Dr ANAGNOSTOPOULOS Achilleas, Postdoc Research Fellow, University of Macedonia, Greece

BITZENIS Aristidis, Associate Professor, University of Macedonia, Greece

TITLE: Institutions, Informality and Labour Flexibility in Greece: Evidence from a provincial labour market survey

KEY WORDS: Greece, SME’s, labour flexibility, informal employment

ABSTRACT

The paper explores flexible contracts in the Greek labour market. This issue is still very controversial in Greece if the high unemployment in the years of prosperity (the period of 2007-2008) was taken into consideration. The main query is whether the Greek labour market was flexible enough, according to international standards, in the prosperous years and reforms were not necessary.

A survey in the provincial labour market of Thessaly (TERS) was conducted based on the Workplace Employers Relations Survey (WERS) by the UK and a questionnaire, was constructed to explore numerical flexibility and informality in the workplace. Empirical data were collected in 2007 and personal interviews were conducted at 206 businesses in central Greece. In order to have a representative sample of businesses, a proportional stratified sampling was chosen. The sample was chosen from the total number of businesses and its stratification deals with the main fields into which the companies are divided. Quantitative research methods were used to analyze data from employees in part-time, temporary time, fixed-term, seasonal and agency contracts. In addition, subcontractors, family members, home workers, and subsidized employees provide exceptional information for regression analysis with the above data.

Results presented indicate the situation of labour flexibility and informality in central Greece and hence throughout Greece during the years of prosperity. In terms of atypical forms of employment- Greece can be seen to be a country with higher percentages in self and family employment (which inflates informal employment) as well as the lowest percentage in part-time employment (as are other southern EC countries). Reforms and comparisons with post crisis data are also taken into consideration.
This publication derives from two projects: (a) Archimedes project on “Flexible Forms of Employment in Thessaly Region, Greece” (2005-2008) by TEI of Larissa and (b) Thales project “The Shadow Economy in Greece: Size, Reasons and Impact” (2012-2015) by the University of Macedonia, both funded by the European Social Fund (ESF) and Greek National Resources.