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Comparing the training activities of unemployed and full-time employed people

Many empirical studies for Germany consider either the training activities of the unemployed or those of employees. However, a comprehensive comparison of both groups had not been conducted until now. The paper closes this gap. Using data from the latest time-use survey (*Zeitbudgeterhebung*) of the Federal Statistical Office, the amount of training is compared for both groups. Furthermore, the types of activities that are made use of in particular are described. Heterogeneity due to different relevant socio-economic characteristics in the two groups is eliminated by applying a suitable statistical procedure.

The situation of the two groups differs substantially. The human capital of employed people is usually developed by daily work, e.g. by advancing to new technologies or by access to colleagues' know-how. Accordingly, employed people's need for further training is *ceteris paribus* smaller than that of unemployed people. The article therefore examines the hypothesis that the amount of further training undertaken by unemployed people is higher than that of people in full-time employment (off the job). The term 'further training' is understood as "further training in the broader sense". This paper includes non-formal and informal learning activities and provides an overview of all further training activities.

The hypothesis is not corroborated for those who undertake any form of training. Here, the proportion of people undertaking training in the unemployment group is significantly lower than that in the full-time employment group. The significant difference resulted from a much smaller proportion of training in professional development. In contrast, the difference between unemployment and counterfactual full-time employment is not significant for general training. This group includes people who undertake only general training as well as those who do both occupational as well as general training. If we split this group into the disjointed events "only general training" and "general and occupational training" we can see that the proportion of unemployed people undertaking general training is significantly larger than the respective proportion of people in full-time employment. However, this proportion is not large enough to compensate for the lower participation in occupational training.

Comparing the amount of training, the hypothesis of unemployed people undertaking a larger quantity of training (all training activities) is confirmed. This means that unemployed people spend more time on training than people in full-time employment do outside working hours. Adding together all of the time spent on training activities, unemployed people spend 5.7 hours per week on average. Otherwise, if these people were in full-time employment, they would spend an average of 3.6 hours per week on training. The amount of training time used is significantly larger, although among the unemployed people a significantly smaller proportion takes part in further training. This means that the unemployed people who are trained do this in a larger amount of time than they would do if they were in full-time employment.

If training is differentiated according to training content, the larger volume of training is caused by the general training. In contrast, occupational training shows no significant difference between unemployment and full-time employment. Regarding the further training activities, the larger amount is the result of (informal) self-learning activities, while no significant differences can be found with regard to more formal activities.

It is to be noted that unemployed people have more potential time for further training off the job than people in full-time employment. The potential further training time can be quantified for both groups only approximately. Based on this, data shows that unemployed people use or can use a substantially smaller proportion of their potential further training time on average than people in full-time employment.

The evaluation of training activities is especially important for unemployed people with major problems finding a job. Here, the amount of training shows a different picture for the low-skilled and older unemployed people over 50. Compared to the counterfactual situation, the training period for low-skilled unemployed women and low-skilled eastern Germans seems to be longer. In contrast to this, the training periods for older unemployed women and older unemployed eastern Germans are even shorter. However, due to the low case numbers and the great spread, no significance can be found.