



UNIVERSITÀ DEGLI STUDI DI BERGAMO

**ADAPT**  
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Dottorato di ricerca in **Formazione della persona e mercato del lavoro**  
PhD in **Human Capital Formation and Labour Relations**

CALL FOR PAPERS

**PROFESSIONALISM, EMPLOYMENT CONTRACTS  
AND COLLECTIVE BARGAINING  
IN THE CONTEXT OF SOCIAL INNOVATION**

Occupational Transitions,  
Individual and Professional Training, Value of Work  
in the IV Industrial Revolution

IX Edition

30 November-1 December 2018



The most recent evolution in work and production – stemming not only from the impact of technology, but also from globalization and demographic dynamics – opens a new and particularly attractive field of scientific debate. The traditional categories of work (not only from a legal perspective), the forms of wages and the organization of enterprises are put into question; this changes our idea of work, as well as that of enterprise and balance. Based on an exchange between subordination and wage, attention thus inevitably shifts to the (also economic) enhancement of the workers' autonomy and professionalism, with training paths that seem to envision the dismantlement of the old categories of employment and self-employment.



Flavio Mairani – Painting on canvas, 1979

In the legal literature – as in the sociological, pedagogical, psychological and organizational – the word “professionalism” assumes different shades that have changed over time and which, today, require one to be adequately assessed and included in a single container of analysis. In all areas and sectors, and at all levels, we are witnessing a rediscovery of the qualitative dimension of work, due to the spread of new technologies and organizational models that require more knowledge, participation and autonomy on the part of the employee and call into question not only his/her technical skills, but also his/her personal, relational and social skills. On the other hand, there is a spread of professions that can be described in terms that are more concrete, which are characterized by services that literature recognizes as the main distinctive feature of a profession – namely, the intensity of knowledge. To meet diverse needs and cover new, real and virtual service markets, the traditional professions are transformed, and the new professions are spread into areas previously characterized by a prevalence of manual labour. These dynamics are part of a general push towards social innovation arising from the recognition of a crisis. This is based on the model of production and welfare of the nineteenth century, in search for new paradigms that are both fair and sustainable for all participants.

It is in this context that we frame this year's international conference, which deepens the reflection and discussion already started from the last conferences – **The Great Transformation of Work** (Bergamo, 6-7 November 2015), **The Future of Work: A Matter of Sustainability** (Bergamo, 11-12 November 2016) and **Industry 4.0: Triggering Factors and Enabling Skills** (Bergamo, 1-2 December 2017) – proposed the analysis of the transformation of work from the perspective of professionalism being seen not only as a set of tasks, level of qualification or a characteristic element of a specific group of occupations, but as an extension of one's personal identity, reputation and self-realization. Professionalism serves as a key to a modern organization of work and as a lever for its proper development and recognition. The conference aims to promote an interdisciplinary and comparative debate through the study of various fields (cultural, legal, organizational, economic, social, institutional, etc.) that the new and wider dimension of professionalism calls into question, and it benefits from the contributions of participants from all over the world.



Giuseppe Luzzana – Oil on canvas, 1944 ca.

The **PhD in Human Capital Formation and Labour Relations**, promoted by the **Università degli Studi di Bergamo** and by **ADAPT**, invites professors, researchers, graduate students, professionals and all those who have interest in the subject matter of the conference, from diverse backgrounds and disciplines, to present their contributions on the following topics.

## 1. MORE VALUE AT WORK?

Sixty years after the publication of *The Human Condition* by Hannah Arendt, and in conjunction with an unprecedented centrality of cognitive and intellectual work, we aim to reflect on the meaning of human activity in the world and to wonder if there was a change in the dimension of the work (labour, work, action) or if there was a change in the relative weight of people's lives. Considering the decline of traditional boundaries between work and private life, between autonomy and subordination, and between the workplace and external environment, this can be an opportunity to overcome previous boundaries and reconcile, in an organic and systemic approach, the sphere of work with other aspects of social life. Therefore, it is intended to investigate some issues, such as:

- whether and how the growth and transformation of traditional professions, as well as the entry of cognitive content – even in those sectors with a traditional prevalence of manual and executorial labour – changes the deeper sense of the work;
- if and how it changes the value that people give to work within their personal lives;
- how professionalism and its new centrality contributes to defining the social status of the worker.

## 2. PROFESSIONALISM AND EMPLOYMENT TRANSITIONS

If professionalism is increasingly a central element in the construction of the social status and the personal identity of the worker, it is necessary to articulate the rights and protections that can enhance the professional/personal experience of the individual even within discontinued careers. To support workers in an environment filled with rapid economic and social changes, the importance of other instruments emerges through the construction of adequate services for vocational orientation and guidance, combined with an effective system of labour market intelligence that involves all the actors at different institutional and territorial levels, who can develop a role in facilitating the career transition. Essentially, we aim to discuss the following aspects of the relationship between professionalism and the labour market:

- methods and instruments for portability of protection and skills;
- active policies and transitional labour markets, beyond the flexicurity;
- the role of labour market enablers on the construction of skills and in the governance of employment transitions;
- systems of mapping, monitoring and anticipating the skills necessary at a territorial level;
- technology, big data and new tools for the construction of modern labour market intelligence systems.

### 3. SKILLS

If professionalism acquires a different significance in the new economic and productive paradigm, then it is vital to enhance and protect the skills that comprise and enrich the professional contribution of each worker. Some important areas of reflection are the conditions that enable the de-



Pietro Maria Ronzoni – Oil on canvas, first half of the 19<sup>th</sup> Century

velopment of key skills required in the labour market, how to ensure proper certification to protect the worker during transitional phases, and tools to promote a consistent and effective development. This forces us to reflect on some issues, including:

- the impact of technology on the content and tasks of the job, as well as the role and responsibilities of individual workers;
- crossing of boundaries between school and the world of work in order to effectively match the supply and demand of labour;
- schemes and training programs for the development of innovative, professional profiles;
- the role of continuous training to facilitate the worker throughout his/her career;
- new forms of training through technology;
- a larger security in the fragile labour market to provide a constant requalification and redefinition of the worker's skills;
- the demand for transversal skills and the manner of their allocation and certification.

### 4. LABOUR ORGANIZATION

The increasing focus on professionalism seems to profoundly affect the structure of organizational models into a more flexible and less hierarchical model; consequently. The increasingly widespread conviction is that there exists a positive link between direct involvement of workers and productivity. The flattening of hierarchies and the greater responsibility, as is the case in models that emphasize teamwork, impacts the systems of rules and rights in the workplace, which is a matter of further study. In relation to these changes, we aim to investigate these subjects in particular:

- the emergence of new organizational model – particularly new forms of high performance work practices – whose goals are the enhancement of individual skills and continuous training;
- the organizational and regulatory instruments for the collaboration between enterprises: consortiums, joint ventures, network contracts, etc.;
- the changes that occur at the time and place of work, and their regulation;
- the effects of organizational innovations on the employment dimension of the realities involved, as well as the roles and responsibilities of the workers, beyond the legal distinction between subordination and autonomy;
- working by phases, cycles or objectives: professional self-employment and contract work.

## 5. INDUSTRIAL RELATIONS

Even in contexts and sectors where the common working status – characterized by repetitive, manual and executional tasks – led to a development of a collective consciousness, the growing importance of professionalism is clearly threatening the traditional union of representation, and with it, the state of the industrial relations. At the same time, the economic crisis and especially the rapid, digital evolution have catalysed a new wave of independent and professional work that begins to express its voice not only in the trade unions, but also in the new forms of associations and cooperatives. Faced with this scenario, we aim to question:

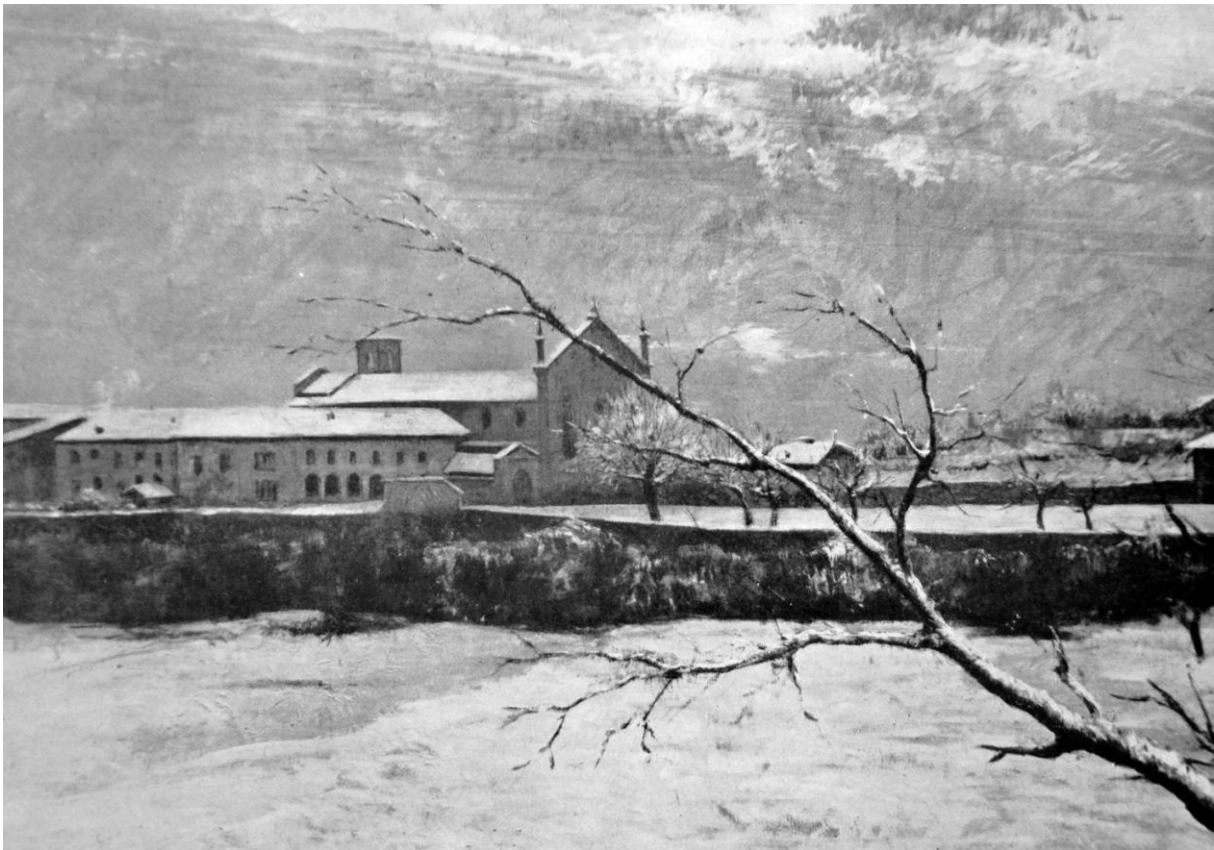
- the future of representation (not only of workers, but also of companies) and industrial relations;
- the role of collective bargaining for the implementation and the (not only economic) development of professionalism;
- prospects, practices and tools of employee participation (and their representatives) on the life of the enterprise.

## 6. NEW WELFARE AND TERRITORIAL DYNAMICS

If professionalism can be considered, in its wider dimension, a personal extension of the identity of the worker, it is reasonable to ask whether we are facing an unprecedented humanisation of work, and a subsequent elevation of the work experience beyond the mere status of an economic activity. To question this idea is to question a fundamental pillar of the socio-economic Fordist paradigm, and therefore, question the exchange between work and pay. Thinking of work as a personal, relational and social experience imposes a necessary reflection on the current validity of the terms in this exchange, and the possibility of finding a new contract that strengthens and enhances the relationship between the company and employee, as well as the relationship between them and the territory in which they operate. Not only do the dynamics of global competitiveness promote the territories as networks to support the competitiveness of enterprises and poles of attraction to new skills,

but also does the growing gap in labour relations require territories to strengthen relations between the subjects that compose it, so as to promote a more social role of workers and citizens. These two elements contribute to radical change in the logic of the welfare systems and of the geography of work. In this sense, we look to discuss:

- new forms of welfare (at enterprise, employment, territorial and community level) and methods for their effective integration;
- the social function of new technologies;
- sharing practices and circulation of skills and information between different actors (universities, businesses, representative associations, etc.), to grant a technological and social development of the territories;
- new forms of aggregation and the functional organization of most companies, over enterprise networks and industrial districts;
- forms of adapting and anticipating skills needed in the territories.



Giorgio Oprandi – Painting, 1949

## Conference Scientific Committee

- **Teaching Staff** of the PhD in Human Capital Formation and Labour Relations
- Members of the **ADAPT International Scientific Committee**

## Abstract Submission

Abstracts shall be sent to [sid@unibg.it](mailto:sid@unibg.it), indicating “**Abstract Bergamo**” in the subject line.

## Deadlines

- Submission of abstracts: **1 September 2018**
- Notification of selection: **30 September 2018**
- Confirmation of participation: **3 November 2018**
- Submission of final papers: **25 November 2018**

## Papers

The best papers presented at the conference will be selected and, depending on the topic, evaluated for publication in **Formazione Lavoro Persona**, **Professionalità Studi**, **Diritto delle Relazioni Industriali** and **E-Journal of International and Comparative Labour Studies**. Editors will also consider for publication the papers by those who are unable to attend the conference but are willing to provide their contribution just the same.

## Costs

Participation in the conference is free. Participants must bear the costs for travel and accommodation. A limited number of grants to cover part of the travel costs will be made available for students or doctoral students whose abstracts are particularly worthy of originality and scientific quality.

## Further information

Further information will be available on the website of the event. For other information send a mail to [sid@unibg.it](mailto:sid@unibg.it).