



***Fragmentations  
AND Solidarities***

*24–26 APRIL 2019*

# BOOK OF ABSTRACTS

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**Campus of the University of Vienna**

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Austria



# **Abstracts Keynotes ILPC Conference 2019**

**Wednesday 24 April 2019, 11:30, Venue C1**

Keynote:

**Prof. Florence Palpacuer, Université de Montpellier**

## **Fragmented production and global solidarities: activist strategies, challenges and perspectives in global value chains**

Prompted by massive subcontracting and offshoring since the 1980s, Global Value Chains (GVCs) have become prominent forms of organization in today's world economy. So have the global fragmentation and instability of production, and their correlate of deteriorating work conditions across workplaces offering highly unequal workers' rights and protection. In turn, such trends have triggered an 'upscaling' of previously local social struggles, whereby various activist groups from the North and the South have developed new forms of contestation and workplace militancy. Building on solidarities between places of production and marketing in GVCs, they have sought to establish a 'chain of responsibility' between lead firms operating at the market end, and workers involved at the production end of these chains. What have been the key dynamics and outcomes of these GVC-based activist strategies? What are their prominent challenges and most promising perspectives? I will adopt a neo-Gramscian perspective to critically assess these questions, drawing on cumulated research at the intersection of the global value chains and transnational activist networks literatures.

**Friday 26 April 2019, 12:30-13:30, Venue C1**

Public Keynote:

**Prof. Virginia Doellgast, ILR School, Cornell University**

## **From dualization to solidarity: Collective action and precarious work**

Labour unions have long relied on traditions of solidarity to build and sustain strong social protections. The expansion of precarious jobs – short-term, unpredictable, and low paid – introduces new divisions in the workforce that weaken solidarity. As employers take advantage of growing options for escaping collective agreements and legislated minimum standards, unions struggle to organize workers across increasingly fissured workplaces. Under what conditions does collective action by unions and other worker organizations succeed in overcoming these challenges? Drawing on research in the US and Europe, I argue that unions are best able to contest the expansion of precarity where they build new inclusive forms of solidarity, based on bridging divisions across groups of workers and in the labour movement.



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**Abstracts General Conference and Special Streams**

**ILPC Conference 2019, Vienna**

**In alphabetical order, sorted by surname of first author**

# **International students work experience in irregular works in London**

**Author: Emine Canan Acar**

Economic growth in the developing world has created a new middle class (Brooks and Waters, 2013) for whom it is a source of pride to send children overseas to study. However, while new middle class families are able to provide the necessary funds for the successful processing of visa application requests, and while they can often pay for the first term fee and the first few months of expenses to support establishing life in the host country, international students often need to look for work to survive in their new environment (Baas, 2010a). According to UKCISA reports on university and college level international students published in 2004 and 2006, nearly a quarter of the students confirmed that they did not have enough money because UK living costs were high and exchange rates were unfavorable (Forbes-Mewett et al. 2009).

According to UK student visa migration rules, international student permission to work while studying is only offered to those studying in higher education institutions (HEIs) and publicly funded further education colleges. These groups of students are allowed part time work during term time (max 20 hours a week) and full time during holidays (Home Office, 2014). However, international students who cannot find legal work or who wish to work more than what the legal limit allows tend to turn to irregular work to deal with the country's high cost of living, such as, in petrol stations, restaurants and as taxi drivers during their study (Baas, 2006, 2007, Neilson, 2009). Forbes-Mewett et al. (2009) reported that some students end up working on a full-time basis even when their visa conditions do not allow it. Consequently, international students often get exposed to low-skilled irregular work without any guarantee of representation, are often compelled to perform menial tasks and need to fulfil employer demands for long hours work with no paid holiday entitlement as well as work performed during unsociable hours. In some cases, international students who engage in irregular work may be unfairly dismissed and yet are not able to enjoy any legal redress. The result is that students who operate in irregular work contexts often become vulnerable and at the mercy of employers who utilize their cheaply supplied labour to the maximum extent for saving costs (Forbes-Mewett et al., 2009).

This paper asks to what extent financial factor plays part behind working in irregular work and remain within the border between legal and illegal. Furthermore, this paper is an attempt to understand why international students remain in irregular work status although they have 20 hours work permit legally, what are the factors that shape their decision.

Semi-structured interviews conducted with twenty five South Asian international students who hold/held jobs in irregular work contexts. Data collected through the use of personal networks and the snowball sampling method.

# Mobility power and migrant workers: Some evidence from the construction sector in Saudi Arabia

**Authors: Ayman Adham, Anita Hammer**

The double indeterminacy of labour power i.e. effort power and mobility power, is a key conceptual development in the labour process theory that was first proposed by Smith (2006). While wage-effort bargaining is related to how labour power is used and valued in terms of money, mobility power mainly concerns dynamics that arise from workers' ability to change employers. This mobility-effort bargaining configures aspects of the labour process, such as the length of stay in the firm, the intensity of the work and the nature of tasks. While the bulk of labour process research has focussed on indeterminacy around work-effort bargaining in various contexts, for example Turkey (Yücesan, 1998), Australia (Barnes, 2007), Poland (Bancarzewski, 2015) and China (Smith and Liu, 2016), there is lack of research on mobility-effort bargaining in the Arab Gulf countries. This paper addresses this gap by examining mobility power in Saudi Arabia.

The *Kafala* system in the Arab Gulf countries is a mechanism of the state mainly to control the mobility of migrants (e.g. Alsadiq and Wu, 2015; Hanieh, 2015; Rahman, 2018). Under this sponsorship system, migrants cannot change their employers but the latter can lay off migrants (by deportation) after paying a very modest compensation. Little is known about the role of the *Kafala* system as a mobility control mechanism and the dynamics that arise from it, such as labour escaping and concealed businesses known by *tasattur*.

Through a detailed case study of a firm in the construction sector undertaken in 2016-17, the paper shows the contradictions and the tensions that exist in the *Kafala* system. The argument focuses on the contradictions that arise from mobility-effort bargaining between capital and labour and how it is shaped by the state policies of *Kafala*.

The research sheds light on two key aspects. First, it is crucial to distinguish between two levels of *Kafala* control: state control and employer control. Second, the control of migrant labour mobility is not total since migrants are able to avoid the *Kafala* system through obtaining a free visa and seeking recourse to concealed businesses. It shows that mobility-effort bargaining is at the core of understanding labour-capital relations in Saudi Arabia. It can be argued that the dialectics of control and resistance between the state, firms and migrant labour have resulted in the emergence of informal forms of employment contracting (i.e. the free visa), which reduces both state and capital controls over migrants' mobility.

# **Power imbalances, labor policy continuity, and collective labor rights in Latin America: Chile in comparative perspective**

**Author: Pablo Pérez Ahumada**

In the recent decades, debates on labor policy and reform in Latin America have been frequent (Cook, 2007; Carnes, 2014). In Chile, these debates have revolved around the persistence of the collective labor regulations established by the dictatorial regime of Augusto Pinochet (1973-1990), articulated in the 1979 Labor Plan. Since its establishment, the Labor Plan regulations restricts collective bargaining to the firm level and undermine the right to strike by allowing employers to replace striking workers. It also imposes strong restrictions on unions' bargaining power by promoting the coexistence of multiple unions within the same firm and the formation of semi-regulated "bargaining groups" that can be formed regardless of whether the firm already has a union (Feres, 2009).

Since the return to democracy in 1990, workers have demanded the repealing of the 1979 regulations, and different center-left governments tried, without success, to dismantle them (e.g. reforms of 1990 – 1993 and 2000 – 2001) (Haagh, 2002; Duran-Palma, et al 2005; Cook, 2007; Carnes, 2014). In 2015 the socialist government of Michelle Bachelet (2014 – 2018) carried out the last attempt to reform these norms. Despite favorable political and institutional conditions—e.g. for the first time the ruling coalition had congressional majority, the last labor reform failed, like the previous ones, to repeal the collective labor laws established during the Pinochet dictatorship.

Why did the Bachelet labor reform fail to dismantle the regulations that since 1979 have undermined workers' collective rights? In this paper, I answer this question by focusing on the interaction between the employer peak association Confederation of Production and Commerce (CPC), the Workers Unitary Central (CUT), and the state throughout the legislative process that ended with the enactment of the new labor law (Law 20,940 of 2016). Drawing upon insights from the literature on class, collective action, and policy change (Silver, 2003; Cook, 2007; Korpi, 2008; Lawrence, 2014; Wright, 2015; Murillo, Ronconi, & Schrank, 2011), I show that the main factor accounting for labor policy continuity in Chile is the power imbalances between capital and labor. I show that this imbalance of power is expressed in two ways. First, in employers' ability to shape and protect their class-wide, cross-sectoral unity vis-à-vis the reformist government and, as a result of that, in their stronger capacity to influence the policymaking coordinately through the action of the CPC. Second, in the CUT's inability to overcome political and strategic disputes among different sectors of the labor movement (e.g. the dispute on whether confront the government through lobbying or mass mobilization).

In addition to using qualitative evidence (interviews with employers, state officers, workers, etc.), I test this argument by comparing the case of Chile with other Latin American countries where legislative changes successfully reversed neoliberal labor policies—e.g. Argentina and Uruguay in the 2000s. To do so, I draw on accounts of recent reform process and on quantitative data from ILO, the ICTWSS dataset (Visser, 2015) and the collective labor rights dataset constructed by Kucera and Sari (2018).

# Managing female labour in Saudi Arabian SMEs and the shifting role of females in Saudi society under the Nitaqat regime

**Authors: Saja Albelali, Steve Williams**

This research offers an important contribution to understanding the multiple experiences of female employees in a patriarchal society. Its specific focus is the shifting role of women in the Saudi Arabian labour market under the Nitaqat programme, the latest Saudisation initiative. The introduction of this programme in 2011 involved imposing quotas regarding the employment of Saudi nationals in the private sector, and has generated an increase in the number of female employees working in what was hitherto an almost exclusively male environment. Historically, culture influences gender roles and consequently the place for females in the labour market. In relation to this, Walby (1989), a dual system theorist, posits that within such patriarchal societies, it is important to understand the power of men in constructing highly gender-segregated cultures. However, Saudi women are gradually beginning to experience more open environments and these changes have inspired the current study into the management response to the increase in female labour in Saudi Arabian private companies. Thus, Bradley's (1999) approach, concerning gender and power relations in the workplace, is used to understand the experience of Saudi women and the shifting nature of their roles; a shift which in some ways challenges the 'norms' within patriarchal societies. Consequently, this original study, based on five detailed cases of private sector firms, enables us to explore the experiences of Saudi female employees in a sector where they had previously rarely worked, also with specific reference to how they are managed. Through the use of semi-structured interviews, this study generated rich, in-depth qualitative data from 26 female employees and human resource managers. To enrich these data, an ethnographic approach, using observation techniques, was used in two of the firms which had started to employ females after the introduction of Nitaqat. The research findings highlight various responses to female employment due to the nature of the business conducted and managerial priorities in each firm. The findings show that, in some cases, there are still boundaries to communication with female employees, thus limiting their opportunities to progress. Most importantly, though, this research provides insights into the variations in the levels of liberation evident among the female private sector employees, particularly how their workplace experiences had started to affect power relations, including them becoming less dependent on their male dominated families within what is historically a highly patriarchal society. This research thus makes an important contribution to existing work that has been undertaken on the feminization of employment and the implications for gender, power and the labour process in emerging economies (e.g. Walby, 2002; Williams et al 2013).

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# Old actors becoming ‘new actors’? The influence of retired members in union campaigns

**Author: Gabriella Alberti**

This presentation will focus on research which investigates how and why retired trade unionists are (re)collectivising in order to campaign for social justice for workers. The context is within one of the largest British trade unions, Unite and its community membership— a strategy for organising new trade union members who are not in the workplace. Unite Community encompasses people who are unemployed, retired, students, carer, but, in essence, the majority of the membership is made up of retirees—most of who have been active union members or social movement activists in the past.

The national Unite strategy begun in 2011 and has resulted in an additional 16,000 trade union members. Drawing on the individual experiences of members of Unite Community through in depth ‘story of self’ semi-biographical interviews (Merrill and West, 2009) we consider what activity is being undertaken by these members who are not in employment. What effect are they having on union campaigns and how does their activity link to the literature on ‘new actors’ in the employment relationship? Past research has indicated that the involvement of supporters that are external to the workplace may represent the risk to outsource the campaign (Alberti, 2016), whereas others claim that this form of community solidarity can offers benefits to workers (Fine, 2005, Prowse, et al., 2017, Rhomberg and Simmons, 2005). We consider these arguments, but also ask is it a mechanism to circumvent the legal restrictions relating to trade union activity? And, could it be the start of a new grassroots movement to assist in organising workers in the grey zones of work and employment?

Wider issues beyond these questions are probed in the interviews including the motivations of Unite Community members to undertake union organising in their communities, the sustainability of the Unite Community strategy, the issue of political factions on the functioning of UC branches, and the effectiveness of the campaigns in achieving both a higher profile and a new narrative for trade unions. Findings indicate that personal, geographical and historic differences among members and branches have an impact on the politics, vibrancy and nature of the Unite Community branches and on the type of people involved and the union organising activity undertaken. We also note from findings that there are issues with sustainability due to turnover of members, leader ‘burnout’, inter branch tensions and factionalism.

Mobilisation theory (Kelly, 1998) helps explain individual journeys to collectivisation through such concepts as cognitive liberation, the creation of a group social identity, the attribution of blame for a lack of social justice to wider bodies, and the ability of the branch leaders to frame their concerns into a coherent argument and campaigning agenda (Gall and Holgate, 2018, Darlington, 2018). But we also find that an analysis of the ‘other actors’ literature (see special edition on this topic in Heery and Frege, 2006, *British Journal of Industrial Relations*, 2006) helps to provide and understanding of how these ‘old actors’ (retired trade union members) can be transformed into ‘new actors’ and perhaps provide unions with a way of re-engaging retired members to remain or become active in future organising—particularly in the more precarious sections of the labour market where some groups of workers either lack industrial muscle to effect change, or are in (as yet) unorganised sections of the labour market.

The methodological approach has been qualitative and inductive. Using in-depth interviews, observation, and participation, the researchers have immersed themselves in the activities of the union in order to get a rich understanding both of what was said, but also what has been

done. As a result of expertise in trade unions and community organising, researchers have also acted as ‘sounding boards’ in discussions about direction and progress, and have taken part in training, presentations and workshops with Unite staff and UC members, as well as taken part in branch meetings over a six-year period.

In total, 50 interviews with lay members (in three branches in three different regions of the UK) were undertaken and 18 with Unite staff. In order to understand the purpose of the Unite Community initiative, interviewees also included Unite Community co-ordinators—the paid organisers in each of the union’s regions and three senior officials with responsibilities for Unite Community.

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# **Introducing young unemployed to the sobering reality of work: “Cooling out” in active labour market policies**

**Author: Lukas Alexander**

This paper focuses on “cooling out” in active labour market policies, a mechanism that lowers professional aspiration and aims at a quick integration into regular employment. So far, this mechanism has mainly been studied in the formal education sector by Clark (1960), Goffmann (1962, 1952), Carroll et al. (2016) and many other scholars. Andreas Walther (2015, 2007, 2003), however, has researched young people and their halting transition from school to apprenticeship. Profound investigation of “cooling out” in active labour market policies will contribute to a broader understanding of the mechanism itself and its ties to the Activation paradigm, which is a neoliberal tendency in governmental practices.

Institutional patterns on multiple scales including the individual experiences of participants in the policy are investigated through the Viennese training programme “Back to the future”. This programme offers transitional workplaces for young unemployed people, with the aim to activate them - prepare them for, and transfer them to, the first labour market. It is a perfect example of top-down policy integration, institutional cooperation and the interplay of Vienna’s regional labour market actors. Based on semi-structured interviews (1) with experts and participants of “Back to the future” a content analysis is conducted.

The first results indicate that the institutional structure around the program is quite hierarchical, yet interactive processes are present on all levels and the local organisations hold considerable liberty in the final implementation. Experts rely unquestionably on “cooling out” as a necessary mechanism to achieve labour market integration. However, individual professional preferences still seem to play an important role, which might mitigate negative long-term effects that a forced integration bears. The interviewed participants seem not to be aware of the passive and active forms of institutionalised “cooling out”, which are essential pillars of the respective policy. In fact, they report on escaping the mental pressure occurring in unemployment and regaining motivation and self-esteem through “Back to the Future”. The findings indicate rising pressure of the Activation paradigm within policies, which often go unnoticed.

(1) The interviews have been conducted for Young AduLLLt, a comparative research project with 15 partner institutions in 9 EU member states funded by Horizon 2020 for a period of three years (until February 2019). It investigates current Lifelong Learning (LLL) policies for young adults in Europe, using a wide-ranging mixed methods approach. The main goals are: understanding the relationship between LLL-policies and social conditions and how it influences the life course, analyzing LLL-policies in its´ frames (institutional, structural, and individual) and identifying best practice policies. (<http://www.young-adulllt.eu/>)

## **The principle of achievement as driving force of class fragmentation**

**Authors: Carina Altreiter, Jörg Flecker, Ulrike Papouschek**

Axel Honneth (2003) defines the logic of achievement as guiding principle for recognition in modern capitalist societies. Achievement – as meant in the sense of work – was enforced by the Bourgeoisie to distinguish itself from the ‘unproductive’ aristocracy in the early stages of capitalism. The principle of achievement as measurement for economic but also symbolic recognition is vague and has been subject to struggles in which the ruling classes remain in a favourable position. However, the successful establishment of a meritocratic order is also linked to the ruling class’s ability to spread achievement as moral principle amongst the dominated class. As several authors have shown (Sennett/Cobb 1993; Lamont 2000; Altvater/Mahnkopf 1999) the working-class itself has incorporated it as it turned working hard into a cornerstone of class pride. Referring to Vester et al. (2017) one could argue that the principle of achievement functions as ‘integrative ideology’ (Integrationsideologie) which sets the framework for a moral order applied in the struggles for recognition and the distribution of power and resources.

The paper draws on data from a research project on solidarity formations in Austria between 2016 and 2019 to explore how in different fractions of the dominated class – ranging from more affluent white-collar employees to precarious manual workers – the principle of achievement is shaping solidary orientations. Based on 40 qualitative interviews it shows how the principle of achievement is coined differently and how it structures interviewees’ perceptions of who should get what and why (van Oorschot 2001).

Socio-economic but also political changes within recent years have put increasing pressure on the dominated class, especially at the lower and lower middle end (Castel 2008, Decker et al 2014, Heitmeyer/Anhut 2001). Yet, the state is seemingly less able and willing to mitigate and compensate for the consequences. The interviews show that the logic of achievement as moral norm of the working classes can be turned against ‘others’ perceived to be withdrawing from these forces. Long-term unemployed people, foreigners but also parts of a younger generation represent groups that are imagined to have eluded from the normative imperative of subordination to market forces or do not share common values. Aggression and hostility towards ‘others’ is not only fuelled by one’s own positional suffering (especially in the lower class segment) but also because it is perceived as violation of moral values of the class (Altreiter 2019).

However, this mode of exclusion is not as consistent as it might seem. First, interviews show that the logic of achievement also gives room for interpretation creating an inclusiveness for those submitting themselves to the norms (e.g. hard-working refugees). It could be argued that here we find aspects of class solidarity, which is based on achievement but does not necessarily apply ethnical boundaries – contrary to the current political discourse. Second, we can observe a tension between the logic of achievement and the logic of need, which applies different criteria of deservingness and can challenge the scope and foundations of interviewees’ solidary orientations.

## **Call centre workers: loyalty, exit or... voice?**

**Author: Paulo Alves**

Under the rubble of Fordism, following the emergence of a new stage of capitalism, which is the response of the system to the crisis started in the 70s, a new economic activity emerged and expanded: the call centres, which have concentrated an important share of the employment worldwide, creating what Huws (2001, 2003) calls a "cybertariat". Its expansion has been fuelled by the neoliberal globalization, the service sector growth, the widespread diffusion of ICT and by the productive restructuring that features the new regime of accumulation that Harvey (1989) calls "flexible accumulation", which strongly reinforces the destructive nature of capital (Mészáros, 1997). This activity crosses the brave new world of ICT and working conditions that are typical of the past. There is evidence of a deep "real degradation of the virtual work" (Antunes and Braga, 2009). In fact, contrary to the post-Fordism theses, these workplaces reveal the continued application of the principles of the scientific management's despotic regime of Taylor and Ford. On the other hand, call centres are the symbol of the business organization model of the current stage of capitalism. A network organization consisting of three levels, standing these centres at the third, providing services to companies located in the others. In this logic, the rationalization of costs, through the widespread practice of subcontracting involving a generalized precariousness, is of great importance. But the changes under the flexible accumulation were not only punctuated by an objective character. Through the ideological sphere the subjective dimension of workers was reached, with the apology of individualism to encourage competition between them. New hegemonic logics of domination are also implemented alongside with the old coercive ones and a newspeak arises in order to produce the consent of domination by the workers, leading them to cooperate with the reproduction of capital, as evidenced by Burawoy (1979). Under these conditions, what is the place for collective action in the call centres? Although the logics of domination implemented hinder it, through the production of conformism that leads to loyalty, and despite the individual exit attitude that prevails, hence the high levels of turnover that exist in this industry in Portugal, collective action is possible. And we have an important example of that in Portugal that we will analyse in this paper, based on a case study in the utilities sector. For it to take place it is necessary that the conditions that were set out by O'Sullivan and Turner (2013) are present: the existence of a common sense of injustice; to target a clear and identifiable entity, making an objective distinction between "we" and "them"; and develop the confidence in the group, with "us" taking precedence over "me". Furthermore, it is essential that the group see effectiveness in the action and that someone predisposes to be a spokesman of the group. However, these are necessary but not sufficient conditions. The presence of a militant union in the workplace that mobilize the workers and the communication face-to-face between workers and the union is crucial.

# Local politics and workers' organisational practices in the waste collection and recycle chain in Argentina and Chile

**Authors: Maurizio Atzeni, Lucas Cifuentes, Fernando Duran-Palma, Pablo Ghigliani**

This paper aims to map and compare the different forms of employment relations and workers organisation existing in the waste collection and recycle chain across metropolitan areas in Argentina and Chile. It has been rightly argued that what makes a focus on this production network important is the existence, in the provision of this basic urban life service, of multiple contractual relations that, crossing the boundary between formality and informality, are functional to the accumulation dynamics of capitalism (Rainnie et al. 2015). However the role of left political parties, trade unions and workers organisations and of class based networks and alliances in influencing local states politics and actions in shaping business structures and employment relations within the production network remain relatively unexplored, particularly from a comparative perspective. We believe that a detailed analysis of workers' organisational practices in the context of state intervention within the operational mechanisms of the waste production chain can help to highlight the concrete ways in which labour agency can become constituent rather than passive element in the chain's power relations configuration. By privileging this focus the paper builds and extends on existing research on the labour process and workplace dimension in global production networks as recently introduced within the ILPC debates (Taylor et al. 2015) and in the labour regime literature within development studies (Mezzadri and Fan Lulu 2018). The paper is based on an ongoing qualitative fieldwork in different urban areas of Chile (Santiago, Valparaiso, Valdivia) and Argentina (Greater Buenos Aires and Greater La Plata) and is based on interviews with trade unions delegates, members of workers cooperatives and social movements organisations involved in the waste chain and political institutional actors at local level. The analysis of existing literature has been used to integrate findings from the fieldwork.

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Mezzadri, A. and Fan, L. (2018) 'Classes of Labour' at the Margins of Global Commodity Chains in India and China, *Development and change*, 49: 4, 1034-1063.

# **Work Restructuring in Global Value Chains: The Emergence of Hegemonic Despotic Factory Regime in Pakistan's Apparel Industry**

**Author: Muhammad Ayaz**

Existing research on global value chains (GVC) is focused on inter-firm structures and relationships. There is lack of attention being paid to what goes on within the firm and how it impacts the operations of GVC. This has resulted in complete ignorance of organization of work and employment relationship at intra firm-level that has a strong influence on the value creation and appropriation in value chains (Rainnie et al, 2011). To fill this gap, labour process theory (LPT) provide complementary resources to illuminate the process of value creation and value appropriation in GVCs (Newsome et al, 2015; Thompson & Vincent, 2010).

This paper focuses on the emergence of a hegemonic despotic regime in response to structural pressures arising out from global apparel value chain. The study is based on a qualitative case study (Yin, 1989) of garment manufacturing organizations in Pakistan. With the removal of production quotas and the resultant intensification of competition, there has been an attempt from manufacturing organizations to change the factory regime to increase control over labour process: from 'piece rate regime' employing a self-employed group of male stitchers working autonomously to 'salaried regime' employing salaried female stitchers working on a line-based (Fordist) system of manufacturing. This was needed to maintain and improve the position in global apparel value chain. This change was resisted by male workers and eventually it was not successful as it was not adopted by the industry at large. However, the introduction of reserve army of labour i.e. female workers and closures of many manufacturing firms created pressures on male workers who finally agreed to make some concessions in fear of losing their jobs. This resulted in emergence of a hegemonic despotic factory regime (Burawoy, 1983) where employers have more control over effort and mobility power (Smith, 2006). The analysis compares these different factory regimes and explain how mobility and effort power were managed by situating it in broader politico-economic context. This is because labour process does not operate in vacuum; rather it is enmeshed in the political economy surrounding it. Workplace is embedded in dynamics of globalization, global value chains, and micro level forces such as organizational structuring of labour markets and work. The embeddedness of factory regime in particular global and local context shaped its character and hence impacted outcomes for labour in different ways.

This paper contributes to existing research by bringing together the complementary insights of GVC and LPT literature and sheds light on the interplay of global-local processes of value creation and appropriation. Generally, GVC literature does not acknowledge the structured conflict of interest inherent in capital-labour relations across the entire GVC (Selwyn, 2013) and hence fail to provide adequate explanation of uneven economic development in different regions and national economies. Bringing in the insights from LPT, which focuses on capital-labour struggles at workplace, would help explain better the process of value creation and appropriation in GVCs and its implication for firms and workers in developing countries as bulk of manufacturing in GVCs is centred in those countries.

## **It gets better with age (?): AI and the Labour Process in old and new gig-economy firms**

**Author: Adam Badger**

The growth of the so-called ‘gig-economy’ has been meteoric throughout much of the world. From bedrooms and basements in the Valley, these firms have become prominent players in the global economy, taking in millions of workers world-wide who engage with them as paid labour across a spectrum; from full-time work, to top-up money or rainy day fund building. Whilst critical academic and policy insights have taken snapshots of these organisations (and the lived experiences of work they engender) crystallised at a specific place and time, little has been done to establish patterns of change, or the impacts of these changes on a day-to-day level.

Based on nine-months of covert ethnographic fieldwork working as a cycle courier for two platforms in London, it looks to address two key questions. Firstly, how does the labour process change over time within a single company? This takes into account the barrage of updates to the platform, as well as the worker app, and apps used by other people in the business (such as customers and restaurants), in addition to the increasing sense of precarity that ensues as awareness’s grow of the smart’ness’ of the AI being harnessed. Secondly, it seeks to address the qualitative differences in the labour process of working for a small company, and for the market leader – a significantly bigger and older firm.

Whilst one company makes small, rapid changes that require workers to adjust labour processes rapidly, the other is clearly consolidating its technologies, bringing all of its other services in-house (such as shift booking, payments, metrics, etc.) and in-so-doing monopolising its own data ecosystem. Findings highlight the critical role of technologies in dictating the labour process, whilst also bringing to the forefront key events (in regulation environments, in the courts, and in response to worker resistance) that become fundamental to the way in which the AI is then programmed to orchestrate specific outcomes – again having massive impacts on the labour process as experienced by the worker.

Finally, it seeks to also bring awareness to the fact that many workers in the gig-economy are juggling multiple apps across multiple devices. Here palimpsests of algorithms, urban space, and bodies overlap and intermesh as workers are required to intuitively learn the limits of the AI of each firm to maximise their earning potential. Similarly, they must remain always aware of the different labour processes required to satisfy each platform, and be equipped to switch effortlessly between them in order to not risk ‘de-activation’.

## **Public policies, Adverse Incorporation and the logic of *network capital*: evidences from two production networks in Southern Italy**

**Authors: Francesco Bagnardi, Giuseppe D'Onofrio, Lidia Greco**

The paper analyzes the role of public policies addressing local firms' *adverse incorporation* within global production networks (GPNs). In two case studies - the tomato and the textile-clothing GPNs in Puglia, Southern Italy - the adverse incorporation of local suppliers has led to workforce's segmentation, employment's informalization and generalized deterioration of working conditions. At odds with part of the literature that consider public actors as mere facilitators of GPNs, our case studies document public policies that genuinely attempt to curtail the most dramatic consequence of adverse incorporation on local labour. However, we contend that such policy interventions fail on a number of grounds: *analytically* they focus on the single firms rather than on the network, neglecting therefore the structural causes of informalization and segmentation; *strategically* they rely on market mechanisms, ignoring the power relations within the GPNs through which down-ward pressures are passed onto local suppliers and their workers; and *politically*, policies overlook the potentially progressive role that a less vulnerable labour could play in the processes of formalization and upgrading. The paper brings new evidence on the potential role of the state in the processes of adverse incorporation. Also, it sheds new lights on *the logic of network capital*, in which asymmetrical relations lead local suppliers to activate processes of informalization and workers' segmentation. At the same time, policy failures demonstrate both the role of power relations within the network and the importance of considering labour an active agent that concur to shape the production network in which it is incorporated.

# **Is the model of Activity and Employment Cooperatives transferrable anywhere? About the possibilities and limits of social protection of freelance workers**

**Author: Flora Bajard**

When considering the Grey-Zones of employment (GZ), many researches often refer the latter to precariousness, because the blurring frontiers between wage-earning statuses and self-employment is thought as a regression in comparison with the standard employment relationship (see for e.g.: Bisom-Rapp and Coiquaud 2017, p. 2). However, the GZ may also constitute sources of experimentations of new working conditions and employment relationships. In this perspective, this abstract focuses on a particular form of "grey zone" of employment: "Coopérative d'Activité et d'Emploi" in French (CAE), namely Activity and Employment Cooperatives (Corsani et Bureau 2014; Veyer and Sangiorgio 2006 : 92; Lamarche, T., Bodet, C., Grenier, N. (de), 2013).

CAE gather different professional activities together: each worker then consider him/herself as a freelance worker, because he/she works alone in autonomy and dedicates him/herself to his/her personal project. However, they all share the same SIRET number (company registration number) and their individual sales revenue generate a common sale revenue. On a strictly juridical point of view, these freelance workers are all employees of the CAE, and consequently, they may benefit the social protection that exists in France for employees: pension, invalidity, etc. In France, these "autonomous employees" (Grégoire et al.) are officially called "salaried-entrepreneurs".

In spite of many political and organizational differences between CAE, all of them aim to re-create a continuity in worker's careers. As such, social protection is a major issue, since it constitutes the basis of such model: the CAE system actually consists in "swifiting" the salaried status in order to give freelance workers salaried working conditions. This is what this communication aims to focus on: to what extent are the social protection system and "swift" of the salaried status major elements of such organizations ? To what extent are these experiences, based on the French and Belgian welfare-state, transferrable to other countries?

In-depth studies on different French cooperatives in the south of France, as well as the European cooperative Smart, may then be compared with other worker-owners cooperatives. Other worker-owners cooperatives at a worldwide level will not be investigated in depth in the current framework, however we will try to set a wider landscape of cooperative systems, in order to initiate such a comparison.

Based on an empirical enquiry where both discourses and practices are taken into account, this communication will pay attention to three dimensions:

- -the political and economic rules of different CAE in France
- -the goals and cause promoted by these organizations
- -individual discourses and practices (individual working and living conditions, social and political representations, trajectories...).

# **Sectorial wage inequality in Australia: The role of unions and the Industrial Relations landscape**

**Authors: Ruth Ballardie, Richard Gough; James Doughney**

Rising wage inequality despite rising productivity is a feature of late capitalism in the West since the 1970's, however the underlying causes of this decoupling are much disputed. While a significant proportion is accounted for by an increased share of productivity growth going to capital owners, a more significant factor in the decoupling of wages from productivity growth relates to the growth of inequality within the distribution of wages across wage earning groups.

Neo-classical explanation of growing wage inequality argues that more complex technologies have led to a growing demand for skilled employees, who are paid more than relatively unskilled workers who are less in demand. However, a Kaleckian political economy approach rejects this, arguing for the role of bargaining power of unions and related political and institutional issues in determining levels of wage compensation. Emerging empirical research support this explanation over a technology-driven account. This directly relates economic inequality to an underpinning political inequality.

Using publically available economic data sets, this paper maps longitudinal changes in the levels of wage inequality across three major private sector industries in Australia - financial services, retail and manufacturing. Specifically, it examines the evolution of the wage and labour shares in these industries in relation to median wages and productivity growth since the early 1990s, and growth in inequality within the distribution of wages. The comparison of these three industries reveals somewhat different trends regarding to these issues. Informed by Kalecki's approach to functional shares and wage distribution, the paper adopts an institutional as distinct from neo-classical theoretical approach to explaining growing inequality. Growing inequality arises from factors such as declining levels in union density and related bargaining power in each industry, the declining extent of enterprise bargaining, the declining levels of minimum wages and the shift in power to employers in Australia since the early 1990s. From this analysis a clearer picture emerges with regard to the underlying processes related to the decoupling of wages from productivity growth, shifting functional shares in favour of employers and the growing inequality in the wage distribution in the case of Australia.

## **At the far ends of GPNs: Child labour in hybrid cottonseed production in Western India**

**Authors: Muneeb Banday, Ernesto Noronha, Saikat Chakraborty, Premilla D'Cruz**

The move from state-led import substituting industrialization in favour of export-oriented development induced many developing countries to join global production networks (GPNs) instead of building their own value chain from scratch. The assumption was that this move would ensure that social upgrading outcomes follow economic upgrading. It is in this context that we study the hybrid cottonseed production industry in the Western Indian state of Gujarat where the employment of child workers has been a persistent concern. The hybrid cottonseed industry itself often gets subsumed under the purview of cotton production despite having its own separate local chains. We therefore focus on the organization of work in the hybrid cottonseed production industry itself. Further, while child labour in cotton production has been a focus of the academic literature as well as of global campaigns against their employment, the issue of child labour in GPNs has received little attention. This is particularly so with regard to the hybrid cottonseed production industry. Our study aimed at understanding the latter with particular attention to the conditions created by the value chains and the social structures, which facilitate the employment of child workers.

Our paper draws from a large multi-source multi-method study on child labour in the hybrid cottonseed production industry. We used survey instruments (113 farms, 569 workers) to assess the prevalence of child labour and the nature of employment as well as conducted in-depth interviews with 24 stakeholders including local NGO workers, employers, middle persons, local investigators and parents. Simultaneously, qualitative interviews were conducted with 36 child workers. Our data reveal that the positioning of workers at the far end of the production networks, involved in low cost, tedious, repetitive and seasonal agricultural work, as well as the social categorizations of the workers, viz. their migrant, tribal and child identities, in the local geographies create the conditions for the exploitative employment of child labour. The child workers reported frequent bullying, harassment and physical violence. Apart from depriving the children of proper schooling and affecting their health, employment in these production networks leads to inter-generational transfer of poverty. Further, employment in hybrid cottonseed production falls in the realm of the informal economy thus limiting the nature as well as scope of regulations available to monitor child labour. These conditions not only make the social upgrading of workers impossible to achieve but also push them into institutionalized invisibility, relegating them to the far end of global production networks. Finally, the study also attends to the constrained agency exercised by workers in their attempts to subvert the exploitative work conditions.

## **Narrating life and labour. Fragmented lives of working women in Croatia**

**Authors: Valerija Barada, Jaka Primorac, Marija Šarić**

Researching labour conditions and lives of working men and women has only recently regained interest in Croatian sociology. This absence can be explained by the burden of this topics' ideological saturation stemming from the socialist Yugoslav era. Research interest in post-socialist times shied away from the stigmatized issue of labour and was reinstated mainly due to the economic crisis and deterioration of workers' rights and labour market segmentation. The post-socialist and post-transitional Croatia is undergoing a thorough systemic transformation of human and labour conditions. In such societal framework, women's working lives prove to be an empirically and theoretically generous topic, since they can be used as a showcase of both gender specific and broader social changes.

It can be claimed that women get social recognition by participating in the labour market, which establishes paid work as a legitimate frame for investigating the complexities of their social position. Used as an encompassing concept that does not even out women's social positions, work biographies explain both the similarities and differences of female social statuses. Women have been given and have gained access to the labour market, however exploration of their individual life and work trajectories shows that more complex phenomena come to the fore. Namely, Croatian women, as they narrate their lives, gain social status primarily through family status. The accounts of working women in Croatia show that despite differences in their socio-economic status and/or educational attainment their lives are still shaped by structural constraints of family, and often married life.

The data for this presentation was obtained through mixed methods research project "Social stratification in Croatia: structural and subjective aspects", and focuses on narrative interviews conducted with 25 women on their work biographies. Participants were sampled in two waves: 1) in a national-wide questionnaire potential interviewees stated their willingness to participate in the qualitative part of the project; 2) using the snowball method to complement the first wave. The sampling criteria included employed women older than 30 years of age with substantial labour market experience. Research sample's maximum variation was ensured in both the social and labour position of women, as well as their regional dispersion, since the interviewees come from nine cities of all historical, but culturally different Croatian regions. Additionally, interviewees were dispersed over age cohorts (30-40, 41-50, 51-60, over 60).

The interview protocol was adjusted from McAdams's (1993) technique of nuclear episodes, and consisted of three parts. At the beginning women retold their life story focusing on different life episodes; after that they were asked to single out the most positive and most negative life events. Additionally, interviewees were asked to retell their work biography, finishing off with their class self-positioning. This sampling and interview method have ensured grasping of the (fragmented) specificities of women's lives and labour in their complexity.

# **Contradictions in the culture of solidarity at Amazon as a challenge to intermediary trade unions**

**Author: Georg Barthel**

Digitalization is challenging the institutions of industrial relations by creating new business sectors and changing old ones. Amazon is regarded as an avant-garde of digital capitalism (Nachtwey/Staab 2015) that has been restructuring the retail sector. Its dominant position in online retailing is based on a network of warehouses, where it applies digital Taylorism to control the workforce and ensure high productivity at low costs. With its despotic working conditions and its refusal of trade unions Amazon is posing a massive challenge to collective action of workers. It's also the scene of a long struggle of workers in Germany revealing some limits of 'intermediary trade unions' (Müller-Jentsch 1982) who are part of the "regime of production" (Burawoy 1985) guaranteeing the workers' rights as well as the production and obscuring of surplus-value.

I want to discuss some of the challenges and efforts to deal with them based on an analysis of the "Culture of Solidarity" (Fantasia 1988) which has been constituted in the struggle. This concept makes it possible to analyze class-consciousness as a dynamic category in relation to its embodiment in practices, meanings and institutions. It allows to grasp the contradictions and mediations between transformative and reformist moments of the strike movement.

I would like to discuss two preliminary findings from an ongoing co-research and active participatory observation in the struggle at Amazon in Leipzig (Germany) I have been supporting for three years now.

The presentation will highlight, among other things, contradictions between the workers' lived experience of work and the union's framing of it. The former in part fundamentally challenges the organisation of work, which is expressed in various forms of everyday resistance. The trade union ver.di, on the other hand, first called for a collective agreement transforming the workers' criticism into issues of pay and working hours. Only recently, ver.di has tried to integrate the main grievances of the workers' lived experience in a different draft of a collective agreement.

The second challenge that I would like to put emphasis on is the contradiction between the national intermediary trade unions and the transnationality of the production process. While all warehouses in Europe are operating as part of one digital service factory, the culture of solidarity is being structured and thus fragmented by organizational as well as national borders and legal regulations. In my paper I will discuss the attempts of trade unions and grass root networks to overcome these barriers.

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## **A Shifting Paradigm Within Decent Work: Firms and Communities**

**Author: Gracelin Baskaran**

The International Labour Organization has adopted a list of Decent Work Indicators, that include ten criterion, directly corresponding to the four basic pillars of the Decent Work Agenda – rights at work, full and productive employment, social protection and promotion of social dialogue. Whilst the 2012 Marikana Massacre, which left 44 people dead, appeared to point to a shortcoming in the fourth pillar, social dialogue, the reality is that collective bargaining has been in the mining sector for decades – and it’s been strong. What the Massacre did reveal, is that many of the problems facing the mine that appear to be classic employer/employee challenges, are not at all of that nature. Issues of housing, education public health, and employment, are, under normal circumstances, addressed by the state. But because mines are sitting on tribal land, the expectation is that they will play the role of firm and state; firms, on the other hand, have pushed back by stating that they fulfill their corporate social responsibility (CSR) and taxation requirements, and thus, should be exempt of such duties. This disagreement about responsibility has led to mounting tension and increasing violence; at Anglo American Platinum (AAP)’s Twickenham Mine, demands from the community to employ 5,000 locals have gone unmet and has led to ongoing tripping of electrical cables (which can cut off electricity to workers underground) and threats of an armed takeover. While most organizational behavior, industrial relations, and political economy research addresses the challenge of labour through the lens of employee, employer and union, this paper will argue that the lens should be shifted to that of a firm and community.

## **Embracing care identity within capitalist division of labour: Desegregation in Slovene long-term care**

**Authors: Branko Bembič, Aleksandra Kanjuo-Mrčela**

Affective relations and embracing the need and responsibility to care for others are often considered to be in opposition to hegemonic masculinity. Accordingly, defining care identity in feminine terms is said to pose a major obstacle for a stronger involvement of men in care work. Writing care out of men's lives is in turn perceived as an important hurdle for fighting the oppression and exploitation of women. In short, strengthening the string between affective relations involved in care and socially accepted forms of masculinity should enhance gender equality.

Our contribution puts to test this “identity” grounded argument. Our approach is informed by Marxist conceptualisation of division of labour and feminist theories of reproductive labour which enable us to capture both nurturant care that is inherently relational (i.e. involving a face-to-face relationship with those cared for) as well as nonnurturant care occupations (e.g. cleaning) that may not be relational at all.

We explore the following research questions. How do male care workers cope with the demands of affective relations entailed in their work in face of constraints posed by the model of dominant masculinity? What are the actual trends in gender segregation in the Slovene care occupations? What impact does desegregation of work in Slovene long-term care have on female care workers?

Our study is based on the examination of the statistical data and fourteen interviews with care workers and management representatives in one public and one private long-term care facilities in Slovenia. The interviews offer little evidence that male carers experience problems with embracing the allegedly feminine qualities associated with nurturing care, such as empathy, care for the others and emotional intimacy. The evidence of negative social sanctions of male carers' career choice is rather slim as well. However, statistical data suggest that segregation is declining only in nurturant, but not in nonnurturant care jobs. As growing importance of educational credentials transforms relational aspects of care work into technical skills, the capitalist division of labour increasingly separates nurturant from certain nonnurturant care occupations with former being gradually desegregated while the latter incurring even stronger gender segregation. To be sure, due to understaffing of long-term care facilities, low-waged and almost exclusively female nonnurturant care workers shoulder a large part of nurturing care work they are neither formally assigned to nor paid for. Instead, they are awarded only with a moral recognition of the importance of their work – a caring identity.

The observed pattern of desegregation of nurturant care scarcely advances emancipation of women. Turning management of affective relations into a technical skill indeed makes it readily accepted by men, but only at the cost of leaving to women the drudgery of nonnurturant care work compensated by an unpaid “caring identity”. Important question remains to be addressed: why does the line of division of labour run along the gender divide?

# **Beneficial constraints in lean times: A re-assessment of the German Diversified Quality Production**

**Author: Chiara Benassi**

“Beneficial constraints” were at the origin of the German Diversified Quality Production model: Collective bargaining agreements, strict employment protection legislation and strong labor representation at workplace limited the ability of management to dismiss workers or hire on cheap contracts, forcing them to invest in training and technology in order to increase productivity and to compress labor costs. Skilled workers and their works councils pushed for the implementation of a work organization characterized by teamwork, task rotation and autonomy, which required a broad skill base and employment stability. This work organisation constituted an alternative to Taylorism and, later on, Toyotism (Kern and Schumann 1984; Sorge and Streeck 1989; Streeck 1991).

Since then, much has changed. With the erosion of industrial relations institutions, manufacturing employers have increasingly hired on cheap nonstandard contracts and externalised production segments and industrial services to cheaper subcontractors outside collective agreements (Benassi 2016; Doellgast and Greer 2007); furthermore, production work is organised along the principles of rationalisation and standardisation characterising Fordism and Toyotism alike (Springer 1999; Juergens 2004).

This article looks at large automotive employers, who have adopted a lean work organisation even though IR institutions in the workplace have not dramatically changed since the Eighties. This is at odd with the expectation that lean work organisation can be implemented only under weak IR institutions – how does lean work organisation under institutional constraints look like? And can institutional constraints be beneficial to lean manufacturing systems?

Empirical evidence relies on interviews with 43 interview partners including HR managers, works councillors, union representatives and employer representatives in the German automotive industry, site visits and participant observation in a two-day employer meeting. Findings suggest a mixed picture. On the one hand, work is routinised and the quality control function is clearly separated from manual work on the line. On the other hand, codetermination still influences fundamental aspects of work organisation, which contribute to greater employees’ involvement in processes of continuous improvement such as the implementation of reward systems for individual improvement suggestions and generous team discussion time.

Most of all, codetermination still makes sure that companies have “redundant capacities” available. First, as works council have codetermination on the number of apprentices, qualified workers end up on the assembly line because there are not enough skilled positions. These ‘overqualified’ workers on the assembly line are fundamental for internally flexible teams, which are a crucial element of lean production. Furthermore, works councils bargain that the number of team members is higher than the number of work stations: in this way, they maintain a fluid production process and ensure that supervisors and experienced workers can train newly arrived team members and work on the assembly line only in case of quality problems.

These findings suggest not only that the beneficial constraints of DQP are compatible with lean production; but also that the deriving ‘redundant capacities’, which would technically be considered as ‘waste’ in lean production systems, ultimately benefit the latter.

# **Out of sight out of mind: The challenge of externalisation for industrial manufacturing unions in Germany and Italy**

**Authors: Chiara Benassi, Lisa Dorigatti**

Vertical disintegration and work externalisation have fundamentally challenged the traditional representative and bargaining structures of the labour movement in Western democracies. In the Fordist era workers' solidarities were built within the boundaries of vertically integrated companies and mainly represented through the organisational form of industrial unions (Hyman 1999). While union structures have remained, to a large extent, similar, the use of external work arrangements has challenged the ability of unions to represent and organise workers along the value chain (Doellgast and Greer 2007; Bernhardt et al. 2018).

Scholars in the field of sociology of work and industrial relations have therefore conducted extensive research on how old and new forms of solidarity can be (re)built in order to resist the precarisation and fragmentation of work (Alberti et al. 2018; Doellgast et al. 2018). They have shown that traditional institutional power resources often fall short at supporting collective bargaining along the value chain (Pulignano et al. 2015; Doellgast et al. 2018), so unions need to innovate their strategies and develop new power resources in order to represent workers along the value chain (Ibsen and Tapia 2017).

However, unions have not always demonstrated commitment in representing peripheral workers and their strategies have varied across sectors and workplaces. While national and sectoral level studies point at the role of ideological orientation (Marino 2015; Dorigatti 2017) or of unions' need to prevent the decline of membership and mobilisation potential (Frege and Kelly 2004), we contribute to this debate by pointing at the – so far almost neglected - role of the differences within the 'labour market periphery' in terms of work arrangements, skills and tasks.

Our research relies on site visits and interviews with HR managers and union representatives in two manufacturing MNCs in Italy and Germany (2014-17). By comparing unions' responses to external work arrangements (agency work and subcontracting), we found that union engagement depends on the type of tasks performed, in particular how 'far' external workers are from what is perceived to be the core of the companies' production process, while institutional resources support different degrees of success in regulating external work arrangements. Thus, while supporting institutionalist perspective on union strategies (Doellgast et al. 2018), our findings point at the value of adding a labour process perspective to the debate. Second, they suggest that processes of work externalisation challenge unions not only because they lack institutional resources to regulate such processes and their outcomes on workers, but also because they question solidarities developed within the framework of industrial unionism, strengthening 'dormant' divisions within unions' representation domain and particular between 'core' and 'peripheral' workers.

# **Formulating Local Activism: Politics of Worker Opposition in Global Garment Production Networks**

**Author: Safak Tartanoglu Bennett**

The role of worker activism to reshape the global production networks has gained increased attention in academic research. While the GPN (global production networks) approach provides an analytical framework for exploring labour agency as a key dimension of contestation, there is still a need to discover the experiences of workers as an agent at local, national and international levels with further research in different countries.

In the studies of labour activism and collective action, general discussions have focused on the importance of mobilisation theory. Recent contributions to the theory have come from scholars (Gall and Holgate, 2018; Kirk, 2018; Holgate et al., 2018) when they discussed the sustainability of mobilisation in the long term, also pointing out the importance of leadership and presenting a more detailed account of alternative trajectories of worker opposition which are more prevalent in global production networks.

The garment industry is a typical example of labour intensive and buyer driven value chains with a weak collective action tradition and limited access to traditional representation mechanisms of workers. Under these conditions, workers' action is appearing in new forms and their interests are represented by different channels. Worker opposition might be shaped and catalysed by alternative organisations in different countries according to the politics of worker representation. In this context it is also important to analyse and discover how the workplace grievances are represented in different political contexts.

Turkey plays an important role in global garment production and constitutes a typical example of a supplier country to the production network with low labour costs, weakened associational power of workers and limited potential of labour agency. This research seeks to address the local mobilisation dynamics and collective actions of garment workers with a specific case from Turkey. It analyses the emergence worker opposition in Bravo textile factory which was a supplier for global brands such as Zara, Mango and Next based in Istanbul. 150 workers from the factory demanded their wage and severance payments after the sudden closure of the factory in July 2016. They have been supported by the local union and Clean Clothes Campaign Turkey in the legal process and started a collective action targeting the consumption/purchasing power of the public to damage the reputation of the mentioned global brands. As a result of the worker mobilisation and also responsibilities of the global brands as being part of the Global Framework Agreement they have agreed to pay a limited part of the wages and severance payments and the workers have stopped their actions for this moment. Using semi-structured and unstructured interviews with workers, local activists, NGOs and union leaders, this research aims to explore whether mobilisation is developing in the current situation of workers, its potential to transform into a long term labour movement in the specific conditions and the distinctive tensions between local and international actors to represent workers' interests in the specific political context.

## **Dutch and German works councils compared. Similarities and differences**

**Authors: Annette van den Berg, Yolanda Grift, Sarai Sapulete, Wolfram Brehmer, Martin Behrens, Arjen van Witteloostuijn**

Industrial relations world-wide are most often studied at the national level, but at the same time there is a stream of literature dealing with comparing and classifying the organisation of businesses and work across different countries, whereby Germany and the Netherlands are always situated in the same country cluster. German and Dutch works councillors are both endowed with information rights, consultation rights, and the right of consent, giving them veto power in a range of social issues. However, given the unique institutional features of each nation state (as stressed by Hyman), there are reasons to question this apparent resemblance between the two countries.

In this study a comparison between the German and Dutch works councils (WCs) at establishment level is made using information about the actual practices and informal relationships that characterise employee representation in German and Dutch private sector organisations (above 50 employees), to discover the similarities and differences between the two, in terms of institutions, processes and outcomes. Using a unique large sample containing information from approximately 1,000 German and 500 Dutch works councillors on a wide range of issues the black box of employee representation is opened with a focus on the actors, their mutual relationships, procedures and core activities.

By doing so, we follow the approach by the sociologists Dufour and Hege (2013), who argue that successful workplace representation does not follow exclusively or a priori from their legal rights in their national context. Representatives need to be well equipped to perform their tasks, which could be derived from their legal prerogatives but could also stem from local support, both by management and by rank and file. They need to be given time off work, access to training and other facilities such as external advisors. Different levels of influence rather stem from sociological processes regarding the worker representatives: their relationships internally, with their constituencies, with management, and with unions,

The conclusion is clear. Even though Dutch and German works councils are both endowed with strong legal rights, their functioning at establishment level shows more differences than similarities. On the whole, Dutch WCs seem to operate in a more cooperative way and more in agreement with management than German WCs, who in turn are much closer connected to trade unions and to their rank and file. Especially, three aspects need further exploration and explanation. First, both countries differ in their assessment of the exchanged information between WCs and management compared to the frequent communication they have. Second, the classification of negotiations with the management as informal is not in line with the trust relationship being judged negatively by one third of the establishments. Lastly, the general feeling of WCs that the management does not consult them at all does not match one-to-one with the perceived say and influence WCs say they have.

## **Varieties of precarity in Europe: An empirical analysis of different types of precarity in comparative perspective**

**Authors: Ioulia Bessa, Christiana Ierodiakonou**

The paper focuses on the concept of precarity, whose prevalence has massively proliferated the past years in academic and public policy debates. Yet, the term remains theoretically fragmented (Della Porta et al., 2015) and empirically under-investigated (e.g. Standing, 2011, 2014). Consistent with Puar (2012) and Nielsen and Rossiter (2015), the current paper argues that precarity is more than simply financial and contractual vulnerability that extant research tends to focus on (Rubery et al, 2018; Moore and Newsome, 2018) but is in fact a more complex notion, disseminated in individual's lives, affecting and being affected by different factors (Greer et al, 2018). The paper contributes by offering a broader conceptualisation of precarity, suggesting a multi-dimensional perspective, theoretically informed and empirically tested. Drawing from the literature, we identify four different aspects that define precarity: the employment aspect, the household aspect, the political participation and the financial aspects, capturing not only elements related to quality and insecurity of people's work lives, but further taking into consideration social, household and political factors, arguing that "varieties of precarity" in Europe go beyond employment (Alberti et al, 2018). Drawing on data from the 2015 European Working Conditions Survey (EWCS) from 17 countries our analysis consists of three steps: First, we use factors analysis and create different factors that capture the four different aspects of precarity (employment, financial, household and political). In the following step and based on these four aspects, we conduct latent class analysis and create clusters, which identify homogeneous groups of individuals with similar characteristics by taking into account these four aspects of precarity. In the last step we "map" individuals within their countries, as well as examine their individual profiles in detail and specifically in relation to gender, age, contract types and employment status (employed, unemployed, self-employed).

# Financialisation, Labour and Algorithms: The Case of Google

**Author: Paško Bilić**

GAFAM companies (Google, Apple, Microsoft, Amazon, and Facebook) have established oligopolistic control over digital markets with the use of complex technical systems, algorithms and artificial intelligence. Financialisation plays a major role in the rapid development and global deployment of their products and services. The rise of financialisation as the driver of capitalist accumulation started in the 1980s. It created a superstructure to the productive base of capitalism (Magdoff & Sweezy, 1983) which was fast becoming independent and uncontrollable (Sweezy, 1994). Financialisation is closely linked with managerial ideologies of creating shareholder value (Froud et al., 2000; Lazonick, 2000), and restructuring of labour (Thompson, 2003; Martin, Rafferty & Bryan, 2008; Bryan, Martin & Rafferty, 2009; Sotiropoulos & Lapatsioras, 2014). Many tech companies offer financial incentives and stock awards, along with short-term and flexible contracts to skilled labour. That creates new hierarchies between highly skilled workers, and low-skilled workers performing repetitive micro-tasks (Mosco & McKercher, 2009). Tech companies also deploy crowdsourcing strategies as a way of further reducing labour costs. Crowdsourcing is, in many regards, nothing more than the continuation of corporate restructuring through outsourcing (Huws, 2017). In this presentation, I will analyse the close entanglement between production and finance among GAFAM companies by looking at their respective R&D expenditures, labour incentives such as stock-based compensations, stock dividend payments, and stock buybacks in the period between 2005 and 2017. Corporate management strategies differ among the analysed companies. Changes often depend on key turning points in company development such as major acquisitions, changes in key management positions, and so on. The focus of the presentation will be on the labour management strategy of Google. In particular, I will look at: (1) their financial incentive programs for managers and highly skilled workers; and (2) the deployment of search quality raters (Bilić, 2016, 2018) who perform repetitive, albeit essential, tasks for Google's machine learning algorithms. Algorithmic systems are discursively presented as autonomous and automated, while the labour input necessary for their development is often framed as a computational problem (Irani, 2015). By cutting down labour costs and maximizing shareholder value, financial capital creates new class structures and divisions of labour.

## "Let's walk and talk shop": reflecting on the value of walking interviews in labour process research

**Author: Karen Bilsland**

While traditional qualitative methods, such as interviewing, observations and document analysis, have proven effective in researching various aspects of work and organisation, novel methods such as 'walking' interviews - otherwise known as 'go-along' interviews (Carpiano, 2009), or 'commented walks' (Raulet-Croset and Borzeix, 2014) - are largely underutilised in studies of work organisation and the labour process. With established roots in social anthropology and geography, the central premise of the 'walking' interview is that visual images generate different *types* of memories, sensations and information than verbal commentary. Indeed, a criticism often levelled at 'word-based' interviews is that their effectiveness depends upon the interpersonal communication skills of the interviewer (Bryman, 2012). Although the traditional methods associated with LPT have produced interesting results and continue to hold promise for application to a variety of contexts, there is potential for new methods to offer new perspectives and insights that may otherwise be overlooked. It is also interesting to reflect on how particular methodological practices become institutionalised in various disciplines and schools of thought, which can potentially restrict the development and theoretical maturation of disciplines.

Inspired by previous studies on space in organisations (e.g. Kornberger and Clegg, 2004; Clegg and Kornberger, 2006; Dale and Burrell, 2008; Van Marrewijk, 2009), particularly those applying insights regarding workplace relations (e.g. Baldry, 1999; Fleming and Spicer, 2004; Halford, 2004), this research sees considerable merit in incorporating a spatial perspective theoretically *and* methodologically in analyses of work and employment. Through the act of 'walking and talking', insights can be gained into certain spatial practices in retail work environments, contributing to a more spatialised critical analysis of the workplace (Ward, 2007) and a better grasp of the lived experience of the labour process. 'Walking' interviews not only provide opportunities to clarify the meaning of participants' responses, but also allow the researcher to explore issues and interpretations as they occur within specific contexts. As Evans and Jones (2011: 849) summarise, 'walking' interviews represent a particularly useful tool for investigating the relationship between "*what* people say and *where* they say it [emphasis added]". Such a focus is crucial given that LPT has been challenged to develop "a richer account of worker subjectivity" (Adler, 2007: 1338), and continues to grapple with the issue of 'the missing subject' (Thompson, 1990).

This article draws on empirical data from a wider research study conducted within a multinational furniture retailer based in Sweden and operating in the UK, and is concerned with the application of 'walking' interviews as an interpretive research method to investigate the experience of retail work in two different contexts. A total of 11 'walking' interviews were carried out with 'frontline' members of staff (i.e. those working on the shopfloor) in the UK and Sweden. The findings demonstrate the value of 'walking' interviews in labour process research, particularly in exploring the retail workplace and the nuances of the service work labour process in consumer capitalist society.

## **Nurturing the labour movement: the significance of childhood memories for unionisation**

**Author: Helen Blakely**

A number of classic studies have illustrated the role of kinship in the unionisation process (see for example, Marshall, 1967 and Beynon, 1973). Marshall's work focused on labour in the South of the US. It discussed the success of a strike by garment workers in the late thirties in Tennessee, affording significance to the fact the striking women workers secured the support of large numbers of members of the United Mine Workers Union in the area. In his analyses, he noted that: "the workers in the garment plants were mostly women from the miners' families" (Marshall, 1967:177). Similarly Beynon's (1973) study of union formation within a new plant of the Ford Motor Company in the UK considered the "roots of activism" and explored the reasons why men recruited as assembly line workers became trade union activists (Beynon 1973). In this account, the influence of kinship emerges as a significant factor, providing workers new to assembly lines a 'trade union interpretation' of particular events within the work place. These reflections point to the necessity of not abstracting:

the decision to unionise from the institutional environment within which it is made, including not just the structure of the employment relation in law, but also the broader system of laws and norms that frame this relationship... differences in these environments have possible implications for the ability to generalise across nations. (Godard 2008: 380)

Pursuing this line of inquiry, our paper draws on new empirical data to examine the ways in which childhood memories of family practices, and the associated biographical trajectories, impact on contemporary trade union activity. This research stems from previous work on geographical variations in collective understandings of trade unionism in the UK (see Beynon et al, 2012), which considered the fundamental question of why people join trade unions. Demonstrating the above average strength of trade union membership in Wales compared with other parts of the United Kingdom, this study contended that compositional effects are not sufficient to explain the extent of the geographical variation, and argued that the spatial dynamics of social, cultural and political features need to be considered.

Drawing on forty biographical interviews with trade union activists in South Wales, we examine the influence of patterns of kinship by attending to those accounts that emerge around childhood memories of everyday trade union activity in the family home and by extension in local communities. These accounts are produced by activists to ground and position their contemporary commitment to the labour movement. In this way we show how the family can act as both a powerful mode for the transmission of collective understandings of the labour movement and a locus for the collective behaviour underpinning present day trade union activism. This is a form of historical spillover that is highly spatialised, and embedded through local habitual practices of kinship, accomplished in part through storytelling around early memories of everyday life in the industrial past.

# **Precarious professionals at work and beyond: the role of luck and social connections**

**Authors: Alicja Bobek, James Wickham, Sinead Pembroke**

Studies on precarious employment tend to focus on low-pay work, which is often associated with insufficient hours, and characterised limited social rights (Rubery et al., 2018). Precarious workers are also often assumed to be concentrated in low-skilled jobs, with a common miss-match between skills and education (e.g. McKey, 2012). However, it has been argued that middle class workers are increasingly more likely to have ‘risk prone career paths’ (Ekinsmyth, 1999). This trend can be linked, for example, to the ongoing projectification of professional employment, labour market mobility, and the importance of so-called ‘boundaryless careers’ (Arthur and Rousseau, 1996). As a result, flexible and non-standard forms of work are no longer just a common feature of casual employment or transitional jobs. On the contrary, occupations which were traditionally associated with full-time and permanent employment become more precarious. As we will argue in this presentation, this shift has profound effects on individuals’ careers, and on their lives outside of work.

This paper is based on the findings from the ‘Social Implications of Precarious Work Project’ which examined the nature, the extent, and the consequences of non-standard employment in Ireland. At the core of the project were qualitative interviews with precarious workers, as well as expert interviews with relevant trade union representatives. The study focused mainly on well-educated precarious workers, who often held professional positions characterised by non-standard contracts. Our sample included individuals who were between 20 and 40 years old, and therefore experienced precarity throughout different stages of their life-cycles.

As we found in this study, precarious employment has significant implications for career paths and for individuals’ labour market mobility. According to our fieldwork, in case of these professionals, the importance of human and cultural capital is often replaced by such concepts as ‘luck’, ‘fortune’ or a ‘chance’. Professional careers are therefore increasingly not a result of a strategic planning (or ‘portfolio-building’), but is rather influenced by a combination of different external circumstances. Furthermore, it became evident that for many of our interviewees this notion of ‘being lucky’ extends to other aspects of life, for example access to healthcare or housing. Due to their non-standard employment arrangements, our participants were often excluded from mortgage market (and home ownership) or were not in a financial position to afford adequate healthcare or healthcare insurance. They were therefore ‘lucky’ to have a good relationship with their landlord, ‘fortunate’ to be in a good health, or ‘luckily’ know a medical professional. In other words, services which are usually taken for granted by professional workers are no longer easily available to those with precarious contracts. As a result, not only professional jobs become increasingly precarious, but so are individuals’ lives throughout their life-course.

# **The banking labour process: contradiction between automatization, robotization and the construction of the social confidence**

**Author: Giorgio Boccardo**

The objective of this paper is to describe the contradiction between automatization, robotization and the construction of client confidence in the banking labour process in Chile.

First at all, this research describe and explain the connections among three different banking labour process: first, the “factory” where skilled workers make financial products and analysis market trends and financial risk; second, the physical offices, where semi and low skilled workers build the client confidence and sells financial products; third, the phone banking where low skilled workers provide customer services. In each labour process, there are different forms of control –autonomy responsible, bureaucratic and technical control, and emotional and body control–, consent –with unions– and resistances –individual and small worker group resistances, and and misbehavior–.

Secondly, this research show that the automatization of banking labour process has replaced many banking occupation -for instance, cashiers, internal processes and simple financial operations. But union actions have delayed this trend. Furthemore, there are a tension between robotization of some office labour process, and the building of client confidence. Hence, as long as robots cannot produce by themself client confidence –the most important bank asset–, the clerical workers will be necessary for the bank -at least, a part of them.

Finally, the results also indicate new trends on bank offices uses: cowork space, place for business financial assessment or for finding a business network.

The results are based on trend analysis of main changes in the market of banking employment (1990-2017) -through national employment surveys analysis-, review and analysis of institutional documents of Chilean Superintendency of Banks and Financial Institutions (SBIF), as well as 36 in-depth interviews with workers (12), managers (12) and unions leader (12) –according gender and worker experience– in one large bank in Chile. The Chilean case shows characteristics common to many labour markets from other countries, albeit exacerbated towards its liberalisation and flexibilisation.

# **Coworking as a new hybrid workspace: An exploratory study from New Zealand**

**Author: Kate Bone**

Coworking is a practice where self-employed professionals, and other workers (often in engaged in non-standard employment), pay membership fees to gain access to a dedicated work space where they can conduct their work/business alongside other individuals thus joining a coworking community. Coworkers might collaborate together, or work individually side-by-side. Since emerging in 2005 out of San Francisco, coworking has become an exponentially popular employment trend, creating a service industry in itself.

Coworking is a cutting-edge working trend that reflects a shift in traditional working practices. The phenomenon is complex from a labour process perspective because coworking is conceptually linked to both individual precariousness and collective, collaborative employment practices. As such, coworking emerges as a 'grey zone' between narratives of freedom and novelty, while at the same time reflecting shifts towards individualisation, fragmentation of working lives and self-responsibility. Research on coworking is growing but there are many unanswered questions surrounding the value and purpose of coworking from individual/micro accounts, to broader macro/structural examinations.

The purpose of this qualitative ethnographic case study research is to explore coworking in the New Zealand context, seeking answers to the following questions: Who coworks and why? What is unique about the coworking environment? How does coworking relate to worker wellbeing? Interviews with proprietors and coworkers, ethnographic fieldwork at coworking sites, and content analysis of coworking space websites inform this initial exploratory pilot study. The theoretical underpinnings of the study are interdisciplinary spanning the fields of management, sociology and cultural geography. Illustrations of the lived experience of coworking as told by New Zealanders, and those working and living in New Zealand, will be brought forward in the analysis and presented here.

The pilot study is underway at present, and the study proposal recently won the 2018 MPOWER Researcher Support Award from Massey University. Judges commented on the topical nature of the research reflecting the direction of where work trends are heading. The pilot study findings will inform a much bigger study that will investigate multiple coworking sites across New Zealand.

# **The obsolescence of labour, between self-management, automation and control. An analysis of the organizational assets of Port labour in a comparative perspective**

**Author: Andrea Bottalico**

No impact has been as pervasive as the technological innovation introduced in the organization of dock labour. Automation processes and technological evolutions produced unavoidably a contraction of the number of dockworkers in the port segment of the maritime-logistics chain since the 1960s. Technological innovation, increased containerization, intermodal transport, and the integration of container terminals in global supply chains are just some of the elements that have characterized this process of transformation. With the advancement of automation, the organizational structures, the professional and social status of the dock labour have deeply changed.

For this reason mainly, labour unions are particularly watchful on these topics. Fields of automation include the overall maritime-logistics chain, but the focus has been on the operational automation at port level, with impacts on work and organisation. It is further acknowledged that automation reduces human intervention but not necessarily employment, and that it is a very slow, gradual process, although a certain rhetoric talks about an imminent extinction of port labour.

The purpose of this study is to provide an analysis on dock labour systems in two European ports, focusing in particular on the container handling business, strongly affected by automation processes, digitalization, self-controlled processes, and IT systems. The paper reflects the result of three years of research on port labour dynamics conducted in various places throughout Europe for the PhD project in Economic Sociology and Labour Studies (thesis defended in May 2018). This paper in particular aims at analysing the impact of the automation and digitalization processes on the organizational models of dock labour. By comparing two distinct case studies, the study aims to answer the following research questions:

- 1. How is the search for economies of scale achieved by market players along the maritime-logistics chain shaping the organizational structures of port labour in the European ports?*
- 2. To what extent do terminal operating companies respond to the constraints driven by market players, in order to maximize the performance of dock labour in two distinct ports/container terminals?*

The observation of the entire logistics chain fosters an analysis of the dynamic and complex structure of the maritime supply chain, but also of the background tendencies occurring in the overall dimension in which ports are situated, and hence the variety of organizational and management strategies of dock labour.

The methodological itinerary of this research starts from the information gathered during the fieldwork in the port of Antwerp (Belgium) and Genoa (Italy). The systematic practices of interviews, related to participant observation and the collection of secondary data about the port performance indicators, have been the most appropriate research techniques.

The empirical findings gathered during the fieldworks in the ports of Genoa and Antwerp are presented and discussed. The paper shows how the strategic action of the main players along the maritime-logistics chain is modifying the organizational strategies of the cargo handling companies in the port segment. The organizational models of labour in the ports selected seem to be undermined by the cutthroat competition along the entire logistics chain. On the other hands, the empirical findings show a strong resistance of the unions in the attempt to introduce new technological innovations and automation in the port operations, in particular in the Belgian case.

The comparative analysis displays to what extent the de-structuring processes of the organizational patterns are crossing the ports / container terminals analysed, besides the constraints partially common among the cases and partially specific to each of them.

## **Innovation and consent in the Norwegian Model**

**Author: Stian Bragtvedt**

In 2013 The Economist hailed the Nordic countries as the future of capitalism. Research has shown that where workers have a high degree of autonomy in problem solving, firms tend to be more innovating. In Norway the national context is characterized by a high degree of cooperation between employers, trade unions and the state, and this cooperation has been important for the ability of firms to create and maintain competitive advantage. The high levels of cooperation and trust that follows from this cooperation has contributed to a proliferation of organizational forms where teams of workers have a relative autonomous status, and a high degree of freedom to solve problems as they see fit.

My research explores what norms and conventions regulate this autonomy, and how the class compromise on the national level affects local regimes of production. The structural antagonism between labor and capital and how it is handled in the firm is a common topic in labor process theory, but often overlooked in research on innovation. The importance of workers knowledge is emphasized in approaches such as the knowledge economy concept of Bengt-Åke Lundvall and employee-driven innovation of Steen Høyrup, but questions of class are rarely brought into focus. My research aim to do this by deploying the concept of consent developed by Michael Burawoy to explore how innovation and class are connected. I am currently in the phase of data collection, which is done by a combination of participant observation at the shop floor and interviews with workers, trade union representatives and managers.

Preliminary findings suggest a development towards greater autonomy for teams of workers with regards to problem solving and regulating their own schedule. While managers played a significant role in the 1980s, today workers have a great degree of freedom to make decisions regarding production, and run the factory by themselves during nights and weekends when management are not present. At the same time, new technological developments along with higher demands to safety and quality have increased formalization of roles and surveillance of what workers do. The reason that this tension does not challenge the regime of production seems to be because workers identify with the goals of the production process. At this early point of data analysis, I believe that this identification is connected to their increased responsibility and autonomy. That the regime of production is not fundamentally challenged however, does not imply that this process is without friction. At the conference I aim to present a fuller analysis of this process, as data collection will be finished and analysis further developed.

## Sexual harassment in health- and servicesector - #metoo?

**Author: Mona Bråten**

In Norway, the #metoo campaign was dominated by middle class occupations while working class occupations did not have their own #metoo movement. This paper highlight questions about employee experiences with sexual harassment and how cases are followed up in parts of the health and service sector.

The paper is based on findings from an online survey among members of the Norwegian United Federation of Trade Unions (Fellesforbundet) in the hotel and restaurant industry and members of the Norwegian Union of Municipal and General Employees (Fagforbundet) in the healthcare sector in 2016. 3129 employees answered the questionnaire in addition, we have conducted qualitative interviews with 12 employers in the enterprises concerned.

In line with EU-directive 2006/54/EC we have defined sexual harassment as ‘unwanted sexual attention perceived as offensive and intimidating. We distinguish between three main forms: *Physical*, which includes a broad spectrum of actions ranging from unwanted touching to rape and attempted rape; *verbal*, which encompasses sexual allusions and comments; and *non-verbal*, which encompasses aggressive staring, indecent exposure, showing of erotic pictures etc. The study was conducted among employees in industries with the highest rates of perceived unwanted sexual attention in the workplace as reported by national living conditions surveys from Statistics Norway.

In total, 19 per cent of the respondents reported to have been exposed to sexual harassment at work in the course of the last three years. The proportion is somewhat higher in the hotel and restaurant industry, at 21 per cent, with 18 per cent in the health and care sector. Members of both unions report to have experienced physical, verbal and non-verbal sexual harassment.

As regards the consequences for the individuals concerned, job dissatisfaction and a desire to quit the job were reported by a significant proportion in both unions. In both unions we find members who report to have been absent from work for reasons partly or fully attributable to sexual harassment in their workplace.

The Working Environment Act stipulates clear requirements for the working environment and systematic Health, Safety and Environment (HSE) efforts. Employers are responsible for ensuring an appropriate working environment that helps promote the mental health and welfare of their employees. Employers are obligated to prevent and protect against sexual harassment. In the paper we highlights the fact that sexual harassment is a working environment problem that attracts little attention in the enterprises and is only marginally included in the general HSE efforts.

The #MeToo campaign illustrates that little transparency about the issues conceals large numbers of darkness and makes it difficult to address the issues. We find that many choose not to tell anyone what they have experienced.

In this paper we highlight questions about why it apparently is so difficult to do anything about sexual harassment, which obviously is a work environment problem.

# Labour's Value's Lost? Revisiting Labour Process Analysis and the Value Form

**Authors: Kendra Briken, Robert MacKenzie**

Value theory currently has found new interest in debates around the future of work and utopian versions of post capitalism. The Post-Work debate relies on the idea that with the machines taking over soon and the end of work set to come, capital would lose its source of value formation: human labour (Mason 2015; Snricek/ Williamson 2015). Ultimately this would lead to the collapse of capitalism, without workers even having to fight for it. Such postulations stand in contrast to Post-Operaist suggestions focussing on the obsolescence of value theory not because machines would take over but precisely because machines would finally foster the general intellect needed for a revolutionary step made by the 'social worker' outside the factory. Immaterial (human) labour would lose its measurability (though as convincingly argued by Van den Broek 2010, it would be still deeply embedded into the contradictions of capital). So far, labour process analysts have been unimpressed by debates around value theory, and not surprisingly given that the 'core' LPT (Thompson 1983; 1990) suggests there little utility in engaging with this part of Marxian analysis. LPT instead claimed to focus on the realisation of value, and for sure the circuits of capital thesis (Kelly 1985) allows for this approach.

In our conceptual paper, we argue that value, as a reflection of abstract labour, demonstrates the unique role of human labour or labour power within the capitalist production process and the wider social relations of the capitalist mode of production. Detached from labour, and the labour process, value becomes conceptually conflated into money terms, essentially employed as a synonym for revenue or profit. Value becomes something *created* by other factors of production, technology or even management, or beyond production through financialisation. Framed in this way, labour is another factor of production. This raises the question of why single out this factor for special attention through the study of the labour process? The field of inquiry becomes reduced to studies of the *production process*, the *technical process* the *management process*, or, even consultancy literature.

We suggest that an opportunity for a (re)engagement with value theory lies in recent discussions around new technologies at work, as it is precisely the connection between value and abstract labour that allows for a deeper understanding of exploitation at work that is central to this debate. The move from formal to real subsumption with its abstractification of the human body and hence the conversion of labour power to labour, the creation of value and valorization process in the hidden abode of production, is what can be focussed on when analysing new forms of control and technology. It is the use of value theory as a conceptual tool within the sphere of production that provides a more compelling argument for its return to labour process debates, since it bridges the theoretical path to new forms of exploitation and alienation.

Labour process in its current debates about new technologies specifically has become so focussed on the mechanisms of control it has lost sight of the purpose - and even the meaning - of control. As purchasers of their labour power, the employer *control* the use value of that labour and utilises this in the creation of value and pursuit of valorisation. The obsession of many writing in the labour process tradition has become one of seeking out and reporting ever more draconian and repressive forms of management fiat, or fetishizing the technology through which this is applied.

In our contribution we will argue that some of the work published as labour process analysis of new technologies is actually confusing Marxist control with Foucauldian surveillance. New technologies are neither about the panopticon and discipline, or crude rationalisation (like replacing human labour), but about value formation. Without value theory much in the debate seems to be reduced to the assumption of control for the sake of control and thus ends up in a rather poststructuralist undercurrent of dystopian surveillance fetishism, or rational choice based functionalism.

## Making the case for variegated capitalism in labour process analysis and political economy of work

**Authors: Paul Brook, Christina Purcell**

There is now a broad-based consensus on the inadequacy of the *varieties of capitalism* (VoC) approach (Hall and Soskice, 2001) as an analytic tool for comparative political economy of work (e.g. Frege and Kelly, 2013; Heyes et al., 2014; Milner, 2015). For many critics, especially those looking to develop labour process analysis (LPA) at the level of political economy (Smith and Thompson, 2009; Vidal and Hauptmeier, 2014), VoC puts too much analytic emphasis on the variety of national economies and too little on the commonalities emanating from global capitalism (Thompson, 2010). Instead, proponents of LPA advocate an approach to comparative political economy that captures the dynamic interaction between international-level forces and existing local institutions (e.g. Vidal and Hauptmeier, 2014).

For LPA, one of the most fruitful sources of engagement with global political economy in recent times has been the study of global value chains (Newsome et al., 2015), which has evoked an extensive range of work addressing the *connectivity problem* between labour process analysis at the point of production and the broader political economy. The same connectivity problem is also addressed in the study of the impact of financialisation on labour and the workplace (e.g. Cushen and Thompson, 2016). Despite this endeavour, there has been limited progress in both fields. However, in the narrower field of study into the rise of temporary agency labour markets (Brook and Purcell, 2017) the *variegated capitalism* approach (Peck and Theodore, 2007) has emerged, as arguably the predominant analytic paradigm, particularly among labour geographers (see Coe et al., 2010; Jordhuis-Lier et al., 2015; Theodore, 2016).

When compared to the functionalist tendency of VoC's mono-scalar, path-dependency, *variegated capitalism* offers a dynamic account of the complex interrelationship between domestic and international politico-economic phenomena that combine to create uneven employment conditions and labour markets at national, regional and sectoral levels. Hence, a variegated capitalism approach commences from the understanding that the variable institutional characteristics of different national capitalisms are the product of their own uneven and combined development with international forces and tendencies (see Davidson, 2017). As such, variegated capitalism employs a multi-scalar, contingent understanding of institutional change (Zhang and Peck, 2016) that enables the capture of the dynamic and complex connections between local labour processes at the local point of production and wider developments in the international political economy. This dynamic interplay is a significant factor in shaping the specificities of local labour markets and labour process regimes (Theodore, 2016).

The conceptual development of variegated capitalism in conjunction with LPA, to date, has tended to stay within the confines of labour geography (see Theodore, 2016) with very few exceptions (see Brook and Purcell, 2017; Coe 2015). This is despite compatibility with LPA in stressing the complex, dynamic and contingent nature of change at the micro, meso and macro levels of global capitalism; and its utility in comparing and explaining work and employment in a myriad of forms and places (e.g. labour under financialised capital, GVCs, and international digital platforms). In line with Atzeni's (2014) call to develop interdisciplinary perspectives on the challenges facing workers and labour in a globalised economy, we argue for bringing variegated capitalism into the mainstream of debates on the future direction of labour process analysis. We believe it will strengthen the theoretical resources at LPA's disposal to address the *connectivity problem*; and for many is likely to provide a substantive theoretical basis for honing our analyses of contemporary work,

employment and labour.

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# Photoactivism for Precarious Heroes

**Author: Robert Byford**

Neoliberalism's mechanisms as well as its ideology distort the boundaries of personhood (Brown 2015) and in the process restrain or silence workers as actors. In effect they reduce the personhood of workers and enhance the personhood of corporations. Negative images of trade union activities reinforce narratives supportive of neoliberal ideology and are present in the foundational texts of neoliberalism (Hayek 1944, 1960, 1980, 1988 Friedman 1962, 1980, Stedman Jones 2012). Media portrayal of trade union members in industrial disputes are frequently non-supportive of strike action and trade unions and often utilise photographs that reflect this.

The face of trade unionism is always changing. The internet and social media have provided new avenues for trade union activists to tell their own stories and present their own image and photographs without having to persuade newspaper and television editors to allow them to do so. The camera lens provides activists with an opportunity to counter the de-personalisation that employment and the purchase of labour creates. Used well, photoactivists' images of strikes present visibly complete persons, that resist and counter distortive or demeaning images that have been applied to or imposed upon workers by opposing corporate, media or political persons.

Photo-activism is not a new phenomenon. Robert Adamson photographed the working conditions of Newhaven's fishing folk in 1845. Jacob Riis, pioneered the use of flash photography to illuminate living conditions of poverty in 1880's New York slums. Lewis Hine, photographs mobilised resistance against child labour at the beginning of the last century.

In the course of their industrial dispute with British Airways, Mixed Fleet UNITE opened a "secret group" on Facebook, "*for Cabin Crew across all fleets to share their experience and reservations associated with taking industrial action*". It stated its "*primary purpose is to promote solidarity and confidence and assuage fear*". Having been involved in pioneering trade union use of social media by BASSA members in their disputes with BA in 2007 and later in 2010, the researcher was approached to contribute photographs to the secret group. In the course of 85 days of industrial action, the researcher spent over 300 hours with striking members on picket lines and took over 50,000 photographs of which several hundred were used to mobilise, build solidarity, document and celebrate strike activities. Amongst company demands in early negotiations was the dissolution of the secret group.

In 2018, the researcher has contributed varying levels of photo-activism drawing on more than 16,000 photographs to several UCU branches in their pension strike, UNITE Restaurant and Bar Workers branch in their TGI Fridays Strike, the Bakers Food and Allied Workers Union, McStrikers and Wetherspoons workers in their FFS410 strike and the IWGB's Uber drivers, University cleaners, foster carers and TDL and Deliveroo riders in their precarious workers Demo.

This paper will visually present many of the images of the striking workers as well as their personal assessments of the value of photo-activism and their comments on their future expectations of photo-activists.

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# **Strikes, emotions and social identity: an investigation using text and visual research methods**

**Authors: Iona Byford, Robert Byford**

This paper will focus on how emotions and social identity interact in combination amongst striking workers. Emotion as a subject is either implicit or missing from most strike accounts in the academic literature. Analysis of our interviews and photographs, indicates that emotions are firmly central to the lived experience of being on strike. Furthermore, the photographs promote the idea that there is ‘another way of telling’ (Bailey and McAtee 2003:56). The combination of interview and visual data demonstrate that emotions and social identity align on the picket line to create a powerful narrative around the strike issues. Strikers, in close proximity to one another, exhibit both their individual and collective identity. Visual artefacts in the form of trade union banners, homemade posters, flags and brightly coloured sloganized clothing are often used by workers, involved in industrial disputes, to highlight their arguments and resistance. Utilising photographs, in combination with interviews, presents an opportunity to further enhance our understanding of emotion and social identity in industrial disputes.

A theoretical model of strike emotions can be developed by modification of the ‘Ladder of emotions’ model utilised in the analysis of social protest (Woods et al 2012) and social identity by utilising one of the constituents of Mobilisation Theory (Kelly 1998). There are arguably both individual and collective forms of emotion expressed in taking strike action. Collins (1990:28) describes emotions as “the glue of solidarity and what mobilises conflict”. Social identity theory posits that an individual has both a personal and social identity (Tajfel and Turner 1986) which can be used either individually or collectively depending on which is salient at any particular time. Social identification (alongside attribution and leadership) is one of the constituent processes of mobilisation theory (Kelly 1998). During strike mobilising, the creation of ‘in’ and ‘out’ groups strengthens social identity.

The methodological approach is qualitative and inductive. Our data includes interviews (40) and selected photographs from strikes recently undertaken in the UK by BASSA (2009-2011) MFU (2017), UCU (2018) and BFAWU (2018). Photographs that were taken daily by the researcher and posted daily on strikers social media, as a record and psychological boost for the workers taking part in the strikes are utilised in this research. The most powerful photographs of striking workers are those capturing, delivering and inducing persuasive emotion.

The combining of visual and textual forms of data sought to triangulate the results to elicit increased validity for the idea that emotion and social identity, although created and strengthened through different means, mutually reinforce one another during the strike process. The findings show that emotions (in the form of defiance, anger, excitement, thrill and trepidation) and social identity are enacted and experienced together creating strong ‘in’ and ‘out’ groups. The dominant factors contributing to the categorisation of those groups were the lack of respect from the employer, the nature of pay, the disputed level of skill needed for the jobs, and the power of the collective.

## **Re-Examining the Gendered Oil Curse and Women's Labor Participation in the Arab Gulf: A Comparative Study of Kuwait and Qatar (2007-2018)**

**Authors: Gilla Camden, Ahmed Aref**

Despite the fact that the GCC states have witnessed considerable educational attainment for women and increased female labour force participation, yet, they are characterized by higher rates of gender gap due to fewer granted economic and political opportunities for women.

Through decades of gulf studies, accumulated evidence examined the relationship between oil revenue and women empowerment, where the GCC states appear on the surface to exhibit the correlation between oil wealth and gender discrimination. Literature shows that in times of high oil revenues, fewer improvements to women's economic rights appeared and less participation in the labor market occurs. In turn, times of lower oil prices would, witness an expansion of women's economic rights and public agency within the labor market.

Examining the nexus between these two factors, this paper will explore the relationship between oil wealth and women's participation within the labor force of Kuwait and Qatar and its relationship to the policy context. The paper will contextualize this correlation within the macro level frame of patriarchy, tribalism, socioeconomic and demographical driving forces. This will be examined within the context of these two extreme rentier states as they represented not only some of the Middle East's highest oil or gas producing countries but are among the few countries within the wider Arab region that are listed among the ranks of countries with very high human development rates.

Thus, to test this inverse correlation between oil prices and the status of women within the economy of the oil-exporting nations of the Kuwait and Qatar, this paper examines the national approaches of both states towards the participation of local women in the labor force over the past decade, a period of time that witnessed two episodes of significant decreases in oil and gas revenue both at the global and regional levels (e.g. 2008-2009 and 2014-2015). This analysis contextualizes pre-existing statistical data on local women's participation in the labor force within a textual exploration of official government statements and work policies and programs designed to target this issue and its related socioeconomic challenges during this specific period in order to examine the validity of the gendered oil curse narrative and its generalizability as it relates to the Arab Gulf region.

## **Uber, the Firm that Plays the Grey Zone of Work and Employment**

**Authors: Rodrigo Carelli, Donna Kesselman**

The grey zone of work and employment (GZWE) results fundamentally in the destabilization of categories rooted in the existence of class. That is how legal systems determine in the courts whether Uber drivers are subordinated or not, how governments determine what rights it will grant them – or whether they decide to refrain from explicitly regulating on the nature of the relationship between drivers and Uber. We propose to study the role played by Uber and governments in the construction of the GZWE in Brazil, United States, France and United Kingdom because they're in the forefront of legal classification of drivers as employees (Carelli, 2017). France because, with the United States, in a context where declining labor organizations and institutions, they're a foremost example of how the employer offensive is displacing the labor question into the "public space" (Azaïs, Dieuaide, Kesselman 2017).

The study will try to look closely at the frictions among institutional scales at multiple levels on the issue of the regulation of Uber and analyze the multiplication of stake-holders and spaces of interactions, questioning to what extent the State may be a creator or at least a co-creator of a GZWE. The fundamental and strategic role of the Judiciary in the creation of this phenomenon will be highlighted, and the paradox given that this occurs at the moment when the state retreats increasingly rapidly from its primary prerogative, that of implementing law and regulations.

The importance of a deeper look at the Uber question goes beyond the limits of its dispute with taxi drivers, since it can be seen as a new model of work organization that may be spread to virtually all sectors of the economy, causing serious problems of regulation and acquisition of rights by the workers, as they are – at least formally by companies like Uber– considered as “partners”, “independent contractors” or “entrepreneurs”. It is also an example, possibly the first in the history of capitalism, where an emerging work occupation takes such radically different forms in different countries and sometimes within one single country.

And it is not just a model of work organization, but raises fundamental issues of the relationship between work, the worker and society from a global perspective and about the political frame of construction – and denial – of labor rights and even basic commercial rights in the case of independent contractors to this new category of workers.

# **Between Conflict and Cooperation. Interactions and Relationships between Trade Unions and Migrant' Workers Organizations in Western Germany in the 1970s and 80s**

**Author: Anne Lisa Carstensen**

From a migration and labour history perspective, the decades of the 1970s and 1980s can be seen as a period in which important transitions took place and later developments appeared visible. After the recruitment stop in 1973, migration to Western Germany diversified and became more permanent. During this time, Western German trade unions adapted an ambivalent position towards immigration policies and migrant workers' demands. The idea of equal representation of all workers paired up with the fear of labour market competition, political mistrust towards migrants' (self-)organization and a controversial debate on immigration. Taking these aspects into account, we analyse central claims, forms and practices of migrant activism in relation to trade unions as well as the effects of this activism on trade unions.

In this paper, the attention is drawn to practical expressions and effects of conflict versus cooperation, taking into account the intersectional multiplication of conflict constellations: Throughout the period of investigation, the conflict line between capital and labour and the idea of a unified working class became increasingly complicated against the background of the migration regime and racist divisions between migrant and non-migrant workers. It is of interest then, how these constellations became visible and productive in concrete interactions and shaped practices of local organizations, activists and trade unions. Conflict is understood here as a practice of interactions between actors in different positions within a specific structural context. From this perspective, we can ask if and how migrants claim for participation and their political agenda changed trade unions. Instead of reconstructing migrants' individual biographies, we focus on activism and organized articulations of migrants' interests. Since the period of examination comprises structural changes in western European labour markets, we also observe a multiplication of sites of struggles such as the quarter or neighbourhood and political representation as migrant movements claimed the right to vote.

The paper is based on results from an empirical research project on the relationship between migrant organizations and trade unions during the 1970s and 80s in three western German metropolitan regions: Hamburg, Stuttgart and Frankfurt/ Main. The methodological approach combines the analysis of historical documents with narrative interviews and participatory workshops with activists and unionists.

## **Hand, Heart, Home Office. Dis/continuities of (in)visible work**

**Authors: Tanja Carstensen, Isabel Klein**

The separation of workplace and household and the gendered and racialized division of labour constitute capitalist societies. Unpaid, reproductive, low valued, feminized and female as well as affective and caring work have often been made invisible by this separation. Recently, work relations in general and the boundaries between visible and invisible work in particular keep transforming in (post)neoliberal times while new hybrid forms of immaterial labour emerge, caused by feminist and migrant labour movements as well as by economic and technological transformations. The increasing visibility of (some) women's work (see for example #momlife and #workingmom on Instagram) come along with new invisibilities (the New York Times asked e.g. "Where Are All the Nannies on Instagram?" 11/11/2017).

Our paper argues that the (in)visibility and therewith emerging grey zones of work are basic elements of modern capitalism, causing and reproducing gendered and racialized inequalities; however, at the same time, this (in)visibility is not ontological but a temporary contingent status subject to continuing struggles. Therefore, we suggest to use (in)visibility as a dialectic category in researching contemporary labour relations, taking into account their historical becoming and possible futures. While it is widely researched that informal or unregulated work leads to higher risks of precarity and that postfordist regimes exploit this "immaterial labour force", less is known about the subversive potential of new forms of informal or unregulated work. We would like to put forward a notion of "(in)visibility" that not only captures the exploitative vulnerable character of gendered work but to use it as an analytical empirical category. (In)visibility, we argue, is a key category in researching work and gender relations that entails both, its exploitative and subversive potential. Furthermore, we think of (in)visibility as a concept that links labour practices and the everyday of "doing" work with structural dimensions such as employment relations, welfare state, gender and migration policies. (In)visibility therefore entails the dialectic relations of work we find empirically in a wide range of work experiences, ranging from high-skilled work at home ("home office") to devaluated bodily service interactions as found in nail salons ("hand"), from affective labour on the web ("heart") to night time cleaning jobs. We will focus on contemporary forms of labour such as mentioned above considering these hybrids of visible and invisible work. Additionally, we will investigate (in)visible work as movement negotiating these (in)visibilization, e.g. the struggles for "wages against housework" in the 1970ies or current examples such as "Care Revolution". Based on our empirical research and existing literature, we will discuss how (in)visibility shapes work in (post)neoliberal times.

# The European Precariat: The Free Movement of Workers in the Era of Precarious Employment

**Author: Daniel Carter**

‘Non-standard’, or ‘a-typical’, employment – broadly defined as employment not on a full-time, permanent basis is becoming more common throughout the industrialised world. Often, this increased flexibility results in reduced job security in terms of working schedule, wages, job security, employment status etc. This is commonly referred to as precarious employment. It often means reduced security in terms of fixed wages or hours, or employment duration. It can also involve being ‘pushed’ into less advantageous contractual situations, such as being classified as a self-employed contractor (contrary to the actual relationship between the parties), or being engaged as a posted worker thereby forfeiting certain benefits such as collectively agreed pay rates as well as social security and pension contributions. At the same time, it is argued that there is a general retrenchment and tightening of immigration rules across Europe, usually in response to the backlash against the processes of globalisation, immigration and European integration being experienced by a number of EU Member States.

The interaction between these two processes results in many European migrants engaged in economic activity, that would previously have been defined as workers, now being treated not as workers but under other statuses within the EU legal order. This situation undermines the normative foundations upon which the free movement of workers in the European Union is based, namely the concept of ‘embedded liberalism’. This refers to the structure of European integration, whereby an individual’s EU-based market rights are ‘embedded’ into the social norms and obligations of the host-Member States in which they are currently residing. In more practical terms, this means that actors engaging in economic activity in another Member State should be integrated (or, ‘embedded’) into the welfare system of that state.

This legal analysis will explain how the interaction between precarious employment and recent legal developments in Europe have resulted in many economic actors forfeiting rights as a result of their working situation, as well as how this displacement and exclusion undermines the concept of embedded liberalism in Europe, thereby ‘disembedding’ the migrant from society at large. In particular, this paper will look at how engagement in marginal and intermittent employment can result in EU migrant workers falling into a legal ‘grey-zone’, whereby they are engaged in paid-employment, and yet are not treated as migrant workers under national or EU law. In addition, the paper will assess which groups of migrants are most likely to be affected by such legal uncertainty, as well as the wider societal effects of such legal treatment.

# Automated and autonomous? Technology as mediator in labour subjectivation

**Author: Beatriz Casas Gonzalez**

The question about the relationship between technological change and labour autonomy is a constant in work sociology and the object of a large number of empirical studies. The answers to that question vary to a great extent, from authors emphasising the technological potential for labour empowerment, work-relief, up- and multi-skilling, to others concerned about increased labour control, deskilling and job destruction. The ongoing digitalisation of work has recently revived this debate, with a current tendency to assess the impact of digitalisation on labour autonomy in terms of its consequences over workers' scope of action.

My own empirical insights, gathered between June and October 2018 through 19 qualitative interviews with production workers from two companies (electronic and ICT-manufacturing) in Germany(1), point towards a widespread sense of autonomy among workers with highly automated tasks which *de facto* allow for very little or no elbowroom at all. Thus, interestingly, workers do not associate narrower freedom of action with greater control. This apparent contradiction seems me to call for further analytical attention and explanation.

My initial hypothesis at this very preliminary point in my PhD research is that a fundamental aspect of technology's increasing relevance as mediator in the conflict between capital and labour is its power to co-affect labour subjectivation. In that sense, I assume that this empirically observed contradiction between subjectively perceived autonomy and organisational autonomy of labour responds to a technologically mediated de-personalisation of labour control and a fetishisation of technology. Both have the effect of potentially obscuring from labourers' subjectivities the social character of capital's interest and strategies for labour control.

This suggests the importance of bringing in the problem of subjectivation to the current discussion on the relationship between digitalisation and labour control, in order to grasp its complexity. That is, we need to pay attention to the subjective dimension, alongside the technological and organisational, and to the contingent and multidirectional interactions between them.

In my paper I shall introduce an empirical case from my PhD research and on its basis offer for discussion a theoretical conceptualisation of the mediating influence of technology on labour subjectivation, to make sense of the observed contradiction between praxis and meaning. Thus, I aim to both benefitting from and contributing to the ongoing discussion on subjectivation, technology and labour process.

(1) As part of my PhD research within the framework of the SOdA-Project, lead by the ISF Munich and funded by the German Ministry of Education and Research.

## **Solidarity networks and modes of organising: discoursing gendered labour in RMG industry of Bangladesh**

**Author: Mitaja Chakraborty**

With the expansion of the global market, the era of globalisation and post liberalisation have provided access to a space for human rights campaigns to emerge and form a network of activists to work together from across the world. The emergence of transnational activist networks that counter the hegemony of capital through a variety of methods locates the shift from traditional modes of organising. The transmission of testimonies is one such powerful tool that have been used to garner support for rights at the workplace by the international campaigns. While it has been critiqued for eclipsing the discussion on labour rights with the stress on human rights, it has also shown the need to move beyond the traditional modes of organising to challenge power from the grassroots. At the same time, the lack of response towards the effects of gender relations in the workplace and the rampant sexism and misogyny within the organisation documented in feminist critique of trade unions reinforced the need to focus on the grassroots (Cunnison, 1993).

The Readymade Manufacturing Garments (RMG) industry in Bangladesh has undergone several watershed moments from intense militant protests a little more than a decade back to threat on organising and deteriorating terms of employment in the recent years. After a series of grave industrial accidents, many international human rights organisations and networks based in the global north have entered the labour rights discourse in Bangladesh. Inevitably many independent unions were formed which work alongside and in a network with the international human rights organisations. The framing of demands of garment workers struggle based on the particular needs of the women garment workers in the workplace and outside, in the community and family was representative of the shifting discourse on gendered labour. The illustration of this shift can be seen in the current demand for ration and accommodation facilities along with the facilities for child care and proper medical care articulated by the garment workers and activists. In this context, this paper seeks to look at how the transnational network intervenes and changes the landscapes of power in the local and effects the local activist network when a serious threat on unions persists. It also seeks to locate the shifting discourse on gendered labour with respect to the local activist networks and their programmes to respond to the crises faced by women workers in a society that detests women who protest.

Taking from feminist scholars from and based in Bangladesh, the paper locates the study in the gender development and empowerment debate which alludes to the NGO-isation and problems of state sponsored empowerment programmes in the context of Bangladesh (Nazneen and Mahmud, 2014 and Kabeer, 1994). It is also pertinent to look at the role of the state, while acknowledging the term 'thinned/weak state' emerging in the literature by Networks of Labour Activism (NOLA) scholars, in mediating between both the networks of global capital and labour activists (Zajak et al, 2017). This paper thus seeks to look at gendered labour and its crises through the network of activists, both global and local, functioning in a globalising economy with a large female workforce and ineffective laws. This paper responds to these questions through a collection of semi structured interviews and group discussions with garment workers and local labour activists gathered during the field work. The analysis of pamphlets, posters and documents published by unions and other stakeholder organisations also form a significant exercise to understand the recognition and representation of gender in local labour activist networks.

## **Migrant Service Work, Masculinity and Respect in China**

**Author: Susanne YP Choi**

The prominence of female migrant workers in the global care chain has drawn attention to the intersection between migration, service work and femininity. In comparison, the presence of male migrant workers in service work has drawn relatively less academic attention, despite the growing prevalence of this group of workers in unskilled, low-status, and low-paid service work in large cities in both the global North and the global South. Using in-depth interview and participant observation data collected with rural to urban male migrant security guards in South China between 2012-2017, this paper illustrates how the entrance of male migrant workers into the service industry is fraught with problematic negotiations of masculinity. The stories of male migrant security guards are particularly intriguing because security guarding has traditionally been viewed as a masculine service niche that is dominated by men and requires attributes that men are expected to possess. In reality, male migrant security guards struggle to live up to their ideas of masculine dignity and respect that are situated within the overlapping rural ideals of ‘manly work’ and urban notions of ‘successful manhood’. This is because security guarding is stigmatized as ‘easy work’, ‘lazy work’ or ‘work for the old, weak and feeble.’ The paper argues that to grasp the particular experience of these male migrant service workers and to understand the relationship between migration, work, and masculinity, we need to situate their experiences within three cultural and structural dimensions: (1) the rural and urban hegemonic discourses of masculinity; (2) the growing class and status inequalities between rural migrant workers and the urban middle class; and (3) the subordination of service workers in the new discourse of consumer supremacy. Based on this analysis, the paper develops a framework to theorize the relationship between migration, work, and gender identity/practices that situates the embodied worker within the intersecting realms of commodification, production and consumption.

## **A Case Study on Fragmentations and Solidarities in the Gig Economy: How a Gig Workers Mobilization shaped a Bike Deliverers Online-Platform?**

**Authors: Nicola Cianferoni, Jean-Michel Bonvin, Luca Perrig**

The literature so far addresses the gig economy in very broad terms. Since it is a new phenomenon, few data have been produced and analysed on this topic. In our paper, we wish to discuss the case of an online platform of bike deliveries in Switzerland. By taking this approach, we hope to bring a closer look at the issues related to this form of work and the challenges it implies in terms of fragmentations and solidarities. In particular, we would like to shed additional light on these questions: How does a platform manage such an atomized workforce? What does it take to organize such a workforce? Which solidarities can potentially be developed in such a context? How can they lead to new social dialogue forms?

First, we will introduce the platform in the frame of the new gig economy. The situation in Switzerland is peculiar since in the bike delivery sector, there are currently no international corporations operating such as Deliveroo, Glovo, Foodora or UberEats. Thus, there is a fierce competition in the market, which has consequences on the working conditions. Moreover, the management of the platform uses tools such as ratings, performance measurement, dispatching algorithms, shift-pickers, etc. that seem to be crucial when evaluating the legal status of gig workers (independent or wage worker) as well as the possibilities to initiate a social dialogue.

Then, we will discuss the issue of social dialogue itself since a collective action took place in the platform for about six months in 2017. By using different means of pressure, the bike couriers were able to build a mobilization and negotiate a collective labor agreement. What were the tactics used? Which were their connections with the trade-unions? This experience can help better understand the development both of a bike deliverers' movement across Europe and of solidarities among the workers engaged in the gig economy.

Finally, we wish to discuss the impact of this collective action on the platform and its deliverers. Did the working conditions change? Which points have not been raised during the negotiations? Have the management tools been included in the negotiations? In this last section, we want to adopt a critical stance, since we also wish to confront the traditional social dialogue and its adequacy in the gig economy.

Our communication draws from interviews and observations gathered in the frame of a project financed by the Swiss Network of International Studies (SNIS). This research seeks to provide a broad view of workers' protection and social dialogue in the gig economy in Europe. It unites research teams based in Switzerland, United Kingdom, Germany and Greece.

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# From control over workers to worker resistance in platform capitalism. Some insights from the logistics sector in Italy

**Authors: Lorenzo Cini, Bartek Goldmann**

Digital platforms have become central in the organization of production and labour of contemporary capitalism (Srnicek 2017). They constitute the infrastructure of current business models through which economic value is created, captured, and distributed. Within this framework of value production, the logistics sector, with its capacity to reduce the space and time of capital circulation, plays a strategic role. Over the last ten years, economic sociologists and political economists have widely studied the technological and economic transformations associated with this new economic paradigm. However, the role played by workers in the rise and development of platform capitalism has been the subject of relatively less scrutiny, and so far no study has examined how workers have challenged or attempted to modify this model of production.

This paper investigates two cases of worker resistance in the Italian logistics sector which have been ongoing since 2011, namely, food delivery (ie. Foodora, Deliveroo, Glovo) and e-commerce shipping (i.e. TNT, Amazon, Leroy Merlin), to explore how workers have sought to improve their working conditions and to increase their autonomy of action (Gandini 2018). By exploring these cases, we seek to renew and give new theoretical and empirical insights into one of the classical debates in labour process theory (Braverman 1974, Burawoy 1978), meaning, the dialectical relation between managerial control and worker autonomy in the reorganization of the labour process in the post-Fordist economy. The dominant thesis of this debate was the identification, on the one hand, of a process of a tendential loss of autonomy and control on the side of workers and, on the other, of a progressive managerial empowerment and an increase in the firm's control over workers (Thompson 2010). In other words, no room was left to workers to influence their working conditions and to shape the new organization of labour.

Drawing on insights from critical studies of social movements (Cini et al. 2017) and the Italian Marxist tradition of workerist theory (Wright 2002), we claim that digital workers possess the capacity for resistance and an autonomy of action, and under some conditions can successfully influence the processes of labour organization at their respective companies. To probe this proposition, we carried out semi-structured interviews with the workers, union representatives, and managers of these companies and took part in political meetings, strikes, and protest events.

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# Low-paid migrant workers, identity and collective action: An ethnographical account of loading bay operatives' struggles for workplace rights

**Author: Gabriella Cioce**

A divide between primary and second labour markets (Bonacich, 1976; Piore, 1979; Waldinger and Lichter, 2003) seem to be reproduced along the lines of social identities such as ethnic, gendered, racial, and migrant status categories. With regards to migrant labour, workers seem to be confined to a secondary labour market, characterised by exploitation, discrimination, weak workers' collective negotiation (Hyman, 1999), and few opportunities for social mobility (Castles and Kosack, 1972). Contrary to accounts on migrant workers as powerless and blackmailed subjects mostly as a result of institutional racism and exclusive immigration policies (Piore, 1979; Waldinger and Lichter, 2003), this paper presents research on migrant workers' class-based collective action and the way their political engagement shapes their collective and individual identity. However, when it comes to the study of migrant workers, there is little attention to dimensions of oppression related to culture and identity issues (Però, 2014). As a result, this paper tries to contribute to what Tapia et al. (2015) call "revised industrial relations" (Tapia et al., 2015, p.275), namely, the emergent research field that considers the relevance of social identities formed outside the workplace for mobilising collective actions. From this perspective, this paper tries to inform Industrial Relations studies with New Social Movements' Theory (Touraine, 1985), as the latter expands the study of workers' experiences of collective action and might lead to moving away from static, essentialising, and homogenising views of participants.

More specifically, the case study draws on rich and nuanced ethnographical data collected across multi-sited fieldwork (Marcus, 1995) whose featuring site was Bologna (Italy) among migrant workers employed as loading bay operatives in logistics warehouses and enrolled in what may be defined as a militant rank and file union, named S.I. Cobas. Accordingly, research was conducted between 2017- 2018 and it was characterised by 43 in-depth semi-structured interviews, 31 conversations, 15 group interviews, 103 participant observations and an ongoing reflexive attitude towards the entire analysis process (Glaser and Strauss, 1967). Similarly, findings of this paper come from participants' accounts of exploitative and abusive working conditions experienced at the workplace before unionising, and their subsequent active engagement in picket lines, strikes, and union negotiations. On this view, class-based collective action and solidarity mechanism seem to have lead migrant workers to the achievement of both material and not-material goals, such as being paid fairly and treated with dignity, as well as it appears to have positively shaped their self-representation, both as migrant and worker. In this vein, although data analysis is still in progress, the initial study suggests that the paper will focus on collective, and individual renewed representations of migrant workers both within the workplace and the Italian society as a whole.

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# **The Impact of Mental Health on Labour Market Outcomes: Evidence from the UK**

**Authors: Klavs Ciprikis, Damien Cassells, Jim Hanly, Jenny Berrill**

Persons with mental health problems are subject to strong stigma in labour markets. Therefore, this study utilises the UK Household Longitudinal Study to examine the impact of mental health on employment and wages in the UK from 2009 to 2015. Three measures of mental health are employed - the General Health Questionnaire, the Mental Health Composite Scale and clinical depression in order to improve the accuracy of findings. Findings from an Oaxaca style wage decomposition indicate that, for all measures of mental health a part of the wage gap between workers with mental health problems and those without can be explained by differences in demographic and productivity related characteristics. The part of the wage gap that is unexplained by differences in these characteristics may be due to unobserved wage related factors or potential discrimination in the UK labour market. Employment differentials between persons with mental health problems and those without are examined by applying Fairlie method of employment decomposition. The results indicate that some of the employment differential is explained by differences in observed employment related characteristics while the unexplained employment differential may be due to discrimination. The results also suggest that workers with clinical depression appear to experience the greatest unexplained wage and employment differential when compared to other measures of mental health employed in this study. The findings of this study are timely and important due to the growing number of workers with mental health problems in a labour market and policy decisions to improve labour market outcomes for those with mental health problems.

## How do Licensing regimes displace labour law and trade unions?

**Author: Ian Clark**

In the UK employment sites which house informalized work are problematic areas for worker interest representation. Place-based sites for hand car washes, nail bars and parcel delivery and platforms that enable the delivery of take-away meals frequently house informalized low-wage, precarious work. Due to the fragmented nature of work in these areas the UK's dominant mode of interest representation via trade unions can fail to fit. Accordingly new hybrid forms of representation, resistance *and* worker repression may develop beyond the trade union movement. Hence for labour process theory and industrial relations 'new' forms of work and the related informalization of work challenge the embedded interplay between institutions and agency.

The theoretical orientation of this paper centres on the dynamics which enable informalization and the potential for modern slavery in contemporary employment. These dynamics derive from an institutional void following on from de-regulation and the globalization of labour supplies that has enabled informalization as a preferred business model in some areas. Regulators and those who represent the interests of workers are faced with three choices; do nothing, seek to eradicate informalization or make lawful 'bring-in' sites of informal employment. The UK's director of labour market enforcement (DLME) has now conceded that informalization in sectors such as hand car washing and nail bars results from inadequate state intervention and accordingly has set in motion strategies to create licensing regimes in each area.

Our research is on-going; its method and associated findings demonstrate how developments in formalized employment practice such as the growth of short-term employment and zero hours contracts operate in a context of limited social protection and insufficient and variable working hours. By drawing on our own primary research and secondary sources on other sectors we show how these developments are re-produced in informalized employment. Therein our findings suggest that policy choices now privilege casualization-informalization, wage suppression and the 'fiscalization' of work. More controversially we find that within a particular social context both owners and workers determine their own social reality where de-regulation has created the space for informalized actors to usurp formalized actors. Therein informal employment practice was until recently tolerated but is now subject to re-regulation by the state.

Our contribution to new knowledge and the representation and resistance special stream addresses and advances three areas of debate cited in the stream's call for papers. Firstly, in contrast to "car washeroo's" in the United States there is no collective hybrid form of representation and resistance in hand car washes in the UK. Secondly, car washing, nail bars etc. are sites of low-paid precarious exploitative work which are defined (by some trade unions) as problematic for interest representation. Thirdly, a dialectic for state regulators and trade unions is that the failure of institutionally embedded interest representation has led to the re-purposing of legal institutional instruments. Therein licencing schemes have the potential to displace the application of labour law and collective worker representation in place-based sites of informalized work.

## **Fragmentation but no solidarity! Grey zones of hand car washing across middle England**

**Authors: Ian Clark, Fearnall-Williams, H., Hunter, J., Pickford, R., Reynolds, B.**

The theoretical orientation of this paper argues that to understand the dynamics which enable and facilitate the informalization of work it is necessary to utilize a lens which extends beyond work, employment and organization. Accordingly our contribution to new knowledge is an examination of 'abandoned spaces' in localities and how these attract exploitative informalized employment on sites that previously housed formalized work. This transition is a structural transformation of urban areas which grounds the obsolescence in place-based manifestations of some sites which housed the fordist mode of production and associated forms of formalized employment.

Our research method provides a nuanced understanding of localized spatial structures which house inequality and amalgamate into a regional and national picture of vulnerable workers in exploitative informalized workplaces in one sector of work. To do so we categorize the location of types of hand car wash (HCW) at different scales and sizes of cities and towns across the east and west midlands. We do this through a digital GPS community engagement classification tool developed by Hunter. The tool enables us to create digital profiles of community engagement, crime and deprivation characteristics in neighborhoods' across a region. In turn this enables us to generate an indicative interactive map of HCW sites across midlands cities and towns, cross-referenced by type and community location. Delivering on these objectives will enable us to identify which types of HCW are most prevalent in particular communities; specifically the extent to which these workplaces demonstrate different levels of informalization and exploitation.

At the time of submission our research is on-going but is informed by a small pilot study of one post-code area of Birmingham, the largest city in the middle of England. This pilot leads us to two research propositions; firstly, the segregation of informalized employment in HCWs represents a spatially informed structure for work inequality where these workplaces are unevenly distributed but spatially concentrated. Secondly, the nature of informalization in the wider labour process is highly space-specific to localized contexts.

Our contribution to the grey zones of work and employment stream addresses and advances three areas of debate cited in the call for papers; firstly, our theoretically informed empirical lens provides a sophisticated digitally informed analysis of labour exploitation sites to enable a broader contextual setting within which the labour process operates. Secondly, we demonstrate how space-based territorial transformations change working trajectories for wage labour subject to precarious informalized employment. Thirdly, we suggest that across middle England a growing heterogeneity of labour informs the socio-spatial fragmentation of work within a nationally emergent area of employment pushing it beyond traditional tools and institutions which regulate work and employment. Our work demonstrates a labour process dialectic for the state which has been forced to take a direct regulatory role in the management of hand car washes.

# Trade unions and the green transition in construction: challenges and opportunities

**Authors: Linda Clarke, Melahat Sahin-Dikmen**

This paper examines the role of trade unions in the transition to low energy construction (LEC) in Europe. The construction industry is responsible for 40% of European Union (EU) end-use emissions, yet receives little attention in union responses to environmental degradation. The impact of climate change on jobs tends to be discussed less in terms of energy reduction than of job losses, alternative energy sources and the new 'climate jobs' to be created in the future green economy. Debate on the role of unions revolves around the dilemma of how to respond to job losses, particularly among union members employed in high carbon industries, whilst arguing for a socially and ecologically sustainable economy and society. Why is this so and what are the implications? Although the call for a 'just transition' implicitly recognises the interconnected exploitation of nature and labour under capitalism, the emphasis on 'jobs' and 'work' means that the labour process and employment relations within which the green transition takes place, occupational change (rather than job loss) and the quality of labour tend to be side-lined. This distinction between an approach centred on jobs and work as opposed to one focussed on occupation and labour echoes that made by Biernacki (1995) between 'embodied labour', linked to output in a given work process, and 'labour power', revolving around the development of labour capacity. Improving the energy efficiency of buildings is fundamental to achieving EU targets of 80-95% reduction in emissions by 2050 and construction is a major area of transformation in the EU2020 strategy. The Energy Performance of Buildings Directive requires member states to ensure new buildings are nearly zero energy (nZEB) by the end of 2020. This has major consequences for the vocational education and training (VET) of construction workers, as nZEB needs inter-disciplinarity, higher levels of theoretical knowledge, and precision (Clarke et al, 2017). As a result, substantial effort has been put into developing VET for LEC to equip construction workers with the expertise to deliver green buildings (EC, 2014). The paper presents findings on the role of construction unions in this process, drawn from two research projects: an 8-country, social partner led European project on VET for LEC; and a Canadian-sponsored project Green Transitions and the Built Environment in Europe, focussed on trade union interventions in five countries. Through a case study approach, a selection of trade union responses to EU strategy is evaluated, presenting a varied, complex picture of trade union action at European, national and regional/local levels, from minimal acknowledgement to broad support along the lines of ecological modernisation (Mol et al, 2009; Hampton, 2015). Though bringing a critical perspective to policy driven by energy performance targets, radical appraisals of the construction industry and its exploitative and high-carbon practices are rare, as are trade union actions at local level, though these are more likely to engage with the employment and VET implications of LEC. Unions in Europe face challenges and opportunities in developing 'just transition' strategies. The paper presents a labour-centred alternative to a technical and work-driven transition agenda, focusing on the implementation of energy efficiency standards and how the labour process needs to change in a sector dominated by small firms, self-employment, extensive sub-contracting chains, a fragmented labour process, reliance on migrant labour and often low levels of VET.

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# **Trade union responses to restructuring in France: comparing the private and public sector**

**Authors: Genevieve Coderre-LaPalme, Ruth Reaney**

The last three decades have seen a shift towards more market-driven employment relations in France. As part of this trend, employers in both the public and private sectors have engaged in various restructuring efforts aimed at reducing costs and improving efficiency. Within the private sector, employers have sought to streamline operations and improve business competitiveness through processes such as vertical disintegration, outsourcing and offshoring. In the public sector, 'New Public Management' mechanisms such as privatisation, marketisation and decentralisation have been an integral part of public sector reforms, thus shifting public administration towards private sector style management.

In this context, local trade unions have turned to various strategies in order to influence managerial decisions and defend the interests of their members. Union responses to restructuring are generally more substantive than a simple 'tooth and nail' opposition, ranging between opposition, negotiation, non-involvement and support (Foster and Scott, 1998; Jalette and Hebdon, 2012; Greer et al 2013; Meardi et al 2009). To explain variety in trade union responses to restructuring, research highlights a number of internal and external factors, reflecting ongoing debates in social science research around structure and agency (Connolly and Darlington 2013). First, internal characteristics and resources such as ideology and identity (Levesque and Murray 2010; Hodder and Edwards 2015; Hyman 2001) and internal/external power resources (Levesque and Murray 2005; Murray et al 2010) shape the opportunities and threats which unions see in their environment. Second, external factors, including social and economic change, the institutional context, and employer strategies, may help or hinder unions in their actions (Frege and Kelly 2003; Jalette and Hebdon 2012; Lucio and Stuart 2005). While comparative industrial relations has tended to rely on national typologies to explain variations in trade union action, more recent studies have also highlighted the importance of sectoral differences in explaining both cross-national convergence and sub-national variations (Bechter et al 2012; Doellgast 2009).

This paper aims to establish how internal and external factors influence trade union strategic choice within different sectors in France. To explore these dynamics, case studies in the automobile and healthcare sectors are compared. A multi-method approach was used, combining 65 semi-structured interviews with key informants and documentation as evidence.

The main findings of this research suggest that sub-national variation within and across sectors can be explained by a variety of internal and external factors, including sectoral specificities, the local context and trade union identity. In addition, the presence of multiple unions representing the same membership base was found to elicit variation in workplace strategy across the different unions. These factors explain why case study unions responded differently to restructuring. Although employer attitudes and strategy were particularly important in limiting trade union power and participation, this research demonstrates that external factors do not determine trade union strategic choice

# Quality of work among hybrid workers in Europe. An analysis of workers' surveys 2000-2015

**Authors: Wieteke Conen, Paul de Beer**

The changing nature of employment in today's labour market is accompanied by changing employment patterns and a hybridisation of work in many advanced economies. Hybridisation of work in the context of our study refers to workers holding several dependent employment relationships at the same time, or combining dependent employment and self-employment activities. The rise of the gig economy and freelancing is making a significant contribution to the transformation of the standard employment relation into various activities of self-employment and hybrid work. The new organisation of work leads to a more flexible and fragmented nature of contemporary labour. On the one hand, it is argued that changing product and labour markets, diffusion of information technology and participative management strategies – amongst others – have led to job enrichment and mutual improvements for both workers and employers (Handel, 2005; Greenan et al., 2013). This view is related to post-Fordist theory and mutual gain literature, arguing that new work systems have improved the quality of work, for instance in terms of intrinsic rewards (such as job challenge and autonomy), working conditions (such as decreased physical workload) and material rewards (such as wages). In contrast, the more critical Neo-Fordist view argues that any (limited) gains that may have accrued to workers are outweighed by increased effort requirements and insecurity. Within this view, it is argued that recent changes in labour markets and work organizations have created greater work pressure and that for many workers material conditions (such as pay and job security) have deteriorated (Handel, 2005; Kalleberg, 2009; Greenan et al., 2013). Previous historical-comparative studies show mixed results about various dimensions of the quality of work (e.g. Clark, 2005; Handel, 2005; Brown, 2008; Olsen, 2010), although more consistent trends have been found in terms of a deterioration in the area of work intensity and physical and emotional strain (Clark, 2005; Brown, 2008; Greenan et al, 2013; Lopes et al, 2014) (for an overview, see Conen & De Beer, 2018). This raises the question whether patterns of the quality of work are indeed rather stable, or whether there is happening more 'beneath the surface'? In this study we focus on vulnerability versus self-sufficiency of hybrid workers in terms of their quality of work, and whether and how the quality of their work has changed over time. We examine a) trends and differences in the quality of work among hybrid workers, and b) compare them to the quality of work among employees and self-employed workers. Quality of work is defined in terms of five dimensions: extrinsic rewards, intrinsic rewards, working conditions, work intensity and training. We analyse data from the European Working Conditions Survey between 2000 and 2015.

# **Rethinking situated learning during austerity: participation and communities of practice in the UK Fire and Rescue Service**

**Authors: Hugh Cook, James Brooks; Irena Grugulis**

This paper presents findings from a nine-month ethnographic study of Northern Fire, a large region of the UK Fire and Rescue Service, which focussed on the dynamics of skills and knowledge transfer within communities of practice (CoPs), between old-timers and novice new recruits. It argues that the labour process relating to skills retention in fire fighters (and beyond) is fundamentally dependent upon the introduction of new novices to CoPs. This is because we find the nature of learning in a CoP to be a two-way reciprocal process where old-timers also learn from novices, by re-visiting, re-appraising and re-affirming their existing skills. The research was conducted in a context of austerity within the fire service, resulting in recruitment freezes and restrictions, which made our findings possible. In turn, these findings illuminate real risks of skills erosion, that are raised by austerity, recruitment freezes and restricting access to professions. There is a wide tradition of 'learning by doing', from Orr's (1996) ethnographic account of photo-copier repair personnel to Felstead et al.'s (2009) accounts of sandwich production and processing calls. Situated learning occupies a central space in the CoP literature. Lave and Wenger's (1991) study of midwives, tailors, butchers and non-drinking alcoholics is epistemologically wedded to this idea. In their study, learning and the acquisition of knowledge are socio-cultural practices built upon the concepts of legitimate peripheral participation (LPP) and novices moving in a linear and sequential manner as they inculcate themselves in the practice of more experienced old timers. LPP acts as a bridge to acquire skills, experience and ultimately approbation from peers, which is a gradual process where learning occurs via centripetal participation in the community, and the community depends upon a membership. The consequences of removing the experienced 'middle' from a CoP have been shown to fundamentally damage learning in a community because a key source of knowledge is absent (Grugulis and Stoyanova, 2011). Now we contend that the absence of novices is often overlooked in the extant literature (the entry of new novices is simply assumed), but that their absence in a CoP constrains the fundamental workings of it. This is because legitimate peripheral participation was not centripetal but rather radial; knowledge flowed back and forth from novice to 'old timer' who learnt from each other and where situational learning and participation were a two-way bilateral process. The data-set comprised of focus groups of twelve individual watches within Northern Fire, covering its entire geographical area. 58 participants were interviewed, comprising 44 fire fighters, ten Station Managers and four Group Managers. The focus groups were conducted in a diverse range of Fire Stations to reflect Northern Fire's varied topography. These ranged from large busy stations based in the city centre to smaller, more rural stations, with vastly different rates of fire and call-outs. In addition, fourteen semi-structured interviews were conducted with senior management and key staff within emergency response and support functions.

# **The trajectory of contemporary shop steward organisation in the UK car industry: Revisiting old trends and assessing new directions**

**Authors: Niall Cullinane, Eugene Hickland**

The UK automotive sector is traditionally viewed as ‘pattern setter’ for wider manufacturing, in many respects leading the now well-known post-war ‘model’ of company/plant bargaining, shop steward organisation and (unofficial) strike action (Marsden et al. 1986; Katz and Darbshire, 2002). Yet the sector also heralded the employer ‘counter-offensive’ of 1980s, characterised by industrial relations restructuring, the elimination of ‘mutuality’, enhanced job flexibility and weakened shop stewards. Additionally, Japanese ‘greenfield’ automotive influence resulted in the introduction of unitarist human resource management techniques, the promotion of ‘strike free’ industrial relations and, in some cases, the practical elimination of steward influence on the automotive shop floor (Beale, 1992; Garrahan and Stewart, 1992; Danford, 1999; Stewart et al. 2006). Given these features occurred in a wider context of capital mobility, technological change and deindustrialisation driven by redundancy and plant closure, the result was said to be a disciplining of organised labour in direction of ‘hollow shell’ unionism. This paper revisits this prognosis through a contemporary empirical study of existing shop floor union structures in twelve automotive manufacturing plants in the UK. Utilising Lévesque and Murray (2002; 2005; 2010) analytical framework of local union power resources, the paper seeks to assess the contemporary state of trade union organisation and influence within these plants in light of the historical reversals of shop-floor union power.

# Not dead yet: emergent hybrid forms of resistance under fragmented collective bargaining

**Author: Jo Cutter**

This paper challenges accounts from industrial relations and the sociology of work that characterise recent changes in the collective representation of worker interests solely in terms of decline. While recognising the importance of developing research focussed on new forms of work and resistance and new groups of workers, we argue that industrial relations accounts of contemporary worker organisation in “old” or “traditional” sectors of employment are significantly underdeveloped, both empirically and theoretically.

There can be no doubt that neoliberal globalisation and restructuring has seen the fragmentation of hard-won solidarities and significant erosion of established forms of collective bargaining. However, studies of union decline in the global North tend to focus on macro-level institutional comparison and or union strategy and capabilities (for instance, Frege and Kelly 2004; Baccaro and Howell 2017; Gumbrell-McCormick and Hyman 2013). Too often, the detail of everyday workplace relations remains unexamined. As a result, important ramifications of the global restructuring for workplace relations are omitted.

This paper takes a different approach. Combining detailed evidence from six workplace case studies (two ethnographic and four longitudinal) in “traditional” employment settings, we examine the emergence of new and hybrid forms of worker contestation (cf. Kirk 2018). We show that the inability of employers to resolve fundamental contradictions within the employment relationship, in a context of transformed collective relations, labour institutions, state policies and management practices, has led workplace union activists to improvise new forms of leverage in their dealings with managers both from within and beyond traditional union structures.

In addition, we develop a conceptual framework for grasping the dynamics of this process, as well as the spectrum of bargaining opportunities and resources that emerge. In doing so, we aim to take analysis beyond the control–resistance binary, to specify these emergent forms in terms of *bargaining*; that is, the extent to which workers’ collective organisation is able to restrict or reshape managerial prerogatives.

The contribution of this paper is to show the innovation of new and hybrid forms of representation and resistance that extend across new and established groups of workers. The extent to which unions take up, build on, and disseminate these new methods, though, remains to be seen.

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## **Work and employment in new productive configurations: an effort of reconceptualization**

**Authors: Martine D'Amours, Leticia Pogliaghi, Louise Briand, Guy Bellemare, Frédéric Hanin, Christian Papinot**

Over the last 30 years, the casualization of workers has increased because of, on the one hand, the fragmentation of wage labour into a multitude of atypical statuses, generally less favourable, and on the other, the fragmentation of productive processes within the network enterprise, the value chain or any other configuration combining productive decentralization and the centralization of control and power. Production activities are carried out within the framework of market relations, between legally separate entities competing for contracts, which too often leads to a deterioration of working and employment conditions and a dilution of responsibilities that were traditionally assigned to a single employer as part of the employment relationship. Our contribution in this conference is to put forward a broader conception of the employment relationship, which allows for a better understanding of the capital-labour relations in contemporary productive organizations. We develop the notion of the “work social relationship”, conceived as a configuration relating to the division of labour, remuneration and risk distribution, a configuration socially constructed by actors and regulated by formal and informal institutions. This effort of conceptualization allows for a double enlargement: of the concept of the worker (no longer just an employee, in the context of an employment relationship, which binds him to a single employer, but also as a self-employed worker, a franchisee, a worker through platforms and other "gray areas") and the concept of the employer (taking into account not only the legal employer, but all the entities that organize, control or benefit from the work and power relations between them). It also allows for the analysis of various configurations of work with the same analytical tools.

We will illustrate this concept from multiple case studies (agri-food processing, IT services to businesses, taxi services via a platform) in various countries (Canada, France and Mexico), which allowed us to document the coexistence, at the level of the value chain or the network, of various configurations of work social relationships, having a differentiated impact on the work, employment and collective capacity of specific groups of workers. These configurations are structured by unequal relationships, involving multiple entities: lead firms, subcontracting firms, client firms, intermediaries and consumers. We analyze their roles in the manufacturing of working and employment conditions, and the power relations between them. Our analyses show the weakening of subordination (bilateral) and the increase in control relationships (multilateral). It also leads us to question the actors and the levels of collective action. Does the multiscalarity of working relationships translate into a multiscalarity of struggles?

## **The construction of a gray zone of employment and the vagaries of collective representation: the case of home childcare providers in Quebec**

**Author: Martine D'Amours**

Based on ten years of sociological research about the work, employment and collective action of home childcare providers in Quebec (HCP, equivalent of “assistantes maternelles” in France), including a survey of 3 000 of these types of workers, the conference aims to reflect on the modalities of collective representation to be developed in the hybrid zones of employment, in particular to contribute to the debate opposing those who support the assimilation with wage-earners and those who push for alternative modes of hybrid-type collective representation.

Qualified legally as self-employed, the Quebec HCP operate in a gray zone of employment, considering the two constitutive dimensions of any work: the organization of the work and the distribution of the risks associated with the work. With regard to the first of these dimensions, the majority of the elements of the organization of their work is determined from the outside and their activity is subject to strong control by the rules. With regard to the second dimension, it is one of the few groups of self-employed workers in Quebec whose “labor deployers” contribute to social protection, under a special sector-based regime of collective representation adopted in 2009, which allows the negotiation of collective agreements between representative workers' associations and the State.

Based on a socio-historical analysis, the conference traces the construction of this gray zone of employment. Over a period of 20 years, HCP have had three successive configurations: they were truly autonomous (that is to say, masters of their work organization and assuming alone the risks associated with the work) in the period prior to 1997; in the period from 1997 to 2009 they have passed to a gray area of controlled autonomy, while continuing to bear the risks associated with work. Starting from the implementation of the special system of collective representation, in 2009, they migrated to another gray zone, which combines controlled autonomy and risk sharing. The construction of these successive configurations is explained by the combined or concurrent action of various actors: the State as « labor deployer », the courts and trade union organizations.

The second part of the conference is devoted to analyzing the potential and limits of collective representation of these hybrid workers. The special regime of collective bargaining, which itself has hybrid characteristics and is much less protective than those granted to employees by the general scheme provided for in the Labour Code, offers real, though limited potential for improving the conditions of work and employment of the HCP. Beyond the characteristics of the regime itself, the diversity of career aspirations of home childcare providers, traditionally far removed from trade union action and highly divided as to the desired employment status (wage or self-employment), is another major challenge for the collective representation of these workers.

# Labour mobility and OSH vulnerability of posted workers: the cases of Austria and the Slovak Republic

**Authors: Sonila Danaj, Katarina Hollan, Anette Scoppetta**

Posting of workers from one EU member state to another has become an important mechanism of labour mobility within the single European labour market. The main concern with the posting literature has been the fear of social dumping of workers from lower income countries being posted to higher income ones (e.g. Cremers 2011; Berntsen and Lillie 2015). Little attention has been paid to how such form of short-term cross-border labour mobility affects the occupational health and safety of this type of EU migrant workers. In this research project we conducted a comparative case study on Austria and Slovakia. The main research question was: how does the interplay of EU-regulation and national OSH systems affects the health and safety of posted workers in a transnational workplace? To answer this question we looked into the way OSH regulation is applied to posted workers, the existence and the form of specific regulation drafted to provide OSH for this particular type of workers, the existence and the form of the adjustments made to institutional mechanisms in order to respond to the particularities of posted workers, the response of worker representative organizations, as well as management strategies and practices in workplaces where posted workers are employed, and the experience of the posted workers themselves. The empirical data is based on 30 semi-structured interviews conducted with national, regional, and workplace level stakeholders, other experts and workers during the period June 2017- February 2018 and were analysed using the layers of vulnerability approach proposed by Sargeant and Tucker (2009). The findings indicate that the temporary, mobile and transnational character of posting affects the health and safety of posted workers in multiple ways. Economic vulnerability and dependence on the employers make workers comply to poorer working and living conditions. Cases of injury also reveal the various irregularities to posted workers' health insurance and care. While each country has complex systems of OSH providing for both prevention and protection of workers, posted workers do not necessarily take advantage of the existing mechanisms. This is partly due to their lack of knowledge on host countries OSH structures and mechanisms, and partly because of their hesitation to go to the authorities, but it is also partly because of the inadequate response of enforcement organizations. The findings across countries suggest that enforcement organizations have limited human resources and the transnational mobility of workers creates confusion among them on the applicable legislation. Furthermore, lack of or limited access to collective representation, particularly in smaller or non-unionized workplaces significantly lowers workers' level of protection from possible exploitation and OSH-related violations. Language barriers further limit workers' access to information and present a major obstacle to engaging with the people in the receiving country which has a wide range of implications – from exercising their employment rights, including health and safety rights, to accessing healthcare and housing and managing their daily lives.

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## **Workplace bullying and disability: filling the contextual void**

**Authors: Ria Deakin, Leighann Spencer**

There has been a proliferation of research into workplace bullying in recent years. However, despite findings indicating that disabled workers experience more bullying than non-disabled workers, their experiences are notably absent from workplace bullying discourses. Where the experiences of bullied disabled workers are considered, disabilities are seen as consequences of workplace bullying, or to a lesser extent antecedents to exposure to bullying. This conceptual paper argues that the current positioning of disabled workers in workplace bullying research is inadequate and fails to capture the complexity of such experiences since these research and discussions are conducted in a contextual void. The reasons for the current treatment of disability are explored, and an alternative framework for analysis and future research into disability and workplace bullying is offered. The proposed framework is grounded in an understanding of the labour process and how this is constrained or facilitated by the social model of disability. Recognising the interplay between the labour process, the social model of disability, and workplace bullying is crucial to understanding the wider political and social dynamics of the employment (and unemployment) of disabled workers.

The paper argues that the focus on disability as an antecedent or consequence does not adequately capture the complex nature of workplace bullying and disability, and it is, instead necessary to see a dynamic relationship between bullying and disability. Disability may be both an antecedent and a consequence, it may be neither, or it may become a mechanism for further bullying in a pre-existing pattern of bullying. The latter may be particularly relevant where a disclosure of a disability is made, for example in the form of a request for reasonable adjustments, since disability may then become an additional tool for bullying.

The paper argues that the dominance of psychology and social psychology in workplace bullying and the focus on interpersonal dynamics of workplace bullying and/or the role of the work-environment, divorced from considerations of the labour process, fails to sufficiently capture the processes shaping the relationship between managers and employees, and between employees themselves. Accordingly, dominant perspectives fail to account for the role of management control and how this may be exercised to legitimise bullying. Understanding the additional influence of the social model can help explain how and why disabled workers may be further disadvantaged by the exercise of control, and to understand how this control may manifest in bullying behaviours. Employer responses to workplace bullying complaints and the experiences of disabled workers in engaging with management and HR through policies and procedures are used to illustrate the additional barriers within the labour process that disability and the influence of the social model, pose in cases of workplace bullying.

## **Amazon: robots and living labour**

**Author: Alessandro Delfanti**

In Amazon warehouses, labour interacts with robots at a mass scale, as algorithmic task allocation and automated shelves organize and speed up the work of thousands. Yet against recurring discourses about the role of automation for the “end of work,” the Amazon case shows how robotic technologies are used to include, deskill and intensify living labour rather than replace it. In the present, hundreds of thousands of Amazon workers confront robotic machines and their underlying algorithms as agents of surveillance and alienation, as well as facilitators of worker turnover. In the future, Amazon imagines technologies for a workplace where the labour process is standardized even further and time-motion analysis enters the worker’s body. Workers are acutely aware of how their present workplace may fold into the future designed by Amazon and set up strategies to resist these outcomes.

The paper draws on two research methods. First, a set of interviews with workers and union organizers, as well as site visits, in Amazon warehouses in Italy and Canada. Second, an analysis of the patents owned by the R&D division Amazon Robotics. The latter has recently come under scrutiny for its role in the design of automated machines to be used on the shop floor. Amazon warehouses are already extensively equipped with algorithmic task allocation and robotic shelves. But Amazon Robotics owns patents for further automation, such as a wristband that would control and direct the worker’s hand towards a specific commodity, and a cage served by robotic hands that would deliver the shelf to the worker.

Two theoretical pillars help me situate and analyze the relation between automation and labour at Amazon. Autonomist Marxism has conceptualized the role of technology in imposing capitalist command from Fordist factories to digital platforms. This allows for an analysis of the interplay between the technical composition of capital and the political composition of the workforce, that is how workers organize politically and towards which demands. Science and Technology Studies places weight on the role of specific values and interests in technological evolution. This supports an approach to patents as objects that can reveal how corporate cultures are incorporated in machines starting with the ideation and design stages.

Amazon calls for a nuanced analysis of the role of automation for the future of work. Cutting-edge robotic technologies should be seen as the continuation of processes that have long characterized industrial capitalism. Current debates on technology and work need to incorporate an attention to such historical trends if we are to understand how a politics of resistance may affect the evolution of digital capitalism.

# **The complexities of experiencing job autonomy: the case of the international shipping industry**

**Author: Helen Devereux**

This paper explores job autonomy in the international shipping industry, an industry in which work takes place beyond the geographical limits of the jurisdiction of individual states and a physical separation exists between management (ashore) and employees (shipboard). The findings are drawn from thirty-seven semi-structured interviews with seafarers conducted on board four foreign-going vessels. They show that levels of job autonomy experienced by different seafarers varied substantially and the current crewing strategies in the international shipping industry whereby unstable crews are the norm have resulted in seafarers experiencing different levels of job autonomy throughout a tour of duty and during subsequent tours depending on the whims of the senior officers on board at the time. Moreover, the findings indicate that experiencing job autonomy had both favourable and unfavourable consequences for those who work at sea. Positive consequences of experiencing job autonomy included individual seafarers scheduling work to avoid fatigue and delaying tasks in order to take shore-leave. Negative consequences, however, entailed abuses of power and unethical behaviour and such consequences were seen to be further compounded by a lack of effective monitoring of the organisation of working routines on board by shore-side management.

## **Labour informality in Argentina and its dynamics**

**Author: Laura Di Capua**

Labour informality has great incidence in Latin American economies and the southern cone - and Argentina is no exception. At the local level, workers informality is considered a binding constraint for the labour market. The precarious conditions under which a large proportion of the labour force works (affected by labour instability, low incomes and lack of social protection, among others), highlights the relevance of this problem. Although the economic literature uses the term informal to describe different processes of the economy and the labour market (such as 'informal economy', 'informal sector', 'informal work', etc.), this paper defines informality as a labour activity carried out outside the legal framework and characterized by its precariousness and vulnerability. Following this line, the paper presents an empirical assessment of the dynamic of labour informality in Argentina. This research analyses workers' transitions between formal and informal employment following a quantitative approach. The purpose of this research is to study workers' flows between informal and formal employment, identifying how individual characteristics and family background condition these transitions. The paper also evaluates the consequences of switching among the different types of employment in terms of workers income and its distribution.

Data used in this paper comes from a regular household survey, Encuesta Permanente de Hogares (EPH), carried out by the national statistical bureau. This survey provides quarterly data of socioeconomic and demographic characteristics of households belonging to the most populated urban areas of Argentina (urban areas concentrate more than 90% of the population in Argentina). The panel structure of the survey allows the dynamic approach intended in this paper. The period under analysis corresponds to 2003-2013, for which survey design shares the same methodology. To estimate the transitions from and to informality and the relationships of these transitions with income generation and distribution, both non-parametric and parametric methods are used. These include kernel density estimations, transition matrices and econometric model estimations. Taking into consideration that labour is the main source of income for the vast majority of households, a better understanding of the nature and main features of workers transitions between informal and formal employment should not only contribute to specific policies targeting at inequalities in the labour market but also to the design of more general public policies to improve living standards for the population.

# **Times and Rhythms of Working with Customers. Alienation and Immediatization Processes in the Shopping Streets of Milan and London**

**Author: Annalisa Dordoni**

In the last 20 years, Western countries have passed through a process of deindustrialization: in many European metropolitan cities the capitalism of the Factory System is over. The automatization earlier and the phenomenon of delocalization later, have caused the expulsion of a lot of blue-collar workers from the productive system. We can observe in parallel the growth of employment in the tertiary sector, often in metropolitan cities in the retail activity, and often with low wage, precarious and low skilled jobs (Bauman 1998, Gallino 2001, Fellini 2017). The number of shopping centres and retail parks increase substantially also today, in Europe. Moreover, in recent years a process of deregulation of openings hours has begun: in many European cities there are stores and supermarkets open 24 hours, 7 days a week, 365 days a year. Sales assistants, work shifts, work on Sundays and on holidays, they have not a structured week or structured and recursive social times. However, the whole social life, especially in urban contexts, and not only the retail workers' everyday life, is influenced by the liberalization of shops opening hours and the changing times, in this case of consumptions (Adam 1994). We are witnessing the emerging of a social process that I called “immediatization”, a process together of acceleration (Rosa 2003, 2007, 2010, Wajcman 2015), de-routinization and de-structuration of the social life (Giddens 1979, 1984, 1999). The research investigates this phenomenon from the point of view of retail shift workers, observing their perceptions and representations, the influences on their everyday life and their time. Two case studies (Stake 1994) were chosen, two shopping streets in two European cities characterized by a strong service-oriented economy: Corso Buenos Aires in Milan and Oxford Street in London. Qualitative methods were used: six months of ethnographic observation in each case study, comprehensively 50 semi-structured interviews with photo-elicitation, two focus groups with photo-elicitation and documentary analysis. The rich empirical material collected was analysed and codified through a CAQDAS, Computer Assisted Qualitative Data Analysis Software, MaxQDA. The research findings are very interesting: retail shift workers perceive a condition of “time alienation”, they feel that they have not power over their own time and this situation creates a context of anxiety, stress and pressure. The most alienated are the women, besides the problems in their work/life balance in particular if they have children, almost all the adult and young adult female shift workers interviewed perceive a sort of “lack of recognition” in their relationships with customers that conditions their confidence, their self-assurance, and their everyday life also outside their workplaces. This situation is linked both with the “commercialization of human feeling” (Hochschild 2003) and with the condition of “time alienation” caused by de-structured working and social times. The author argued that the classical concept of alienation (Marx 1849) could unify the theoretical debate on the phenomena of consumerism (Marcuse 1964), precariousness (Sennett 1998) and social acceleration.

# **Rising Informality, Precarity and Dualization in the Turkish Labor Market**

**Author: Anil Duman**

Non-standard contracts become very common in several developing economies including Turkey to cut down labor costs and promote employment generation. Until recently, temporary employment has been relatively restricted on paper. Nonetheless, Turkish employers have various other methods to raise the flexibility of their workforce. Sub-contracting, bogus self-employment and informal sector jobs are widespread. Especially among the younger, female and less skilled labor market participants, non-standard forms of jobs have been increasing. Moreover, a great share of these employment types are involuntarily chosen by workers, which elevate the personal insecurities. In addition, the flexible contracts have various social protection gaps in terms of eligibility, contribution and integration. Informal sector employees, whose share is sizable in Turkey, are entirely left out of employment protection legislation, unemployment benefits, pension and health insurance. Temporary contract holders suffer from meeting the minimum number of days of contributions to social security to be eligible. Sub-contracted workers are unable to join to trade unions and be covered under collective bargaining agreements. Hence, there is a growing disparity between well-protected and well-paid jobs in the formal sector as opposed to the employees that have informal and precarious positions. The paper first presents the development of atypical work arrangements in Turkey, discusses the overlaps and differences across various forms of non-standard employment. Then, it looks into the labor market policies that are required to narrow down the gap between permanent and on-permanent workers in Turkey.

# Productive fragmentation, labour instability and abolitionist decentralisation in collective bargaining. The Chilean case

**Author: Gonzalo Duran**

In recent years, collective bargaining and union density have shown a general decline in many countries. Even though those trends are non-celebrated, at least not in an open way, new studies, promoted and conducted by the IMF, foster an industrial relations agenda where collective bargaining is less likely to take place at aggregate levels. By doing this, the union bargaining power is reduced. In other words, they encourage the so-called decentralised system, with a clear preference at the firm-level.

In this respect, the Chilean experience offers us stylised data of almost 40 years under what could be called a "decentralised abolitionist" system of formal collective bargaining, where sectoral and national levels were institutionally abolished, and negotiations take place exclusively at the most decentralised level, the firm-level, between multiple firm-level trade unions and individual companies.

The origin of this system came at the end of the seventies. In those years, and inspired by the ideas of the Chicago School of Economics and Friedrich A. Hayek, Pinochet's military and civil dictatorship completely changed the order of work, establishing a new institutional framework which is still ruling the neoliberal industrial relations system. This institutional setting represents the first piece - in what we have called - a **three-fold frame circuit** that undermines the collective action at the workplace, reinforcing the discipline and control over workers. The second piece, right next to the institutional base, is the high productive fragmentation driven mainly by large companies. Particularly relevant here is the on-site subcontracting, the external subcontracting, the upsurge of the temporary work agency, and the massive usage of the split-up method (where a single company divides itself into several new companies, all of them belonging to the same owner), among other variants. The three-fold frame circuit it closes with a high-level of labour instability, with temporary contracts, easy dismissal policies and discontinuous and flexible wages.

Although this three-fold frame circuit has re-configured the work all around the world, there are some specificities in the Chilean case. With almost 40 years of neoliberal policies, it is possible to see a sort of over-stimulation on the productive fragmentation which reinforces the organisational atomisation of workers.

In this research, we address the following questions: *what do we understand by "abolitionist decentralisation" in collective bargaining? how does it work and which is the development of this three-fold frame circuit in Chile during the last years?*

We use the Power Resource Approach (PRA) and also other classical theories about power relations. This study follows a mixed methodology based on data analysis and semi-structured interviews. Regarding the first, we use the new Chilean trade union database (SIRELA Repository) which contains the list of all the valid organisations and the name of the related companies. Starting from this point, we design some process schemes to explain the fragmentation and its impacts on unionism.

# Career aspirations and work values in transition: Macro-economic, socialization, and life course effects

**Authors: Petra Eggenhofer-Rehart, Wolfgang Mayrhofer**

What workers aspire for their careers and value at work is of vital interest for organizations struggling to attract talent (Crowley-Henry, Benson, & Al Ariss, 2018). Hence, and against the backdrop of changing work relationships and career patterns (Biemann, Fasang, & Grunow, 2011; Cappelli & Keller, 2013; Chudzikowski, 2012; Lyons, Schweitzer, Ng, & Kuron, 2012), attention should be directed towards how work values and career aspirations might change as well. Both in the scholarly and the popular management literature, much has been written about generational differences in work values and career expectations (Costanza, Badger, Fraser, Severt, & Gade, 2012; Parry & Urwin, 2017). While reported differences are frequently based on anecdotal evidence and exploratory research, the scholarly literature claims to build on Karl Mannheim's (1952) sociological approach which explains that generational differences may exist because the socio-economic context has an imprinting effect on adolescents' beliefs and values that will guide their aspirations and decisions throughout their life. This also applies to intrinsic versus extrinsic work values and career aspirations as is reflected in studies on generational differences also referred to as the cohort effect (Joshi, Dencker, & Franz, 2011; Krahn & Galambos, 2014; Lyons & Schweitzer, 2017; Mayrhofer et al., 2011; Parry & Urwin, 2011, 2017; Twenge, Freeman, & Campbell, 2012). The generational literature has, however, been criticized for neglecting that work-related preferences also evolve over the life course (Baltes, 1987; Rudolph & Zacher, 2017). After all, the age effect is also supported in the career literature that acknowledges changes, at least during the early career (e.g., Derr, 1986; Schein, 1996; Sullivan, Forret, Carraher, & Mainiero, 2009). Finally, there is evidence for a period effect, i.e., that the socio-economic context influences current attitudes irrespectively of age or context of upbringing. For instance, cohorts' materialist values evolve toward more post-materialist values as the socio-economic conditions improve (Inglehart, 2018), and economic disruptions influence individuals' expectations about their employment prospects (Berntson, Sverke, & Marklund, 2006; Eggenhofer-Rehart, Mayrhofer, & Schiffinger, 2016; Green, Felstead, & Burchell, 2000; Kattenbach et al., 2014). Based on these considerations, we seek to contribute to the current knowledge about changes in career aspirations and work values. We build on literature discussing the empirical amalgamation of age, period, and cohort (APC) effects (Becker & Blossfeld, 2017; Costanza, Darrow, Yost, & Severt, 2017) and use data from our multi-cohort panel study ViCaPP that has been tracing career trajectories of WU graduates of 1970, 1990, 2000 and 2010 for many years. Against the backdrop of changes in employment relations, work structures and labor processes including economic fluctuations and the digitization of workplaces, we report on cohort differences between graduates of 2000 and 2010, trace their career aspirations and work values over their first eight career years, and explain period effects such as the impact of the Great Recession (e.g., Kroft, Lange, Notowidigdo, & Katz, 2016). We believe that our study can help connect literature streams, scholarly disciplines (sociology, psychology, economics), and levels of analysis (individual, macro-economic) to help build a more complete theory on changes in work-related values and career aspirations. Please note that this study is work in progress and solid findings will become available over the next few months. In case this abstract is accepted, the presentation at the ILPC 2019 will be based on a full paper.

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# **Attitudes towards the welfare state and patterns of solidarity in Austria based on a mixed methods study with ESS data and company case studies three regions**

**Authors: Hubert Eichmann, Martina Zandonella**

Support and legitimacy of the welfare state rely on the consequences a population associate with it. Within this context people may assume that the welfare state prevents poverty and contributes to a more equal society. Others might believe that the welfare state generates laziness and reduces family as well as community ties, or that it puts too much strain on the economy. Using data of the European Social Survey we examined these different patterns of attitudes towards the welfare state in Austria. While on first sight the positive social consequences outrun negative moral and negative economic consequences by far, a closer look points to high levels of ambivalence among the Austrian population (especially compared to other European countries). In trying to explain the formation of these attitudes we took socio economic aspects, individual experiences with the welfare state, ideological attitudes, basic values and the overall satisfaction with the given political system into account. We furthermore apply different conceptions of justice (e.g. equity of means and performance justice) and analyze different patterns of solidarity.

Additionally, we conducted 40 qualitative interviews with employees in three distinct regions of Austria. These allow us to take the regional and enterprise level into account, when it comes to attitudes towards the welfare state and different patterns of solidarity. Here, typical attitudes can be separated in high, medium and low acceptance to welfare state and labour market policies. While high acceptance refers to principles of solidarity and redistribution, medium acceptance – which is widespread in rural areas – refers predominantly to norms of reciprocity. Here, many workers both demand and grant fairness along the norm that those with more and long-term social security contributions based on employment should get more benefits from the welfare state when they need support.

Finally, we discuss our results within the politics of welfare and the dominant political discourse on the welfare state as well as on welfare recipients.

# Fighting gender inequality in a fragmented industry: gate keeping and opportunity in the Canadian screen industries

**Authors: Doris Ruth Eikhof, Amanda Coles**

Work and employment in the screen industries have long been severely gendered, from workforce participation and advancement to male-centric industry norms and experiences of sexual harassment. Women are under-represented in the workforce overall, in specific occupations and in senior positions of power and influence (e.g. CAMEo, 2018; Creative Skillset, 2014). Work and employment conditions centred on networking, unsocial hours, presenteeism and geographical flexibility make career advancement more difficult for women than men (e.g. European Women's Audiovisual Network, 2016; Spedale et al., 2014; Wreyford, 2015). Male-centred perceptions of talent, performance and success pose further powerful obstacles to women's workforce participation and advancement, and link closely into a misogynist, abusive and individually harmful industry culture (e.g. Dean, 2017; Hennekam & Bennet, 2017; O'Brien, 2014). Fragmented employment relations (up to 90% of workers in the screen industry are freelancers (Creative Skillset, 2014)) and the exceptional dependence of employment prospects on individual reputation and ascription of success (e.g. through awards or credits lists) have traditionally limited the emergence of effective solidarity and amongst workers, even where unions exist (e.g. Coles, 2016; Kennedy, 2018). The conceptual debate of gender inequality in cultural work has recently started shifted its focus from abstract structural barriers to concrete exclusionary practices (e.g. Eikhof, 2017). What is needed now for the screen industries is empirical evidence of the gatekeeping and decision making that affords or withholds opportunities for women and that shapes the work and employment conditions, perceptions and industry cultures. Some conceptual tools have emerged, but empirical research and evidence that can provide insight and test concepts is still scarce. Our paper proposes to address this gap based on research in the Canadian screen industry. Our paper will present evidence from an in-depth study of two initiatives run by Women in View and involving a broad range of industry partners, such as the Directors guild of Canada and the Canadian Media Production Association, independent production companies, and public and private broadcasters. The workforce development programme 2xMore gives emerging female episodic directors the opportunity to direct an episode of scripted television. The gatekeeper development programme 5 in Focus targets various barriers that female directors face as a consequence of managerial and executive decision-making. Drawing on in-depth interviews and quantitative surveys, our paper will provide an empirically driven analysis of the following questions - What are the key gatekeeping and decision making practices that need to be changed to facilitate fundamental transformations of industry norms, values and practices? - What are the key collective/structural contexts that constrain and enable these practices? Based on our empirical analysis we will review current conceptual developments and propose revisions and extensions where needed.

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# Examining the meanings and motivations for working within the Scottish microbrewing industry

**Authors: Vaughan Ellis, James Richards**

Brewing has experienced a considerable revival in recent years with the number of brewers in the UK being at its highest level since the 1930s (Cask Report, 2018). After decades of mergers and takeovers saw the emergence of a small number of global brewing conglomerates, many of the recently established brewers have spearheaded what has been referred to as a 'craft beer revolution'. Typically, producing small batches of artisan brews and with small workforces, the output of craft brewers accounts for approximately 2.5% of all beer sales in the UK, but is the fastest growing sector of the drinks market. The growth of the industry mirrors that seen by artisan food producers and has led some to suggest an emerging preference for rejecting mass produced food and drink products.

Despite recognition of the craft beer industry's emergence, growth and cultural significance, almost nothing is known about work and employment within it. Indeed, to date only a handful of papers examining work within the industry have been published. Founded on a rejection of Fordist production methods, and utilising the craft knowledge of workers to design and sell ever expanding ranges of innovative products, the industry has been held up by some as offering an '...appealing antidote to modern industrial production and rationalised service provisions based on mass consumerism' (Thurnell-Read, 2014: 46). However, such claims have not been adequately explored, tested, nor their implications assessed.

Drawing upon thirty in-depth, semi-structured interviews with workers within craft breweries from across Scotland, the aim of this paper is to present preliminary findings examining the organisation and experience of work and employment within the Scottish craft beer industry. In particular, quality of working life, job satisfaction, work-life balance and career opportunities within the Scottish craft beer industry are evaluated. The findings are discussed through the prism of labour process theory and contribute to discussions on, for example, responsible autonomy, craft, rather than scientific principles of work organisation, and, self-organised forms of resistance and misbehaviour. The findings are expected to represent the first comprehensive accounts of work and employment in the emergent and rapidly expanding micro-brewing industry. The findings will also contribute to the extension of labour process theory and further demonstrate the relevance and importance of labour process analysis in contemporary work and employment contexts.

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## **Worker representatives and represented workers in occupational health: understanding interaction processes and effects**

**Authors: Laia Ollé Espluga, Montse Vergara-Duarte, Joan Benach, María Luisa Vázquez**

The question of how different types of worker representatives act and defend workers' interest is a research topic that is steadily garnering interest as a way to invigorate organised labour, widen worker participation and enhance workers' collective strength in a context in which the balance of power in the workplace has shifted in favour of management. In the field of occupational health, the way workers and their representatives interact is a subject which has been insufficiently studied to date. In Spain, surveys show a moderate knowledge of the existence of representatives in occupational health (safety representatives) among workers, while safety representatives express lack of support from workers.

By means of a multi-method approach, this doctoral research about worker participation in occupational health aimed to describe and understand main processes leading to interaction between safety representatives and workers, its influencing factors, as well as to analyse its effects. We carried out two qualitative studies, one focused on safety representatives (n=10) and the other focused on workers (n=22), and a quantitative analysis using data from the VII Spanish Working Conditions Survey. Qualitative results show that workers-safety representatives interaction is weak and limited in scope.

From the safety representatives' perspective, it is mostly restricted to information processes and to identifying health and safety-related problems, rather than incorporating workers' participation in decision-making and problem solving. Among workers, a widespread unawareness regarding the safety representatives' role and functions emerge. Only workers who personally know their safety representatives refer to information sharing or help requests interaction processes. Other workers report experiences of raising issues, and to a very limited extent, of mobilisation and participation in decision-making with whom they identified as union representatives.

Factors influencing interaction are related to contextual/external determinants (unequal power distribution plus a context of economic crisis, increased precarious work, or firm and management characteristics), to safety representatives (a widely prevailing technical-legal view of their function, or their type of action), and to workers (negative opinion of unions, or workers' knowledge and perceptions on occupational health and safety). Also, workers' unawareness of the safety representatives' existence stands out as both a consequence of the weak interaction between safety representatives and their constituencies and a factor influencing their relationship.

Implications of (un)awareness of the existence of safety representative were analysed in the quantitative study by examining its association to levels of preventive action at the firm. Workers reporting to have safety representatives were more protected by preventive action than those unaware of their existence. No differences were found between workers unaware of the safety representatives' existence and those reporting not to have.

The study highlights the potential of interaction as a factor determining the effectiveness of safety representatives through different paths: by influencing workers' knowledge of these representatives and their functions, by creating distance from workers and thus altering the legitimacy of representatives, and by having repercussions on workers' health and safety.

## **Influencing factors for and social spaces of solidarity in times of individualization. Examples of solidarity at the workplace and the influence of the Austrian trade union school**

**Author: Christine Esterbauer**

Much has been written about the consequences of digitalization for society in general and working conditions in specific. Likewise, what would be needed to create a future under this conditions that is more humane and worth living. However, existing social spaces where ways to get there are explored and tested are still outside the focus of social research.

In the context of ever more individualizing working environments, this paper asks how social spaces of solidarity may still be created. In the paper, I, first, theoretically reflect on the dialectical relationship between individual attitudes and social change, and second, discuss the findings of a qualitative study carried out among others between students in external, precarious and insecure working environments at the Austrian trade union school.

The paper suggests that even under individualizing working conditions, solidarity is a value that can be learned, among others by exchanging and reflecting on lived experiences at the workplace. Solidarity is understood as a necessary condition for collective mobilisation in a world where labour interests get weakened in processes of individualization.

The presented study is a working paper.

## **Gender, intersectionality and participation: a tale of two unions**

**Authors: Eve Ewington, Ana Lopes, Sue Durbin**

The composition of trade union membership has changed: the traditional image of white, male, manual workers has been replaced with a feminised professional profile. Despite this, questions remain about trade union's ability to effectively represent both female and professional members - women continue to be under-represented in trade union leadership structures (Ledwith, 2012), limiting their influence over the trade union agenda and leading to the continued marginalisation of women's concerns (Greene and Kirton, 2003). Class analysis remains single-fold, failing to capture the complexity of class identities in the workplace. In the context of instability in Europe and uncertainty in the UK, understanding what prevents and what facilitates women's participation in trade union activism is crucial if unions wish to promote gender equality in an uncertain future.

Data was gathered from two trade unions, whose membership spans the public and private sectors, including a mix of large, small and not-for profit organisations. Data from the first trade union was gathered through a survey followed by a focus group and interviews. Data from the second trade union was gathered exclusively through interviews. Respondents ranged from those engaged in informal participation through to those active at a formal, national level.

The data highlights gendered disadvantage in work and trade union life irrespective of occupational/ hierarchical positions and reveals how the intersection of different identities (both oppressed and privileged) leads to qualitatively different experiences of working life and trade unionism. The reported barriers to becoming a union representative included lack of time, interest, confidence and job insecurity; in addition, homogeneity amongst senior trade union officials prompted many women to question the relevance of their trade union and their own place within it. The findings reveal a range of enablers to trade union participation. Paid time, bespoke training, learning and development opportunities were reported as the most important facilitating factors for women to become activists. In addition, lived knowledge in the form of experiences of disadvantage prompted some women to participate. Women in both trade unions reported experiencing a sense of vulnerability but the impact this had on participation levels differed dependent on the level of workplace privilege held by the participant – for women in senior and professional roles, vulnerability was a motivation to participation whilst for those in lower paid, lower skilled occupation it was a barrier.

This paper contributes to understanding of the foundations of solidarities and collective action at individual, organisational and societal levels and, in doing so, highlights how patterns of inequalities in the workplace must be taken into account by trade unions' seeking to develop more effective organising strategies.

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# Putting the Spotlight on Job Quality: Developing a Tool to Identify the Highs and Lows, and Prompt Change

**Authors: Alan Felstead, Duncan Gallie, Francis Green, Golo Henseke**

It is commonly known and widely understood that some jobs are better than others. However, it is less clear in what ways are they better or worse than others and on what basis such ratings are made. Despite this lack of clarity, job quality – or the promotion of what is sometimes referred to as good or fair work – is an idea high on the agenda of politicians, policy makers and academics. For the last quarter of a century or more, both the ILO's and the EU's employment strategies have been based on the idea that having a job does not mean that workers' needs are automatically met since terms and conditions of jobs vary (ILO, 1999; European Commission, 2001). However, despite policy interest in the field, it is not always clear in this discourse what good or fair work actually means, and how it can quickly and easily be measured. This is not helped by the lack of a widely agreed and commonly used short form instrument. The motivation for this paper, and the development of the job quality quiz which underpins it, comes from three sources. The first is the absence of a short form set of measures of job quality such as those developed by psychologists for personality and affective well-being. The second motivation is to fill this gap by providing policy-makers with three principles to be applied when choosing which measures to adopt. The third motivation is the observation that periodic national (even international) surveys of job quality are of little help to individual workers who wish to benchmark their job quality against their peers. The paper argues that three principles need to be followed in choosing the right measures and shows how these principles have been used to create a short job quality quiz ([www.howgoodismyjob.com](http://www.howgoodismyjob.com)). The quiz is based on tried and tested questions used in the Skills and Employment Survey (SES) series ([www.cardiff.ac.uk/ses2017](http://www.cardiff.ac.uk/ses2017)). The series is made up of seven nationally representative sample surveys with the latest carried out in 2017 and comprising 3,306 respondents in Britain. Taken as a series, over 29,000 respondents have taken part since 1986 (Felstead et al., 2015). The latest results show that workers in Britain are working harder and have less say, but are less anxious about losing their job or having their job changed in some way (Green et al., 2018; Gallie, et al., 2018; Felstead et al., 2018). The quiz is designed to engage a wider audience with these results by challenging them to compare their jobs with others. At the time of writing (10 October 2018), more than 18,000 workers have taken the quiz, the tool is being made available for trade unions and others to use, and the lessons learnt by developing the quiz are being presented to the various governments of the UK. Wordage: 491.

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## **State and life strategies: the case of street vendors in Belo Horizonte (Brazil)**

**Author: Tarcísio Araújo Filho**

This paper aims to present data from the doctoral research entitled: Life of "toreros": work dynamics and life trajectories of street vendors on the margins of informality. The research aims to comprehend how, and under which rationalities, a specific group of street vendors in Belo Horizonte - the toreros - engage and sustain themselves in their daily work activities, amid conflicts that are typical at the margins of informality and State. These street vendors do not have licenses or legal legitimacy to work in public spaces, so they create tactics of circulation and sale for dealing with state control, taking into account fiscalization gaps, face-to-face negotiations and conflicts. The group is, then, configured as one of the main opponents of the so-called "urban order". The research works with qualitative methodology: in-depth interviews focused mainly on the reconstruction of life trajectories; and field observation in order to apprehend the work routines, circulation logics and sociability of the urban public spaces. This presentation debates the modes of classification and regulation of the street vending and its effects on the formation of *toreros* paths. Even if street vending is a forbidden activity, I argue that, in Belo Horizonte, as in other large Brazilian cities, there are mechanisms of management of the street commerce that works on two complementary ways: market inclusion incentives That the local governments calls "formalization of the business" for some; and repression for others (police forces, surveillance, confiscation of goods). Informality is historically dominant in Latin America, what leads to the creation of new standards of marginalization by the State that takes into account a moral point of view of what is licit and illicit work forms, created and adjusted to the local context. This processes creates, from a moral point of view, the distinction between licit and illicit work forms, wich reinforces social inequalities. For this reason, I discuss how the state power legitimize an image of "ideal informal workers" forging the figure of what I call "the official informal.", by analysing the relations between the municipal power of Belo Horizonte and the city's street vendors. From the point of view of classifications and distinctions, "the oficial informal" makes an important contrast with the *toreros*, which are taken as "deviants", the ones who refuse or do not fit the imposed alternatives. From this perspective, I intend to discuss how the research subjects mobilize resourses, deal with possibilities and organize themselves in a practical sense, in the face of circumstances, strugling their ways for keep working in the streets.

## **Austerity and Labour Control in Latin America**

**Author: Adam Fishwick**

As argued by Sian Lazar, it is ‘changed conditions of labour and life [that] produce changing modes of collective organisation’ (Lazar 2017: 17). In Latin America, particularly in Argentina and Chile, these changing conditions of ‘labour and life’ have combined a deepening of flexibilised and informalised labour with the heightening insecurity of the retrenchment of state spending. With the return of right-wing governments under the leadership of, in Argentina, Mauricio Macri (since 2015) and, in Chile, Sebastien Piñera (since 2017), the rhetoric and practice of deep cuts to government spending on welfare, education and government employment has intensified. Most notably, for example, the recent agreement reached between Macri and the IMF has led to proposals for widespread cuts to the public sector, while Piñera has proposed to follow a similar path since electoral victory last year.

Such dramatic changes to the political economy of each of these countries has intersected with wider transformations to work and labour that have been underway in leading economic sectors for, at least, the last decade. Despite progressive government in both countries – Kirchner and Fernández in Argentina, Bachelet in Chile – major industrial sectors have seen dramatic transformations. The automobile sector in Argentina, for example, has seen a series of collective agreements deepen flexibilisation outside the core workforce and heighten intensity in the labour process (Ebert 2018; Guevara 2012; Santella 2017).

The aim of this paper is to begin to map out the theoretical and methodological approach underpinning a wider comparative project aimed at understanding the intersection of these combined transformations of ‘labour and life’ on the limits and possibilities of labour mobilisation and collective organisation. Drawing on labour process theory and embedding it within a wider critical political economy approach, one inspired by strands of workerist and autonomist Marxism (Woodcock 2014; Wright 2017; Dinerstein 2015), the aim is to disclose the specific impacts of these moments of labour control aimed at restricting the organising and mobilising capacity of workers. Simultaneously, the paper will reflect on how such an approach can make it possible to re-read austerity and draw out its interconnections with prior and ongoing changes in and at work from the perspective of the lived experience of workers’ themselves. The key contention here, one shared by labour process theorists and critical political economists (Atzeni 2010; Bailey et al. 2017) is that worker mobilisation and organisation is an ‘always-already’ condition – a ‘living encounter’ with solidarity (Atzeni 2010) – to be continuously constrained by these intersecting changes to labour and life. The paper, therefore, will seek to elaborate on the development of a comparative, interdisciplinary methodological approach for revealing these processes.

# What helps enhancing labour market chances of disadvantaged workers? Evidence from a survey experiment among employers in Germany, UK and Sweden

**Authors: Flavia Fossati, Fabienne Liechti**

In modern society, labour market participation is key to economic and social integration. From the literature, we know that there are certain groups, such as women, migrants, and elderly, which face more difficulties in obtaining employment resulting in unequal labour market access. In this paper, we take an alternative approach and focus on the question of whether there are measures or activities that can help overcoming labour market access disadvantage.

We analyse the (potential) compensatory effect of participation in active labour market policy measures that are implemented by governments to increase the employability of jobseekers and ask if these measures contribute to re-integrate disadvantaged individuals more easily into the labour market.

We investigate the demand side of the labour market in a comparative perspective and focus on the *employers*, as they act as gatekeepers. The paper analyses whom employers want to hire in the low skilled labour market sector, which is affected by technological change and immigration pressures, and ask whether measures such as training, temporary employment programmes or subsidies render disadvantaged jobseekers more attractive for employers and thus contribute to decrease inequality on the labour market. The question is investigated in a comparative perspective, focusing on Germany, Sweden, and the UK, which represent different welfare state regimes. Although all three countries have adopted measures aiming at reintegrating unemployed individuals into the labour market, they differ in the extent to which employers are involved in the provision of these measures, which might have consequences for employers' perception of candidates participating in these measures.

We use novel data from a comparative online vignette experiment administered to employers in the three countries. In more detail, we embed fictitious descriptions of job applicants for different jobs in the low skilled labour market and ask employers to indicate their willingness to invite the candidates for a job interview. This strategy allows identifying which individual characteristics carry the biggest amount of disadvantage (i.e. discrimination by employers) and at the same time it allows analysing whether participation in activation measures contributes to a reduction of this disadvantage

We are currently finalizing the survey experiment and the data collection will be concluded by the end of the year. The results will give insights into potential (political) strategies that may help address hiring inequality. This information is increasingly relevant, as governments have to re-train their labour force to match the requirements of the fast-changing labour market. So far little research has focused on the demand-side and asked employers what they think of government financed measures. However, their view is essential for the effectiveness of this important part of labour market policy and because their hiring behaviour still represents a big hurdles for disadvantaged jobseekers.

# Gender and Low-wage employment in Germany, Austria and Switzerland

**Authors: Nina-Sophie Fritsch, Roland Verwiebe, Bernd Liedl**

Research on European labour markets confirms that women's earnings fall below men's (Blau and Kahn 2003; European Commission 2017). This difference is generally known as the gender wage gap and depending on whether you refer to the adjusted or unadjusted calculation, it ranges between 5 and 30 percent. Despite the increase in women's human capital, climbing female labour force participation rates and adapting employment careers between the sexes, this imbalance remains surprisingly marked within recent decades. Although there is a vast amount of studies concentrating on the gender wage gap (Antonczyk et al. 2010; Blau and Kahn 2006; Christofides et al. 2013), differences in low-wage employment between male and female employees are less well studied. The present paper wants to add to the literature by analyzing gender-specific patterns of low-wage development in a long-term perspective (1996 - 2016). It takes a closer look at the process of labour market flexibilization whilst particularly focusing on gender in three Central European countries – Germany, Austria and Switzerland.

These countries are interesting since they share various economic and institutional characteristics. Germany, Austria and Switzerland feature similar welfare arrangements and represent comparable logics of stratification and societal integration, as they belong to the group of corporatist and etatist countries which show similar degrees of decommodification. Besides these common grounds, recent reforms shaped institutional structures of the labour market quite differently, helping to understand the variations in the degree of gender inequalities. Against this background, we endeavor to investigate to what extent institutional change within the last decades shape labor market outcomes and examine developments in the low-wage sector in three German-speaking countries. Thus, we pursue the following research questions: *How has low-wage employment in Germany, Switzerland, and Austria developed over the last 20 years? Which gendered patterns can be addressed and what impact emanates from the diversified composition of the labor markets?*

Our empirical analysis is based on available data sets for those three countries (GSOEP, ECHP/SILC, SLFS) for the period between 1996 and 2016. Our results indicate that, that low-wage quotas are increasing in all three countries and female employees face higher risks to fall beneath the low-wage threshold. Nevertheless our analysis also reveals, that differences between the male and female workforce are declining over the time period. Moreover, we apply decomposition analysis in an attempt to include alterations on the labor market when evaluating the narrowing gender gap. In general, the composition of labor market was cushioning a yet stronger increase in in-work poverty rates especially in Germany.

# The gendered division of the labour market and occupational transitions in Austria

**Authors: Nina-Sophie Fritsch, Bernd Liedl, Gerhard Paulinger**

The gendered division of the labour market is prevalent across Europe and has been a remarkably persistent characteristic of Western societies. In this context, female employees tend to be overrepresented in service occupations or in health and social services, while men are more likely to be active in technical occupations. This imbalance remains relatively stable within recent decades, despite the increase in women's human capital, climbing female labour force participation rates and adapting employment careers between the sexes. Alongside this stability, research highlights the growing importance of dynamics especially within the last years, accelerating the ongoing processes of flexibilization and deregulation. As a result, of these recent developments employment biographies are infiltrated by different episodes of career interruptions and occupational transitions become an indispensable demand.

Against this background, we endeavour to shed light on gender-specific labour market mobilities in Austria by contrasting occupational transitions where gender boundaries have been overcome or where still unimpaired. The Austrian welfare state is particularly interesting in this regard, since gendered division of the labour market is quite pronounced and flexibilisation reforms are gaining increasing relevance. Thus, we pursue the following research questions: How can we describe occupational transitions in Austria between 2007 and 2017? And which factors determine gender(un)typed occupational transitions? For our empirical analysis we use the Austrian Micro Census. We prepared a data set by joining the longitudinal data from 2008 to 2017 with five quarterly measurements of occupation per person, each in order to track the potential gender(un)typed transitions over 4 quarterly periods. We restricted the data to dependent employees aged between 16 and 65. The gender-specificity is operationalized as categorical measure based on all occupations in Austria. Following international studies in this field, we define male occupations as with a female percentage of 0-30; respectively female occupations with a female percentage of 70-100 percent and mixed occupations with a female percentage of 30-70 percent (Anker 1998; Busch 2013). First, we describe the development of transitions visually and numerically to explore gender(un)typed specific trends. We then examine predictors of different occupational transitions using multinomial logistic regression models (there are four possible transitions between gender-typical and gender-atypical occupations). In the last step, we extend the analysis to a multilevel logistic regression in order to decompose effects of individual characteristics and the period of measurement. First results indicate, that we can observe a decrease in occupational transitions in general, and among these transitions an increase of the share of gender-typical changes and a stagnation of atypical changes across gender-boundaries. Depending on the type of transition, our preliminary models suggest that gender has an effect on typical/atypical transitions (compared to no transition at all).

## Challenging “work” for welfare recipients in Swiss Courts

**Author: Gesine Fuchs**

As in other welfare states, authorities in Switzerland assign welfare recipients to workfare programmes, like evaluation schemes or so-called work integration programmes. The legal status of this “work” is unclear in terms of employment status, social security contributions, freedom of contract and the meaning of reasonable work; the relationships between recipient, programmes and welfare offices show a great variety and often enough are inscrutable. If clients refuse to attend such programmes, welfare offices either cut or completely terminate payments, due to a rather legalistic or peculiar interpretation of the constitutional right to assistance when in need and the principle of subsidiarity. Some welfare recipients have challenged their mandatory participation in such programmes in the courts.

1. Which conditions and issues of the programmes or which personal situation makes people to challenge cuts or sanctions in court?
2. How do courts interpret the often opaque legal construction of the programmes and especially the relationships between programmes, welfare office and client?

To answer the questions, the paper uses a comprehensive concept of legal opportunity structures (LOS) that comprises access to justice (legal literacy, legal aid, civil society support) as well as material and procedural law.

The paper analyzes over 230 cantonal court cases between 2005 and 2017 in all regions of the country that deal with workfare programmes. Differing in style, length and legal reasoning, most judgments nevertheless confirm sanctions, do not consider or discuss the reasonableness of programmes or their factual impact (or the missing or respective evaluations). They also tend to deny eligibility of the claimants for free legal aid. Claimants are mostly middle-aged people with comparatively good resources (eg. education or networks) and more often male.

Additional interviews with experts from grass root initiatives impressively confirm the need for legal empowerment of welfare recipients; a low level of legal literacy and access to legal aid can partly explain the small number of court cases.

The data comes from an ongoing research project on the legal framework, prevalence and regulatory gaps of Swiss workfare programmes funded by the Swiss National Science Foundation.

# **A critical conception of work for a socio-ecological transformation**

**Authors: Stefanie Gerold, Ernest Aigner**

In this paper, we argue that in order to transform our (work) society in a socially and ecologically sustainable way, we have to fundamentally question the centrality of wage labour in our society. Drawing on the tradition of radical critiques of work rooted in Marxist, anarchist, and feminist thought (for an overview, see Seyferth, 2019), we provide a critical analysis of our current working society. These theories point to the socially constructed nature of wage labour, and the power structures embedded in the wage labour relation as such. Through the transition from traditional to capitalist societies, work became an end in itself, engendering a strong work ethic that is still prevalent (Frayne, 2015; Gorz, 1989; Weeks, 2011). This did not only lead to the subordination of human needs to profit interests, but also to a situation where an increasing number of jobs have become virtually meaningless (Graeber, 2018). At the same time, a social-ecological transformation calls for a drastic reduction of material throughput upon which contemporary work societies heavily rely on. Given this backdrop, we argue for a threefold reconceptualization of work in critical analysis.

First, work is often understood as an activity that provides workers with the means of consumption. Taking into consideration compensatory consumption as a result of long working hours and meaningless work, the so-called work-and-spend cycle (Schor, 1991), and the interrelation between consumption ethic and work ethic (Weeks, 2011), work, however, turns out to be much more a consumption-causing, rather than a consumption-enabling activity (Lodziak, 2002).

Second, work is often associated with the potential for self-realisation, as particularly reinforced in knowledge capitalism (Boltanski et al., 2005), and neglects the ongoing hierarchies and subordination in the work place. Thus, work is better understood as a disciplinary apparatus (Weeks, 2011) or social control institution, enforced through an increasingly exclusionary social investment state (Palme and Cronert, 2015; Sassen, 2014). Racist discourses about migrants turn into ‘public and psychological wages’ (W. E. B. Du Bois cited in Weeks 2011: 64) for those in employment, obscuring the increasing inequalities between low- and high-income jobs.

Third, work is conventionally conceptualized as a productive activity that creates monetary value by transforming inputs into consumer goods and services. Understanding work as an activity and thus making it comparable to other time-use categories, reveals that work is a highly energy intensive activity. This becomes obvious when we apply energy accounting commonly used for ‘consumptive activities’ (e.g. Druckman et al., 2012), such as private air travel, to ‘productive activities’, such as flying to meetings. Work is therefore not only a value producing, but also an energy consuming activity.

Considering the proposed conceptual shifts, paid work may not be best understood as social-inclusion institution but rather as biophysically intense social-control institution that stabilises societies in an environmentally and socially unsustainable way. As a result, we conclude that work has to be reduced drastically, and limited to meaningful, use-value generating, and biophysically as well as socially regenerative work.

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## **Resistance to MOOCs in the US Higher Education system**

**Authors: Valentina Goglio, Paolo Parigi**

The digital transformation that characterizes recent decades became pervasive of many aspects of everyday life and education is not exempt from it.

MOOCS is the acronym for Massive Open Online Courses, which are university-level courses on a specific argument, delivered online on digital platforms (most popular ones are edX and Coursera but many others are available, with a great variance of business models) and for the vast majority free-of charge (at least at basic level (Class Central 2018b)). Initially started with an open and collaborative intent as part of the Open Educational Resources movement in the form of cMOOCs (connectivist MOOCs), they soon flipped into what some authors defined as part of the neoliberal assault to education (Barkawi 2013 in Carfagna 2018) or a pedagogical project subsuming “labour practices inside technologically mediated forms of coercion, command, and control” (Hall 2015:265).

This contribution addresses a particular period of the hype of MOOCs, between 2012 and 2013, when the threat posed by the neoliberal approach to MOOCs (Carfagna 2018) to the autonomy and quality of faculty labor was particularly evident. Although the risk of deskilling of faculty labor and loss of intellectual property rights on course materials are still critical and current issues (Mark Lieberman 2018; Greg Toppo 2018).

By presenting three cases of resistance to the adoption of MOOCs for academic credits that occurred at three (very) different universities in the United States, the paper sheds light on the tensions and threat in terms of innovation and inequality generated by such example of digital transformations in education. The paper’s main research question investigates to what extent the introduction of such type of digital transformation challenges the existing distribution of power among actors in the HE system; ultimately, whether this innovation further increases inequality among social groups.

The paper combines bibliographic material from newspapers, specialized magazines and internal documents of the HE institutions analyzed, with qualitative empirical material collected in Fall 2017, consisting of ten interviews to key actors of the movement of resistance.

The three cases confirm the emergence of a tension between faculty at local level and academic leadership in charge of the governance of HE institutions at both local and national level; between the neoliberal approach of MOOCs advocates and claims of autonomy from the academic staff. It does not show any internal divide within the professorate, not among discipline nor across academic positions. At the same time, the three cases also show the success of processes of resistance put in place by faculties that acted as a homogenous group. The success of resistance movements timely occurred in the period of the descending curve of MOOCs hype and contributed to growing disenchantment and changes in the business model of MOOCs.

Although not directly linked with AI, the process of diffusion of MOOCs in the Higher Education system is particularly relevant to Special Stream No.5 for showing the threat that this type of digitalization in the educational field poses to academic labor. Although with different forms compared to what happens in the gig economy, the type of digitalization associated to MOOCs poses concerns on the intensifying of already precarious conditions of non-tenured positions, on the de-skilling of some segments of academic labor and in general on the neoliberal threat to public education. Moreover, the paper spots the light to a successful form of resistance and solidarity, which has received some media coverage but has been mainly ignored by sociological research.

# Living on the Job: A Study on the Allocation of Employment and Housing in Low-wage Industries in Japan

**Author: Lenard Görögh**

Economic turmoil and labor market reforms have taken a toll on the Japanese working class. For most of post-war Japan, welfare programs were provided through company-based insurance schemes to the male breadwinner and their families. However, these benefits apply to long-term employees only, leaving the ever increasing amount of precariously employed or subcontracted workers with no or limited access to social assistance. This shift in the labor market not only had severe consequences for workers with less income stability, it also had a considerable impact on the housing system in general. When manpower was needed in the urban centers of Japan during the period of high economic growth, the state actively supported the construction of privately owned housing through low-interest credits and many firms attracted workers from the countryside by providing company housing to the unmarried in the vicinity of the workplace. This usually was a sign of mutual commitment, as the workers would stay in the company dormitory until married, then take out a loan to build a house and with wages rising based on seniority, in time, pay back their liabilities.

While this arrangement may still work out for those employees with higher wages and stable income, due to the porosity of the social safety net, loss of housing has become a real threat to many in Japan. Decreasing numbers of visible homeless in the streets of Japanese cities notwithstanding, we witness a rise of people finding temporary shelter not only in government funded support facilities but also outside the common housing market. By now we find a whole network of different service providers that aim at precarious workers who struggle to secure accommodation. Due to increasing social isolation, workers easily become dependent on guarantor businesses for important social transactions, or they rent out boxes in Internet Cafés or so-called *Zerozero Bukken*, apartments operating under hotel regulation stripping residents of any tenants' rights. These and similar services are attractive to the working poor because renting out an apartment in the regular housing market may be very difficult or even impossible. When moving into an apartment, landlords or real estate agents often demand a multiple of the first rent including costs like agency fees, security deposits and more. On the other hand, ongoing gentrification and the increasing use of real estate as an internationally traded financial asset have reduced the amount of available and affordable housing, pushing the working poor onto the margins of the city and society.

While the overall numbers start to fall in the course of the 1990s, market insiders and social activists suggest that jobs that come with joint housing are still found in many low-income sectors in Japan such as construction, service, or manufacturing industries. Given the drastic changes in the Japanese labor and housing market in the past decades, it makes sense to ask: How do living on the job arrangements affect employment relations in low-wage industries after the 1990s?

In order to answer this question, I will conduct interviews based on a semi-structured questionnaire with workers who have living on the job experience on the one hand as well as entrepreneurs who offer jobs that come with joint housing on the other. In that manner, I aim to explore how employment relations have changed over time while also shedding light on the mechanisms used by employers and workers alike to advance their interests in the face of a changing economy that is shaped by low growth rates and an increasing labor shortage.

## **Funny ha ha or funny serious? Workers use of humour in the UCU pensions dispute and strike, 2018**

**Authors: Jo Grady, Phil Taylor**

Recent decades have seen a growing interest in management studies in the nature, purposes and forms of workplace humour. In research on the phenomenon, the functionalist tradition focused on an array of presumed positive managerial and organisational outcomes (Westwood and Rhodes, 2007). For example, humour was seen to improve group communication and cohesion and organisational cohesion (e.g. Duncan et al, 1990). Humour has also been associated with the promotion of effective organisation cultural change (Deal and Kennedy, 2000).

In contrast, critical studies have challenged this functionalist tradition, demonstrating the ways that comedy and humour can be employed by workers as resistance and satirical challenge to workplace order, management and employers (Ackroyd and Thompson, 1999; Collinson, 2002, Linstead 1985). Research has examined workers' use of humour as subversion in specific organisational contexts (Rodrigues and Collinson, 1995; Taylor and Bain, 2003) which draw on labour process theory in developing an explanatory framework.

With the exception of Taylor and Bain (2003), one of whose call centre case studies analysed the contribution of subversive, satirical and countercultural humour to a union organising campaign, studies specifically centred on the role of humour in industrial conflict have been un-researched. A handful of seminal studies (e.g. Lane and Roberts, 1971; Fantasia, 1988) have revealed the feelings of liberation and elation among striking workers and the carnival atmosphere on picket lines where tantalising glimpses of humour are suggested.

Recent work on the FBU strike of 2002-3 (Moore et al, 2018: ) and the British Airways-BASSA dispute (Taylor and Moore, 2019) provide compelling examples of firefighters and cabin crew in turn engaging in satirical, clowning and subversive humour directed at the specific targets of government and employer, with particularly sharp barbs fired at the political and corporate leaders (Chancellor George Brown and Willy Walsh, British Airways, respectively) as personally responsible for the workers' plight.

The visual and verbal humour publicly displayed by workers on picket lines, at mass rallies and demonstrations in the form of slogans on placards and banners, costume and dress, artistic expressions, music and song by firefighters and cabin crew in these disputes appears to have become an endemic feature of worker expression in contemporary strikes as the Junior Doctors strikes of (2016-7) suggests and seems confirmed by the UCU pensions strikes of February-March 2018.

Empirically, this paper concentrates on the purposes, forms and effects of humour deployed by university workers (*inter alia* lecturers, administrators, lab technicians, contract researchers) in the pre-1992 institutions, in their dispute with their employers (UUK) and the corporate trustees of the Universities Superannuation Scheme (USS) over the degradation of their pensions. While the paper examines the visible (and public) forms taken on the 14 days of strike action additionally considers the flourishing and novel forms of satire digitally expressed through social media, particularly Twitter, evaluating the satirical content of memes, blogs and commentary from diverse UCU branch and personal accounts.

Data comes from a number of sources. First, the paper draws on an archive of photos from photographer Rob Byford. Second, it will examine the satirical twitter accounts that collated and archived USS photos and memes (main sources - UUK Spin @UUKspin, Lego VC @iancooketal, and USS strike memes @UniversityWork). Third, it includes reports on and

reflections of the use of humour by strikers provided by officers and activists from the 61 UCU branches that participated in the action, in their responses to a survey.

A thematic analysis of this data will provide the evidential basis for questioning the appropriateness of the categories of humour identified in the literature, notably by Ackroyd and Thomson (1999). Taylor and Bain (2003) did demonstrate the importance of the neglected issue of the types and purposes of humour when allied to a union organising campaign. However, this paper takes exploration of the relationship between workers' humour and collectivism into uncharted territory, specifically, the context of extended strike action. Thus, the paper will deliver novel insights that will stimulate further re-conceptualisation of the use of humour.

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## **Political orientations and attitudes towards refugees of different solidarity clusters in Austria and Hungary**

**Authors: Istvan Grajczjar, Zsófia Nagy; Antal Örkény**

During the past decade Europe has witnessed a number of interrelated crises, including the economic breakdown in 2008-09 and the so-called „refugee crisis” in 2015. Both of these crises have fuelled scholarly attention towards issues of social solidarity and the fate of the welfare state in particular. The concept of solidarity helps us look into the effects of these transformations. This paper presents results concerning the refugee-solidarity nexus of the SOCRIS survey conducted between July and September in 2017 in Austria and Hungary. The surveys were based on representative samplings of active aged employed and unemployed people. Based on existing literature (first of all on Kriesi’s model from 2015) we provide a model with four alternatives of solidarity – inclusive solidararian, inclusive non-solidarian (neoliberal), exclusive solidararian and exclusive non-solidarian approaches – and analyse the size and proportion of these clusters in Austria and Hungary. This is followed by a descriptive analysis of these groups in the two countries regarding their sociodemographic composition and political orientations. Finally, by relying on step-by-step multinomial regression analysis we provide an explanatory model regarding the attitudes and refugee support/refusal associated with the four clusters.

## **The ambiguous work of the fitness instructor: the blurred edges of 'work' and employment in the fitness industry**

**Authors: Kay Greasley, Pete Thomas, Karen Dale**

This paper examines employment relations in the UK fitness industry through the perceptions and experiences of instructors. We argue that the experiences of these instructors represent examples of the blurring of boundaries in employment in two ways. Firstly, for many their employment status is often multiple, ambiguous and precarious. Secondly, for some their work blurs the boundaries between work and leisure being both their job and a significant part of their identity and a 'way of life', which brings to mind the notion of work as a 'vocation'. The employment status of fitness instructors seems to be typical of those one might consider to be in precarious work. Work is often part-time, temporary and with a need to be flexible, yet at the same time some would assume the description of 'self-employed', that is self-determining, self-organising and 'entrepreneurial'. The paper is based on an empirical study that aimed to investigate the meaning that fitness instructors ascribed to their work, our starting point being a perceived ambiguity between precarious and entrepreneurial work. Our fieldwork finds a tension between the insecurity of flexible work and the self-determination of self-employment, with instructors treading a line between the two with risk being a characteristic of their work however it might be framed. In short, we find that instructors find themselves in an ambiguous situation of precarious employment and self-employment, whilst having a sense of vocation in the work that they do, a sense that may be taken advantage of in the employment relationship. The relationship between work and 'non-work' is also evident in the experiences of the instructors. They have typically entered the sector on the basis of a personal interest in the experience of training, which continues as they work in the industry. This creates a grey zone between their work as instructors and their experience of training and exercise for their own purposes, which has implications for their work and their own training. We explore the embodied experience of training and training others and the impact this has on the bodies of instructors. This has implications for their continued employment and their enjoyment of the experience of training, themselves and others. In particular, we consider the difficult balance between maintaining their bodies for their own benefit, and the potentially erosive effects of training when compelled to deliver programmes to clients. Here we explore the relationship between their work on the body and the nature of their employment. In both employment and in their experience of the work, we find that the instructors are not passive 'dupes', nor are they unaware of their ambiguous position. We demonstrate how they anticipate, plan for and respond to the rigours of their employment and the demands made of their bodies.

## **Solidarity and the self-activated Subject: Individualized strategies and coping methods between resistance and compensation**

**Authors: Johanna Grubner, Kristina Binner**

Recent societal transformations like the neoliberal turn from welfare- to workfare-state, promote a new type of (self-)activated working subject. This “new” entrepreneurial subject seemingly meets the requirements of a flexible, deregulated labour market and workplace arrangement by seeking productivity in a highly efficient manner. In our contribution, we address this new articulation of subjectification, which challenges collective forms of solidarity, especially formalized resistance like unionization.

Drawing on episodic and problem-centred interviews with employees working in sectors with both high and low levels of formalization (academia, social work, administration, education), we investigate different subjective perceptions and action strategies employed to deal with different forms of workplace requirements like efficiency, adaptability/flexibility and self-regulation. We will discuss how employees use their agency to create a number of different individual coping strategies. By looking at their daily routines and how they organize and manage their performance both within the workspace and between work and life, we are able to identify different aspects of resistance and compensation. With a special focus on the facet of self-care, we show that the line between employers’ and employee’s interests can be thin and therefore contested – an aspect that aligns with the (neoliberal) requirements for the “new” self-managing entrepreneurial subject. We will discuss a number of different individual strategies used by employees, which range from incorporating neoliberal workplace demands (in the sense of technologies of the self) to sophisticated strategies of resistance. We will show that some individual coping methods succeed in protecting employees from self-exploitation, while others not only affirm the existing structures but hinder collective forms of solidarity due to the individualisation of structural challenges. Since the boundaries between informal resistance and employers’ interests are fragile, it is in the everyday struggles of the employees that a way to handle and organize these boundaries must be found. The focus of our contribution is on these everyday struggles and their implications for the structure and organization of workplace arrangements in the current workfare-state.

One of our findings is the paradoxical effect that: Though unintentionally, (self-)managing strategies can re-enforce neoliberal state and workplace policies, and by creating individual re-actions, they tend to further the fragmentation of society.

## **The mismatch between actual and preferred work and working hours**

**Authors: Barbara Haas, Nadia Steiber, Michaela Kobler-Weiß, Adila Sahbegovic**

This paper investigates to what extent actual and preferred work aligns among men and women across two specific life course stages, first in the main working age (between 20-64 years), and second in the late career phase, when the question about when to retire is at stake. How do underemployment and overemployment vary across countries? While underemployment means that individuals would prefer to be in employment or to work longer hours, overemployed workers would like to reduce paid working time or to retire instead of working involuntarily. We explore the factors determining the work participation and working time in the main working phase, also called the “rush hour of life”, when childcare responsibilities may occur. Furthermore we ask, to what extent these determinants differ from the late career phase, when questions about the actual and preferred age of retirement are reflected in retrospect. The analysis is based on two cross-national studies, using both the European Social Survey Data 2010-2012. The aim is to address the educational effect of inclusion or exclusion across two life course stages and across different European countries (16 for the main working phase and 23 countries for the late career). Drawing the attention on work and time preferences of the active and of the inactive population underemployment is seen to be more widespread among the lower-educated persons and in countries with limited labour market opportunities in terms of low wages, high unemployment rates and with a lack in part-time jobs. Overemployment, by contrast, is more prevalent among the highly educated men and women, irrespective of the country context. In the conclusion, we suggest to use the so-called “Triple A” approach, by arguing that there is an interplay between the availability, the affordability and the attractiveness of having a job or working the right amount of hours. These conceptual insights help us to better understand cross-national differences in employment and policy constraints, varying by age, gender, education and by care obligations in different life stages.

## **‘The way he looks’: Bears, wolfs and cubs Sexualized aesthetic labour in the gay tourism industry. An empirical analysis**

**Authors: Anastasios Hadjisolomou, Dennis Nickson**

This project responds to Warhurst and Nickson’s (2009) call for further research on (sexualized) aesthetic labour to include male sexuality in the analysis. Unsurprisingly the sexualisation of women has dominated the literature on sexualized work with theoretical and empirical analyses focusing on female employees who need to conform within heterosexualized demands (see for example, Avery, 2016; McGinley, 2007). Warhurst and Nickson however suggest that the gendering of sexualized work needs to be rethought and suggest that men’s sexuality should also be considered and analysed in relation not only to interaction with female customers but also male, homosexual customers. This project explores the market of service organizations intended for homosexual customers and particularly focuses on two popular gay tourism markets in Europe. The service organizations operating within this context, who are actively chasing the so called Pink pound, are explicitly sexually oriented to develop the desired corporate image that will appeal to the (homosexual male) customer’s sexual desires and/or fetishes. This image and the ‘right look’ are still however to be understood as a corporate strategy driven by the customer’s sexual orientation and sexual preferences. Scholars have neglected sexuality as a corporeal feature of labour that is utilized by designated service organizations. This project fills this gap and identify how aesthetics are commodified in this niche market and how employees experience and contest it.

The study is qualitative, reporting on 28 semi-structured interviews with front-line staff, 78 hours of participant observation and one research diary. Research was conducted in two of the most popular beach gay destinations in Europe, whilst part of the research was conducted during Gay Pride, the peak period for gay tourism industry. This is a cross-case analysis with participants from a variety of hospitality organizations, including, gay bars and clubs, gay hotels/resorts, gay sex clubs and gay saunas. Briefly the data reveal the embeddedness of sexualized aesthetic labour in the sector with participants discussing the necessity of the sexualisation of the service in order to attract and retain customers. Interestingly however the ‘right look’ varied across organizations based on sexual themes, sexual fetishes and the types of customers.

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## **“You can’t argue with numbers!” Transnational representation at company boards – the Nordic case**

**Author: Inger Marie Hagen**

Board level employee representation is well established in a number of European countries. In some countries, the arrangement is anchored in company law, while in others the provisions are found in either labour law or in collective agreements. The different arrangements have however one important feature in common: the arrangements are part of national law and thus – the right to representation is given to employees working in the country in question only. Employees in foreign-based subsidiaries have no right to representation at group board level (‘konsern’) even if national legislation might provide for representation in the subsidiary in the country at hand. However, three countries make up the exception to this rule: France, Denmark and Norway. In addition, in Germany and Sweden, the legal situation might be interpreted as permitting transnational representation if the trade unions comply and in both countries, examples of transnational representation exist. This paper look at this transnational arrangement with a Nordic perspective. So far 29 groups have been identified, 24 in Norway, 2 in Denmark and 3 in Sweden. Three key questions are addressed. First, why transnational representation established? There is no mandatory provision on representation in neither country and thus, the workers need to organize a demand for representation. The next step is to transform the arrangement into a transnational arrangement. Did the employees, the management, the shareholder elected board members or the trade union take the initiative? Secondly, how was the representatives elected? All three countries are characterize by a ‘single channel system’, e.g. at company level the trade union representatives (from the local branch of the national trade unions) represent the employees in relation to the management. Never the less, BLER election methods varies. E.g., when to elect a Swedish representative from the Swedish subsidiary to the board of a Norwegian group – does Swedish (appointed by the trade union) or Norwegian rules (elected by all employees in company) apply? Thirdly, how do the representatives evaluate the arrangement and especially the role of their foreign colleagues? If – and how - do the representatives cooperate and what is the role of the trade union (if present in company)? The data is mainly qualitative (interviews with BLERs in different groups) supplemented by two quantitative survey, one by the European Trade Union Institute (ETUI) and one by Fafo. The paper argues that in order to understand the role of BLERs at different level, the analysis need to include both an industrial relation framework as well as insight from corporate governance. The paper is based on a project is funded by ETUI.

# Labour platform in the South Global. The case of app workers in Argentina

**Authors: Julieta Haidar, Diana Menéndez Nicolás, Arias Cora**

Labour industrial researchers have recently claimed that a new form of labour organization becomes prominent within current capitalism: “labour platform” or “gig economy.”

However, organizational work practices epitomized in the platforms are not novel; they were apparent in Western Europe until the 19th century and were still active—though in a subordinated and unarticulated way—during the Fordist era in central countries: common practices included breaking up jobs into small and low-skilled tasks, home-based production, on-demand work, piecework compensation, as well as the proliferation of an intermediary-based business model (Vandaele, 2018). At the same time, precarious work became the main production model in the South Global and a key condition for the development of capitalist accumulation in the Global North.

Taking these arguments into consideration, some researchers assert that ‘virtual paupers’ entail a prerequisite for the growth of platform work: their own existence operates a re-commodification of labour in the core countries of the capitalist system from the 1970s onwards (Dyer-Witthford, 2015; Healy et al., 2017; Stanford, 2017; Weil, 2014; Collier et al., 2017 in Vandaele, 2018).

Even though topics such as the new features of labour platform, the platform workers organizations, the challenges for unions, and the scope of these organizational work practices are common in research about Europe, there are few studies about the phenomena in the South Global—precisely where crowdworkers perform low-skilled jobs as “app workers”. The main objective of our paper is to contribute to fill this lacuna in the field.

We will analyze a particular form of labour platform in Argentina: on-demand digital platform workers called via apps that mostly employ low skilled physical, offline work—specifically bicycle food delivery services.

At the beginning of 2018, two big companies reproducing this model of platform on-demand work—Rappi and Glovo—emerged in Argentina. They took advantage from a legal vacuum and the deteriorated labour market, where 40% of the workers have precarious jobs. Strikingly, a few months later the platform workers organized a key protest action in the region. Subsequently, they created a new union organization, challenging the academic and political consensus regarding the structural difficulties inherent to the organization of that kind of workers.

We will focus on the following questions: What are the conditions of possibility that allow the proliferation of this form of work in Argentina? What are the singularities of this kind of work management? Which socio-political elements facilitated the workers organization? What are the main characteristics of these workers? How are they organized and what are their main objectives? How do traditional unions and the Argentinian labour relation model respond to the workers' demands?

In our research we use a qualitative methodological approach based on in depth interviews with union delegates, as well as with workers.

# Representing the new ‘we’ – trade union solidarity in neo-liberal globalization

**Author: Lise Lotte Hansen**

Commodification and exploitation in the labour market do not only produce fragmentation and challenge trade union solidarity it also produces polarization and lead to protest and organisation (e.g. Lindberg & Neergaard 2013). Nevertheless, solidarity does not just happen. It has to be constructed, and trade unions play a key role in this.

The overall interest of the paper is how solidarity among a widely diverse group of workers is produced, reproduced, changed, and challenged today. The specific interest is on trade union solidarity strategies. Taking off in a conflict about changes in housekeepers’ working conditions in a Danish based international hotel chain, and how the union 3F dealt with this, the paper discusses interest representation and the making of a new ‘we’ in a changed socio-politico-economic environment.

Key to the making of a new ‘we’ is the framing of interests: How do unions represent workers’ interests? What is on the agenda? Who is included in interest representation? And where does interest representation take part? However, for trade unions to become a new ‘we’ not only interest representation is important. Trade unions exist in a dynamic relationship to societal dynamics, workplace collectivism and workers’ political identification: they interact and mutually ‘shape’ each other (also Doellgast et al 2018). Union renewal literature points at deep organizing, democracy developments, coalition building and changes in agenda in order to meet the challenges and to include all workers. Yet, trade unions also need to redefine the ‘we’ (Hansen in writing; Hyman 2011).

## Research

The paper builds on research funded by the Danish Research Council for Society and Business. The research focuses on commercial cleaners and the trade union, 3F, in Denmark. Commercial cleaning is centrally placed in processes of exploitation and commodification. It is reproductive work and outsourcing is common. It is low-paid, done alone, connoted female and increasingly done by migrants. The organization percentage and coverage by collective agreements are lower than in the labour market in general.

Data production ran from 2013–2016. It consists of 27 interviews (34 persons) with trade union leaders, employee representatives, cleaners in hotels and hospitals and migrant network leaders; fieldwork in the trade union 3F, at organising activities, in migrant networks and in workplaces; one memory workshop with female trade union leaders and officers; and one research circle with trade union leaders, officers with diverse backgrounds.

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## **Between alienation and meaningful work – individual ways of appropriating work in times of work intensification in professional work**

**Authors: Friedericke Hardering, Mascha Will-Zocholl**

**Background:** The work of professionals is affected by the rapid changes in the world of work, which are characterised by an increase in flexibility, precarisation and work intensification. Due to various structural changes like economisation and a new political agenda (in terms of social reforms), work in health care and social work has become more stressful and demanding, even for those who are highly qualified. Professionals have to deal with these conditions in a constantly changing environment and worsening working conditions. These changes in work raise the question of how professionals deal with the changes and how they appropriate work despite this resistance. In the course of our research, three different ways of appropriation of work can be identified.

**Methods:** We conducted 40 biographical-narrative interviews with doctors and social workers in management positions. A total of twenty specialist doctors and twenty social workers were interviewed. The interviews focused on employment biographies, work experience as well as the resources and burdens of work to get an insight and understand individuals strategies to deal with the structural challenges. The interviews were conducted within the framework of the project: “Societal conceptions about what makes work meaningful and individuals’ experiences of meaningfulness at work” that is funded by the German Research Foundation (DFG 2014-2016).

**Findings:** On the basis of the interviews, three different ideal types of appropriation have been identified: type A, “progressive meaning-making”, type B, “resistant meaning defense“ and type C “pragmatic meaning conservation”. Each type stands for a specific view of one's own possibilities for shaping work and for a form of primary attribution of meaning in work. The three types show that there is not the one ideal path for a successful appropriation of work that protects against the challenges and demands of work. On the contrary, there are very ambivalent tendencies within the single types. Protecting the inner working life is accompanied by various ambivalences, forms of satisfaction and possibly new burdens on the work life balance. Every type demonstrates the ambivalences in dealing with today’s challenges in professional work.

**Discussion:** The findings from the two professional groups provide indications for understanding professional work under the conditions of work intensification and stress increase. They highlight the complexity of appropriation processes and thus help to better understand the work experience of employees.

## **What do European Employers' Organisations do?**

**Authors: Marco Hauptmeier, Mona Aranea, Leon Goberman**

The representation of labour and employer interests at European level forms a central part of European economic and social integration. In the academic field of employment relations, the literature so far primarily focuses on labour's perspective in European social dialogue and policy-making, especially trade unions' struggle for a social dimension of European integration. Very little is known about how employers influence European policies in the area of work and employment. There are very few studies with a specific focus on EU-level employer representation (Keune and Marginson 2013; Platzer 1984; Platzer, 2010). European employer organisations (EEOs) have received some academic attention as social partners in European inter-professional and sectoral social dialogue (Keller, 2003; Prosser 2016; Degryse, 2015; Keller and Weber, 2011; Leisink, 2002; Perin, and Leonard, 2011; Pochet et al., 2009; Poissonneau and Nolda; 2012) but systematic knowledge on their nature and activities is still scarce.

The research addresses the identified gap with the aim to build up systematic knowledge on EEOs' influencing strategies across various European arenas. The paper presents initial findings from the Cardiff University research project on employer interest representation, started in February 2018. We found that EEOs influence European work and employment policies through four main channels: social dialogue, political representation, standard-setting and member services. The paper identifies a range of EEOs activities across these four channels of influence.

We pursue this research through two research methods. We review organisational (EEO) websites and EU archival records (e.g. European Commission Meetings and policy consultations; European Parliament events or European Commission expert groups). In addition, we conduct interviews with EEO representatives, but also with related actors that have knowledge of the working of EEOs such as labour unions, NGOs and national employer organisation. The research contributes to the field of European employment relations with an empirical assessment of EEO scope, activities and channels of interest representations. Furthermore, the paper assesses the theoretical significance of these EEO activities based on different theories of employer interest representation.

# The Map is not the Territory. Contested Space in Food Delivery Work

**Author: Heiner Heiland**

Space is a central aspect of delivery work. Since platforms such as Deliveroo and others offer to deliver food from restaurants to customers, “the elimination of space through time” (Marx) is at the centre of their business model. Furthermore, and as this paper will show, space is a contested terrain of the labour process as well as an instrument of its control.

Food couriers are **free in a double sense**. Usually they are independent contractors and are therefore not subjects to the platform’s instructions. The couriers are formally independent in the way they fulfil their work. At the same time their work is not bound to one place, since the couriers’ place of operation is the whole city: “The metropolis is to the multitude what the factory was to the industrial working class” (Hardt/Negri 2009).

This “double freedom” is a challenge for the platforms. It acts as a **zone of uncertainty** and as such is a power resource for the workers (Crozier/Friedberg 1980). Therefore, platforms try to resolve these uncertainties via GPS-surveillance, the production of space as well as the workers’ perception of it.

1. Couriers are permanently **GPS-localised** during their work. While traditional couriers can use the uncertainty of their localisation as a resource to undermine the management’s instructions, this option is not only devaluated for food couriers but becomes a relevant information for the platforms efficient allocation of the orders as well as the control over the workers. As a counter strategy to the heteronomy coming along with this the couriers use Fake-GPS-Apps to keep the platforms in the dark about their actual location.
2. The **platforms produce the space the couriers are using**. They create different delivery zones of a city and keep their borders non-transparent to the couriers. These borders can change over time without notification and are in general rather fluid. The maps provided from the platforms are therefore not identical with the territory. However, contrary to Korzybski (1948) and in order to give the platforms control over the labour process, they sometimes do not even have a similar structure to the territory. Thus, they lead to a change in the drivers’ perception of space and their mental maps, undermining their tacit knowledge and resources of action.

The production and appropriation of space are never an individual practice but rather moments of social conditions (Lefebvre 1974). In this case, however, the influence on the spatial practice is not based on a general social representation of space alone (ibid.), but rather on the specific representation the platforms produce to control the labour process. Since every “map presages some form of exploitation” (Hall 1993) and as the presented research shows, the maps used by food delivery couriers as well as the constant GPS-surveillance are central aspects of the control of the labour process.

The research is based on 33 qualitative interviews with German food couriers, ethnographic data through own courier work, a quantitative online survey and the analysis of online forums and chat groups.

## Reversed Solutionism. Technological and Organisational Fix

**Author: Heiner Heiland**

Algorithms are a signum of our present. They have become omnipresent in the recent past – in many different social fields as well as in the public and scientific discourse. This paper brings forward the argument that even though algorithms have become responsible for management duties of the whole spectrum, the focus on as well as the critique of them in labour related contexts is necessary but not sufficient. The result can be a reversed solutionism in which not every problem is reduced to a technological one (Morozov), but criticism focuses on technology alone and runs the risk of becoming mechanistic.

Next to the technological fix focused on algorithms an organisational fix is the complementary other side of the coin. Both sides and their interaction can be exemplarily analysed in the field of food delivery platforms. Here, the use of technology is „an effort to implement a **technological fix** to problems of profitability and control“ (Silver 2003: 39). However, even here algorithms are only one technological instrument next to others. Most important are the digitally codified production of information asymmetries as well as performance and GPS-tracking. Subsequently, the technological control of the labour process is new in its form but not its content, as it resembles a sustained “struggle for transparency” (Thompson 1967).

As Edwards (1979) shows, technology alone is not able to control the labour process but is complemented with bureaucratic control. Following this, the paper argues that an **organisational fix** usually considered to be minor is a crucial control form. Delivery platforms move the markets’ frontier into the organisation, leading to an externalisation of the courier workers. However, with this cost reducing organisational arrangement the riders become “independent” and their coordination and control becomes a challenge to the platforms. Next to the technological fix, the implementation of platform-internal organised markets becomes a central feature. Every aspect of these markets is controlled through the platforms via the technological fix. One of the results of this organisational setting is a specific working time regime, leading to a rising importance of the workers’ performance-based status on these internal markets. The riders are required to work less favourable shifts in order to get access to more profitable ones. As a result, the post-fordistic “**subordination of contract to status**” (Marshall 1964: 112; Streeck 1986) is transformed. Work in this context does not anymore provide people with more resources to act and with an industrial citizenship, but is the paradoxical precondition to receive and preserve a status which is fundamental to work in a half-decent profitable way.

Only the interaction between the technological and the organisational fix allows the platforms to obtain control over the labour process following a displaced market frontier.

The paper is based on 33 qualitative interviews with German couriers and platform managers, a quantitative study among riders, extensive ethnographic fieldwork including own courier work and analysis of chatgroups and forums.

# Digitalization in the Belgian retail sector: tensions, discourses, and trade union strategy

**Authors: Maarten Hermans, Miet Lamberts**

Similar to most West-European countries, the retail sector in Belgium forms a sizable segment of the labor market, characterized by challenges for labor quality and trade union work. This sector, with a relatively large share of precarious employment and workers with a weak negotiating position, is at the same time the setting for intense ongoing discussions on the impact of ‘digitalization’. For example, the impact on labor (quality) of the growth of e-commerce, the emergence of hybrid players such as Amazon, self-scan checkouts, robotization of warehousing, etc.

In these debates, management- and policy discourses stress the possibilities for upskilling and more “high route” retail-jobs due to technology-uptake and e.g. a shift to “shopping experiences”. These optimistic expectations stand however in stark contrast with current and short-term expected employment outcomes of hard discounter-competition, such as an increasing share of precarious employment forms, work intensification, monitoring through automatically collected metrics, etc. Diverging expectations like these tie in with the more critical literature on historical evolutions in retail work, such as deskilling through the introduction of technological innovations (e.g. Price, 2011).

Drawing on a literature review, expert interviews, and mainly focus groups with 80 shop stewards in food and non-food retail, we explore these underlying tensions in the context of digitalization-trends. We focus on reoccurring, bottom-up topics of work intensification, control over job reconfiguration, precarization, and de/upskilling processes.

As the research is part of a broader research agenda for trade union strategy in the Belgian retail sector, we link these topics to a discussion of shop steward strategies and trade union power resources. Given the enduring relevance of institutional characteristics in explaining labor outcomes at the level of retail organizations (Carré and Tilly, 2017), we contextualize these tensions, topics, and shop steward strategies within the Belgian institutional framework.

We thus aim to contribute to the research literature on two points. Through the analysis of the qualitative empirical material, we deepen the understanding of organizational level tensions, strategies, and discourses on retail work. Secondly, we complement comparative research on retail work, in which Belgium has been relatively absent. Currently faced with mounting pressure on the still relatively robust union density rates, sectoral collective bargaining, and historical corporatist compromises, the retail sector in Belgium provides an interesting case for trade union responses to contemporary challenges in retail work.

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# **Beyond algorithmic management: labour control in platform-based food delivery**

**Author: Benjamin Herr**

Research on local platform work highlights the role of algorithmic management (Lee et al. 2015; Cant 2018). Food delivery platforms consciously influence the work organisation, especially fleet operation and dispatching (McKinsey & Company 2016; de Stefano 2016). A core managerial problem is the ‚indeterminacy of labour‘ (Smith 2006; Thompson 1983), i.e. to ensure an exploitable result and performance out of the purchase of labor time. The early labor process debate provides a rich set of analytical tools to engage with this aspect of working life (Braverman 1974; Brighton Labour Process Group 1977; Friedman 1977; Edwards 1979). The overall research interest is informed by this stream of thought. It aims to get better insights in the strategies management applies to control labour in platform-based food delivery. Following research questions are guiding the text:

- What role plays technical control in the work organisation of platform-based food delivery?
- What impact have personal and normative forms of control in the respective labour process?
- What is the relationship between data-driven forms of work organisation and forms of control?

A case-study design was applied. The observed company is a leading food delivery platform that operates in various European cities. The author worked for four months in one a branch as a food-deliverer. Based on the analysis of fieldnotes and lived experiences of the labour process a guideline was constructed. This guideline set the basis for subsequent semi-structured interviews with 16 salaried workers and freelancers of the branch, sampled along gender and occupational status. In addition, a second participatory observation was conducted at a traditional bike messenger company for 7 months.

The findings suggest that data-driven forms of work organisation have to be embedded into particular social relations. Performance data has to be actively and personally communicated through supervisors. Supervisors themselves are embedded into a system of competition via international team rankings. Navigating through the city is too complex as that it could be compulsory standardised. The upholding of a start-up feeling through various kinds of narratives is actively created by the management in order to control feelings, emotions and belonging. A messenger mythos was used as a discursive fragment to successfully silence demands. Measures of the performance review are the materialisation of the contestation between capital and labour on this respective shop-floor level.

Altogether, the findings suggest a view on platform-based food delivery that goes beyond notions of a data-driven, automated and algorithmic controlled workplace. By identifying the social interfaces of automated forms of control it opens paths for future research on the intersection of labor research, activism and social innovation.

## **When work becomes invisible. Intensification of labour in online freelancing**

**Authors: Johanna Hofbauer, Dominik Klaus**

We intend to discuss the notion of work intensification in the field of online freelancing, using the example of virtual assistants and virtual receptionists.

Virtual assistance is an emerging field of gendered work, enabled by digitalization and platform economy. Self-employed freelancers take on office management tasks from individual professionals, small firms or larger companies. Jobs may include regular service tasks, but the requirements on task accomplishment differ, one of the reasons for this being that flexibility and availability claims increase. What is more, quality of service essentially demand communication and social skills that compensate for the lack of face-to-face interaction. The same applies to the work of virtual receptionists. Virtual receptionists manage customer queries of all sorts for hotels, medical cabinets or similar professional clients. They carry out typical frontline work tasks. Skilled service interaction, however, means to work the intersection of an anonymous service requester and an equally anonymous customer. Erving Goffman once characterized this type of frontline work as representing the “company’s face to the world”, a task that seems even more challenging when impression has to be managed in a virtual environment of service provision, where rating systems and algorithmic management rigidly control performance.

In the paper, we argue that the challenges of virtual assistance and virtual reception jobs are easily underrated, not only by requesters and customers, but also by the freelancing workers. Online freelancers expect more autonomy from a remote, self-employed job – a job that can e.g. be carried out from a private home which promises easier reconciliation with other responsibilities, e.g. care duties. We assume, however, that the potential advantages of these virtual jobs hardly make up for the range of skills and efforts to be put into the job, not to mention job risks due to irregular or precarious employment.

Contractualization of services and the practice of all-inclusive contracts tend to let service requesters take the service for granted and ignore the multi-faceted investments made by virtual service workers to get the job done at “complete customer satisfaction”. This involves, among others, to convey a feeling of “personal” assistance, create a bond with the client, respond to his/her particular needs, while knowing hardly more than the client’s name and a few business facts. Moreover, virtualization shifts work into private homes, which renders investments into office equipment, accomplishments in trouble-shooting on a day-to-day basis, efforts in emotion management and emotion work, or the involvement of social relations in terms of co-production of service invisible.

The paper draws on the case of virtual assistance and virtual reception in order to make a contribution to the debate around the intensification and valuation of work in platform economy, thereby also touching upon the issue of digitization and gender. It will center around questions such as

- How is virtual service provision valued? What are criteria of performance assessments?
- How do virtual assistants and receptionists cope with digitally mediated working requirements and control? How do they draw boundaries between work and non-work given the high level of availability requirements?
- How can we assess work intensification in virtual service provision, assuming that work intensification is measured as the relation between performance and work valuation, and given the issues of invisibility of digitally mediated work in informal working environments?

# **Sectoral analysis of the impacts of greenhouse gas mitigation on employment for the Austrian economy, and implications for the debates on just transition and degrowth**

**Authors: Maja Hoffmann, Clive Spash**

In debates on social-ecological transformations of industrial-capitalist economies, concepts such as ‘selective degrowth’, ‘just transition’, or ‘work-sharing’ have emerged. There appears to be consensus that activities in certain economic sectors need to be reduced or ceased entirely in order to ensure effective climate change mitigation in line with the Paris Agreement targets, while it is objected that this needs to be balanced against concerns about job loss (referred to as the ‘jobs-versus-environment-dilemma’). However, there has been surprisingly little systematic empirical research into the question exactly which areas of economic activity are susceptible to climate change mitigation in which ways, and what this implies for employment.

We analyse the impacts of greenhouse gas (GHG) mitigation on employment using the Austrian national economy as a case study. Four specific questions are addressed: (1) Which economic sectors are most susceptible to impact from phasing out fossil fuels over the next two decades?; (2) What is the susceptibility of sectors that are essential for meeting basic social needs?; (3) Are there identifiable sectors that have very low climate impacts or positive GHG mitigation potential?; and (4) Which sectors can be reorganised on the basis of existing renewable energy (RE) technologies, and under what conditions?

As a basis for analysis, a table using a two-dimensional matrix has been developed. The first dimension lists all branches of economic activity (and associated areas of employment) as classified according to ÖNACE-08. The second dimension covers seven aspects: (a) number of jobs/persons employed; (b) revenue; (c) social value; (d) primary fossil fuel consumption; (e) carbon dioxide emissions; (f) climate impact of finished product/service in use; (g) RE potential.

Based on this empirical basis, preliminary results suggest, as might be expected, the high susceptibility of extractive and energy-intensive industries, but also vulnerability of less obvious ones such as wholesale trade, air and space transport, or defence activities. Issues with regard to basic social needs could arise due to vulnerabilities affecting, for example, manufacture of food products, civil engineering, and RE system components. Positive GHG mitigation potential is possible e.g. in forestry and agriculture. The potential for deployment of RE technologies is limited across a considerable number of economic/professional activities dependent on industrial process heat and/or fossil-fuel transportation, assuming limited technological change over the next two decades. This issue combined with aspect (c), social value, and the perspective of rapidly shrinking carbon budgets necessitates a discussion, both scientific and public, on privileging certain sectors over others (e.g., the manufacture of RE technology or medical equipment over consumer electronics and defence activities).

The overall implications for employment are far more substantive and involve more sectors than the literature on green job creation or just transition in the context of the larger work-environment debate suggests. Future research should focus on the details of selective degrowth and rapid work reduction, and what this implies for industrial work-centred and work-dependent societies. Questions of economic/corporate power, of symbols of industrial culture, and of war and peace must further be dealt with when discussing the phasing out of fossil-intensive industries.

This exploratory analysis also presents an approach that is applicable to other countries that provide NACE/ISIC-classified statistics.

## **Refugees welcome: the added worker effect of the large refugee inflow to German establishments**

**Authors: Christian Hohendanner, Mario Bossler**

In course of the devastating war in Syria a large number of people fled towards Europe. In Germany, a few month after the largest influx, the refugees started to enter the labor market, resulting in a tremendous a labor supply shock, which may impact wages and employment of incumbent workers. In the political debate, consequences for the domestic workforce are of particular interest. On the one hand, concerns about labor market competition are often regarded as a cause of anti-immigrant sentiment. On the other hand, employers' associations favor migration to Germany and still promote a novelty of a more migration friendly immigration law. This political stand is most likely grounded on labor shortage and a high demand for cheap immigrant labor. However, the consequences of the recent refugee inflow for firms in Germany is still an open question. From a theoretical perspective, we distinguish between two conceivable possibilities: first, refugees do not displace domestic workers because they fill in for positions domestic workers would normally reject. In other words, domestic workers and refugees work in different segments of the labor market and do not compete with each other. From this dual labor market perspective, the additional inflow of labor would increase overall employment. The second possibility is derived from neoclassical theory - assuming substitutability of incumbents and refugees on a single labor market. From this perspective, market wages fall with an increase of labor supply. Total employment could increase as the firms' labor demand rises under falling wages. However, refugee workers could also crowd out incumbents if the latter do not accept wages/working conditions that refugees are willing to accept. The second - pessimistic - perspective results in increased wage pressure and labor substitution. We try to shed light on these potential labor market effects on the level of workplaces in Germany by estimating panel models that uncover wage and employment developments at refugee hiring workplaces in comparison with a control group of establishments that did not (yet) hire any refugees. The data source of our analysis is the IAB Establishment Panel, which is an annual, representative survey of more than 15,000 establishments in Germany. A unique establishment identifier allows us to track establishments over time, while observing changes in variables such as employment and wages. In 2017, the survey included a question on whether the respective workplace has hired refugees that came to Germany during 2015 and 2016. The results are as follows: We observe a (small) negative effect on average wages at refugee hiring workplaces. The decline in average wages is mainly driven by non-unionized establishments and may be explained by a lower remuneration of the refugees themselves. Employment effects are positive and correspond with the fraction of employed refugees at the respective workplaces, supporting the added worker hypothesis over a substitutive relationship.

## **Old actors becoming ‘new actors’? The influence of retired members in union campaigns**

**Authors: Jane Holgate, Gabriella Alberti, Iona Byford, Ian Greenwood**

This presentation will focus on research which investigates how and why retired trade unionists are (re)collectivising in order to campaign for social justice for workers. The context is within one of the largest British trade unions, Unite and its community membership—a strategy for organising new trade union members who are not in the workplace. Unite Community encompasses people who are unemployed, retired, students, carer, but, in essence, the majority of the membership is made up of retirees—most of who have been active union members or social movement activists in the past.

The national Unite strategy begun in 2011 and has resulted in an additional 16,000 trade union members. Drawing on the individual experiences of members of Unite Community through in depth ‘story of self’ semi-biographical interviews (Merrill and West, 2009) we consider what activity is being undertaken by these members who are not in employment. What effect are they having on union campaigns and how does their activity link to the literature on ‘new actors’ in the employment relationship? Past research has indicated that the involvement of supporters that are external to the workplace may represent the risk to outsource the campaign (Alberti, 2016), whereas others claim that this form of community solidarity can offers benefits to workers (Fine, 2005, Prowse, et al., 2017, Rhomberg and Simmons, 2005). We consider these arguments, but also ask is it a mechanism to circumvent the legal restrictions relating to trade union activity? And, could it be the start of a new grassroots movement to assist in organising workers in the grey zones of work and employment?

Wider issues beyond these questions are probed in the interviews including the motivations of Unite Community members to undertake union organising in their communities, the sustainability of the Unite Community strategy, the issue of political factions on the functioning of UC branches, and the effectiveness of the campaigns in achieving both a higher profile and a new narrative for trade unions. Findings indicate that personal, geographical and historic differences among members and branches have an impact on the politics, vibrancy and nature of the Unite Community branches and on the type of people involved and the union organising activity undertaken. We also note from findings that there are issues with sustainability due to turnover of members, leader ‘burnout’, inter branch tensions and factionalism.

Mobilisation theory (Kelly, 1998) helps explain individual journeys to collectivisation through such concepts as cognitive liberation, the creation of a group social identity, the attribution of blame for a lack of social justice to wider bodies, and the ability of the branch leaders to frame their concerns into a coherent argument and campaigning agenda (Gall and Holgate, 2018, Darlington, 2018). But we also find that an analysis of the ‘other actors’ literature (see special edition on this topic in Heery and Frege, 2006, *British Journal of Industrial Relations*, 2006) helps to provide and understanding of how these ‘old actors’ (retired trade union members) can be transformed into ‘new actors’ and perhaps provide unions with a way of re-engaging retired members to remain or become active in future organising—particularly in the more precarious sections of the labour market where some groups of workers either lack industrial muscle to effect change, or are in (as yet) unorganised sections of the labour market.

The methodological approach has been qualitative and inductive. Using in-depth interviews, observation, and participation, the researchers have immersed themselves in the activities of the union in order to get a rich understanding both of what was said, but also what has been

done. As a result of expertise in trade unions and community organising, researchers have also acted as ‘sounding boards’ in discussions about direction and progress, and have taken part in training, presentations and workshops with Unite staff and UC members, as well as taken part in branch meetings over a six-year period.

In total, 50 interviews with lay members (in three branches in three different regions of the UK) were undertaken and 18 with Unite staff. In order to understand the purpose of the Unite Community initiative, interviewees also included Unite Community co-ordinators—the paid organisers in each of the union’s regions and three senior officials with responsibilities for Unite Community.

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# Self-regulation theory as a predictor to improve Job Club

**Authors: Stian Holmefjord, Hilde Therese Johansen**

## **Background:**

Job Club (Azrin et al., 1975; Rife & Betcher, 1994) is a widely used labour market program in Norway. It is viewed as beneficial for most job seekers, enhancing job search strategies, but studies show that the positive effect declines rapidly (Filges et al. 2015). There exist significant gaps in previous research on job search interventions (Liu, S., Huang, J. L., & Wang, M. 2014). First, it lacks review of theoretical perspectives in job search interventions. Second, there are few studies which have tried to explain variations in effectiveness of job search interventions. Third, there is limited understanding on how job search strategies can be changed and the effect prolonged. A contemporary theoretical framework is to view self-regulation as a key to improve job search skills and job search motivation (Caplan et al., 1997). Self-regulation is determined by two types of resources; individuals' task-relevant knowledge/ skills and task-motivation (Liu et al., 2014). An important part of self-regulation is self-efficacy. Liu and colleagues found in their meta-analysis that job search interventions which boost self-efficacy are more effective than interventions that don't. Previous literature review (Holmefjord & Johansen, 2018; Filges et al. 2015) showed that few if any studies have looked at Job Club in Norway within the framework of self-regulation theory. There are equally few studies looking at how job search strategies can be changed. Job Club in Norway has solely been evaluated through measuring transition to work.

With background in self-regulation theory, we have made two hypotheses: 1) The positive outcome effect of Job Club is largely due to enhancement in both task-relevant skills and self-efficacy. But the short-lived effect is mainly due to a rapid decline in self-efficacy alone. 2) The positive outcome effect of Job Club can be prolonged by offering booster-sessions after ended program.

## **Method:**

We want to investigate these hypotheses by looking at two groups attending Job Club in Bergen, Norway. One intervention group and one convenient control group, matched for gender, age, level of education and length of unemployment. The intervention group receive mandatory Job Club for 3 consecutive weeks. Followed by booster-weeks given with a gap of 2 weeks between each week. The control group receive Job Club as it is organized today, with 3 + 3 weeks. The total number of weeks with direct intervention are for both groups 6 weeks. We will use General Self-efficacy scale (GSE) to measure change in self-efficacy. And a questionnaire to measure two different job search outcomes; 1) numbers of interviews, and 2) number of job-offers.

## **Implications:**

Job Club is widely used in Norway, but there is a lack of systematic knowledge about the program. We believe this study will contribute to develop the knowledge base for Job Club. The results will give us a better understanding on how the program works and can be used to develop the program according to scientific principles.

## **What accounts for the long-term changes in the chances of being NEET in the UK?**

**Authors: Craig Holmes, Emily Murphy, Ken Mayhew**

Young people who are not in employment, education and training – NEETs – are a major concern for policy makers in many countries. The proportion of young people that are NEET has been adopted internationally as a key indicator on the state of youth labour markets and opportunities for those leaving full-time education. This paper presents UK Labour Force Survey data on young people between the age of 16 and 29 in the UK and tracks how the incidence of being NEET has changed over the period between 1975 and 2015. During this time period overall NEET rates have fallen considerably, but most of these changes happened in the 1980s and 1990s with little progress since then. To understand why, we break down the data into four time periods – 1985-1993, 1993-2000, 2000-2007 and 2007-2015 – and using a standard Blinder-Oaxaca decomposition, look at whether young people have stopped gaining the characteristics associated with lower NEET rates or whether those characteristics are no longer associated with lower NEET risks than in the past.

For both men and women, the most important change NEET rates have fallen because the number of individuals who have low or no qualifications – a significant predictor of being NEET - has also fallen, albeit far less so in the period between 2000 and 2007. By comparison, the growth in the number of young people with degrees has had little effect on NEET rates, largely due to the fact that the difference in NEET rates between those with degrees and those with upper secondary school level qualifications is minimal. We find some evidence of scarring for young people who would have entered the labour market around the start of the financial crisis as NEET rates for those over 22 increase between 2007 and 2015. National and regional conditions drive most of the rest of estimated changes. Better overall labour market conditions – captured by the regional over 35s unemployment rate – correlated to reduced NEET rates in 2000s, but not since financial crisis. After 2000, we find evidence of significant differing outcomes for those inside London and outside London, although these trends are different for men and women.

As regional differences give us a large and significant but unexplained reason for why NEET rates have not continued to fall, we try to find which regional characteristics are most relevant. We find that that a higher regional share of part-time work (as proxy for flexible employment) and lower skill service occupations no longer correlate to lower NEET rates. Moreover, professional occupation share of region correlates with reduced NEET rates when the overall unemployment rate doesn't, which suggests that when the local economy providing enough jobs for all, the type of jobs available matters less.

## **Have skilled jobs become more routine? Evidence from UK workplaces**

**Author: Craig Holmes**

Research on the future of work has moved on from predictions over the number of jobs which are at risk of being lost through automation (for example, Frey and Osborne, 2013) to more nuanced analyses of the way technology might replace certain tasks within a job whilst leaving other tasks to be performed by human labour. In this way, the number of jobs might not fall, although what is meant by certain jobs and occupations is likely to change. Recent history gives numerous examples of this. For example, Bessen (2016) demonstrates how after the introduction of ATMs, the number of bank tellers increased as banking became much cheaper and demand for bank services rose, while the work of bank tellers after the introduction of ATMs obviously changed to require the performance of tasks that could not be automated by those machines. In terms of what this means for the skill requirements of work, new technology might remove the need for human labour to perform less skilful routine tasks so that it could focus on more demanding and rewarding work. If AI can provide reliable medical diagnoses, doctors could spend more time performing more complicated procedures. An accounting clerk whose previous tasks are replaced by accounting software might be able to add value for clients by providing analytical insights from these accounts. However, reductions in skill requirements are also possible. Brown, Lauder and Ashton (2011), in their discussion of "digital Taylorism", give the example of bank managers, whose work has shifted towards customer service and data entry while the more complex tasks (such as who to offer loans or other financial products to) have been standardised and are now performed by a computer algorithm.

Bisello and Fernández-Macías (2016) found that across Europe, many jobs have become more repetitive and standardised. This paper looks at data from the Workplace Employment Relations Survey (WERS) between 2004 and 2011 to address two questions. Firstly, using individual worker responses to questions about the level of individual influence over work, the extent of employee voice over working practices and the degree to which workers seem themselves as overskilled, we look to see which jobs are becoming more routine and whether these changes affect reports of being overskilled for a job. We find a number of highly skilled professional and managerial occupations which have seen significant drops in worker discretion. Secondly, we use the matched employer survey to estimate what lies behind these changes - in particular, whether they are due to the introduction of new technologies, new products, new working practices or some other aspect of work organisation. With the exception of initiatives to involve employees more in firm decision-making, we find most managerial changes to working practices have tended to lead to less discretion and employee voice while new technology investments or new products themselves have no effect.

# Digitalisation in the service context: European unions navigating erosion, disruption and innovation

**Author: Ursula Holtgrewe**

Digitalisation presents multiple challenges for trade unions, but the current debate tends to focus on manufacturing and „industry 4.0“. However, services are affected just as much. European services unions are concerned over actual and potential job losses due to automation, the shrinking of their core constituencies as labour markets polarise and “normal” employment relationships erode, the blurring of sectoral boundaries and the extension of competition and potential disruption across sectors, and over a concentration of management power through data-based HR and decisionmaking. However, fragmentation of employment relationships, heterogeneous workforces and more difficult conditions for organisation and representation do not hinge on new technologies only. Digitalisation continues to take place in conjunction with globalisation, liberalisation of some markets, and ongoing restructuring of both companies and work organisation. Yet, these concerns vary with sectors, regions, and professional profiles of trade unions, and also with unions’ involvement in national digitalisation policies.

This contribution is based on a series of studies conducted in collaboration with UNI Europa which conducted expert interviews with European trade unionists, company case studies, and a series of workshops with trade unionists and academics to figure out ways to develop industrial relations to address these challenges on the European level. However, it takes a reflexive stance in exploring the tensions between changes in service industries, their translation into “old”, “new” and “old/new challenges by trade unions, the increasing needs to collaborate transnationally and across sectors and the persistent and increasing asymmetries in labour standards and power.

We argue that on the one hand, “digitalisation” has the potential to catalyse new approaches of unions to new and emerging workforces and modes of working. On the other hand, gaps between union strongholds and the wider sector may increase, and innovative “lighthouse” initiatives (such as collective agreements on a “right to disconnect”) may become harder to extend beyond these strongholds. Ways of bridging sectors, regions and initiatives are explored but unions’ own organisational interests suggest at least some ambiguity over regional and (sub)sectoral disparities.

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# Emotional Labour and Burnout amongst Police Officers

**Authors: Benjamin Hopkins, David Dowell; Joe Flitton**

Within the context of continuing austerity measures, police numbers in the United Kingdom have fallen to their lowest levels since 1985. In this setting, we investigate the relationship between emotional labour (Hochschild, 1983) and burnout (Maslach et al., 2001) in this public sector service (Brook, 2009). Policing is an understudied area of the public sector, partly as a result of access issues. However, this emotional ‘dirty work’ is necessary for the effective functioning of society (McMurray and Ward, 2014) and it is crucial to understand issues facing workers in the public sector, particularly in the police.

We investigate these issues of burnout and emotional labour by utilising Maslach et al.’s (2001) Burnout Index and Brotheridge and Lee’s (2003) Emotional Labour Scale. A total of 330 completed questionnaires were returned by serving officers, and these form the data set for this study. Rather than assuming heterogeneity amongst officers, we instead sought to create a typology of different groups of officers. This was achieved by using finite mixture modelling.

Using this methodology, we propose that there are three types of officers. The first of these is termed Misaligned Values, and amongst this group we find that both surface acting and deep acting increase levels of burnout. Amongst the second Core group we find that again surface acting will increase levels of burnout, and this is exacerbated by length of surface. Finally, the third Matching Values group again experiences higher levels of burnout as a result of surface acting, but this is mitigated by deep acting, or aligning their own values with those of the organisation. What is of particular concern, however, is that although this group find their values aligned with those of the police service, they have by far the highest level of burnout of any of the groups.

Having established these groups through quantitative analysis, a key strength of this paper is that these results have then been discussed with both serving and former police officers in order to establish the validity of these descriptions and the typology with practitioners. Combining this expert insight with quantitative analysis, we investigate ways in which the police service can mitigate the effects of burnout in the context of continuing public sector austerity measures.

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## **Gender Matters: An Exploratory Study of Platform Work**

**Authors: Debra Howcroft, Clare Mumford, Birgitta Bergvall-Kåreborn**

Platform-based working and ‘gigs’ are attracting increasing levels of attention from policymakers, consultancy firms, commentators and academics. When compared with the norm of regular, full-time employment, seeking work on digital platforms is relatively marginal, but the benefits for capital suggest that it is set to increase. Given that women’s integration into wage employment in traditional workplaces has been based on the retention of high levels of gender segregation, gender pay gaps, and the gender divide in domestic responsibilities (Rubery 2015), we ask whether platform work replicates these experiences or is significantly distinct. In relation to women workers, some have found grounds for optimism, suggesting that platforms provide flexibility for those with care obligations, they offer paid work for those weakly attached to the labour market, and provide new opportunities for those with limited access to the formal economy. This perspective contrasts with the emerging body of critical research which reveals that platform work is primarily characterised by low and intermittent pay, highly fragmented and routinized work tasks, as well as exclusion from social protection and employment standards (Howcroft and Bergvall-Kåreborn 2018).

Studies show that more men are undertaking platform work as an additional source of income to supplement the day job, while for women it is more likely to constitute their primary source of income (ILO 2018): consequently, the insecure nature of this form of work matters more. For women workers, homework reflects their labour market vulnerability, which stems from the availability of their skill and the domestic division of labour. Many types of platform work, require investing significant amounts of time in searching for work tasks (Berg 2016) resulting in a higher proportion of unpaid total working hours. While ostensibly platforms appear gender-blind, research has revealed a gender pay gap (Adams and Berg 2017). Gender pay differentials operate regardless of feedback scores, experience, occupational category, working hours and educational attainment, which suggests gender inequality is embedded in the operation of platforms (Barzilay and Ben-David 2017) in ways that require further exploration. As Wajcman (2017: 4) observes, technologies are ‘crystallizations of society’ and bear the imprint of the social context from which they emerge, reproducing inequalities online. With this in mind, the paper reports on a qualitative study of platform working that aims to explore the experiences and consequences for women workers, particularly for those with caring responsibilities.

## **Hybridization of employment statuses in domestic and care work: comparison of European Union and Latin American strategies**

**Authors: Majda Hrženjak, Lorena Poblete**

In 2011 ILO adopted Convention 189 with a view to the adoption of a comprehensive standard for decent work for domestic workers. In this paper the authors compare how two different world regions, Latin America and European Union, within diverse socio-economic contexts, equality standards, labour and care cultures and policies, tackle the issue of regulation of domestic work. The authors analyse recent policy developments and their evaluations in two regions along the lines of Definition of services, Service users, Organisational forms, Employment statuses, Working conditions, Professionalization and Public costs. While many EU states have over the past decade developed specific policies to actively promote the development of the formal market of what is euphemistically called ‘personal and household services’ through the introduction of cash-for-care schemes, vouchers or different socio-fiscal measures in order to diminish informal economy, create new employments and support work and family balance, Latin America took a different route. Many Latin American countries amended their legislations including new incentives (such as tax exceptions, occupational hazards insurances) as well as enforcement mechanisms (such as ex-officio enrolment, and labour inspection) in order to formalize informal arrangements. In the conclusion the paper discusses pros and cons of regional strategies from the perspective of quality of employments for domestic and care workers.

# Fragmented and fractured work and labour relations

**Author: Emma Hughes, Tony Dundon, Miguel Martinez Lucio, Debra Howcroft, Arjan Keizer and Roger Walden**

## Background

The paper offers a comprehensive literature review on the capacity for employee influence and reports that many contemporary employment relationships are brittle or broken. Employment relationships continue to evolve in multi-dimensional ways, prompting crucial questions around the contextual dimensions shaping the realities of work. A reoccurring argument in the literature affirms that the balance of power has tipped overwhelmingly towards employers. Yet, power shifts are multifaceted and context dependent (Bourdieu and Thompson 1991, Erchul and Raven 1997, Lukes 2005). The paper aims to probe the shifting power dynamics within modern employment relationships and deliver fresh insights on employee capacity to leverage influence about workplace terms and conditions.

## Methodology

Academic and grey research evidence is reviewed around seven core employment relationship dimensions:

- legal sources
- contract status
- technology and employment
- institutional governance
- union participation
- non-union voice
- external actors and networks.

The framework integrates the seven dimensions with a fourfold schema (Marchington and Wilkinson 2012, Wilkinson et al 2014) to rigorously capture shifting employment relationship influences in terms of: *'form'* (for example, different forms of non-union/union voice); *'scope'* – the range of issues influenced (for instance, trivial tea break issues, or substantive strategic decisions); the *'level'* at which influence occurs or is inhibited (such as, workplace, organisational, division, national, transnational); and finally, *'depth'* – the extent of actual or real influence (for example, deep employee influence by affecting workplace decisions, or shallow influence by receiving information about management decisions made).

## Summary of findings

Turning to legal sources, we find that their form is mainly indirect. A lack of robust collective legal frameworks foregrounds individual rights and hinders employee influence. Contract status is a widespread issue shaping the degree of employee power. The recent recommendation peddled enthusiastically in the Taylor Review to reclassify gig-economy 'workers' as 'dependent contractors', seems unequipped to tackle the deep-rooted problem of bogus self-employment. Digital 'gig-work' platforms are fracturing employee influence by obscuring the boundaries between employers and employees and glorifying software algorithm managers. Employees may have a degree of influence on employer brand through websites such as Glassdoor, but this is merely perpetual, not real influence. Trade union and non-union voice are potential sources of employee power. Trade union density has significantly declined, yet collectively orchestrated resistance secures substantive concessions

in some industries and contexts. However, union influence at national and corporatist levels seems shallow under the UK voluntarist regime in relation to other European systems. Non-union voice is a growing phenomenon and generally covers a wide scope of issues, but schemes tend to be management led, curbing the depth of employee influence. Finally, a range of external actors and networks (e.g., CSOs) provide manifold forms of employee influence relatively wide in scope. However, the depth of influence warrants further investigation due to contextual forces such as the politics surrounding lobbying.

Overall, we identify potential pockets of employee influence, but they are disconnected and constrained, generating fragmented employment relationships. The unstable Brexit milieu foments further pessimism and uncertainty around the future of work.

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## **Mobilising for equality? Equal pay disputes, third-party activists and mobilisation theory**

**Authors: Scott Hurrell, Martin Beirne, Fiona Wilson**

This year marks the 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the publication of John Kelly's influential 1998 book *Rethinking Industrial Relations: Mobilisation, Collectivism and Long Waves*. This has led to renewed interest in the theory (see for example Gall and Holgate, 2018), and consideration of its applicability for analysing the dynamics of collective grievance expression.

Whilst there is appreciation of the theory, it has long been criticised for placing too much emphasis on the role of enlightened union leaders as mobilising agents neglecting the role of 'followers' and grass roots activists (see Atzeni, 2009; Fairbrother 2005). The theory can be criticised for providing an overly-functional account of unions and union leadership. It has been noted that collective mobilisation may occur independently of union leaders, enabled by grass-roots activists (Atzeni, 2009). Such critical analysis, whilst critically developing Kelly's theory, remains wedded to processes within unions, leading for some to call for greater appreciation of external forces that may also affect mobilisation processes (Darlington, 2018). Nevertheless these calls remain functionalist, predicated upon how external agents may act in concert with unions (ibid).

Efforts to achieve gender pay equality give us cause to think of different ways in which we might conceptualise the mobilisation of collective grievances and the role of external agents. Despite undoubted union gains in fighting pay inequality between men and women, criticisms remain that union leadership is often slow to act on such issues, with their thinking dominated by male concerns (Beirne and Wilson, 2016). It has also been noted that unions often have insufficient internal expertise to adequately represent female dominated occupations at the bargaining table (Gilbert et al., 2012). In this regard there is evidence that some women have become disgruntled with union representation in equal pay cases and have instead turned to third party agents in the form of no-win-no fee lawyers (Beirne and Wilson, 2016). Whilst such arrangements may be seen as 'running with wolves', considerable gains have been noted through these avenues (ibid).

The paper draws upon a secondary case analysis of a long-running equal pay dispute in a British local authority. Analysis reveals a complex web of alliances, counter-mobilisation and leadership distributed throughout the mobilisation. Dissatisfaction with the unions was evident amongst many grass root women members, who started to increasingly utilise legal agents to express their grievances through the law courts. These external agents began to have considerable success and further mobilisation was enabled through their activities and those of vocal grass-roots activists. As the dispute and legal cases continued, relationships evolved between the various unions, legal agents and the women fighting for equal pay. Interviews with key actors within the dispute (women activists, unions and legal agents) are planned, to further interrogate the dynamics at play and draw wider implications for the development of mobilisation theory, particularly with regards to leadership.

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# Multi-scalar competition in Transnational European Production: Fragmentation meets Xenophobe Culturalization

**Authors: Stefanie Hürtgen**

In my contribution I argue that a specific, neoliberal depoliticization of socio-economic relations represents the ground on which the right and far right can base on. More precisely, socio-economic unevenness and competitive processes of fragmentation are framed as a configuration that comes from “cultural differences”. This “ethnicization of the social”, as Christoph Butterwegge put it, is an inherent part of the contemporary European political economy, which on the one hand is based on transnationally fragmented and competitively organized production, and which on the other hand seeks to naturalize its social effects via xenophobe culturalization.

Already for quite a while and well before current “migration-crisis” and electoral upswings of the (far) right, hence, xenophobe-culturalist and racial-populist framings are deeply inscribed in working life and the (transnational) relations of work and production. This is in particular true, as I will show, when it comes to the framing of social competition and fragmentation among workers. Fragmented work and uneven socio-economic working conditions are reflected, by a good part of workers and trade unionists, as the outcome of different “working cultures”. Hereby, the stereotyping of social groups as “not being able to perform good work” is multi-scalar: it runs with regard to the precarious worker nearby as well as with regard to production sites in other regions or countries and the working people there.

However, not all workers or trade unionist, by far, follow this xenophobe framing. Research shows that there are two important universalistic, basically solidary lines of arguments among workers:

The *first* is linked to what we can call universalistic class-position, and it is notably bound on a specific notion of (dependent) work as a contribution to society. In this view, all workers, non-important who they are and where they work, are *good* workers in the sense that their work builds up the material and immaterial fundament of society. In this view, thanks to their societal contribution, generally all workers are legitimized to run a good life and to have good working conditions. Processes of competition and fragmentation are principally rejected as an attack by employers. The *second* universalistic position we do find in research argues with a general right on dignity. It is not so much connected with a specific notion of work but is based on profound, often non-explicit normative positions about the quasi natural need to deliver good working and living conditions for every human-being.

These two universalistic normative positions, I will close the contribution, are under high pressure for already quite a while. The main danger hereby, however, is not the far-right. The basic danger is the structural and normative rebuilding of socio-economic relations in a way that risk to turn normative ideas of social justice, legitimate rights and more solidarity in society into irrational illusions. Neoliberal depoliticization, marking harsh competition, rising unevenness and massive social exclusion as natural processes, is the catalysator of that transformation, in which the (far) right can jump in.

## **#McStrike: Exploring representation of strike action on Twitter using social movement theory**

**Authors: Katy Huxley, Wil Chivers, Helen Blakely, Alex Bryson**

Trade union representation within large corporations has faced stark and strategic opposition from employers (Clawson 2003, Logan 2002, 2006, Freeman and Rehavi 2008), and this has been noted as particularly severe with low-wage fast-food sector employment (Royle 2010), yet in October 2017 the Bakers, Food and Allied Workers Union (BFAWU) was successful in organizing workers and conducting the first ever UK strike at McDonald's restaurants. Utilizing social movement theory (Tilly 1978, McAdam 1982, Snow and Soule 2010, Kelly 1996), and specifically framing theory (Snow et al 1986), this paper explores the representation of this important strike action on social media.

Gahan and Pekarek (2013) have called for greater engagement of framing theory within industrial relations research, in order to identify different levels and processes that can occur within social movements and trade union campaigns. By exploring strike action through the lens of the framing perspective we can providing greater understanding of the mechanisms via which representations of strike action may develop mobilisation and successful union campaigning.

There has been some debate on the role of technology in supporting or hindering trade union work (e.g. Diamond and Freeman 2002), and there is a growing literature on social media use within the union movement (e.g. Panagiotopoulos 2015, Panagiotopoulos and Barnett 2015, Hodder 2015, Dencik and Wilkin 2015, Geelan and Hodder 2017). There has been a significant level of importance placed upon the potential of social media platforms to allow workers to communicate and organise, and for trade unions to engage with workers and with wider communities. We contribute to this body of literature by asking how social media can be understood to contribute to trade union campaigning, using framing theory.

Drawing on Twitter data, extracted using COSMOS (Social Data Lab 2017, Burnap et al. 2014), structural analysis, word frequency analysis and thematic content analysis of the tweets that contain the McStrike hashtag was undertaken within the qualitative software package Nvivo. Tweets were analysed and coded according to the three core framing tasks (the diagnostic, prognostic, and motivational) and counter-claims highlighted by Snow and Colleagues. Further analysis explores networking, the 'levels' at which content is produced and the development of framing processes. The analysis of the Tweets indicated that each of the framing tasks were evident within the Twitter content. The most prominent being the 'diagnostic' frame. The analysis further indicates that framing tasks were performed both at the social movement level and the individual level, and provided avenues for frame extension which can aid the development of frame resonance and alignment.

The paper contributes to debates on the role of technology and social media in trade union campaigns and highlights the efficacious use of social media during strike action which pertains to the theoretical underpinnings of framing tasks and processes (and the levels at which these occur) as defined by Snow and colleagues.

# Resisting the Algorithmic Boss: Technology and collective strategies in two food delivery platforms in Berlin

**Authors: Mirela Ivanova, Joanna Bronowicka**

The celebratory rhetoric surrounding the gig-economy claims that digital labor platforms promote autonomy at work and nurture micro-entrepreneurs. Scholarship has fundamentally challenged these readings by illuminating the technical means through which platforms control gig-workers (Moore, 2018; Waters & Woodcock, 2017). Digital nudging, informational asymmetry, data-fueled rating systems, constant surveillance and automatic decision making appear to be core characteristics of algorithmic management in the gig-economy (Rosenblat & Stark, 2016; Möhlmann and Zalmanson, 2017; Ivanova, Bronowicka, Kocher, Degner, 2018).

Having given a lot of attention to control mechanisms in the algorithmic management, we now focus on the way it influences practices of resistance. Although control mechanisms are increasingly opaque, the digital workplace remains a contested terrain and workplace opposition has not vanished (Collinson & Ackroyd, 2005). Different management regimes create different challenges and opportunities for resistance (Thompson, 2017; Belenger & Thuderoz, 2010). In other words, organizational structure and management can influence the nature and scope of possible resistance strategies as well as the power resources that workers have. It is often believed that the organizational reality of digital platforms impedes rather than facilitates collective action. However, food delivery gig workers in Europe have been moderately successful in undertaking various forms of collective mobilization.

In this paper, we focus on the impact of algorithmic management in the food delivery platforms on the possibilities and challenges for collective resistance. We study a wide variety of collective oppositional practices deployed by workers at Foodora and Deliveroo in Berlin: from informal solidarity initiatives to unionization and collective action. We draw our conclusions from over 20 semi-structured interviews with unionized and non-unionized riders, trade union secretaries and company representatives.

Our initial findings confirm that food delivery riders face similar challenges as other platform workers, such as high turnover, anonymity, legal barriers, and freelance identity. However, we suggest that what has a significant impact on the workers is the platform's monopoly over the design of the App. By changing different features of the App such as online chat rooms, log-in areas and zone centers, platforms can manipulate the opportunities for off- and on-line communication between the riders. In parallel, the workers are gaining awareness of the way this particular management model works and are learning to exploit its vulnerabilities. Our empirical data reveals that digital control might foster collective digital misbehavior and opposition: from solidarity exchanges of shifts through the App to wildcat strikes by logging off from the App simultaneously. Furthermore, we found out that sudden and unilateral changes to the App can actually raise awareness of technological means of control and facilitate mobilization of collective resistance.

During the ILPC 2019, we will present the latest results of the in-depth analysis of the interviews with Berlin workers about collective resistance to algorithmic management, which we believe might grow in importance as digital technologies continue to transform the way we work.

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# **‘Digital Taylorism’: What scope for collective bargaining at company level? Evidence from the logistics sector**

**Author: Karen Jaehrling**

Much of the debate about the potential effects of the current wave of technological change stresses the potential of these technologies to substitute tasks across skill levels. Thus, the debate is primarily concerned with the extent and pace of job destruction, and on the other hand with the creation of new forms of work resulting from the growth of entirely new markets and business models (crowdwork, platform economy). By contrast, there is much less debate and even less empirical research on the changes within already existing jobs in ‘old’ industries; how they are affected by the current digitalisation of the economy, and how companies handle the associated challenges.

The presentation seeks to fill the gap, drawing on findings from a recently finished European project on the interlinkages between innovations and job quality (QuInnE; see Jaehrling 2018). It focuses on technological changes and its implications for job quality and labour relations in the logistics sector where the adoption of technologies that are framed in the current debate as ‘digitalization’ started more than 15 years ago. Based on company case studies in German and French retail fulfilment centres, the presentation scrutinizes, firstly, to what extent the current transformation of low skilled workplaces in this sector corresponds to a more general trend towards ‘Neo-Taylorism’, ‘Digital Taylorism’ or even ‘Digital Despotism’. A particular emphasis is then placed on the scope for collective bargaining to shape the implementation of the new technologies and modify their impact on job quality. Can employees and employee representative exploit the vulnerability of firms in just-in-time supply chains, by turning certain nodes in the transport chain, like ports or warehouses, into “choke points” in the circuit of goods (Bonacich/Wilson 2008;/ Alimahomed-Wilson/Ness 2018)?

The findings show, firstly, that a more longstanding ‘lean’ transformation of the supply chain tends to revitalise and intensify Taylorist principles, which is facilitated - but not caused - by digital technologies. Secondly, however, not only the Taylorist principles have been transposed into the early digital age, but the social relations that have evolved in the heydays of Fordism continue to impact on the new socio-productive model as well. Thus, both in Germany and France the jobs in fulfilment centres are still to some extent benefiting from the compromises that have been forged as a result of legal restrictions, institutional infrastructures and processes of collective bargaining in the past. This helps to explain why for the moment being companies still differ from the kind of ‘digital taylorism’ and ‘digital despotism’ pioneered by Amazon, Walmart and the likes. At the same time, our evidence sheds some light on the prerequisites as well as limits to turn retail warehouses into ‘choke points’ and to exploit the “brokerage position” (Sowers, 2017) occupied by logistics companies for the benefit of job quality.

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## **Riding in the “Grey Zone”. A contribution to the analysis of platform workers hybrid status**

**Author: Arthur Jan**

The erosion of employment standards and welfare protection systems derived from the fordist mode of regulation has been widely demonstrated by social sciences, while transnational firms' power is growing and national social systems are compelled to compete.

These evolutions result in the blurring of the boundaries between the opposite categories and dichotomies traditionally used to analyze employment forms and their appropriation: independent work/salaried work; subordinated work/autonomous work, etc.

This blurring invites social sciences to propose adequate analysis tools that are adapted to these evolutions. In this perspective, researchers have put forward the notion of grey zone (Azaïs *et al.*, 2017; Bureau and Dieuaide, 2017). This notion aims to characterize the blurring of employment norms led by legislations, leading to a hybridization of work and employment forms, each configuration depending on the interactions dynamic between workers and companies investing the grey zones.

While some studies (Azaïs, 2014; Dieuaide, 2017) on grey zones focused on the mutations of employment norms and status in stabilized professions, this communication proposes to enrich this analysis and to demonstrate how this notion might be heuristic to understand the most contemporary mutations linked to the emergence of platform capitalism.

Focusing of the French case, this communication will show how digital platforms and their workers invest the grey zone reinforced by the emergence in France of the self-employed status in 2008, leading to hybrid contractual, managerial and working practices, at the crossroads of wage-earning and independent work.

Our remarks will rely on the results of an ongoing qualitative study amongst bicycle-couriers delivering food through an online platform. This investigation takes place as part of a PhD research studying the workers of a transnational digital platform on a comparative perspective between France and Chile. At that point, the empirical material includes 15 semi-structured interviews with bicycle couriers, focusing on their daily work, relations between workers and the platform and workers socio-professional trajectories. It also includes a participant observation as a bicycle courier in Paris and non-participant observations of riders meetings. Workers online daily conversation on a social network are also being studied.

First, this communication will show how digital platforms take advantage of the blurry boundary between independent and salaried work, using extensively the self-employed status, as other organizations already studied by the French literature have done (Schütz, 2014; Abdelnour, 2017).

This hybridization appears on the one hand in the contractual and hiring practices of the platform we studied, between strong recommendations and reminders of the independent status. On the other hand, the hybridization is reflected in the platform managerial practices, where the digital tool appears as a suitable instrument for soft injunctions and distant supervision of work practices.

Then, we will expose the ambivalent subjective appropriation of this hybrid status by the workers themselves and the emergence of professional identities at the crossroads of independence and subordination, between the quest for autonomy in working and difficulty to make a long-term commitment in an activity with such low protections and fluctuating incomes. In this context, we will demonstrate how work satisfaction in this kind of employment is conditioned by its place in workers socio-professional trajectories and the social resources they can rely on.

# **The Mother-workers of India: Reproductive Labor and Women's Autonomy in Commercial Surrogacy**

**Author: Madhusree Jana**

India, often termed as the “surrogacy capital of India” offered assisted reproductive services at a low price and with cutting-edge technology and considered as one of the most popular transnational surrogacy destinations until 2015, when the government put a bar on transnational surrogacy. Although no official data exists, some sources suggest that almost three thousand clinics in India offer surrogacy services today. The recent academic literature on commercial surrogacy shows that the growth of infertility treatment services in the developing countries like India was further boosted by a steady pool of women willing to offer their reproductive labor by merging their bodies into the economic production. Taking the feminist discussion on economization of women’s body as the entry point, this study attempts to establish commercial surrogacy as a form of feminized labor, and argues that the surrogacy industry in India is till date, an unregulated industry and the surrogates are the reproductive laborers in the capitalist economy.

The paper draws on data collected via in-depth, semi-structured interviews with surrogates and former surrogates from different religious and caste backgrounds. The interviews (n=17) took place primarily in the surrogacy hostels, and snowball sampling design was selected to identify and recruit the participants for the study. The field survey took place in the National Capital Region of Delhi between October, 2016 and April, 2017. Additionally, fertility experts, gynecologists, surrogacy agents and other medical staff members were interviewed in both fertility clinics and outside clinical spaces. Ethical clearance for the study was obtained from the Institutional Ethical Review Board of Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi.

The women who were interviewed for the study shared their narratives on their socioeconomic backgrounds explaining their financial hardships and their experience as commercial surrogates. In all the cases, the surrogates came from rural areas, with almost no educational attainment or skilled work experience, and thus surrogacy served as the easiest option for them to ease their economic difficulties. Some of the women even migrated from the neighboring country Nepal to work as surrogates. Additionally, a workplace observation approach was undertaken to examine the nature of the surrogate’s reproductive labor. The empirical evidence from the field vividly portrays the limited autonomy of the women working as surrogate mothers. All the surrogates reported receiving limited or no professional counseling, and none of them had clear ideas about their surrogacy contracts. Most of the surrogates had no direct contacts with the commissioning parents, and the exchange of money and information took place via mediators. Coming from rural backgrounds, the women had little ideas about the invasive medical procedures, and they passively followed the instructions, living under twenty-four-hour surveillance. The accounts of the women drawn in the study manifest the limited extent of agency of the surrogates as reproductive laborers. The results also reveal the power hierarchy in the labor relations, which not only increases the chance of exploitation of the surrogates, but also reiterates the disposable nature of labor of the third-world women.

# **Precarious Self-employment, Online Gig work and Collective Organization**

**Authors: Giedo Jansen, Roderick Sluiter**

This paper investigates patterns of collective organization among self-employed in general, and among (online) gig workers specifically. Theoretically, membership of interest organisations is investigated through the lens of precarious self-employment. To identify different forms of self-employment we build upon the theoretical framework by Vosko (2006) and explore four dimensions of precariousness in self-employment, i.e.: a) the degree of uncertainty of work b) the degree and autonomy or control over the work process, c) the degree of protection and insurance against risks, and d) the degree of financial vulnerability.

Empirically, based on a Latent Class Analysis we construct a four-category typology of solo self-employment (i.e., secure traditional / precarity-prone traditional / secure professional / precarity-prone professional). We study whether different types of self-employed workers have diverging expectations of interest organizations, and/or diverging membership patterns. After establishing a typology of self-employment, we use insider-outsider theory (Emmenegger, 2014; Rueda, 2007) to formulate hypotheses on whether precarious self-employed workers relative to secure self-employed are organized differently – if they are organized at all.

The hypotheses are tested using survey data from the Netherlands. We conclude that the most notable group of self-employed are the precarity-prone professionals, who are not only most likely to deviate from traditional patterns of interest representations, but also most willing to join a trade union. This paper concludes with several theoretical considerations and directions for future research zooming in specifically on (self-employed) gig workers in the online platform economy.

## **Visualising the voice of migrant domestic workers: opportunities and challenges in co-produced visual research**

**Author: Joyce Jiang**

Research with marginalised, vulnerable and ‘hard-to-reach’ groups of workers faces a variety of methodological challenges. Studies suggest that the use of visual research methods is valuable in studying marginalised workers as they overcome the obstacle of participants’ limited literacy ability, reveal inarticulate experiences, and have the therapeutic function. The paper reflects on the benefits and challenges encountered in an ethnographic study of migrant domestic workers that incorporated participatory video workshops. Our participatory video workshop series was a collaborative project between academic, filmmaker and thirteen migrant domestic workers from The Voice of Domestic Workers in London. The self-produced videos offer a glimpse into everyday life of migrant domestic workers and their identity construction. Our research argues that involving participants in co-creating visual data is empowering and reveals experiences which would not have been possible to be collected through traditional textual methods. It also increases migrant domestic workers’ visibility and our research impact through creative output- gallery and museum exhibitions which appeal to broad and diverse audiences. However, we also argue that there are additional ethical challenges associated with the use of participatory visual methods, such as confidentiality and consent.

# **Labour Process and Social Relations of Production in the ICT Sector: A Case Study of Thiruvananthapuram City, India**

**Author: Rohith Jyothish**

The paper attempts to inform the theoretical discourse on labour process in India's heterogenous information and communication technology (ICT) sector by unpacking the social relations of both domestic and transnational production in ICT products and services in a non-tier one space. Thiruvananthapuram city in the Southwest coastal state of Kerala is a location that is known for hosting India's first and Asia's largest 'Software and Technology Park' (STP). Kerala is historically known for its social democratic governments and militant labour unions led by communist and socialist political institutions. The lack of adequate economic conditions for the development of manufacturing industries has forced the state to adopt a services-led model of growth and job creation. In this pursuit, the aforementioned STOs have become sites of both domestic and international ICT products and services. These "regulation-free" zones have become the default spaces for "high-skilled" ICT jobs. Through a series of close to 100 unstructured interviews with different ICT workers as well as experts in the field from the city, the paper argues that software and other non-manual ICT labour processes generate surplus value through the same neoliberal practices that characterise Fordist manufacturing. In the case of software and other ICT labour processes, materiality of the labour process is a determinant of productivity in so far as it includes various other cognitive functions of the ICT worker. Urban spaces that are not tier one in India are sites of surplus value generation by further erosion of worker control over the labour process and the presence of STPs create additional informal sites of capitalist production processes at the peripheries of these non-tier one locations.

Tight control over labour processes, fragmented nature of work flows as well as a culture of "professionalism" over working class consciousness in the absence of labour regulation does not allow workers to collectively organise or assert their rights against exploitative work conditions and pay. Working conditions are always by design directed to be an individual bargaining process with the middle manager. Employment relations at the workplace also encourage competition between teams of workers and workers within teams which further damages the solidarity between workers. Workers see themselves as professionals and as superior-skilled compared to those in other sectors in spite of a predominant section of labourforce employed to maintain legacy ICT systems in the First World. The carrot of working "onshore" is often dangled while beating them with the stick of self-learning new technologies constantly with every project and customer-need in order to keep their job.

# Thinking ‘out of the box’: Trade union innovation in Central and Eastern Europe

**Authors: Marta Kahancova, Magdalena Bernaciak, Aurora Trif**

Industrial relations literature has traditionally portrayed trade unions in Central and Eastern Europe (CEE) as weak and ineffective. Unions were claimed to prove incapable of maintaining their membership levels and recruiting new members after the collapse of state socialism. Also, very rarely were unions able to achieve substantial improvements in workers’ conditions of employment, particularly concerning wages and job security (Trif et al., 2016). The 2008 crisis has further reduced unions’ external leverage: apart from diminishing workers’ capacity to disrupt production, the austerity measures led to further weakening of unions’ institutional support (e.g. labour market deregulation), particularly in countries which had rather favourable collective employment regulations. In sum, the weakening of institutional and structural resources for unions has reduced their capacity to undertake actions that protect the interests of their members and other workers (Doellgast et al. 2018).

In this context of weakening union resources, the paper studies whether and how unions can they improve their own fate, e.g., through engaging in innovative actions despite hostile conditions in the CEE region. We adopt a resource-based perspective and analyze how unions are equipped with institutional, structural and organizational resources; and how they utilized these resources to pursue innovative practices. We conceptualize trade union innovation as a concept distinct from trade union revitalization. While the weakening of external strategic leverage and internal organizational capacity have undoubtedly diminished unions’ role and influence in improving working conditions, we conceptualize how very weak external (institutional and structural) and internal resources can trigger innovative union practices. The inadequacy of their traditional channels and instruments have forced CEE labour organisations to think ‘out of the box’ and adopt innovative actions.

The paper distinguishes between three sets of innovative union actions undertaken in relation to (a) organisational structure; (b) strategies vis-à-vis employers and government; and (c) target groups, which may *or may not* lead to union’ revitalization. The analysis is based on original empirical evidence collected within eight country case studies of innovative union practices (Croatia, Czechia, Estonia, Hungary, Poland, Romania, Slovakia and Slovenia).

We argue that the absence of country or group-specific patterns of union innovation might stem from the unstable nature of political economic institutions in the post-communist region. Even in countries hosting encompassing social dialogue structures, institutional guarantees are often weak and negotiated deals are not always complied with. For this reason, rather than focusing on their competencies like their counterparts in developed market economies do, CEE unions are more likely to search for strategic alternatives. Their recent initiatives can be considered a critical case of union activism insofar as they have been launched by weak organizations in particularly hostile institutional and economic settings.

Even in countries that had offered relatively wide opportunities for social dialogue, the recent crisis and the subsequent austerity drive reduced unions’ external influence and policy influence. Under these new, harsh circumstances, the pressure for ‘backup options’ and new strategic avenues became particularly pronounced.

By documenting innovation of CEE trade unions, the paper contributes to current literature by demonstrating that very low strategic leverage and rather low organizational capacity may increase unions’ *willingness* to employ innovative actions precisely due to unions’ low capacity to take actions and not despite of it. Nevertheless, the sustainability of such innovative practices is contingent on unions’ capacity to (re)build institutional resources, as suggested by the available literature (Doellgast et al, 2018; Weil, 2005).

# **Lean Standardization and Skilled Labor: Digitizing tacit knowledge and work-place autonomy in a German mechanical engineering company**

**Authors: Yannick Kalff, Yalcin Kutlu**

The proposed contribution discusses impacts of digitization processes in a German mechanical engineering company on work-place autonomy of skilled labor workers. We contribute to the empirical understanding of digitization and the transformation of labor processes, standardization, and workers' autonomy – especially in skilled labor environments. While the overall digitization discourse stresses that skilled labor may benefit from upskilling induced by digital technologies, our empirical results show that quite the opposite is the case. Negative digitization impacts like shrinking spaces of autonomy, de-qualification, and labor substitution usually are attributed to deskilled and untrained labor. However, we show how skilled labor as well is threatened in its autonomy and labor process organization by standardization and lean methods – and further, how skilled labor is pressured by cheaper, unskilled work force. Braverman's law of deskilling in industrial production seems to work relentlessly – although "Industrie 4.0" promises a humanized, socially compatible transformation with humans at its core.

The goal of the research project (funded by the German Federal Ministry of Education and Research) is to implement and pilot run a knowledge management tool on the shop floor, which skilled labor workers use and maintain in the assembly process. Saving tacit knowledge apparently was only one target of the participating company: standardizing labor processes and furthering lean production methods were another – they even are highly interrelated. Through formalizing tacit knowledge, labor processes are standardized to fit documentation guidelines. This complements ongoing transformations of the labor process to lean philosophies: activities outside the value stream are prohibited; workers are prevented to perform little rework tasks or amendments by confiscating tools and materials, which are not related to the value stream. The workers see this as a severe incision in their autonomy and as a negation of their competences and skills. They counteract these limitations by bringing own tools or hiding materials. This conflict is summed up best by the company's image in the eyes of management as a "manufacture" or a "tinker shop" versus the self-image of skilled workers as "artisans".

We interpret this situation as a complex interrelation of digitization processes that formalize tacit knowledge in a process of real subsumption: knowledge and labor processes are broken down and rearranged under capital relations. Further, the expanding lean philosophies restructure value streams and partly deskilling the labor force to match tight process descriptions. In the end, lean production's ambivalence of high process standardization and highly skilled problem-solving skills is broken down by formalizing knowledge resources and task execution: two spheres of autonomy are reduced.

Our research project is in the middle of qualitative data interpretation; a first qualitative content analysis has been conducted while more reconstructive approaches are planned. We applied workplace ethnography, interviews with workers, management and workers council members as well as group discussions with workers to collect data. The given overview represents key findings of our research, which we interpret with a (Neo-)Marxist approach with a specific focus on work-place autonomy and labor process theory.

# The transformation of professional work. Introducing the paradigm of user involvement in Danish psychiatry and elderly care

**Authors: Annette Kamp, Betina Dybbroe**

User involvement is currently a cornerstone in the transformation of the health sector in most Western European countries, as part of a “shared governance for health” (Kickbusch, 2011) involving citizens as co-producers with new roles, responsibilities and duties in relation to health provision. This, affects professional work, knowledge and identities of professionals, and may become one of the main drivers of change in knowledge bases, in professional autonomy, and in the positions of the professionals.

User involvement is driven by different rationalities. Neoliberal discourses on the active responsible and empowered citizen play a dominant role, depicting this kind of empowerment as a way of rationalizing and slimming the most costly sectors of the welfare state such as social care and health care (Newman & Clarke 2009). However, also other discourses are at play. As e.g. Barnes and Cotterell (2013) observe, ideas of democratization based on ideas of citizenship both in relation to professional systems, the health sector and wider society do also play a role. This is due to the upcome of strong user movements, particularly within fields as psychiatry and disability, whose main claims are recognition and ‘full citizenship’ as opposed to the dominance of professionals and the systems of the welfare state. In other fields as e.g. elderly care, rationalities of austerity and efficiency play a dominant role. Thus, user involvement takes on different forms as discussed by eg Vrangbaek, 2015, and must be studied contextually. This is important in order to understand the tensions and paradoxes that are introduced in care work (Kamp and Dybbroe, 2016; Brown and Korczynski, 2017).

In this paper we present our ongoing research on user involvement in Denmark based on ethnographic field studies in 2017 and 2018 within two fields: psychiatry and elderly care, where user involvement is positioned differently. The paper points out how these differences matter when user involvement is practiced in care work. We explore how the professionals manage knowledge, meaning and professional ethics, when they engage in coproduction with patients and clients. We point out how emotional labour plays an increased role in these two fields, and we show how the balance between responsibility and risk is played out in new ways.

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# Virtual care work in times of citizen empowerment and retrenchment

**Authors: Annette Kamp, Agnete Meldgaard Hansen**

New technologies, termed ‘welfare technologies’ in the Nordic Countries have become a new mantra for reforming Danish public health care. Following a long period dominated by New Public Management-inspired reforms aiming at rationalization and marketization, these new technologies are envisioned as leading to a new and smarter form of retrenchment, promising better quality, empowerment of clients and work that is smarter and more qualified (The Danish Government et al., 2016). In this paper, we present an ethnographic study of the introduction of one such technology - ‘virtual homecare’ - in Danish elderly care. Virtual homecare entails the performance of specific homecare services by care workers and community nurses through video conversations (telecare) instead of physical visits in the clients’ homes.

Previous studies of telecare primarily focus on how virtualization may imply transformations of care and care relationships (Pols, 2010). However, it is also important to acknowledge how new technologies like virtual homecare form part of broader political reform agendas. Both ambitions to enact so-called ‘person-centred care’ (Wilberforce et al., 2017), and broader ambitions concerning the withdrawal of the welfare state, and the need to change relationships between professionals and citizens (see e.g. Newman and Tonkens, 2011) are at stake. They form part of the arguments for implementing these technologies, and affect the way they are used.

In this paper, we show how this framing of the technology is critical for understanding its implications for working life. Furthermore, we highlight how different ways of organizing the labour process of virtual homecare affect care work. Our study comprises two forms of organization of virtual homecare, in two different municipalities: a) organized in a local specialized call centre, and b) integrated in normal out-going homecare services.

The analysis focusses on both formal and informal processes of care work (see e.g. Bolton and Wibberley, 2014) and show how conceptions of care, professionalism and professional ethics are negotiated in the ambiguous and conflictual work practices of virtual homecare. We explore how the framing and organization of virtual homecare impacts care workers and nurses’ possibilities to develop care relationships with clients, and create transparency through the very short virtual home-visits. Moreover, we discuss how the use of virtual homecare affects questions of meaning and identity in work in the two cases.

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## **The Changing Contours of Goldsmithing in India: A Sociological Study of Informal Work, State Regulation and 'New' Precarity among Migrant Artisans of West Bengal, India**

**Author: Sruti Kanungo**

In India, while gold is a highly regulated and monitored commodity, goldsmithing has been primarily an unregulated economic activity. The goldsmiths from West Bengal, India tell an interesting story of the process of transformation of labour, new forms of work and work cultures along with an emergent work force in the goldsmithery units. The paper describes how liberalization, economic restructuring and institutional reforms have led to the making of a new generation of goldsmiths travelling from West Bengal to different states within India as well as to Nepal and Bangladesh. Their move, the goldsmiths point out, was to escape the lack of economic opportunity in the villages and severe flood situation that periodically destroyed the crop. However the multi-sited field study in three states of India suggests that while migration had started from this area in the 1980s after the devastating flood of 1978, large-scale migration for 'gold work' began in the 1990s. With the repeal of the Gold-control Act of 1968 in 1990, the gold industry expanded and provided an opportunity to these 'new goldsmiths' to join the work-force. Goldsmithery units today witness artisans drawn from a wide range of castes and geographical regions. Their migration brought in remittance, hopes of upward mobility and a new identity to these first generation goldsmiths, however liberal market and changing consumer tastes and preferences have affected the handmade work and have led to growth of machine-made jewellery. Further continuous state regulations to increase the GDP, control high consumer demand and illegal market supply have led to a 'new' precarity amongst the artisans. The paper attempts to focus on the challenges that these 'new' goldsmiths face, their efforts to move out of poverty and developing a guild like bond to deal with the precarity of the volatile gold economy.

# **Future of work and labour policy in the Global South: The social impact of Automation and AI**

**Author: Suparna Karmakar**

The world of work is in a flux. A world with aging population and declining fertility levels, and consequent rise in labour costs, encourages technology-enabled productivity rise to maintain competitiveness and economic growth. This has led to adoption of industrial automation even in populous developing countries such as China and India.

But insofar as labour market and employment structures are concerned, recent developments in artificial intelligence (AI) and advanced robotics has become a disruptive technology. It is now generally accepted that greater adoption of automation and AI will impact the future of work (1), which calls for appropriate public policy response to the changing nature of work to ensure that AI can have a positive impact within society. As fewer people have gainful employment, economies experience a multitude of social issues, the latter not only emanating from the social conditioning that has trained us to tie our personal worth to the pursuit of work and success.

This paper looks at how recent developments in AI and advanced robotics are beginning to disrupt and fracture the Indian labour market and employment structures, and analyses the issues that redressal mechanisms (viz. regulation and institutions) should address. India has for long struggled with ‘non-standard forms of employment’ (informal work and self-employment), a withdrawal of the state from social provisioning, and challenges for workers to organise collectively – issues now affecting the working lives of workers in the Global North. We look at the efficacy of revamped education systems and reskilling, in ensuring that technological progress makes lives more inclusive, fulfilling and prosperous, from the lens of past experience in India.

First we analyse the future of jobs and employment in the country in key industries, outlining the various channels through which automation impacts labour’s share of output. Thereafter, we address the lacuna of the need for changing social systems that would require devising a new social contract to reflect the emerging dynamics in global labour markets. What would be the pillars of the new social contract? Rapid labour-saving technological advances generate gains for skilled workers and capital owners, but in the short-run immiserate those not able to invest in physical or human capital, or are in the very lowest rung of the skills-pyramid. Well-designed and comprehensive social safety nets – including, for example, unemployment insurance and public health insurance – are needed to protect vulnerable workers amid rapid change, but will not suffice.

This paper looks at the latest thinking and work undertaken in the Global North, but approaches the unique problems and experiences of labour in a country like India from a Southern lens, to ensure as far as possible, that policies react to and reflect the changing nature of work in populous developing countries such as India. The paper hopes to shape global policy debates and approaches.

(1) Although automation – through productivity growth or instrumented by foreign patent flows or robot adoption—has not been employment-displacing, it has reduced labour’s share in value-added. However, automation since 2000s have become less labour-augmenting and more labour-displacing.

## **Workplace health promotion as organizational strategy towards equality?**

**Authors: Fabian Karsch, Katharina Kreissl**

Given that work organizations are confronted with a variety of challenges to account for demographic change, health promotion within the workforce has recently gained a considerable amount of attention. In our research, we are interested in health promotion programs as an organizational strategy to enhance productivity and individual health but also inquire their inclusive or exclusive potential for employees, taking diversity dimensions and social inequality into consideration.

Our research is based on two assumptions:

First, workplace health promotion (WHP) primarily targets prevention of behavior which is predominantly taken up by individuals who have resources available. Education, social economic status and diversity dimensions in general play an important role in providing barriers or opportunities to actively engage in a healthy lifestyle. That is why, for example, qualified employees tend to profit from workplace health promotion while precarious or less qualified individuals are often not targeted by the programs.

Second, WHP is an ambivalent issue. On the one hand, it can enhance individual health and improve well-being at the workplace. On the other hand, health-related, behavioral requirements can increase pressure on employees and portray lack of health as individual deficit rather than consequence of structural factors.

Against this background, we are interested in the normative conceptualization of “the healthy employee” that is embedded within WHP, what kind of requirements it entails and potential risks or chances for targeted employees, considering diversity dimensions. We will explore this with a document analysis of policy documents and strategy papers on workplace health promotion and will use specific companies who are considered best practice as an example.

## **Trading time: Store trading hours, the 5-day working week and theorising the conjunctural retail labour process from Johannesburg, South Africa, 1968-1972**

**Author: Bridget Kenny**

In the late 1960s and early 1970s in Johannesburg, a long-standing debate around the extension of store trading hours was posed as a trade-off by unions for achieving the 5-day working week for retail workers, who unlike most manufacturing workers still worked 6 days per week. Store trading hours in South Africa were regulated by provincial ordinance. In Johannesburg unions had fought to maintain 17h00 weekday closings, 17h30 Friday evening and 13h00 Saturday afternoon closings. Yet in the 1960s, new retail stores, most prominently supermarkets, began to push for the extension of trading hours competing with older department stores. The National Union of Distributive Workers (NUDW), which organised [as SA categories were] white, coloured and Indian workers at the time, negotiated specific deals for differential shifts that extended working hours into the evenings and on Saturday afternoon in exchange for adding a 5-day shift for some workers. This period coincided with changes in the labour market from white women to black women in service and clerical jobs, and the struggles around working and trading hours took up racial and gendered discourses. Based on extensive archival research and interviews, this paper examines the historical debates as unions in the sector began to acquiesce to extended hours (implicating working hours) in the face of retailer claims of competition from newly entering global firms and as unions made an unsuccessful effort to win a shorter working week for a majority female workforce. This is a watershed moment for retail workers in Johannesburg as the issue of flexible shifts, casual employment and late working hours became critical to changes to the retail labour process in the following decades. This paper, then, offers a view of the retail sector labour process in South Africa by returning to an important conjunctural moment when unions attempted (but ultimately lost) an argument for a shorter working week. Instead, by the 1970s and 1980s black workers entered these jobs to become the workforce filling ‘unsocial hours’ as jobs deskilled.

This very specific historical contest in Johannesburg, South Africa offers a critical reading of global southern labour processes – by explicitly examining localised debates through a ‘relational comparative’ (Gillian Hart 2016) lens to argue for the temporal and spatial co-constitution of retail labour processes across contexts. Practices often seen as germinating with northern firms and moving (via ‘globalisation’) to the South, in fact, were being discussed, contested and put into practice simultaneously through concrete relations in place (Doreen Massey 1994) as global transnational practices circulated. The paper contends that definitive features of retail labour process can productively be theorised as co-constituted in such conjunctures in ways that assist us to explain later dynamics reinforcing the centrality of working time to the retail labour process.

## **Precarity and Development: Production and Labour Process in the Informal economy in India**

**Authors: Surbhi Kesar, Snehashish Bhattacharya**

In spite of a sustained period of economic growth in India, a vast majority of the working population continues to earn their livelihood in informal economy. The labour processes involved and the precarious nature of work in the informal economy have been analysed in recent literature in terms of the idea of precariat. We argue that the notion of precarity, particularly in the Indian context, conceptually involves three distinct dimensions related to production and labour processes: (a) the ‘traditional’/ ‘pre-capitalist’ production and labour processes that encompass self-employed petty commodity production (PCP) units that are marked by an absence of capital – wage-labour relations and are not integrated in the circuit of capital in terms of their production processes, (b) the PCP units that are incorporated in the circuit of capital via their (subcontracting) linkages with capitalist enterprises, and (c) informalised (or casualised) wage labour in capitalist production units. We argue that it is analytically important to maintain these categorical distinctions within the precariat in order to analyse different implications of changes involving these different processes. In this paper, we depart from the prevalent mainstream as well as radical discourses on development that argue that with economic growth the ‘pre-capitalist’ economic processes dissolve over time, and those that continue to be informally employed serve as the industrial reserve army – in other words, the informal economy is functional to the ‘needs’ of capitalist accumulation. We analyse each of the distinct categories of precariat, as well as the transitions across them, during the recent high growth period in India. First, we analyse the PCP units and find that these units (including their associated production and labour processes), which were expected to dissolve with high economic growth, have continued to reproduce themselves, although at precariously low levels, without any marked possibility of accumulation and expanded reproduction. Given this reproduction, such production and labour processes cannot be considered merely to be remnants of the past that have failed to dissolve over time, and should therefore be referred to as ‘non-capitalist’ processes. We argue that a part of this non-capitalist segment constitutes the space of surplus population that is not strictly ‘needed’ for (or functional to) capitalist reproduction. Next, we find that PCP units that are integrated with the circuit of capital via subcontracting linkages have even lower accumulation possibilities than the non-capitalist production units that are not integrated with the circuit in terms of their production processes. Finally, we categorise households in terms of their economic dependence on various production and labour processes and examine the nature and patterns of the shifts in their dependence across these processes. We find that while there have been substantial transitions of households, a large proportion of these transitions, especially those towards non-capitalist and informalised labour processes, have resulted in a worsening in their conditions of livelihood. We find that there has been a continued reconstitution of different economic spaces – and respective labor processes – that were expected to be dissolved with capitalist development, accompanied by an increasing informalisation of capitalist labor processes. The precariat acts as a large floating population that is always in a flux – either as ‘footloose’ labour, which is moving between sectors and occupations in search of livelihood and cannot find a firm grounding anywhere, or as those reproducing their conditions of livelihood precariously – and sporadically – at the margins in the spaces of non-capital. The reproduction and entrenchment of the non-capitalist economic spaces and informalised labour processes show that the expectation that with economic growth, capitalist – and formalized – production and labor processes will pervade the entire economy does not seem to have actualised. This calls into question the imaginary of transition through the process of capitalist development that animates much of the discourse on economic development.

## **Worker consciousness and norms relating to contracting for work in a changing economy**

**Author: Eleanor Kir**

Recent debates have centred around the nature of labour processes in the gig economy, and upon the lived experience of precarity. So far, less is known on how workers themselves make sense of the new contractual arrangements. How do people think about work contracts and the process of contracting for work? In this paper, early findings from a research project exploring processes of contracting for work in both recent and historical, cross-national and sectoral comparative perspective are presented. The focus in this paper is upon contemporary norms about contracting for work, exploring the interrelations between forms of consciousness e.g. political, class, trade union, and legal, and how they relate to the framing of the antagonisms of work and resultantly, whether the underlying structures from which they emanate are challenged and transformed, or accepted and reproduced. With all the hype over the gig economy and the very real spread of precarity, the paper aims to gain an understanding of the extent to which the neoliberal ideology of enterprising selves (Rittich, 2014) is becoming an integral part of lived experience. The project aims to give insights into how accepted new contractual norms are by workers, and how they are encouraged by the experience or expectation of repeated, if not perpetual labour market exposure over one's lifetime (Dukes, 2018), by policy discourses, careers advice, job adverts, in short everyday life? What are the variations of 'justification' (Boltanski, 2006), acceptance and denial in peoples' responses? How does this vary across industries and through occupational hierarchies?

The paper draws from a broad range of literature from classic sociology (e.g. Marx, Weber, Polanyi), economic sociology (Beckert and Streeck, 2008; Bandelj, 2015), the economic sociology of law (Ashiagbor et al, 2015) and of labour law (Dukes, 2018), political economy of work (Thompson, 2003; 2013) and critical HRM (e.g. Legge, 1995; Thompson, 2011; Dundon and Rafferty, 2018). Concepts from these overlapping literatures are synthesised in order to develop an understanding of work-related norms and how they are formulated, placing particularly emphasis around contracting for work, recognised to be a form of action which is simultaneously social, economic and legal. Additionally, the paper maps how norms may have changed along with socio-economic and institutional change (e.g. Streeck and Thelen 2005), most notably, with the increasing transferal of risk from organisations towards individuals (Burchell et al, 1999). These themes are then explored through the preliminary analysis of biographical, life-course interviews with workers spanning the increasingly diverse range of employment arrangements and contractual statuses, including but not limited to the 'gig economy', self-employment, 'bogus self-employment and other ambiguous or dubious arrangements (Thornquist, 2015). The interviews explore the norms workers hold about acceptable work and work contracts, encompassing notions of work ethic (Weber, 1905) and new spirits of capitalism (Boltanski and Chiapello, 1999; du Gay and Morgan, 2013), class, trade union and political consciousness (e.g. Hyman, 1975), and also legal consciousness (e.g. Ewick and Silbey, 1998; Halliday and Morgen, 2013), and related modes of action and inaction.

# The Digital Blurring of Boundaries and the Negotiation of Paid Work

**Authors: Dominik Klaus, Johanna Hofbauer**

The digitalisation of the world of work came with a heavy utilization of information and communication technologies by the management of the labour process. New forms of bureaucratic, technical and normative control have extended the scope of management into new territories. The experience of work and the power relations on the labour market changed as well as the worker agency (Hall 2010). Moreover, the heavy utilization of information and communication technologies (ICT) has further blurred the boundaries between work and private life, constantly stressing the question of what is work(ing time). This is affecting traditional jobs with ICT utilization in terms of availability and communication patterns, forcing employees to respond to emails and calls outside working hours without being paid for it.

Next to it, a new form of work organisation was introduced, commonly referred to as the digital labour markets of the platform economy (Schmidt 2017). While putting forward a kind of ‘digital Taylorisation’ (Boes et al. 2017, p.168) by a high level of standardization and division of labour, platforms also charge the boundary of paid work: More and more of the necessary supportive work to solve a task is stripped away from the actual amount of paid work. On top of this, most of the platforms try to disguise the actual character of wage work by labelling their workforce as riders, turkers or tigers (Pongratz 2018). The question of what is to be considered and recognized to be part of paid work can be seen an elemental contest between labour and capital. Answering this question is particularly tricky as people tend to have ‘positive attachments to work and work identity’ (Thompson & Briken 2017, p.258), as it is especially in the jobs that are managed by the utilization of ‘flexibility through empowerment’ (Allvin et al. 2011).

This papers aims to contribute to a better understanding of the underlying mechanism of this negotiation process and the subjective coping strategies by the analysis of qualitative interviews from two case studies (regular job with high ICT utilization VS bogus self-employed remote platform work). With this objective in mind, we pursue the following questions:

- Where do workers draw the line for ICT use outside working hours and what kind of actions are considered to be part of paid work?
- What subjective coping strategies are used by the employees to justify sprawling work outside working hours?
- How do the company and the platform foster misleading views on recognition of the boundaries of paid work?
- What are the differences in boundary management between regular jobs and bogus self-employed platform workers?
- How does the boundary management interplay with the identity and work orientation?

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# Old rule in new gowns? Conceptual framework and evidences for a digital Taylorism

**Authors: Robert Koepp, Christine Gerber**

The public narrative on digitization predicts pervasive changes ahead of us. ‘Disruption’ is commonly used to describe the changes on how we will produce and work in the future. Contrary to such medially and politically hyped notions, labour scholars tend to highlight the continuities of previous forms of work organization and modes of production. This article argues that neither approach is able to adequately understand the current developments.

Instead, a conceptual framework is needed that offers an embedded understanding of digital transformation by addressing how digital technologies are implemented in the context of established models of work organization and production. While this may modify their characteristics it also intensifies their inherent tendencies and mechanisms. Our contribution refers to the low road of digitization of work, or more specifically on a work regime which has been dubbed as *digital Taylorism* (Huws, 2014; Brown et al., 2010). Social sciences lack, however, a coherent conceptual debate surrounding a possible digital rebirth of Taylorism. Bearing the potential to map new and old forms of domination in the labour process of the digital age, this paper seeks to trace the few and largely isolated indications within existing literature and connect them to a conceptual discussion. The paper contributes to current debates by first developing a conceptual framework for a digital renaissance of Taylorist work regimes and second to discuss this framework against the backdrop of empirical cases.

In order to understand which classical problems of work organization and control are addressed by means of digital technologies, the article examines two empirical cases of past qualitative research projects on industries that are frequently associated with ‘digital Taylorism’: fulfilment logistics of a German online retailer and US and German microtask platforms for online labour.

The analysis suggest common traits of Taylorism in both cases, but this time mediated through semi-automated digital infrastructures: the standardization and modularization of work, the separation of conception and execution in the labour process, the centralized and hierarchical allocation of tasks and allowance of work steps, and the close monitoring and control of work performance. The Internet of Things, for instance, targets the optimization of production processes by data monitoring to which work is subordinated. This can be and is also used to control work performance.

The findings also suggest differences. In logistics, for instance, algorithmically-embedded wearable technologies hierarchically dictate the task execution and work cycles, appropriate essential work-relevant knowledge and enable an all-encompassing control of the labour process. This reflects an intensified but rather classical Taylorist constellation. A modified version can be observed on microtask platforms, where work cycles are indirectly imposed upon the seemingly autonomous crowdworkers by means of piece wages and time-based modes of competition.

## The realisation of skills: Towards a multi-process perspective

**Authors: Andrew Kozhevnikov, Steve Vincent, Scott Hurrell**

In this paper we draw upon a set of qualitative semi-structured interviews with skilled migrants in the UK to explore how and whether they develop their skills within employment. Whilst many agree that skills are increasingly important, ontological issues associated with skill development processes, epistemological issues relating to who can be considered skilled, and practical issues relating to individuals' prospective skills potential of individuals within specific contexts appear underdeveloped within the existing literature. Despite this lack, these issues are particularly pressing for migrants who have greater risks of under- and unemployment, wherein organisations and societies are missing opportunities to make the adequate use of migrants' skills (Drinkwater et al., 2009; Qureshi et al., 2013; Nowicka, 2014).

Using skilled migrants as a critical class of cases, this paper will contribute by revisits the ontology and epistemology skill from a realist position. Addressing the "skills problem" in the UK context is especially timely, considering the recent changes in migration policies and the ongoing polemic regarding the withdrawal of the UK from the European Union.

The issue of skills *realisation*, i.e. forms of skills development that produce positive effect on skilled migrants' careers in the UK, is complex and multi-dimensional, mirroring the nature of skill (Cockburn, 1983; Green, 2011). To develop this area, we pay explicit attention to three separate, but inter-related and mutually reinforcing processes (or, rather, groups of processes) – namely, *development*, *use* and *recognition* of skills, and consider how these processes relate to migrant's skills development. In the existent scholarship, all three of them emerge as significant and highly problematic. Yet, although processes relevant to the "skills problem" are reasonably well-explored in the available literature, a comprehensive multi-process model is lacking. We provide such a model here developing extant literature on the nature of skill, before empirically interrogating the individual and contextual mechanisms that enable skilled migrants' potential to be *realised*.

Presently, we are preoccupied with the data analysis. At the first stage, this research examines skilled migrants' career stories where all three process (development, use and recognition) are established, reinforcing each other and, ultimately, leading to skills realisation. The next stage then scrutinises a range of stories where one of the components is missing or 'underperforming'. Deploying contrastive explanation as a data analysis instrument, we explain how migrants' skills are realised as an outcome of a dynamic interplay between the three processes and what structural and agential mechanisms enable and/or obstruct the realisation of migrants' potential as skilled workers. The results suggest the significance of organisational and wider societal contexts, as well as migrants' own agency for realisation of skills.

This paper will discuss theoretical, methodological and practical implementations of the research. Theoretically, we offer a novel dynamic and multi-process model that grasps the complexity of skills. We problematize skills as a joint property of individual career agents and their contexts, which is developed and accumulated over time. This model is not limited to skilled migrants and applicable to the broader population. The methodological contribution advances the contrastive explanation. Finally, the practical consequences of this research should enable individuals, organisations and societies to make more adequate use of skills.

# Publi-Sector Austerity and Professional Expertise: The Move from Holistic to Specialist Expertise in English Critical Care Nursing

**Author: Nikolaus Krachler**

There has been a growing debate on how financial pressures, for example, through financialization, create fragmentation at the workplace, such as labor market security for some workers and not for others (Thompson, 2013). This paper contributes to this debate by examining how public-sector austerity shapes the fragmentation of professional expertise. Based on the case of the changing critical care nursing profession in England, I argue that public-sector austerity tends to fragment professional expertise. More specifically, I argue that what shapes professional responses to financial pressures is the power struggle between financially-focused senior managers and experienced professional middle managers who can fend off managerial challenges to professional autonomy and define changes in favor of the profession's autonomy. I also argue that occupational institutions that are broader than the workplace can intensify managerial attempts at fragmenting professional expertise by empowering elite parts of the profession.

I draw on 32 interviews with workers, managers, and professional and trade union representatives, and a document analysis to capture workplace level and national level developments. Like in other parts of the National Health Service (Kessler, Heron, & Dopson, 2015), I find that there has been a polarization of skills with the delegation of routine tasks to healthcare assistants in English critical care nursing. At the same time, however, advanced practitioners have gained discretion over higher-level clinical tasks, extending the profession's jurisdiction into the realm of medical practice, and middle managers have protected the profession's core norm of fixed nurse-to-patient ratios. As a response to financial pressures, these trends have fragmented work organization in English critical care nursing from a traditional focus only on high-quality, holistic expertise to a plurality of models which also include a cost-focused, specialist expertise model. Middle managers reported resistance to this fragmentation, however, in situations where critical care nurse middle managers had long tenures and senior managers applied little pressure on middle managers, such that cost savings focused on physical assets, not staffing. Moreover, elite parts of the profession made use of public-sector austerity by extending the profession's jurisdiction to fill a labor market gap of physicians. While this means that part of the profession is turning financial pressures to its advantage, it also means elite parts of the profession are intensifying the managerial fragmentation of skills.

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# **‘Good’ bad jobs? The evolution of migrant low-wage employment in Germany in the light of economic and organisational changes**

**Author: Torben Krings**

Low-wage employment has significantly grown in Germany since the mid-1990s (especially between 1995 and 2005). Migrants were among those groups in the labour market most affected by these developments. This paper seeks to examine the rise in migrant low-wage employment by drawing on data from the German Socio-Economic-Panel (SOEP). An analysis of SOEP data shows that up until the early 1990s the share of migrants in low-wage employment did not differ substantially from the domestic workforce. At that time migrants were employed especially in low-skill industrial work (Industrielle Einfacharbeit (Abel et al. 2014)). Much of this work was labour-intensive, monotonous and offered little prospect for occupational mobility. Arguably, many of the jobs held by migrants were part of the secondary labour market (Piore 1979). At the same time, these jobs were not necessarily low wage as pay was mostly through collective agreements (the lower rungs). Further, the jobs offered some employment stability (although migrants were more affected by the economic cycle). To some extent, these were ‘good’ bad jobs. Since the 1990s many of these low-skill industrial jobs were lost as German manufacturing companies began to cut down on jobs in their internal labour markets. From then on, new employment opportunities emerged especially in private services, which were mostly not covered by collective agreements, and in temporary and contract work. Thus, the rise of migrant low-wage employment took place in the context of a move towards service sector employment, organisational change and an expansion of ‘atypical’ work arrangements. What are the implications of this for the debate about work and migration? Above all, it becomes apparent that what a ‘bad’ job constitutes is not a given but socially constructed and changeable. It depends especially on employer strategies but also on the role of trade unions and the regulation of the employment relationship. The supply side of the labour market matters too as Germany experienced a new wave of migrant inflows from Central and Eastern Europe since the 1990s. Thus, the German experience suggests that to a considerable extent processes of labour market segmentation and labour migration increasingly overlap. It remains to be seen to what extent the introduction of a statutory national minimum wage will provide a threshold against a ‘race to the bottom’ in low-wage sectors. Analysis of SOEP data suggests that a non-negligible number of migrants, more so than domestic workers, continues to remain employed below this threshold.

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# **An Irish solution to an Irish problem. Trade unions representing employees in non-union companies**

**Authors: Jonathan Lavelle, Patrick Gunnigle, Alan O’Leary, Caroline Murphy, Michelle O’Sullivan**

## **Introduction**

This paper focuses on key employment relations themes of trade union organising and employee representation in non-union companies. In a recent critique of the trade union organising literature, Simms (2015) notes the binary nature of the literature on trade union organising campaigns – the focus is on “...whether or not particular objectives (recognition, bargaining first contract, membership engagement structures etc.) have been achieved at the point where a union withdraws resources from the campaign” (Simms, 2015: 398). The limitation of such an approach is the failure to understand and examine a broader range of outcomes that may materialise from a union organising campaign. For example, even in situations where trade unions fail to secure a recognition agreement through an organising campaign, they may have succeeded in making gains – such as an increase in trade union membership; they may now be representing individual employees in grievance and disciplinary hearings in that company; they may have indirect influence on existing internal employee representation structures; they may have influenced managerial decision-making as a result of the campaign. Thus there are a number of outcomes, many of which may be innovative and positive from a trade union perspective, but because research on non-union companies is sparse (Wallace et al., 2013) we know little about them nor examined them. This paper aims to address this gap by focusing on union organising campaign in two large pharmaceutical multinational companies (MNCs) operating in Ireland. In particular, the focus is on the process and the outcome of the union organising campaigns. In doing so we draw on the institutional entrepreneurship literature, which is a framework to analyse how actors operating within institutional structures may have agency and affect institutional change (Eisenstadt, 1980; DiMaggio 1988; Leca et al., 2008).

## **Methods**

The paper adopts a case study approach focusing on two non-union MNCs in the pharmaceuticals, chemicals and medical devices sector in Ireland. Data collection involves semi-structured interviews, secondary research and participant observation.

## **Preliminary findings**

In both case studies, the MNCs refused to recognise the trade union for collective bargaining purposes – in Ireland the process of union recognition is voluntary and therefore organisations cannot be forced to recognise a trade union. Thus adopting the traditional binary perspective this would have been viewed as a failure on behalf of the trade union to secure trade union recognition agreement. However, a more in-depth analysis of both campaigns revealed that the trade union and the MNCs came to an arrangement that facilitates the trade union to represent workers in those companies. This arrangement has been termed an ‘Orderly Dispute Resolution Framework (ODRF)’. The ODRF is a joint worker-management forum whereby individual and collective issues can be resolved through an agreed forum. Critically trade unions may represent workers at individual or collective level in those MNCs. This new arrangement is an example of how trade unions are innovating and adopting within prevailing institutional structures.

## **Power Resources and Strikes of Chinese Informal Workers**

**Authors: Mingwei Liu, Hailong Jia**

Informal workers, particularly those in the global south, are usually viewed as powerless. Yet, China has recently witnessed a growing number of strikes staged by informal workers and more importantly, the workers have won in some cases. What power do the Chinese informal workers have? And why do they succeed in some strikes but fail in others? Based on a comparative study of two strikes of sanitation workers—one succeeded and the other failed, this paper attempts to answer these questions by providing a contextualized analysis of the strikers' power resources. We find that, although the Chinese sanitation workers have little structural and associational power, they can possibly develop four types of power resources, namely internal solidarity, external solidarity, narrative resources, and infrastructural resources, with the help of labor non-governmental organizations and other civil society actors such as college students and journalists. In particular, labor NGOs play a critical role in strengthening the workers' capacity of collective action. However, the formation and strength of these power resources are also contingent on the institutional arrangements in which the involved actors operate, the particular opportunity structures, and the capacity of other actors. Our study contributes to a better understanding of workers' power in contemporary China and has important implications for the future development of Chinese labor movement.

# Desynchronisation and the fragmentation of the temporal labour process

**Authors: Adrian Madden, Professor Sian Moore; Dr Graham Symon**

Half a century after publication EP Thompson's (1967) article 'Time, work discipline and industrial capitalism' stands, alongside the work of Polanyi (1944) and Braverman (1974), as being vital to the understanding of the labour process in modernity. In particular, he draws us to synchronised labour as central to the control of work and fundamental to the new labour processes configured by industrial revolution. Since the crisis of Fordism and the Neoliberal Turn we have entered a phase of capitalism where co-ordinating institutional frameworks have eroded and the financial sector has established a hegemony that has had pernicious consequences for workers. Further notable developments that have further disorganised accumulation and 'disconnected' the circuit of capitalism (Thompson, 2013) are the digital revolution of the cusp of the 21<sup>st</sup> century, and the Global Financial Crisis (GFC) of 2008 onwards. Work discipline is no longer based on clear temporal distinctions around which 'the working day' is organised; work itself has become detemporalised as working lives are predicated on anticipation and readiness for the unknowable.

This paper argues that time as a central component the labour process should be rethought in the light of recent critical scholarship on the changing nature of work (Moore, et al. 2018). We explore how far we are seeing a shift from Thompson's idea of synchronization to *desynchronization*. Desynchronization has emerged where work – particularly precarious work – has been re-engineered by global economic forces and technological development becoming fragmented and atomised from the certainties and decommodifying institutions associated with organised capitalism. The drive for more flexible forms of accumulation –and the emergence of more flexible firms to support it have had profound consequences for labour and also for our view of time and temporality as mediators in the labour process. Power, claims Sharma (2015) 'coalesces temporally' exposing a cadre of workers whose lives lack temporal worth or regularity.

Our argument is ultimately structured thus:

- Desynchronisation of labour (as per EP Thompson) is a process that has been underway since the crisis of Fordism and the neoliberal turn
- The process has accelerated in the last decade with the confluence of the labour market impacts of the GFC and rapid advancement of new technology
- This has placed temporality at the core of the analysis of work and employment
- An exploration of the class location of those workers who are subject to the desynchronised work time discipline raises questions for collective organisation, on one hand exposing lives, careers and work patterns that have been pulled apart temporally and deregularised in ways that subvert collective action, but on the other showing how, in the example of the McStrike movement, workers reject the flexibility that precarious work represents.

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## **Taking Stock of Inequalities in Atypical Employment and their Implications for Political Inclusion**

**Author: Dani Marinova**

A non-negligible part of the workforce finds itself in atypical employment. The insecurely employed and underemployed seldom enjoy statutory entitlements and social benefits, making them highly vulnerable to unemployment, welfare loss and poverty. Notably, similar forms of atypical employment carry vastly different risks across labor markets, thus rendering misleading the direct comparison of atypical contracts in cross-national research. To account for variation in the economic conditions experienced by workers on atypical contracts, and to compare meaningfully atypical work across labor markets, this paper, first, estimates the risk of in-work poverty among workers on atypical contracts. Estimates from EU-SILC Microdata show that atypical employment implies vastly different levels of in-work poverty across countries. Second, estimates of in-work poverty are paired with multiple waves of the European Social Survey. The empirical analyses demonstrate that variation in in-work poverty risk among workers on atypical contracts meaningfully conditions their inclusion in the political process. Together, the descriptive results from EU-SILC and the empirical analysis of the ESS lend support to the need to account for variation in the level of economic risks experienced by workers in atypical employment in future cross-national research.

# **Privatization, Austerity and the Public Sector - Trends in Managerialism, Teacher Substitution and Work Intensification in 20,000 English Schools**

**Author: Nicholas Martindale**

Since the 1980s a combination of economic, technological and political change has transformed the public sector in the UK, with important consequences for workers in public services. Public sector employees are now working longer and harder (Felstead et al. 2015) and the creation of new job roles has shifted established patterns in the division of labour (Bach & Kessler 2012). In state education, researchers have highlighted trends towards the intensification of teachers' work, increasing reliance on support staff and a growth in the power and size of school managements, which, according to some researchers, amounts to the "*continued 'Taylorisation' of teaching*" (Carter et al. 2010: 141).

However, the conclusions reached in existing school workforce research are now somewhat dated as they draw on empirical evidence from the middle of the last decade. Given the major political and economic changes in the UK since then, including austerity policies which have cut per pupil funding by 8% in real terms (IFS 2018), it is unclear whether trends identified in previous research have persisted. Moreover, existing research pre-dates the rapid growth in the number of the Academy schools, the major structural transformation of the English state school system of the past decade. Academies are privately-run, state-funded schools that now account for 30% of primary and 66% of secondary schools in England. The proponents of the Academies programme have sought to free schools from local government control to allow them to adopt novel organizational and leadership practices to raise performance standards (Adonis 2012). While scholars have therefore speculated that the structure of the workforce and the intensity of work in Academy schools may differ from non-Academy schools (Stevenson 2013), there has been little empirical research of the impact of programme on the workforce.

This presentation therefore aims to bring the understanding of the English state school workforce up-to-date and establish to what extent government policies have Taylorised work in England's state schools. For the first time, the analysis considers whether the privatization of the school system under the Academies programme has had a significant impact on the workforce. In so doing, I evaluate the relevance of Labour Process Theory, in both its original and subsequent formulations, for the understanding of the evolution of the state school workforce. This work contributes to the growing international debate on the role of private providers in state education (Little 2015) and is particularly important because of the role England has often played as a test-bed for reforms that subsequently spread abroad.

# **Work conflicts, cleavages and solidarities in Global Value Chains. Two case studies in the Swiss machinery industry**

**Authors: Aris Martinelli**

The emergence and expansion of Global Value Chains (GVCs) is due to a combination of socio-economic factors such as the oil crises of the 1970 years, and the application of the new technologies on the production process (Baldwin, 2013; Chesnais, 1994) ; the trade and investment liberalization policies (Michalet, 2004); the integration of the underdevelopment countries in the global market (Freeman, 2007) as well as the offshore and outsourcing strategies of multinational firms (Milberg & Winkler, 2013).

These socio-economic transformations impact on employers' strategies and workers' conditions. On the one hand, capital owners faced with an increase of economic competition and the difficulty to coordinate the production processes embedded in different territorial and institutional levels in which there are different actors (local, national and international suppliers or subcontractors) (Gereffi, Humphrey, & Sturgeon, 2005; Gereffi & Luo, 2014). On the other hand, GVCs also affect the "morphology" (division of labour, contracts, sectors of activity, qualifications, age, gender, ethnicity, etc.) and the "form of being" of the working class. This latter concerns the ability of workers to organize herself for improving working and living conditions (Antunes, 2015).

In this context, recent researches suggest different results. Some researches point out how GVCs reinforce work subordination and affect the capacity of workers to improve their working conditions (Drahokoupil, 2015; Hale & Wills, 2005; Raworth & Kidder, 2009). Others, show how GCVs produce a more efficient workers' action within GVCs (Coe, 2015; Fichter, 2015; Quan, 2008). Starting from an analytical framework based on the articulation of the GVC framework and sociology of work (Newsome, Taylor, & Rainnie, 2013), the aim of this paper is to investigate how the GVCs affect the labour agency. More precisely, I will interpret the emergence of different forms of work conflicts and cleavages in a situation of GVCs restructuring in relation to the GVC' structure as well as economic and institutional variables.

This paper is grounded on a PhD working progress research based on three GVCs cases studies in the Swiss mechanical, electrical, and metal industry (MEM). I have recorded approximately 60 hours of semi-structured interviews by speaking with management, staff, and unionists' members in GVC's lead firm as well as in strategic subcontractors. My inquiry shows how, due to the absence or weakness of collective workers organization, GVCs restructuring transform the forms of work resistance. The classic conflict between workers and employers gives way to conflict and cleavages within work teams. In this situation, new forms of solidarity seem to emerge outside the workplace.

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# **A study on industrial delocalization in Brazil: a case from São Paulo automotive industry**

**Authors: Fernando Ramalho Martins, Helen Sampson, Marcos Lazaro Prado**

This paper aims to reflect upon the process of relocation in the Brazilian automobile industry. A series of multinational organisations set up new units on such places, including: Volkswagen and its modular system in Resende (RJ), inaugurated in 1996 (Sako, 2006; Abreu, Beynon, Ramalho, 2000); Renault and Volkswagen-Audi plants in Paraná State, in 1990s (Araújo, 2006); Mercedes-Benz's plant of Juiz de Fora (MG), also opened in 1990s (Neves, Carvalho & Neto, 2006); GM Gravataí (RS), inaugurated in 2002 (Sako, 2006); and Fiat-Jeep Goiana (PE), set up in 2015 (Ladosky, 2015). In such scenario, our aim is to contribute with these researches based on our investigation of an automotive plant from Mercedes-Benz located in Iracemápolis, a small city in São Paulo State's countryside, and opened in 2016. Semi-structured interviews were carried out with: former worker, workers, Iracemápolis' major, and a São Paulo state's MP. All interviews were transcribed and analyzed using thematic analysis approach (Bardin, 1977). In order to give a clear picture of the context in which the concerned plant was opened, documents from two newspapers' archive (Folha de São Paulo and Estadão), and also data from Brazilian Automotive Industry Yearbook (2017), published by ANFAVEA (National Association of Automobile Manufacturers) were used. We are going to address our discussion to the following issues: location characteristics; factors that attracted the company to the city; factory characteristics; workers perceptions in relation to the job. Regarding the last issue, our preliminary interviews reveal a curious tendency pointing out to a quite opposite direction concerning the outcomes presented by Annavajhula & Pratap (2012), i.e., some of our interviewees have declared that the job in itself and the labour conditions of an organization on the top of the production chain are worse or equal to those of subcontractors. It is important to stress that the findings hereby presented are preliminary and are the result of a qualitative inquiry.

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# **Industrial Relations from Below Union Organizing and Institutional Change in an E-Commerce and Logistics Multinational Corporation**

**Author: Francesco Sabato Massimo**

In the last years Amazon rose up as one of the most worthy financial corporation in the world. In the e-retail market, Amazon stands as the major player: it has been recently estimated that 44 cents of every dollar spent online goes to the Seattle-based multinational's pocket. Concerns have been raised by many scholars and commentators about the harmful dominant position of Amazon in the market (Khan, 2016). Jeff Bezos' company has been criticized also for eluding tax jurisdiction, along with many other big multinational corporation, such as Facebook and Alphabet (European Commission, 2017). Besides market and fiscal issues, Amazon has been attacked on one other main issue: work. The expansion of Amazon logistics infrastructure – the physical internet of its market place – has been impressive. Nowadays Amazon is the second employer in the US (250 thousands workers, plus 50 thousands seasonal workers). In Europe Amazon hires around 50 thousands workers and established logistics facilities in UK, Germany, France, Poland, Czech Republic, Slovakia, Italy and Spain.

The establishment of Amazon in Europe means the settlement of an American multinational in countries with very specific patterns of development of class conflict and employment relations, i.e. the embeddedness of union and firm action in different national institutional sets. This has been a classic question in the last years among political economy and economic sociology scholars (Almond and Ferner, 2006; Pulignano, 2006; Pardi, 2011). However the case of Amazon allows to address this classic question in a new fashion.

Amazon management and labor process lies on a very strong neoliberal corporate culture (Coutrot, 1998; Skeggs, 2011; Stone, 2013; Taplin, 2017). This corporate culture is has proven to be hegemonic so far (not as despotic as the classic logistics) thanks to the use of performance benchmarking and management tools, and mix of paternalistic and authoritarian internal policies. However, Amazon logistics devices have not been immune from union action and industrial conflict, namely in Germany (2013), France (2014), Italy (2017) and Spain (2018). Moreover, in the last two years union action has been deployed not only on the local and national level, but also on a transnational European one, through coordinated actions and solidarity and the first stages of the constitution of Amazon European Workers Council (EWC). Union action proves the resilience of European institutional settings and the (not always successful) ability of unions to face the challenges of the digital service economy, on the shop floor as well as the transnational arena. Both dimensions seems to be crucial for the constitution of a *sui generis* transnational intra-firm industrial relation system. In order to understand and take into account this multilevel and transnational process, this paper will draw on the first results of a PhD research being conducted in two European countries (Italy and France) since 2017. Data come from fieldwork deployed on three levels: shop floor (ethnographic observation in Amazon logistics warehouses), collective national firm and branch bargaining, transnational union coordination.

Combining industrial relations, social movement studies and socio-economic study of the industrial districts, this paper will propose an understanding of industrial relations and union revitalization in a time of austerity and capitalist restructuring. On one hand, sociological literature on “union organizing” has proven to be useful to understand union revitalization, but less able to give an account of the inclusion of new actors in the industrial relations system. On the other hand, this paper aims to articulate macro-level explanations of changes in the industrial relations field with a micro-level analysis. As it has been recently state industrial relations institutions have been entered a neoliberal trajectory. Even if empirical

evidence seems to support this analysis, the theoretical risk is to conceive of neoliberalism as a relentless and obscure force. It is a matter of fact that logistics restructuring in the industrial districts contributed to the decline and erosion of the institutions upon which the national systems of employment relations were built. The old institutions underwent a process of “institutional conversion” and industrial relations seems to be unable to keep the pace of these transformations. At the same time unions, together with other social movements, are struggling to face the social forces contrast pushing toward a deregulation and enlargement of employers’ discretion. The aim of this paper is to show how they can shape and influence the development of the biggest e-commerce retailer. On a theoretical level the main goal of this paper is to call for a closer encounter of industrial relations, ethnography of work and social movement studies.

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## **The Forgotten Workers and the Indignity of Work and Non-Work**

**Authors: Jo McBride, Andrew Smith**

Dignity at work is discussed in numerous studies of employment (see for e.g. Bolton 2007, Hodson 2001) as well as in relation to the social value of work (see McBride & Martinez Lucio, 2014 and Toynbee 2003) and the value of the person at work (see Sayer 2011). The focus of many studies has centred on elements of dignity at work such as self-esteem, bullying, harassment, inequalities and autonomy. Hodson's (2001) perceptive analysis focuses on mismanagement and abuse, overwork, employee involvement and the importance of autonomy. Our work acknowledges all of these issues, however our main focus is on the association of indignity in terms of, not only how an individual is treated as an employee, but also how an individual may feel valued as a person (Sayer 2011:199). This is concurrent with Bolton's (2007) examination of 'dignity at work' to exemplify the social character of the human being. It is also in accord with Sayer's (2011) more recent work, where he associates dignity with autonomy whereby people primarily treat each other as means to some ends and not just end in themselves. As he suggests, this is the case in employment, in particular where individuals fill jobs that are easily substitutable. These types of jobs are generally found in lower paid, lower skilled work which is the focus of our study. We aim to broaden these categories as we link the idea of dignity to work - in terms of the indignity of work - but also the question of non-work lives (in terms of 'non-work' we mean for those in zero hours and/or variable contracts and the 'wait' for work in-between jobs) and how these have evolved and affect perceptions of work and the experience of work. For example, how does stress and increasing work intensification (and indeed what we refer to as work extensification) undermine the manner in which work is viewed? How does this influence an individual's relation with the purpose of their work? How does that impact on their non-work lives? The data presented are from 50 detailed interviews with low-paid workers in multiple employment. These workers have 4, 5, 6 or even 7 different jobs. There is what we have called an extensification of work by being employed for long, variable and non-standard hours, covering early mornings, evenings, nights and weekends. This is combined with an intensification of work due to outsourcing work, lean staffing and budget cuts. Many are on zero hours contracts or variable hours contracts. As all of these workers are engaged in multiple low-paid employment, this creates additional complexities and dilemmas to their lives. The challenges of combining multiple jobs results in a paucity of disposable income indeed, some went to foodbanks to help them get through the month. All of these factors have affected many of our respondents in different ways with some claiming to be 'ashamed' or 'worthless' clearly suffering from indignity from their work. The paper investigates the reasons for these perceptions whilst contributing to dignity at work debates.

## Disruption, diffusion and displaced freelancers

**Authors: Paula McDonald, Penny Williams, Robyn Mayes**

First introduced by Clayton Christensen (1997), the term disruptive innovation describes how new technologies can unsettle established markets and existing methods of organizing, producing and managing, by providing different value from products or services (Yu and Hang, 2010). Many disruptive innovations are digital in nature, using the internet and advances in mobile technology to access new markets, automate services and reduce costs (Degryse, 2016). Examples include platform businesses which: connect buyers with self-employed service/product providers (Coyle, 2017); crowdsource tasks to a community of workers; and create user-generated content where the consumer is also the creator (Daugherty *et al.*, 2008). Along with digitalisation, social media and information-sharing platforms, these new models comprise the “digital economy”, where information and communication technologies create global networks that drive economic and social change (Pesole *et al.*, 2018; Valenduc and Vendramin, 2017). Disruptive innovations provide accessibility and affordability in previously well-established, high-cost markets, and, correspondingly, have the potential to fundamentally alter labour markets and approaches to work (Degryse, 2016) in both positive and negative ways. For example, although new approaches to organising production and work are said to provide an unparalleled opportunity for economic and employment growth (Valenduc and Vendramin, 2017), they can also transform value chains, lower barriers to entry, de-skill professionals, and contribute to offshoring, placing pressure on pay and working conditions and reducing employment security (Coyle, 2017; Graham *et al.*, 2017).

Despite the significant impact that digital disruption is likely to exert on individual workers, occupational and professional groups, and the labour market more broadly, empirical research which examines these effects in specific industry contexts has been relatively scarce. Drawing on in-depth interviews, we address this knowledge gap through a study of workers in an industry that has undergone significant disruption in recent years, namely, photography. The study reveals how the convergence of technological innovations, digital media, crowdsourcing, and platform businesses has changed the nature of photographic work and opportunities for employment in the industry, and explains how photographers have responded. The study presupposes that workers are not entirely at the mercy of technological innovations, but rather that they may exercise agency in the use of technology to construct their professional careers (Etelapelto *et al.* 2013).

The findings from the study indicate that it is not so much technological determinism, but technology diffusion that is shaping the future work and income of photographers, and that photographers, aware of the risks to their livelihoods, either opt out or exercise professional agency in ways that seek to protect either or both the individual and collective interests of the profession. Supporting Huws (2010), some photographers offered little resistance, passively accepting the erosion of photography as a profession. Most however, exercised at least one form of professional agency, by adapting their businesses to offer new or different services, resisting price reductions, participating in other low-paid platform work, or seeking employment outside of professional photography. Each of these choices was circumscribed by the technology-driven socio-cultural context that has profoundly changed consumer access to the photographic image. More broadly, the study contributes to the emerging literature on technology, disruption and the future of work.

# **Responsible restructuring and integrative concession bargaining: an empirical examination of the role of trade unions at a UK steel firm**

**Author: Chris McLachlan**

This paper explores the connection between responsible restructuring and integrative bargaining at a UK steel firm. Through an empirical examination of the negotiation process between management and trade unions and drawing on Walton and McKersie's (1965) seminal framework of labour negotiations, the paper argues that trade unions are able to induce management into more responsible forms of employment restructuring by realising the 'integrative potential' when bargaining over restructuring.

Recent debates in industrial relations literature have highlighted the relationship between trade union activity and Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR), suggesting unions are well placed as key stakeholders to engage with CSR initiatives in order to improve outcomes for their members and wider society (Harvey et al, 2017; Preuss et al, 2014). Nonetheless, there has been little empirical research on the role of trade unions in relation to specifically responsible practices. With regards to restructuring processes, the term *responsible restructuring* represents a range of practices implemented by organisations in order to ameliorate the consequences of redundancy for affected employees (Forde et al, 2009). Responsible restructuring has thus been viewed as connected to an organisation's CSR agenda, with research suggesting ways in which a more ethical approach to restructuring may also bring strategic benefits (Tsai and Shih, 2013; Rydell and Wigbald, 2013). Moreover, a burgeoning consistency has been identified between responsible restructuring and integrative bargaining, whereby unions may engage with management when bargaining over restructuring in order to seek a quid pro quo when agreeing concessions in relation to job losses (Walton and McKersie, 1965; Teague and Roche, 2014; Garaudel et al, 2008). That is, in an era where restructuring and redundancy is considered inevitable, unions may acknowledge certain complementary interests with management in times of restructuring and utilise these in the negotiation process. Garaudel et al (2008) refer to this as 'integrative potential', where by unions engagement in restructuring processes may help mitigate some of the negative social and economic effects of redundancy for employees.

Based on a qualitative case study of a restructuring process UK steel plant, this paper explores the role of trade unions in inducing management into a more responsible process by engaging in integrative bargaining with management. Through interview and ethnographic data, the negotiation process is analysed in relation to the nature of concessions sought by unions and management, and the particular circumstances that made an integrative approach possible. The paper concludes with an extended discussion on the subsequent implications for trade union strategy in relation to responding to restructuring processes more widely.

## **Exploring internal labour market 'churn': analysing employees' experience of internal redeployment**

**Authors: Chris McLachlan, Robert MacKenzie**

Employees who are subject to organisational restructuring processes typically experience a range of social and economic effects, whereby the loss of employment has implications for future employability, future earnings and disruption to career trajectories. For employees displaced through redundancy, the transition to new employment typically involves retraining for a new job and engaging with institutional support mechanisms externally. In this sense, displaced employees face a period of employment instability and the experience of labour market 'churn' (Brand, 2015; Jolkkonen et al, 2017). One organisational approach to limiting the impact of restructuring and avoiding compulsory redundancies has been through the implementation of internal redeployment processes. This paper thus explores the consequences of the implementation of internal redeployment processes for affected employees, provoking a wider debate around the function of internal labour market systems and notion internal labour churn in relation to organisational restructuring.

The rationale for organisations implementing internal labour market systems is traditionally understood as a means of protecting job security and job instability through employer-led solutions (Grimshaw and Rubery, 1998; Grimshaw et al, 2001; Capelli and Neumark, 2004). The organisational practice of internal redeployment has therefore sought to insulate employees affected by restructuring from the vagaries of the external labour market by offering them alternative employment internally. The paper hence builds on ideas of external labour market churn, viewed as the volatility caused by the voluntary or involuntary turnover of employees for organisations and employees alike, and the consequent impact on employment outcomes and career trajectories. Internal labour market churn thus represents an analogous phenomenon, yet focuses attention on the way the employees' experiences are shaped specifically by internal labour market systems such as through the practice of internal redeployment. Whilst employees can experience such churning due to the vagaries of the external labour market, this paper argues that churn may also be evident, and equally negative, within processes such as internal redeployment.

With regards to methodology, this paper seeks to further conceptualise the notion of internal labour market churn by building upon empirical research conducted in the UK steel industry. Based on a qualitative case study of an internal redeployment process the findings revealed the challenges faced by redeployed employees. That is, as employees moved between jobs in the internal labour market following internal redeployment they experienced similarly negative effects to those faced in the external labour market in terms of career scarring, feelings of displacement, underemployment and poorer terms and conditions.

# Discipline and the forms of resistance at the workplace in Chile

**Author: Gabriela Julio Medel**

This paper is based on an ongoing PhD research project which focuses on the forms of resistance at the workplace in contemporary Chile. The Chilean case is presented as a relevant example for the study of the possibilities of resistance within the context of a country which was pioneering in the implementation of a broad neoliberal restructuring.

The imposed neoliberal transformation during Pinochet's dictatorship, was a total project, aiming at changing the whole society and targeting and persecuting the labour movement in particular. After the return of democracy, political liberties were recovered however, the workplace and the institutional structure that regulates the employment relations remained highly authoritarian. The effect is that, almost 30 years after of the reestablishment of democratic elections and governments, the labour movement has not recover the key political role it used to have, and has become highly fragmented, making the possibilities for collective action very costly for workers.

There is abundant literature looking into the institutional reasons for the non-recovery of the labour movement in Chile, but there is less literature looking into the topic from the workers perspective. Drawing from an autonomist framework this project aims at inverting that perspective and exploring "the power of the workers to resist" (Cleaver 1992, p.113), considering also the everyday forms of resistance, either collective or individual, that can and do appear at the workplace.

Recognising that work, waged and unwaged, is still the main form of domination under capitalism, and that there are many terrains for contestation, this research focuses on the workplace as a key site of discipline and resistance, "where we often experience the most immediate, unambiguous, and tangible relation of power ... on a daily basis" (Weeks 2011, p.2).

The research project is based in a qualitative methodology using semi-structured in-depth interviews with workers and union leaders from different productive sectors, paying special attention to the non-unionised workplaces as well (a highly understudied group but which represents the condition of the majority of Chilean workers now-a-days).

For the conference presentation, I will briefly outline the context of the research and methods, to later focus on the early results from the fieldwork, to finally discuss the implications that the Chilean case can have in the context of an expanding neoliberal capitalism worldwide.

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## **In Search for Dexterous Workers: Third Country Nationals' Employment Through Temporary Work Agencies in Hungary**

**Authors: Tibor T. Meszmann, Olena Fedyuk**

There is a growing practice of recruiting and employing “third county nationals”, especially Ukrainian and Serbian nationals in the Hungarian electronics and automotive plants through temporary work agencies (TWAs) and with the help of recruitment intermediary companies. Employment of third country nationals through TWAs is happening at the intersection of the immigration and employment regimes that constructs an idealized labour force and specific employment relations in the region. This means that both the state - with its power to regulate the conditions of legal stay, and employer - with a need for seasonal, flexible hiring and firing arrangements – determine the employment relations and conditions of workers. In our paper, we focus on jobs of third country nationals and also on the form and content of their employment relation, including social relations at the workplace. In order to evaluate the quality of “regular” jobs for Ukrainians in Hungarian multinationals we observe them from an interrelated-reinforcing perspectives of labour process,, industrial relations and migration. Our argument is that apart from complex recruitment and highly regulated migration arrangements, wrapped up in a triangular employment relationship of temp workers, social construction of 'third country national' temp workers creates practices of subtle control (with elements of coercion) and gives rise to a particular form of precariousness. Using labour process theory we claim that these jobs are “flexicarious” – in constant pressure and dependency from production needs. Apart from the market, changes in production technology also affect these jobs. We analyze these flexible and precarious jobs in terms of working time, remuneration and worker autonomy in everyday operations (control over operations and length of shifts) affect Serbian and Ukrainian workers more than their local counterparts. In our assessment, we predominantly rely on worker interviews, but also representatives of intermediaries, officials and experts in Hungary as well as plant level trade unions and Hungarian workers in the automotives and electronics.

# **Demands and orientations of day care workers in reorganization processes**

**Author: Franziska Meyer-Lantzberg**

The contribution presents the results of a research project on the demands of day care workers in reorganization processes. The research offers broad insight into how workers perceive the structural changes in public day care for children, and what goals and claims they develop in these processes.

## **Problem**

In the last 15 years, various political reforms were made to expand and improve public day care for children in Germany. Since the results of the PISA Study in 2002, the bad results of German students and especially the big influence of family background on educational success have been debated intensively. As a consequence obligatory programs for education in day-care facilities were introduced. Furthermore, laws were passed which guarantee public day care for children older than twelve months. Hence, within in a short period an extreme increase in the capacities of day-care facilities was necessary.

Both trends – the stronger focus on education and the expansion especially for children younger than three years – confront pedagogical workers with enormous challenges and demand various processes of reorganization in the day care centers.

## **Methods**

For investigating these processes we performed three company case studies in day-care centers and analyzed the reorganizations made in the last two decades with a focus on how they were negotiated and implemented. Therefore, we conducted interviews with responsible staff of institutions who run the centers, with managers of the centers, with employee representatives and with five to seven pedagogical workers in each case. The analysis of the material was informed by the sociology of knowledge, methodological thoughts of the Documentary Method were borrowed to identify orientations of the workers which structure their perception, thinking and acting.

## **Findings**

We were able to carve out three different orientation frameworks of pedagogical workers in children day-care facilities. Each of the three frames – called “expansive needs”, “rational enclosure” and “primacy of practice” – comes with specific potentials, but also challenges for the workers in their labor and in the negotiation procedures in the organization. The contribution for the conference will discuss in particular how the different frameworks enable the workers to deal with the new demands according to the mentioned structural changes: the common frame of “expansive needs” is focused on care activities as central for the job identity, as a consequence employees with this orientation are highly contested by the reconfigurations of the sector. Some of them struggle and resist to new tasks and rules, at the same time workers develop more subtle ways of dealing with restructuring by adopting the new demands and terminology for their own priorities. In opposition the frame of “rational enclosure” is strongly affirmative about new job content and activities which are related to a more formal understanding of the occupation, for example public relations, documentation tasks and (explicit) education activities. The contribution shows how necessary negotiations of reorganization are structured by these different orientations.

## **(De)fragmenting representations. The case of solo self-employment in France, Italy and Slovakia**

**Authors: Petr Mezihorak, Annalisa Murgia, Mathilde Mondon-Navazo, Paolo Borghi**

The processes of fragmentation and hybridisation impact labour markets and work organisation in many ways, including the blurring boundaries between employment and self-employment, the becoming instable and uncertain of individual careers – especially for low- but also for highly qualified workers – and the decreasing levels of social protection as well as collective representation (Supiot 1999, Fudge 2006, Buschoff and Schmidt 2009, Dekker 2010, Eichhorst et al. 2013).

Within the heterogeneous population that inhabits the hybrid areas of work and employment, solo self-employed workers – namely self-employed workers without employees – represent an emblematic category, which is challenging the classical employment/self-employment opposition, and also comprises very different subjects: from genuine autonomous workers to platform workers and bogus self-employed (D’Amours 2006, van Stel and de Vries 2015, Armano and Murgia 2017, Azais, Dieuaide and Kesselman 2017, Bologna 2018). The heterogeneity of this category is reflected also in the variety of organisations that represent their interests (Frege and Kelly 2004, Pernicka 2006, Wynn 2015, Hyman and Gumbrell-McCormick 2017). These organisations – unions, associations, cooperatives or grassroots movements – convey different narratives of solo self-employed workers, identified as disguised employees, (craft)workers, freelancers, professionals or entrepreneurs. How solo self-employed workers are represented, in terms of cultural frames, affect both the strategies of organising and the co-construction of their identities, which may favour or hinder their ability to mobilise to improve their working conditions.

The study is based on empirical material gathered through a comparative and multi-sited ethnographic research (Marcus 1995, Mangen 1999) within solo self-employed unions and associations in France, Italy and Slovakia. For four months (beginning of September - end of December 2018) we have been investigating how the different organisations represent solo self-employed workers, both in terms of classification and interpretation of a social group and in terms of practices of organising aimed to extend their collective bargaining rights. The three selected case-studies are characterised by different welfare states, but also by a transversal growth of solo self-employed workers.

In this contribution, therefore, the ‘representation’ of solo self-employed workers is analysed by addressing diverse constellations of meaning (Pitkin 1967). The first relates to symbolic representations – that is, the narratives, discourses, stories, metaphors, slogans, and anecdotes found in the everyday talks and practices of the studied organisations. The second constellation of meanings is instead related to representation as collective bargaining, and hence to entitlement to speak on behalf of someone or having a voice on a relevant matter.

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## Sub-contracting and emerging new self-employment in India

**Authors: Nripendra Mishra, Tulika Tripathi, Manik Kumar**

Developing economies of South Asia, especially India, have witnessed rise in a particular type of self-employment with global reorganization of production. It is argued that self-employment is a stepping stone of entrepreneurship and therefore the shift from wage employment to self-employment is welcome. Apparently, self-employment denotes greater degree of autonomy and is expected to bring higher rate of earnings than wage employment. However, one needs to distinguish under what conditions this self-employment is being taken up which is referred as voluntary self-employment (choice) and involuntary self-employment (compulsion) (Albrecht *et al.*, 2009).

The recent growth in self-employment in India has been coterminous with growing subcontracting in informal sector (NSSO, 1999-00; Unni & Rani, 2010). Global value chains are much more pervasive now. Central production sites are disintegrating, and work is shifting to home of workers. Consequently, this part of world has seen growth of a special kind of self-employed workers, often referred to as home-based workers. Thus, self-employment can be advocated as desired form of employment (voluntary self-employment) if it meets following conditions.

1. if such employment comes with independence and autonomy or stronger bargaining power for workers.
2. if it is a source of higher or adequate earnings.

If these conditions are not met, then it is involuntary self-employment emanating out of compulsion.

The present paper examines these conditions in case of self-employed home-based workers from India by combining Labour Force Survey with Enterprise Survey to estimate their earnings and degree of in/dependence. It has developed a concept of 'notional income' to know if their earnings are adequate. This notional income is estimated for household of workers. It suggests what members of household of these workers might have earned had they not be doing what they are doing right now. The result suggests that more than 80 percent of home based workers earned less than the notional income. A comparison between sub-contracted and non-sub-contracted workers shows that majority of sub-contracted workers are in precarious subcontracting relationship with parent firm; legally not enforceable and at adverse conditions. Indicators of independence and earning levels are worst for sub-contracted workers. This new self-employment under GVCs has resulted into further self-exploitation of workers and siphoning away of their assets. While sub-contracted workers are worse than non-sub-contracted workers, fully sub-contracted workers are even worse off than partly sub-contracted workers. Independent workers are at the top and fully sub-contracted workers are at the bottom of this pyramid. The trend and pattern in their growth suggest that bottom is gradually broadening, and the top is narrowing. Global value chains have further reduced share of workers in output. In a way, this kind of self-employment is nothing, but self-exploitation of workers and workers might be better off being in wage employment.

## **The Search for (Artificial) Intelligence in the Labour Process**

**Authors: Phoebe Moore, Frank Engster**

Machines do not stand in isolation of their social circumstances and political economy and have for millennia been incorporated into work processes, used to valorise living labour and socialise other machines, socialise ourselves, and shape our experiences of capitalism. It is not the machine nor its ability to conduct activity, or idealised 'intelligence' that has determined how history has developed. Instead, the ways that technologies and machines are incorporated into society, and human relationships with machines are understood, rather than just the technology or work design practices on their own, that reveal how perceptions of intelligence and the artificiality of ascriptions to intelligence, are so often misconstrued. Today, artificial intelligence (AI) appears to pose a real contender and perhaps competitor in labour processes today. Rather than point directly to this competition as such, this paper takes a detour by looking at how we humans, from the period of scientific management, have posed the question of intelligence, and where and how we searched for it and conceptualised it and what ramifications this has had in the lead-up to the current fads in AI. In short, humans have tried to come to a point of self-illumination and self-understanding through linking our intelligence to the supposed intelligence machines, but as we will see, usually in competition with machines and aligned with productive capabilities, as machines socialise other machines and socialise humans. This article argues that the artificiality in AI is not in the comparison between machine and human capacity for intelligence. Intelligence is neither human nor machinic, it is not present in subjects nor objects. It is what we have shown as their correlation, but this correlation as to be understand as a capitalist mediation that is sublated on both sides. This sublated mediation is AI.

# The customer as workforce and resource in the gig economy

**Authors: Eduard Mueller**

The gig economy is profoundly restructuring previously established relations between workers, management and clients (Drahokoupil & Fabo, 2016; Huws, Spencer, Syrdal, & Holts, 2018). At its core, platform organisations are using their flexible triangular structure (Kushner, 2013; Schörpf, Flecker, Schönauer, & Eichmann, 2017) to create new ways of control over crowd workers as well as commodification of customer activity in order to gain value. For example, clients are either obligatory or voluntarily evaluating workers performance via rating systems in form of multi-scale scores and/or comments. (Kornberger, Pflueger, & Mouritsen, 2017; Rosenblat & Stark, 2016) Thereby, customers take over managerial tasks and help to aggregate valuable information which can be commercialised by the platform organisations. Additionally, workers often also provide evaluations about the customer's behaviour as well as more and more bureaucratic tasks are imposed on the customers in the process of consumption. As a result, the responsibility of the clients is constantly growing (Scholz, 2016; Vandaele, 2018), as well as their workload in the consumption process – which is helping the companies to reduce their fixed costs and therefore is a competitive advantage. Furthermore, data about the customer's activities is stored and commodified, which makes the behaviour of the customers a profitable resource for the platform organisations and is a constant challenge for data protection regulation.

In this presentation, I conceptualise how platform organisations exercise the mutual control of workers and customers and are therefore outsourcing managerial tasks to their users and at the same time try to commodify the surveillance of their customer's activities. For this purpose, a combination of the strand of labour process theory (Braverman, 1998; Burawoy, 1979; Gandini, 2018) with the Foucault's idea of 'governmentality' (Clegg, Courpasson, & Phillips, 2006; Foucault, M., 1979) will be applied. Even though those concepts are originating from a time before the rise of the platform economy (Kenney & Zysman, 2016), they both offer important resources for a thorough analysis and understanding of control and power in platform organisations and the new role customers take in the labour process of the gig economy.

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# **Employment regulation and the labour process of labour inspectorates: the emergent challenges of fragmentation and de-skilling**

**Authors: Stephen Mustchin, Miguel Martinez Lucio**

The employment relationship and the labour process are significantly determined by the actions of the state, in terms of what regulation exists and how such regulation is enacted and enforced (Kagan, 1989; Tombs, 2016). State agencies constituting a labour inspectorate play a significant role in enforcing the regulation of work (Metcalf, 2017), however relatively little attention has to date been paid to the labour process of those public sector employees tasked with enforcing employment regulation, and what impact their labour process may have on their attempts to regulate employment more generally. The labour process of such workers has been changing and this is having a broader impact on the question of enforcement.

This paper addresses these issues by drawing on qualitative empirical research including interviews with 40 individuals consisting of inspectors from the UK Health and Safety Executive, Gangmasters and Labour Abuses Authority (GLAA), and HM Revenue and Customs minimum wage enforcement functions along with representatives of the wider state, trade union and civil society networks involved in the enforcement of employment rights. Inspectors and those tasked with regulatory work are subject to pressures experienced across the public sector, including austerity, performance management regimes and work intensification. Additionally, the scope of their work is determined by the political priorities of government and has been expanded in some respects (such as a heightened focus on enforcing immigration law and tackling modern slavery) and constrained in others (as with the scaling back of health and safety regulation in line with wider deregulatory and austerity policy agendas) (Clark and Colling, 2018; Lodge and Wegrich, 2015).

Furthermore, there are a range of specific changes in the work of labour inspectors which are having an impact on enforcement issues more generally, including changing skills profiles and moves towards more generalist expertise. There is evidence of decreasing levels of industrial sector specialisms and a more generic approach to occupational and operational details which in some respects constitute a form of de-skilling. There is evidence of diminished resources and time allocated to specific cases and a problem of workloads and task multiplication. It can be argued that there is an element of deskilling due to a greater emphasis on graduate trainees among health and safety inspectors and a reliance on former police officers in the case of the GLAA, who may not have the detailed knowledge of industries and working conditions that they investigate. There is an increasing emphasis on multi-state agency and more flexible team working across the fragmented structure of agencies tasked with enforcing employment rights which can lead to operational challenges due to different cultures and approaches within separate inspectorates. These challenges are exacerbated by diminishing links to civil society groups and organisations involved in broader aspects of labour rights enforcement.

The paper argues that these changes to the nature and form of the work of those employed within regulatory institutions are significant, and coterminous with wider processes of labour market deregulation and the marginalisation of trade unions. Despite the enduring body of certain aspects of labour rights, the institutional and human resources deployed to enforce them are increasingly constrained and fragmented.

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# **An exploratory study of job satisfaction in the gig economy: The case of gig workers in central Scotland.**

**Author: Katriona Myhill**

The purpose of the study is to explore aspects of the nature and experience of work in the so-called gig economy.

Over the last 5 years the UK gig economy has expanded rapidly with approximately 5 million workers now engaged in gig work (CMI, 2016), approaching the number of workers employed in the public sector. However, despite its rapid growth, the gig economy has faced significant backlash within the media (see for example Edwards, 2017; O'Connor, 2017) due to its contribution to the creation of 'low quality' jobs and the severance of the link between low unemployment and wage levels, from which workers have previously benefited. Consequently, the quality of life for those working in the gig economy emerges as an area of concern and one in need of further investigation. As such, the main, yet broad aim of the study is to explore aspects of the nature and experience of work in the so-called gig economy.

In order to address this problem and contribute to a growing body of knowledge related to work in the gig economy (e.g. Flanagan, 2017; Kalleberg & Dunn, 2017), this study will explore the individuals experience and perception of gig work. Further to this, an aim is to position the study within a broader body of knowledge related to the quality of work (McGovern, et al., 2004; Knox, et al., 2015; Kauhanen & Natti, 2015) and in order to understand the wider implications of the growth in gig work, a worker-orientated job quality framework is utilised (Munoz-Bustillo, et al., 2009), focusing on the aspects of work associated with job satisfaction and employee well-being.

In support of these aims, the study adopts a qualitative approach based upon semi-structured interviews designed to explore issues such as, reasons for working in the gig economy, perceptions of wages and conditions and the impact gig work has had on broader aspects of their working lives. Face to face interviews were conducted with 32 gig workers (varying from 35-90 minutes per interview) located in Central Scotland, working via digital app-based platforms, and doing work related to hospitality, courier and taxi driving. The interview data is analysed using template analysis (King & Brooks, 2016).

A range of important findings emerge from the analysis of the data but the main findings so far show that the key benefits of gig work identified by participants included, amongst others, such things as; the high levels of temporal and geographic flexibility, the control/choice over when, where and how often to work and, the absence of workplace politics.

In addition, whilst ease of access was often cited as a key benefit of gig work, it was also seen as the primary reason for a decline in employment conditions with the perceived oversupply of workers and growing levels of 'competition' for work contributing to rising levels of dissatisfaction, particularly amongst those working in the gig economy full time. Similarly, the sense of anonymity provided from working through an app was perceived by participants as having both a beneficial and detrimental effect on their work experience with some participants preferring the feeling of independence whilst others reported feeling undervalued.

Whilst the majority of respondents indicated their satisfaction with their job in the gig economy and the intention to continue using work-based platforms, a large proportion indicated that they would not see gig work as a long-term or full-time career. The uncertainty over the future of the gig economy and the perception of a career in this sector as unsustainable poses a key challenge for trade unions and emergent labour interest groups in attempting to mobilise change within the gig economy as well for employers seeking to attract and retain a happy and productive workforce.

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## **Abstract: Workplace recognition and solidarity in Hungary in times of crises**

**Authors: Zsofia Nagy, Diana Bartha, Flora Takacs**

Recent economic and societal crises in Europe have brought the issue of solidarity to the forefront of research. A line of academic inquiry investigates the changing levels of solidarity towards those in need in European societies, especially in light of the changing labour market situation and the migratory waves and their effects. While it is commonly argued that societal hardships would lead to a decrease in solidarity in affected societies, findings are contradictory in the matter. Another, equally relevant line of research examines factors that have explanatory value in these changing patterns of solidarity, including structural and economic explanations or socio-psychological drivers. There appears to emerge a consensus in the field is that solidarity should not be regarded as a one-dimensional scale ranging from acts of solidarity to a lack of solidarity but a multi-dimensional phenomenon, the scope, foundations, orientations, goals of which need to be equally considered (Stjerno, 2014).

The paper presents the Hungarian findings of the qualitative phase of the SOCRIS research project that investigates solidarity in times of crisis in Austria and Hungary. 42 semi-structured, problem-focused interviews were carried out, where the sample included those employed in the public sector, private sector, self-employed and unemployed respondents. It focuses on the complex relationship between workplace recognition and solidarity in Hungary, differentiating between workteam recognition, workplace recognition and professional recognition. It argues that workplace recognition experiences and expectations are most strongly associated with scopes of solidarity.

## Still a reserve army? Reflections on the role of migrant labour in Western Europe

**Author: Johanna Neuhauser**

In the context of increasingly globalised labour markets, rising international mobility and simultaneous attempts to politically control and limit migration in Western Europe, the question of the social meaning of migrant labour is a highly relevant as well as controversial topic. What role does labour migration play in Western Europe compared to the 1960s and 1970s? Do migrants still fulfil the function of an 'industrial reserve army of labour', as stated by prominent migration scholars in the 1970s? To what extent are they part of a secondary labour market whose jobs are significantly different from the primary work segment due to precarious working conditions and insecure contracts? And how do racism and unequal gender relations interact with the changed labour market and migration regimes? In the social sciences, the debates about the social meaning of migrant labour have become comparatively quiet. While in the 1970s and 80s these questions were still widely discussed and taken up in a couple of works in the 1990s, there are only a few current studies that deal with the theoretical understanding of migrant labour.

The aim of the conceptual contribution is a theory-based investigation of the existing state of research in order to discuss classical theoretical concepts according to their potential to explore some core developments in the employment of migrants in the low-wage sector in Western Europe. For this purpose, political-economic perspectives are brought into dialogue with social-constructivist approaches that focus less on the macro than on the meso and micro level of the social construction of migrant labour.

In doing so, I first shed light on the macroeconomic changes since the 1970s, in particular the loss of importance of industrial jobs and the shift to a service economy. I ask how the changes in employment relations, which in labour studies are often summarised under the headings of 'flexibilisation' and 'precarisation', are related to the so-called 'migrantisation' of certain sectors. In particular, the change of organisational structures as the outsourcing of services to subcontractors causes a fragmentation of the workforce, which often interacts with hierarchies along ethnicised and gendered differences. However, the empirically repeatedly stated fact that migrants are over-represented in certain work areas is hardly substantiated and often only attributed to the particular precariousness of these jobs. Some studies argue more deeply that the capitalist use of migrants is particularly due to strategies of increasing the flexibility with regard to temporary labour requirements, seasonal fluctuations and wages.

However, flexibility as a fuzzy term is not an objective fact, but a social construction. Qualitative studies show that the particular 'suitability' of migrants for certain jobs is often explained by their 'flexible attitude', which acts as an ethnicised and often also gendered construction of a special 'migrant work capacity'. Migrants are represented as paradigmatic neoliberal subjects, embodying values such as flexibility, competitiveness and discipline, and thus responding especially well to the demands of liberalized labour markets. These findings reveal the importance to open political-economic macro-analyses to social-constructivist approaches in order to conceive migrant labour not as given, but as shaped by various social actors *and* exploited by capitalist interests.

## **Working Insecurely and Unproductively: Exploring the Paradox of Intensified Work**

**Authors: Kirsty Newsome, Peter Nolan, Nik Hammer, Sian Moore, Edward Yates**

The paper addresses the paradox of the co-existence of evidence of significant rises in work intensification within British workplaces (Felstead et al. 2018) and the much-documented collapse of British productivity. The paper asks why, if workers are working harder, is this extra effort not revealed in official ONS productivity data? It seeks to explore these dynamics within the context of growing non-standard, insecure work following the 2008 crisis. A substantial proportion of the new jobs created have taken the form of non-standard and sometimes informal work (e.g. zero hours contracts (ZHC), temporary work, 'bogus' self-employment). There is virtually no extant research on the implications of non-standard work for productivity. Yet the former is an expanding and significant feature of contemporary working lives (Moore et al 2018, Newsome et al 2018). There is some research on the fiscal implications of the growth of insecure work and self-employment (TUC, 2017), but the connections to growing levels of work intensification and the UK productivity puzzle, have not been investigated.

The empirical focus of the paper is on non-standard, insecure and non-compliant forms of working in three sectors that have grown since 2008. The evidence from three private sector industries (garment manufacture, distribution and warehousing and food retail/hospitality) to illuminate (i) the nature of work organisation; (ii) the politics of production; and (iii) the politics and measurement of productivity. It will combine qualitative data collection with explicit consideration of the quantitative measurement issues associated with, for example, labour time hidden by non-compliant practices, wage theft, underpayment, non-standard contractual arrangements including 'bogus' self-employment.

The paper addresses issues about the relationship between work-place social relations and performance outcomes that have been neglected in the long running policy debate about the productivity puzzle. The focus on differentiated forms of non-standard work and varying degrees of informality in the three sectors will promote a better understanding of the increasingly complex interplay of labour market and spatial conditions, variations in contractual status, and associated business practices. The proposed exploration of the informal and 'hidden' areas of work, and specifically non-compliant practices within fragmented supply-chains, will give further insights into the seeming paradox of growing levels of intensification and low productivity outcomes.

# **Transformation of work through sun and wind? Company strategies towards the German “Energiewende**

**Authors: Linda Nierling, Bettina-Johanna Krings**

The transformation of the German energy system towards renewable energy supply is a complex process, affecting all actors of society. Against the background of the energy system transformation, this article focuses on current changes in the working environment of energy-intensive companies: It will be discussed how overriding political decisions such as those of the German energy system transformation can affect concrete organisational processes in industrial work and which consequences one can observe from this big ecological inspired transformation finally on the company level.

The paper will present empirical insights from the ongoing research project "Synergy", which is funded within the framework of the German BMBF programme "Kopernikus" on the future of the German energy system transformation. In this project, solutions for the adaptation of industrial processes to the expected high shares of wind and solar power in the energy system transformation are developed by a large (technical) consortium. In our part of the project, we analysed how possible fluctuations of the energy system can have effects on production processes and thus on the operational work organization. In an empirical study, we conducted a set of qualitative interviews on the management level in energy intensive companies (45-60% energy costs, branches: material production, automotive industry, forming technology, paper making). In these companies we found not only a huge variety of technical innovation strategies, like virtual batteries, or flexible shifts to second energy resources, but also a broad spectrum of organisational strategies, like the establishment of energy management departments (new occupation: „energy broker“), the development of own benchmarks or strategies to reduce energy consumption. Not least, new business models developed. Nevertheless, all these strategies had in common that they count positively in the company's economic calculation.

In this paper it will be discussed, how such “big transformations” finally are embedded into the normative logics of the companies, i.e. efficiency and rationalisation and how the agency of companies is shaped, i.e. towards new innovation models (industry 4.0) but also towards societal responsibility like climate change or sustainability.

# Fitting refugees into workplaces: Organizational inclusion, identity construction and exclusionary trends

**Authors: Renate Ortlieb, Elena Glauninger, Silvana Weiss**

In the wake of the unprecedented number of refugees arriving in Europe between 2015 and 2017, research has expanded on their integration into the labour market. But while scholars typically address the question how refugees find a job, they pay only limited attention to what is happening to refugees in the workplace.

This paper goes beyond previous research on refugee integration and focuses on refugees working as salaried employees or apprentices in organizations. Theoretically, it draws on insight from critical perspectives on diversity and inclusion in organizations (Zanoni et al., 2010; Hofbauer and Podsiadlowski, 2014; Ortlieb and Sieben, 2014). We argue that in trying to integrate refugees, both managers and co-workers of refugees have created a social construct, a defining image of the refugee as ‘glorious,’ ‘good’ and ‘grateful’. Refugees themselves are co-creators of this identity. They must comply with this image, which inhibits them from asserting their rights or protesting against working conditions in a way that does not fit the social construct. The image helps management and other actors rationalise integration because seeing refugees as good, glorious and grateful suits business logic. It also helps overcome stereotypes and the often ambiguous perceptions of refugees and legitimises the existence of refugees as employees and co-workers. We maintain that the bracketing effect of this kind of refugee identity adds to the overall vulnerability of refugees and weakens their negotiating power in organizations.

Empirically, the paper concentrates on Austria. Austria is an interesting country for studying refugees. Between the beginning of 2015 and June 2018, more than 162,000 people applied for asylum in Austria (BMI, 2018). A good third of these people already received a positive decision and many found a job (BMI, 2018; AMS, 2018). Our empirical material comprises more than 70 semi-structured interviews with refugees from Afghanistan and Syria working in Austria, plus their employers, co-workers, supervisors and mentors. The iterative process of coding and analysing the interviews will last until December 2018. In the case that our abstract will be accepted for the ILPC 2019, our presentation will be based on a full paper.

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## **Facing precarious work through on-demand platforms. The case of Mexican domestic workers**

**Author: Andrea Santiago Paramo**

The use of on-demand platforms to hire domestic workers is an emerging phenomenon in Mexico that gives rise to new forms of work organization, new mechanisms of control over the workers, new relationships between those who provide the service and those who receive it, and the development of skills that were not previously a requirement to obtain this type of job.

Work through digital platforms has allowed many domestic workers to access a better salary and better treatment from those to whom they provide services, which is important to underline given the high levels of discrimination historically reported by domestic workers in Mexico. Likewise, for many, it has given the possibility to reconcile work with family life or with other activities. For some, the work provided through on-demand platforms is seen as a secondary job that allows them to obtain extra income to pay off their debts.

While we cannot deny certain benefits reported by domestic workers themselves, these on-demand digital platforms, incorporate new ways of transferring costs to workers, eliminate labor obligations by those who recruit the employees, do not provide social benefits and hinder the organization of the sector to advocate for their labor rights. Likewise, the narratives both to sell the services and to recruit domestic workers disguise the exploitation and cover up the class and ethnic inequality so that it is the least uncomfortable for the person who benefits from the services.

However, the workers have developed innovative responses against the functioning of these platforms. Sometimes these involve making external agreements with the same people who hired the service via the platform in order to work directly with them without the intervention of an intermediary. In this way, they manage to take away the clientele from the company and can negotiate better employment conditions. These strategies can be considered as new forms of workers' resistance under modern working modalities in the gig economy.

This paper explores the functioning of a digital platform on-demand in Mexico City and also the new challenges posed by these new working practices for domestic workers and state institutions, especially those responsible for ensuring the social security. It will also recover some of the everyday strategies that domestic workers employ to face precarious working conditions. Their case can help us to have a better understanding of the labour reality we are drifting towards in the current economic system and the need to find alternatives that, in the face of change, guarantee access to decent work.

This paper relies not only in specialized literature on the particular subject, but also on qualitative research such as informal interviews and in-depth interviews sustained with domestic workers and employers in Mexico City as part of a current PhD research in anthropology.

# Putting it out there: The democratic meanings of civil alliances for the New Zealand union movement

**Authors: Jane Parker, Ozan Alakavuklar**

Union membership in New Zealand (NZ) nearly halved in the early 1990s, following the dismantling of arbitration machinery; introduction of ‘anti-union’ legislation (Jess, 2016; Barry and Wailes, 2004); and declining collective bargaining coverage in the private sector against a backdrop of extensive legislation on individual employment rights (Foster, Murrie and Laird, 2009; Estlund, 2013). The movement has since sought to consolidate its membership and clout amid NZ’s comparative vigorous adoption (e.g. Kelsey, 2015) of neo-liberal economic and labour market imperatives. While the country’s current cornerstone employment statute, the Employment Relations Act 2000, aims at ‘compromise’ by encouraging both collective and individual employment arrangements, unions have struggled in a rigorous climate of internationally-influenced regulatory, industry and job shifts. Some have thus pursued new modes of organising and strategy in efforts to secure their role as a key critic of questionable workplace and wider practices. This survival rationale has motivated unions to look for new solidarities with movements and groups that have typically functioned outside union spheres of activity (Parker, 2001, Frege, Turner and Heery, 2004). Arguably, however, other motivations exist, particularly as connections between and the fate of workplace concerns and other realms (e.g. the environment, domestic arrangements) is increasingly conceived as intertwined.

Drawing on textual analysis of local studies, international scholarship and online documentation concerning the environmental agenda, we examine the relative significance of different rationales for the NZ Council of Trade Unions (CTU) and several of its affiliates’ coalition with civil groups. We also assess what alliance-building has meant for the union movement’s strategizing and organisation of work under capitalism, and ask whether these forays will be sustainable – and effective – for progressing the respective interests of all involved. In relation to this, we also draw on Laclau and Mouffe’s (2001) radical democracy framework to approach social movement unionism and union-civil alliances as a notable effort in building new hegemony against the dominant neo-liberal discourses and practices at workplace and societal levels. In particular, we argue that the ongoing, contingent struggle for radical democracy through the creation of what they term ‘chains of equivalences’ leads multiple alliances to emancipatory politics, of which unions have been traditionally part (Fairbrother, 2008). While widening the scope of class struggle through recognition of other social, economic and environmental causes opens up spaces for new, hybrid and alternative forms of representation and solidarities, we contend that Laclau and Mouffe’s thinking on radical democracy provides theoretical and empirical tools with which to scrutinise union efforts to move out of their ‘comfort zone’ through alliance building.

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# **Blogging labour: utilising the grey zone to pursue mobility in a changing world of work**

**Authors: Jane Parry, Brian Hraes**

The hybridisation of labour market statuses and careers is approached in this paper through our research on blogging labour. Blogging has triggered a wealth of debate from sociology and cultural studies. Yet there has been relatively little critical attention on work-related blogging, despite evidence that over the lifecourse of many blogs the boundaries between labour and playbor become increasingly complicated. Countering this, Richards (2008) has highlighted the value of blogging in charting and understanding new labour processes. On the basis that blogging can provide insight into how work practices evolve and play out in the digital age, our empirical research, which drew upon 10 purposefully-selected blogs and an analysis of 1,304 blog posts, was used to develop a novel typology of 5 distinctive formations of blogging labour. This typology ranged from individuals who were blogging to resist their paid work conditions (Workbloggers), through to professional bloggers who were relying entirely on their blogs, and their associated commodification, for their income. Within the context of this framework, we analysed how bloggers' combined their blogging labour with other forms of paid and unpaid work, with consequential effects upon labour mobility.

We analysed blogs over an extended period of time, using the framework of this typology. This approach shed light upon how bloggers' relationship between their blogging and any other sources of paid work shifted over time, reflecting their changing motivations, workplace relations, and structural opportunities. So too, blogging can shift from leisure to informal employment, self-employment, and integration with employment. As occupational expectations have become revised in a transformed labour market, paid and unpaid work are combining in complex ways around individual labour market experiences (Pettinger *et al.*, 2005), patterns uncovered in our data echoing broader labour market trends. We discuss movement within our typology in terms of Glucksmann's 'total social organisation of labour' (1995) in order to provide conceptual clarity around these interconnected labour dynamics and mobility, contemplating the relative meaningfulness of the institutional and non-institutional bonds of paid and unpaid work in which bloggers are engaged. **It is argued that the new forms of collectivity that can be accumulated through blogging within a specialist community, provide an important resource for bloggers in confronting the complicated demands of establishing professional identity and recognition in a fragmented and precarious labour market.** Our focus on this aspect of work-related blogging provides new insight in terms of digitised relationships or solidarities in hybrid areas of work.

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# **It ain't what you do, it's the way that you do it? Introducing robotics in the food and drink industry in Norway**

**Authors: Jonathan Payne, Caroline Lloyd**

There is currently much debate around the ‘march of the robots’, particularly the threat to employment (Brynjolffson and McAfee 2014, Ford 2015), amid widely varying predictions of potential job losses (Frey and Osborne 2017, Arntz et al 2016). Talk of a ‘jobless future’ is nothing new however (Aronowitz and DiFazio 1994, Rifkin 1996). As in the past, there is a danger of seeing technology as an inevitable, determining force with fixed effects, thereby neglecting human agency, interests and power in shaping outcomes for workers and society (Howcroft and Taylor 2014, Wajcman 2017, Briken et al 2017). A central issue for research is understanding the role of institutions and actors in shaping outcomes and, in particular, the conditions which help to support better jobs with higher skill utilisation (Jaehrling 2017). At workplace level, trade unions face challenges in knowing when to ‘engage or resist’ (Edwards and Ramirez 2017), especially where job losses may be involved. Previous UK studies suggest that union involvement often comes late in the process, with management controlling the agenda (Beirne and Ramsay 1992). In a context of decline and marginalisation, unions have emphasised the potential of technology to improve job quality and the importance of worker voice, along with the need to learn lessons from other countries (Scottish Government/STUC 2018, TUC 2017). With international research ‘surprisingly lacking’ (Neufeind et al 2018), the food and drink sector in Norway offers an interesting study. Norway has a labour market model underpinned by strong unions, and is often noted for its cooperative workplace relations and institutionalised mechanisms for worker voice. Productivist coalitions are seen as important for maintaining competitiveness in a high-wage economy (Løken et al 2013). Surveys suggest Norway has among the highest concentrations of jobs with high levels of autonomy and learning intensity in Europe (Lorenz 2015). Food and drinks processing, however, is a sector associated mainly with routine jobs usually deemed most susceptible to automation. This paper focuses on two central research questions. First, in a relatively conducive institutional context, can unions shape the introduction and implementation of robotic technologies in this sector in support of better jobs? Second, how are trade unions confronting tensions between investment in technology and job losses? To address these questions, the paper draws on qualitative research undertaken in Norway during 2017 and 2018. Interviews were conducted with national trade union officers and employer organisations in the food and drink processing sector. At workplace level, case study research was undertaken in two plants where robotic technologies have been introduced. Interviews were conducted with managers, union representatives and workers who use the technology. The research indicates that there are opportunities to shape how technology is used and the way jobs are redesigned. However, there are a number of challenges for unions around inclusive participation, threats to union autonomy and influence within broader company strategy.

## **Absolutist work regime. A political geography of capitalist enterprise**

**Author: Domingo Perez**

Since a couple of decades “labor geography” has become consolidated as a growing subdiscipline in Human Geography, inserting a fundamental but largely ignored analysis dimension in the industrial relations literature: the scale and space. Among its diverse contributions, and specifically delving into its virtuous connection with the labor process theory, this subdiscipline has generated a fruitful debate between geography, political sciences and sociology by problematizing the concept of “factory regime” of Burawoy.

However, in none of the new approximations on this topic there is a political geography perspective regarding the *territorial* character of private ownership of the means of production and, with it, its effects in the *political regime* at the enterprise. With this, the labor geography loses a central explanatory element of the labor relations in the capitalist society.

Against this incomplete connection between geography and capitalism, this paper, starting from a Marxist political-economic geography, aims to contribute to the concept of “work regime”, describing the mechanism by which the political value of the private property structure an autonomous political regime at the company level, by which the capitalist regularly organize a absolutist work regime against the workers.

As Lefebvre argues, space constitutes a means of production as well as a political instrument. Likewise, the company, for its own organization, needs to deploy an internal State (Burawoy) above the capitalist property geography. In this context, political and social value of private property at the level of the capitalist State, determines a territoriality of workplace reflected mainly in enterprise work regime, where capitalist has a totalitarian control of productive process and workers preserve marginal spaces to organizing themselves. In effect, following political theory, this type of regime is the most appropriate to describe the political relationship between capital and labor within the company.

More specifically, capitalist property territoriality has internal repercussions on the fact that political initiatives of organized workers –such as create a union or a strike mobilization– cannot be freely displayed inside the property. For that reason, workers acquire a territorial rearguard in internal but more frequently external safe spaces in relation to the workplace: workers houses, union headquarters or public spaces. In this sense, while in “public class struggle” a state’s democratic regime is generalized, at the company level a “private class struggle” is developed where an absolutist labor regime is predominant.

This dynamic is based on two politically dominant aspects in dependent capitalism on the South Globe. On one hand, capitalist materially uses private property as a source of totalitarian and sacred power, relatively autonomous from the external political life, where he unilaterally tends to regulates horizontal and vertical positions, punishment and expulsion from the territory. On the other, capitalist strategically destroys all capacity for power and class autonomy spaces of the workers.

In this context, the discussion of the work regime can be deepened with a more direct analytic application of the different types of political regimes, trough the nature of labor territorial control.

# Digital Platforms and Trade Unions' Responses. Field Theoretical Reflections and Empirical Evidence

**Author: Susanne Pernicka**

The last decade has witnessed an unprecedented rise of globally operating digital platforms that have entered established and created new services markets. The focus of this proposal lies on taxi and hire car with driver services that have been complemented and partly replaced by Uber, Lyft, Taxify and other app-based passenger transportation services. I argue that the struggles between challengers and incumbents over the restructuring of these markets do not only shed light on the practices and boundaries of established and newly applied business models, mobility structures, societal values and political preferences, they also reveal the state of associational fields and their collective actors (trade unions, labour groups, business and employers' associations, etc.).

Following sociological field theory an associational field is viewed as a historically created, relatively autonomous social space of power positions in which interest groups have achieved a certain degree of professional closure and share a common belief in how to collectively represent the interests of their members and constituencies. Dependent on the state and position of the associational field within the wider field of power, its effects on the perceptions, interests and strategic responses of interest groups towards Uber are assumed to vary. The empirical focus lies on California (Los Angeles) and Austria (Vienna) which allows for analysing two most-different associational fields within varying economic, political, social and cultural contexts. The United States, and California in particular, are early adopters of app-based work arrangements in taxi and for-hire car markets and a comparison with Austria where Uber arrived comparatively late, shed light on the state and properties of interest associational fields in these markets. The case selection is also guided by the assumption that platform corporations are expected to meet more obstacles in relatively stable, encompassing and state-sponsored associational fields than in fragmented ones with weak or no backing of the state.

Empirical evidence, based on desk research, qualitative interviews and non-participant observations, suggests that both associational fields investigated, pluralist fields in California and neo-corporatist fields in Austria are contested societal orders whose ability to integrate all relevant societal interests have been disrupted. The strategic responses of business associations, trade unions and labour groups such as the National Taxi Workers Alliance towards Uber in California can be summarized as reflecting the fragmented state of pluralist associational fields. Labour unions and worker groups have been delegitimized actors whereas Uber benefited from more favourable rules and conditions than those applicable to taxi and limousine companies. The strategic responses of the highly centralised business and labour associations towards Uber in Austria reflect the still strong disposition of employers' associations (Chambers of Commerce) and trade unions towards the logic of influence. However, the uncommon situation that a company (Uber) and its workers ('driver partners') can barely be controlled by collective bargaining institutions or social partner agreements points to the fragile and contested character of existing associational structures and practices. Despite large differences of Californian and Austrian associational fields, the emergence of transnationally operating TNCs has also revealed a (potential) commonality concerning the strategic orientations of interest associations: even though passenger transportation by taxi, hire car with driver and Uber is mainly confined to the local and regional level, labor and business associations have created or strengthened their (existing) transnational networks and cooperation with their counterparts in other countries in order to protect their constituencies from the disruptive behavior of Uber and other TNCs. They have begun to extend their scope of action and to seek strategic alliances and cooperation across local, regional and national jurisdictions.

## **Building workers' power and solidarity among precarious migrant workers. The case of indie unions in London.**

**Author: Davide Pero**

Migrant workers often find themselves in vulnerable positions characterized by multiple and intersecting forms of precarity - economic, legal, social and political. In many countries this precarity is worsened by the current anti-immigration discourses calling to put 'native' workers first. In terms of representation, migrant workers tend to be overlooked by mainstream unions which privilege citizens in 'secure' employment (Standing 2011; Martinez Lucio et al. 2017; Alberti and Però 2018). At the same time, in the context of ongoing capitalist restructuring, not only have precarious employment relationships become the norm for many workers, but unions have experienced declining membership and power. Various authors have described mainstream unions as persistently bureaucratic and hierarchical as well as informed by an individualist, depoliticized and quiescent ethos (Simms 2012; Tapia 2013). Renewal efforts made through organizing and community unionism seem to have had only a limited impact (Simms and Holgate 2010; McAlevey 2016).

In this context, and with special reference to the representation of precarious migrant workers, this paper seeks to contribute to debates on union vs non-union forms of labour renewal by exploring alternatives to the development of a top-down community unionism built around mainstream unions as well as to the abandonment of the union format altogether. Drawing on arguments that (i) labour initiatives are diverse and that historically move along the movement-institutions continuum (Hyman 1989, 2001; Fairbrother and Webster 2008), that (ii) unions' identity and attitudes about justice and action are constructed and thus can be reframed (Kelly 1998; 2018), and that (iii) similarly associational workers power and solidarity can be built (Wright 2000; McAlevey 2016), this empirically grounded paper explores the possibility for the development of a self-organized, democratic, solidarity-based and combative unionism that is effective at articulating precarious migrant workers' interests.

This is done by focusing on the emerging phenomenon of British *indie unions* - independent grassroots unions co-led by migrant workers in London. Examining their forms of organizing, bargaining and representation is important given that they have proved appealing to precarious migrant workers as well as very effective despite the lack of material resources and the presence of a hostile environment. The paper draws on an intersectional actors-centred approach (Alberti and Però 2018) based on extensive multi-sited ethnographic fieldwork with three new migrant-led unions in London (UVW, IWGB and CAIWU). In particular, the paper documents what these new unions provide to invisibilised, isolated, disempowered and unorganized workers that transforms them into 'communities of struggle' capable of successfully taking on much more powerful counterparts (e.g. the contractors for whom they often work, their client organizations and sometimes even mainstream unions). In so doing, the paper also demonstrates the importance to view labour renewal as a process that can occur also through the independent bottom-up initiatives of precarious workers.

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# **Platform management from within: The design and use of an online delivery app**

**Author: Luca Perrig**

The great majority of digital platforms nowadays rely on an independent workforce. This employment status is justified by the use of technology as an intermediary between the management and the workers. Instead of relying on human supervision to lead its workers, a platform can use a mobile app designed to provide the appropriate incentives for tasks to be conducted in sufficient number and quality. But how do managers base their decisions in choosing the appropriate devices? And how do workers use and interact with the digital tools of the platform economy? I will provide some elements to answer these questions based on a field study I led in the market for online food deliveries in French-speaking Switzerland.

The goal of a delivery platform is to conclude as many transactions as possible. To do so, the platform has to recruit a sufficient number of couriers, make them ready for deliveries (proper gear, trained, waiting in a central location), match each order with a courier, and convince them that the order is worth accepting by making an appealing offer. At each stage of this process, the worker is free to log out, ending the transaction. In order to frame the worker's behaviors, the platform has only a few tools at its disposal: the app, a matching algorithm, and rating devices. I will show that both the design and the usage of these tools are essential to understand the functioning of the market.

## **Data**

My fieldwork consisted in a prolonged engagement for several platforms as a bike courier, observation in the office of a delivery platform, and interviews with workers, consumers, restaurant owners and application developers in French-speaking Switzerland. It is a study field that allows a fine observation for market development as competition is currently fierce and no giant platform is operating in the region for the moment (Uber Eats, Foodora or Deliveroo). The market thus consists mainly of local platforms struggling to enroll both a sufficient workforce and a large enough customer base. This allowed me to witness the strategies and difficulties of platforms not yet settled. My presentation will draw extensively from the data I gathered in this ethnography.

## Work and employment on digital platforms

**Authors: Georgia Petraki, Ioanna Leontsini**

In recent years, multiple digital platforms (Airbnb, Uber, etc.) have developed as new types of intermediaries between clients and those who offer work. They provide opportunities for new labor segments and give consumers greater choice at lower cost. Some of these new financial players have become multinational businesses in just a few years, generating enormous revenue, and have established themselves as symbols of the new digital economy. While a fundamental feature of this pioneering economic transaction model is that those who offer work are sometimes, or often, individuals, that is, they are not necessarily wage-earners or professionals. They have the working tools or sell their workforce as independents either directly to consumers or to intermediaries.

According to some analysts, new economic and working practices can also be perceived as ways of reviving old practices. Outsourcing facilitated by new technologies can indeed be compared with the putting-out system that characterizes the industry, where a "manufacturer" distributes the orders and the materials needed by home workers, who manufacture parts or the whole in a specific time frame at predetermined prices. Pierre-Yves Gaumez refers to the "exode digitale": migrating thousands of wage earners into independent work, done from home via a computer, reconstructing pre-industrial housework, as well as reviving getting paid by the piece or work done. Crowdsourcing can then be seen as a renewed and internationalized form of this "home-based economy".

In our paper we will present the results of field research conducted in a leading company of the ICT sector in Greece, that studied cloud workers, workers who propose their work via the "cloud". Our interest focuses on investigating the porosity of the statutes. Even if the porosity of the statutes is not new, the works of historical sociology reveal that the paths of small entrepreneurs are made of comings and goings between independence and wage-earning- it should be noted that recent changes in labor and employment tend to blur the boundaries between independence and wage-earning.

Our investigation will be based on semi-directed interviews with workers in company N. through a "cloud"- about the working conditions they face, their self-determination and how they are placed and face the working relationship that is being formed. How they deal with managerial control.

Company N is a multinational enterprise specializing in industry telecommunications. In Athens they house one of their major worldwide research and development centers which play a key role in developing technologies and mobile broadband solutions. The center also develops solutions for the transition to the Cloud and provides technical support to its customers worldwide.

Since the 1970s, sociologists have generally talked about "destabilization" of wage labor. The latter is thus weakened in its center by the progressive deconstruction of the stable and guaranteed employment model and by the expansion of precarious forms of employment. At its margins, since the 1980s, wage-earning has been jeopardized by the emergence of "hybrid" employment statuses and the revival of self-employment (which often takes on new forms with new legal statuses) observed in most Western countries. In the face of rising unemployment, since the end of the 1970s, the public authorities have encouraged the unemployed to "create their own jobs", thus leading in some countries to the creation of an intermediate legal category: 'self-employment that is economically dependent'. We are therefore witnessing a blurring of the employment status which can be captured through the occupational trajectories of individuals, which seem even more chaotic than before.

Our study aims to understand the mechanisms of job fragmentation, the new forms of work, as well as the new forms of individual negotiation or/and collective representation.

# The making of a female labour force? Domestic workers and trade unions in Spain and Uruguay

**Author: Virginia Pflücke**

Since the 1990s, domestic workers constitute a growing labour force, especially in the deindustrializing Global North (ILO 2017). The care of a household and its residents, a duty traditionally decommodified during the post-war period, is now increasingly being outsourced to (migrant) women within informal labour relations. Trade unions have shown very diverse reactions when faced with this precarious workforce employed by and for private households: not only does the degree of unionisation vary (Hobden 2015), but the unions' positions differ strongly (Kraamwinkel 2016; Nadasen 2015).

In this paper, I apply an intersectional and feminist political economy perspective (FPE) to the analysis of domestic workers' representation and unionisation through the comparative study of Spain and Uruguay. Both countries have the highest percentage of household employees in their regions: 3.7 percent (over 630.000) of all working women in Spain, and 8.7 percent (about 120.000) in Uruguay. In Uruguay, domestic workers organise within a small trade union (the SUTD) which was founded in the 1960s and re-established after the end of military dictatorship in 1985. In post-Franco Spain, they find themselves formally represented by the two mass union organizations CC.OO and UGT, but have started to organise within groups related to migrant women's associations in the past 15 years. Many domestic workers migrate to Spain from non-European countries and struggle not only with their status as workers but with citizenship. Uruguayan domestic workers on the other hand, mostly come from the countries' rural areas and move to urban regions seeking employment. Not only are over 99 percent of domestic workers female, but almost 1/3 of all afro-Uruguayan women work as household employees.

Analysing documents from the Ministry of Work and trade unions as well as expert interviews with 21 key actors gathered in 2015 and 2016, I explore the differences in representation in both countries: Spain has shown immense difficulties to include household labour into collective bargaining: The two trade unions still neglect domestic work, as many functionaries still fail to see it as 'real work' and don't accept the existing civil society organisations as their partners. Uruguay, on the other hand, has established reputation being the first country fully integrating its domestic workers in collective bargaining and the broader landscape of industrial relations (Goldsmith 2013), developing new bonds between uncommon allies.

Through the narratives of key actors involved in its re- and deregulation, I find the racialized and gendered division of labour at the core of the exclusion of domestic work from traditional workers' representation in Spain. In Uruguay by contrast, the union sees domestic employees as exploited simultaneously as women *and* workers, and seeks to decolonise the country's social structure. As a result, the union has built tripartite negotiations which concluded their seventh round this year. Drawing on FPE, the study identifies main conditions when organising domestic labour, and finds that representation of domestic work can succeed if it is seen as "the foundation of the factory system, rather than its 'other'" (Federici 2015: 6f.).

## **Labour processes segmentation and forms of solidarity. The case of the Italian slaughterhouses**

**Authors: Valeria Piro, Devi Sacchetto**

The paper aims at investigating social practices emerging within working places, focussing in particular on some Italian meat processing plants. Industrial slaughterhouses have been chosen as a case study especially because, in the last ten years, they have been undertaking relevant transformations for what concerns the organization of the labour process and the composition of the workforce.

With the purpose of pursuing flexibility, many companies have implemented strategies to differentiate internally their labour force, i.e. adopting different forms of contract for workers hired for the same task and position, with a relevant increase of the levels of segmentation. Moreover, thanks also to a progressive liberalization of the Italian legislation regulating subcontracting, the last few years have been characterized by an increase in the number of tasks outsourced to external subjects, that in the North of Italy often assume the form of 'fake cooperatives'. These 'cooperatives' employ mainly migrant (male and female) workers whose labour conditions substantially differ from the 'core' workers (lowest wages, higher flexibility, etc.).

Within the plants, these transformations imply a general worsening of working conditions, but they also have a relevant impact on the everyday social relations, raising tensions between workers hired with different types of contract, Italian and migrant labourers, companies and subcontractors, major and minor trade unions, and so on. However, although the augmented fragmentation brings in new conflicts, it could also foster new forms of solidarity according to class, gender and national lines.

The paper aims at providing an answer to the following questions: first of all, which type of conflicts and which forms of solidarity are currently experienced inside these workplaces? How gender, 'ethnicity' and class, which are relationally produced and reproduced, are used as a dispositive to fragment workers and increase inequalities? And how they are used as a resource prompting new forms of solidarity and agency?

Secondly, which is the role of the trade unions? How do they innovate (or not) their strategies to engage migrant male and female workers?

The paper illustrates the preliminary findings of an ongoing empirical research focussed on two big meat processing plants in the North of Italy. The research relies on qualitative methodologies, and in particular on around 40 narrative interviews with Italian and migrant workers, entrepreneurs and trade unions' representatives, realized inside and outside the workplaces.

The analysis of the empirical material will contribute on the debate on contemporary forms of fragmentations and solidarities inside the workplaces, providing ethnographic insights on how gender, ethnicity and class interplay, constituting alternatively axes of segmentation or lines of solidarity. Moreover, it will also shed some light on trade unions' different engagement strategies to deal with migrants, that range from a formal recognition of migrant presence in the workforce (e.g. through the introduction of quotas for the election of migrants' representatives inside the plants) to the support of more conflictual and inter-sectorial forms of struggle, which come closer to the social movements' repertoire.

## **Locating labour in the circular economy: the production of social and ecological innovation**

**Authors: Frederick Harry Pitts, Steffen Boehm**

Today material shifts weaken work's status as a guarantee of the means of consumption. Meanwhile, we experience what Marxist ecology calls a 'metabolic rift' between social activity and natural resources. The circular economy (CE) is an innovation addressed primarily to the latter. However, despite the political traction CE gains through international accords such as the 2018 Memorandum of Understanding between the EU and China, its growing popularity through the work of the Ellen MacArthur Foundation, and forecasts that the UK economy will be 27% circular by 2025, there has been a paucity of critical labour and organisation studies around the capacity for the CE to restructure work itself. Within a literature largely focused on supply chains and sustainability, some studies highlight the opportunities CE business models hold for job creation, but more research is needed into the kind of work and organisation entailed by a circular reconfiguration of the circulation and consumption of goods and resources. Current approaches constitute a loose, macro-level framework, often failing to capture the everyday reality of the organisational practices at play in an emergent field spanning everything from advanced manufacturing to community upcycling. Interrogating this multidimensionality using case studies and interviews in Germany, the Netherlands and the UK, this paper probes how practitioners experience the CE in relation to the reshaping of work, focusing on the potential for the CE to mediate systemic contradictions and tensions within capitalist production and consumption, institutionalising alternatives through co-working spaces, co-operatives and impact hubs incorporating circular principles.

## **The shared curation of quantified selves as class struggle and critical citizen social science**

**Authors: Frederick Harry Pitts, Eleanor Jean**

This paper reflects on a prototype performance and research method for the exploration of possibilities for reconnecting the body to 'immaterial' labour in a digital age by means of the collection, interpretation and sonification of data using wearable tech, mobile apps, synthesised music and modes of visual communication. There is a rapidly-expanding critical literature on the proliferation of technologies of self-quantification and self-tracking. Some of those employed in the study included wearables like Fitbits, chest strap heartrate monitors and Bluetooth glucose monitors, aswell as mood- and stress-measuring or productivity-enhancing apps. Self-quantification is commonly thought of as either a means of control or commodification. In this paper we want to explore the potential for these technologies to be used as tools of critical 'citizen' social science. Recovering the embodied social subject from its abstraction in data, we take as a case study our own 'sonic' exploration of the methodological and practical potential of quantified self technologies to tell us about the world of work and how it sits within life as a whole. In the study we collected data from a range of wearable tech over the course of a week in each of our working and non-working lives. By means a Lefebvrian 'rhythmanalytical' methodology centring on the qualitative conflict between different natural and social rhythms, specifically those between our embodied circadian and biological rhythms and the rhythms of work and organisations, quantitative data was then selectively 'sonified' with synthesisers and drum machines to produce a forty-minute electronic symphony performed, with improvised elements, to a non-academic audience. Using sound and performance to explore and interpret, sometimes improvisationally and in real-time, the objectivity of the self in its quantified form marks an innovation not only in the analysis of data in studies of work, employment and organisation but also an innovation in how findings are disseminated and made communicable to a wider audience in an age where 'critical performativity' is a major concern of critical management and organisational scholarship. In so doing, we pose the question as to whether the tools for self-quantification can also become tools of resistance in much the same way as the managerial clipboard wielded in the Taylorist factory, where established forms of measure that were both used to dominate workers and by those same workers to organise around and strike bargains. The need to reconstitute collective and politicised forms of measure is made all the more pressing in kinds of work where measures are less easily established, either because of the content or the form of the labour. Data about the embodied doing of the work itself might permit workers to both better understand their labour and present representations of it to employers (or clients in the case of freelancers and the self-employed) in order make claims to a greater share of value. This may have the effect of 'rematerialising' what appears as so-called immaterial labour by providing evidence of the physical effects of work associated with an immaterial or intellectual character, demonstrating the time and space in which it takes place and the impact of it on the person who performs it- whether in terms of heart rate, stress, mood, mobility and so on. The shared 'curation' of data, we suggest, may represent one way to institutionalise a capacity for the data of self-quantification to be turned to the ends of both critical 'citizen' social science and new forms of worker organisation.

## **Get SMart: Self-employment, Universal Credit and institutional experimentation beyond Taylor's British Way**

**Author: Frederick Harry Pitts**

SMart is a growing cooperative labour market intermediary for independent and self-employed workers which acts somewhat like a de facto employer, processing and chasing transactions with clients, guaranteeing income via a mutual fund and smoothing volatile monthly incomes in the form of a regular salary. Pioneered in Belgium and expanding into other continental European countries, the SMart model does not currently have a presence in the United Kingdom. Focusing on one potential contribution SMart could make to the representation and organisation of the self-employed in the United Kingdom, this paper explores how SMart, by recalibrating the formal employment status of independent workers, may help the self-employed collectively address challenges associated with the controversial rollout of the government's Universal Credit welfare reforms. The Minimum Income Floor that sits at the centre of the latter, and determines whether or not claimants can receive support, does not accommodate the volatile monthly incomes to which the self-employed are subject, with some 400,000 of the 700,000 anticipated self-employed claimants of the Universal Credit forecast to fall foul of it. By addressing the issue of volatility, SMart may stand a potential solution. In making this argument, the paper explores the obstacles and opportunities for 'institutional experimentation' afforded by the policy and political context of the government-commissioned Taylor Review, in particular the latter's proposal of new forms of 'Worker Tech' to represent the unrepresented in the gig economy, its consideration of the need for strengthened worker status to bolster protections, and its suggestion of a specific 'British Way' with reference to labour markets and industrial relations. Concluding that contrary to the prescription of a British Way we can learn from European experiments in new institutions for the self-employed, the paper assesses whether the implementation of the SMart model is a feasible way for the 700,000 self-employed workers forecast to claim the Universal Credit to collectively weather a situation in which it seems, according to the recent Budget statement, the unpopular and heavily contested policy is here to stay.

## **Tackling informality. Policies of formalization in Argentina**

**Author: Lorena Poblete**

Informality is a structural feature of the labour market in developing countries, particularly in Latin America. Historically, in Argentina, at least one third of working people were engaged in so-called informal activities. During the 1990s, the informality rate rose to 35 percent, climbing to 45 percent in 2002, after the 2011 economic crisis. Nowadays, as the result of various formalisation policies, the informality rate has decreased. Even though, 34 percent of the working population can still be considered informal workers.

Since 1991, Argentinian legislators have introduced many laws seeking to formalise the situation of these workers. Since then to now, formalisation has become an important issue for legislation. However, the rationale underpinning this process of formalisation changed during this period. Between 1991 and 2001, in accordance with the Washington Consensus and neoliberal policies developed, formalisation and flexibility are considered part of the same equation. All the legislation enacted under the auspices of the Labour Reform process initiated in Argentina in the 1990s promote labour flexibility in classical ways: short-term contracts, part time jobs, internships, and different kind of subcontracting arrangements—as the development of Temporary Employment Agencies or the promotion of self-employment. Since 2004, with the so-called “counter” Labour Reform, formalisation has been used as a way to expand social protection. In line with the approach of the ILO, the main goal is to provide “decent work” to all workers.

While the motives justifying the process of formalisation seem clearly differentiated in the two periods, the way in which formalisation was conceived by labour law and implemented is less clear distinguished. This paper seeks to analyse, from a historical perspective, the different regulatory responses to informality adopted within Argentina since 1990.

## **Self-exploitation – a theoretical approach**

**Author: Hans J. Pongratz**

In analyses of new and more autonomous forms of work and organization, workers' subjectivities have been explored extensively. On the one hand, these analyses have detected the spreading of entrepreneurial orientations, interpreting them e.g. with the Foucauldian concept of entrepreneurial self (Bröckling, Rose); on the other hand, an increase of psychosocial stress, burnout and exhaustion has been diagnosed (Ehrenberg, Neckel). Causes of this astounding impact of work autonomy are to be found in project-based teamwork, permanent organizational change and transitions to contingent employment. Oftentimes in these analyses the effects on workers are interpreted as some kind of self-exploitation, without elaborating in theoretical terms on this category. In my talk I develop an analytical conception of self-exploitation drawing on basic assumptions of Marx (exploitation), Weber (rationalization) and Labour Process Theory (control).

The analysis focusses on practices and strategies of mostly highly skilled workers who try to master the balancing act between their entrepreneurial orientations and an exhaustive working life. My theoretical conclusions draw on the results of several empirical studies on project-based work, solo self-employment, and platform-based online labour. And they refer to the thesis of the 'entployee' as a new type of labour power (Pongratz/Voß) that may be distinguished from the types of employee and proletarian worker by its systemically increased level of self-control, self-commercialization and self-rationalization. The core argument is that becoming an entrepreneur of one's own labour power requires the exploitation of a particular kind of knowledge resource. For the time being, this specific source of knowledge is characterized as 'knowledge of oneself'.

The category 'knowledge of oneself' comprises awareness of one's own personal habits, motives, and feelings – and the reflexive thinking about them. This reservoir of strengths gets exploitable by using methods of time management, feedback, coaching or mental techniques that only become effective if applied willingly by the person him- or herself – being the only one with direct access to this knowledge resource. These methods may serve self-realization with respect to private goals as well as ambitions of self-optimization to improve one's work performance and value to the market. In the context of capitalist modes of labour organization they may be interpreted as means of self-exploitation.

The entployee-type of labour power is to be seen as the result of a complex mix of internal and external control mechanisms. They imply the notion of acting as 'one's own exploiter' – but thus lead to a turning point of the social process of individualization, and refer back to concerns of mutual support and collective prevention. Exemplarily, the interplay of control mechanisms and collective strategies will be discussed for work in academia. Offering high levels of work autonomy, universities and research institutions have been boosting self-exploitative career strategies for a long time. They might allow for the development of counterstrategies, instead, as academia not only comprises competitive knowledge production but collective knowledge sharing as well.

# **Class Compromise and Worker Solidarity among Logistics Workers: Warehouse Workers in Cross-National Perspective (1)**

**Authors: Valeria Pulignano, Steven Vallas, Nadja Doerflinger**

Logistics workers are employed at the critical “choke points” of global capitalism, and are thus endowed with latent powers of disruption that can in theory bring the circulation of commodities to a screeching halt (Bonacich and Wilson 2008). Yet logistics workers have only rarely used such powers. The question thus becomes one of accounting for this social fact. That is, what social mechanisms have enabled capital to limit the structural power of the logistics workers they employ? Previous efforts to address this question have emphasized the spatial, organizational, and ethnic divisions that have limited logistics workers’ power. While these influences are quite real, a fuller explanation must address what Burawoy called the politics of production –the managerial regimes through which firms govern the labor process, generating varying forms of class dominance within the industry’s work sites (Burawoy 1985; Burawoy and Wright 1990). In this paper we draw on data from a cross-national study of 4 warehouses owned and operated by a large multi-national logistics firm. One warehouse was located in Belgium (BE1), another in the Netherlands (NE1), and two in Germany (DE 1 and DE2). We collected observational data at each warehouse, complemented by interviews (N = 30) with managers, trade union leaders and rank and file warehouse workers at each site. We find that class power assumes varying forms in these warehouses, even though HQs has sought to standardize and centralize the nature of their operations. The predominant form of managerial control rests on coercion, in which management imposes high levels of job and employment insecurity on workers (most of whom are temporary, fixed term or agency workers). This pattern was especially clear in DE 2, where the region’s labor market conditions were unfavorable and where workers enjoyed low levels of associational power. A broadly similar pattern existed at BE 1 and NE 1). At DE 1, however, we found a different form of production politics: partly owing to their greater associational power, and partly to more a severe labor shortage in the region, management was forced to rely on organizational inducements (internal labor markets and provisions for individual mobility) that fostered worker consent. We conclude that efforts to understand workers’ capacity for mobilization must pay careful attention to the micro-political conditions that workers encounter at the establishment level, especially in an era when collective bargaining systems grow more decentralized than in the past.

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# **Striving for excellence, achieving closure? Unravelling the labour market experiences of migrant academics in hard sciences, social sciences and humanities**

**Author: Toma Pustelnikovaite**

International labour migration is one of the most prominent and controversial topics in recent UK public debate, and an important research site for scholars of work and employment (McGovern, 2007). A growing body of literature in this field focuses on the low-skilled workforce (MacKenzie and Forde, 2009; Thompson et al, 2013; Alberti, 2014). Yet, understanding of the highly-skilled migrant labour, and in particular of the ways in which occupational context conditions the working lives of highly-skilled migrants, remains much weaker (Allsop et al, 2009; Bauder, 2015).

This paper focuses on migrant academics who come to work to the UK. Specifically, it examines how academic disciplines influence migrant scholars' labour market access. The social understanding of what it means to be a bona fide practitioner of a particular discipline varies across borders (Bach, 2007; Clifford, 2012; Prasad, 2013). Hard science disciplines are rather routinized: they have reached a general agreement on the content and requirements of professional training, which means that tasks are more predictable and the supervision of others' work is easier (Lodahl and Gordon, 1972, 1973). By contrast, social sciences and humanities are more craft-like: national research traditions exist (Burawoy, 2016), and these disciplines share a contested epistemology whereby different schools of thought try to renegotiate professional standards (Abbott, 2001; Karakayali, 2015). However, the relationship between differences in cognitive commonality across borders and migrant scholars' labour market access remains unknown. On the one hand, social closure theory suggests that profession's labour market control rests on the degree of knowledge standardisation (Larson, 1977; Abbott, 1988). On the other hand, labour market control is also what enables professions to nourish disciplines, including their different schools of thought (Freidson, 2001).

Semi-structured interviews on labour market entry experiences were conducted with 62 foreign-born academics working in 13 British universities, and a comparison between UK- and abroad-educated scholars in hard sciences, social sciences and humanities was carried out. Findings show that academics from hard sciences are able to follow opportunities arising in other countries rather easily. However, where there is less shared agreement over what constitutes a bona fide professional (and thus more uncertainty at work), labour market access falls on socio-cultural bases for trust, such as having to have UK-specific work experience or publications with reputable Anglo-American publishing houses. Consequently, this paper contributes to the literature by showing how disciplinary differences influence the level at which social closure is applied in professions (Murphy, 1988). Closure is operationalised globally where cognitive commonality is high, and nationally where epistemology is contested.

# **Workplace Harassment: From Critical Realist Literature Synthesis to Embodied Foundations of Solidarity**

**Author: Elizabeth Quinlan**

Workplace harassment, from a Labour Process theoretic perspective, is a consequence of the convergence of several historical trends that affect the way work is organized under contemporary capitalism. More specifically, workplace harassment is congruent with performance management systems, work intensification, and other dominant forms of managerial control in neoliberal workplaces. This understanding of harassment suggests that perpetrators need not be individuals, but can be procedures governing the organization of work and the social interactions evoked as a consequence. On this view, interventions to address workplace harassment, such as communication skills training, complaint procedures, and workplace policies, whether initiated by employers or unions, have limited chance of eliminating harassment in the workplace. However, as Labour Process Theory would suggest, not all interventions to address harassment are ill-fated, rather that they are constrained by the particular conditions imposed by the nature and form of the employment relationship within the capitalist mode of production. Yet, there is minimal research identifying, testing, and refining the theories accounting for how and why particular interventions work, and under what circumstances. The analytical project reported in this paper responds to this gap. The paper begins with a review of a set of provisional propositions concerning the context, mechanisms, and outcomes of workplace harassment interventions derived from relevant literature synthesized using Critical Realist Evaluation methodology, a methodology aimed at understanding what social interventions work, how, for whom, and under what circumstances.

The provisional propositions set the stage for their empirical testing of an intervention not found in the reviewed literature. The intervention, discussed in the paper, was designed to address workplace harassment among health care workers in a western Canadian province, using a popular form of theatre that takes inspiration from the Boalian Theatre of the Oppressed. Grounded in Marxist theory and Brecht's political aesthetic, Theatre of the Oppressed aims to empower individuals to become protagonists in their own lives by recognizing that social problems, such as workplace harassment, can be experienced individually but have structural antecedents. The intervention's Theatre of the Oppressed activities were chosen specifically to develop solidarity within the group and highlight the structural conditions of participants' work. The results of the intervention demonstrate that through the intervention's embodied foundations of solidarity, participants developed collective strategies to resist the oppressive relations of employment and provided support for targeted fellow workers to pursue avenues of redress.

# **Neoliberal Logics, Teaching Evaluations and the Career Trajectories of Marginalized Academic Women**

**Authors: Andrea Quinlan, Sandra Smele**

Universities are being increasingly reconstituted according to neoliberal logics. Not only have they become sites expected to provide their student-consumer body with valuable human capital, they are all also increasingly competing for more of the globalized student market while the employment conditions of those teaching students have been significantly eroded. A key site of tension that has emerged in relation to these shifts is the new role of student evaluations of teaching in universities. While university administrators and policymakers have identified these evaluations as one of key means through which teaching quality is ensured, research demonstrates that their use is giving rise to new forms of inequities among the academic workforce. Indeed, teaching evaluations commonly reflect systemic biases against women academic instructors, particularly those marginalized by race, ethnicity, and/or ability. Given that these evaluations are having this impact at the same time that employment precarity within academe is also further entrenching inequities among the academic workforce, our study explores the confluence of these trends on marginalized women in the academy, particularly with regards to the impact on their career trajectories. In this first, preliminary phase of our research, we conducted twenty qualitative interviews with precariously employed academic women at a Canadian University to explore their perceptions of student teaching evaluations and their impact on careers. The experiences described by our research participants demonstrate both the need to centre concerns about equity in assessments of teaching quality, and the significant need for greater supports for marginalized women as they advance through their academic careers. While preliminary in nature, these findings demonstrate the importance of ongoing analysis of the impact of student evaluations of teaching on the most precariously positioned members of the academic workforce, and the need for changes in policy and practice in institutions of higher education based on these findings.

# The New World of Work: the impact of virtual teamwork on coordination, learning, autonomy and control

**Authors: Monique Ramioul, Yennef Vereycken**

Although increasingly popular, virtual teamwork is often associated with communication and collaboration challenges (Dulebohn & Hoch, 2017) and coordination of work over distance is identified as a key issue. Literature on virtual teamwork identifies a multitude of coordination challenges that may negatively impact on autonomy and learning opportunities of team members, such as knowledge barriers (Painter et al., 2016) or a loss in communicational richness (Schaubroeck & Yu, 2017). Research often focuses on managerial factors such as team leadership or trust to solve this coordination problem of virtual teams (Dulebohn & Hoch, 2017). Further, technological solutions are advocated (Painter et al., 2016). In this paper we investigate the organisational design and division of labour of virtual teams to assess the consequences of virtuality on coordination of work and on learning, control and autonomy. We present primary data collected in 10 Belgian knowledge-intensive organisations that have implemented virtual teams. Qualitative data include in-depth interviews with HRM, team leaders and team members of different teams, document analysis and expert observations. We observe a clear link between the division of labour and the impact working in a virtual context has on the team coordination. If a team's division of labour is limited, task interdependencies and coordination requirements are minimal, and working from a distance is not likely to cause major problems because the team can more easily absorb the complexity related to virtuality. In contrast, high levels of division of labour generate a lot of interdependencies and associated high levels of coordination requirements which become even more complex when team members have to collaborate in a virtual context. Moreover, centralised information and communication technologies codify knowledge and standardize the workflow, prescribing or constraining team members' control capacity by imposing standardized procedures (Trusson et al., 2018). Here, virtual teamwork is leading to negative outcomes such as backlog, informal solutions or communicational disturbances. Further, coordination through technical systems is prone to technical and communication errors, thus generating additional disturbances. In response, team members develop workarounds in order to find solutions to make the technical system work. All these effects of high levels of division of labour negatively impact on autonomy and learning.

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# The German Minimum Wage, Work Organization and Worker Satisfaction

**Authors: Miriam Rehm, Toralf Pusch**

How do firms re-organize the work process following minimum wage introductions, and what do these changes mean for worker satisfaction? Increased labour costs may require increases in productivity, which can be fostered by management strategies (Riley and Rosazza Bondibene 2015; Hirsch et al. 2015). However, the effect of this productivity channel on job quality is under-researched. Economic theory offers little guidance regarding its expected direction; the neoclassical theory of compensating wage differentials and the institutionalist high road/low road theory reach opposing conclusions regarding the relationship between minimum wages and job quality. The introduction of the German minimum wage is an interesting example for testing some of these theoretical predictions.

To the best of our knowledge, the only empirical analysis so far is Bossler and Broszeit (2016), which showed significant effects on wage satisfaction and overall work satisfaction using the IAB LPP dataset. We extend this work by using the IAB PASS database, which covers the German low-wage sector exceptionally well and enables us to analyze a wider range of objective as well as subjective questions regarding work quality and satisfaction. We also use the IAB establishment panel to investigate organizational changes as reported by firms.

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# Surmounting the Trade Union Act 2016: A case study of getting the vote out in the UK higher education sector

**Authors: James Richards, Vaughan Ellis**

The UK labour movement has faced almost four decades of anti-trade union (TU) legislation, culminating of late in the Trade Union Act 2016 (TU Act 2016). The TU Act 2016 sets a range of new restrictions on the activities of UK TUs, but of most consternation is the introduction of minimum voter thresholds of 50 per cent to make a vote for industrial action (IA) legal\*. While TUs, such as the RMT, are widely renowned for high turnouts in strike ballots, many TUs operating in the public sector do not have a strong record (Darlington and Dobson, 2015) in ‘getting the vote out’ (GTVO).

The UK’s higher education (HE) fits more with the latter and since the 2006 formation of the sector’s main union, the University and College Union (UCU), the UCU has traditionally never come close to the current mandatory 50 per cent threshold. However, in late 2017, and facing the third and most detrimental change to the pension scheme of pre-92 HE academic and related staff (USS) and despite its historically low turnout rates the UCU decided to separately ballot the members of 69 HE institutions. The risk paid off in a range of ways, but of most significance for this paper and the wider UK labour movement is how 65 of the 68 branches met or exceeded the 50 per cent turnout, leading to the largest ever series of strikes in the history of the UK HE sector.

However, less than a year since such unprecedented levels of strike activity, the UCU, after going into dispute with UCEA, the HE Sector’s employer association, announced plans to once again separately ballot all UK HE branches (147) for action based on addressing key sector concerns, such as pay, gender pay gap, casualisation and workload. Again, this was considered a risky move given the significant loss of pay incurred by members striking in 2018, as well as the balloting of 70 or so branches that were not involved in the USS dispute. Despite a 69 per cent vote for strike action and an 80 per cent vote for action short of strike action, only seven\*\* of the 147 branches made the voting threshold demanded of the TU Act 2016 – this was based on an average turnout of approximately 38 per cent with branches recording turnouts from 9.5 to 64.1 per cent.

One branch – Heriot-Watt University UCU (HWUCU), as was the case with the USS dispute turnout (76.3 per cent), topped the ‘league table’ of voter turnout in the pay/equality ballot 2018, clearly surmounting the threshold requirements of the TU Act 2016, with a turnout of 64.1 per cent. This paper attempts to conceptualise how HWUCU was able to organise in a fashion that clearly exceeded the threshold offset by the Trade Union Act twice in one year. In short, the paper seeks to answer the important question of how HWUCU successfully organised and mobilised occupational groups to breach the first world’s most prohibitive industrial relations legislation.

In doing so, this paper draws on Kelly’s (1998) mobilization theory to investigate how or what allowed HWUCU activists to transform individuals into collective actors ready and willing to engage in collective action against their employer. The key objective of the proposed paper is to make a contribution to mobilization theory by reflecting new legislative restrictions on collective forms of industrial action and historically difficult to mobilize occupational groups. A further key objective is to provide practical advice for TU activists facing the twin problem of mobilizing difficult to organise occupational groups under the TU Act 2016.

The aim is to structure the paper as follows. First, there will be a review of the literature on TU engagement with the TU Act 2016 (e.g. Ewing and Hendry, 2016; Tuckman, 2018),

mobilization theory (e.g. Badigannavar and Kelly, 2005; Holgate et al., online early), and the defining features of academic and related labour (e.g. Ogbonna and Harris, 2004; Allmer, 2018). Second, the methodology will be outlined and discussed, focusing mainly on an analysis of HWUCU branch activities (e.g. mainly branch emails, recruitment materials and GTVO strategies) surrounding two IA ballots 2017-2018, an approach compatible with studies based on university workers succeeding in situations where they were predicted to fail (e.g. see Pliskin et al., 1997).

After the presentation of key findings, the proposal is to end the paper with a discussion of what can be taken, theoretically and practically, from the activities of HWUCU. The paper concludes with a discussion of the wider implications of the findings and an agenda for further research based on mobilizing difficult to organise occupational groups under prohibitively restrictive IRs legislation.

\* In the case of ‘specialised public services’, TUs need to obtain a minimum 50 per cent turn out plus 40 per cent of those entitled to vote must support IA.

\*\* A further three UCU branches based in Northern Ireland did not make the 50 per cent threshold, but because they are not subject to the threshold restrictions of the TU Act 2016, were in October 2018 deemed legible to take part in lawful industrial based on pay/equality.

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## **‘Fragmentations and Solidarities in the era of ‘zombie capitalism’: temporary work agencies, alienation and human consequences’**

**Authors: Helen Richardson, Daiga Kamerade**

Harman (2009) described 21<sup>st</sup> century capitalism as a ‘zombie system’, dead in terms of affording achievement of human goals yet adept at surges of activity creating universal havoc. In this abstract we introduce aspects of this mayhem by consideration of the human consequences of hyper-flexibilisation (Berrebi-Hoffmann et al, 2010) and contemporary alienation in the UK labour market.

In 2017, we were involved in research to look at the relationships and practices of temporary work agencies in Derbyshire in the UK (Ball et al, 2017). Working with the Derbyshire Unemployed Workers Centres we interviewed 31 workers on temporary agency work (TAW) or zero-hours contracts (ZHC). We also interviewed managers from 4 local agencies and representatives from Derbyshire Unemployed Workers Centres, Unite the Union, North Derbyshire Unite Community branch and Derbyshire Law Centre.

Within the past 5 years or so, temporary work agencies have had free access to claimants in the UK via government ‘Job Centre Plus’ offices and wield power through a contract called the ‘Claimants Commitment’ including the requirement to actively seek and accept work. The choice is accept work or face sanctions – suspension of benefits and instead provision of vouchers for charitable food banks. The medium for offering work is usually via mobile phones with job seekers often contacted with very little notice to fulfil shifts that could last from one hour to twelve hours and for work contracts that could be one shift in duration or offering three months of work – although never guaranteed. Moreover many of these shifts involve ZHC which means hyper-flexibility that benefits employers but create many hardships and difficulties for the workers. Technology is further employed to manage this hyper-flexibility and control state benefit payments affected by this fluctuation on a weekly basis of hours worked (Ball et al, 2017). They are graphic examples of the commodification of labour, controlled and directed for commercial gain. In an interview with one agency – or insinuating plundering parasites as Marx called them (Marx, 1990/1867: 591) - the manager discussed the benefits of TAW: ‘employers can try before they buy’ with workers reduced to things to be exchanged, used or discarded.

We draw on, in particular, Amy Wendling’s evaluation of Marx, technology and alienation (Wendling, 2009). We consider how not only work organisation is controlled and managed but also aspects of access to work and in particular sufficient work to be able to live and pay for food, housing and the very technology that affords this access.

We provide details of our interviews highlighting the experiences of those on TAW and ZHC contracts, used today as a way to control permanent staff and a means to ensure hyper-flexibility of staffing at a low cost. Contrary to the technological neophilia common when discussing the ‘new’ business models, the ‘gig economy’ is increasingly being noted for imposed and draconian working conditions and terms of employment – bogus self-employment status, bullying of sick workers, lack of transparency in pay – the list goes on and on. These represent very old – Victorian – business models rather than anything new. Likewise the sight of Uber-eats or Deliveroo workers huddling under bridges from the rain with mobile phones at the ready waiting for the next job task utilising 200 year old technology – the bicycle – illustrates modern day hyper-flexibility, not a new business model for mutual benefit.

Throughout history workers are not inevitably victims or ‘zombies’ – the 1888 Match Girl’s strike for example and the 2018 Bakers Union fast food strikes among others suggests solidarities and that another world is possible.

## **Gender and perceptions of class conflict**

**Author: Josef Ringqvist**

The paper studies perceptions of class conflicts and the degree to which they differ between men and women. Analyses are based on survey data from the International Social Survey Program (ISSP) social inequality module, collected in 1999 and 2009.

The recent decades have seen a substantial increase in women's labour force participation and an ongoing process of deindustrialisation. The post-industrial working class is increasingly female and located in the growing service sector. We can thus speak of a quantitative and a qualitative feminisation of work and the working class. This has previously been described as a development being at the same time "[...] the most striking and the least well comprehended by conventional class theory" (Clement & Myles, 1994: p 243). This arguably remains true today, as much of the contemporary social analysis is driven by an interest in the sentiments of the industrial (male) working class.

Previous research on class and gender has mainly focused on class identification, and suggests that women are less likely than men to identify in terms of class (particularly when it comes to working class identity). The issue of perceived conflict has been less explored. Based on traditional hierarchical models of subjective class, the fact that women are less likely to hold a class identity should also translate into low levels of perceived conflict. Contrary to this expectation, the paper finds that women are more likely than men to perceive class conflicts. Gender differences regarding perceptions of class conflict are manifested both quantitatively and qualitatively. Women tend to be more likely than men to perceive class conflicts but they also perceive them somewhat differently. Whereas men and women are almost as likely to perceive class conflicts in terms of production relations, women are much more likely than men to perceive class conflicts in terms of resource distribution. The paper explores the degree to which horizontal and vertical labour market segregation contributes to these gendered differences in perceptions of class. Seeing as the feminisation of work has taken different paths in different countries, the article also explores whether gender differences are manifested differently in countries belonging to the social democratic, liberal and conservative welfare regimes.

Whereas identity and political attitudes rightfully have received much attention in the scholarly debate on the ongoing relevance of class, they do not fully capture the relational properties of the concept. Arguably, class needs to be understood through the lens of conflict in order for it to retain its' historical signification in social analysis. If classes are not perceived as groups with opposing interests, class loses much of its' value as an analytical concept. This motivates empirical explorations on the degree to which individuals perceive society to be characterized by class conflict. Considering ongoing changes in the gendered labour market composition, exploring class conflict in relation to the feminisation of labour is particularly relevant.

## **Do trade union members have higher social solidarity? Assessing the impact of individual union membership in 18 European countries**

**Authors: Nicolo Rosetti**

Unions have been primarily analysed quantitatively by labour economists, specifically in their role as vested interest organisations. This offers some insight into trends of union decline, but fails to account for the institutional factors that allowed unions to gain prominence and defend their position over time. It also fails to explain why union movements across Europe are not following the same trend of generalised decline we observe in anglophone liberal market economies. Power resource theory acknowledges the role of unions as social agents, which explains how they became institutionalised and gained representative legitimacy, but it assumes that the willingness to oppose employer interests is constant, limited only by a scarcity of power resources. This holds true in general terms, and empirical evidence suggests that, overall, countries with stronger labour movements achieve lower inequality and better redistributive outcomes. However, power resource theory fails to explain trends of labour market dualism in resource-rich industrial relations regimes. In particular, the theory offers little insight on why seemingly resource-rich labour movements have at times been complicit in the creation of a highly protected group of labour insiders at the expense of a growing and increasingly vulnerable group of unrepresented workers.

This paper examines social solidarity itself as a power resource, which determines the willingness of unions to protect the labour force from neoliberal market pressures. Using data from 18 countries in the European Social Survey, it measures the impact of individual trade union membership on two key dimensions of social solidarity: opposition to neoliberalism and inclusivity. Opposition to neoliberal interests is calculated using micro data on attitudes towards issues of inequality and the welfare state. Inclusivity signals a more unified representation of labour interests and is measured using individual responses to issues of diversity and immigration. The 18 countries are divided into five 'regimes' of industrial relations as defined by the qualitative literature. Two regression models are used, a generalised one for European level effects and one analysing individual industrial relations regimes separately.

The results suggest that at European level, union membership still has a significant effect on all dimensions of social solidarity. Therefore, despite declining power resources and new, diverse challenges, being a union member today still 'means something'. However, these seemingly consistent relationships vary significantly across the five industrial relations regimes, reflecting the institutional differences across different styles of unionism and the impact they have on the ability of unions to build a unified internal narrative. Two key findings stand out. First, unions in Nordic countries still have significant effects on internal attitudes towards inequality, somewhat contrary to expectations from the qualitative literature, which describes a dilution of union identity over time. Finally, unions in Anglophone countries stand out for having a particularly weak effect on the social solidarity of their members compared to those in other European union regimes. This reinforces the existing viewpoint that labour movements follow separate, path-dependent trajectories of institutional change, rather than universally converging towards a neoliberal equilibrium of union decline.

# **The Neoliberal University as Workplace: Worker Representation, Fragmentation and Resistance**

**Authors: Stephanie Ross, Larry Savage**

Much scholarly and activist attention has been paid to the transformation of universities over the last three decades as part of a larger process of neoliberalization. Neoliberalism in the university context has involved a challenge to the institution's traditional purpose and form. Neoliberal advocates envision a university oriented primarily towards the needs of employers in a competitive global economy, whether in terms of research and development or the supply of labor markets with particular kinds of workers. However, this purpose cannot be fulfilled while the vestiges of a prior and now "outdated" conception of university life, and the people who defend such a conception, remain in positions of teaching, research and administration. The neoliberal university has thus entailed a thorough reorganization of a variety of processes and relationships, including strengthening university-corporate linkages, transforming students into customers, and the introduction of corporate-oriented management and decision-making structures. For the purposes of this paper, we focus on the changing labor process in universities and its impact on the forms of worker representation, expressions of resistance, solidarity and division amongst various university workers.

As much as universities are educational institutions, they are also fundamentally workplaces. The construction of the neoliberal university involves a reorganization of work processes and a redistribution of power within them. Such transformations also have implications for collective bargaining, and whether unions can effectively manage the negative effects of changing work organization on their members. In this paper, we use conceptual tools from labor process theory (including the work of Braverman, Burawoy, Hochschild, Edwards, and Thompson) to map the ways that both academic and administrative university work has been fragmented, deskilled, intensified, and made subject to greater levels of surveillance, hierarchy, and precarity. As with their private sector counterparts, universities as employers have used these techniques to concentrate control in the hands of administrators, to discipline workers and reduce their autonomy, and to extract greater value from their labor in the delivery of the commodity called "education." We also use this analytical lens to understand the bases of division between different groups of university workers in the highly stratified university sector. Such divisions are central to the effectiveness of collective bargaining insofar as they constitute the bases upon which potential forms of resistance and solidarity may be constructed.

# Employee experiences and perceptions of Professional Identity in the Indian Business Process Outsourcing (BPO) Industry Post-crisis

**Authors: Chandrima Roy, Dora Scholarios, Phil Taylor**

This paper delivers an overdue theoretical and empirical critique of the concept and actuality of the Professional Identity of frontline workers in Indian BPO. The notion of PI is imbued by a Foucauldian strand of identity theorizing that sees identity work as imprisoned in ‘spheres of prescribed action and expectation’ (Cerulo 1997, p. 388; Deetz, 1992). This theorizing depicts employees’ identities as ‘manufactured’ (Burawoy, 1979) or ‘regulated’ (Alvesson and Willmott 2002) through normative forms of control to produce, for example, ‘engineered’ (Kunda, 1992), ‘designer’ (Casey, 1995) or ‘enterprise’ (du Gay, 1996) selves.

Influential studies (Noronha and D’Cruz, 2009) have proposed that PI has been the defining characteristic of Indian BPO work, constructed and sustained by normatively imbued HRM and people management and HRM practices. These include innovative induction, training, continuous and intensive socialization, ‘fun’ activities in the workplace, performance management, promotional opportunities, lucrative financial incentives and additional allowances and facilities. It is held that within networked business arrangements, there has been a greater dependence of employees on employers to develop and maintain professionalism (Marks and Scholarios, 2007) based on reciprocal expectations and norms. In contrast, the authors of this paper argue that employers’ ability to “keep their side of the bargain” (Thompson, 2003) depends crucially on economic outcomes of the changing dynamics of global business, of recalibrated transnational supply chain arrangements and inter-firm relationships (Roy *et al.*, 2017), such as in BPO service provision, and thus it is problematic to consider PI as the central defining characteristic.

Empirical evidence is drawn from 77 semi-structured interviews with senior and middle managers and front-line employees from three contrasting case study organisations selected as representative of Indian BPO industry types in India conducted between 2013 and 2015. Of these interviews, 36 were conducted with front-line employees, those for whom the professional identity designation was supposed to apply, according to Noronha and D’Cruz. Through an ongoing process of evaluation, of and reflection on, their working conditions, HRM practices and experiences in the years following the crisis frontline BPO workers’ testimony challenges the influential PI depiction. Exhibiting widespread perceptions of ephemerality regarding of their locus in the transnational business and the limited opportunities now offered employees report of instrumental behaviors which render them incapable of anchoring to organizationally inculcated professional identity.

This investigation enhances our understanding of the concept of PI in the transnational context of the shifting dynamics of work and employment and captures the need to address temporal dimension in identity research (Brown, 2015). In conclusion, it is argued that if any explanatory purchase could be elicited in the notion of PI among Indian BPO frontline workers, it was historically contingent, transient, unstable and unsustainable. Moreover, it was and remains inappropriate to treat BPO operations as undifferentiated manner. Differences in organisational type, ownership structures, relationship with clients, and workflow complexity are all important variables that impact on the sustainability of the concept of PI.

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## **The ILO and the International Financial Organizations (IFIs) – Improving or degrading social protection and worker’s rights at the global level?**

**Authors: Yvonne Rueckert, Tony Royle**

The International Labour Organization (ILO) was set up in 1919 to raise labour standards around the world. The ILO is important for trade unions as it is the only inter-governmental organization where trade unions have direct access at the international level. Since its foundation, the ILO has arguably changed substantially in its character, originally envisaged as a setter of labour standards it is now closer to a development agency (Standing, 2008). The ILO Declaration on Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work from 1998 can in part be seen as watershed in this process, but it is also an important point of reference for the Global Unions in their attempts to lobby for the core labour standards which underpin the more nebulous ‘principles’ of the Declaration. However, it has been argued that the ‘principles’ in the Declaration are a reflection of the weakened position of labour and the increasingly strong position of employers within the ILO (Royle, 2010). Allied with influential nation states like the USA, the World Bank and the IMF have driven neo-liberal economic policy and labour market ‘flexibility’ since the 1980s. The result has been an undermining of the tripartism on which the ILO has been based, weakening the notion of collectivism and the ILO’s position as a standard setter in the system of global economic governance. For example, after the World Trade Organization was established in 1995 its primary relations were and continue to be with the IMF and the World Bank and it makes no provisions for the incorporation of the ILO. As a result this system means that labour has no proper legal representation in the global system of economic governance (Wilkinson, 2002).

Nevertheless, following the 2008 global economic and financial crisis the IMF held its first ever joint conference with the ILO in Oslo in 2010. The organizations discussed the impact of the global economic and financial crisis on jobs and one outcome of the conference was a joint agreement on some follow-up work in the areas of social protection and social dialogue. In 2011 the G20 suggested that a mechanism be created for knowledge sharing and to better coordinate international agencies. In 2012 the Social Protection Inter-Agency Cooperation board (SPIAC-board) which is co-chaired by the ILO and the World Bank was established. Its members include, amongst others, the World Bank, the IMF, the ILO and the OECD. However, the International Trade Union Confederation has only an observer status, again reiterating labour’s weak position in the global system. According to SPIAC-board, its role is ‘about cooperation and ensuring policy coherence by bringing together the different competencies and constituents of agencies specialized in social protection topics’ (SPIAC, 2017).

The paper presents data from an ongoing qualitative study which examines the ‘dialogue’ between the ILO and the IFIs and the dialogue between the Global Unions and the IFIs. Since 2008 a total of more than 50 interviews have been conducted with senior representatives from the global trade unions and the ITUC, the IFIs and the ILO. More recently in 2017, 10 of these interviews were conducted with ILO and IFIs representatives before and during the high-level meetings in February in Washington D.C. and afterwards in Geneva. Further interviews are planned in Geneva 2018 and 2019.

The following paper aims to shed light on these recently established ‘interactions’ and the extent to which ILO is able to use such developments to influence the system of global governance in its attempts to promote a more inclusive economy based on fair employment, social protection and equality. In this context, the paper analyses some of the challenges which the ILO currently confronts (both internally and externally) and how this impacts on its

relationship with the IFIs and the Global Unions. Preliminary findings suggest that the IMF, the World Bank and the ILO have been able to develop some understanding and agreement in some areas (e.g. the relevance of social dialogue), but different perceptions remain with regard to the role and importance of coordinated collective bargaining systems at the national level and, the development of a coherent international macro-economic strategy which is required for a successful implementation of the United Nations 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. It is argued that the success and failure of interactions between the ILO and the IFIs are determined by the openness and commitment of individual actors, the organizational culture (which is to some extent determined by organizational leaders) and organizational resources (e.g. number of country offices and staff employed in these offices with the relevant knowledge and expertise).

# Grey zones of work: Do national labour force surveys capture the complexities of contemporary work arrangements?

**Authors: Lorraine Ryan, Michelle O’Sullivan, Tom Turner, Juliet McMahon, Jonathan Lavelle, Caroline Murphy, Mike O’Brien, Patrick Gunnigle**

The structures of work and the employment relationship have undergone significant change in many countries in recent times. Declining unionisation, the rise of neoliberalism and intensifying global competition have changed the landscape of many work arrangements. Consequently, there have been calls for employment regulation and social protection to be adjusted to better reflect the fragmented nature of contemporary labour rather than the standard employment relationship (SER) on which such protections are traditionally based (Rubery, 2015). This would provide greater security for those engaged in ‘grey zones’ of work such as zero hours contracts, pseudo self-employment and the gig economy. Gathering data that accurately reflects the nature and extent of such work arrangements however is difficult (Olsthoorn, 2014). Definitional uncertainty, the complex nature of individual contracts and the wide spectrum of precarious work arrangements present numerous challenges in this regard. Thus we ask – do national labour force survey sufficiently capture the complexities of contemporary work arrangements? What are the implications of this for workers?

This paper reports on a study of zero hours contracts in Ireland and presents a case study of the Irish national labour force survey. ZHCs are contracts where there are no guaranteed hours of work and where workers are not obliged to accept hours offered by an employer. They are similar to on-call work arrangements across Europe. The research approach included analysis of the national labour force survey which is conducted on a quarterly basis by the Central Statistics Office. A critical component of the research was 35 in-depth interviews with 82 representatives of employer organisations, trade unions, government departments, non-government organisations (NGOs) and legal experts. While the quantitative data highlighted changes in working hours across sectors, it was the qualitative component of the study that enabled nuanced insights into the reality and intricacies of different employment arrangements in use. This highlighted the limitations of the national statistics in capturing the true extent of the number of workers engaged in indeterminate and uncertain contemporary work arrangements.

We outline our key findings demonstrating how failure to adequately capture those engaged in ‘grey zones’ of work can lead to poor public policy and inadequate employment protection. Inaccurate statistics also provide a defence for employers and policy makers as the evidence they depict may mask the true extent of the problems of precarious work. This creates limitations to providing security and decent work for a broad spectrum of workers. We conclude by providing suggestions for future data collection at national level which would more accurately capture the extent of workers engaged in these ‘grey zones’ of work.

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## **Is the triple burden heavier in the South? Production, reproduction and resistance in Cambodian garment industry**

**Author: Anna Salmivaara**

Globalization has implied the transfer of industrial production to countries of the Global South, where deregulation of labour markets and weak unionization are key factors behind low production costs. This shift is intertwined with “labour’s crisis” - the weakening of labour’s traditional sources of bargaining power (e.g. Silver, 2003). Much research on workers’ organisational strategies in contemporary Global South focuses on their embeddedness in GSC dynamics, identifying both limitations and possibilities, including new power resources based on transnational campaigns that target lead firms of the GSCs.

Feminist economists have drawn attention to the role of social reproduction – and the avoidance of any responsibility for it – as motivating outsourcing production to the Global South (Acker, 2004). In line with this observation, this paper suggests that focusing on workers’ ‘vertical’ embeddedness in GSC dynamics is not sufficient to explain the challenges that Southern workers face. Instead, the scope of analysis should be widened to examine workers’ ‘horizontal’ embeddedness in local social relations, including those of reproduction and gender.

Based on ethnographic research conducted among Cambodian garment workers in 2016 and 2017, this paper suggests that the spheres of production and social reproduction – or ‘work’ and ‘life’ - cannot be meaningfully understood as separate categories in a context where the responsibility for both falls simultaneously on the same people. In Cambodia, this is the case especially for female workers, who form 85% of labour force in the garment sector. In addition to their children, women workers are expected to take care of their parents economically. Through their unpaid roles of social reproduction, Cambodian garment workers *de facto* subsidize both the international garment brands (as suggested by Collins, 2006) and the massive land grab that has impoverished rural Cambodia. This burden affects workers’ strategies of unionization and resistance. Workers face a trade-off between *access to* and *conditions of* employment (Kabeer, 2004) and many opt for avoiding unions and all forms of open resistance. Nonetheless, as Lawreniuk and Parsons (2018) have recently shown, rural communities have also supported factory workers collective organization and joined their minimum wage campaigns.

Finally, the paper reflects on the gendered nature of the Cambodian labour movement. While in late 1990s, independent unions emerged from grassroots struggles led by women, currently the movement leadership is almost completely male. The analysis shows that in addition to the gendered division of social reproduction, cultural expectations regarding power and leadership are influential. The role played by global union federations has been somewhat ambivalent in this regard.

# Organized by transitions: The campaigns of students and unemployed graduates in Slovenia

**Author: Barbara Samaluk**

This paper examines the (self-)organisation of students and graduates making the precarious transition into education and social work occupations in Slovenia. We examine their campaigns for paid internships to enter the professional labour market and meet the national regulators' requirements to become fully licenced professionals. A nascent literature identifies innovative (self-)organization among precarious workers and wider social groups, as well as challenges (Samaluk 2017a; Cha et al 2018; Tapia and Holgate 2018). Drawing on debates in European sociology, we ask how this activism is shaped by state facilitating workfarist policies that push unemployed towards precarious transitions and normalise precarity (Castel 2003, Dörre 2015; Greer 2016; Samaluk, 2017b). Based on participant observation and in-depth interviews with different generations of activist students and graduates, trade unionists and other key informants, this paper explores drivers for students' and graduates' self-organisation, their tactics, and their engagement with trade unions and other sectoral actors. Since the entry into the EU and Eurozone, neo-corporatist Slovenia has been adopting EU's workfarist flexicurity agenda, intensifying competitive pressures on those entering the labour market. Post-crisis austerity measures have increased these pressures in social work and education by capping public sector hiring, eliminating paid internships, and increasing the significance of EU-funded project work and active labour market schemes. We find that self-organizing by students and graduates was driven by weak prospects for employment and the long-lasting unemployment spells after graduation and was facilitated by innovative trade union projects. These campaigns were successful in outlawing unpaid internships in the public sector, but their demands for sustained government-funded paid internships have not been met. Aiding students' and graduates' transitions into professions would require more active engagement of sectoral trade unions and regulatory bodies; we conclude that such action may take place, since growing precarity undermines employment conditions and professional norms across these public service occupations.

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## **Making Sense of New Dynamics in the Platform Economy: The Serbian Case**

**Authors: Jelena Sagic, Branka Andjelkovic**

This paper presents the preliminary results of an inquiry into hybridization of work within the platform economy and its impact on the labour law and social protection system in Serbia. The paper argues that insofar lack of institutional response in addressing this grey zone increases non-standard work and platform workers' exposure to a number of vulnerabilities. The first exploratory research on the socio-economic position of platform workers from Serbia was carried out by the Public Policy Research Center in 2018. In addition to holding multiple jobs, the research revealed that transition to platform work generated legal tensions and incoherence. For example, the vast number of the respondents did not legally register their online activities with public authorities (35.5%) or declined to answer the question (27.6%). The reasons for declining to register are multi-fold: uncertainty of online employment, high taxes, and burdensome procedures for opting in and opting out from the system. The absence of adequate contracts in the platform economy transformed workers in precarious entrepreneurs. Drawing upon these results and preliminary findings on ways to accommodate new hybrid forms, this paper extends to the range of tools and institutions that can be envisaged to regulate platform work that has fallen outside the traditional regulatory scope of labour law in Serbia. It highlights niches to modify social protection system in the country so as to make it sustainable and accessible to the platform workers. By doing so, the paper aims to contribute to the ongoing debate on the creation of the so-called third category and comprehension of dynamics of contemporary labour markets.

## **Splitting days, fragmenting work: Split shifts in the cleaning and care sectors**

**Author: Karin Sardadvar**

Split shifts are a working time model used in domiciliary elderly care, office cleaning and other service sectors oriented towards clients. They imply that the working day is split into two (or, in some cases, three) parts, with an unpaid break of several hours between shifts. Split shifts are often scheduled at the margins of the day, e.g., one shift in the early morning and one in the evening. These split shifts can imply very long overall working days, including several changes between paid and unpaid work and multiple travel times. Split shifts can be challenging for organising childcare; they have been linked to adverse health effects; and they have been shown to impede workers' social and family lives and recreation (Mårtensson/Wondmeneh 2013; Åkerstedt et al. 2012; Sardadvar 2012).

However, split shifts are a little-investigated mode of labour fragmentation and flexibilization. In my contribution, I will use split shifts in the Austrian cleaning and care sectors as example in order to analyse some of the backgrounds, dynamics, and problems linked to split shifts in a broader context.

In the cleaning sector, one main reason for the use of short shifts at unsocial hours is that cleaning work has developed into something performed “invisibly” for the customers (Holtgrewe/Sardadvar 2011, 2012; Schroth/Schürmann 2006). The service triangle of employer, customer or client, and employee (e.g., Leidner 1996; Korczynski 2002) substantially shapes working times and employment conditions. In domiciliary elderly care, the time-bound physical and care-related needs of the clients shape employees' working times. Both cases raise questions with regard to the impact of customers' demands on employees' lives, as well as questions with regard to the regulation of working times and the compensation of hardships.

In my contribution, I will discuss how split shifts are used for employment flexibilization and how they result in labour fragmentation for workers. I take the Austrian cleaning and care sectors as a point of departure and make international and cross-sectoral comparisons. In so doing, I will discuss how split shifts reflect the dynamics of the service triangle in service work, contribute to the invisibility and low status of employees' work, and are an example for how paid work spills over to other areas of employees' lives (leisure time, reproductive work).

My contribution is based on an empirical research project on split shifts in the cleaning and the care sectors (the SPLITWORK project, 2018-21, funded by the Austrian Science Fund, V 598-G16). The presentation will draw on initial empirical findings and comprehensive state-of-the-art research from this current project, and on my own previous empirical research on working conditions in the cleaning and care sectors (Sardadvar 2016; Sardadvar et al. 2015; Holtgrewe/Sardadvar 2012, 2011). The SPLITWORK project encompasses in-depth, primarily qualitative, empirical research that links the individual, the organisational, and the regulatory levels. The project aims to contribute to a sociology of work that considers the interactions between paid work, unpaid work, and other areas of the subjects' lives (Jürgens 2009; Glucksmann 2005).

## Do Migrants have Access to Decent Work?

**Authors: Petra Sauer, Stella Zilian**

As response to the unequally distributed benefits of globalization, the International Labour Organization (ILO) has introduced an agenda which promotes to provide *Decent Work for All*: “Decent work sums up the aspirations of people in their working lives. It involves opportunities for work that is productive and delivers a fair income, security in the workplace and social protection for families, better prospects for personal development and social integration, freedom for people ... equality of opportunity and treatment for all women and men.” In adopting a rights-based approach to labour migration, the ILO extended its agenda to include all migrant workers. However, the increasing relevance of anti-migration campaigning in European countries is able to hinder the economic and social integration of migrants. In this regard, labour-market experiences play a central role in securing migrants' well-being. This relates not only to labour income in order to fulfil basic needs, but also to the conditions of work itself and the broader employment relations in which work takes place.

Having a paid and decent job has been one of the most defining features of personal life since the emergence of wage labour during the Great Industrial Revolution. Being employed is not only a source of financial means, but it also affects social status, self-esteem, and is generally associated with establishing own identities. The relevance of decent working conditions for individual well-being as well as for the society as a whole has been well-established by various disciplines which show that the quality of work matters for a range of outcomes related to financial, social as well as mental and physical health aspects, among others. However, the traditional economic approach is based on the presumption that supplying labour is troublesome. From this perspective, other dimensions of work quality than wage income become irrelevant for the understanding of differences between social and ethical groups regarding their position in the labour market. Due to the focus of the economics literature on the monetary reward of work, the labour market integration of immigrants has been primarily studied on the basis of the adjustment of wage levels of workers with migration background, compared to wage levels of native workers over time.

The aim of this paper is to provide an integrated analysis of the multiple dimensions of work quality that affect the integration of migrants in European labour markets. Theoretically, our analysis is, on the one hand, based on the perception of contemporary labour markets as being segmented along various social, cultural and economic lines. This (later) segmentation-theory approach enables to understand why population groups are simultaneously disadvantaged along multiple dimensions of work quality. On the other hand, we draw from sociological approaches of precarious employment (e.g. by Robert Castel) in conjunction with the Psychology of Working Theory (PWT) put forward by David Blustein. Moreover, the vast institutional, political as well as scientific contributions that have aimed at conceptualizing work quality since the 1960s and 1970s when the concept of quality of work emerged alongside the concept of quality of life, build the basis of the main dimensions of work quality we consider in our empirical analysis, i.e. skills, autonomy, social environment, decent work intensity, employment quality, and pay.

We quantify the concept using the Survey of Adult Skills (PIAAC) which provides extensive information on the employment situation and work history of respondents, their education and training outcomes as well as their socio-economic background. By combining factor and linear regression analysis we aim to tackle the following research questions:

- Along which lines are migrants discriminated on the labour market?
- To what extent do gaps in skills, education and training as well as the socio-economic background of migrants explain gaps in various labour market outcomes?
- In how far do differential labour market and welfare state institutions produce differential regimes of discrimination?

# **Acceleration@work: The case of project management and project work**

**Authors: Stefan Sauer, Amelie Tihlarik**

Within the past two decades, project work has been on increase in all sectors of research and development. This is due to greater insecurity on the part of companies and the demand for flexibility and innovation in increasingly interconnected and complex value-added chains for complex and heterogenous products (Dönmez & Grote 2011; Ekstedt et al. 1999; Geraldi et al. 2008). Instead of or in addition to preset project plans, developers should plan the work for themselves to accomplish unforeseen and changeable results. Also, the increasing time-pressure is demanding project work in order to manage resources more efficiently. That applies to Development departments too, as they need to become faster and more flexible. Therefore, we understand project work as an effort for acceleration (Rosa 2015). For the employees, project work leads to work intensification and brings up new demands for the work force such as self-organization or autonomous decision making. For the organization, the paradox (Smith & Lewis 2012) of different pace arises. Project based work in research and development has a different pace as work in administration and management. This leads to a change of approaches in terms of project work and project management, which therefore focuses on acceleration and empowerment or management structure of project work. For example, agile project management (Sutherland 2017) can be seen as a milestone for accelerated and relatively empowered project work.

As time and the accelerating processing of projects are predominant in recent findings of our studies on agile project work, we want to examine if project work can be seen as a new way of acceleration in the economy. We are theoretically and empirically focused on project work as a process of acceleration. Therefore, we show the challenges for employees and work councils and the paradox of different pace and different organizing logics within organizations. Based on this, we demonstrate ways to deal with acceleration in favor of ‘good work’ without work overload and work intensification.

## **Socio-ecological Sustainability @ work**

**Authors: Stefan Sauer, Marco Blank**

Allocating political as well as societal resources between climate change adaptation (CCA) and climate change mitigation (CCM) are the first priorities in terms of environmental answers to humanities past (and present) habits (f.e. Brundtland 1987).

But, in order to reach climate goals, the necessity of involving the industry is rising to an extent, in which people are going on the streets to put the pressure on both, politicians as well as industry (any climate demo).

This shows not only the urgency for action, but also the climate change awareness which raised in the recent years. We don't ask for the trigger – there have been a vast number of events in the past (Hendrix 2007; Norgaard 2017) – we want to show, that there is a powerhouse available which is not used as of now. Parts of the industry are reacting to the pressure with more or less performing CCM measures, with Energy Efficiency (EE) concepts had shown to be one the most effective (source). Some companies therefore installed so called environmental specialist units in order to maximize EE or, which is also environmentally as well as economically lucrative, the productive use of energy. Those are capitalized in a sense of corporate social responsibility (CSR) (Murillo & Lozano 2006; Neu et al. 1998).

One of the main measures is the implementation of specialist units. Though the idea to put a specialist in place in order to solve an issue is comprehensible, it is not exactly that easy. Often, the specialists have a big toolkit available, but don't know where to bring it. Therefore, a lot of their measures are only scratching at the surface while the employees, who are often much more aware of what could be done because of their tacit knowledge (Nonaka & Takeuchi 1995; Polany 1966), could go deeper with higher efficiency (Kühner et al. 2017). This has been addressed many times before mostly with top-down-activities such as work orders and info sheets, but the outcome fell short of expectations.

We want to show, that the reasons for the low outcome are the top-down-processes which are not addressing time and resource constraints which are allocated to the employees in order to translate their specialist and tacit knowledge in actual solutions. A lot of employees are already familiar with productive use and environmental protection. Not because of trainings or workshops, but because they inherit climate change as ethical concept to their daily lives. If our approach is taken seriously, the demand for environmental sustainability is also leading to empowerment of employees and social sustainability.

# De-solidarisation or new labour disputes? An ethnography of resistant solidarity cultures in platform-based courier work

**Authors: Simon Schaupp, Heiner Heiland**

Modern industrial relations are in a transitional stage. Many of the Fordist regulation dispositives break up or erode and new forms of (digital) production regimes arise. As a consequence the relations between labour and capital are renegotiated. On the one hand the control and control of the work process on the part of employers increases and some of the "innovative" jobs resemble a "back to the future", being a reminiscence of early capitalist conditions. On the other hand, this situation opens up new possibilities for action in the field of labour policy.

Using the empirical example of platform-based courier work, we argue that new forms of labour disputes are emerging as novel types of digital work coordination and control become more prevalent. Our argument turns against the thesis that digitization of work leads to a closure of all control gaps and a concomitant desolidarisation of employees. Instead, we empirically present new cultures of solidarity and worker's organisation. Out of these arise labour disputes that often find more radical and transnational expressions. We base this argument on two multi-month ethnographic studies and 45 qualitative interviews with various actors in the digitized delivery industry in Germany.

Although the delivery sector is (still) of limited size in Germany, it serves as an exemplary empirical reference point. This is mainly due to the fact that it can be identified as an organizational avant-garde of platform capitalism and the corresponding techniques of algorithmic management. Thus, in this sector the organization of new business models and mechanisms for work control are tested and developed. Both the organizational model of these platforms (1) and the technical control instruments (2) can have both oppressive and liberating effects.

1. Workers are deprived of secondary power potentials due to the specific nature of work organization, in which they sometimes are not even members of the company anymore. But this form of organization is a challenge for the platforms concerning the coordination of all relevant actors, and at the same time increases the primary power potential of the workers. Workers are for example able to shut down entire delivery zones by means of a common logout of a few couriers. The challenge for the workers lies in overcoming their isolation, enforced by the platforms.
2. The digital coordination of the work process is accompanied by comprehensive monitoring and control of the workers and their individual performance. At the same time, the digitality and the accompanying uniformity of the apps controlling the work process offers the workers the opportunity to form city-wide and cross-border coalitions, to overcome isolation and at the same time to use the digital instruments for their own organization.

The Result of the process outlined here is not yet settled. We see a more ambivalent picture than often portrayed in media and scientific discourse. On the one hand, while managerial rule is changing and becoming more comprehensive, on the other hand new degrees of freedom and power resources are being created for the workers, so that work in its digital form is and remains contested terrain.

# **The End of Industrial Work and its Political Ramifications: Estimating the Impact of Global Employment Change on Political Values**

**Authors: Lukas Schlögl, Kyunghoon Kim**

There is mounting evidence of a tendency for jobs in developing countries to emerge primarily in the service sector and for a phenomenon known as ‘premature deindustrialisation’ (i.e. countries reaching their peaks in manufacturing employment at earlier stages of economic development; see Palma 2005, Rodrik 2015, Felipe and Rhee 2015, Diao et al., 2017, Sumner 2017). Rodrik (2015) speculates that the political consequences of this development “could be significant” and could mean that the growth of a civic-minded middle class, public support for democracy and social cohesion are at risk. Evidence from political sociology corroborates that there are strong links between a country’s occupational structure and mass political preferences (see e.g. Inglehart 1977; Weakliem 1991; Inglehart and Welzel 2005; Marx 2013;). Further, long-standing research on cleavage politics and class voting points into a similar direction of labour market outcomes becoming manifest in political preferences.

This paper takes Rodrik’s concern about the potential political effects of deindustrialisation in developing countries seriously and subjects it to an empirical test. The paper does the following: first, it performs a country-fixed-effects panel regression of sectoral employment shares on a set of political preference variables (including left-right identification and support for democracy); this model accounts for mediating factors such as changes in economic inequality, labour market dynamics, unionisation and education and controls for a set of potential time-varying confounders such as economic growth and demographic change; second, based on a simple extrapolation of historical trends, it forecasts scenarios of global structural change in employment shares in the agricultural, industrial, and service sectors; and third, it projects corresponding scenarios of political value change in developing countries that are undergoing deindustrialisation. Implications of the results for policy-making are discussed.

Employment share data are drawn from the World Bank’s World Development Indicators (up to 217 countries, annual data since 1990) and, for selected countries, are studied in more detail using the Groningen GGDC 10-Sector database (up to 40 countries since 1950). Country-level political value estimates are drawn from the World Values Survey (up to 100 countries, six waves since 1981) which is based on a large set of nationally representative and internationally comparable opinion surveys. The World Values Survey contains a range of standard political variables (such as party affiliation, ideological leanings and modes of political participation) and has been used to study political effects of economic modernisation and social change.

## **The Limits of Precariousness: The Polanyian Countermovement and German Labor Relations**

**Authors: Stefan Schmalz, Anne Hasenohr, Sarah Hinz, Ingo Singe**

For a long time, precarious labor arrangements were said to be omnipresent in East Germany. As a result of the disembedding of labor market regulation after reunification, low wages, atypical employment and long working hours were characteristic features of East German labor relations. However, recent years have seen a marked decline in unemployment, due to economic revitalization and population decline. By discussing the impact of labor market development on industrial relations, we observe a Polanyian countermovement to the commodification and precarization of labor. Our argument is twofold: First, employers recognize that existing despotic factory regimes turn dysfunctional as poor working conditions have contributed to a lack of trainees and physically demanding jobs have led to early retirement of workers. Second, unlike in the times of industrial decline that followed reunification, the disciplinary regime of precariousness tends to erode. The growing assertiveness of workers is not only reflected in a renewal of collective representation, but also in hidden forms of industrial conflict against low payment, high flexibility requirements and poor working conditions. Our paper will build on an intensive case study in one manufacturing site located in East Thuringia. The case study combines qualitative methods (22 semi-structured interviews with management, worker representatives and employees, completed in November 2016) and a quantitative workplace survey ( $N \geq 385$ , completed in March 2017). We also draw on earlier research projects such as a project on union organizing in East Germany (21 company case studies).

## **Placing the displaced: mediating employment opportunities for migrants**

**Authors: Anna Schneider, Bernadette Bullinger; Jean-Pascal Gond**

People fleeing from the Middle East and African countries as in the recent “refugee crisis”(1) experience displacement and disruption not only during their journeys. Upon arriving in Europe, divisions between forced migrants and European citizens remain, propelled for instance by barriers to participate in employment. Research on migration suggests that the exclusion from work and education in host countries reinforces the disruptions of forced migrants’ everyday life and career (Ott, 2013; Valtonen, 1998). Forced displacement “is and is predicted to grow as a massive phenomenon during the coming century as a result of a mixture between environmental scarcity and demographic, political, and social issues” (Naccache & Al Ariss, 2017, p. 1).

The integration of the displaced in the host countries’ society and their inclusion in the labor market is an issue that falls under the categories of “grand challenges” and “wicked problems.” (Ferraro, Etzion, & Gehman, 2015). Job placement efforts are a response to the displacement and disruption that forced migrants experience, and an attempt to re-solve the grand challenge of integrating migrants into host countries’ societies by means of integrating them into the labor market. On the labor market, these initiatives to integrate forced migrants into host countries’ workforce constitute intermediaries as they stand – either as information provider, matchmakers or administrators (Bonet, Cappelli and Hamori, 2013) – between worker and employer. While market intermediaries aim at facilitating market transactions, they are not neutral but themselves involved in processes of valuation (Bessy and Chauvin, 2013). The market itself has a moral character (Stark, 2011; Krenn, 2017) and is a collective device that turns uncertain situations and conflicting interests into calculations, which allow for compromises (Callon and Muniesa, 2005). Calculation in this sense is the construction of value, comprising processes of valuation, which includes the assessment of value (evaluation) and the adding or diminishing of value (valorization) (Muniesa, 2012; Vatin, 2013).

Translating these theoretical considerations to the context of labor markets for forced migrants, we address the question how labor market intermediaries engage in processes of valuation. Through the analysis of various data sources (e.g. qualitative interviews, analysis of verbal and visual text on websites, brochures, job advertisements, and user profiles), we explore the question of how labour market intermediaries, which organize employment opportunities for refugees and migrants, engage in the valuation – i.e. the construction of value – of forced migrants on host countries’ labor markets. From the analysis (current paper stage) we seek to show that markets themselves are not neutral spaces but moral arenas, where valuation takes place, i.e. where actors such as market intermediaries assess value and in- or decrease the value of market entities. Empirically, we study for three types of labor market intermediaries (information providers, matchmakers, and administrators such as temporary work agencies) in form of several local initiatives, which address forced migrants’ labor market integration. In the case that our abstract will be accepted for the ILPC 2019, our presentation will be based on a full paper.

(1) Migrants and refugees are generally defined differently; as migrants choosing to leave their countries, e.g. for better economic chances and living conditions, and as refugees being threatened by prosecution or war and therefore having to leave their home countries in order to survive (Edwards, 2016). However, the terms “forced migration” and “forced displacement” acknowledge that in many cases migration is involuntary and due to conflict and persecutions, even if the displaced do not formally fall under the definition of the UN Refugee Convention from 1951 (Hatton, 2016; UNHCR, 2015). Also, as integration on the labor market is a goal that refugees and migrants share (Ott, 2013),

we subsequently use the terms forced migrants/migration and forced displaced/displacement, unless referring to our data sources that might use a different term.

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# Yesterday's snow becomes fully effective. The adoption of modern technologies at the workplace

**Authors: Philip Schörpf, Jörg Flecker, Annika Schönauer**

The debate on digitalisation usually takes technology as a starting point, concluding on how technology is implemented and used and how it affects workers, companies and consumers. Artificial intelligence, big data or machine learning are prime examples for this approach: big changes of work processes are bound to happen simply due to the vast automation capabilities of the modern technologies. However, the use and implementation of technology is ultimately depending on actual company strategies, on work processes and the realisation at the workplace (Wajcman, 2017). Digitalisation and automation technologies clearly extend the options for the organisation of work and the structure of the firm. Within a company, tasks and functions are automated, the division of labour is remodelled, cooperation between workers is rethought and business processes are changing. Likewise, there are new possibilities for the spatial relocation of work, as information and communication tools allow faster and easier transfer of data and information. While there is plenty room for revolutions in the work organisation, for changing work process and working conditions, there are also signs of slower developments and of stability (Valenduc & Vendramin, 2017). Where do we see automation at all cost? Where are technologies used as tools to assist qualified employees, providing the capability to work remotely and flexibly? Where is work split into ever smaller modules and is rigidly controlled?

In a study with shop stewards in Austrian services industries we try to dissect the hype surrounding ICTs from the actual effects digitalisation has on companies, on the work process and on workers. We interviewed shop stewards in logistics, telecommunication, software development, consulting, banking, health care and public administration. The results reflect the diverse industries in focus, but still highlight specific trends:

- Intra-firm communication processes are changing through the implementation and consistent use of enterprise social media tools (such as Workplace by Facebook, Yammer, SAP Jam or Microsoft Teams).
- Location independent work is becoming more common through firstly, mobile communication tools and secondly, through remote access to IT-systems of the value chain.
- The codification and structuring of knowledge has a marked effect on the work process. ERP-systems play an important role at this. These steps are frequently seen as a preparation for (further) automation.
- In our sample, there is little tangible evidence for the much debated 'hype' technologies, such as machine learning, robotic process automation and AI. However, some companies are experimenting with applications for said technologies.
- Data is no longer limited to the (IT-system of a) firm, but is accessible through other companies in the value chain. The data and information are increasingly processed automatically between connected IT-systems.

Interestingly, the most important current changes strongly resonate the hypes from a decade ago – B2B, Workflow – while current hypes regarding AI etc can only be found in peripheral experiments. This should warn us to focus in our research about changes in work on cutting edge technological developments.

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# **The impact of neo-liberalism as a new form of capitalism on the working conditions of informal stone quarry workers in Central Region of Ghana**

**Authors: Moses Segbenya, Angela A. D. Akorsu**

This study examined the “*The impact of neo-liberalism as a new form of capitalism on the working conditions of informal stone quarry workers in Central Region of Ghana*” within the ILO’s decent work framework guiding the global developmental agenda (Goal 8:8) till 2030. The study used the neo-liberalist, dualists and the justice theories to examine the causes of informality and its associated working conditions under neo-liberalism (an extension of capitalism). The study adopted the qualitative multiple case design. The study population comprised 259 stone quarry workers out of which 161 were informal quarry workers. Purposive and simple random sampling techniques were used to sample 88 respondents from four districts such as Gomoa East, Gomoa West, KEEA and Cape Coast Metropolis. The sample drawn comprised 27 self employed female quarry workers and 56 wage casual/temporal quarry workers. Additionally, a representative each from the Labour Office, Environmental Protection Agency, Ghana Trade Union and two management members of two quarry firms from the selected districts were also purposefully selected for the study. Four cases representing four quarry firms selected were Pilot Quarry Ltd, Executive Quarry, Sarcon Quarry Ltd and Melliss Quarry Ltd. Cape Coast Metropolis was however purposefully chosen to represent the self employed. Multiple data collection instruments such as semi-structured in-depth interview guide, focus group discussion guide and observation guide were used to collect data. Twenty six (26) individual in-depth interviews and four (4) focus group discussions were conducted. Data collected was transcribed, coded, themes were deduced based on responses and finally thematic content analysis was employed for the data analysis. The four stone quarry firms were represented in the analysis with alphabet A,B, C and D for ethical reasons. It was found that with the exception of wages of informal regular wage quarry workers, all other indicators of their working conditions in Quarries A and B were not decent per ILO decent framework and the Labour Act of Ghana (Act 651). Comparatively the working conditions of quarry workers in a Ghanaian and Italian quarry firms (Quarry C and D) were better than what were discovered in Chinese quarry firms in the Central Region of Ghana. Regular wage quarry workers in Quarry A and Quarry B could afford to buy some protective clothes, self-employed (own account workers) could not afford same due to low returns/revenue from their quarry activities. Thus, the working conditions of the own account workers was very precarious and indecent as compared to wage quarry workers. It was also found that the labour department’s monitoring role over these quarries suffered several logistic and human resource challenges. It was therefore recommended that the government of Ghana should resource the labour department temporally with staff to ensure effective monitoring to ensure that quarry firms adhere to labour standards in Ghana.

## **Re'constructing' Labour Relations: Coercion and Agency in Public Works Construction as part of Famine Relief in Colonial India c.1870-1914**

**Author: Amal Shahid**

This paper will examine the blurring trajectories of free and unfree in labour employed on public works as part of famine relief efforts by the colonial state. In the latter half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century and beginning of 20<sup>th</sup> century, the Indian subcontinent was wrought with frequent famines. Besides charitable relief, relief to the affected population was provided by the state through employment on public works such as roads, canals and railways. Taking the case of the North-Western Provinces in colonial north India, the study aims to elucidate the freedom and unfreedom of labourers in their experiences of construction work under famine conditions. The research draws upon private correspondences and published reports, in addition to debates on meanings of freedom from the workers' perspective under capitalism. Discussing working conditions, wages, recruitment and migration, the paper explores how the degrees of coercion varied in famine times. Freedom in work has been seen as a linear concept, and, especially in the context of Indian history, it has been assumed all labour had been unfree until colonial intervention. On the other hand, labour employment during famines has been viewed as being akin to slavery. Hence, key in this analysis is exploring what constitutes freedom for labourers in this kind of work, not just in the traditional sense of agency vis-à-vis the state, but also agency as a part of interdependent relationships in the economy. The paper argues in favour of dependency as freedom for the labourers, and highlights informal modes of exercising agency under coercive working conditions. Coexistence of workers, both free and unfree, was a consequence of the complexities of imperialism, famines and economic changes. The paper hence elucidates the grey area between free and unfree, thereby questioning the distinction between the two concepts that has remained undisputed in Indian history. Therefore, the paper holds implications for current discussions on freedom and coercion in formal and informal economies in the global south.

# **The Transformation of White-Collar Service-Sector Work, Class Formation, and Feminization in the Canadian Airline Industry: A Labour Process Analysis**

**Author: Vivian Shalla**

This paper examines the transformation of the work of customer sales and service agents at Air Canada and the establishment and consolidation of the union representing these workers, analyzing changes beginning in 1937 at the time of the creation of the air carrier until the late 1960s. This transformation is set against the backdrop of the political economy of Canadian and international air transportation to demonstrate that the changing nature, conditions, and relations of work did not occur in isolation of broader institutional, political, and societal factors. The analysis takes shape around three key themes: a new labour process and its transformation; unionization and nascent labour militancy; and, women's white-collar service-sector work. The study draws on company and union archival material, and on in-depth qualitative interviews with workers and union officials. The paper uses insights from, and critically engages with, labour process theory (Thompson and Smith, 2010) to develop a multi-dimensional analysis of the transformation of white-collar service-sector work and the radicalization of workers in the airline industry under post-war capitalism.

The paper makes a number of contributions to the literature on work and the labour process. First, while studies have been conducted on white-collar and service-sector work during the Second World War and its aftermath, there is nevertheless a dearth of research on such employment at a time when it started to play a critical role in the economy. My study delves into highly labour-intensive airline-industry work and its transformation, addressing more particularly the process of deskilling with the implementation of new technologies, the reorganization of the labour process, and the introduction of different forms of managerial control. Second, our knowledge of unionization and union strategy in the expanding service sector during this historical period remains limited. Much of the history of labour has been about blue-collar workers, notwithstanding early inroads made by the labour movement in areas of the service sector such as transportation. An examination of unionism and class formation in the early years of the Canadian airline industry is therefore paramount given the centrality of civil aviation to the international economy during the war and post-war years. My study draws links between labour process transformation and class formation, showing that, in the face of workplace reorganization, airline workers increasingly resisted managerial control and began adopting a militant stance, resulting in more confrontation union-management relations. Third, an investigation of work transformation and unionization in the nascent airline industry provides an opportunity to explore women's employment realities in the rapidly growing service sector. The paper sheds light on the complex process of feminization that took hold in the post-war years, whereby the work of customer sales and service agents underwent degradation and the air carrier increasingly relied on the female reserve army of labour to fill the growing ranks of this new occupation during a period of tremendous growth in the airline industry. More broadly, my study on the transformation of white-collar service-sector work, class formation, and feminization in the Canadian airline industry is instructive because the dynamics and processes under investigation encapsulate broader shifts in the world of work.

## **The bastardization of labor relations in the Philippine manufacturing sector**

**Author: Vincent Silarde**

The paper studies the prevalence of contractualization and subcontracting in the Philippine manufacturing sector where a third of the total workforce is working without security of tenure. Living usually under precarious conditions due in large part to their status of employment, they suffer the brunt of what is termed in this paper as the phenomenon of bastardization. By its lexical definition, bastardization refers to the process by which concepts and practices are corrupted or perverted. This can then be used as an idiom to describe industrial relations in the manufacturing sector where dignity of employment is disregarded when assumption of accountability is circumvented or left ambivalent and laws are circumvented through warped interpretation of employment relationship. From the root word “bastard,” bastardization also calls to attention the question of progeny and paternity, which happens to be the bone of contention in most legal disputes bitterly fought by workers and corporations. Companies enter into subcontracting arrangements to abdicate their duties and status as principal employers. It is not, however, difficult for the workers to establish in a lot of cases the fact that their labors are primarily necessary and desirable for the operation of the companies they claim to be part of and not the manpower or subcontracting agencies to which the jobs they perform are said to be outsourced and which also refuse or unable to recognize and treat them as regular employees. Even audit reports of the Philippine Labor Department support this assertion. Still, this and other similar unlawful practices remain widespread due to a confluence of factors related to enforcement, the contentious provisions of the law, and the geopolitical and economic environment under which the labor market operates. The study attempts to lay bare the epistemic conditions that underlie and develop in tandem with the phenomenon being described using data gathered from desk review, key informant interviews, and focused group discussions. Personal narratives of workers, in particular, are foregrounded to invite sustained discussions on policy reforms and other forms of intervention that address the clamor of workers for proper recognition as vital cogs of the national economic, social and political machinery and not simply dispensable material inputs who get alienated from the process of nation-building for which production is supposedly undertaken.

# **Precarious solidarities: unions, young workers and representative claims**

**Author: Melanie Simms**

It is widely accepted that union movements in many countries face profound structural challenges organising and representing young workers, despite often significant investment in this area (Hodder and Kretsos 2015). This raises questions about the limitations of current activities and what might be necessary to improve outcomes. This paper draws on two forms of claims that unions make when representing any group of workers; solidaristic claims (Hyman 1997) and representative claims (Saward 2010).

After an exploration of the theoretical basis of these two forms of claims, this paper addresses two central research questions:

- What solidaristic claims are being made when unions seek to organise and represent young workers?
- What representational claims are being made in these processes?

The presentation draws on evidence from three research projects undertaken by the author since 2011. The first was a Eurofound survey of social partner responses to helping young workers during the crisis. The second was a British Academy Small grant comparing the UK, Ital and France. And the third was a large-scale international comparative project comparing the USA, UK, Netherlands, France and Germany. Despite slightly different research questions and methodological approaches, all three projects have resulted in a wealth of data from trade unions regarding their efforts to organise and represent young workers.

Using evidence from these studies, the paper argues that solidaristic claims are extremely important ‘rallying cries’ (Hyman 1997) but, in practice, often precarious because they are typically invoked when there are few avenues for effective bargaining and representation. Evidence shows that unions are keen to stand in solidarity with young workers, but often have few mechanisms to represent their interests. In this space, new representative claims are being made by unions. In some cases, institutional arrangements allow unions to make ‘expert claims’ (Saward 2010) and represent young workers despite very low membership. This is typically the case where unions are embedded in extensive networks of nationally supported representation systems. Where that is not evidence, or perceived as ineffective, we sometimes see the emergence of new representative organisations such as San Precario in Italy, which make ‘alternative claims’ (Saward 2010) in the spaces where unions are absent or ineffective.

This presentation argues that solidaristic claims are important but not sufficient to build effective representation of young workers. Too often the debate is framed in terms of what young workers can do for unions with regard to survival and renewal, rather than what unions can do for young workers.

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## **Debt relationships mediated by new technologies as a way to control precarious work in Brazil's financialization scenario**

**Author: Erica Siqueira**

The financialization process in Brazil is considered precocious (Lavinás et al., 2017). According to the authors, this precocity is linked to our indexed currency, with the fiscal crisis and debt crisis, as well with the financial expansion and banking concentration that intensified in the 1970s and 1980s. Thus, having consolidated as a hegemonic sector in that period, the banking sector imposed an agenda of economic liberations that would occur in 1990s. This decade was marked by the invasion of high finance in the commodification of state's spending through the subfinancialization, which began in 1980s, but worsened in 2000s. Also in this period, the financial inclusion through credit programs raised the Credit/GDP ratio from 22% in 2001 to 55% in 2015. The commitment of the debt service income, for those people who receive up to 3 salaries, reaches expressive 73%. The expenditures that, according to the authors, should be financed by higher wages and a fairer tax structure, are financed through credit, reproducing inequalities and social vulnerabilities. (Lavinás et al., 2017).

Ribeiro and Lara (2016), using data about the indebtedness of the working class in Brazil, show that 57 million people had arrears, and for 30 million of them, debts committed more than 100% of the family budget. For the authors, low wages, a result of the type of employment created in recent years, as a result of flexibilization, outsourcing and austerity, feed the "interest bearing capital" without, however, making it unfeasible. Besides the low wages and the indebtedness, the financial education oriented by international organizations became a state policy in Brazil, since the creation of the National Financial Education Strategy in 2010. For the authors, the ideology contained in these strategies is a condition for the reproduction of financialized capitalism, which imposes on the work: coercion, manipulation and consent in tactics. For the authors, workers are "disciplined" by an ideology of "intelligent consumption of financial products" (Ribeiro and Lara, 2016). The work of Sorderberg (2014) deals with the ideology used by the states in an attempt to standardize what the author called "debtfare state" and the book by Dardot and Laval (2016) also discusses the financial market as a disciplining agent.

In this Brazilian scenario of financialization and growth of precarious work, this research seeks to present the means by which precarious labor is controlled by financial capital and by a debt relation, with specific focus on the role of new technologies, in the case when this debt relation is created and controlled by the cell phone and other mobile devices e apps. As explain Gabor and Brooks (2017), these new technologies allow converting financial excluded into resilient ones, which are connected predictive algorithms, allowing control over these people.

In terms of theoretical contribution, this research will seek to closer financialization literature with Labor Process Theory, seeking to show how precarious work is controlled by financial capital.

Critical Ethnography will be used as a field study method and critical hermeneutics as a method of data interpretation. The proposed field to study is the textile pole called "Sulanca", located in the state of Pernambuco, in the northeast of Brazil. The region is the second largest textile pole in Brazil, and it is known as the "Brazilian China", because it employs workers in a situation of precariousness, involving low wages, micro-entrepreneurship and informal work. The proposed period of field study is November (2018) to February (2019) with the possibility to present preliminary results in ILPC conference, in April 2019.

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## **Ethnic diversity at work and support for immigrant entitlements: studying spillovers from interethnic contact, interethnic social resources and cultural openness**

**Authors: Roderick Sluiter., Agnes Akkerrman, M. Lubbers, Katerina Manevska**

The increase in migrant workers, such as from Poland and Bulgarian, in western-European countries over the past decade has fueled the debate on the sustainability of European welfare states. Right-wing populist parties have jumped into this debate, by claiming that entitlements to social and civil rights should be confined to natives. Given the rise in popularity of right-wing populist parties, this so-called welfare chauvinism is an increasingly popular position among the public of western-European societies. Studies on welfare chauvinism typically attribute the phenomenon to cultural threat, economic competition over resources, and views on deservingness and reciprocity. As such, little attention has been given to processes at work that might as well have an influence on people's support for immigrant entitlements to social and civil rights. This is surprising, given that the work context is the prime social environment in which people interact with, for example, the eastern-European 'newcomers'. Further, increasing labor migration has fueled the debate on welfare chauvinism. In this paper, we study how ethnic diversity at work influences support for immigrant entitlements. We do so by innovatively combining insights on interethnic interactions, taken from both contact theory and cultural capital theory, with social capital theory. We rely on unique survey data from the Netherlands (N=6346) containing detailed information on the ethnic composition of the workplace, interethnic contact and social resources at work and outside work, as well as support for immigrant entitlements. Overall, this study underlines the importance of studying social relations at work for understanding current (developments in) political preferences, such as support for immigrant entitlements.

## **Neo-Paternalism as a labour regime: American Tech Employers, market paternalism and modern employment**

**Authors: Chris Smith, Yu Zheng**

This paper looks at new employer strategy with regard to the use of a form of paternalism. It frames paternalism as a labour regime, and offers an analytical approach to the modern expression of this regime in Hi Tech companies. While Marx rightly argued that economic exchange defines structural relations between workers and capitalists, social relations between the two can become habituated or framed within social labour regimes, whereby both parties build particular identities with each other. Modern US hi-tech can be considered to be based on one such labour regime, which depends on social (and cultural) relations, but with major differences with traditional paternalist labour regimes. In classical paternalism the company presents itself as a “family”. Supervisors often claim “father” role and company and managers intervene in the personal lives of employees beyond the workplace (Fitzgerald, 1988). Company and supervisors can expect unreserved loyalty and do not typically accept challenges to their authority (Krzywdzinski, 2018: 32). In Durkheimian terms, paternalism is highly personalized 'gift relationship' between master and servant, founded upon a gross power inequality (Ackers, 1998). In labour process terms we can see paternalism as a labour regime that yields certain objectives for employers: long-term labour capture; trust and loyalty through closure of the labour market within the firm; skill retention for long-term (internalization); family orientation with family forms of employment, not short-term labour capture; individual recruitment – personalized focus and employer-controlled benefits. These objectives were realised in closed and often isolated communities in earlier forms of capitalism, and were largely prior to the separation of ownership and control and rise of both professional management, organised labour and more established labour markets. However, as Smith et al (1990) have shown, companies like Cadburys practiced paternalism alongside professionalised management and a unionised workforce. US anti-union firms practiced forms of sophisticated paternalism that build welfare through the firm, to exclude unions (Jacoby, 1998). The literature on paternalism is more than an historical curiosity. As in US hi-techs (Facebook, Alphabet, Apple, Amazon) today, we can see an aspects of this management practice, but with a very different content. This we would call ‘market paternalism’ or ‘instrumental paternalism’ – trying to build short-term loyalty through four different mechanisms: 1. Labour capture or recruitment and retention - In earlier forms paternalism was for lifetime labour power capture, especially father-to-son occupational patterns, and area-based communities (Drummond, 1995). In hi-techs it is more about daily-capture or yearly capture – there is no sense of employer interest in lifetime loyalty. As markets and innovations shift constantly in hi-tech sectors the firm needs a built-in turnover of labour. So paradoxically, American hi techs have high labour churn alongside benefits and employer-dependent ‘gifts’ typical of earlier periods – free food, sports facilities, etc. Such ‘gifts’ are not designed for long-term loyalty building, but short-term retention of labour and extensive working – providing working environments that keep people at work in a long hours culture, with both intensive and extensive forms of exploitation. Management focus on keeping workers working intensively for the short-term, to maximise innovations and rotate workers out of the organisation in order to suck in new talent. There is a talent mill in operation. 2. Contract differentiation – in classical paternalism there were labour force divides, but within a sense of ‘corporate community’ where long-term relations were emphasized. In market paternalism there are pronounced insider/outsider splits – elite workers are on standard contracts, and mass of outsourced workers on self-employed and flexible contracts that make their removal easy. There is spatial division of labour, rather than integration of labour of different types into the organisation as in earlier forms of paternalism. This is ‘tiered

paternalism'. 3. Space and Place - Whereas in C20th paternalism there was a geography to labour markets – strong community, local ties and recruitment patterns - and paternalist firms were identified with towns, cities, communities (Chance, 2017). In the current period in hi-techs the firm is central but labour sourcing is global – as international migrants play a crucial role in knowledge development and transfer and feed into high patterns of labour turnover. Conditions are unitary, with paternalistic features, but labour is global – for example, the dominant role of Chinese and Indian engineers in Silicon Valley (Saxenian, 2002; Saxenian & Hsu, 2001). 4. Sexual divisions of labour and age - Cadburys (as an example of old paternalism ) operated with a rigid sexual division of labour; continuous turnover of productive labour, especially in packing lines as females left when they married - a marriage bar for women existed until 1960s (Rowlinson, 1998). Paternalism in the form of long-term-relations for the individual was gendered – males had long term employment, women workers did not – so there was flexibility. At the level of the family – several family members might be employed – mothers, fathers, daughters, and sons - but women had broken careers if they married. In Hi techs there is a gendering, but also a particular demographic, with a primacy place on recruiting youth. The sexual division of labour – techies are predominantly male and women experience problems accessing and maintaining work. But a fetishism around young workers and the division of labour is both sexual (male techies) but more especially age-based - -bias in favour of young workers, whereas in old paternalism, bias was for older experienced workers. In terms of labour process theory, paternalism can be framed as a labour regime, a specific form of exchange relations, between employers, workers and other institutional actors. The paper will explore the value of analysing companies, as in the case of American Hi-Techs, through this labour regime.

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## Solidarity at Work? Migrant Union Activism in Germany

**Authors: Damir Softic, Celia Bouali**

The preponderance of research on (labour) migration to Germany focuses mainly on labour market inclusion and education: migrants are less likely to obtain higher education, trainee positions, or a steady job. Most of the research disregards the dynamics of political and social representation and participation, especially in the context of labour struggles. The case of industrial relations in Germany, however, highlights the active involvement of migrant workers in different labour struggles - with changing relations to the (larger) trade unions. While the 1950s, 1960s and 1970s saw several wildcat migrant strikes, German unions have since made an effort to integrate migrant workers into their structures. In 2016, a representative study on the German metal worker union *IG-Metall* has found that persons with a so called 'migrant background' are equally active in union politics as their non-migrant counterparts (although they remain underrepresented in 'higher union ranks'). What explains incorporation of migrants in trade unions when it does occur? What chances do immigrants have to act in the field of trade unions as 'insiders'? How and to what extent are they able to influence the field?

The paper will explore these questions by examining migrant participation in union and works council activities. While there has been research on this issue, the different paths to union activism, their relation to issues of migration and discrimination as well as specific union policies on those issues remain relatively understudied. Against this background, our ongoing research project looks at why and how workers with a so-called 'migrant background' participate in union and works council activities. Our aim is to identify motives for and forms of union activism amongst migrant workers. We are interested in the structural, organisational, in- and out-of-firm factors that contribute to union activism among workers with a 'migrant background' as well as the differences between the union activity of migrant and non-migrant workers.

The answer to these questions, we suggest, can be found by critically re-evaluating Bourdieu's concept of habitus to take into account border-crossing phenomena. Going beyond the national embeddedness of the original Bourdieusian concept to incorporate a transnational perspective, renders visible the mechanics of how a trans-national habitus operates within a national context. Against this background, we are currently conducting individual semi-narrative interviews with (unionized) metal workers with a 'migrant background' to trace activist biographies and identify the different factors at play. In a second step, we will organize focus groups with some of the interviewees as well as other union representatives in order to analyse how individual biographies as well as union and firm policies on 'diversity' interact. The results will cumulate in two typology that illustrate different attitudes towards the migratory background and distinct representation strategies.

Our research seeks to contribute to the debate on fragmentations of labour and how they are translated into labour struggles. It also offers a different perspective on the German debate on 'integration' that still revolves around othering ascriptions and notions of cultural assimilation. In contrast, our research looks at migration in the context of the contradiction between capital and labour, focusing on migrant workers as subjects in industrial relations as well as on the question of solidarity in that context.

## Showing Solidarity the digital way

**Author: Ronald Staples**

Cooperation is one of the fundamental principles of sociality. It is a necessary prerequisite for every community and even more important for a functionally differentiated labour society. In the modern working world, labour relationships are becoming increasingly individualized. The orientation towards a collective is replaced by a radical assertion of particular interests. This is also fostered by a discourse, where the typical employee is stylized as entrepreneur. Solidarity as the basic concept of an employee's identity and the ideal mode of cooperation is thus coming under pressure. Trade unions also run the risk of representing only particular interests if the individual becomes the yardstick for action. Employees in digital fields of work are considered the spearheads of an individualized world of life and work. Workers in traditional industrial sectors are facing a growing digital divide, where white can participate on company issues digitally and blue collars do not even have access to these communication platforms.

Having these developments in mind the paper sketches a multidimensional concept of organic solidarity and then shows how solidarity relations are also effective in digitally mediatized working environments. Underlying assumption is that digitalized communication may also be suitable to organize people, not only to disseminate information. Applied to three pressing issues of labour (growing heterogeneity of workforce, dislocation of labour and marketisation of labour relations, it will be asked to what extent digital solidarity can represent an opportunity to solve these problems. These conceptual assumptions will be empirically challenged by the findings of a research projects concerned with the question of how digital transformation influences and changes co-determination. So, in the first part of the paper a multidimensional concept of 'digital solidarity' will be put to debate. If and how digital solidarity can be found in industrial relations will be discussed in the second part. The empirical sample used for this purpose consists of seven case studies, conducted throughout German industry. Each case consists of at least 8 qualitative, episodic interviews with works council members and management representatives. Additional material for analysis are observations of participatory initiatives, documents on strategy and visions of works councils and 10 qualitative interviews with experts on industrial relations and digitalization. Data will be triangulated harnessing situational analysis. This paper will make a contribution to the debate on the quality of digital communication (and its potentials for organizing) and it contributes also to the ongoing discussion of how to oppose the particularization of interests.

## **The greatest trick the devil ever pulled...? Collective action in the 'informal economy'**

**Author: Ilona Steiler**

This paper addresses the question of whether, and to which extent, people working 'informally' share occupational identities and are able to organise around collective interests. I thereby also offer a critique of the concept of 'informal work'. Based on seven months of fieldwork in the sectors of street trade and domestic work in Dar es Salaam, Tanzania, I wish to highlight two aspects which have so far received little attention in debates on collective action and trade union organising in the Global South: Firstly, workers' power, both structural and associational, depends to no small part on conceptualisations and practices concerning 'informal work' itself. Secondly, contrary to the widespread assumption that the 'informal economy' implies the absence or insufficiency of labour law and state policies, these play a key role in enabling (or disabling) collective action.

Drawing on debates in legal anthropology and political economy, my research on the dissimilar sectors of street trade and domestic work illustrates how the label of 'informal work' becomes applied to quite distinct and heterogeneous labour relations. In each sector, however, informality can be shown to resemble a continuum: intersections of gender, race, age and family status determine not only workers' levels of income, social position and access to legal and social protection, but that of their (informal) employers and clientele as well. Yet the antagonisms and solidarities thus emerging tend to be overshadowed by a focus on the informal-formal divide and on the status of employment, among Tanzanian policy makers and activists, as well as in much of the academic literature on the subject.

At the same time, legislation in Tanzania differentiates sharply between the two sectors: street trade is criminalised, whereas domestic work is fully recognised under existing labour laws. This has enabled the organisation and political representation of domestic workers by local associations and trade unions, despite the difficulties of accessing domestic workers in their workplace, the private home. By contrast, the lacking legal recognition of street trade as an occupation in its own right increases street vendors' vulnerabilities and has so far effectively impeded organisation and collective action. In addition to legislation, however, global discourses on labour protection and transnational activism can be found to influence the potential for collective action in each sector.

In conclusion, I propose that the potential for collective action is an outcome of multi-causal relations of power into which street traders and domestic workers are embedded, combined with the effects of legislation, government policies and transnational activism, rather than a matter of 'formal' or 'informal' work. My findings suggest unpacking the notion of 'informal work' as fixed category describing non-standard, unregulated and unprotected work, particularly in the Global South. Instead, the analytical focus needs to turn towards understanding processes of 'informalisation' not only as by-product of labour market transformations but also of active political and legislative choices.

# A Safer, Faster, Leaner Workplace? Worker Perspectives on Drone Technologies in the Steel Industry

**Authors: Dean Stroud, Martin Weinel, Claire Evans**

When new technologies are introduced by a manufacturing firm it is often with the aim of achieving greater efficiency and improved productivity. For a workforce expected to work with and alongside new technology this will normally mean new ways of working, as the technology modifies the production process and the work performed becomes, for example, more routine or complex, upskilled or deskilled, and so on (e.g. Braverman, 1974; Blauner, 1964); or the work might disappear altogether as technology replaces the worker and job losses ensue. Indeed, any assessment of the available evidence suggests that there are implications for work and workers emanating from technological change (see Edwards and Ramirez, 2016 for an overview). Our contribution to debates on technological innovation and new technologies in the workplace is to examine the implications for work and workers of a new piece of kit i.e. unmanned aerial vehicles (UAVs), more familiarly known as drones.

In this paper, we draw on evidence from a project that is investigating the use of drones in the steel industry. Funded by the Research Fund for Coal and Steel (RFCS) the project examines how drones can be used for monitoring gas leaks in pipes and identifying the need for repairs in roofs and chimneys. The specific aim of the project in employing drone technologies is explore how they might enhance occupational health and safety (e.g. reducing the need for work at height) and improve productivity (i.e. by identifying repairs more quickly and replacing workers, thereby reducing labour costs). The potential outcome of the project is, then, a safer more efficient workplace, but one that seemingly aims to intensify work and threatens, moreover, to remove it for some entirely; to which we might add questions of increased levels of workplace surveillance from drone camera technologies. However, during the research, it became clear that the potential use for drones within the industry is much broader than that specified by the project – with a range of applications and opportunities enthusiastically discussed by our worker participants from steel plants in Germany and Italy (e.g. for upskilling, enhanced monitoring and detection, resource efficiency, etc.).

Hence, we might ask a question similar to that raised by Edwards and Ramirez (2016: 99) in their analysis of how workers might respond to new technologies: ‘...[on what basis might] workers and trade unions consider whether to embrace or resist new technology’? Thus, we give consideration to the tension between risk and benefit, and how workers perceive the introduction of a particular piece of new technology that offers both opportunities and threats. Set within wider discussions of the digital workplace (see, for example, Pfeiffer (2017) on *Industrie 4.0*), we view the relationship between workers and the introduction of drone technology through the lens of Orlikowski’s (1992) analysis of the dimensions of technologies: intended/unintended effects; direct/indirect effects, and; the degree to which technology is reconstituted in use, to comment more broadly on technological (digital) innovation and the labour process.

We begin by discussing the steel industry context within which the drone technology is to be introduced, before locating our analysis within debates concerned with understandings of the implications for workers of the introduction of new technologies in the workplace. We then provide an account of research design and afterwards present our data and discussion.

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# **Social Upgrading and Industrial Relations: Comparing the Auto Sector in South Africa with Apparel in China and Vietnam**

**Author: Christina Teipen**

The research project “Global Value Chains – Economic and Social Upgrading” investigates the effects of the restructuring of global value chains on working conditions and trajectories of economic and social upgrading in the global North and South. It is the aim of this paper to present some selected preliminary research results and theoretical implications for the role of national as well as value chain configurations. This is especially challenging in cases where trade union activities are controlled or repressed by the state, for example in countries like China or Vietnam.

If we consider the auto versus the apparel industry and their different integration into value chains and the different national relations systems in the cases of South Africa, China and Vietnam there can be no unitary strategies for social upgrading. Although South Africa’s auto industry is comparably well organised, its spill-over effects for the national labour market have so far been insignificant. In contrast to those few auto workers who could draw advantages from their integration into global value chains, South-Africa is characterized by a high unemployment rate and gigantic income inequalities without minimum wages.

Regarding China there are more and more signs indicating that its purely low cost-based competitive advantage is becoming less important, which in the past could make use of a huge reservoir of labour depending because of missing skills on precarious working conditions in apparel production. A national government-driven strategy of social upgrading is essential here, which has established social security systems increasingly for rural areas. China’s economic upgrading led to higher wage expectations based on minimum wages even in the apparel sector and created a dynamic labour market for more demanding employment. This happened, however, without substantial trade union rights or collective bargaining as could be observed in the case of South Africa.

The most unfavourable situation prevails in Vietnam. A macroeconomic economic or social upgrading remains unknown to date. Despite its precarious working conditions, the apparel sector is therefore still a core segment of the national labour market together with expanding low skilled jobs in electronics manufacturing.

Multiple levels of analysis will be examined, which interact with each other: global value chain governance, the specifics of the selected sectors and national specifics in the field of industrial relations as well as industrial policy. The aim is to identify the factors that have led to the asymmetric distribution of value added, wages and salaries, as well as working conditions.

## **Grey-zones of work in sub-prime finance: How regulation and app-based digital technologies govern self-employed collection agents in the home credit industry**

**Authors: Esme Terry, Abigail Marks, Arek Dakessian, Dimitris Christopoulos**

The once dichotomous distinction between employment and self-employment is giving way to an increasingly blurred line in many corners of the contemporary labour market, with a growing body of literature exploring the phenomenon of ‘dependent’, ‘fake’, ‘false’, ‘bogus’ or ‘fictitious’ self-employment (Bögenhold and Klinglmair, 2016; Böheim and Muehlberger, 2006; Eurofound, 2013, 2016; ILO, 2016; Muehlberger, 2007; Muehlberger and Pasqua, 2009; Román, Congregado and Millán, 2011; Thörnquist, 2015; Williams and Horodnic, 2018). Studies have shed light on these ‘grey zones’ of work in areas such as direct selling (Bone, 2006; Moisander, Groß and Eräranta, 2018), construction work (Behling and Harvey, 2015; Vershinina et al., 2018), parcel delivery (Moore and Newsome, 2018) and sex work (Cruz, Hardy and Sanders, 2017). Indeed, the implied autonomy of an individual’s self-employed status is increasingly constrained by changing labour processes (Moore and Newsome, 2018; Tremblay and Genin, 2010). This is in part due to the commonplace introduction of digital technologies as mechanisms of control, through which firms structure power, control working practices, homogenise work and conduct surveillance of their ‘self-employed’ workforces (Evans and Kitchin, 2018; Graham and Woodcock, 2018; Howcroft and Bergvall-Kåreborn, 2018; Moisander, Groß and Eräranta, 2018; Rosenblat and Stark, 2016; Savat, 2012; Spencer, 2017).

As part of a larger, ongoing study, exploring the work of collection agents in the home credit industry, this paper answers a call from Williams and Horodnic (2018) for further sector-specific research into dependent self-employment. Based on interviews with 75 agents and managers working in Scotland and England within the home credit sector, this paper looks at the fine balance between autonomy and control for self-employed collection agents.

Prior to the introduction of digital technologies to regulate lending decisions, self-employed agents held a high level of autonomy in deciding which customers to sell loans to, largely using their discretion, ‘gut’, and past experiences to assess creditworthiness and the likelihood of repayment. In recent years, however, home credit providers have invested in the development of lending apps, partly in response to heightened institutional regulation of the industry, originally intended to ensure responsible lending. The consequence of introducing app-based technology as part of the agents’ labour processes, is that the personal autonomy of agents over lending decisions is tempered by algorithmic calculations of affordability. Additionally, findings suggest that there is a clear tension between the long-held meaning of work in home credit and the digitalisation of its labour processes. The agents’ self-employment has become highly dependent, decreasingly autonomous, characterised by tightened digital control over agents’ work and restricted by regulatory and managerial control.

## **‘Phantom employment’: Managing the double indeterminacy of labour in times of capital and labour mobility**

**Authors: Anne Theunissen, Patrizia Zanoni, Koen Van Laer**

This paper examines how the use of in-house outsourcing involving foreign companies and workers affects capital’s ability and strategies to manage the indeterminacy of labour (Braverman, 1974), both in its form of ‘effort indeterminacy’ and ‘mobility indeterminacy’ (Smith, 2006). Whereas traditionally the struggle between capital and labour focused on the former (Baldamus, 1961; Thompson, 1989), some authors have recently started to highlight how this form of indeterminacy becomes increasingly intertwined with mobility indeterminacy. Mobility indeterminacy refers to uncertainties related to workers’ decisions about where and to whom they sell their labour power (Thompson and Smith, 2009). Accordingly, the struggle surrounding mobility power has been examined both as a form of worker resistance (Smith, 2006) and as a point of focus in employer strategies to retain employees (Jacoby 1998).

To accurately understand the struggle surrounding the double indeterminacy of labour however, we need to place it against the background of a contemporary globalized capitalism characterized by the increasing mobility of both labour and capital. In the last decades, capital mobility has led to the outsourcing of parts of the production process to other (foreign) organisations, reconfiguring production processes into production networks. While some authors argue that outsourcing can magnify a client organization’s control over labour effort through the fragmentation of production (Flecker et al., 2013; Mezihorak, 2018), others warn for decreased levels of control over labour effort in fragmented organizations, for example caused by contradicting control interests between various organisational actors (Gottfried, 1992).

At the same time, labour’s increased mobility in the global economy affects both effort power and mobility power in an ambiguous way. On the one hand, the ‘good work ethic’ and ‘superior compliance’ of vulnerable groups of migrant workers increase employers’ possibilities to maximize labour effort and exploitation (Baxter-Reid, 2016; Choi, 2014). On the other hand, other groups of migrant workers intentionally accept jobs which are undesirable in the eyes of local workers to gain the required experience and skills necessary for upward career mobility, using the increased mobility options of the European labour market to facilitate their exit strategies (Alberti, 2014).

However, labour process authors have until date not sufficiently studied these mechanisms simultaneously. This study explores the contradicting dynamics arising from the simultaneous use of outsourcing and migrant workers by addressing two research questions: 1) How does in-house outsourcing to foreign companies employing migrant workers affect labour’s effort and mobility power? 2) Which practices does the client organization develop to manage the indeterminacy of the migrant labour employed by foreign subcontractors in house? We answer these research questions through an in-depth case study of a Belgian company in the meat industry, which outsources all its core meat processing tasks to three foreign subcontractors employing workers from Romania, Poland and Latvia. Our findings indicate that the client organization enacts ‘phantom’ employment by mimicking employer behaviours to control and retain the foreign subcontractors’ labour, to maximise the labour power and decrease the mobility of its subcontractors’ migrant workers.

# Short Shrift on the Short Sea: Can Action Research Reverse the Decline of European Seafarers in the Western Mediterranean?

**Author: Huw Thomas**

The process of ‘flagging-out’ vessels plying international waters is well established (Lillie 2004), whereby mobile elements of capital (such as shipping companies/ship operators) can operate in areas of less(er) regulation – ‘spaces of exception’ – by removing specific work spaces, contexts or categories of people from the protection they would normally expect to enjoy within sovereign states (Lillie 2010). In contrast, short-sea shipping between EU Member States and its near neighbours (e.g. north African countries) has traditionally been the preserve of European seafarers. A proposed ‘manning’ Directive (COM(1998)251) that would protect this work was rejected by the European Community Shipowners’ Association (ECSA) on the grounds that they had no intention of flagging out or employing ‘crews of convenience’ recruited from non-EU countries. Contrary to these assurances, and in the absence of a manning Directive to protect employment and working conditions, there has been a steady decline in the number of European seafarers employed in short-sea trades such as the Western Mediterranean. Seafaring unions appear to be ‘all at sea’ in the face of this decline, but recently initiated an organising and political campaign to preserve jobs for European seafarers.

Whereas most research on trade union revitalisation has ‘overwhelmingly concerned an orientation entailing research *on* unions, or more recently, research *for* unions’ (Huzzard and Björkman 2012: 161 original emphasis), an alternative approach is to undertake research *with* trade unions through a process of action research. Working with the European Transport Workers’ Federation (ETF) over a 6-month period, we developed an experimental ‘organising tool’ for ship inspectors working in Mediterranean ports. This tool ‘mapped’ all ships operating in the Western Mediterranean (to and from Spain, France and Italy), with details of their operator, owner, flag, route(s), nationality of crew, and any ‘human element’ deficiencies as well as any detentions due to port state control. National seafaring unions provided additional information on any collective agreements that applied to particular shipping lines and/or particular vessels, as well as other data on crewing. Data were uploaded in a simple Excel file, with vessels ‘colour coded’ according to whether they fly a ‘flag of convenience’. An indicative list of potential targets for national and international campaigns of action was also identified. Using this organising tool, the ETF/ITF and affiliated maritime unions were now in a position to target specific companies/vessels with sub-standard terms and conditions of employment, concentrating their efforts on the routes/ports most frequently visited by these companies/vessels (Thomas and Turnbull 2013).

Mapping and diagnostic techniques are typically regarded as the ‘first stage’ of any new organising ‘experiment’ (Blyton and Turnbull 2004 p.167), but in this case the database needed to be updated on a regular (annual) basis and the resources were not forthcoming to sustain the data collection process. More importantly, not all national unions engaged with the processes of ‘joint diagnosis’ and ‘joint action’ that is inherent to the action research process (Turnbull 2006 p.81). In this respect, the experiment was more akin to *inaction* research. The reasons behind the limited success of this institutional experiment are explored in this paper.

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# International Labour Standards in the Global South: Social Camouflage or Political Opportunity?

**Author: Huw Thomas**

The ‘vertical’ integration of agricultural workers into global value chains (GVCs) poses a significant challenge for traditional ‘horizontal’ forms of labour governance, most notably the ratification and enforcement of international labour standards (Thomas and Turnbull 2018). Agriculture is what the International Labour Organization (ILO) calls ‘one of the most hazardous of all economic sectors’ (ILO 2011: 5), poverty is widespread (ILO 2008), agricultural workers often lack the leverage and organisation needed to engage in collective bargaining (Riisgaard and Hammer 2011) and the ratification of agricultural-relevant ILO Conventions is limited (Lincoln 2010). Existing research has examined the role of horizontal institutional influences on employment relations across different vertical value chain configurations, however one key area of development is the incorporation and examination of other institutional influences, such as the ILO’s labour standards (Lakhani et al. 2013: 466). While some states with poor human rights performance will ratify particular labour standards as a form of ‘social camouflage’ in order to avoid or blunt criticism from the international community (Levi et al. 2013: 15) international normative agreements such as ILO Conventions can create political opportunities for domestic actors and ‘the influence of [these standards] on these societies encourages domestic groups to adapt their norms, model their behaviors, and frame their own claims around issues that are domesticated from international politics’ (Tarrow 2001: 14).

To explore the impact of labour standards in the agricultural sector I draw on ‘fieldwork in the field’, quite literally, combining questionnaires with 1,814 plantation workers and 39 focus group discussions with trade unions, plantation owners and government representatives to analyse the conditions of work in two plantation sectors (tea and palm oil) in two countries (Sri Lanka and Indonesia respectively). Whilst Sri Lanka has ratified the ILO’s Plantations Convention (C.110), Indonesia has not and so on a binary scale (0,1) they are ‘polar opposites’. The advantages of this selection arises from the fact that ‘processes of interest’ are more likely to be ‘transparently observable’ with ‘polar opposites’ (Eisenhardt 1989).

The starting point is that the Indonesian government has pursued a strategy of greater efficiency and foreign exchange earning capacity at the expense of its adverse impact on its citizens in terms of labour rights. Examples of forced and child labour were readily discovered during the fieldwork, which is hardly surprising in the context of hostile business interests, weak and fragmented trade unions, and the weak incorporation and enforcement of labour rights. In Sri Lanka, on the other hand, domestic labour rights have a long tradition in the sector and these have been maintained despite international competition. Democratic unions are sufficiently strong to bargain effectively for their members and the sector has one of the most stringent collective bargaining agreements in the global tea industry. The findings demonstrate that Sri Lankan tea workers were able to leverage the horizontal against the vertical ‘whipsawing’ tactics of transnational capital. ILO Conventions bolstered the position of horizontal actors by providing additional leverage to embed these transnational actors in the sovereign space of the member state. In Indonesia, on the other hand, weak ‘horizontal governance’, namely the poor record of ratification and enforcement of ILO Conventions, meant that palm oil workers were at the mercy of capital, leading to widespread indecent work.

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## **Beyond technological determinism: revitalising labour process analyses of technology, capital and labour**

**Authors: Paul Thompson Knut Laaser**

The rise of an intellectual and policy discourse around a ‘fourth industrial revolution’ has predictably been accompanied by a resurgence of technological determinism. This stretches from mainstream commentators predicting the idea of a wipeout of jobs by automation to leftists promoting a post-capitalist, post-work agenda. The resultant catastrophism (Wajcman 2016) obscures causation and agency. Other than call the technological determinism out and remind people that we have been here before in previous periods of disruptive technological change, is there any alternative. This paper argues that a revitalised labour process analysis offers the best means of addressing and transcending technological determinism.

Many scholar’s understandings of LPA and technology derive largely from second wave LPT and associated case studies. This literature provides invaluable insights on the concrete utilization of different technologies at work and their consequence for workers. However, they tended to suffer from the common problem to that ‘wave’ of a workplace-centric focus that tended to neglect the bigger picture, both in terms of political economy and the broader trends in technology. Our primary starting point, instead, is a political materialist reading of first wave LPA, where the basic building blocks of an understanding of the relationships between capital, science and labour were put in place. We revisit and build critically from the work of Braverman, Greenbaum, Cooley, Noble, Rosenberg, Wilkinson and others. The framework we seek to develop sets out to explore the various pressure points of contestation and choices inherent in the relations between the forces and relations of production on a macro- and meso level and the relationship between the social and the technical at the workplace level, while acknowledging different forms of institutional mediation. We engage in critical dialogue with recent work from Matt Vidal (2018) that develops an account of the same dynamics, but rests on a more traditional distinction between the forces and relations of production.

To illustrate the workings of our frame, the paper utilises two extended ‘cases’, the labour process and technology in banking/call centres and in platform-based working within the gig economy.

## **Precarity in German universities: the akademischer Mittelbau, unions and self-organisation**

**Author: Ian Towers**

The process of casualisation of the academic labour force at German universities continues to run ahead under the umbrella of neoliberalism. Particularly affected by this process is the *akademischer Mittelbau* (mid-level faculty assistants). This largest part of this group consists of the research assistants of professors. They are usually completing a doctorate under the supervision of the professor, have a teaching load, support the professor's research and on top of that carry out organisational tasks such as organising conferences. A second part of the *akademischer Mittelbau* are the teachers in the language centres that each university has, and a third part are those lecturers who have already completed their doctorates, but cannot find a full-time teaching position (contract teachers).

Common problems for the members of the *akademischer Mittelbau* are: short-term contracts, low pay and the need to carry out a great deal of unpaid extra work. Due to these poor working conditions, attempts are being made to improve them. One approach is through unions. Several unions represent the academic labour force in Germany. ver.di (United Services Union) and GEW (Education and Academic Workers' Union) are large "typical" unions, but several smaller, more radical union-type organisations like the FAU (anarcho-syndicalist) are also beginning to play a role. A second approach is self-organisation; there is some evidence that this is becoming widespread, with ad hoc groups at various universities being formed.

A significant issue is how the unions are responding to the precarisation of the academic workplace. Each of the large unions has set up task-forces and organised conferences to help the academic precariat; a national day of action is planned for November. Preliminary findings suggest, however, that affected union members are largely dissatisfied with the efforts of the unions, and this discontent is then leading to various forms of self-organisation. The groups that are active at individual universities are beginning to work together; this is particularly important for the language teachers, most of whom are foreign nationals, a group that unions have historically been relatively ineffective at representing.

The research takes a mainly qualitative approach, using grounded theory. Semi-structured interviews are being carried out with paid and non-paid union officials, members of bodies representing staff at universities, and with members of the academic precariat themselves. The research is investigating the motivations of those involved in the 'bottom-up' initiatives, the effect that this involvement has on identity, and, of course, what lessons can be learned about what makes such initiatives successful and how the 'official' unions can learn from and work with these initiatives.

## **The effects of new technologies at work on the articulation of social times: the spatial and temporal flexibility in question**

**Authors: Maria Cecilia Trionfetti, Aline Bingen**

The communication will be based on the results of a ten-month research project (May - December 2018), funded by the Belgian Minister of Social Affairs and Public Health, in collaboration with the Federal Public Service (SPF) Employment, Labour and Social Dialogue, in the context of the new initiatives on burnout. The research aims to analyze the impact of "new" forms of employment and work on well-being at work in the context of the digitalization of the economy.

While, in this context, the notion of "new" or "atypical" forms of work suggests the emergence of a completely disruptive phenomenon, the communication intends to focus on what is happening at the junction of "classic" forms of work and modes of work organization considered as "innovative" in terms of "social uses of digital technology at work" (Dujarier, 2016). Based on the mobilization of sociology's achievements in the field of occupational health, the study examines professional activities subject to forms of spatial and temporal flexibility and their effects on working conditions.

The communication will present the results of the qualitative survey currently in progress by cross-referencing them with the findings of the literature. The qualitative approach combines the conduct of semi-directive individual interviews and the organization of focus groups bringing together workers, representatives of trade unions, employers and health actors (occupational physicians or prevention advisors).

The focus groups were notably created on the basis of two types of professional activities emblematic of this "spatial and temporal flexibility", namely activities related to the delivery of orders (food or non-food and destined to companies or individuals) and activities related to the management of administrative or banking files subject to the "new ways of working". While these activities differ in terms of workers' skill levels and work content, research tends to reveal many points of convergence in terms of the use of mobile technologies and spatial and temporal flexibility (Taskin, 2010; Vendramin *et al.*, 2016) and their effects on well-being at work.

The communication aims to present the transversal analysis of the work situations analyzed. More specifically, it will focus on the psychosocial risks resulting from the use of digital technology as a management tool (Brugière, 2018) and on the question of their impact on the blurring of boundaries between work and private life. Behind "flexible and autonomous" time management, can digital management practices become, on the contrary, a source of tension? (Pompa, 2013; Mettling, 2015; Vendramin *et al.*, 2016; Eurofound, 2017). To what extent do these working conditions encourage workers to be more available and to demonstrate results? (Eurofound, 2015; 2016; Huws *et al.*, 2017).

# **Knowledge-Based Economy and Flexploitation: Proletarianization of Knowledge Workers in the Post-Fordist Era**

**Author: Rabia Burcu Uluyurt**

The capitalist economy is undergoing a post-Fordist restructuring of organization of work and concomitant transformations in the social mode of regulations since the late-1970s. On the one hand, (one of the) competing emerging models of restructuring – the knowledge-based economy, demands a highly-skilled and flexible workforce for a relatively coherent accumulation of capital; and, on the other, rapid flexibilization of labour markets across the globe subjugates ever-growing numbers of the labouring class to structural violence within and outside the labour process. Flexibility, whether in the labour market or labour process, has been a major force driving proletarianization over the last couple of decades, resulting in further exploitation – or flexploitation – of the labouring class. This trend is affecting all the segments of the working class including those who have been previously considered immune to the insecurity. Therefore, despite the prevalent narrative of a friction-free, knowledge-based society, a trend towards flexibilization of labour markets is evident across the globe, perhaps more so in the context of an emerging accumulation strategy based on knowledge, innovation and intellectual property rights.

The changes in Turkey's labour regime since the turn of the millennium has been in line with those global trends. The articulation of Turkish economy to the global economy in terms of knowledge-producing work within the third international division of labour and the exercise of flexibility as a control mechanism in the particular neoliberal environment of the country have produced further inequalities and generated a profound transformation in societal relations. In this paper, we explore the concepts of flexibility and knowledge-based economy as material mechanisms and discursive aspects of accumulation. Our aim is to elaborate their role in the new organization of work and in the exercise of micro and macro technologies of control of labour both theoretically and empirically, and their reflections in material experiences of labouring class in the context of a late developing economy.

## **Intermediate stages of digitalisation in the market for live music: Or, why isn't there an Uber for musicians?**

**Authors: Charles Umney, Ian Greer; Dario Azzellini**

This paper examines how labour markets and labour processes for live musicians are affected by the competition-intensifying logic of digital "platforms". It examines the emergence of online agencies in music work, which challenge the role of the traditional cultural agent (the "impresario" figure who uses cultural/social capital to act as a gatekeeper, limiting competition for work). Instead, they offer a high-volume, low-cost model in which buyers can use enquiry forms and drop-down menus to browse and compare potentially thousands of acts.

Our research presents data from a small Hans Boeckler Foundation-funded project. We have constructed a database of British and German web-based intermediaries in live music, clustering them according to relative levels of automation and different methods of organising transactions. We have supplemented these insights with a series of interviews with musicians and intermediaries in the UK and Germany. The guiding questions are: what forms of digital intermediation exist in live music? What consequences can we expect for the quality of live music work? And, why have we not seen more automation?

The paper's main empirical contribution is to consider the consequences of these technology-driven industry changes for the conditions of live music work. We highlight various concerns: difficulties of collective bargaining, intensified price competition, and stronger labour process control through the threat of disconnection. Our central empirical argument is that we can identify the emergence of what we call "digitalised matching services": in other words, agencies who use their online resources not to act as a representative of musicians, but to function as a venue in which customers can browse and compare acts according to price and user feedback.

The theoretical contribution is to link this discussion to wider debates on digital technology and work organisation. We note that the online intermediaries we discuss still feature high degrees of personal managerial interlocution in arranging transactions. Why haven't we seen a higher degree of automation in this sector? Why, as one Reddit user asks, is there no "Uber for musicians"? Our explanation focuses on two factors. First, the complicated contingencies involved in live music transactions (such as travel costs, food provision, required repertoire) act as a handbrake on fully-automating exchanges. Second, the importance of reputation remains high, which jeopardises scope for intermediary capitals to grow.

# **Interplay and Interest Articulation in the Multilevel Employee Representation System**

**Authors: Christine Üyük, Thomas Haipeter**

The rising global competition pressure between companies leads to increasing transnational restructuring activities in multinational companies, thus employee representatives have in many cases only limited intervention options on local and national level. In addition, it is very simple for the employers to play off different locations against one another. For example by threatening with transfer of production to areas with lower production costs and the closure of the side. Therefore, collective action on transnational level and solidarity between the countries is needed. Transnational protest actions are one form of such a collective action. As not every restructuring phase leads to a transnational protest action, the purpose of the presentation is to show why or why not and under which conditions transnational protest action as collective form of interest representation was chosen.

However, the work between the employee representatives is hampered by the complexity of the transnational representation system with its Local, National, European and Transnational level of interest representation (multi-level system). Numerous obstacles like different languages, different interest representation cultures, different unions, missing interest representation structure in some countries, and diverging interests between the countries hinder the cooperation. Therefore, the presentation deals secondly with the question, how the interplay and the interest articulation between the employee representatives on the different levels of interest representation in the phase of restructuring works and how transnational protest actions could be organized. Important participating actors and levels of actor will be identified. Aim is the analysis of the coordination process between the different levels of interest representation on the basis of a structuration theory (Giddens) and empirical case studies.

The study presented is based on findings of a project about interest articulation in national and transnational action frameworks financed by the German Research Foundation (DFG) and a PhD which is implemented in this context. Therefore, we can rely on 12 company case studies from different sectors, each case based on seven to nine qualitative interviews with Works Councils and Union Representatives from different employee representation levels and different countries.

## **Industrial districts and the labor strikes in Chile. A comparison between Antofagasta, Los Lagos and Santiago districts**

**Authors: Diego Velásquez**

From the union revitalization studies, the focus has been on the power resource approach. Four main resources are recognized: structural power, associative power, institutional power and social power (Schmalz 2018, Silver, 2003, Wright, 2000). However, this theory - with roots mainly in sociology and political science - does not consider geographic factors of its distribution and the conditions that able its presence in the territories. Based on the theory of industrial districts (Markusen, 2006), this research asks how the configuration of companies in the territory allows the availability of resources of power of unions. For this purpose, I'll study the actions of strikers in Chile according to the general features of strikes, his institutional paths and the tactics deployed, and comparing three ditricts: the Antofagasta region, Los Lagos Region and Metropolitan Region.

## **Contradictions of the labour process, worker empowerment and capitalist inefficiency**

**Author: Matt Vidal**

I articulate a classical-Marxist theory of technical change in the capitalist labour process, highlighting two contradictions. The management contradiction is the conflict managers experience between coordination (to increase efficiency) and discipline (to ensure valorisation). The workforce contradiction is the tension workers experience between productive socialisation and alienation. I submit that both contradictions were substantially muted from the earliest stages of capitalism through the Fordist stage but have become intensified in the postfordist period. Under postfordism, the basis of efficiency is economies of scope and flexibility, and thus there is a real efficiency advantage to empowering workers, via both multiskilling and employee involvement in problem solving and decision making. Postfordist capitalism has thus initiated an intensification of the management and workforce contradictions. In response, capitalist management is increasingly impeding the growth of the productive forces by failing to empower workers.

# **The trouble with labour market intermediaries: A realist synthesis of existing theory and research**

**Author: Steve Vincent**

This paper will develop a realist synthesis of existing theory and research on the employment and broader economic consequences of labour market intermediaries (LMIs). LMIs are agencies that act between workers and employers to place workers in jobs. They include: private sector businesses, such as employment agencies, recruitment consultancies, and employment services providers; public sector agencies, including job centres, local authorities and vocational colleges; and, charitable or third-sector organisations that seek connect more marginal groups with work. In this context, realist synthesis aims to synthesise existing theory and research with the objective of identifying the causal mechanisms or generative structures that account for observed empirical outcomes (Brannan, et al, 2017). In this case, outcomes associated with the activities of LMIs will be placed at the centre of a causal analysis of the various conditions that enable specific employment related events or occurrences. Arguments about the employment-based consequences of LMIs are various and mixed. On the positive side, and in theory, LMIs may be social mechanisms that ameliorate or solve the UK's employment challenges. The UK suffers various skills shortages, a problem which may be exacerbated by Brexit. Employers may engage with LMIs to plug skills gaps, with LMIs acting as broker between employers, workers and trainers. Such inter-organisational relations can also address underemployment in the UK, wherein workers are too often overqualified for and underused in their jobs. Here, LMIs may allocate people to work that reflects their skills, which should release untapped potential and catalyse wage and productivity growth. Public sector agencies may also engage with LMIs to enable access to the rare professional skills. And, relations between employers and LMIs can also aid marginal groups, who have suffered reductions in social benefits under austerity, by activating novel forms of employment. These positive outcomes are likely to be catalysed by contextual forces, such as pro-active employer strategies, high demand for specific skills, and specific public policy interventions, but the circumstances of positive outcomes require detailed empirically and theoretical determination. However, LMI-client relations may also exacerbate the UK's employment challenges. LMI-client relations may enable "churn" between low-wage, low productivity employers. They may allocate over-qualified workers to less skilled jobs and maintain the UK's widely publicised rump of resilient but underproductive firms (Strauss, 2018). Agency workers, which many LMIs place, are also known to cause tensions in employment relations across various sectors, which may be counter-productive (Rubery, et al. 2002). Consequentially, LMI-client relations may contribute to the UK's "productivity puzzle", in which, despite historically low unemployment, UK productivity is no higher than before the financial crisis (ONS, 2018). Less desirable outcomes are also likely to be catalysed by contextual forces, such as financial austerity, public policies which force workers into any job, short-term variations in demand for workers, less regulated occupations and areas of industrial economic decline, but the specific causes of less beneficial outcomes also require more detailed analysis (see Benner, et al, 2007). To generate a better understanding of how and why LMIs impact employment as they do, this realist synthesis will ask (1) how do diverse types of LMI-client relation impact to the UK's employment challenges? And, (2) how are outcomes shaped by the contexts in which LMI-client relations occur? In the analysis presented, empirical outcomes will be assessed in terms of existing data about wages, skills and productiveness [e.g. growth, innovation] associated with specific types LMI activities. To understand the influence of context, the synthesis will undertake a theoretical inquiry into the ways in which LMIs are enabled and constrained by their context(s.) These contexts include: a labour market context; a relational context of networks, organisation, and associations [etc.];

a legal or regulatory context, of employment laws/contracts and public policies; a resourcing context to LMIs work [e.g. funding and incentives]; and, a value context of the preferences, desires and objectives. The outcome will be a critical review of the existing knowledge in this area and a more culminative understanding variable impacts of LMIs on labour market outcomes.

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# The Power of Prediction: People Analytics at Work

**Authors: Uwe Vormbusch, Peter Kels**

By collecting and connecting huge amounts of data, people analytics is designed to establish new possibilities to evaluate and control staff and to raise the effectiveness of people management practices (Manuti/de Palma 2018; Goodell/King 2016; Sullivan 2013). From the perspective of ‘knowledge capitalism’, people analytics is responding to the need "to make the intangible assets employees [...] embody computable and calculable" (Vormbusch 2007, p. 92). For example, the entire communication of workers, or rather their email, their use of phone and social media, their operative and even private networks ought to be scanned, then merged in a unified data space, allowing Human Resources and an emerging rank of data specialists to create ‘data doubles’ (Haggerty/Ericson 2000) readily available for manifold analysis.

In a first step, the talk will outline the general concept of people analytics with special attention to the specific knowledge performed by algorithms and Big Data. For this purpose, we are simultaneously drawing on management literature and AI-research as well as on economic and cultural sociology.

In a second step, our talk addresses the following conceptual and theoretical issues:

- 1) What opportunities do workers have to evade or flex control to their favor if every single *like* on social media platforms, every single mail they are writing is monitored, thereby extracting large quantities of unpaid ‘data labour’? Are strategies of ‘gaming the system’ still of use in this context of enhanced transparency and visibility?
- 2) What have critical algorithm studies (Gillespie/Seaver 2018) to offer when it comes to the analysis of power and resistance at the shop floor? Could it be possible to transfer strategies of „sousveillance“ (Mann 2004) to the workplace?
- 3) It has always been workers’ informal task to get things done by bypassing official organizational procedures, normally tolerated by middle management. Do algorithms and Big Data overturn the established lines of conflict in work organizations in the sense that the ever contested balance between workers and management is overlapped by an emerging conflict between a new class of data specialists (in-house as well as major global players such as Microsoft, IBM and Oracle, which are processing data of thousands of corporations, then selling data-based analyses back to their original contexts) on the one hand, workers, HR-Managers and middle management alike on the other? Is algorithmic knowledge therefore unintendedly leading to shifting alliances at the shop floor?

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# The experience of well-being in low paid service work: A multiple case study

**Author: Victoria Walker**

Low pay poses significant social problems in the UK due to the precarious nature and poor quality of this work. Approximately 23% of workers are in a low paying job, many of which are highly insecure and unpredictable, as the use of non-standard working arrangements are common place in low paying sectors (Clarke and D'Arcy, 2016). Low wage work is most common amongst marginal workers in the labour market, and disproportionately affects women, young people, disabled workers, migrants and ethnic minorities (McKnight et al., 2016). Job quality and employment conditions in low paying work remain poor, with limited opportunity for workers to progress into better paying work. These poor conditions can lead to workers becoming trapped in the 'low pay, no pay' cycle', where low paid workers are more likely to become unemployed, and unemployment increases the likelihood of re-entering the labour market in a low paid position (Shildrick et al., 2012). Workers can find themselves trapped in low paid work for extended periods of time, with a recent study of low paid workers in the UK over a ten-year period finding that 25% of these employees were low paid in every single year (D'Arcy and Finch, 2017). Various research has demonstrated the high risk of poverty among low paid workers, and the linkages between the low pay, no pay cycle and recurrent poverty (Maitre et al., 2012, Shildrick et al., 2012). Low pay also makes it difficult to sustain the costs of being in work, such as childcare, transport, food, clothing and social aspects, all of which can act as structural barriers to escaping low wage work (Goulden, 2010). Furthermore, poor pay and working conditions are also associated with poorer physical and mental health (Cottini, 2012). The experience of low wage work therefore has significant consequences for workers that reach far beyond their working lives, calling into question the effect that low wage work has on the well-being of workers.

The employer too has a considerable role to play in this experience, as the perceived quality of employees' experiences at work significantly impacts their well-being, and HRM practices and policies directly affect the quality of those experiences (Peccei et al. 2013). This study considers employers in the retail, hospitality and social care sectors, which are well known using exploitative employment and HR practices. These sectors represent a significant proportion of low wage work in the UK, and have rarely been considered concurrently.

Therefore, this study employs a qualitative multiple case study approach, examining an organisation in each of these sectors, exploring the underlying philosophies of management, the use of HR practices within low wage, and how these HR practices affect the experience of low wage work. Drawing of approximately 50 semi-structured interviews with senior managers, line managers and frontline staff, this study unpacks the complex experience of employee well-being in low wage work from multiple perspectives, using a resource-based perspective to explain the varying outcomes that exist for employees.

## **Calling and pay: the response to unsustainable working conditions in a charitable organization**

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Employee relations proper have been under-researched in the important and expanding charity sector in the UK. While there are some limited studies none seeks to combine traditional employee relations focus of pay, performance, and the internal labour market with the concerns of industrial sociology such as labour process, power relations, and ideological disposition. This paper makes a start in seeking to remedy that research gap. The paper is also timely as pressures on large charities in the UK are growing: the main recent changes come from exogenous shocks due to (1) changes in funds from mainly grants to local authority contracts, and (2) scandals about sexual harassment and bullying at work that have damaged their reputational standing among the public and politicians. This set of external pressures has created a crisis within the employment system in many charities with many staff leaving, despite some sense of wishing to stay due to the powerful influence of being involved in areas of social life where a ‘calling’ may offset poor pay and conditions, and where labour management remains amateurish.

Charitable organisations are rooted in volunteerism among faith-based and other groups wishing to address particular community needs. There are over 160,000 voluntary organisations, employ more than 880,000 staff and contribute £12.2 billion to the UK economy in 2016-2017 (UK Civil Society Almanac, 2017). Their work touches millions beneficiaries, in particular, children and young people, with 28% of charities specify this group (NCVO, 2017). Their altruistic ethos has generated expectations among their own staff that relatively lower wages and poorer working conditions are acceptable, alongside unpaid overtime and self-sacrifice for the benefits of service users (Baines et al., 2014). This sector has traditionally attracted highly committed individuals, many of whom live their values and define their identity through work (Cunningham, 2010). However, the opportunity to work in tandem with one’s values, for and with a particular client population, is thought to come at the costs of lower wages and difficult working conditions (Nickson et al., 2008, Baluch, 2017). Such value-based job satisfaction is consistently reported as the key aspect of work that draws and retains staff in the nonprofit sector (Parry and Keillihier, 2011).

This sector has undergone a profound economic change, reflected by 54% statutory grants decline between 2003/04 and 2013/2014 from £6.1 billion to £2.8 billion (NCVO, 2016). Charities have to bid with private sector competitors for contracts from the central government and local government, which tends to be shorter, 1-2 years, the standard one is 3 years due to the nature of election. They are generally disadvantaged to secure contracts due to the greater expectations of professionalism and the ability to demonstrate measurable outcomes from their work by commissioners. The “Golden pound” rule to spend every penny on the beneficiaries has pressurized the winning charities to self-fund core costs, including staffing, project management, office costs, accountancy and regularity compliance (House of Lords report, 2017). Therefore, the shortfall was “absorbed” by the winning charities through passing on to staff.

As a result the finances of charitable organizations are partly tied to their market performance when bidding against private providers for local authority contracts. This has been a much tougher task since the 2008 recession and subsequent austerity Measures. Consequently, fiscal stress and the management of risk associated with contract bidding have changed the nature of the employment relationship. Staff evaluation of their employment experiences in this sector, however, have sharply deteriorated. CIPD research (2014, 2016, 2017) based on about 300 observations has revealed that voluntary sector staff when compared with those in the public

and private sector reported lower staff job satisfaction, higher sick leave, and higher turnover intention rates. These findings have been complemented by case studies which showed increased precarious employment conditions due to project-based contracts and work intensification caused by cost-benefit measures (Cunningham 2012; Baluch, 2017).

This raises sharp questions within the employee relations' framework in at least two aspects

1. Does the social purpose, 'calling', still matter to staff in the voluntary sector?
2. Will the employment relations in the charitable sector become more like those in the business sector proper? Namely, that pay, working conditions, and task activity are becoming as important as or even more than social/religious purpose in the charitable organizations.

This study explores the employment relations within one branch of an international faith-based organization between 2017 and 2018. A staff survey was undertaken among 200 employees in 2017, after one year, we attained actual staff turnover data. The empirical results (logit and survival analysis) show that 'felt job exhaustion' significantly contributed to quitting even among those who were on a permanent contract. Good value fit reduced the likelihood to resign only among those staff who felt receiving comparable pay of the same job role in the market. The theoretical and empirical implications were discussed.

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## **The introduction, implementation and employment outcomes of the new digital technologies**

**Authors: Chris Warhurst, Sudipa Sarkar, Wil Hunt**

The current debate about AI centres on future massive job losses. Some analyses temper these claims, pointing out that job creation and job reconfiguration are as likely as job destruction. These concerns about the effect of new technology on jobs and work are not new. Current debate, however, is underpinned by technological determinism. Past debate recognised that choice influences the adoption and use of new technologies. This choice is exercised by powerful actors within companies. Current debates overlook such choices and who makes them and why they are made. To understand the impact of the new digital technologies on jobs and work, what is required is research into these technologies that is sensitive to this old approach. This paper reports such research. Undertaken with the UK's CIPD in 2018, its survey sampled business leaders from organisations from a cross section of the UK economy. It examines why organisations invest in new technologies, how new technologies are introduced and implemented, who makes those decisions and the outcomes of those decisions for jobs and work. Preliminary findings indicate that nearly a third of organisations introduced some sort of AI-enabled technology during the last five years. The most common reasons for investing in AI-enabled technology were: to improve the quality of goods and/or services; deliver goods or services more cheaply; and to reduce overall costs. The departments most commonly consulted were: production/operations; R&D and IT. HR departments were least likely to be consulted. In terms of implementation, the departments most likely to be involved were similar, with HR again least likely to be involved. The introduction of AI for physical tasks was reported to more likely affect those working in production/operations and IT, whereas AI for cognitive tasks was more likely to lead to changes in marketing and sales and/or accounting and finance departments. The occupational groups most likely affected by the introduction of AI were: professional and higher technical staff; managers, administrators and intermediate managerial staff. Semi-skilled and unskilled manual workers were less likely to be affected. Jobs were reported to become more secure in around half of organisations but less secure in a fifth. AI for physical tasks appears to provide more job security generally whereas AI for cognitive tasks leads to more security for some and less security for other workers. AI also leads to more control over work hours and job tasks. These findings challenge many current assertions about the impact of AI. They highlight that AI plays out differently across and within organisations, that job losses are not inevitable, that its impact varies by occupation and that some aspects of work can improved. What is of concern, but perhaps of little surprise, is the relative marginalisation of HR in decision-making. These findings both signal the need for awareness of the impact made by different types of AI and the need to return to analysis sensitive to the choices made by key actors in organisations about new technology introduction and implementation.

## **Poor working conditions in Japan: labour market reform and union response**

**Author: Hiroaki Richard Watanabe**

This paper addresses the question of how and why Japanese working conditions have deteriorated since the collapse of the bubble economy in the early 1990s. The paper argues that, while labour market reform has contributed to the poor working conditions of a larger number of workers, the ways labour unions responded to employers' and the government's attempts to deregulate the labour market has also contributed to the deteriorated working conditions in Japan. In contrast to the interpretation typically found in the dual labour market literature, however, the working conditions in Japan have deteriorated not only for non-regular workers but also for a larger number of regular workers. While we can identify the dual labour markets in Japan in terms of wages, job protection, fringe benefits and so on, the percentage of regular workers who have to engage in long hours of overtime work remains high. In addition, the wage growth of regular workers remains stagnant and the scope of regular workers who can benefit from job protection under lifetime employment has decreased due to the diversification of regular employment (Watanabe, 2018).

This paper employs a theoretical perspective and approach based not only on the concept of the power resources of unions but also their preferences as a methodology for answering the above-mentioned research question. Although the labour market reform implemented by the dominant centre-right government of the Liberal Democratic Party (LDP) contributed to the degradation of working conditions by increasing low-paid, precarious non-regular employment and making the use of regular employment more flexible, both in terms of working-time rules and job protection, the ways Japanese labour unions responded to the reform attempts also contributed to poorer working conditions. Instead of resisting the deregulatory reform by maintaining labour solidarity, Japanese unions have been fragmented between mainstream, dominant 'enterprise' unions with incentives to cooperate with management, on the one hand, and other unions that are much more concerned about the working conditions of individual workers but suffer from small power resources, on the other hand. Although the power resources of enterprise unions vis-à-vis employers have declined due to such factors as the changes in labour policy making in a way to represent employers' interests to a greater extent at the cost of unions and individual workers, mainstream enterprise unions have allowed the LDP government to implement the deregulatory reform due to their preferences to maintain cooperative relations with employers and thus protect their jobs rather than attempting to solve the plights of individual workers by maintaining labour solidarity. The paper contributes to the literature of the power resources of unions by identifying the importance of examining their preferences in understanding union behaviour and the results of labour market reforms. The paper also contributes to the literature of labour market dualism by identifying more flexible regular employment despite union resistance due to the increased power resources of employers vis-à-vis labour unions and workers.

## **Finding collectivity in insecurity? Strikes by non-standard workers**

**Authors: Vera Wegmann, Sian Moore**

The episodic and desynchronised nature of precarious work would suggest atomisation that is at odds with social relationships at work, collectivity generated by the labour process and in particular collective organisation (Moore et. al., 2018). At the same time the Taylor Review of Modern Working Practices (2017) proposes that the ‘flexibility’ generated by non-standard contracts reflects the preferences and lifestyles of certain groups of workers. These assumptions have been challenged by the mobilisation of precarious and often young workers in the #McStrike movement with industrial action at Deliveroo, Uber, UberEats, McDonalds, Wetherspoons and TGI Fridays often organised by independent trade unions. These workers may be on Zero Hours Contracts, Minimum Hour Contracts or so-called ‘self-employed’, characterised by insecurity, limited employment rights, uncertain hours, low pay and unpaid labour. Such work offers little training or long-term progression and management is reduced to the scheduling of hours and continual recruitment in the light of high turnover. The purpose of this paper is to explore how social relationships develop amongst non-standard workers and how this transforms itself into collective organisation and action, including how these workers organise strikes. The paper thereby feeds into broader discussions on the future of trade unionism and new ways of organising around work, which go beyond the workplace and might demand new workers institutions (Bieler, 2014; Holgate 2015; Wegmann 2018). We follow an action-research methodology and draw on 20 in-depth interviews and focus group discussions with non-standard workers who have taken strike action in London. Access to the field is facilitated by the primary researchers involvement with independent trade unions in these workers organise. The aim is knowledge production that is useful for the struggle of non-standard workers and to allow participants to construct their own narrative through dialogue (Brydon-Miller et al., 2003; Bradbury and Reason, 2008; Mackewn, 2008). Thematically the analysis will focus upon:

- The immediate motivations for strike action;
- The perception of risk and opportunity costs in terms of strike action;
- The social and solidarity relations that lead to collective organisation and strike action
- The role of trade unions in strike action;
- The concept of organisational commitment amongst striking workers;
- The concept of a working life

While insecure work might not seem a propitious source of collective action, such conditions might suggest that the capacity for organisational commitment may be tenuous and further raise issues about the long term attachment of young people to work, particularly in a period where they may have little permanency in living arrangements.

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## **Public Administration Work Revisited. Dimensions of digital literacies analysis beyond the automation paradigm**

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In the current discussion about the consequences of digitisation in the workplace, concrete qualifications and literacies that are useful in the context of these new working worlds are rarely discussed. The question which competencies could be transferred to artificial intelligence dominates, which is often reduced to the question of man or machine. Another approach is to explore which competencies and skills are needed in the course of an ongoing digitisation of our lives. In this context, ICT-related skills are named but referred to mainly as instrumental competencies for the use of information technology or on the level of management. To cope with work in digital work contexts, a broader approach to competences in terms of digital literacy is needed, which does not refer to the simple addition of competencies and skills, but identifies digital literacy as part of a person's identity (Martin 2008: 167). There are several literacy conceptions that can be drawn from literature, e.g. the concept of digital competence offered by Larraz (2013: 90) for the context of universities. It includes information literacy, computer literacy (handling of technology), media literacy (for multimedia messages) and communication literacy for participating ethically and democratically in digital communication. Our aim is to identify further dimensions of digital literacies to develop this subject further.

To do so, we analyse the field of public administration work. In this field of work, the greatest automation potentials are expected due to the high formalisation of work. Yet, there is currently no evidence to support such an assumption. On the contrary, already in earlier discussions in the 1960s and 1970s under the term "administrative automation", it became clear that this is not a compelling development. So far, a standardisation of work (Carter et al. 2011) and, at the same time, a subjectivisation of work have become apparent. Characteristic of the latter development is the emergence of more complex activity and responsibility contexts and also an emancipation of rigid hierarchies through information. Recent evidence from an exploratory study (Gerber et al. 2018) shows that employees demand for support to develop digital literacies. Against this background, we investigate the transformation of work and the practices in dealing with technology in public administration work in order to gain new insights into the formation of digital literacies. To do so, it is important to identify dimensions for further research on digital literacies. Hence, we will discuss those dimensions with the ILPC audience and present first empirical insights of our research in progress.

# Learning from the enemy? – Onsite subcontracting, organizational learning and works councils

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Labour process theory places the historical evolution of the (solutions to) the transformation problem of labour at the center of its argument (Little 1982). Implicitly it is assumed - apart from historical observations of the internal contract or putting-out system - that workers are employed in vertically integrated firms. Recent reorganizations of the value chain have challenged this focus. The management of global production networks in different sectors and especially forms of onsite subcontracting dissolve vertically-integrated firms (Greer Doellgast 2007; Hertwig et al. 2018) creating new management challenges. Nearly nothing is known about the effect when firm's boundaries are redrawn for HRM (but see Marchington et al. 2004). Therefore, we compare two food processing firms which use onsite subcontracting. Based on semi-structured interviews with managers and works councillors we analyze the practices of HRM which turn out to be quite different. We show in our paper that a sufficient solution to the transformation problem with labour power depends on advanced HRM practices and that repressive regimes are dysfunctional.

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# **Platform work: surviving algorithmic insecurity and the automation of management**

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A recent survey found that 8% of the working-age population across 14 EU countries work via gig economy platforms at least once a month (Pesole et al. 2018). If this finding holds across the EU, this would equate to 26 million European workers. The gig economy refers to people using online platforms to sell their labour (Taylor et al., 2017). These platforms enable the automation of core management functions such as spatial and temporal task allocation and labour control.

Local gig economy platforms, such as Uber, Deliveroo, Foodora and AmazonFlex, in the transport, food delivery and courier sectors have attracted much public attention. However, similar numbers of workers are actually working remotely, usually from their homes, via gig economy platforms (Pesole et al., 2018). This platform-based remote digital work is sometimes referred to as ‘crowdwork’ or ‘online gig work’. It is growing rapidly and includes data entry, translation, transcription, Internet marketing, content creation, programming and graphic design (Kässi and Lehdonvirta, 2016). The more visible local gig economy has been the focus of much public concern, but much less attention has been paid to the experiences of remote gig workers. We address this situation with a cross-national study of remote gig workers in both high- and middle-income countries. Our findings are based on semi-structured interviews (N=81) with 35 remote gig workers in the Global North (N. America and the UK) and 35 in the Global South (the Philippines), and 11 with freelancer community advocates; and on participant observation of 15 remote gig worker meetups and events (in San Francisco, Los Angeles, New York, Manila and London).

Algorithmic control in the remote gig economy centres on platform-based reputation systems (Lehdonvirta et al., 2018; Wood et al, 2018). That these reputations only exist on a particular platform mean that workers can become locked into a platform and thus dependent on it. This creates a new form of A.I induced precarity in which workers’ livelihoods are reliant on platform reputations created by opaque algorithms over which workers have little direct control. Moreover, negative client feedback was felt to significantly damage a workers’ future earning ability. Fear of harsh feedback and changes to platforms were sources of constant worry for many workers, which we term ‘algorithmic insecurity’.

In this paper we explore workers’ individual and collective survival strategies. Individual survival strategies included learning how to manage client demands and filter potentially vindictive clients. Nevertheless, many workers ended up doing unpaid labour to keep clients happy and some had even refunded clients and provided their labour completely free to avoid receiving negative feedback. However, we find that this insecurity also pulls workers into social media groups where they seek advice on how to deal with difficult clients and non-payment, and warn each other of bad clients. These self-organised communities could, we argue, form the basis of collective efforts to challenge insecurity in the gig economy.

## **Work and Artificial Intelligence: making, faking, and breaking**

**Author: Jamie Woodcock**

Technology has shaped and reshaped work in various ways throughout history. Digital technology is continuing to create widespread change across different kinds of work, this is set to intensify with the increasing use of artificial intelligence (AI). So far, there has been documented use of AI in the hiring, managing and firing of workers. What is less understood is what the effects of this is on the labour process, workers, and managers. Although platform work uses AI extensively to plan, manage, and control workers, there is less little empirical research on how these operate in practice. In this paper, work and AI are addressed through three lines of analysis: “making” exploring how workers are being used to train AI datasets (and their potential replacements) as well as the work of software developers; “faking”, discussing the increased use of AI as a smokescreen to hide managerial decisions making process and accountability; and “breaking”, highlighting resistance practices, both emergent and potential, that workers are experimenting with. While there has been much focus of AI in platform work, it is increasingly being used in other forms of work. Disentangling the ways in which AI works in practice, as well as understanding how it can be resisted, is an increasingly pressing concern for both workers and researchers. The three-part understanding of AI provides a basis for addressing these.

## **Coworking Community and Entrepreneurial Identity**

**Authors: Adrian Wright, Gemma Wibberley, Dorota Marsh**

The mainstream discourse of enterprise tends to romanticise self-employment as fulfilling and liberating, offering a readily accessible narrative for shaping the identity of entrepreneurs. However, for precarious entrepreneurs on the margins of entrepreneurship, the clichéd narratives are far away from lived experience of working for low returns, accompanied by anxieties, isolation and individualisation. In the absence of traditional structures, work arrangements and attachments to strong organisational contexts, the entrepreneurs' work identity is especially ambiguous. Dealing with the fragmented nature of self-employment, fluidity, uncertainty and a lack of work based social relations, individuals face challenges in mediating conflicting influences to construct coherent self-narratives.

This paper examines how a Coworking space helps to shape and frame entrepreneurs' identities of those who work within it. Coworking workplaces are shared spaces where people do their own work alongside each other. Individuals often work alone but share, and pay for, space, resources and being a 'member' of a community. The socio-economic context of which Coworking is embedded, characterises the changes in contemporary work of self-employment, including associated characteristics of risk, precarious work and 'flexible' labour conditions. As Coworking spaces are predicted to continue to rise, it is important to understand the conditions within this 'third space' of work. Using in depth interviews and ethnography this paper examines how the rituals and activities in the Coworking space, help shape and frame the understanding that the cohort has of their work and the expression of entrepreneurial identities. The papers also explores the importance of participation in this community, not only for dealing with precarious work, but also for mediating those dimensions of their entrepreneurial identity, which were inadequately sustained outside this community. It finds that Coworking offered a route to escape the inhospitable conditions of previous work environments and gave enhanced meaning to those within the Coworking community. However, the strategies undertaken in the community for dealing with precarious work and mediating entrepreneurial identity, often had the potential to reinforce the inhospitable and precarious conditions for these workers.

# Working in men's territory: The Case of Japanese Women's careers

**Authors: Huiping Xian, Savita Kumra, Sashiko Takeda**

Introduction Japan still have less than 10 percent of managerial positions occupied by women (MIAC, 2017) and ranked second –lowest among all OECD countries in The Economist (2018) glass ceiling index. Japanese firms' life-long employment and a double-track system have been widely criticised for hindering women's career development. Men are often hired on career-track and assigned to regular positions, which require professional knowledge or key skills and engage in core business tasks (Suzuki, 2010). Female employees in non-career track positions are hired typically as Hisho (assistant) to conduct "general duties" or clerical work. Nevertheless, a small number of women stayed on career track. Drawing on theories of gendered organisation and women's careers in male dominated fields, we show that Japanese women careerists encountered distinctive cultural and organisational issues which made them adopt extreme coping measures but ultimately faced personal costs. Women working in men's field The gendered organisation perspective proposes that women's lack of progress can be attributed to cultural and institutional barriers embedded in corporations (Ferguson, 1984). Organisational structure is actually a reproduction of inequality in the surrounding society (Acker, 1990; Kanter, 1977). Organisational logic assumes an ideal worker, who is male and commits to full-time, life-long employment. Women have been systematically disadvantaged in power and control over goals, resources, decision-making and outcomes. These organisational structures can be particularly damaging to women's careers in male-dominated occupational fields, due to a lack of support mechanism and the incongruence between women's interests, values and goals and those of the organisations (Diekmann et al., 2010). The few women who survive face marginalisation, isolation and a lack of opportunities (Hewlett et al, 2008). Methodology We adopted an interpretivist approach. In-depth, semi-structured interviews were conducted with 25 career-track women from Tokyo and Osaka. All interviewees have managerial responsibilities from middle to senior organisational levels. They aged between 39 and 61. A brief interview guide was used to maintain consistency and prompt responses around topics of work-life interface, career decisions, organisational practices, barriers and their ways of handling difficulties. Data were then translated into English by three bilingual research assistants for analysis within the research team. The process of analysis followed the steps of a thematic analysis approach suggested by Spencer et al. (2014): familiarisation with data, construction of an initial thematic framework, indexing and sorting, reviewing data extracts and data summary and display. Findings All our interviewees reported to have taken significant measures to 'fit in' the masculine Japanese corporate customs and career-track employment, including working long hours and not having children. Many women felt it was necessary to prove they can work like men or even outwork men so that they would be respected by male colleagues and their career prospect would not be affected by their female gender. These women had to constantly negotiate their places. Normal work practices such as receiving training or going on business trips could be problematic. As the 'last woman standing', many interviewees pointed out that starting a family was particularly difficult due to a lack of prior examples. They had to go through a few hurdles (e.g. line manager, senior management and HR department) within the corporate system to negotiate a maternity leave. All 25 women participants had to deal with implicit or explicit gender bias in the workplace throughout their careers. It is common for young females to face comments about their age, with the expectation that women younger than 25 years old are more desirable as potential wife candidates. Some respondents reported that they had to comply with gender-specific requirements about their personal appearance. Our data resonate findings in other contexts where women work extensive hours to fulfil both work and family roles. We found unusual measures taken by Japanese career-track women owing to employer expectations to employee 'overwork' in Japanese firms and an unsupportive work-

family organisational culture. We noted mothers taking unregulated nursery places, which offer longer hours of childcare and accept infants, or using special nurseries that accept sick children.

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# **The End of Sweatshop? : Robotization in Manufacturing and the Changing Politics of Production in China**

**Author: Hui Xu**

Chinese labor-intensive industries have been targeted for a long time by transnational labor rights campaigns, since a bunch of violations are reported in the notorious sweatshops such as Foxconn in China. This low-labor-rights-advantage model is always condemned due to its making migrant workers suffer a lot from low wages, long working hours and rude management. For instance, young migrant workers in Foxconn are highly atomized by assembly lines, resulting in an incident of suicide wave in 2010. Against this background, robotization was taken into account and then implemented by the management of Foxconn since 2011. On the macro level, in order to achieving moving-up in global value chain, Chinese government has been promoting and subsidizing industrial upgrading in terms of automation and informatization in the past few years. As a result, by the end of 2016, there were 340,000 of units of industrial robots being estimated to operate in factories in China.

From the perspectives of labor sociology, the fast developing of robotization in Chinese manufacturing industries is crucial to migrant workers as it is significantly changing politics of production in workshops. In this sense, this paper firstly depicts the case of robotization in Foxconn plants and then raises the questions that to what extent the robotization in manufacturing will impact migrant workers and whether the emerging few-manned or even unmanned factory means the end of sweatshop. Based on continuous factories visits since 2016, participant observation and in-depth interviews with people from enterprises robotic integrators, higher vocational schools, commercial robotic training institutes in 2018, this paper argues robotization is also a process that workers lose their control of execution after they have lost the control of conception that means migrant workers are forced to quit manufacturing industries and a large scale of structural unemployment may happen. On the other hand, the few-manned/unmanned production model to a certain extent changes the practical base of classic labor process theory that the control-resistance relations in workshops are weakening due to the dramatic reduction of numbers of workers, so the organizational forms, gender structure, bargaining power and skill-based solidarity among workers in production process are going to be changed accordingly. Finally, this paper concludes that even if the sweatshop problems are alleviated in manufacturing industries, migrant workers are going to confront more precarious and unprotective situations when they turn to service sectors such as delivering work in platform economy.

## **Work until you drop? The problem of attrition amongst the NHS's ageing workforce**

**Author: Edward Yates**

Staff churn in the NHS is significant problem and has resulted in the service facing a crisis of recruitment and retention. A key element of this problem is the increasing average age of the NHS's workforce. This paper examines the prospects for longer working in a resource-constrained NHS which is characterised by a high-pressure working and is experiencing fast rising patient demand. It aims to deepen understanding of the reasons why - in specific occupations, job roles and work contexts - inducements to leave work may dominate incentives to stay.

Set against the backdrop of recent initiatives by the UK government to promote longer paid working lives, this paper examines two interrelated questions. What accounts for the high levels of churn in clinical professions in the NHS? And, how have these patterns of transition been conditioned by the working environment? The paper examines working conditions for various staff groups and presents evidence of the reasons why, and the rates at which, staff are exiting the service and reporting 'burn-out' as the proximate cause.

The paper forms part of a larger research project entitled Extending Working Lives in the NHS, funded by the cross-research council (MRC/ESRC) Lifelong Health and Wellbeing programme. Data were collected using a variety of techniques, commencing with interviews and focus groups with key health sector stakeholders (professional bodies, trades unions and relevant government departments and agencies). The research team then conducted 350 interviews of between 60-80 minutes with staff at six NHS Foundation Trusts (acute (x3), ambulance, mental health and community) in England during 2015-2016. A second major data source is a 2016 UK-wide stratified survey of over 4000 (n=4224) NHS employees of all ages, professions and grades. A third data source is the NHS Staff Survey, an annual survey of the entire NHS workforce which covers twenty-two topics and in 2017 had a response rate of slightly below 50%.

The paper makes several contributions. It provides a quantitative assessment of the ranking by staff of the hierarchy of causes that are driving them to leave their jobs. The findings acquire new significance at a time when the longer working lives agenda is deemed part of the solution to staff shortages in the NHS and elsewhere. The paper is also the first piece of research to disaggregate NHS Staff Survey findings at the level of individual Foundation Trust, staff group and occupation, revealing with greater clarity which areas of the NHS are under the greatest pressure, and the reasons for this. The paper illuminates the complexities of the problems facing the contemporary NHS and the implications for both staff and patients.

## **Precarious work and campaigns for the \$15 minimum wage in Quebec and Ontario Canada**

**Author: Cheolki Yoon**

Since 2012, the campaigns demanding the increase in the minimum wage to 15 dollars per hour have been spread out across the United States as well as in Canada. Inspired by their neighbours in south, various organizations in Ontario and Quebec launched their campaigns for \$15 which have become a major labour movement, a rare case in the neoliberal era given the number of individual or collective participants and the consistency of the activities in recent years. Furthermore, as far as the minimum wage affects directly the low-wage workers, especially those who are not covered by the collective bargaining, precarious workers are mainly targeted by campaign organizers. On the other hand, the fact that the increase in the minimum wage can only regulate the paid working hours raises a limit of the demand to improve the annual income of precarious workers whose working period and hours are unstable. In this sense, the precarity of the work can indicate both an urgent necessity of a higher minimum wage and a limit of the demand. Meanwhile, campaign organizers have been deploying diverse tactics and strategies to organize precarious workers through the campaigns and integrate the campaigns into their larger movement vision. Even though the campaigns in two provinces have several common features in their strategies, the structure of the campaigns reveals important differences: Among others, \$15 & Fairness covers various groups of Ontario under one same banner, while the movement in Quebec is marked by the plurality of the campaigns or the coalitions, such as Minimum 15, 5-10-15 and 15 maintenant. These aspects can only be properly understood when the context and the tradition of labour and social movement of two provinces are taken into account. Considering this complexity, my research proposes to explore the question of the precarious work within the campaigns of two provinces of Canada. More precisely, it aims to answer the following two questions: What is the meaning of the precarity of work for the \$15 campaigns? What is the place of precarious workers within the campaigns? First of all, the concept of precarious work should be clarified (ILO, 2012, 2013, 2015; Castel, 2000, 2009; Standing, 2014a, 2014b, 2016). And then, the question of organizing precarious workers and their role within the campaigns needs to be analyzed, considering different types of labour movement organizations' strategies which have evolved along the transformation of labour relations, such as the renewal of labour unions (ILO, 2013; Haiven, Lévesque & Roby, 2006; Noiseux, 2008, 2013, 2014; Ross & Russell, Savard, 2018, Serrano, 2014) and the emerging extra-union strategies (Boudreau & Sarrazin, 2018; Cordero-Guzmán, 2015; Cranford & Ladd, 2003; Fine, 2006). In addition, the communicative approach to social movement, proposed in my PhD dissertation, will help to analyze dynamics between diverse actors involved in the campaigns. Regarding the research method, the research will take the qualitative approach, based on the data collected through the text analysis and the semi-structured interviews.

# Flexible working practices and employee well-being: Examining the roles of trust in management and job autonomy

**Authors: Suhaer Yunus, Ahmed Mostafa**

Over the past 25 years, the influence of new forms of flexible working arrangements that provide temporal and spatial flexibility to employees have become an increasingly prominent topic in the Human Resource Management (HRM) literature. Existing literature on the impact of flexible working practices (FWPs) on the workforce, however, has presented mixed results, specifically in relation to subjective well-being. Despite considerable advances in this area, there is still a gap in our in-depth knowledge of the process through which FWPs affects employees' subjective well-being.

In general, it is argued that the *raison d'être* of FWPs is to decrease the conflict between work and family demands of employees, allowing them to better manage their work and non-work spheres, and their availability/use is expected to have positive effects on the well-being of employees (Wood et al., 2018). Yet, more critical work has highlighted a 'dark side' of flexible working which shows that the effects of such practices, albeit well intended, tend to be quite marginal (Allen, 2001), and promote isolation, job insecurity, gender inequality, reduced career prospects, longer working hours and work/life imbalance among the workforce (Allan et al., 1998; Bone, 2006). Particularly, research on telework and home-based work has questioned the benefits to work anywhere and anytime to balance the demands of work and family life, linking such arrangements to imbalance of domestic responsibilities for work obligations (Hyman et al., 2005).

This paper contributes to our understanding of the dynamics of the relationship between FWPs and employees' subjective health- and happiness-related well-being (i.e., job-related anxiety and organisational commitment), and highlights boundary conditions under which these practices may relate to improved well-being. Using data from Britain's Workplace Employment Relations Survey (WERS) of 2011, we developed and tested a moderated mediation model linking perceived availability of FWPs, such as working from home, to job-related anxiety and organisational commitment. Drawing on the Social Exchange Theory (SET; Blau, 1964) and the Conservation of Resources Model (COR; Hobfoll, 2001), the mediating and moderating roles of trust in management and job autonomy are investigated in this association.

The findings reveal that perceived availability of FWPs has a direct significant positive affect on organisational commitment and a positive, albeit, insignificant direct effect on job-related anxiety. However, these practices are seen to increase employees' trust in management, which in turn mediates a positive relationship between the availability of FWPs and perceived well-being. Results further provided support that perceived job autonomy moderated the relationship between FWPs and trust in management to significantly reduce the levels of anxiety and increase perception of organisational commitment amongst employees. This suggests that the intended positive benefits of flexible working arrangements on employees' health- and happiness-related well-being depend on wider perceived organisational support climate which fosters employees' discretion to allocate time and schedule work and non-work commitments, and the perceptions of positive relationship employees feel they have with their line managers.

## **The effects of inequality and precarious working conditions on solidarity and the trust in democracy**

**Authors: Martina Zandonella, Andreas Holzer**

Over the past decades not only the distribution of wealth became more and more unequal. While high incomes increased, middle incomes stagnated and people with low incomes had to face real wage losses. In addition, job insecurity and precarious working conditions increased, but employment- as well as welfare based social security schemes were cut back within the framework of austerity. Simultaneously we witnessed a decreasing trust in democracy, whose well-established political parties promised prosperity via the liberalisation of economy and market-based policy-making. Also within this period of time, nationalist authoritarian parties gained support. Within this context, our paper examines how class and specific working conditions affect perceptions of justice, solidarity and attitudes towards democracy. It is based on a representative survey, conducted throughout the spring of 2018 among 2.500 employees in Austria. Already an explorative regression model shows that occupational status and working conditions alone account for nearly 30% of the variation within democratic vs. authoritarian attitudes. We then identified five classes among Austria's employees – they mainly differ in their economic and cultural capital, and they (as expected) face quite different working conditions. The introduction of these classes allows an in-depth analysis of how status and working conditions impact perceptions of justice, solidarity and attitudes towards democracy. Our data shows for example, that low status, the lack of economic capital and certain precarious working conditions account for the loss of trust in democracy among the two bottom classes. Among the set of working conditions we studied, those associated with lacks of reliability, justice and appreciation where (so far) found to decrease solidarity and enhance authoritarian attitudes. This includes violations of existing laws that protect employee's rights (e.g. working hour regulations), consistently increasing workload, and the experience that at work some groups of employees are treated better than others. These kinds of working conditions decrease solidarity and enhance authoritarian attitudes among all classes of employees, but it must be considered that the lower classes are much more affected by most of them. We also examine, if and to what extent class consciousness can explain why employees with similar status and working conditions refer to opposite political interpretations (right-wing vs. left-wing) for their situation. Finally, we discuss our results based on economical and societal transformations and within the predominantly existing political discourse.

# **Freelancers' strategic alliance to minimise exploitation caused by prejudice**

**Author: Yiluyi Zeng**

How do freelancers deal with unfair employment practice? In the past two decades, freelancing has become a popular form of work outside of organisational employment for workers of all kinds. On the one hand, the flexibility of freelancing is an escape from organisational bureaucracy. Freelancing opens up opportunities for those who are passionate about their work. On the other hand, freelancers are subject to income instability and exploitative employment practices due to the lack of protection and regulations in the nonstandard employment area. Reflecting on empirical data, this paper discusses whether the traditional frameworks of organizational exploitation and self-exploitation are appropriate to understanding unfair employment practices encountered by freelancers. Additionally, I examine the conflicts between freelancers and their clients and how they influence professional identity and payment negotiation.

To better understand the challenges of freelancing in the context of an economy with a large informal sector, I conducted 32 interviews of a wide spectrum of independent professionals in Taiwan. Preliminary analyses result in three findings that complement and challenge current literature:

First, for many professionals, freelancing is a reaction to exploitative organizational structures. Liberation from organizational exploitation, however, is only the beginning of the story. Inexperienced freelancers are motivated by financial and human capital accumulation and inevitably have to undergo a period of self-exploitation before reaching a satisfactory stage of fair negotiation.

Second, these freelancers understand the risk and vulnerability of self-employment and mitigate against them. To minimise replaceability and stabilise sources of work, highly skilled freelancers diversify skills and form alliances with other freelancers. Freelancers divide labour in cooperative partnerships, forming complementary alliances to carve out a niche in their profession while escaping the exploitation typically associated with division of labour.

Third, the freelance experience in Taiwan is impacted by local social and cultural factors. Clients don't necessarily understand or appreciate the investment and skills involved in freelancers' work. Clients' skewed judgements of freelance work creates asymmetrical valuations of the work, and such evaluational asymmetry is manifested in different perceptions of the client vs the freelancer regarding the respectability of the profession (specifically, the reluctance to regard creative professionals as true professionals), which also results in gaps in expected payment.

By studying a representative group of highly-skilled freelancers in Taiwan, my paper will provide an in-depth and comprehensive analysis of the highly-skilled freelance experience in Taiwan while addressing issues of exploitation. Although Taiwan has a large informal economy, high-skilled freelance workers, and particularly those in creative and cultural industries, are a novel phenomenon, and are very much pioneers fighting for their place within the broader economy. Consequently, their approach to collective representation is improvisational and has met with mixed results. With regard to practical implications, the authorities should consider altering public prejudices towards nonstandard workers while providing professional and legal training for freelancers to better promote their working conditions.