



IWPLMS 2016 BOOK of ABSTRACTS

<http://ddd.uab.cat/record/167415>

SAME JOB, DIFFERENT TASKS: THE HETEROGENEITY OF TASK CONTENT AND METHODS ACROSS OCCUPATIONS IN EUROPE

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ABSTRACT

Occupations are more or less coherent bundles of tasks. However, mechanisms such as seniority rules or differences in competences between equally skilled workers may lead to differences in the actual bundle of tasks performed by workers within the same occupation. Also, different types of task content may be more or less occupation-specific, or differently affected by occupation-unrelated factors such as organizational culture. Until recently, data limitations have rarely allowed for a detailed exploration of these sources of within-occupation task heterogeneity. In this paper, using a newly developed tasks framework and international data from PIAAC and EWCS, we empirically test the degree of within-job heterogeneity in tasks in Europe, discussing the importance of country differences and other determinants of this heterogeneity. We also evaluate the relevance of within-task heterogeneity for understanding change over time in the overall distribution of task content in the economy.

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