



The post-pandemic labour market. Video interviews with IAB Director Bernd Fitzenberger

Jutta Winters

The whole world is talking about COVID-19. The hard lockdown in December this year threatens to send the German economy into recession. But this crisis too will pass. In a three-part interview series conducted in early November, IAB Director Bernd Fitzenberger risked a glance at the post-pandemic labour market.

IAB Director Bernd Fitzenberger focusses on the labour market after the pandemic in an article published in late October 2020 in the collection [“Jenseits von Corona. Unsere Welt nach der Pandemie – Perspektiven aus der Wissenschaft”](#) (“Beyond Corona. Our World After the Pandemic – A Scientific Outlook”), edited by Prof. Dr. Dr. h.c. Bernd Kortmann and Prof. Dr. Günther G. Schulze. He highlights various aspects of this topic in three video interviews.

1. Video: How will Germany weather the COVID-19 crisis?

In this video interview, produced before the December lockdown, Bernd Fitzenberger gives his opinion on how Germany is handling the COVID-19 crisis. “The short-time working scheme

Quelle:

<https://www.iab-forum.de/en/the-post-pandemic-labour-market-video-interviews-with-iab-director-bernd-fitzenberger/> | 1

is a huge safety net for the German economy and for the labour market and helps preventing sharp increases in unemployment”, explained the IAB director. According to him, also the social security systems are playing an important role. Mr Fitzenberger explains that the German labour market is flexible enough to cope with the upcoming processes of change. Nevertheless, in view of the demographic development, he advises to be careful not to neglect the losers of the crisis. For it will be more difficult to meet the labour demand in the future, especially in view of the decreasing migration to Germany. “We must ensure that there will be no decrease due to the crisis which cannot be made up for later on”, said Mr Fitzenberger.

Aktivieren Sie JavaScript um das Video zu sehen.

<https://youtu.be/PfHEwAi5-DQ>

2. Video: How does COVID-19 affect migration and the tourism industry?

The COVID-19 pandemic affects some economic sectors and dependent employees more than others. Nevertheless, not all the concerns we had in spring 2020 have come to pass. In this interview, Mr Fitzenbergers talks about the effect of the COVID-19 crisis on business travel, on student exchange, and on migration. “Even in this crisis firms are looking desperately to fill positions,” the IAB director explains. So far, migrants and students from abroad who stayed after their degrees in Germany filled parts of the gap. However, as a consequence of the COVID-19 crisis, he expects an aggravating shortage of skilled labour due to declining migration and decreasing numbers of foreign students at German universities.

Quelle:

<https://www.iab-forum.de/en/the-post-pandemic-labour-market-video-interviews-with-iab-director-bernd-fitzenberger/> | 2

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https://youtu.be/cpR_6K-BGW4

3. Video: COVID-19 in Germany: Is there opportunity in the crisis, too?

With every crisis comes opportunity. According to Mr Fitzenberger, some positive developments can actually be identified as an accompanying effect of the COVID-19 pandemic. In this interview earlier in November, he discussed the greater digitisation efforts, increasing home office opportunities and optimised health protection. According to him, there are even opportunities for those disadvantaged on the labour market: "Health protection will play an important role and help creating new jobs for unskilled workers. Just think about controlling hygiene measures in supermarkets."

Quelle:

<https://www.iab-forum.de/en/the-post-pandemic-labour-market-video-interviews-with-iab-director-bernd-fitzenberger/> | 3

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<https://youtu.be/wNfgVG4QQVY>

More about Bernd Fitzenberger:

[Bernd Fitzenberger](#) has been the director of the IAB since September 2019, and [Professor of Quantitative Labor Economics](#) at Friedrich-Alexander-Universität Erlangen-Nürnberg since October 2020. His main research areas are equality of income and salaries, employment trends, evaluation of measures in the field of labor market and education policy, vocational training and the transition from school to the labor market, employment of mothers, trade unions, evaluation methods and methods of quantile regression.

Other contributions on this topic can be found here in the IAB-Forum online journal as part of the series [“COVID-19 crisis: Consequences for the labour market”](#).