

BeLL Sample Plan Germany/DIE

Adult education/continuing education (AE/CE) in Germany is remarkable for its diversity. The terms AE and CE are used synonym in Germany, even when the expression “adult education” (AE) has a more social, general and political education connotation and the expression “continuing education” (CE) has a more vocational connotation. In the following text we will use the term AE/CE for more general explanation and the term AE when it only concerns liberal adult education.

Despite its heterogeneous structure, a relative strong field of AE/CE has grown up in Germany and the number of institutions is very high.

Generally the AE/CE institutions have a varied structure. They differ not only in size but also according to whether (see Nuissl/Pehl 2004. P. 23)

- they are exclusively responsible for CE or carry out other activities as well.
- their provision is open to all interested persons or is limited to a restricted group.
- they are part of a major societal organisation such as churches, trade unions and entrepreneurial associations, or are not bound in this way.
- they are governed by commercial interests (e.g. distance education institutes), private social interests (e.g. church education services), public interests (e.g. community adult education centres) or other organizational interests (e.g. industrial and commercial companies).
- they have a private, public or official legal status and
- they offer provision in the whole field of AE or concentrate on areas of provision with specific contents.

The most important AE institutions and groupings in the field of liberal adult education are (see Nuissl/Pehl 2004; p. 24f):

- *Community adult education centres (Volkshochschulen)*. They cover all parts of Germany and have a communal and regional role in AE. The provision offered by the community adult education centres embraces the whole range of AE, but contains major elements of foreign language teaching, cultural and general education.
- *Trade union AE* which rests on the tradition of workers' education in many fields. The two large union umbrella organisations are: The German Federation of Trade Unions (DGB) and the German Public Employees Union (DAG). These organisations maintain the largest institutions of vocational continuing education but they also offer a broad provision in political adult education.



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- *Religious AE*, run by the Evangelical and Catholic Churches, and related to socially committed liberal education movement of the last century. Both churches have their own nationwide network of family education centres, academics and residential and *Land* adult education centres and other educational programmes.

- *Commercial AE institutions* particularly in the areas of foreign language teaching and data processing.

“Work and life” association. A cooperative grouping of community education centres and trade unions offering a wide range of political and vocational education.

Residential adult education centres which are run by a variety of sponsors but have a particular educational identity and are grouped together in the “Association of German Education Centres”(AdB).

The foundations of the political parties concentrate especially on the provision of political education.

Voluntary initiatives and *alternative groups* which have developed since the end of the '70s, are separate from major societal groups and work with specific content or target groups.

The BeLL sample Germany/DIE

The Bell sample in Germany consists of those organizations which represent the liberal AE provider institutions in Germany according to their percentage of (liberal) AE educational offers.



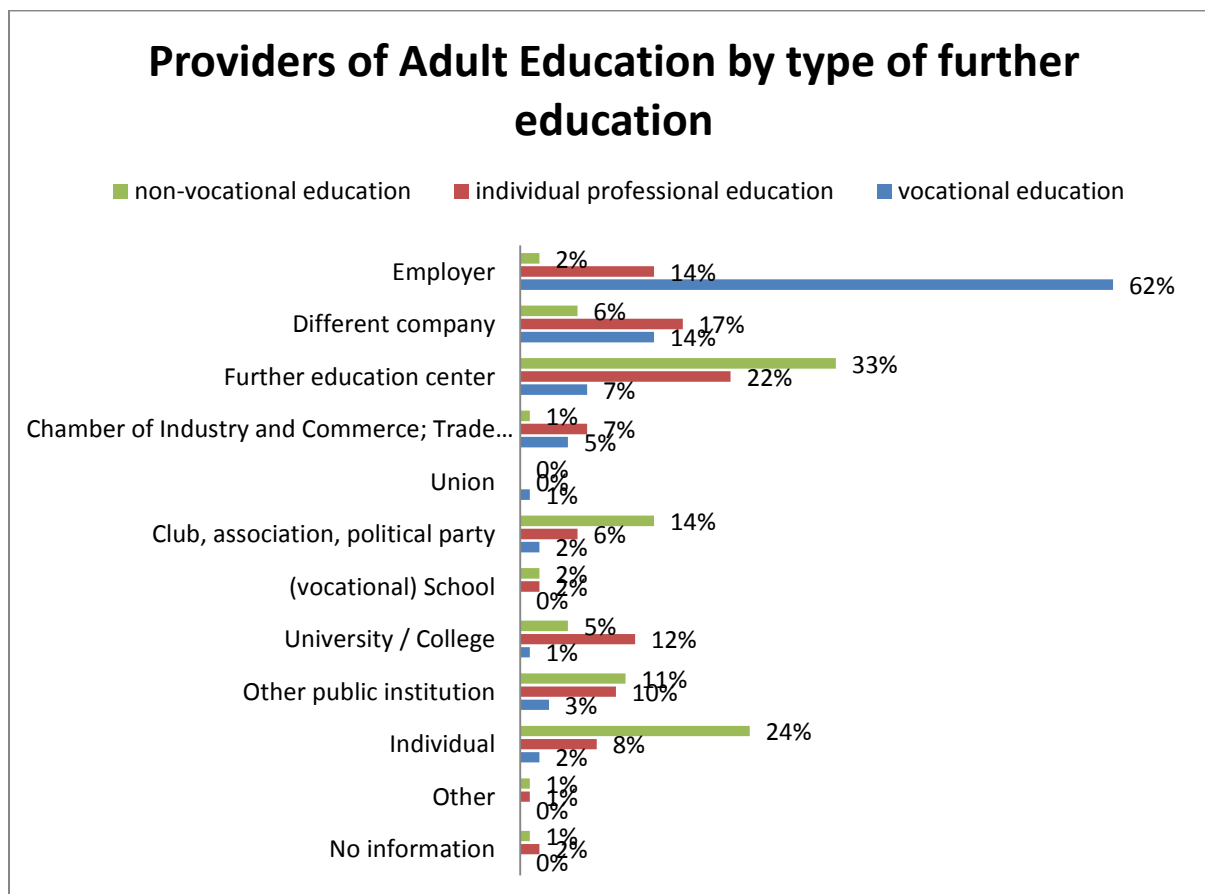
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Modified based on AES data 2007 (see Rosenblatt/Bilger 2008)



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These are:

Community adult education centres or further education center (Volkshochschulen) (2 institutions/ 500 questionnaires)

AE institutions run by the (Evangelical and Catholic) Churches (1 -2 institutions/250 questionnaires)

Voluntary initiatives and alternative groups (1 institution/125 questionnaires)

Club, association political party (1 institution/125 questionnaires)

This means, the DIE sample contains 4 – 5 particular AE organizations which represent the main institutions offering liberal Adult Education in Germany. So, the sample in Germany is representative through the type of institutions respectively organization offering liberal Adult education.

The chosen AE organizations already cooperated with the DIE in other projects, so that a contact is already well established. A good communication between DIE and the organizations will help to assure a high quality of the data. This will not influence the data because in the BeLL-study respondents are participants but not employees of the AE organizations.



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