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Presentation of the new section Surveys and Debates (SD)

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Presentation of the new section *Surveys and Debates (S&D)*

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The Editorial Board of the *Rivista di Storia Economica/Italian Review of Economic History (RSE/IREH)* is launching a new section in the *Rivista* dedicated to Surveys and Debates (S&D). We envision articles in the S&D section addressing ongoing debates in economic history, economics, and more generally social science. These may relate to influential articles or books, or break new ground. Particular attention will be given to works dealing with Italian economic history, but contributions focused on other geographical areas are encouraged as well. Articles included in the S&D section need not follow a prescribed format with division into sections but should be short (typically not more than 5,000 words). In any case, they will have a fast and transparent review process.

We are excited to inaugurate this new space in the *RSE/IREH* with a lively discussion between two internationally renowned scholars: Leandro Prados de La Escosura and Jan Luiten van Zanden. The debate follows the publication of Prados de La Escosura's *Human Development and the Path to Freedom: 1870 to the Present* (Cambridge, CUP, 2022). This book analyses how human development has evolved in the last 150 years. More than 30 years after the launch of the Human Development Index (HDI) by the United Nations, the authors debate the critical issue of how, and how far, we should go beyond GDP in measuring wellbeing. Prados de la Escosura's book, following this research tradition, represents a further step in the evolution of HDI, by both suggesting some technical modifications to its original formulation and by including «freedom» among the components to be considered. The focus of the two contributions of the debate is on both on the usefulness of aggregating different dimensions into a single, composite

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index, and on the possibility of including other dimensions of well-being – beyond longevity, education and wealth – in measuring economic development in historical perspective. The debate is so rich and intense that we foresee other contributions on the same topic being published in coming issues of the *RSE/IREH*. We hope that the opening of this S&D section will make the *Rivista* ever more appealing to our readers.