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Research & Innovation

Description of the funded research project
1st Call for H.F.R.I. Research Projects to Support Faculty
Members & Researchers and Procure High-Value
Research Equipment



Title of the research project:

The geography of income inequality in Greece

Principal Investigator: Prof. Y. Psycharis

Reader-friendly title: GEOINC GREECE

Scientific Area: Social Sciences

Institution and Country: Panteion University of Social and Political Sciences, Greece

Host Institution: Panteion University of Social and Political Sciences, Special Account for Research Funds

Collaborating Institution(s): -

Project webpage: <http://geoinc.gr/>



Budget: 151.140,00€

Duration: 28 months

Research Project Synopsis

The distribution of income is a key issue in economic analysis, as well as social and welfare policy. However, while income inequality reflects the welfare conditions within an economy, its geographical distribution provides insights on its variations across space, which becomes particularly significant in times of economic crisis. Therefore, GEOINC aims at investigating the geographical aspects of income and income inequality in Greece during the period 2000-2015. The analysis will be based on individual micro-data allowing for the identification of the geographical location of households, together with demographic, economic and social variables at the sub-national level in Greece.

GEOINC aims to complement existing knowledge about interregional and intra-regional inequality and welfare in Greece by exploring the evolution and the determinants of income inequality, before and during the economic crisis. The spatiotemporal analysis of income inequalities, including comparisons between pre- and post-crisis periods, will help us to identify patterns and clusters of income inequality, and thus, pave the way for the identification of possible causes of income inequality in Greece. GEOINC will also unveil trends in polarization and social segregation within large metropolitan areas, specifically Athens. Finally, it will focus on issues of evidence-based public policy recommendations by synthesizing the empirical findings of the project.

Overall, GEOINC focuses on some of the most important socio-economic challenges for Greece, especially during the last decade. The micro-level statistical data that will be used, together with the most appropriate spatial analysis methods, will shed light on the Greek experience offering useful insights for policymakers and contributing to the international literature in the field. Participation in conferences, scientific publications and organization of special sessions relevant to the project at national and international conferences will act as a means for boosting the outcomes of the project.

Project originality

GEOINC bases its originality in four pillars. First, GEOINC aims at complementing existing knowledge about regional inequality and welfare in Greece. Although regional economic and income inequalities in Greece have been examined throughout the existing literature, the geography of income inequality has received less attention, whereas its investigation using micro-data has not yet been explored in the literature. The GEOINC project will analyze potential asymmetries and polarization phenomena of income distribution in Greece during the pre- and post-crisis period.

Second, GEOINC focuses on unveiling polarization and social segregation trends in large Greek metropolitan areas. Studies on polarization and social segregation are widespread in international literature, given that multi-developmental processes are taking place within urban areas, influencing the evolution of income inequalities. The GEOINC project aims at investigating the impact of socio-spatial outcomes of developmental processes to explore income inequalities at an intra-regional level. Special attention will be given on the cases of Athens and Thessaloniki.

Thirdly, GEOINC targets on studying the evolution of income inequality and polarization in Greece. Although inequality has received substantial attention in the literature, income polarization remains relatively unexplored. Recent studies focusing on Greece use information coming from the EU-SILC dataset and the Household Expenditure Surveys (HES). The GEOINC project aims to contribute to existing studies by using individual declared income data, which are more precise than small-sampled surveys data.

Finally, GEOINC focuses on investigating public policy interventions and assessment. Studies related to the geography of income inequality provide important information about specific areas and income groups that should be considered for designing social policy. Therefore, GEOINC project aims at leveraging all derived insights referring to the current distribution of income inequality, poverty and segregation across space, towards providing an evidence-based approach for policy recommendations

Expected results & Research Project Impact

The project is anticipated to enhance our knowledge and understanding regarding the geography of income and inequality in Greece. The primary aim of this analysis is to provide policymakers and researchers with new input that could be used as a baseline upon which well-targeted social policies could be designed. GEOINC will also cover, at least in part, the existing research gap on the investigation of regional and sub-regional income inequalities in Greece and to trigger a discussion on the enhancement of further research on this topic.

The overall structure of the project includes a set of closely related outputs and expected results, where each one of them captures a different aspect of the project objectives. First, we aim to provide a concrete state-of-the-art regarding methods and studies on income inequality. This includes a review of the literature on regional development studies, containing a collection of literature sources and data that have been used for empirical analyses. Second, expected results also include the measurement of the geography of income inequality in Greece. This consists of the investigation of the evolution of income inequality, as well as the spatial variations of income, not only at a national, but also at a sub-national and metropolitan level. Third, GEOINC expects to provide results related to the determinants of income inequality in Greece. It also focuses on revealing segregation and spatial polarization patterns in Greek cities with an emphasis on Athens. Finally, expected results also include policy recommendations referring to income inequality, income polarization, and the geography of the tax burden at sub-national level.

The impact of the project will be maximized by following a dissemination plan, considering the publication of scientific papers and participation in conferences as ways in which the generated knowledge can be distributed during and after the project lifetime.

The importance of this funding

The GEOINC project focuses on income inequality, which is one of the most important contemporary issues relevant to economic theory and public policy. At the same time, insights about inter- and intraregional inequalities are essential for society since they feed everyday discussions and public debates. GEOINC lies in the heart of this ongoing socio-economic debate and tries to provide relevant information for more informed, and therefore, efficient policy making processes. Including the spatial dimension on our analysis will progress efforts towards providing place-based insights that will enable policymakers to consider territorial specificities when designing social and economic policies. Hence, GEOINC places inclusive growth at the center of attention, instead of pure economic growth perspectives, which can be further empowered through the deeper understanding of the geography of income inequality



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