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## **A Comparative Inter-Institutional Perspective on Program Planning in Germany**

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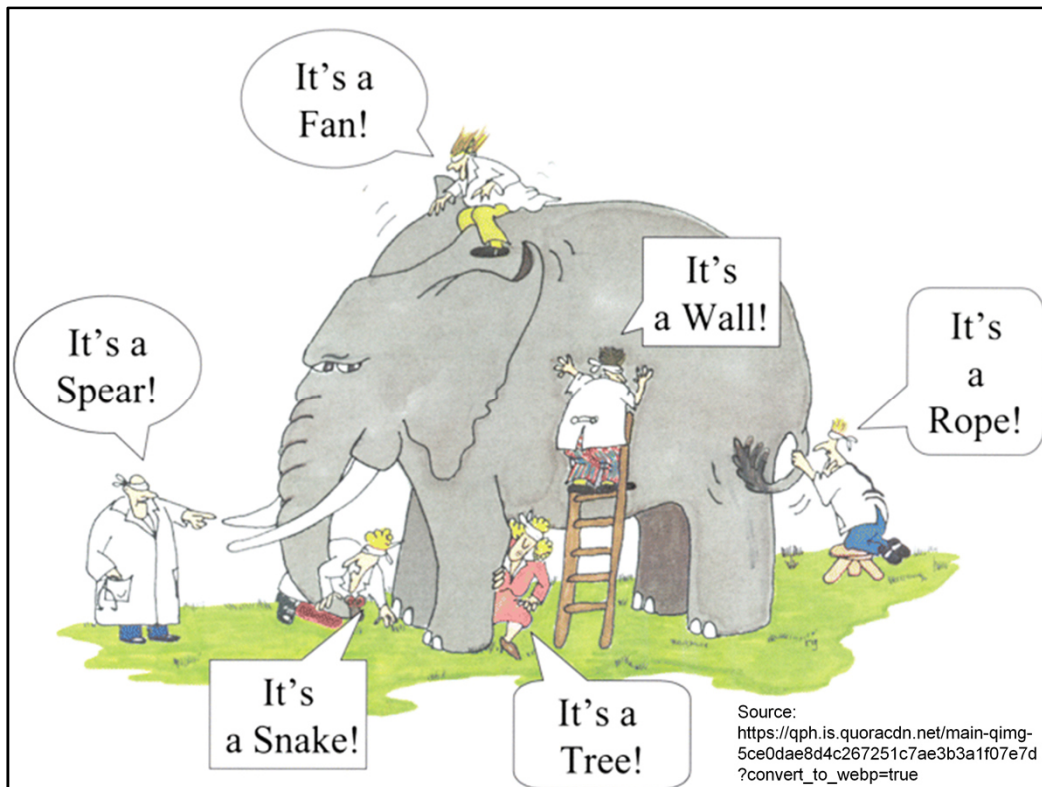


**International Conference  
“Cultures of Program Planning  
in Adult Education: Policies,  
Autonomy, and Innovation”**

**Leibniz University Hannover,  
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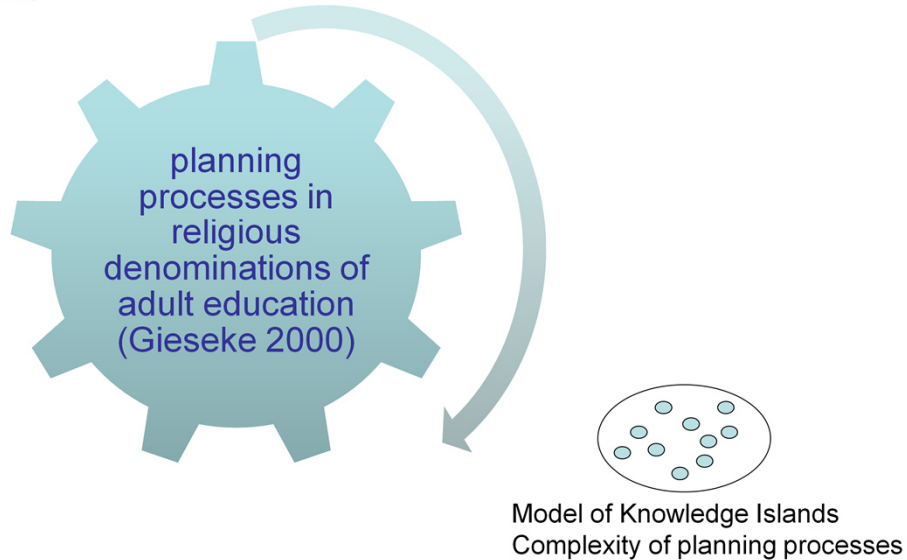
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Department for Vocational and Adult Education



The elephant illustrate both the importance of combining different perspectives and research methods as well as research in different provider forms.

## 1. German Program Planning Approaches: Starting point



In Germany, the market of adult education is characterized by its various provider forms like religious denominations run by church, public providers like Volkshochschule and commercial providers, that get no state funding at all and has to work economically. That's why we need more perspectives on program planning in different provider forms.

Both Phd-projects refer to the idea of program planning as a convergence action ("Angleichungshandeln") according to Wiltrud Gieseke's approach. She did research on program planning in religious denominations and developed the model of knowledge islands in order to visualize the complexity of planning.

## 2. Claudia Pohlmann's PhD-Project about Program Planning on Educational Leave

- **Context:** Research project from Prof. Steffi Robak due to the amendment to the educational leave law in the federal state of Bremen (see Robak et al. 2015)
- **Research question concerning program planning:** How do program planners justify and conceptualize educational leave courses?
- **Data collection:** qualitative expert interviews with program planners (see Meuser/Nagel 1991)
- **Data analysis:** type construction (see Kelle/Kluge 2010)

### Info-Box Educational Leave:

a legal right to absence of the employee from work (mostly 5 days p.a.) to allow participation in organised further education subject to continued payment of the employee's wage or salary by the employer

- Educational leave is a specific German law that allows employees taking time for education during their working hours. Usually the employee can take one week per year. The employer has to continue the payment of salary.
- The educational leave course must not be useful for the job in a narrow sense, but for education in a wider sense moreover for professional development, personal development and participation in different parts of life and society. So the learner is free to choose the educational field and the further education institute.
- In fact only a few employees - on average 1 to 2 percent – take educational leave. One reason for the very low participation rate might be that many employees don't know their right. Another reason could be that employees are afraid of taking their educational leave, because educational leave suffers from a bad image.
- To increase the low participation rate there was an amendment of the educational leave law in Bremen (federal state of Germany). Steffi's research project investigated the effects of the amendment and moreover the benefit of educational leave for both the employers and the employees.
- In my study, which is a part of the research project, I am interested in the justifications the planners give for educational leave courses: How do program planners justify and conceptualize educational leave?

Qualitative Sample: Different Types of Providers and Educational Fields

	Political education	Vocational education	General education		
			Language education	Healthcare education	Cultural education
Adult education center			X	X	X
Institute that is supported by church	X				X
Institute that is supported by trade unions	X	X		X	
Institute that is supported by employee's association		X			
Institute that is supported by sports association				X	
Commercial provider		X	X		

- I have conducted interviews with program planners in different educational fields and further education institutes.

## Types of Concepts – Differentiated according to Provider and Educational Field

		Educational field	
		<i>overlapping</i>	<i>specific</i>
Provider	<i>overlapping</i>	(1) general concepts	(3) educational field-specific concepts
	<i>specific</i>	(2) provider-specific concepts	(4) specific concepts

- The interviews were analysed with content analysis and compared according to the provider and the educational field (typology analysis according to Kelle/Kluge 2010).
- I have identified concepts that are provider-overlapping or -specific or rather concepts that are educational field-overlapping or -specific.
- Finally four types of concepts have been empirically grounded constructed:

### Types of concepts:

- (1) General concepts are pursued in almost all educational fields and further education institutes.
- (2) Provider-specific concepts are specific for a provider, but extend over different educational fields.
- (3) Educational field-specific concepts are specific for an educational field, but provider-overlapping.
- (4) Specific concepts are both educational field-specific and provider-specific.

### Example for General Concepts: Educational Leave as a Public Cross-class and Cross-generation Discussion Space

“In educational leave courses people with different social backgrounds, different ages and different genders come together, learn together and share their lives for one week. Educational leave helps to encourage public discussions. We try to arrange inhomogeneous learning groups. So that people can talk with other people they don't get in contact with in their normal lives. They learn cooperation, they learn to accept different opinions and they learn to deal with conflicts.” (Program planner)

#### (1) Examples for general concepts:

- All interviewees have emphasized that educational leave should enable access to education for all employees, especially disadvantage target groups like shift workers who do not have the opportunity to visit an evening or a weekend course. This aim is connected to the roots of educational leave in the 1960s, when the seat was planted by the Trade Unions.
- Furthermore educational leave is conceptualized as a public cross-class and cross-generation discussion space: For illustration see the quote from the interview on the slide.

## Examples for Provider-specific Concepts of Educational Leave

Institute that is provided by the trade unions	Commercial Provider
<p>“We have a concept that is <i>employee-orientated</i>. Each seminar deals with <i>working conditions</i> and promotes <i>participation in everyday work</i> as well as in <i>everyday life and society</i>. We work very close to <i>learner interests</i>.” (Program planner)</p>	<p>“We have a concept that is <i>economy-orientated</i>. Our educational leave courses always have a <i>benefit for the company</i>, because we offer vocational education that is useful for the employer and the employee as well.” (Program planner)</p>

### (2) Examples for provider-specific concepts:

Provider-specific concepts are particularly clear by comparing institutes that are supported by employees associations and institutes that are supported by employers associations:

While the institute that is supported by the trade unions is orientated to the interests of employees, the commercial provider is obviously orientated to the interests of employers and business objectives.

Here we can see the impact of policy on program planning: From the very beginning of educational leave there has been a big discussion between the associations of the employees and the employers about the benefit of educational leave.



### Examples for Educational Field-specific Concepts of Educational Leave

Political education	Language education	Healthcare education	Cultural education	Vocational education
political knowledge, political judgement and political participation	linguistic skills, language awareness and intercultural competencies	physical, psychological and emotional healthcare	...	...

### (3) Examples for educational field-specific concepts:

- Political Education promotes political knowledge, political judgement and political participation.
- Language education promotes linguistic skills, language awareness and intercultural competencies.
- Healthcare-education promotes physical, psychological and emotional healthcare. Etc.

## Examples for Provider-specific and Educational Field-specific Concepts of Educational Leave:

### Different Designs of Healthcare Education

Institute that is sponsored by sports association	Institute that is sponsored by trade unions
Healthcare education as a part of organized sport with focus on exercises, relaxation and nutrition	Healthcare education as a part of political education with focus on socio-political questions of health and illness.
➤ The employee should become fitter for work.	➤ The employee should analyse and criticise working conditions.

#### (4) Examples for specific concepts:

- In one further education institute, that is supported by sports association, healthcare education is designed as a part of organized sport. The focus is on exercises, relaxation and nutrition. The employee should become fitter for work.
- In another further education institute, that is provided by the trade unions, healthcare education is designed as a part of political education. The focus is on socio-political questions of health and illness. The employee should analyse and criticise working conditions.

## Interim Conclusion

		Educational field	
		<i>overlapping</i>	<i>specific</i>
Provider	<i>overlapping</i>	(1) general concepts	(3) educational field-specific concepts
	<i>specific</i>	(2) provider-specific concepts	(4) specific concepts

- In the interviews we can see that the general concepts are connected to the original political idea of educational leave – metaphorical speaking - the general concepts built the strong trunk of the tree.
- During the last 40 years the tree has branched out in various educational fields and institutes. New concepts of educational leave have been developed. In the provider-specific concepts we can see how program planning is involved in the policy discussion.
- The theoretical implication is to have a differentiated look at program planning in both the educational field and the provider.

### 3. Interim Conclusion: German Program Planning Approachs



Specifics and mutualities of providers and educational areas

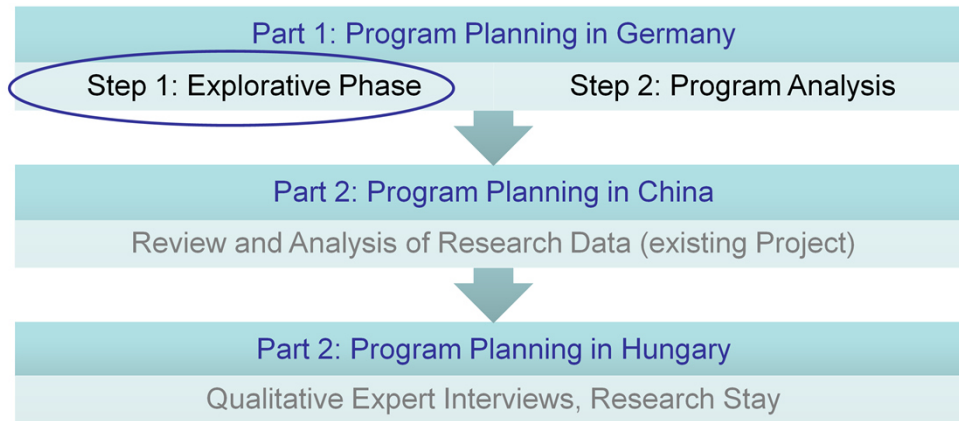
#### 4. Lisa's PhD-project: Program Planning in Transnational Space – a Comparative Analysis of Program Planning of Weitbild in Germany, China and Hungary

- **Occasion:** no planning approach considers all forms of German continuing education institutions, planning is culture-specific (Ryu & Cervero, 2011)
- **Research questions:**
  - How does Weitbild develop programs and products for continuing education in Germany?
  - How are program topics chosen in China and Hungary?
- **Research Design:** case study of Weitbild

#### Lisa's PhD-project: Program Planning in Transnational Space

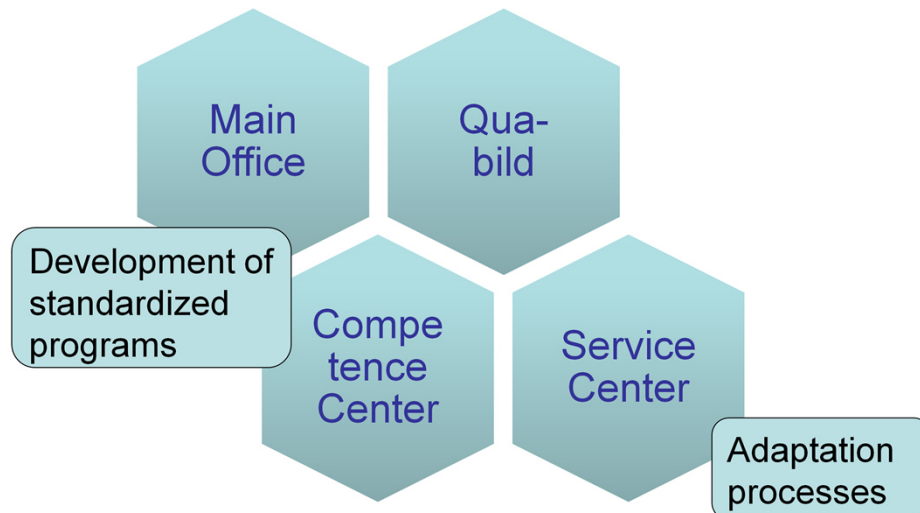
Therefore I examine the program planning of Weitbild in Germany, China and Hungary. Weitbild is a German commercial adult education provider and I changed the name here for protecting anonymity. The provider has a technological focal point and provides programs of continuing education such as programs for logistics. Weitbild has also started working international and delivering programs in China and Hungary.

## 4.1 Case Study of Weitbild



I conducted 8 qualitative expert interviews and analyzed these by using content analysis after Meuser & Nagel (1991).

## 4.2 Intermediate Results (Explorative Phase): Complex Specialized Planning Network



Program planning is done by Weitbild within a complex, specialized planning network, which consists of the main office, various service centers all over Germany, competence centers and „Quabild“. Each organizational entity is performing different tasks of planning. For example they are mainly the main office and the competence centers that undertake the development of new programs.

Furthermore the main office and CC digitally provide standardized programs, which are used by the planners in the service centers. Because of regional needs and focal points, it is necessary to adapt standardized programs in the service centers. Learning time, learning methods or topics for example are open to be changed.

## 4.3 Differentiated Logic of Program Planning

### Statutorily Regulated Qualification

- Regional training plan of each employment agency
- Certification processes

### Wholesale Banking

- Needs because of legal requirements or institutional problems
- Standardization, Adaption and Development of programs

There are two different customer segments: statutorily regulated qualifications, where the state is the customer and wholesale banking, which has companies as customers. Because of this program planning needs to differ.

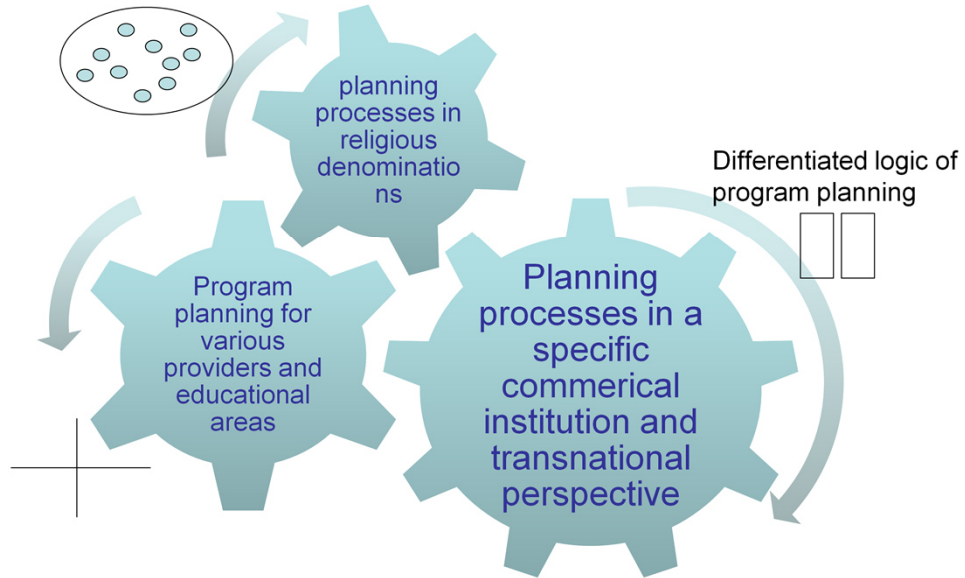
The statutorily regulated qualification is strongly regulated by politics. Each employment agency publishes a regional training plan. Within the training plan the employment agencies decide which topics will be promoted or funded for unemployed people in the following year. Thus need assessment is already done by local agencies.

A main task of planning is the certification process. All providers of statutorily regulated qualification need to have a certificate as a provider themselves and for each measure. The planning of measures is a part of the certification process.

Program planning in the segment of wholesale banking is less regulated compared to the statutorily regulated qualification. Need assessment is done by the planners through various actions like market observation, reading of newspapers and journals as well as analysis of job advertisements. Needs are either defined by legal requirements, so continuing education is compulsory, or caused by special problems of firms. The planners can use the standardized programs in the wholesale banking especially in the segment, which is regulated by legal requirements. Furthermore they need to adapt existing programs to the needs of individual customers/firms. Sometimes no program can be used as basis for planning, and then new programs must be planned by the planners on their own.



## 5. Conclusion: Program Planning Approaches



## 6. Discussion



Source: <http://www.global-english.com/news/tips-for-tefl-discussion-classes/>

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