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Anthony Atkinson (1944 – 2017)

Sir Tony Atkinson, President of the Econometric Society in 1988, will be remembered throughout the economics profession for the clarity and insight of his work on the principles and design of public policy and the importance of his empirical investigations into inequality and poverty. He devoted long and valued effort to the collection of accurate and consistent data on the distribution of income and wealth. He was tireless in advising official and governmental bodies on issues of public policy, especially where those bore on questions of social justice.

Born in Caerleon in South Wales in 1944, he was an undergraduate in the early days of Churchill College, Cambridge, where he was influenced by Frank Hahn among others. He became a fellow of St John's College in 1967. After a period at the University of Essex from 1971 he joined UCL as its head in 1976. He taught from 1980 to 1992 at LSE before returning to Cambridge then taking a post as warden of Nuffield College from 1994 to 2005 where he remained a fellow until his death. He was latterly also Centennial Professor at LSE. In addition to being president of the Econometric Society, he served as President of the Royal Economic Society, the European Economic Association and the International Economic Association. Honours have been numerous, including Fellow of the British Academy and Chevalier of the Légion d'Honneur.

As President of the Econometric Society he was heavily involved in the development of regional activities and wrote: "One of the most pleasant duties of the President is to take part in the regional meetings of the Society. I was very impressed by the scientific quality and high level of participation at the Latin American Meeting (San Jose, Costa Rica) and the Australasian Meeting (Canberra)."

His interests in income distribution and welfare economics as a guide to public policy are well encapsulated in his Walras-Bowley lecture, "On the Measurement of Poverty", *Econometrica* 1987, where he writes 'Throughout this lecture, I have tried to show how different views about poverty can be encompassed within a common framework. The aim is to reach some degree of agreement even where judgments differ-whether as to the level of poverty line, the choice of poverty measure, or the relationship between poverty and inequality. [...] What was needed was a greater degree of vertical integration between the statistical measurement of poverty on the one hand and welfare economics on the other. One of the great merits of the Econometric Society is that it brings together these two concerns and I hope that the present lecture too has made a contribution to such integration.'

Richard Blundell, President of the Econometric Society in 2006
and Ian Preston, University College London.