

Female Unemployment in Greece, in times of crisis - The case of Rhodes and the subsidised placement schemes for unemployed women

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Abstract

In the 'Post-industrial Societies' or 'Knowledge Economies' we supposedly live in, the new labour-market requirements demand more flexible employment policies, which could unlock the knowledge economy's enormous potential, especially for women who, due to their multiple and often contradicting social roles, might be more easily attracted by less 'typical' types of work (part-time, seasonal, on-demand, fixed-term etc.). The Greek government has so far responded to those 'demands' by setting up various training programmes and subsidized placement schemes for unemployed women, usually funded by EU money (mainly through the 'European Social Fund'). This paper is a case-study based on the experiences of unemployed women in the island of Rhodes (Greece) who took part in one of the subsidized placement schemes organized by the Greek (State) Manpower Employment Organisation (OAED). The participating women were interviewed in order to describe their strategies on the way to achieve a work-family balance, evaluate their experiences from the programme and express their views on the type of employment they would prefer if they had choice. The findings of the study raise important issues concerning strategies for the promotion of the so-called 'flexicurity' in the labour-market, especially in the light of the recent economic crisis and the labour-reform measures taken at national (Greece) and international level (European Union).