

Abstracts (englisch)

Petra Radke, Wiebke Störmann

Qualification and equal opportunities

Starting point for the analyses is the aim to diminish the existing wage differences between men and women and to ameliorate the prospects of promotion as well as career for women. Wage discrimination against women can be partially explained by longer interruption of their working careers after childbirth. Despite the fact that women tended to increase their engagement in the market in contrast to men, there remains, at least to a certain degree, the traditional pattern of specialization: men are in charge of securing the family's income and women are responsible for household production during parental leave. This paper extends the traditional fertility model of New Home Economics by relaxing the hypothesis of perfect substitutability between parental leave and household production time after working hours. The model shows that an extended supply of qualification programs during parental leave can reduce the gap between men's and women's earnings. This result does not always hold if there exists employment protection legislation and if the bargaining power of the employees is low.

Carsten Beyse, Gerd Möll

Single production in East Germany - a promising production concept with no future?

Against the background of the ongoing process of de-industrialisation in East Germany, this paper discusses the prerequisites and prospects of an alternative to mass-production: the small-batch and customized production. With reference to an important part of the machinery manufacturing industry it is stated, that there is a growing discrepancy between the qualification, knowledge, organisational forms and technology, many East German firms do rely on, and the new challenges of taylor-made production. To fill this gap internal restructurings may be necessary for the firms, but this will not be sufficient. Especially smaller firms could make the experience that complex customized production will be beyond their scope. Therefore, it will be more and more important for them to establish cooperative forms of inter-firm relationships.

Arnd Brinkmann, Joachim Fidorra

Transition to flexible working hours in the area of conflict between working time politics and wishes

Presented by using working time preferences of female and male drivers in the public local traffic transport

The present direction of relating discussions as to how to make working time more flexible leads to the fear that the character of legitimation of economically justifiable decisions hinder the view on the social component of time structures. Thus, it is not realised that the time of the day and the length of working times influence not only the physical well-being of the employees but also open or close individual chances for a good quality of life. In this context results of an empirical research in the public short-distance transport will be shown in the following article. The high meaning of this chance to take part in the social life can be seen from the working time preferences of the driving staff in the public short-distance transport. For most of them the „standard“ working time has always been a foreign word.

Peter Mehnert

Maintenance of industrial health and safety standards in the butcher's craft

At present it is estimated that 40 to 50% of the workforce in Germany is employed in small-scale enterprises. Not much is known about occupational health and safety problems in these enterprises. The aim of the present study was to investigate the work environment in the butcher's craft and to develop measures for the reduction of stress and strain at the workplace. Manual material handling turned out to be an essential physical stress factor. High prevalences were found for musculoskeletal disorders. Cold, draft and alterations of air temperature as well as complaints in the respiratory system were reported frequently. Particular draft was named as a climatic stress factor. Ergonomic deficits were found with the lighting especially for machine operators. Among the psychological stress factors time pressure, stress, overtime and disturbances of the work process were prevailing.