

CALL FOR PAPERS

An International Conference Organized by
Cornell University/International Policy Center (Ford School, Michigan)

Enforcement, Evasion and Informality: Theory and Practice

Ann Arbor, June 4-6, 2010

Regulations and laws governing economic activity are pervasive in transition and developing countries, but there is widespread concern that these regulations are not enforced fully. Regulations include registration for taxes, labor regulations such as minimum wages, financial regulations and environmental regulations. The issue of violation and enforcement is central to policy debates. On the one hand there are calls for stricter enforcement to achieve the objectives of the regulation; on the other, violations are seen as evidence of the inappropriateness of the regulation in the first place. Further, the informal sector is often seen essentially as a collection of activities that are either avoiding or evading laws and regulations.

Yet it would be fair to say that the enforcement of regulations and laws in developing and transition economies is under-researched:

- (i) There is insufficient quantitative documentation of violation and non-compliance of different types of regulations.
- (ii) We do not fully understand, theoretically and empirically, what factors explain the variations in violation across time and space, in the specific context of transition and developing countries.
- (iii) The government's objectives, the technologies and institutions of enforcement, punishment design, and in particular credibility issues all need to be analyzed in depth.
- (iv) The relationship between the nature and intensity of enforcement, and the nature and extent of "informality", needs to be understood.

With this background, Cornell University and the International Policy Center at the Gerard R. Ford School of Public Policy of the University of Michigan are hosting a major international conference – "Enforcement, Evasion and Informality: Theory and Practice" – June 4-6, 2010, at the Ford School in Ann Arbor, Michigan. The conference organizers are Ravi Kanbur, Cornell University, and Jan Svejnar, University of Michigan.

The conference will discuss theoretical, empirical and policy papers. The suggested topics include, but are not limited to, the issues (i)-(iv) highlighted above.

The organizers invite the submission of completed papers or substantive abstracts (3-5 pages) by December 1, 2009. Submissions should be sent electronically to Ravi Kanbur at sk145@cornell.edu Decisions will be communicated by January 15, 2010.

Participants who can use their own funds to cover part or all of the cost of their participation are requested to do so. The conference will provide accommodation and economy class travel for one presenter per paper accepted for those who do not have funding. Please indicate with your submission what funding you need.

It is the organizers' intention to publish a high quality publication—a special issue of a journal or an academic press volume—based on papers selected from the conference. Those authors who wish to have their papers considered for publication will be invited after the conference to submit their paper for refereeing if they wish to do so.