

The current state of research provides very few empirically proven findings about the influence of academic higher education on the development of student professionalism. In the course of the reform of the higher education systems in Europe (Bologna declaration) these questions become increasingly important. So far on the European level the effects of neither the "discontinued course of study" (diploma) nor of the newly implemented bachelor/master course are sufficiently known. Therefore the research project ILLEV, financed by the German Federal Ministry of Education and Research, compares the effects of the different courses of study in the domains of economics and business on professionalization and its development.

The project focuses on the modeling and assessment of cognitive dimensions of professionalism, economic content knowledge and pedagogical content knowledge, whereby other relevant parameters such as dimensions of intelligence, motivation, epistemological beliefs and socio-demographic variables are controlled. In the context of a longitudinal analysis, diploma and bachelor students of economics & business and economics & business education (n = approx. 1000) are accompanied and questioned over three years (fall 2008, 2009, 2010) and their development of competence analyzed. Existing and validated tests are used for the measurement of economic content knowledge. For the measurement of pedagogical content knowledge in the domain of economics, however, a test is being developed and will be validated in the project.