



The debate surrounding the further development of occupational tasks and requirements, - which therefore also centres on the aims, contents and forms of vocational education and training, can be mapped on the basis of two perspectives. One of these focuses on the rising requirements made of the theoretical knowledge of workers, whilst the other emphasises occupational experience for the overcoming of demands in the workplace.

In international comparative terms, data relating to occupational tasks has primarily been analysed and discussed with regard to its general (not occupationally specific) development, technical substitutability and remuneration. The conclusions drawn from this frequently correspond with the first perspective stated – the requirements with regard to theoretical knowledge and increasing, and this is something to which vocational education and training policy will need to adjust.

A data-based analysis of task requirements between countries and *within occupations* has not yet been presented, although there is a series of empirical indications that jobs within a (nominal employment) occupation and their associated requirements differ between countries. This project aims to map and investigate this hypothesis of heterogeneity of occupational requirements (which are usually measured as specialist and non-specialist requirements) in the same occupations between different countries. The objective is to accord particular consideration to the significance of work experience and learning in the workplace.

The initial aim is to enter into cooperation with researchers from various countries to investigate the extent to which this is facilitated by existing international records (PIACC, European Working Conditions Survey etc.) and national datasets (such as the Employee Survey and questionnaires conducted in selected federal states and regions).

The second stage of the project will involve looking at how far the data is able to explain the differences which have been identified. Main emphases will be placed on an analysis of training programmes and qualifications and on the interplay between the biographical characteristics of employees and company factors.

The intention is that the results of the investigation will enrich debate within international vocational education and training research (with regard to aspects such as curricular issues and “job design”) as well as helping to inform both the VET policy pursued by international organisations and international consultancy and guidance (e.g. ESCO, bilateral cooperation agreements etc.).