PArtecipazione e COnflitto
http://siba-ese.unisalento.it/index.php/paco
ISSN: 1972-7623 (print version)
ISSN: 2035-6609 (electronic version)
PACO, Issue X(X) 20XX: XX-XX
DOI: 10.1285/i20356609vXiXpXX

RESEARCH ARTICLE

Political, general, or economic strikes? New types of strikes and workers' contention in Italy (2008–2018)

Margherita Sabrina Perra
University of Cagliari

Katia Pilati
University of Trento

ABSTRACT

The article provides an overview of workers' collective actions in Italy between 2008 and 2018, which characterized a new wave of contention; the article focuses on the development of strike activities in this period. While the literature suggests an increase in general/political strikes and a decline of economic strikes, we argue that this distinction does not sufficiently account for the variety of strikes that has recently occurred. Our contribution aims to clarify the differences between three types of strikes: general political strike, general/large-scale economic strike, and local economic strike.
The empirical analysis is based on a new data set of workers' collective actions, including strikes, observed in Italy in the decade 2008–2018. The data set was built using protest event analysis (PEA). Multiple correspondence analysis (MCA) reveals three types of strikes that differ along these dimensions: the actors promoting them, the workers' occupations involved, the issues claimed, the scale of action, and the addressee of the actions.
Conclusions compare the characteristics of workers' contentious actions between 2008 and 2018 with the old cycle of protests observable in the 1960s and 1970s, and suggest an integration of economic and political explanations to account for the new types of strikes.

KEYWORDS: collective action, industrial relations, social movement, strike, trade unions

CORRESPONDING AUTHOR(S): Margherita Sabrina Perra (mperra@unica.it); Katia Pilati (katia.pilati@unitn.it)

1. Introduction

Recent international debate on industrial relations and social movements recognizes that the 2008 crisis heralded a new cycle of protests (della Porta and Andretta 2013; Kriesi et al. 2020). Globally, from 2008 onwards, multiple waves of mobilization have occurred, starting with the December 2010 protests in Tunisia and the 2011 Arab Uprisings which touched several countries in the Middle East and North Africa, to the emergence of movements such as the 2011 Indignados in Spain, Greece and Portugal, and Occupy Wall Street in the USA. Leading scholars Tilly and Tarrow argued that "since 2007 the world has become even more contentious" (2015, p. xiii). In Italy, protests in 2008 started to peak with the student movement referred to as Onda Anomala, but several authors contend that these protests never developed into a wave as in other Southern European countries such as Greece or Spain (Zamponi 2012; Kriesi et al. 2020), nor did they resemble the wave occurring in the early 1990s associated with the crisis of the Italian political system (Forno 2003). The waves of mobilization affecting mainly Southern European countries between 2008 and 2015 were characterized by the return of economic demands (della Porta 2015; Kriesi et al. 2020) and recent research shows that workers' protests in Italy did develop into a wave of contention (Pilati and Perra 2022). This article's specific aim is to disentangle some aspects of these protests by providing an analysis of strike trends in Italy after the 2008 recession.

Strikes are part of workers' mobilization strategies in which different types of actions are integrated (Hamann et al. 2013). Scholars have found that while there has recently been a decline in workers' participation in economic strikes in Europe, there has been a greater propensity to join general strikes, which, in the past decade, have challenged austerity policies implemented during the 2008 recession (Gall 2013; Hamann et al. 2013; Vandaele 2016; Altiparmakis and Lorenzini 2018). As a result, protest actions against national governments in their role as regulators and employers have increased (Altiparmakis and Lorenzini 2018; della Porta 2015; Diani and Kousis 2014). These trends have also been recorded in Italy (Andretta 2018) where the increased use of strikes during the crisis has only partially limited the systematic decline of economic strikes recorded in recent decades (Pedersini 2014)[1]. As mentioned, a partial increase in the number of workers' protests has been observed with a diversification of the repertoire of actions that includes demonstrations and forms of "street protest" (Tarrow 1989; Gentile 2015; Quaranta 2014).

While strikes are still used as the main instrument of conflict in which workers are involved (Pilati and Perra 2022), few studies are concerned with detecting and explaining their most recent changes. Furthermore, although the literature has emphasized the need to distinguish between economic and political strikes, in Italy this difference has not been explored in depth recently, either from a theoretical perspective or—mainly due to the lack of official data[2]—from an empirical perspective attempting to explain the trends of each type. Distinguishing whether a strike is political or economic is, however, of crucial importance. So far, to analyze strikes, scholars have drawn on the role of business cycles (Brandl and Traxler 2010). In contrast, the political nature of many strike demands calls for the introduction of a more "political" interpretation that accounts for the role of political

[1] The decline of economic strikes has been attributed partly to the loss of centrality of the Fordist model of production, the progressive deindustrialization, the transformations of tertiary sector work, and the deep crisis of representation affecting collective actors.

[2] The National Institute of Statistics (Istat) stopped publishing statistics on labor conflicts in April 2010. The latest data available refer to conflicts in 2009. At the moment, the only data available concerns strikes in the public sector.

cycles and variables within the political context as well (Hamman et al. 2013). Our contribution thus aims to push towards a better understanding of strikes in an attempt to provide suitable explanations for their emergence in the article's conclusions. In this framework, we aim to clarify the distinction between political and economic strikes and propose a typology of strikes that distinguishes between general political strikes, general/large-scale economic strikes, and local economic strikes.

To clarify the distinction between these strikes, the article integrates two types of literature, firstly, on social movements, and secondly, on industrial relations, starting from the assumption that the two perspectives have so far favored a dichotomous view of collective action by distinguishing movements and unions as actors operating in two different spheres of conflict, with different tools, purposes, and resources. Such a view suited the experiences of collective action recorded in the "thirty glorious years" (from 1945 to 1973) when Italy's political and industrial arenas had clearer boundaries, and strikes were coordinated by unions as an expression of a broader historical and collective actor: the labor movement (Accornero et al. 1977; Pizzorno 1980). The recent Italian experience offers an interesting case study because it suggests that the latest round of protests has fostered attempts to reinvigorate the labor movement alongside a reconfigured working class with different characteristics and actors involved (Milkman 2013; Nowak and Gallas 2014). The Italian case allows us to highlight similarities and differences between the recent wave and the past wave developed in the 1960s. As the Italian labor movement of the 1960s emerged, trade union federations became hegemonic actors not only in industrial conflict, but also in institutional and political spheres, due to their exclusive relationships with political parties through what Pizzorno termed "political exchange" (Pizzorno 1977; Gentile 2015; Gambilonghi 2020). In contrast, research concerning recent worker action shows a multiplicity of organizations representing and mobilizing workers. In this situation, trade union federations are complemented by new independent trade unions as well as non-working categories (Pilati and Perra 2022). The recent protest mobilization can nonetheless be understood as connected with the cycle of protests of the 1960s, particularly in how economic grievances interact with political grievances to define the space of social and political conflict. For this reason, Pizzorno's analysis of trade unions' actions as political exchange is well-suited to guide us in the attempt to distinguish economic from political strikes, and to consider both economic and political approaches to the analysis of strikes (Pizzorno 1977).

The empirical study proposes a descriptive-exploratory analysis of strikes since 2008 in Italy. Data are derived from an original data set of collective actions—including strikes—by and pro workers in Italy from 2008 to 2018. Albeit partially, this data set compensates for the absence of data from official statistics on strikes and other forms of protest in Italy during the decade in question (Vandaele 2016). The results show the specific characteristics of strikes and highlight changes in the occupational categories mobilized, the organizations promoting strikes, the scale of action, the addressee of the action, and the different issues associated with the three types of strikes.

2. Economic, general, and political strikes: theoretical aspects

Strikes represent the most important protest event in the labor/capital conflict and signal the mobilizing capacity of collective actors, especially trade unions (Franzosi 2006; Pedersini 2014; Crouch 2017; Gumbrell-McCormick and Hyman 2018). The literature points to a persistent distinction between economic and political or general strikes (Hamman et al. 2013; Gallas 2018; Pizzorno 1980).

Economic strikes, i.e., those that are directly related to the labor/capital conflict, have been the privileged instruments of unions' protest actions in Italy (Pizzorno 1978). These strikes involve one or more occupational categories mobilizing against the employer counterpart, that is, they are addressed to the employer (Pizzorno 1980), they aim to improve working conditions, or regard layoffs and wages, among other issues. In contrast, the political strike regard more general "non-negotiable" interests that oppose political-economic choices implemented by governments (Pizzorno 1980) and are oriented against the government and its representatives as promoters of specific reforms or decisions. This definition of political strikes often overlaps with that of general strikes. According to Hyman's definition (1989: 17), a general strike is a "temporary, national stoppage of work by workers from many industries, directed against the executive or legislative arms of government, to enforce a demand or give voice to a grievance." This concept of general strike is, however, ambiguous when we consider the nature of the issues and grievances claimed and the targets and the consequences of strikes (Hamman et al. 2013; Gallas 2018; Pizzorno 1980). General strikes may in fact include both economic and political demands. Additionally, according to a narrow conception, the general strike involves all sectors of production. In a broader conception, the general—and more properly political—strike involves not only various categories of workers in one or more sectors, but also participants from non-working categories such as students or citizens.

In the case of general strikes focusing on economic issues, while the issues claimed are economic, the addressee can be either a private employer or the State as employer or actor who should intervene to provide or mandate more and better jobs. When workers from a range of categories within a single economic sector—like public transportation workers—go on strike, even if their demands are purely economic - concerning working conditions, the renewal of the national contract, salaries or layoffs - their addressee could nevertheless be the local government. In such a case, the strike would demand the government to put pressure on public transportation companies.

In turn, when general strikes focus on political issues, they address the State as the political actor which takes decisions on specific reforms concerning the labor market, pensions schools, or on other government policies. The aim of challengers is to be included as partners in the decision-making process. In the most recent European experiences, general strikes addressing political issues took the form of protest actions oriented primarily against government-sponsored austerity policies, welfare cuts, and pension and labor market reforms (Bojar et al. 2021; Flesher-Fominaya 2017; Genovese et al. 2016). In Italy, instances of general political strikes were observed between 2008 and 2010 in conjunction with the discussions of school reforms that preceded the passage of the so-called "Gelmini reform" in 2010, named after Mariastella Gelmini, the Minister of Education who proposed the reforms. These strikes involved students, researchers, and education workers (Zamponi 2012; Nowak and Gallas 2014). Other general strikes were organized against the austerity reforms proposed by Mario Monti's government beginning in late 2011. In both cases, the strikes could be defined as "political" in terms of their demands and the expected consequences of changes in political choices (Pizzorno 1980). In this context, the economic motivation is "politicized," supported by unions seeking revitalization from a period of relative stagnation, and implemented through a movementist approach to collective action that develops outside the workplace and combines the range of labor and citizen protest actions according to the "double repertoire" (Gentile 2015). Politicization has thus increasingly affected economic strikes, which, although organized within the industrial conflict, have amplified their symbolic value of contesting governments' political choices which are held responsible for the general worsening of life conditions. These ambiguous definitions complicate not only the correct measure of the events, but also the classification of the content and outcomes of mobilization (Hamman et al. 2013).

Empirical evidence shows that economic strikes have continued to decline over the past several decades, while general political strikes have increased (Gall 2013; Vandaele 2016; Hamman et al. 2013). The cycle of anti-austerity protests that began in 2008 in Italy has been fragmented and weak in comparison to anti-austerity struggles in Greece and Spain (Della Porta et al., 2017; Cillo and Pradella 2019), but has highlighted the persistence of the dichotomy between the political and economic arenas of mobilization and the involvement in the two spheres of all collective actors. Trade union federations attempted to reinforce their position in the realm of industrial relations (Carrieri and Feltrin 2016) and at the same time, to redefine their political role in a context where coordination with political parties had been widely reduced (Molina and Barranco 2016; Gambilonghi 2020). The direct and indirect effects of the 2008 crisis on both labor and people's living conditions prompted unions to organize protests in collaboration with organizations and movement groups. In many cases these actions were linked to the unions' attempts, through so-called revitalization strategies, to increase membership (Frege and Kelly 2003; Baccaro et al. 2003; Hamann et al. 2013; Tapia and Turner 2013; Vandaele 2016; Béroud 2018). Through the coordination of collective mobilization, unions thus acted in both industrial and political conflict (Pizzorno 1978). However, this process was complicated by the high level of inter-union conflict that weakened their position in industrial relations and their legitimacy as political actors (Bradanini 2014). While in post-World War II, Italian trade union federations were long the hegemonic actors in industrial relations and coordinated the labor movement, in more recent years they have lost this exclusivity in favor of new actors that mobilize workers (Meardi et al. 2021; Carver and Doellgast 2021). Testifying to this shift are the results of case-specific or sector-specific research using ethnographic techniques that explore processes of individual and collective action both in and out of the workplace (Cillo and Pradella 2018; Tassinari and Maccarrone 2020; Doellgast et al., 2018). Important evidence has emerged from these studies about the relationship between union federations and grassroots, autonomous, and spontaneous worker representation; their action in the contexts of organized labor; and their abilities to build alliances and engage labor market outsiders. The latter contend with a lack of representation of their interests in industrial conflict, which favors their participation in general strikes. Thus, the distinction between rights and interests -class and occupation-specific- has also resurfaced, which may justify the ideological distance between unions and movement actors (Köhler and Calleja Jimenez 2015; Vandaele 2016).

3. Methods

Our empirical analysis explores strikes based on data derived from an original data set containing information on conflictual collective actions in industrial relations, including strikes, observed in Italy during 2008–2018. The data was collected by following the established method in social movement studies, known as Protest Event Analysis (PEA) (Koopmans and Rucht 2002). To collect this data, we drew on a selection of articles from print and online daily versions of *La Repubblica*, a major Italian newspaper. We collected data from both the national and ten local editions of *La Repubblica* from January 1, 2008, until December 31, 2018, resulting in a sample of 9,910 collective actions. The data set is original for a few reasons. It is the first to include collective actions that specifically concern workers and contains detailed information on the occupational category of workers involved in the protests. Second, unlike past studies that have used PEA and have focused only on protests, the data set contains information both on protests—such as strikes, sit-ins, occupations, and traffic blockades—and on actions that are more conventional, albeit contentious, such as negotiations and

actions that take place using institutional channels. Third, the data set contains information on actions at the local level, which overcomes the limitation of many PEA studies that focus only on the national level (Andretta 2018; Kriesi et al. 2020). This captures the consequences of the process of "downward scaleshift" in which the scale of action decreases—in particular, from the national level to actions closely related to local issues (McAdam et al. 2001)—a process resulting from the decentralization of bargaining processes in the field of industrial relations.

Our empirical analysis first investigates the forms of action in which workers engaged. For these analyses we use the full sample of data (N = 9,910 actions). Secondly, we focus on strikes to understand their characteristics. The sample we use to investigate strikes focuses on 2,482 cases. We first identify general strikes by drawing on the direct information collected in our data set assessing whenever a "general strike" [sciopero generale] was reported in our source. We classified 360 general strikes, representing 3.6 percent of all 9,910 actions. General strikes are often defined as such regardless of the specific type of action taken: 44.6 percent of general strikes in our data are demonstrations, 29.2 percent are strikes defined as abstention from work, and 9.5 percent are sit-ins. From this data we identify strikes that are defined as a form of action involving abstention from work. These strikes represent 2,122 events[3]. From these variables alone it is difficult to identify the economic or political nature of strikes. We thus explore how certain characteristics of strikes cluster together, allowing us to perceive and identify groups representing different types of strikes. To do this, we use multiple correspondence analysis (MCA), a technique for nominal categorical data used to detect and represent underlying and latent structures (Greenacre and Blasius 2006; Beh and Lombardo 2014). MCA is an extension of simple correspondence analysis used for summarizing and visualizing data tables containing more than two "categorical variables" (Abdi and Williams 2010). MCA is helpful for analyzing our data on strikes because it allows us to examine how different characteristics—namely, the types of issues claimed, the organizations promoting the events, the workers' occupations mobilized by the events, the addressee of the action, and the scale of action—cluster together in groups, and thereby to identify types of strikes. MCA provides a visual representation of the associations among these variables and the groups involved.

In the data set, the characteristics of strikes are identified through the following variables:
Workers' occupation is a nominal variable whose categories include the major occupations involved in strikes as identified through the 2008 ISCO (International Standard Classification of Occupations) code. We focus on those occupations mostly involved in strikes: plant and machine operators, craft and related trade workers, elementary occupations, service and sales workers, professionals, and a residual category of other occupations.

Type of issues claimed is a nominal variable that identifies the focus of the action's demands, whose categories are the following: economic, political, and social rights issues, and a residual category aggregating those claims not classifiable by the previous categories.

Actors involved identifies the organizations promoting or involved in the events. It is a nominal variable whose categories are the following: trade union federations, independent trade unions, professional associations, unorganized workers, and non-working categories including student organizations, social movement organizations (SMOs), and civil society organizations (CSOs).

Scale of action is a variable distinguishing action occurring at the city or local level from those occurring on a larger scale.

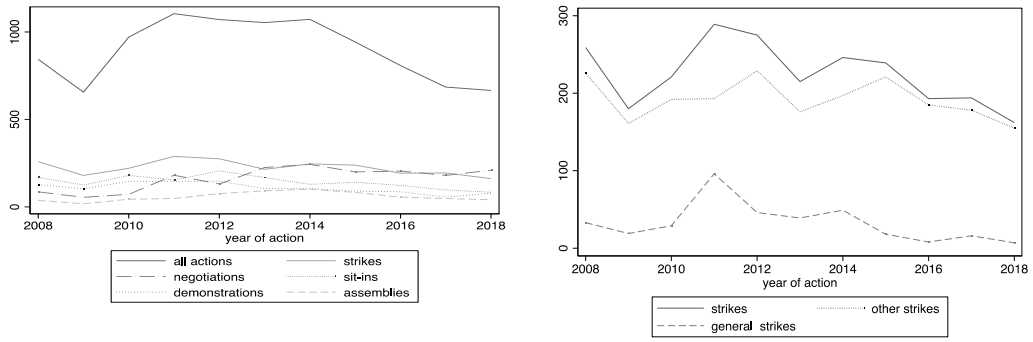
[3] In our analysis of strikes we did not include 36 cases of "white strikes" representing 0.36 of all workers' actions, due to the different nature of actions and the low number of cases for their separate analysis.

Addressee of the action identifies to whom the action is targeted. A political addressee identifies the target of action in the government, the region, the province, the municipality, the juridical system, or the police forces; economic addressees include private companies or private entities. Other addressees include targets such as public companies and institutions—e.g., Fincantieri, The National Institute for Social Security (INPS), the Postal Service (Poste Italiane), or universities—or unions and professional associations, theatres/museums, and other actors not included in previous categories.

4. Patterns of strikes in the broader field of collective action

The analysis of the number of work-related collective actions between 2008 and 2018 shows a clear wave of contention in the labor field (Figure 1), characterized by a variety of actions and a rather steady increase in the number of contentious actions up to 2010. The years between 2011 and the end of 2014 witness high and persistent levels of contention which precede a phase of demobilization starting in January 2015. Approximately 40 percent of all work-related collective actions developed in the Northern regions of Italy; 27 percent in the South and in the islands including Sicily and Sardinia; and 27 percent in the center.

Figure 1 - Total number of workers' collective actions and main workers' collective actions by year (left hand graph); total number of strikes, general strikes, and other strikes (right hand graph). Italy 2008–2018 (N = 9,910)



Source: own elaboration on our original PEA data set (N all actions (left graph) = 9910; N total strikes (right graph) = 2,482; N general strikes = 360; N other strikes = 2,122)

Of all the actions, strikes were the most common form of protest, representing, on average, 21.4 percent of all actions occurring in the decade considered (see the left-hand graph of Figure 1). The right-hand graph of Figure 1 - which breaks down the number of overall strikes (N = 2,482) into general strikes (N = 360) and other strikes (N = 2,122) - shows that far fewer general strikes occurred than other strikes[4].

Separate analyses show that there is a general decreasing trend of classic forms of action in the decade considered (see also Pilati and Perra 2022). This trend concerns strikes as well as other forms of more conventional actions such as sit-ins. In turn, institutional actions like negotiations, legal actions, and states of agitation—actions implemented through institutional channels, and which are also considered the most conventional actions for advancing demands on work-related issues—are used much less at the beginning of the wave but increase sharply after 2012 and then show a steady,

[4] These strikes include all actions of abstention from work with the exclusion of those that are general strikes.

even trend. Finally, disruptive actions prevail in the early phase of the wave of mobilization (2008-2010) and then decrease consistently throughout the 11 years observed.

As recently examined (Pilati and Perra 2022: 10), a variety of actors supported these actions, with trade union federations supporting workers the most (50.2 percent of all actions). The presence of independent trade unions in the decade's actions was, in general, far lower than that of trade union federations: independent unions took part, on average, more than two times less frequently. A high proportion of actions were not supported by any organization and 24.7 percent of actors involved were in fact unorganized workers, who were most active in the early and core phases of mobilization. Most actions functioned on a local scale: more than 80 percent involved workers on a city-wide basis. Workers engaging in collective action were mostly (83.2 percent) motivated by economic demands, specifically, working and contractual conditions, layoffs, and the non-payment of salaries. Actions relating to political demands, such as reforms, EU regulations, national or local government policies, comprised 16.3 percent of all actions, while 8.1 percent of workers' demands related to social rights such as housing, solidarity, and environmental issues.

4.1 New types of strikes?

To further investigate the strikes in the decade examined, we deploy multiple correspondence analysis (MCA) and scrutinize how various features of the strikes—different issues claimed, scales of action, organizations promoting the event, the occupational category of workers mobilized, and the addressee of the action—cluster in groups which can be taken to represent different types of strikes. Importantly, we can understand whether economic demands and political demands are associated with different types of strikes. Among those considered in the MCA, we have two variables that help us to distinguish economic and political demands: the issue and, following Pizzorno (1977), the target of the demands. If economic and political issues and addressees are associated with different types of strikes, our analysis then supports our argument for the need to distinguish general political strikes from general economic strikes. In the following analyses, we perform an MCA considering all strikes occurring between 2008 and 2018 in Italy (see Table 1 showing the first four dimensions and the amount of variance accounted for by each of them).

Table 1 - Multiple/Joint correspondence analysis

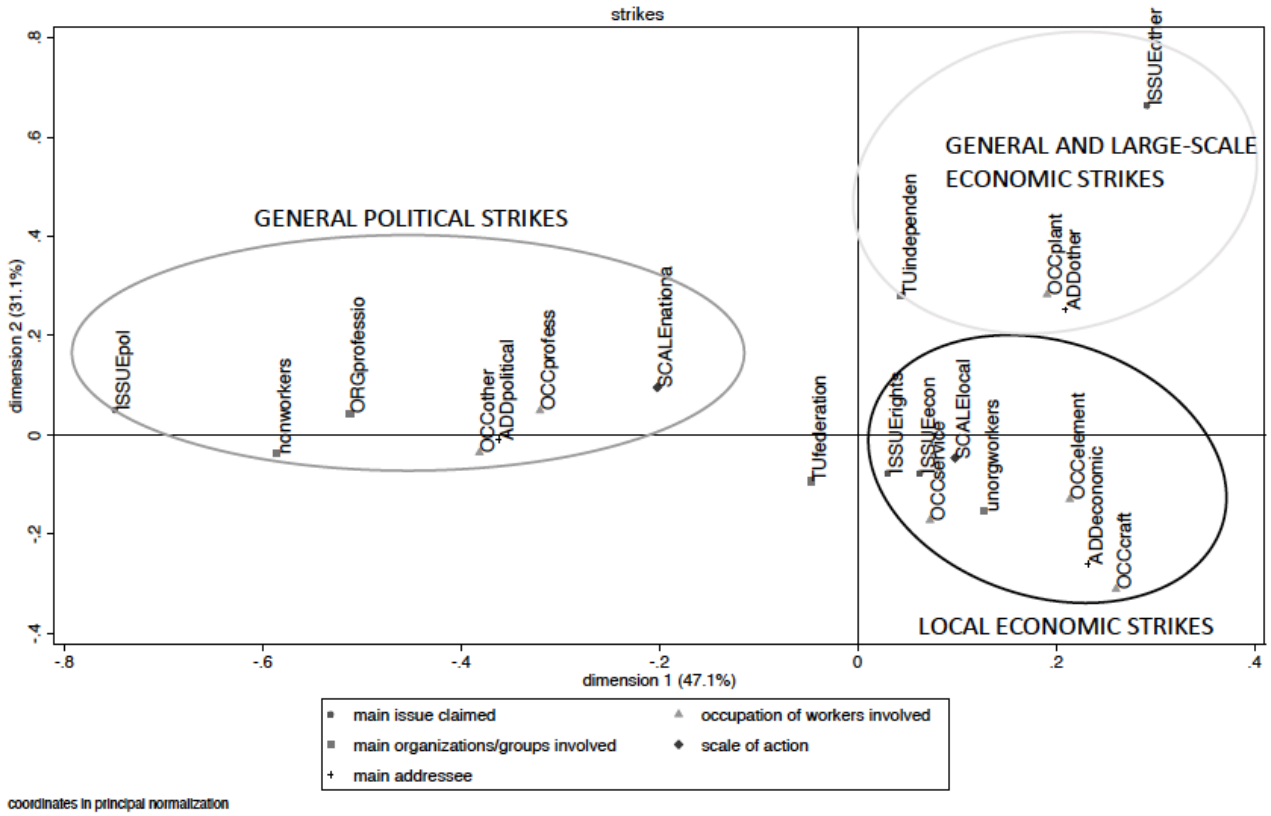
Dimensions	Principal inertia	percent	Cumulative percent
1	.049	47.1	47.1
2	.033	31.1	78.2
3	.004	4.1	82.4
4	.000	0.7	83.0
Total inertia:	.10	100	

Source: own elaboration on our original PEA data set (N = 2,153)

As shown in Table 1, the first two dimensions are sufficient to retain almost 80 percent of the total inertia (variation) contained in the data. Not all the points are equally distributed in the two dimensions. However, variable categories with a similar profile are grouped together. Figure 2 plots the two main dimensions resulting out of the MCA, on issues claimed, addressee of the action, occupational categories, scale, and organizations/groups promoting the event. Considering the two

dimensions, we look at the variable categories with larger values, as they contribute most to the definition of the dimensions[5].

Figure 2 - Characteristics of different types of strikes: local economic strikes, general/large-scale economic strikes, and general political strikes (Italy, 2008–2018)



Note: Economic, political, social rights, and other issues claimed are respectively identified by the labels ISSecon, ISSpol, ISSright, and ISSother. The workers' occupation involved in the events—plant and machine operators, craft and related trade workers, elementary occupations, service and sales workers, technicians and professionals, and other occupations—are identified respectively as follows: OCCplant, OCCcraft, OCCelement, OCCservice, OCCprofess, and OCCother. Organizations promoting the events—trade union federations, independent trade unions, non-working categories such as student organizations, SMOs and CSOs, professional associations, and unorganized workers—are identified respectively as follows: TUfederation, TUindependent, nonworkers, and unorgworkers. The scales, local or large-scale, are identified respectively as SCALElocal and SCALEnational. The addressees—political, economic, and other addressees—are identified respectively as ADDpolitical, ADDeconomic, and ADDother.
Source: own elaboration of our original PEA data set

The top contributors to the positive pole of the first dimension include actions targeting economic actors or the residual categories of addressees—which includes public companies or bodies—as well as professional associations and unions; craft and related trade workers; and plant and machine operators. In distinction, political issues, a political addressee, and the residual category of occupations, contribute to the negative pole of the first dimension.

The categories of the variables associated to the positive pole of the second dimension are the following: the presence of issues that are neither political, economic, nor concerning social rights; plant and machine operators; independent trade unions; and addressees that include public companies

[5] These values are not shown but are available upon request to the authors.

or bodies. In distinction, the variables contributing most to the negative pole of this dimension are craft and related trade workers, and economic addressees.

Considering the distance between the points in Figure 2, we can ascertain the characteristics associated to a new typology of strikes. Three groups can clearly be identified in Figure 2, one on the upper right, the second on the lower right, and a third on the left side of the graph. Each group or type of strike shares a number of characteristics. Only one category, trade union federations, is not associated with any specific type of strike and lies close to the origin of Figure 2. This suggests that trade union federations are present across the three types of strikes.

Regarding issues, the results emerging from the MCA clearly show how demands on political and economic issues are associated with different types of strikes. The groups differ along the actor addressed by the strike—distinguishing political addressees from economic addressees—and the actors mobilized. The collective actions of non-working actors are clearly distinguished from some groups of workers, namely those in elementary and craft occupations, as well as unorganized workers without any organizational affiliation. The scale of action also distinguishes the types of strikes: those focused on economic issues tend to be organized at the local level while strikes on political issues and those addressed to political actors tend to have a larger scale.

Synthetizing the information presented in the graph, we identify the following three types of strikes: one type is the *general political strike*, the second is the *local economic strike,* and the third is associated with a fewer number of characteristics. This latter group includes both *general economic strikes* and *economic strikes* whose scale goes beyond the local level.

The three groups can be considered ideal types which provide us with some hints on specific characteristics that are more closely associated with one type than the other.

General political strikes

The first type of strike identified is associated with the characteristics grouped on the left of Figure 2. We define these strikes as general political strikes as they focus on political issues and address political actors by advancing demands against specific governmental reforms or policies. Actions characterizing this type of strike include protests against the budget laws and are characterized by demands regarding reforms and government policies like the austerity reforms implemented from 2011 onwards, or the 2014–2015 labor market reform, referred to as Renzi's "Jobs Act". These general political strikes tend to be organized on a national scale and involve mostly non-working categories: more than 75 percent of actors involved are from non-working categories such as students or citizens, or social categories like parents protesting against the government to implement better education to their children (see also della Porta 2015; Kriesi et al. 2020; for the Italian case, see Andretta 2018). Students, for instance, were present in more than 10 percent of all these actions.

While no specific trade union appears to be associated with these strikes more than another, our data show that trade union federations engaged in more than 80 percent of general political strikes while autonomous trade unions were present in only one quarter of them. Most participants were professionals, whose professional organizations were also closely associated with this type of strike. Educators were especially present in the 2008 university strikes and the Onda movement (Zamponi 2011). These were mostly general political strikes involving the school sector against Berlusconi IV's cabinet. Additionally, strikes by school professionals erupted around June 2010 against the Gelmini reform concerning school and university reform, and around 2015, in response to the introduction of another school reform, the so-called "Buona Scuola" [good school].

General political strikes occurred mostly between 2011 and 2014, specifically against Monti's government austerity reforms in 2011 and 2012, and in 2014 against the Jobs Act. An important peak of protest occurs at the end of 2011, correlating with the end of Berlusconi's cabinet and the beginning of Monti's technocrat government which came to power in November 2011. Specifically, protests began to erupt in September 2011 and reached their highest peak in January 2012 after the approval of two decrees. The first was the "Save Italy" decree passed in December 2011. This was a package of spending cuts and tax increases which included deeply unpopular measures like the Fornero pension reform named after the Ministry of Labor and Social Policies. This reform raised the country's retirement age and concluded the cycle of pension reforms began in 1995 with the Dini Reform[6]. Within the austerity measures adopted, a second decree known as the "Grow-Italy" decree, was passed by Monti's cabinet in January 2012. Many professionals engaged in protests against these austerity measures. Among other aims, the Grow-Italy decree initially attempted to force lawyers and notaries to agree on their fee before any assignment, and to increase the number of pharmacies per inhabitants. The respective professionals—lawyers, notaries, and pharmacists—protested against the decree, forcing Monti's cabinet to implement partial revisions. In 2014, many protests occurred against the new labor market reforms, including the Poletti decree which liberalized the use of fixed-term contracts in March 2014. Afterwards, protests continued against the decrees implemented through the 2015 Jobs Act promoted by Prime Minister Matteo Renzi. The Jobs Act increased the overall flexibility of the labor market while extending passive and active policies for the unemployed. The Jobs Act also modified the 1970 Workers' Statute in several ways, including by allowing greater discretion to employers in the allocation of employees' tasks; possibilities for stricter monitoring of employees' performance to increase organization and safety; revising the rules and (implicitly) the costs of severance payment; along with new regulations for open-ended contracts (Boeri and Garibaldi, 2018; Lucifora and Naticchioni 2018).

Local economic strikes

The second type of strike is identified by those characteristics grouped at the bottom right-hand side of Figure 2. These strikes, identified as local economic strikes, regard the city level and focus both on economic issues such as working and contractual conditions, layoffs, and the non-payment of salary, and on social rights. Since the latter appears close to the origin of the graph in Figure 2, we can say that social rights are not a clear or distinctive characteristic of this type of strike. These local economic strikes target private companies and involve specific occupational categories, namely, craft and related trade workers, service and sales workers, and workers in elementary occupations. While trade unions are not absent here, these strikes are widely characterized by the presence of unorganized workers with very low levels of unionization. Metal workers show a very high percentage of engagement in unorganized strikes. The latter may especially concern precarious workers, even though our data does not include types of employment contracts. The high presence of unorganized workers in local actions support previous analyses showing that "action by unorganized workers tends to be on a local scale" (Pilati and Perra 2022).

[6] The Law n.335/1995, named after the President of the Cabinet Lamberto Dini, was based on the principle of "actuarial fairness on average," which is only guaranteed in the Legislated Conversion Factors (LCFs) "on average," without distinguishing between different categories of workers or between men and women. This principle links the contributions and benefits of future pensioners at the age of retirement to the present value of their contributions.

Craft and related trade workers—especially metal, machinery, and related trade workers like steel workers—mobilized throughout the whole decade. They challenged important private companies like FIAT—now Stellantis—, Fincantieri, one of the world's largest shipbuilding groups; Leonardo-Finmeccanica, one of the world's biggest companies building high tech, including technologies for defense, aerospace, and security; and ILVA, one of the major Italian steel companies[7]. This group, craft and related trade workers, engaged mainly in strikes, which accounted for 21.51 percent of all their actions. However, their actions included a similarly high share of negotiations as well, at 21.45 percent. Most of their actions (18.1 percent) occurred in Liguria where steel workers mobilized at Fincantieri Sestri Levante against Leonardo-Finmeccanica, and at ILVA in Cornigliano. Demands addressed to Fincantieri in 2011 regarded cuts included in the industrial plan and the possible closure of the plant sites at Sestri Ponente (Genova) and in Castellammare di Stabia (Napoli). Protests by metal workers also occurred at FIAT—now Stellantis—when a new employment contract was introduced. Particularly important among these were the protests following the December 2010 deal in Mirafiori in Turin, FIAT's largest plant site and its headquarters. This deal itself followed on the heels of one signed in June 2010 in Pomigliano (Naples). On these occasions, under CEO Sergio Marchionne, FIAT and trade unions—except the left-leaning FIOM—signed an agreement on a new contract for workers at the site. The agreement held that FIAT would not apply Italy's national contract law to the Mirafiori plant site and would ban all union activity for those workers not signing the deal. Other protests occurred in Sicily where metal workers mobilized in both 2010 and 2011 at the Termini Imerese FIAT plant site, against the Fincantieri shipyards and Ansaldo Breda.

Local economic strikes by service and sales workers, mostly addressing private companies, also focused on issues such as working conditions. Examples include timekeeping at Almaviva, and the opening of shops on Sundays and public holidays, like April 25—Liberation Day in Italy. Some protests focused on recovery plans that companies were implementing or intended to implement. Others involved sales workers occupied in general retail trade, including workers from companies like Auchan, Carrefour, Coop, Decathlon, IKEA, Mercatone Uno, and call centers like Almaviva Acea. Contention involving service and sales workers also occurred in 2014 in Lazio, where the major airport hub, Fiumicino, is located, and where workers at Alitalia, Meridiana, and Easyjet protested their employers' allegations of job redundancy outlined in the companies' recovery plans.

Finally, workers in elementary occupations—mostly refuse workers (34.05 percent of all workers in this category), cleaners, and assistants—also engaged frequently in local economic strikes (19.18 percent) although they were also active in sit-ins (18.26 percent). About one fifth of protests by workers in elementary occupations occurred in Palermo (21.22 percent) and around 10 percent occurred in several other big cities like Rome, Milan, and Naples. Many of these actions were addressed against companies dealing with city refuse collection.

General and large-scale economic strikes

The last type of strike identified at the upper-right side of Figure 2 is less straightforward and, apart from the presence of independent trade unions and the involvement of drivers and mobile plant operators, does not show as many shared characteristics as the first two types of strikes. We define these strikes as general and large-scale economic strikes Most of these strikes regard drivers and

[7] The steel plant in Taranto was at the center of an environmental scandal in 2012 which led to the conviction of some of the owners—the Riva family—and the transfer and control of the company to ArcelorMittal, the world largest steel producer

mobile plant operators. In general, plant and machine operators and assemblers represent the largest share of workers who engaged in contentious collective actions between 2008 and 2018 (24.1 percent of all actions), even though they joined strikes mostly in 2008 and during the core of the crisis, in 2011 and 2012. Their actions regarded trucking and public transportation—trains, buses, metros, ports—and most strikes focused on economic issues such as contract renewal and working and contract conditions, as well as the non-payment of salaries, workplace safety, and layoffs.

In 2011, the first year of the core period of contention, a variety of categories of workers joined protests, but public transportation drivers mobilized the most, often against companies managing public transport. Such strikes occurred frequently in 2012 as well. Just to cite some important ones in that year, local public transportation workers—often joined by truck drivers and workers employed in the sectors of highways and car rentals—went on strike on March 1, on April 20, on July 20, and again on October 2, against the position held by employers' associations and companies operating in the sector which did not want to apply the national collective agreement.

Separate analyses on our data show that more than half of these strikes were organized by trade union federations and around 40 percent by independent trade unions. In this type of strike, as shown in Figure 2, independent trade unions play a pivotal role as the actors organizing most of the protests and strikes in the public transportation sector at both local and national levels (Bordogna and Pedersini 2013). Public service workers, including public transportation drivers, have been historically associated to independent trade unions, escaping the control of the major trade union federations even back in 1960s (Regalia et al.1978: 120). This is confirmed by the "Commissione di garanzia dell'attuazione della legge sullo sciopero nei servizi pubblici essenziali" [Commission for the Implementation of the Law on Strikes in Essential Public Services], which emphasizes that a large part of general economic strikes is organized by autonomous trade unions which mobilize resources to improve their power relationship. The transformation of Italian industrial relations occurred in the last twenty years, the low level of institutionalization (Pulignano et al. 2018), and the disorganized form of the decentralization of collective bargaining (Pedersini 2014) in fact offered a structural opportunity to autonomous trade unions to increase their presence at the company level and their representation in many sectors.

5. Conclusions

Our results show that the 2008 crisis and post-crisis period were characterized by a distinct wave of mobilization by workers in Italy. While this wave can be considered part of the protests that followed the global crisis, the national arena has remained predominant. As comparative analyses have suggested, protest demands, their repertoire, and trade unions' strategies had to adapt to transformations of economic, social, and political aspects of Italian society.

The characteristics of workers' repertoire of actions in this wave are different from those in the past. Today, strikes are part of a wider repertoire of actions; blue collar workers—the core of workers who protested under industrial societies—now join protests next to other workers and non-working categories such as students, especially in political strikes. Workers' current repertoire of protest action resembles the repertoire of protests studied by Tarrow (1989: 68) during the 1960s and 1970s. With similarity to our own findings, Tarrow reported that between 1965 and 1974, 20.3 percent of all forms of actions occurring were strikes, while 12.4 percent were marches and 9.8 percent were public meetings. Likewise, we find that between 2008 and 2018, 21.5 percent were strikes, 12.0 percent

were demonstrations, and approximately 7 percent were assemblies[8]. While today's workers' repertoire of actions is similar to Tarrow's, what differs in our research is the type of actors and protests examined. In other words, we only focus on actions by workers and for workers, while Tarrow considered all protests developing between 1965 and 1974, which, in addition to those whose main organizers were workers, included those organized by students and young people, who were the largest group of challengers. The latter made up a third of all social actors, but their protests may not have necessarily concerned work (Tarrow 1989: 86). Therefore, today, workers' repertoire of actions seems blurred towards a more general repertoire, losing its own specificity characterized by previously prevailing strategies of strike activity (Franzosi 2006 [1995]). This is confirmed in our analysis by the fact that economic demands are integrated with political demands. Today, both the State and local institutions are the direct targets of many workers' strikes. The transformation of the Fordist regulation model—due to the progressive erosion of standard work conditions—has changed the composition of the social classes and the processes by which workers and citizens' interests become represented. The weakness of collective class identities goes in parallel with the emergence of new forms of social belonging that influence protest demands, the repertoire and targets of collective action, and the role and tools of unions in the processes of workers' representation. Trade unions have started to combine political and economic types of collective actions since the 1990s, in step with the decrease in industrial struggle (Molina and Barranco 2016).

Our empirical analysis thus suggests the importance of distinguishing political from economic strikes. General political strikes addressed to institutions seem to be the other side of the coin of the demise of what Pizzorno referred to as "political exchange" (Pizzorno 1977). In the 1960s, political exchange equated to collective bargaining (Regini 1983). Institutions incorporated trade unions in negotiations in exchange for social order and consensus. Through collective bargaining, trade unions exchanged participation in institutional decisions for social consensus on the part of the workers. Today, through general political strikes, trade unions exert political pressure with the aim to change a political decision or reform from which they have been excluded. Trade unions' exclusion from participation in institutional channels and in decision-making processes regarding government reforms or policies, has had consequences on consensus and social order that are reflected in increasing numbers of political strikes (Culpepper and Regan 2014). When institutional actors reject the political exchange with trade unions, excluding them from concertation, trade unions withdraw their collaboration in sustaining social order and promote, in contrast, political strikes. This framework suggests that we need to incorporate political approaches to explain strikes, especially political strikes, given that these approaches—namely, the political process model (Tilly 1978; Tarrow 1989)—allow us to focus on the role of institutions in granting opportunities or in constraining trade unions' access to, and participation in, processes of negotiations. This is one of the most significant aspects that distinguishes the cycle of protests of the 1960s and 1970s from the current one. The emergence of the political dimension of strikes can be thus understood as a sign of the new characteristics of the labor movement. Unlike in the past, trade union federations do not hold a hegemonic position in organizing protests. In this way we can explain the "erratic" participation of workers in this wave of protests. The decline in trade unions' mediation and organization of interests is the result of the transformations of the political and economic arenas which began in the 1990s.

[8] A form of action that differs from the past is the presence of sit-ins. 15.9 percent of actions occurred between 2008 and 2018 are sit-ins while in Tarrow's research this type of action is discussed together with occupations which represented 8.3 percent of all forms of actions (1989: 74). Sit-ins were largely used during the US civil rights movements from 1955 until the end of the 1960s. In Italy they may have thus become more common later than during the period examined by Tarrow.

Parties and trade union federations have not been responsive to such changes, making them unable to provide answers to their worker membership. The outcome of such processes thus depends on the way in which the representative organizations will re-establish new links with their rank and file "base".

Our results further suggest that labor struggles arising from the last economic crisis have introduced innovative organizing tactics and strategies, different from those used in the 1960s, which could be more appropriate to non-standard labor arrangements (e.g. informal workers, gig economy workers). Today, trade unions coordinate protests in combination with independent trade unions and unorganized workers. The boundaries of the labor/capital conflict, especially for general strikes, seem more permeable allowing for the entry of new actors and the building of alliances between trade unions and other actors, to merge their grievances and organize solidarity between workers belonging to different economic sectors. Moreover, new grassroots unions are promoting experimental schemes (e.g., social welfare, benefit advice, and assistance to members) and innovative solutions for including non-standard workers not covered by traditional forms of representation, including immigrants. This opens competition for representation between the major trade union federations, and the autonomous and independent groups of workers inside and outside the workplace (Colombo and Regalia 2016). This competition is particularly important considering the decentralization of collective bargaining processes and the enhancement of the bargaining at the plant/sector level. In a situation characterized by competitive pluralism and in the absence of specific rules about the extent of representation, trade union federations are positioned between two roles: as organizations defending the rights of their own members and as actors of social movements defending broader rights (Regalia 2013; Regalia and Regini 2018). Therefore, they move from the economic to the political sphere to maintain their pivotal role in the system of industrial relations[9]. Despite these difficulties, unionization in Italy is higher than the European average, although this trend is not an indicator of the ability of unions to mobilize participation in strikes[10], nor a sign of workers' belief in the union's ability to represent class interests (Regalia 2012).

The pattern of strikes, economic and political, the types of membership and the motivations for one or the other, highlight the distinction between interests and rights, and the need for unions to define how each can be represented and defended. This especially concerns non-standard workers. Even though our data do not include different types of employment contracts, employees in sectors where non-standard work is more common appear to constitute the interconnection between the economic and political spheres of conflict. Given the characteristics of non-standard employment relationships, it is more difficult to distinguish between interests and rights in such cases. For a migrant who is a precarious worker, is joining a trade union a way to get information about tax reductions, or to defend their interests as a worker? The answer is important for understanding how collective social actors, such as classes, emerge (Doellgast et al. 2018). In this regard, our data suggest that occupational categories of workers show different behaviors which may relate to different class belonging. For example, occupational categories with high levels of affiliation with trade union federations—like the insider component of metal workers which still represents the core of the working class—are more likely to see their actions reaching higher visibility, legitimacy, and effectiveness than other

[9] This point has always been crucial in the history of Italian trade unions, especially in the 1960s where the distinction between political and economic action became less clear-cut than in previous experiences of the workers' movement (Pizzorno 1980).

[10] Despite the high level of unionization compared with other southern European countries, Italy has a lower level of strikes and labour/capital conflict and seems unable to produce strong social and political coalitions (Andretta 2017; Molina and Barranco 2016).

occupational categories. In contrast, elementary occupations such as cleaners and refuse workers have low levels of confederal trade union affiliation, with high levels of workers without any affiliation, even to autonomous trade unions. All these workers are more likely to suffer from the lack of resource mobilization offered by trade union federations and their promotion of collective action. This increases the risk of marginalization for this precarious section of workers. Their participation in general political strikes could be a signal of the weakness of these workers' agency within the labor struggle (Accornero 1985; Bordogna and Cella 2002). In this ambiguous situation, these actors may have the opportunity to make political, economic, and social gains through new models of political mobilization that combine interests and rights in both economic and political spheres.

References

Abdi, H. and Lynne J. Williams, L.J. (2010), "Principal Component Analysis", *John Wiley and Sons, Inc. WIREs Comp Stat* 2: 433–59.

Accornero, A.; Pizzorno, A.; Trentin, B. and Tronti, M. (1977), *Movimento sindacale e società italiana*, Milano: Feltrinelli.

Accornero, A. (1985), "La terziarizzazione del conflitto e i suoi effetti", in G.P. Cella and M. Regini (eds), *Il conflitto industriale in Italia*, Bologna: Il Mulino: 275-313.

Altiparmakis, A. and Lorenzini J. (2018), "Disclaiming national representatives: Protest waves in Southern Europe during the crisis", *Party Politics*, 24(1): 78-89.

Andretta, M. (2018), "Protest in Italy in Times of Crisis: A Cross-Government Comparison", *South European Society and Politics*, 23 (1): 97–114 DOI: 10.1080/13608746.2018.1434456

Baccaro, L.; Hamann, K. and Turner, L. (2003), "The Politics of Labour Movement Revitalization: The Need for a Revitalized Perspective", *European Journal of Industrial Relations*, 9 (1): 119-133.

Béroud, S. (2018), "French trade unions and the mobilization against the El Khomri law in 2016: a reconfiguration of strategies and alliances", *Transfer*, 24 (2): 179–193.

Boeri, T. and Garibaldi, P. (2018), *Graded Security and Labor Market Mobility Clean Evidence from the Jobs Act*, INPS, working paper.

Bojar, A., Gessler, T., Hutter, S. and Kriesi, H. (eds) (2021), *Contentious Episodes in the Age of Austerity: Studying the Dynamics of Government–Challenger Interactions* (Cambridge Studies in Contentious Politics), Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Bordogna, L. and Cella, G.P. (2002), "Decline or transformation? Change in industrial conflict and its challenges", *Transfer*, 4: 585-607.

Bordogna, L. and Pedersini, R. (2013), "Economic crisis and the politics of public service employment relations in Italy and France", *European Journal of Industrial Relations*, 19 (4): 325-340.

Bradanini, D. (2014), "Common Sense and 'National Emergency': Italian Labour and the Crisis", *Global Labour Journal, 5*(2): 176-195.

Brandl, B. and Traxler, F. (2010), "Labour Conflicts: A Cross-national Analysis of Economic and Institutional Determinants, 1971–2002", *European Sociological Review*, 26 (5): 519–540.

Carrieri, D. and Feltrin, P., (2016), *Al bivio. Lavoro, sindacato* e *rappresentanza nell'Italia d'oggi*, Roma: Donzelli.

Carver, L. and Doellgast, V. (2021), "Dualism or Solidarity? Conditions for Union Success in Regulating Precarious Work", *European Journal of Industrial Relations*, 27 (4): 367–85.

Cillo, R. and Pradella, L. (2018), "New immigrants' struggles in Italy's logistics industry", *Comparative European Politics*, 16(1): 67–84.

Cillo, R. and Pradella, L. (2018), "Remaking the labour movement in Italy: The revival of strikes at Fiat-Chrysler Automobiles in 2015-2017", *Globalizations*, 16(4): 457-471.
Colombo, S. and Regalia, I. (2016), "Changing joint regulation and labour market policy in Italy during the crisis: On the edge of a paradigm shift?" *European Journal of Industrial Relations*, 22 (3): 295-309.
Commissione di Garanzia Sciopero (CGSSE) (2018) CGSSE – Commissione di Garanzia dell'Attuazione della legge sullo Sciopero nei servizi Pubblici Essenziali (several years), *Relazione Annuale (Annual Report).*
Crouch, C. (2017), "Membership Density and Trade Union Power", *Transfer: European Review of Labour and Research*, 23(1): 47–61.
Culpepper, P. and Regan, A. (2014), "Why don't governments need trade unions anymore? The death of social pacts in Ireland and Italy", *Socio-Economic Review*, 12 (4): 723–745.
della Porta, D. and Andretta, M. (2013), "Protesting for justice and democracy: Italian Indignados?" *Contemporary Italian Politics*, 5(1): 23-37.
della Porta, D. (2015), *Social movements in times of austerity: bringing capitalism back into protest analysis*, Cambridge; Malden: Polity press.
Della Porta, D., Andretta, M., Fernandes, T., Romanos, E., O'Connor, F. and Vogiatzoglou, M. (Eds.) (2017), *Late Neoliberalism and its Discontents in the Economic Crisis.* London: Palgrave.
Diani, M., Kousis, M. (2014), "The duality of claims and events: the Greek campaign against the troika's memoranda and austerity, 2010-2012", in *Mobilization: An International Quarterly* 19(4): 387-404.
Doellgast V., Lillie N., and Pulignano, V. (eds) (2018), *Reconstructing Solidarity: Labour Unions, Precarious Work, and the Politics of Institutional Change in Europe*, Oxford: Oxford University Press.
Flesher-Fominaya, C. (2017), "European anti-austerity and pro-democracy protests in the Wake of the global financial Crises", *Social Movement Studies*, 16(1): 1-20.
Forno F. (2003), *Protest in Italy 1988-1997*, Ph.D. dissertation, University of Strathclyde, Glasgow.
Franzosi, R. (2006) [1995], *The Puzzle of Strikes: Class and State Strategies in Postwar Italy*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
Frege, C.M. and Kelly J. (2003), "Union revitalization Strategies in Comparative Perspective", *European Journal of Industrial Relations*, 9(1): 7-24.
Gall, G. (2013), "Quiescience continued? Recent strike activity in nine Western European economies", *Economic and Industrial Democracy*, 34(2): 667-691.
Gallas A. (2018), "The politics of striking: on the shifting Dynamics of workers' struggles in Britain", in J. Nowak, M. Dutta and P. Birke, (eds), *Workers' movements and strikes in the twenty-first century*, London-New York: Rowman&Littlefield: 237-254.
Gambilonghi, M. (2020), "Industrial Democracy and Social Transformation in the Workers' Movement in Italy and in Europe", *Economia e Lavoro*, 2: 13-30.
Genovese, F. Schneider G. and Wassmann, P. (2016), "The Eurotower Strikes Back: Crises, Adjustments and Europe's Austerity Protests", *Comparative Political Studies*, 49 (7): 939-67.
Gentile, A. (2015), "Labour repertoire, neoliberal regimes and US hegemony: what deviant Italy tell us of OECD union's path to power", *European Political Science Review*, 7(2): 243-270.
Greenacre, M. and Blasius, J. (2006), *Multiple Correspondence Analysis and Related Methods* (1^ ed.), Boca Raton, Florida: Chapman and Hall/CRC.
Gumbrell-McCormick, R. and Hyman, R. (2018) [2013], *Trade Unions in Western Europe: Hard Times, Hard Choices*, Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Hamann, K., Johnston, A. and Kelly, J. (2013), "Unions Against Governments: Explaining General Strikes in Western Europe, 1980–2006", *Comparative Political Studies*. 46(9): 1030-1057.
Hyman, R. (1989), *Strikes*, London: MacMillan.
Köhler, H-D. and Calleja Jimenez, J.P. (2015), "They don't represent us!" Opportunities for social movement unionism strategy in Spain", *Relations Industrielles*, 70, 2, pp. 240-261.
Koopmans, R. and Rucht, D. (2002), "Protest Event Analysis", in: Klandermans, B., Staggenborg, S. (Hrsg.): *Methods in Social Movement Research*. Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press: 335-367.
Kriesi, H., Lorenzini, J., Wüest, B. and Haüsermann, S. (eds) (2020), *Contention in Times of Crisis: Recession and Political Protest in Thirty European Countries*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
Lucifora, C. and Naticchioni, P., (2018), The "Jobs Act" and Industrial Relations: a lost Opportunity?", *Economia italiana*, 2-3: 72-100.
McAdam, D., Tarrow, S. and Tilly, S. (2001), *Dynamics of Contentions*, New York e London: Cambridge University Press.
Meardi, G., Simms, M. and Duncan, A. (2021), "Trade Unions and Precariat in Europe: Representative Claims", *European Journal of Industrial Relations*, 27(1): 41–58.
Milkman, R. (2013), "Back to the future? US labour in the new gilded age", *British Journal of Industrial Relations*, 51(4): 645-665.
Molina, O. and Barranco, O. (2016), "Trade union strategies to enhance strike effectiveness in Italy and Spain", *Transfer*, 22(3): 383–399.
Nowak, J. and Gallas, A. (2014), "Mass strikes against Austerity in Western Europe: A strategic assessment", *Global Labour Journal*, 5 (3): 306-321.
Pedersini, R. (2014), "European industrial relations between old and new trends", *Stato e Mercato*, 102: 341-368.
Pilati, K. and Perra S. (2022), "The insider–outsider divide and contentious politics: the tripartite field of the Italian labour movement", *West European Politics*, 45(6): 1283-1309.
Pizzorno, A. (1977), "Scambio politico e identità collettiva nel conflitto di classe", in Colin Crouch and Alessandro Pizzorno (eds), *Conflitti in Europa: lotte di classe sindacati e stato dopo il '68*, Milano: Etas Libri, pp. 407-433.
Pizzorno, A. (1978), Le due logiche dell'azione di classe, in a. Pizzorno, Reyneri, E., Regini, M., Regalia, I. (eds), *Lotte operaie e sindacato. Il ciclo 1968-1972 in Italia*, Bologna: Il Mulino.
Pizzorno, A. (1980), *I soggetti del pluralismo. Classi, partiti e sindacati*, Bologna: Il Mulino.
Pulignano, V. Carrieri, D. and Baccaro, L. (2018), "Industrial relations in Italy in the twenty-first century", *Employee Relations*, 40 (4): 654-673.
Quaranta, M. (2014), "The 'Normalisation' of the Protester: Changes in Political Action in Italy (1981–2009)", *South European Society and Politics*, 19 (1): 25–50.
Regalia, I. (2012), "Italians Trade Unions: Still shifting between consolidated organizations and social movements", *Management Revue*, 23 (4): 386-407.
Regalia, I. (2013), "For a reconfiguration of trade union action: a wide-ranging interpretation beyond hypotheses of convergence", *Labor History* 54(4): 460–465.
Regalia, I. and Regini, M. (2018), "Trade Unions and Employment Relations in Italy during the Economic Crisis", *South European Society and Politics*, 23 (1): 63–79.
Regalia, I., Regini, M. and Reyneri, E. 1978 "Labour Conflicts and Industrial Relations in Italy". In *The Resurgence of Class Conflict in Western Europe Since 1968* Vol. 1, 101–158, edited by Crouch, C. and Pizzorno, A. London and New York: Macmillan.

Regini, M. (1983), "Le condizioni dello scambio politico. Nascita e declino della concertazione in Italia e Gran Bretagna", *Stato e mercato*, 9 (3), La contrattazione politica in Europa: 353-384.
Tapia, M. and Turner, L. (2013), "Union Campaigns as Countermovements: Mobilizing Immigrant Workers in France and the United Kingdom", *British Journal of Industrial Relations*, 51 (3): 601–622.
Tarrow, S., (1989), *Democracy and Disorder: Protest and Politics in Italy, 1965-1975*. Oxford: Clarendon Press.
Tassinari, A. and Maccarrone, V. (2020), "Riders on the Storm: Workplace Solidarity among Gig Economy Couriers in Italy and the UK", *Work, Employment and Society* 34(1): 35–54.
Tilly, C. (1978). *From Mobilization to Revolution*, Reading, Mass.: Addison-Wesley.
Tilly, C. and S. Tarrow, (2015) *Contentious Politics*, New York: Oxford University Press.
Vandaele, K. (2016), "Interpreting Strike Activity in Western Europe in the Past 20 Years: The Labour Repertoire under Pressure", *Transfer: European Review of Labour and Research*, 22 (3): 277–94.
Zamponi, L. (2011), "La rivolta della conoscenza: il movimento studentesco", in Maida, B. (ed.) *Senti che bel rumore*, Torino: Accademia University Press.
Zamponi, L. (2012), "Why don't Italians Occupy?' Hypotheses on a Failed Mobilisation", *Social Movement Studies*, 11 (3-4): 416-426.