

Employability for all!

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Employability has become the new career mantra: everyone has to be employable to survive or thrive in the current labor market. Employability has attracted considerable attention from scholars and policy-makers alike against the background of recent developments, for example the ageing workforce, increasing flexibility in terms of personnel staffing, and digitalization. The general idea is that everyone has to and can become employable: the focus is upon investments in employability in the form of upskilling. In this presentation, I will present a critical overview of studies questioning this general idea and the underlying assumptions. In particular, I question the assumption that everyone can be employable: instead, I will argue that employability is not only a matter of agency. Furthermore, I will demonstrate that investments in employability do not have the same desirable outcome for all individuals. Instead, the strongest profiles in the labor market may attract most investments and may benefit most.