

# **The Education System in the Federal Republic of Germany 2017/2018**

**A description of the responsibilities, structures and  
developments in education policy for the exchange of information in Europe**

– EXCERPT –

## 13. MOBILITY AND INTERNATIONALISATION

### 13.1. Introduction

#### Basic legislation

In the Federal Republic of Germany, governmental functions and responsibilities are divided between the Federation and the Länder. This is due to the federal principle which is laid down in the Basic Law (*Grundgesetz*, Art. 20, Paragraph 1 – R1). For the educational sector, there is no explicit and comprehensive attribution of competence to the Federation. Therefore, according to Article 70 of the Basic Law educational and cultural legislation is primarily the responsibility of the Länder (see also chapter 1.3.). The Federation, on the other hand, is responsible for foreign affairs and thus for cultivating international relations in the field of education at the level of the state (Art. 73, Paragraph 1 and Art. 32, Paragraph 1 and 2 of the Basic Law). The responsibility of the Federation for foreign affairs, and the cultural sovereignty of the Länder have in the day-to-day routine established the necessity of a close cooperation based on partnership and mutual trust between the Federation and the Länder.

The rights of participation of the Länder in EU affairs are laid down in Article 23 of the Basic Law and in the Law on Cooperation between the Federation and the Länder in issues of the European Union of March 1993 (EUZBLG – R10). Accordingly, the Federal Government has to take into account the statements of the *Bundesrat* on European Union issues when the legislative powers or administrative procedures of the Länder are affected by the proposals of the European Union (see also chapter 1.3.). When legislative powers exclusive to the Länder in school education, culture or broadcasting are primarily affected, the federalism reform of 2006 (Federalism reform I) requires that the exercise of the rights belonging to the Federal Republic of Germany as a member state of the European Union is delegated to a representative of the Länder designated by the *Bundesrat*.

#### Cooperation through the Standing Conference

The extensive participation of the Länder in issues of foreign cultural policy, international cultural relations as well as European cooperation occurs through the Standing Conference of the Ministers of Education and Cultural Affairs (*Kultusministerkonferenz* – KMK). The coordinating committee for this area is the Committee for European and International Affairs (*Kommission für europäische und internationale Angelegenheiten*). The Committee deals with EU cooperation regarding issues of education, culture and research as well as with the educational and cultural activities of the Council of Europe. The committee develops common positions for all Länder which may be taken into account at an early stage in consultations by the Federation, other Länder conferences and the academic organisations. Furthermore, the Committee deals with basic questions of foreign cultural policy and coordinates the views of the Länder in order to achieve a joint statement. The members of the Committee discuss questions of bilateral foreign cultural policy, in which the Länder participate within the framework of cultural agreements as well as through other activities in the sphere of cultural exchange. In the multilateral sector, the Committee primarily deals with the participation of the Länder regarding issues of educational and cultural policy in the committees and specialist conferences of the UNESCO and the OECD. Within the framework of joint discussions, regular dialogue

takes place with the Federation, particularly the Federal Ministry of Education and Research (*Bundesministerium für Bildung und Forschung – BMBF*) and the Federal Foreign Office (*Auswärtiges Amt*).

According to a “Position paper of the Standing Conference on policies in the fields of education, science and culture with regard to projects of the European Union” (*Positionspapier der Kultusministerkonferenz zur Bildungs-, Wissenschafts- und Kulturpolitik im Hinblick auf Vorhaben der Europäischen Union*) of December 2007, the formation of opinion within the Standing Conference is geared to the following framework conditions:

- Quality assurance and quality development in the areas of school and higher education
- Furthering and securing mobility in teaching and learning
- Maintenance and promotion of cultural diversity in Germany
- Representation of Länder interests in national and international context

In its agreement, the Standing Conference expresses support for European cooperation in education, science and culture affairs in a Europe that safeguards its cultural wealth and the diversity of educational systems in line with the respective traditions of the Member States. Furthermore, it emphasises the significance of policies in the fields of education, science and culture as core elements of the sovereignty of the Länder, as well as the autonomy of cooperation in this area which cannot be subordinated to economic, social or employment policies.

### **Guidelines of foreign cultural and educational policy**

The Federal Government regards foreign cultural and educational policy as the “third pillar” of German foreign policy alongside political and economic relationships. The Federal Foreign Office (*Auswärtiges Amt*) names the following focuses for foreign cultural and educational policy:

- To promote dialogue between people and societies through the co-production of knowledge and culture
- To make a sustainable contribution to worldwide crisis and conflict prevention
- To encourage European integration
- To maintain the world's cultural diversity, the heritage of mankind
- To connect Germany as a modern, attractive location for education, science, research and professional development, as a creative and cultural location with other societies
- To promote the German language in Europe and the world

## **13.2. Mobility in Early Childhood and School Education**

### **Pupil and student mobility**

Erasmus+ is the European Union programme for education, training, youth and sport (2014 to 2020) with a budget of just less than Euro 14.8 billion. The follow-up programme to the EU Programme for Lifelong Learning (2007 to 2013) is designed – in support of the aims of the Europe 2020 strategy – to improve competences and employability, and advance the modernisation of the education, training and youth work systems. In the 2014 to 2020 programming period over 4 million people in Eu-

rope – particularly pupils, students, trainees, teachers and young volunteers – should receive grants and subsidies for a stay abroad for learning purposes.

In the school sector Erasmus+ promotes under Key Action 1 – Mobility of individuals – the in-service training of teachers, school heads and specialist education staff at schools and at pre-school facilities. Under Key Action 2 – Cooperation for innovation and the exchange of good practices – it promotes partnerships between schools or preschool facilities and other types of partnership, including cross-sector partnerships, which are geared to school development and teacher training. Support under the project includes short encounters and longer periods abroad by pupils and teachers.

In vocational education and training, the National Agency Education for Europe (*Nationale Agentur Bildung für Europa*) at the Federal Institute for Vocational Education and Training (*Bundesinstitut für Berufsbildung* – BIBB) also promotes the international mobility of dual-system trainees and pupils in full-time school-based vocational education and training programmes who lead to a vocational qualification in accordance with Land legislation.

The National Agency for Erasmus+ in the school sector is the Educational Exchange Service (*Pädagogischer Austauschdienst* – PAD) of the Secretariat of the Standing Conference of the Ministers of Education and Cultural Affairs (*Kultusministerkonferenz* – KMK). On behalf of the Länder it is responsible inter alia for programme management, advising applicants, implementing information events and evaluating the results of projects. The Educational Exchange Service is, moreover, the national support service for eTwinning, a platform for networking and digital collaboration between schools in Europe and, through eTwinning Plus, with other countries outside Europe. More information on Erasmus+ school education and eTwinning is available on [www.kmk-pad.org](http://www.kmk-pad.org) and <https://www.facebook.com/kmkpad>.

Personal contact is essential in deepening understanding of other cultures. Therefore, exchanges have been carried out for decades, often as part of school partnerships or cross-border regional cooperation programmes, which are carried out at Länder level, as well as coordinated by the PAD with funding from the Federal Foreign Office (*Auswärtiges Amt*) and the European Union, respectively, or other sponsoring bodies (e.g. foundations, youth organisations).

In 2017 and 2018 around 30,000 pupils each participated in the exchange programmes of the PAD. In numerical terms, the largest group consists of the pupils who visit their partners in Germany or abroad and take part in school lessons within the framework of school partnerships. These partnerships are funded by the Federal Foreign Office and have been promoted for a number of years with the USA, countries of central, eastern and south-eastern Europe, the Baltic states and with Israel. Within the framework of the initiative of the Federal Foreign Office “Schools: Partners for the Future” (*“Schulen: Partner der Zukunft”* – PASCH), since 2008 it has been possible to apply for grants for exchange measures with schools throughout the world. In addition, exchange and cooperation measures for pupils in Europe have also been implemented and promoted in the framework of the EU programme Erasmus+.

The European and international dimension is also supported by the “Internationales Preisträgerprogramm” (IPP) (international award winners) programme that is or-

ganised by PAD on behalf of the Federal Foreign Office (*Auswärtiges Amt*) to encourage the education and training of foreign pupils in the German language (with the involvement of around 90 states) and “*Deutschland plus*” (currently 18 nations). Pupils are invited to spend four weeks in Germany in the IPP with a programme of study, language course and accommodation with a host family; they are organised in international groups. In the “*Deutschland Plus*” programme, foreign pupils in national groups spend between two and three weeks in a host family. During this stay they receive special lessons in German as a foreign language and sit in on lessons with their host brothers and sisters. A total of more than 900 pupils are invited to Germany each year within the scope of the two programmes.

An agreement has been in place with France since 1986 on a medium-term individual pupil exchange incorporating a two to three-month stay in the partner country with a return visit from the exchange partner (BRIGITTE-SAUZAY Programme). In addition, the one-year exchange programme (six months in Germany, six months in France) VOLTAIRE has been in existence since the school year 2000/2001.

Additionally there are further individual exchange programmes at Länder level which are carried out together with partner schools abroad.

Periods of learning and study abroad for pupils in the upper secondary level lasting between at least six months and up to one year have been supported with up to Euro 504 a month, depending on the parents’ and the pupil’s own income, since August 2016 through the Federal Training Assistance Act (*Bundesausbildungsförderungsgesetz – BAföG – R83*). If, however, the period of learning and study abroad takes place within the scope of a cooperation agreed with the vocational education and training that is attended, a shorter period of at least twelve weeks is also eligible for support. A supplement of Euro 250 each way may additionally be paid for outward and return travel if the place of training is in Europe, or Euro 500 each way outside Europe. Financial support through the BAföG for pupils is a grant which does not have to be paid back.

Trainees have the opportunity to spend limited periods of their vocational education and training abroad. The period abroad is treated legally as part of the vocational education and training, provided it serves the objective of the training.

Within the framework of Erasmus+ (2014–2020), the National Agency Education for Europe (*Nationale Agentur Bildung für Europa*) at the Federal Institute for Vocational Education and Training (*Bundesinstitut für Berufsbildung – BIBB*) is supporting mobility projects for learners in the field of vocational education and training. The acquisition of international qualifications and linguistic and intercultural competences helps develop an international vocational expertise which is of growing importance to the labour market and individual career planning. The average length of training placements abroad is between two and five weeks. In Germany the number of placements abroad applied for and approved under the umbrella of the mobility projects for learners in the field of vocational education and training has increased substantially over the previous year. In 2017, just less than 21,300 grants were awarded within the framework of projects to trainees and pupils at *Berufsschulen* (part-time vocational schools).

Within the scope of the Erasmus+ key action Mobility for individuals, periods of learning and study abroad are also subsidised for pupils who have completed voca-

tional education and training programmes no longer than one year ago. These periods of learning and study abroad should allow international professional qualifications and the acquisition of language and intercultural competences within the scope of continuing vocational education and training.

Periods of study and learning abroad by trainees as well as trainers in countries that do not participate in the Erasmus+ programme can also be supported via the support programme “Vocational Training Worldwide” (*‘AusbildungWeltweit’*) of the Federal Ministry of Education and Research (*Bundesministerium für Bildung und Forschung – BMBF*). The BMBF has commissioned the National Agency at the BIBB to carry out the programme.

In addition, the “Information and Consultancy Unit for Vocational Education and Training for Germans Abroad” (*Informations- und Beratungsstelle für Auslandsaufenthalte in der beruflichen Bildung – IBS*) of the NA at the BIBB advises trainees, qualified persons and companies about further support options for worldwide periods of learning and study abroad in continuing vocational education and training on behalf of the BMBF.

The bilateral exchange programmes of the BMBF in vocational education and training are aimed at cooperative measures that go beyond the EU programmes with partner countries of particular importance to Germany. The exchange measures are generally embedded in longer term partnerships between training companies, vocational schools, chambers and other professionals in vocational training and, in addition to the promotion of mobility of trainees and those responsible for vocational training, are also aimed at the development and testing of innovative vocational education and training models. Since 1980 the Federal Ministry of Education and Research has been promoting, together with the French education ministry and ministry of labour, ProTandem, the German-French Agency for exchange in vocational education and training with the aim of intensifying cross-border collaboration in the field of vocational education and training. By establishing permanent cooperation structures and simultaneously strengthening cooperation between vocational education and training actors, vocational education and training experience is supported during vocational training. In 2017, 2,891 German participants were promoted within the framework of the programme. Since 1980, a total of more than 100,000 people have taken part in exchange measures.

The German-Israeli Programme on Cooperation in vocational education and training is a cooperation between the Israeli Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs and the BMBF. The programme gives vocational education and training experts as well as trainees from different vocational fields the opportunity to learn professionally from each other, to experience the foreign everyday reality and thus deepen an understanding of each other. The programme is carried out by the National Agency (NA) at the BIBB on behalf of the BMBF.

In March 2015 the Standing Conference of the Ministers of Education and Cultural Affairs adopted a new “Framework agreement on the *Berufsschule*” (*‘Rahmenvereinbarung über die Berufsschule’*). In order to be able to better react to the requirements of a globalised working world, the opportunities to spend time abroad during education and training were greatly improved.

## Teacher mobility

With regard to the European and international dimension of teaching, within training, further training and in-service training of teachers special importance is attached to experience acquired abroad. A large number of teacher training students are taking up the opportunity of spending a period of study abroad, whether as part of the Erasmus+ programme, which not only enables periods of study abroad at higher education institutions, but also placements abroad at host schools or through the programme for the exchange of foreign-language assistants operated by the Educational Exchange Service of the Standing Conference, in which aspiring foreign language teachers are exchanged with many countries in Europe (including France, the United Kingdom, Italy and Spain) and with Australia, New Zealand, Canada, the United States, the Russian Federation and China.

The international exchange programmes for foreign-language assistants (FLA) supports the acquisition and spread of the German language amongst foreign pupils. The assistants support the teachers at the receiving schools in their native language. The FLA programmes should arouse an interest in learning the foreign language, perfect the fluency of the participating students from the partner countries or Germany, support them in the development of their personality and make a contribution to the professional qualification of the participants. The PAD sends German students to schools as well as institutions of higher education in the partner countries. In return, foreign students are sent to schools in German countries as FLA.

The further and continuing education of teachers and other educational staff in the school sector is served by various bilateral work shadowing and exchange programmes under the auspices of the PAD, which are carried out with Belgium, France, the United Kingdom, Italy, Spain, the United States and China. Moreover, as part of the initiative “Schools: Partners for the Future” (*Schulen: Partner der Zukunft* – PASCH) of the Federal Foreign Office (*Auswärtiges Amt*), for example, further training measures and work shadowing programmes are implemented in Germany for foreign German teachers from central, eastern and south-eastern Europe, the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS), Asia, Latin America and Africa. Teachers from all school types and levels can participate in these programmes. In 2017, approximately 750 teachers participated.

Furthermore, the German Länder and the federal government have been financing the continuing training programme of the Standing Conference for local teachers at German schools abroad and DSD (German Language Diploma) schools for over 50 years: around 30 local teachers come to Germany each year under this programme where they sit in on lessons and teach at German schools. They are immersed in the German school system, improve their knowledge of the national culture, even beyond the borders of Germany, and bring their language skills up to date. Many of the teachers who have enjoyed this kind of continuing training then assume more responsible tasks in their home schools.

Other further training measures for German teachers abroad or foreign teachers in Germany are available under programmes offered by the European Union (Erasmus+) and the Council of Europe, and through bilateral courses such as the German-French qualification programme for teachers at schools with bilingual teaching or through the BMBF-funded programme “Europe meets school” (*Europa macht*

*Schule*'), in which European guest students participate in lessons in a German school class and present their home country through a special project.

Other exchange programmes for teachers also exist at Länder level.

Vocational education and training staff play a key role in the internationalisation of vocational education and training in Germany. Through the LEONARDO DA VINCI sub-programme of the European Union's Lifelong Learning Programme (2007–2013), therefore, the National Agency Education for Europe also supported training placements abroad for persons active in vocational education and training. Many vocational education and training institutions use the funding opportunities in this area in order to support the necessary staff development measures as part of their increasingly international orientation.

Within the framework of Erasmus+ the National Agency Education for Europe (*Nationale Agentur Bildung für Europa*) at the Federal Institute for Vocational Education and Training (*Bundesinstitut für Berufsbildung – BIBB*) is supporting mobility projects for staff in vocational education and training. In 2017, more than 4,400 grants were awarded within the framework of the projects to vocational education and training professionals.

### **13.3. Mobility in Higher Education**

#### **Student mobility**

Globalisation, the fact that Europe is growing closer together and the formation of a European Higher Education Area opens up new horizons for graduates. Good knowledge of foreign languages and personal experience of both the economic and social conditions and the culture and mentality of other countries are nowadays regarded as basic requirements for graduates in many sectors of the labour market. It is this trend that has prompted the development of EU programmes to promote cooperation in higher education and student mobility and also the national, regional and bilateral initiatives that provide incentives for study/placements abroad and fund and develop new courses of study. National initiatives include, amongst other examples, the increased promotion of study abroad and in particular of a full course of study in another EU country or in Switzerland as part of the Federal Training Assistance Act (*Bundesausbildungsförderungsgesetz – BAföG – R83*) and likewise special support programmes implemented by some Länder.

In April 2013 the Federation and the Länder adopted a joint Strategy of the Federal and Länder Ministers of Science for the Internationalisation of Institutions of Higher Education in Germany" (*Strategie der Wissenschaftsminister/innen von Bund und Ländern für die Internationalisierung der Hochschulen in Deutschland*). This develops joint objectives for areas of action relating to internationalisation. The paper is based on the main idea that internationalisation is a central element for the development of an institutional profile for German institutions of higher education. The Federation and Länder want to support this process and have agreed on joint objectives and approaches in nine fields of action:

- Strategic internationalisation
- Improving the legal framework
- Establishing a welcoming culture
- Establishing an international campus



- Increasing the international mobility of students
- Improving the international appeal of Germany as a higher education location
- Attracting excellent junior scientists from abroad
- Extending international research collaborations
- Establishing offers for transnational university education

The internationalisation goals are to be realised by the Länder and the Federation at their own responsibility within the scope of the constitutional responsibilities and respecting the autonomy of the institutions of higher education.

Through placements abroad during courses of study, prospective academics can acquire additional competences and develop personally. International experiences are moreover becoming increasingly important on the labour market and in science. The Federation and the Länder therefore seek to ensure that one in two higher education graduates has gained study-related experience abroad and at least one in three can provide evidence of a period of study abroad lasting at least three months or equivalent to 15 ECTS. They have also set the target of increasing the number of students studying abroad to 350,000 by 2020.

Mobility is already well developed even now. In total in the 2016/2017 winter semester 265,484 international students studied at German higher education institutions. At the same time more and more German students are studying abroad with the aim of obtaining a higher education qualification: in 2015 in total around 137,700 German students were enrolled at higher education institutions abroad. Compared to the total number of German students studying in Germany, the share of German students abroad rose from 2 per cent in 1991 to 6.0 per cent in 2015.

The main host countries for German students wishing to obtain their degree abroad are Austria, the Netherlands, the United Kingdom, Switzerland, the United States, China and France. These seven states accounted for 75 per cent of German students abroad. The member states of the European Union accounted for more than two thirds (69.1 per cent) of German students abroad, while a further 12.8 per cent went to other European countries. A total of 81.9 per cent of German students abroad therefore remained in Europe. 9.0 per cent of German students abroad opted for the Americas, 6.8 per cent for Asia, 1.5 per cent for Australia and Oceania and 0.7 per cent for Africa.

In Germany, the task of promoting relations between higher education institutions and foreign countries through the exchange of students and academics is the responsibility of the German Academic Exchange Service (*Deutscher Akademischer Austauschdienst* – DAAD), a self-governing organisation of German higher education institutions. The programmes of the DAAD to promote internationalisation at German higher education institutions aim at creating the organisational and financial framework for studies/ a placement abroad, international cooperation and the establishment of strategic partnerships between higher education institutions as well as further development of courses of study and higher education qualifications. Furthermore, the measures already carried out shall be incorporated into a strategy for internationalisation involving the entire institution of higher education.

The internationalisation of higher education institutions is regarded as a complex process which links the interests of students and academics, the higher education institutions, the aims of foreign cultural and education policy, national science policy, development cooperation, and the requirements of all international partners.

At the start of 2013 the DAAD presented its “2020 Strategy”. This covers the three strategic fields of activity “Scholarships for the Best”, “Structures for Internationalisation” and “Expertise for Academic Collaboration”.

**Scholarships for the Best** – Providing scholarships remains the DAAD’s “core business”. In 2017 alone it was able to support just less than 25,000 German and international students, doctoral candidates and researchers with scholarships and individual programmes.

**Structures for internationalisation** – The second action area focuses on creating and maintaining the structures that make academic exchange and mobility possible. This includes international degree programmes, and the PROMOS programme ([www.daad.de/promos](http://www.daad.de/promos)) to enhance the mobility of German students, which finances short stays for German students abroad. As part of the programme launched in 2010 with funding from the Federal Ministry of Education and Research (*Bundesministerium für Bildung und Forschung* – BMBF), in 2017 12,706 scholarships were awarded by 306 higher education institutions.

**Expertise for academic collaborations** – In the future, the DAAD will apply its competences and expertise even more to providing information and advisory services to institutions of higher education and other academic exchange stakeholders, both in Germany and abroad. With its decades of experience in programme work and its unique worldwide network of 15 regional offices and 57 Information Centres, the DAAD brings tremendous knowledge of higher education systems and national science systems around the world.

Within the scope of Erasmus+ (2014–2020), DAAD also acts as a National Agency on behalf of the BMBF and is therefore responsible for the implementation of Erasmus+ in the higher education sector. As part of this mobility programme the international mobility of students (courses of study and practical placements) is supported *inter alia*. The prerequisite for funding is cross-border higher education agreements and the undertaking to guarantee the full recognition of the credits obtained abroad by the university of origin. Moreover, the participating institutions of higher education must possess a valid *Erasmus Charta for Higher Education*. Between the beginning of June 2015 and the end of May 2017 a total of 32,003 students from Germany were given funding for a period of study abroad, and 8,087 students for a work placement abroad. More information can be found on the Internet (<http://eu.daad.de>).

Grants for periods of study abroad are also provided under the Federal Training Assistance Act (see also chapter 3.3.). Students are able to receive assistance under the Federal Training Assistance Act for a full course of study in a member state of the European Union or in Switzerland. Furthermore, financial assistance is provided for practical training and studies of limited duration inside and outside of Europe.

Alongside these funding opportunities at national level, in some Länder there are Land-level programmes to support international student mobility.

## **Academic staff mobility**

In foreign educational and cultural policy, special importance is attached to exchange measures in the sector of research and higher education institutions. The exchange of individuals takes place under grant programmes for lecturers and other higher education staff which are predominantly organised by the DAAD and the Alexander von Humboldt-Foundation. Evaluation of international exchange programmes is generally performed by independent agencies or experts.

The total number of foreign scientists who were resident in Germany in 2015, either temporarily or permanently, is more than 88,000. Of these 88,000, around half worked in the German institutions of higher education. Around 9,500 scientists of foreign nationality were involved in research at the four biggest extramural research organisations (Max Planck, Helmholtz Association, Leibniz Association, Fraunhofer Gesellschaft) in Germany in 2015. In addition, there are guest academics/scientists who are supported by the DAAD, the DFG or the Alexander von Humboldt Foundation (around 35,600 in 2015) and around 2,600 Erasmus guest lecturers who teach in Germany. The total number of measurable German academics/scientists abroad in 2015 amounts to around 50,000. These include German academics/scientists at institutions of higher education (over 30,000), research visits by German guest academics/scientists (16,000) and teaching assignments as Erasmus guest lecturers (around 3,200). In 2015, 14,000 German PhD students also carried out research abroad, with increases in numbers particularly in Denmark, the Flemish part of Belgium, Norway and Sweden.

Within the framework of the European Union Erasmus+ programme the DAAD, as the National Agency for higher education cooperation within the EU, also promotes the outward mobility of lecturers and other higher education staff. Between the beginning of June 2015 and the end of May 2017 a total of 4,938 study periods abroad were funded for teaching and continuing education purposes. More information may be found on the Internet (<http://eu.daad.de>).

Statistics on the international mobility of scientists and researchers may be found in the publication *Wissenschaft weltoffen* ([www.wissenschaftweltoffen.de](http://www.wissenschaftweltoffen.de)).

## **13.4. Mobility in Adult Education**

### **Learner Mobility**

In the field of initial and continuing vocational education and training, promoting cross-border collaboration is intended to lead to the development of quality and innovations as well as to intensifying the European dimension in initial and continuing vocational education and training.

The Educational Exchange Service (*Pädagogischer Austauschdienst – PAD*) of the Secretariat of the Standing Conference of the Ministers of Education and Cultural Affairs (*Kultusministerkonferenz – KMK*) is the biggest partner of the German UNESCO Commission (DUK) in organising the international voluntary service “kulturweit” that is supported by the Federal Foreign Office. The voluntary service offers young people the chance to spend six or twelve months working in the field of foreign cultural and educational policy. Since 2009, the PAD in cooperation with the Central Agency for German Schools Abroad (ZfA), has been sending young volunteers from Germany to foreign schools (DSD schools) where the German Language Diploma of

the Standing Conference (*Deutsches Sprachdiplom – DSD*) is awarded as well as to German schools abroad within the scope of “kulturweit”. The majority of the schools are in central and eastern European countries; other work locations are in Latin America, Asia and Africa. Depending on their previous knowledge and skills, the volunteers, who are aged between 18 and 26, support the local schools by supervising homework, for example, offering teaching projects on various topics, by getting involved in the school theatre group, supplementing sports, arts or music lessons, organising PR or alumni work etc. Every year the PAD places about 200 volunteers.

In cooperation with the Franco-German Youth Organisation (*Deutsch-Französisches Jugendwerk – DFJW*), the French Agence du Service Civique and the majority of the Länder, the PAD has been organising a German-French voluntary service at schools since the academic year 2012/2013. This voluntary service is aimed at young people between the ages of 18 and 25 who want to work in a school in the partner country for ten months. They have the opportunity to take part in school and extracurricular activities and can participate according to their interests and skills. They can take part in everyday school life and enrich this with their culture and language. Up to 70 participants are to be placed each year.

### **Teacher and Trainer Mobility**

Within the framework of Erasmus+ (2014–2020) the National Agency Education for Europe is supporting mobility projects for staff in the field of adult education. In 2017, 1,163 grants were awarded within the framework of these projects.

## **13.5. Other Dimensions of Internationalisation in Early Childhood and School Education**

### **Internationalisation in Early Childhood Education and Care**

As part of its work programme Education and Training (ET2020), the EU also deals with early-childhood education issues. Its most recent initiative presented in May 2018 was a proposal for a Council Recommendation on quality early childhood education and care. The quality framework presented is the result of an increasingly internationalised (European) dialogue on early childhood education: it was produced by the European Commission’s thematic Working Group on Early Childhood Education and Care with the participation of the Member States. The aim of the Quality Framework is to support the development of the quality of early childhood education in the EU Member States. Joint objectives for early childhood education were also proposed.

### **European, Global and Intercultural Dimension in Curriculum Development**

The Standing Conference of the Ministers of Education and Cultural Affairs of the Länder (*Kultusministerkonferenz – KMK*) first presented its general outlines on the European dimension in the school system in June 1978 in its Recommendation “Europe in the classroom” (*Europa im Unterricht*), which was amended in December 1990. In May 2008, against the background of developments in Europe, the Standing Conference adopted an update to the Recommendation under the title “Educating about Europe in schools” (*Europabildung in der Schule*). Under the amended version the school has the task, by addressing key aspects and content of European history

and the process of European integration, of developing skills and attitudes which contribute to a successful life in Europe. Pupils should:

- develop an understanding of the geographical diversity of Europe with its physical, social and economic structures
- compare and evaluate the political and social structures of Europe against the background of its similarities and differences
- assess the importance of the functions and procedures of European institutions
- examine the influential historical forces in Europe, especially the development of European legal and political thinking and the ideal of freedom, and draw conclusions about current developments and personal courses of action
- appreciate the lines of development, features and evidence of a common European culture notwithstanding its diversity and be prepared to defend them
- recognise the cultural richness which the linguistic diversity of Europe represents
- appreciate the history of European thinking and the efforts made towards integration by the states of Europe
- recognise the need for the balance of interests and joint action in Europe to resolve economic, environmental, social and political problems within the European states and beyond
- develop an awareness of and willingness for the mobility essential in a Europe which is growing closer together, in study, training and work
- be aware of the importance of their own commitment to a democratic Europe and a peaceful world

All subjects should, as a rule, contribute to the development of the European dimension in teaching and education. Primarily these topics are integrated into subjects of a social and economic nature and into German and foreign-language lessons. A range of specific goals and topics as well as information about suitable subjects, useful forms of work and desirable attitudes have been included into the education plans and curricula of the various school types and levels. Interdisciplinary and multilateral projects and school competitions, exchanges and school twinning projects, as well as the exchange of teachers and foreign language assistants, can be used to develop the European dimension. Within this framework, greater importance is attached to the new information technologies, which permit encounters, collaboration and exchange. The great importance of European issues is also reflected in school books. In addition, the institutes for school development of the Länder and the Central Offices of the Länder for Civic Education (*Landeszentralen für politische Bildung*) have produced recommendations and also material packs for teachers.

In order to develop the European learning theme further, the recommendation adopted by the Standing Conference of the Ministers of Education and Cultural Affairs of the Länder proposes, among other measures, the following:

- implementing the recommendation of the Standing Conference on *Europabildung in der Schule* (educating about Europe in schools) when amending curricula and educational standards
- implementing pilot projects to promote *Europabildung in der Schule* in classroom teaching and school

- taking the European dimension of foreign language skills into account in teacher training,
- implementing further and continuing training measures for teaching staff on the theme “Europe” and on the European dimension in classroom teaching
- upholding the test criterion “European dimension in classroom teaching” when approving teaching and learning materials
- promoting and applying the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR) and the European Language Portfolio (ELP)
- promoting bilingual teaching
- promoting project work on European themes and with European school partners

In a globalised world, intercultural competences are increasingly important as key qualifications for all children and young people. The Standing Conference therefore emphasised, in its December 2013 amended recommendation “Intercultural education at school “ (*Interkulturelle Bildung und Erziehung in der Schule*) the potentials of cultural diversity, and developed cornerstones for the work at schools which are rounded out by suggestions for educational administrations and for cooperation with non-school partners. Intercultural competence here is understood to not simply mean engaging with other languages and cultures but most of all the ability to consider one’s own perceptions of other people and to put them in context, and being aware of and reflecting on the social framework conditions in which these perceptions have developed.

For a few years now, German pupils and teachers have increasingly taken up the opportunities provided by the education programmes of the EU (Lifelong Learning Programme from 2007–2013 or Erasmus+ from 2014–2020) for the acquisition of subject-specific, methodical, linguistic and intercultural competences.

FOREIGN-LANGUAGE TEACHING makes a key contribution when it comes to learning about European neighbours and Europe’s common cultural legacy. It cultivates a willingness and an ability to communicate whilst imparting intercultural and linguistic and communication skills. Great importance has traditionally been attached to foreign-language teaching in Germany and in recent years teaching of foreign languages has been both intensified and diversified.

In all Länder, foreign language teaching is already firmly established in the curriculum of the primary schools as compulsory subject in grades 3 and 4 (see chapter 5.3.). This is partly in the form of cross-border regional projects to promote cooperation between schools. Foreign-language teaching, including terminology related to the professional field, is being stepped up at vocational schools. The number of pupils learning the less common foreign languages of Italian and Spanish has increased appreciably over the last years, and Danish, Dutch, Polish and Czech are taught in the relevant neighbouring regions. In December 2011 the Standing Conference adopted “Recommendations to strengthen foreign language skills” (*Empfehlungen zur Stärkung der Fremdsprachenkompetenz*). The report by the Standing Conference “Foreign languages in primary school – state of play and concepts 2013” (*Fremdsprachen in der Grundschule – Sachstand and Konzeptionen 2013*) provides an overview of the areas of competence and expectations as regards competences in the curricula, and the range of languages on offer, and also the organi-

sational structures of foreign language lessons in the primary schools of the different Länder.

Bilingual educational courses were first established at the *Gymnasium* and are now increasingly available at primary schools, *Realschulen*, types of school offering several different courses of education, and in the vocational education and training sector. In all Länder bilingual education is offered both as part of bilingual branches and as bilingual subject lessons, particularly in social sciences subjects. In all Länder bilingual education involves the languages English and French. More information can be found in the Standing Conference report "Concepts for bilingual teaching" (*Konzepte für den bilingualen Unterricht*) of October 2013.

The bilingual Franco-German course of education in which pupils aim to attain both the German *Allgemeine Hochschulreife* and the French *Baccalauréat* is a special variant of this bilingual concept, and is currently on offer at 74 German schools. The offers are to be expanded.

As part of the Committee on Innovation in Continuing Training (*Innovationskreis berufliche Bildung*), in 2007 the Federal Government and the social partners in 2007 set out guidelines for the sustainable organisation of vocational education and training. The opening up of the national vocational education and training and further training rules to Europe was viewed as an important instrument to this end in safeguarding internationally sustainable qualifications. Courses of education which provide additional international qualifications are therefore particularly desired by all partners involved in vocational education and training. Corresponding offers can be researched in the database of the portal for *duales Studium* (dual studies) and additional qualifications in initial vocational education – *AusbildungPlus* – at the Federal Institute for Vocational Education and Training (*Bundesinstitut für Berufsbildung* – BIBB) ([www.bibb.de/ausbildungplus/de/](http://www.bibb.de/ausbildungplus/de/)).

In March 2015 the Standing Conference adopted a new "Framework agreement on the *Berufsschule*" (*Rahmenvereinbarung über die Berufsschule*). In order to be able to better react to the requirements of a globalised working world, the opportunities to spend time abroad during education and training were greatly improved. These include foreign language teaching offers that build on the skills acquired at general education schools and extend these for the specific vocation. By sitting an examination, interested trainees can obtain a certificate documenting the language level achieved in accordance with the specifications of the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR).

### **Partnerships and networks**

Under Key Action 2 – Cooperation to promote innovation and exchange proven methods – Erasmus+ promotes one to three-year strategic partnerships in different types of projects and with a combination of cost modules in the school sector. In Germany the campaign is organised by the Educational Exchange Service (*Pädagogischer Austauschdienst* – PAD) of the Secretariat of the Standing Conference. Not only schools and pre-school institutions can take part in "Strategic partnerships in the school sector" but also different protagonists with a thematic relationship to the school sector, for example further training institutes for teachers, institutions of higher education or government authorities. Projects that cover several educational

areas with a thematic focus on the school sector are also possible. Institutions from at least three programme countries are usually involved in a strategic partnership.

The eTwinning network as part of the EU Erasmus+ programme allows teachers in all subjects, types of school and academic years to make contact with partner schools throughout Europe and to realise internet-based teaching projects. Participation is free. eTwinning offers a protected learning environment with tools to realise media projects. Through the cooperation with partner classes in Europe, pupils can learn foreign languages authentically via eTwinning and improve their media competence. More than 20,600 teachers from around 8,350 schools are currently registered from Germany. Within the scope of European contact seminars and workshops, around 200 teachers from Germany were able to participate in continued education courses in 2017 and 2018 each.

In 2008 the Federal Foreign Office (*Auswärtiges Amt*) launched the initiative “Schools: partners for the future” (*Schulen: Partner der Zukunft*). The initiative strengthens and connects a global network of around 2,000 partner schools at which German is taught to a significant degree. The aim is to promote pupils’ interest in Germany and the German language worldwide, and to win teachers, parents, head teachers and education authorities over to committing themselves to the German language and its permanent integration in the education system. The most important instrument for networking partner schools more firmly with each other and with schools in Germany is the website of the initiative ([www.pasch-net.de](http://www.pasch-net.de)), which serves as the central interactive platform of the PASCH network and connects 600,000 pupils worldwide. Networking opportunities that allow for the increasing number of alumni to keep in contact with each other after schooling and as an orientation aid for studying and training are offered by the platform [www.pasch-alumni.de](http://www.pasch-alumni.de). The Federal Foreign Office coordinates the partner schools initiative and is implementing it in cooperation with the Central Agency for Schools Abroad (*Zentralstelle für das Auslandsschulwesen – ZfA*), the *Goethe-Institut*, the German Academic Exchange Service (*Deutscher Akademischer Austauschdienst – DAAD*) and the PAD. Partner schools include around 140 German schools abroad (*Auslandsschulen*), and about 1,100 schools in the national education systems of partner countries which offer the German Language Certificate (*Deutsches Sprachdiplom – DSD*) of the Standing Conference. The Level I DSD examination verifies a command of the German language to the A2/B1 level of the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR). A DSD I serves as proof of the necessary German language skills for admission to a *Studienkolleg* in Germany. The Level II DSD examination verifies a command of the German language to the B2/C1 level of the CEFR. A DSD III serves as proof of the necessary German language skills for admission to a degree course at an institution of higher education in Germany. Furthermore, around 600 schools overseen by the Goethe-Institute are part of the PASCH network, and have introduced or wish to expand German as an academic subject (“Fit-Schools”), as well as 27 German Profile Schools. The PAD is responsible for long-term school partnerships which are intended to make a contribution to promoting the teaching of German at foreign schools, and promote interest in modern Germany and its society. Targeted placement measures and a virtual marketplace for school partnerships ([www.partnerschulnetz.de](http://www.partnerschulnetz.de)) have facilitated the development of numerous partnerships with schools abroad.



The PAD also supports schools that organise international exchange schemes by cooperating with foundations. For example, the initiative "JIA School Partnerships" (*JIA-Schulpartnerschaften*) of the Deutsche Telekom Foundation supports schools who organise MINT-based projects with schools in Eastern Europe. Together with the Central Agency for German Schools Abroad (*Zentralstelle für das Auslandsschulwesen – ZfA*) and the PAD, the *Deutsche Telekom-Stiftung* (German Telekom Foundation) helps future MINT teachers from eastern Europe sit in on classes. The Mercator School Partnership Fund Germany-China (*Schulpartnerschaftsfonds Deutschland-China*) of the Mercator Foundation supports lighthouse projects in the field of German-Chinese school exchanges.

Schools abroad are a central element of foreign cultural and educational policy. The guidelines for schools abroad are encounter between the society and the culture of Germany and the host country, securing and expanding on school provision for German children abroad, and promoting German teaching in foreign school systems. The German schools abroad, the schools offering the German Language Certificate of the Standing Conference, and the "FIT Schools" overseen by the Goethe Institute, together teach over half a million pupils with pupil figures are rising constantly.

Further information on the placement of volunteers within the framework of the voluntary service "*kulturweit*" and on the exchange of volunteers with France in cooperation with the German-French Youth Organisation (*Deutsch-Französisches Jugendwerk – DFJW*) by the PAD can be found in the section on mobility in adult education.

Continuing education and training for teachers and future teachers is organised in the USA together with the Fulbright Commission.

### **13.6. Other Dimensions of Internationalisation in Higher Education**

#### **European, Global and Intercultural Dimension of Teaching**

Higher education institutions are committed in many different ways to strengthening the international dimension and are supported in their efforts by the Federation and the Länder and by intermediary organisations, including the German Academic Exchange Service (*Deutscher Akademischer Austauschdienst – DAAD*) and the Alexander von Humboldt Foundation (*Alexander von Humboldt-Stiftung*) as well as the German Rectors' Conference (*Hochschulrektorenkonferenz – HRK*). Of note are the intensive efforts to expand English-language study courses, the setting up of international study courses and study courses leading to a double degree or a joint degree, the establishment of international study and training partnerships, the formation of Bachelor's study courses with integrated periods abroad, the creation of international doctoral programmes and strategic international higher education partnerships, and the employment of foreign guest lecturers. In order to facilitate academic recognition between European partner institutions of higher education and promote the mobility of students, the European Credit Transfer System (ECTS) has been introduced in Germany. The ECTS is applied to all consecutive study courses. Within the framework of Key Action 1 – Mobility of individuals – in the higher education institution sector of the EU Erasmus+ programme, the conclusion of *Learning Agreements* is obligatory, in which a programme of study is agreed between the home institution of higher education, the foreign guest institution of

higher education and students. The *Diploma Supplement* serves the better acceptance abroad of qualifications and degrees awarded by higher education institutions; this was developed from a joint initiative of the EU, the Council of Europe and UNESCO in Germany in 1999. It is generally written in English. The higher education institutions award a *Diploma Supplement* to all graduates of Bachelor's and Master's study courses, while graduates of diploma and state examination study courses receive the *Diploma Supplement* on demand.

European and international courses of study are characterised by being based on a study concept that, from the outset, includes an international dimension and involves one or several periods of study at a foreign higher education institution as a compulsory component of the course. Some higher education cooperation schemes and exchange programmes have been developed by the higher education institutions involved to such an extent that foreign degrees are awarded as well as German degrees (double degree or joint degree). The course and examinations are conducted according to a curriculum and examination schedule which has been agreed on between the partner institutions. In the summer semester 2018, 268 first degree courses of study leading to international double degrees are on offer at German higher education institutions.

A growing number of higher education institutions are offering a range of European-oriented special graduate study courses, especially in law, economics and engineering.

An overview of the international degree courses is included on the website of the German Academic Exchange Service (*Deutscher Akademischer Austauschdienst* – DAAD). All in all, according to the Higher Education Compass of the German Rectors' Conference German higher education institutions in Germany offer just less than 1,800 international first degree and special graduate courses of study. In this way, German institutions of higher education are continuing to play their part in the process of enhancing Germany's international competitiveness in the field of higher education. The DAAD programme "Study Programmes of German Higher Education Institutions Abroad" which has been promoted since 2001, also contributes towards this. The programme provides for the development of curricula modelled on German study programmes in cooperation with local partners. Amongst other things, these offerings contribute to winning highly qualified doctoral candidates for German higher education institutions. Furthermore, the Federation and the Länder in cooperation with the academic organisations (DAAD, HRK) have established an international image campaign which since 2008 has been continued by the DAAD and the Federal Ministry of Education and Research (*Bundesministerium für Bildung und Forschung* – BMBF) under the roof of the initiative "Germany – Land of Ideas." Through the consortium GATE-Germany, the DAAD, in cooperation with the German Rectors' Conference and in consultation with scientific organisations, supports German higher education institutions in their international marketing.

To facilitate improved care and integration of foreign students, doctoral students and academics in Germany, in recent years new service centres (e.g. welcome centres) have been established, as have various general, academic and social offers, and digital channels have been used increasingly. Through the Web seminar series "Higher education markets worldwide" (*'Hochschulmärkte weltweit'*), the DAAD brings higher education institutions and the DAAD network into direct con-

tact with one another. With a view to a targeted recruitment of skilled employees these offers and structures for the large number of foreign and doctoral students are to be increased and expanded. This involves in particular the stage of orientation and preparation, the observation of the course of study, and also offers facilitating the transition from study to work.

The *Graduiertenkollegs*, or graduate colleges, of the German Research Foundation (*Deutsche Forschungsgemeinschaft* – DFG) are becoming increasingly attractive for foreign doctoral students. In 2017, the DFG supported a total of 241 graduate colleges, 43 of which were international graduate colleges. The share of foreign PhD students is much higher in the graduate colleges than in other forms of PhD training. The proportion of such students at the *Graduiertenkollegs* is considerably higher than in other forms of doctoral study programmes. There is also international demand for the International Doctoral Programmes of the DAAD, the International Max-Planck Research Schools, Graduate Schools, and the graduate schools (*Graduiertenschulen*) for the promotion of young scientists that are promoted as part of the Excellence Initiative.

### **Partnerships and networks**

The Erasmus+ Key Action 2 promotes the internationalisation of European institutions of higher education within the framework of strategic partnerships and knowledge alliances as well as the creation of networks and joint projects to build up capacities in neighbouring European regions and worldwide international partnerships. In Germany, the action is carried out by the National Agency for EU Higher Education Cooperation of the DAAD.

The Franco-German University (*Deutsch-Französische Hochschule* – DFH) is an association of German and French members with its own legal personality and secretariat in Saarbrücken. The aim of the DFH is to strengthen the collaboration between Germany and France in higher education and research. It supports the establishment of joint integrated study courses and awards grants to participants. In the 2017/2018 academic year the DFH offered 183 integrated binational and trinational study courses in different disciplines. More than 6,400 students and around 300 PhD students are registered at the Franco-German University.

Apart from the DFH, which is active nationwide, networks for institutions of higher education also exist in the Länder, within the scope of which joint integrated courses of study are offered and an exchange of students and research collaborations are coordinated.

With the DAAD programme “Strategic Partnerships and Thematic Networks” (*Strategische Partnerschaften und Thematische Netzwerke*) German higher education institutions are given support in developing strategic partnerships and thematic networks with one or more selected higher education institutions abroad, so as to strengthen their international profile. The programme promotes partnerships with different focuses which are funded by Federal Ministry of Education and Research financing over a period of four years. Of the 28 selected projects that are being supported between 2015 and 2018, ten are strategic partnerships and 18 thematic networks. Partnerships from a total of 39 countries are involved. One focus is the cooperation with institutions of higher education in the USA and China.

## 13.7. Other Dimensions of Internationalisation in Adult Education and Training

### Global and Intercultural Dimension in Curriculum Development

At EU level, the "renewed European Agenda for Adult Learning" sets out the priorities for European cooperation in adult education policy for 2012 to 2020. The Agenda is based, inter alia, on the strategic framework for European cooperation in education and training (ET 2020). The national coordination unit for the European Adult Learning Agenda is based at the National Agency Education for Europe (*Nationale Agentur Bildung für Europa*) at the Federal Institute for Vocational Education and Training (*Bundesinstitut für Berufsbildung – BIBB*).

Both as part of further education monitoring, in the Adult Education Survey (AES) for instance, and also with respect to European further education networks such as the European Association of Regional & Local Authorities for Lifelong Learning (EARLALL), the European and international dimension of further education is becoming increasingly important. This applies to the sphere of competence of the Federation as well as that of the Länder.

### Partnerships and networks

The Erasmus+ Key Action 2 also promotes strategic partnerships in adult education and vocational education and training. These are international projects aimed at the transfer, development and/or implementation of innovation and proven methods. The National Agency Education for Europe is responsible for strategic partnerships in adult education and vocational education and training. This is also the home of the national coordination office for the E-Platform for Adult Learning in Europe (EPALE). The multilingual online platform is offered by the European Commission, and allows adult education organisations and staff the chance to establish networks across borders.

Promoting international cooperation and initiating collaboration and business relations in in-company vocational training and vocational further education is the aim of the centre International Marketing of Vocational Education (iMOVE) of the Federal Ministry for Education and Research (*Bundesministerium für Bildung und Forschung – BMBF*), which is based within the BIBB in Bonn. iMOVE supports primarily small and medium-sized educational enterprises with the strategic planning and implementation of their commitments abroad through extensive service provision which includes publications, seminars and conferences, and trips by delegations. With its brand "Training – Made in Germany" iMOVE also carries out publicity abroad for German competence in initial and continuing vocational education and training.

## 13.8. Bilateral Agreements and Worldwide Cooperation

### Bilateral Agreements

The traditional exchange programmes for pupils, foreign language assistants and teachers of the Educational Exchange Service (*Pädagogischer Austauschdienst – PAD*) of the Secretariat of the Standing Conference of the Ministers of Education and Cultural Affairs (*Kultusministerkonferenz – KMK*) are for the most part based on bilateral agreements on cooperation in the cultural and educational sector. With regard

to international contacts and the international education in schools, the PAD is partner of the Ministries of Education and Cultural Affairs and the Senate Departments of the Länder. Furthermore, with regard to the implementation of foreign cultural and educational policy, the PAD is partner of the Federal Foreign Office (*Auswärtiges Amt*). The PAD cooperates closely with bilateral youth organisations as well as competence centres and funding agencies for international youth work to support cooperation between schools from two states and also sits on numerous commissions and committees.

Within the European Union, the conviction has grown that targeted efforts are needed towards practically-oriented education and training for the transition into employment, on the one hand to improve the employability of the individual and thus on the other hand to combat the high level of youth unemployment. Many European states consequently initiated national reforms and also began to amend laws in the field of vocational education and training. Germany has a comparatively low level of youth unemployment (6.3 percent in January 2018 according to EUROSTAT).

In order to support the international cooperation on vocational education and training, the Federal Ministry of Education and Research (*Bundesministerium für Bildung und Forschung* – BMBF), in close cooperation with the relevant departments and organisations, created the *Zentralstelle der Bundesregierung für internationale Berufsbildungskooperation* at the Federal Institute for Vocational Education and Training (*Bundesinstitut für Berufsbildung* – BIBB) in September 2013, in which the Federal Ministry of Economic Cooperation and Development (*Bundesministerium für wirtschaftliche Zusammenarbeit und Entwicklung* – BMZ) and the Federal Foreign Office are involved with their own personnel. The *Zentralstelle* acts abroad as the German Office for Cooperation in Vocational Education & Training (GOVET) and is in charge of three key fields of work:

- FUNCTIONS AS THE ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICE FOR THE ROUND TABLE on international vocational education and training cooperation, in which the departments involved in the international vocational education and training cooperation vote under the leadership of the BMBF
- ONE-STOP-SHOP, i.e. central point of contact for inquiries from national and international protagonists in vocational education and training cooperation
- ACCOMPANIES the international bilateral vocational education and training cooperations of the BMBF

## **Cooperation and Participation in Worldwide Programmes and Organisations**

### **Copenhagen Process in the Vocational Education and Training Sector**

With the Copenhagen Declaration of November 2002, the ministers of the EU member states responsible for education together with the European social partners defined specific areas and steps for intensifying European collaboration in vocational training. Germany has played an active and key role in the Copenhagen Process from the start and is represented in all important working groups that were set up in order to implement the process. The Copenhagen Declaration identifies the promotion of transparency, recognition of qualifications and quality assurance in vocational education and training as the most important fields of action for the EU. At

the European level, the following instruments are being developed or further developed as a matter of priority:

- The European Qualifications Framework (EQF)
- The European Credit System for Vocational Education and Training (ECVET): Parallel to the ECTS credit system in higher education, the Copenhagen process is working on the development of a credit system for vocational education and training. The aim is to award credit points for training modules for the transfer and crediting of training periods. As a European system, ECVET is to be based on voluntary participation and applied in compliance with applicable national laws and regulations with regard to evaluation, assessment, recognition and quality assurance
- The European Network for Quality Assurance in Vocational Education and Training (EQAVET): In August 2008, the German Reference Agency for Quality Assurance in Vocational Education and Training (DEQA-VET) was founded as part of the establishment of a European network for quality assurance in VET. It is part of the European Network for Quality Assurance in Vocational Education and Training EQAVET (European Quality Assurance in Vocational Education and Training) and is based at BIBB. EQAVET's work is based on the recommendation of the European Parliament and the Council to establish a reference framework for quality assurance in 2009

Another important instrument is the EUROPASS as a uniform transparency framework for qualifications and competences. The Europass framework concept comprises a total of five documents. The individual documents are:

- Europass CV
- Europass Certificate/Diploma Explanation (for vocational education and training degrees)
- Europass Mobility
- Europass Diploma Supplement (for higher education degrees)
- Europass Language Passport.

The Europass was introduced throughout Europe in 2005. The documents serve to make the skills and qualifications of EU citizens clearly and easily understood in Europe, and therefore simplify and promote the mobility for learning and working. In Germany the National Europass Centre (NEC) is the contact for all questions relating to the Europass. It is located at the National Agency Education for Europe (*Nationale Agentur Bildung für Europa*) at the Federal Institute for Vocational Education and Training (*Bundesinstitut für Berufsbildung – BIBB*). The NEC administers the database to apply for Europass mobility. Issuing agencies of the Europass Mobility are the PAD for the school sector, the German Academic Exchange Service (*Deutscher Akademischer Austauschdienst – DAAD*) for the higher education sector as well as trade organisations and social partner organisations for vocational training. More detailed information is available on the internet ([www.europass-info.de](http://www.europass-info.de)).

With the Bruges Communiqué in December 2010, the Member States, social partners and the European Commission committed themselves to focusing on the two core objectives of the European Commission's strategic framework "Education and Training 2020" and formulated a series of short-term objectives which set out concrete measures for achieving the strategic objectives. In addition, the need for higher la-

bour market relevance through high-quality vocational training with integrated company practice was emphasised.

In June 2015 the responsible European ministers for vocational education and training met in Riga for the conference "Innovating for the Future of VET". Together with representatives of the social partners and the European Commission they discussed the future challenges in the working world. The results were set out in the Riga Conclusions. In these, the following five deliverables were defined on EU level for the period 2015–2020 to boost employability and competitiveness:

- To promote work-based learning, i.e. learning at the place of work
- Further develop quality assurance mechanisms
- Enhance access to VET and qualification for all
- Further strengthen key competences in the curricula
- Introduce systematic approaches to, and opportunities for, initial and continuous professional development of VET teachers, trainers and mentors in both school and work based settings

The Riga conclusions are intended to serve as guidelines for the vocational training process in Europe and are accompanied, among other things, by an intensification of the European Alliance for Vocational Education and Training.

### **The Bologna Process**

Further major impulses for the internationalisation of German higher education institutes are provided by the intergovernmental Bologna Process, which builds on the Sorbonne Declaration adopted in 1998 by the ministers responsible for higher education in France, Italy, the United Kingdom and Germany. The Bologna Process was introduced in 1999 with the aim of creating a European Higher Education Area by 2010, characterised by a free mobility to be achieved through the transparency and compatibility of consecutive study structures, quality assurance systems on the basis of European standards and guidelines as well as the mutual recognition of academic achievements and qualifications. The objectives of the Bologna Process correspond with the reform efforts of the Federation and the Länder in the higher education sector.

In May 2018 the ministers responsible for institutions of higher education in 48 signatory states met in Paris to once again take stock. With a view to the current political and economic crises, special emphasis was made of the contribution of the Bologna process to intercultural understanding and peaceful coexistence, to equality, critical thinking and tolerance through academic freedom.

In order to further develop cooperation within the framework of the Bologna Process and to ensure the implementation of the basic commitments, the ministers decided in their final communiqué to set up expert groups to focus on the following three topics:

- a three-stage system compatible with the overarching Framework of Qualifications for the European Higher Education Area, the first two stages of which are equipped with an ECTS system
- adequate implementation of the Lisbon Recognition Convention
- Quality assurance in line with the Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area

Germany has implemented the objectives of the Bologna Process in these three core areas and is making its experience available to other participating states.

The Bologna secretariat currently has its registered office in Italy. The secretariat will organise the work until 2020 on the basis of the decisions of the 2018 Ministerial Conference. This will deal in particular with the adequate implementation of all resolved projects in all European institutions of higher education.

In implementing the Bologna Process, Germany has achieved further progress over past years. According to the joint national report of the Standing Conference and the BMBF on the implementation of the goals of the Bologna Process 2015–2018, the German focus for the further development of the European Higher Education Area is on the further promotion of mobility and exchange, the strengthening of strategic partnerships between higher education institutions throughout the European Higher Education Area, and the promotion of the development of European higher education networks by 2024. At present, the guarantee of scientific freedom and institutional autonomy in all states is seen as a particular challenge.

The German Bologna Follow-Up Group advises on the current developments and practical problems associated with the implementation of the Bologna Process. This group consists of representatives of the Federation, the Länder, the German Rectors' Conference, the German Academic Exchange Service, students, the Accreditation Council (*Akkreditierungsrat*), the social partners and the German Student Services Association (*Deutsches Studentenwerk*). Federation and the Länder support the reform of the German higher education system with numerous measures. These include inter alia the Higher Education Pact to create additional study places, the Teaching Quality Pact (*Qualitätspakt Lehre*) to improve quality in study and teaching, the competition "Getting ahead through education: Open higher education institutions" (*Aufstieg durch Bildung: Offene Hochschulen*) for more permeability and study financing instruments (Federal Training Assistance for study abroad, educational credit and scholarships). This is in addition to the mobility promotion offered by the Federation via the German Academic Exchange Service and the Alexander von Humboldt-Stiftung, the funding offered by the German Rectors' Conference (*Hochschulrektorenkonferenz – HRK*) project "nexus", which supports higher education institutions in implementing study reforms in Germany, and the team of Bologna experts which is coordinated by the DAAD ([http://eu.daad.de/der\\_bologna\\_prozess/de/](http://eu.daad.de/der_bologna_prozess/de/)).

### **Recognition of Foreign Qualifications**

Germany ratified the Convention on the Recognition of Qualifications concerning Higher Education in the European Region (Lisbon Convention), which was resolved on 1 April 1997, on 1 October 2007. The Convention provides for the simplified recognition of foreign coursework and qualifications and aims on the one hand at recognition for the purpose of higher education admission and on the other at the assessment of higher education qualifications for the purpose of entering the German labour market. The higher education institutions are responsible for recognition for the purpose of higher education admission, for admission to further study courses and for the crediting of specific courses and examinations. The right to carry titles conferred by foreign higher education institutions is regulated by the Land higher education laws. Information on this is distributed by the Länder education ministries. Holders of foreign higher education qualifications can apply to the Cen-



tral Office for Foreign Education (*Zentralstelle für ausländisches Bildungswesen – ZAB*), based in the Secretariat of the Standing Conference of the Ministers of Education and Cultural Affairs of the Länder, for an assessment of their degree. An administrative fee currently amounting to Euro 200 is charged for this assessment, further assessments cost Euro 100. Detailed information on degree assessment is available on the website of the ZAB ([www.kmk.org/zeugnisbewertung](http://www.kmk.org/zeugnisbewertung)). Information on the recognition of foreign vocational qualifications can be found on the website of the Federal Government "Recognition in Germany" ([www.erkennung-in-deutschland.de](http://www.erkennung-in-deutschland.de)) and on the telephone hotline operated by the Federal Office for Migration and Refugees (*Bundesamt für Migration und Flüchtlinge – BAMF*) "Working and Living in Germany". Since 2016 the website has also been the German advisory centre for questions on the recognition of foreign vocational qualifications at EU level.

The Central Office for Foreign Education is the competent information and expert body for the rating and ranking of foreign academic certificates in the Federal Republic of Germany. On an international level the ZAB cooperates closely with the national centres of equivalence in the countries of the European Union (NARIC), the European Council and UNESCO (ENIC). Through the *anabin* database (<http://anabin.kmk.org>) the ZAB provides information on the education systems of around 180 countries. The data ranks more than 34,000 foreign education certificates and is open to the public. For authorities a password-protected area is available.