

28.5.2026

Author

NIEMANN, Arne

Title

Scientific political consulting and university education in Germany : demand and supply patterns in the context of the Bologna Process / Arne Niemann and Sabine Heister

Publisher

Basingstoke : Palgrave Macmillan, 2010

Collation

10 Bl.

Publication year

2010

Source/Footnote

In: European Political Science. - 9 (2010) 9, S. 398 - 416

Inventory number

44234

Keywords

Bologna-Prozess ; Grade : Bachelor / Master ; Wissenschaft : Politikwissenschaft

Abstract

his article examines the competences required for a career in scientific policy consultancy (especially in the field of foreign policy) in Germany and the extent to which university education in the field of political science can and does prepare for this occupation. Our analysis indicates that both university education and on-the-job training are equally important for such a career. Among the broad competences, 'analytical skills' and 'expertise/know-how and experience' are regarded as more important than 'communication skills' and 'customer focus'. We have found that political consultants would prefer university programmes to include more practical elements, including a greater degree of involvement of policy-makers, and more integrated internships and innovative forms

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of studying such as role play and the drafting of policy papers. When comparing these findings with the university programmes offered, an ambiguous picture emerges. On the one hand, it is clear that most universities are making a concerted effort to offer new innovative programmes and to meet the challenges of the Bologna process. On the other hand, traditional perceptions and methodologies of university education have been preserved. There thus seems to be a certain gap between ambition and implementation. The article limits itself to analysing the German case but nevertheless aims at encouraging a European-wide debate about political science programmes and scientific political consulting. (HRK / Abstract übernommen)

Signature

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