

Press release

Institut für
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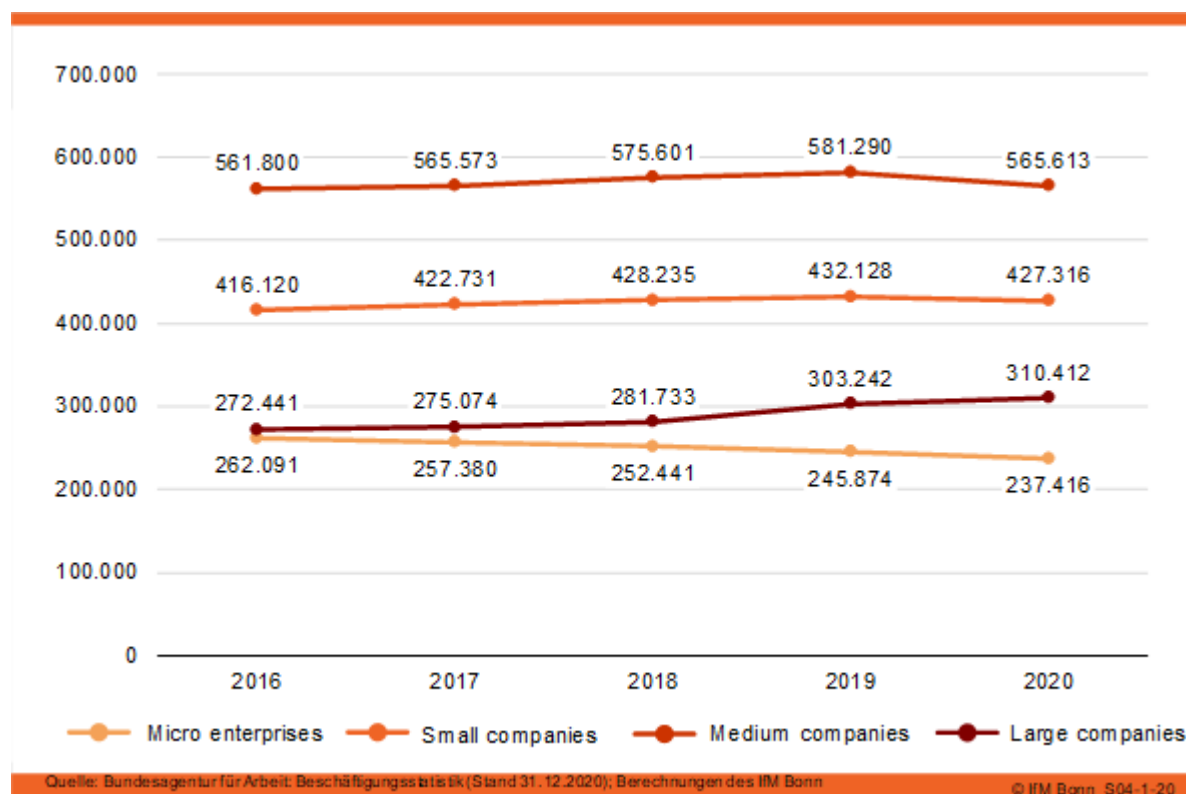


Micro establishments are looking for apprentices

IfM Bonn: In 2020, the biggest increase in the number of apprentices was in the health and social care sector.

Bonn, 25.08.2021. In the competition for apprentices, micro establishments (less than 10 employees subject to social insurance contributions) are falling further behind: Up to 31 December 2020, these establishments employed 3.4 % less apprentices than at the end of 2019. In contrast, the number of apprentices in large establishments (500 and more employees subject to social insurance contributions) rose by 2.4% in the same period.

Number of apprentices by company size



All in all, at the turn of the year 2020/21, only 15.4 % of all apprentices were still employed in micro establishments, in contrast to 20.1 % in large enterprises. By comparison: In 2010, 21.2 % of trainees were still employed in micro establishments - and 16.8 % in large establishments.

IfM researcher Dr André Pahnke reports, that "even though the clear majority of apprentices- almost 80 % - is still employed in small and medium-sized establishments, the proportion of apprentices in large establishments is slowly but steadily increasing". According to his research, one major reason for the continuous decline in the number of apprentices in micro establishments is, that these establishments are finding suitable applicants less and less frequently. Nevertheless, the willingness of micro establishments to provide training has not declined in recent years, but rather increased. However, they usually offer only one training place. If this cannot be filled, they are not included in the official statistics as training companies, giving the impression that they are less willing to provide vocational training.

"Usually, micro establishments are cutting down their training activities only if they do not need skilled professionals who were trained by themselves or if they are only interested in trained specialists who can be deployed immediately. Regarding the current figures, the fear expressed in the recent national report on vocational training (Bundesbildungsbericht) should be taken seriously. The basic willingness of companies to provide vocational training could decline in the long term, if they are confronted with staffing problems over a longer period of time," says the IfM researcher.

More apprentices in the health and social care sector

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic the number of apprentices in the hospitality industry has decreased in 2020 (- 11.6 %) - as in numerous other industries, e.g. manufacturing (- 5.2 %). By contrast, the number of apprentices in the health and social services sector (294,059 persons) has not only increased significantly (+ 4.5 %) but also surpassed for the first time the total number of apprentices in "wholesale and retail trade; repair of motor vehicles and motorcycles" (280,164 persons) for the first time.