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Transition from education to employment:

A case study of graduates from faculties of Philosophy in Greece

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Abstract

The aim of this article is to analyze the transition from education to employment of graduates from schools of philosophy, 5 years after they leave the educational system. A data survey was conducted in the Centre of Planning and Economic Research of Greece-KEPE. Traditionally, the State was the main employer of these graduates and guaranteed them permanent and secure jobs in the public sector. However, nowadays, with the growth of the number of individuals with a university education and the restrictive economic and financial policies, the procedures for recruiting teachers and other staff in the public sector have become more and more selective. The female graduates from the schools of Philosophy so greatly outnumber the male graduates that mention is made of the 'feminization' or the domination of these schools by women. So we analyze demographic and educational characteristics, ways and length of time to find employment, career opportunities, job flexibility and the correspondence between education and employment. Furthermore an econometric analysis is developed in order to evaluate the impact of demographic, educational and job characteristics on the remunerations of young women and men separately.

Keywords

Transition, Education, Work, Job Mismatches, Earning.

1. Introduction

The aim of this article is to analyze the transition from education to employment of graduates from faculties of Philosophy in Greece, 5 years after leaving the educational system. It probes the characteristics of employment of these new entrants into the labour market (OECD 1999, 2000, 2009). Moreover this work is incorporated into the analysis of the mechanism of integration into the labour market of Higher Education graduates. In the developed countries, a transition period is acknowledged to exist, according to the field of study. The transition from higher education to work is a complex process. Often, before the acquisition of permanent, formal and satisfactory employment, the graduates may take on various jobs in succession which correspond more or less to the standard as well as the field of their studies. Moreover, graduates might go through numerous stages of employment. So the transition process has become longer and more complex. Therefore, the professional route or mobility of the first years of their career is analyzed through "longitudinal analysis", with retrospective questions concerning previous work relations (Teichler 1998, Shavit and Muller 1998, Ryan 2001, CEREQ[1] 2001, 2008). For this reason, a data survey was carried out at the Centre of Planning and Economic Research of Greece-KEPE (Athanassouli 2004, 2009, 2011a).

The choice of graduates from faculties of Philosophy is motivated by the fact that they are graduates from the so called "*professorship schools*" which used to be characterized by high levels of unemployment and feminization. Furthermore, traditionally, the public sector was the main employer of this category of graduates. But, with the growth in the number of individuals with a university education, the procedure for recruiting teachers and other staff in the public sector has become more and more selective. Moreover,

[1] Centre d'Etudes et de Recherche sur les Qualifications.

nowadays, as part of reforms aimed at reducing government spending, the number of jobs in the public sector needs to shrink even more (*The second Memorandum of Economic and Financial Policies for Greece, 9 Feb 2012*).

So a set of tools was developed in order to describe the routes taken by these young people when making the move from education to work, the length of time spent searching for employment, forms of employment, career opportunities as well as their earnings, *ceteris paribus* (Athanassouli 2009, 2011a).

This paper is set out in 5 sections. Section 2 immediately following this introduction (section 1) is on methodology. Section 3 analyses the demographic profile and employment characteristics of young graduates from faculties of Philosophy in Greece. Section 4 shows the results of the relationship between education and employment and also deals with earnings differentials. Finally, section 5 contains concluding remarks.

2. Methodology

A sample of 460 graduates was selected. To be precise, a survey questionnaire was administered to a sample of respondents as a self-administered questionnaire, in the form of a mail survey. Moreover, with a view to increasing the return rate, the method of collecting survey data was only completed after interviews had been conducted[2]. Interviewing was done over the telephone and the same questionnaires were completed by the interviewer. In other words, in the interviews, the questions were similar to those of the questionnaires**.** Initially, the questionnaires were sent to all the graduates of the

[2] Interview surveys typically attain higher response rates than do mail surveys.

1998-1999 academic years[3], from the National and Kapodistrian University of Athens, the University of Ioannina and the University of Crete. Finally, information was collected from 460 graduates, a number which corresponds to a response rate of 30% (Athanassouli 2009). The participation in the survey of the faculties of Philosophy in Greece is presented in Table 1:

Table 1: Graduates classified by faculties of Philosophy in Greece

Faculties of Philosophy in Greece	Graduates
Department of Philology	26.7%
Department of History and Archaeology	31.3%
Department of Philosophy, Education and Psychology	40.2%
Department of Philosophy and Social Studies	1.7%
Total	100.0%

Source: Centre of Planning and Economic Research, authors' calculations.

Therefore, the data used for studying the transition process of graduates from education to work, includes retrospective elements, since this kind of data permits patterns of transition from education to the labour market to emerge. So in this way, young people were studied over time until they obtained a stable and secure job, 5 years after their graduation from university. The same methodology was used for the graduates from the National Technical University of Athens (National Technical University of Athens

[3] 1998 was a significant date because the procedure for recruiting teachers and other staff in the public sector became more and more selective. To be more precise, from this date the procedure took the form of a competitive examination (For more information about higher education in Greece see Stamelos (ed.) et al. 2008, Kyriasis and Asderaki 2008).

2001, Athanassouli 2003, Grelon 1987, 2001) and for other graduates in Europe (CATAWE[4] project-European research on transitions, REFLEX[5], CHEERS[6]).

3. Demographic profile and employment characteristics of graduates from faculties of Philosophy

3.1. Demographic characteristics of graduates from faculties of Philosophy in Greece

The female graduates from the faculties of Philosophy outnumber the male graduates so much so that mention is made of the '*feminization'* or the domination of these universities by women (82.3% are females). The duration of studies does not exceed 5 years on average. Five years after graduation, 80.3% of the so called young 'philologists' have a job, 11.0% are doing private lessons, whereas 2.2% choose to pursue postgraduate studies. About 5.9% are unemployed. One third of the young graduates are married, while a further 18% have a child (Athanassouli 2009, 2011a).

3.2. Ways to find employment

In the international bibliography, job search strategies are divided into formal (examination, classified ads) and informal (family and professional connections) (Granovetter 1973, Degenne et al. 1991, Athanassouli 2011b). A range of informal mechanisms for professional integration seems to play a significant role in the search

[4] A Comparative Analysis of Transitions from Education to Work in Europe (CATEWE).
[5] REFLEX (Research into Employment and Professional Flexibility), carried out in 2005.
[6] CHEERS (Careers After Higher Education: A European Research Survey), carried out in 1999.

for their first job. So 54.0% of the young philologists found their first job through some informal mechanism, whereas the percentage goes down to 39.0% for finding their current main job (Table 2).

Table 2: Ways used by graduates from faculties of Philosophy in Greece to find first and current employment

Ways of finding employment	First employment	Current employment
Informal ways	*54.0%*	*39.0%*
Through friends and relatives	41.0%	28.5%
Through the university	5.1%	4.8%
Through professional connections	7.5%	5.9%
Formal ways	*46.0%*	*61.0%*
Through classified ads in the media or on the internet	19.3%	28.4%
With the help of the State employment service office (OAED)	8.5%	2.3%
By examination	1.9%	15.5%
By directly contacting employers	16.5%	14.6%
Total	100.0%	100.0%

Source: Centre of Planning and Economic Research, authors' calculations.

Moreover, the gender distinction evident in graduates' means of getting their current employment shows that more males (65.0%) than females (60.0%) use formal ways to gain employment. Furthermore, 6.5% of young men and 4.4% of young women have passed an examination in order to find their first job. The percentages are higher in the case of their current employment (men: 29.3% and women: 21.5%). These results highlight less competitive behavior in women as far as finding employment is

concerned. It appears that the performance of women decreases when they feel competition in the labour market (Antonovics, Arcidiacono and Walsh 2003).

3.3. Graduates' transition time from university to employment

Transition time, which is defined as the length of time between graduation and obtaining first employment by graduates, is a crucial index of the systems' preparedness to absorb graduates into the world of work. Similar research from the program CHEERS (Murdoch and Paul 2003) shows that mean transition time between graduation and employment in Europe is nearly 6 months. But the transition remains more difficult for graduates from countries in southern Europe than for those from countries in northern Europe (Nikolitsa 2007, Athanassouli 2011b). What about the graduates from faculties of Philosophy in Greece?

An analysis of the time that it takes to settle into work after education shows that the mean transition time is 9 months for first employment. The length of time spent searching for the current employment approaches one year and 9 months. With similar education in philosophical sciences, young women are more rapidly integrated into the labour market than young men. The mean transition time for women is 7 months while the mean transition time for young men is 1 year and 10 months.

It is also estimated that more than half of the graduates (66.0%) found their first job within a year, while 7% were already working before they had completed their studies. The main current employment was found within a year of graduating for 44% of the young adults from faculties of Philosophy (Table 3).

Table 3: Length of time spent searching for first and current employment by graduates from faculties of Philosophy in Greece

Length of time spent searching for employment	First employment	Current employment
Before graduation	11.0%	7.0%
During the first year after graduation	66.0%	44.0%
2 years after graduation	11.0%	16.0%
3 years after graduation	6.0%	13.0%
More than 3 years after graduation	6.0%	20.0%
Total	100.0%	100.0%

Source: Centre of Planning and Economic Research, authors' calculations.

4. Job stability, job mismatches and earnings of graduates from faculties of Philosophy in Greece

Five years after graduation, the majority of the respondents (80.3%) were employed while 5.9% were unemployed and 2.2% were pursuing their studies at post-graduate level. However, from those who are in employment, 31.3% have to face seasonal unemployment because they are mainly occupied in the area of education as teachers. Many of them are occupied as temporary teachers in primary and secondary education. So, during the summer months they remain unemployed.

It is true that the employment rate is high but other elements such as the job stability and the relationship between graduation and employment reveal transition outcomes

which reflect the characteristics of the transition process. For that reason, these elements are developed below.

4.1. Forms of employment of graduates

The forms of employment emphasize the dualism of the labour market, since the number of graduates in more flexible jobs remains quite high (Doeringer and Piore 1971, Dupuy et Larré 1998). On the contrary, only 13.6% of the young graduates from faculties of philosophy are hired by the public sector and 14.8% work to contract indefinitely (Table 4).

Table 4: Graduates from faculties of Philosophy in Greece classified by forms of employment

Forms of employment	First employment	Current employment
Public sector salaried	0.7%	13.6%
No fixed term contract	15.2%	14.8%
Fixed term contract	38.7%	21.4%
Self-employed	0.7%	3.8%
Hourly paid work	27.9%	34.3%
Private lessons	10.0%	12.1%
Job acquired through OAED programs (e.g. Stage)	5.6%	-
Voluntary work	1.1%	-
Total	100.0%	100.0%

Source: Centre of Planning and Economic Research, authors' calculations.

Additionally, examining the career entry patterns of these young people, a remarkable increase in paid workers in the public sector is observed from 0.7% for the first job to 13.6% for the current job.

4.2. Job mismatches

The match between a university degree and the skills required for certain jobs is defined as the appropriateness of the graduates' jobs to their level of education and relevance to courses taken. This method reveals the relationship between graduation and occupation (GREEK STEP-92 - ISCO88) and it aims to be more objective. A job mismatch is defined as a discrepancy between the current occupation and the original field and level of education.

Concerning the relationship between the education and employment of the young philologists, three distinct categories were noticeable. The first category includes 72.4% of new graduates whose jobs correspond to their level of education and are relevant to the course of study (Table 5). In other words, in this category, graduates have found jobs matching their level of education and the courses they took at university. In the second professional category the phenomenon of over-education (10.0%) is observed, as it includes those who work as clerks and are employed mainly in secretarial or other miscellaneous jobs (Pochic 2001, Duru-Bellat 2006). So, the level of education and skills acquired do not match the job held. Finally, a third category is characterized by the phenomenon of employment-out-of-field (17.6%), that is, their field of study is not directly relevant to their professional activity.

Table 5: Graduates from faculties of Philosophy in Greece classified by occupational status (GREEK STEP-92) and gender

Job occupation of graduates from faculties of philosophy	Gender (%)		Total
	Males	Females	
Jobs that matched their educational background - category 1			
Teachers in tertiary education and associates	8.1%	1.2%	2.4%
Teachers in secondary education	13.5%	19.1%	18.1%
Teachers in primary education and other teachers	4.1%	4.0%	4.0%
Teachers in private institutions such as 'Frontistiria[1]'	13.5%	26.6%	24.3%
Teachers-private lessons	12.2%	12.1%	12.1%
Historian-archaeologists, linguists and authors	12.2%	11.3%	11.4%
Total category 1	*63.6%*	*74.2%*	*72.4%*
Employment-out-of-field - category 2			
Executives in economics-management	16.2%	11.0%	11.9%
Executives in human resources	6.8%	5.5%	5.7%
Total category 2	*23.0%*	*16.5%*	*17.6%*
Job mismatch and over-education - category 3			
Secretaries, clerks and others	13.5%	9.2%	10.0%
Total	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Source: Centre of Planning and Economic Research, authors' calculations.
[1] see Panayotopoulos (2000)

Consequently, the research reveals that beyond the conventional education area, there are other fields where the scientific background which was gained during the period of studies constituted a remarkable advantage in getting a job, compared with those who have a lower educational background. Employment-out-of-field can be found in the fields of communication, advertising, marketing, as well as in the area of human

resources, in the broader sector of health and psychology. For these jobs, the initial education is a 'signal' of its capacity to equip individuals to learn and adapt on a lifelong basis (Spence 1973, Héraud, Richardot et Stoeffler-Kern 2003, Calmand et al. 2009, Bouffartigue et Grelon 2004).

4.3. Earnings

The earnings of the graduates play a considerable role in the sense that they constitute the outcomes of the transition from higher education to employment (OECD 2000). The analysis of remunerations determines the conditions under which entry into the job market takes place.

An econometric analysis of the total net income for 2003 is carried out so that the real income disparities will emerge, *all other things being equal*. From a methodological point of view, in comparison to previous research which took place in Greece, beyond the descriptive and economic analysis of the data, in this particular survey an "explanatory" element was added, with the application of the econometric model of the analysis of remunerations. The technique of analysis of variance (ANOVA) is elaborated[7] (CNISF[8] 2003, 2008, Aeberhardt et Henriquez 2005, Le Pellec et Roux 2001), because of the presence of categorical data. The model has the advantage of explaining the real income disparities and not only describing them.

Paradoxically, in various models tested the gender variable has no statistically significant effect on earnings. This result is somewhat surprising given the strength of

[7] It corresponds to a regression analysis of earnings with dummies for qualitative data.

[8] Centre National des Ingénieurs et des Scientifiques de France.

previous results documenting the effect of gender on wages (Mincer 1974, Meurs et Ponthieux 2006, Perivier 2007, Cholezas 2010). It is generally reported that male workers earn on average more than female workers. But nowadays, with the increased participation of women in the labour market in relation to the highest level of education, sex-based earnings gaps have declined in the general population (International Labour Office 2009). The results of Noonan, Corcoran and Courant (2005) from a survey of University of Michigan Law School graduates, show that in the first years of the career, there are no sex differences in pay. They start out at roughly equal salaries. But, 15 years after graduation women earn only 61-63% as much as men. This is related to the care of children and family.

So an alternative explanation may be the young age of graduates from schools of Philosophy. They were about 29 years old on average when the survey was held. For that reason, two separate models by sex are estimated in order to find which variables have an impact on the remuneration of women and men. So, for a first model 1, the dependent variable is net annual earnings (€) in 2003. The explanatory variables used are related to the job characteristics such as occupational status, working hours per week, type of social security system[9], and work experience. Others concern the educational performance such as educational degree and language ability (knowledge of a foreign language, which is English for the majority of graduates), and marital status. Table 6 shows the results of the regression model 1 predicting annual earnings of young women.

[9] There are different types of social security in Greece, as in many countries in southern Europe. They are related to job status (self employed or salaried, employed in the public or private sector) (Athanassiou, Zervou and Kotsi 2009).

Table 6: Results of the estimations of variance analysis model 1 predicting annual earnings of young female graduates from faculties of Philosophy in Greece, 5 years after graduation

Dependent variable of model 1: net annual earnings (€) in 2003

Parameters	Number of cases (n)	Coefficients (B)	t-statistic	p-value (Sig.)	95% Confidence Interval	
					Lower bound	Upper bound
Intercept		12128.7	11.594	0.000	10066.4	14190.9
Current occupation						
Historian- archaeologists, linguists and authors	19	2093.8	2.053	0.041	83.3	4104.4
Secretaries, clerks and others	23	743.4	0.827	0.409	-1028.9	2515.7
Executives in economics-management and human resources	44	2219.9	2.928	0.004	725.1	3714.7
Teachers	137	*Ref*.	.	.	.	.
Weekly working hours						
Less than 18 hours weekly	65	-1584.9	-2.482	0.014	-2843.8	-326.0
More than 18 hours weekly	158	*Ref*.	.	.	.	.
Type of social security						
Social security system for salaried workers	162	-2170.3	-2.475	0.014	-3898.9	-441.8
Social security-system for the self-employed	15	-650.9	-0.535	0.593	-3049.7	1747.7
Without social security, or covered by spousal social security	11	-3314.9	-2.332	0.021	-6117.2	-512.7
Social security system for salaried employees in the banking or juridical branch	12	-521.8	-0.380	0.705	-3231.8	2188.2
Public sector social security system	23	*Ref*.	.	.	.	.
Work experience in the current job						
Up to 3 years	67	-2154.6	-3.759	0.000	-3284.5	-1024.7
Over 4 years	156	*Ref*.	.	.	.	.
Level of education						
Post-graduate (Master and /or PhD)	53	1342.5	2.138	0.034	104.4	2580.7
Graduate	170	*Ref*.	.	.	.	.
Knowledge of a foreign language *(English for the vast majority)*						
None	118	-1029.9	-1.587	0.114	-2309.0	249.1
Little	43	-1950.7	-2.613	0.010	-3422.4	-478.9
Very good	62	*Ref*.	.	.	.	.
Marital status						
Single young woman	144	-1183.1	-2278	0.024	-2207.2	-159.1
Married young woman	79	*Ref*.	.	.	.	.

Source: Centre of Planning and Economic Research, authors' calculations.

Results show that a young female graduate from faculties of Philosophy in Greece, who belongs to the reference group, earns **12129 €.** The reference group has the characteristics of the reference category. This amount corresponds to the intercept in Table 6. It gives the remuneration of reference used to estimate the differentials due to the characteristics of the graduate, *ceteris paribus*. The characteristics of the reference group are those of a young married woman, who is a teacher in the secondary education system, and affiliated to the public sector social security system with 4 or more years of experience or seniority in the current job, and working more than 18 hours weekly. Furthermore, she has only a graduate diploma and she has good knowledge of a foreign language, which is English.

Most previous tests show that married men may adopt more dynamic behavior towards work than single men, and married women less dynamic behavior towards work than single women, as a result of marital status (Marry 2004). However, in the case of young female graduates from faculties of Philosophy in Greece, effects of marital status are high and statistically significant in the regression. In other words, single women earn 1183 € less than married women while the opposite had been anticipated (Table 6).

As expected, earnings are higher the more hours one works and the greater the number of years of work experience or seniority one has in the same firm or organization. In particular, women who work less than 18 hours weekly earn less (-1585 €) and it is statistically significant. The acquisition of human capital *via* the number of years of work experience one has in the same firm or organization also has a significant effect on earnings (+2155 € for those who have worked for more than 3 years in the same organization).

In addition, the acquisition of human capital is treated *via* the level of education (graduate and post-graduate) and the foreign language. The findings from the study confirm the positive returns for higher levels of educational attainment. Earnings differentials between graduates and post-graduates exist and are statistically significant. Post-graduates earn 1343 € more than the others. In addition, young female graduates with a very good knowledge of English are also better paid than the others.

As far as current occupation is concerned, it is worth noting that young women who gain employment out-of-the-field of their basic studies or who are over-educated earn more than teachers in the secondary education system, holding all other variables constant. To be precise, young women working in areas of economics and management earn 2220 € more than teachers (Table 6). The same holds true for over-qualified respondents, who earn 743 € more. It is also the case for graduates from faculties of History and Archaeology, who earn 2094 € more than female teachers.

In addition, the explanatory variable on the type of social security system the young women contribute to, shows that those who are not affiliated to the public sector social security system earn less. For instance, young women who have social security for salaried workers earn 2170 € less than those who have public sector social security, *ceteris paribus* (Table 6). This result confirms that the public sector is more 'generous'.

In what follows, earnings regressions are estimated only for men and the estimates of equation are presented in Table 7.

Table 7: Results of the estimations of variance analysis model 2 predicting annual earnings of young male graduates from faculties of Philosophy in Greece, 5 years after graduation.

Dependent variable of model 2: net annual earnings (€) in 2003 (after tax)

Parameters	Number of cases (n)	Coefficients (B)	t-statistic	p-value (Sig.)	95% Confidence Interval	
					Lower bound	Upper bound
Intercept		15959.0	11.322	0.000	13133.1	18784.9
Weekly working hours						
Less than 18 hours weekly	9	-5562.9	-4.116	0.000	-8272.6	-2.853.3
More than 18 hours weekly	50	*Ref*.	.	.	.	.
Social security system						
Non public sector social security system	48	-3377.8	-2.720	0.009	-5867.7	-887.9
Public sector social security system	11	*Ref.*	.	.	.	.
Level of education						
Post-graduate (Master and /or PhD)	23	-2268.2	-2.275	0.027	-4267.4	-269.0
Graduate	36	*Ref.*	.	.	.	.
Marital status						
Single young man	44	-2711.9	-2.462	0.017	-4920.3	-503.4
Married young man	15	*Ref.*	.	.	.	.

Source: Centre of Planning and Economic Research, authors' calculations.

So for a second model the dependent variable is annual earnings (€) in 2003 and the explanatory variables used to determine differences in earnings of young male graduates from faculties of Philosophy, are: weekly working hours, type of social security, educational degree and marital status.

The findings from the study show that a young man, who belongs to the reference group earns **15959 €**. The reference group has the characteristics of the reference category. This amount corresponds to the intercept in Table 7. It gives the remuneration of reference used to estimate the differentials due to the characteristics of the graduate, *ceteris paribus*. The characteristics of the reference group are those of a young married

man, a graduate from faculties of Philosophy in Greece, working in the public sector (public sector social security), more than 18 hours weekly.

Marriage has a positive and significant effect on the earnings of young male graduates from faculties of Philosophy in Greece. More precisely, those who are not married earn 2712 € less than those who are married. This confirms the dynamic behavior of married men also found in other studies (Marry 2004).

As expected, earnings are higher the more hours one works. In particular, men who work for less than 18 hours a week earn less (-5563 €) and the effect is statistically significant.

Contrary to the traditional human capital model (Becker 1964, Mincer 1974), the Becker-Mincer-type model, a higher degree of education has no positive effects on earnings. Moreover post-graduates earn 2268 € less than the graduates. Two main explanations can be explored as to why the differentials appear. Firstly, the young men are numerically more likely than young women to pursue their studies with a Master's degree or a PhD and secondly they have to complete their military service[10]. Together, these two factors delay their entrance into the labour market and the acquisition of the necessary work experience.

5. Conclusion

This article presents elements of the transition to work of young graduates from the faculties of Philosophy in Greece, 5 years after graduation. The transition from

[10] Military service was obligatory for men in Greece, for a minimum of 12 months, during the period of the survey.

graduation to working life is a process and is characterized as a critical phase in the lives of young people.

Graduates from faculties of Philosophy constitute a female dominated field of the so called "*professorship schools*". It is worth noting that the unemployment rate is limited to 5.9%, 5 years after graduation and about 80% of graduates have found employment. Moreover, the job search methods, and the length of time needed to access the labour market are analyzed. The results reveal the importance of informal strategies developed by 54% of graduates in order to find their first job. The percentage is reduced in the case of the current job (39%). The mean transition time is 9 months and it is higher for men than for women. It is worth noting that over 70% of the graduates are in jobs that match their level and field of education. They have found employment closely linked to their level of education. This is indicative of the quality of the programs run by the different departments in the faculties of Philosophy in Greece. For other graduates, it is worth mentioning that employment-out-of field remains steady in the area of human resources and economics-management, while the phenomenon of over-education is substantially limited. In this way, the study highlights the employer recruitment strategies for these graduates and the rise in the qualification requirements. However, the faculty needs to intensify some elements of the programs and of its courses in order to improve the match between education and employment.

Another main section focuses on differences in starting wages paid to young graduates from schools of Philosophy in Greece. Results of the regression model predicting annual earnings show that independent variables such as demographics, family characteristics, educational attainment, hours of work, experience and job setting have significant effects on earnings. Traditionally, it is suggested that there is discrimination

by sex because the labour market treats men and women differently. Paradoxically, contrary to what is commonly found, effects of gender are insignificant in all regressions. One explanation of this finding may be the young age of graduates. They were on average 29 years of age when the survey was held. So, two separate models by sex are estimated. Firstly, differences in starting wages paid to female graduates are estimated. Marriage has a statistically significant positive effect on women's earnings. This result may seem unusual for women. A common presumption is that married women may adopt a less ambitious attitude towards work than single women. Earnings are higher the more hours one works and the more years of work experience one has in the current job. As expected, it is widely recognized that the effects of the acquisition of a post-graduate degree and of the good command of a foreign language appear to be statistically significant. These results confirm the human capital theory. In addition, the characteristics of employment which are referred to in the public sector social security system as well as the occupation are significant. For instance, women working as executives in economics-management and human resources earn more than teachers, once other characteristics have been controlled for. Secondly, in the wage equation of young men, working hours and public sector social security system appear to enter significantly, holding all other variables constant. Moreover, married men are paid more than single men. This finding is in agreement with a more ambitious attitude of married men towards work. Finally, we control for the educational performance of young men by distinguishing those who are only graduates from those who are post-graduates. Contrary to a common presumption, a higher level of education has no positive effects on men's starting wages. Several explanations can be explored as to why this might be. Firstly, the number of young men continuing their studies is higher relative to young

women and they have to complete their military service. Together, these two factors delay the young men's entry into the labour market and may explain this finding.

The extension of the surveyed population in other categories of jobs of relevant scientific standards will increase the comparability of the data and the results. Moreover, in order to carry out a "longitudinal analysis", the periodicity of the surveys, every 2 or 3 years, is considered imperative so that a panel with data could be created which will enable the observation of the evolution of jobs in the future. The continuous provision of information will facilitate the adjustments of the needs of education and training in the changing conditions of the job market thus contributing considerably to a better coupling between supply and demand. The conclusions are widely useful in the procedure assessment framework in tertiary education[11] (Kladis 2003). Systematic scientific updating is considered necessary nowadays because of the internationalization of education which triggers the liberation of the market (Stamelos (ed.) et al. 2008); it facilitates the mobility of the labour force, improves competitiveness and lessens the danger of marginalization in a united Europe of skills and knowledge.

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