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THE WORLD TO COME: KEY CHALLENGES FOR THE AUTOMOTIVE INDUSTRY

Annamaria Simonazzi, Jorge Carreto Sanginés, Margherita Russo

The automotive industry is going through a paradigm change that will affect the entire supply chain, and have the potential to redraw the boundaries of the sector, redefine the key players and sourcing practices, and affect the relative advantage of countries and regions, reshaping existing industrial geographies. We address the issue of the reorganisation of the global value chains in the face of various challenges: new, large markets opening up, and new, aggressive competitors emerging; an increasingly unpredictable global geopolitical context, translating into the forging and undoing of trade agreements; the reorganisation in value chains, induced by new digital technologies; and the redefinition of what a “car” is, determined by electrification, autonomous driving, and new mobility. These simultaneous changes impact upon the geographical location of the industry, the distribution of power within the value chains and between incumbents and new players entering the industry (from energy firms and power utilities to battery producers and big tech monopolists), with obvious consequences for the distribution of production and employment across countries and within manufacturing and service sectors.

Keywords: automotive industry, global value chains, green and digital transitions, new forms of competition.

LEANING INTO TFP

Enrico D’Elia, Leonello Tronti

Growth policies, including the European recovery facilities, aim at enhancing total factor productivity (TFP), which, in the neoclassical theoretical framework, is the sole source of overall output growth in addition to that mechanically resulting from increasing labour and capital inputs. Nevertheless, few algebraic manipulations show that TFP depends on income distribution and market power. Thus, suggestive as it may be, it is only an imperfect measure of productivity; and boosting its supposed determinants mentioned in the literature, so to accelerate economic growth, can be misleading. Suitable income and industrial policies are necessary instead.

Keywords: factors’ remuneration, primary income distribution, productivity, market power.

GENDER EQUALITY, THE CARE ECONOMY, AND THE EU COVID-19 RECOVERY FUND

Ursula Barry

Based on research commissioned by the FEMM Committee of the European Parliament (published in 2021), this article explores the impact of Covid-19 on the care economy, gender equality, and the newly established EU Covid-19 Recovery Fund. Gendered impacts of Covid-19 are explored focusing on the care systems of nine selected EU societies, and highlighting poor conditions, particularly among workers in – mainly private – long-term care congregated facilities for older people. Research data documenting increased gendered inequalities in the home (arising from the withdrawal or restrictions of care, health, and educational services), as well as evidence of increased gender-based violence, are drawn together. The establishment of a substantial EU Recovery Fund ringfencing significant funding for the EU green and digital economies, but without equivalent supports for the care economy is documented. This study concludes that 30% of EU recovery funds should be designated for the care economy to create more equal funding status with the green and digital economies.

Keywords: care economy, gender equality, Covid-19, care workers, long-term care, gender-based violence, valuing care, unpaid work, EU countries, EU Recovery Fund.

MONOPOLY CAPITAL AT THE TIME OF DIGITAL PLATFORMS

Andrea Coveri, Claudio Cozza, Dario Guarascio

This paper adapts the *monopoly capital* theoretical approach to the case of large digital platforms. First, we identify the structural drivers of economic power of today's platforms, i.e. control of data, technology, labour, and value chains, as well as conditioning on government activity. Second, we discuss similarities and discontinuities with respect to the 20th-century transnational corporations. Finally, we focus on policy implications, comparing antitrust regulations and assumptions about the socialisation of data and of digital infrastructure needed to use them.

Keywords: monopoly capital, monopoly power, digital platforms, Amazon, transnational corporations.

MINIMUM WAGE AND COLLECTIVE BARGAINING: A POSSIBLE COMBINATION

Pasquale Tridico, Patrizia Tullini

This paper deals with the issue of the introduction of a legal minimum wage, as well as how to make it consistent with the Italian legal, institutional, and collective bargaining framework. To this aim, an economic and legal analysis will be carried out on the interaction between mandatory remuneration and the role played by collective bargaining in our legal framework. A proposal will be tabled with the purpose of introducing a guaranteed minimum wage for workers with a view to combining the effectiveness of collective bargaining as a regulatory source between workers and firms, and the support offered by legislation. The recent initiatives on minimum wage, promoted within the EU, will be discussed, and their impact on the Italian system in both economic and legal terms will be evaluated.

Keywords: minimum wage, NCBA.

POSSIBLE UNITY: HISTORY AND MEMORY OF THE CGIL CIL UIL FEDERATION (1972-1984)

Francesco Lauria

The book *L'unità possibile. La Federazione Cgil, Cisl, Uil 1972-1984*, edited by Franco Lotito, brings together essays and testimonies by scholars and trade unionists from different cultural backgrounds. It reconstructs the preparatory work, establishment, development, and fall of the CGIL CILS UIL Unitary Federation (1972-1984). It is a valuable text that, through historiographic and archival research, as well as interviews with its protagonists, contributes to bringing back to memory this important and unique trade union experience. The text collects the results of a joint effort lasted several years within Fondazione Giacomo Brodolini, and therefore represents a necessary, important, open, prospective, and authentic research work. The Unitary Federation is unfortunately affected by a lack of consensus about its significance and value, which makes it a very interesting subject of study that can be developed further, not only to understand trade union patterns and trends, but also to study in depth more than a decade of Italian political, economic, and social history. Reflections on the book are complemented with a brief examination of the autobiographical interviews, published between 2019 and 2021, with two important protagonists of the CGIL CILS UIL Unitary Federation: Giorgio Benvenuto and Emilio Gabaglio.

Keywords: trade union unity, pluralism, CGIL CILS UIL Unitary Federation.

PARTECIPARE ALL'IMPRESA GLOBALE. UNA RICERCA ANTROPOLOGICA IN AUTOMOBILI LAMBORGHINI BY FULVIA D'ALOISIO.
REVIEW-ARTICLE

Francesco Garibaldo

The book and research work reviewed here analyse the transformations of work in an automotive company, Lamborghini, which has implemented a profound change by digitising work activities within Industry 4.0. This work stands out for the ethnographic approach that made use of the tools of participatory observation and in-depth interviews carried out within the company. The ethnographic reconstruction concerned: the insourcing of the department in which the carbon chassis is produced; work carried out at the super sports cars assembly line and the female-dominated saddlery department; industrial relations; and the point of view of managers and “white-collar workers”. However, the main focus of the ethnographic reconstruction is the industrial relations system and its participatory nature – as a matter of fact, almost half of the book is dedicated to this topic.

Keywords: ethnography, digitisation, Industry 4.0, participation.