

German apprenticeship training and the skill weights approach – An empirical analysis

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Apprenticeship training in a dual system, i.e. the acquisition of practical skills during on-the-job-training combined with the acquisition of necessary theoretical background knowledge at vocational schools, plays a crucial role in occupational training in German-speaking countries. Fundamental for this form of training is on the one hand the willingness of firms to invest in apprenticeship training. On the other hand, in view of the increasing competition at the labor market and the fast technological changes, mobility after completion of apprenticeship training is becoming more and more important for the worker's willingness to participate in apprenticeship training. Our theoretical and empirical analyses show that the more uncommon or the more specific qualifications in an apprenticeship occupation are the higher is the training investment share a firm has to bear. At the same time, an increasing specificity of qualification requirements reduces the mobility of the employee. Obviously, there exists a trade-off: if training should become less specific in order to prepare employees for technological changes, occupational mobility might increase, but, at the same time, firms would reduce their training investments.