

Report of Activities – Panel *Epidemics and Contagious Diseases: The Legacy of the Past*

Period: 2023–2025

Panel Chair: Tim Riswick (Radboud University)

Members: Ciara Breathnach (University of Limerick), Alain Gagnon (Université de Montréal), Raquel Pollero (Universidad de la República), Lucia Pozzi (Università degli Studi Di Sassari), Diego Ramiro Fariñas (Spanish National Research Council, CSIC), Alice Reid (University of Cambridge), Lone Simonsen (Roskilde University, Denmark), Kaspar Staub (University of Zurich)

Overview of Activities

Between 2023 and 2025, the Panel actively advanced research and debate on the history and contemporary relevance of epidemics and contagious diseases. A major achievement during this period was securing EU funding through the COST Action *The Great Leap* (CA22116) – an international network dedicated to understanding historical mortality transitions – which has significantly strengthened our research capacity and collaborations (see www.greatleap.eu).

The main events organised by the panel included:

- **IUSSP Panel Session at the European Society for Historical Demography Conference** – Radboud University, Nijmegen (Netherlands), 30 August–2 September 2023.
- **Virtual Workshop “Toward the Elimination of Cholera Epidemics: From the Past to Contemporary Societies”** – hosted online by Adam Mickiewicz University (Poznań), 19 April 2024.
- **Workshop “Tuberculosis: The White Death as a Social Disease”** – University of Sassari, Alghero (Italy), 26–28 September 2024.
- **International Seminar “From Influenza to COVID. Continuity and Discontinuity in the Factors of Inequality”** – Madrid (Spain), 14–15 November 2024.
- **Virtual Workshop “New ways of transcribing, visualizing, publishing, and providing access to data on epidemics and contagious diseases”** – hosted online by University of Zurich (Switzerland), 18 June 2025.
- **International Conference “How Did We Lift the Burden? Infectious Disease Mortality in the Western and Non-Western World (1800–Now)”** – Radboud University, Nijmegen (Netherlands), 28–29 August 2025,

In short, the Panel strengthened its profile through a mix of virtual workshops, in-person seminars, and a major international conference. Topics of both historical and contemporary significance, such as cholera, tuberculosis, influenza, and inequalities in COVID, were addressed from diverse methodological and interdisciplinary perspectives. The Nijmegen conference served as a fitting culmination of the period, bringing together researchers worldwide, marking the completion of a major research project, and reaffirming the continuing relevance of historical epidemiological research. In addition, several publications based on the workshops are underway (such as a volume on cholera and a special issue in tuberculosis).