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Intergenerational Educational Transmission within Families: An Analysis and Microsimulation Projection for Austria

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Abstract

In this contribution we study intergenerational educational transmission within families in Austria. The paper is divided into an analytical part and a synthesis of the resulting behavioural models to a comprehensive computer microsimulation model that is used to project the future educational composition of the population. The models are based on retrospective event history data collected in the special programme of the 1996 micro-census, which was also used to generate the starting population for projections. The analysis of school choices reveals a very strong influence of parental educational attainment leading to strong intergenerational transmission mechanisms within families, i. e., considerable intergenerational persistence of educational careers within families. In contrast to the continuing educational expansion at the population level, very stable behavioural relationships can be found on the micro level when accounting for parental educational attainment. Our projections reveal that the educational expansion that we experienced in the last decades will continue at a very moderate speed in the next decades until an equilibrium is reached. In the equilibrium, half of the population will obtain a Matura diploma of which 30% will also graduate from university.

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