

PhD Position in Economics

Paris Sorbonne University | Department of Economics & Management
France

The Department of Economics, Paris Sorbonne University is recruiting a motivated student to start in its doctoral program leading to a PhD in Economics.

You will join a dynamic and internationally oriented research environment currently counting 60 permanent faculty members organized in four active research groups : Applied Macroeconomics & Finance / Finance, Enterprise, Management and the Creative Economy / Health Economics & Migration / Dynamics of Capitalism and post-Keynesian Analysis.

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RESPONSIBILITIES

The program in economics is an individualized PhD training that usually consists of three years of full-time study. It eventually leads to a PhD degree and prepares the student for an academic career or a career as a researcher in a policy institution.

PROFILE

This vacancy targets students that successfully completed a research master in economics or in a closely related field (e.g. finance, econometrics,...) by September 2021. The selected candidate will immediately start in the doctoral program.

Paris Sorbonne University seeks to foster an environment where all talents can flourish, regardless of gender, age, cultural background, nationality or impairments.

RESEARCH STATEMENT

See Annex

OFFER

The successful applicants will be offered a fully-funded place in the doctoral program. The academic year starts on September 1, 2021, but there is some flexibility to start later if that is preferable.

The paid position is for up to 3 years, with an annual review of research progress and performance. As doctoral student, you will receive a stipend of minimum € 1,769 euros per month with health insurance. Additional tasks (e.g. tutorials) carried out under the contract give rise to additional monthly remuneration calculated on the basis of the number of hours worked.

Over these three years, you will conduct independent research under the supervision of Pr. Dr. Beatrice Dumont.

APPLICATION AND CONTACT DETAILS

You can apply for this job no later than May 15, 2021

Your application package should contain the following documents:

- Curriculum vitae
- Transcript of all university grades
- (optional) Reference letters

If you have questions regarding the application or about the PhD position itself, please contact Pr. Dr. Beatrice Dumont (beatrice.dumont@univ-paris13.fr).

Shortlisted candidates will be notified on June 2, 2021.

The interviews will take place on June 4 and July 1, 2021 (to be confirmed).

ANNEX :

****PhD on THE EFFECTIVENESS OF DAMAGE COMPENSATION IN CLASS ACTIONS****

CONTEXT

One of the paradoxes of the field of consumer law is that although damages are of a mass nature, since they are repeated identically for all consumers placed in the same situation and originate from the same breach of duty by professionals, they are rarely compensated in the absence of a collective method of dispute resolution. Indeed, although each injured consumer is entitled to take legal action to obtain compensation for his or her loss, he or she is dissuaded from acting because the individual gain expected in the future is small compared to the high costs of an often lengthy procedure with uncertain results.

The recent development of the right of victims to obtain compensation for damage caused by a breach of duty by a company, recently enshrined by the Court of Justice of the EU, is intended to remedy this shortcoming in consumer protection (EC, 2013). Indeed, the introduction in Europe of a group action mechanism, better known in the United States under the name of class action, now allows a group of consumers to come together, under the leadership of an approved association, to take legal action against a company or a professional who has not respected its legal or contractual obligations (Favre, 2014). This procedure, which may cover very different realities, corresponds to a civil procedure action allowing one or more claimants to take legal action on behalf of a category of people (class or group). to obtain compensation for everyday economic damage (abusive invoicing, anti-competitive practices, investment and securities fraud, etc.). It allows for a pooling of resources and an economy of procedural costs, which makes it attractive when individual actions are not (Claudel, 2014). Beyond the protection of victims, the facilitation of class action is supposed to strengthen public action by dissuading companies from violating their obligations (Priest, 2000).

However, such a procedure is not without raising numerous concerns, fuelled by the example of the abuses to which the American or Australian class action model gives rise, namely the appearance of litigation funders, with a justice for profit approach

that leads them to adopt a forum shopping strategy, such that certain unfunded disputes cannot take place and/or unfounded disputes are funded (Ulen, 2012). Two legitimate concerns are thus confronting each other: on the one hand, the fear of seeing collective action drifts and their negative impact on companies and, more generally, on the economy. On the other hand, there is the desire to provide consumers with a reparation to which he or she is entitled and which he or she is in fact deprived of.

OBJECTIVES

The objective of the thesis is to analyse the effectiveness of group action procedures, but also to determine how to improve the effectiveness of reparation, both in terms of procedure and the determination and evaluation of the damage. More specifically, the aim is to determine whether these group actions can complement public action by strengthening the dissuasive power of consumer and competition law or whether, or on the contrary, are likely to be used for opportunistic and/or rent-seeking purposes. What factors are likely to minimise the social and private costs of legal disputes (cost allocation rules, remuneration methods of intermediaries, intervention of insurance companies, risk aversion of the parties, etc.). Finally, this thesis proposes the first economic analysis of the consequences of litigation funding on litigants' incentives to sue and on the choice of litigation outcome.

THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

This doctoral work will include a theoretical and an empirical component. It will be based on work in the economic analysis of law (Posner, 1992 and 2001) and, more specifically, on the economic analysis of the resolution of legal disputes by highlighting the different hypotheses of strategic behaviour of litigants (Cooter & Rubinfeld, 1993) and on the literature on the compensation of damage. In the extension of this work, the literature of incentive theory, information economics or game theory will be mobilized.

WORK PLAN

The doctoral work will be broken down into several stages combining an empirical approach and formalised theoretical analysis.

1/ Survey and analysis of group action models in the European Union, the United States and Australia

In this first stage, the main features of the group action procedure both in the EU, the United States and Australia will be presented through the prism of economic theory. More specifically, this step will be based on a survey and critical analysis of the economic literature on litigation. The actual objective will be to examine the effects of class actions on (i)- how class action can serve efficiency and collective welfare; (ii)- to provide the analytical framework for representing the judiciary and studying its functioning, thus determining under what conditions and in which way class action promotes social welfare.

2/ Creation of an original database

This stage, concomitant to stage 1, will aim to build an original database on class actions. This implies the collection on Internet of class action cases dealt with by courts in Europe, their categorisation but also the coding of the disputes in order to be able to move on to an econometric analysis in stage 3. The analysis will focus more particularly on securities class actions.

3/ Modelling and econometric analysis

The modelling will aim in particular to test the hypothesis that meritless class actions lead to considerable economic losses for innovative companies. It will also aim to analyse the nature of strategic behaviour at work during the course and outcome of class actions (Landes, 1971).

This will involve developing an original micro-econometric model of the demand for justice of the share type (OLS regressions on logistic transformation or beta regression according to the importance of shares at zero or 1) by highlighting the factors determining the number of conflicts (infringements, preventive behaviours, costs of the lawsuit, regulation) as well as the number of class actions (costs, delays

in access to the lawsuit, information asymmetries, attitude of the parties to the risk). Taking into account the possibility of a selection bias, the aim will be to understand the levels and distribution of compensation for damages to which they give rise. In particular, it will be necessary to test econometrically the validity, and if necessary the determinants, of possible rent seeking behaviour on the part of litigation funders, namely the fact that the latter may abuse the class action system by bringing unfounded lawsuits.

4/ Analysis of the results and recommendations

In this last step, recommendations on judicial policies are expected, including how design modifications could limit or, on the contrary, favour rent-seeking behaviour vs. the efficiency of the class action mechanism.

References

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