

# Employment Outcomes of Young Graduates in Europe and Japan – Empirical Evidence from CHEERS and REFLEX and a New Approach in Germany



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Group: „Assessing learning and employment outcomes“

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## Overview

- Employment outcomes
- International comparison – selected finding
- Network of Graduate Surveys
- The new research project: „Study conditions and professional success“
- Outlook

Schomburg and Teichler: Employment Outcomes of Young Graduates in Europe and Japan

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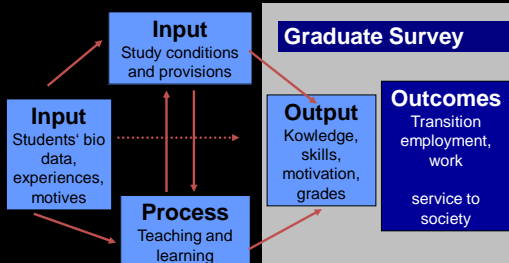
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## A Simple Model of Analysis in Higher Education



Context: Labour market – Region – Country; Socio-economic development and personal development

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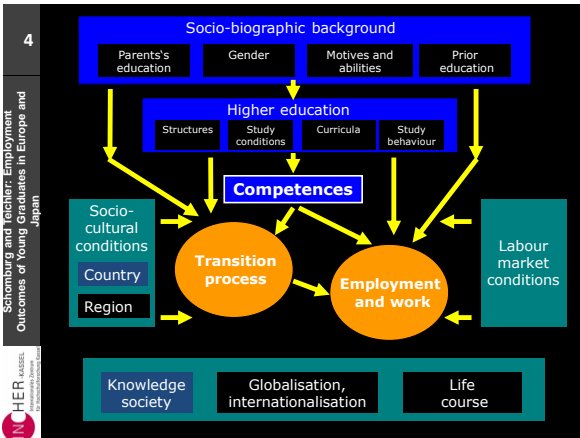
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- ### Data Sources
- Labour Force Surveys are not providing the relevant information (missing variables) and the necessary amount of cases for differentiated analysis
  - Graduate/Alumni Surveys are needed
  - Only CHEERS and REFLEX are relevant for international comparison
- Schoenburg and Teicher: Employment Outcomes of Young Graduates in Europe and Japan

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### Surveys: CHEERS and REFLEX

	CHEERS	REFLEX
Timing	1997-2000	2004-2007
Countries	12	16+
Year of graduation	1995	2000
Year of data collection	1999	2005
Response	40,000	40,000+
Standardised questionnaire	Ca. 600 questions/variables	Ca. 400 questions/variables

Schoenburg and Teicher: Employment Outcomes of Young Graduates in Europe and Japan

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Schomburg and Teicher: Employment Outcomes of Young Graduates in Europe and Japan

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## Selected Findings from CHEERS and REFLEX

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Schomburg and Teicher: Employment Outcomes of Young Graduates in Europe and Japan

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## Labour Market for Graduates – Selected Employment Conditions

1. Type of contract
  - More fixed term contracts?
2. Working time
  - More part time work?
3. High income?
4. Over-education?
  - More graduates working in jobs where a higher education degree is not required?
5. Skill mis-match?
  - More graduates working in jobs where their field of study is not useful?
6. Does the competences of graduates fits their work requirements?
7. Job satisfaction?

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Schomburg and Teicher: Employment Outcomes of Young Graduates in Europe and Japan

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## Summary of Descriptive Findings

- High stability of good employment conditions for HE graduates in Europe
  - Unlimited term contracts (78%)
  - Full-time employment (79%)
  - Field related work (82%)
  - Educational level fits job requirements (91%)
  - High level of job satisfaction (68%)
- Change
  - High flexibility and mobility in the first years after graduation
  - Growing work requirements regarding „generic skills“ or „soft skills“
  - About 3 years of training and learning after graduation
  - Competence development after graduation

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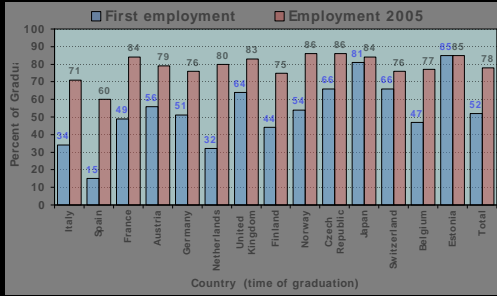
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### Flexibility and Mobility During the First Five Years After Graduation – Unlimited Term Contract, by Country (%)



Source: REFLEX 2005; INCHER-Kassel

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### Causal Effects of Programme Characteristics?

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### Results of CHEERS and REFLEX

- No single variable has stable strong effects on professional success
- The betas from multiple regressions are seldom higher than +/- 0.1.
- Many effects are country specific (like the role of the institution in the case of the Grandes Ecoles)
- No simple answers available

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## Some Limitations of International Comparison

- ❑ Differentiated curricular approach – horizontal differentiation
- ❑ The more „employability“ the less „comparability“?
- ❑ National regimes of „education - employment links“
- ❑ Multi-institutionell comparison on the level of study programmes is necessary
  - High number of cases
- ❑ Interpretations of findings by study programme experts is needed

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## Status of Research on Causal Relevance of HE

- ❑ How college affects students? (Pascarella/Terrenzini, most comprehensive synthesis report, 2005)
  - Little evidence
  - Little net effects of programme quality
- ❑ Still in search of usable knowledge (Peter Ewell, National Center for Higher Education Management Systems (NCHEMS))

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## Many Open Questions

- ❑ How to measure study conditions and study provisions
  - Does program quality matters for employment outcomes?
- ❑ Which student characteristics must be controlled?
- ❑ What are the best indicators of employment outcome and professional success?
- ❑ How to conduct survey efficiently with high quality? What are the standards for quality?
- ❑ How should the data be analyzed to gain usable knowledge?

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## A NEW APPROACH IN GERMANY

### Network of Graduate Surveys

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## Network of Graduate Surveys

- Established 2006 at the University of Kassel
- 2008: about 250 members
- German language
- Individual membership (email list)
- Two conferences per year
- Professionalisation of tracer study researchers
- Initiative for the research project „Study Conditions and Professional Success“

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## Background: New Challenges

- Growing competition of HE institutions
- Growing international competition
- New study structure (Bologna process)
- „Employability“
- Evaluation and Accreditation („Accountability“; „outcome assessment“)
- Growing service demand from students
- New HE management philosophy – quality management

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## New Survey System in Germany

Schomburg and Tschier: Employment Outcomes of Young Graduates in Europe and Japan

Year of graduation	Year of Tracer Study				
	2007/2008 Dec.-March	2008 Oct.-Dec	2009 Oct.-Dec	2010 Oct.-Dec	2011
2006 (9 HE institutions, 15,000 graduates)	1.5 years after graduation	Panel	Panel	4.5 years after graduation	
2007 (50 HE institutions; 90,000 graduates)		1.5 years after graduation	Panel	Panel	4.5 years after graduation
2008 (50-100 HE institutions)			1.5 years after graduation	Panel	

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## Implementation

- Address database of the HE institution
- Update of addresses by HE institution
- Four contacts/send outs
- Contacts by letters and/or email
- Combination of paper and online questionnaire
- Response rate should be about 50%

Schomburg and Tschier: Employment Outcomes of Young Graduates in Europe and Japan

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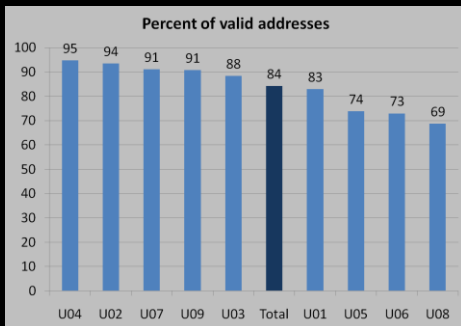
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## Germany – Pilot Study: Valid Addresses by HE Institution



Source: Graduate Survey 2007; INCHER-Kassel

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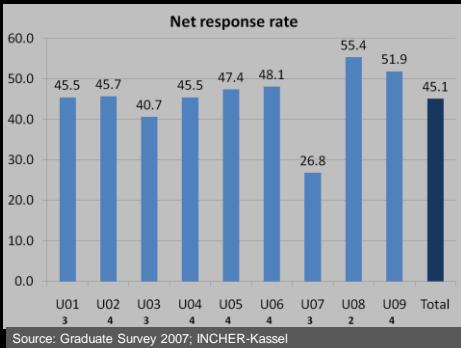
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### Germany – Pilot Study: Net Response Rate by HE Institution (%)




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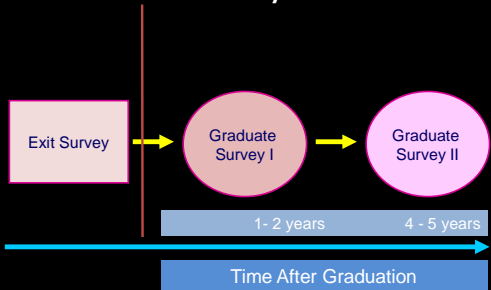
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### (Future) Design of Graduate Surveys




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### Key Element: Cooperation with Faculties and Study Programmes

- Discussion and development of the questionnaire (adaptation)
- Interpretation of findings
- Dissemination at faculty/study programme level

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## Outlook

- Establishment of a regular system of graduate surveys at most of the HE institutions in Germany (and other countries)
- Cooperation with INCHER-Kassel (service and research)
- International cooperation
  - Regular Graduate Monitor based on existing surveys
  - Harmonisation of national survey systems
  - New systems – worldwide network of graduate surveys

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## Further information

- <http://www.uni-kassel.de/incher/absolvent>
  - The German Graduate Survey Network
- <http://www.his.de>
  - The HIS Graduate Surveys
- <http://www.ihf.bayern.de>
  - The Bavarian Graduate Panel Survey

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