

Municipalities education programme

POLICY DEVELOPMENT

STRATEGY/ACTION PLAN

 GERMANY

Timeline

2021 Implementation 2022 Implementation 2023 Implementation
2024 Implementation 2025 Implementation

ID number 41070

Background

Education takes place where people live and work: in the municipalities. Cities and rural districts are facing the challenge of providing their citizens with the best possible access to attractive, varied and local lifelong learning opportunities close to home. It has been shown that data-based management, cross-departmental coordination of education topics within local government and the additional involvement of civil society education actors help to provide citizens with suitable education offers at all stages of their lives and to promote their participation in education.

Objectives

The aim of this programme is to support the municipalities to tackle urgent challenges in education: from digitalisation to the development of new cooperation and services, and to the expansion of promising education topics.

Description

With the ESF Plus education municipalities programme, the Federal Ministry of Education and Research (BMBF) supports districts and independent cities in the further development of their education landscape. One thematic focus of the programme is the establishment of digital-analogue networked education landscapes for lifelong learning. Local education authorities also choose specific thematic priorities, for example, in the area of cultural education, democracy building/political education, education for sustainable development, securing skilled labour/education in structural change, integration through education or inclusion (including migrants and learners with disabilities).

2021 Implementation

The funding of the ESF Plus education municipalities programme started in 2021 and lasts until 2027.

2022 Implementation

The call for applications for funding was published in January 2022. Districts and cities independent of a district are eligible to apply. Several rounds of applications are planned until the second half of 2023.

As part of the Transfer Initiative for Municipal Education Management, the BMBF organised the *Federal Conference on Education Management 2022* under the title *Shaping Educational Landscapes - analogue.digital.networked*. The participants expected thematic discourse formats for the further development of data-based municipal education management, impulses from empirical education and transfer research as well as offers for networking with the actors of the *Transfer Initiative Municipal Education Management*, from municipalities, transfer agencies, science and civil society.

2023 Implementation

The programme was continued in 2023.

2024 Implementation

In 2024, an additional programme line has been added to the BMBF's ESF Plus 'Municipalities education programme'. The aim is to promote the municipal coordination of the expansion of all-day childcare services and thus improve the opportunities for all children in Germany to participate in education in the long term. Several information events have been organised.

2025 Implementation

The programmes were continued in 2025.

Bodies responsible

- Federal Ministry for Education, Family Affairs, Senior Citizens, Women and Youth (BMBFSFJ) (since 2025)
- Federal Ministry of Education and Research (BMBF) (until 2025)
- Federal Ministry for Research, Technology and Space (BMFTR) (since 2025)
- Federal States (Bundesländer)

Target group

Learners

Learners in upper secondary, including apprentices
Young people (15-29 years old)
Young people not in employment, education or training (NEETs)
Learners with migrant background, including refugees
Learners with disabilities
Adult learners

Entities providing VET

VET providers (all kinds)

Thematic categories

Governance of VET and lifelong learning

Coordinating VET and other policies
Engaging VET stakeholders and strengthening partnerships in VET

Supporting lifelong learning culture and increasing participation

Promotion strategies and campaigns for VET and lifelong learning

Ensuring equal opportunities and inclusiveness in education and training

Subsystem

IVET CVET

Further reading

[Education municipalities programme \(BMFTR\)](#)

[All-day education in educational communities](#)

[Amendment to the Funding Guideline for Education Municipalities dated 15.06.2022](#)

[Federal Conference on Education Management 2022](#)

Related policy developments

2025 Implementation

National education platform (NOW!)

In 2021, the Federal Ministry of Education and Research (BMBF) is funding the first prototype of a technical infrastructure for a digital education platform.

 GERMANY

Type of development

Practical
measure/Initiative

Subsystem

IVET CVET

2025 Implementation

Lifelong vocational guidance for young people and adults

Building upon the results of its pilot project Continuing education and training guidance, the Federal employment agency launched in 2017 a more comprehensive Lifelong vocational guidance project. The project targets both young people and adults. In 2018, it was piloted at four locations.

 GERMANY

Type of development

Practical
measure/Initiative

Subsystem

IVET CVET

2023 Discontinued

Telephone and online guidance service

The Federal Ministry of Education and Research (BMBF) offers a telephone information and guidance service supporting individuals who are considering their further education and qualification options.

 GERMANY

Type of development

Practical
measure/Initiative

Subsystem

IVET CVET

2025 Implementation

Cooperation among stakeholders to facilitate transition from school to work

To provide young people with the best possible one-stop support in the transition from school to work, local alliances known as JBA have been established in many places since 2011 (first in Hamburg but ten years later widespread in Germany with more than 350 agencies).

 GERMANY

Type of development

Practical
measure/Initiative

Subsystem

IVET

2025 Implementation

Expanding vocational guidance and support from school until completion of training

Nationwide standard support measures anchored in the Social Code (e.g. SGB III) cover the transition from school to work, for example with various forms of vocational preparation and continuous support during training.

 GERMANY

Type of development

Practical
measure/Initiative

Subsystem

“ … ” **Cite as**

Cedefop, & ReferNet. (2026). Municipalities education programme: Germany. In Cedefop, & ReferNet. (2026). *Timeline of VET policies in Europe* (2025 update) [Online tool].

<https://www.cedefop.europa.eu/en/tools/timeline-vet-policies-europe/search/41070>