INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION FOR RESEARCH IN INCOME AND WEALTH

COUNCIL
CHARLES YUJI HORIOKA (*President*)
CHARLOTTE BARTELS
CONCHITA D'AMBROSIO
SHATAKSHEE DHONGDE
MARINA GINDELSKY
WENDY LI
ALICIA RAMBALDI
REBECCA RILEY
SANJIV MAHAJAN
CATHERINE VAN ROMPAEY
JORRIT ZWIJNENBURG

DAVID JOHNSON (*Executive Director*)

1100 VERMONT AVE., #650
WASHINGTON, DC 20005
E-MAIL: info@iariw.org
WEB SITE: www.iariw.org

Call for Papers for the 39th IARIW General Conference

Brussels, Belgium, August 24-28, 2026

The International Association for Research in Income and Wealth welcomes submissions for the 39th General Conference in Brussels, Belgium, August 24-28, 2026. Submissions should be relevant to one of the 10 Themes described below or included in an Other category; the Council also agreed to consider additional themes at a later date. The submission portal will be available before the end of March on the IARIW conference webpage, and submissions will be accepted until September 30, 2025. Proposals will be reviewed by theme organizers and the IARIW program committee, and authors will be notified about acceptance in December 2025. For more information about the structure of the conference, the format of having discussants present the papers, and the tentative schedule see the link, here.

Session Themes

Theme 1: Advancing Well-being Measurement and Application: Bridging Research and Practice

Lead Organizer: Anthony Lepinteur (University of Luxembourg)
Co-organizers: Kelsey J. O'Connor (National Institute of Statistics and Economic Studies), Shatakshee Dhongde (Georgia Institute of Technology), Dean Mitchell Jolliffe (World Bank)

There has been a notable rise in the adoption of well-being frameworks in policymaking. As of 2024, 27 out of 38 OECD countries have implemented such frameworks, with approaches ranging from national well-being monitoring with traditional metrics to incorporating subjective well-being into cost-benefit analyses. Another central example is the framework of the Sustainable Development Goals, soon ending in 2030. With the extensive conceptual framing of wellbeing in multiple dimensions through a variety of lenses including monetary, nonmonetary, objective, subjective assessments, the aim of this proposal is to highlight research focused on advancing measures of well-being and their empirical applications.

We seek contributions on improving both the measurement and use of well-being metrics across different economic contexts. As an example, the U.K. Treasury has released internal guidance on how to monetize life satisfaction benefits for cost-benefit analysis. This requires four inputs: the

monetary value of life satisfaction points, accurate measures of the causal determinants of life satisfaction, their effect sizes, and their duration. Subjective indicators such as perceived financial security, perceptions of inflation, and personal economic outlook can reveal divergences in economic data and subjective behavior. More research is needed in each of these areas, and these considerations may be particularly challenging in low-income settings, where institutional capacity, data quality, and policy needs may differ from high-income countries. With the limitations of material well-being measurement and the Beyond GDP agenda, the need to consolidate and further the scientific knowledge on subjective well-being measures is ever more important.

Submissions from both researchers and practitioners in government (especially statistical offices in both high- and low-income countries) or business are encouraged. This proposal calls for papers on all aspects involving conceptualizing and measuring subjective well-being.

Theme 2: Determinants of Well-being

Lead Organizer: Nancy Kong (University of Technology Sydney, Australia)
Co-organizer: Shatakshee Dhongde (Georgia Institute of Technology)

This theme examines the multifaceted factors influencing well-being across generations, highlighting societal and family-level determinants as well as the impact of unexpected shocks. At the societal level, poverty, inequality, political instability, and income volatility shape long-term outcomes. Within families, factors such as income shocks, parental stress, and financial hardships significantly affect both child and adult well-being. Additionally, unpredictable shocks—such as natural disasters (droughts, floods), economic disruptions (inflation, stock market crises), and public health crises (pandemics, healthcare strikes)—can cause severe disruptions in wealth, assets, income, and consumption, ultimately influencing multiple dimensions of well-being.

Research has demonstrated how these conditions shape critical outcomes, including obesity, mental health, and both cognitive and non-cognitive skills. Moreover, the emerging field of epigenetics reveals how socio-economic and environmental factors can be biologically transmitted, providing new insights into the mechanisms of intergenerational transmission.

This session seeks to deepen understanding of the complex interactions that shape well-being and to identify effective policy interventions that can mitigate negative impacts.

We invite submissions from researchers investigating a wide range of topics related to well-being, including:

- Intergenerational impacts of economic conditions, trauma, and stress on child health, education, and development.
- Effects of external shocks on household and individual well-being across dimensions such as wealth, health, and consumption.
- Coping strategies and policies, including government social safety nets, that have mitigated the adverse consequences of these shocks.

This session aims to foster evidence-based dialogue on promoting resilience and equitable well-being across populations and generations.

Theme 3: Non-Traditional Data

Lead Organizer: Sofie R. Waltl (University of Cambridge)
Co-organizers: Giorgia Menta (LISER), Conchita D'Ambrosio (University of Luxembourg), Richard Heys (Office for National Statistics) and Rebecca Riley (King's College London & ESCoE)

Digitization has largely extended the potential data sources usable to assess agents' behaviour and economic outcomes both from a micro and macro perspective.

This includes:

- genetic and epigenetic data,
- remote-sensing sources including satellite data,
- scanner data,
- internet searches and clicks,
- digitally collected time-use diaries, as well as further non-traditional sources.

Linking new data sources to traditional economic outcome variables may vastly expand our understanding of the sources and consequences of inequalities. This session thus aims to bring together researchers and statisticians producing or assessing new data sources linked to traditional economic quantities to measure the sources and implications of inequalities in various dimensions.

- Can the sources and consequences of inequalities be better understood when adding currently under-explored dimensions measured by non-traditional indicators?
- Which indicators and data are missing to fully make use of non-traditional data sources comprehensively? How to link non-traditional sources to existing data and statistics in an effective and informative manner?
- How can the use of non-traditional data sources advance economic and socio-economic measurement?

Papers to be presented in this session may ask for instance questions like the following:

- How and why do changes in annual patterns of temperature and precipitation affect humans' cognitive performance and health, as well as economic outcomes and success in life?
- How are health, well-being and happiness linked to climate and environmental shocks experienced during different stages of life?
- How do environmental hazards affect shifts in preferences for different regions to live, types of housing units, amenities and jobs? And how does that affect local communities, jobs and housing markets?

- Can the integration of biological data into economic research contribute to a better understanding of individuals' behaviours and outcomes? How can genetic and epigenetic data contribute to the analysis of inequality and disadvantage?
- In the nature vs nurture debate, how do environmental exposures affect gene expression and biological ageing?
- Which insights can be drawn from time-use diaries to better understand the changing nature of work and living styles?

We would like to attract papers that make use of non-traditional data for research purposes, as well as studies evaluating data needs and new measurement techniques to address inequalities along underexplored dimensions.

Theme 4: Advances in Distributional National Accounts

Lead Organizer: Joseph Grilli (OECD)
Co-organizers: Marina Gindelsky (Bureau of Economic Analysis), Jorrit Zwijnenburg (OECD)

Distributional National Accounts (DNA) have become a core research area for many countries in recent years, consistent with goals outlined in the System of National Accounts. Continuing to make progress in these measures is crucial to understanding well-being and addressing the micro-macro gap in results. What began as exercises have become well-developed and timely statistical products for some countries, while others are still working hard to meet these goals.

There are several key target areas for such methodological advances in DNA. First, there is a need to produce results sooner in order to inform data users and policy makers. This is especially challenging given that underlying micro (and often macro) data is available with a substantial lag. We thus need techniques to move beyond these data limitations. Second, income, consumption, and wealth are often mis-measured throughout the distribution, but particularly in the tails. There have been some theoretical approaches proposed to address the tails, but less empirical work testing the success of such approaches in the DNA framework. Third, there are significant potential improvements that may stem from the incorporation of non-traditional data (i.e. outside of national survey and administrative data). Such data can be costly and incomplete, but nevertheless yield important insights and help plug data gaps. Fourth, there are items contained in National Accounts which are particularly difficult to deflate given their lack of obvious market value. Indeed such items constitute significant portions of household resources in many counties but are especially hard to estimate. Finally, there are significant gaps in coverage at the micro level for many macro items, such as mixed income and property income. Closing these gaps is essential to measuring income well and to arrive at more granular distributional results.

This session welcomes informative papers on major methodological advances in DNA, addressing some of the issues as listed above, as well as other relevant developments in this area.

Theme 5: Challenges in Measuring Consumption: Today's Choices and Tomorrow's Outcomes

Lead Organizer: Jake Schild (US Bureau of Labor Statistics)
Co-organizers: Thesia Garner (BLS), Robert Martin (BLS), Paul Schreyer (ESCoE), Veli-Matti Tormalehto (Statistics Finland), Jörg Neugschwender (LIS)

Conceptualizing the many facets of consumption is critical for understanding the distribution of material well-being from a micro and macro perspective. Influential studies, such as the *Stiglitz-Sen-Fitoussi report (2009)*, have underscored the importance of integrating income, consumption, and wealth to provide a comprehensive measure of economic well-being.

However, accurate measurement of consumption is multi-faceted. It includes not only market purchases but also in-kind transfers from employers, governments, and other households, as well as home production for own consumption. These complexities become more pronounced when comparing advanced and emerging economies, where the significance of non-market activities and the informal sector can vary substantially. Empirical analyses comparing consumption patterns across countries reveal how inequality evolves with economic development—shifting from basic needs driving disparities in lower-income nations to more diverse consumption behaviors in wealthier societies.

We invite research addressing the following critical challenges:

- What is the role of wealth, saving, and intergenerational transfers in shaping current and future consumption?
- How can linking income, consumption, and wealth data at both micro and macro levels improve estimates of consumption across national contexts?
- How can administrative data (e.g., credit card transactions) and alternative data sources enhance our understanding of the distribution of consumption?
- How can we develop accurate deflators that account for regional price differences, and varying consumption patterns across household groups and countries?
- What methodologies can help improve the measurement of non-market activities (e.g., implicit financial services, non-market care, barter)? How can we develop accurate deflators that account for in-kind transfers (such as health and education)?

We encourage submissions of papers that cover the topics above, related topics that improve consumption measurement more generally, and especially those topics that incorporate both micro- and macro-perspectives. We aim to advance in our understanding how to tackle the challenges of developing comparable, reliable metrics across countries.

Theme 6: Inequality and Housing: Micro and Macro Perspectives on Housing Affordability

Lead Organizer: Alicia N. Rambaldi (Lead Organizer)
Co-organizers: Robert Hill (University of Graz), Sofie Waltl (University of Cambridge), Miriam Steurer (University of Graz), Chihiro Shimizu (Hitotsubashi University)

Housing is important. From an individual point of view, housing costs tend to be a household's largest regular expense -- independently of whether they are renters or buyers. From a societal point of view, the recent cost of living crisis, increased financing costs, changes in working habits and COVID19 illustrate the importance of the residential and commercial property markets for the wider economy. After the initial fall following the global financial crisis (GFC), housing prices worldwide rebounded strongly.

COVID19 and geopolitical disputes have brought large disruptions to the real estate markets, with heterogeneous effects across geographical and income dimensions. Scholars and institutions have significantly improved the measure of house price inflation since the GFC. However, there has been less progress in measuring the impact of house price inflation on various groups in society.

Questions that fall under this heading include the following:

- How and why are housing wealth, affordability and inequality evolving over time?
- How is financial stability affected by fluctuations in residential and commercial real estate prices?
- When prices/rents increase, who has access to credit and who is priced out of the market? Do certain policy-settings favour renters or owners?
- Which indicators and data are missing to capture housing inequalities comprehensively?
- Inequality in intergenerational access to housing: which policy measures benefit renters/owners?
- Are cross-sectional or intergenerational inequalities linked to spatial heterogeneities and regional disparities?
- How big is the carbon footprint of housing and how can it be reduced?
- What can be done to improve the reliability of real estate indices?

We would like to attract papers that evaluate data needs and data availability to address housing affordability and inequality both within and across countries.

Theme 7: Capital Stock

Lead Organizer: Josh Martin (Bank of England, ESCoE)
Co-organizers: Carl Obst (Institute of Development of Environmental-Economic Accounting), Peter van de Ven (Inter-Secretariat Working Group on National Accounts, UN), Jorrit Zwijnenburg (OECD)

Capital plays a crucial role in the economy, and data on capital are important for productivity analyses and to assess sustainability questions. Capital is also difficult to measure, conceptually and in practice, and official statistics on capital are still rather scarce and often lack detail.

The 2025 update of the System of National Accounts expands the production and capital boundaries, and updates various concepts associated with capital. Key updates include: the treatment of data as a produced asset, the introduction of the depletion of natural resources as a cost of production, and a promotion of 'net' measures in the sequence of accounts. There are a range of other conceptual, practical and presentational changes too, as well as issues that remain on the research agenda.

With considerable demand for statistics on capital, and new challenges presented by the changes in SNA 2025, this session will showcase the latest research work on capital measurement in the context of the SNA. The focus of the session would be on practical measurement methods and challenges, with the aim of sharing knowledge and experience between related researchers, to aid consistent and robust incorporation of these new capitals into the national accounts in different countries.

We welcome proposals on the following questions, or any topic related to capital measurement in the context of the SNA:

- How to measure depreciation of produced capital and depletion of natural resources in a consistent way?
- How to avoid double counting but ensure exhaustiveness across software, databases, data (new in SNA 2025), and R&D, and where does AI fit into this?
- How can we improve the availability of capital estimates, and ensure they are high quality and consistent across countries?
- How should we communicate, explain and promote the use of 'net' measures of economic activity?
- Is the current asset breakdown for specific types of capital fit for purpose and what additional breakdowns could be useful for what purposes?
- How to further advance the measurement of human capital?
- How to define and measure social capital for the purpose of economic analyses?

Theme 8: Inequality of Opportunity, the Top End of the Income Distribution, and the Political Salience of Inequality

Lead Organizer: Barry Watson (Acadia University)
Co-organizers: Nicholas Rohde (Griffith University), Lars Osberg (Dalhousie University), Nishant Yonzan (World Bank), Alessio Rebechi (University of Tasmania), Philippe Van Kerm (University of Luxembourg)

Roemer (1998) argues that inequality of opportunity is determined by both differences in 'circumstances' and 'efforts', and a large recent literature has attempted to estimate the degree to which circumstances, beyond the control of individuals, predict income inequality. Notably, Checchi & Peragine (2010) have argued that inequalities associated with differences in circumstances are 'ethically offensive', constituting the 'unfair' component of earnings inequality. Further, inequality of opportunity concerning wealth (e.g., inheritance and taxation of property) also greatly matters, but has yet to be addressed in the literature.

Recent evidence also suggests that income inequality is markedly rising at the top of the distribution, which is often mismeasured in household surveys. Work has been done in recent years to address this issue by combining survey data with administrative and national account data, along with income tax records. Likewise, at the bottom of the distribution, it is unclear how to handle very small values; thus, little is known about measurement error at the bottom of the income distribution.

Milanovic (2019) argues that this extreme concentration of income and wealth is accompanied by a concentration of political power. By exerting a disproportionate influence on the political system, this 'plutocracy' promotes self-interest and the systematic exclusion of others from political influence. Access to this exclusive club is strongly dependent on factors outside individual control (e.g., gender, race, class), resulting in an over-representation of specific groups among those top positions (primarily white males). Further, the transmission of educational and financial advantages has enabled propagation of power and privilege among the elite, thereby restricting access for individuals from a low socioeconomic background (Chetty et al., 2016; Chetty, Hendren, Jones, & Porter, 2019).

Piketty (2020) has discussed the institutional settings in which inequality is reproduced over time, arguing that changes in the electoral structure cause changes in the justification for inequality and redistribution. In particular, the ideological evolution of political parties has resulted in deep changes in the electoral composition of their supporters. The rise of new political cleavages contributes to the emergence of a multi-elite system, where left-wing parties (traditionally representing the working-class) are increasingly supported by the highly educated, and right-wing parties are increasingly supported by the wealthy. This has left a lot of voters, who do not feel represented, more prone to the claims of populist parties.

This session will welcome papers that:

- Examine how distributions of income, wealth, labour market outcomes, well-being, health, and other social and economic factors are impacted by individual circumstances, efforts, and systemic trends, along with theoretical arguments concerning the differentiation between 'effort' and 'circumstance'.
- Improve or develop new methods that address challenges related to adjusting the top and bottom of the income distribution.
- Analyse the relationship between political decisions and economic inequality, and how economic disparities influence electoral outcomes, policy formation, and governance. Those examining the impact of policy initiatives to reduce inequality, and those considering the systemic societal impacts of wealth concentration, will also be considered.

Theme 9: The System of Environmental-Economic Accounting Ecosystem Accounting (SEEA EA)

Lead Organizer: Carl Obst (Institute of Development of Environmental-Economic Accounting)
Co-organizers: Bram Edens (OECD) and Catherine van Rompaey (World Bank)

The adoption of the System of Environmental-Economic Accounting Ecosystem Accounting (SEEA EA) in March 2021 by the UN Statistical Commission was a key milestone in providing a coherent framework for the integration of data on ecosystems and the benefits they provide to people and the economy adapting the accounting principles of the SNA.

As the first version of a standard it was to be expected that there were a range of topics which required ongoing research and discussion. One of the most challenging topics has been determining the appropriate way of connecting the monetary values of ecosystem assets as described in the SEEA EA, with the monetary values of natural capital in the SNA balance sheet. The challenge is that values in the SNA balance sheet, in particular values of land, will commonly incorporate elements of ecosystem asset values. In some cases these values can be readily separated (e.g. the value of timber resources in forest ecosystems) but in other cases the appropriate solution is not clear. In addition, the SEEA EA does not apply the concept of economic ownership but this is important in the SNA context particularly in terms of institutional sector accounts and the allocation of costs of capital.

Resolving these types of recording issues is of particular importance in deriving measures of aggregate wealth using multiple capitals for example in measures of inclusive and comprehensive wealth and avoiding issues of both double counting and potentially missing values.

The focus of the session would be on describing possible approaches and methods to integrating monetary values of ecosystem services and ecosystem assets from the SEEA EA with the SNA balance sheets, sector accounts and supply and use tables. Connections to economic analysis in the form of wealth accounting, environmentally extended input-output tables (and related modelling) and environmental multi-factor productivity analysis may also be considered. Of particular interest are specific examples and case studies, both actual and stylised, that can provide a basis for a rich discussion and understanding of the alternatives for recording, the conceptual challenges and the analytical possibilities. Examples could include accounting for the monetary value of forest land, accounting for the value of houses, accounting for the value of agricultural land, and accounting for the value of carbon and related climate regulation services.

Theme 10: Productivity and Infrastructure

Lead Organizer: Dariusz Kotlewski (Warsaw School of Economics and Statistics Poland)
Co-organizer: Barbara Fraumeni (Central University of Finance and Economics, China)

The measurement of productivity has been extensively explored in the literature. Productivity is generally categorized into two main types: partial factor productivity and multifactor productivity. Among these measures, labor productivity and total factor productivity (TFP) are the most widely used indicators for assessing technical efficiency in production.

Understanding the drivers of productivity and output growth is essential for shaping effective economic policies and fostering sustainable development. Infrastructure is critical in shaping productivity growth by enhancing connectivity, reducing transaction costs, and promoting economic efficiency. This session will explore productivity and output growth decompositions

across regions and sectors, using both micro and macro data. We will also investigate the intricate relationship between infrastructure investment and productivity at macroeconomic and microeconomic levels. By integrating firm-level insights with aggregate economic trends, this session aims to uncover the heterogeneous patterns of productivity and output dynamics and the key factors driving efficiency gains at different levels of analysis.

The discussion will focus on methodologies for productivity and growth analysis, including KLEMS decomposition, firm-level production function estimation, measuring total factor productivity (TFP), output and TFP growth decompositions, and analysis of the main drivers of productivity growth. Particular attention will be given to distinguishing within-firm improvements from reallocation effects, sectoral shifts, and regional disparities. Regression analysis can highlight how factors such as firm size, export status, market concentration, innovation capacity, digitalization, and infrastructure investment contribute to productivity changes.

A crucial aspect of this session will be the role of micro-level heterogeneity in shaping aggregate productivity outcomes. Using microdata, researchers can examine how firm entry and exit, technological adoption, and labor reallocation influence sectoral and regional productivity trends. Additionally, macroeconomic perspectives will provide insights into how national policies, trade dynamics, infrastructure, and global supply chain disruptions impact productivity at a broader scale.

By bridging micro and macro perspectives, this session will provide a comprehensive view of output and productivity growth decompositions, offering valuable insights for policymakers, economists, and industry leaders seeking to enhance productivity performance across different regions and sectors.

We will also encourage papers analyzing the interaction between cyclical changes in the output gap and potential growth, two fundamental components of output growth. Since measuring real output, and in turn productivity, relies on measuring prices, this session also encourages papers examining the importance of price indexes.

This session will also incorporate papers using Business Tendency Survey data to provide valuable insights into firms' expectations, operational constraints, productivity, and market conditions.

Business tendency surveys may complement traditional productivity estimation methods by providing timely, forward-looking data that enhance the understanding of productivity dynamics across firms, sectors, and regions. Their integration into empirical productivity models could strengthen the assessment of short-term business cycle effects while improving long-term growth projections.

Both theoretical and application approaches are welcome in the session.