



DR. SERGEY SLOBODYAN
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09 September 2015

Dear Dr Slobodyan,

Re: Klara Kaliskova Dissertation Report

Please find below my report on the Dissertation of Klara Kaliskova, Charles University (CERGE-EI), entitled "Essays on Public Policies and Female Labor Supply".

This is an excellent empirical microeconomics dissertation which studies the impact of certain key public policy on female labor supply decisions. Specifically, on joint taxation in the Czech Republic, on tax and transfer policies in the EU, and on reforms of Czech parental allowance. This is important research, carefully carried out, which is useful for both methodological and policy contributions. It represents original and publishable work.

The debate on joint taxation and its impact on labour supply and family incomes is a key one in the tax and public policy arena. The idea of examining the introduction of joint taxation in the Czech Republic in 2005 is natural. What is so impressive in this first chapter of the dissertation is the careful use of empirical methodologies to recover a credible estimate of the impact of this reform on family labour supply.

The approach taken is to develop a difference-in-differences method with four alternative treatment and control groups to estimate the magnitude of the joint taxation effect on the

labor supply of Czech married couples with children. One important aspect of the Czech reform was that joint taxation was introduced as a voluntary option and therefore the estimated parameters are a lower bound for the effect of mandatory joint taxation. Nonetheless, the estimated impact is strong and negative on the labour supply of married women reducing employment by more than two percentage points. The impact on women was found to be much stronger than for men, in line with previous literature on family labour supply. The dissertation considers a number of robustness results that confirm this conclusion. Particularly she is able to show that those women who experienced the highest change in work incentives responded with the largest decrease in employment.

The second chapter is impressive as it considers responses to tax and benefit policies across the EU using the EUROMOD micro-simulation model to calculate a participation tax rate for each individual in the micro-data. This is an original and convincing approach, which uses a detailed micro-data base and allows her to deal with the possible endogeneity of the participation tax rate. The results are equally impressive and show a strong impact of effective taxes across the EU, implying that a 10 percentage point increase in the participation tax rate decreases the female employment probability by 2 percentage points. These results are shown to be stronger for secondary educated women, for married women and for women with small children. Moreover, the effects appear to be highest for liberal welfare regimes such as those in Ireland and the UK belong. She shows how her results compare with the literature.

The final contribution in the dissertation examines the effect of the duration of paid parental leave on the labor supply of women after childbirth. It uses two reforms that occurred in the Czech Republic in 1995 and 2008. What is nice about this work is that it examines the impact of the two reforms on the complete career break after childbirth. This is then decomposed into the family leave duration effect and any subsequent period of unemployment. The results point to a substantive impact on inactivity of mothers from the 1995 reform that extended the paid parental leave from three to four years. However, the reform is shown to have no permanent impact on women's attachment to the labour market. Finally, the 2008 reform, which went in the opposite direction, is used to confirm these findings.

In sum, I regard this thesis to be original and of excellent quality. The dissertation thesis satisfies formal and content requirements for a PhD thesis in economics, and I am delighted to recommend the dissertation for a defense.

I would be happy to provide more detail on any aspect of the dissertation should that be useful.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'R Blundell', is written above a horizontal line.

Professor Sir Richard Blundell CBE FBA
Ricardo Professor of Economics, UCL,