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Título da Comunicação: *Passive modernization: the 'new' Human development index and its components in Italy's regions (1871-2007)*

Resumo: The article presents and discusses new estimates of social and economic indicators for Italy's regions, in benchmark years roughly from Unification to the present day: life expectancy, education, Gdp per capita, and the human development index (HDI) of which has been recently prepared a new version by the United Nations. After having put Italy in comparative perspective, by using a 'hybrid' version of the old and new HDI, a broad interpretative hypothesis, based on the distinction between passive and active modernization, to account for the evolution of regional imbalances over the long-run is proposed. In the lack of active modernization, southern Italy converged thanks to passive modernization, i.e., State intervention. However, this was more effective in life expectancy, less successful in education, expensive and as a whole ineffective in Gdp. As a consequence, convergence in the HDI occurred from the late nineteenth century to the 1970s, but came to a halt in the last three decades of the twentieth century when Southern regions started to diverge.

Palavras-chave: Italy, Regional development, Hdi, Gdp