A Good Job, Not Just Any Job
Defining and Measuring Employment Quality in Illinois

September 1, 2022

Dylan Bellisle, M.S.W., PhD
Alison Dickson, M.U.P.P.
Peter Fugiel, PhD
Lonnie Golden, PhD
Larissa Petrucci, PhD
Robert Bruno, PhD*
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Researchers at the University of Illinois Project for Middle Class Renewal (PMCR), in partnership with Illinois Future of Work Taskforce, have developed an indicator of the quality of jobs throughout the state - Employment Quality of Illinois (EQ-IL). The effort was spurred by a partnership with Illinois’ Future of Work Taskforce. This indicator is based on research comparing data collected from over 3500 employed in Illinois in late Fall 2021—an extension of a pre-Covid survey conducted in Fall 2019. PMCR’s model is informed by a parallel national initiative led by the Aspen Institute Economic Opportunities Program and the Families and Workers Fund, which is bringing together leaders from business, policy, labor, and workforce to align on and advance a common job quality definition.

EQ-IL creates a composite measure of employment quality with a wide range of variables that considers workers’ reported working conditions and its marginal contribution to explaining relevant well-being outcomes. Specifically, EQ-IL consists of objective and subjective measures of employment quality. Objective measures relate to dimensions like pay, benefits, and work schedule and other key job characteristics. Subjective measures relate to dimensions like work autonomy, supervisor fairness, co-worker support, and other key work conditions. Survey data collected was analyzed with an eye toward differences by occupation, industry, and demographic groups. Ultimately, PMCR researchers aspire for EQ-IL’s key findings, and corresponding public-facing online dashboard1, to be used in labor market policy and practice decision-making, as was identified as the first recommendation outlined in the Future of Work Taskforce’s May 2022 report (IL Future of Work Task Force, 2022).

EQ-IL is composed of seven (7) core dimensions, each with associated components. They include subjective and objective measures connected to job satisfaction, life satisfaction, worker health and well-being, and work-life balance, conflict, and integration (Figure E1).

Figure E1: Core Dimensions and Components of EQ-IL

1. Pay - Including: wage rates and raises; bonuses; and wage penalties or pay gaps for certain workers.
2. Employer Supports and Benefits Coverage - Including: provision and take up of health insurance; availability of pension and retirement plans; childcare support; education subsidies; and ease of commuting to job sites; access to paid sick leave for workers and their families; access to paid parental leave; caregiving support; and other paid time off.
3. Outlook - Including: job security; opportunities for advancement and promotion; skills development and on the job training; and mobility.
4. Hours and Scheduling -- Including: the match (or mis-match) between desired and actual work hours (e.g., underemployment); existence of mandatory overtime work; and unstable hours on a weekly basis; regular or irregular timing of work shifts; control over daily schedule and location of work; and predictability of upcoming schedules.
5. Social and Physical Working Environment - Including: interpersonal and social relationships or conflict with superiors and co-workers; and accommodations for disability and work-family reconciliation; health and safety; existence of physical risks and hazards; negative mental health outcomes and stress and fatigue; and mistreatment and abuse.
6. Job Content - Including: autonomy on the job; meaningfulness, usefulness, repetitiveness, and engagement at work; voice, input, representation, and due process in the workplace.
7. Contract Type – Including: Whether workers are unionized or not, and W-2 employees or self-employed, nontraditional, or nonstandard employment arrangements.
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

General Findings on Employment Quality

• Using the common scale of 0 to 10 (highest), the average worker assessment of their own employment quality in Illinois is 6.8.
• Over a quarter of workers rated their job quality as low or very low, 5 or below
• A quarter of workers regard their employment situation as very high quality, 9 or 10.
• Union members rate their employment quality almost a full point higher than workers without union representation.
• Poorer quality working conditions tend to be bundled with relatively poorer compensation, while more desirable working conditions are coupled with superior compensation and other positive work and job features.

Pay and Employment Quality

• On average higher-paid workers report better employment quality.
• The mean monthly pay was about $3,680.
• Union workers earn 16 percent higher monthly pay than non-union workers.
• Importantly, women and Black and Latinx workers are more likely to earn low monthly pay and less likely to earn high monthly pay and these pay differentials contribute to disparities in overall job and employment quality.

Work Hour Adequacy and Employment Quality

• Workers who report that they are under-employed or over-employed are less likely to report their employment quality as above average, relative to those whose actual weekly work hours matched their preferred hours. Only 58 percent of part-time under-employed workers and 55 percent of full-time over-employed workers rate their employment quality as above average, compared to about 70 percent of part-time and full-time workers.
• Illustrating the connection between under-employment, pay and employment quality, only 42 percent of part-time workers who earn less than $2,000 per month rate their employment quality as above average.
• 63 percent of workers who have fairly stable work hours from week to week rate their employment quality above average, while only 55 percent of those who experience extreme instability in their work hours rate their employment quality above average.
• Black and Latinx workers are less likely to experience stable work hours compared to White and Asian workers, which contributes to disparities in job and employment quality.
• Extreme instability in work hours is negatively impactful particularly on parents’ employment quality. Roughly 42 percent of working parents with extreme instability say it is very or extremely difficult to coordinate their work schedules with childcare or other caregiving arrangements.
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Job Security, Future Outlook and Employment Quality

- Almost one third of surveyed workers said that it was extremely or very likely that they would lose their job in the next 12 months. Just under half (48 percent) of these insecure workers are moderately or very satisfied with their job. By contrast, 70 percent of more secure workers are moderately or very satisfied with their job.
- The percentage of workers who report their job as very or extremely secure and rate their employment quality above average is nearly twice that of workers with less secure jobs.
- Job security also appears to be related to monthly pay, with a larger percentage of higher-paid workers (69 percent) reporting their job is very or extremely secure compared to lower-paid workers (53 percent).
- Insecurity goes along with other aspects of poor job quality. Workers with lower pay, less paid time off, and poor health or safety conditions are more likely to report job insecurity and intention to turnover.
- Workers in regular, W-2 employment are more likely to see a future for themselves in their job. Fewer than 41 percent of regular employees say they are very likely to lose or leave their job in the next 12 months, compared with 61 percent of independent contractors and temporary employees.
- A larger percentage of workers covered by a union contract (77 percent) report that their job is very or extremely secure compared to those not covered by a union contract. Workers covered by union contracts also tend to enjoy other positive job components (e.g., higher wages, better benefits) and this helps to explain their overall better employment quality.
- The increase in union members’ employment quality in their past 5 years of employment is twice as large as those not in unions.

Paid-Time Off and Employment Quality

- Two in three workers in Illinois have access to paid time off at their main job, but over 40 percent of single parents have no paid leave.
- Workers who experience poor safety and health conditions or mistreatment at work are also less likely to have paid leave. These workers are at greater risk of injury or illness, yet they may not be able to take a single day off of work without losing income.
- Workers who rate their employment quality above average have nearly a week and a half more in paid time off.

Disparities in Employment Quality by Industry Types

- The greatest occupation disparity in employment quality is between managerial and professional jobs, where there is over 70 percent who rate their employment quality as 7 or above, and services jobs, where barely over 50 percent do so.
- The greater disparity by industry type was in hospitality and services, where only about 50 percent rate their employment at 7 or above while in business/technology and public administration/education had almost 70 percent rating it 7 or above.
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Social and Physical Working Environment and Employment Quality

- Black and Latinx workers report worse occupational health and safety conditions than White workers in Illinois.
- About 74 percent of workers said their supervisor treats them moderately or very fairly and 70 percent of these workers rate their employment situation above average (7 or higher on a scale of 0-10).
- Among workers who say they are treated slightly or less fairly by their supervisor, only 40 percent give their employment situation an above average rating.
- Nearly 63 percent of workers report a lot or a great deal of coworker support. These workers are three times as likely as workers who feel less supported to rate their employment situation very highly.
- Coworker support is also strongly correlated with supervisor treatment, suggesting that supervisors play a role in fostering positive or negative social dynamics within work groups.
- Among workers who report at least moderately fair supervisor treatment and a lot of coworker support, 20 percent give their employment situation the highest possible rating (10 out of 10). By contrast, among workers who report unfair treatment or less support, only 4 percent rate their employment quality as highly.
- Disparities by race, ethnicity and gender in workers' social environments are as great if not greater than disparities in their health and safety conditions at work. While 64 percent of White, non-Latinx workers report a lot of coworker support, only 53 percent of Latinx workers report this level of coworker support.
- Wider disparities exist by gender, with 64 percent of men but only 38 percent of non-binary workers reporting a lot of coworker support.
- Marginalized workers experience lower employment quality not only as a function of the kind of jobs they hold but also how they are treated by supervisors and coworkers.

Modeling Employment Quality: Which Components Matter Most for Employment Quality?

- Job content, Outlook, and Social and Physical work environment are the Big Three dimensions of employment quality.
- Workers who find their jobs more meaningful and secure give substantially higher ratings of their employment situation on average than workers with otherwise comparable jobs that they find less meaningful or secure.
- Autonomy, or how much freedom workers have to decide how to do their work, is the next strongest predictor of employment quality.
- Promotion opportunities, the likelihood that a worker feels they will be promoted in the future, also predicts higher self-rated employment quality.
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Recommendations

- The state should formally adopt EQ-IL’s seven components as a statewide job quality measurement and track this annually.
- Public bodies should allocate tax dollars to private employers based on the firms creating and/or upgrading the quality of their jobs.
- The state should require most employers to collect and submit data to the state on these job quality metrics.
- The state should produce annual reports on the trends in these metrics and associated outcomes for workers and labor markets.
- The state should propose and pass legislation and reforms that promote each of the seven dimensions of job quality their impactful components.
# Table of Contents

I. Introduction .................................................................................................................. 9

II. The Illinois Future of Work Taskforce ................................................................. 11

III. Prior Research on Measuring Employment Quality ...................................... 12

IV. EQ-IL: 7 Dimensions of Employment Quality and Their Components ........ 14

V. Survey Characteristics ............................................................................................ 15

VI. Findings .................................................................................................................... 16

   1. The Relationship between Various Dimensions of Jobs, their Components, and Self-rated Employment Quality (EQ) .................................................. 16

   2. Putting the Pieces Together: Modeling Employment Quality ...................... 28

VII. Future Directions .................................................................................................. 31

   *Impacts for Workforce Development Funding and Job Quality*
   *Overall Impact on Policy Deliberation in Illinois*

VIII. Recommendations ............................................................................................... 32

IX. Conclusion ................................................................................................................. 33

References ..................................................................................................................... 34

Appendix A ..................................................................................................................... 43

Appendix B ..................................................................................................................... 46

Endnotes ......................................................................................................................... 50
A Good Job, Not Just Any Job

Defining and Measuring Employment Quality in Illinois

About the Authors

Dylan Bellisle, M.S.W., PhD is a Postdoctoral Research Fellow with the Project for Middle Class Renewal at the School of Labor and Employment Relations at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign. His research focuses on how public policy shapes family economic well-being and the financial coping and social mobility strategies of low-income families. His current research examines individual and family-level experiences with the Earned Income Tax Credit and Child Tax Credit, the possible misalignments between EITC eligibility and family life, and the ways in which families establish and maintain forms of social support expressed through mutual care. He completed his Ph.D. in Social Work, Policy, and Practice at the University of Chicago. Prior to his doctoral studies, Dylan served as a program manager at the Center for Economic Progress on a demonstration project of a periodic payment of the Earned Income Tax Credit in collaboration with researchers at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign. Dylan has past professional experience as a social service caseworker, a union organizer, and a Peace Corps volunteer.

Alison Dickson, M.U.P.P. is a Senior Instructor in the School of Labor and Employment Relations at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign. She has a Masters’ in Urban Planning and Policy from the University of Illinois at Chicago and a Bachelors’ degree in International Relations and Economic Development from George Washington University and is currently pursuing her Ph.D. in Urban Planning and Policy from the University of Illinois at Chicago. Dickson directs and teaches for the Worker Rights Project, a LEP initiative that provides bilingual (Spanish-English) workers’ rights training for immigrant and other low-wage workers. In addition to her teaching, she conducts applied and scholarly research that focuses on workers, workplaces, and economic devolvement.

Peter Fugiel, PhD is a Postdoctoral Research Associate with the Project for Middle Class Renewal. His research focuses on schedule arrangements in relation to work-life conflict, economic governance, and labor market inequality. He has a Ph.D. in sociology from the University of Chicago, where he taught courses in social policy and theory. He was recently awarded a two-year fellowship by the National Science Foundation for a book project on the making of scheduling standards. He will pursue this project as a postdoc at the Rutgers School of Management and Labor Relations.

Lonnie Golden, PhD is a Professor of Economics and Labor & Employment Relations at Penn State University, Abington College. He was a senior research analyst, affiliated with the Project for Middle Class Renewal, as well as with the Economic Policy Institute (DC), International Labor Organization (Geneva), and the Work-Family Research Network. His research analyzes trends, patterns, determinants and consequences of hours of work, work schedules and non-standard employment-- across labor markets, organizations and individuals. His focus is on underemployment and overemployment, overtime and part-time work, work scheduling, labor flexibility, overwork, worker health, earnings gaps, happiness, work-family time and time -use; and policies such as the Fair Labor Standards Act, Fair Workweek and work-sharing. He has published two books and many articles in leading academic journals such as Industrial Relations, Monthly Labor Review, and Journal of Marriage and Family. He lead-authored PMCR reports: Scheduling Stability for More or Fewer Workers?; Scheduling Stability: The Landscape of Work Schedules and Potential Gains from Fairer Workweeks in Illinois and Chicago; Still Only Part Way Home: Part-Time Work and Underemployment in Illinois and Its Region; A Happiness and Objective Well-Being Index (How-Is-IL) for Living and Working in The State of Illinois.

Larissa Petrucci, PhD is a labor sociologist with expertise in flexible and precarious work, workplace equity and inclusion, collective organizing, and public policy. She earned her Ph.D. in Sociology at the University of Oregon, where she also worked as a researcher at the Labor Education and Research Center. She has published research on unpredictable scheduling practices and Fair Workweek legislation in Oregon, teachers’ gendered care work in the context of environmental disaster, experiences of low-wage essential workers during COVID-19, and the experiences of women and Black, Indigenous, and people of color in male-dominated industries. Larissa also has experience with labor unions, serving on the Bargaining Team and as the Vice President of Political Education in her graduate employee union.
About the Authors

Robert Bruno, PhD is Professor and Director, Labor Education Program at the University of Illinois – Urbana Champaign’s School of Labor and Employment Relations. His research focuses broadly on working-class and union studies issues. He is the author of three books, Reforming the Chicago Teamsters: The Local 705 Story, Steelworker Alley: How Class Works in Youngstown and Justified by Work: Identity and the Meaning of Faith in Chicago’s Working-Class Churches. He has also published articles in such journals as Workplace Democracy, Labor Studies Journal, Labor History, Advances in Industrial and Labor Relations, Working USA and the Journal of Labor Research.

Bruno is the co-author and presenter of a labor play, “Illinois Labor Works,” and is a recipient of an Illinois Humanities Council grant. He is co-editor of Labor Studies Journal. He has taught numerous industrial relation courses to trade union members working in public, private, and professional occupations. Bruno hosts a cable show called Illinois Labor Works on a Chicago Public Access channel and is a frequent commentator on labor relations for both regional and national media. He is a member of the University Association of Labor Educators, the Labor and Employment Relations Association (LERA), as well as an executive board member of the Chicago Chapter of LERA, and is co-chair of the Chicago Consortium for Working Class Studies.

About the Project for Middle Class Renewal

The Project for Middle Class Renewal’s mission is to investigate the working conditions of workers in today’s economy and elevate public discourse on issues affecting workers with research, analysis and education in order to develop and propose public policies that will reduce poverty, provide forms of representation to all workers, prevent gender, race, and LGBTQ+ discrimination, create more stable forms of employment, and promote middle-class paying jobs. Each year, the Project publishes critical research studies and holds education forums on contemporary public policies and practices impacting labor and workplace issues. If you would like to partner with the Labor Education Program in supporting the work of the Project or have questions about the Project please contact Robert Bruno, Director of the Labor Education Program, at (312) 996-2491.

*Authors are listed alphabetically and do not reflect their relative contributions to the report. Robert Bruno is the Director of PMCR and served largely as the report’s editor.
I. INTRODUCTION

Through the pandemic and subsequent recovery the labor market has finally focused attention not only on the future of work but specifically on the quality and not just quantity of jobs being created. Indeed, the “future of work” depends on both the prevalence of “good” or “bad” jobs and “what makes a job good or bad.” This report focuses less on the number of “bad” or “good” jobs—important as that is—and more on the specific features of jobs that are regarded as bad, good, or somewhere in between by workers themselves. The Covid-19 pandemic has further revealed the importance of attending to a number of characteristics of jobs to improve workers’ conditions and experiences. The subsequent “great resignation” that followed in the robust recovery appears to be somewhat about quitting, burnout or labor force withdrawal, but even more about worker mobility to find jobs that have either improved quality of working conditions or conditions that better matched their preferences than their existing jobs.

Nevertheless, low quality jobs and job features persist. The 21st century labor market is still too characterized by a dismantling of the traditional employer-employee relationship, increased use of outsourcing and contingent labor, not to mention a coordinated resistance to organized labor, enforcement of established workers’ rights by government and compliance with such standards (Weil, 2014; Bernhardt et al., 2009). A preponderance of American jobs have experienced a longstanding “stagnation or decline in real (inflation-adjusted) income and wage levels, sharply rising overall wage inequality, and a high and rising incidence of low pay” (Howell and Kalleberg, 2019). Meanwhile, accessing employment-associated benefits such as paid leave and affordable healthcare and protection from “wage theft” is diminishing. Moreover, just-in-time work hours and scheduling has expanded (Henly et al, 2021; Harknett, Schneider & Irwin, 2021; Petrucci, et al 2021; Golden and Dickson, 2019). The Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA) is no longer as well-equipped for maintaining a floor as originally intended, not only for pay and employee benefits, but for work hours and schedules that are adequate, stable, predictable, and responsive to the needs of worker to balance work and nonwork obligations. The intensified pursuit of labor cost reduction, facilitated by technology, has led to more work becoming more variable or last minute, in certain sectors (Henly and Lambert, 2014; Golden 2015). This sparked a grassroots response that has led to nascent policy innovations which aim to create new minimum standards for the employment relationship, to curb associated risks to aspects of workers’ well-being (Golden, Dickson, and Bruno, 2019; Harknett and Schneider, 2021).

The burgeoning of low-quality employment both within existing jobs and within newly created jobs—across all countries, including the US, is occurring simultaneously with an upskilling of many other jobs. One survey concluded that less than half the US workforce is in “good jobs” (Alpert et al., 2019). Thus, more academic researchers as well as institutions, organizations, and policymakers, are expanding their scope of review beyond just the quantity of jobs created or even the quantity of “good” or “bad/lousy” jobs created and focusing more on job quality across the board. Attention is shifting to exploring the specific job features associated with regarding employment as being low- or high-quality.

The importance of employment quality was clearly illuminated for many only by the pandemic labor market conditions during the 2020-2021, when frontline and essential workers were lauded as “heroes” by their employers and the public, yet faced on-going occupational health and safety hazards, unpredictable work schedules and either inadequate or excessive working hours. Even more so, the labor market recovery after the shutdowns shined a spotlight on the degraded conditions of work. Rising quit rates during
I. Introduction

the “great resignation” of 2021-2022 focused employer attention on retention across a range of jobs, including lower-paid jobs, as workers sought either higher quality jobs or other uses of their time. Thus, it is crucial that attention become more focused now on the contributing factors to the quality of employment, workplaces, and jobs, to better understand and predict the “future of work” both in Illinois and the US. Given the on-going “changing nature of work,” the time is right to develop an indicator of employment quality in Illinois – or an Employment Quality (EQ-IL).

Researchers, institutions, employers, and policymakers are increasingly interested in identifying, measuring, tracking and ultimately, improving what contributes to the quality of jobs. One key challenge is that existing labor standards that might promote more “decent work” (ILO, 2013) can only go so far to prevent further job precarity or promote more positive outcomes such as job satisfaction, income security or work-life balance. Another key challenge is that there is no one standard definition of job quality within the research literature or among practitioners, and indices vary in the number and complexity of analyzed dimensions and variables. Definitions of job quality still focus narrowly on the level of wages and salaries, benefits and skill levels, sometimes including security, safety, or union representation. A further challenge is that the data on these job aspects are difficult to find under one roof. Moreover, there are additional characteristics of work that clearly affect workers’ well-being and behavior e.g., intangible conditions such as the flexibility of when and where one works, social interactions at work with supervisors, coworkers and customers, voice, and input into and meaningfulness of work, perceived equity, treatment and dignity, and prospects for mobility.

Finally, there is a need, beyond the reach of available data, to better understand the impact of economic and labor market disruptions and their association with a wide array of outcomes -- income and beyond, which contribute to peoples’ subjective well-being. Workforce development practitioners, industry leaders, worker rights advocates, public policy makers, and researchers concerned with the changing nature of work, all share the need for having a more comprehensive perspective, of the overall quality of employment, to amend the overall employment quantity picture (see Appendix A). From this we could eventually build a composite index of employment quality, from individual workplaces to industries to statewide and national labor markets. Such a tool would be valuable to worker advocates, conscientious employers, policy makers and practitioners in the fields of job training and adult education, to continue developing labor protections, supportive economic policies, and practical advice for Illinois workers.
II. The Illinois Future of Work Taskforce

In May 2022, the Illinois Future of Work Taskforce issued a report of their findings and recommendations after eight months of analysis and discussion amongst task force members focused on the complex challenges and opportunities facing Illinois firms and workers. This bipartisan and diverse set of stakeholders comprising the taskforce convened in response to passage of Public Act 102-0407, and their report was presented to the Illinois General Assembly. The Illinois Future of Work Task Force “engaged stakeholders across a diverse range of communities, including employers, workers and their unions and trade organizations, education and training institutions, entrepreneurs, corporations, technology developers and platforms, nonprofit organizations, government at all levels, and others to find common ground solutions,” and was “charged with presenting [our] findings and recommendations of how the state can best produce a broad-based post pandemic recovery, confront the worsening crisis of poverty and create high-quality jobs for all” (IL Future of Work Task Force, 2022, iii). The creation of EQ-IL directly responds to the first priority recommendation outlined by taskforce members in relation to job quality, benefits, and labor standards (Figure 1). It also directly or indirectly supports the other taskforce recommendations related to job quality.

Figure 1: Job Quality, Benefits, and Labor Standards (IL Future of Work Task Force, 2022)

1. Adopt a statewide job quality measurement.
2. Use a job quality measurement mechanism to award state funding.
3. Extend benefits to more people through models that:
   a. are not tied to any particular job
   b. support contributions from multiple employers or clients
   c. cover any worker, including independent contractors and other non-traditional workers.
4. Create paid leave benefit programs to improve economic security for workers when they need to care for themselves and their families.
5. Encourage employers to expand the scope of benefits to include as much employee support as possible, including defraying costs such as transportation.
6. Fund, pilot, and evaluate co-enforcement strategies in sectors with high instances of violations.
7. Consider enacting retaliation protections and stronger penalties for misclassifying employees.
III. Prior Research on Measuring Employment Quality

The research literature on job quality has been recently growing in size and scope. The attempts to gauge the quality of jobs range from a simple collection of just a small handful of indicators from a single case study or readily available survey data, to more complex computations based on a more vast collection of overall labor force data or primary data generated from nationally representative surveys. Studies range from one-off reports for popular audiences to more technical analyses published in academic journals.

Most studies consider multiple “dimensions” of a job, each with various “components.” A few studies attempt to generate an overall index of the quality of employment, for a micro level such as an industry or macro such as a region or whole country. Thus, job quality can also be analyzed from a macro- or micro-perspective. While macro-perspectives deal with the “issue of whether or not a job meets a worker’s needs against the backdrop of the labour market,” micro-perspectives “measure job quality irrespective of workers’ personal characteristics and the labour market” (Eurofound, 2012). Measures of job quality fall into two main categories, objective indicators and subjective indicators (Munoz de Bustillo et al., 2011).

**OBJECTIVE INDICATORS** are the observable working conditions that are widely considered to contribute negatively or positively to the quality of a job, such as level of pay, benefit coverage, health and safety risks, the type of employment contract, employee-friendly work schedules etc. For example, an objective approach for measuring job and employee characteristics assesses types of employment contracts.

**SUBJECTIVE INDICATORS** are the self-perceptions of the quality of one’s job, or some aspect of it-- the psycho-social and environmental factors that have been shown to determine subjective well-being at work (Santero-Sanchez et al., 2015), such as its security/precarity, meaningfulness, workplace supports, autonomy and say/input, interpersonal relationships, fairness, mistreatment, etc.).

Measurement of job and employment quality is one of the persistent challenges. For one, most attempts are bounded or limited in scope by which characteristics are queried about in a survey, how those questions are asked and interpreted and how each contributes to a given worker well-being outcome of interest. Second, while dimensions of job quality clearly go beyond its pay, the features of jobs are quite often bundled together. For example, low-paid workers are more likely to face a variety of other poor quality job dimensions, while workers in highly paid jobs experience better overall job quality. Meanwhile, it is possible that others may face a trade-off, sacrificing precarity, (in)security, (in)flexibility for better benefit coverage for pay. Third, the extent to which a given job characteristic is associated with better or poorer job quality depends on the chosen indicator of worker well-being. The outcome measure may be a singular focus, such as job satisfaction, mental or general health, happiness or emotions at work, or intention to quit or stay [See APPENDIX B for discussion of outcomes associated with job quality].
III. Prior Research on Measuring Employment Quality

Conceptions and Components of Job Quality: Three Waves of Research

Conceptualizing job quality and its components has taken place in three waves (See APPENDIX B, for a full review of the evolution of this research literature). The first-generation analysis of job quality attempted to measure job quality with surveys that featured subjective measures (Seashore, 1974; Staines and Quinn, 1979; Yoshida and Torihara, 1977). These types of approaches measured workers’ evaluations as well as aspirations and expectations, rather than specific job traits.

The second wave was spearheaded by the International Labour Organization (ILO), in 1999, with their introduction of the concept of decent work (Ghai, 2003; Anker, 2003) and reiterated by the European Commission (EC, 2001). Its breadth included indicators of equity, dignity, security and opportunity with an eye toward social justice, such as including child labor (Arranz et al., 2017; Bescond et al., 2003). This spurred attempts to more comprehensively specify the many dimensions of decent work indicators (Bonnet et al., 2003; ILO, 2013).

In the last 10 years, several different fields have been pursuing more refined definitions and measurement of job or employment quality (Burchell et al 2014; Budd and Spencer 2015; Pereira, 2019). It has further distinguished employment quality and work quality (Munoz de Bustillo et al., 2011). Each approach features both commonalities and differentiation as well (Cascales-Mira, 2021).

Recent efforts in the US, attempt to summarize job quality with six key elements and subcomponent indicators within each (Loprest, Katz, and Shakespere, 2021; Rothwell and Crabtree, 2019). A “job quality index” (JQI) has been introduced, simply adding national data regarding compensation associated with the net jobs added to the economy (Alpert et al, 2019; Fee, 2022). These help to inform our more comprehensive effort to combining a wide range of both objective and subjective indicators to define and measure the level of job, work and employment quality.
IV. EQ-IL: 7 Dimensions of Employment Quality & Their Components

Methodology and a Taxonomy

The scope of our methodology for measuring and assessing employment quality and working conditions encompasses and expands on attempts outlined in this report’s previous section. We sorted the various components of jobs and working conditions into 7 dimensions, starting with compensation and included objective and subjective measures of work and job conditions. Each dimension has various components that we gather in our survey.

Figure 2: Core Dimensions and Components of EQ-IL

1. **Pay** - Including: wage rates and raises; bonuses; and wage penalties or pay gaps for certain workers.
2. **Employer Supports and Benefits Coverage** - Including: provision and take up of health insurance; availability of pension and retirement plans; childcare support; education subsidies; and ease of commuting to job sites; access to paid sick leave for workers and their families; access to paid parental leave; caregiving support; and other paid time off.
3. **Outlook** - Including: job security; opportunities for advancement and prospects for promotion; skills development and on the job training; and mobility.
4. **Hours and Scheduling** - Including: the match (or mis-match) between desired and actual work hours (e.g., underemployment); existence of mandatory overtime work; and unstable hours on a weekly basis; regular or irregular timing of work shifts; control over daily schedule and location of work; and predictability of upcoming schedules.
5. **Social and Physical Working Environment** - Including: interpersonal and social relationships or conflict with superiors and co-workers; and accommodations for disability and work-family reconciliation; health and safety, including existence of physical risks and hazards; negative mental health outcomes and stress and fatigue; and mistreatment and abuse.
6. **Job content** - Including: autonomy on the job; meaningfulness, usefulness, repetitiveness, and engagement at work; voice, input, representation, and due process in the workplace.
7. **Contract type** - Including: Whether workers are unionized or not, and W-2 employees or self-employed, nontraditional, or nonstandard employment arrangements.
PMCR researchers fielded a survey between October to December 2021, using a Qualtrics online survey platform. The survey included individuals who had been employed in Illinois sometime during the previous 4 weeks and were age 18 and older. After cleaning the data, we had a usable sample of about 3,500 workers. The sample was representative across various demographics, regions and industries in Illinois. Additionally, we appropriately adjusted the sample to the Illinois labor force by applying weights. As a state, Illinois is one of the most representative states in the US along these characteristics, therefore we believe our findings may also help inform national evaluations of employment quality and related questions. Our survey included questions that encompassed roughly 80 working and job conditions. Also included were a wide range of demographic, family and household characteristics. Finally, the survey contained several well-being outcomes that might be associated with working—one’s satisfaction with their job, pay, benefits, work scheduling and work-life balance, happiness during their most recent work day, and both their current and past prior assessment of the quality of their employment.

To analyze current employment quality, we specifically used a question regarding one’s overall employment situation, with the following: “On which step of the ladder, from 0 to 10, would you say you personally feel your employment situation is now?” We refer to this herein as “employment quality” (EQ). Table 1 provides sample level identifiers of how respondents answered the employment quality question.

### Table 1. Self-rated Employment Quality

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Employment quality rating (0-10)</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Low (0-5)</td>
<td>26.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Med (6-8)</td>
<td>48.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High (9-10)</td>
<td>25.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Below average (0-6)</td>
<td>38.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Above average (7-10)</td>
<td>61.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mean</td>
<td>6.79</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
I. The Relationship between Various Dimensions of Jobs, their Components, and Self-rated Employment Quality (EQ)

Overall, in Illinois, almost four in ten employed rated their current employment situation as lower than 7 of a possible 10. Over a quarter rated it as low or very low, as only 5 or below out of 10. A quarter of workers regard their employment situation as very high quality, as a 9 or 10. The average across all those employed in Illinois is 6.8 out of a possible 10. Men are slightly higher than women, 6.9 vs. 6.7. W-2 payroll employees (6.9) exhibit higher EQ than non-employees (6.1, e.g., contractors/temps) but slightly lower than those self-employed (7.1).

To further analyze employment quality, we explored both the levels and distributional disparities in exposure to low- and high-quality components of our 7 dimensions of job quality and how these related to self-rated employment quality. Specifically, we explored disparities in self-rated employment quality, by workers’ and their job’s characteristics -- monthly pay, adequacy and stability of work hours, job security, paid-time off and working environment. We also highlight important differences and disparities in access to these components of job quality by characteristics like gender, race, monthly pay, industry, and age. Unsurprisingly, we find that poorer quality working conditions tend to be bundled with relatively poorer compensation, while more desirable working conditions are coupled with superior compensation and other positive work and job features.

To further explore the connection between the various job dimensions and employment quality, we created and tested a multi-dimensional model of employment quality to observe which are the dominant components that contribute most to workers’ EQ ratings and reveal what workers themselves consider to be features of a high employment quality. We close with recommendations that would provide both greater access (e.g., on ramps) to higher quality jobs and to raise the standards across all jobs, especially those considered lower quality jobs.

Pay and Employment Quality

Monthly and annual reports on mean and median wages and salaries are one of the most common indicators of job quality. At the time of the survey in November 2021, 29 percent of Illinois workers paid by the hour were earning less than $15 per hour. Most of these low-wage workers (65 percent) work outside of Chicago, where the minimum wage is lower. Still, nearly one in five hourly workers in Chicago were paid less than $15 per hour. Unions continue to deliver higher pay to workers in Illinois. On average, union workers report 16 percent higher monthly pay than non-union workers in this study. Workers making less than $15 per hour are most concentrated in the restaurant (63 percent), entertainment (55 percent), and retail (45 percent) industries. These industries employ a larger share of women and workers of color than higher-wage industries, such as business and technical services, contributing to gender and racial wage gaps.

We now consider monthly pay as this more closely aligns with the income that individuals and families bring in on a regular basis. Among our sample, the mean monthly pay was about $3,680. To provide a benchmark for examining employment quality, we examined the relationship between monthly pay and self-reported employment quality.
As seen in Table 2, there is a relationship between monthly pay and self-reported employment quality. Less than half (47 percent) of workers earning under $2,000 monthly (or less than $12.50 an hour at 40 hours a week) rate their employment quality at 7 or above or above average. This compares to about three-quarters (76 percent) of workers earning above $4,000 monthly (or more than $25 an hour at 40 hours a week). Therefore, workers’ take-home pay is closely related to self-reported employment quality, and on average higher-paid workers report better employment quality. Importantly, women and Black and Latinx workers are more likely to earn low monthly pay and less likely to earn high monthly pay and these pay differentials contribute to disparities in overall job and employment quality (Tables 3 and 4).

Similarly, there is a clear association between a household’s annual income and the quality of their employment situation. EQ climbs along with income.

Table 5 shows that the overall mean employment quality rating of 6.8 holds for household incomes near the median, but six-figure income households are in significantly higher quality jobs than those reporting their annual incomes are less than $30,000 per year. Moreover, the data show self-reported improvements in one’s own employment quality, over the last five years, are far larger among those in higher income brackets than in the lowest income category.
Employment quality differences can also be found at the industry level (see SPOTLIGHT below). Relatively low EQ ratings occur in hospitality, other services, and distribution (including retail) industries, while the relatively highest are in education/public administration and business and technology industries. Occupations also matter. The greatest disparity is between managerial and professional jobs, where there is over 70 percent who rate their EQ as 7 or above, and services jobs, where barely over 50 percent do so.

**Work Hour and Scheduling Adequacy and Employment Quality**

A growing body of research has shown the rise and importance of underemployment (or involuntary part-time employment) and work hour volatility (or work hours varying week to week), for both worker and household income and general well-being together, these two components of job quality can cause workers to not earn enough and/or have unstable earnings that then diminish their ability to meet their basic needs and work towards economic mobility. Industries with lower typical weekly hours (i.e. more part-time work), also have more instability from week to week. This combination of underemployment and instability is most acute in arts and recreation and personal services such as house cleaning and hair salons.
VI. FINDINGS

Furthermore, a large body of literature has illustrated the deleterious effects of “over-employment”, especially when it is due to mandatory overtime. Therefore, we examined how these components of job quality relate to self-reported employment quality.

First, we find that about 63 percent of all part-time workers are underemployed and only 29 percent are satisfied with the number of work hours they have. Among full-time workers, we find that just about 8 percent are over-employed (or want less hours) and about 44 percent are satisfied with the number of hours they work.

As expected, we find that workers who report that they are under-employed or over-employed are less likely to report their employment quality as above average. About 70 percent of part-time and full-time workers who are satisfied with their hours rate their employment quality as above average, compared to only 58 percent of part-time under-employed workers and 55 percent of full-time over-employed workers. Furthermore, illustrating the connection between under-employment, pay and employment quality, only 42 percent of part-time workers who earn less than $2,000 per month rate their employment quality as above average (Table 6).

### Table 6. Under and Over-Employment by Percentage Above Average Employment Quality

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Employment Status and Work Hour Preferences</th>
<th>% Above Average Employment Quality</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Part-time Under-employed</td>
<td>58%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Part-time Under-employed, Monthly Pay under $2,000</td>
<td>42%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Part-time Satisfied with Hours</td>
<td>70%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Full-time Satisfied with Hours</td>
<td>69%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Full-time Over-employed</td>
<td>55%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Importantly, when workers can’t get enough hours, they are more likely to turn to safety net programs to make ends meet. Nearly one-third (31 percent) of part-time workers experiencing extreme underemployment receive SNAP food benefits, compared to 12 percent of those working their preferred number of hours. Furthermore, we also find that parents living with children under 18 are more likely to experience unstable hours and related hardships.

Work hour volatility is also related to employment quality. For example, Table 7 shows that about 63 percent of workers who have fairly stable work hours from week to week rate their employment quality above average, while only 55 percent of those who experience extreme instability in their work hours rate their employment quality above average. We define “extreme instability” as work hours that vary by 50 percent or more in the past four weeks.
VI. FINDINGS

Table 7. Work Hour Stability by Percentage Above Employment Quality

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Hours Volatility</th>
<th>% Above Average</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Stable Hours</td>
<td>63%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Extreme Instability</td>
<td>55%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Workers with extremely unstable hours are more likely to say the demands of their job interfere with their life outside of work (38 percent), compared with workers who either have some input into their schedule or relatively stable hours (21 percent).

Importantly, Table 8 shows that Black and Latinx workers are less likely to experience stable work hours compared to White and Asian workers, which contributes to disparities in job and employment quality. Furthermore, we find that extreme instability in work hours is particularly challenging for parents. Roughly 42 percent of working parents with extreme instability say it is very or extremely difficult to coordinate their work schedules with childcare or other caregiving arrangements.

Table 8. Work Hour Stability by Race/Ethnicity

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Hours Volatility</th>
<th>Asian</th>
<th>Black</th>
<th>Hispanic/Latinx</th>
<th>White</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Stable Hours</td>
<td>52%</td>
<td>41%</td>
<td>39%</td>
<td>47%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Extreme Instability</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>31%</td>
<td>37%</td>
<td>26%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In addition to work hours instability, workers can experience reductions in their work hours. About one in six workers in Illinois (17 percent) report a substantial reduction of hours (by 15 percent or more of their typical weekly hours) in at least one of the past four weeks. Workers who experience these reductions are more likely to be paid by the hour and underemployed. Importantly, these reductions in hours fall disproportionately on young Black and Latinx workers (see Figure 3). For example, nearly 41 percent of Black
VI. FINDINGS

workers 18-24 years old report a substantial cut in hours, compared with 26 percent of White workers in the same age group. Workers who experience substantial cuts in hours also report lower job security and a higher likelihood of quitting.

**Outlook/Job Security and Employment Quality**

Among factors that influence a worker’s job outlook, none is more critical than a sense of job security. Job security is vital for attracting and retaining workers. Workers’ prospects for keeping and advancing in their jobs strongly relates to their self-rated employment quality. Conversely, we find that insecure jobs, or jobs that workers believe they will lose in the near future, are likely to bring other forms of insecurity (e.g., financial and hours reductions), less paid time-off, and limited training and promotion opportunities. Almost one third of surveyed workers said that it was extremely or very likely that they would lose their job in the next 12 months. Just under half (48 percent) of these insecure workers are moderately or very satisfied with their job. By contrast, 70 percent of more secure workers are moderately or very satisfied with their job.

Furthermore, we find that 68 percent of workers who report that it is extremely or very likely they will lose their jobs soon are also extremely or very likely to quit or retire from their job soon. Therefore, it is unsurprising that job security is a strong predictor of employment quality.

Indeed, we find that the percentage of workers who report their job as very or extremely secure and rate their employment quality above average is nearly twice that of workers with less secure jobs (see Table 9). Importantly, job security also appears to be related to monthly pay, with a larger percentage of higher-paid workers (69 percent) reporting their job is very or extremely secure compared to lower-paid workers (53 percent), as seen in Table 10.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Job Security</th>
<th>% Above Average</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Less Secure</td>
<td>39%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Very or Extremely Secure</td>
<td>75%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Job Security</th>
<th>Less than $2,000</th>
<th>Above $4,000</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Very or Extremely</td>
<td>53%</td>
<td>69%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Insecurity goes along with other aspects of poor job quality. Workers with lower pay, less paid time off, and poor health or safety conditions are more likely to report job insecurity and intention to turnover. Workers in regular, W-2 employment are more likely to see a future for themselves in their job. Fewer than 41 per-
VI. FINDINGS

A Good Job, Not Just Any Job

Defining and Measuring Employment Quality in Illinois

VI. Findings

Center of regular employees say they are very likely to lose or leave their job in the next 12 months, compared with 61 percent of independent contractors and temporary employees.

Lastly, we find that a larger percentage of workers covered by a union contract (77 percent) report that their job is very or extremely secure compared to those not covered by a union contract (see Table 11). Workers covered by union contracts also tend to enjoy other positive job components (e.g., higher wages, better benefits) and this helps to explain their overall better employment quality.

Table 11. Job Security by Union Contract

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Job Security</th>
<th>Union Contract</th>
<th>No Union</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Very or Extremely Secure</td>
<td>77%</td>
<td>59%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics; Bureau of National Affairs

Paid-Time Off and Employment Quality

Among the employment benefits we assessed, paid time off (PTO) is an important component of job quality as it allows workers to take time off to take care of their and their family member’s health needs, have leisure time to promote general well-being, and attend to other needs that promote work-life balance. Overall, we find that about two in three workers in Illinois have access to paid-time off at their main job, but over 40 percent of single parents have no paid leave (Figure 4). Workers who experience poor safety and health conditions or mistreatment at work are also less likely to have paid leave. These workers are at greater risk of injury or illness, yet they may not be able to take a single day off work without losing income.

The availability of paid time-off is related to employment quality. We find a considerable gap in the number of paid days-off workers have available to them among those who rate their employment quality below
average compared to above average. Indeed, there is over a 7-day difference between workers who rate their employment quality below average compared to above average. This translates to workers who rate their employment quality above average having nearly a week and a half more in PTO (see Table 12).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Employment Quality</th>
<th>Average PTO, by Days</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Below Average (Below 7)</td>
<td>13.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Above Average (7 and Above)</td>
<td>21.2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Importantly, we also find wide differences in access to paid time-off by industry. For example, we find that workers in the personal services and hospitality industries have the lowest number of paid days off, with an average 8.3 and 8.6, respectively. This compares workers in the hospital and long-term care industry and public administration, who on average have 26.1 and 39.1 paid days off, respectively (see Table 13). Therefore, where someone works has implications how much paid time-off they have access to.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Industry</th>
<th>Average PTO, by Days</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Personal Services</td>
<td>8.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hospitality</td>
<td>8.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hospital and Long-Term Care</td>
<td>26.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Public Administration</td>
<td>39.1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

SPOTLIGHT: Chicago’s Paid Sick Leave Ordinance Improves Job Quality for Lower Wage Workers

Chicago’s Paid Sick Leave Ordinance illustrates how policymakers can take decisive action and can make a difference in workers’ lives. The Ordinance requires employers to provide a minimum amount of paid leave, in this case up to 40 hours of paid sick leave per year for eligible workers. On average, workers in Chicago have 6.6 days of paid sick leave per year, compared to 5.5 days outside of Cook County. Yet, the benefits of the Chicago Paid Sick Leave Ordinance are most apparent among lower paid workers - those with the least access to sick leave. Lower paid workers in Chicago receive two and a half times the number of sick days reported by workers in downstate Illinois.

Continues on page 24
VI. Findings

Social and Physical Working Environment and Employment Quality

Employment quality is about more than what workers do or how they are paid for their work. It also has to do with their environment at work. This includes their physical environment, such as health and safety conditions, as well as their social environment, or how they are treated by other people. While relatively few workers in our study report unsafe conditions or unfair treatment at work, those who do rate their employment situation much lower on average.

We asked Illinois workers to evaluate the health and safety conditions at their work on a five-point scale from terrible to excellent. Fully 80 percent of workers said their occupational health and safety conditions were good or excellent, while 20 percent said these conditions were fair at best. Among workers with good occupational health and safety conditions, roughly 1 in 3 rated their employment quality below average (6 or lower on a scale of 0-10). By contrast, among workers with worse occupational health and safety conditions, 64 percent rated their employment quality below average. In other words, workers who face health and safety problems at work are twice as likely as other workers to rate their employment quality low.

Black and Latinx workers report worse occupational health and safety conditions than White workers in Illinois. Overall, 82 percent of White workers say their health and safety conditions are good or excellent. Among Black workers, this figure is 78 percent and 76 percent among Hispanic or Latinx workers. This disparity is due in part to the greater representation of Black and Latinx workers in industries like transportation and retail. However, even within the same industries, Latinx workers report worse occupational health and safety conditions than non-Latinx workers.

With respect to workers’ social environment, two features stand out as particularly important for employment quality: supervisor fairness and coworker support. We asked workers how fairly they are treated by their supervisor on a seven-point scale from very fairly to very unfairly. About 74 percent of workers said
VI. Findings

their supervisor treats them *moderately or very fairly* and 70 percent of them rate their employment situation above average (7 or higher on a scale of 0-10). Among workers who say they are treated *slightly or less fairly* by their supervisor, only 40 percent give their employment situation an above average rating.

We find a similar relationship between employment quality and workers' responses to the question, 'how much do the people you work with support you?' Nearly 63 percent of workers report a lot or a great deal of coworker support. These workers are three times as likely as workers who feel less supported to rate their employment situation very highly. Coworker support is also strongly correlated with supervisor treatment, suggesting that supervisors play a role in fostering positive or negative social dynamics within work groups. Among workers who report at least moderately fair supervisor treatment and a lot of coworker support, 20 percent give their employment situation the highest possible rating (10 out of 10). By contrast, among workers who report unfair treatment or less support, only 4 percent rate their employment quality as highly.

We find disparities by race, ethnicity and gender in workers' social environments that are as great if not greater than disparities in their health and safety conditions at work. While 64 percent of White, non-Latinx workers report a lot of coworker support, only 53 percent of Latinx workers report this level of coworker support. Figure 4 shows even wider disparities by gender, with 64 percent of men but only 38 percent of non-binary workers reporting a lot of coworker support. These findings suggest that marginalized workers experience lower employment quality not only as a function of the kind of jobs they hold but also how they are treated by supervi-
VI. Findings

SPOTLIGHT: Union members have a markedly higher rating of their employment quality (EQ) than nonunion workers

In 2021, union members accounted for 13.9 percent of wage and salary workers in Illinois, approximately 752,000 workers, compared with 14.3 percent in 2020. Union membership rate for Illinois was at its peak in 1993, when it averaged 21.0 percent, and at its low point in 2019 at 13.6 percent. Nationwide, union members accounted for 10.3 percent of employed wage and salary workers in 2021. The rate was down from 10.8 percent in 2020 when the rate increased due to a disproportionately large decline in the total number of nonunion workers compared with the decline in the number of union members. Since 1989, when state data became available, union membership rates in Illinois have been above the U.S. average (U.S. BLS, 2022C). Union members rate their employment quality higher than nonunion workers by almost a full point, 7.5 to 6.6, out of a maximum of 10 (Table 14). Moreover, the increase in their EQ in their past 5 years of employment is twice as large as those not in unions. Unions deliver considerably higher wages, monthly pay and paid time off. This may explain why union workers, compared to nonunion workers, desire more hours than they currently receive. Unionized workers have significantly great satisfaction with their job, benefits, and work schedules. Union workers also judge their job, work or workplace as providing at least somewhat more opportunities for advancement (3.3 to 2.6), training (4.0 to 3.2), meaningfulness, security (4.1 to 3.7), supportiveness (4.0 to 3.7) and supervisor fair treatment (6.1 to 5.8).

Continues on page 27
### VI. Findings

Continued from page 26

**Table 14. Union Coverage and Employment Quality**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Covered by a Union contract</th>
<th>13.9% of total employment</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sample</td>
<td>2,113</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mean</td>
<td>6.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EQ - current job (0-10)</td>
<td>6.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EQ - 5 years ago</td>
<td>6.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hourly wage</td>
<td>$19.20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Monthly pay</td>
<td>$3,662</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Typical hours per week</td>
<td>36.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Additional hours desired per week (number)</td>
<td>2.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Volatility of hours week to week</td>
<td>0.43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PTO days (number)</td>
<td>12.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sick days (number)</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Meaningfulness of work</td>
<td>3.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Autonomy in job</td>
<td>3.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Security</td>
<td>3.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Opportunities for advance</td>
<td>2.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Support from co-workers</td>
<td>3.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Safe conditions</td>
<td>4.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Supervisor fair treatment</td>
<td>5.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Training provided</td>
<td>3.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Satisfaction with benefits (0 to 7)</td>
<td>4.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Satisfaction with work schedule (0 to 7)</td>
<td>5.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Satisfaction with job (0 to 7)</td>
<td>5.4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
VI. Findings

2. Putting the Pieces Together: Modeling Employment Quality

As the preceding sections detail, workers consider many features of their job when asked to judge its quality. They not only consider their wage rate, but how reliable their hours are. They also consider less tangible features of their job, such as how secure it is and how other people at work treat them. Employment quality is a puzzle made up of many pieces.

The pieces of the employment quality puzzle tend to come in packages or overlapping sets. Jobs that pay low wages are more likely to offer unreliable hours and poor job security. This overlap makes it difficult to say exactly what share of employment quality is explained by different components. Which components matter most for employment quality? This question is important not only for understanding employment quality, but also for policy and other efforts to improve it. If policymakers focus only on raising wages, for example, the benefits to workers may be less than if higher wages are combined with policies that protect workers against arbitrary layoffs or cuts in hours.

Therefore, we developed a statistical model to determine which components are most strongly associated with employment quality. We started with workers’ ratings of their own employment quality on a 0-10 scale, based on the Cantril Self-Anchoring Striving Scale used in prior research by Gallup (Cantril, 1965; Rothwell and Crabtree, 2019). We then examined a wide array of job and worker characteristics that prior research suggests are relevant for employment quality. We used a process of elimination to select 40 predictors for our preferred model, eliminating many other indicators that were only weakly related to employment quality.

We used ordinary least squares regression to estimate the association between employment quality and each predictor while holding constant demographic characteristics and other job features in our model. Figure 5 shows some of the strongest predictors of employment quality along with other job features representing different components of our conceptual framework. The colored dots depict the point estimate and the horizontal gray lines a 95 percent confidence interval for the standardized regression coefficient. Dots that lie farther from the (vertical) zero line have a stronger association with employment quality, while lines that overlap with zero are not statistically different from zero, i.e. they don’t make much difference for our prediction of employment quality.
VI. FINDINGS

The strongest predictors of employment quality are how meaningful and how secure workers rate their job. A standard deviation increase in either of these predictors (roughly 1 point on a 5-point scale) is associated with a nearly 25 percent of a standard deviation increase in employment quality (half a point on an 11-point scale). In other words, workers who find their jobs very meaningful and secure give substantially higher ratings of their employment situation on average than workers with otherwise comparable jobs that they find less meaningful or secure.

Autonomy, or how much freedom workers have to decide how to do their work, is the next strongest predictor of employment quality (around 9 percent of a standard deviation). Promotion opportunities, that is, the likelihood that a worker will be promoted also predicts self-rated employment quality. Indeed, the strength of the association between employment quality and promotion opportunities is equal to the association between employment quality and monthly pay (6 percent of a standard deviation). The strength of these predictors helps explain why the job content and outlook dimensions of our model account for such a large share of the variation in employment quality, as discussed below.

We can summarize the results of our model by grouping predictors according to the dimension of employment quality they are supposed to capture. We used a technique known as Shapley regression to decompose the variation in self-rated employment quality into the proportion explained by each group of predictors in our model (Juarez, 2012). Figure 6 illustrates the Shapley values using different colors for the components of employment quality. Although our model explains a great deal (40 percent) of the variation in employment quality, Not Just Any Job
Defining and Measuring Employment Quality in Illinois
VI. Findings

employment quality, most of this variation is unexplained by our model. This unexplained variation could be associated with other job features that we did not measure or could reflect idiosyncratic differences in how workers evaluate their jobs for our survey.

Figure 6. Variation in Employment Quality by Model Component

This diagram reveals that job content, outlook, and working environment are the Big Three dimensions of employment quality. Job content and outlook together explain about a quarter of the variation in workers’ ratings of their employment situation. Workers’ physical and social environment at work explain 8 percent of the variation in employment quality. All the other dimensions of our model—pay and benefits, hours and scheduling, industry and occupation, type of contract, and demographic profile—account for another 8 percent of the variation in employment quality. Although these are relatively small pieces of the employment quality puzzle, they still matter for how workers rate their jobs and, perhaps more so, for their broader quality of life. Yet what matters most for employment quality in our model are the meaning, autonomy, security, and opportunity that workers find in their jobs.
VII. Future Directions

It is the hope of the authors that the eventual construction of an EQ-IL index can be used to measure the quality of working conditions in Illinois and track over time to observe where employment is degrading or upgrading and for whom. A follow up analysis of the existing survey data will focus on contrasting the quality of employment across industrial sectors and occupations in Illinois. Beyond the cross tabulations, we will estimate further models of the determinants and additional worker well-being outcomes, such as job satisfaction and happiness at work (which correlated significantly in preliminary findings with employment quality generally). Finally, since poor working conditions appear to be bundled with lower compensation, it would be useful to confirm an absence of compensation wage differentials, i.e., “hazard pay” for poor or detrimental scheduling conditions (Mas and Pallais, 2019) to bolster the case for public policies in Illinois labor markets.

Impacts for Workforce Development Funding and Job Quality

Workforce programs funded by the federal Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) as well as other public and private sources, assist low-income workers to achieve the skills, training, and connections they need to acquire and retain employment. Unfortunately, many of the jobs available to program participants, especially those facing high barriers to employment, are low-quality positions with low wage rates, little if any benefits or paid leaves and variable scheduling practices. This type of placement results in high turnover, causing hardship not only for affected workers but also the workforce programs whose performance is graded on retention rates. Given that public workforce funding has been so limited, local workforce areas should use their WIOA plans and funds to pursue the high road model--reward employers that promote higher quality jobs. Development and application of the IL EQI would incentivize workforce providers to facilitate job seeker placements based on the quality of employment, as opposed to quantity or retention rate. Workforce development agencies could gauge employment quality by earnings, health and retirement coverage, paid sick and family leave, stable and predictable hours and contractor/temp status. Identifying good quality jobs would provide job seekers with higher, more stable and growing incomes, as well as improved well-being including work-life balance. It provides workforce funders with strategies to prioritize, support, and reward practitioners who partner with high-road employers.

Overall Impact on Policy Deliberation in Illinois

Findings from this study should reinforce the need to adopt a statewide minimum standard for work hours and quality jobs as part of the need to rebuild stable work and worker well-being, post-Covid. The findings could also warrant new discussion of potential expansion of the FWW ordinance coverage to sectors currently exempt in Chicago. Indeed, there is little risk involved with expanding the scope of coverage if current employees do benefit from the greater stability, predictability and adequacy of work hours, since these benefits are shared with employers, via improved productivity and turnover, which in turn would offset much of any initial cost of adopting the new scheduling standards (Williams, Lambert and Kesavan, 2018).
VII. Recommendations

Single parents, women, Black and Latinx workers, and workers with disabilities tend to have less access and lower quality benefits than partnered parents, men, White workers, and workers without disabilities. While these workers are already disadvantaged in the labor market, their lack of benefits makes them more vulnerable to unsafe working conditions and economic hardship. By the same token, public policies that raise the floor for job-related benefits can improve economic security, health, and employment quality first and foremost for these vulnerable workers. Public policy can help vulnerable workers by raising the floor for job-related benefits. Therefore, based on the reports’ findings, the following five steps are recommended:

- The state should formally adopt EQ-IL’s seven components as a statewide job quality measurement and track this annually.
- Public bodies should allocate tax dollars to private employers based on the firms creating and/or upgrading the quality of their jobs.
- The state should require employers to collect and submit data to the state on these job quality metrics.
- The state should produce annual reports on the trends in these metrics and associated outcomes for workers and labor markets.
- The state should pass legislation that promotes each of the seven dimensions of job quality.
IX. Conclusion

The way that policy makers, employers, labor leaders, academics and journalists think about the future of work must be more than a numerical accounting of jobs and how technology will shape occupations. Job growth is unquestionably important, but it doesn’t necessarily move a worker from non-employment to high quality employment. To meaningfully increase the labor force participation rate, and worker well-being outcomes, a human infrastructure that invests in a person’s creative productive activity from early age to the prime of life must be built.

Job quality is dependent on measures that precede and nourish employment opportunities by supporting well-educated and healthy residents who can sustain a family-work balance. Additionally, technological innovation will occur but the limits of technology to raise employment standards are too often ignored. Likewise, the utopian promised gains of machine intelligence are too readily assumed. People subjectively seek meaningfulness in their work and job quality cannot be scientifically engineered. We cannot leave the evolution of work purely to the mechanics of the market. The market will generate and foreclose employment but work and its dense network of accompanying dynamics are not a product of economic science or natural law. Work writ large is a social convention dependent on public policy. Who counts as an employee, what is the employment standard, how do we understand employment obligations, and what participatory mechanisms do workers have to influence their employment destinies are just a few of the matters that policy determines.

Instead, our report argues that the focus needs to be on the quality of the employment relationship and job content. We are confident that adopting effective policies along with a strong upfront investment in enforcement and worker/employer education will generate positive work outcomes. This report is an investment in the belief that robust research and evidence can inform improved policy making to help produce better outcomes for working people.


References


REFERENCES


REFERENCES


References


References


References


WHY STUDY JOB QUALITY NOW?

While the Illinois economy and workforce have continued to recover from the unemployment and economic disruptions experienced since March 2020, the profound health, housing, and food security issues faced by too many in our state continue to shine light on the complexities facing discussions centered on the future of work. In the past two years, Illinois has reached reported unemployment rate levels of 17.4 percent in April 2020, then down to recent state-wide levels of 4.4 percent as of July, 2022 (BLS, 2022B). In recent times, many business sectors claim to face worker shortages which have been attributed partly to a variety of reasons including Covid-related childcare challenges, school closings, and health fears. Increasingly, public attention has focused on the poor-quality of work conditions coupled with poor pay, indignity and dissatisfaction with work, as the source of higher quitting, labor force withdrawal and chronic labor shortage.

Employment and Unemployment in Illinois

As of June, 2022, the Illinois labor force consisted of 6,462,000 civilians, with 64.4 percent of the civilian population in the labor force, roughly .1 points below the January 2020 pre-pandemic labor force participation rate of 64.54 percent. The state’s unemployment rate has fallen to 4.5 percent, still higher than the pre-pandemic level of 3.7 percent in January, 2020 but significantly lower than the Covid-19-related unemployment rate of 17.4 percent experienced in April, 2020 during the economic shut-down. Throughout the past ten years, Black or African-American workers in Illinois have had the highest unemployment rate among all races and ethnicities, followed by Latinx workers and then White workers (Table A1). Historically, men have reported higher labor force participation rates than women, though the gender gap narrowed following the 2007-2009 recession. In 2007, the average male labor force participation rate in Illinois was between 75 and 76 percent and 14 to 16 points higher than average female labor force participation rate. However, by January, 2015, the labor force participation rate for men had decreased to 70.0 percent and the gender gap fell to 10 points. As of July, 2022, the female labor force participation rate in Illinois hovered at 61.5 percent, 9.5 points below the male labor force participation rate (Table A1; Figure A1; U.S. BLS, 2022A).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table A1: Illinois Labor Force Participation Rates by Gender and Race/Ethnicity, 2021</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>All</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Men</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Women</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>White</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Black/African-American</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hispanic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asian</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure A1: Illinois Labor Force Participation Rates, Total and by Gender (12-Month Averages)

Table A2: Illinois Long-term Industry Projections, 2020-2030

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>North American Industrial Classification System (NAICS) Code</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Base Year 2020</th>
<th>Change 2020-2030</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0</td>
<td>TOTAL, ALL INDUSTRIES</td>
<td>6,315,758</td>
<td>494,072</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>100000</td>
<td>Self Employed Workers</td>
<td>254,257</td>
<td>-19,595</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>120000</td>
<td>Total Nonfarm</td>
<td>5,715,856</td>
<td>516,449</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>210000</td>
<td>Natural Resources and Mining</td>
<td>6,794</td>
<td>91</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>230000</td>
<td>Construction</td>
<td>216,665</td>
<td>21,708</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>310000</td>
<td>Non-Durable Goods Manufacturing, Total</td>
<td>239,648</td>
<td>11,719</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>326900</td>
<td>Durable Goods Manufacturing, Total</td>
<td>314,875</td>
<td>8,916</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>420000</td>
<td>Wholesale Trade</td>
<td>281,714</td>
<td>7,855</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>440000</td>
<td>Retail Trade</td>
<td>556,348</td>
<td>36,235</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>445000</td>
<td>Food and Beverage Stores</td>
<td>114,445</td>
<td>980</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>452000</td>
<td>General Merchandise Stores</td>
<td>123,063</td>
<td>9,350</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>460000</td>
<td>Transportation, Warehousing &amp; Utilities</td>
<td>348,670</td>
<td>54,201</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>493000</td>
<td>Warehousing and Storage</td>
<td>65,160</td>
<td>17,572</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>510000</td>
<td>Information</td>
<td>87,444</td>
<td>680</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>520000</td>
<td>Finance and Insurance, Total</td>
<td>326,281</td>
<td>11,495</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>530000</td>
<td>Real Estate and Rental and Leasing</td>
<td>78,302</td>
<td>5,040</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>539900</td>
<td>Professional and Business Services</td>
<td>890,779</td>
<td>80,874</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>540000</td>
<td>Professional, Scientific &amp; Tech. Services</td>
<td>411,722</td>
<td>40,916</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>560000</td>
<td>Administrative &amp; Waste Management Services</td>
<td>395,849</td>
<td>38,393</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>611000</td>
<td>Educational Services</td>
<td>533,943</td>
<td>16,682</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>620000</td>
<td>Hospitals</td>
<td>269,713</td>
<td>11,839</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>623000</td>
<td>Nursing and Residential Care Facilities</td>
<td>132,231</td>
<td>2,125</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>624000</td>
<td>Social Assistance</td>
<td>132,451</td>
<td>24,644</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>710000</td>
<td>Arts, Entertainment and Recreation</td>
<td>63,248</td>
<td>35,808</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>721000</td>
<td>Accommodation</td>
<td>31,407</td>
<td>19,960</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>722000</td>
<td>Food Services and Drinking Places</td>
<td>364,203</td>
<td>97,976</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>810000</td>
<td>Personal &amp; Other Services</td>
<td>254,660</td>
<td>24,824</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>999100</td>
<td>Federal Government, exc. US Post Office</td>
<td>42,500</td>
<td>-289</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>999300</td>
<td>Local Government, exc. Educ. &amp; Hosp.</td>
<td>225,652</td>
<td>13,990</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Illinois Department of Employment Security
An index of job quality might attempt a composite indicator of workers’ well-being compiling several outcomes from work. The literature typically focuses on single indicators of quality, or it develops a more complex measure of perceived quality that weights each characteristic of a job. The weights assigned to each may be equal and thus simply additive. Alternatively, the weights may be “induced” according to workers’ own attribution of importance or value to them, or according to averages found in the sample or in other studies or expressed by workers themselves (Kochan et al., 2019). To date, no set standard or agreed upon definition of job quality exists within the literature or amongst practitioners, and indices vary in the number and complexity of analyzed dimensions.

The first-generation initial wave of analysis of job quality, attempted to measure job quality with surveys that featured subjective measures (Seashore, 1974; Staines and Quinn, 1979; Yoshida and Torihara, 1977). These types of approaches measured workers’ evaluations as well as aspirations and expectations, rather than specific job traits. Approaches to examining job quality emerged as early as the 1960s, as scholars recognized social and technological changes impacted workers’ experiences of work and attempted to measure the ‘quality of working life’ beyond compensation (Burchell et al., 2013). The research that followed made an attempt “to correctly evaluate the performance of an economy...to identify the quality of the jobs created and destroyed in the process of creative destruction that lies behind economic growth” (Munoz and Bustillo et al., 2011). The next generation after early job quality measures were spearheaded by the International Labour Organization (ILO) in 1999, with their introduction of the concept of decent work and declaration that “the primary goal of the ILO today is to promote opportunities for women and men to obtain decent and productive work, in conditions of freedom, equality, security and human dignity” (Ghai, 2003; Anker, 2003) and reiterated by the European Commission (EC, 2001). Both the ILO and EC measures were designed to be all-encompassing, as their breadth was to include indicators of equity, dignity, security and opportunity with an eye toward social justice, such as including child labor (Arranz et al., 2017; Bescond et al., 2003). However, “no agreed set of statistical indicators … measure decent work, not may it be measurable or even definable. This lacuna as regards decent work indicators greatly hampers ILO’s own work, as well as the ability of its constituents to monitor and evaluate the situation in their own countries” (Ankar et al., 2003).

These initial efforts were a considerable undertaking on the part of international institutions to not only measure job quality and progress toward decent work globally, but also to start empirically analyzing relationships between different job quality variables as well as between decent work, economic development and poverty reduction (Anker, 2003). The Second Version of the ILO Manual encompasses eleven dimensions of statistical decent work indicators, ranging from between 2 and 12 variables per dimension (ILO, 2013; Bonnet et al., 2003). Additionally, the ILO Manual delineates 21 distinct legal framework indicators analyzing the scope of European statutes applicable to work and social benefits. The efforts created offshoots that delved into measuring particularly relevant aspects of decent work, such as “decent working time” and “quality part time work” (Boulin et al., 2006). They also created heated political debate, as their...
selectiveness, country-wide scope and inevitable cross-country comparison implied policies to which there would be both strong support and fierce objection (Berten, 2022).

**Dimensions and Components of Employment Quality**

The second generation of literature regarding the determination and measurement of employment quality advanced well beyond the initial ILO efforts to broadly specify the components of the quality of employment, operationalizing more consistent efforts to generate internationally comparable data on labor markets, and thus more detailed measurements (Burchell et al 2014; Pereira, 2019). Over the past 20 years, numerous models have been developed to try to measure job quality, each with varying composition and with advantages and weaknesses to each. Studies typically define and specify job quality as a multidimensional concept, and thus complex (Ribar and Wooden, 2020). There is a commonality among those dimensions with a great deal of differentiation as well (Cascales-Mira, 2021).

The array of methodologies reflects different emphases by field, from various schools in economics to sociology to industrial-organizational psychology to labor-employment relations to human resource/organizational management (Munoz de Bustillo et al., 2011). Each has its own theoretical foundational focus. For example, neoclassical economics on wage rates, time and effort allocation and compensating wage differentials, while non-orthodox economics fixates on power relations and segmentation. The latter considerations are featured in labor-employment relations and work sociology, which add worker voice, contractual status, such as precarity and the intrinsic rewards, motivation and potential alienation regarding work (Kochan et al., 2019). Finally, occupational health and safety and work-life (family) fields focus mainly on the association of various working conditions and these particular well-being outcomes.

The term job quality can be further dissected into the concepts of employment quality and work quality. Employment quality “refers to those aspects of the employment relationship that have a potential impact on the well-being of workers: these are all the aspects related to the employment contract, remuneration, working hours and career development,” while work quality “refers to how the activity of work itself and the conditions under which it takes place can affect the well-being of workers: autonomy, work intensity, the physical and social environment, etc” (Munoz de Bustillo et al., 2011).

Most research adopts distinctions in their explorations of intrinsic and extrinsic dimensions of work. Contemporary work can be defined by intrinsic characteristics that focus on the nature of the work— the job overall or certain tasks -- for the experienced well-being of workers. Whereas the extrinsic aspects that describe the consequences of the work - salary, promotion, prestige, or the conditions under which it is performed (Cascales Mira, 2021). Workers who have a greater ability to control their own work -- such as their duties, work time or pace -- are more likely to get intrinsic rewards from their jobs, such as "process benefits" -- enjoyment from doing or accomplishing certain tasks in a job (cite), while extrinsic rewards are the salary, wages or benefits workers receive for job performance, which might include supplemental benefits or profit sharing, (Kalleberg, 2011, 7). Extrinsic rewards may help to reduce turnover and improve productivity (Dube et al., 2016). Intrinsic rewards may provide a particularly important influence on perceptions of
In general, recent attempts to specify and operationalize measurements of job quality can be loosely grouped first into a handful of broad dimensions: socio-economic (decent, stable wages); working conditions (intrinsic quality of work, and health and safety); opportunities for improvement (qualification and training); and balance of work and non-working life (Arranz et al., 2017). Pay and working conditions are the most common elements associated with job quality indicators (Green, 2021; Congdon et al., 2020). Virtually all efforts to specify employment or job quality start with the basic pay and benefits coverage that has been traditionally associated with “good jobs” in the overall economy. Evidence abounds that monetary compensation at the macroeconomic scale has been on a long-term secular trend downward (Schmitt and Jones, 2012; Carre et al., 2012; Howell, 2019). Poorer quality compensation is also associated with other underlying economic patterns and trends, such as labor market concentration and shifting power away from labor (Benton and Kim, 2019). Perhaps not inconsequentially, job satisfaction in the US and other countries have been trending downward (Clark, 2015).

Most taxonomies of "good jobs" and "bad jobs" are divided into separate categories, from as few as three, forming the most basic measures of quality-earnings quality; labor market security; and quality of the working environment or non-economic aspects of jobs (e.g., Organization of Economic Cooperation and Development, 2017). There are more comprehensive approaches, which include a total of six dimensions. These are derived from twenty of the questions used on the cross-country, global International Social Survey Program, of OECD countries (Clark, 2015; Cazes et al., 2015). It measures workers’ own evaluations of their broad job domains: pay; hours of work; future prospects (e.g., promotion and job security); difficulty of the job; job content, including interestingness, prestige and independence; interpersonal relationships (with both co-workers and with management).

Particularly in the US context, where social protections are more limited, there is more emphasis, if not an entirely separate category, for a range of employee benefits, from insurance coverages to paid time off. In Europe, where data are more widespread, comprehensive, frequent and long-validated, there are now indicators of both the quality of work and quality of employment. They are composed of up to 43 items, starting from top level categories of social conditions, job design, work intensity and physical conditions of work (Steffgen et al, 2020; Eurofound, 2021).

In the US, there is an on-going effort to track labor market changes beyond the quantity of jobs, with a “job quality index” (JQI) (Alpert et al, 2019; Fee, 2022) or the extent of mobility into higher quality occupations (Gabe, Abel and Florida, 2019). It is important to have a consistent metric to track, which includes the pay levels of the jobs added or subtracted. Yet even this attempt is too simplified, given the growing importance of the subjective indicators of work and job quality and experiences of workers at work and the workplace. In this spirit, researchers in the US have tried to summarized job quality for wider audiences. They have identified the following six key elements, (Loprest, Katz, and Shakespere, 2021; Rothwell and Crabtree, 2019):
Appendix B

1) Pay -- including both the level, the predictability and regularity of pay (e.g., overtime, tips, bonuses, wages or salary and relative pay (Katz et al, 2020);

2) Benefits -- including health and retirement plans offered, employee assistance plans, community allowances, fitness plans and education benefits (e.g., tuition reimbursement) and all their terms (such as affordability and quality);

3) Leaves – including paid (or unpaid) medical, family, or sick leave, personal, vacation time;

4) Job skills development, future advancement prospects at organization or labor market;

5) Working conditions -- including security, autonomy, physical health and safety, stable and predictable hours, control over work hours and work location, adequacy of the number of work hours, and part- versus full-time status;

6) Organizational/business culture and job design--including task composition and the non-monetary value of work, such as meaningfulness of work, culture of equity and non-discrimination, inclusion and belonging, enjoyment day-to-day, a sense of purpose, having power to change unsatisfying aspects of work.

An additional comprehensive approach accentuates the role of employment relations (Budd and Spencer, 2015) and elaborates on health risks such as hazards, harassment, stress and excessive effort or hours. It also includes those work practices that improve mental health and self-esteem, and elevate social standing and consistency with self-identity. In yet another schema, employee voice (Kelly et al., 2022) and worker agency is stressed. Here factors like the role of unionization, opportunities for skill enhancement and job autonomy, and the opportunity to control how one’s work is designed are paramount. Another comprehensive conception of job quality (Felstead et al., 2019) that accentuates intrinsic qualities of work focuses on intensity at work, task diversification, working time autonomy, work-life balance, flexibility, managerial support and opportunities to learn new things. Finally, some additional features of employment quality more prevalent in the European states and context include social protections, social dialogue, and the ethics of employment (Korner, 2009; Burchell et al., 2014).
1 For an interactive dashboard and summary of group differences in employment quality in Illinois, visit the study website: [https://employmentquality.illinois.edu/](https://employmentquality.illinois.edu/).

2 The (grouped) predictors are: (Pay) monthly pay, paid salary; (Benefits) health insurance, retirement benefits, days of paid time off; (Hours/scheduling) hours mismatch, volatility, advance notice, days vary; (Job content) autonomy, meaningfulness, exhausted at end of workday; (Environment) supervisor fairness, coworker support, health and safety; (Contract type) regular W-2 employee, covered by a union contract; (Outlook) job security, formal training, promotion opportunities; (Demographics) race/ethnicity, gender, age, region, disability, and parent status; Industry and occupational group.

3 Such as excluded sectors, beyond Food services, Retail, Hospitality, Manufacturing, Hospitals, Warehouses and Temporary workers employed in those industries, as well as certain salaried workers and independent contractors -- particularly those that we can identify as likely mis-classified according to their responses to survey questions.

4 The labor force includes all persons in the civilian, non-institutional population classified as either employed or unemployed.

5 The terms Hispanic and Latino/a/x are used interchangeably throughout this report, depending on the source material.