

1 **Supplementary File**

2 **Table A1.** Distribution of independent variables within the educational pathways identified by
 3 sequence analysis.

Variable	pathways					
	#1	#2	#3	#4	#5	#6
School performance:						
Final grade in school ^{a)}	2.78	2.49	2.57	2.45	2.70	2.63
Probability of success:						
Self-assessed chance to successfully complete study ^{b)}	3.92	3.45	3.72	3.57	3.72	3.89
Anticipated costs:						
Monetary study costs ^{c)}	-0.26	0.73	0.27	0.52	1.43	1.54
Non-Monetary (social) costs ^{d)}	3.15	2.80	2.95	3.07	2.68	2.94
Anticipated benefits:						
<i>Material benefits</i>						
- Relative expectation "well-paid job" ^{e)}	0.89	0.70	0.80	0.62	0.86	0.92
- Relative expectation "not be jobless" ^{e)}	0.10	0.08	0.03	0.03	0.15	0.43
<i>Status-related benefits</i>						
- Relative expectation "prestigious job" ^{e)}	0.91	0.74	0.71	0.72	0.76	1.02
<i>Non-material benefits</i>						
- An inclination towards "practical work" as a motive for post-school pathway ^{f)}	4.25	4.63	4.32	4.42	4.25	4.31
- Importance "Opportunity for scientific work" for post-school pathway ^{g)}	2.89	2.71	2.89	2.76	2.80	3.08
Significant others:						
"Most of my friends want to take up higher education after school" ^{h)}	3.91	3.18	3.42	3.67	3.49	3.37
Parental preference for higher education	44.76	25.89	27.45	25.40	29.79	25.25
HISEI (vertical percentage):						
low SES	17.5	29.3	31.4	28.9	35.3	47.0
middle SES	44.2	43.9	43.1	45.2	43.9	41.9
high SES	38.3	26.7	25.5	25.9	20.8	11.1
N (total 6,751)	4,798	671	631	286	229	136

4 Notes: All results are adjusted to the statistical population using design weights. ^{a)} 1 = sufficient to 4 = very good;
 5 ^{b)} 1 = very low to 5 = very high; ^{c)} Index of four variables: (1) role that costs generally have in the study decision
 6 (1 = no influence to 5 = great influence), (2) difficulty for respondents and their families to cover various costs
 7 during studies (1 = very easy to 5 = very difficult), (3) "Early financial independence" as a motive for post-school
 8 pathway (1 = of no importance to 6 = very important), (4) loss of income as Opportunity costs (1 = very low to 5
 9 very high); ^{d)} Index of two variables (1 = unimportant to 5 = very important): (1) Importance of "Closeness to
 10 home" when choosing the place of work or study, (2) Importance of "parents, relatives or friends live in the place
 11 of VET/study" when choosing the place of work or study); ^{e)} 1 = very bad to 5 = very good; ^{f)} 1 = of no importance
 12 to 6 = very important; ^{g)} 1 = very unimportant to 5 = very important; ^{h)} 1 = doesn't apply at all to 5 = applies
 13 completely. Source: DZHW Panel of School Leavers 2018; authors' own translation and calculation.

14 **Table A2.** Logistic regression for the study decision (average marginal effects)

	M1	M2	M3	M4
Pathway to higher education entrance qualification (ref.: #1: General upper sec. schoolers)				
#2: Practice-orientated vocational schoolers	-0.26 ***	-0.23 ***	-0.18 ***	-0.07 ***
#3: Specialized (vocational) grammar schoolers	-0.10 ***	-0.08 **	-0.05 *	-0.02
#4: General upper secondary school upgraders	-0.15 ***	-0.12 ***	-0.07 *	-0.03
#5: Back to school after VET	-0.11 **	-0.07 *	0.07 *	-0.01
#6: Evening schoolers	-0.04	-0.01	-0.01	0.02
SES (HISEI/10)		0.03 ***	0.02 ***	0.00
Final grade in school (1= sufficient; 4= very good)			0.11 ***	0.06 ***
Probability of success				0.06 ***
Anticipated costs:				
Monetary study costs (index)				-0.04 ***
Social costs (index)				-0.02 ***
Anticipated benefits:				
Relative expectation "well-paid job"				0.02 *
Relative expectation "prestigious work"				0.01 *
Relative expectation "not be jobless"				0.02 **
Motive "practical work" (non-monetary benefit)				-0.05 ***
Motive "work scientifically"				0.04 ***
Significant others:				
Friends want to study				0.03 ***
Parental preference: higher education (Ref.: no preference for HE)				0.13 ***
N	6,751	6,751	6,751	6,751
Pseudo R² (McFadden)	0.04	0.06	0.11	0.21

15 Note: Adjusted for gender and migration background; weighted results. *= p<0.05; **p<0.01; ***p<0.00.

16 Source: DZHW Panel of School Leavers 2018; authors' own calculation

17

18 **Table A3.** Non-linear decomposition for the effect of the *practice-orientated vocational schoolers* versus
 19 the *general upper secondary schoolers* (KHB-method)

	M1	M2	M3	M4
Effect Decomposition	Coeff. (AME)	Coeff. (AME)	Coeff. (AME)	Coeff. (AME)
Reduced Model	-0.22	-0.22	-0.23	-0.23
Full Model	-0.20	-0.15	-0.10	-0.07
Difference	-0.03	-0.07	-0.01	-0.16
Confounding percentage overall	11.42	31.18	54.41	68.36
Confounding percentage single variables				
SES (HISEI/10)	11.42	7.56	3.30	2.39
Final grade in school (1= sufficient; 4= very good)		24.62	14.14	13.03
Probability of success			15.04	13.09
Anticipated costs:				
Monetary study costs (index)			5.72	4.99
Social costs (index)			2.41	2.33
Anticipated benefits:				
Relative expectation "well-paid job"			2.22	1.64
Relative expectation "prestigious work"			1.01	0.30
Relative expectation "not be jobless"			0.50	0.43
Motive "practical work" (non-monetary benefit)			6.18	6.19
Motive "work scientifically"			3.89	3.66
Significant others:				
Friends want to study				7.45
Parental preference: higher education (ref.: no preference for HE)				12.84
N	5,469	5,469	5,469	5,469

20 Note: Adjusted for gender and migration background; weighted results. Source: DZHW Panel of School Leavers
 21 2018; authors' own calculation

22

23 **Table A4.** Non-linear decomposition for the effect of the *specialized (vocational) grammar schoolers*
 24 *versus the general upper secondary schoolers* (KHB-method)

	M1	M2	M3	M4
Effect Decomposition	Coeff. (AME)	Coeff. (AME)	Coeff. (AME)	Coeff. (AME)
Reduced Model	-0.09	-0.09	-0.09	-0.10
Full Model	-0.07	-0.04	-0.03	-0.16
Difference	-0.25	-0.05	-0.06	-0.09
Confounding percentage overall	27.09	54.02	65.49	84.01
Confounding percentage single variables				
SES (HISEI/10)	27.09	16.34	4.83	2.79
Final grade in school (1= sufficient; 4= very good)		37.68	21.04	18.45
Probability of success			13.96	11.95
Anticipated costs:				
Monetary study costs (index)			7.59	6.65
Social costs (index)			4.30	3.93
Anticipated benefits:				
Relative expectation "well-paid job"			1.51	0.73
Relative expectation "prestigious work"			6.04	4.11
Relative expectation "not be jobless"			1.16	1.07
Motive "practical work" (non-monetary benefit)			2.84	2.77
Motive "work scientifically"			2.22	2.01
Significant others:				
Friends want to study				10.90
Parental preference: higher education (ref.: no preference for HE)				18.66
N	5,429	5,429	5,429	5,429

25 Note: Adjusted for gender and migration background; weighted results. Source: DZHW Panel of School Leavers
 26 2018; authors' own calculation

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28 **Table A5.** Non-linear decomposition for the effect of the *general upper secondary school upgraders*
 29 versus the *general upper secondary schoolers* (KHB-method)

	M1	M2	M3	M4
Effect Decomposition	Coeff. (AME)	Coeff. (AME)	Coeff. (AME)	Coeff. (AME)
Reduced Model	-0.13	-0.13	-0.13	-0.14
Full Model	-0.10	-0.05	-0.03	-0.03
Difference	-0.03	-0.08	-0.10	-0.11
Confounding percentage overall	22.43	59.39	71.56	81.65
Confounding percentage single variables				
SES (HISEI/10)	22.43	13.72	5.67	4.36
Final grade in school (1= sufficient; 4= very good)		45.67	25.97	22.35
Probability of success			14.79	12.83
Anticipated costs:				
Monetary study costs (index)			9.38	8.35
Social costs (index)			0.79	0.76
Anticipated benefits:				
Relative expectation "well-paid job"			2.75	1.61
Relative expectation "prestigious work"			4.19	2.80
Relative expectation "not be jobless"			1.18	1.06
Motive "practical work" (non-monetary benefit)			5.26	5.06
Motive "work scientifically"			2.60	2.39
Significant others:				
Friends want to study				3.03
Parental preference: (ref.: no preference for HE)				17.06
N	5,084	5,084	5,084	5,084

30 Note: Adjusted for gender and migration background; weighted results. Source: DZHW Panel of School Leavers
 31 2018; authors' own calculation

32

33 **Table A6.** Non-linear decomposition for the effect of the *back to school after VET* versus the *general*
 34 *upper secondary schoolers* (KHB-method)

	M1	M2	M3	M4
Effect Decomposition	Coeff. (AME)	Coeff. (AME)	Coeff. (AME)	Coeff. (AME)
Reduced Model	-0.09	-0.10	-0.10	-0.11
Full Model	-0.05	-0.06	-0.03	-0.01
Difference	-0.04	-0.04	-0.08	-0.10
Confounding percentage overall	42.33	40.94	74.18	88.46
Confounding percentage single variables				
SES (HISEI/10)	42.33	25.89	12.32	9.15
Final grade in school (1= sufficient; 4= very good)		15.05	8.44	7.47
Probability of success			11.99	9.95
Anticipated costs:				
Monetary study costs (index)			26.67	23.10
Social costs (index)			4.02	3.74
Anticipated benefits:				
Relative expectation "well-paid job"			0.52	0.34
Relative expectation "prestigious work"			3.63	2.42
Relative expectation "not be jobless"			0.77	0.66
Motive "practical work" (non-monetary benefit)			1.43	1.37
Motive "work scientifically"			4.40	3.93
Significant others:				
Friends want to study				10.22
Parental preference: higher education (ref.: no preference for HE)				16.33
N	5,027	5,027	5,027	5,027

35 Note: Adjusted for gender and migration background; weighted results. Source: DZHW Panel of School Leavers
 36 2018; authors' own calculation.