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Daughters of migrants often participate in further training

20. August 2020 | Ute Leber, Franziska Schreyer, Huy Le Quang



Digitisation, demography and ever increasing international interdependence require life-long learning of employees. Yet, participation in vocational further training has so far been unequally distributed among different groups. This is also obvious for the employees with a migration background: Men who immigrated themselves seldom take part in further training, whereas women whose parents had come as immigrants often do so.

For a detailed comparison of further training activities of employees with and without a migration background by Ute Leber, Huy Le Quang and Franziska Schreyer, please see the [IAB Brief Report 19/2019](#) (in German).

Due to the demographic developments, the number of people available in the labour market in Germany will be declining in the future. Then again, the demand for qualified [labour force](#) will probably not decrease. Accelerating digitisation is a striking example. It will replace a number of

activities currently performed by people, but it will at the same time create new occupations and areas of activity. This quickly evolving world of work poses new challenges to gainfully employed population, and these challenges can be better coped with by means of qualification.

Growing demands on skills also result from the increasing internationalisation of the economy. This applies, for instance, to language abilities, intercultural competencies or specific know-how regarding legal or technical regulations abroad, such as environmental or safety standards.

In the course of the demographic and digital change coupled with growing international interdependences more and more importance will thus be attached to further training – along with school, vocational training, and higher education. Following stagnant participation in vocational further training between 2012 and 2016, on-the-job further training as the most frequently used form of further training has recently been on the rise again. For occupation-related further training outside the company, the level remained the same according to a [report](#) by the Federal Ministry of Education and Research from 2019.

Against this backdrop, Germany has set itself the goal of developing a new further training culture as part of its national further training strategy. This is to allow people to cope with the structural change, as well as open up new chances to those with difficult start conditions.

Further training opportunities of different groups of employees

Up till now, different groups of people have unequally participated in vocational further training. For instance, university graduates take part in further training far more often than workers without or with a vocational qualification. The employees whose activities could be largely replaced with modern technologies take part in further training rather seldom as compared to those whose activities are less likely to be replaced by a computer. Those working in large companies or certain sectors, such as education and healthcare, accomplish further training courses more often than those working in smaller companies and other sectors. And finally, the participation in further training among people without a migration background is higher than among those with a migration background.

According to the [Federal Statistical Office](#), more than [every fourth person in Germany had a migration background in 2019](#). Around [eleven million people with a migration background were available for the labour market](#) as either gainfully employed or unemployed. This group of people is very multifaceted: The range can extend from an Australian scientist through a Spanish nurse to a young female refugee from Afghanistan that was deprived of going to school there.

This article focuses on the group of gainfully employed people with a migration background and their participation in the vocational further training. A differentiation is made between the migrants of the first generation, the migrants of the second generation, and Germans without a migration background (see info box), and it considers company-funded as well as non-company occupation-related further training of persons in dependent employment (in the following referred to as “vocational further training“). The analyses are based on the data of the [Socio-Economic Panel](#) (SOEP; see info box below) and focuses on the following questions: Is there a difference in training participation depending on whether those interviewed immigrated themselves (first generation), or whether they are children of parents who had come as immigrants (second generation)? How high is the participation rate of males and females, or the employees with different levels of qualification with a migration background? What is the role of the economic sector in which the people work? The findings on further training participation of the Germans in dependent employment without a migration background will be taken for comparison.

Findings on vocational further training

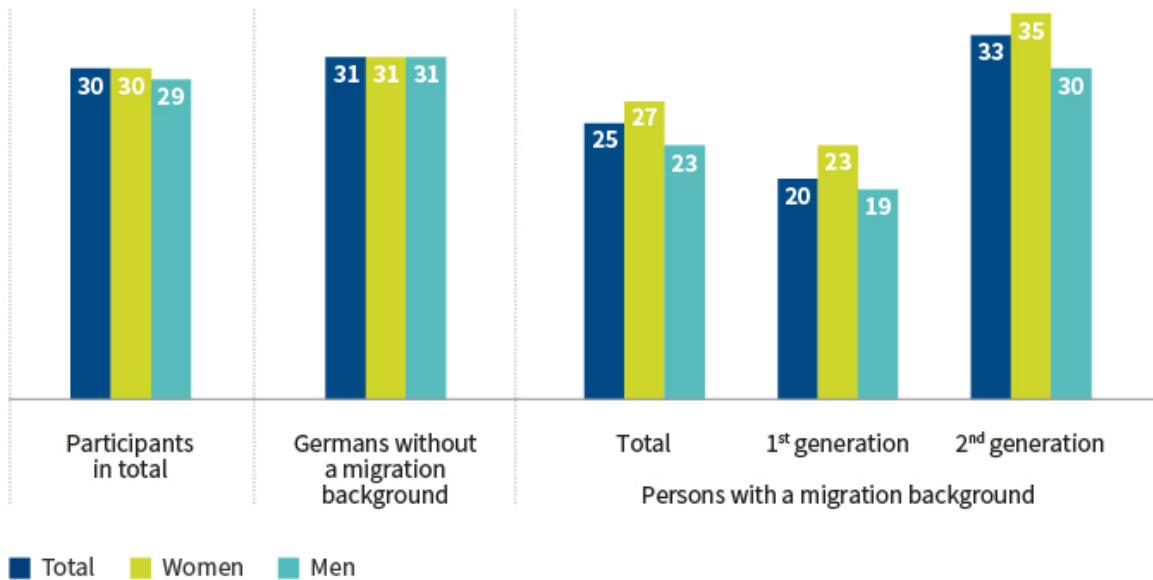
Firstly, the overall participation in vocational further training both of all employees with a migration background and of Germans without a migration background is analysed. Secondly, the participation is differentiated by first and second generation and by gender. Thirdly, qualification level and occupational status are taken into account. Finally, the economic sectors and the regions of origin are considered.

Overall participation

During the observation period between 2013 and 2015, nearly every third German employee without a migration background took part in vocational further training at least once (31%). Among persons with a migration background, the share was 25 percent (see Figure 1).

Figure 1: Participation rates of individuals in dependent employment without and with a migration background in vocational further training according to gender

From 2013 to 2015, full-time and part-time employees aged 26 to 65 ¹⁾, in percent



¹⁾ Individuals employed only irregularly and/or marginally have been excluded.

Note: The question asked was: "Did you take part in a vocational further training measure (in the previous year)?"

The results differ significantly among the groups under consideration here on the level of 1, 5 and 10 percent.

Source: SOEP surveys 2014, 2015 and 2016; weighted. © IAB

Participation of the first and second generation

As far as the first generation, i.e., those who immigrated themselves, is concerned, their training participation rate amounts to 20 percent. Yet, it is quite different with the employees from the second generation with a migration background: 33 percent of them took part in vocational further training, which is proportionately slightly more than in the case of Germans without a migration background (31%) (see Figure 1).

A [report](#) by the Federal Ministry of Education and Research from the year 2019 looks at recent developments. According to this report, the participation in further training schemes of people with a migration background increased between 2016 and 2018. This holds true for the first generation and for the second generation alike, as well as for in-company and non-company occupation-related further training. At the same time, this report implies that the participation in in-company further training among those from the first generation is lower as compared to the second generation or the persons without a migration background.

Participation of men and women

35 percent of females in dependent employment from the second generation with a migration background took part in vocational further training at least once between 2013 and 2015 (see Figure 1). So, they represent the highest participation rate of all – even higher than the participation rate of German females and males without a migration background (31% respectively).

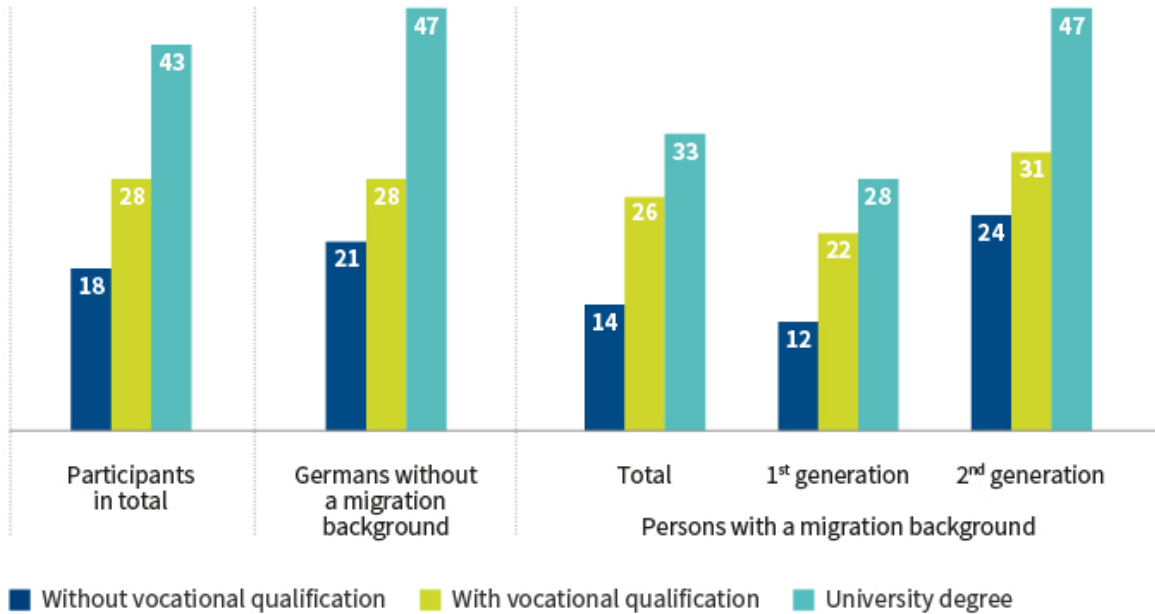
This is most likely due to the fact that 95 percent of the employed females from the second generation have a vocational or academic qualification, and comparatively often work as (highly) qualified employees – this has been revealed by supplementary evaluations. More than every third woman from the second generation is employed in the field of education and healthcare, and every fifth in the public sector. Those working in these areas are generally characterised by active participation in further training schemes (see table).

Participation of persons with different qualification levels

While considering all partial groups both with and without a migration background, the following becomes obvious: The higher the professional qualification, the greater the participation rate (see Figure 2).

Figure 2: Participation rates of individuals in dependent employment without and with a migration background in vocational further training according to the highest vocational qualification

From 2013 to 2015, full-time and part-time employees aged 26 to 65 ¹⁾, in percent



¹⁾ Individuals employed only irregularly and/or marginally have been excluded.

Note: The question asked was: "Did you take part in a vocational further training measure (in the previous year)?"

The results differ significantly among the groups under consideration here on the level of 1, 5 and 10 percent.

Source: SOEP surveys 2014, 2015 and 2016; weighted. © IAB

The lowest participation rate of 12 percent is observed among the immigrants from the first generation without any (recognised) professional qualification. Among the low-skilled Germans, the rate is still as high as 21 percent.

It is generally worthwhile mentioning that the employees of the second generation within each qualification group have higher participation rates in further training than the employees of the first generation. In addition to this, the participation rate of the employees from the second generation without and the second generation with a professional qualification is higher than that of the Germans without a migration background of these qualification groups. This is probably associated with the fact that the employees of the second generation comparatively often work in sectors requiring a lot of further training. Among university graduates, the further training rate of those from the second generation is approximately the same as that of German employees: Nearly every second individual in dependent employment attended at least one vocational further training measure.

Participation according to the occupational status

Unskilled and semi-skilled workers have by far the weakest participation in vocational further training (see table). Across all comparison groups, the highest participation rates are observed among qualified and highly qualified employees, as well as among civil servants.

Table: Participation rates of individuals in dependent employment in vocational further training

From 2013 to 2015, full-time and part-time employees aged 26 to 65¹⁾, in percent

	Total	Germans without a migration background	Persons with a migration background		
			Total	1 st generation	2 nd generation
Region of origin					
EU-28	30	31	26	23	32
Turkey	17	-	16	12	19
Other third countries	18	-	18	15	20
Occupational status					
Unskilled/semi-skilled workers	9	10	9	8	13
Skilled workers/foremen/master craftsmen	18	19	15	16	13
Employees with simple activity	21	20	23	19	30
Qualified employees	35	35	35	31	40
Highly qualified employees	45	46	41	40	43
Civil servants	50	49	54	29	62
Economic sector					
Agriculture, forestry and fishing	15	16	10	6	23
Processing industry	24	25	20	18	25
Construction	21	22	18	16	27
Wholesale and retail trade	18	21	11	8	17
Communication, financial and insurance services	32	33	29	27	32
Public administration	34	34	31	26	36
Education and healthcare	44	45	41	36	47
Households and other services	29	31	19	8	26
Number of observations	24,804	18,868	5,936	4,129	1,807

¹⁾ Individuals employed only irregularly and/or marginally have been excluded

Note: The question asked was: "Did you take part in a vocational further training measure (in the previous year)?"

The results differ significantly among the groups under consideration here on the level of 1, 5 and 10 percent.

Source: SOEP surveys 2014, 2015 and 2016; weighted. ©IAB

Participation according to economic sectors

The immigrants of the first generation working in agriculture, trade, households and other service areas have by far the lowest participation rates (6% to 8%). Those working in the field of communication, financial and insurance services, in public administration or in the segments of education and healthcare constitute the group with the most active attendance of vocational further training measures – regardless of the migration background (26% to 47%).

Participation according to the region of origin

Persons with a migration background from the EU member states with a share of 26 percent take part in vocational further training proportionately more often than persons from third countries (from Turkey: 16% and from other third countries: 18%; see table).

Different factors that favour further training activities

With the help of multivariate analyses it can be investigated whether or not the migration background itself contributes to the explanation of further training participation, or whether the differences in further training participation between the employees with and without a migration background are associated with other factors, such as differences in qualification or occupational status.

While controlling different variables, the estimations show that the migration background not in every case implies a statistically significant connection with further training participation. The immigrants of the first generation have a significantly weaker participation in vocational further training as compared to the Germans without a migration background; however, those in dependent employment from the second generation reveal no statistically significant effect on the participation in further training. More active participation in further training of the employees from the second generation, or specifically women from the second generation that has been revealed in our descriptive analyses seems to be associated not with the immigration status, but rather with other factors.

What plays an important role here is a relatively good qualification structure of (female) employees from the second generation as well as their comparatively high occupational status. Our multivariate analyses reveal a significant role of these factors to explain the participation in further training. They therefore confirm the finding already known from the research of further training according to which the participation in further training increases in line with the qualification level, and varies among persons with different occupational status.

Another estimation result points to the significance of German language skills: our analyses show that the better the employees' command of German is, the higher the participation in vocational further training will be. Thus, proficiency in the German language and participation in language and integration courses not only increase the opportunities to access the labour market, as Herbert Brücker et al. demonstrated in a [report](#) from the year 2019. In addition to this, these seem to have a positive effect on the access to vocational further training, and subsequently secure employability.

Conclusion

On average, individuals with a migration background in dependent employment participate in vocational further training somewhat less than Germans without a migration background in dependent employment (25% and 31% respectively). This difference, however, is due to the significantly lower participation (20%) of those from the first generation who immigrated themselves.

The further training rate of the employees from the second generation amounts to 33 percent, and is thus slightly higher than that of Germans without a migration background. Above all, there is one group with a migration background that has the highest participation rate as compared to all other groups: more than every third female employee from the second generation attended at least one vocational further training measure between 2013 and 2015.

Females in dependent employment from the second generation have a comparatively high level of professional qualification, and a substantial share of them work as qualified or highly qualified employees, as well as in the economic sectors such as education, healthcare or public administration that are characterised by high further training rates. This way, they feature all factors that favour the participation in vocational further training.

Individual groups of persons (with and without a migration background) thus relatively often participate in vocational further training. Nonetheless, the associated potentials shall be further tapped. Further training is not only a central instrument for the employees to keep up with the evolving world of work. It is also important for companies to meet their demand for skilled workers and to ensure adequate qualifications in the future.

Literature

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Further literature references as well as access to additional information on the issue of “In-company further training“ are available in German on the [IAB information platform](#).

Info box: Terms and definitions

Migration background

Persons with a migration background in this article are those who immigrated to Germany themselves or whose parents did so irrespective of their current citizenship.

First and second generation

The first generation migrants immigrated to Germany themselves. Those from the second generation were born in Germany, but at least one parent is an immigrant.

Germans without a migration background

German citizenship holders that have no migration background are considered Germans without a migration background in the analyses of this report.

Info box: The Socio-Economic Panel (SOEP)

Our analyses are based on the data of the Socio-Economic Panel (SOEP), a representative recurring survey among individuals with and without a migration background. Some 20,000 persons in around 11,000 households are interviewed personally every year. The SOEP has been conducted since 1984 in West Germany and since 1990 in East Germany on behalf of the German Institute for Economic Research (DIW) in Berlin; the interviews with younger groups of migrants are conducted by the IAB together with the SOEP in the context of the IAB-SOEP Migration Sample.

Cite article

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