
Editorial

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Biographical notes: Giuseppe Giulio Calabrese is a Senior Researcher at the CNR-Ircres (Research Institute on Sustainable Economic Growth of the National Research Council, former CNR-Ceris) of Moncalieri, Italy which he joined in 1988. He taught as a Visiting Professor in Managerial Economics at University of Turin and Polytechnic of Turin. He is the Editor-in-Chief of the *International Journal of Automotive Technology and Management* and member of the International Steering Committee of Gerpisa. His main areas of research are focused on industrial organisation, SMEs, technological innovation, industrial policy, balance sheets analysis and automotive industry.

The 2020 International Colloquium of Gerpisa reports the first year of the new program of research on the ‘The transformations of the global auto industry’. The new international program aims to study these transformations, as well as the forms of coexistence between the old and new paradigms, through the prism of digitalisation, which is asserting itself as the main accelerator in the transitions underway.

In particular, the theme of the conference was the digitalisation of the auto industry. This included three broad categories: the effect of digitalisation on the architectures of automotive products; the impact on industry value chains and the wider industry ecosystems. The colloquium was meant to take place in metropolitan Detroit, but due to the COVID-19 pandemic was held as a virtual online conference. The same formulation will be for the 2021 Gerpisa Conference.

Nevertheless, the quality and the number of presentations did not suffer of the virtual online solution and the articles selected for this special issue confirm this.

Tommaso Pardi pays attention on the role of European Union policy about the prospects and contradictions of the electrification of the European automotive industry.

The paper of Martin Krzywdzinski focuses on the impact of automation and digitalisation on the changes in occupational structures in the automobile industry in Germany, the USA and Japan

Martin Schröder paper is dedicated on an emerging automotive country and in particular on the supply chain in Vietnam.

The colleagues Takefumi Mokudai, Martin Schröder, Marvin Müller, Carsten Schaede, Hajo Holst, Robert Sinopoli, Ulrich Jürgens, Gary Herrigel and Katsuki Aoki proposed a paper the digital technologies as lean augmentation in Japanese.

Viktor Werner is the 2018 winner of the Gerpisa Young Author with the paper ‘From protection to selective exposure: commercial demonstrations as steppingstones for upscaled technology diffusion’ written with Ksenia Onufrey and Thomas Magnusson.