

**SEVENTH INTERNATIONAL
ASTRIL CONFERENCE
CRISIS, STRUCTURAL CHANGES
AND PUBLIC POLICIES: THE LABOUR
MARKET AT A CROSSROADS**

25 - 26 JANUARY 2024
SCUOLA DI ECONOMIA E STUDI AZIENDALI
VIA SILVIO D'AMICO 77, ROMA
BLENDED MODE (LOCALISED AND VIRTUAL)

CALL FOR PAPERS

The labour market is currently grappling with profound challenges that stem not only from global and persistent economic crises, but also from other phenomena that are reshaping it. Italy and Europe, in particular, are facing significant migration flows which are influencing and modifying labour force dynamics and relationships between workers. They are also experiencing demographic shifts and an aging population which have been central to justifying retirement system reforms in many European countries, most recently in France. Moreover, structural changes and innovations, also spurred by the challenges of climate change, deglobalization and the NEXT Generation EU programme, are exerting a significant influence on the demand for labour qualifications and could potentially lead to labour market fragmentation and dualization. In light of all these issues, public policies must be comprehensive, encompassing not only macroeconomic policy and fiscal rules that determine aggregate labour demand, but also the establishment of suitable institutions aimed at preventing the deterioration of labour conditions. Mandatory components include establishing a minimum wage, ensuring a well-organized unemployment benefits system, and addressing social contributions. All the social parties are involved in implementing this change, Government and Trade unions in particular.

The Seventh International ASTRIL Conference aims to bring together works in these fields on both theoretical and empirical grounds. Contributions in the following topics are particularly welcome:

1. Migration, Wage, and Employment Distribution: There is an extensive debate in European countries regarding the impact of migration on employment opportunities for native workers. This debate encompasses not only its effects on employment, but also on wage dynamics and social sustainability. However, the expected outcome of migration flows on employment strongly depends on the theoretical framework applied to labour markets and the theories of income distribution that underpin them. Moreover, considering the macroeconomic context is essential when analysing the effects of migration on the labour market. Additionally, new challenges also arise for trade unions who are tasked with the complicated missions of alleviating possible tensions among native and migrant workers and incentivizing the latter to join the ranks of the unions.

2. Aging Population and Social Security: An aging population is a central factor driving the extensive increase in the retirement age across European countries. In Italy, various governments have made promises to amend the “Legge Fornero”, introduced with the aim of cutting public spending. However, the law is still in effect, and comprehensive changes have not been enacted. In France, recent reforms have sparked significant protests among the population. Budget constraints have played a role in driving these reforms, but a policy aimed at achieving full employment and increase in productivity could potentially enhance the sustainability of the pension system.

3. Structural Change, Employment Displacement, and Social Benefits: Innovation stands as a central objective in the Next Generation EU programme and policy agenda. Nevertheless, the impact of innovation on the labour market is a subject of ongoing debate in the academic literature. The impact of climate changes and how and to what extent innovations themselves will affect these changes is also under discussion and theoretical and empirical aspects related to these topics require further clarification. From a policy perspective, there is a pressing need for proactive and transparent measures also involving a possible reduction in working hours and a change in the work-life balance. The effects of robust innovation can be asymmetric and may lead to labour market marginalization. While new employment opportunities may emerge, others could become obsolete, resulting in adverse consequences for individuals’ wages and incomes and social sustainability. As a result, a comprehensive policy approach encompassing minimum wage regulations, unemployment benefits, and social welfare provisions must be implemented to address these challenges.

4. Macroeconomic policies, budget constraints and income distribution: In the face of significant economic and social changes, both fiscal and monetary rules play a prominent role in preventing severe economic and social crises. Following the COVID-19 period, EU countries are reverting to fiscal regulations that enforce the austerity and respect of the Stability and Growth Pact. Furthermore, in response to the recent surge in inflation, the European Central Bank is implementing a stringent monetary policy. In view of stagnant nominal wage growth, the potential impact on unemployment and income distribution could be substantial. New solutions and approaches are required to address these challenges.

Deadlines

Abstracts and session proposals (300-500 words):

Notification of acceptance:

Submission of papers:

25 November 2023

8 December 2023

8 January 2024