Decision-Making on Job-Related Migration, Long-Distance Commuting and Daily Commuting in Comparison

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Growing flexibilization in labor markets fosters more complex forms of geographical mobility. Classical migration is increasingly substituted by circular forms of mobility, such as long-distance commuting. Although the conditions of migration and commuting are comparatively investigated in the recent past, existing survey based studies suffer from problems of endogeneity, self selection and the fact that the decision is not compared directly, but ex post. To overcome those problems in the present study a factorial survey design has been used to ask for the effects of the characteristics of an external job offer upon the intentions to the various forms of mobility. Formulating a general two-step model of the mobilization decision, it is assumed that for the different forms of mobility completely different subjective utilities are important. Fictitious job offers are presented to academic staff of the ETH Zurich. It is found that the tendency to migrate is generally most preferred and that infrastructural and job-related characteristics are considered systematically different at both steps of the decision.

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