



German Institute for Adult Education –  
Leibniz Centre for Lifelong Learning

# SHORT ANNUAL REPORT 2020





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Ministry of Culture and Science  
of the German State  
of North Rhine-Westphalia



# Foreword



Prof. Dr. Josef Schrader, Scientific Director

Dear Readers

In the foreword to last year's annual report, written during the lockdown of spring 2020, the Corona pandemic was at the forefront of our minds. A year down the line, and we are only too aware of its impact – with adult education having experienced the biggest slump since World War II. There have been drastic reductions in programme offerings, with some providers fearing for their existence. But perhaps most significant has been the loss of jobs and income amongst the, often part-time and self-employed, teaching staff, who were not eligible for financial assistance and compensation. All of a sudden, it became evident just how fragile our institutional adult- and continuing educational structures still are.

The intense push towards digitalisation throughout the education sector aimed to keep lessons and courses running as far as possible and left little time for didactic innovation. Indeed, the work at DIE has also been characterised by the extensive changes in the organisational structures and use of digital media.

At DIE, we have observed and documented changes in the adult education field, in order to provide reliable information to policymakers, the public, and practitioners in the field. Amongst other things, we produced a survey on the implications of the pandemic for adult education centres (Volkshochschulen), carried out in cooperation with the German Adult Education Association (DVV) (see page 28); a “wbmonitor” survey?, in association with the Federal Institute for Vocational Education and Training (BIBB), on the consequences of digitalisation for other adult education providers; a contribution to the National Education Report (“Nationaler Bildungsbericht”) and its review of “Education in a Digitalised World” (see page 16); various surveys on media use and health-related behaviour of adults under Corona conditions; and a special focus in “weiter bilden” on the impact of the pandemic, a topic which will be readdressed in 2021. None of this would have been possible without the significant commitment and creativity of both our employees and cooperation partners.

At the same time, we have continued working on other long-term, ongoing projects:

- Together with our partner universities Hagen and Cologne, we have worked on the professorial appointment of three department heads, thus deepening our research cooperation.
- We have started to work on an ambitious longitudinal study on employment conditions, skills and qualifications of teaching staff in adult- and continuing education, in cooperation with the Leibniz Institute for Educational Trajectories (LifBi) (TAEPS, see page 17).
- We have cooperated with the “Basic Education and Literacy Research Network” (“Forschungsnetzwerk Grundbildung und Alphabetisierung”), which is funded by the state of North Rhine Westphalia, coordinated by the University of Cologne, and supported by the University of Duisburg-Essen (see page 18).

- We have established the „Practice Network Dialogue for DIE Knowledge Transfer and Innovation”, to promote knowledge transfer both between DIE and participating organisations and between these organisations themselves (see page 15).
- We have set up a new project with BIBB to further develop coverage of continuing vocational education issues (see page 17).
- And we have adopted a paper on gender-sensitive language and further developed our Ombud's office for issues concerning good scientific practice.

Obviously, the Corona pandemic has transformed day to day life in the Institute. Despite business trips and conferences being cancelled, many of us have experienced an intensification of our working time. This forced us to digitalise the DIE Continuing Education Forum and Innovation Award ceremony at short notice, presenting a significant challenge in terms of publicity work, but one to which preparation teams rose successfully, as evidenced by the increased reach of both events and the extremely positive feedback we received (see page 20). Furthermore, within the Institute, our IT team has worked tirelessly to bring digital infrastructures quickly up to modern home office standards.

Some organisational and personal changes? will be with us for the longer term. These include the strategic development of the newly-formed research department “Organisation and Programme Planning” (see page 16), and the integration of several new employees under social distancing conditions. Our works council and management board are collaborating on a working hours agreement, aimed at balancing mobile working with physical presence in the institute, creating new flexibility. Our provisions in terms of career and family balance will continue, boosted by the significant positive feedback we have received, in particular from parents of school- and pre-school children. And we will work

to further develop our equal opportunities concepts, a matter of great importance to our management.

We are living in a very challenging age. In Greek mythology, the term “kairos” signifies an opportune moment for decision making. Indeed, with politics taking on new responsibility for the economy, education and society, in which the need for modernisation is undeniable, the term seems currently particularly applicable to adult and continuing education. It is high time to expand digital infrastructures and platforms throughout further education as a whole, thus ensuring stable working conditions for many smaller providers, particularly in general adult education. It is high time for the development and implementation of digital qualification for all adult- and continuing education teaching staff, for example with a virtual academy combining and developing bottom-up initiatives. It is also high time for empirical research that is proactive, rather than offering merely fore- or hindsight. And, finally, it is high time to establish alternative institutional structures for political consultation and implementation that are more consistent and more binding than those to date.

There will be no return to pre-Corona times in adult education, even when the pandemic is a thing of the past. And while no one knows exactly what the much-quoted “new normal” will be in terms of education and employment, it will definitely be more “digital.” Conditions may be changing, but DIE aims to be part of this development of new learning and educational opportunities for all adults. We can only achieve this with your help.

Prof. Dr. Josef Schrader

## › THE DIE IN FACTS AND FIGURES

1.23 million  
page impressions



84,600

Downloads of the "Magazine for Continuing Education Research" on SpringerLink

19 Doctoral students



25 PARTNERS  
in the DIALOGUE practice network



813 Registrations  
for the 2020 DIE Forum



2,946 Current electronic journals



1,083  
DOWNLOADS  
of the **DIE-Brief** (Issues 1-8)



25 Learning pathways,  
consisting of  
230 Learning objects



# The Institute: our structure - our concept

THE DIE IS THE CENTRAL INSTITUTION for research, politics and practice of adult- and continuing education in Germany. Guided by key questions concerning adult teaching and learning, it is our goal to improve the overall quality of further education.

Funded on national and regional levels, the institute is a member of the Leibniz Association. Our remit covers research on adult teaching and learning, further education programmes and institutions, and the political and institutional framework conditions of lifelong learning. The DIE contributes to the transfer of knowledge in Germany and Europe and provides an infrastructure for research and practice. In terms of its structure, size and profile, the institute is a unique establishment, both in the European education system and beyond.

## OUR RESEARCH METHODS

Our work focuses on socially-significant education and learning research and development issues in the field of lifelong learning. Questions that are, and will remain relevant, include:

- How can continuing education systems be designed to increase participation and competence and reduce social disparity?
- How can continuing education systems be structured and managed in a way that ensures the courses they offer are educationally effective?
- How can continuing education programmes be developed to best meet the needs of those they serve?
- How should adult teaching, learning and counselling be managed to achieve success?

## OUR PRINCIPLES

The DIE:

- pursues practical and fundamental research,
- enables knowledge transfer, providing the necessary infrastructures for research and practice,
- develops innovative concepts for practice
- offers advice to those involved in regional, national and international further educational policy fields.

The driving force behind all of the DIE's research work and research-based services is a desire to support the development of the continuing- and adult education sector, in terms of research, practice and policy. As such, research is based on the sector's specific needs, with a strategy aimed at ensuring comprehensive innovation from start to finish. This entails identifying any current problems in the science, policy or practice of further education and lifelong learning, analysing which institutional, organisational or personal factors lie behind the problems, and using this knowledge to develop pedagogic concepts or advisory services to bring about practical improvement.

The result is much more than a one-way transfer of knowledge - it is a mutual exchange of scientific information, which itself, becomes a subject of research, through the analysis of its success. The DIE develops the concept of knowledge transfer further, by translating research findings into a series of instruments for specific target groups. This research and development

work is supplemented by the provision of permanent infrastructure services for practice and research.

## WE SUPPORT NATIONAL, INTERNATIONAL AND INTERDISCIPLINARY COOPERATION

The institute is committed to establishing links between adult and continuing education policy, practice and research on national, international and interdisciplinary levels. This is of particular importance for the following reasons:

- Education policy in Germany is led by the federal states (educational and cultural sovereignty of the federal states)
- National and regional policies concerning adult and continuing education are increasingly superseded by decisions made at inter- and supranational levels
- Research on continuing education and lifelong learning is undertaken in many sociological disciplines
- Due to its institutional variation and heterogeneous structure, adult- and continuing education is subject to various governance modes of practice.

The DIE is constantly extending its collaboration with European and non-European institutions and represents the German adult and continuing education sector on an international level. Our researchers are members of international panels, undertake international comparative research, organise workshops and guest visits and produce publications that receive acclaim beyond national borders.

## HOW WE WORK

The institute's priorities are planned on a medium-term basis and agreed annually with grant authorities, based on programme budgets. The administrative board supervises processes in the institute, the scientific advisory board oversees the work in terms of content. The legal entity is a registered association, currently with 19 members, approximately half of whom have a background in adult- and continuing education practice and research. The DIE has institutional cooperation agreements with several universities and will extend this in the future. Currently, the DIE is collaborating on, among others, the Basic Education and Literacy





Research Network (“Forschungsnetzwerk Grundbildung und Alphabetisierung”) with the universities of Cologne and Duisburg-Essen (see page 18). Cooperation with the Distance Learning University of Hagen includes projects on the use of digital media for language learning. Furthermore, projects concerned with the promotion of educational staff skills have been ongoing for some time with the University of Tübingen.

## HOW WE TRANSFER RESEARCH

DIE departments work on the basis that adult- and continuing education is a multi-level system, made up of various interconnected levels, ranging from teaching- and learning to the policy framework. While ensuring continuity in terms of its overall perspective on the adult- and continuing education sector, this also enables the institute to adapt to continuous change. Differentiating between these levels and stimulating research about the interaction between them is what structures the departments’ research and transfer work.

The DIE’s activities are split into Research and Infrastructure sectors. The Research sector consists of three departments – “System and Politics”, “Organisation and Management” and “Teaching, Learning, Counselling” – while the Infrastructure sector is divided into the “Knowledge Transfer” and “Research Infrastructures” departments. The research work, which combines practical relevance with scientific soundness, is disseminated by the Infrastructure sector through publications and internet portals, thus promoting knowledge transfer and supporting interdisciplinary research on lifelong learning. Both DIE sectors strive to consolidate research, development and infrastructure services and cooperate closely to achieve this.

In 2017, the successful application for a Leibniz special strategic funds paved the way for the DIE to make significant improvements to the cooperation between research, practice and policy in adult- and continuing education. Indeed, in 2018 this enabled the creation of additional permanent posts, charged with building a network of partner institutions and digitally-supported knowledge transfer. As a result, practice needs can be met more quickly, discerning-

ly and with improved communication. Furthermore, the provision and reach of information for policy and practice has also been improved. Four groups of junior researchers are involved in intervention- and implementation studies, concerned with various aspects of adult education. Their leads have already received a positive response from the scientific advisory board.

## OUR LOCAL ETHICS COMMISSION

The DIE has had a local ethics commission (LEK) in place since 2018, making it only one of four extra-mural institutions in the Leibniz Association to have such a body, along with the GESIS – Leibniz Institute for Social Sciences, the Social Science Center Berlin (WZB) and the DIPF – Leibniz Institute for Research and Information in Education. The commission is charged with safeguarding the scientific quality of research projects from an ethical and data protection point of view. In order to ensure that the interdisciplinary work at the DIE can be judged competently, the commission’s members are selected from all departments. Ethical standards are based on those stipulated by various specialist associations, including the German Educational Research Association (GERA), the German Psychological Society (DGP) and the German Research Foundation (DFG). Since its foundation, the commission has issued 27 ethical authorisations.

## GOOD SCIENTIFIC PRACTICE AT THE DIE

Sarah Widany and Inga Specht have held the role of DIE ombudsperson since 2019 and were selected for a three-year posting by secret ballot. Decentralised ombudspersons in colleges and non-university institutes, such as the DIE, are the first point of contact for questions and advice on good scientific practice, as well as offering mediation in conflicts concerning scientific misconduct. Standards for the ombudswork have been set by the Leibniz Association (“Guidelines for good scientific practice in the Leibniz Association”) and the ombuds office is part of a wider network in the German research field. The DIE’s ombuds officers are supported by the Leibniz Association’s central ombudship body and the German Research Association’s

“research ombudsman”. As a further point of reference, they can consult Leibniz Association guidelines and the DFG code of conduct “guidelines for safeguarding good research practice”, which are subsequently to be applied as internal institute guidelines. This process will be launched as part of a DIE seminar, with a presentation by the “research ombudsman”, an office created by the DFG to handle questions on good scientific practice and scientific integrity. Due to the pandemic, the event was postponed to 2021.

In agreement with doctoral students’ representatives and in cooperation with the methodology consulting unit, a module on good scientific practice has been developed as part of the structured doctoral programme (SDA). The module, which also comes under the remit of the ombudsperson, will be offered to complement the DFG guidelines. The development of internal institute guidelines is in line with a participatory approach to increasing the visibility of good scientific practice that is already in place, and supporting it by giving it direction, structures and processes. It is precisely such an organisational culture which is the best prerequisite for scientific integrity and the prevention of scientific misconduct.

## WE MAKE FAMILY AND WORK COMPATIBLE

The DIE is committed to implementing personnel policies that take account of different family and life situations and help employees achieve a positive work-life balance.

With its certification in 2010 by the “workand-family” audit, an initiative by the non-profit Hertie organisation, the institute declared its commitment to developing a family-friendly culture. Based on an existing family- and life-phase-conscious personnel policies, the audit establishes binding targets to fully incorporate family consciousness into the corporate culture, monitoring their application every three years. The strategy is developed in consultation between “workandfamily” project managers and the institution’s management board, works’ council and equal opportunities officers. Indeed, the presence of a family-oriented corporate culture is of key importance to the DIE board.

The organisation is also a member of the corporate network “Success Factor Family”, established by the German ministry for family affairs, senior citizens, women and youth in cooperation with economic umbrella organisations and the Federation of German Trade Unions, with the aim of establishing family-friendliness as a trademark of the German economy.



Corona-compliant lunch-break: Mareike Kholin, Inga Specht and Martin Merkt relax with a game of chess



The institute offers its staff a wide range of personnel development schemes, flexible and remote working options, as well as corporate health care and family support schemes. In 2020, webinars took place, dealing with questions concerning childcare, parenting and caring for relatives. Due to Corona, the lunch-time yoga courses and mobile workplace massages were unable to operate. The weekly running club, launched as a staff initiative for anyone wanting to jog round the neighbouring Rheinaue park in Bonn, was also severely limited in its activity this year.

The DIE also advocates employee equality, with disabled rights and equal opportunities representatives on hand to support job applicants and employees. Furthermore, a company agreement on integration management is in place to maintain and promote employee health.

#### OUR SUCCESS THROUGH TEAMWORK – THE DIE’S ROLE IN THE LEIBNIZ ASSOCIATION

The common mission of all Leibniz Association institutes is „theoria cum praxi“ – science for the benefit and good of humanity. The 96 member institutes are measured and

regularly evaluated in terms of the excellence claims of their non-university research funding. Closely accompanied by the scientific advisory committee, the DIE considers itself to be progressing well. It has already extended its cooperation with other Leibniz institutes, particularly in the “Educational Potential” network and the interdisciplinary research network “Open Science”. The latter looks into the effects of innovative network technology on science and society, agreeing new research and development fields to expand the use of new, participative technology. The DIE’s active role in this research alliance enables digital technology to be used to benefit the adult education field.

In the “Educational Potential” network, the DIE works with 25 renowned university and non-university educational research institutes to examine how an efficient education system can be designed that promotes lifelong education. The alliance, which has become a recognised contact for educational policy makers, is currently concerned not only with research projects, but also in policy consultation concerning the use of digital learning tools in both official and informal formats.

## › INTERNATIONALISATION

Since its last evaluation in 2016, the institute has continued to develop its internationalisation strategy in close cooperation with the scientific advisory board, measuring success using the criteria of visibility, reputation, responsiveness and expansion. As across-cutting task, internationalisation is firmly established in the research sector.

The Corona pandemic placed severe limitations on the DIE’s internationalisation work. Cross-border networking and mobility, both of which are crucial in peer learning and research cooperation, were significantly limited. Due to travel restrictions, international conferences were cancelled, and DIE exchanges and workshops to initiate international cooperation could not go ahead. The study trip to the University of British Columbia (Canada), sponsored by the German Research Association (DFG) was postponed to 2021. The trip, which intends to focus on German and

Canadian adult education provision and participation patterns, was a joint initiative of the “System and Policy” department (Katrin Kaufmann-Kuchta’s junior research group) and the Internationalisation Unit (Alexandra Ioannidou). Furthermore, the workshop planned to launch a collaborative research project with the Higher School of Economics of the Russian National Research University in Moscow, also had to be postponed. The project, which is being organised by the “Organisation and Programme Planning” department (Karin Dollhausen) and the Internationalisation Unit aims at examining university lifelong learning strategies in regions of economic transition in Germany and Russia.

Research and policy consultation work and representation in international bodies and working groups was somewhat less hard hit by the pandemic, with the institute continuing to be represented across



Meeting of the board members of ESREA at the DIE in Bonn in January 2020. On the left, ESREA secretary, Alexandra Ioannidou. First row bottom right Andreas Fejes, chair of ESREA.

European research networks. In 2020, Alexandra Ioannidou was appointed to the board of the European Society for Research on the Education of Adults (ESREA), where she is now a secretary and board member.

Meanwhile, Susanne Lattke is one of three coordinators of the ESREA-ReNAdET Research network (Research Network for Adult Educators, Trainers and their Professionalisation). Junior research group leader Martin Merkt coordinates the EARLI special interest group 06 (SIG) “Instructional Design”, with Moritz Sahlender holding the JURE coordination post for the same group (SIG).

In the adult literacy and basic education field, Monika Tröster represents the DIE in the European Basic Skills Network (EBSN) and Peter Brandt is involved in the Erasmus+ committee at the National Agency Education for Europe at the German Federal Institute for Vocational Education and Training (NA-BIBB). The DIE has also increased its international presence beyond European boundaries, with three DIE employees – Alexandra Ioannidou, Carmen Biel and

Susanne Lattke – having been involved in the ASEM Education and Research Hub for Lifelong Learning (ASEM LLL Hub), the official network for cooperation between Europe and Asia on research into lifelong learning. Alexandra Ioannidou also works as an expert on issues of “Inclusive and Diverse Higher Education in Asia and Europe” for the Asia-Europe Foundation (ASEF), the official multi-stakeholder partner of the ASEM Education Minister Conference. Susanne Lattke is working on the publication of the national progress report for the fifth Global Report on Adult Learning and Education – GRALE V – for the UNESCO Institute for lifelong learning (UIL). She is also a member of the steering committee charged with developing and implementing the globALE curriculum, which is supported by institutions including the DIE, the German Association of Adult Education (DVV), DVV International, the UIL and the International Council for Adult Education (ICAE). The DIE’s internationalisation agenda is under constant development. In coming years, knowledge transfer and the institute’s research infrastructures are expected to take centre stage in internationalisation work.

## › COMMUNICATING ADULT EDUCATION

One of the Leibniz Association's strategic goals is the transfer of knowledge and research findings to target groups beyond academia contributing to social reflection and innovation. DIE's press and public relations team plays a key role in this respect, acting as a go-between to facilitate dialogue with society and politics, and actively increasing the image and visibility of the work among the public. The pandemic year of 2020 saw the publicity team focusing on communicating information about the institute's research work concerning the pandemic.

Communication is achieved through various means – internal and external newsletters, image films and leaflets, information material, annual reports and social media channels and events. A recent innovation is “DIE-BRIEF” – a one-page newsletter for scientific communication and knowledge transfer, devised and edited by the team. The “Continuing Education Checklist” – a practical handout for anyone considering going into continuing education – has been revised and updated. Development and publication of the DIE annual report – effectively the institute's calling card – is also the work of the communication team. As of 2017, a short version of the report has been made available in German and English – the “Short Annual Report”.

At the heart of the communication network is the DIE homepage, which is also maintained and developed by the public relations team. The institute's social media accounts on Facebook (@diebonn.de) and Twitter (@die-bonn.de) feature institute-wide news, with the Twitter Account, in particular, growing steadily and being used to inform media, educational practice and the public about all the DIE'S activities, projects, publications and research results.

Last year, a DIE internal paper was published on gender-sensitive language, and communicated as a recommendation to employees, with the institute's board and managers using the document to appeal for staff sensitivity on the issues, both in their day-to-day work and in text and documents.

The public relations team is also responsible for maintaining and optimising corporate design (CD) thus ensuring the institute's unified identity and boosting its recognition.

In addition, they work with researchers to organise external events, such as the “DIE Continuing Education Forum”, which regularly brings together representatives from science, educational practice and politics to reflect on issues and discuss research results. The 2020 event took up the issue of “Digitalisation in adult education from a quality and professionalism aspect” and featured a prize ceremony for the “Innovation in Adult Education” award. The 2020 award acknowledged educational services aimed at boosting the digital skills of continuing education personnel, under the title “Ready for the digital revolution? – educational tools for continuing education staff.”

Due to the pandemic, the event had to be streamed live – and thanks to easy digital access, the number of participants well exceeded that of previous years. The public relations team supported the event on social media, as well as ensuring comprehensive coverage on the DIE homepage.

## › Highlights: the DIE in 2020

**THE CORONA PANDEMIC THREW THE DIE AGENDA INTO A SPIN.** Events were cancelled, or went virtual, networks were set up – while real, “face-to-face” networks fell flat. Nevertheless, 2020 was still a productive year for the DIE, with a variety of new research published and new projects and collaborations started. The DIE Continuing Education Forum – a well-established DIE event series, proved it could also be successful digitally. These, and other milestones, notably scientific projects and knowledge transfer provisions were all among the year's highlights.

### › KNOWLEDGE TRANSFER MAKES ITS MARK WITH A DIE “DIALOGUE PRACTICE NETWORK”

In November 2020, representatives from the DIE and 25 adult and continuing education institutions met for the digital launch of a new knowledge transfer and innovation platform – “DIALOGUE practice network.” Aimed at improving communication between adult- and continuing education research and practice, the network is a further expansion of the DIE's transfer formats. The network's members are institutions with a substantial interest in integrating research-based knowledge into their work, and who, on the other hand, are happy to provide the DIE with a further outlet to publicise research. They represent a broad spectrum – both in terms of subject matter and geographical coverage, being spread throughout Germany.

The network has a free choice as to which issues it wishes to tackle, so long as they come under the broad remit of how adult and continuing education can be used to enable Germany's entire adult population to achieve the personal development, social participation and employability they desire. One of the network's goals for the future is the review, preparation and conveyance of existing research, as well as mutual discussion regarding interpretation and solutions. The network also has the potential to actively influence the DIE research agenda.

With member institutions able to volunteer to run trials, the network takes on an active role



in research and can thus drive innovation. DIALOGUE also wants to run its own specialist events, generating impetus in the field. The DIE has already received significant positive feedback from the institutions involved.

The new practice network is part of a wider strategic evolution of knowledge transfer at the DIE, which resulted in 2020, in the agreement and publication on the website, of a knowledge transfer concept applicable to the entire institute. The concept outlines transfer responsibilities in terms of function and scope, both for knowledge transfer staff and those in other research units. Such institution-wide transfer concepts are recommended in research policy, in order to ensure knowledge transfer activity receives its due worth in society. Indeed, knowledge transfer infrastructure has always been a key issue for the DIE and is now even more deeply enshrined in its culture.

[www.die-bonn.de/institut/dienstleistungen/dialog-praxisnetzwerk.aspx](http://www.die-bonn.de/institut/dienstleistungen/dialog-praxisnetzwerk.aspx)





## ADULT EDUCATION AND LEARNING IN THE NATIONAL EDUCATION REPORT 2020

The eighth national education report „Education in Germany 2020“ was published on June 23, 2020. It was the first time DIE was involved in writing it, and DIE director Josef Schrader together with colleagues Ina Rüber and Sarah Widany, were responsible for a rethink of the chapter “Continuing Education and Adult Learning”, which now comprehensively depicts the heterogeneity of the quaternary education sector. Indeed, there have been many positive developments – increasing enrolment rates, improved significance of vocational education and widespread quality management. But there are further improvements to be made to tackle regional disparities, inequality in enrolment, expansion of online learning provision, and falling success rates in integration courses.

This year’s focal chapter „Education in a Digitalised World“ is dedicated to the framework, developments and developmental needs in the field of digital learning and is well abreast of current developments in society, delivering fact-based evidence



for all educational sectors. It delivers preliminary answers to questions arising from the Covid-19 pandemic and the associated digitalisation drive.

## DEPARTMENTAL REORGANISATION: ORGANISATION AND PROGRAMME PLANNING UNIT

The DIE undertook a reorganisation of its research sector as per July 1, 2020, creating the new department “Organisation and Programme Planning”. It emerged from the former units “Organisation and Management” and “Programmes and Participation”. The department is completed by a junior research group that studies the professional beliefs of teaching staff within professional learning communities in adult education. The reorganisation took place according to a recommendation by the DIE board.

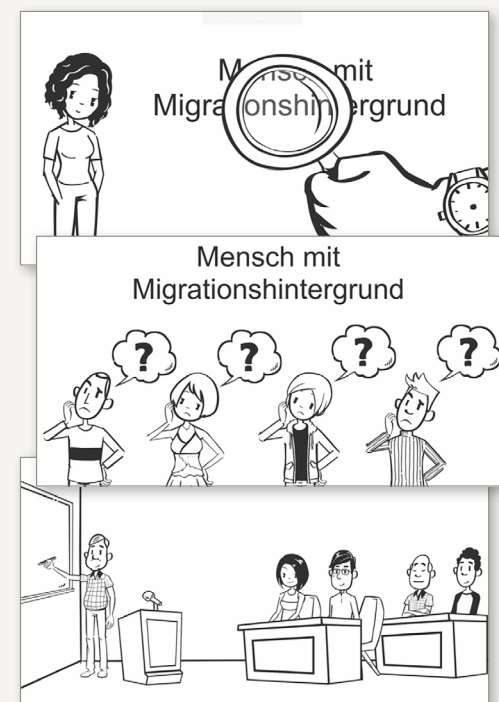
The reorganisation was moderated by the board of directors and closely involved managers and employees in both departments, who not only engaged in developing the new organisational structure, but who also developed the research questions concerning

their future work. The resulting set-up implies that aspects of programme- and organisational research can be analysed in a systematic, interrelated way, thus giving a new impulse to the further development of disciplinary questions on the meso level of continuing education. Rudolf Tippelt will act as professional and strategic consultant to the department for a year. Tippelt was, until 2016, professor of educational research at the LMU Munich and educational organisations continue to feature strongly in his research.

The DIE research sector thus consists of three departments focusing on questions on the systemic-, organisational- and teaching-learning levels, and highlighting, more than ever, the relations between them.

## ONLINE VOCATIONAL LEARNING FOR MANAGERS

The project “Manage2Integrate” was successfully completed at the end of June 2020, having worked with QUA-LiS NRW and LAAW NRW e.V. to develop a training module and online course for practitioners in leadership positions on how to manage educational services for migrants in Germany. The training module is available via a publicly-accessible Moodle Platform (<https://m2i-online.laaw.nrw/>) and is unique, not only in the fact it is skills-oriented, but also in its applicability for managers from a variety of continuing education backgrounds, regardless of their previous knowledge or learning needs. It can be used in private study or can be integrated within existing training offers. It features four central topics: integration as a cross-sectional task, networks in the context of intercultural openings, milieu-related skills and target audience work, as well as intercultural personnel development (see page 25).



## INNOVATIVE PROJECT COMBINES PANEL AND INTERVENTION STUDIES

August 2020 saw the launch of the project “Teachers in Adult Education – A Panel Study” (TAEPS). Over the course of six years, a representative random sample of teachers will be surveyed three times and the basic features of the institutions in which they work will be noted. The way in which the project combines panel- and intervention studies is particularly innovative. Its key aim is to gain insights into the living and working conditions and skills of teaching staff, as well as researching the needs and potential for further qualification of educational personnel. The project is linked to the wb-personal-monitor, building on it from a longitudinal perspective and is one of the first of its kind, both nationally and internationally. Indeed, the TAEPS project goes beyond existing boundaries in adult- and continuing education research, addressing important, previously



## TEACHERS IN ADULT EDUCATION A PANEL STUDY

unanswered questions on theoretical and practical issues in the field of lifelong learning. The project is the work of the “Teaching, Learning, Counselling” and “System and Politics” departments, in cooperation with the University of Heidelberg and the Leibniz Institute for Educational Trajectories (LifBi).

### WB-WEB WINS THE COMENIUS-EDUMEDIA-AWARD

Following on from its success in winning the OER Award in 2017, the DIE's portal for adult- and continuing education staff, wb-web, has now been presented with the Comenius EduMedia Award by the Society for Education, Information and Media e.V (GPI). The award, which is now in its 25th year, recognises international educational media which are considered outstanding from an educational, content or design point of view.

The GPI awarded wb-web both the Comenius EduMedia seal and medal in the „adult education and personnel development category“, praising its significant role in developing the skills and professionalisation of adult- and continuing education staff, and highly recommending it as a didactic and methodical resource.



The award acknowledges the comprehensive transfer work undertaken by wb-web, which began in 2013 with the Bertelsmann Foundation and achieved a further milestone with the integration of the EULE learning platform in 2020.

### NRW BASIC EDUCATION AND LITERACY RESEARCH NETWORK

The need to support adults in their linguistic ability was again underlined by the „LEO 2018“ study. And it is with this in mind, that basic education and literacy are today held as a key topic in the adult education sector. The “NWR Basic Education and Literacy Research Network” was established to provide a scientifically substantiated base for practical and political actions. Work began in September 2020. The project is subsidised by the North Rhine Westphalia Ministry of Innovation, Science and Research (MKW), led by researchers from the University of Cologne, as well as involving the University of Duisburg-Essen and the DIE. A total of six doctoral and one post-doctoral student analyse basic education



and literacy issues from a social, organisational and teaching and learning perspective. One of the network's key goals is to ensure a continuous dialogue on politically- and practically relevant issues between the research, practical and political fields.

<https://nrw-forschungsnetzwerk.uni-koeln.de>

### „DIE CONTINUING EDUCATION FORUM“, DIGITALISATION DIALOGUE AND „INNOVATION IN ADULT EDUCATION“ AWARD

#### DIGITAL ADULT EDUCATION QUALITY CONTROL

A challenging year drew to an end for the DIE with the 22nd “DIE Continuing Education Forum” which, like so many events in the year – took place online. The livestream went out to more than 600 participants from all sectors of adult- and continuing education. In the true spirit of digitalisation, the forum linked in with the successful “DIGITALISATION DIALOGUE” event series, a twice-yearly opportunity for representatives from practice and politics to discuss digital education topics, organised as part of the project “Digitalisation in empirical educational research” (Digi-EBF).

The digital education market is rich in technologies that claim to effectively assist digital learning, with innovations, such as virtual reality or blockchain technology and cloud- and algorithm-based applications among those presented in forum sessions. But which criteria do we consider when describing an educational technology as “good”? And how does the EdTech sector's understanding of quality compare with that of adult educators? In order to answer these questions, the DIE organised four sessions, to which they invited key players from research and practice to grill EdTech

providers. It is clearer than ever that a discussion on the quality of educational technology is necessary. As is the fact that the quality criteria on which adult- and continuing education rely is not in need of total renewal, but merely a widening of its application.

#### NEW LEARNING – NEW PROFESSIONALISM

Questions arising from the discussions, in particular from those with educational backgrounds, were concerned with how the quality of educational technology can be guaranteed and how those required to use such technology can be trained to do so professionally?

Obviously, technical affinity and multidisciplinary readiness are prerequisites. But it also became clear that it is not just media education and didactic skills which need to be improved, but rather that users need to accept that they have a new role to play. Unless they are experienced or trained in virtual reality, teachers must be open to digital teaching and learning, accepting support and advice, as their students do, from those who are technically trained in digital educational settings.





Of course, appropriate training is available for educators, albeit only on a regional basis, as lamented by Josef Schrader. The DIE this year awarded its „Adult Education Innovation Prize“ to such projects, rewarding their efforts in assisting the qualification and professionalisation of teaching staff in digital adult education.



Virtual award ceremony of the DIE Innovation Award to the EbmoocTeam of CONEDU: Beate Beyer-Paulick (DIE) in conversation with Karin Kulmer, Birgit Aschemann and Simone Müller (from above).



Peter Brandt (DIE) in conversation with Julia Westerholt, Director of the German Adult Education Association (DVV).

In a concluding panel discussion, the event’s findings were discussed with representatives from political and other educational fields. It became clear, that the educational research sector will be responsible for tackling questions concerning the quality of digital education, and that the professionalisation of educational personnel is an issue for educational and employment policy on a national and regional scale.

2020 INNOVATION PRIZE WINNERS: SELF-DETERMINED, OPEN & COURAGEOUS

The winning projects all had varying focal points: from enabling autonomous, contemporary education free of charge, to helping achieve changes of perspective and secure digital role-play.

While the “Coaches for online learning” project from Leipzig Adult Education Centre enables trainers to try out digital environments from a student’s perspective and use their experience to adapt their teaching plan, Austria’s EBMooCPlus project focuses on everyone involved in adult education, with open online courses featuring key aspects of digital education work. In awarding the prize to the LoveStorm project, the institute highlights a company that tackles the use of hate speech and cyber mobbing and emphasises that the responsibility for encouraging digital civil courage in society as a whole, lies within the remit of digital adult education.

» Art at the DIE

THE DIE REGULARLY OPENS ITS rooms for art and exhibitions. In January, we hosted the vernissage “Ideenvielfalt – Variety of Ideas” – dedicated to staff, friends and family who work as freelance artists. The imaginative and varied works, in the form of photography, mosaic, object art, collage and painting, were presented by Giorgos Arwanitidis, Miriam Bastisch, Lily Cely, Julia Haun, Nadine Preiß, Jutta Rohwerder and Susanne Witt.



Giorgos Arwanitidis



Giorgos Arwanitidis



Giorgos Arwanitidis



Miriam Bastisch



Miriam Bastisch



Julia Haun



Lili Cely



Lili Cely



Lili Cely



Miriam Bastisch



Julia Haun



Julia Haun



Nadine Preiß



Jutta Rohwerder



Jutta Rohwerder



Jutta Rohwerder



Susanne Witt



Susanne Witt



Susanne Witt



# Educational research and innovative concepts for practice

**THE DIE IS ONE OF THE INSTITUTES** in the Leibniz Association that both conducts research and provides infrastructure services. Linking the two – and developing innovative concepts with those involved on the practical side – requires close cross-departmental cooperation to coordinate research and development and to transfer research results.

DIE’s decision to orientate its research and infrastructure work to individual and collective stakeholders on three levels of the adult- and continuing education sector is decisive for the institute’s departmental structure. These levels are:

- The macro level focuses on continuing education systems and their structure, development and management by national and international players from political and civil sectors and increasingly from an international perspective.
- The meso level takes into account adult- and continuing education organisations, the management of educational services and the development of needs-oriented programmes.
- The micro level looks at learning and consultation processes, as well as the actions of those involved, particularly in terms of the skills, diagnosis, promotion and recognition of teaching staff.

As such, the actions and decisions of those involved in continuing education are not only the focus of research, but they are also the recipients for the institute’s knowledge transfer process and infrastructure services. These include, in particular, national and international representatives from the fields of politics, administration, profes-

sional and sponsoring associations, management and planning personnel in continuing education institutions, course leaders, trainers and consultants and, not least, the students themselves.

Adult education and its requirements, formats and consequences are at the core of DIE’s research and it is from this perspective that the institute analyses all aspects of continuing education, from social and cognitive to motivational requirements. Particular attention is paid to the pedagogical and institutional support that adult learners receive from teaching staff, programme planners and managers of continuing education institutes. The ways in which adults learn are considered in terms of their impact on education and skills development, social integration, or professional career development.

One of DIE’s key fields of work is research into continuing education systems and the organisations involved with its heterogenous institutional structures.

Furthermore, the evolving levels of demand for continuing education, as well as changing financial, political and legal conditions, lead providers and organisations of adult and continuing education in a constant state of fluctuation.



For example, one of the key challenges faced by adult education institutions is the design of professional programmes and course portfolios that meet participants’ expectations, foster personal development and improve conditions for social integration. As these needs change, institutions find themselves faced with the challenge of having to adapt the strategies behind their training programmes.

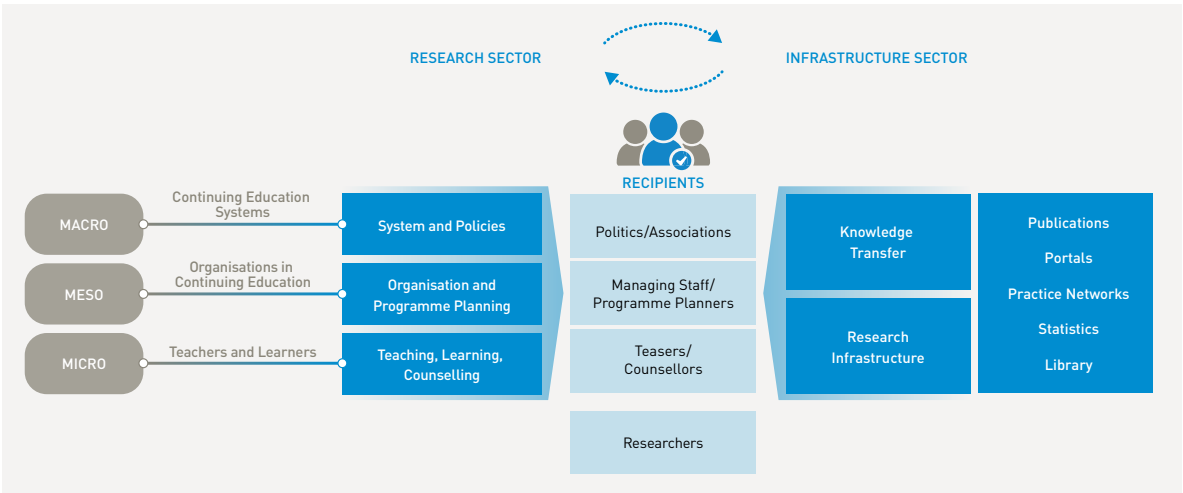
This is where research on teaching and learning processes as well as the analysis of their effects within and outside the educational environment come in. DIE’s research and development work is based on the assumption that the professional development of teaching staff is a key means of enhancing the quality of teaching and learning processes.

Thanks to its series of books and magazines, the „Knowledge Transfer“ department encourages lively

expert discourse, with an increasing reliance on digital media. The department has developed an open access policy and offers a growing amount of information as open educational resources (OER).

The „Research Infrastructures“ department has developed DIE’s library into a research library, aiming to make data from educational reports better accessible for internal and external use in future research. Furthermore, the department has established a research data management system to document and protect data from DIE research projects (see page 28).

To ensure it has its finger on the pulse in the dynamic field of adult- and continuing education, both in terms of research and infrastructure, DIE regularly invites internal and external experts to give lectures in its DIE seminars. Their lectures form the basis for discussions and for future cooperation opportunities.



The DIE structure reflects the multi-level structure of the adult and continuing education system.





## › System and Policies

THE “SYSTEM AND POLICIES” DEPARTMENT is responsible for observing and analysing Germany’s continuing education system. Researchers focus on the social and institutional frameworks of continuing education, as well as on political and civic stakeholders and the impact of their actions on continuing education structures, offerings and participation. They also examine the individual and wider social effects of participation in continuing education.

### › IN FOCUS – SYSTEMATIC REPORTING ON VOCATIONAL EDUCATION – IWBBE PROJECT

In summer 2020, the DIE began cooperation with the Federal Institute for Vocational Education and Training (BIBB) on a project to create a new reporting system for vocational training. The project, entitled: “Integrated continuing education reporting – development of a systematic approach to vocational training reporting” is funded by the Federal Ministry of Education and Research (BMBF).”

Although there are regular reports on the (vocational) continuing education infrastructure in Germany, there is rarely consistency in the conceptual basis or data sources. This, and the varying emphases of the reports, makes it difficult to draw comparisons or collaborate results. The project takes an integrative approach to developing

the reporting system, using an integrated vocational training framework to combine relevant data and results from existing but unrelated reports and thus identify information gaps, interfaces and development needs.

New topics, such as the Corona pandemic, digitalisation and structural changes in the job market will also be included in the project, which will draw on the help from experts to target reporting to the specific information needs of the political, practical and research sectors. The department’s long established expertise in reporting and data collection, through its involvement in the “Adult Education Survey”, the National Education Report (see page 16) and “wbmonitor”, will come to the fore in the project.

## › Organisation and Programme Planning

THE DEPARTMENT FOCUSES ITS RESEARCH ON THE FOLLOWING ISSUES: What designates cooperation between management and programme planners in adult- and continuing education organisations? How can the expectations of various target groups be taken into account when designing programmes? Which programme structures and focal points result from planning activities? And to what extent can the professional planning of programme- and course provision effectively improve participation, learning and the education of adults?

### › IN FOCUS – MANAGE2INTEGRATE: ONLINE VOCATIONAL LEARNING FOR CONTINUING EDUCATION MANAGERS

The project “Manage2Integrate” aimed to develop a training module and online course on the subject of the “management of integration-fostering educational services for migrants in Germany”. The three-year project was completed in June 2020, its key outcome being an online learning resource, to help provide management with the skills they need to establish and develop services to aid integration in their organisations. Such services not only comprise German language and integration courses, exams and personal counselling for migrants, but also services designed to target the host communities themselves. This ensures a wide-reaching response to the range of continuing education needs in a world characterised by migration. The online learning resource can be accessed free of charge at <https://m2i-online.laaw.nrw/>.



Thanks to open licensing, the material is not only available for private study, but can also be adapted by teachers, providers and associations offering their own management courses in integration.





## › Teaching, Learning, Counselling

THE „TEACHING, LEARNING, COUNSELLING“ DEPARTMENT focuses its work on the prerequisites of successful teaching, learning and counselling processes and examines the ways in which they are planned, designed and evaluated. Particular emphasis is placed on the recording, analysis, promotion and recognition of teaching personnel's professional skills.

### › IN FOCUS – USING CARTOONS TO MAKE BASIC EDUCATION ACCESSIBLE

Giving adults with limited literacy skills access to basic education is an ongoing challenge. The project VerB (Verstehensprozesse mit Bildgeschichten – Narrative comprehension of comics) investigates whether educational comics may be a suitable approach to reach out to these audiences. VerB is part of the DIE's research and development on improving basic language training for adults and the institute's long term, cross-departmental commitment to the literacy and basic education sector.

In 2020, initial work addressing basic cognitive processes was conducted in three internships and one bachelor thesis at the University of Bonn. The project, initially financed with internal funding, is conducted in cooperation with the Leibniz-Institut für Wissensmedien (IWM, Knowledge Media Research Center).



CAN'T READ BUT I HAVE EXCELLENT TV VIEWING SKILLS."

## › Knowledge Transfer

PROFILPASS, STUDY BOOKS, WB-WEB, digitalisation dialogue, the weiter bilden magazine – these are just a handful of the tried and tested formats the DIE relies on to disseminate its knowledge and experience in the practice, policy and research triangle. They also demonstrate the DIE's commitment to ensuring that socially relevant scientific questions are not only researched, but that the answers are passed on to the fields of adult- and continuing education, as explanations, interpretations and solutions and that research-based developments achieve wider application. To achieve this, the DIE uses tried and tested knowledge transfer channels – publications, portals and practice networks.

### › IN FOCUS – THE PROFILPASS FURTHER EXPANDS ITS WIDE-REACHING PORTFOLIO

The DIE has developed three new versions of the ProfilPASS, as part of EU projects, to assist specific groups in assessing their competences. All three versions of the ProfilPASS are available as open access and in various European languages.



The **ProfilPASS for Start-Ups** is aimed at those who wish to set up their own company. With the help of the ProfilPASS, which features 13 entrepreneurial competences sections, they can reflect upon and document their abilities and experience. Biographical examples and testimonials are used to highlight their situation and provide an authentic impression of company establishment and management in various contexts.



The **barrier-free ProfilPASS in Easy Language** is targeted at those with cognitive impairments and learning difficulties. As well as its simplified language, with increased picture use and significantly shortened text passages and tables, it features a barrier-free pdf, suitable for the blind and visually impaired, and a guide on filling in the ProfilPASS.



The **“ProfilPASS – kickstart your career!”** is a cross between the **“ProfilPASS for adults”** and the **“ProfilPASS for young people”**. It is aimed, above all, at young, disadvantaged adults who are neither in employment, education nor training (so-called NEETs) and tackles topics, such as abandonment of training, family responsibilities and the career guidance. The stimulating design and character of the ProfilPASS has been developed in such a way as to motivate users.





## ➤ Research Infrastructures

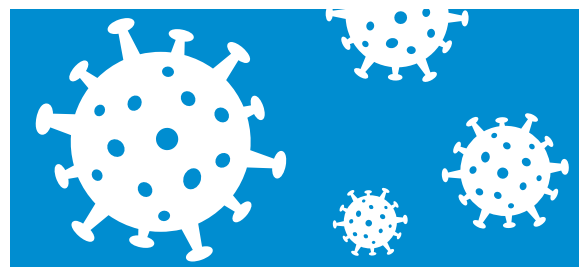
THE „RESEARCH INFRASTRUCTURES“ DEPARTMENT is charged with collecting, archiving, and documenting research data across the adult education sector, and making it available to researchers, both in Germany and internationally. It is guided by the principles of open and transparent research and is supported in a variety of services and projects by staff in the statistics sector, the library and web development.

### ➤ IN FOCUS – ANALYSIS OF DIE PROVIDER STATISTICS – THE COVID SURVEY

In cooperation with the “System and Policies” department and the German Adult Education Association (DVV), the research infrastructures department carried out a special pandemic survey among adult education institutions.

Its focus was the effects of the lockdown in Spring 2020 on events, the increased use of digital learning provisions and any particular difficulties, challenges or financial consequences, resulting from the pandemic. Thirty eight percent of institutions took part in the survey.

Initial results show that the pandemic presented an enormous challenge, for which adult education institutions were not prepared. The result was a collapse in the number of events and participants, and the respective financial consequences. At the same time, it sparked a significant expansion in digital offerings, which had previously accounted for less



than five percent of courses or events. Despite numerous reported difficulties in connection with further digitalisation, the majority of institutions claimed they expect the pandemic to change demand for and provision of digital learning on a long-term basis and are thus adapting their recruitment of teachers, staff qualification and programme planning accordingly.

The data is expected to be published as a scientific use file and, in combination with the DIE’s annual educational institutions statistical report, is expected to provide numerous opportunities for research analyses.

# Fostering young talent

THE DIE NOT ONLY CARRIES OUT RESEARCH into continuing education but is also committed to the professional training of students, graduates and post-docs.

## ➤ STUDENTS

The DIE currently offers dual training for the following apprenticeships: business office management and media and information services (FAMI, library sector.) In June 2020, an apprentice completed the FAMI course

after three years of apprenticeship. A further apprenticeship began the second year of the office management course in September 2020. The DIE’s goal is to provide courses to develop and promote professional skills.

## ➤ JUNIOR RESEARCHERS

From content analysis to structural equation models, mixed-methods research to causal analysis and peer reviews to academic English – the structured doctoral programme (SDA) at the DIE combines education in qualitative and quantitative adult education research methods with events aimed at teaching scientific and professional skills. The programme is enhanced through cooperation with the DIE’s relevant partner institutes, such as the Centre of Methods at Tübingen’s Eberhard Karls University, which makes its training sessions available to DIE doctoral students. In addition, DIE junior researchers benefit from extensive care services, provided by departmental and junior research group management to ensure ongoing progress in dissertation work.

Junior research groups are a core element of the DIE’s junior development programme. Qualified doctoral students are given the opportunity to take on responsibility for a junior research group, thus ena-



bling them to build up their own research profile. In 2018, four junior research groups were established at the DIE, whose members are currently completing dissertations on continuing education research, for example on the effects of professional learning groups or the question of educational leave.

## ➤ METHOD CONSULTING INTERFACE

The method consulting interface, under the management of Christian Spoden, is responsible for the education of doctoral students and their organisational involvement in the institute. Spoden also offers junior researchers an advisory service for

questions regarding research design and assessment strategies. Intense cooperation with research methodology experts in other institutes, as well as ongoing training, ensures advisors are drawing their information from a quality-assured foundation.





# Projects at the DIE

**THIRD PARTY FUNDED PROJECTS** are essential for the DIE in dealing with current and lasting issues in the field of lifelong learning. They enhance internally-funded research and development work, enabling current developments in politics and practice into account and paving the way for innovation.

The DIE's goal is to establish a portfolio of third party funded projects which includes competitively acquired funding from the Federal Ministry for Education and Research (BMBF) and the European Union, as well as from the German Research Foundation (DFG) or the Leibniz Association. Third party funded projects are strategically planned and involve all departments, often in cross-departmental collaboration. The DIE also cooperates in project research with numerous external partners: continuing education providers, professional and umbrella associations, partner universities and professors, educational research institutes within the Leibniz Association and international partners.

Depending on the question and subject matter, descriptive and hypothesis-generating, hypothe-

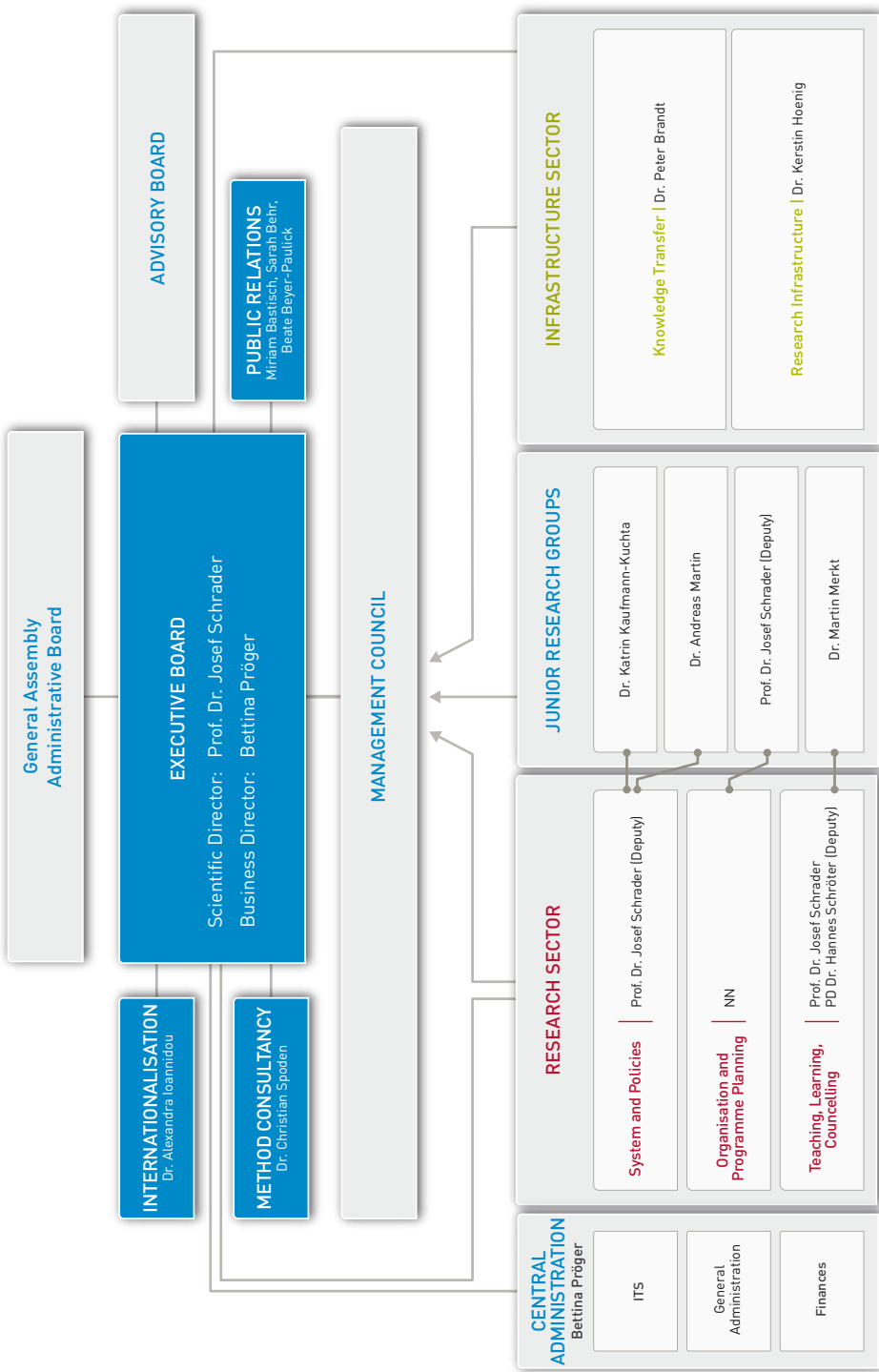
sis-testing, correlation and causal analyses, based on (quasi) experiments or longitudinal surveys are carried out, along with intervention and evaluation studies. Qualitative and quantitative evaluation and survey procedures are used, and, where appropriate, linked to mixed-methods approaches.

An overview of ongoing third party funded projects clearly shows the numerous and varied ways in which questions concerning the digitalisation of learning and education processes are dealt with. Of further note, is a significant increase in the number of projects in the Infrastructure department, thanks to the wb-web portal, which provides the DIE with quick and extensive knowledge transfer in the form of open educational resources (OER).

For more information on all DIE projects, please see the DIE website:  
[www.die-bonn.de/weiterbildung/forschungslandkarte/recherche.aspx?org\\_id=1](http://www.die-bonn.de/weiterbildung/forschungslandkarte/recherche.aspx?org_id=1)

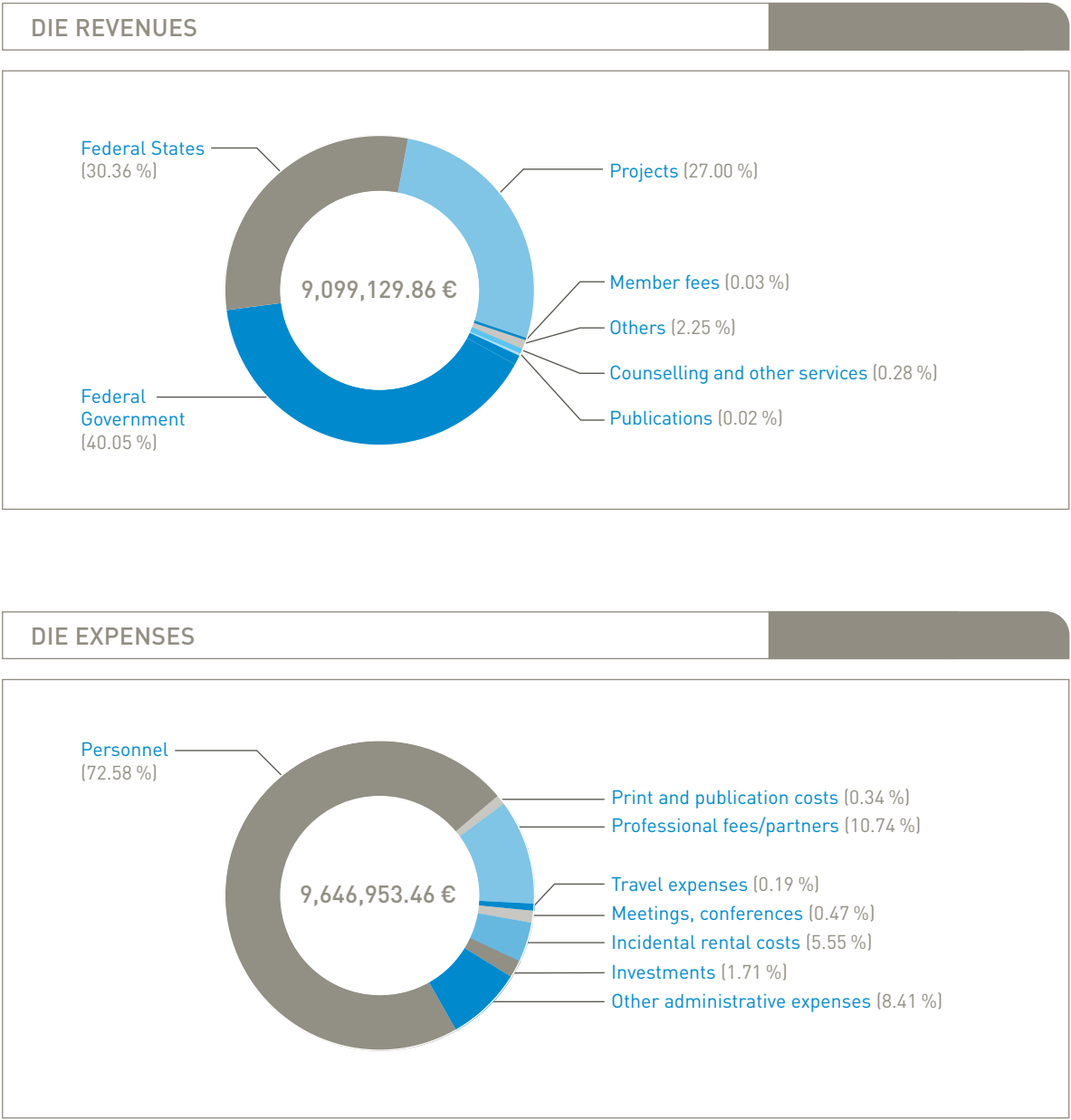
# Appendix

## ORGANISATIONAL CHART





FINANCES



STAFF

EMPLOYEES OF THE DIE (December 31, 2020)				
	Full-time equivalent	Persons	Women	Men
System and Politics				
Researchers	10.25	13	8	5
Non-researchers	0.80	1	1	0
Total	11.05	14	9	5
Organisation and Programme Planning				
Researchers	6.20	9	8	1
Non-researchers	2.25	3	3	0
Total	8.45	12	11	1
Teaching, Learning, Counselling				
Researchers	14.00	18	14	4
Non-researchers	3.05	5	4	1
Total	17.05	23	18	5
Knowledge Transfer				
Researchers	11.25	13	6	7
Non-researchers	6.93	11	10	1
Total	18.18	24	16	8
Research Infrastructures				
Researchers	5.00	5	3	2
Non-researchers	14.09	17	12	5
Total	19.09	22	15	7
Executive Board				
Researchers	5.60	5	3	2
Non-researchers	2.80	6	6	0
Total	8.40	11	9	2
Central Administration				
Researchers	0	0	0	0
Non-researchers	11.75	13	9	4
Total	11.75	13	9	4

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