

Research Projekt 2.1.313

Bachelor's degrees in competition with initial and further vocational education and training certificates? An analysis of company preferences

Key facts in brief

Tobias Maier

Prof. Dr. Robert Helmrich

Betül Güntürk-Kuhl

Alexandra Mergener

I/2016 – I/2019

Bundesinstitut für
Berufsbildung
Robert-Schuman-Platz 3
53175 Bonn

Telefon: 0228 / 107 – 2043
E-Mail: tobias.maier@bibb.de

www.bibb.de

Bonn, January 2016

About 16 years after the Bologna Reform came into force, bachelor graduates have arrived on the labour market. At the same time more and more young people are flocking to the universities and technical colleges. The increased supply of academics and the two-tier system of higher education are changing the structure of the supply of workers entering the labour market and thereby provoke the companies to deviate from their recruitment preferences when hiring new staff. Against that background, the research project focuses on the analysis of company preferences when hiring new (higher-ranking) skilled workers in occupations in which, due to the knowledge imparted, persons with a variety of formal qualification levels would be suitable. The key question is to what extent bachelor graduates, from the point of view of the companies, constitute an option for substituting workers with initial or further vocational education and training certificates.

The project pursues this leading question using two different methodological approaches. The first step will be a screening of the Federal Employment Agency's job advertisement pool for bachelor graduates meeting the required qualification level. The corresponding occupations/job titles listed in the job offers will then be examined with respect to the activities, required skills laid down and possible alternative levels of training named therein and compared with the activity and requirement profiles listed for comparable jobs where not bachelor graduates but graduates of initial or further vocational education and training are sought after. This approach allows us to generate job-specific and qualification-specific requirement profiles from the enterprise's point of view which clarify the differences between the perceived competences of persons with bachelor's degrees or initial or further training certificates.

In the second step the current and also future recruitment behaviour of companies will be analysed by means of a company survey. In this survey, descriptions (vignettes) of possible recruiting situations will be submitted to personnel decision-makers for assessment. By experimentally varying certain description elements (such as the certificate obtained: bachelor's degree vs. initial vocational education and training vs. further training certificate) in the submitted vignettes, those characteristic features can be filtered out that are relevant to a hiring decision in a personnel recruitment situation.

The research project broadens the discussion about displacement processes in the labour market by adding a quantitative inter-occupational study on the company preferences regarding formal vocational certificates when performing external recruitment.