

Foreword

The economy of Brandenburg, one of 16 states of the Federal Republic of Germany, is undergoing major structural change, which opens new prospects for highly skilled workers. As part of this process, the state has intensified efforts to diversify the economy towards cleaner and more knowledge-intensive industries. This includes developing advanced manufacturing, exploiting spill-over effects from the start-up scene in Berlin, fostering entrepreneurial activities at its own higher education institutions (HEIs), promoting innovative places for working and living, and transitioning from coal production to next-generation technologies. As the driver of skills development and research in the state, the higher education sector will play an important role in building human capital and innovation capacity to help the state unleash these opportunities for economic and social development.

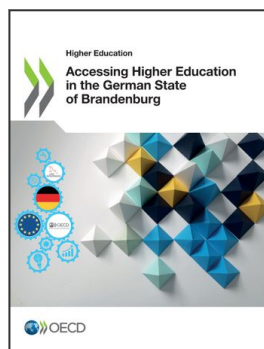
Brandenburg's higher education sector is developing a strong human capital and research base for the state's economy. This involves offering specialties that provide skills for the labour market; attracting international students, especially in the area of science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM); and making studies more attractive both through greater support for students and more flexibility.

Despite its many strengths, Brandenburg's higher education sector also faces challenges. These range from projections of declining enrolment and low participation of youth to financial issues affecting both students and the institutions themselves.

This report offers an assessment of the current policy landscape related to higher education and skills development, including particularly access paths into higher education, student profiles and graduate trajectories in the state of Brandenburg, identifies recommendations to the state government on how to strengthen the policy framework and to higher education stakeholders on how to improve their practices in favour of stronger development and retention of human capital in the state.

The analysis and recommendations contained in the report are underpinned by analyses of the Brandenburg higher education system, international examples of policies and practices of relevance to Brandenburg, and engagement with a wide range of stakeholders. Engagement included interviews, group discussions and workshops with state ministries, public agencies, higher education institutions, state schools and business representatives.

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