



# Special Session Proposal

## Decent work: Job quality in regional science

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### Abstract

Employment growth is central to regional development strategies, but policymakers and researchers are increasingly concerned not only with the number of jobs, but also their quality. Job quality encompasses measurable aspects such as income, job security, working hours, and benefits, as well as factors like autonomy, meaningfulness of work, opportunities for skill development, and leadership quality. Regional labour markets are undergoing significant transformations driven by technological change (e.g., automation, AI), demographic shifts (e.g., aging populations, migration), and post-pandemic adjustments (e.g., remote work, flexible schedules). This raises an important question: how do these changes affect the availability of decent, high-quality jobs across regions? Research on these topics can inform regional labour market strategies that promote both employment growth and sustainable, well-paid, and fulfilling work, in line with Sustainable Development Goal 8: Decent work and economic growth.

This special session aims to bring together scholars interested in the multidimensional nature of job quality, both from a regional science perspective and beyond. We welcome theoretical, empirical, and methodological contributions exploring how job quality is defined, measured, and influenced, as well as its implications for individuals, firms, and regions.

Contributions may address (but are not limited to) the following themes:

- Measurement and conceptualisation of job quality and decent work
- Regional and spatial inequalities in job quality



- Determinants of job quality: institutions, labour markets, and local economic structures
- Job quality and individual outcomes: wellbeing, mental health, productivity, and social inclusion
- The role of technology, automation, and digitalisation in shaping job quality
- Gender, migration, and life-course perspectives on job quality
- The relationship between job quality, regional resilience, and sustainable development
- Policies and interventions promoting good work and regional wellbeing

#### *Session goals*

The session aims to stimulate discussion across disciplines, such as economics, geography, sociology, organizational psychology and public policy. How can job quality be enhanced and better integrated into regional development research and practice? What are the potential outcomes of high-quality jobs? How can (regional) policies help promote job quality and overall well-being of the workforce?

Researchers at all career stages are invited to submit their papers to this special session, and we accept full papers as well as preliminary work, as long as it can contribute to a stimulating discussion.