

Paper “Internal flexibility and collective bargaining in the European Union during the Great Recession: an analysis at the establishment level”

Review: The paper “Internal flexibility...” main goal is to analyze “the collective bargaining response to the GR in terms of internal flexibility during the economic crisis in five EU countries ...and three economic sectors (industry; tourism, commerce and hospitality; and bank-financial services and real estate)”. It deals with an important topic and literature and applies an empirical methodology (Probit Model) that allows it to control the effects of the Great Recession on industrial relations considering sectorial and firm-level differences. Thus, the paper offers fresh evidence on the underlying phenomena that justifies its publication.

Nonetheless, it would be interesting for the author(s) to consider the following recommendations:

- (i) Introduction – the paper does not explain the reasons to select Spain, Germany, France, Italy, UK as the main focus of the research. Footnote 1 informs how those countries are classified following Gumbrell-McCormick and Hyman (2013) classification. Nevertheless, there are no mentions to the countries selection criteria.
- (ii) Section 3 “The national and sectoral context” – Again, readers would gain with a discussion on the countries selection criteria.
- (iii) Conclusion - The Global Financial Crisis and the Great Recessions were mainly determined by financial sector structural imbalances. Consequently, authors should consider in future research to incorporate financial variables to control such influence in the regressions. In this particular paper, employment was the proxy used to control for the “economic situation” (p.10). It is debatable if this was the better choice. Perhaps, results would be different if a proper financial variable was introduced. Author(s) should mention such potential limitation and explore the opportunity to advance alternative estimations in the future.

Recommendation: Publish.