

Report 7: Tanja Potezica, Session Q. Globalisation, Value/Supply Chains & Trade



By Tanja Potezica (email), Bauhaus-Universität Weimar, Fakultät Architektur und Urbanistik, Professur Raumplanung und Raumforschung, Weimar, Germany

Eight speakers from a variety of geographical insights, disciplines, and scales participated in the two sessions on globalisation, value/supply chains, and trade.

The first session started with an insightful presentation by Ioana Jipa-Musat, lecturer in International Business and Strategy from Royal Holloway University of London. Titled “Firm-Education-Industry Association Linkages: Driving the Territorial Embeddedness of Business Services Multinational Corporations in Romania?”. Her presentation highlighted that firm-education-industry association linkages facilitate recruitment, (re-)designing Curricula, and developing managerial skills while reshaping state-capital coordination and supportive policy cadres. However, she reflected that the Romanian case differs from other cases

with 'branch plant' economy features as MNCs leverage Romania's inherited superior technical base.

Moving to another part of the world, Akanksha Agnihotri from the United Kingdom discussed the strategic integration of emerging economies in global value chains, using the Indian pharmaceutical industry as an example. She highlighted the importance of balancing economic interests with social/environmental concerns and added a social dimension to the sometimes technical debate by citing forced prison labour in some major brands.

Juan Duran, a postdoctoral research fellow at the Economic and Social Institute ESRI, Ireland, additionally added a social dimension by examining 'Superstar Firms' and wage inequality between firms through evidence from European Regions.

Jacopo Canello, Assistant Professor at the University of Parma and the University of Groningen, delved into the small scale by looking at "Beyond the Giants: The Hidden Role of Micro and Small Enterprises in GVC Reconfiguration Dynamics". His conclusions have initiated a lively debate and a variety of questions as they stand in contrast to an expanding optimism about de-globalisation. The presented research highlighted that reshoring in MSEs is associated with adverse economic conditions and does not help MSEs to improve performances in the post-reshoring period. Diving into the details, he highlighted that a solid local subcontracting network mitigates the adverse effects of repatriation in the post-reshoring period. The policy implications, especially that direct reshoring incentives might be ineffective, should be avoided. Indirect policy measures aimed at strengthening the structure of regional subcontracting networks could be more impactful were met with a creative and open thinking ahead in the session.

Staying on the same scale, the first session was rounded off by Giorgio Ricchiuti, Associate Professor at the University of Florence, on "The Survival of Foreign Affiliates: a Multi-level Analysis", highlighting that firm size is crucial for survival in a low-quality institutional setting.

After the lunch break, Mengdi Shang from Tongji University, China, talked about supply chain network structure and trade credit, showing that the configuration of the supply chain network has the potential to influence the external governance mechanisms employed by the organisation.

Professor at the University of Neuchatel Switzerland Olivier Crevoisier's presentation titled "Value(s) and Food Transactions: An Experiential, Valuative and Territorial Approach", embedded in economic geography, forms an integrated conceptual framework to explain how value is constructed in both material and symbolic ways while looking at the way it unfolds across space. The research revealed that the same objects generate different values depending on the scenes to which they are attached, showing the complexity to which valuation processes are exposed.

Stephen Little, Professor Extraordinaire at Tshwane University of Technology, presented a practical approach to an Institutional Framework for Regional Synergies in Africa in his last contribution. He talked about the establishment of a Centre for Pan-African Studies, its work, and its plans for the future.