

Industrial policy for sustainable human development in the post-Covid19 era

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National and local societies all around the world are fighting the most dramatic global public health emergency of our time, which has soon become an economic, social and human crisis touching all key dimensions of our lives.

Within an inevitable revamping attention on the need for government intervention to face the challenges raised by the Covid19 pandemic, industrial policy is appearing as a central piece of the puzzle. As production dynamics in every country is highly affected by the crisis, industrial policy is considered part of the response to solve dramatic economic and social problems deriving by extraordinary levels of unemployment, deprivation and poverty. In this paper, we argue that a turning point on the connection between industrial policy, sustainability and development has been reached, highlighting the need to rethink its theoretical foundations as well as its governance and implementation processes for a new role in our post-Covid 19 societies. Therefore, the research question underlying this paper deals primarily with the nexus between the debate on industrial policy and its effects in terms of human development, social cohesion and sustainability. For this reason, we attempt at closing the gap between different strands of literature, whose integrated connection leads to a new analytical framework with real-world implications on the role of industrial policy, not only as tool for productive dynamics, but also as a leverage for sustainable human development. All in all, we aim at contributing to the debate on our post-Covid19 economies and societies in two ways: firstly, by providing a new integrated analytical framework on industrial policy to steer a sustainable structural change of our economies and societies towards sustainable human development; secondly, by identifying preliminary implications on industrial policy governance and implementation, investing in the accurate and transparent design of industrial policy in the post-Covid19 era.