Field-of-Study Homogamy

Alena Bičáková and Štěpán Jurajda
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Abstract

This paper reports evidence on the strong tendency of the college educated to match with partners who graduated in the same field of study—a dimension of assortative matching that has been overlooked thus far. We employ Labor Force Survey data covering most EU countries to measure the extent of field-of-study homogamy in prevailing married and cohabiting couples within several years of college graduation. We find that field-of-study homogamy increases almost immediately after graduation to reach very high levels, especially for spouses working in the same industry, and that it varies dramatically across countries. Graduates in Social Sciences display a particularly strong tendency towards homogamy and also have the highest matching theory-implied match gains from homogamous matches.

JEL Codes: I23, J13, J16

Keywords: Field-of-Study Homogamy, College Graduates, Marriage and Cohabitation

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Address  CERGE-EI, a joint workplace of Charles University in Prague and the Economics Institute of the Czech Academy of Sciences, Politických veznu 7, P.O. Box 882, 111 21 Prague 1, Czech Republic. E-mail: alena.bicakova@cerge-ei.cz, stepan.jurajda@cerge-ei.cz