

## Summaries

Maurizio Franzini and Anna Giunta  
*Italy's economic decline: a reassessment*

Our article serves both as an Introduction to this monographic issue on Italy's economic decline and as a reassessment of some economic and institutional questions which have been raised in Italy's economic decline debate. In particular, we argue that the total factor productivity slowdown of the last ten years is mainly caused by Italian industry fragmentation and by its peculiar specialization model in traditional sectors. Both these two characteristics have, in turn, caused a low adoption of information and communication technologies. On the institutional side, we underline that too much attention is usually devoted just to the amount of financial resources needed, whereas, according to our view, policies should be more concerned with the «complementary conditions» which raise the probability of intervention success. Finally, this article questions the lack of attention in the debate paid to the North-South gap, arguing that the «Mezzogiorno» could play a crucial role in the future Italian growth dynamics.

Giovanni Paoloni  
*Research and innovation in Italy in the past sixty years:  
a comparison between two models*

This paper starts from the observation that the origin of Italian economic structural problems go back to the 1960's when the favourable conditions which allowed the so called «Italian miracle», first of all that of being a latecomer, faded away. To face the challenge of being a modern industrial economy, Italy needed an effective and integrated research system that, actually, was never established. The paper reconstructs the main episodes in the disappointing history of Italian research and innovation and points to the responsibilities both of entrepreneurs and government as well as of some structural factors that shaped their choices and behaviour.

Luciano Marcello Milone  
*Italy's economic decline: a review of the debate*

An increasing number of scholars tend to interpret the weak performance of the Italian economy as a consequence of structural decline, in particular since the

early 1990s. This view is supported by adverse trends in a wide range of indicators: real per capita GDP, labour productivity, total factor productivity and international competitiveness measured by both net exports and foreign direct investments. The major structural weaknesses that have been identified in the Italian economy feature: low research and development activity, weak innovative capacity, a human capital gap relative to other industrial countries, an excessive number of small-size firms, rigidities in the labour market, various inefficiencies of financial markets, low competitive pressures owing to heavily regulated product markets, inadequacy of public infrastructures, poor quality of certain public institutions. There is a broad consensus that a sustained growth strategy requires a set of structural reforms, both of product, labour and financial markets and of the public institutional setting. Nevertheless, for a number of reasons considered in this paper, the implementation of such a reform program appears to be slow and difficult.

Michele Raitano and Stefano Supino  
*Italy's economic decline: the role of the human capital*

The limited number of graduated – a proxy of the human capital accumulation – is usually considered having a main role in explaining the slow-down of the Italian economy and its main peculiarities (i.e. a manufacturing system with a very high share of small firms specialized in traditional sectors with a low ICT diffusion of the information and communication technology). In this essay we argue that it may be over-simplistic to focus only on the skilled workers supply side. Therefore we propose to analyse also the opposite link, i.e. the demand of such workers from the productive system. Presenting many data on the human capital diffusion in Italy and on its effective utilization by firms, we try to settle the controversy between the role played by demand and supply factors in determining the human capital accumulation in the Italian economic system.

Massimo Giannini  
*Do we need a decentralized school system?  
 Social and economic aspects of Italian devolution*

The article focuses on the socio-economic effects relate to a shifting from a national to a local funding system for schooling in Italy. While benefits of such a shift are rather fuzzy, the article shows that negative effects could be rather heavy in terms of a rising in inequality across local school districts.

Paolo Saracco  
*Research and innovation policy measures: what are the real knots?*

The lack of innovation is the peculiar feature distinguishing Italy from other developed countries: this should be the starting point for any well-grounded analysis of national policies aimed at research and innovation and recovering this gap should be their main goal. In this article Italian industrial policies are criticized and some alternative scenarios of intervention are proposed.

David C. Mowery  
*University-Industry collaboration in the United States:  
technology transfer and intellectual property rights*

University-industry research collaboration and technology transfer, especially the licensing by U.S. universities of patented inventions, is considered by many authors as a central «cause» of U.S. economic resurgence in the 1990's. Such developments are, in turn, attributed to changes in U.S. policy during the 1980's, particularly the Bayh-Dole Act of 1980. This paper argues that the focus on patenting and licensing as the essential ingredient in university-industry collaboration and knowledge transfer may be exaggerated. It is a fallacy to associate the entrepreneurial activities of universities exclusively with patenting and licensing. The emphasis on the Bayh-Dole Act also seems somewhat misplaced, ignoring the long history, extending at the earliest decade of the 20th century, of collaboration between university and industry.

Pier Luigi Sacco and Giorgio Tavano Blessi  
*A new model of sustainable development: cultural districts and urban areas*

This paper attempts to illustrate a strategic framework for cultural planning at the local level. Local development cultural-led models have become very important for those interested in assessing the long-run impact of systematic cultural policies. This paper reviews the latest literature on cultural districts and illustrated two case studies by which will be possible to highlight the role played by culture as catalyst for major economic and social renewal. By «cultural district» authors mean an emergent, self-organized model of cultural supply that displays significant strategic complementarities with other production chains with a typical post-industrial characterization, e.g. in terms of high value added generated by the accumulation of intangible assets such as human, social and cultural/symbolic capital.

Marzia Andretta  
*The Corleonesis and the mafia history*

This article focuses on the history of the Corleonesis mafia. The strong influence of the Corleonesis group on the Palermitan mafia in the last years of the last century shows how useful is such historical reconstruction. The analysis draws on the first documents, dated since 1893, that certify the presence of the mafia in Corleone. This article underlines the capacity of the mafia to regenerate itself, not only in Corleone. On the one hand, the link between the Palermitan mafia and the Corleonesis mafia reveals the continuity of the mafia's phenomenon. On the other hand, my empirical research contrasts the largely accepted hypothesis according to which the Corleonesis mafia is basically a countryside closed system.