



OSKA study: vocational education fields with low professional placement and the reasons for it

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A recurring pattern emerges in the reasons for not entering professional employment. Less than 40% of students from 70 vocational training programs mapped in the OSKA study later find employment in their field as their main occupation. There are clear patterns in the learner profiles and the main reasons for low professional placement.

There are several reasons why some vocational training programme graduates do not enter professional employment, and they can be divided into reasons influenced by the labour market and the economy and reasons related to the organisation of studies and the learner.

Reasons for not taking up professional employment

The main reasons for the low professional employment rate include low pay and poor working conditions, lack of interest and motivation in the profession, studying only to receive secondary education, job seasonality and insufficient demand for products/services in a particular field, which makes it difficult to earn a sufficient income from professional work.

Programmes with a high proportion of adult learners should consider reducing the proportion of degree study while increasing the proportion of lifelong learning programmes, micro-credentials and on-the-job training, in order to better match the supply of education and skills with labour market demand.

With young people, in addition to professional placement, preparing them for the labour market in general is of considerable value, given the socialising aspect of education. Vocational training programmes may also fill the role of youth workers, on the one hand keeping young people in the education system and improving their skills and attitudes, and on the other hand increasing their competitiveness and ensuring they are ready to enter the labour market later in life as fully-fledged members of society.

The analysis suggests that young people graduating from programmes with low professional placement rates have relatively low wages in professional employment, which is detrimental to their economic livelihoods and reduces their desire to choose professional placement.

The professional placement of graduates from most curriculum groups was above 50% based on graduates from the last three academic years (2019/2020-2021/2022). Professional placement was highest in social and technical fields and lowest in horticulture and handicrafts.

Vocational training programmes with a significant number of adult learners

A high proportion of adult learners have already acquired higher education.

For many adult learners, the degree they are acquiring is often their second or third degree. Popular professions among adults include upholstery manufacturer, furniture restorer, nail technician and tailor.



Often, adult learners' main purpose is not to find professional placement, but rather to find application for a hobby, for self-improvement or to support other careers.

Types of reasons for not finding professional placement

Type 1 is characterised by the seasonal nature of the job.

- Over 90% of adult learners, 40% of higher education graduates.
- For example: gardeners, small harbour specialists, tour guides.

Type 2 is characterised by a sufficient demand for graduates in the labour market, but little interest for professional placement among graduates.

- Low pay plus difficult and poor working conditions.
- Under 30% of adult learners, 8% of higher education graduates.
- For example: warehouse workers, vehicle technicians, facility servicemen.

Type 3 is characterised by insufficient demand for products/services, making it difficult to make a living in professional placement.

- Learning for self-improvement.
- 70% of adult learners, 20% of higher education graduates.
- For example: textile crafts, upholstery manufacturer, nail technician.

Type 4 is characterised by the fact many employers expect applicants to have a higher education degree as opposed to a vocational education degree.

- 25% of adult learners, 7% of higher education graduates.
- For example: environmentalists, junior specialist in information technology.

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