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Myth? Results from the German Cooperation Project
Tracer Studies**

by

Lutz Heidemann

INCHER -Kassel

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Only Successful Graduates Respond to Tracer Studies: A Myth? Results from the German Cooperation Project Tracer Studies

by

Lutz Heidemann *

Abstract

INCHER-Kassel and 58 German Higher Education Institutions conducted together the biggest tracer studies campaign in Germany so far. Up to date, more than 100.000 graduates of the cohorts 2006 – 2009 were surveyed in the years 2007 – 2011. During this project it was often claimed that graduate tracer studies cannot be representative. This doubt is based on the assumption that only particularly successful or satisfied persons participate in these surveys. This hypothesis will be discussed in the following essay after a introduction in the methodological approach of the Cooperation Project balancing comparability and individuality of the questionnaires. The essay will also explain the network approach of the Cooperation Project “Study Conditions and Professional Success – Cooperation of German Institutions of Higher Education for the Design and Execution of Tracer Studies” (KOAB). The respondents of the cohort 2008 which were surveyed in the fall semester 2009/10 are divided into two groups to test the hypothesis that only particularly successful or satisfied persons participate in these surveys: early respondents and late respondents. The graduates were invited by up to four contacts to participate in the survey. Early respondents participate right after the first contact, while late respondents representing the non-respondents of the first contact. This model refers to the idea of a “continuum of resistance” in survey participation. A comparison shows that there are no fundamental differences between the early respondents and late respondents according to the following indicators: assessment and satisfaction with study programme, study success (final grade), or actual professional situation and satisfaction with current professional situation. Based on these observations, the above mentioned statement that only successful or satisfied persons will participate in graduate tracer studies cannot be confirmed.

1. Overview of the Survey of the Graduate Cohort of 2008

During the fall semester of 2009/2010, graduate tracer studies were conducted at 45 higher education institutions in Germany as part of the Cooperation Project “Study Conditions and Professional Success – Cooperation of German Institutions of Higher Education for the Design and Execution of Tracer Studies” (KOAB).

One of the Cooperation Project’s central goals is to coordinate the implementation of nationwide graduate tracer studies in order to generate comparable results. The tracer studies serve to gather information about different aspects of study programmes and work life. The central questions are:

- Into which professions or fields of work do graduates enter?
- What characterizes the transition from college to the workplace?
- What are the work conditions of today’s graduates?
- Does the professional activity match to the contents of the degree program?

* Internationales Zentrum für Hochschulforschung Kassel (INCHER-Kassel), University of Kassel
e-mail: heidemann@incher.uni-kassel.de

- How do graduates evaluate the competencies they acquired during a course of study, and assess their usefulness for work?
- How do graduates evaluate their studies in retrospective?

The targeted cohort of the survey was the graduates of 2008, i.e. those who successfully completed a course of study between October 2007 and September 2008. At the time of the survey, the graduates of 2008 graduated about one to two years prior. At the time of the survey, the graduates were either transitioning from their studies to the workplace, or they were in a phase of initial job consolidation. This includes graduates who participated in additional training. Most higher education institutions factored all possible degrees into the survey: Bachelor, Master, Diploma (*Diplom*), Magister Artium (*Magister*), Teaching Degree (*Staatsexamen Lehramt*), other State Examina (*Staatsexamen*) and Doctorate.

In the winter semester of 2007/2008, all higher education institutions in Germany were invited to participate in the Cooperation Project on tracer studies. In all, 31 universities, 12 Universities of Applied Sciences (*Fachhochschulen*), and Universities of Arts (*Kunsthochschulen*) decided to join the Cooperation Project. Professional teaching schools (*Pädagogische Hochschulen*), graduate theological schools (*Theologische Hochschulen*), and professional schools for business administration (*Verwaltungsfachhochschulen*) were not included in the Cooperation Project. The largest participating higher education institute (University of Münster) had a cohort of ca. 5,900 graduates in 2008, while the smallest higher education institute participating in the Cooperation Project, the Merz Academy at Stuttgart, had less than 70 graduates.

Table 1. Institutions of Higher Education Participating in the 2010 Tracer Study (Survey of the Graduates of 2008 in the Fall Semester of 2009/2010)

Baden-Wuerttemberg	University of Freiburg, University of Heidelberg, Institute of Technology at Karlsruhe, Merz-Academy at Stuttgart, University of Stuttgart, University of Tübingen, University of Ulm
Berlin	Beuth University of Applied Sciences at Berlin, Free University of Berlin, Humboldt University of Berlin, Technical University of Berlin, University of the Arts at Berlin
Brandenburg	Technical University of Cottbus
Bremen	University of Applied Sciences Bremerhaven
Hamburg	University of Hamburg
Hesse	Technical University of Darmstadt, University of Applied Sciences of Frankfurt/M., University of Frankfurt/M., University of Applied Sciences of Fulda, University of Kassel, University of Marburg, University of Applied Sciences RheinMain
Mecklenburg-Western Pomerania	University of Rostock
Lower Saxony	University of Arts at Braunschweig, University of Göttingen, University of Hannover, University of Osnabrück, University of Vechta
North Rhine-Westphalia	University of Applied Sciences of Aachen, RWTH Aachen, Ruhr University of Bochum, University of Applied Sciences of Dortmund, Technical University of Dortmund, University of Düsseldorf, University of Applied Sciences of Economics and Management, University of Cologne, University of Münster, University of Paderborn, University of Siegen, University of Wuppertal
Saxony-Anhalt	University of Applied Sciences of Anhalt
Schleswig-Holstein	University of Kiel
Thuringia	University of Applied Sciences of Erfurt, Technical University of Ilmenau, University of Weimar

The surveys were conducted with the complete population: No samples were taken; instead, every graduate was surveyed. Those who received the survey had the choice of completing it online or on

paper. The graduates were contacted via regular mail, first, because only few e-mail addresses of the graduates were available, and second, because it is easier to trace the delivery of letters than of e-mails. Like the survey of the graduates of 2007¹, the Cooperation Project Tracer Studies achieved a high participation rate for this survey. In all, ca. 33,000 participated in the tracer study of 2010. The success of this survey is even clearer in comparison to the last nationwide HIS-tracer study (survey of the graduates of 2005) which had ca. 12,000 participants.² Also, the rate of return for the KOAB study is outstanding: Of all 45 higher education institutions, an average of ca. 50% of those graduates who were contacted successfully through the postal service participated, whereas participation rates for other nationwide tracer studies in Germany is estimated to be ca. 30%.³

2. Who was surveyed?

Graduates who completed a degree in the fall semester 2007/08 and in the spring semester 2008 at an institution participating in the Cooperation Project (graduating class of 2008) were surveyed. Most higher education institutions included all possible degrees: Bachelor, Master, Diploma (*Diplom*), Magister Artium (*Magister*), Teaching Degree (*Staatsexamen Lehramt*), other State Examination (*Staatsexamen*) and Doctorate.

The higher education institutions wished to include almost 78,000 people⁴ of the graduating class of 2008 in the survey. But the respective administrative units in charge of managing address lists only supplied roughly 76,500 addresses of graduates. Along with the postal address, other data were often available such as degree granted, field of study or major, date of birth, nationality, date of examination, gender, and final grade. The data were used to verify the exactitude of the match between performed spot checks and overall numbers. About 7,000 graduates, for whom a postal address existed, could verifiably not be reached. This means ca. 69,500 graduates were reached.

3. Conduction of the Survey

Participating institutions could choose which survey methods to use: only online surveys, only paper surveys, or both.

Two thirds of the participating institutions utilised multiple procedures (i.e., a mixture of online and paper surveys). 15 institutions conducted online surveys only.

Graduates were to be contacted and asked to participate in the survey solely through regular mail, even where only an online survey was planned.⁵ Contacting graduates through e-mail was to take place only in exceptional cases (e.g., when no postal address existed, or when research yielded none), or when previous agreements had been made (e.g., where graduates made arrangements to this end). Only one institution contacted graduates exclusively via email⁶, and a few other institutions sent one or more follow-up mails electronically. Contacting the graduates was to take place during the time between the 42nd calendar week (October 13, 2009) and the 50th calendar

¹ See Heidemann (2011)

² See e.g. Briedis (2007:235)

³ See *ibid.*

⁴ In all, 82,000 graduated in the class of 2008 at the participating institutions. At some institutions, not all programs or departments participated, and some institutions excluded certain kinds of degrees (mostly doctorates) from the survey. See table 18 of the Appendix for an exact overview of the excluded cases.

⁵ INCHER-Kassel recommended this procedure as it makes the problem of non-deliverability easier to quantify than it would have been with email contacts. When a postal address is outdated, the letter can be returned to the sender with a corresponding note from the postal service. While a defunct email address will generate a similar message, there are large amounts of “dead” email addresses which do not get checked anymore, and do not generate a respective reply to the sender.

⁶ This institution operates under special circumstances in that it offers exclusively vocational programmes of study, and is able to rely on regularly updated email addresses which the address holders use regularly even after they graduate.

week (December 8, 2009).⁷ The project's partners at the institutions were asked to time the dispatch of the cover letters and questionnaires such that they would reach the graduates shortly before the weekend of the respective calendar week.

Overall, within the framework of the Cooperation Project, a high degree of homogeneity with respect to conducting the survey was achieved among the different institutions. All participating institutions carried out the field work between the 40th calendar week of 2009 and the 10th calendar week of 2010.⁸ One institution already completed the survey in the 6th calendar week, three institutions in the 7th calendar week, five institutions in the 8th calendar week, and 22 institutions according to the plan in the 9th calendar week of 2010. Six institutions extended the field work phase by one week, thus finishing the survey in the 10th calendar week. On average, the institutions spent 140 days in the field phase.⁹ Many project coordinators at the institutions updated wrong addresses during the field phase with the help of local state registry offices, the service "AdressFactory" of the German postal service (*Deutsche Post AG*), or the internet services "StudiVZ" or "XING". In this manner, a total of over 7,600 addresses were corrected. The correction of addresses during the field phase was very time-consuming. Since many institutions could only supply very little or not enough human resources to conduct the survey, not all of them were able to comply with the planned relatively narrow time frame that was set for sending out the questionnaires. Even though the first mailing to the graduates was administered simultaneously, it is noticeable that the dates of the second mailing spread out a bit more. Finally, only a minority of institutions were able to carry out the fourth and fifth contacts as originally scheduled. Eight institutions could only conduct three mailings, and one of the 45 institutions is missing all documentation of the field phase, and research in this matter came to no avail.

4. Response Time and Response Behaviour – Definition of the Test Groups

The scope of the study of the 2008 graduates included an examination of potential differences between those people who responded to the very first contact and those who only responded to a later contact. This examination was based on the idea that follow-up mailings or reminders could also be understood as a "survey of non-respondents" as a consequence of the first contact. During the field phase, all people who can be reached by regular mail were to be contacted as well as encouraged to reply up to four times (see figure 1). Only people, who have not partaken in the survey at the time of the printing of the reminder letter, were to be contacted and reminded repeatedly. Should a postal address turn out to be out of date or undeliverable, this address is to be updated, and the procedure of contacting shall begin anew for this person. This new address might also turn out to be out of date, necessitating another update and a new letter establishing the first contact. It is further possible that the postal service only submits information about non-deliverability to an address after the second, third, or even fourth contact. In these cases, the procedure for updating addresses will set in relatively late in the entire process. The goal of the updating process is to minimize a drop in participation due to out dated addresses. Out of 76,500 people, 14,600 could at first not be reached due to out dated addresses. For 7,600 of these people, addresses could be updated, hence reached through the postal service. Ultimately, a valid address could not be ascertained for 7,000 people and these people could verifiably not be reached. The

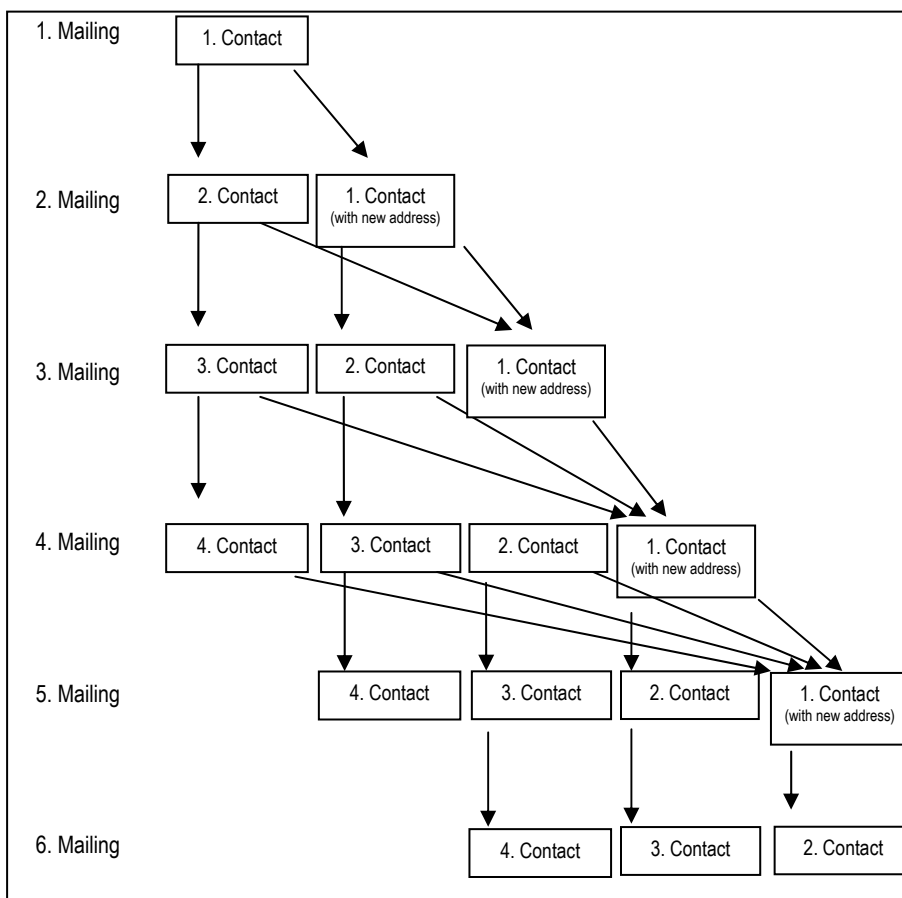
⁷ This was followed by a phase of follow-up contacts to addresses that could initially not be reached, but were updated during the process of the survey. This time period lasted until the 4th calendar week of 2010 (January 26, 2010).

⁸ Originally, field work was to begin on September 29, 2009 during the 40th calendar week, but this date needed to be delayed by two weeks due to technical problems. Seven institutions did not accept this change of date, and began field work in the 40th calendar week. Seven institutions had minor problems shortly before the scheduled starting date for the field phase, and began field work one to two weeks late. At one institution, field work was delayed by three weeks. The other 30 institutions began the survey on schedule in the 42nd calendar week of 2009.

⁹ The minimum is 119 days, the maximum is 162 days.

date of response is documented for almost 24,000 participants of the online survey. These survey participants split into two groups according to the response date: the “early respondents”, and the “late respondents”. Those who responded before the date of the general second mailing are classified as early respondents and those people who responded after the date of the general second mailing are defined as late respondents. So late respondents are persons which not responding for the first invitation and therefore late respondents can be described as non-respondents of the first contact. The underlying idea behind this approach is that every single subject in a surveyed population has an individual position on the so called “response continuum”. It ranges from ‘will never respond’ to ‘will always respond’. The assumption is that non-respondents will be located more close to ‘will never respond’. Graduates who require more reminders before they participate would have been non-respondents if the data collection had stopped earlier. Therefore, late respondents are assumed as more similar to non-respondents. This assumption has been called ‘the continuum of resistance model’ (see e.g. Lin and Schaeffer 1995 or Kaminska / McCutcheon and Billiet 2010).¹⁰ Due to the process of updating addresses, the separation of the two groups ends up being slightly imprecise. For some people, the general second mailing represents only their first contact at an individual level. Similarly, the third or fourth mailing could represent the first contact at an individual level (see figure 1). The resulting imprecision, however, only affects a small section of the survey participants (below 10%). Should distinct differences emerge between the early and the late respondents, these differences would be measurable despite the imprecision described above.

Figure 1. Progress of field phase



¹⁰ A similar approach was already used before e.g. by Goldhor (1974).

More than 10,000 (43%) of study participants responded before the second mailing, and almost 14,000 responded only after the second mailing (see table 2).

Table 2. Time period of survey participation (count and per cent)

		Total of surveyed persons by the KOAB Tracer Study 2010		Valid cases for research question after response date	
		Count	Per cent	Count	Per cent
Online responses	Early respondents (response before the second mailing)	10,255	31	10,255	43
	Late respondents (response after the date of the second mailing)	13,571	41	13,571	57
	Date of response not documented	2,763	8	-	-
Paper responses	Date of response not documented	5,656	17	-	-
Other	Without documentation of survey method and date of response	650	2	-	-
Total		32,895	100	23,826	100

5. Results

The assessment of the study programme is measured with 35 core items (see table 3 and tables 10 and 11 in the appendix). Furthermore some participating institutions used additional individual items. In the following parts only core items are taken into consideration. The core items were derived from other European studies (CHEERS and REFLEX) and were discussed and sometimes slightly changed in cooperation with the participating institutions. The used items cover in total eight aspects of the study programme: practice orientation, reference to science, organisation of the study programme, quality of teaching, advice and guidance, facilities, career support and foreign languages.

Table 3 shows the means of the assessment (measured with a 5 point scale) and the percentages of positive assessments. Both are shown for the two test groups. The differences in the means between the early respondents and the late respondents are very small. No difference is bigger than 0.1. All differences are within the standard deviation. The differences between the percentages of positive assessments are also very small. No difference is bigger than 3 per cent. In total, the numbers show no clear evidence for the thesis that late respondents are more critical towards their study programme.

Table 3. Assessment of study programme part I (per cent and mean values)¹¹

	Early respondents (response prior to date of second mailing)	Late respondents (response after date of second mailing)	Total	Early respondents (response prior to date of second mailing)	Late respondents (response after date of second mailing)	Total
	Mean values			Amount of positive assessments (in per cent)		
Schedule and coordination of courses	2.6	2.6	2.6	50	49	50
Access to obligatory courses (e.g. seminars, tutorials)	2.4	2.5	2.4	59	57	58
Possibility to complete study requirements in the provided time	2.6	2.7	2.6	52	50	50
Exam system and organisation	2.7	2.7	2.7	49	46	47
Design and structure of study course	2.6	2.7	2.6	50	47	49
Preparation for using literature in other foreign languages	3.8	3.7	3.7	14	14	14
Preparation for communication in the field of study in foreign languages	3.9	3.9	3.9	11	12	12
Acquisition of scientific work methods	2.6	2.7	2.6	51	48	49
Training for oral presentations	3.0	3.1	3.0	39	36	37
Writing of scientific texts	2.9	2.9	2.9	42	39	40
Teaching methods - contemporary	2.5	2.5	2.5	55	53	54
Quality of teaching – didactics	2.8	2.8	2.8	39	39	39
Quality of teaching – subject related content	2.1	2.1	2.1	77	75	76
Possibilities for field-oriented specialisation	2.4	2.5	2.5	56	53	54
Relation to research of teaching and learning	2.8	2.8	2.8	41	40	40
Contact with teaching staff	2.4	2.5	2.5	57	54	55
Contact with fellow students	1.8	1.9	1.9	83	81	82
Count	10,255	13,571	23,826	8,558	11,207	19,765

Question: How do you evaluate the following offerings and conditions in your subject field? Response scale 1 = very good ... 5 = very poor. The "amount of positive assessments" refers to the sum of the answers listing either 1 or 2.

The professional situation at the response date is measured in a question with multiple responses and was then recoded into six categories as shown in table 4. The allocation of the six categories within the two test groups is very similar. The only nearly noteworthy difference can be found at the "Professional training" category which could be a reason for the difference in the "regular employment" category. This is related to the phase of professional training which is mandatory for some professions and fields of study. Even a detailed examination by subject fields (see Table 8 and Table 9 in the Appendix) does not show fundamental differences. In total, the numbers show no evidence for the thesis that late respondents are less often in a regular employment or more often unemployed.

¹¹ See appendix (tables 10 and 11) for the tables of part II and part III of assessment of study programme.

Table 4. Situation at the response date by response time (per cent)

	Early respondents (response prior to date of second mailing)	Late respondents (response after date of second mailing)	Total
Regular employment	47	50	49
Professional training / teacher training, etc.	20	17	18
Work Study (parallel)	16	16	16
Only studies	11	11	11
Looking for work	2	3	2
Other	3	4	4
Count	8,936	11,696	20,632

Question: What is your current employment situation?
Answers grouped

The question of professional success is here indicated in six aspects: Duration of job search, gross income, fulltime employment, vertical match (level-appropriate employment), horizontal match (utilization of qualifications) and job satisfaction. For the graduates with regular employment the duration of job search is in total around 3 months. The difference between early and late respondents in duration of job search is around one week. Also for the other selected aspects of professional success of those graduates in “regular employment”, again no differences can be detected between the groups examined here (see Table 5). With regard to the question of the professional situation and job satisfaction at the time of the survey, the assumption that early respondents are particularly more successful or more satisfied people cannot be verified.

Table 5. Aspects of professional success at the date of response by response time, “regularly employed” only

		Early respondents (response prior to date of second mailing)	Late respondents (response after date of second mailing)	Total
Duration of job search in months ^I	Mean	3.0	2.8	2.9
Monthly gross income of current/last employment ^{II}	Mean	3,057 €	3,073 €	3,066 €
Full-time employment - current employment ^{III}	per cent	89	89	89
Level-appropriate employment ^{IV}	per cent	83	84	84
High utilization of qualifications ^V	per cent	86	86	86
High job satisfaction ^{VI}	per cent	91	90	90
Count		4,097	5,581	9,678

^I Question: “How many months did you search for a first job in total? If you have not found a job yet, how many months has your search taken so far? Please exclude temporary non study related jobbing.”

^{II} Question: “What is your current gross monthly income? (incl. special payments and overtime)” Response scale of 20 categories

^{III} Question: “What is the number of regular / contract hours in your current employment?” 35 contract hours per week and more were recoded as fulltime employment

^{IV} Question: “In your opinion, which academic degree is best suited for your current job?” Options “A higher academic degree” and “My academic degree” were recodes as “Level-appropriate employment”

^V Question: “In your opinion, what field of study is most appropriate for your current job?” Options “Exclusively own field” and “Own or a related field” were recodes as “High utilization of qualifications”

^{VI} Question: “How satisfied are you with your current job situation?” Response scale from 1 “Very satisfied” ... 5 “Very dissatisfied”

Small differences between early and late respondents are visible with regard to the gender of the graduates and the field of study. In general higher number of men belong to the group of late respondents. This difference can be found more or less clearly in five out of nine study field groups. A small reverse difference is visible for one study field group, i.e., Law Economics and Social Sciences. For the field of study can also found slight differences between the groups. In “Medicine” a higher number of graduates responds late than in “Linguistics and Cultural Sciences”.

Table 6. Sex and field of study (grouped) by response time (per cent)

	Male		Female		Total	
	Early respondents (response prior to date of second mailing)	Late respondents (response after date of second mailing)	Early respondents (response prior to date of second mailing)	Late respondents (response after date of second mailing)	Early respondents (response prior to date of second mailing)	Late respondents (response after date of second mailing)
Linguistic and Cultural Sciences	46	54	46	54	46	54
Sport	38	62	44	56	41	59
Law, Economics and Social Sciences	44	56	41	59	43	57
Mathematics and Natural Sciences	43	57	47	53	44	56
Medicine	36	64	41	59	39	61
Agriculture	39	61	40	60	40	60
Engineering	40	60	40	60	40	60
Art	39	61	44	56	43	57
Other	37	63	47	53	44	56
Total	42	58	44	56	43	57

Questions:

"In which field of study were you (or are you currently) studying in this study? [...] Please consider major and minor subjects, if applicable."
 "What is your gender?"

6. Conclusion

A comparison of the mean of the final grades to the level of satisfaction with the course of study and the current job situation shows that there are no fundamental differences between the two groups (see table 7). The discrepancy between the satisfaction with the course of study and the satisfaction with the current job situation is minimal and clearly within the standard deviation. Therefore, these minimal differences are negligible. The comparison of individual evaluation items does not show noteworthy differences between early and late respondents either.

Table 7. Final grade, general satisfaction with study programme, and general satisfaction with current job situation by date of response (mean values)

	Early respondents (response prior to date of second mailing)	Late respondents (response after date of second mailing)	Standard deviation
	Mean	Mean	
Final or average grade	1.9	1.9	.57
General satisfaction with study programme*	2.3	2.4	.90
Satisfaction with current employment situation**	2.3	2.4	.99

* Question: How would you rate your satisfaction with your course of studies from today's perspective?

Response scale 1 = very satisfied ... 5 = very dissatisfied

** Question: How would you rate your satisfaction with your general professional situation?

Response scale 1 = very satisfied ... 5 = very dissatisfied

In conclusion the comparison shows no fundamental differences between the early respondents and the late respondents according to assessment and satisfaction with study programme, study success (final grade), or actual professional situation and satisfaction with current professional situation. None of the indicators support the thesis that only successful people participate in tracer studies. On the basis of the report at hand, one can safely assume that tracer studies provide valid information about the entry into the labour market and the workplace as well as about retrospective evaluations of study programmes.

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a. Appendix

Table 8. Job situation by subject field and date of response (per cent)

	Regular employment	Professional training / teacher training etc.	Work Study (parallel)	Only studies	Looking for employment	Other	Sum of row	n
Linguistics and Cultural Studies Early	34	36	13	11	2	4	100	2,077
Linguistics and Cultural Studies Late	34	34	13	11	3	5	100	2,448
Law, Economics, and Social Sciences Early	61	15	11	7	3	3	100	2,416
Law, Economics, and Social Sciences Late	59	16	10	8	3	4	100	3,173
Mathematics/Natural Sciences Early	38	18	23	17	2	3	100	2,157
Mathematics/Natural Sciences Late	44	12	23	17	2	2	100	2,722
School of Medicine/Health Sciences Early	27	19	40	2	1	11	100	243
School of Medicine/Health Sciences Late	32	17	37	4	1	9	100	396
Agricultural and Nutritional Sciences, Forestry Early	47	5	13	26	4	5	100	276
Agricultural and Nutritional Sciences, Forestry Late	47	9	12	24	4	6	100	408
Engineering Early	63	6	19	7	3	2	100	1,324
Engineering Late	67	5	16	7	3	3	100	1,975
Art, Music, Design Early	49	23	11	6	3	7	100	324
Art, Music, Design Late	50	21	11	9	4	5	100	414
Other Early	37	43	10	8	1	2	100	104
Other Late	45	40	6	1	2	5	100	150
Total	49	18	16	11	2	4	100	20,607

The distribution of subject fields follows the categories of the Federal Office of Statistics (*Statistisches Bundesamt*). The subject fields "Physical Education" and "Veterinary Medicine", however, were subsumed under "Other".

Early = early respondents (responses prior to date of second mailing)

Late = late respondents (responses after date of second mailing)

Table 9. Professional situation by type of degree and date of response (per cent)

a	Regular employment	Professional training / teacher training etc.	Work Study (parallel)	Only studies	Looking for employment	Other	Sum of row	Count
Bachelor-UAS Early	47	6	16	26	1	3	100	202
Bachelor-UAS Late	45	5	14	25	6	5	100	223
Master-UAS Early	83	4	8	-	4	1	100	77
Master-UAS Late	78	3	8	2	5	5	100	104
Diplom - UAS Early	79	4	6	5	2	4	100	1,066
Diplom-UAS Late	79	4	6	4	3	4	100	1,557
Bachelor-U Early	15	11	20	48	2	4	100	1,181
Bachelor-U Late	15	10	18	51	2	4	100	1,419
Master-U Early	49	15	21	8	4	4	100	383
Master-U Late	52	12	18	9	4	6	100	520
Diploma-U Early	59	8	22	5	3	3	100	3,217
Diploma-U Late	59	7	22	6	2	3	100	4,215
M.A. Early	51	14	18	7	5	5	100	721
M.A. Late	50	15	17	7	5	7	100	857
Teaching Degree Early	8	84	4	1	0	2	100	1,089
Teaching Degree Late	13	78	4	1	1	2	100	1,244
Other State Examina (Staatsexamen) Early	16	45	31	3	1	4	100	472
Other State Examina (Staatsexamen) Late	22	41	27	5	1	5	100	719
Doctorate Early	86	5	2	-	2	6	100	485
Doctorate Late	85	5	2	0	2	6	100	766
Other Early	38	38	6	9	-	9	100	32
Other Late	46	30	6	6	4	7	100	69
Count	49	18	16	11	2	4	100	20,618

Early = early respondents (responses before the date of the second mailing)

Late = late respondents (responses after the date of the second mailing)

Table 10. Assessment of study programme part II (per cent and mean values)

	Early respondents (response prior to date of second mailing)	Late respondents (response after date of second mailing)	Total	Early respondents (response prior to date of second mailing)	Late respondents (response after date of second mailing)	Total
	Mean values			Amount of positive assessments (in per cent)		
Professional advice and guidance provided by teaching staff	2.5	2.5	2.5	57	54	56
Discussion of written examinations, assignments etc.	3.0	3.0	3.0	38	36	37
Individual occupational advice in your field	3.7	3.7	3.7	13	13	13
Individual study advice in your field	3.2	3.3	3.2	27	25	26
Count	10,255	13,571	23,826	8,558	11,207	19,765

Question: How do you assess the following elements relating to advising and guidance in your subject field? Response scale 1 = very good ... 5 = very poor. The "amount of positive assessments" refers to the sum of the answers listing either 1 or 2.

Table 11. Assessment of study programme part III (per cent and mean values)

	Early respondents (response prior to date of second mailing)	Late respondents (response after date of second mailing)	Total	Early respondents (response prior to date of second mailing)	Late respondents (response after date of second mailing)	Total
	Mean Values			Amount of positive assessments (in per cent)		
Subject matters (teaching contents) are up to date with regards to practical requirements	2.7	2.7	2.7	47	45	46
Relationship between theory and practice	3.0	3.0	3.0	34	34	34
Preparation for work	3.5	3.5	3.5	18	18	18
Preparation for using literature in english language	3.7	3.6	3.6	16	16	16
Preparation for communication in the field of study in english language	3.8	3.8	3.8	12	12	12
Support with employment search	4.1	4.0	4.0	8	9	8
Offers for profession-oriented courses	3.7	3.7	3.7	13	13	13
Support with internship search	3.6	3.6	3.6	17	17	17
Teaching staff with practical experience	3.1	3.1	3.1	33	32	32
Practice-oriented teaching contents	3.1	3.0	3.0	32	30	31
Study projects	3.1	3.1	3.1	33	33	33
Mandatory internships / practice semesters	2.9	2.9	2.9	41	41	41
Courses on technical, environmental, economic, social, cultural and / or psychological impacts of scientific applications (e.g. technological consequences)	3.5	3.5	3.5	16	16	16
Offers for acquisition of key competencies	3.3	3.3	3.3	23	22	22
Count	10,255	13,571	23,826	8,558	11,207	19,765

Question: How do you assess the following practice- and job-oriented elements of your subject field? Response scale 1 = very good ... 5 = very poor. The "amount of positive assessments" refers to the sum of the answers listing either 1 or 2.