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## **Inequality and Unionization within the United States**

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### **Highlights**

- Unions have a negative impact on income inequality in U.S. states
- Higher rates of unionization decreased inequality, as measured by the Gini coefficient, the share of income accruing to the top 1% of earners, and the share of income accruing to the top 10% of earners
- Findings are robust across several estimation methods and also when union coverage is used as an alternative to the percent of workers in unions

### **Abstract**

Using data on U.S. state-level inequality from Frank *et al.* (2015) and state-level unionization data from Hirsch *et al.* (2001), this paper shows that unions have a negative impact on income inequality in U.S. states. In particular, higher rates of unionization decreased inequality, as measured by the Gini coefficient, the share of income accruing to the top 1% of earners, and the share of income accruing to the top 10% of earners. The findings are robust across several estimation methods and also when union coverage is used as an alternative to the percent of workers in unions.

**Keywords:** Labor Unions, Labor Institutions, Income Inequality

**JEL Codes:** J50, D31

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