

**The Institute of Employment Rights & UNISON**

Invite you to hear

**Richard Wilkinson**

the author of

**The Spirit Level**

Chaired by

**John Hendy QC**

with a welcome from

**Bronwyn McKenna UNISON**

**on Thursday 9th June 2011, 5.00pm—7.00pm**

**UNISON Centre , 130 Euston Road, London NW1 2AY. Nearest Tube Euston Station**

**Refreshments available**

**Numbers limited. RSVP to Sally on [s.brooke@unison.co.uk](mailto:s.brooke@unison.co.uk) 0207 121 5234 or**

**Treena on [office@ier.org.uk](mailto:office@ier.org.uk) 0151 207 5265**

**THE  
INSTITUTE  
OF  
EMPLOYMENT  
RIGHTS**

**UNISON**  
*the public service union*

**The Equality Trust**

### **The Spirit Level**

In 1990 Richard Wilkinson and Kate Pickett published a timely book called *The Spirit Level*. The conclusion of the book, based on years of rigorous research data, was that inequality is bad: it's bad for your health, bad for the economy, bad for society and bad for the environment.

Their groundbreaking book provides hard evidence to show:

- How almost everything – including mental and physical health, crime and drug use, educational performance, prison numbers, obesity, teenage pregnancy and child well being – is affected not by how wealthy a society is but how equal it is.
- That inequality in society leads to increases in debt and economic instability. The financial crashes of 1929 and 2008 happened at the two peaks of inequality, with about 1.5 trillion dollars a year being siphoned from the bottom 90% of the US population to the top 10% in the run up to the 2008 crash.
- That the most important factors in narrowing inequality is trade union membership and collective bargaining

In 2010 *The Spirit Level* was re-printed with a new chapter rebutting the criticisms made of the book by right wing bodies such as The Tax Payers' Alliance, The Democracy Institute and the Policy Exchange. In today's economic climate, it is essential trade union members have the facts, the graphs and the arguments available to show that cuts are not the answer. Economic stability, social wellbeing and environmental survival depend on equality.....and trade unions.

