

Research Projekt 4.1.303

Typical education histories and career paths in selected commercial occupations – competition and complementarity between vocationally and academically qualified persons

Key facts in brief

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The relationship between vocational certificates and higher education certificates – in particular with regard to their usability on the job market – has been discussed in the course of the higher education structural reform and in the context of the equivalence of higher education and vocational qualifications as stipulated in the German Qualifications Framework. Competition between vocational and higher education qualifications and substitution tendencies have been assumed to exist. Competitive situations between initial and continuing education and training certificates and bachelor's and master's degrees can occur in the employment system in particular when there are similarities with regard to the demands on the activities to be performed. At the same time, complementary qualification profiles can be observed where companies tend to differentiate into different tasks and areas of work accordingly. Surveys have shown that there are differences between the industry sectors and that the company-internal personnel structure and the training activity of the companies influence the competitive relationships.

This project aims to trace typical qualification sequences and career paths in selected industry sectors (commerce, banking, logistics, tourism) and identify competition situations with academic education (bachelor's and master's degrees). The usability on the job market (for example, employment status, position, income) of selected qualifications will be evaluated in order to develop ideas for the future structure of vocational education and training programmes. To answer these questions, corresponding vocational and academic qualifications will be examined by means of document analysis under consideration of the classifications of the German Qualifications Framework. An analysis of job offers in the media with regard to the respective company positions and activities will be carried out as well. In addition, the recruitment strategies of the enterprises in the above industry sectors and the criteria relevant to them will be examined more closely by means of case studies and a company survey. Finally there will be a follow-up survey to the 2017 BIBB/BAuA Employment Survey of the Working Population on Qualification and Working Conditions in Germany which is expected to deliver insights into the usability of vocational and academic qualifications on the job market, in particular from the individual point of view.