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1.

Historically, decisions about, and organisation of, most aspects of education have been made a 'regional' basis in Germany; only the years from 1933–1945 was there a centralized system. This 'federalised system' has always produced differences. Some *Länder* introduced progressive training schemes, whereas others remained more traditional. Sometimes a political change produced a cut-back of earlier reforms, sometimes there were more or less successful attempts for a more unified and coherent system.

Today, the Federal Republic of Germany (FRG) consists of 16 *Länder* (states), independent in cultural policy, schooling and teacher training. There are some framework laws and an installed system of co-ordination and permanent discussion through the Standing Conference of Ministers of Education and Cultural Affairs of the *Länder* (KMK *Kultusministerkonferenz*). Even though the degree of unified structures has never been as high as it is today, there are important differences.

2. Teacher Education

2.1. The First Training Phase

The admittance to the first phase of teacher education (Phase I) is based on the *Hochschulreife*, provided by the *Abitur* (school leaving certificate of upper secondary education: Baccalaureate), or another equivalent certificate. There are no general access limitations for the training Phase I, especially not with respect to the number of teachers needed, as this is illegal.

Some training universities ask teachers in technical or vocational subjects first to complete a period of practical training; at others, this is demanded during the course of study.

The overall structure of the training of teachers is unified. In reality, there are a lot of specific regulations in each of the *Länder* with respect to:

- the categories of teachers (e.g. teachers for *Hauptschule* and *Realschule* as one or two distinct training courses) to be trained in a given *Land*;
- the training institutions and their organisation (university, *Pädagogische Hochschule*);
- the lengths (e.g. minimum requirement for primary teachers in the Phase I in Nordrhein-Westfalen 6, in Berlin 7, in Bayern 8, in Hamburg 9 semesters) and

formal study requirements (minimum number of study lessons in each subject and study field);

- the formal requirements in content and form for the State examination and the kind of teaching qualification aspired to.

The first training phase generally takes place at an institution of higher education, mostly in a university, and follows the framework laid down by the state, while the institution has the responsibility for the training. Everywhere, this phase is a mainly theoretically orientated course of study lasting a minimum of six semesters for primary and a minimum of eight semesters for upper secondary, special, vocational and technical teachers. There are differences in the minimum length of courses for different kinds of teachers at the lower secondary level.

Always required is the study of:

- one (academic, technical or vocational) subject;
- another (academic) subject or teaching field
- basic studies in social and educational science (*Gesellschafts- und erziehungswissenschaftliches Grundstudium*); and
- some weeks of practical time in a school (there are a few exceptions, especially for grammar school (*Gymnasien*) teachers.

Training Phase I always ends with the first State examination for the teacher category studied (e.g. *Erstes Staatsexamen für das Lehramt an Grundschulen,...an Realschulen* = First State Examination for teaching at *Grundschule*,...at *Realschule*). This means it is under the control and presidency of the Ministry of Education of the *Land*, which appoints by a separate, additional procedure those university professors who are accepted as 'state examiners'.

2.2. *The Second Training Phase*

Having passed this first state examination, the former student has to apply for a post to complete the second training phase (Phase II) in the *Lehrerausbildungsseminar*, corresponding to the category of teacher and a school studied for.

During the training time of 2 years, future teachers are engaged temporarily as civil servants. They get a small salary for candidates. The Ministry of Education of the *Land* takes direct responsibility for this training phase.

Training Phase II focuses mainly on practice and consists of 2 years of learning to teach, instructed by experienced teachers in a school, in combination with training activities in the institution called *Ausbildungsseminar*. The two studied subjects, as well as general pedagogical fields, are met. This phase ends with the *Zweites Staatsexamen* (Second State Examination).

With the two State Examination certificates, the teacher is now fully qualified, but with the last day of examination the training job ends and unemployment might follow.

3. Application for a Post and Tenure

With the two State Examination certificates, a teacher can apply for an appointment to commence at the next date (1st February and 1st August) at the office of the *Land* which employs teachers.

Posts are offered for types of school in connection with subjects. Selection for a post is generally based on the average marks obtained in the State Examinations. It is known that most of the *Länder* weigh the marks differently. Normally, the marks of the Second State Examination certificate are multiplied with a factor, while those from the first count as they are. Some *Länder* also give more weight to marks in subjects rather than those attained in pedagogical fields.

According to the legal basis of the Federal *Beamtenrechtsrahmengesetz* (framework law for civil servants), all education and training for civil servants is equivalent, but in reality this may not always be the case for teachers. There are also some agreements between the Ministers of Education concerning the mutual recognition of teacher training. Nevertheless, problems are possible, especially as *Beamte* teachers have a secure post. After a *Lebenszeitverbeamtung*, a tenure for life which is given normally after 2 years teaching and after a formal assessment, a *Lebenszeitbeamter* cannot lose his job.

4. General Description of the Professionalisation of Teachers

Today about 770,000 teachers work at general and vocational schools, between about 30% and 80% are female, depending on the school type and a given *Land*. The *Professionalisierung von Lehrern* (professionalisation of teachers) is used as a concept. It can be described, with a lot of variations, by:

- hohes Fachwissen*: high (scientific) subject knowledge, mainly achieved during 'training Phase I' at a higher education institution (University) in the *Fachstudium* (study of an academic subject, having a correspondence in school),
- related *fachdidaktisches Wissen und Können*: didactic knowledge and skills based on subjects. The theoretical aspects are also often treated during the 'training Phase I' in *fachdidaktischen Studium* (study of special didactics) and the practical application including reflection and experiences mainly acquired during the 'training Phase II' within the *Fachseminar*, where, on the basis of teaching practice in schools, academic, general, and didactic as well as methodological points are studied.
- Grundwissenschaftliche Fundierung*: foundations in social sciences, such as child development, general didactics, psychology, sociology etc. and school-related general knowledge (e.g. education law) and skills (e.g. evaluation methods and grading). These aspects can be found in both training phases, the more theoretical aspects in the Phase I, *Grundwissenschaftliches Studium* (study of social sciences including education); the more practical, teaching-related in the Phase II within the *Allgemeines Seminar* (general seminar) or in direct connection to teaching in school.
- The socialisation into the teaching profession or, more realistically, into the given special kinds of teacher, takes place in Phase II during the practical participation and work at the school where the training takes place.

5. Unity and Diversity in Teacher Education

In summary, one can say that all teachers have the same entry requirements—the *Hochschulreife*. The general training scheme is the same, but different in the length for the academic course (Phase I), though equal in length in phase II.

However, the well established formula for achieving unity in teacher education in

the *Länder* of the FRG hides diversity. *Gymnasiallehrer* (grammar school teachers) are mostly studying at traditional, well established universities, while primary teachers often study at newly founded universities or less prestigious institutions. The difference in length of study is not the only, but the most important, cause for the differences in status and salary. However, if the study time for primary teaching in one *Land* is the same length as the study time for secondary teachers in another *Land*, teachers moving to another *Land* will only be recognised and paid as primary teachers.

Even though the training Phase II now has the same length of 2 years, and for all categories of teachers takes place in the same type of institution (*Ausbildungsseminären*) and is following similar guidelines, this training phase results more in socialising into different categories of teachers, rather than in a unique teaching profession. Most of these *Ausbildungsseminäre* are specialised according to the different school types (*Grundschule, Hauptschule, Realschule, Berufsschule, Gymnasium*) and some according to school cycles (primary, secondary I, secondary II). But here, we also see some relics of the traditional separation between *Volksschullehrer* and *Gymnasiallehrer*. A lot of *Ausbildungsseminäre* are the same for different kinds of 'lower' status teachers or/and types of school. *Gymnasiallehrer* generally have their own *Studienseminar*. If different titles are used for those in training, then the future *Gymnasiallehrer* have the older, more prestigious one (*Referendar*).

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