

Irene Kriesi, Marlis Buchmann & Stefan Sacchi, 2010:

Variation in Job Opportunities for Men and Women in the Swiss Labor Market 1962-1989

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Abstract: For the period of the 1960s to the late 1980s, this paper examines variation in job opportunities for men and women in the occupationally segmented and highly gender segregated Swiss labor market. Job opportunities are defined as the volume of job openings potentially accessible to individuals with given skills and other desired characteristics. They are conceptualized within the queuing approach, taking into account the structure and cyclical fluctuations of the Swiss labor market. Theoretical arguments about employers' criteria for ranking workers are abundant. However, the testing of the corresponding hypotheses has often been hampered due to the difficulty of measuring individual job opportunities empirically. This paper attempts to advance this research field by proposing an individual-level and time-dependent measurement of job opportunities based on annual occupation-level job advertisement data. It yields an indicator of the volume of job opportunities accessible to workers with given occupation-specific credentials and other job relevant characteristics (i.e., gender, age, work experience). Based on separate regression analyses for men and women, job opportunities for salient groups of labor-market participants and their ranking within the labor queues are assessed. The findings, which differ markedly by gender, show that macro-level processes, such as the economic cycle, play an important role for men's job opportunities in particular. Furthermore, job opportunities strongly depend on occupational credentials whereas educational attainment plays a minor part. Age and cohort effects are found mainly for women. These findings imply that in occupationally segmented and sex-segregated labor markets occupational credentials and sex serve as employers' primary ranking criteria.