

## **The effects of higher education programme characteristics on allocation and performance of the graduates: A European view**

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### Abstract:

The paper provides new insight into the role of the educational programme in allocation and performance during the transition from education to the labor market. We investigate the significance of certain characteristics of the higher education programs in European countries for an efficient transition from education to work. Four educational programme characteristics are discerned in the analyses: (1) The generic versus discipline-specific character of the competencies generated by the curriculum; (2) the level of standardization of the generated competencies; (3) the extent by which working and learning activities are combined and (4) the internationalisation of the educational programme. Using a unique data set on the labor market situation of graduates in nine European countries, we will analyse the effects of competencies acquired in higher education and the effects of the educational programme characteristics on allocation and performance in the labor market. In the analyses the labor market will be differentiated by an own discipline-specific domain of occupations, a domain requiring the discipline-specific competencies of another educational programme and a generic competencies domain.

With respect to the allocation outcome, the results reveal in particular the importance of the competencies orientation of the educational programme. Graduates from discipline-specific oriented programs have an increased probability of finding an occupation inside the own discipline-specific competencies domain whereas graduates from generic competencies oriented programs are more likely matched to an occupation inside the generic competencies domain. Given this allocation, the wage analyses show that the standardization of the educational programme with respect to the acquired competencies plays an important role in revealing information to the employer and reducing the adjustment costs.