

The Rise of the Intern Economy: Internships and the Informalization of Labour in Italy

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There is an increasing tendency around the world to hire interns, often without pay and with very little possibility of achieving a real education or a stable job. In the last few years, the rise of the intern economy has attracted the attention of journalists and activists; sociologists, however, are still paying inadequate attention to this phenomenon and its causes. This inattention contributes to a growing ambiguity surrounding the term ‘internship’, making it difficult to understand its aims and to evaluate its abuses. In other words, sociological analysis is very much needed not only to explain the explosion of the intern economy, but also to develop a critical compass to raise awareness about the uses and abuses of internships.

This paper addresses this gap by providing a theoretical framework to explain the growth of the intern economy. First, since the internship is not a new phenomenon, a historical background will be presented to illustrate its origins. Moreover, the reasons that gave apprenticeships the recognition of a special employment relationship with educational content will be discussed, alongside why internships still lack such recognition. Clarifying such historical fluctuations within the dialectic relationship between formal and informal economies is thus a necessary starting point. Second, we see how interns are nowadays emerging in every sector, involving an increasing number of young people worldwide, with a rising differentiation of use. Italy, which is where I conducted fieldwork consisting of more than 30 interviews,¹ seems to be an ideal field to investigate the new popularity of internships. Even if the internship has become widespread in the Mediterranean region only recently, it is now a crucial asset in education, public policies and companies’ recruiting and production strategies. Both the words ‘internship’ and ‘interns’ operate as umbrella terms able to cover different uses and different situations. This characteristic makes the internship ultra-flexible and extremely adaptive to the point that it is an ubiquitous figure in contemporary labour markets. Third, to focus on the reasons for this explosion, the effects of the lack of recognition of interns’ working activities will be discussed accounting for both the rationales of companies and the experiences of individuals working as interns. On one hand, in fact, it allows companies to make use of internships to avoid employer

responsibilities, including that of paying a salary. On the other hand, the obscuring of interns' productivity (in terms of work) by educational aims operates as a narrative that increases their motivation and flexibility. In other words, the perspective of the informal economy not only seems to help us to understand the lack of recognition of interns' working activities, but also to understand why the internship is crucial for contemporary capitalism.

Specifically, it is the possibility of obtaining a cheap, docile and motivated labour force that makes the internship one of the assets that capitalism is looking at with a growing interest. Moreover, such a mechanism does not seem limited only to internships. Thus, understanding the rise of internships as part of the growth of informal labour makes the internship a useful lens through which to examine the transformation of the labour market and the most predatory tendencies of contemporary capitalism.

From Apprenticeship to Internship: The Socio-Historical Background of the Intern Economy

Learning on the job is not a new phenomenon. Its history, in fact, can be traced back to ancient times. Nonetheless, to see a sociological phenomenon related to training-on-the-job and the initial formalization of the apprenticeship, we can look to the Middle Ages in Western Europe, which was a period of significant transformation. Urban economies were born, many estates were parcelled out, labour relations were clarified along with agrarian contracts that delineated obligations and rights of landlords and tenants (Bloch, 1989). In other words, Europe was slowly moving from a feudal economy of subsistence towards the basis for a capitalist society.

In this context, artisans and merchants became the protagonists of the new urban settlement, thereby giving a crucial role to the acquisition of skills. In order to protect occupational prestige, guilds and associations of craftsmen flourished across Europe. The standardization of a formal period of training was a necessary step to establish and maintain control over new members and to gain the recognition of specialized knowledge. It is in this way that the apprenticeship took shape. Apprentices had to work unpaid for years before the possibility of having their own workshop. At the same time, masters were taking care of their food and housing needs. Thus, apprentices were part of a master's household sharing not only the work in the workshop, but also the same house and family obligations (Rorabaugh, 1986). The rise of apprenticeships transformed the economic life of urban settlement, involving a relevant portion of the younger population and becoming a highly influential factor shaping economic life (Frenette, 2015). This explosion led to a formalization of the apprenticeship, which happened in Europe during the 16th century. The first example of this is the Statute of Artificer, which is the first law on apprenticeships, occurring in the United Kingdom in 1513. However, this not only standardized the function of the apprenticeship on a national scale, but its main aim was that of maintaining 'social order' by limiting the most appreciated apprentices to those who had property or to a master's family (Shyrock, 1966).

However, despite such efforts, this order ended with the rise of capitalism. For craftsmen and artisans, in fact, the introduction of new and more efficient machines replaced their work, leading to their impoverishment. Furthermore, the new labour regime not only made training unnecessary, but skilled workers became an obstacle to be overcome in the drive for techniques of mass production.² In sum, following the rise of industrial capitalism, the apprenticeship declined, while former skilled workers, artisans, and craftsmen were condemned to a marginal position in society. Thus, the abolition of the Statute of Artificer in the UK in 1813 represented not only the decline of the apprenticeship, but also the beginning of a new era. We need to wait until the 20th century to see a new formalization of the apprenticeship. The first attempt in this direction was the Fitzgerald Act in 1937 in the United States, which is noted by Perlin because the Act "finally stabilized and revived the apprenticeship in the United

States” (Perlin, 2012, p. 54).³ Similar acts arose in Europe during the same period. In Italy, for example, the Vigorelli law in 1955 stipulates that the “apprenticeship is a special working relationship with educational content.”

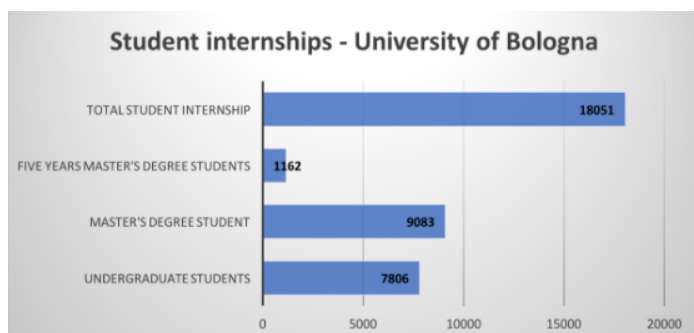
As opposed to apprenticeships, the internship is a product of the ‘great transformation’, which resulted in physicians regulating their own market (Sarfatti Larson, 1979). Until that time, in fact, lawyers, doctors and architects worked under the protection of State or Church elites. Most likely, one of the early instances of the internship in America can be traced back to the ‘residency program’ by William Osler, a Canadian medical scholar who, inspired by his travel in Europe, developed a new training method for medical practitioners (Bliss, 1999). At that time, in fact, the medical profession was not only facing fierce competition, but also a general skepticism from the public because of their intangible commodity.⁴ The road chosen by medical practitioners was that of creating medical associations based on the old guilds. With regards to internships, what is significant is that this process ended in the monopolization of medical knowledge. It is in this context that the internship was established as a formal period of training (Sarfatti Larson, 1979, p. 14). As Sarfatti Larson observes (1979, p. 14): “Because of the unique nature of the products to be marketed, and because their use value to the larger public was as uncertain as it was new, control had to be established first at the point of production: the providers of services had to be controlled to standardize and thus identify the commodity they provide.”

Thus, even if both are associated with learning on the job, the different historical roots of apprenticeships and internships have also determined different forms of social and legal recognition. In this context, we mean recognition not simply as legal formalization, but as “a sociocultural device which, in a fixed historical period defines the standards of social esteem that the determined occupations enjoys” (Honneth, 2010, p. 57). It is in this perspective that the recognition of what is worthy to be considered as work and what is not becomes a social problem. The internship is not only younger than the apprenticeship, but the association of the latter with manual labour gave it a recognition that the internship still lacks. As noted by Portes and Castels (1989, p. 23), “the informal economy is in a constant flux [...] it evolves along the borders of social struggles, incorporating those too weak to defend themselves, rejecting those who become too conflictive.”

The Liberalization of the Internship: The Rise of the Intern Economy in Italy

We can find internships used worldwide across different sectors and for a wide range of purposes. Italy seems to constitute an ideal field to analyze this liberalization. The southern Mediterranean country, in fact, not only had an exponential growth of the intern economy in recent times, but also an increasing differentiation of its uses. Furthermore, such a process seems to be in a direct relationship with variations in economic cycles, which, as underlined by Portes and Castells (1989), represents one of the most influential factors in defining the borders between formal and informal economies. It is important to underline that this process is still ongoing.

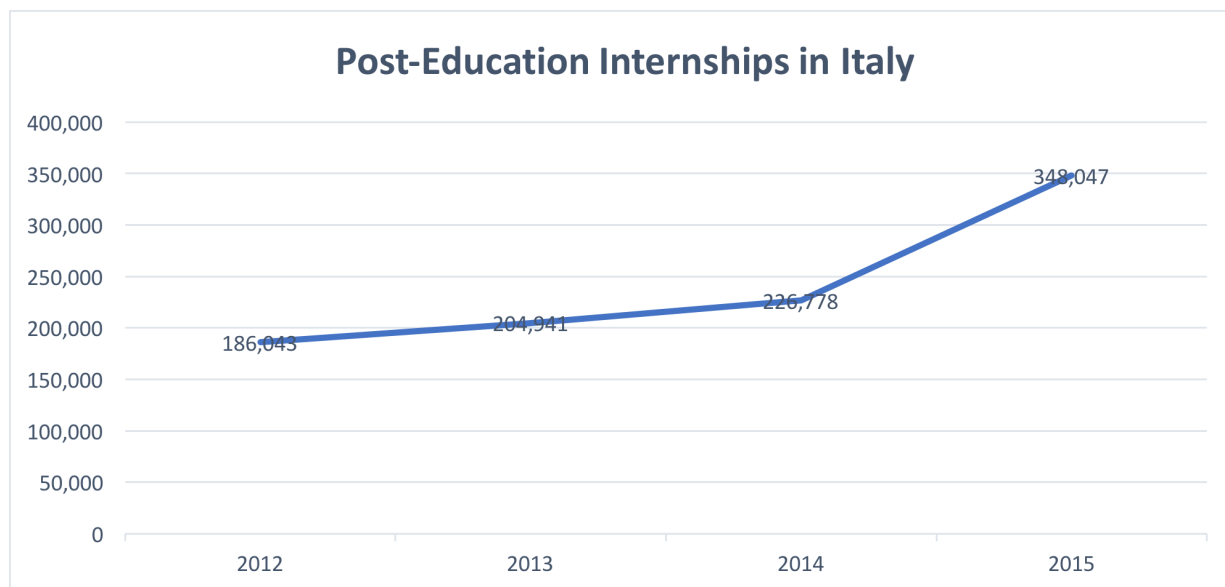
Figure 1 – Student Internships at University of Bologna. (2014-2015)



Source: University of Bologna
Placement Office

The first experience of training-on-the-job in Italy originated around the Second World War with the 'cantieri scuola' (school yards) established to produce skilled workers necessary for rebuilding the country. However, the first step for the liberalization of internships occurred in 1977, a point at which the oil crisis and global recession of the 1970s produced rising unemployment. In this context, the internship was introduced as part of vocational training programs not only to improve education, but with the specific aim of helping individuals to enter the labour

Figure 2 – Post-education internships (2012 – 2015)



Source: Minister of Labor and Economics

market. Once the unemployment emergency was over, two significant transformations emerged during the 1980s and 1990s. On one hand, the internship achieved a new lease on life not solely defined by educational programs, but becoming independently available without limitations on its uses. On the other hand, after several years of confusion about its aims, the internship came to be considered as a training activity exempted from employment standards.

By the end of 1990s, as with other western countries, Italy implemented neoliberal labour market reforms. This led to the 'flexibilization' of the labour market, resulting in a major emphasis on an individual's skills (Crouch, Finegold, & Sako, 2001). Because of the recent transformations of the welfare state in Europe, public institutions were required to help individuals develop their own employability skills, a shift intended to assist in reducing public expenditures. It is in this context that the internship also came to be widely used in activation policies. First, following the idea of a 'third mission' in educational policies, universities have adopted the internship as a mandatory part of their educational programs in a growing number of degrees.⁵ The number of degrees that include a mandatory internship is now very significant, involving a large percentage of the total student population. For example, as represented in Figure 1, the number of internships undertaken in the academic year 2014-15 at the University of Bologna was approximately 18,000, meaning that out of a total population of 90,000 students, 20 percent are working in unpaid internships. Furthermore, the intern economy has received a significant boost with the latest school reforms, which aim to extend the university internship model to high school. This means that

high-school students will also be required to work unpaid for a semester in companies such as McDonald's, which recently signed an agreement with the Minister of Education.⁶

The most recent boost for the intern economy deals with European Union (EU) labour policies, which are using internships in active labour policies as well as trying to achieve a continental standardization. Such debates led to the adoption of a 'quality framework for traineeship' by the Council of the European Union in 2014, with the aim of standardizing internships at a continental level, and also recognizing the need for reimbursement to ensure fair access. Following that, a law in Italy fixed minimum reimbursement at a national level of 400€ per month for post-grad interns. What is seen in Figure 2 is that there is a notable increase in 2015, when the number of internships grew by 54 percent with respect to 2014. It seems reasonable to think that this growth is an effect of the 'youth guarantee program'. Since 2014, in fact, the EU has licensed the first program of direct intervention, funding more than 6€ billion to those countries in the Union that have more than 25 percent youth unemployment until 2020. Italy received 1.7€ billion, and the internship is very much the protagonist of this program. More than 40 percent of EU funding, in fact, has been used to pay minimum reimbursements to companies, which keep hiring free labour even after the internships law.

Since its liberalization, it seems that the intern economy in the Italian context is constantly increasing, and will continue to increase because of recent developments in public policies. However, what the Italian context underlines is not only the growth of the intern economy, but also the increasing differentiation in the possible uses of internships. In other words, the internship seems to be more an umbrella term under which different aims are addressed. As underlined by Perlin (2012), ambiguity seems to be one of the main features of internships; but I would like to add that it is precisely such ambiguity that constitutes its success. Finally, in this perspective, internships seem to be associated with informal labour not only because of the lack of recognition of the activities undertaken through internships as labour, but also because of the absence of a clear definition of the aim of internships, which makes the internship ultra-flexible and extremely adaptive, being used widely outside practitioner training.

The Informalization of the Intern Economy

Crucial questions arise at this point: what are the consequences of internship's informality? How does this status play a role in the explosion of the intern economy? First, the exemption of the internship from employment standards allows companies to avoid obligations and responsibilities assumed by employers. This is a crucial component for competing in what has been termed 'network capitalism' (Boltanski & Chiapello, 1999). The tendency for firms to be absolved of employer obligations, in fact, has also been addressed by scholars who focus on the globalization of industrial production. As underlined by Gereffi and Korzeniwicz (1994), outsourcing is motivated not only by the desire of employers to reduce labour costs, but also to avoid respecting employment standards. It is in this perspective that the informalization of labour represents one of the recent characteristic tendencies of globalization. Both in the east, where it is now a structural part of global production chains, and in the west, where neoliberal policies have undermined employment standards, we see a larger use of informal labour by formal firms (Chen, 2007; Routh & Borghi, 2016; Breman & van der Linden, 2014). As Chen emphasizes (2007, p. 11), many formal firms prefer informal employment relationships in the interest of flexible specialized production, global competition, or (simply) reduced labour costs. The issue is that formal firms choose these types of informal employment relationships as a means to avoid their formal obligations as employers. In other words, informal labour seems to represent one of the most predatory aspects of globalization, where the employment relationship is rendered invisible and thus employment rights are negated.

This complex relationship between formal and informal economies has also been discussed by Sassen (1994), who underlines how the informalization of labour can be an important option for those activities that cannot be outsourced. This is illustrated by the experiences of workers at a restaurant included in my study. As Gaia, a trade unionist working at the restaurant, explains, “the abuse of interns began after our activity in the company regularized precarious employment, overtime payment, health insurance and other worker rights guaranteed by the national contract between trade unions and the employers’ association which the owner was not respecting.” In other words, it was after unionization, which stopped the employer from constantly violating employment standards, that the internship became an option. The effect of this was the continued violation of employment laws for those without the protection of a collective agreement.

All cases are not the same, however. Another participant, Fabio, held an internship in a small independent film-making production house. An increase in demand at the company turned out to be beneficial for Fabio, because it led to a proper job after his internship. However, hiring Fabio was not sufficient to meet production quotas and so the use of internships was also adopted, as it was the easiest and the cheapest way to meet temporary increases in demand. In Fabio’s film-making production house, interns are used ‘for activities without any educational content’ such as packaging DVDs, contacting cinemas and festivals to enhance distribution, writing emails to organize public presentations, and, more generally, as he said “to do all that work that we could not afford with our limited resources... you know... at the end what we do with interns is not visible outside.”

Scarcity of monetary resources is another common reason behind the spread of informal work (Loayza & Rigolini, 2011; Williams & Nadin, 2010). Informalization, in fact, may be a strategy for small businesses not only to compete, but also to survive by ‘operating informally’ (Sassen, 1998, p. 89). Luca and Roberta’s internship experiences seem to be related to this point. Their internships were at the university in a research group, where they were responsible for filling out questionnaires, contacting local associations, and looking for people with the right profile to interview. Their work was fully organized by the research group, which specified the number of questionnaires, the list of associations they had to contact, and what they had to do to fill out the questionnaire correctly. They even had a brief meeting to learn the basic skills of social research. Thus, when asked why they were doing this job rather than someone more qualified, Luca answered “Probably they had not enough funds to hire someone to do this job; therefore they have used interns.” Due to massive cuts in public expenditures, it is likely that no funds were available and getting student interns seemed to be the easiest and cheapest way to obtain a workforce for the project. Another participant, Angela, who had a student internship in a small editorial house, had a similar experience. Once she got the internship (for which she also had to take a test because “the test made it look like a serious thing”), she discovered that the publishing house was primarily using interns as its workforce. As she further explains, “We were five of us working there, four were interns and one guy, who was our editor-in-chief, with a precarious contract.” It is important to underline here how there is not only a systematic use of internships, but the use of the internship represents a strategic choice to survive in the labour market. As Angela underlines, “most likely he would go out of business if he had to pay us.”

The lack of recognition makes the internship a very attractive option for employers because it allows them to avoid their obligations, including that of paying a salary. Scarcity of resources, avoiding unionization, and access to a ‘just-in-time’ workforce are some of the dynamics that are promoting the use of informal labour through internships by formal firms. Thus, the perspective of informalization seems to be helpful in focusing on the effects of the lack of recognition of interns’ working activities. But it also helps us to understand the mechanisms that lead to their abuse. Therefore, it is the strategic use of the internship by employers, which involves a qualitative transformation of the internship, more than simply its quantitative growth, that represents the new feature of intern economy.

Education-at-work: Neoliberalism and Informalization

While the informal status of the internship allows employers to avoid their obligations under employment laws, it simultaneously requires a reconstruction of the technologies of workforce control due to the absence of a salary. Education plays a key role in this by superseding interns' work activities, obscuring their exploitation, and justifying their informal status. In other words, through the internship, capitalism seems to have managed to 'capture' education, transforming it into an efficient mechanism through which to obtain workers' dedication despite being unpaid or highly underpaid.

First, for internships the borders between work and education are blurred by definition, which results in a wide variety of interns' self-evaluation. As Lorenzo, who had his internship experience in one of the biggest facility management companies in the province of Bologna, claimed,

I've done many different jobs during my experience. I still don't know if they were using me as a stop gap individual to fill in for various people or if they wanted to show me how the company was working in all fields.

In other words, the ambiguity that surrounds the internship seems to impede individuals from having objective parameters of evaluation. However, such an ambiguity also allows interns to create alternative narratives for themselves to justify their efforts in the workplace. Lorenzo, for example, even if he did not receive a job proposal after his internship, thinks his efforts have been worthy because "I have noticed that some of those jobs now at least let me have an interview." Similarly, Angela, despite the lack of opportunities in the editorial house where the entire workforce consisted of interns, said, "It might be true that I have been exploited, but I anyway learned something which can be useful in the future." In other words, the overlap of education and work experience seems to obscure exploitation, transforming interns' perception and allowing them to build a reluctant narrative to avoid the admittance of having been exploited.

Second, in a context where skills are a crucial component for an individual's competition in the labour market, the educational purposes of the internship meet the neoliberal ethic of 'human capital'.⁷ The company where Daniele had his internship has a wide range of activities; but his task was mainly to record and mount videos for some of the most famous Italian newspaper journalists and TV broadcasters:

Actually I did not have my internship because I wanted to learn something specifically... I guess internship is more an opportunity. Therefore, when I see other interns complaining I think: the success of an internship also depends on what you can get from it.

From this quote, an internalized justification seems to emerge to explain the absence of a salary. While there is no salary for their work, interns are achieving something they will enjoy and for which they are responsible. This also produces a 'moralizing effect', typical of neoliberal rhetoric, which evokes a necessary sacrifice in the present in order of achieving a bright future (Brown, 2003). Behind the narrative of 'investing in yourself', are not only the costs of training, which are placed on interns, but also the responsibility for a quality training (Zimmermann, 2011).

Third, as Polanyi (1958) underlines,⁸ the educational relationship is more asymmetrical than employment since is based on mutual trust. Such a relationship allows an employer to make use of interns to fill a temporary gap in the

workforce, often asking them to accomplish different tasks, without taking into consideration the educational content of the activities. For example, Francesco described his internship experience in a car factory as follows:

I have not been trained for any specific position. Since my chief officer switched to working part-time because of childbirth, I guess the reason why I was there was to do all that work that she could not do anymore.

His office, in fact, has a peripheral position in the organization. Thus, through their educational purpose interns' flexibility increases, often resulting in them being efficient 'stop gap' workers unable to distinguish education from exploitation.

A final crucial aspect of the intern economy needs to be underlined, specifically regarding the systematic relationship between the informalization of labour and the enlargement of capital's control over workers. According to Sassen (1998, p. 116), "there is a correspondence between a devaluing of jobs (from full-time to part-time, from jobs offering upward mobility within firms to dead-end jobs, etc...) and a feminization of employment in these jobs." The concept of feminization, in fact, seems to be a useful synthesis of all that has been described in this section. This is not only because women's work represents a paradigm of unrecognized and unpaid work, but as underlined by Morini (2007, p. 42):

Women seem to represent a model that contemporary capitalism looks at with growing interest, both in terms of the forms of the administration of labour (precariousness, mobility, fragmentary nature, low salaries) and in terms of the contents, given the new anthropological focus that work claims to assume through the intensive exploitation of quality, abilities and individual skills (capacities for relationships, emotional aspects, linguistic aspects, propensity for care).

In summary, we may argue that the use of the education-at-work narrative makes interns internalize the idea of working for their own good. Therefore, interns are a very attractive workforce not only because employers can avoid their obligations, but also because they are flexible, vulnerable and strongly motivated. As underlined by Lisa, "the truth is that we – the interns – work even harder than others who have a proper job."

Raising the issue

This paper has argued that the internship plays a crucial role in contemporary capitalist dynamics as it allows employers to avoid their responsibilities, including, but not limited to, that of paying a salary. Moreover, the neoliberal use of the sphere of education as a means to enhance control over the intern workforce has transformed what had once been a method of enhancing workers' skills into one of the most prominent features of insecurity in the contemporary labour market. Finally, the informal status of internships removes them from the spectrum of traditional unionization, leaving interns with little prospects for struggle in gaining recognition for their value both inside and outside workplaces.

Nonetheless, alongside the explosion of internships, interns' autonomous associations are mushrooming worldwide to fill this gap. The activities of such associations mainly deal with intern advocacy, bringing attention to the vulnerability of internships through campaigns or making use of the internet and social networks. This has been effective in recent times by raising public awareness about internship abuse and, in some cases, leading to better legislative protections for interns.

However, the main challenge for these associations seems to be that of actually organizing interns. The inherently temporary condition of internships, combined with neoliberal moralization, feminization, and the risk of stigmatization, makes organizing interns an almost impossible task, so long as significant resources are not made available. This means that even if significant improvements are made, interns are still very much unprotected in their workplaces. The strategy of 'naming and shaming', largely used among interns' associations to fill this gap, is only partially able to solve the protection of the workplace.

More fundamentally, when we look at the rise of the intern economy, we see a general tendency of contemporary capitalism that eliminates the possibility of a 'fair' internship. What seems to be required in this scenario, where the nature of the internship exists in between different worlds (policy, labor, education, etc...), is to build alliances among actors such as interns' associations, student organizations, and trade unions. Though it is perhaps unrealistic to achieve more protection for interns while the labour market itself is increasingly unprotected, it is an important goal nonetheless, because the struggle to improve interns' conditions may represent an opportunity to achieve a better labour market for everyone.

About the Author

Marco Marrone is a PhD student in Sociology of labour and economic processes in the Department of Sociology and Social Research at the University of Bologna. He also actively collaborates with the Institute of Economic and Social Research of Emilia-Romagna, which is linked with CGIL trade union. This collaboration has resulted in a number of relevant publications, among which the latest "Voucher: occasional work in Italy and Emilia-Romagna" has received attention from national media. His research interests include global transformations of capitalism and its impact on both formal and informal work, the transformations in labour markets, especially those involving young workers, the organizing experiences of precarious workers, labour policies and the welfare state in the era of globalization, and the effects of neoliberalism and austerity policies on living conditions. From September 2016 to February 2017, he held an International Visiting Traineeship at the Global Labour Research Centre, York University, Toronto, Canada.

The views expressed in this research brief are those of the author and do not necessarily represent those of the Global Labour Research Centre or of York University.

Endnotes

¹ Ten interviews with interns and former interns are analyzed in this paper. However, another 20 interviews have been undertaken with interns and special observers such as trade unionists, politicians, or persons in charge of the placement office in the University of Bologna. The interviews were conducted between February and June 2016 and are limited to university students or graduates, since they are one of the most prevalent groups in the intern economy.

² A synthesis of the problematic nature of skilled worker in the new labour regime is offered by Ure (1835, p. 21) 'By the infirmity of human nature, it happens, that the more skillful the workman, the more self-willed and intractable he is apt to become, and, of course, the less fit a component of a mechanical system, in which, by occasional irregularities, he may do great damage to the whole. The grand object therefore of the modern manufacturer is, through the union of capital and science, to reduce the task of his work-people to the exercise of vigilance and dexterity, faculties, when concentrated to one process, speedily brought to perfection in the young.'

³ The Act has an explicit goal to “formulate and promote the furtherance of labour standards necessary to safeguard the welfare of apprentices and to cooperate with the States in the promotion of such standards” (50 Stat. 664; 29 U.S.C. 50).

⁴ As underlined by Shyrock, in the second half of 19th century, the public tacitly asked, ‘where were the medical equivalents of steam engine or telegraph?’ (Shyrock, 1966, p. 171).

⁵ With ‘university third mission’ we mean the need for the university to connect directly with the external world, particularly in the economic dimension (Laredo, 2007).

⁶ Reported by: <http://www.internazionale.it/opinione/christian-raimo/2016/11/16/scuola-lavoro-alternanza-mcdonald>

⁷ Becker defines human capital as: ‘activities that influence future monetary and psychic income by increasing resources in people’ (Becker, 1984, p. 11)

⁸ ‘You follow your master because you trust his manner of doing things even when you cannot analyse and account in detail for its effectiveness. By watching the master and emulating his efforts in the presence of his example, the apprentice unconsciously picks up the rules of the art [...] These hidden rules can be assimilated only by a person who surrenders himself to that extent uncritically to the imitation of another’ (Polanyi M., 1958, p. 55)’

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Global Labour Research Centre Working Papers Series

Information for Submission

Submissions for consideration in the GLRC Working Papers Series should be submitted to glrc@yorku.ca. All papers will be refereed by an editorial committee of the GLRC and revisions may be required before publication. Copyright remains with the author(s). Submissions may take one of two forms: (1) research papers, not exceeding 5000 words; (2) commentaries, not exceeding 3000 words. Referencing should be in APA style. Submission should include a separate cover page, indicating title, abstract, author(s) names and contact information, and a short author biographical note (150 words/author).

Global Labour Research Centre

The **Global Labour Research Centre (GLRC)**, based in the Faculty of Liberal Arts & Professional Studies at York University (Toronto, Canada), engages in the study of work, employment and labour in the context of a constantly changing global economy. The Centre's work is organized around four major themes:

- The impact of the changing nature of work and employment on labour rights
- The interrelationships between migration, citizenship and work
- Gender relations at work and in labour movements
- The revitalization of workers' movements

The GLRC acts as hub for pan-university research collaboration on global labour, and promotes research that engages with a wide range of labour and community partners.