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Central School Exit Exams and Labor-Market Outcomes

by Marc Piopiunik, Guido Schwerdt, Ludger Woessmann
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Abstract:

Many countries use centralized exit exams as a governance device of the school system. While abundant evidence suggests positive effects of central exams on achievement tests, previous research on university-bound students shows no effects on subsequent earnings. We suggest that labor-market effects may be more imminent for students leaving school directly for the labor market and, on rigid labor markets, for unemployment. Exploiting variation in exit-exam systems across German states, we find that central exams are indeed associated with higher earnings for students from school types directly bound for the labor market, as well as with lower unemployment.

Text: See [Discussion Paper No. 6889](#)



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