

Apprenticeship training in Germany – Is there a change from an investment- towards a production-oriented strategy?

Harald Pfeifer, Federal Institute for Vocational Education and Training, Germany

Gudrun Schönfeld, Federal Institute for Vocational Education and Training, Germany

Felix Wenzelmann, Federal Institute for Vocational Education and Training, Germany

The motive of German firms to train apprentices has been discussed in several recent works, whereas no clear message emerges on whether the majority of German firms rather trains to cover current production needs or to secure access to skilled labour. The paper addresses the question, which training motive prevails in Germany and whether there has been a shift away from an investment-oriented towards a production-oriented strategy in recent years. For this purpose, we compare results of two enterprise surveys on costs and benefits of apprenticeship training conducted in the years of 2000 and 2007. On an overall level, net costs of firms have dropped significantly between these years. At the same time, retention rates have not changed significantly. The paper analysis this development using regression techniques and discusses possible reasons for the observed change in firm behaviour.