

How Was Life?

GLOBAL WELL-BEING SINCE 1820



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Edited by

Jan Luiten van Zanden, Joerg Baten,
Marco Mira d'Ercole, Auke Rijpma,
Conal Smith and Marcel Timmer

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Foreword

FOLLOWING ANGUS MADDISON'S FOOTSTEPS

In 2001, the OECD Development Centre released Angus Maddison's book, *The World Economy – A Millennial Perspective*, which was soon to become a classic in economic history for statisticians, economists and historians. Angus had a very long association with the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), which he joined in 1953, and was one of the founding fathers of its Development Centre. This enthusiastic and thought-provoking “chiffrephile” – as he used to call himself – devoted much of his career to quantifying and analysing long-term growth in output as well as achievements in development and social welfare over the past millennium in as many countries of the world as possible. In doing this, he greatly contributed to one of the core missions of the OECD: providing the evidence for policy-making.

We are very pleased today, more than a decade after the release of Maddison's seminal work, to renew our association with his legacy. We do so through a report that both connects with and departs from his contributions to economic history. It connects, due to the report's long-term, global perspective, covering the period 1820-2010. It departs by going beyond GDP to encompass a broader set of dimensions that shape people's living conditions, such as their wages, longevity, education, height and personal security, among others.

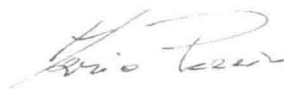
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Martine Durand
OECD Chief Statistician
Director, Statistics Directorate



Mario Pezzini
Director, OECD Development Centre

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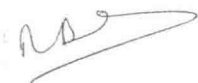
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