

Entrepreneurial, economic and financial education: training for teachers

POLICY DEVELOPMENT**PRACTICAL MEASURE/INITIATIVE** GERMANY

Timeline

2018 Implementation**2019 Implementation****2020 Implementation****2021 Implementation****2022 Implementation****2023 Implementation****2024 Implementation****ID number 28146**

Background

People who are proactive and implement ideas are the engine for further development and economic prosperity. In increase the spirit of entrepreneurship among learners, the Federal Ministry for Economic Affairs and Energy (BMWi) launched in 2012 the national initiative 'Entrepreneurial spirit in schools', which includes regular continuing professional development for VET teachers. It offers e-learning opportunities and a web portal that encourages integrating entrepreneurship in teaching. The web portal includes a wide range of activities, materials and e-learning for teaching staff.

The topics of economic, consumer and financial education are closely linked to the topic of entrepreneurial education, as these are relevant as basic skills for entrepreneurial education. Economic education in a rapidly changing world and the teaching of consumer competence and financial education to learners are part of the curricula of both general education schools and vocational schools. Teachers need support in order to convey this content to learners in a balanced and up-to-date way using attractive learning formats.

Objectives

The objective is to strengthen the culture of entrepreneurship in Germany and safeguard it for the future. To this end, the entrepreneurial thinking and acting of teachers should be fostered and developed so that they can transmit the entrepreneurial spirit further to the young people, who are particularly receptive to new ideas and want to make their ideas happen.

Description

A report commissioned by the Federal Ministry for Economic Affairs (BMWi, 2018) suggested further investing in education and training of teachers with the goal of increasing knowledge, appreciation of and enthusiasm for entrepreneurship education.

I 2018 Implementation

2019 Implementation

In December 2019, the initiators of the platform *Entrepreneurial spirit in schools* updated their common positions, implementation and steps for taking up further initiatives.

2020 Implementation

In 2020, the online portal continued to give updated information and support to secondary school students and their teachers. Against the background of the Corona pandemic, it provided recommendations on how to continue the work online in home-schooling with best practice examples and work aids. A new flyer and a newsletter were published in June 2020.

2021 Implementation

In 2021, the initiative *Entrepreneurial spirit in schools* has been fully implemented and ran on a regular basis throughout the country. The online portal offers an overview of the initiatives around the topic of entrepreneurial spirit in schools. The initiatives offer practical support on the implementation of business projects in schools. Five of the 43 initiatives registered on the homepage are aimed at teacher qualifications in vocational schools:

- (a) the Network for Teaching Entrepreneurship (NFTE) Deutschland e.V. trains teachers in entrepreneurship education throughout Germany;
- (b) in the initiative *Project Management in Schools (Projektmanagement macht Schule)*, teachers are enabled to use project management in cross-curricular lessons without neglecting the goals of the current curriculum or education plan;
- (c) in the teacher training courses, teachers are enabled to implement a school company as a practical business project;
- (d) StartGreen@School offers further training for teachers on school-based start-up education, with a content focus on sustainable business and entrepreneurial responsibility;
- (e) the aim of the Start-up BW State campaign initiative of the Baden-Württemberg Ministry of Economics, Labour and Tourism is to promote entrepreneurship amongst young teachers and to raise awareness amongst young people at an early stage about possible professional self-employment.

2022 Implementation

The platform *Entrepreneurial spirit in schools* was operational and the five initiatives which started in 2021 continued to be offered.

2023 Implementation

The *Entrepreneurial spirit in schools* platform of the Ministry of Economic Affairs offers various support programmes for teachers:

- (a) eTraining programme *Entrepreneurial spirit*: there are various modules on basic topics of entrepreneurship education;
- (b) support: here you will find an introduction to the topic of business in schools, including teaching materials and other points of contact;
- (c) *GründerKlasse* series of publications: this provides information on the methodical ways in which entrepreneurship projects can be carried out both in and out of the classroom and offers contacts;
- (d) teachers can get in touch with each other and exchange ideas via the *Entrepreneurship in schools* teacher forums.

The *Entrepreneurs as Teachers* project is organised by the Ulm Chamber of Industry and Commerce's education network for schools and business. Here, an entrepreneur takes over school lessons and teaches pupils about entrepreneurship using a practical

example.

The Bildungswerk der Nordrhein-Westfälischen Wirtschaft e.V. (BWNRW) of the employers' organisations SCHULEWIRTSCHAFT NRW is involved in the area of start-ups and provides support with learning opportunities to teach entrepreneurial and financial education:

- (a) project *Experience business up close - JUNIOR expert student companies*: With JUNIOR expert, students from year 9 onwards set up a company for one school year. Working in a team, they learn and try out the basic principles of entrepreneurial behaviour. By realising their own business idea, the students experience the economic, social and ecological impact of their own actions;
- (b) in the Business online simulation game, pupils at upper secondary level (grammar schools, comprehensive schools, vocational colleges) form the management of a company. Teachers and school administrators are supported in guiding the students and teaching basic economic knowledge through practical relevance;
- (c) regular training courses on economic education are offered for teachers.

In 2023, the Ministries of Finance and Education joined forces to present the *Financial Education* initiative. The aim of the initiative is that increasing the level of financial literacy can have a positive impact on individual financial well-being and the resilience of the German economy as a whole. The plan is to develop a national financial education strategy in cooperation with the OECD, create a central financial education platform to bundle and network the programmes on offer and strengthen research into financial education.

The *Mit Geld und Verstand (With money and sense)* platform was launched as one of the initiative's measures. It provides an overview of further education opportunities and teaching materials on financial topics.

The funding guideline for research into financial education was published by the Ministry of Education. Initial results on the status of financial education in schools show that school materials on financial education are primarily aimed at grammar schools.

There are various initiatives from politics and policy-related institutions, private sector organisations and non-profit initiatives to offer support to teach economic topics in schools:

- (a) the privately financed German Economic Institute (IW) has been active with its JUNIOR project since 1994, bringing entrepreneurship education as well as economic and financial education to all types of schools including VET schools. The IW JUNIOR programme offers direct support for students, but teachers can also use the programme to develop their teaching concepts. Schools can arrange start-up camps, workshops, innovation workshops, and business training in secondary schools, as well as excursions such as job shadowing and experience days, on topics such as career orientation, entrepreneurship education, and financial education, tailored to the school types. Students can work on project management using an e-learning module. The *Business and Schools* portal from IW JUNIOR is aimed exclusively at teachers. Here they will find support in preparing their lessons with teaching materials on topics such as household and money, business and the market, the state and economic policy, career orientation and the labour market, globalisation and Europe. The materials are categorised by class and school type. There is also material for teaching at vocational schools. Teachers can also use an economic dictionary and view recommended reading and references to projects and competitions. The selection of topics is based on the curricula of the individual federal states and the current economic policy discussions. There are currently no further training opportunities for teachers;
- (b) *Teach Economy* is a project of the non-profit Joachim Herz Foundation, which is aimed specifically at teachers of economic topics. Among other things, this website offers educational videos for teachers, publications and teaching materials on the topics of business, finance, the labour market and entrepreneurship;

- (c) the Federal Association of Consumer Centres offers teaching materials on economic consumer education. With a material compass for the evaluation and differentiated selection of materials in order to develop factually correct and balanced lessons, it supports the independent judgement of learners. Furthermore, it provides training programmes for teachers. The Federation of German Consumer Organisations also recognises the commitment of schools to consumer education with the Consumer School Award;
- (d) the *Zukunftstag* (*Future Day*) is an initiative of the federal and state governments together with student representatives, to which schools can apply for a project day centred on economic education. Specifically, basic knowledge is taught in the four subject areas of finance, taxes, rent and health insurance. Parallel to this crash course, there are teaching units for teachers that build on the content of the Future Day.

2024 Implementation

The *Entrepreneurial spirit in schools* platform of the Ministry of Economic Affairs supported teachers with 42 registered initiatives in 2024. At the end of 2024, it has been renamed *Gründung in school* (foundation in school) and under the umbrella of the Economic Affairs Ministry initiatives has been brought together. Part of this work is to support teachers with understandable, high-quality, free and flexible didactic offers that can be integrated into lessons.

The *Startup Zukunft!* initiative hosted a free symposium on 11 June 2024 entitled *Shaping futures - Strengthening vocational orientation at school with entrepreneurship education*.

The *Network for Teaching Entrepreneurship (NFTE)* Germany offers three training formats for teachers on entrepreneurship education.

In September, the *Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD)*'s proposal for a national financial education strategy for Germany was accepted as part of the German government's financial education initiative. This includes an inventory and proposals for measures to strengthen the financial education of people from different socio-economic groups. With regard to financial education in schools, around 100 initiatives were counted. These are predominantly aimed at secondary school pupils, both at general and vocational schools. One recommendation involves designing a training programme for teachers on the topic of financial education.

In October, the Ministry of Finance will present a simulation game that will be made available to schools and educational institutions and in which the federal government's budget negotiations can be re-enacted.

Bodies responsible

- Federal Ministry of Economic Affairs and Climate Action (BMWK)
- Federal Ministry of Economic Affairs and Energy (BMWi) (until December 2021)
- Federal Ministry of Education and Research (BMBF)
- German Economic Institute (IW)
- Federal States (Länder)
- Federal Ministry of Finance (BMF)

Target group

Education professionals

Teachers

Thematic categories

Modernising VET offer and delivery

Diversifying modes of learning: face-to-face, digital and/or blended learning; adaptable/flexible training formats

Developing and updating learning resources and materials

Acquiring key competences

Teachers, trainers and school leaders competences

Systematic approaches to and opportunities for initial and continuous professional development of school leaders, teachers and trainers

Subsystem

CVET

Further reading

[Teaching materials and worksheets for teachers \(BMWK\)](#)

[Start-up platform \(BMWK\)](#)

[Starting your own business \(BMWK\)](#)

[Initiative financial education](#)

[The SCHULEWIRTSCHAFT NRW network supports schools in teaching basic economic knowledge](#)

['Business and Schools' portal for teachers \(IW JUNIOR\)](#)

[Teach Economy](#)

[Network for Teaching Entrepreneurship \(NFTE\) Deutschland](#)

[Economics and finance in the classroom of the Federal Centre for Consumer Education](#)

[Future Day: Financial education project day for schools](#)

“ ... ” Cite as

Cedefop, & ReferNet. (2025). Entrepreneurial, economic and financial education: training for teachers: Germany. In Cedefop, & ReferNet. (2025). *Timeline of VET policies in Europe* (2024 update) [Online tool].

<https://www.cedefop.europa.eu/en/tools/timeline-vet-policies-europe/search/28146>