

CALL FOR PAPERS

FAIR WAGE, AN ACHIEVABLE IMPLEMENTATION?

Catholic Institute of Paris – Carmes Campus
May 16th-17th, 2024

The conference “**Fair Wage, an achievable implementation**” will be held in **Paris on May 16th-17th, 2024**. It is organized at the **Catholic Institute of Paris** by the Faculty of Social Sciences, Economics and Law, the Faculty of Arts, the Artois University, and the University of Timisoara (Romania).

This event is part of a series of conferences (France, Morocco, Uruguay, Russia, Romania, Netherlands, Malaysia, United States, Japan etc.) carried out by an international research network, founded in 2015 and counting around forty teacher-researchers (in around twenty countries), entitled WAGE for Wage Analysis in a Globalizing Environment. Our work focuses on the evolution of wages in the world since 1950 and their link with globalization (increase or not of inequalities?). In 2024, we are publishing a general work on Wages and Globalisation, first Results, nourished by communications at the 2015, 2018 and 2022 sessions of the World Economic History Congress and, at a similar timing, another work on African Wages since 1960.

Wages are important and form 40% of global GDP. In advanced countries, they represent 50% of GDP, two-thirds of companies' added value and about as much of gross primary household income. They are increasing with economic development and on the planet, the importance of employees is increasing and reflects the gradual institutionalization of the labour market. In the choice of a profession for young people, the salary represents one of the elements of the decision, even if the latter considers other components such as the regional training offer, the cultural habits of the family, the conditions of work. etc.

Salaries and wages, which concern 80 to 90% of working people in advanced countries and 30 to 40% of those in emerging countries, are very diversified and generally organized in established or implicit salary grids with numerous classifications according to qualification, seniority and responsibilities; it is generally accepted that engineers, for example, are paid more than unskilled workers. However, this dispersion is increasingly questioned: between the upper and lower deciles (D9/D1) or percentiles (C99/C10), between juniors and seniors, and especially between men and women (gender gap from 5% to 35% depending on the country).

Although a large part of the gaps can be explained by differences in diplomas, jobs or working hours, this diversity questions the intellectual world and the society since the 19th century and the industrial revolution (Ricardo, Marx) as well as than the contemporary public

in its relationship to equality. In fact, is it a statistical dispersion with classic and identifiable biases or real and factual inequalities? The treatment and evaluation of this subject are not neutral and can direct societies towards turbulent dissatisfaction in the event of worsening inequalities or prepare the ground for a certain social appeasement in the case of wage remediation policy.

Can a fair compensation system be both a solution to the feeling of growing pay inequality and to more balanced growth? A fair wage would be a wage that satisfies four requirements at the same time: social justice and equity, economic performance and productivity, the agreement of the parties concerned (employer, employees, union and public authorities) and a decent standard of living. Assigned to an employee, it must be able to apply to all employees in the same situation. The fair wage does not exclude the hierarchy of wages in relation to qualifications and responsibilities. In this case, fair wages are diversified: a minimum wage for an unskilled worker, an average wage for a skilled worker or a ceiling wage for a higher management salary. The problem of a fair wage concerns a fair remuneration system rather than a salary taken in isolation and requires considering the monetary wage as much as the salary package.

Historically since the 1950s, we can cite companies that have practiced a dynamic social policy intended to support direct wages (Renault, Siemens, Michelin, IKEA, Unilever, Astra), States that have sought to operate redistribution through taxation or public expenditure in situations of potentially significant wage gap (Scandinavian countries, Canada) or authoritarian political regimes which have endeavoured to reduce the wage scale sharply (socialist economies 1917-1991) with fairly negative collateral effects. Since the 2000s, a general demand for equity (trade, work, products) has spread in public opinion and networks of actors promoting work and fair wages have developed.

The rapid development of emerging countries, led by China, raises questions on this subject from a global perspective. What is the historical importance of these systems, their impact and can we draw up a form of balance sheet? Or are they very specific situations, difficult to reproduce and transpose?

Among the very many aspects that could be studied, we will mainly retain **four axes** that could each constitute a half-day for conference.

1. Theories and representations of fair wages
2. Hierarchy/differentiation of salaries (wage grids, steps, interdecile gaps, junior-senior, women-men, by sector, etc.)
3. Fair wage companies' practices, European social labour market
4. Public pay equity policies: minimum wages? age and gender gap? education and training improvement

This conference is resolutely multidisciplinary. Proposals from economists, historians, sociologists, political scientists, and philosophers are welcome.

SUBMISSIONS

Proposals should take the form of an abstract of between 400 and 600 words, with 3 keywords and a short bibliographical reference. Abstracts must be sent with a short CV before **January 31th, 2024** to the following email addresses: mpierre.chelini@univ-artois.fr, muriel.perisse@univ-artois.fr, ciprian.panzaru@e-uvt.ro, ph.rojas@icp.fr. Submissions can be written either in English or French.

REGISTRATION FEES: 100 euros (free for PhD candidate).

Our budget is limited. Participants are expected to make their own travel arrangements and pay for their travel costs. We will provide meals and refreshments on site. If funds remain available, we will try to reimburse part of the travel. The use of video should make it possible to communicate remotely without having to incur travel costs.

VENUE

The conference will take place at the “Carmes campus of the Catholic University of Paris, 74 rue de Vaugirard, 75006 Paris, France.

ORGANIZING COMMITTEE

Michel-Pierre Chelini, Economic history, University of Artois, Arras, France

Nil Favier, History, Pas-de-Calais, France

Christine Noël-Lemaître, Philosophy, University of Aix-Marseille, France

Ciprian Panzaru, Sociology, University of Timisoara, Romania

Muriel Perisse, Economics, University of Artois, Arras, France

Pierre-Hernan Rojas, Economics, Catholic Institute of Paris, France

SPECIAL ISSUE

The goal then being to publish a book on the subject with the main communications within a reasonable time (2025-2026), an early finalized preparation of your texts can save everyone time. For the symposium itself in May 2024, it would be necessary to provide a fairly developed version of your presentation.

DEADLINES AND SUBMISSIONS

November 30th, 2023: Launch of the call for papers

January 31st, 2024: End of the call for papers

March 15th, Notification of decisions to depositors

April 15th: Establishment of the final program

May 16th-17th, 2024: Conference at the Catholic Institute of Paris.