

Field-of-Study Homogamy

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CERGE-EI

March 2016

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

Acknowledgements Jurajda is Research Affiliate at CEPR, London and Research Fellow at IZA, Bonn. This research has been supported by the Czech Science Foundation (grant P402/12/G130). The paper was initiated while Jurajda was visiting the School of Economics at the University of Edinburgh; the School's hospitality is most gratefully acknowledged. We would also like to thank Nikolas Mittag and Michael Smith for their comments and suggestions.

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