

Jari Eloranta

The 2022 Eino Jutikkala History Prize was awarded to Professor Jari Eloranta. The prize in the amount of 15 000 euros is awarded every three years for distinguished scholarly work in the field of historical research.

Professor Jari Eloranta is the internationally most renowned Finnish economic historian. His most prominent research themes pertain to the history of the security of supply and the history of welfare states, and he is indisputably one of the best-known researchers engaged in the historical analysis of defense expenditure in the world today.

Jari Eloranta has forged an international career as a researcher. He graduated as a licentiate from the University of Jyväskylä, and then transferred to the European University Institute in Florence, where he earned his doctorate in 2002. After Italy, Eloranta moved to Great Britain to work as a post-doctoral researcher at the University of Warwick. From Great Britain, he continued to the United States and the Appalachian State University in North Carolina, where he advanced rapidly and impressively through the tenure track.

In 2018, Eloranta returned to Finland as the Professor of Economic and Social History at the University of Helsinki – the same professorship that was first held by Eino Jutikkala.

Eloranta has taken an exceptionally active role in international organizations and adopted a prominent position in advancing research and training in the sector. At the same time, he has continued to network extensively: Eloranta is known to everyone in his field.

Eloranta's defining strength is his comparative approach to research: instead of focusing on a single country, he compares phenomena within a group of countries, typically over the longer term. Eloranta is a prominent figure in quantitative historical research, and he has also worked hard to promote quantitative methods in his Finnish publications. With this, he has furthered the breakthrough of quantitative methods in Finnish historical research as a researcher and a teacher.

Through his professorships, Eloranta has contributed significantly to the devel-

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opment of economic history education in both the United States and Finland. He has, for example, taught both economic history students and history students on the use of quantitative methods in several Finnish universities. Eloranta is a well-liked teacher, and he is the second European to receive the Teaching Award of the Economy History Association.

“The passing of information and expertise to students in different forms is one of the best parts of science. I have always invested greatly in the direction and mentoring of students. I received excellent guidance and teaching myself, and I consider it a key element of any scientific activity”, Eloranta says. “The greatest moments are those where one of my mentees achieves great success. Of course, I have also enjoyed having articles published in top international journals, receiving fund-

ing for projects, and the various recognitions and specialist assignments.

Jari Eloranta has been exceptionally active in international organizations in the field, published his research in major economic history journals, and headed numerous extensive research projects. He also does not shy away from public debate.

Eloranta has a clear idea of his future research topics:

“I am particularly interested in the long-term economic, social, and political change in a country such as Finland over centuries. How did we become a society with a high level of welfare and trust? This question will continue to keep researchers busy in the future. I also want to continue researching the impact of crises and conflicts, which still remains a highly topical subject.”

Jari Eloranta was invited to join the Finnish Academy of Science and Letters in 2020.

Photo: Maarit Kytöharju