

## **Special Issue of the Economic History Yearbook:**

### **“Quality of Life and Quality of Work”**

Multidimensional perspectives on quality of life and employment have become a topic of fresh interest for policymakers and researchers since the 1990s. A broadened conceptualization of wellbeing, including influences from the capability approach (Sen 1984), and literature on subjective wellbeing or happiness have expanded contemporary and historical perspectives on quality of life and its determinants. Composite indices and systems of indicators for capturing varied developments across multiple dimensions of quality of life have been embraced by present and historical researchers. Over the same period, the measurement of employment outcomes in current research and related policy has grown beyond an exclusive focus on unemployment and wages. This change has been influenced by shifts outside of the academy such as the International Labour Organization’s advocacy of “decent work” and the European Union’s commitment to “more and better jobs”, and shaped within in research circles through the growing interest in job quality (Green 2006, Findlay, Kalleberg, and Warhurst 2013).

This special issue will present historical perspectives on these broad conceptualizations of quality of life and work. The organizers invite the following types of papers:

1. Wellbeing/Quality of Life: New applications of existing wellbeing or quality-of-life indicators to previously unstudied periods and locations.
2. Wellbeing/Quality of Life: New methods to measure wellbeing in the past, including the largely unexplored topic of subjective wellbeing in history
3. Quality of Work/Decent Work: Quantitative and qualitative analysis of decent work and its subsidiary element, job quality. The ILO’s framework for Decent Work incorporates a wide range of aspects such as the presence of child labor and adherence to other labor standards, work dignity, job quality (measured on one or more dimensions), security of employment, and labor rights.
4. Quality of Work/Decent Work: Papers that develop methods to quantify or otherwise systematically analyze the ILO’s dimensions of decent work in historical settings, and perhaps compare these dimensions between locations or across periods.

Framing or motivation for papers that judiciously and appropriately connects historical findings to present-day social science and/or policy debates is strongly encouraged.

Papers analyzing any period(s) or location(s) are welcome as long as they address the core topics outlined above. Information about length and other submission requirements is available on the [journal website](#).

To submit a paper, please send your submission to the special issue editors, Herman de Jong ([h.j.de.jong@rug.nl](mailto:h.j.de.jong@rug.nl)) and Benjamin Schneider ([benjamin.schneider@oslomet.no](mailto:benjamin.schneider@oslomet.no)). If you have questions or would like to discuss whether a potential submission would be suitable, please contact us well in advance.

**Application Deadline: 12 September 2025**