

# Economic Education in Germany



## Birgit Weber

It is rather difficult to describe economic education in Germany: (1) Due to German federalism the sixteen German *Länder* (2) are independent in terms of educational policy. Thus the German educational system differs slightly from Land to Land, even more heterogenous is the situation of economic education. With regard to this it is impossible to give a detailed picture of the whole, but it is useless to present the situation in only one land.

This report tries to do the impossible by giving a rough overview of the situation of economic education in Germany at school as well as at university. Above all it is concerned with outlining the gap between claim and reality of economic education. A summary about the main topics of the didactic discussion can reflect contents and methods, which influence the syllabus construction.

[Download \(pdf/zip\)](#)

### **Inhalt**

[1 "More economy in classroom!"](#)

[2 Economic Education in school system and teacher training](#)

[2.1 Economic Education in German school system](#)

[2.2 Economic Education in Teacher training](#)

[3 Objectives of economic education](#)

[4 Desiderata](#)

[Notes](#)

[References](#)

## **1 "More Economics in Classroom!"**

"More Economics in class-room" is one of the topics in the current German public discourse about the educational system. This discussion takes place besides the laments of the role, science and mathematics plays at school after [TIMSS](#), besides the complaints about the competencies of reading, writing and understanding after [PISA](#). Whereas the time students spend in school is still longer than in other European states, the time is limited too, while the claims to reach more aims and improve education rise. So it is not astonishing, that the consent to strengthen economic education divides the protagonists: Should economic studies be anchored in other subjects or has a new subject to be established. Viewing the arguments of the protagonists reflect their intentions:

- Advocates of emancipation want individuals to understand the grammar of society, which is impossible without understanding economy. They want individuals to sharpen their competence for criticism, but also to become independent and self-determined consumers, employees and citizen.
- To advocates feeling responsible to solve the problems of society – especially the rate of unemployment – economic education seems to be a kind of economic policy in order to create a culture of entrepreneurship. They aim at a realistic and authentic image of economy and economic actors to induce agreement to the market order.

These opposite positions seldom appear in such a clarity, they just point out the extreme contrast. So the conference of ministries of economics (WMK) and the conference of ministries of Education and cultural affairs

(KMK) of the German Länder agreed to strengthen economic education in Germany. But their intentions differ.

The main argument of the ministries of economics is to create a culture of entrepreneurship. A future-oriented economic policy promoting small and middle-sized companies requires such a culture. So the ministries agreed, that Economic Education is an important factor to a positive economic development. (WMK 2001, 31). One mean can be seen in an intensified cooperation between school and firms. The ministers do not leave a doubt which topics they prefer. While they do not spend consideration to the "questions of economy", they especially mentioned startups and management of firms as important subjects of economic education. They demand economic studies as a subject of its own beginning at lower secondary school, also requiring teachers, who studied this subject (WMK 2001). As we will show, teachers who teach economics as a part of another subject, are not always compelled to study economics at university.

On the other side the ministers of education and cultural affairs (KMK 2001a) agreed, that economic education is an indispensable factor of general education and an educational aim of schools providing general education. In their opinion economy (3) as a learning field is anchored solidly at school and is included in several forms of learning and teaching. In classroom it is part of subjects or a subject by its own. Outside classroom it may appear as students enterprises or economic projects as well as outside school in cooperation with various partners. The report of the ministries looks like a defence: the ministers generalize, what they do and then they line out in detail their subjects and programmes (KMK 2001a).

## 2 Economic Education in School System and Teacher Training

In German schools providing general education economic education is a wide spread field. Due to German federalism education is one of the main responsibilities of the Länder. Thus economic education appears in very different school systems with different structures of teachers education.

### 2.1 Economic Education in German School System

The only school all students of a generation attend is the *Grundschule* (primary school) up to 4th class. With a few exception most pupils and their parents have to take the decision in which type of secondary school to continue after 4th class. There are the following types in lower secondary schools:

- the so-called *Hauptschule* (4),
- the secondary modern school - *Realschule* (5),
- the comprehensive school - *Gesamtschule* (6) or
- the grammar school - the German *Gymnasium* (7).

Officially the intention of the differentiated system is characterized with the aim:

"each pupil obtains an advanced education at secondary schools with different demands and different duration of schooling" (KMK 2001: 103) "The organization of lower

secondary level schools and courses of education is based on the principle of basic general education, individual specialization and encouraging pupils according to their abilities" (KMK 2001: 110).

Historically the system was based on the idea, that individuals are equipped with different sorts of talents, which would show until 4th class. Those talents should be developed in the following classes preparing for special professions, e.g. to handicraft professions at *Hauptschule*, to trading and service professions at *Realschule*.

After secondary school the next decision is to be made whether to continue school up to class 13 (*Gymnasiale Oberstufe*) with passing the *Abitur* – qualifying for university entrance – or to leave school for the vocational system.

In the following paragraphs I shall examine those subjects which are supposed to give an anchor for economic education at the general school system. These are:

- *Sachunterricht*, a combination of social and science studies at primary schools,
- *Arbeitslehre*, pre-vocational studies at some lower secondary schools,
- *Sozialkunde* as social studies at secondary schools.

### **(1) Social and Science Studies at Primary School**

At primary school pupils are taught a subject called *Sachunterricht*. It is defined by KMK (2001: 278) as a "subject taught at primary school familiarising pupils with scientific and technical phenomena and with social, economic and historical aspects of their own area". The aim of this subject is to provide pupils with an orientation in their social and natural environment, help them to understand the fundamentals and to act within this environment. This subject is obviously composed of the fields of the pupils' experience.

When the KMK (1994) issued recommendation for primary schools, none of their learning fields (8) mentioned economic education, although economy is a factor in their definition 2001. Economic phenomena are mentioned, when the concrete technical dealing shall develop a comprehension of technology. Moreover knowledge about economic and ecologic connections is demanded for the understanding of nature and environment. Asked for the role economic education at primary school the ministries of education (KMK 2001: 8) summarize that although the main emphasis is laid on secondary school, there's a first contact in primary schools, when for example pupils become acquainted with currencies, get knowledge about production sequences, with work and service and when mathematical operations with money and other economic factors take place.

Looking at the curricula in the different *Länder*, they do not differ very much regarding the role of economic education at primary school (9):

- On the one side economic phenomena are embedded in fields of experience dealing with labour, production and technology. Besides manufacturing goods and learning to plan and to produce the main intention is to respect the importance of labour for society as well as its value for human being. Pupils shall explore the places of labour in the region and get an idea of the change of the world of

labour.

- On the other side it is part of a field of experience treating the subject in the community. The main aim is a self-determined consumer, who has to reflect his necessities and who has to resist the manipulation of sales promotion. Besides this more affirmative intentions another practical aim is striven for: a safe pedestrian way to shopping malls.

Economic perspectives may also occur, when themes like environmental pollution, public goods and trading with foreign goods are taught.

Although it is obvious, that economy is part of pupils' lives, which they need to understand to act as well as weather, nature or electricity, treating economic phenomena in classroom already seems to be worth explainable and a field to be developed. As the results of Annette Claar (1990/1996) and others about economic consciousness and explanations of children show, their knowledge and understanding of economic surroundings is poor - for example about origin of goods and money, its circulation, costs of production and role and function of banks. It is not based on natural intellectual development as training on the one side and intercultural studies on the other side show. Looking at the constitution of curricula, there's no reason to be astonished – at least there are only affirmative aims required.

## **(2) Pre-vocational Studies in Lower Secondary Schools**

In the Sixties the German *Bildungsrat* – a commission of educational experts – recommended a subject called *Arbeitslehre* respectively the field labour-economy-technology for all students.

An agreement by KMK reached 1993, amended 1996, requires that

"an introduction to the professional and working world is a compulsory component of every course of education and is provided either in a special subject such as *Arbeitslehre* (pre-vocational studies) or as part of the material covered in other subjects" (KMK 2001: 110; KMK 1996, chapter 4.1.5).

KMK (2001: 269) defines *Arbeitslehre* as

"Pre-vocational studies - introduction to the professional and working world covering the topics of technology, economics, home and work. It is taught - whether under this name or another – at *Hauptschulen* as a compulsory subject and at other lower secondary level schools either as a subject in its own right or as an integral part of other subjects".

The subject should prepare for the world of labour and give guidance to choose an occupation as a part of general education. It combines economic and technical phenomena in private households as well as in firms. *Arbeitslehre* was supposed to treat labour within its social and political relations. Although it was supposed to be a subject for all pupils, it still remained as a compulsory subject at *Hauptschule*, an optional subject at comprehensive schools, it exists rarely at *Realschule* and hardly at grammar schools. Pre-vocational studies are established in various constructions:

- *Arbeitslehre* as an integrated subject,
- Labour-Economy-Technology as an integrated studying area with

- more importance to the composing subjects,
- Economic studies composed with one other subject especially technology, sometimes computer science,
- Economic studies as an own subject (10).

In the didactic discussion the integration principle is playing such a prominent role, that it is often hard to identify the fundamentals to explain economic behaviour, actors and systems. According to the dominance of preparing for roles as economic actors like consumers and producers the organisation of political economy is not included naturally. Often the basic economic task in those subjects is restricted to cost-comparison between self-made, manufactured or industrial produced goods. Hardly economy is a part of reality to be explained. Often it is only a part of reality, where labour takes place.

For years advocates are struggling to improve the image of *Arbeitslehre*. In public it seems to be a "blue-collar-subject" for those students, who seem to be talented to manufacture goods, educated by teachers, who seldom studied this subject. Recently syllabus constructors of different German *Länder* are trying to define the relevant fundamentals of economic and technical education.

While the advocates of *Arbeitslehre* criticize the isolated structures of a divided solution there are questions remaining:

- Though there is no doubt, that technology and economy are important factors and components in the world of labour, the question is, if one teacher can be able to teach both components professionally.
- There is also no doubt, that technology and economy do not exist without interactions. But the question remains, if economic and technical concepts, categories and methods have so much in common, that the integration paradigm is such an important value. (11)

### **(3) Economic Education as a Part of Social Studies or Institutional Studies**

As Social Studies aim to describe, explain, provide orientation and enable pupils to make their own decisions as regards social existence and society, it has to refer at least to political science, sociology and economics. Social Studies can be done in subjects called social science, politics or political education as well as in an integrated subject called economy and politics.

The KMK agreed, that social science should be a studying field for all students at **lower secondary school**. The time-table includes 13-16 hours a week from 5th to 10th class. Although it seems to be a lot, the time has to be shared with geography and history, which are more established than social science in a narrow sense.

- Most of the *Länder* describe their citizen education as Social Studies or Politics, sometimes economy is especially mentioned in the name of subject e.g. in *Schleswig-Holstein*, partly in *Nordrhein-Westfalen* and recently in *Hessen*.
- Only *Bayern* and *Thüringen* offer an own compulsory subject for economic studies, but obviously it is combined with law. *Saarland* and *Rheinland-Pfalz* have designated economic courses as optional subjects at *Realschule*.
- Social Studies in combination with History and Geography are often

found at schools, where *Arbeitslehre* is a compulsory subject – at *Haupt- or Gesamtschulen*.

For the **upper secondary school** the KMK agreed, that economic studies can be an optional subject, which belongs to the three main areas

- "languages, literature and the arts, (e.g. German, foreign languages, Fine Art, Music)
- social sciences, (e.g. History, Geography, Philosophy, Social Studies/Politics, Economics)
- mathematics, natural sciences and technology (e.g. Mathematics, Physics, Chemistry, Biology, Information Technology)" (KMK 2001: 117).

None of these areas can be ignored, pupils have to choose at least one subject from each area. Moreover, upper secondary school has to offer students with the world of labour:

"Education at upper secondary schools picks up aspects of the world of profession and labour and prepares for this world. Viewing the capability to profession and studying the following abilities are important:

- Understanding of the social, economical, political and technical relations,
- Thinking in entire and complex structures,
- Ability to apply knowledge in different contexts,
- Ability to self-control one's learning and information-resourcing,
- Ability to a realistic estimation of the own competence and possibilities,
- Ability to communication, cooperation and decision.

There have to be a profound information about areas of professions, the structures and requirements of the labour market" (KMK 2002 5.6 – translated BW).

Although economic studies are mentioned, it is not frequent, that they are offered as a subject of their own. Only *Bayern and Thüringen* provide a subject for economic studies, which includes business studies as well as law studies. As an optional subject economic studies can be chosen 5 from *16 Länder*. (12)

Most social science curricula include a political perspective of economy, such as

- the economic order,
- the economic system,
- economic policy.

The subject aims at educating a self-determined economic citizen, who is competent to judge economic policy. Some syllabi treat conflict management within working life as well as social, economic-ecologic and international relations. (13) The role of the consumer and the perspective of the firms, however, are rarely treated as topics. Nevertheless the consumer's perspective plays a role in secondary schools, it's not reduced to consumer-protection, but to strengthen his sovereignty. Syllabi for social science nearly never include business economics, their perspective is the national economy, their problems and disequilibria. If arguments treat firms, conflicts between employees and employer and their management were concerned, but seldom the firm as an economic system. According to the view, that economy is a factor of political

decisions, there are different interests and powers, but economic mechanisms are rarely explained.

## 2.2 Economic Education in Teacher training

Becoming a teacher for economic education outside business schools is different from one German *Land* to another, from one type of school to another. Each German *Land* has different examination-orders and intends different subjects – especially in social science and prevocational studies. Also the way to become a teacher is different to other European countries. Coming teachers in Germany have to complete two state-examinations: the first examination is to be done after the studies in university - takes 3-4,5 years due to the type of school. The second examination has to be done after a 1,5-2 year trainee-time at school. The studies at university include two subjects with their didactics, studies in educational science and sometimes practical studies at school.

The German *Länder* and within them the different universities don't give the same importance to all of these elements: the importance of the subjects, the didactics, the educational science and the practical studies. According to KMK the studies of the subjects must have a volume of two third for the lower classes respectively three fourth for the higher. The traditional German measurement to count the studies and to divide it into its elements are Semesterwochenstunden (SWS), this means "hours each week in a term". To become teacher for the lower secondary schools a student has to study about 120 to 130 SWS, for upper secondary schools about 160 to 170 SWS. The area for educational studies occupies 25 to 30 SWS, the studying of the two subjects part the rest. (14)

### (1) Economic and business studies as special subjects

Only in *Thüringen* and *Bayern* there are subjects with a dominant part of economic and business studies, usually combined with studies of law. Students have to study economics and business in about 50 to 60 SWS. Also in *Rheinland-Pfalz* and *Niedersachsen* students get the chance to study a subject called economics or labour/economy – provided for *Hauptschule* and *Realschule*. In a European perspective the courses that have to be taken seem to be very few, but it seems to be a lot comparing with other German *Länder*, where economic studies are integrated in interdisciplinary composed subjects.

### (2) Economic studies integrated in social sciences

Social Science seems to be a composed subject including political science, sociology and economics. The situation and the terms at school are as different as the situation concerning the teacher training. In nine of sixteen *Länder* the examinations are dedicated only to political science. It is not necessary to make one proof of accomplishment in economics, the examination-order demands only basic knowledge in economics to understand political structures. Only in seven *Länder* at least one proof of accomplishment in economics has to be done and examinations can, but don't need to, be done in economics. There are only two *Länder*, *Nordrhein-Westfalen* and *Schleswig-Holstein*, who demand economic studies between 10 and 36 SWS as well as compulsory proofs of accomplishments

and examinations.

### **(3) Business and domestic sciences integrated in "labour-economy-technology"**

Although the subject *Arbeitslehre* is composed of business, economic, technologic, domestic and labor sciences in some special types of secondary schools, a combination of economics and technology only has to be studied in five *Länder*. In four *Länder* it can be described as an integrated subject with a lot of referred disciplines, economics is one from. In three *Länder* economic studies are not included. Economic studies in *Arbeitslehre* can differ from 0 to 20 SWS. According to the didactic mainstream in the *Länder* different characters of the subject exist. The subject can be

- composed mainly pedagogical, focusing the part labour plays in human life,
- focused on labour with referred disciplines,
- a combination of economic and technical studies,
- a combination of studies of domestic science or technology.

### **(4) Situation of teacher training for economic education in universities**

Even when a subject pretends to be social science it is often dominantly obtained by political science. Also the subject *Arbeitslehre* is not a subject including necessarily economic studies. There's a lot to be done, that German teachers as well as their pupils can describe, explain and arrange their economic living situations and the world they are living in. Subjects with a thorough anchor for economic education at school must fail unless there is a similar anchor in teacher training.

In view of the different tasks and the available time it's not satisfying when coming teachers of social science or pre-vocational studies get only the chance to choose courses, which were provided for coming economists or managers. The questions differ as much as the tasks and situations, students have to be prepared for. In some *Länder* there were special generalists designated for this training, they got the responsibility for the subject as well as for the didactics. Because economic studies in general education are not self-evident, the subjects and the role differ, those special generalists are not found as obvious as lecturers in teaching methods for languages, mathematics or (nature) sciences. In view of the personal shortage and of the reduction of scientists in this field the claims, which were arisen, can hardly be satisfied.

## **3 Objectives of Economic Education**

In the didactic discussion of economic education in Germany there are different approaches, which can gain from each other if only they took note of each other. But nevertheless their intentions as well as their emphasis differ especially as regards the aims of economic education, the role of economics and the relation between didactics and economics.

### **(1) Preparation for economic living-situation**

Dietmar Ochs and Bodo Steinmann (1978/1994) demand, that economic education has to prepare individuals for their roles in every-day economic situations as consumers, producers and economic citizen. Therefore living-situations are the more important for satisfying necessities the more the satisfaction is endangered and the more opportunities to arrange are there. This didactic concept is not only aimed at acquiring qualifications needed in later life and adapting to living situation, its main aim is the emancipation of individuals to improve their living situations in a responsible way.

In a later work Steinmann (1995) pointed out, that this concept, which refers to the rise of income through production and work on the one side, the use of income to consumption and precautions on the other side has to be complemented by welfare, social, ecological and international development, which interact with the individual economic living-situations.

The preparation for the role as consumers, producers and economic citizen seems to be the undisputed consent between the scientists of economic education. But the questions remain:

- Does this consent initiate consequences for the contents of economic education?
- Does the orientation at economic living-situation prepare for individuals emancipation or for social adaptation?

## (2) Economic concepts, categories or methods

According to economic education the main referred discipline is – of course – economics. Economics shall describe economic situations, factors and aspects, explain causes of social problems and help to find adequate instruments to solve economic and social problems. There are three ways offered to deal with economics:

Hans Jürgen Schlösser (2001) defines the **social market economy**, its function and development in a European and global economy as the didactic centre of economic education. As well Hans Kaminski's (1996) starting point is the existing **order of economy** and society. Within this order the **economic actors** – private households, firms, government, foreign countries – constitute the central contents of economic education.

Some scientists of economic education try to work out central categories. As a base of economic thinking they are supposed to give individuals the chance of an orientation in a complex reality, when they allow to find the general and typical in particularities and specialities. Those categories can be explored in different ways as the following approaches show:

- Hermann May (1998) describes economic action as caused by necessities, forced by the scarcity of goods, characterised by conflicts, determined to decision, afflicted with risk and orientated on advantage and gains. It`s implications are work division, the necessity of coordination, the causing of interdependence and circulation. Accompanying the more neutral categories other categories are based on the acceptance of the market order.
- Erich Dauenhauer (1997) distinguishes between four sorts of categories
  - o Basic categories like scarcity, added value, work division, efficiency  
...
  - o central categories like allocation, sanction, stability, interdependence, ...

- o system categories like optimizing gain, risk affliction, competition, ...
- o regulation categories like market games, responsibility for costs, certainty of law
- Klaus-Peter Kruber (1994) wants to consider those categories, which are important for the specific concepts and methods of economics and for the understanding of economic problems. His categories in order to reflect
  - o economic relations are cost-advantage, risk, circulation
  - o economic order are market, competition, economic constitution
  - o political relations are interests, power, conflict, law
  - o ethical basic ideas of the social and economical order are freedom, justice, safety and survival.

Besides there are economists who set great store to special **economic theories**. To Gerd Jan Krol (1994/2001), Jan Karpe (2001) and Andreas Zoerner (2001) the explanations especially of the theory of economic behaviour, game theory and institutional theory are helpful to explain the gap between individual consciousness and behaviour. They want to make those theories available, to define social problems respectively dilemmata and extract the special economic solutions to describe, explain and solve the problems.

Last but not least the question is about the relation of economic education to its referred science. For example Peter Weinbrenner (1989) criticizes the economic limited idea of rationality. Reinhold Hedtke (1999) charges the preference for formalism, the limitation on calculability, the methods of constructing models and assumptions.

As a subject at school is not a reduced image of a science, it has to be taken into account, that the science constructs models, which only explain a small part of reality, while its focus may not be directed on economic living situations. If the economical and political constitution of a society and human behaviour in society shall be explained, it's worth to work out categories, theories and methods by economics, but it can't be restricted to it.

### **(3) Learning economics in self-directed and self-controlled learning situation**

There's a wide consent between lecturers of teaching methods of economics, that economics should be learnt by special kind of methods. (15) According to the individual construction of cognitive structures and aiming at competencies to explain, understand, judge about, act in and array economic circumstances methods like explorations, case studies, projects and simulation games are preferred. Without neglecting economic contents they allow to make plans, analyze situations, make reasonable decisions and compare the anticipated or established new situation with former plans. In this way it is possible to pass self-determined through a whole action process and improve the own capacities. Above it simulation games allow to reduce long lasting periods and experiment with economic instruments to change the situation. Explorations permit an authentic access to economic life and compare theoretical assumptions with economic reality and the arguments of its acteurs. Besides there were students enterprises at school – cooperating with business partner - to

strengthen a culture of entrepreneurship at school.

Of course it matters how the methods are used. They allow either adaptation and affirmation or individuals emancipation. They can offer inherent necessities or different ways to arrange and design society.

## 4 Desiderata

In the discussion about economic education a lot of desiderata remain:

Looking at the curricula in a biographical way it is hard to believe that pupils have the chance to get a complete picture of the economic world, they are living in. Affirmation is aimed at primary schools, getting accustomed with the role of consumer or producer is the goal of the prevocational studies at *Hauptschulen* or *Gesamtschulen*, judging as an economic citizen in social science is the objective at grammar school, unfortunately often without understanding the economic mechanism. Either they learn about macroeconomic perspectives if they are at grammar school or about individual economic behaviour at other secondary schools. It is a pity that they often have to learn with teachers who seldom have the chance to get a basic knowledge and understanding of economics during their studying.

Economic education needs time to develop. If it is spent in an own subject or if it is integrated in another subject, does not matter, as long as teacher training prepares adequately. According to the public pressure it would not surprise, if more optional subjects will be established. So the impression can be arise, that the importance of economic education is considered. But optional subjects do not make economic education an indispensable factor of general education. It has to be decided, what are the economic knowledge and abilities, that every pupil has to be equipped with – whether they were built up at primary school, in prevocational studies, in social or economic studies. Therefore the didactics have to clear up their relations to social sciences and to technical sciences and participate as well in the syllabus discussions to find an adequate anchor for economics respecting other explanations and arrangements of society.

(16)

Building up economic knowledge, abilities and competencies has to respect the individual construction of knowledge and judgement. This respect has to take place in different manners:

- First is the offer of special teaching and learning methods, which allow various ways for different learners.
- Second is the respect to the principle of controversy, which is important since there is no defined truth like natural law in social science.
- Third is the research about the individual construction of economic explanations, constructions, ideas and judgment more than just testing the existence of neoclassic knowledge.

## Notes

(1) Although the situation of economic education in Germany has not been carried out thoroughly up to now, there are some exceptions to be mentioned: Due to the pressure to force economic education the KMK gave an overview about the situation of economic education in their countries. The Institute of the German Economy (Weiß ed. 1998) explored

syllabi in four countries, interviewed teachers and didacticians in order to get information about economic education at school and at university. We studied the syllabi of economic education at grammar school (Schlösser/Weber 1999), the examination orders of teacher education (Weber 2000) as well as the syllabi of subjects including economic education from primary up to lower secondary school (Weber 2003).

(2) *Land* (*Länder* pl.) is the "Constituent state of the Federal Republic of Germany (16 in all) which, like the Federation, has original state authority. However, responsibility for the execution of state powers and the fulfilment of state tasks is divided by the German constitution, the Basic Law, between the Federation and its constituent states. (KMK 2001: 275)

(3) In the German discussion "economy" as well as "economic studies" are used to describe a subject or part of subject in school. Sometimes this difference seem to be intended as we will show later.

(4) *Hauptschule* is a "type of school at lower secondary level providing a basic general education. Compulsory school, unless pupil is attending a different type of secondary school, usually comprising grades 5-9. General education school leaving certificate obtained on completion of grade 9 at the *Hauptschule* or any other lower secondary level school. This first general qualification is generally used to enter a course of vocational training within the dual system. In some *Länder* pupils who have achieved a particular level of performance may be awarded a so-called qualifying *Hauptschulabschluss* at the end of grade 9 and in some *Länder* it is possible to obtain what is known as an extended *Hauptschulabschluss* on completion of grade 10." (KMK 2001: 274).

*Hauptschule* could be translated as the "main school". At the time it was planned, it was supposed to be the school for the majority, but the individual election of school didn't confirm to that aim, so that term and reality fall apart.

(5) *Realschule* is a "Type of school at lower secondary level, usually comprising grades 5-10. Provides pupils with a more extensive general education and the opportunity to go on to courses of education at upper secondary level that lead to vocational or higher education entrance qualifications." (KMK 2001: 277) It ends up with the *Mittlerer Schulabschluss*, which is the "General education school leaving certificate obtained on completion of grade 10 at *Realschulen* or, under certain circumstances, at other lower secondary level school types. It can also be obtained at a later stage during vocational training at upper secondary level. In some *Länder* called *Realschulabschluss*" (KMK 2001: 276).

(6) *Gesamtschule* is a "Type of school at lower secondary level offering several courses of education leading to different qualifications (*Hauptschulabschluss*, *Mittlerer Schulabschluss*, entitlement to proceed to the *Gymnasiale Oberstufe*). It either takes the form of a cooperative *Gesamtschule* or an integrated *Gesamtschule*. In the cooperative type, pupils are taught in classes grouped according to the different qualifications available, whilst in the integrated type, pupils are set in courses grouped according to level of proficiency for a number of core subjects, but taught together as a year group for all other subjects. *Gesamtschulen* can also encompass the upper secondary level in the form of the *Gymnasiale Oberstufe*" (KMK 2001: 273).

In some German *Länder* the names of schools at lower secondary level are different. In Sachsen the *Mittelschule*, in Thüringen the *Regelschule*, in Rheinland-Pfalz the *Regionale Schule*, in Sachsen-Anhalt the *Sekundarschule*, in Hessen and Mecklenburg-Vorpommern the *Verbundene*

*Haupt- und Realschule* and in Hamburg the *integrierte Haupt- und Realschule*, in Saarland the *Erweiterte Realschule* are types of school at lower secondary level providing the courses of education otherwise offered by *Hauptschule* and *Realschule*.

(7) *Gymnasium* is a "Type of school covering both lower and upper secondary level (usually grades 5-13) and providing an in-depth general education aimed at the general higher education entrance qualification". "The upper level of the *Gymnasium*" is called *Gymnasiale Oberstufe*, "which can however be established at other types of school such as the *Gesamtschule*. Normally it comprises grades 11-13. Course of general education concluded by the *Abitur* examination, which leads to the general higher education entrance qualification" (KMK 2002: 274). "In the *Abitur* examination, candidates are examined in 4 subjects. In some Länder, candidates are examined in a fifth subject or a particular achievement (*besondere Lernleistung*) is incorporated in the examination. Each of the following three subject areas must be represented: languages, literature and the arts; social sciences; mathematics, natural sciences and technology. (KMK 2001: 269)

(8) "The following areas are to be increasingly included as constant principles in the programme of education at the *Grundschule*: linguistic education (encouragement of linguistic development), mathematical education (introduction to logical thinking and problem solving), media education (using media in a critical way), aesthetic education (creative activities and sensory experiences), using technology, movement education, encounter with foreign languages, environment and health (treating nature and one's own body in a responsible way), attachment to one's home country or region combined with an international outlook." (KMK 2001: 97, KMK 1994).

(9) In Weber (2003) the curricula of the primary schools for the subject Sachunterricht are analyzed about the role of economic education.

(10) The different constructions of prevocational studies do not only differ from *Land* to *Land* but also to type of school.

- **Arbeitslehre:** *Bayern, Berlin, Hamburg, Hessen, Saarland, Rheinland-Pfalz* at some lower secondary school, *Bremen* at lower secondary school.
- **Labour-Economy-Technology:** *Brandenburg, Mecklenburg-Vorpommern* at lower secondary school
- **Economic and technical studies:** *Baden-Württemberg, Mecklenburg-Vorpommern, Saarland, Sachsen, Sachsen-Anhalt, Thüringen* at some lower secondary school
- **Economic studies:** *Bayern, Berlin, Sachsen-Anhalt Thüringen* at grammar school, *Nordrhein-Westfalen, Niedersachsen, Schleswig-Holstein* at some lower secondary school.

(11) Kaiser (1974) draws the history of the subject, while Dauenhauer (1997) claims the end of the idea of *Arbeitslehre*.

(12) *Brandenburg, Bremen, Berlin, Niedersachsen* and *Sachsen-Anhalt*

(13) Schlösser/ Weber (1999) analyzed in detail the role of economic education in the curricula of grammar school.

(14) Weber (2000) analyzed the role of economics in the curricula for teacher training - politics, social sciences, *Arbeitslehre* and economic studies.

(15) See the description, discussion and development of methods by Kaiser/Kaminski (1999), Schweizer/Seelzer (2001), Steinmann/Weber

(1995), May (1998).

(16) See the request of Reinhold Hedtke (2002) to a common constituted curricula for social science, which supports the specific competences as well as the overlapping social scientific competences.

## 5 References

**Claar, A. (1990):** Die Entwicklung ökonomischer Begriffe im Jugendalter. Eine strukturgegenetische Analyse. Berlin, Heidelberg, New York.

**Claar, A. (1996):** Was kostet die Welt. Berlin, Heidelberg, New York.

**Dauenhauer, E. (1997):** Kategoriale Wirtschaftsdidaktik. Münchweiler/Rod.

**Dauenhauer, E. (1997):** Arbeitslehre. Vom Ende einer Bildungs- und Wissenschaftsidee. Münchweiler.

**Hedtke, R. (1999):** Konsum in der Standardökonomik. Eine Kritik der theoretischen Grundlagen. Weingarten.

**Hedtke, R. (2002):** Wirtschaft und Politik. Über die fragwürdige Trennung von ökonomischer und politischer Bildung. Schwalbach.

**Institut für ökonomische Bildung (2001):** Ökonomische Bildung in der modernen Gesellschaft. Diskussionsbeitrag Nr. 6, Münster, August.

**Kaiser, F.-J. (1974):** Arbeitslehre. Materialien zu einer didaktischen Theorie der vorberuflichen Erziehung. Bad Heilbrunn/Obb.

**Kaiser, F.-J./ Kaminski, H. (1999):** Methodik des Ökonomieunterrichts. Grundlagen eines handlungsorientierten Lernkonzepts mit Beispielen. Bad Heilbrunn.

**Kaminski, H. (1996):** Ökonomische Bildung und Gymnasium: Ziele, Inhalte, Lernkonzepte des Ökonomieunterrichts, Neuwied/Berlin.

**Karpe, J. (2001):** Wirtschaftspolitik als integraler Bestandteil einer modernen ökonomischen Bildung. In: Institut für ökonomische Bildung, S. 29-39. In: *sowi-onlinejournal* 2/2001:  
<http://www.sowi-onlinejournal.de/2001-2/karpe.htm>

**KMK (1994):** Empfehlungen zur Arbeit in der Grundschule. Beschluß der Kultusministerkonferenz vom 2.7.1970 i.d.F. vom 6.5.1994

**KMK (1996):** Vereinbarung über die Schularten und Bildungsgänge im Sekundarbereich I. Beschluss der Kultusministerkonferenz vom 3.12.1993 i.d.F. vom 27.9.1996

<http://www.kultusministerkonferenz.de/schul/schulart.pdf>

**KMK (2001):** The Educational System in the Federal Republic of Germany 2000. A description of responsibilities, structures and developments in education policy for the exchange of information in Europe. (Published by Secretary of the Standing Conference of the Ministers of Education and Cultural Affairs of the Länder in the Federal Republic of Germany, edited by Jöns, Gerdi, Boele, Klaus), Bonn

[http://www.kultusministerkonferenz.de/dossier/dossier\\_2000\\_engl\\_ebook.pdf](http://www.kultusministerkonferenz.de/dossier/dossier_2000_engl_ebook.pdf)

**KMK (2001a):** Wirtschaftliche Bildung an allgemeinbildenden Schulen. Bericht der Kultusministerkonferenz vom 19.10.2001, Bonn

<http://www.kultusministerkonferenz.de/doc/publ/wirt-bildung.pdf>

**KMK (2002):** Vereinbarung zur Gestaltung der gymnasialen Oberstufe in der Sekundarstufe II. Beschluss der Kultusministerkonferenz vom

07.07.1972 i.d.F. vom 16.06.2000 –Anlagen nach dem Stand der Fortschreibung vom 15.05.2002)

<http://www.kultusministerkonferenz.de/doc/beschl/abi-01.pdf>

**Krol, G.-J. (1994):** Ökonomische Verhaltenstheorie, Verbraucher- und Umwelterziehung, In: Kruber 1994, S. 70-80.

**Krol, G.-J. (2001):** "Ökonomische Bildung" ohne "Ökonomik"? Zur Bildungsrelevanz des ökonomischen Denkansatzes. In: Institut für ökonomische Bildung, S. 1-13 In: [sowi-onlinejournal 1/2001](http://www.sowi-onlinejournal.de/2001-1/krol.htm): <http://www.sowi-onlinejournal.de/2001-1/krol.htm>

**Kruber, K.-P. (Hg.) (1997):** Konzeptionelle Ansätze ökonomischer Bildung. (Deutsche Gesellschaft für ökonomische Bildung). Bergisch Gladbach.

**Kruber, K.-P. (Hg.) (1994):** Didaktik der ökonomischen Bildung. Baltmannsweiler.

**Kruber, K.-P. (1994a):** Didaktische Kategorien der Wirtschaftslehre. In: Kruber (1994), S. 44-57.

**May, H. (1998):** Didaktik der ökonomischen Bildung. München.

**Ochs, D./ Steinmann, B. (1994):** Der Beitrag der Ökonomie zu einem sozialwissenschaftlichen Curriculum. In: Kruber (1994), S. 36-43.

**Schlösser, H. J. (2001):** Ökonomische Bildung, Wirtschaftsdidaktik, Wirtschaftswissenschaft. In: [sowi-onlinejournal 2/2001](http://www.sowi-onlinejournal.de/2001-2/oekonomische_bildung_schloesser.htm): [http://www.sowi-onlinejournal.de/2001-2/oekonomische\\_bildung\\_schloesser.htm](http://www.sowi-onlinejournal.de/2001-2/oekonomische_bildung_schloesser.htm)

**Schlösser, H.J./ Weber, B. (1999):** Wirtschaft in der Schule. Eine umfassende Analyse der Lehrpläne für Gymnasien. (Hg. Bertelsmann Stiftung, Heinz Nixdorf Stiftung, Ludwig-Erhard-Stiftung), Gütersloh.

**Schweizer, G. (1997):** Zur Frage des didaktischen Zentrums in ökonomischen Bildungskonzepten. In: Kruber (1997), S. 55-74.

**Schweizer, G./ Selzer, H. M. (Hg.) (2001):** Methodenkompetenz lehren und lernen. Beiträge zur Methodendidaktik in Arbeitslehre, Wirtschaftslehre, Wirtschaftsgeographie. Bd. 3. Dettelbach.

**Steinmann, B./ Weber, B. (Hg.) (1995):** Handlungsorientierte Methoden in der Ökonomie. Neusäß.

**Steinmann, B. (1997):** Das Konzept Qualifizierung für Lebenssituationen im Rahmen der ökonomischen Bildung heute. In: Kruber (1997), S. 1-22.

**Weber, B. (1997):** Handlungsorientierte ökonomische Bildung. Nachhaltige Entwicklung und Weltwirtschaftsordnung. Neusäß.

**Weber, B. (2000):** Die Bedeutung der Ökonomie in der Lehrerbildung. Eine Analyse der ökonomisch relevanten Studienfächer für Lehrämter des allgemeinen Schulwesens. (Hg. Bertelsmann Stiftung, Heinz Nixdorf Stiftung, Ludwig - Erhard - Stiftung), Gütersloh. [http://www.uni-siegen.de/cntr/zfl/dload/la\\_oek.pdf](http://www.uni-siegen.de/cntr/zfl/dload/la_oek.pdf)

**Weber, B. (2001):** Stand ökonomischer Bildung und Zukunftsaufgaben. In: [sowi-onlinejournal 2/2001](http://www.sowi-onlinejournal.de/2001-2/zukunftsaufgaben_weber.htm), Nr. 2, S. 1-20 [http://www.sowi-onlinejournal.de/2001-2/zukunftsaufgaben\\_weber.htm](http://www.sowi-onlinejournal.de/2001-2/zukunftsaufgaben_weber.htm)

**Weber, B. (2003):** Ökonomische Bildung in der Grundschule. (Gutachten im Auftrag des Pädagogischen Landesinstituts Brandenburg), Potsdam.

**Weber, B. (2003):** Situation und Herausforderungen ökonomischer Bildung in Deutschland (i.V.).

**Weinbrenner, P. (1989):** Die Zukunft der Industriegesellschaft im

Spannungsfeld von Fortschritt und Risiko. In: Bundeszentrale für politische Bildung (Hrsg.): Grundfragen der Ökonomie, Bonn, S. 29-50

**Weinbrenner, P. (1997):** Plädoyer für eine zukunftsfähige ökonomische Bildung. In: Kruber (1997), S. 225-262.

**Weiß, R. (Hg.) (1998):** Wirtschaft im Unterricht – Anspruch und Realität ökonomischer Bildung. Köln.

**WMK (2001):** Wirtschaftsministerkonferenz 2001: Wirtschaft in der Schule. Beschluss der Wirtschaftsminister und -senatoren im November in Saarbrücken. Niederschrift, WMK, 22./23.11.2001

[http://www.oekonomische-bildung.de/aktuelles/dokumente/WIMI\\_Beschluss.pdf](http://www.oekonomische-bildung.de/aktuelles/dokumente/WIMI_Beschluss.pdf)

**Zoerner, A. (2001):** Welche ökonomische Bildung wollen wir? In: Institut für ökonomische Bildung, S. 14-28 In: sowi-onlinejournal 2/2001:

[http://www.sowi-onlinejournal.de/2001-2/oekonomische\\_bildung\\_zoerner.htm](http://www.sowi-onlinejournal.de/2001-2/oekonomische_bildung_zoerner.htm)

---

KeyWords: Economic education, economic studies, economics, Germany, teaching methods, teacher training, learning methods, self-directed learning, objectives of education, principles of teaching, principles of learning, economic awareness, syllabus, curriculum, culture of entrepreneurship, ministers for education and cultural affairs, German school system, compulsory school, primary school, Grundschule, Hauptschule, Realschule, Gesamtschule, Gymnasium, secondary school, Gymnasiale Oberstufe, Abitur, Sachunterricht, Arbeitslehre, Sozialkunde, pre-vocational studies, Bildungsrat, Labour-Economy-Technology, Social Studies, Social Science, Politics, Institutional Studies, Social Sciences



■ (c) 2003 [sowi-online e.V.](http://www.sowi-online.de), Bielefeld ■ Leading editor of Onlinejournal for Social Sciences and their Didactics 2-2002: Reinhold Hedtke ■ Responsible for this document: Reinhold Hedtke ■ WWW-Präsentation: Norbert Jacke ■ Processing: Lea Holtmann ■ URL: [http://www.sowi-onlinejournal.de/2002-2/germany\\_weber.htm](http://www.sowi-onlinejournal.de/2002-2/germany_weber.htm) ■ Publishing date: 2003/02/16