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Measuring effectiveness in work integration – dimensions of occupational and social integration

The effectiveness of measures for occupational and social integration is a controversial issue in expert discussions as their success is often measured by the rate of placements in the regular labour market alone. The effect on “soft” factors such as social integration or personal living conditions are ignored here.

Against the backdrop of conflicting study results and of the topic’s high relevance, the Commission for Technology and Innovation CTI has financed a three-year research project. Its aim is to develop, apply and validate a standardised instrument for the measurement of effectiveness in work integration. The instrument is to account for the diverse dimensions of the effectiveness of integration programmes as well as their cost-benefit ratio.

Together with the consulting firm socialdesign, the Bern University of Applied Science (BFH) has developed a model of effectiveness as a theoretical basis for the development of a measuring tool. It includes all relevant factors that have an empirically proven influence on the intended effects. This model of effectiveness will be explained in detail in and put up for discussion in the first part of the workshop.

In the second part of the workshop, the research design will be presented. The study conducted by BFH and the partners from practice is a panel survey: the participants of five Bernese integration programmes are interviewed three times with a standardised measuring tool – the first interview takes place when joining the programme, the second time after approx. six months, on leaving the programme, and the third approx. one year after completing the programme. The participants to be interviewed are continuously recruited via the integration programmes. The first two interviews take place as online interviews at the providers’ and are conducted by members of their staff who received particular training. The third interview is intended as a telephone interview and is conducted by BFH itself. Those who drop out of the programmes are also interviewed further, thus forming a comparative group. The interviews of the programme participants started in March 2015 and are still in progress.



In the third part of the workshop, the practical benefit to be expected will be identified. Different variations of the validated measuring tool developed in the context of the research project will be made available to interested circles for an effectiveness review of their offers. The benefit thus generated for the providers and their investors is obvious: on the basis of the results, the integration programmes can be adapted continuously, thus implementing an institutional learning effect. Furthermore, a better segmentation of the clientele can be achieved, and the integration programmes can be applied more purposefully (formative benefit). In addition, the results of the effectiveness review can also be used to describe the strengths and weaknesses of the integration offers, for example when reporting to financing institutions, politics and the public (summative benefit).

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