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# Economic Development and Employment First Strategy: The Case of the US' Industries

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## Résumé

The literature on industrial development provides significant insights into the role of industry development that creates jobs, improves productive capacity, and strengthens nation's economic and social development. We draw on this literature to confront the structural unemployment inflicted by global trade and technological change in the developed world using the United States as a case study. In the context that a number of developed countries are struggling with persistent inequality across social classes and geographical regions, structural unemployment aggravates the distress caused by economic and social declines of the working class. Using mixed methods research, this research project assesses the cause of these phenomena and addresses them through economic and policy analyses. What are the ways in which American government could revitalize the American society by providing quality employment, inclusive growth and sustaining development? We construct a composite indicator, the Quality Employment Index (QEI). QEI includes variables that characterize industries that have created high-quality employment – industries with employment growth that also provides full time, skilled, and adequately compensated jobs. The QEI ranks 22 industries enveloping the entire US economy from 2001 to 2016 (rank 1 is the best; rank 22 is the worst). The QEI's results suggest that during the 2001-2016 period, the best performing sectors generating high-quality employment in the US are (1) public administration, (2) professional and technical services, (3) finance and insurance, and (4) information industries. Industrial manufacturing is in the middle of the ranking varying from rank 8 (2006) to rank 17 (2013) and is at rank 8 in 2016. This implies that these industries' ability to create skilled and quality employment is cyclical and demand driven. Public administration collapsed from rank 1 (2001) to rank 15 (2014); although, it immediately recovered in the later period. Mining declined over time from rank 3 (2001) to rank 16 (2016). Health care and social assistance improved its performance from rank 6 (2001) to 3 (2009) and then 7 (2016). We provide more nuanced qualitative analyses to explain the rise and decline in those major sectors and the policy space that is available for the US government.

**Mots-Clés:** USA, Industrial policy, rise of populism in the US, decline of manufacturing industries

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