



**WP3: Case Studies**

*Italian Lamborghini Case*

**Final report**

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

The company and the branch chosen and here described – the Lamborghini, for the automotive manufacturing sector – are of unquestionable interest for the extent and intensity with which some of the major changes in the socio-technical paradigm are unfolding today, both on the side of the organization of work over that of industrial relations. Toyotism, Lean Production, World Class Manufacturing, automation, digitization, Industry or Work 4.0, bargaining decentralization, participatory models, are here the key words.

The multinational character of the Group to which the Emilian factory relates to, together with its location in the heart of global competition, constitutes a further factor of interest, in relation to the managerial and union strategies of anticipating change. Yet, the fact that the company belongs to a German Group Volkswagen-Audi, strongly characterized by its participatory orientation and style to industrial relations, represents a significant testing ground for verifying the influence of other managerial styles in a context such as that Italian, historically marked by the absence of participatory structures and institutions, comparable to the Nordic ones. For example, in terms of co-determination rights and employees board-level participation.

Our case study, with the survey carried out directly at the Emilian plant - among its production and assembly lines - largely confirmed the expectations with which we had approached this important case of technological innovation and industrial relations.

### 1.1. METHODOLOGY

This case study was carried out, first of all, by researching and acquiring the information available on the web, which are many, in particular on the company website and on that of the sectorial and local trade unions. Secondly, we have discovered the existence of some academic publications, produced in the field of sociology of organization and industrial relations (see the bibliographic references). But, above all, in a third and decisive phase, visiting the Sant'Agata Bolognese plant, with interviews with union and company representatives<sup>1</sup>.

Walking with them along the production and assembly lines, scrutinizing the characteristics of the work environment, observing the workers attending their job and duties; the robots and the machines, the ergonomic solutions, the interactions between man and machine, was of unpayable utility and learning.

For having me offered their kindly availability, I would like to thank: Dr. Giuseppe Nardacchione, Head of the industrial relations for the company; Dr. Eng. Antonio Aurucci, Responsible Manager for the "URUS" production; Dr. Michele Bulgarelli, General Secretary of the FIOM-CGIL Bologna; Simone Selmi, territorial official at the FIOM-CGIL Bologna; the work council union delegates Alberto Cocchi and Giuseppe Amendola; Dr. Luca Zoboli, trade union delegate as well and *Digital Business Planner*; Dr. Volker Telljohann, international expert in industrial relations at the IRES Emilia Romagna and author of several publications on Lamborghini. Their support was fundamental, helping me to clarify the numerous aspects – socio-technical, organizational

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<sup>1</sup> All the interviews were carried out on May 23, 2019, at the FIOM-CGIL of Bologna and above all the Lamborghini factory, in Sant'Agata Bolognese.

and contractual – relating to the new workers’ conditions in an archetypical environment of Industry 4.0, with a very high rate of innovation, both in terms of product and process.

## 2. GENERAL BACKGROUND

### 2.1 – The company and the work

Lamborghini is a historic Italian manufacturer of luxury sports cars, and now also super SUV, with a single plant in Sant’Agata Bolognese, between Bologna and Modena, in Emilia Romagna. A territory with a high and long lasting industrial district vocation, with traditionally highly developed human capital, strong trade unions and intense industrial relations. In the province of Bologna alone, there are 94 unionized companies, with more than 100 employees. Out of a total of 26,074 workers, 84% is covered either by the sectorial and firm-level agreements, signed by the most representative unions (FIOM Bologna Notizie, 2019).

The company was founded in 1963 by Ferruccio Lamborghini, in open competition with Enzo Ferrari and his famous sport-cars, whose factory is just a few kilometers far from that of Lamborghini. With Ducati, Maserati and all the sub-contractors highly specialized in producing components for these and other European producers, we can call it – this territory between Bologna and Modena – a *Motor Valley*; an automotive industrial district.

In 1987 the old owners sold to the American giant Chrysler, until 1998, when the company was acquired by the German Audi, of the Volkswagen Group, from which – since 2011 – It is totally controlled. In those same years, the foundations were laid for the transition to Toyotism and the lean production system.

Since its founding until 2002, Lamborghini has produced an average of 300 super-sports vehicles per year, but from 2004 onwards the average jumped to 1,800 units. During the global crisis that followed 2008, sales fell by nearly 50%, to reach previous levels only in 2012. In 2018, the increase in sales marked growth for the sixth consecutive year, with 3,815 cars delivered throughout world. A bit less than the half are sold in the US market, followed by Japan. The goal for 2019 is to produce 7,000 cars; 5000 super SUVs (*URUS*) and 2000 super sports cars (*Aventador* and *Huracan*).



The Aventador on the road

The big jump takes place in 2014, when the Emilian company manages to snatch the production of a super SUV – URUS – from the Slovak site of Audi, obtaining for this purpose important investments both from the German group and from the national and regional public authorities.



The super-SUV “URUS”

In 18 months, the plant doubled its surface (from 80,000 to 160,000 square meters), further modernizing itself, with the construction of a new line, a new logistics center, a test track. This led, in just five years, to a 70% increase in the number of employees, going from 1029 in 2013 to the current 1754, with an average annual growth of 10%. 46% are direct (workers and intermediate) and 54% indirect (employees, middle managers, managers), with a prevalence of male staff, equal to 80%. The average age is 39 years, with rather high educational and technical training levels; 39% own a university degree. The average company seniority is 8.8 years. 82% have a full-time and interim contract; 18%, almost all blue collars, work through an agency (FOCUS Lamborghini, 2019).

At the end of 2018, there were 229 new hires, at an average age of 29, all on permanent contracts and with a 30% holding a post-university degree. This acceleration was driven by the positive trend of the URUS, which had already allowed the recruitment of as many as 500 workers in previous years. We are therefore in the presence of a case in which an important product innovation has led to an equally significant process innovation - from a socio-technical point of view - contributing overall to significantly jobs creation, and certainly not to cutting them.

The plant is divided into two main areas; the historical one, for the integral production (mechanics, bodywork, saddlery and painting) of the two super-sports models, and the most recent, for the assembly of the URUS. The daily production is on average 22 URUS and 4 super-sports, with very high levels of customization and personalization of products, with extremely high added value and sales costs; something like several hundred thousand euros.

Workers are organized in two main shifts of 7 or 7.5 hours, five days a week, paid for 40 hours, with a residual use of a third shift. The breaks are of 26 minutes (two of 13 minutes each). The work at each station takes place in teams of about six members, with

a leader that the union delegates have defined as "primus inter pares", and in a set time of 36 minutes for the URUS line and 104 minutes for the super sports line. The most common level of job classification, according to the parameters of the national metalworking contract, is the 5th (medium-high). The gross type remuneration is over 30,000 euros a year, of which over 10 due to the company supplement of the basic pay defined at sector level. 70% fixed for all and the rest as an extra results-related bonus.

## 2.2 – Industrial relations

The industrial relations system at the Lamborghini plant reflects and develops a traditionally strong participatory style in the industrial districts of Emilia Romagna, and now further consolidated by the strong presence of German-controlled companies in that territory<sup>2</sup> (Papigani and Benassi, 2014; Telljohann, 2015). This led to a fruitful hybridization between trade union and management cultures, favoring the development of industrial relations particularly devoted to socio-technical innovation and involvement in all its forms: direct and indirect.

Lamborghini applies the national agreement of the metalworking sector, signed jointly by all the main trade unions federations at the end of 2016. The unionization is on average around 50%, but with peaks of around 80% among the blue collars. FIOM-CGIL has always been the first and almost only organization, in a quasi-monopoly position, with 910 affiliated members (60 of which TAWs). In the last elections of the work council (RSU), it obtained the 95% of the votes, electing 19 delegates out of 20. For a long time, and by the will of FIOM, the collective agreements, to be applied, must be subjected to the vote of all workers (no matter if unionized or not).

Industrial relations at the plant are very intense (Cetrulo, Pavone, Russo, 2018). Only in the last three years, 61 joint documents have been drawn up, of which 55 belonging to collectively agreed texts, and 18 minutes of bilateral technical commissions.

In 2011, Lamborghini implemented, through an specific company agreement, the contents of a transnational company agreement signed in 2009 at the VW by the World Works Council and Ig Metall, known as *Charta on labor relations*, binding for all companies and production sites belonging to the VW Group all over the world. Today, that document is considered by the scholars and observers as a best practice in the context of transnational group agreements (Leonardi, 2013; Telljohann, 2013, 2015; Whiteall et al., 2017). For Lamborghini, the "Charta Volkswagen" has represented a very important document, with its strong German imprint according to the spirit of codetermination, and where all the main company's decisions are shared with the union, in terms of information, consultation and codetermination rights. There are four joint technical committees (CTP), on times and methods, health and safety, vocational training, performance bonuses. Composed according to the "3 + 3" formula, the CTPs are technical consultation bodies, in close collaboration with the most properly negotiating action of the elected works council.

If the workers' rights to information and consultation boast a certain legal and contractual solidity in the factory, and in general in their Italian system of industrial

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<sup>2</sup> It is estimated that Italian companies participated by German companies employ a total of over 175,000 employees in Italy. These approximately 300,000 employees are distributed over more than 3,000 companies in Germany and Italy. A large concentration of them is in Emilia Romagna (Mutinelli 2011).

relations, the real challenge of the Charta concerned the "co-determination", certainly foreign to national tradition (Leonardi, 2015). Its interpretation here is consisting in converting such a right in a collective bargaining prerogative over all the matters listed under such a kind of exchange. In this sense, there is a convergence of interpretations between the union and the management. The implementation of the Charta, through a specific company agreement that gave it the necessary legal strength, required some training moments, which the management and the union managed jointly. With a few hours dedicated to deepening the issues of participation in industrial relations.

In the meanwhile, the workplace delegates and the sectorial union official have established good and frequent relationships with their German colleagues, in the works councils of Audi and Volkswagen, and of IG Metall. A cooperation that has also been consolidated within the European and World Work Council (EWC and WWC) of the German Multinational. The collaboration between the Italian top management and that of Wolfsburg appears equally profitable. Today there is a well-structured cooperation between the Fiom-Cgil of Bologna and of Emilia-Romagna and the IG Metall of Wolfsburg, which has developed since 2013. The cooperation, born on the ground of ties between the automotive industries of the two countries, aims to safeguard the interests of workers in companies that are part of cross-border value chains. Facing to the digitization processes, the two metalworkers' unions do not want to subordinate themselves to technological imperatives, but rather to determine the most appropriate political strategies and make sure that the workers will be not victims, but protagonists of the new technological revolution. According to the two unions, "a democratic participation process will be needed to ensure that the ongoing revolution is placed at the service of man and his needs".

Company level bargaining takes place at regular rates, every three years. The last two renewals took place in 2015 and 2018. The first allowed to acquire the production of the SUV, snatching it from Bratislava (where the SUVs of Porsche, Audi and soon Bentley are already produced). The aim of the agreement was to safeguard and increase the productivity and profitability of the plant, accelerating the work rhythms by 9.17% and creating a system of industrial relations more inspired by collaboration. Thanks also to the Government's support, Audi decided to invest in Italy 700-800 million (of which about 350 in research and development) for the construction of the first Lamborghini URUS SUV. The Emilia Region administration, on its side, allocated important funds dedicated to the vocational training and skills. This allowed the recruitment of 500 people: 300 transformed from fix-term to permanent contracts. Yet, the agreement has introduced the so-called "German pre-retirement", with the possibility of accumulating permits and time and wages, to be used in the last working phase through early retirement, up to 7 years earlier than expected and in exchange for new employment.

The latest collective agreement, signed in December 2018, concerned the temporary agency work, with extending its use up to 24 months. The agreement regulates the methods of exceeding the legal limit of 12 months of fixed-term contracts, without the need to resort to reasons, to allow workers - who for this purpose will be hired with open-end contracts by the temporary work agencies - a longer stay in the company. The agreement also confirms the company's commitment to provide training plans for temporary workers and to recognize a significant economic contribution to the worker at the end of the administration contract (introduced in 2012 and called non-confirmation compensation).

There is a project (DESI) of alternating school and work (2014-2016). An agreement on cognitive surplus value was signed in 2016. The "new workers" follow an internal training course of at least three months for the most basic tasks and six months for the most delicate ones. The training takes place both on the line and through virtual reality viewers, present in a special room. Other spaces are home to high school students who for some years, through the DESI program, have been selected by technical institutes and spend six months in the factory, where they attend classes and practice on the assembly line.

### **3. PROCESS OF RESTRUCTURING LINKED TO DIGITALIZATION**

The URUS is considered "the masterpiece of Made in Italy manufacturing"<sup>3</sup>. It is all a condensation of Industry 4.0, combined with the characteristic manual skill of the car manufacturer. Each car has about 50 thousand components and 105 control units that communicate with each other. "*The electronic complexity of these cars is equal to that of a Boeing*", stresses a trade union delegate. The old craft tradition blends with the specialization, ergonomics and safety of industry 4.0. A modernity that never loses sight of the irreplaceable manual ability of man when it comes to customization and ever higher quality standards.

The new integrated production management system allows to organise the quality of the product, and the related process, up to its maintenance, responding to three different types of needs:

- a) the ability to respond to the need to digitalize the documents that contain the history of the car during the whole assembly process, facilitating the identification of possible non-conformities;
- b) the control and monitoring of the production of production processes and the availability in real time of information for the correct progress of the car;
- c) constant observation in real time of the efficiency of the systems and at the same time the possibility of promptly alerting maintenance personnel in the event of malfunctioning or scheduled maintenance".

Visiting the plant, the cleanliness, the order and the silence that envelops - almost muffled - the work of the workers on the production lines, are striking. All the handling takes place in an almost aseptic atmosphere; a thousand miles away from any twentieth-century factory imaginary.

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<sup>3</sup> Lamborghini won first place at the prestigious SAP Quality Awards in the Business Transformation category, for having distinguished itself in the implementation of production and quality principles thanks to the revolutionary MES (Manufacturing Execution System) project.



The interior of the factory

The new production line, entirely dedicated to the URUS, has been conceived according to the principles of Industry 4.0, labeled here – as pointed out by the company's industrial relations manager – “*Manifattura Lamborghini*”, rather than “Smart-Factory”.

Here there is no assembly line, with rails or rollers, but a system – called AGV (*Automated Guided Vehicles*) – that move the car body with millimeter precision from one station to another. The AGVs, supported by yellow pincers lift it from the top, transport individual components and cars' skeletons independently. They do not require rails; they can be reprogrammed as easily as robots and managed quite flexibly. The sensors rule the whole process, allowing to switch from the twenty screwers previously requested in some stations to only one, which is wireless.



The AGV - Automated Guided Vehicles

Transport via AGV guarantees a high level of flexibility. Every station has its own life and, if it is necessary to add or remove passages, it could be done with very little effort, without redesigning the whole plant. Each work phase has a duration ranging from 36 minutes to a maximum of one hour.

The Mes (*Manufacturing execution system*) system dictates times and movements; it is a software that regulates, records and monitors everything. “*This is where the real big*

*news of the Lamborghini Manufacture lies", commented the union delegate, with the function of Digital Business Planner. Thanks to it, the carts move; we know what operations have been carried out and by whom; which screws can be used with a specific screwdriver, with how much pressure and so on. The touchscreens follow the workers step by step for each task, with the confirmation that the operation was done correctly, or they signal any problems or ask for light on the most suitable techniques for less frequent processing, those required by the extreme possibility of customization that the factory allows. All operations once printed are now entirely digitalized. "Once to mark the various production steps you had to record everything by hand; there was a sea of paper. Now it's all on screen and all the manuals are constantly updated ", we were told by the head of the URUS production area. An observation also shared by the delegates who accompanied us on the visit to the factory's lines. The chances of error are minimal; "On average, one every two or three weeks".*

Technologies that meet the highest standards in terms of ergonomics at the work stations, such as the load hooks of the car bodies, swivel and adjustable in height, to allow the best ergonomic positioning of the vehicles. The workers are aided and supported in every stage and task by *collaborative robots (Cobots)*, with the possibility of interrogating the *Touchscreens* in case of doubts and immediate reports if there is an error. Repetitive operations such as screwing, gluing and assembly becomes much easier.



Workers are provided with a bracelet that is used to log them on the workstation. Not being deliberately equipped with GPS, they do not have the purpose of remote control of the workers, but have been conceived, with the collaboration of a trade union delegate. *"It arose from the need to remedy any forgotten username and password, which was not so unusual", a trade union delegate told us. "Traceability is just logical and concerns exclusively the process; certainly not physical or aimed at the worker's remote control".*

#### **4. IMPACT**

The assessment of the social partners – relating to the management of innovation and change – is overall positive, both on the management and on the trade union side. In the first case, satisfaction with the goals achieved is strong, in terms of new production volumes and economic results.

The concept of “*Manifattura Lamborghini*” aims to combine the most advanced technological applications with the craftsmanship that has characterized the prestige of the brand. For the company, “*Customer is king*”. Each model must be able to be customized in various ways, without this distorting the production lines. The production process must be characterized by the ability to reconcile digitization, automation and craftsmanship. Digitization and robotics, which also play a decisive role in recent process innovation, “*have not been conceived and designed to replace workers, but to help them do their jobs better*” (Manager)

From the occupational point of view, the real challenge does not seem to come from the risks related to the innovation process, but from the products risks. “*It has to do with the idea of the car of the future, the sustainable mobility*”, for a market segment certainly characterized by high consumption and environmental impacts (a super-sports car can do just 3-4 km with a liter of fuel). Will the hybrid and the electric have an impact on the production of this type of high-consuming cars? A concern that we also found in the discussion with the union representatives. Here the evaluation of socio-technical innovations is overall positive. The impact on employment has been but in a positive sense, in a phase that – thanks to the new model – has resulted in a substantial increase in the number of workers employed in a few years.

“*Much will depend on the ability to maintain current levels of production and competitiveness, constantly investing in the requalification of personnel, also thanks to the commitment of public authorities. The latter will also promote and coordinate an industrial policy, focusing on sustainable mobility and favoring investments that have these objectives*” (Union delegate).

The effects on the work organization and on working conditions are judged sustainable and able to reduce the psycho-physical fatigue of the various tasks. Even at the assembly lines, according to a trade union delegate, “*work increases its conceptual component, in an undoubtedly advantageous environmental and ergonomic setting*”. The task of the worker consists in fact in reproducing an articulated sequence of different operations, where true craftsmanship is still enclosed.

The intensification, through the elimination of so-called *not-added-value-activities*, maintains margins of “porosity” acceptable and pre-established in the collectively-agreed times and working methods (union delegate).



Young blue collars, in particular, do not seem particularly worried by the ongoing changes, but instead rather proud of the very prestigious brand they work for. The new technologies do not imply a particular level of difficulty, and the learning and acquisition takes place in a couple of weeks of trial, between sided support and collaboration, after a classroom training phase, in which a first contact with the union is also established.

A workers' delegate, expert for the unions in the technological joint committee, underlined the risk for the workers of losing the memory of the various stages of their job, now laid down and untreated by a user-friendly instrumentation, always ready to report anomalies (through specific "alerts") or remember protocols, in a problem solving key. Workers, he said, can *"turn off their brains"*; perhaps reducing memorization stress but also professional expertise and know-how. *"Whether this is good or bad, it can depend a lot on points of view"*; is the open comment about it. *"Technology, as always, depends on how it is brought to workers"*. At the moment, what we've observed is the workers seem to have no particular fears and have taken a certain confidence with it.

From a survey conducted by questionnaire, from the plant's works council, it emerges that 50% of direct blue collars declare to sustain high rates and rigid deadlines only rarely. Where, almost surprisingly, this share falls significantly in the case of white collar employees, for whom this happens often (64%) or even always (17%). Interestingly, the same survey reveals a fact that cannot be underestimated. And that's the fact that, in the presence of problems at work - whatever they may be - workers overwhelmingly prefer to contact their direct supervisor, rather than their workplace representative or the delegate responsible for health and safety: 83%, against 12% who turn to the union reps.

In terms of hierarchy and hetero-direction, they are now incorporated into more and more intelligent machineries. *"The instructions are all digitalized, immediate and user-friendly"* (union delegate). For the union, there are risks, *"as always happens in a capitalist system. For example, companies say that to continue to work well there will be a need for workers with different professional skills than the current ones. This is a technological innovation that sees robotics and digital technology being embraced with lots of algorithms and mechatronics. Behind these changes there are various social and work organization models that we, as a union, want to condition so that they do not conflict with the interests of workers and workers, with their rights and with employment"* (Papignani, 2018). This may generate redundancies, even if they are not redundant linked to the economic crisis in the strict sense.

According to the General Secretary of the FIOM-CGIL Bologna, much more must be done in negotiating the reduction of the working hours. *"Something which will require also a cultural campaign, in order to convince also the workers, who too often indulge in recourse to overtime, also because of the too long stagnating wages"*. The way could be the one opened by the last German metalworkers' collective agreement: allowing an exchange on an individual basis, between a possible lower salary, to be sought for example at the level of the thirteenth or other and more free time; for example through special permits.

## 5. ROLE OF INDUSTRIAL RELATIONS

The social partners share the appreciation for the system of collective bargaining and involvement achieved in recent years. A conjunction in which the good traditions of a territory with high district specialization and unionization converge, with innovative forms of social dialogue, have always been experimented. Lean production and Toyotism have certainly favored a renewed attention to the crucial importance of the human factor, encouraging its involvement and constant qualification. Finally, the arrival of German property has certainly helped the consolidation of a managerial style and in industrial relations, inspired by the principles of co-determination. In 2018, Lamborghini was “Top Employer Italia” for the fourth consecutive year

The implementation of the transnational agreement at the VW headquarter level, with the 2009 Charter, represented an essential step, from this point of view (Telljohann, 2015; D’Alosio, 2018). The opinions collected, in this regard, have been quite unanimous. The company's industrial relations manager recalled the three pillars of that system - information, consultation and co-determination - emphasizing the originality of the latter, declined on the ground of an Italian-style trade union right to collective bargaining. A theme also taken up by the trade unions, recalling the initial perplexities induced by an approach foreign to the Italian trade union tradition, rather inclined to the enhancement of the conflict and to the rejection of forms of co-responsibility that should imply a legal obligation of social peace.

Nevertheless, in Lamborghini, the exchange has concerned the possibility of inserting contractual cooling clauses, on the base of which eventual contrasts will have to be debated for 15 days, before leaving the two parties free to act unilaterally. There have been no strikes lately, except on the occasion of national and political mobilizations, as the Italian legal system allows, unlike the German one. The relationship with German property has returned to more than one discussion with trade unionists.

*“It was a great opportunity for us when VW came along and we’ve made the most of it”,* said the chairman of works councils: *“Lamborghini has become a model for how an employee participation system based on German-style co-determination can also work in Italy. Many Italian managers find it almost impossible to believe that a militant trade union like FIOM is supporting stable industrial relations at Lamborghini. They do not regard the metalworkers’ union as a reliable negotiating partner. That only goes to show that a lot of our managers here in Italy aren’t really up to speed”.*

Both parties underline the differences between the Lamborghini system and that of nearby and comparable Ferrari, which reflects the different managerial styles of the VW/Audi group and of Fiat/FCA (Fiorani and Simonazzi, 2018). In the first case, the choice of respecting the consolidated system of industrial relations prevailed, starting with the national contract. Instead, it was canceled by the 2010-2011 Fiat / FCA agreements, signed separately by some unions and not all of them, to the benefit of an unprecedented national Group agreement, which does not recognize the elected representatives of the workers and that put the FIOM-CGIL out of the company, as it was not a signatory to those agreements.

Two other major differences separate the two models: Lamborghini and Ferrari; the international dimension and the work organization. In the first case, the German multinational has signed several transnational group agreements and the Italian-American

none. In the second, the role of the team leader is much more hierarchical in the FCA case than in that of Lamborghini, although in the latter the unions are just demanding that their designation has to be done on a more bottom-up basis.

For the trade union, the Lamborghini system has been built in recent years by successive firm-level agreements (2012, 2015, 2018).

The role of the training is very important; it has been achieved with the provision of four weeks of classroom and on-the-job training for temporary agency workers (TAWs) and the consequent certification of acquired skills. With reference to the collective agreement of 2018, concerning in particular TAWs, the union underlines how “through the collective bargaining we can always improve the workers' conditions and so avoid problems dumped on the weakest figures, as the TAWs” (Segr. Gen. FIOM-CGIL Bologna).

In the months we're writing these notes, the renewal of the company agreement is being prepared. The unions will emphasize the wage issue, after the nationally industry-wide increases in the sector have been really modest, if non-monetary and welfare benefits are excluded.

The FIOM-CGIL, as we have seen, has a quasi-monopolistic majority in the company. For a union traditionally considered to be expression of a conflictual culture of industrial relations, this wide availability to the employee involvement and participation, as acknowledged by the management itself, may appear surprising. In reality, in this territory, this union has always expressed a pragmatic vocation, strong of a rooting and membership able to dissuade the management from the pursuit of unilateral solutions, more probable where the union is weak and / or disunited.

Trade unions must neither overestimate the change nor underestimate it; on the contrary, they must discuss it with all their workplace delegates and with the workers, trying to understand the advantages and giving weight to the words they say.

With regard to the issue of technological restructuring and its impact on employment and industrial relations, the FIOM-CGIL of Bologna expresses concerns that go beyond the specific case of Lamborghini, where, after all, things at the moment do not go bad.

The idea, expressed by an executive on the local FIOM magazine, is that economic growth will not mean more employment. And that for this will emerge the need for an interdisciplinary training that lasts for the whole working life, qualification and professional requalification. It will be important to think about forms of occupational inclusion through an annual reduction in working hours without wage penalties.

There are still those who observe, at the sectoral trade union level, that the full "rationalization" of the production process, reducing waste and downtime, is not always well seen by the workers. *"Inefficiency also generates rest"*, where more advanced solutions often lead to greater saturation and less porosity in the execution of different tasks.

Another aspect concerns the future composition of the working class. The Secretary of FIOM Bologna observes with concern the risk of new stratifications within the blue collars. At one extreme, it's his reasoning, we have an aristocracy, more and more involved in the empowerment of Industry 4.0 and tempted to enclose itself in a corporatism and an individualism that can make it almost incapable of identifying itself as a class for itself. On the other extreme, there will be an increasingly marginalized and impoverished segment, in its rights and in its collective power, pushed out of the

associative and negotiating perimeter of the metalworking sector. Logistics, warehouse, security personnel and temporary workers with sub-standard contracts of various kinds. In the middle, a still Fordist working class, widespread despite ongoing innovations, exposed to relocations and therefore also politically sensitive to the dangerous calls of the chauvinist and nationalist-conservative parties.

To avoid this harmful outcome, trade unions will have to beat the way of fight for equality, using the lever of sectoral and multi-employers bargaining as an antidote to both, the corporatization and the precarization of work. For example, in a work organization that increasingly rewards team action, the performance bonus must always be calculated on a collective and never individual basis. In labor relations, on the other hand, a good example comes from the Emilian metalworking companies, where the unions has imposed not to exceed - with fixed-term or sub-standard contracts - 10% of the total number of employees.

But there are also opportunities. *“It will be our task to evaluate how working and life times will change. Our action will have to recover the value of being together. We will have to work on continuous education and training; pay attention to the possible controls exercised on the workers, and so on. It seems to me that in Bologna we are looking at these changes very seriously. Words must become a strong commitment to workers if we don't want to end up like parties, which we are not. The advantage is that none of the actors in the field can be considered self-sufficient. In the face of changes that will be permanent, we will also need training that is not hyperspecialistic to govern what is now defined as intelligence oriented to the benefit of all”* (Trade Union Sectoral Federation, Bologna).

In a joint document subscribed by the IG Metall of Wolfsburg and by the Fiom-Cgil of Bologna and Emilia-Romagna, we read that the digital revolution, and the new push towards globalization processes that derive from it, *“must be managed in order to avoid that the international competition is pursued with widening the social and wage dumping, the worsening of working conditions, the precariousness of labor relations and the reduction of the workers' rights and their organizations”*. A further acceleration in disparities, power and wealth, to the detriment of employees, now also through the processes of digitization, *would inevitably lead to the disintegration of society*. A socially sustainable strategy cannot, therefore, limit itself to taking into consideration only the need to guarantee the competitiveness of the industry but *“must safeguard the social conditions of European workers as an equally important task”*.

With regard to the processes of digitization, various issues are posed that require a more in-depth analysis, including:

- industrial policies and innovation processes;
- alliances on European policies;
- vocational training;
- active employment policies;
- industrial relations at group level and along the value chain.

In addition, the two unions identified the need to strengthen their cooperation structures among whose tasks they would fit

- improving the flow of information;
- deepening of the comparison and dialogue;
- the promotion of exchanges of experiences carried out at local level;

- the development of joint strategies both at the level of multinational groups and along the value chains as well
- the construction of coordination structures at group and supra-company level.

## 6. CONCLUSIONS

The Lamborghini case constitutes one of the best practices in the multi-faceted panorama of Italian participatory industrial relations. And as such, of unquestionable significance - as already noted in other researches (see the bibliographic reference) - for the potentially emulative implications that could be drawn.

A strong impulse to technological and digital innovation has not turned into a loss of jobs, but into a significant growth of in their number. This has been made possible by the high specialization and reliability of the Bolognese plant, favored by a productive context and by a social and human capital typical of the best tradition of Italian industrial districts.

The investments of a big German multinational, the first producer of cars in the world, together with those made available by the Italian regional public authorities, were essential to significantly expand the production capacity of the plant, with product innovation (the manufacture of an SUV, alongside the traditional super-sports cars ) that reflected on process innovation. WV is a Group notoriously very oriented towards codetermination, even in relation to the German participatory context

Social dialogue at the company level - through a regular collective bargaining and a system of information and consultation rights - has been crucial in fostering this commitment, consolidating the participatory practice of industrial relations, typical of this territory.

To a top management inspired by a participatory style, the trade union responded with accepting the challenge of an organizational innovation, even when it required an intensification of working times on the assembly lines. Employment growth and the limited impact on working conditions seem to have compensated for this bet at the moment.

All positive circumstances that, nevertheless, still render this model and this experience difficult to replicate on a large scale.

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