Professionalisation of Adult Education Teachers in Germany

Qualification Requirements and Profiles

Qualification requirements are diverse

• The access to the field as a whole is not regulated by law
• Employers define their own qualification requirements

Trainers in Adult Education (AE) Institutions are highly qualified

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Qualification Type</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>University degree</td>
<td>50.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Polytechnic degree</td>
<td>32.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vocational training degree</td>
<td>25.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vocational school degree</td>
<td>10.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other degree</td>
<td>11.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No vocational degree</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

...but not necessarily in the field of pedagogy:

• 40% of AE teachers hold a pedagogical qualification
• 35% have no pedagogical qualification whatsoever
• 20% have undergone some continuing training in pedagogy (20%)

Qualifying as an Adult Educator

There is a notable German tradition of university studies in adult education

• University prepare for full time positions in AE, with management and leadership duties
• Since the 1970s: four-year study programmes leading to a degree with emphasis on AE
• Currently: 9 Bachelor Programmes with a focus AE, plus several Master-Programmes

...but continuing professional development becomes increasingly important

• Most staff in AE have found their way as career changers
• Many teachers lack a specific background in adult pedagogy
• Specific trainings are organized for teaching staff; Community centres (VHS) have established own standardized training modules
• 21% of all AE teachers have undergone an employer organized training

The “market” for AE staff continuing training is growing and confusing

• Training offers on the market are not subject to any given quality standards
• A complete overview is lacking, a comparison is hardly possible
• An attempt to create more transparency is the database QUALIDAT on training offers for AE staff

Employment Situation & Working Conditions

The field is dominated by freelancers and/or part timers

A recent study (WSF 2005) found that:

• 11% works on a permanent contract
• Around every seventh person has an insurable employment
• 64% work as freelancers
• 37% of the teachers AE is a full time occupation
• 62% works part-time, often to gain some additional income

Job offers

The largest number of AE jobs is offered by:

• Private organisations (~27%)
• Community adult education centres (VHS) –18%

Regarding employments that are liable to social insurance we find that these are most likely to be found in private organisations (~25 % of all such employments), but are comparatively rare in VHS

Job profiles are on the move

Main activity fields in AE:

• Teaching
• Management
• Counselling and Guidance
• Media Use
• Programme Planning
• Support
• Evaluation

“Teachers” are increasingly called upon to perform a wider range of tasks than just teaching e.g. tasks relating to counselling/guidance, administrative work, programme planning.

No overall statistics are available. Based on various sector statistics it is estimated that:

• About 650,000 persons work in AE
• Many of which work simultaneously in several (part-time) jobs
• The overall number of jobs positions in AE is estimated to be 1,6 million
• Of which 1,35 million are teaching jobs

The situation is especially difficult for those AE teachers who work full-time on a fee basis. A large proportion of this group finds itself in a precarious situation

A minimum wage is currently negotiated by a collective agreement

Staff Numbers in Adult Education

Contract and Employment Situation

Many teachers are struggling financially

Almost half of AE teachers think their individual financial situation is:

• “merely sufficient” (25%) or
• Find it “hard to make ends meet” (23%)

The other half are more or less happy with it, calling it “satisfactory” (31%) or even “good” or “very good” (19%)

The situation is especially difficult for those AE teachers who work full-time on a fee basis. A large proportion of this group finds itself in a precarious situation

A minimum wage is currently negotiated by a collective agreement

Contact

German Institute for Adult Education – Leibniz Centre for Adult Education (DIE)
Dr. Regina Egetenmeyer, egetenmeyer@die-bonn.de
Susanne Lattke, M. A., lattke@die-bonn.de