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ACRONYMS

AHAED  Arab House of Adult Education and Development
AI    Artificial Intelligence
ALE  Adult Learning and Education
ASEF  Asia Europe Foundation
ASEM  Asia-Europe Meeting
BMAS  Federal Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs
BMBF  Federal Ministry of Education and Research
CET  Continued Education and Training
Cpd  Continued Professional Development
DFG  German Research Foundation
DGfE  German Society for Educational Science
DGPs  The German Society for Psychology
DIE  German Institute for Adult Education
DVV International  The German Adult Education Association’s Institute for International Cooperation
EBSN  European Basic Skills Network
EFQM  European Foundation for Quality Management
ESREA  The European Society for Research in Adult Education
ESREA  European Society for Research on the Education of Adults
GESIS  The Leibniz Institute for the Social Sciences
ICAE  The International Council for Adult Education
IKO  Institute Conference
Länder  The 16 federal states within Germany
LEK  Local Ethics Committee
LERN  The Leibniz Centre of Excellence Education in Museums
NA-BIBB  The National Agency at the Federal Institute for Vocational Education and Training
NBP  National Education Platform,
NRU/HSE  National Research University, Higher School of Economics
OECD  Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
OER  Open Educational Resources
PR  Press and Public Relations
SDA  Structured Doctoral Training Programme
SDGs  Sustainable Development Goals
SME  Small and Medium-sized Enterprise
UIL  The UNESCO Institute for Lifelong Learning
VHS  German Adult Education Association
WZB  The Social Science Research Center Berlin
Dear Readers,

part of adult education’s self-image, indeed its self-assurance, is that it reacts more quickly to social developments than other educational areas. But is has been a while since that self-assurance has been put to the test. Whereas, in the past two years, we were primarily concerned with how the pandemic changes the teaching and learning of adults, i.e., what remains and can remain of pre-pandemic adult education after the pandemic, we now have to think about adult education in the pandemic, when contact restrictions can repeatedly rule our everyday lives. And after Russia’s attack on Ukraine in violation of international law, we can no longer rule out a Europe at war, even if living in a Europe after war is part of, not only, the younger generation’s identity. At the same time, climate change is advancing, refugee movements are increasing and political disputes are becoming harsher in an increasingly segmented society in which the binding power of large organisations such as churches and trade unions is dwindling.

And all of this is accompanied by a sometimes aggressively displayed irrationality that blurs the boundaries between fact and fiction. A turning point? The term is being used more and more frequently in public, even if it seems rash in a historical perspective.

We often hear how every generation has its own challenges. The current one, it seems, must learn to deal with the inevitable risks and uncertainties that come with profound social transformation. This demands resilience from all, as the Action Council on Education recently ardently stressed. And it requires us to endure ambiguity in dealing with uncertain information and conflicting values and beliefs. For, even with convincing scientific evidence, the consequences of decisions cannot be predicted with certainty, and conflicting values persist even when we try to ignore them. All this requires rational action and decision-making that are impossible without lifelong learning.

The good news: there is little evidence of adult education resigning. While the published opinion is often presented in an all too understandable mode of complaint (about insufficient attention) and appeal (preferably to politics for more support), adult education, not least the publicly accountable one, shows itself...
to be extremely committed, creative and competent, as is the case for the supposed Ukrainian refugee crisis. With education, counselling and guidance, it supports participants in overcoming the challenges that life, society and the world of work expose them to, not least also through its form: a public understanding of what is true, right and helpful. What it offers in language (basic) education, health and (inter)cultural education and digital media skills, and in vocational and in-company training, is indispensable. But what is also clear is that, despite the often-overlooked commendable voluntary commitment of many, these offers will be impossible in the future without considerable improvements in working conditions.

It is also encouraging that, in its coalition agreement, the new federal government has declared its willingness to once again assume more responsibility for education and upbringing. During the pandemic, it had temporarily shifted this responsibility to families and institutions - with incalculable consequences in increased psychosocial stress, restricted learning opportunities, exacerbated social inequality or impaired working conditions for educators - also in adult education.

The federal government’s ambitious reform program, which focuses on, among other aspects, improving financial framework conditions, expanding digital infrastructures and qualifying staff in adult and continuing education, deserves support. This support is also essential because public funding disputes are likely to become fiercer, not only those between education, social and defence policy, but also those between the education sectors and within their segments, such as general and vocational continuing education.

Despite any pandemic-imposed constraints, in 2021 the DIE continued to deliver high-quality work and develop itself further. We are participating in important projects to establish a national digital education space, as promoted by the German ministries BMBF and the BMAS (see p. 22). We have continued our research on using digital media for learning and education, with a view to their potential for supporting teachers’ professional activities, but also with a view to opportunities and challenges for learners.

We have contributed to educational reporting, which is particularly necessary in phases of drastic change, with the DIE Trend Analysis (see p. 27), the third German Continuing Education Atlas and the wbmonitor. We have expanded our research infrastructures, e.g., by digitizing the programme archive of the German Adult Education Association (VHS - see p. 22) so that adult education’s sensitivity to societal changes can be examined historically. Vocational and in-company continuing education are also receiving increased attention, for example in a new project on AI-supported innovation processes in SMEs, in cooperation with the Fraunhofer-Gesellschaft; in the analysis of the range of continuing vocational education offered at VHS centres and in an OECD-funded study on the counselling needs of the low-skilled (see p. 29).

And we have, not least, responded to increased requests for advice on dealing with the pandemic from federal and regional policy makers and from sponsoring associations.
In the future, a new open-access series entitled “DIE Results” will present the institutional results from research and development. In 2021, we also responded to current developments, including a themed issue of the journal “weiter bilden” (continue education) on dealing with critical life events. And we have increased our expertise in using digital media for internal and external communications, learning how to reach more people in events without sacrificing social exchange.

Internal development was characterized by improving our research expertise and our ability to collaborate, including the completion of two processes involving the appointment of professors for chairs at the Distance Learning University of Hagen, one in 2021 and the second in early 2022. Another appointment process at the University of Cologne is nearing completion.

We have also intensified international networking: in the European Society for Research on the Education of Adults (ESREA), through the continuation of research relationships with international partners (see p. 14) - although we are currently suspending the research cooperation with a Moscow university - and through the internationalisation of consulting services related to the ProfilPASS.

Last but not least, to improve work-life balance, we have reached a consensus on a new working time agreement, providing all employees with more flexibility in time and place. Together with all stakeholders, we will monitor and reflect on the consequences of that agreement for cooperation within the Institute and for our organizational culture. This also applies to measures we initiated after intensive discussions in response to a survey on psychological stress factors in the workplace, e.g., the appointment of a confidant who provides preventive and curative advice to employees, stress-prevention training for employees or leadership supervision for managers.

All of this was only possible thanks to the commitment of our employees. In close coordination between the Institute’s Conference of Scientific Staff, the Executive Board and the Management Team, we are currently discussing focal points we want to pursue or develop in a process of participatory strategy development. This process includes, for example, whether and how we can expand our range of topics to areas in which we currently have little presence, such as education for sustainable development or political education.

The fact that modernity repeatedly generates crises does not mean that the principles supporting it are outdated or even refuted. On the contrary, without being able to judiciously interact with ourselves, others, nature and society, we can only suffer transformation, not shape it. At the DIE, we will therefore continue to deal scientifically with those questions whose answers make a practical difference. Only experience will tell whether we are successful. Our work can only be done in co-operation. Feel invited, indeed challenged, to get involved, especially now.

Prof. Dr. Josef Schrader
The DIE in facts and figures

33 ProfilPASS versions

10 new episodes of the wb-web-podcasts PotenzialLLL

988,155 downloads from DIE Open-Access publications

400 teachers have completed the GRETA validation process (see p. 19)
107 publications by DIE researchers

2,000 newsletter subscribers

almost 60,000 continued education centres in Germany: the DIE continued education register

37 on-going research projects in 2021
The institute: our organisational structure – our concept

THE DIE IS THE CENTRAL INSTITUTION for research, politics and practice of adult and continuing education in Germany. Supported by research evidence, our goal is to improve the overall quality of adult learning and education (ALE).

Funded by the governments at federal and regional level, the Institute is a member of the Leibniz Association, which connects 97 independent research institutes across various fields. Our remit covers research on adult teaching and learning, further-education programmes and institutions, and the political and institutional framework of lifelong learning. The DIE contributes to transferring knowledge in Germany and Europe and provides an infrastructure for research and practice. In terms of its organisational structure, size and profile, the Institute is a unique establishment, both in the European education system and beyond.

OUR CONCEPT

The DIE:

• conducts applied and basic research,
• enables knowledge transfer and provides infrastructures for research and practice,
• develops innovative concepts for practice,
• provides scientific policy advice to those involved in further education policy at regional, national and international levels.

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

The result is much more than a one-way transfer of knowledge - it is a mutual exchange of scientific information, an exchange that itself becomes a research topic.
when its success is analysed. The DIE has developed knowledge transfer further by translating research findings into instruments for specific target groups. This research and development work is supplemented by permanent infrastructure services for practice and research.

WE SUPPORT NATIONAL, INTERNATIONAL AND INTERDISCIPLINARY COOPERATION

The institute is committed to establishing links between ALE policy, practice and research at national, international and interdisciplinary levels. These links are of particular importance for the following reasons:

- Education policy in Germany is under the jurisdiction of the individual states (Länder).
- National and Länder ALE policies are increasingly superseded by decisions made at inter- and supranational levels.
- ALE’s institutional variation and heterogenous structure mean it is subject to a variety of governance practices.
- Research on ALE and lifelong learning is undertaken in many social disciplines.

The DIE is constantly extending its collaboration with European and non-European institutions and acts as the German ALE research hub. Our researchers are members of international panels, undertake international comparative research, organise workshops and guest visits and write articles acclaimed beyond national borders.

OUR ORGANISATIONAL STRUCTURE

The DIE is a registered non-profit association with 19 institutional members from further education research and practice. It enjoys full autonomy from regional and federal governments in its research, practice and policy
advice. The Executive Board consists of the Scientific Director, Prof. Josef Schrader, and the Business Director, Ms Bettina Pröger. In accordance with its articles of association, the DIE has a supervising body (the Administrative Board) and a supporting body (the Advisory Board). Every seven years, an independent committee evaluates the Institute’s performance on behalf of the Leibniz Association; based on the outcome of the evaluation, government bodies decide on future funding. The Institute’s priorities are planned medium-term based on programme budgets, and we agree on them annually with the funding authorities. Further information about the committees and bodies can be found here: DIE | Committees and Bodies (die-bonn.de)

The DIE’s Board of Directors and Executive Board are accompanied and advised by the Institute Conference (IKO). The academic staff can voice their opinion on institute policy issues and have a say in the Institute’s strategy. A workshop on participatory strategy development is planned for 2022.

The DIE has cooperation agreements with several universities and will extend these in the future.

HOW WE TRANSFER KNOWLEDGE

The DIE departments work on the basis that ALE is a system of different operational levels, ranging from teaching-learning processes to educational policy frameworks and each with specific forms of action. This organisational principle ensures the Institute maintains a continuity of perspectives on ALE while remaining open towards continuous change.

The DIE’s activities are divided between research and infrastructure sectors. The research sector consists of three departments (“System and Policies”, “Organisation and Programme Planning” and “Teaching, Learning, Counselling”); the infrastructure sector is divided into two departments (“Knowledge Transfer” and “Research Infrastructures”).

The Institute’s research combines problem orientation and practical relevance with scientific soundness. The infrastructure sector provides research data, thus supporting interdisciplinary research on lifelong learning.

It provides knowledge transfer through publications and internet portals that contribute to the networking between science and practice in ALE. Both DIE sectors strive to consolidate research, development and infrastructure services and cooperate closely to achieve this.

In 2017, the DIE could significantly improve the cooperation between ALE research, practice and policy by successfully acquiring Leibniz special strategic funding. In 2018, this funding enabled additional permanent positions dedicated to building a network of partner institutions and to extending digitally-supported knowledge transfer. As a result, the needs of those working directly in the field can be met more quickly, more discernibly and more communicatively. The scope of information for policy-makers and practitioners has also been extended, and the information is now reaching more people. Four groups of junior researchers are engaged in intervention and implementation studies on different topics in ALE.

Some of the leaders of these groups have been positively evaluated by the Institute’s Scientific Advisory Board; others have received and accepted calls to professorships.

WE RECONCILE FAMILY AND WORK

The DIE is committed to implementing personnel policies that support employees in their efforts to achieve a positive work-life balance. With its “workandfamily” certification in 2010, in line with an initiative of the non-profit Hertie Foundation, the Institute has explicitly committed itself to developing a family-friendly culture. Every three years, the status quo of any measures are audited and, through binding targets, family awareness is anchored in the corporate culture. Targets and measures are developed in consultation between the “workandfamily” project manager, the Executive Board, the Works Council and the Equal Opportunities Officer. Maintaining a family-conscious organisational culture is of key importance to the Institute’s management.

The DIE is also a member of the corporate network “Success Factor Family”, a network in which the Federal Ministry for Family Affairs, Senior Citizens, Women and Youth; German business umbrella organisations and the German Federation of Trade Unions work to develop family-friendliness as a trademark of the German economy.
A company agreement on managing integration aims at maintaining and promoting employee health. The Institute also offers its staff a wide range of personnel development schemes, flexi- and part-time arrangements, corporate health care and family support schemes and opportunities for mobile working. Webinars were also offered in 2021, addressing issues such as childcare and parenting or caring for relatives. Some offers, such as mobile workplace massages, could not be maintained due to Corona; however, the lunch-break yoga class took place virtually. The pandemic has severely challenged the compatibility of work and family, not only for the employees but also for the Institute. It is thanks to the lived corporate culture that those challenges could be overcome.

EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES AT THE DIE

The DIE is committed to gender equality and equal opportunities. As a Leibniz Institute, it has pledged to implement the research-oriented 2008 gender equality standards of the German Research Foundation (DFG) and the Leibniz 2016 Gender Equality Standards.

A Gender Equality Plan for 2021 to 2025 sets the framework for the DIE equal opportunities’ strategy. In addition to promoting the compatibility of work and family, it provides, in particular, for measures to foster women in leadership and to anchor equality as a guiding principle throughout the Institute, for example within the framework of Leibniz Mentoring. The Equal Opportunities Officer’s functions are bound to rights and duties. Together with the Works Council, the Officer ensures the interests of job applicants and employees and supports management in planning and implementing equality-related measures.

SUCCESS THROUGH NETWORKING – 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 DIE has extended its cooperation with other Leibniz institutes, particularly in the “Educational Potentials” 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 technologies. The DIE’s active role in this research alliance enables digital technology to be used to the benefit of ALE.
In the “Educational Potentials” 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, a recognised contact for educational policy makers, is currently concerned not only with research projects but also in policy consultation about using digital learning tools in both official and informal formats.

Since 2021, the DIE has also been a member of LERN, the Leibniz Centre of Excellence “Education in Museums”. In that network, eight Leibniz Association research museums have joined forces with four educational research institutions and the Technical University of Munich to jointly advance empirical educational research on museums. The researchers investigate questions of what successful museum education requires and what it can achieve.

GOOD SCIENTIFIC PRACTICE AT THE DIE

OMBUDSMANSHIP

The ombudsperson is the central contact point for academic staff when disagreements arise about good academic practice and integrity. In summer 2021, the DIE academic staff elected two new ombuds officers, Prof. Dr. Irit Bar-Kochva and Dr. Thomas Jung. Their first major task will be to practically implement the “Leibniz Code of Good Scientific Practice”, adopted by the General Assembly of the Leibniz Association in November 2021, and consult with the Executive Board and management staff to ensure binding procedures at the DIE. The Leibniz Code represents a form of the “DFG Code of Good Scientific Practice”, which was drawn up in close consultation with the DFG and adapted to the structure and requirements of the Leibniz Association.

LOCAL ETHICS COMMITTEE

The DIE’s expanding research activities and adherence to international standards led it to establish a Local Ethics Committee (LEK) in summer 2018. Along with GESIS (The Leibniz Institute for the Social Sciences) and WZB (The Social Science Research Center Berlin), the DIE is one of only three non-university institutions in the Leibniz Association with its own LEK. The LEK’s task is to ensure the scientific quality of research projects from ethical and data protection perspectives. Its ethical approvals are based on guidelines from various professional societies, such as those from the German Society for Educational Science (DGfE), the German Society for Psychology (DGPs) and the DFG. Since starting work, the LEK has ethically approved 33 projects.

More information: Local Ethics Committee and Ombuds Officers (die-bonn.de)

INTERNATIONALISATION

How can internationalisation help the DIE achieve its strategic goals and sharpen its profile? This is the leading question for the Institute’s internationalisation activities, which are measured against criteria of visibility, reputation, responsiveness and expansion. Since its last evaluation in 2016, the Institute has continued to develop its strategy in consultation with its Scientific Advisory Board and firmly anchored the internationalisation process as a strategic cross-sectional task.

The Corona pandemic has, however, severely impaired its efforts and, in particular, significantly limited international mobility; yet it is precisely personal encounters that are crucial to peer learning and research collaborations. Trips and workshops to initiate international collaborations could not take place, guest visits at the DIE had to be cancelled. Although the digital format has proven good for cooperation within established working groups, it is less suitable for initiating international collaborations.
Nevertheless, the Institute’s international relations have survived the restrictions of the past year unscathed. The cooperation with the University of British Columbia (Canada) to initiate joint research projects could be continued thanks to the DFG extending the funding period. The research is being planned jointly with the “System and Policies” department (junior research group Katrin Kaufmann-Kuchta). The project compares the institutional framework and supply structures in specific regions in Germany and Canada. The preparatory meetings took place digitally in 2021. The study trip to Canada has been postponed to 2022 but remains uncertain due to the current pandemic situation.

The workshop to initiate a research cooperation with the National Research University, Higher School of Economics (NRU/HSE), in Moscow (Russia) was also postponed. This project focuses on university education and aims to examine university strategies for lifelong learning in regions undergoing an economic transformation in Germany and Russia. A project proposal was developed in the “Organisation and Programme Planning” department and submitted to the DFG’s joint funding line and the Russian Science Foundation. Since the attack on Ukraine in violation of international law, the DIE has put this cooperation on hold.

In addition, the DIE has a new international cooperation partner, this time from northern Europe: Linköping University in Sweden. The cooperation with the Department of Behavioural Sciences and Learning there will run initially for five years, allowing joint research projects to be realised. The cooperation agreement was signed by the Scientific Director of the DIE, Josef Schrader, and the Dean of the Faculty of Education at Linköping University, Håkan Löfgren, in November 2021.

In 2021, the European Commission gave the go-ahead for Horizon Europe, the new EU Framework Programme for Research and Innovation. The DIE participated in two calls for proposals of the first Horizon Europe work programme. The first application, “Constructing Learning Outcomes and (Under-)Achievement in the Life Course (CLEAR)”, is a collaborative project in which the DIE is cooperating with eight institutes from seven European countries: University of Münster (Germany/Coordination), University of Vienna (Austria), University of Urbino, University of Genova (both Italy), University of Turku (Finland), University of Porto (Portugal), University of Thessaloniki (Greece) and University of Plovdiv (Bulgaria).
The second application aims to develop a European network for doctoral students: “Adult Education as a Common Good (ADUCOMMON)”. Participating institutes are the University of Verona (Italy/Coordination), University of Nottingham (UK), Aalborg University (Denmark), Institute of Philosophy and Sociology - Bulgarian Academy of Sciences (Bulgaria), Autonomous University of Barcelona (Spain), Institute of Research on Population and Social Policies - National Research Council (Italy) and VIA University College (Denmark).

In addition, the DIE participated in a joint DFG call with Villa Vigoni, the German-Italian Centre for European Dialogue. In cooperation with the University of Verona (Department of Human Sciences), a five-day scientific colloquium was applied to the topic “Adult education and training as a public/common good - Ask what your country can do for you”.

The pandemic has had less effect on research and policy advisory activities and on representation in international bodies and working groups. The Institute continues to be well represented in European research networks; it has also expanded its international presence beyond European borders.

Since 2020, the DIE staff members Alexandra Ioannidou, Carmen Biel and Susanne Lattke have been involved in the “ASEM Education and Research Hub for Lifelong Learning” (ASEM LLL Hub), the network between Asia and Europe for research cooperation on lifelong learning. In 2021, the Outlook Report 2030 “Inclusive and Diverse Higher Education in Asia and Europe”, to which Alexandra Ioannidou contributed, was published by the Asia Europe Foundation (ASEF); the report served as a basis for discussion at the 8th ASEM Education Ministerial Meeting (ASEMME8) and was recognised as a valuable input for policy advice. In their conclusions, the ministers from the 51 partner countries of the Asia-Europe Meeting (ASEM) affirmed that the findings and policy recommendations were a valuable source for the ASEM education process and contributed to achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

Susanne Lattke is a member of the Steering Committee for the Development and Implementation of the Curriculum globALE, which is jointly supported by the DIE, the German Adult Education Association’s Institute for International Cooperation (DVV International), the UNESCO Institute for Lifelong Learning (UIL) and the International Council for Adult Education (ICAE). She is co-coordinator of the ESREA-ReNaIE research network (Research Network for Adult Educators, Trainers and their Professionalisation).

Until September 2021, junior research group leader Martin Merkt coordinated the EARLI Special Interest Group (SIG) “Instructional Design”, Moritz Sahlender was the JURE coordinator of the same group, in the area of literacy and basic education, Monika Tröster represents the DIE in the European Basic Skills Network (EBSN) and Peter Brandt is involved in the Erasmus+ Monitoring Committee at NA-BIBB, the National Agency at the Federal Institute for Vocational Education and Training.

The successful cooperation with ESREA, the European Society for Research in Adult Education, was extended by three years (2022-2024); Alexandra Ioannidou, Internationalisation Unit, remains the managing director and a board member. Shortly before the end of the year and the renewed tightening of Corona measures, members of the Arab Adult Education Network AHAED (Arab House of Adult Education and Development) visited the DIE. DVV International accompanied the study trip to Brussels and Bonn. The DIE staff informed the visitors about the German continued education and training (CET) system in the pandemic and the resulting accelerated digitalisation push in the sector.

Convinced that internationalisation will increase the quality of our research, the DIE’s internationalisation agenda is being continuously developed – thus also enabling us to meet the requirements internationalisation places on science organisations.
The DIE’s Press and Public Relations team (PR) is responsible for the Institute’s science communication and actively shapes its image: it informs the media, the professional public, the research world and education policy makers about the DIE’s research results and projects and visualizes the Institute’s ALE achievements. In line with the strategic objectives of the Leibniz Association, it thus helps relay the findings of the Leibniz Institutes to the economy, politics and society.

PR target groups are - in addition to the Institute’s ALE groups from science, practice and politics - specialized and local and regional media and editors of supra-regional media handling “education”. The team also helps The DIE researchers disseminate project results.

In 2021, the Corona pandemic was, of course, also one of the important topics; the PR team communicated the Institute’s research activities on this topic in particular. An overview of Corona research and a list of experts, with short resumés, make it easier for the media to contact the right person.

The team uses a variety of communication channels: internal and external newsletters, image films and brochures, general information material, annual reports and social media channels and events. A more recent format is the “DIE-BRIEF”, conceived and edited together with the Publications team, a one-pager as a medium for science communication and knowledge transfer. The Institute’s business cards, the DIE Annual Report and the abridged English version “Short Annual Report”, are updated and edited by the PR Department. The Short Annual Report and the increasing number of English web pages are building blocks of the DIE’s internationalisation strategy; an offer that will be expanded in the coming years.

A modern website, www.die-bonn.de, is at the heart of all communication. The PR Department continuously maintains and optimises it - with both more web-friendly content and improved function and design. As a measure of the ongoing development of our website, we started preparing a major conversion in 2021. It will go online in 2022 when, as part of a “facelift”, improvements will be made, in particular, to the interface, user-oriented access and accessibility.

The DIE is active on both Facebook and Twitter. A LinkedIn company page has been added and is now being successively expanded. The scope and intensity of communication via these social media channels was increased again last year. In particular, our Twitter account is attracting growing attention, informing the media, educational practitioners and the interested public about all DIE activities, projects, publications and research results. A unified corporate design across all channels boosts the recognizability of the Institute.
Highlights: the DIE in 2021

2021 was characterised by the initiation of visionary projects and the completion of fundamental projects that had shaped the DIE’s content and strategic orientation for some time. For example, the DIE is now participating in major federal government projects concerning developing digital education spaces and digital platforms for (continuing) education. Here it can draw on its expertise in ALE research and knowledge transfer. At the same time, milestones have been reached in certain research fields: in the professionalisation of teachers, in literacy and basic education and in digitalising the VHS programme archive. And, of course, in 2021, we continued and intensified our Corona research projects. We present these and other DIE milestones in the following “Highlights”.

Hannes Schröter is appointed professor at the Distance Learning University in Hagen and chairs the DIE department “Teaching, Learning, Counselling”

On 1 April, Dr Hannes Schröter was appointed university professor of the chair “Adult Cognition and Learning” at the Faculty of Psychology in Hagen. This professorship is the result of a cooperation between the Distance Learning University and the DIE. In June 2021, the DIE also appointed him as head of its “Teaching, Learning, Counselling” department. Schröter sees numerous mutual contact points and opportunities for cooperation between the two institutions, many of which were implemented in late 2021, for example with a collaboration on a project designing diversity-appropriate online assessments. A special interface has been formed with the interdisciplinary Hagen research focus “Digitisation, Diversity..."
and Lifelong Learning” (D²L²), which is closely connected to central research topics of the “Teaching, Learning, Counselling“ department. As a result, in the future, questions can be dealt with across education sectors: on developing, evaluating and implementing innovative digital media to support teaching-learning processes, on competence-oriented teaching research and on the professionalisation of teachers, as well as on (basic) adult language education. Schröter has been a research associate at the DIE since 2016 and deputy head of the “Teaching, Learning, Counselling“ department since 2019.

GRETA – IMPORTANT STEPS ON THE WAY TO CONSOLIDATION

For many years, the DIE’s work has centred around professionalising ALE teachers. GRETA is one of the central projects of this initiative: Following a development phase (GRETA I), GRETA II allowed professionalisation inventories to be piloted and tested under the motto “GRETA - competent action in training, course and seminar”.

Mid-2021, the GRETA consortium invited experts and those involved in planning and administering German federal educational policy to a virtual stock-taking meeting. The meeting, “GRETA and Recognition of Competence - Potentials for Professionalisation and Qualification of ALE Teachers“, focused on questions of how the positive individual experiences with GRETA competence assessments could be raised to a structural level and how the project results could be turned into something more permanent. The political appraisal was based, in particular, on practical experiences with GRETA. At the meeting, experts presented specific applications and showed, for example, how GRETA instruments are used in EFQM excellence strategies (quality management system of the European Foundation for Quality Management).

A closer link between support for continued professional development (CPD) and the individual paths teachers take in their development can promote more effective in-service training and thus improve the quality assurance of CPD. This strategy can also be of value in ensuring the wider use of procedures related to validating informally acquired competences. By the end of the project in mid-2022, more experience with using GRETA inventories will have been gained, e.g., their contribution to ensuring accountability in quality management or to developing the competencies of individual employee groups.
The new EIBE project aims to professionalise practice in literacy and basic education. A central component is the development of an integrative training concept for management, programme planners and teachers in the field. The project uses “good practice” concepts, methods and instruments from previous projects, for example, ones addressing individual target groups and those providing supportive diagnostic measures. Selected institutions test and evaluate the measures from different perspectives using qualitative and quantitative methods. The benefits and disadvantages are thus assessed not only for managers, programme planners and teachers but also at the course level.

Important aspects are the development of literacy skills, motivation to read and write, self-efficacy and the social participation experienced by course participants. The project results will include a handout on implementing a counselling and qualification concept.

The educational game MONETTO was developed in the project “Curriculum and Professionalisation of Basic Financial Education” (CurVe II) and ties in with the Competence Model and the Curriculum Basic Financial Education. Anyone working in the field of basic financial education now has at their disposal a scientifically-tested set of materials that build on each other and can be flexibly combined and applied in different contexts.

Such a set opens up new potentials for both practice and research in basic education/literacy. MONETTO is an educational game in which 4 to 6 people aged 14+ can playfully learn and test everyday skills in dealing with money.

The players accompany a family through their day-to-day life. All family members want to keep their finances under control. But they are sometimes...
presented with challenges, for example, when the unexpected happens. They calculate and manage and acquire coins and points - and it remains exciting to the end.

MONETTO is a board game with 999 cards from real examples guiding the players’ actions in the world of finances. The players thus become experts and can expand their competences individually and collaboratively.

SEARCHING FOR CONTINUED EDUCATION: A PERFECT FIT AND AI-SUPPORTED

Technical progress and digital transformation are causing profound structural changes in the working world. In addition, employers and employees have needed to adapt quickly to the conditions created by the COVID 19 pandemic. Against this background, September 2021 saw the start of the cooperation project IWWB-PLUS between the DIPF | Leibniz Institute for Human Development and Educational Information and the DIE. The project is part of the INVITE competition initiated by the Federal Ministry of Education and Research (BMBF).

The aim of IWWB-PLUS is to expand the German meta-search engine “InfoWebWeiterbildung” (InfoWebContinuedEducation) (IWWB). A personalised learning environment will improve searches for continued education and training (CET), and the existing infrastructure is to be expanded to include new technologies. The new infrastructure will involve digital assessments or a chatbot to record potential learners’ preferences and skills, as well as personalised artificial intelligence (AI) search assistants based on learning preferences. Selected target groups will test the facilities. In addition, the plan is to connect individual competency profiles to the Europass system.

The DIE will be providing the qualitative and quantitative research required to ensure that any developments consider the perspectives of users, ALE providers, database providers and vocational experts.

The IWWB-PLUS project embeds the existing IWWB platform more strongly in the European CET system and promotes market standardisation and networking. The planned improvements will allow the IWWB platform to continue to fulfil its role as a central access point for anyone providing CET or interested in it.
THE DIE PARTICIPATES IN NATIONAL (FURTHER) EDUCATION PLATFORM

In 2021, the DIE and various project partners acquired three BMBF-funded projects that involve developing an innovative digital education space: KUPPEL (AI-supported cross-platform professionalisation of ALE teachers) and TrainSpot (Train-the-Trainer-HotSpot of the National Education Platform in the field of ALE). The third project is IWWB-PLUS (see p. 21).

Two strands lead to the BMBF’s digital education space. First, the INVITE competition was announced. Set up by the BMAS and the BMBF, it is an innovation competition for a digital platform for vocational CET. KUPPEL was one of the winning projects. By comparison, the second strand, involving the BMBF’s National Education Platform (NBP), is designed for all educational sectors. TrainSpot was one of the winners in the first round of the competition.

Both initiatives are to merge in the future and pursue the vision of a combined digital ecosystem: the planned structures will be cooperative, interoperable and sustainable and will make educational offers available quickly, easily and locally. The intention is that every educational pathway can be customised and platform-supported – aided by AI and uniform standards for data exchange and data sovereignty. All learners should be able to locally complete courses and manage their certificates and proof of competence in a personal digital wallet, forgery-safe and with secured access. Users will be able to access all courses and channels using a convenient single login.

A special focus is on the competence development of teachers. Here, the DIE builds on its tried and tested tools and measures developed in earlier BMBF-funded projects. In the case of KUPPEL, the DIE is involved in an innovative, AI-supported and cross-platform training for improving teachers’ digital competence. It is based on the GRETA competence system and integrates self-learning from the learning platform on wb-web. In TrainSpot, the entire EULE learning offer will initially be connected to the NBP.

THE DIE PRESENTS AN EXPANDED AND OPTIMISED DIGITAL PROGRAMME ARCHIVE

The DIE has redesigned and expanded its digital archive of the VHS programmes. It is thus facilitating research projects on adult education and provides a rich resource for analysing developments in CET as well as for historical studies.

The VHS Programme Archive has always been an integral part of the DIE archive and is an important primary source for ALE scholars. It provides an impression of which educational content was considered worthy at certain times and in certain areas.
ON THE WAY TO FAIR DATA

Since 2017, the DIE policy on research data has been committed to developing and implementing quality-conscious research data management. The policy is guided by the FAIR principles; FAIR data are findable, accessible, interoperable and reusable. Such data are the basis of good scientific practice in the sense of open and transparent research.

The DIE’s commitment ranges from advising researchers on new standards and protocols to the development of an in-house system architecture and to participating in relevant networks. In 2021, the DIE expanded its advisory activities in research data management and, for the first time, also advised external researchers. Data management plans support researchers not only in implementing FAIR principles but also in project management and in maintaining ethical standards.

For the in-house systems, the migration of the DIE library to an open-source system and the recording of library media in a new joint catalogue also follow the principles of a reusable, interoperable and standardised metadata structure. Research data can also be recorded in this way. Important changes also took place in 2021 in the networks on research data and open science where the DIE is a member. In October, the presidium of the Leibniz Association approved the founding of the Leibniz Strategy Forum Open Science, with the DIE as a founding member. The Strategy Forum is the central contact point for open science within the Leibniz Association.

CORONA RESEARCH FOR ADULT EDUCATION

The Corona pandemic has posed an existential threat to adult education: Many CET courses were cancelled during lockdown, the income of the educational institutions and that of their teachers, lecturers and trainers, many of them working part-time, collapsed. Unlike in the school education sector, the question soon arose as to how the adult education sector could survive the pandemic financially. To allow the sector to cope better with the challenges the pandemic has posed, the DIE is contributing with research, infrastructural offers and knowledge transfer. In 2021, the focus was on DIE periodicals and publications:

Issue 3/2021 of the “Zeitschrift für Weiterbildungsforchung” (Journal of CET Research), entitled “Adult- and Continued Education in the Pandemic. Challenges and Perspectives”, asked how adult education is affected by the pandemic and looked at the societal framework, the organisation, the forms of learning and the changed topics.

The DIE Trendanalyse 2021 (see p. 27) presented the status quo of ALE in Germany, thus presenting a basis for decisions in educational policy and practice. One chapter was devoted to the consequences of the
Corona pandemic for the education sector. Together with the Federal Institute for Vocational Education and Training, the DIE published the wbmonitor 2020 survey “Corona - Impact on CET Providers”. The survey made it clear that the CET sector had been hit hard by the pandemic, assessing the sector’s economic situation as very poor.

An online study on “Media use during Corona” investigated the connections between the perceived Corona virus threat, media use and perceived and actual information about COVID-19. The results have been published in the journal “Frontiers in Psychology”.

The DIE researchers were also sought after as experts by media professionals. The media focus was on, above all, the Corona-induced cuts in the industry and the lockdown-triggered digitalisation push.
Educational research and innovative concepts for practice

**THE DIE IS ONE OF THE INSTITUTES** in the Leibniz Association that conducts both 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.

The 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 of the institute’s knowledge transfer process and infrastructure services. These include, in particular, national and international representatives from the fields of politics, administration, professional 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 into 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. The 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 the 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 the 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, the 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 ALE system.
System and Policies

THE SYSTEM AND POLICIES DEPARTMENT observes and analyses the German CET system and compares it with CET systems in other countries. Its research focuses on the social and institutional CET framework, on the actors in educational policy and civil society and on the effects that their actions have on the structures of CET providers and CET supply and participation. In addition, the researchers in the department investigate the effects that participation in CET has on individuals and society.

> IN FOCUS – DATA-BASED CET REPORTING: TRENDS IN CET IN 2021 (DIE-TRENDANALYSE)

The fourth edition of the “Trends in CET: DIE-Trendanalyse 2021” bundles the broadly scattered knowledge about the CET sector and provides comprehensive information for actors from CET policy and practice and for researchers. The authors base the content on a guiding principle of indicator-based reporting and thus use various data sources and research findings to provide differentiated information on central CET developments.

For the first time, cross-sectional issues from practice were also specifically taken up. In addition, the Trendanalyse also contains current findings on the effects of the Corona pandemic on CET. With its CET focus, the Trendanalyse makes an important contribution to nationwide reporting on education by supplementing that reporting with detailed CET information.

www.die-bonn.de/id/41438
Organisation and Programme Planning

THE “ORGANISATION AND PROGRAMME PLANNING” DEPARTMENT investigates CET institutions and their programmes. It examines the professional actions of the institutions’ managements, the planning staff, their cooperation with teachers and the coordination and agreement processes in and between CET institutions and their environments.

> IN FOCUS – CONTINUING VOCATIONAL EDUCATION AND TRAINING IN VHS CENTRES

Society views vocational CET as extremely important, especially in view of the constantly changing competences required at work and technical change and digitalisation. The project “Continuing Vocational Education and Training in VHS Adult Education Centres. Access to Lifelong Learning” project addressed the following questions: How does the largest publicly-funded CET institution meet these challenges? What thematic structure is it developing in the process?

The analysis involved data about topics, target groups, access requirements, degrees and certificates, cooperation and funding structures, forms of work and information on possible utilisation of the contents. A detailed coding guide can be used in numerous ways in future research - also when comparing institutions. The study illustrates the multifaceted vocational CET offers of the VHS as an institution, offers it adapts flexibly to social needs. It also documents the changes in the VHS programme since about 2005. The publications provide a basis for developing both the VHS programme and the theory and concepts in vocational CET – both within the VHS and beyond.

A programme analysis of data taken at two different points in time recorded 1,856 offers from four sample VHS institutions in different regions in Germany.
Teaching, Learning, Counselling

The Department “Teaching, Learning, Counselling” deals with the conditions surrounding successful teaching, learning and counselling processes and examines their planning, design and impact. The researchers pay special attention to teachers’ professional competences and how learners progress in their learning.

> IN FOCUS – CoCa-Survey of Low-Skilled Workers on Career Guidance

On behalf of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), the CoCa project (Consultancy Services for a Project on Career Guidance for Adults with No or Low Qualifications) surveyed reasons for participation or non-participation in career guidance and career-oriented CET counselling. The background to the survey was that low-skilled workers in Germany were, internationally, comparatively poor at taking up offers of vocational guidance counselling.

Fifty guided interviews were conducted with low-skilled employees. The DIE was able to draw here on its proven network: Numerous educational institutions, ministries and employment agencies helped in approaching the target group and recruiting interviewees. The survey results were incorporated into an OECD report published at the beginning of 2022: “Career Guidance for Low-Qualified Workers in Germany” (https://doi.org/10.1787/25206125).
Knowledge Transfer

THE EXCHANGE OF KNOWLEDGE AND EXPERIENCE in the triangle of practice, policy and research has always been an important part of the Institute’s work. Research organisations, especially the Leibniz Association, are placing increasing attention on knowledge transfer. Crises such as the Corona pandemic are spotlighting the necessity for and challenges of knowledge transfer. To shape knowledge transfer in CET, the DIE produces publications, operates portals and coordinates practice networks. These infrastructures continued to develop dynamically in 2021 and are being expanded for integration into the emerging National Education Platform (see Highlights, p. 22).

> IN FOCUS – POSITIVE RESPONSE TO “DIALOG DIGITALISATION”

“Dialogue digitalisation” has established itself as an event for exchange between research and practice on current digitalisation challenges in CET. Dialogue #06 on the topic of “Thinking ahead to digital basic education” is just one example of a knowledge transfer that not only informed practice about research but, vice versa, also enabled practice to productively influence research processes. Almost 90 participants with a practical or academic connection to basic education met for this virtual “dialogue digitalisation”, despite the much-cited Zoom-fatigue. They dealt with input from research on basic education and discussed a competence model developed for practice.

The participants’ evaluations reflected the positive response to the event: all respondents would recommend the event to others, no one rated the event with less than four out of five points. The “digitalisation dialogue #05”, in spring 2021 with 250 registered participants, received a similarly positive response. It was dedicated to the topic “Education, Data, Learning: Perspectives and Professionalism in Dealing with Educational Data in ALE”.
Research Infrastructures

THE DEPARTMENT “RESEARCH INFRASTRUCTURES” PROVIDES infrastructures, research data and services for ALE. It is committed to the principles of open and transparent science, and, in 2021, all of the department’s teams achieved important milestones: the programme archive is now largely available digitally (completion of the RetroPro 2 project, see p. 22), the statistics team has expanded and adapted its survey form to account for the Corona pandemic and the library team has introduced a new management system.

> IN FOCUS – THE DIE LIBRARY ACHIEVED A MAJOR MILESTONE IN 2021 WITH THE MIGRATION TO A NEW SYSTEM ENVIRONMENT.

The DIE Library has been working with a new library catalogue since 2021, an open-source system used in over 15,000 libraries worldwide. Within a network of libraries, it now records its media directly in a mega data pool containing approximately 80 million recorded titles and 200 million recorded items. This large data pool has increased the visibility of the DIE library and made it supra-regional, and it benefits from having access to high-quality external and standards’ data. In addition, opportunities for networking in the community and participating in current developments have been improved.

In addition to a modern user service, the library has laid important foundations in data and system integration at the DIE and in achieving connectivity to future systems, work contexts and new developments. These include, for example, a research information system currently being developed at the Institute, the indexing of research data, the FAIRification process and the Open Science movement. In the course of its strategy process, the library is also contributing to developing scientific information infrastructures and fulfilling the Leibniz Association’s requirements regarding the external use of research infrastructures.
Fostering young talent

WHETHER APPRENTICES, PHD RESEARCHERS OR POST-DOCS – the DIE not only conducts research for further education but also offers training and further education itself, with a vision toward present and future challenges.

› STUDENTS

The DIE currently offers young people career prospects through two possible apprenticeship training paths: training as an office management assistant or training as a specialist in media and information services. The DIE apprenticeship training aims at developing and promoting the trainees’ professional competences.

› EARLY CAREER RESEARCHERS

In addition to extensive supervision by departmental heads and through junior research groups, the structured doctoral training programme (SDA) includes a range of courses with advanced training in qualitative and quantitative research methods in ALE. The training programme also deliberately takes up methodological trends in research, currently, for example, developments in data science. In addition, workplace-relevant skills are also taught, such as recommendations for scientific writing and tips and tricks for dealing with peer-review procedures. The training is supplemented by co-operations with important educational institutions.

The SDA is regularly evaluated, allowing the training, the supervision and the institutional support to be adapted to concrete needs. In summer 2021, very positive evaluations were received for various criteria concerning the courses offered by the SDA, the internal colloquium, how well individual concerns were considered and the support provided by supervisors in preparing research papers. Junior research groups are another core support element for young DIE researchers. Doctoral students assume responsibility as junior research group leaders and extend their research profile within this framework.

› METHOD CONSULTING INTERFACE

Responsible for and organisational integration of the DIE doctoral training lies with the Method Consulting Interface. It coordinates the advanced training programme and also consults young researchers on research methodology. It offers open consultation hours for doctoral students and all other researchers at the Institute with support for various research methodological problems, from general questions of research design, to selecting suitable analytical procedures, to practical research questions such as presenting results.
Projects at the DIE

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

The DIE’s third-party funding comes from the BMBF, the European Union, the OECD, the DFG and from competitive research calls from the Leibniz Association. Third party funded projects are strategically planned and involve all departments, often in cross-departmental collaboration. The DIE also cooperates with numerous external partners: CET providers, professional and umbrella associations, partner universities, educational research institutes within the Leibniz Association and international partners.

Depending on the question and topic, the DIE carries out descriptive and hypothesis-generating work; tests hypotheses and performs correlation and causal analyses based on (quasi) experiments or longitudinal surveys. It also conducts 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 currently being dealt with. Of further note is a significant increase in the number of projects in the Research Infrastructures department. With the wb-web portal, the DIE has also built an infrastructure that allows knowledge to be transferred quickly as an 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
### DIE REVENUES

- **Federal States (26.89 %)**
- **Projects (36.01 %)**
- **Federal Government (34.68 %)**
- **Member fees (0.03 %)**
- **Others (2.40 %)**

Total Revenues: **10,562,099.57 €**

### DIE EXPENSES

- **Personnel (69.95 %)**
- **Print and publication costs (0.20 %)**
- **Professional fees/partners (14.84 %)**
- **Travel expenses (0.09 %)**
- **Meetings, conferences (0.25 %)**
- **Incidental rental costs (4.87 %)**
- **Investments (0.92 %)**
- **Other administrative expenses (8.88 %)**

Total Expenses: **10,274,310.97 €**
## EMPLOYEES OF THE DIE (December 31, 2021)

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PUBLISHER
Prof. Dr. Josef Schrader

EDITORS
Beate Beyer-Paulick

LAYOUT
Medienarchitekten Bonn
www.medienarchitekten-bonn.de

TRANSLATED INTO ENGLISH BY
Write English, Köln

CREDITS
p. 18: Fernuniversität Hagen; p. 20: iStock/Rena-Marie; p. 23: Adobe Stock/Markus Glombitza