

What influence do work-life situations and vocational orientation measures exert on individual commitment to continuing training?

Continuing vocational training is considered to play an important role for both societal and occupational integration. Individuals are not only prepared to participate in continuing vocational training but also to invest their own money and free time. Various existing general conditions have an influence on this continuing vocational training commitment. Moreover, for single societal groups exist different levels of access to continuing vocational training. Existing studies show that individual characteristics (such as school education or occupational status) have a considerable impact on people's continuing vocational training participation and that differences arising as a result of prior educational processes frequently reinforce participation or non-participation in continuing vocational training.

The paper "What influence do work-life situations and vocational orientation measures exert on individual commitment to continuing training?" takes these research results as its starting point for an examination of the question which factors influence individual continuing vocational training commitment in terms of participation in and expenditure on continuing vocational training (the latter referring to investment of money and free time). Moreover, it discusses the relevance of the subjective evaluations of people's own life and occupational objectives. Besides the determination of causal factors, a further aim of the present paper is to use the combinations of characteristics in order to identify and separate groups, which differ according to their respective work-life situation.

The basis for these analyses is the survey data of the Expert Commission on the Financing of Lifelong Learning on participation or non-participation in continuing vocational training in enterprises as well as the survey data of the Federal Institute for Vocational Education and Training regarding the costs and benefits of continuing vocational training of individuals. These two studies are based on the same statistical population and thus make it possible to undertake an observation of aspects of continuing vocational training participation and of private expenditure on continuing vocational training.

In general, the data shows that continual vocational training is determined by the level of education and occupational status combined with the form of employment. Besides these more objective factors, also vocational orientation has a major influence on continuing vocational training participation. Moreover, it was possible to identify three specific groups, which differ in respect of participation and investment in continuing vocational training: full-time and part-time employed women with a rather low income, men in full-time employment with a high level of qualification and men in full-time employment with a middle level of qualification. Although gender as such does not have any significant influence on continuing vocational training commitment, the work life-situation of women has. Continuing vocational training participation by the group of full-time and part-time employed women with a rather low income was 60 %, slightly below the level of participation of men in full-time employment with a middle level of qualification (65 %) and clearly below that of men in full-time employment with a high level of qualification (90 %). Men in full-time employment with a high level of qualification not only participate more frequently in continuing vocational training but also invest more in their own continuing vocational training: this is mostly associated with a specific level of career aspiration and (particular) access to in-company continuing vocational training. Moreover, continuous participation in continuing vocational training appears to form an integral part of the daily working lives of this group. In contrast to this latter group, full-

time and part-time employed women with a rather low income are - because of the high proportion of part-time employment and low levels of personal income - more dependent of their own commitment and benefit to a lesser extent from in-company continuing vocational training.

Besides the importance of already acquired education and training for the participation in continuing vocational training, it is also apparent that the degree of occupational integration, determined the employment relationship, has a considerable influence on continuing vocational training commitment. This because, mainly those in part-time employment (women) are less well integrated in company training processes and, irrespective of their level of educational attainment, participate in continuing vocational training on a less frequent basis. Continuing vocational training commitment is thus to a large extent dependent on the prevailing personal and occupational general conditions as these relate to special groups. The promotion of continuing vocational training pursuing the objective of increasing and stabilising continuing vocational training participation, should consider these findings.