

The Future of Full Employment

The 4th ILO Employment Policy Research Symposium

INTRODUCTION

12-13 December 2019, Geneva

Context

I. Macroeconomic landscape: The policy goal of full employment in retreat?

- Inflation targeting, sometime at the expense of employment
- Fiscal “prudence” or austerity
- Industrial (or sector) policies at the backseat
- Or due to “labour market rigidity”?



II. New momentum for full employment agenda

- “Rethinking” macroeconomics, with growing recognition of “social” value of work
- Labour market polarization (with “new” forms of employment) and widening inequality
- SDG 8: “**Full and productive employment** and decent work for all”
- ILO Centenary Declaration for the Future of Work (III.C):
 - “macroeconomic policies that have those aims as their central objective”
 - “trade, industrial and sectoral policies that promote decent work, and enhance productivity”

Themes: *Full and productive employment*



0. Setting the scenes by Rathin Roy and Charles Sabel

I. Political economy of full employment

- A central topic for century-long debate on “full” employment (e.g. Michał Kalecki)
- How to create conditions for “a pragmatic, non-ideological approach to fiscal (and monetary) policy”?

II. New approaches to structural transformation

- Focus on “productive” employment
- How to reinvigorate industrial/sectoral policies?; Time for new approaches to structural transformation (e.g. in the era of “premature deindustrialization”)?

Themes (continued)



III. Full employment: Beyond simple job counting

- Focus on full **“employment”**
- What “employment” should be measured and used to guide policies, especially when the labour market is increasingly polarized/segmented (e.g. wage-employment puzzle)?
- Keynote by David Blanchflower

IV. Making sense of full employment in developing countries

- What about developing countries where informality and underemployment account for majority of employment (e.g. Okun’s coefficient is low, often close to zero)?

Themes (continued)



V. Achieving SDG 8 – national and international actions

- Bringing all elements together, through **the lens of SDG8**
- ILO, UN, EU and development cooperation partners

VI. The future of work – transitions over the life course

- Full employment from the **perspective of individuals**
- How to support workers in transition?; How to secure policy coherence (e.g. macroeconomic vs labour market policies)?

Outcome



Takeaway lessons and next steps

- Roundtable discussion with ILO constituents
- For a renewed employment policy research agenda

ILO Global Employment Policy Review (GEPR)

- Main vehicle for policy-oriented research by ILO experts
- To address both persistent and emerging policy challenges, not shying from those that are difficult or contentious
- First edition to come out in early 2020