

GERPISA
International Network
Réseau International

GERPISA 13th International Colloquium
***Productive organisations – employment relationships - financialisation:
specificities of the automotive industry***
French Ministry of Research, Paris, 16 and 17 June 2005

Call for communications

The GERPISA 13th International Colloquium will run at the end of the first year of our *Varieties of capitalism and diversity of productive models* research programme, which comes on the back of an ESEMK project receiving support under the European Union's 6th PCRD framework (contract n° CIT2-CT-2004-506077). The purpose of this programme is to extend our collective efforts to develop an analytical matrix capable of apprehending the diversity of firms' productive models in a setting defined by the diverse nature of capitalism's varying forms.

Developing intersectorial comparative approaches

The Colloquium will be an opportunity to present and discuss the initial findings of our programme; to share a framework; and to devise a common method of analysis. We will use this analytical matrix to study productive models by means of **comparative approaches** that are capable of contextualising ongoing changes in the automotive industry as well as in other sectors (aircraft, pharmaceuticals, software, telecommunications equipment, agribusiness, public services).

Studies should specifically focus on the three main areas of research (financialisation; employment relationship; product policy and productive organisation) that we have identified as being apt to work the productive models matrix in a way that meshes with current developments in socio-economic models.

All world-regions are concerned, even if the EU will be deeply analysed. Historical approach of firms or industries' trajectories should be welcomed

Issues in financialisation

Interlinking macroeconomic developments and micro or meso-economic studies of firms and industries, financialisation analyses might cover three series of themes.

- A historical contextualisation within a comparative approach to the process of financialisation.
- A study of recent developments in forms of financialisation, as well as their impact on corporate strategy.
- Managerial elite issues, specifying how their dynamics can engender a re-composition of elites and social networks.

Employment relationship transformation issues

Incorporating changes in the institutional arrangements that one finds at the (national or European) macroeconomic level, such texts might study firms or industries by analysing the change dynamics that affect their employment relationships. A look might also be taken at the factors underlying such changes. Particular attention should be paid to the idea of a convergence towards a European model.

There should also be an initial focus on how changes in governance compromise have impacted employment system characteristics, and how this ties into productive organisation and financialisation constraints. Any effects in terms of unequal status and pay should be studied at the intra- and intercompany (supplier / OEM) levels.

A second series of questions might cover the way in which market risks indirectly affect individual employee by undermining job security, as witnessed by the growth of precarious or temporary forms of employment and by the rise in variable pay arrangements.

A third subset might deal with the various modes used to mobilise employee knowledge: internal training vs. external recruitment, role played by skill-enhancing work organisation (semi-autonomous working groups, task integration, decentralisation of decision-making), individual trajectories, involvement and “quality of life” type programmes.

Lastly, a look can also be taken at the place and the role that labour unions fulfil, and at the different forms of employee organisation.

Following a “product policy and productive organisation approach”

Using conceptual approaches and case studies, the aim here is to study how firms develop their relationship to the market; transformations in the organisation of design and production activities; and forms of public intervention within the industrial dynamics.

Analyses should specifically cover the various modalities for managing knowledge in new product development projects; modularisation issues; and the diffusion of ICT.

In terms of the way this relationship to the marketplace might be managed, and in terms of its impact on the productive organisation, studies might cover B2C industries like the automotive industry, but also B2B (telecommunication equipments, corporate services like software) and Public utilities.

The point here is to apprehend the role of the State by accounting for its varying levels of intervention, and for any interconnections that might exist between them (notably at the EU scale or else within a WTO framework). This can be achieved by studying the formation of sectorial policies and regulations (focusing notably on lobbying and compromise), as well as their impact on corporate strategy.

Deadline for submitting planned communications or sessions: **28 January 2005**

Response from selection committee: by **18 February 2005**.

Deadline for submitting texts (paper and floppy disk or e-mail): **15 April 2005**.

Planned sessions and/or texts should be sent to the following address:

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