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fiscal principle, measurement architecture, and financing horizon

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Preliminary version. Comments welcome.

Note on the genre of this document

This document is a conceptual and programmatic Discussion Paper, not a conventional academic article nor a closed technical proposal. Its purpose is to mark out a direction of research: to formulate an architecture for thinking about the relationship between artificial intelligence, effective demand, taxation, measurement, distribution, and financing.

Formal propositions, quantitative calibration, rigorous modeling, legal codification, and empirical validation are deliberately beyond the scope of this text. They are not omitted because they are secondary, but because they belong to a later stage of the IRIS program — a stage that will require a multidisciplinary community of specialists (in economics, law, public administration, measurement, AI, and adjacent technical fields) capable of converting structural intuitions into verifiable designs.

The contribution offered here is of a different kind: to order the problem, identify its levels, and propose categories capable of guiding further work. The MAT (*Market Access Tax*), the MAR (*Market Access Right*), and the MAD (*Market Access Dividend*) are presented as conceptual instruments and institutional directions. Their tax bases, rates, credits, thresholds, settlement procedures, appeal mechanisms, and forms of governance remain open to research, democratic deliberation, and institutional calibration.

Any figures or orders of magnitude that appear in the text should be read as illustrative references. They are not definitive design parameters. They are intended to show the structural scale of the problem, not to close an implementation.

This document develops and consolidates a framework initially sketched in an earlier draft (April 2026), now superseded by the present version. That draft introduced the initial intuition: in an AI-intensive economy, the human being does not disappear from the economic circuit but changes position within it. If centrality is lost as a producer of wage labor, an indispensable economic function is retained as bearer of the demand factor — that is, as the human capacity to absorb production through purchasing power, which allows

automated production to be realized as market value. The present Discussion Paper extends that intuition along three linked levels: fiscal principle, institutional measurement, and financing horizon.

IRIS is the broader research framework within which this and future modules of the project are integrated. The specific instruments are introduced further on as a guiding architecture, not as a closed policy design.

Abstract

The acceleration of artificial intelligence could erode the wage channel that historically distributed purchasing power and sustained effective demand. Economies can now generate unprecedented productive capacity while employment-based wage income declines in relative terms, opening a structural gap between what can be produced and what the market can realize.

This work argues that the human being does not disappear from the economic circuit: the function changes. From a central producer the human being would become the indispensable bearer of the demand factor — the human capacity to absorb production through purchasing power, which would transform automated production into realized market value.

From this Copernican turn, the IRIS framework articulates three interconnected instruments: the **Market Access Tax (MAT)**, which captures the uncompensated incidence of AI on domestic production; the **Market Access Right (MAR)**, which extends the same logic to access from outside the jurisdiction; and the **Market Access Dividend (MAD)**, its distributive counterpart. The architecture is reinforced by the institutional efficiency dividend generated by the new efficiency of the AI-assisted public sector.

Entitlement to the MAD is recognized in the social body that sustains the effective demand of the market — not as an assistance category defined by need, but as factor compensation for a collective contribution. By principle, that title extends to the citizenry as a whole, whose economic function as

consumers should not, by definition, place its structural position below the subsistence threshold.

The paper further develops a transitional measurement architecture for the incidence of AI in the creation of economic value, evolving from technical, economic, and declarative proxies toward an enterprise interpretive agent assisted by AI. And it confronts squarely the structural limit of the fiscal horizon: even a complete MAT-MAR-MAD system, enhanced by institutional efficiency, may prove insufficient to rebuild broad effective demand in a deeply automated economy.

Linking automation, longevity, sustainability of the pension system, and the care economy, IRIS is configured as a bridge architecture: it buys institutional time for an orderly transition toward new forms of human work, preventing both the collapse of demand and the social collapse that its prolonged erosion could trigger. The question it leaves open is no longer merely fiscal: it concerns how to articulate institutionally a productive capacity expanded by AI with an effectively distributed purchasing power.

Keywords: artificial intelligence; automation; labor displacement; technological unemployment; AI taxation; demand factor; market access tax; basic income; effective demand; aggregate demand; income redistribution; public finance; longevity; care economy; AI-assisted state efficiency; monetary policy; economic transition.

JEL Classification: D63; E12; E24; E25; E51; E62; H23; I38; O33; P16.

1. Introduction

The public debate has already identified the underlying problem with clarity: the structural introduction of artificial intelligence into economic production could displace human labor on a scale sufficient to erode the purchasing power of consumers, and with it the effective demand that sustains the market itself. On that diagnosis there is a growing degree of agreement. What has not yet been articulated is an institutional architecture capable of responding to that erosion without slowing the innovation that generates it.

The debate on the taxation of artificial intelligence has often begun with questions of measurement and instrumentation: how to identify the surplus generated by AI, how to tax it without slowing innovation, how to compensate labor displacement, and how to prevent automation from concentrating income and power. The academic literature and the policy debate have explored various partial responses: taxes on robots or on automation, recalibrations of the taxation of capital and corporate profits, data dividends, universal basic income, public wealth funds, basic capital, algorithmic auditing, productivity measurement, and stronger requirements of corporate transparency.

These responses, however, tend to remain separate. Few of them integrate the full chain: why to tax, what to tax, who should pay, who should receive, how the taxable event should be measured, and what happens if the resulting revenue is insufficient.

This Discussion Paper argues that the standard framing is too narrow. Measurement matters, and Section 3 proposes a trajectory to address it. But once the measurement problem is taken seriously, a deeper question emerges: even an optimally designed fiscal architecture may not collect enough to sustain a transfer capable of reaching the broad universe of beneficiaries that the demand-factor principle implies — a universe that, in its coherent formulation, tends to coincide with the social body that sustains the effective demand of the market. Taxation remains necessary, but it may not be sufficient.

The argument therefore advances in stages. The erosion of the wage channel opens a fiscal question. The fiscal question opens a measurement question. Measurement in turn reveals a financing question. These are not parallel problems but successive moments of a single trajectory.

The paper deliberately adopts a programmatic voice. It does not seek to close the tax, administrative, or monetary engineering of the instruments it proposes. It seeks to formulate an architecture for reading and to suggest a research path. Where the text mentions attributable bases, coefficients, settlements, or verifiable registries, it does so as lines of institutional

development that specialists will need to formalize — not as complete solutions delivered by an individual author.

The structure is as follows. Section 2 develops the fiscal principle and the three derived instruments: the MAT, the MAR, and the MAD. Section 3 examines the measurement architecture. Section 4 identifies the structural limit of the fiscal horizon and opens the broader financing question. Section 5 summarizes the logic of the trajectory and presents IRIS as a bridge architecture.

1.1 On the reference scenario

The trajectory along which artificial intelligence might reshape work and demand is not closed. Two readings dominate the current debate. The first anticipates a manageable transition, in which AI complements human labor and productivity gains diffuse through existing channels. The second anticipates a structural substitution, in which broad segments of human employment would be absorbed by automated systems without the labor market generating equivalent compensations on its own. The argument developed in this document takes the second scenario as its working hypothesis: it asks what fiscal and institutional architecture would be required if substitution proved structural.

This document considers that second scenario highly probable on account of the continuous evolutionary nature of AI itself, which progresses without natural plateaus of stabilization that could foretell an orderly redefinition of the world of work with structural human-AI coexistence. A manageable transition would not arise spontaneously from technological deployment; it would, in any case, have to be deliberately constructed by governments. The paper's working hypothesis is, in consequence, not neutral: it assumes that without institutional intervention substitution could advance faster than the spontaneous compensations of the labor market.

2. First movement — The fiscal principle: the human being as bearer of the demand factor

2.1 The erosion of the wage channel and the coverage problem

Contemporary fiscal architectures were designed for an economy in which human labor occupied the center of production and wages were the primary channel through which value was distributed. Firms produced, hired workers, paid wages, and those wages financed the consumption that validated production. The circuit could undergo crises and inequalities, but it preserved an internal logic: production itself helped to reproduce demand.

Artificial intelligence can weaken that logic. It can substitute human labor or allow firms to expand production, efficiency, or margins without a proportional increase in employment. Productive capacity can grow while the wage mass that sustains aggregate demand stagnates or falls relative to output. What begins as a labor-market problem can become a demand problem.

This mismatch can be called the *coverage problem*. Under labor-intensive production, the demand base was partially reproduced by the productive process itself through wage payments. Under AI-intensive production, that link weakens: production can expand without the system generating the purchasing power required to realize it. Productive capacity can then exceed the demand the system produces through wages. If that gap emerges, it must be covered through some mechanism. The question is which.

It is useful to situate this diagnosis within the contemporary debate on the direction of technological progress. Korinek and Stiglitz, in *Steering Technological Progress*, argue that policy should orient innovation toward technologies that complement human labor rather than substitute for it, and move toward deeper redistribution only if substitution progresses despite that effort. The framework proposed here starts from a different point: it assumes that substitution is a probable trajectory and concentrates on the fiscal and financial architecture required to redistribute its surplus without

slowing it. The two positions are not incompatible. The MAT can be read as the instrument required for the second stage that Korinek and Stiglitz anticipate. The difference lies in the starting assumption: less confidence in the capacity to redirect technology, and greater emphasis on the architecture that must accompany it if substitution becomes structural.

2.2 The Copernican turn: the human being as bearer of the demand factor

The Copernican turn of the argument consists in shifting the center of the human being's economic function. In the industrial economy, the human being occupied the center as worker: contributing labor, receiving wages, and through those wages helping to sustain demand. In an AI-intensive economy, that position may be modified. The human being may become less central as a producer of labor, but remains indispensable as the bearer of effective demand. Automated production is realized as economic value only if there is a human community with purchasing power capable of absorbing it. That relocation is precise: the human being ceases to be primarily a wage-earner and becomes a condition for the realization of the value produced by systems that increasingly dispense with direct human labor.

The proposition that demand conditions production is not new. Keynes showed that insufficient demand leaves productive capacity idle. What changes in an AI-intensive economy is that demand can no longer be taken for granted as an automatic result of production. It becomes an autonomous condition whose reproduction must be institutionally ensured.

The post-Keynesian tradition has developed this argument beyond the condition of realization. Kalecki, in his *Theory of Economic Dynamics* (1954), formulated the dual nature of the wage: simultaneously a cost for the individual firm and a source of aggregate demand for the capitalist sector as a whole. Kaldor, in his analyses of demand-led growth, argued that productivity itself is fueled by demand growth rather than the reverse. And the Bhaduri-Marglin (1990) models distinguish empirically between *wage-led* and *profit-led* regimes, showing that in wage-led economies — where the subsequent

literature situates most of the major European economies (Lavoie and Stockhammer 2013) — the substitution of wages destroys aggregate demand directly. The substitution of human labor by AI systems, read through this framework, is not only a transformation of costs: it is a structural alteration of the demand regime.

A predictable objection is that calling effective demand a productive factor is excessively metaphorical. The objection deserves a direct response. The term is used here in a functional and extended sense: not as a physical input in a conventional production function, but as a condition for the economic realization of the value produced. More precisely, effective demand can be understood as a factor of economic realization.

In classical factor analysis, a factor is characterized by three properties: it is necessary, it is scarce, and its holder can be identified and compensated. Effective demand in an AI-intensive economy satisfies all three properties. It is necessary: without it, production is not realized as economic value. It is scarce: under labor-displacement conditions, effective demand is precisely the constraint that binds the system. And its holders can be identified: they are the human beings who constitute the market. Because it is a collective factor, its compensation cannot be organized through individual contracts with each consumer, but through institutional mediation capable of collecting and redistributing resources.

Effective demand also functions as the common infrastructure of the market. It belongs to no single firm, yet every firm that sells in the market benefits from its existence. In an AI-intensive economy, this common infrastructure could become visible precisely because the wage mechanism that historically reproduced it would be weakening.

2.3 The magnitude of the program

Before developing the concrete instruments derived from the principle above, it is worth naming the magnitude the program acquires when that principle is applied consistently. The universe of MAD holders is not a restricted category defined by economic deprivation or by specific labor displacement; it is the

social body that sustains the effective demand of the market. Its composition and its magnitude condition any subsequent discussion of fiscal instruments.

Under the scenario considered here, the temporal trajectory of AI would tend to blur distinctions that in the early years would appear sharp. Today it may be possible to differentiate between someone directly displaced by AI, a structurally unemployed worker, a worker in a non-automated sector affected through cascade, and a young person never incorporated into the labor market. As AI absorbs positions across ever broader sectors, the category of structural unemployment would progressively overlap with that of AI-driven unemployment: reentry would become very difficult if the relevant positions have already been automated. The line between someone who was displaced and someone who cannot return would blur over time.

An implication of principle follows: IRIS cannot conceptually accept the existence of pensioners below the poverty threshold, since as full consumers their exclusion would weaken the absorption base the system seeks to reproduce. Section 2.7 develops the operational consequences for the pension architecture.

This breadth has an immediate financial consequence. The universe of MAD holders, considered broadly and consistently with the principle, implies a transfer magnitude far greater than that which would sustain a conventional anti-poverty program. If in each advanced industrial economy the social body with an economic function as consumers encompasses the majority of the adult population, and if the MAD aspires to sustain not only subsistence but discretionary consumption capacity compatible with a dignified life, the order of magnitude of the transfer lies far above that of traditional welfare benefits.

The reverse consideration reinforces this point. A MAD designed solely to keep its holders just above the poverty threshold — that is, set barely above subsistence, with little discretionary consumption capacity — would in an AI-intensive economy constitute a particularly explosive combination: supply expanded by automation alongside effective demand contracted by distributive insufficiency. This divergence is not only unjust. It erodes the very market on whose reproduction the realization of produced value rests.

The damage propagates by cascade precisely toward the sectors that AI cannot automate but that depend on discretionary consumption: local retail, restaurants, culture, personal services, tourism. Being non-automatable does not protect them: what places them at risk is not direct technological substitution but the disappearance of the clientele whose discretionary purchasing power sustained them. The vulnerability of international tourism adds a further level, because it depends on discretionary spending originating outside the jurisdiction where it is consumed: a simultaneous contraction across several economies would destroy cross-border tourism demand without any single country being able to compensate for it.

Consider, by way of illustration, Mediterranean economies — coastal Spain, Italy, Greece and its islands, parts of Portugal and Croatia — where tourism, restaurants, local retail, small family firms, personal services, and crafts coexist within a single fabric, frequently on an aging demographic base. The waiter, the shop assistant, the tour guide, the artisan, or the local producer is not substituted by AI; they could lose activity because the clientele whose discretionary consumption sustained them disappears. The pattern would repeat, with variations, in coastal and rural regions of comparable structure elsewhere. The result would be a region that was not automated and yet finds itself economically hollowed out: small family firms would close not from loss of technical competitiveness, but because the solvent base of their market had disappeared. The non-automatable productive fabric would degrade through the erosion of the automatable productive fabric that fed it.

This same contraction could, however, open non-trivial positive consequences. A pronounced fall in discretionary tourism spending would release housing stock now captured by short-term tourist rental — thousands of dwellings converted into *AirBnB* and equivalent platforms that have displaced residential supply and driven prices to levels unattainable for local workers. Returning that stock to residential use would multiply supply for residents and allow urban prices to rebalance. The transition is not net loss: what the productive fabric would lose in tourism activity it could gain in

habitability and residential rooting, dimensions that the market alone was not reproducing.

An honest recognition of this magnitude opens the question developed later in the paper. AI taxation — MAT, MAR, and the institutional efficiency dividend — can capture a substantive portion of the surplus generated by automation, but it should not be assumed, without further modeling, that this capture suffices to sustain a transfer of the order of magnitude that the demand-factor principle implies in its full application. This is why Section 4 of this document opens the broader question of demand financing, an issue that cannot be resolved within a strictly fiscal frame.

2.4 The three derived instruments: MAT, MAR, and MAD

Three conceptual instruments follow from the principle above. They are not presented here as closed legal designs, but as a general architecture for ordering the relationship between automation, access to the market, reproduction of demand, and distribution. Their precise design will require a subsequent stage of economic modeling, legal codification, sectoral calibration, and institutional deliberation.

The **Market Access Tax (MAT)** is the domestic contribution associated with the incidence of AI on the production of value when that incidence is not compensated by an equivalent contribution to the wage channel. Its foundation is not to penalize automation, nor to tax every firm for the mere fact of selling in the market. Its operational starting point should be the identification of an AI-attributable base: the share of value added, turnover, margin, productivity, or surplus that can reasonably be linked to labor substitution or to productive amplification through AI systems.

On that base a potential MAT obligation could be calculated, modulated by the firm's effective contribution to the wage channel: wages paid, social contributions, stable human employment, training, reskilling, professional retraining, and other forms of real human participation in production. This document does not define the formula, the thresholds, the sectoral weights, or the concrete settlement mechanisms. It defines the direction: where AI

displaces or amplifies production without reproducing demand through wages, an institutional obligation to contribute to that reproduction arises.

The **Market Access Right (MAR)** is the extension of the fiscal principle to the plane of coordination between jurisdictions. Its function is to preserve the coherence of the system when the goods and services that make use of a market's demand factor originate outside its fiscal jurisdiction. The concrete form of the instrument — its articulation with integrated economic areas, its relation to equivalent systems in other blocs or countries, and its operational treatment — belongs to a later stage of elaboration and lies beyond the scope of this document. It should be openly acknowledged that this is the weakest point of implementation in the IRIS framework: coordination between blocs, between members of the same bloc, the treatment of trade surplus and deficit, and intra-bloc exchange of wealth are questions that cannot be resolved with a single instrument. For that reason a dedicated future IRIS module is planned on these dynamics, lying outside the scope of the present Discussion Paper.

The **Market Access Dividend (MAD)** closes the redistributive circuit of the system: if the MAT and the MAR capture part of the surplus generated by AI, the MAD redistributes it toward the holders of the demand factor — that is, toward those who sustain the market where that surplus is realized as value. In operational terms it could resemble a basic income or a periodic transfer, but its foundation is different: it is not justified solely by equality, social protection, or macroeconomic stabilization, but by the economic role human beings play as bearers of the demand factor.

This reformulation responds to a classic objection against universal transfers: why should anyone receive income without working? In the IRIS architecture, the individual is not considered solely as a potential worker, but as part of the human base that allows automated production to be realized as economic value. Without a community endowed with purchasing power, AI productivity can generate technical capacity, but not necessarily market value.

The three instruments thus share a single logic. The MAT identifies a domestic contribution associated with the AI incidence not compensated by

wages. The MAR extends the principle to the plane of coordination between jurisdictions, maintaining the coherence of the system when access to the demand factor crosses fiscal borders. The MAD distributes resources toward the holders of the demand factor to sustain effective demand and order the transition. The contribution of this document is to formulate that conceptual architecture; the tax, legal, and administrative engineering remains open as further work.

2.5 The innovation non-braking principle

The MAT should not function as a Pigouvian tax designed to make AI as expensive as equivalent human labor. If it did, it would neutralize precisely the surplus it aims to capture. Its function is not to block automation, but to appropriate institutionally a fraction of the surplus it generates in order to reproduce the demand that allows that surplus to be realized as economic value.

Therefore, after the application of the MAT, AI-assisted production must remain economically advantageous relative to the equivalent labor alternative. The system should not artificially compel firms to employ humans when AI delivers genuine productivity gains; it should ensure that a share of that surplus contributes to sustaining the human market from which the firm benefits.

This point distinguishes the MAT from proposals aimed at slowing automation. The MAT does not ask how to halt substitution, but how to share part of its surplus with the holders of the demand factor without destroying the incentive to innovate.

It is worth noting that the non-braking principle has a temporal dimension. As mass adoption of AI eliminates substitutability by humans as the default reference alternative across entire sectors, the benchmark of the human cost that justified the prudent modulation of the MAT will disappear. Over that horizon, authorities could recalibrate the contribution upward without that adjustment producing a braking effect on innovation, simply because innovation would no longer be operating against a comparable labor

alternative. The non-braking principle is therefore a present-day constraint; its weight will diminish as substitution becomes structural.

2.6 Differentiation from neighboring proposals

The field of fiscal proposals for the AI economy is broad. It is worth situating the IRIS framework within that field, identifying both overlaps and differences.

Robot-tax proposals, visibly associated with public interventions such as that of Bill Gates and subsequent debates, treat labor displacement as an externality to be corrected. The risk is that, by design, such an approach slows the innovation it is meant to finance. The MAT departs in two respects: displacement is not framed as an accidental externality but as a restructuring of factor payments; and the rate is explicitly calibrated to preserve incentives to innovate.

Proposals to increase the taxation of capital, associated with the work of Acemoglu, Restrepo, Korinek, Juelfs, and others, are relevant as incremental adjustments. They capture part of the fiscal dynamic, but they do not by themselves provide a new conceptual foundation explaining why the transfer to citizens should be more than general redistribution.

Data-dividend proposals, associated with Lanier or with Posner and Weyl, correctly identify an uncompensated human input, but they capture only one dimension of the problem. Data is one way in which human beings serve as inputs to the AI economy. Effective demand is another, possibly more fundamental, because it concerns not training or information but the realization of the value produced.

The IRIS framework is close to Mariana Mazzucato's work on public value creation and co-created markets. The difference is not that Mazzucato ignores the market, but that this document shifts the focus toward a specific component of that co-creation: human demand backed by purchasing power as the condition for the economic realization of the value produced, and the

collective title over that condition as the foundation of a compensatory transfer in an AI-intensive economy.

What the IRIS framework seeks to add is a foundation capable of sustaining a specific fiscal design without falling into two recurrent difficulties: unintentionally slowing innovation, or depending entirely on contested normative judgments. The proposal does not eliminate its normative dimension — no fiscal design does — but anchors it in a precise economic relation: access to the human market and the reproduction of the demand that makes that market possible.

2.7 An affirmative reading of the transition

The principle above has an economic justification, but it also carries a broader meaning. AI-driven substitution, if accompanied by adequate institutions, need not be read solely as a threat. It can free human time from repetitive, alienating, dangerous, or low-human-value tasks, and redirect activity toward creative, relational, cultural, intellectual, manual, territorial, and community work.

Keynes anticipated this horizon in *Economic Possibilities for Our Grandchildren*, by imagining that the progressive solution of the economic problem could free human energy toward art, contemplative life, and personal relationships. In the AI economy, that intuition takes a concrete form: automation can displace dirty, monotonous, difficult, or dangerous tasks, freeing time for creative, relational, cultural, communal, and care activities. Daniel Susskind, however, reminds us that this liberation is not automatic: productivity may translate into distributed welfare or into the concentration of surplus.

To this recomposition one must add an axis that often appears fragmented across separate debates: the care economy, longevity, and the sustainability of the pension system. The same artificial intelligence that can displace low-cognitive-density administrative work can also accelerate advances in health, prevention, diagnosis, personalized medicine, and practices for extending healthy life. To this is added the cultural diffusion of biohacking and lifestyles

oriented to preserving physical and cognitive functionality for longer. The possible outcome is not only an aging society, but a super-long-lived generation: people of advanced age, relatively healthy, active for more years, and at the same time often more isolated owing to the transformation of family structures.

This scenario does not reduce the need for human work; it can greatly expand it. Very long-lived persons, in relatively good health and with weaker family networks, will need companionship, psychological support, physical activity, outdoor life, adapted tourism, cultural experiences, art, music, cooking, recreation, everyday assistance, prevention, light care, continuing education, and human presence. Many of these functions will be assisted by AI but not exhausted by it. Presence, trust, sensitivity, situated judgment, and relation are not premodern residues: they may become one of the great human infrastructures of the AI economy.

This dimension connects IRIS to another structural problem of industrialized societies: the sustainability of the public pension system. Super-longevity will not be only a medical or technological achievement; it could also become a fiscal and pension pressure of great magnitude in countries marked by low fertility, demographic aging, and more fragmented contributory careers. The problem will not only be paying more years of retirement, but ensuring a dignified life in a potentially longer, active, and socially relevant stage of existence.

To this pension pressure is added a fiscal counterpart still little discussed. The intensive application of AI to the public sector, and especially to health care, could produce a substantial fall in public spending through reduction of administrative costs, improvement in diagnosis, optimization of clinical processes, and acceleration of prevention. In the Italian case, public health expenditure currently stands at around 6.3% of GDP (OECD Health Statistics, 2024); even moderate efficiency gains in relative terms would represent significant fiscal magnitudes in absolute terms. A fraction of that saving, institutionally captured, constitutes an institutional efficiency dividend: a financing source complementary to the MAT and the MAR. In public health

the effect can be particularly relevant: demographic aging tends to push spending upward, but AI can operate in the opposite direction by keeping populations in better health for longer.

In this context, IRIS could acquire a complementary function with respect to the existing pension architecture. It would not be a question of substituting for the public pension system or absorbing its institutions, but of opening a path of functional convergence: the MAD architecture, under phases and criteria defined by the authorities, could help cover what the traditional contributory system can no longer sustain on its own, raising minimum pensions or the incomes of older adults toward levels compatible with a dignified life. In contexts such as the Italian one, where minimum assistance pensions are often below the poverty threshold, this convergence between the MAD architecture and the pension system becomes immediately relevant: the MAD could relieve pressure on the contributory system without replacing it. The paradox is that the same AI that strains the contributory system by weakening the wage channel could generate part of the surplus needed to sustain a longer-lived population and, at the same time, to expand the human economy of care, companionship, preventive health, and community participation.

The underlying question is cultural. Why should it be considered more normal for a person to dedicate life to managing spreadsheets, answering emails, or handling repetitive calls, than to accompany, care for, attend to, teach, listen to, cook for, guide, train, or provide recreation for other human beings? The technological transition could allow a revaluation of forms of work that the industrial economy treated as secondary, informal, or poorly paid, but that in a long-lived and automated society can become central. The care economy would then no longer be a residual sector in which to absorb the displaced, but one of the higher forms of recomposition of human work.

Susskind's warning remains central. The technological transition does not benignly regulate itself. It can liberate, but it can also destabilize work, concentrate income, and weaken demand. Precisely for that reason, fiscal, distributive, and financial instruments are needed to order the transition. The

MAT gives fiscal form to this position: what must be ordered need not be blocked; the entry of AI into the economy should be accompanied while the demand base that sustains the system is reproduced.

3. Second movement — The measurement architecture: from the proxy to the interpretive agent

Once the principle of the human being as bearer of the demand factor is established, a practical question arises: how to identify the incidence of AI within firms and how to estimate, with sufficient institutional reliability, the portion of value attributable to substitution or to productive amplification through AI. This section does not seek to close the method. It proposes a research trajectory: begin with verifiable proxies, advance toward more integrated interpretive systems, and at all times preserve legal safeguards, privacy, third-party oversight, and the right to appeal.

3.1 The three tiers as proxy for detection and verification

IRIS's initial proposal for measuring AI incidence in firms is organized around three convergent tiers. The first is direct technical measurement: token consumption, GPU hours, billed inferences, processed requests, or equivalent units reported by authorized AI providers under a specific regulatory framework. The second is indirect economic inference: differentials between a firm's productivity indicators and sectoral references, such as revenue per employee, gross margin per employee, value added per employee, or growth not explained by general macroeconomic or sectoral factors. The third is legally anchored corporate declaration: a periodic statement on substitution or productive amplification attributable to AI — binding, auditable, sanctionable, and contrastable with technical and economic data.

The integration of the three tiers is defined as the highest value detected by any of them, avoiding double imputation of the same underlying phenomenon. The logic is simple: if AI generates significant productive amplification, that amplification leaves some trace — technical, economic, or declarative. To

evade all three simultaneously, a firm would have to be technically opaque, economically indistinguishable from the sectoral norm, and willing to assume legal risk through a false declaration. Evasion does not disappear, but its cost rises.

Integrated management of these three tiers by a dedicated AI instrument could further reinforce their detection capacity: a system able to process technical, economic, and declarative signals simultaneously could identify patterns of incidence that each tier separately might miss.

The three tiers constitute the observation system that allows the incidence of AI to be estimated. The MAT tax obligation appears only afterward, when that incidence is translated, through legal rules and calibration criteria, into an attributable base and a concrete contribution. Its purpose is transitional: to allow the MAT principle to begin operating without waiting for a native measurement infrastructure that does not yet exist. It is a bridge solution, not the final design.

3.2 The temporal decoupling between AI and institutional measurement

The problem that the three tiers mitigate, without fully resolving, is temporal and structural. AI evolves in rapid cycles, with qualitative leaps of capability that occur in months or a few years. Institutional measurement operates in slow cycles: annual fiscal years, statistical surveys, sectoral taxonomies that are updated when part of the phenomenon has already changed. This decoupling is not corrected simply by better administrative coordination; it reflects a difference of nature between the observed object and the apparatus that observes it.

The technical and declarative tiers can be updated with some speed because they depend on regulated obligations the legislator can modify. The economic tier is more rigid: sectoral references require time series with statistical depth. In practice, any system based on interinstitutional triangulation will suffer some lag relative to the reality it observes. It can function as a bridge, but not as a stable solution.

There is also a coverage problem. The technical tier assumes that AI consumption passes through authorized providers subject to reporting. That hypothesis is reasonable while much of enterprise AI is channeled through large platforms. It becomes less robust in the face of self-deployed open models, local inference, proprietary infrastructure, or heterogeneous compute. The economic and declarative tiers retain observational capacity because they do not depend on the technical mode of provision, but they do so with lower resolution and greater latency.

The question is then toward what architecture the system might evolve.

3.3 The hypothesis of an enterprise interpretive agent

The missing instrument is not another control tier. It is an AI-assisted fiscal-industrial analysis system, capable of integrating heterogeneous signals and producing an operational reading of the role AI plays within a firm's productive process. We call this system, in deliberately neutral terms, an enterprise interpretive agent.

Its function would not be to monitor everything, but to estimate with sufficient practical reliability what share of value creation depends on AI-driven substitution or amplification. To do so, it would integrate signals today observed separately: employment, revenue, productivity, margins, documented use of AI APIs, computational spending, workflow automation, reduction or reassignment of human hours, sectoral references, aggregate enterprise-management data, generated outputs, organizational changes, and corporate AI incidence declarations.

In its mature version, such an agent would operate as an interpretive layer between firm and administration. It would not replace traditional accounting; it would read the firm as a hybrid productive system composed of human beings, physical capital, conventional software, AI models, autonomous agents, and external providers. Its operational product would be an AI incidence coefficient: an estimate, with explicit margins of uncertainty, of the fraction of value attributable to AI substitution or amplification.

Partial precedents for this class of software exist in the institutional intelligence systems developed in defense, intelligence, advanced financial analysis, and public administration. The analogy is strictly architectural: integration of heterogeneous sources under legally delimited permissions to produce actionable operational readings. Whether implementation should be public, regulated private, consortial, or mixed is an open political question.

Another useful image comes from science: an AlphaFold for productive architectures. AlphaFold transformed a problem long considered extremely difficult — protein structure prediction — into one tractable with operational quality. The analogy is not technical: firms are not proteins. It is an analogy of genre. With heterogeneous data and sufficiently expressive models, a problem opaque to conventional institutional observation can become legible with sufficient practical reliability.

3.4 The OpenClaw moment: a form of transition

In late 2025, OpenClaw — a self-hosted personal AI agent released by an independent developer — illustrated the speed at which an AI debate can move from speculation to operation. What matters is not its technical details but the form of the transition: an imperfect but functional tool can appear before institutional consensus and shift the discussion from whether something is possible toward how it should be governed. The fiscal measurement of AI could undergo an analogous shift: a first credible instrument capable of estimating AI incidence within firms would move the debate toward rates, thresholds, safeguards, distribution, and governance.

3.5 From measurement to scale

Resolving measurement does not resolve the underlying problem. Even with a reliable estimate of AI incidence, a deeper question remains: whether the resulting fiscal architecture can sustain the effective demand required by an automated economy. Section 4 takes up that question.

4. Third movement — The financing horizon: the structural limit of taxation

4.1 The scale problem

The decisive point is simple. An AI-intensive economy can come to produce far more than the traditional wage channel is capable of distributing as purchasing power. If that gap emerges, the problem will not only be how better to tax automation, but how to sustain effective demand sufficient for the new productive capacity not to remain partly unrealized.

In that scenario, taxation performs a necessary but probably incomplete function. MAT, MAR, and the institutional efficiency dividend — the latter fueled by the savings generated by the intensive application of AI to the public sector, especially in health and administration — can capture part of the surplus generated by AI and direct it toward the reproduction of demand. They can open the transition, stabilize it, and give social legitimacy to automation. But it should not be assumed, without further modeling, that those instruments will suffice by themselves to sustain broad demand in a deeply automated economy.

The error would be to interpret the MAD as a mere welfare tool. If the instrument were limited to keeping its beneficiaries just above the poverty threshold, it might contain an immediate social fall, but it would not fulfill its proper function: that level would not suffice to sustain the discretionary consumption and aggregate demand that a high-productivity economy needs to function fully. The mature horizon of IRIS cannot be reduced to administering poverty more efficiently. The MAD must be understood as an architecture of economic participation that turns part of automated productivity into real human purchasing power, social inclusion, effective consumption, and continuity of the market.

This document does not resolve that question. It marks it. Taxation is the first institutional language available for connecting automation and demand, but if the distance between potential production and distributed purchasing power were to grow too large, the differential would remain as an institutional

problem. Among the architectures available to close it, one in particular must be named openly: institutional monetary issuance directed at real consumption to cover the differential between what is captured fiscally and the purchasing power required for production to fully realize itself as market value, calibrated to available productive capacity and bounded by macroeconomic equilibrium. This is not unlimited monetary financing nor functional subordination of monetary policy to political cycles; it is the recognition that, where productive capacity is idle and the wage channel is structurally insufficient, the public creation of means of payment directed at the real economy operates within the limits of price stability rather than against them. The question then shifts to another plane: if effective demand is a condition of possibility of the market in an AI-intensive economy, what institutional architecture should preserve it when taxation falls short? And what rules, governance, and bounds should constrain the institutional issuance of purchasing power so that it serves the function of sustaining demand without producing inflation or political capture? Section 4.2 situates that question within a recognizable historical pattern of institutionalization.

It is worth closing this section with an observation coherent with the non-braking principle articulated in 2.5. The prudent modulation of the MAT — its calibration to keep AI-assisted production economically advantageous relative to the equivalent human-labor alternative — rests on the existence of that human benchmark as a reference. As mass adoption of AI progressively eliminates substitutability by humans across entire sectors, that benchmark will tend to fade. Over that horizon, the MAT could be recalibrated upward without a braking effect, and its revenue component could grow until it approaches, in practice, a Pigouvian-type levy on the cost of AI. The transition does not require deciding this in advance: the very disappearance of the benchmark of reference will widen the revenue space of the MAT naturally, expanding the fiscal capacity of the system precisely when pressure on demand is greatest.

4.2 The institutional question: from the transitory stabilizer to systemic architecture

In an AI-intensive economy, if effective demand is a condition of possibility of the market and taxation alone does not suffice to sustain it, the question ceases to be strictly fiscal and becomes institutional in a broader sense: what kind of public architecture corresponds to an underlying condition of the economic system that the market does not reproduce by itself.

This question is not new in its form. The passage from transitory stabilizer to systemic architecture is the institutional pattern through which much of the infrastructure today regarded as constitutive of contemporary capitalism was built. The stabilizing function of central banking emerged from extraordinary responses to recurring nineteenth-century financial crises and crystallized as systemic infrastructure once financial fragility was recognized as structural rather than cyclical. United States deposit insurance (1933), Bismarckian social insurance (1883-1889), and New Deal unemployment insurance (1935) followed analogous trajectories: emergency responses to conditions later recognized as structural, institutionalized as permanent architecture with stable rules, recurrent financing, and democratic accountability. IRIS proposes the same transition for a new condition: the divergence between productive capacity expanded by AI and purchasing power distributed by a weakened wage channel, presumed structural rather than cyclical, calls for systemic architecture rather than recurring emergency.

One operational consequence deserves emphasis here. A systemic architecture connecting productive capacity with purchasing power must orient the institutional effort toward real consumption, avoiding the outcome whereby institutionally created purchasing power ends up inflating asset prices rather than sustaining demand — a risk that the experience of *Quantitative Easing* (QE) made visible. This document does not resolve how to design that architecture. It names it, situates it within a recognizable trajectory of institutionalization, and opens the space for it to be worked through.

4.3 Objections that delimit the research

Any reflection on demand financing beyond conventional taxation faces serious objections. This document treats them not as rhetorical obstacles but as limits that should orient future research.

The first is the inflation objection. Creating or distributing purchasing power without attending to real productive capacity can generate inflation, loss of confidence, and macroeconomic disorder. The answer cannot be to deny that risk. It must consist in formulating the question with precision: it would only make sense to explore mechanisms of additional financing where there is available productive capacity, insufficient demand, and clear mechanisms of withdrawal or correction when inflationary pressures appear.

The second objection is political capture. An architecture capable of distributing purchasing power can always be used irresponsibly if it becomes a discretionary instrument of the electoral cycle. However, the IRIS principle contains a conceptual defense against clientelism: the beneficiary base is not defined by occasional political decision but by a systemic condition. The holders of the MAD are not selected as favored groups, but recognized for their structural position as bearers of the demand factor. This functional universality does not eliminate all risks of capture — for example, in the definition of amounts, activation phases, managing institutions, or adjustment rules — but it reduces the margin to turn the instrument into a politics of favors. For that reason, any future development must preserve that non-discretionary base through public rules, transparency, accountability, and democratic control.

The third objection is international coordination. An open economy cannot treat demand financing as if it operated in isolation. Trade flows, capital movements, supply chains, fiscal competition, and shared rules condition any design. However, this objection should not be read as a definitive veto. If AI-intensive automation threatens to erode employment, demand, productive fabric, and social cohesion simultaneously, pressure to formulate new principles of coordination may grow rapidly. What today appears politically

improbable may become institutionally necessary under conditions of systemic disruption.

In the European case, this difficulty could also become an opportunity. An integrated bloc has the legal, fiscal, and commercial scale to explore coordinated mechanisms for recognition, compensation, and protection of effective demand, provided it avoids internal distortions and respects the logic of the common market. The process may be conflictive, imperfect, and politically chaotic, but it is not for that reason irrelevant. Great transitions tend to produce first disorder and only later new rules.

These objections do not close the question. They delimit it. They indicate that the problem cannot be resolved with a simple slogan, fiscal or monetary. It requires an institutional architecture capable of connecting productive capacity, purchasing power, stability, legitimacy, and coordination. IRIS does not claim to offer that finished architecture; it proposes the initial map of the problem that forces its search.

5. Conclusion: the logic of the trajectory

5.1 The intellectual movement of the document

The movement of the document can be summarized simply. It begins from an observation: in an AI-intensive economy, the human being may lose centrality as a worker but not as a bearer of effective demand. Automated production needs a human market capable of absorbing it. Without distributed purchasing power, technical capacity is not fully realized as economic value.

From that observation a conceptual architecture follows. MAT, MAR, and MAD are not presented as closed mechanisms, but as three institutional directions: a contribution associated with the AI incidence not compensated by wages; an international extension that prevents uncompensated access to the demand of a market; and a distributive counterpart oriented to sustaining effective demand and the social transition.

The architecture then leads to a measurement problem. If part of the value of firms depends on substitution or amplification through AI, it will be necessary to develop legitimate ways of estimating that incidence. The three tiers and the interpretive agent are not here definitive answers, but ways of naming the kind of institutional capability that an automated economy could require.

Finally, the scale problem appears. Even if measurement improves and taxation adapts, it should not be assumed without demonstration that revenue will suffice to sustain broad effective demand. Taxation may be a necessary first layer. But if AI extraordinarily expands productive capacity while wages lose force as a distributive mechanism, the question will shift toward how to finance sufficient human participation in that abundance.

5.2 The bridge character of the program

IRIS is not proposed as permanent architecture or as a final destination. It is a bridge architecture. Its function is to buy institutional time, to prevent the transition from being organized on poverty, the collapse of demand, and the social collapse to which that combination could lead, and to open space for the economy to discover new forms of human work.

That recomposition should not be imagined only as substitution of lost employment by passive transfers. AI can displace administrative, repetitive, or analytical tasks, but it can also increase the need for human activities difficult to automate: care, accompaniment, education, health, presence, sport, culture, cooking, tourism, art, repair, community life, and relational work.

The horizon is not a society without human work, but a society where human work can shift toward more relational, situated, and meaningful functions. That transition will not happen automatically. It will require incomes, institutions, training, social recognition, and time. IRIS aims to offer an architecture so that this recomposition is not left to market chance or to the trauma of exclusion.

5.3 What this document contributes and what it invites

This Discussion Paper does not offer a law, a mathematical formula, or a finished fiscal model. It offers an architecture.

Its contribution consists in naming a factor that the debate tends to treat as invisible background: human effective demand as the condition for economic realization in an automated economy. From there, it proposes a trajectory: to recognize that factor, to think about how to measure AI incidence, to explore contributions associated with automation, to sustain demand through distributive instruments, and to open a broader research into financing when taxation proves insufficient.

The strength of the document lies not in closing every detail, but in signaling a path. Others will need to formalize, model, correct, refute, or develop its pieces. That is precisely the nature of programmatic work: it does not close debate, it orders it.

Each segment of that trajectory calls upon different specialists. Economists must model scenarios, elasticities, and revenue limits. Jurists must study tax, trade, and constitutional compatibility. AI technicians must explore legitimate forms of incidence measurement. Public administrations must assess operational feasibility. Political philosophers and theorists of justice must discuss eligibility, priority, and legitimacy. Monetary institutions must, if the trajectory requires it, study the relationship between productive capacity and the creation of purchasing power. IRIS is not a closed system, but an architecture for ordering pieces that today appear scattered.

The underlying question can be put this way: if artificial intelligence transforms production, the way society reproduces demand, dignity, and inclusion will also have to be transformed. The old economic contract rested on the wage as the bridge between production and consumption. If that bridge weakens, another will have to be imagined. IRIS is a proposal to begin building it conceptually.

6. Notes and bibliographic references

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