

ABSTRACT

Education with a future Volume 2: Survey of graduates of technical colleges and teaching institutions

What vocational or educational path do graduates of South Tyrolean technical colleges take after graduation, what competencies do they most need at their place of work or study, what feedback can they provide three years after graduation? The present survey by the IER – Institute for Economic Research of the Chamber of Commerce of Bolzano, which was conducted as part of the "School-Economy" cooperation, is intended to provide answers to these questions.

The second volume of this series is based on a survey of 1,630 graduates of the technical colleges and teaching institutions who graduated in 2002. 34.5% of the people contacted took part in the survey.

Satisfied with the educational path

Over 80% of respondents consider their training to be very precious time. Most respondents rate the general conditions at school as "good" and "very good". The number of students who would choose the same school again is high and expresses the satisfaction with the education and training received: 70% (without abstentions) of the graduates surveyed would return to the school they graduated from. The reasons given by the interviewees for not returning to the same school were a change of personal interests, dissatisfaction with the school's offerings and the labour market situation. Despite these pleasing results,

the challenge for young people and parents, as well as for schools and society, remains to focus effectively on vocational and educational orientation.

Practical subjects and foreign languages in demand

Overall, graduates were able to acquire the general and discipline-specific subjects very well. However, the respondents noted a weakness in foreign languages and the second language. In addition, the young people would like to see an even stronger integration of practice in teaching (e.g. internships) and a deepening of the subject of computer science.

Important key competences

During their training, the young people were able to acquire several key competences, the ability to work in a team, manners and thinking in context. When it comes to creativity and self-confidence, they don't feel fully confident. These key competences, which are very important for the working world, can especially be trained in action-oriented activities. Also, in this area, projects or cooperation with companies or other social partners would be appropriate.

Short and easy job search

Half of the interviewees are working three years after graduating from a technical college or teaching institution. Most of the

interviewees are employed in the private sector, where they usually have a permanent employment contract. According to the graduates, the job search was short and easy. The job corresponds to the training, whereby the young people identify a need for further training in languages and computer science.

More cooperation between schools and the economy

The young people find it very important to try out the practical aspects of their training. The "Alternanza" decree already stipulates a stronger exchange between schools and companies, whereby in the future primarily the companies will be challenged to let young people experience work and to provide them with appropriate support. Of course, it also requires open-minded companies and schools, enthusiastic teachers and young people to jointly realize the "school-economy" cooperation.