

**International migration and work flexibility as
determinants of labour productivity in hotels**

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Abstract

The existence of a productivity gap between national economies has long been a major concern for economists and policy makers. More recently, it has been demonstrated that a significant part of this productivity gap is due to heterogeneity (at the levels of sectors and firms) and to the specific types of measures of productivity that are utilised. However, there is persistent international evidence that productivity levels in hospitality and tourism are consistently lower than national productivity, whatever measures are employed. This paper addresses the sources of heterogeneity *within* the sector, at both the establishment and the departmental level, and on differences between physical and financial measures of productivity. It also addresses the extent to which labour productivity differences can be explained in terms of work flexibility practices, and the employment of international migrant workers, and the interaction between these. Finally, the research will address the dynamic nature of productivity, considering short and medium term variations over the course of the 2008+ crisis, and the extent to which these are driven by labour hoarding versus differential retention of more productive workers. The overview of theoretical issues, is followed by an outline of the research team's privileged access to data on an hourly basis for workers in 80+ hotels in the UK and Netherlands over a 7 year period.

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