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Empirical studies on working hours and labour market flows

Abstract:

There is a solid foundation upon which to argue that the labour market is the most important market of modern economies. The reason for this arises from the well-known fact that, by a wide margin, most individuals derive their current income flow from selling their labour services. This applies to the Finnish labour markets, which have gained growing interest during the 1990s. The prominent reason for the interest has been the empirical feature that the unemployment rate soared during the so-called great slump of the early 1990s. Since then, according to number of commentators on public affairs, unemployment has been the most important economic and social problem in Finland. In this respect, the situation is nowadays much the same across the whole European labour markets.

Despite the apparent importance of labour markets, there is rather limited empirical knowledge of a number of particularities that characterize the Finnish labour markets. This collection of empirical investigations consists of five essays. These essays aim to provide evidence on interesting empirical patterns of the Finnish labour markets based on various data sets. The essays fall into three categories. The first two essays investigate the selected aspects of working hours in Finland. These essays investigate the determination of average working time from the long-term perspective and overtime at the individual-level in Finnish manufacturing. The following two essays concentrate on the dynamics of regional labour markets in Finland. These essays focus on gross job and worker flows of the Finnish regions and address the connection between unemployment and reorganization from the regional perspective. The last essay of this collection deals with the issue of the perception of job instability among workers in Europe by using survey data.

Keywords: labour markets, working hours, overtime, gross flows, regional labour markets, unemployment, job instability, job insecurity

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