



1.1.024 - Prospects for Utilising Gender-atypical Vocational Training – A Study on the Persistence of Gender Segregation in the Labour Market

Research project: Project description

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III/2024 – III/2026

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In Germany, educational choices and the labour market are strongly gender-segregated. Occupational gender segregation, i.e. the uneven distribution of women and men in different occupations, significantly contributes to the reproduction of inequality and disadvantage. Female-dominated occupations are often associated with lower incomes, less professional prestige and limited career development opportunities. Meanwhile, occupations mostly carried out by men are more likely to offer poorer work-life balance prospects.

A gender-atypical educational choice has the potential to reduce gender-specific inequalities. However, this only applies if the educational choice leads to a career in that field. Existing research shows that people who are formally trained in professions where their gender is numerically underrepresented, tend to have a worse experience in the labour market, including more difficulty finding a related job, lower retention rates and fewer career development opportunities. To gain insight into the reasons behind the difficult transitions into the labour market experienced by those who trained in a gender-atypical occupation, our study examines the further employment trajectories of men and women with a gender-atypical vocational education and training (VET). We focus on the career entry phase of individuals with gender-atypical VET, and on the reasons why men and women leave their occupations during their careers.

We use a mixed-methods approach incorporating NEPS data alongside qualitative interviews. The interviews focus on men in care and women in STEM and trade occupations. Our theoretical framework encompasses institutional, social, and personal factors when analysing career entry, development, and exit.