

»alpha (Greek)



»betha (Hebrew)

die - Literacy/Basic Education (Inter-)Nationally in Focus

United Nations Literacy Decade (UNLD) creates new perspectives
(2003-2012)

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FOREWORD

The United Nations Literacy Decade (UNLD) came to an end in 2012. This gave us an opportunity to take stock. Looking back, we can see that a lot happened in Germany during this time; the Federal Ministry of Education and Research (Bundesministerium für Bildung und Forschung - BMBF) launched a research and development programme for literacy and basic education for adults. The leo. - Level One Study shed light on the extent of functional illiteracy in Germany, the subject of literacy and basic education has been pushed up the political agenda and the public are becoming more and more aware of the issue. We can therefore say that success and positive developments have been observed in the field.

At the German Institute for Adult Education (Deutsches Institut für Erwachsenenbildung - DIE) we also took a step back and focused on our activities throughout the decade. As shown in this synopsis, the DIE has central functions and tasks in the field of literacy and adult education on a national and international level due to its many years of extensive experience.

This is how the DIE recognised literacy and basic education as a future topic from early on, linked it to international discussions and included it in the context of lifelong learning. The DIE is innovative and generates forward-looking incentives for setting important trends with, for example, theoretical and new distinct concepts such as “literacy“ and “inclusion“. In order to tackle the many challenges in this area of education now and in the future, the Institute is taking on comprehensive tasks and is cooperating with partners in research, continuing education practice and educational policy as well as with relevant stakeholders involved in this context.



Prof. Dr. Josef Schrader
Scientific Director

THE DIE'S SELF-UNDERSTANDING

Our work is dedicated to the important socio-political aim of broadening learning and education for adults and making it more successful, and thereby improving personal development, social participation and employability for the entire adult population in Germany.

THE DIE'S CENTRAL FOCUS

What are the institutional, organisational and pedagogical conditions in modern societies that make it possible for all adults to gain the knowledge, abilities and skills, which are necessary, to deal successfully with public, occupational and private requirements?

MANDATE OF THE DIE

The DIE supports research and continuing education practice by providing data and information as well as research and development services. The Institute

- › researches issues of the teaching and learning of adults and the continuing education institutions, as well as the framework conditions of lifelong learning,
- › prepares the scientific findings for research, practice and politics and
- › develops innovative concepts for practice.

DIFFERENT FUNCTIONS OF DIE

The DIE carries out research, which can be applied appropriately. It also provides research services and develops innovative concepts for practice. As a result, the DIE has the following functions:

PROVIDING

- > Building infrastructure
- > Keeping services stable and consistent
- > Providing knowledge
- > Supporting implementation
- > Making practice more scientific

IDENTIFYING TRENDS

- > Observing changes
- > Sensing trends
- > Identifying demands
- > Starting reviews
- > Recognising challenges

ANALYSER

- > Investigating reasons and causes
- > Providing interpretations
- > Recognising connections

FORUM

- > Promoting exchange and networking
- > Facilitating discussions
- > Ensuring participation
- > Presenting different points of view
- > Establishing relevance

INITIATOR

- > Carrying out pilot projects
- > Implementing developments
- > Recommending action plans
- > Implementing innovations





By **IDENTIFYING TRENDS**, the DIE has recognised the topic of “literacy” long before it was on the political agenda (1979). Currently, 7.5 million functionally illiterate people in Germany emphasise the necessity of the highly significant phenomenon of literacy in continuing education and politics.



In **PROVIDING** data, information and services the DIE ensures that the topics are dealt with in the long term by scientifically supporting continuing education practice.



As an **INITIATOR**, the DIE develops and implements innovations: initiation of good practices, implementation of qualification concepts, as well as scientific support and contribution to processes.



As a **FORUM**, the DIE enables political concepts, developments in practice and scientific findings to be discussed in practice, research and politics.



As an **ANALYSER**, the DIE and its studies and research, for example on the staff in adult education, provide basic principles for professionalization in the field of basic education.



UNITED NATIONS LITERACY DECADE (UNLD)

At the World Education Forum in Dakar in 2000, 164 countries, including the Federal Republic of Germany, agreed on the “Education for All” (EFA) programme. A plan for action was approved with ambitious aims that are to be achieved by 2015.

An important international event to implement these aims was the United Nations Literacy Decade, declared on 13 February 2003 by Kofi Annan, former Secretary-General of the United Nations. UNESCO, which compiled an international action plan and determined six important criteria (see p. 10), was one of the main players of the United Nations Literacy Decade.

In Germany the “Alliance for Literacy and Basic Education” [Bündnis Alphabetisierung und Grundbildung], which includes the DIE, was formed in 2003 on a national level.

The Alliance has carried out various activities and events, and thereby encouraged public discussions to promote the topic of literacy/basic education. The German Federal Ministry of Education and Research (BMBF), which is also an Alliance partner, declared “Research and Development for Literacy and Basic Education for Adults” as a funding priority in 2006 (funding period 2007-2012).

The end of the decade was given due appreciation in 2012 at a BMBF event, however, literacy/basic education still remains a challenge for educational policy that concerns the whole of society. The BMBF has launched a new funding priority focusing on “Workplace-oriented literacy and basic education of adults”. Additionally, the federal and state governments have agreed a national strategy involving important actors, and the DIE also contributes its expertise as a partner.

„EVERYONE HAS THE RIGHT TO EDUCATION.“

The Universal Declaration of Human Rights

(United Nations 1948)

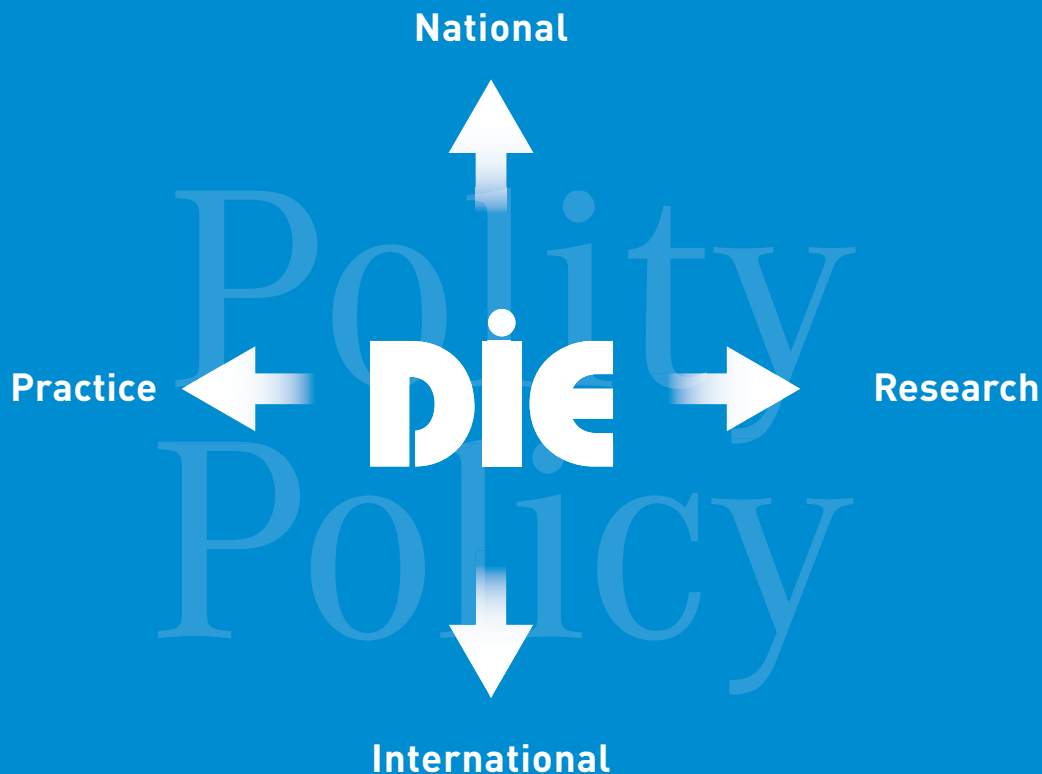
The International Plan of Action for the Literacy Decade (2003-2012) outlines six key areas of action to implement literacy and basic education for all:

1. **Policy** change to improve literacy programmes
2. **Programme modality**: Development of flexible programmes with qualified trainers, which correspond to the needs of the community
3. **Capacity-building**: Development of a suitable infrastructure (planning, management, research and documentation, curriculum and material development)
4. Increase in **research** to achieve a reliable basis for educational programmes
5. **Community participation**, development of local learning centres and of subnational/national networks
6. **Monitoring and evaluation**: Developing better indicators to measure progress in literacy.

PRESERVING TRADITIONS – CREATING VISIONS

Dealing with the subject of literacy/basic education has a long tradition at the DIE. Since the end of the 1970s and the start of the 1980s, the DIE has contributed to this issue,

which was also noticed by educational policy makers. Since then, the DIE has been an important actor nationally and internationally.



SERVICES

The DIE services are addressed to the players from research and practice, as well as adult education and lifelong learning policies.

The DIE service activities form the cornerstones of a research infrastructure in continuing education in Germany. With its data and information centre the DIE collects, prepares, makes available and distributes data and information. It is divided into the working areas of publications, statistics, library and services with their specialist information systems as well as the service units ProfilPASS and documentation and history.

These tasks are oriented to current demands and are being continuously further developed.

For more than 30 years, the institute, currently in the Research and Development Centre (Forschungs- und Entwicklungszentrum - FEZ), has been dealing with questions about literacy and basic education, preparing scientific findings for research, practice and policies and developing innovative concepts for practice. Right from the beginning, the DIE has networked with actors in other countries and is very highly valued due to its expertise as a coordinator or partner of international projects as well as a member in international committees.

DIE - INTERACTIVE

BASIC EDUCATION AND NEW MEDIA

alph@bit “Game-Based Training in Basic Education – Scenario-Based Learning Offers for Low-Qualified Individuals”

(Project term: 11/2007 – 10/2010; funded by: BMBF)

The project developed, tested and distributed computer-aided learning offers for literacy/basic education.

Winterfest – an award-winning learning game prototype



expands knowledge on successfully taking responsibility for self-directed learning

- > allows individual benchmarks in social types of learning
- > sets new demands for teachers (knowledge of media) and organisations (requirements)
- > creates new learning opportunities

The DIE used knowledge and experiences from this project as a starting point:

@lpha – Innovative Approaches in Basic Education through Media-Based Access

(Project term: 10/2001 – 11/2004; funded by: BMBF)

Together with teachers and learners, customised multi-media learning programmes have been developed in continuing education institutions. At the same time,



important general conditions and support structures were specified. This resulted in concepts and concrete methods to implement in practice.

The cooperation partner  “berami berufliche Integration e.V.” was awarded the European Language Label in 2004 for the learning programme “Topsy-turvy. Reading and writing in the kitchen and the canteen” (Original title: Durch Kraut und Rüben. Lesen und Schreiben in Küche und Kantine).

Auszeichnungen alph@bit



DIE – IN FOCUS

PERSONAL AND PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

TRAIN

Professionalization of Literacy and Basic Education - Basic Modules for Teacher-Training

(Project term: 10/2006 – 9/2008; funded by: European Commission)

The focus of the project was on developing and implementing a qualification concept with five basic modules for teachers, which links exemplary good practice approaches in Europe with each other. The priorities are social marketing communications, basic principles for adult education in the field of literacy and basic education, project work, individual learning and ICT skills as well as learning counselling.

This work was based on a compendium containing a total of thirteen country reports (see p. 22) formed an important basis; these reports describe how professionalization is developing in various European countries in terms of concepts and approaches as well as the general conditions and structures in each country. The project results (modules and reports) are published in various languages on the project website. The final transnational TRAIN conference was the kick-off event for activities on World Literacy Day on 8 September 2008 in Germany.

On the occasion of the 10th Grundtvig anniversary, TRAIN was presented in January 2010 in Brussels as one of the 50 best Grundtvig projects.

EVA

Evaluation of Professionalization in Literacy and Basic Education and the Qualification as an Alpha-Scout in the Project Association ProGrundbildung

(Project term: 10/2007 – 09/2010; funded by: BMBF)

Experiences from TRAIN are included in module development at ProGrundbildung. The analysis of the motives and requirements for continuing education, development of professionalism and quality criteria of continuing education formed the central tasks. At the same time the perspectives of the individuals participating in continuing education as well as of the trainers are taken into consideration. The identified quality characteristics and the need for change were summarised in the form of standards and recommendations to carry out continuing education. They formed the basis to create a handbook for state associations of the Adult Education Centres (Volkshochschulen - VHS) and a handbook for trainers.



Final conference of TRAIN 2008



EUR-Alpha Literacy and Numeracy European Network

(Project term: 10/2009 – 09/2012; funded by: European Commission)

Since the beginning of literacy/basic education programmes in Germany, the DIE has played a decisive role in strengthening “learners as experts in their own fields” and actively involving them in activities and developments. As a result of the European project EUR-Alpha, impressive successes are currently being recorded: Learners developed a manifesto and presented it to the public for the first time at the conference “Literacy Learning – Its Place in Europe. The Issues and Concerns of Learners and Tutors” (September 2012), so that their voice and concerns receive more attention throughout Europe (Film of the event: <http://www.alphabund.de/1638.php>).

Additionally, the teachers presented a “charta” and a brochure with good practice examples containing didactic principles and pedagogical premises on how to deal with learners and thus making a contribution to ensuring the quality of basic education in Europe.

BASKET Professional Development of Basic Skills Trainers

(Project term: 08/2011 – 07/2013; funded by: European Commission)

Significant European institutions with many years of experience in questions on literacy form this learning partnership and cooperate to compare continuing education concepts and standards in selected countries. Existing projects are already being jointly advanced and good practices are being exchanged. The aim is to develop recommendations on a European level for the professionalization of teachers in literacy/basic education and to determine points for research.



Final event of EUR-Alpha 2012

DIE – RESEARCH-ORIENTED

FOUNDATIONS OF RESEARCH AND PRACTICE

DaA - German at the Workplace (Deutsch am Arbeitsplatz) – Investigation on Communication in Companies as a Basis for Organisation-Related Second Language Learning

(Project term: 07/2007 – 06/2009; funded by: Volkswagen Foundation)

Communication practices and requirements in workplaces of employees as well as supervisors were collected and ethnographic company portraits were generated. Authentic verbal and written communication was documented and analysed.

The findings led to the subsequent project “Inclusion and Enhancement of Occupation-Related Skills and Competences through Workplace Second Language Development: Evidence-Based Training for Educators, Trainers and Supporters of Workplace Learning”. A series of continuing education measures (five modules) were developed, piloted and evaluated in corporation with the specialist department on work-related German (Fachstelle Berufsbezogenes Deutsch) in the network “Integration through Qualification” (“Integration durch Qualifizierung”, IQ).

Pre-Study on the Scale of Functional Illiteracy in Germany

(Project term: 01/2008 – 02/2009; funded by: BMBF)

The aim of this project was to develop a study on the feasibility of recording the scale of functional illiteracy in Germany. The project network coordinated by the DIE was a joint research project with the Federal Association for Literacy and Basic Education (Bundesverband Alphabetisierung und Grundbildung e.V.; BVAG) and GESIS – Leibniz Institute for Social Sciences.

DIE – RESEARCH-ORIENTED FOUNDATIONS OF RESEARCH AND PRACTICE



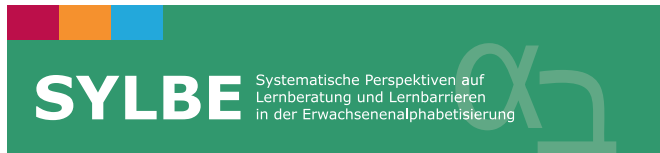
Alpha-Knowledge – Coordination of the Project Network “Basics for Literacy and Basic Education. Scientific Requirements for Institutionalization and Professionalization of Literacy and Basic Education in Germany”
(Project term: 01/2008-04/2011; funded by: BMBF)



State of the Art from a Historical and Systematic Perspective in Terms of Transferability in the Field of Literacy/Basic Education (DIE)



Literacy as Social Practice - A Survey on Sociocultural and Subjective Views on Literacy, which turns the Spotlight on an Urban Quarter (Helmut-Schmidt University/University of the Federal Armed Forces Hamburg)



Systematic Perspectives on Learning Barriers and Learning Counselling in the Field of Adult Education/Literacy (University of Potsdam)



Monitor Literacy and Basic Education - Collection and Analysis of Data and Facts on the State of Literacy and Basic Education in Germany (DIE, Federal Association for Literacy and Basic Education (BVAG), German Adult Education Association (DVV))

alphamonitor as a permanent task of DIE

After the project term, in which the first database on the situation of the provider in continuing education in Germany could be prepared, alphamonitor will be carried out at the DIE every two years as a continuous online survey.

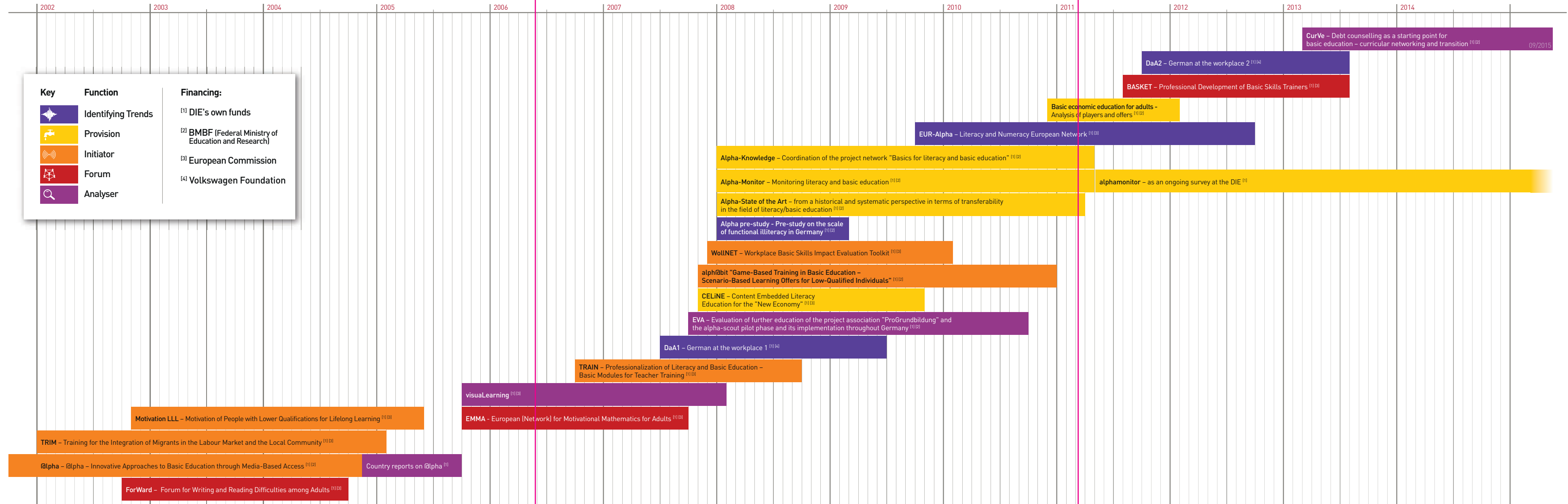
Visit the website of each project for more information:

- > @lpha <http://www.die-alpha.de/>
- > alph@bit <http://www.die-bonn.de/weiterbildung/forschungslandkarte/projekt.aspx?id=180>
- > Alpha Monitor <http://www.alpha-monitor.de/>
- > Alpha State of the Art <http://www.die-bonn.de/state-of-the-art/>
- > Alpha Pre-Study <http://www.die-bonn.de/weiterbildung/forschungslandkarte/projekt.aspx?id=190>
- > Alpha-Knowledge <http://www.die-bonn.de/alpha-wissen/>
- > BASKET <http://basket.vox.no/>
- > CELiNE <http://www.die-bonn.de/weiterbildung/forschungslandkarte/projekt.aspx?id=183>
- > CurVe <http://www.die-curve.de/>
- > German at the
Workplace (DaA) <http://www.die-bonn.de/weiterbildung/forschungslandkarte/projekt.aspx?id=171>
- > German at the
Workplace 2 (DaA 2) <http://www.die-bonn.de/weiterbildung/forschungslandkarte/projekt.aspx?id=654>
- > EMMA <http://www.statvoks.no/emma/>
- > EUR-Alpha <http://www.eur-alpha.eu/>
- > EVA <http://www.progrundbildung.de/>
- > ForWard <http://www.statvoks.no/forward/>
- > Basic Economic Education <http://www.die-bonn.de/weiterbildung/forschungslandkarte/projekt.aspx?id=610>
- > TRAIN <http://www.die-bonn.de/train/>
- > TRIM <http://www.die-bonn.de/Weiterbildung/Forschungslandkarte/Projekt.aspx?id=68>
- > VisuaLearning <http://www.die-bonn.de/visual/>
- > WollNET <http://www.wollnet.org/>

Comprehensive information about the projects and activities can be found on the “Literacy/Basic Education” website
<http://www.die-bonn.de/alpha-portal/>

UNITED NATIONS LITERACY DECADE (2003-2012)

OVERVIEW OF DIE PROJECTS



UNITED NATIONS LITERACY DECADE (2003-2012)

OVERVIEW OF DIE PROJECTS



The “DIE Forum on Continuing Education” among other issues dedicates itself to current issues and perspectives of basic education and aims to contribute to the development of continuing education in research and practice and its consistent professionalization. Therefore, in 2008 the Institute focused on the subject of literacy and basic education and held an international event to contribute to the United Nations Literacy Decade.

11. DIE Forum on Continuing Education

Current issues and perspectives of basic education - National questions within an international discourse

Within the Forum “literacy/basic education” was examined as a main topic. At the same time international developments and trends were discussed, taking the following questions into consideration: What skills and training standards do exist in the context of professionalization in various countries? What challenges for institutional action do exist in terms of cooperation, networking and stakeholders? How can approaches to learners be improved and what motives, interests and barriers are to be considered in this process?

The second main topic was the one of “Inclusion through Literacy/Basic Education”. Good practice examples for gaining participants and the Adult Literacy Curriculum Framework from Scotland that considers literacy in social contexts were presented. Critical enquires were also made as to the extent that the current educational offers for migrants in German-speaking countries correspond to the concepts of literacy and citizenship.



Representatives of international organisations (from left to right): William Thorn (OECD), Dr Peter Lavender (National Institute of Adult Continuing Education (NIACE), Dr Jutta Schubert (BMBF), Dr Ursula Howard (for the EU Commission), Moderator: Prof Ekkehard Nuisst von Rein (DIE)

The international platform “Educational Policy and Research in Dialogue” discussed concepts and solutions.

CONNECTED AND NETWORKED

DIE – NATIONALLY AND INTERNATIONALLY



National Strategy for Literacy and Basic Education

The federal and the state governments in Germany have jointly agreed on a national strategy that has included other societal groups on the basis of a common agreement. The DIE is actively involved in implementing the Strategy.

[http://www.bmbf.de/pubRD/NEU_strategiepapier_nationale_alphabetisierung\(1\).pdf](http://www.bmbf.de/pubRD/NEU_strategiepapier_nationale_alphabetisierung(1).pdf)

EBSN – European Basic Skills Network

EBSN was launched in 2010 with the aim of strengthening the subject of literacy in Europe. Members are research institutions, national provider associations in the field of continuing education and policy makers. EBSN's activities include organising annual conferences and initiating research projects, and EBSN Academy and Policy Briefs are being planned. The DIE is a member and is also represented in the Executive Committee.

<http://www.basicsskills.eu>

Note: Two important examples of the various national and international networks, cooperation projects and alliances are stated here.

Confintea-Reports

- > Progress report on adult education in preparation for the Global Report on Adult Learning and Education (GRALE) of UNESCO at the end of the United Nations Literacy Decade (2012)
- > Living and Learning for a Viable Future: The Power of Adult Education. Confintea VI Report Germany (2008)

Consulting Activities

- > International PIACC Literacy Expert Group, accredited by OECD
- > Consulting Group for Reading Components in PISA
- > Preparation – Evaluation of the United Nations Literacy Decade, UNESCO
- > German Qualifications Framework expert group for non-formal learning, BMBF

International Conference in Cooperation with the National Agency of Education for Europe at the Federal Institute for Vocational Education and Training

(Nationale Agentur Bildung für Europa beim Bundesinstitut für Berufsbildung; NA beim BIBB)

“European cooperation in the field of literacy and basic education. Practical examples and perspectives of future cooperation in the EU programme GRUNDTVIG” (Bonn 2011)



Monika Tröster

Parliamentary Activities on a Federal and State Level

The DIE regularly responds to various requests, such as “Science meets Parliament – Leibniz in the Bundestag”, a successful initiative of the Leibniz Association. In addition, the DIE attends parliamentary evenings.

Involvement in Large International Conferences



Prof Ekkehard Nuisl

UNESCO Regional Conferences in Support of Global Literacy

Addressing Literacy Challenges in Europe with a Sub-Regional Focus: Building Partnerships and Promoting Innovative Approaches, Baku 2008



Prof Josef Schrader

National closing conference of the United Nations Literacy Decade “Further education in dialogue”

Organised by the Federal Ministry of Education and Research (BMBF), Berlin 2012

PUBLICATIONS

DIE – KNOWLEDGE AND FINDINGS

The DIE publication series “Theorie und Praxis der Erwachsenenbildung” (TuP) (Theory and Practice of Adult Education) presents current and trend-setting research results. In this context reference is made to the following volumes:

Lernen und Lernberatung. Alphabetisierung als Herausforderung für die Erwachsenenbildung (Learning and Learning Counselling. Literacy as a Challenge for Adult Didactics) (ed. Joachim Ludwig)

Inklusion und Weiterbildung - Reflexionen zur gesellschaftlichen Teilhabe in der Gegenwart (Inclusion and Continuing Education - Reflections on Today's Social Participation) (ed. Martin Kronauer)



The “Lernen und Diagnostik” [Learning and Diagnostics] volume, which appears in the DIE series “Perspektive Praxis” [Perspective Practices] presents models and recommendations for basic education and literacy (ed. Joachim Ludwig).

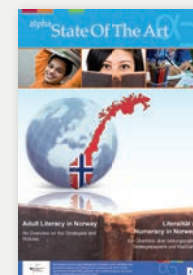
The “REPORT. Zeitschrift für Weiterbildungsforschung”, the leading journal for research in adult education in Germany, in which peer-viewed articles are published, recognised the increasing importance of this subject at an early stage and set respective focal points:



- > 1/2012 - Learning and Literacy/Basic Education
- > 3/2011 - Participation and Literacy/Basic Education
- > 4/2009 - Literacy/Basic Education
- > 4/2004 - PISA for Adults

Country Reports on Literacy/Basic Education

In the DIE projects Alpha State of the Art (see: <http://www.die-bonn.de/state-of-the-art>) and TRAIN (see: <http://www.die-bonn.de/train>) country reports and good practice reports were produced that give insight into the different developments, structures and systems, didactic concepts and models in the field of literacy and basic education.





TRANSFERABILITY SUSTAINING IMPACT

Literacy has not been a priority on the political agenda for a long time. There have been occasions where it has been given more attention but basic education has not been dealt with consistently and systematically. With EurAlpha, DaA 1 and 2, and the pre-study on the scale of illiteracy in Germany, there were links and causes in the form of demand and requirements.

The project EVA and the publication of the TuP volume “Inklusion und Weiterbildung” [Inclusion and Continuing Education] provided analyses on professionalization and skills and was central for the organisation of teaching and learning processes.

Involvement in the Alliance for Literacy and Basic Education that led to the National Strategy for Literacy and Basic Education,

the DIE Forum events and active cooperation in the European Basic Skills Network (EBSN), as well as the project BASKET have created a continuous forum for discussions and meetings, and have established grounds for acting together in a committed manner.

With the TRAIN and alph@bit projects, innovations in the field of micro- and macrodidactics were developed and evaluated.

Through the project research network Alpha-Knowledge and various consulting activities the DIE continuously provides scientific foundations and counselling options in order to sustainably support the field of continuing education.

VOICE OF WRITING
AND READING LEARNERS
IN EUROPE

MANIFESTO



We want:

1. To have a voice in Europe
2. More investment in adult education, especially in writing and reading, numeracy and IT skills
3. To participate directly in adult education projects and centres
4. Trainers to be specially trained to teach adult education
5. To define what, how and why we want to learn. We want a say in how policies and educational programmes are designed
6. Politicians to be involved in our Manifesto and to agree specific commitments
7. To spread the word to the world and also have more contact with more learners from different countries

LOOKING TO THE FUTURE

In the future the DIE will use the extensive expertise it has gained over the years to further develop the field of literacy and basic education.

The DIE is currently coordinating the project “Debt Counselling as a Starting Point for Basic Education - Curricular Networking and Transition” (Schuldnerberatung als Ausgangspunkt für Grundbildung – Curriculare Vernetzung und Übergänge) (CurVe)”, which is established in the new BMBF funding priority “Workplace-Oriented Literacy and Basic Education of Adults”. Based on an analysis on the connection between excess of debt and the demand for basic education, the focus is on the transitions from debt counselling, continuing education consultation and adult education.

After the project was concluded, alphamonitor became an integral part of infrastructural service at the DIE. Data on literacy/basic education, which can be used as a basis for political developments and decisions in continuing education institutions, is continuously being collected and published.

From our point of view, it is important for the future to expand empirical research on learning processes in the field of literacy/basic education. We see another opportunity in developing research that investigates and compares literacy internationally and relates to social processes.

To strengthen the position of the learners, the DIE recommends that learners are intensively and actively included in current developments and that they are included in actions.

The DIE will continue to contribute its expertise in the National Strategy for Literacy and Basic Education as this requires intensive political and social efforts and a joint, coherent strategy to change the situation positively and in a long-term perspective. This includes considering structures, general conditions and legal principles.

The DIE is facing challenges on different levels and will use its expertise to participate in developing and implementing measures and concepts, to deal with questions relevant to research and to ensure (inter-)national discussions.

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