Who are you, where are you?

Author

María Isabel González Bravo, Universidad de Salamanca (Spain).

Type of activity

The exercise presents two related activities that may be used in economics classes, as well as in any class where students' critical thinking is to be encouraged.

Target educational level

It can be addressed to last courses of High School students and to any university student.

Information entry

SDG_1 states that approximately 10% of the world's population still live in extreme poverty today, struggling to meet the most fundamental needs. One of the measures for determining extreme poverty is to consider those who subsist on less than $1.9 a day. Alarmingly, the distribution of poverty levels has become concentrated over time in the same areas and countries: Africa and parts of Asia. Living on less than $1.9 a day is not equally significant in all countries as it depends on the average income level in each country. The OECD measures a country's poverty rate as the proportion of people whose income is below half the median household income of the population. In international statistics, poverty is often measured using the At Risk of Poverty or Social Exclusion (AROPE) rate, which includes the population in one of these situations:

- At risk of poverty (60% of the median income per consumption unit).
- With severe material deprivation (experiencing deprivation in at least 4 concepts from a list of 9)
- In households without employment, or with low employment intensity.

However, poverty is not far away, and significant inequalities can be observed between countries that we consider developed, including Europe.

Source

World Bank's Global Subnational Atlas of Poverty (GSAP)

Problem statement

Activity 1:

Visit the World Bank's Global Subnational Atlas of Poverty (GSAP) to visualise the distribution of poverty around the world. What can you see on the map? What might be the reasons for the uneven distribution of poverty in the world?
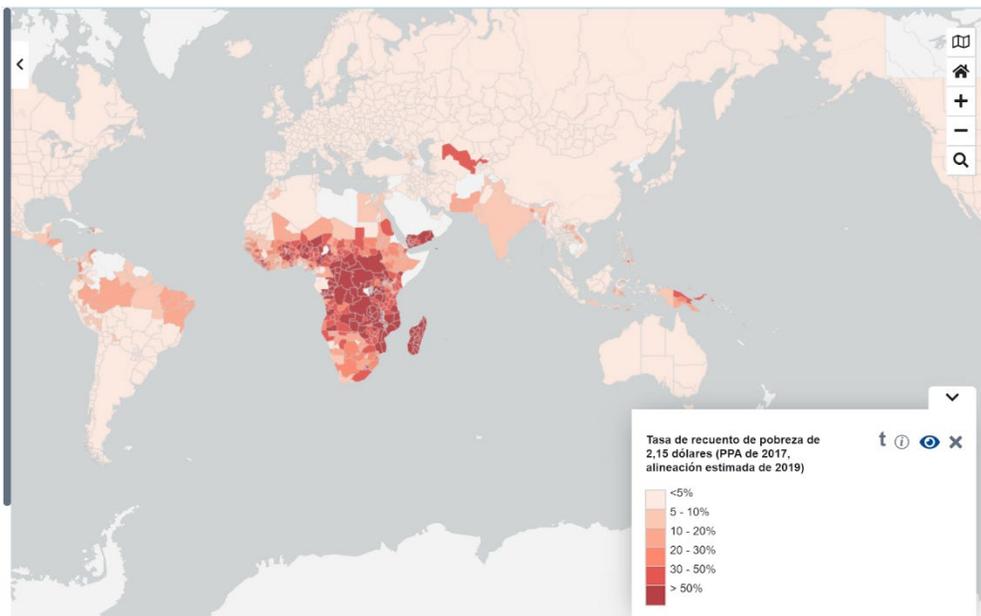
Activity 2:

Create a poverty map of Europe using the AROPE rate data from the Eurostat website, and generate maps for 2019 and 2022 and comment on the results.

Solution

Activity 1:
Students will be able to visualise the following map. They can also access specific data for certain countries.

There is a high concentration of poverty in Africa and also in some Latin American countries. Reasons for this include issues such as

- Climate and climate change: Droughts, heavy rainfall, and environmental degradation affect harvests and particularly rural populations that depend on food production.
- Armed conflict: Poverty rates are higher in countries experiencing armed conflict.
- Business models and the impact of globalization: Multinational corporations use cheap labour to increase profits.
- Scarce resources and limited opportunities for economic development with a high dependence on agricultural production, which is sometimes inadequate to feed the population.

Activity 2

Gain entry to the Eurostat database through the Data navigation tree at:>> EU policies/Sustainable development indicators/Goal 1 - No poverty/People at risk of poverty or social exclusion.

The following map shows the differences in poverty levels in Europe according to the Eurostat database in 2019 and 2022. The difference between countries is also significant, with a marked concentration in the south of Europe, but it is also notable how the poverty rate has increased after the COVID-19 pandemic.

Comments: (Alternatively, the data can be downloaded in Excel and the map can be made using tools such as MapChart, Google Maps or even with a large mural in class and everyone can collaborate. The latter option is more visual for the purpose of awareness raising).

Source of data: Eurostat. Online data code sdg_01_10
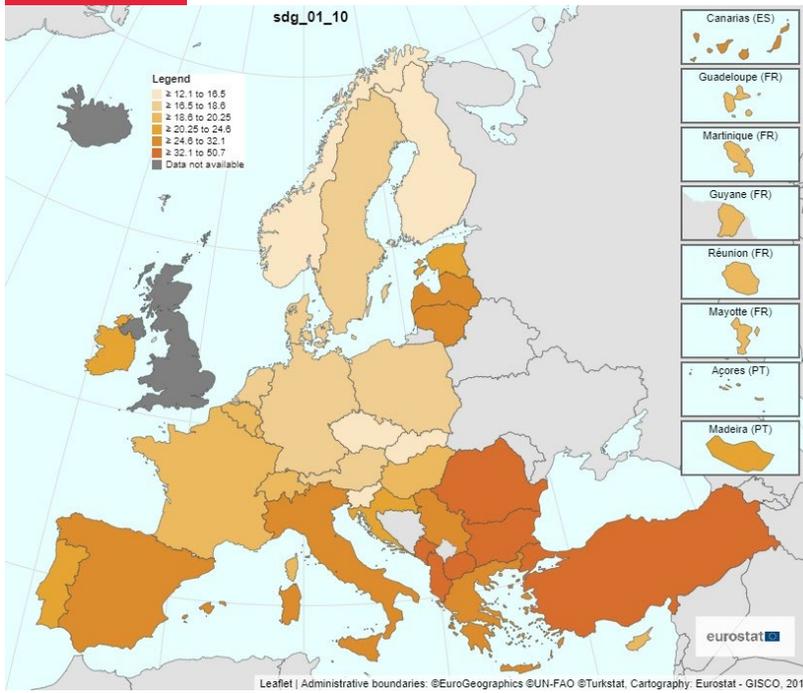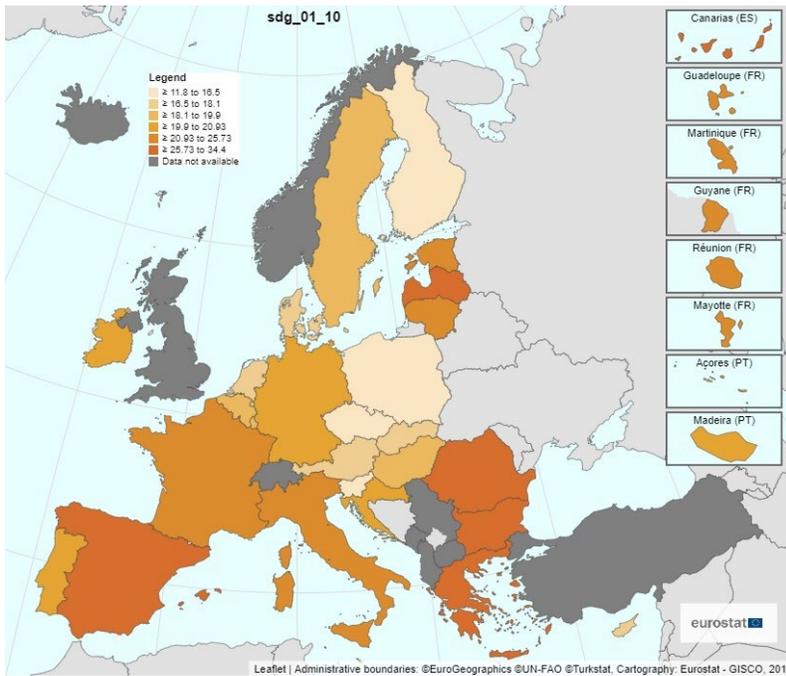https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/databrowser/product/view/ilc_peps01n

Figure 1. Map of Europe 2019.

Figure 2. Map of Europe 2022.