BACKGROUND

European Higher Education Area (EHEA): supranational network with common standards in HE and joint support for mobility and intercultural exchange.

EHEA’s current strategic priority: policies of social inclusion and campus diversity.

Widening participation (WP): encourage underrepresented groups to enroll & succeed in degree programs.

Public school system is tracked with staggered choices of school tracks around the ages of 10 and 16. Available at the second decision point is track-upgrading to specialized high-track schools (THTS).

The SHTS track substitutes for the standard pre-university graduation track offered by traditional high-track schools (THTS).

SHTS contribute at least one third of all annually issued university entrance certificates.

Universities are not allowed to treat SHTS graduates and THTS graduates differently.

Census data for Germany, survey data covering all universities; aggregate evidence gives an ad hoc idea of principle capability of SHTS to mitigate ethnic penalties and facilitate upward mobility, closing graduation gap.

Nationwide survey of first year students (Business Administration, Economics, Business & Law, Business Engineering, Business Informatics): discrete choice analysis over mutually exclusive educational routes to university.

Random utility approach rooted in human capital theory of education.

DATA AND METHODS

MAIN FINDINGS

SHTS high track almost mimics the school population characteristics in terms of migration background and (low) parental schooling attainments

Second-generation immigrants are, ceteris paribus, 14.2% points more likely to taking the SHTS-route to university

Students from less educated family backgrounds are 7.4% points more likely to benefit from using the SHST-pathway

Contrarily, students from academic households over prefer the standard THTS-route to university

REFERENCES

RESULTS

Conclusions

Identify/approve a reliable educational practice suitable for an experimental roll-out across the EHEA to promote the success of historically underrepresented groups.

Results suggest that SHTS establish a good educational practice capable of alleviating disadvantages in the achievements of vulnerable groups, as they prepare for fully fledged university admission and systematically foster enrolment of students with less educated parents

SHTS promote equal educational opportunities by supporting upward mobility, mitigating educational disparities resulting from early tracking

A lesson learned is that keeping young adults in compulsory education sufficiently long and, at the same time, encouraging them to upgrade school tracks off the standard trail creates social innovation that helps to put forward the goal of social inclusion within the European Higher Education Area (EHEA).

Questions

(1) As compared to their native peers at university, do second-generation immigrants over prefer up-tracking to SHTS?

(2) How does parental education relate to the usage of the SHTS practice?

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The data used in the paper were provided by JGU Mainz. Data Collection was funded by the German Federal Ministry of Education and Research (Grant Numbers 01PK15001A, 01PK15001B).