

GERMANY

ECEC Workforce Profile

Country report authors

Pamela Oberhuemer and Inge Schreyer

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1. ECEC governance

In the Federal Republic of Germany, early childhood education and care settings for children up to compulsory school age are located in the child and youth welfare system and are not part of the public education system. Childhood care and education provision (*Kindertagesbetreuung*) comprises not only centre-based *early childhood* settings (infant-toddler centres, kindergartens) and home-based family day care, but also outside-school-hours facilities for school children up to the age of 12 or 14.

In the context of federal and decentralised administrative structures, responsibilities for the (early) childhood care and education system are shared between the federal government (*Bund*), the regional parliaments of the 16 states (*Länder*) and local government bodies. This means that there can be considerable regional differences in specific features of ECEC. Federalism and subsidiarity are core political and organisational concepts underpinning the structures, legislation, regulation, and funding of early childhood education and care in Germany. The subsidiarity principle evolved over time from the traditional provider structures in the social sector. According to this principle, public authorities are only obliged to provide social services if non-governmental agencies are not in a position to do so. Historically, child and youth welfare services were provided exclusively by non-governmental organisations, and even today, around two thirds of centre-based childcare provision across the country is run by voluntary child and youth welfare providers (*Freie Träger der Jugendhilfe*), who receive state subsidies to support independent functioning.

At the **federal level** the main responsibility lies with the Federal Ministry for Family Affairs, Senior Citizens, Women and Young People (*Bundesministerium für Familie, Senioren, Frauen und Jugend*), which by law has a 'stimulatory competence'. At the **regional level**, youth authorities (*Landesjugendbehörden*) in the 16 *Länder*, which are usually located within the Ministry of Social Affairs or Ministry of Education, implement federal legislative requirements and regulate issues not included in the federal law. At the **local level** the municipalities (districts, towns, boroughs) are responsible for the organisation, provision and funding of childhood care and education services, together with church affiliated and non-church affiliated provider organisations.

2. Who belongs to the early years workforce?

2.1 Regular contact staff in ECEC provision

Four main categories of staff work in direct contact with children in ECEC settings in Germany, the largest group being those with a vocational technical college¹ training: 70% altogether, 66% in the western *Länder* and 85% in the eastern *Länder* including Berlin (FKB 2017, 30).

Educators: In 2017, state-recognised Educators (*Erzieherinnen*) comprised over two-thirds of staff in ECEC settings and 67.3% of the total workforce in (E)CEC centres (*Kindertageseinrichtungen*), not including administrative staff (Destatis 2017a, own calculations). *Erzieherinnen* are core practitioners in early childhood education and care and may work as a Group Leader or Centre Head. Entry requirements for their initial professional studies are an intermediate secondary school leaving certificate, or an educational qualification recognised as equivalent, or the completion of a relevant vocational qualification. The course of studies generally lasts three years and takes place at a specialised technical college/academy for social pedagogy (*Fachschule*

¹ Strictly speaking, the term in German is 'school'. However, in the international context this can be misleading and we have therefore chosen the terms 'technical college' or 'vocational college' for *Fachschulen/Fachakademien*.

or *Fachakademie* in Bavaria). The *Fachschulen* are classified as tertiary-level institutions if the school-based component of IPS amounts to at least 2,400 hours, but they are not part of the higher education system.

Childcare Assistants/Social Assistants: Childcare Assistants and Social Assistants work as supplementary staff in ECEC settings. Together with other personnel with a social care training (1.9%) they constitute 13% of the total workforce in (E)CEC centres (excluding administrative staff) (Destatis 2017a, own calculations). In recent years, the traditional qualification route to become a Childcare Assistant has been replaced in most *Länder* by a broader social care qualification as Social Assistant. Entry requirements are generally a secondary school leaving certificate and – depending on the specific regulations in the 16 *Länder* – may take one to three years to complete (see FKB 2017; WIFF 2017c).

Childhood Pedagogues: Childhood Pedagogy study programmes leading to an award at Bachelor level are a relatively recent development in Germany – as is the ongoing construction of a professional self-image in this newly forming academic occupational group in ECEC (Schneider 2016). Since 2004, study programmes have been offered by Universities of Applied Sciences and, less frequently, by traditional Universities. The degree courses generally take three or three and a half years to complete. Entry requirements, curricular areas and also the name of the award may vary from state to state (see von Balluseck 2017; WIFF 2017a, 2017b).

Social Pedagogues: The study programmes for prospective Social Pedagogues at Universities of Applied Sciences or Universities vary from *Land* to *Land* in terms of the entry requirements, duration and content, and sometimes from one higher education institution to the next. Studies generally take three and a half to four years to complete.

Beyond the two core groups (Educators and Childcare/Social Assistants) and – in terms of numbers – the two peripheral groups of staff (Childhood Pedagogues and Social Pedagogues), additional staff with a *Fachschule* qualification like the Educators have but with a different specialisation may be found working in ECEC centres, such as state-recognised Remedial Therapists. Depending on the size of the setting, administrative staff, technical personnel or staff responsible for preparing meals may also be employed. Considerable differences are to be found from setting to setting and among providers. Support staff such as Speech Therapists may be employed on site, but usually they are external professionals who are invited to provide their services in certain circumstances.

Table 1 provides an overview of the staff working in (E)CEC centres and categorises the core practitioners (those with group or centre responsibility) according to one of five professional profiles adapted from the initial SEEPRO study (see Box 1 at the end of this section).

Table 1 c

Germany: Staff in centre-based ECEC/CCE settings

Job title	Main ECEC workplace settings and age-range	Main position/s	Main age-range focus of IPS	Minimum qualification requirement and ECTS points/EQF level/ISCED level ²
Educator <i>Profile:</i> Social and Childhood Pedagogy Professional	Infant-toddler centres 0-3 years Kindergartens 2/3-6 years Age-integrated centres 0-6 or 3-10 or 0-12/14 years Outside-school-hours provision/Hort 6-14 years	Core practitioner/ group leader Core practitioner/ centre head	0-12/14 up to 27 years	Usually 3 years at a tertiary-level vocational technical college (<i>Fachschule</i>) (or technical academy (<i>Fachakademie</i>) – specific length varies from <i>Land</i> to <i>Land</i> <i>Or:</i>

² UNESCO 2012, 2014.

Job title	Main ECEC workplace settings and age-range	Main position/s	Main age-range focus of IPS	Minimum qualification requirement and ECTS points/EQF level/ISCED level ²
				A newly introduced qualifying route, integrating work in settings with theoretical courses (PIA or OptiPrax, see <i>Section 3.1</i>) 3-4 years at <i>Fachschule</i> and in ECEC setting ECTS points: n/a ³ EQF/GQF ⁴ level: 6 ISCED 2013-F: 0112 ISCED 2011: 655
Childcare Assistant/ Social Assistant	Infant-toddler centres 0-3 years Kindergartens 2/3-6 years Age-integrated centres 0-6 or 3-10 or 0-12/14 years Outside-school-hours provision/Hort 6-14 years	Supplementary staff	0-10 years and beyond (Social Assistants)	2 or 3 years at vocational school, length varies in different <i>Länder</i> ECTS points: n/a EQF/GQF level: 4 ISCED 2013-F: 0922 ISCED 2011: 354
Childhood Pedagogue <i>Profile:</i> Social and Childhood Pedagogy Professional	Infant-toddler centres 0-3 years Kindergartens 2/3-6 years Age-integrated centres 0-6 or 3-10 or 0-12/14 years Outside-school-hours provision/Hort 6-14 years	Core practitioner/ group leader Core practitioner/ centre head	0-12/14 years	3 to 3½ years at a University of Applied Sciences or University Award: Bachelor ECTS points: 180 or 210 EQF/GQF level: 6 ISCED 2013-F: 0111/0922 ISCED 2011: 6
Social Pedagogue <i>Profile:</i> Social (and Childhood) Pedagogy Professional	Infant-toddler centres 0-3 years Kindergartens 2/3-6 years Age-integrated centres 0-6 or 3-10 or 0-12/14 years Outside-school-hours provision/Hort 6-14 years	Core practitioner/ group leader Core practitioner/ centre head	Broad age focus	3½ to 4 years at a University of Applied Sciences or University Award: <i>Diplom</i> /Bachelor ECTS points: 180 EQF/GQF level: 6 ISCED 2013-F: 0922/0923 ISCED 2011: 6

³ n/a = not applicable

⁴ German Qualifications Framework

Box 1

SEEPRO professional profile categories for core practitioners (adapted from Oberhuemer, P., I. Schreyer, and M.J. Neuman 2010)

- *Early Childhood Pedagogy Professional* (specialist focus, 0–6/7 years)
- *Pre-primary Education Professional* (exclusive pre-primary focus 3/4–6 years)
- *Pre-primary and Primary Education Professional* (focus on pre-primary and primary education 3/4–10/11 years)
- *Social and Childhood Pedagogy Professional* (mainly broad focus, including ECEC, usually 0–12 years, but sometimes including adults)
- *Social Care/Health Care Professional* (sometimes early childhood focus, sometimes broad focus, including adults)

2.2 Structural composition of the ECEC workforce: qualifications, gender, ethnicity

Persons with a vocational award from a *Fachschule* (or *Fachakademie*) comprise more than two thirds of staff working in childcare and education settings and are thus by far the largest group of specialist staff. Even after the introduction of the new Bachelor study programmes, staff with a relevant higher education degree comprise just over 5% and thus only a small proportion of the total workforce

In one third of (E)CEC centres (33.7%) in 2016, at least one of the staff members employed had a relevant higher education degree (awarded by Universities of Applied Sciences or Universities – *Diplom* and Bachelor study programmes). The distribution varies considerably between the *Länder* and ranged in 2016 from 20.5% of the (E)CEC centres in Brandenburg to 59.2% of those in Hamburg. During the same year, 23.5% of Centre Heads had a higher education degree: 31.7% in the eastern *Länder*; 21.1% in the western *Länder* (Bock-Famulla et al. 2017).

The proportion of male staff in the workforce in (E)CEC centres remains low at just over 5% - a higher proportion (15%) work in outside-school-hours services for school-age children than in early childhood settings.

Data on the proportion of persons with a background of migration are not systematically compiled. According to the Early Education Staffing Barometer (see *Section 6*), 11% of the early childhood workforce were persons with a migration background (FKB 2017, 328). The 2016 micro census data (Destatis 2017b) indicated that 20.2% of all persons in the employment market had a migration background - compared with 22.5% in the total population.

Table 2

Germany: Structural composition of the workforce in (E)CEC centres, 2016

Staff categories	Proportion of workforce overall
Staff with a relevant higher education degree	
• Social Pedagogues	2.9%
• Special Needs Teachers	0.4%
• Pedagogues	1.2%
• Childhood Pedagogues (no disaggregated data on proportion of Bachelor's and Master's degrees)	0.8%
<i>Total</i>	5.3%
Staff with a relevant upper secondary qualification (vocational school)	
• Childcare Assistants	11.3%
• Social Assistants (including social/medical support professions)	1.7%
Staff with a relevant post-secondary qualification (vocational technical school/academy)	
• Educators	67.5%
• Remedial Therapists, Special Needs Pedagogue, etc.	1.4%
<i>Total</i>	68.9%
Staff with other, non-specialist qualification (including short qualification routes in the social and health services)	4.2%

Staff categories	Proportion of workforce overall
Staff with no formal IPS or trainees	7.4%
Specialist support staff (e.g. language therapist or special needs educators)	Mostly off-site, no systematically compiled data
Proportion of male staff in (E)CEC centres	5.4%
Proportion of male staff as Centre Heads	6%
In infant-toddler centres (0-3)	3%
In kindergartens (3- 6)	5%
In out-of-school settings (school-age children)	15%
Among those with a higher education degree	8.5%
Among those with a <i>Fachschule</i> qualification	4.4%
Educators	4.2%
Among those with a vocational school qualification	3.1%
Childcare Assistants	2.2%
Social Assistants	9.1%
Staff in <i>early childhood</i> settings with a migration background*	11.1% (2014)

Source: FKB 2017, 31, 151ff, 319 own calculations

*Micro census definition (Destatis 2017b, 4): 'A person has a background of migration if he/she or at least one parent does not possess German nationality at birth'. In the early childhood field in 2014, only every third employee with a background of migration was not in possession of a German passport (FKB 2017, 328f).

In general, the rapid expansion in the childcare and education field, particularly in ECEC, has been accompanied by a steady growth in the workforce. In 2017, 599,722 persons were employed in (E)CEC centres. Since 2015, 44,748 employees have joined the workforce. Despite expansion and despite staff shortages (see *Section 8.5*), no noticeable tendency can be observed in terms of employing non-qualified staff (with no formal IPS or with a non-relevant vocational qualification) (Böwing-Schmalenbrock and Meiner-Teubner 2017).

3. Initial professional studies (IPS)

3.1 Initial qualifying routes

Educator (*Erzieherin*)

The initial qualifying route leading to the award of state-recognised Educator is not a specialist qualification focussing on early childhood (0-6 years), but a generalist preparation for work in a broad range of child and youth welfare services (e.g. residential children's homes, temporary accommodation for young people, settings for persons with special needs, youth work provision, care facilities in full-day schools). The qualification route is classified in Germany as 'vocational further education' leading to a state-recognised post-secondary vocational award according to the relevant legislation in the individual *Länder* (BöfAE 2012). It is based on a Framework Agreement on *Fachschulen* in a resolution adopted in November 2002 by the Standing Conference of the Ministers of Education and Cultural Affairs of the *Länder* and amended in March 2012. In terms of content, it is based on the competence-oriented Qualification Profile for the education/training of Educators which is part of the Framework Agreement (BöfAE 2012).

In 2011, a controversial decision was made by the Federal Ministry for Education and Research and confirmed in 2013: In the German Qualifications Framework (GQF), this traditional, post-secondary vocational award was placed at the same level as the higher education award of Bachelor – at Level 6. According to experts in the field, this can only be seen as a backward step in the overall professionalisation of the early childhood education field in Germany (see e.g. Stieve and Kägi 2012); moreover, it has been argued that an academic study programme pro-

vides a framework for developing the systematic and critical thinking needed in all education professions, including early childhood education (Rauschenbach 2013).

State-recognised Educators are by far the largest professional group in the field, comprising nearly 70% of the childhood education and care workforce. Roughly half (49.9%) of all Educators work as group leaders; 5.8% hold a post as Centre Head (Destatis 2017a, own calculations).

The institutions which provide initial professional studies for prospective Educators – *Fachschulen/Fachakademien* specialising in social pedagogy – officially belong to the tertiary-level education system, but not to the higher education system. This complicates any comparisons made in the European context. In 2014/2015 there were 593 *Fachschulen* specialising in social pedagogy in Germany; roughly half (49%) of which were public education institutions (FKB 2017, 123).

In Germany, responsibility for the education system as a whole, including the vocational and higher education institutions, lies with the 16 *Länder*, and the entry criteria for the initial professional studies for prospective Educators differ considerably. However, common entry requirements for all *Fachschule* applicants are always an intermediate school leaving certificate or a completed relevant vocational training; the length of the course of studies is calculated accordingly. In the case of applicants with an intermediate school leaving certificate, it usually lasts three years (include one year as a trainee Educator in a childcare and education setting).

Since 2012, it is also possible to follow a qualification route leading to the award of state-recognised Educator which integrates paid periods at the workplace with theoretical studies (*praxisintegrierte Ausbildung, PIA*). Initiated in Baden-Württemberg, the aim is to combine practice and theory more effectively (FKB 2017, 125). Entry requirements are usually an intermediate school leaving certificate (*Realschulabschluss*) or equivalent and one year of work experience in a social welfare setting. The trainee Educators sign a three-year training contract with the provider of the service and receive a monthly payment (1.600€ in Baden-Württemberg; KM BW 2015). In the meantime, this qualification option is also provided in North Rhine-Westphalia and Hesse.

In Bavaria, a similar initiative was started in the school year 2016/2017 called ‘Educator qualifying programme with optimised practical components’ (OptiPrax; Bayerische Staatsregierung 2017). The pilot programme aims to raise the attractiveness of the Educator profession through the integration of theory into practice and through remuneration during the training period. The trainee Educators sign a contract with the provider of a childcare and education setting, who then pays them. The minimum entry requirement is an intermediate school leaving certificate. Through three different training models (of at least 2,400 hours’ duration), trainees can gain the title of ‘state-recognised Educator’ in three to four years, depending on their previous education and experience.

Table 3

Germany: Educator

<p>Title in German: <i>Staatlich anerkannte Erzieherin/staatlich anerkannter Erzieher</i> Profile: Social and Childhood Pedagogy Professional</p>
<p>Entry requirements: Intermediate school-leaving certificate or a completed and relevant vocational training (considerable differences between the <i>Länder</i>)</p> <p>Professional studies: As a rule, 3 years at a <i>Fachschule/Fachakademie</i>, mostly including a one-year field-based placement; 2 years including 12-16 weeks of field-based placements are also possible.</p> <p>Award: State-recognised Educator (usually also a general university entrance certificate or specialist university entrance certificate)</p> <p>ECTS points: n/a EQF/DQF level: 6 ISCED 2013-F: 0112 ISCED 2011: 655</p> <p>Main (ECEC) workplaces: Infant-toddler centre (0-3), kindergarten (2/3-6), age-integrated centre (0-6, 3-10, 10-</p>

<p>Title in German: <i>Staatlich anerkannte Erzieherin/staatlich anerkannter Erzieher</i> Profile: Social and Childhood Pedagogy Professional</p>
<p>12/14), outside-school-hours care and education setting (Hort, 6-14)</p> <p><i>New 'integrated' qualification routes:</i> Since 2012 in Baden-Württemberg, North Rhine-Westphalia, Hessen (PIA) Since 2016 in Bavaria: Educator qualifying programme with optimised practical components (OptiPrax)</p> <p>Entry requirements: As a rule, intermediate school-leaving certificate</p> <p>Professional education/training: 3 to 4 years (depending on <i>Land</i> and previous experience) at a <i>Fachschule/Fachakademie</i> and simultaneously in an early childhood setting</p> <p>Award: State-recognised Educator (<i>staatlich anerkannte Erzieherin/staatlich anerkannter Erzieher</i>)</p> <p>ECTS-Punkte: n/z EQR/DQR-Stufe: 6 ISCED 2013-F: 0112 ISCED 2011: 655 Main (ECEC) workplaces: see above</p>

Childcare Assistant (Kinderpflegerin)/Social Assistant (Social Assistant)

In 2016, Childcare Assistants and Social Assistants comprised 13% of the workforce in (E)CEC centres. The mostly two-year or sometimes three-year training leading to the award of state-certified Childcare Assistant takes place at a vocational school (*Berufsfachschule*), for which the entry requirement is usually a basic secondary school-leaving certificate (*Hauptschulabschluss*). The vocational schools vary both in terms of the length of training offered (one to three years) and also the entry requirements (sometimes an intermediate school-leaving certificate). In some *Länder* the courses are organised so that the Educator qualifying programme can follow on directly. It is also possible in some cases to complete the course with an intermediate or a higher school certificate.

In 2014/2015 in Germany, 219 *Berufsfachschulen* offered a specialisation in childcare and 328 in social care. The childcare qualification route is currently on offer in Baden Württemberg, Bavaria, North Rhine-Westphalia and Saarland. In Berlin, Brandenburg, Bremen, Hamburg, Hesse, Lower Saxony, Rhineland Palatinate, Saxony and Schleswig-Holstein it is possible to attend a course of studies leading to the award of Social Assistant. In Mecklenburg Pomerania, Saxony-Anhalt and Thuringia it is possible to follow both routes (FKB 2017, 120).

Table 4

Germany: Childcare Assistant/Social Assistant

<p>Title in German: <i>Staatlich geprüfte⁵ Kinderpflegerin</i> <i>Staatlich geprüfte Sozialassistentin</i></p>
<p>Entry requirements: 9 years compulsory schooling with secondary school leaving certificate or intermediate school certificate; some <i>Länder</i> also require an interview and/or a written entry examination.</p> <p>Professional studies: 1 - 3 years vocational school (depending on <i>Land</i> and previous experience)</p> <p>Award: State-certified (or state-recognised) Childcare Assistant/Social Assistant. In some <i>Länder</i> it is possible to complete the course with an intermediate school certificate (Childcare Assistant) or secondary school certificate (Social Assistant).</p> <p>ECTS points: n/a EQF/DQF level: 4</p>

⁵ In Baden-Württemberg und Saarland the occupational title is *Staatlich anerkannte Kinderpflegerin* (state-recognised Childcare Assistant)

<p>Title in German: <i>Staatlich geprüfte⁵ Kinderpflegerin</i> <i>Staatlich geprüfte Sozialassistentin</i></p>
<p>ISCED 2013-F: 0922/0923 ISCED 2011: 354 Main (ECEC) workplaces: Infant-toddler centre (0-3), kindergarten (2/3-6), age-integrated centre (0-6, 3-10, 10-12/14), outside-school-hours care and education setting (Hort, 6-14). Social Assistants also work in social care institutions with persons of all ages, e.g. in hospitals or in mobile care services.</p>

Childhood Pedagogue (*Kindheitspädagogin*)

Two major triggers leading to a demand for more early childhood pedagogues with an academic degree were on the one hand Germany's mediocre rankings in international comparisons of educational achievement and on the other hand the fact that the required initial professional studies in the majority of European countries, at least for staff working in pre-primary education (3-6) and increasingly for those in early childhood education (0-6/7), is in the greater majority of cases a Bachelor-level degree or above (von Balluseck 2017). The first Bachelor study programmes in Childhood Pedagogy were therefore launched in 2003/2004, followed in some cases by complementary Master programmes. Currently there are 69 of these study programmes in 51 different locations across Germany, most of them specialising either in childhood pedagogy (0-12 years) or more specifically in early childhood education (0-6 years). The majority (80%) are provided by Universities of Applied Sciences (*(Fach)Hochschulen*), but also Universities of Education (*Pädagogische Hochschulen*) and are in the public sector (61%); almost one quarter (24%) are church-affiliated. In 2015, only three traditional Universities offered such a study programme. Master's degrees are not yet very widespread, currently there are ten on offer across the country (FKB 2017, 127).

Entry requirements, curricular priorities and the length of the study programmes vary from *Land* to *Land*. Most of the higher education institutions require a general university entrance qualification; acceptance may also be granted in the case of a secondary school leaving certificate combined with four- to five-years' of work experience in a relevant field, or through the successful completion of an eligibility exam (see WIFF 2017b). Only six of the 69 study programmes specifically address persons with a completed Educator qualification route; 14 permit comparable awards; in most cases (49), no relevant work experience is expected (FKB 2017). The regular length of studies for the Bachelor award amounts to six or seven semesters.

For Childhood Pedagogues, the Bachelor's or Master's degree opens up a broad field of work. Graduates are often employed in various areas of child and youth welfare, family counselling, integration initiatives and immigration authorities, adult education and in science and research. In 2016, only about 1% of fully qualified Early Childhood/Childhood Pedagogues were employed in (E)CEC centres (Destatis 2016a; own calculations).

Table 5

Germany: Childhood Pedagogue

<p>Title in German: <i>Kindheitspädagogin/Kindheitspädagoge</i> Profile: Social and Childhood Pedagogy Professional</p>
<p>Entry requirements: General university entrance qualification or specialist university entrance qualification, in some cases also a successfully completed Educator training programme Professional studies: 3 to 3½ years at a University of Applied Sciences/University of Education or in some case at a University Award: Childhood Pedagogue (Bachelor, title varies according to <i>Land</i> and higher education institution) – a subsequent 2-year Master's study programme can be followed.</p>

Title in German: Kindheitspädagogin/Kindheitspädagoge
Profile: Social and Childhood Pedagogy Professional

ECTS points: 180 / 210 (120 ECTS for a Master's degree)

EQF/DQF level: 6 (or 7 - Master)

ISCED 2013-F: 0112/0922

ISCED 2011: 6 (or 7 - Master)

Main (ECEC) workplaces: Infant-toddler centre (0-3), kindergarten (2/3-6), age-integrated centre (0-6, 3-10, 10-12/14), outside-school-hours care and education setting (Hort, 6-14)

Additional fields of work: Child and youth welfare, family counselling, integration initiatives, immigrant authority, adult education, science and research

Social Pedagogue (*Sozialpädagogin*)

Degree-level studies in the fields of Social Pedagogy/Social Work usually take place at higher education institutions, mostly universities of applied sciences but also professional academies (*Berufsakademien*), and only occasionally at universities. The traditional degree award (*Diplom*) is increasingly being replaced by a Bachelor's degree. Entry requirements, duration and curricula vary from *Land* to *Land* and between higher education institutions. The average length of study programmes is usually seven or eight semesters. A three- to four-semester foundation course is mostly followed by a four-semester advanced course (see Oberhuemer, Schreyer, and Neuman 2010, 186). A one-year internship may follow (Stiftung für Hochschulzulassung 2017). Follow-up Master's study programmes of one or two years' duration are on the increase. Some higher education institutions offer part-time courses for those wishing to combine studying with work.

Graduates can work in a broad spectrum of fields related to social pedagogy and social work. Alongside early childhood settings, these include adult education, educational counselling, supervision and leisure-time pedagogy. In 2016, Social Pedagogues with a degree from a university of applied sciences (or equivalent) comprised 2.9% of the childcare and education workforce, compared with 1.2% with a university degree (FKB 2017, 202).

Table 6

Germany: Social Pedagogue

Title in German: Sozialpädagogin/Sozialpädagoge
Profile: Social (and Childhood) Pedagogy Professional

Entry requirements: General or specialist university entrance qualification

Professional studies: 3 or 4 years at a higher education institution – including a traineeship, mostly at Universities of Applied Sciences, occasionally at Universities

Award: Degree (*Diplom*) in Social Pedagogy – now mostly a Bachelor's degree

ECTS points: 180 / 210

EQF/DQF level: 6

ISCED 2013-F: 0922/0923

ISCED 2011: 6

Main (ECEC) workplaces: Infant-toddler centre (0-3), kindergarten (2/3-6), age-integrated centre (0-6, 3-10, 10-12/14), outside-school-hours care and education setting (Hort, 6-14)

Additional fields of work: Adult education, educational counselling, family support, leisure time pedagogy, curative/special needs education, general social services, etc.

3.2 Competencies und curricula in IPS programmes

Educator (*Erzieherin*)

Since 2011, the qualifying route for Educators at *Fachschulen/Fachakademien* specialising in social pedagogy is based on a Competence-oriented Qualification Profile which specifies the professional standards, fields of activity in social-pedagogical settings, areas of knowledge and professional skills needed to enter the profession (KMK 2017). The Qualification Profile integrates previous relevant resolutions of the Education Ministers and Ministers of Youth and Family Affairs as well as the competence categories of the German Qualification Framework (social competence, independence, knowledge, skills; DQR 2014).

Table 7

Germany: Competence-oriented Qualification Profile - state-recognised Educator (see KMK 2017, 15-28, adapted)

Knowledge areas (selection)	Competencies/Skills (selection)
1. Understanding children, adolescents and young adults in their life worlds and forming pedagogical relationships with them	
<p><i>Leaving certificate holders possess</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • broad and integrated knowledge about different methods of observation; • in-depth specialist knowledge about the influence of socio-economic circumstances on the life worlds of children, adolescents and young adults; • thorough knowledge about the mandate of the complementary and compensatory role of settings in relation to the family. 	<p><i>Leaving certificate holders possess skills related to</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • analysing and assessing developmental trajectories and socialisation processes in children, adolescents and young adults and – taking into consideration the key determining factors of behaviour, experiences and learning – to independently plan and organise developmental and educational stimulation; • identifying one’s own role as Educator in the developmental and educational processes of children, adolescents and young adults, reflecting on this role and drawing consequences for pedagogical procedures; • conceptualising, planning and organising pedagogical programmes independently which are linked to the life worlds of children, adolescents and young adults.
2. Stimulating, supporting and guiding developmental and educational processes	
<p><i>Leaving certificate holders possess</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • an in-depth understanding of education and development as part of an individual, lifelong process within the framework of their social-pedagogical mandate of ‘education, upbringing and care’; • broad and integrated knowledge which provides them with a complex understanding of developmental, learning, educational and socialisation processes; • in-depth knowledge about didactic approaches for the competent guidance of children, adolescents and young adults in specific learning areas. 	<p><i>Leaving certificate holders possess skills related to</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • reflecting on and developing further their own educational experiences and competencies in different areas of education and learning; • organising the inside and outdoor spaces in socio-pedagogical settings with the aim of creating a stimulating learning environment; • using a wide range of tools and approaches from the various educational and learning areas in a targeted way and evaluating their effectiveness.
3. Guiding pedagogical work in groups	
<p><i>Leaving certificate holders possess</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • broad and integrated knowledge about group psychology and about group work as a classical approach in social pedagogy; • in-depth specialist knowledge in selected areas about didactic and conceptual approaches to education, upbringing and care in small groups in the classical fields of work in child and youth welfare; • thorough knowledge of the legislation frameworks relevant for social-pedagogical work. 	<p><i>Leaving certificate holders possess skills related to</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • systematically observing, analysing and assessing group behaviours, group processes, group relations and their own professional action; • conceptually embedding participation strategies for children, adolescents and young adults; • recognising conflicts and supporting children, adolescents and young people in solving them in an independent way.
4. Forming educational partnerships with parents and caregivers	
<p><i>Leaving certificate holders possess</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • broad and integrated professional knowledge 	<p><i>Leaving certificate holders possess skills related to</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • identifying the individually different needs and re-

Knowledge areas (selection)	Competencies/Skills (selection)
about various models, approaches and forms of partnership in education and upbringing; <ul style="list-style-type: none"> specialist knowledge about community support and counselling systems for families and caregivers; relevant knowledge about forms and methods of public relations work in social services. 	sources of families and caregivers, assessing them in a systematic way and reviewing framework structures and provision accordingly; <ul style="list-style-type: none"> planning and organising needs-based parental education and counselling activities together with other field specialists; developing, carrying out and evaluating public relations strategies for social service settings.
5. Developing organisations and teams	
<i>Leaving certificate holders possess</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> broad and integrated professional knowledge about structures and forms of team work and about other elements of organisation development; integrated specialist knowledge about relevant legislation and the funding and provider structures of settings in the field of social pedagogy as well as about current developments; thorough knowledge about the links between employment, tariff and contract legislation in the field of social-pedagogical work. 	<i>Leaving certificate holders possess skills related to</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> participating in needs and status analyses for the socio-pedagogical institution in order to include these in programme planning; analysing their own team situation according to specific criteria in order to develop this further and, if necessary, to organise support; reflecting on the sustainability of processes in team and organisation development.
6. Cooperating in networks and organising transitions	
<i>Leaving certificate holders possess</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> broad and integrated professional knowledge about child and youth welfare institutions and other specialist services and educational institutions; broad and integrated professional knowledge about support systems and networks; research-based knowledge about attachment patterns and their meaning for transition procedures. 	<i>Leaving certificate holders possess skills related to</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> investigating relevant resources in the community for the target group; coordinating goals for cooperation with network partners and integrating them into their own workplace procedures; organising transitions systematically on the basis of research evidence and conceptual frameworks.

The following basic principles are considered to be defining for all social-pedagogical work: *participation* (including children in decision-making according to their age-related competencies), *inclusion* (as a multidimensional concept of heterogeneity and diversity and also as a basis for planning educational activities), *prevention* (supporting children, adolescents and young adults to cope with different life phases), *language enhancement* (ongoing support of language development), and *values transmission* (guidance in the development of personal values based on the Basic Law/Constitution and the constitutions of the *Länder*).

Each federal state implements the Qualification Profile through its own legislation. An orientation document for this purpose is a cross-*Länder* curricular framework (see *Table 8*). The competencies specified in the curriculum of each federal state are mandatory for the work of the vocational colleges and academies in the field of social pedagogy.

The curricular framework is also organised in *six fields of learning* based on the competence-oriented Qualification Profile and combine complex tasks (see also: Autorengruppe Fachschulwesen 2011).

Table 8

Germany: Cross-*Länder* curricular framework for initial professional studies leading to the award of *staatlich anerkannte Erzieherin/staatlich anerkannter Erzieher* (see BöfAE 2012, 17, 24ff)

Fields of learning and content	Number of teaching hours
General education/non-specialist subjects	minimum 360
Occupation-related areas of learning	

Fields of learning and content	Number of teaching hours
<p>1. Ongoing development of professional identity and professional perspectives</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Biographical work, motive for occupational choice, methods of self-assessment - Professionalisation history of the <i>Erzieherin</i> profession - Fields of work and provider system in child and youth welfare - Education, upbringing and care as mandates of child and youth welfare in a changing society - Societal and legislative context of expectations and requirements regarding the professional role, cross-curricular tasks of social pedagogy work - Requirements, organisation and places of learning in IPS - Learning and working strategies in self-organised learning - Self-management and health prevention in professional work - Employment and tariff framework legislation - Professional organisations and trade unions - Professional prospects, continuing professional development 	160-200
<p>2. The pedagogy of relationships and working with groups</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Image of human being, image of the child, pedagogical values - Explanatory models for educational guidance - Attachment theory - Pedagogy of building relationships - Foundations of group pedagogy - Observation and documentation of group processes - Didactic principles and approaches of working in groups in the field of child and youth welfare, e.g. Froebel, Montessori, Reggio, contextual approach (<i>Situation-sansatz</i>), Social Group Work - Chances for shaping the life worlds and everyday lives of groups in child and youth welfare fields of work - Models and approaches towards a participatory pedagogy - Communication and leading discussions - Conflicts and conflict solutions in everyday pedagogy - Legislative framework for social pedagogical group work such as supervision, child and youth protection, health protection, data protection 	240-280
<p>3. Life worlds and diversity – awareness, understanding, inclusive approaches</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Changing conditions and influences on socialisation - Diversity of life worlds and living conditions and their significance for pedagogical work - Explanatory theoretical models for human experiences and behaviours, such as behavioural and learning theories, psychoanalytical models, systemic approaches, resilience concept - Special developmental needs in children, adolescents and young adults, such as physical and intellectual impairments, giftedness - Basic ethical principles of human life - Basic issues in educational anthropology, such as educational goals, consent and emancipation, normality and abnormality - Pedagogical approaches towards promoting and managing inclusion in selected child and youth welfare settings, such as diversity pedagogy, anti-bias education - Resource-oriented support and guidance of children, adolescents and young adults who are in need of special education, support and opportunities - Observation and documentation strategies in resource-oriented processes of guidance and educational support - Legal frameworks relating to inclusion, such as the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, German Social Code Book VIII, German Social Code Book X - Planning support according to German Social Code Book IX 	240-280
<p>4. Professional organisation of a social pedagogical approach to education in different learning areas</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Explanatory models for (self-) education, development and learning - Developmental domains and developmental tasks in different life phases (childhood, adolescence, young adulthood) - Aspects of diversity in developmental and educational processes - Education mandate of the German Social Code Book VIII - Curricular frameworks for childhood education and care in the <i>Länder</i> 	600-680



Fields of learning and content	Number of teaching hours
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Instruments for the observation and recording of developmental and educational processes – The role of Educators in the areas of education – Domain-specific and didactical knowledge of the areas of learning – Meaning of the areas of learning for the development of children, adolescents and young adults – Organising learning environments and identifying educational chances for different target audiences – Planning, implementation and evaluation of resilience-oriented and resources-based educational activities in different fields of work 	
<p>5. Organising educational partnerships with parents and caregivers and supporting transitions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Social transformation of the family – Diversity in family life worlds and living conditions – Rights and duties of parents – Models, approaches and forms of educational and childrearing partnerships – Forms of work with families – Methods of leading discussions and consultations with parents and caregivers – Presentation and moderating techniques – Supporting family upbringing – Support in upbringing – Endangerment of children’s welfare and protection mandate – Support and consultancy systems in the neighbourhood – Family education provision – Concept and organisation of the family centre – Life course transitions/ transitions theory – Models and approaches towards organising transitions in the child and youth welfare field 	160-200
<p>6. Developing institution and team, networking</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Provider structures, funding and legislative frameworks of social pedagogical institutions – Organisational models and development – Quality development – Programme development – Conceptual frameworks for organising everyday life in child and youth welfare settings – Teamwork and team development – Role and functions in teams/ leadership tasks – Multi-professional teams – Conflict solutions and support models for teams – Public relations work – Networking in the neighbourhood – Networks in child and youth welfare fields of work and with other educational institutions 	160-200
Elective modules	240-360
Total: Occupation-related areas of learning	1,800-2,200
Total hours/areas of learning	minimum 2.400
Placements (practica) in child and youth welfare settings	minimum 1.200

Childcare Assistant/Social Assistant

Competence specifications

Generally speaking, the qualification route leading to the award of Childcare Assistant tends to place more emphasis on competencies relating to interactions with children and on guiding educational processes, whereas that for prospective Social Assistants tends to foreground general

aspects of care. How the specifications are formulated can vary from *Land* to *Land* and between vocational schools. The following is a selection of skills and competences provided for EuroPass purposes for both the Childcare Assistants and the Social Assistants (KMK 2015).

Profile of skills and competences – Childcare Assistant

- Observe the behaviour, abilities and knowledge of individual children and small groups; recognise requirements and identify situations
- Support social learning processes in the group of children whilst taking account of cooperation within the staff team and with parents or legal guardians
- Initiate and support educational processes
- Plan, implement and reflect upon guided activities
- Support children's play and create scope for play
- Create opportunities to practise speech for the purpose of further development of understanding of language, powers of expression and language skills
- Familiarise children with various cultures, customs and practices and take account of these in pedagogical work
- Foster healthy physical development; comply with and apply hygiene measures
- Communicate with parents and education professionals within the scope of the education and teaching partnership and during team consultations
- Carry out housekeeping activities
- Accord due consideration to health and safety at work and to the rules of hygiene

Profile of skills and competences – Social Assistant

- Apply basic socio-pedagogical, social care, housekeeping and organisational management skills
- Assist with the development, education, supervision, care and support of people with and without disabilities on the basis of observations and documentation
- Work in close conjunction with the relevant professionals to support the care process
- Apply basic subject and methodological knowledge in the fields of art, design, creativity sport and play
- Apply communication skills in a way that is adequate to the situation when dealing with clients and their family members
- Work autonomously to formulate, realise, reflect upon and take responsibility for objectives and sub-tasks whilst cooperating closely with the relevant professionals.

Both vocational programmes place importance on ensuring that regulations regarding workplace safety, protection and hygiene as well as behaviour in the case of accidents and initiating first aid measures are effectively transmitted, as well as environmental protection regulations and making efficient use of energy sources at work.

Curricular areas

The curricula of the two vocational programmes vary from *Land* to *Land* and among vocational schools. Three examples are presented below.

Bavaria

The Bavarian state curriculum leading to the award of Childcare Assistant (*Lehrplan für die Berufsfachschule für Kinderpflege*, 2010) is organised into six broad fields of learning: (1) observing persons and situations, observing and explaining behaviour; (2) recognising daily needs and acting appropriately; (3) planning, carrying out and reflecting on educational activities; (4) initiating and guiding educational processes; (5) guiding relationships and communication; (6) cooperating with all those involved in the educational process (StMUK 2010). In a specific vocational school (Berufsbildungszentrum Augsburg und Schwaben 2013) the fields of learning are organ-

ised into the following subjects: religion and religious education/ethics and ethics education, German language and communication* (*= final exam subject) , English, social studies and professional ethics, pedagogy and psychology*, ecology and healthcare, law, mathematics and science education, information technology, didactics and media education, handicraft and design, housekeeping education, music and music education, sport, caring for babies, practicum*.

Mecklenburg-Pomerania

The relevant state Framework Plan for the upper vocational schools programme in Social Assistance (*Rahmenplan der Höheren Berufsfachschule Sozialassistenten*, 2014) distinguishes between general subjects (German/English; mathematics/science; social studies/Protestant religion or philosophy; sport) and occupation-related learning areas (developing professional identity and perspectives; children’s and young people’s development and education; foundations for managing relationships; supporting learning in specific educational areas; body and health; institutional and societal framework conditions; social encounters and learning – project module) (Ministerium für Bildung, Wissenschaft und Kultur 2014).

Rhineland-Palatinate

Project management forms the basis of the Social Assistance branch of the upper vocational school curriculum (*Lehrplan für die höhere Berufsfachschule - Fachrichtung Sozialassistenten*, 2010); this is organised in three areas of learning: (1) defining and planning projects, (2) carrying out projects and (3) assessing and steering projects. The occupation-related syllabus is structured in nine learning areas: (1) professional orientation, (2) organising communicative and educational processes, (3) observing and stimulating developmental processes, (4) supporting persons with impairments, (5) organising play situations and physical activities, (6) supporting artistic and creative forms of expression, (7) promoting healthy eating habits and carrying out housekeeping tasks, (8) implementing health support and caring activities, (9) presenting a final project (Ministerium für Bildung, Wissenschaft, Jugend und Kultur 2010).

Childhood Pedagogue (*Kindheitspädagogin*)

Both competence specifications and curricula for the study programmes leading to the award of Childhood Pedagogue vary from one higher education institution to another. In this section we therefore first present an ideal-typical catalogue of competence dimensions for work in the field of early childhood/childhood pedagogy, followed by three examples of how the study programmes in three higher education institutions are structured and which curricular areas they prioritise.

Ideal-typical catalogue of basic competencies for work in the field of early childhood/childhood pedagogy

Regarding the competencies needed for work in the field of early childhood/childhood pedagogy, an ideal-typical catalogue developed by a research team in Freiburg on the basis of IPS curricula, research on normative requirements, secondary analyses and individual case studies is presented in *Table 9* (Fröhlich-Gildhoff et al. 2014).

Table 9

Germany: Competence dimensions in the IPS of early childhood/childhood pedagogy professionals (Fröhlich-Gildhoff et al. 2014, 24f)

General personal competencies	Occupation-specific competencies			
	Working with child/ren	Cooperating with parents/ families	Working in and with the institution	Networking and cooperation
0.1 Examining one’s own	Work with individual children	2.1 Examining one’s own	3.1 Examining one’s own	4.1 Examining one’s own

General personal competencies	Occupation-specific competencies			
	Working with child/ren	Cooperating with parents/ families	Working in and with the institution	Networking and cooperation
personality / self-reflexivity in the context of societal conditions	1.1 Examining one's own systems of values and norms / guiding orientations relating to the child	system of values and norms / guiding orientations relating to parenthood	systems of values and norms / guiding orientations relating to team work	systems of values and norms / guiding orientations relating to networking and forms of cooperation
0.2 Examining one's own professional biography and guiding orientations and attitudes	1.2 Relationship and interaction	2.2 Developing relationships with parents	3.2 Ability to work in a team	4.2 Ability to enter into appropriate forms of communication with (potential) networking and cooperation partners
0.3 Developing a professional pedagogical disposition	1.3 Observing and documenting children's developmental and educational processes	2.3 Developing a setting-specific programme for working with parents	3.3 Coping with organisational (and budgetary) demands	4.3 Cooperating and networking with external specialist services (social welfare organisations, educational counselling, youth office, therapists, etc.)
0.4 Ability to form relationships; basic ability to build relationships with others based on mutual exchange and reflection	1.4 Organising developmental and educational processes	2.4 Organising activities for groups of parents	3.4 Managing essential administrative procedures	4.4 Building networks in the neighbourhood
0.5 Motivational, volitional and emotional aspects in pedagogical situations	1.5 Organising everyday pedagogical activities	2.5 Providing specific activities from the perspective of diversity and inclusion	3.5 Programme development and quality management	4.5 Organising transitions according to agreed goals and procedures
0.6 Self-regulatory abilities	Working with groups 1.6 Moderating group processes	2.6 Involving parents and families	3.6 Active organisation of the relationship between provider and setting	4.6 Ensuring protection against endangerment of the child's well-being both outside the setting and within the setting
0.7 Own readiness to learn and to develop professionally / research-oriented attitude	1.7 Guiding and moderating dialogues with and between children and promoting communicative interactions between children	2.7 Organising centre-related information for the parents	3.7 Public relations work	
0.8 Reflecting on one's own profession / ability to contribute towards the further development of the profession	1.8 Guiding and moderating conflicts	2.8 Organising and conducting complaints management	3.8 Implementing educational programmes in the context of policy frameworks	

General personal competencies	Occupation-specific competencies			
	Working with child/ren	Cooperating with parents/ families	Working in and with the institution	Networking and cooperation
0.9 Dealing with borderline cases, conflicts and being able to enlist support	1.9 Organising cooperative educational processes	2.9 Participating in a family-oriented development of the setting / Developing the childcare setting into a family centre	3.9 Economic management / acquiring project funding / sponsoring	
	1.10 Organising and enabling participation		3.10 Staff development	
	Specific areas of development			
	1.11 Transition processes			
	1.12 Diversity and inclusion			
	1.13 Inclusion – cultural heterogeneity			
	1.14 Inclusion – children with disabilities			
	1.15 Diversity and inclusion – children of different sexes			
	1.16 Language education			
	1.17 Additional areas of learning			

Course structure and curricular areas in three universities of applied sciences in Berlin, Dresden and Munich

1. Alice Salomon University of Applied Sciences, Berlin

Award: Bachelor of Arts and (on application) state recognition as a Childhood Pedagogue; 7 semesters; full-time studies or a work-integrated course for pedagogues in employment; modular system; 210 ECTS points.

The IPS programme is structured according to nine areas of study which are organised in modules.

Table 10

Germany: Study programme Childhood Pedagogy, Alice Salomon University of Applied Sciences, Berlin: Overview of curricular areas and modules (ASH 2010, 20)

	Hours per semester	ECTS points
Study area I: Pedagogical and psychological foundations	8	10
Module I/1: Children's upbringing, education and development	8	10

	Hours per semester	ECTS points
Sub-module I/1/1: Educational theories		
Sub-module I/1/2: Developmental psychology and neurobiology		
Study area II: Occupation-oriented practice and research methods	28	50
Module II/1: Foundations of a scientific approach to working and researching	7	10
Module II/2: Organising everyday pedagogy	4	10
Module II/3: Theories of play and pedagogy of play	4	5
Module II/4: Methods of practice	4	10
Module II/5: Conflict mediation and prevention of violence	3	5
Module II/6: Research methods	6	10
Study area III: Societal and political contexts of education and upbringing	16	20
Module III/1: Law	5	5
Module III/2: Diversity	4	5
Module III/3: Education systems – national and international aspects	7	10
Sub-module III/3/1: Specialist English		
Sub-module III/3/2: Education systems in a comparative perspective and study visit		
Study area IV: Education and teaching in childhood settings	39	45
Module IV/1: Aesthetic education I	6	5
Module IV/2: Aesthetic education II	6	5
Module IV/3: Natural sciences	7	10
Module IV/4: World and environment	4	5
Module IV/5: Mathematics	4	5
Module IV/6: Communication and languages	7	10
Module IV/7: Media pedagogy	5	5
Study area V: Body, movement and health	11	15
Module V/1: Health, illness and disability	7	10
Sub-module V/1/1: Health and illness		
Sub-module V/1/2: Integrative pedagogy		
Module V/2: Physical activity	4	5
Study area VI: Childhood education and care institutions	15	20
Module VI/1: Fields of work and professional identity	7	10
Module VI/2: Leadership, organisation and management	8	10
Study area VII: Practicum	10	30
Module VII/1: 1. Practicum	5	15
Module VII/2: 2. Practicum	5	15
Study area VIII: Bachelor thesis	2	12
Module VIII/1: Bachelor thesis and colloquium		
Study area IX: Optional studies	8	8
Total	137	210

Dealing with diversity and difference is a cross-curricular topic which is included in all modules.

2. Protestant University of Applied Sciences, Dresden

Award: Bachelor of Arts; state recognition as Childhood Pedagogue; 6 semesters; full-time IPS; modular system; 180 ECTS points.

Students complete 23 modules in four broad areas of study:

- Study area 1: Field-based studies (practica) (51 ECTS points)
 Study area 2: Foundations in educational science (43 ECTS points)
 Study area 3: Development, learning and communication (24 ECTS points)
 Study area 4: Foundations in social sciences (35 ECTS points).

Beyond these four study areas, 15 ECTS points are allocated for the Bachelor thesis and 12 ECTS points for extracurricular studies (*Studium Generale*), totalling 180 ECTS points altogether.

Table 11

Germany: Study programme Childhood Education and Upbringing, Protestant University of Applied Sciences, Dresden – Overview of modules and study programme, 2016 (EHS 2016, adapted)

Semester	Modules					Studium Generale	Workload/ECTS points
1	Fields of work in childhood education and upbringing: institutional contexts 5 ECTS	Development, play and learning in childhood and a research-based approach to work 9 ECTS	Foundations in educational science; images of childhood 5 ECTS	Anthropology, ethical value judgements, human rights and civil rights 5 ECTS	Social policy and legislation frameworks of childhood education and upbringing 6 ECTS		810 h* 30 ECTS
2	Fields of work in childhood education and upbringing: pedagogical approaches 5 ECTS	Field-based studies (practicum) 7 ECTS	Theories of education and upbringing 5 ECTS	Cooperating with families 6 ECTS	Foundations of communication and intervention with children and adults 5 ECTS	2 ECTS	810 h 30 ECTS
3	Theory and practice of teaching 5 ECTS	Field-based studies (practicum) 6 ECTS	Pedagogical diagnostics 6 ECTS	Communication and intervention in groups 5 ECTS	Social conditions of growing up in childhood 6 ECTS	2 ECTS	810 h 30 ECTS
4	Practical studies 16 ECTS			Inclusion and diversity 6 ECTS	Introduction to empirical action research 5 ECTS	3 ECTS	810 h 30 ECTS
5	Pedagogical research and development project 6 ECTS	Areas of learning in centre-based settings of childhood education and upbringing and teaching approaches 6 ECTS	Developing and evaluating pedagogical quality in centre-based settings for children 6 ECTS	Religious education, understanding the world and oneself 5 ECTS	Transitions 5 ECTS	2 ECTS	810 h 30 ECTS
6	Pedagogical research and development project 6 ECTS	Community orientation 6 ECTS	Bachelor thesis and colloquium 15 ECTS			3 ECTS	810 h 30 ECTS
Total workload						4,860 hours	
Total ECTS points						180 ECTS	

*1 ECTS point = 27 hours

3. Catholic University of Applied Sciences, Munich

Award: Bachelor Education and Upbringing in Childhood; state recognised Childhood Pedagogue; 6 semesters part-time for state recognised Educators (4 semesters for applicants with relevant non-German higher education degree); modular system; 210 ECTS points.

The study programme is organised in a modular system of six areas of study. Each study area comprises a different number of modules (KSH 2017).

Table 12

Germany: Study programme Childhood Education and Upbringing, Catholic University of Applied Sciences, Munich – Course structure and curricular areas (KSH 2017, adapted)

	Semester	ECTS points
Study area 1: Scientific foundations		
1.1 Foundations of scientific work and research	3	5
1.2 Development and learning from psychological and neurobiological perspectives	1	8
1.3 Health, illness and disability in childhood	1	5
1.4 Early childhood education in a historical and systematic perspective	3	7
1.5 Promoting children's development: attachment, relationships, basic competencies	4	5
1.6 Socialisation of girls and boys	6	5
1.7 Scientific theories and research methods	4/5	10
1.8 Education and upbringing in an international context	8	5
Study area 2: Areas of education and learning		
2.1 Language, communication, literacy – Introduction	1	5
2.2 Music and movement	1	5
2.3 Nature, environmental education, mathematics	2	
2.4 Religious education and upbringing - Foundations	2	
2.5 Family religion, belief, inter-religious dialogue in childhood education	5	5
2.6 Language, communication, literacy – Consolidation	6	5
2.7 Natural sciences and technology	7	5
2.8 Culture, aesthetics, media	8	5
Study area 3: Pedagogy		
3.1 Pedagogical activities I: Theories of play, supporting play and aesthetic education	2	10
3.2 Pedagogical activities II: Teaching approaches and curricular frameworks	3	5
3.3 Inclusion: scientific-normative foundations and dimensions of practice	3	8
3.4 Practice I: Guiding and stimulating children's learning and cooperating with parents	2	20
3.5 Practice II: Reflexive practice and professional ethics	4	10
3.6 Practice III: Action research and developing practice	6/7	30
3.7 Pedagogical activities III: Current theories and methods discourses	7	5
Study area 4: Organisation, management and legislation		
4.1 Legislative and organisational frameworks of education, upbringing and care	1	7
4.2 Organisation and management, employment law and laws governing the profession	4	5
4.3 Social and quality management	5	5
4.4 Children's rights to education and care, migration and service provision laws	7	5
Study area 5: In-depth studies		
5.1 Inclusive pedagogy and cooperating with parents, school, community	5	10
5.2 Planning and management of childhood education and care provision	6	5
Study area 6: Final module – scientific work		

	Semester	ECTS points
Completing a Bachelor thesis	8	15

Social Pedagogue (*Sozialpädagogin*)

In the winter semester 2017/2018, 91.4 % of all study programmes in Germany awarded Bachelor's and Master's degrees (HRK 2017). It seems that the traditional *Diplom-* and *Magister-*programmes in Social Pedagogy/Social Work at universities of applied sciences have mostly been replaced by Bachelor's or Master's study programmes – in Social Work or Educational Sciences or Childhood Pedagogy. Although it is in principle possible to study Social Pedagogy at 32 higher education institutions, few are specialised only in this area (<https://www.studierenstudium.com/studium/Sozialpaedagogik>). Moreover, the early childhood field is only one of a broad spectrum of fields of work for which students are prepared; these include the health and rehabilitation field, work with senior citizens, work with prisoners, and diverse consultancy activities. Both competence specification and curricular areas are therefore very wide-ranging.

3.3 Alternative entry and qualification routes, system permeabilities

External applicant examinations – IPS for Educators

According to Dudek and Gebrande (2012), all 16 *Länder* offer the chance to study for the award of state-recognised Educator by successfully completing an examination for external applicants (the terms used to describe this examination vary).

Entry requirements in terms of completed schooling and vocational training vary across the federal states; overall, however, they are generally the same as those for the vocational technical colleges. Beyond these, applicants may have to fulfil other state-specific requirements such as language proficiency and age. Applications for admission to this examination often come from persons with an occupation-related vocational training, such as Childcare Assistants or Remedial Therapists, or from persons who have completed a degree in the social sciences, also from mothers, „who are seeking re-entry into the employment market after a family phase and who wish to build on the competencies they have acquired during this time“ (Dudek and Gebrande 2012, 28). Preparation and the examination itself are supervised by providers (sometimes commercial) who often focus on the acquisition of theoretical knowledge, or through preparatory courses at *Fachschulen*, or also through self-study. However, all forms of preparation are criticised for their lack of practical preparation.

Part-time options – IPS for Educators

Another alternative route to become a *staatlich anerkannte Erzieherin/staatlich anerkannter Erzieher* is to study part time. This is possible in all federal states except Saarland. The course of studies likewise takes place at a *Fachschule/Fachakademie* for the same amount of hours as the full-time option, but takes longer to complete: the college-based component takes between three and four years and the final practicum between one and two years. A special form of part-time IPS is mandatory in only four *Länder* (Berlin, Brandenburg, Sachsen und Thüringen). In these federal states the trainees are required to work in a children's centre during their initial professional studies, whereas in other *Länder* they can make this decision on a voluntary basis. According to its proponents, the advantages of combining studying part time and working are that it gives the trainees the chance to earn a living, it promotes a stronger interconnection between theory-based and practice-based phases and it also contributes towards balancing family duties with studying for a professional qualification. Entry requirements for part-time options are the same as those for a full-time initial professional education/training.

Upskilling courses – Pedagogical Specialist in (E)CEC centres

The target groups for a new upskilling course in Bavaria (StMAS 2017) are Childcare Assistants, Remedial Therapists, certified Primary School Teachers, persons seeking career changes and applicants from other countries with a relevant academic degree. Entry requirements are an award as state-certified Childcare Assistant or support worker, a minimum age of 25 years and, depending on the previous qualification, three years of work experience (in a post at least 50% of a full-time post). Primary School Teachers who have successfully completed the First State Examination or lateral entrants with a relevant academic degree only need to have had two years of work experience; for Primary School Teachers with the Second State Examination, no teaching experience is required.

The course comprises a nine-month extra-occupational module phase ending in a theoretical examination and a six-month supervised internship in a children's centre. Those who pass the Certificate are awarded the title of "Pedagogical Specialist in (E)CEC centres", which is included in the "Professions Register for (E)CEC centres" (*Kita Berufeliste*) administered by the Bavarian State Youth Office.

4. Workplace-based learning in the IPS of core practitioners

The workplace as a 'site of learning' (*Lernort Praxis*) has not traditionally had a clear profile in the IPS of core practitioners, most notably that of *Erzieherinnen*. In the early 1980s attention was drawn to a decade-long process of dissociation between professional praxis and the college-based component of IPS, coupled with an increasingly school-like approach towards initial professional education/training (Ebert 2014). Although the Conference of Ministers for Youth Affairs drew attention in 1998 to the role of the child and youth welfare system in the workplace-based component of IPS (JMK 1998) and three years later potentially strengthened the status of this learning site (JMK 2001), a visible upgrading of field-based studies across the country to a level of parity with the *Fachschulen* has even today still to be achieved (Leu 2014). One indication of this is that there is no agreed job title and no agreed profile for the qualification requirements, assignments or remuneration of these staff in the (E)CEC centres who take on a mentoring role for students spending time in the setting during their practicum periods (Oberhuemer et al. 2014). In the context of the more recent IPS programmes in childhood pedagogy in Germany, the interrelationship between theory and practice is considered to be one of the key problematic issues (Pasternack and Keil 2013, 60).

In the higher education IPS routes for the awards of **Childhood Pedagogue** or **Social Pedagogue**, each individual higher education institution (HEI) decides on what priority this part of the study programme should be given. For the childhood pedagogy higher education routes, both the Conference of Education Ministers and the Conference of Youth Affairs Ministers have declared that the workplace-based learning component of IPS should be allocated at least 30 ECTS points (100 days) within a total of 180 ECTS points (KMK/JFMK 2010, 2); this corresponds to roughly 17% of the overall study programme (Oberhuemer et al. 2014). For the state recognition of the occupational title "Childhood Pedagogue" (which has now been introduced in most *Länder*), there is usually a minimum recommendation regarding the required length of a supervised and guided placement (Stieve et al. 2014, 81). For example, at the University of Applied Sciences in Emden (Hochschule Emden-Leer 2016), two practica are completed alongside the HEI-based studies on at the most two days: (1) 180 hours/23 full days; (2) 240 hours/30 full days. During a field-based project, students work independently on selected topics – usually during a block period (240 hours/30 full days). The same amount of time is spent on a practicum abroad, which aims to expand basic profession-related competencies and to strengthen knowledge about the

international context. During the practicum periods students are guided and supported by a tutor from the higher education institution.

In this Section the focus will be placed on the practical element of the IPS for prospective **Educators**, since they are the largest occupational group working in early childhood education and care. Despite the framework agreements reached by the Conference of Education Ministers, the fact that the individual *Länder* have sovereignty in education and training issues still results in diverging organisational structures, meaning that it is here that arguably the greatest need for future debate lies.

Educator (*Erzieherin*)

Despite the varying conditions in the 16 *Länder*, there are two basic forms of field-based learning in the IPS programmes for Educators (see Janssen 2010). Roughly half the *Länder* favour an additive model, i.e. following a two-year predominantly theory-based element at the vocational college/academy, students then spend a one-year work placement in a children's centre. The other *Länder* favour an integrated model of IPS, during which phases of field-based learning are built into the three-year course of studies. The number of hours spent in the placement setting varies – up to a maximum of 1,400 hours. Overall, the field-based component comprises roughly one third of the total length of initial professional studies.

The work placement takes place in a setting which the students choose themselves. They work full time in the setting and sign a contract with the service provider which specifies working times, payment, etc. The placement institution generally signs a contract with the supervisory vocational college/academy. As a rule, the placement period lasts for one year but in some *Länder* it can be shortened to six months if the prospective Educators have already gained appropriate work experience. Some *Länder* may require no work placement at all if, for example, the person has already completed the vocational route leading to the award of Childcare Assistant.

The work placement is remunerated and the amount is decided by the employer, i.e. the service provider. In 2015, prospective Educators in public sector childcare and education settings received a gross payment of 1,433€ per month (Infoportal Öffentlicher Dienst 2017c).

The candidate Educators are supervised by a staff member in the setting and also receive support from the technical college/academy. Further theory-based knowledge is mostly provided on one day a week or in block seminars.

The prospective Educators undertake diverse pedagogical assignments in the setting such as projects or guided activities with the children. Together with the supervisory and supportive member of staff, students reflect on their pedagogical activities and their own role. Tutors from the technical college/academy visit the trainees and observe and assess their work. These field-based grades form part of the decision as to whether the trainee should be admitted to the final examination.

5. Continuing professional development

Continuing professional development (CPD) may be theme-based or competency-based, may provide specialist training for a specific occupational role, or may focus on a specific target group. This section will foreground general aspects relating to the framework conditions for CPD for those working in (E)CEC centres rather than referring to specific occupational groups.

National, regional and provider-specific frameworks

In accordance with the federal structures in Germany, there is no nation-wide framework setting out specifications for the continuing professional development of staff working in early childhood settings, but there are recommendations issued by the Conference of Ministers for Family and Youth Affairs (see, e.g., JFMK 2010). Continuing professional development is anchored in relevant legislation of the *Länder* as a funding-worthy instrument of quality improvement, although views regarding the scope and intensity of steering procedures vary considerably (Diller and Leu 2010). Beyond this, the non-governmental provider organisations in the not-for-profit sector, who in Germany have a dual role as employer and CPD provider, have their own provider-specific requirements and conditions regarding the CPD of early childhood personnel.

Main forms

A comparative study on the continuing professional development systems in six European countries (Oberhuemer et al. 2012) differentiates between non-formal and formal professional development.

Two empirical studies conducted in the framework of the Early Years Professional Development Initiative WiFF (Behr and Walter 2010; Baumeister and Grieser 2011) identified **non-formal** professional development activities as the main form of CPD in Germany. These mainly aim at strengthening competencies within the workplace and the field in general; they are not conceptualised as cumulative and certified qualification measures leading to a formal award for the purpose of career advancement.

The survey by Behr and Walter (2010, 25), in which almost 500 CPD providers participated, analysed the relevant proportions of various CPD formats within the overall total provided by the organisations (multiple responses):

- Short courses up to a maximum of three days (91%);
- Team-specific CPD (69%);
- Long-term offers with individual units lasting more than a week (55%);
- Three- to five-day seminars (49%);
- Team supervision and steering (33%);
- Quality circles (20%);
- Study trips (14%);
- Online-courses via distant learning (10%);
- Other (4%).

The above survey was complemented by a document analysis conducted by Baumeister and Grieser (2011). The researchers examined 96 programmes of large CPD provider organisations in Germany, also in terms of the format of the courses and activities offered (see Baumeister and Grieser 2011, 21):

- Seminars with an average length of one to three days accounted for almost 85% of the total number of CPD programmes;
- On-site (in-house) seminars, e-learning or blended learning approaches as well as excursions, study trips, professional conferences and similar provision represented approximately 8% of the total programme offers;
- Series of inter-connected CPD units stretching over 12 days or more, sometimes offered on a module basis, account for 7% of the total CPD provision.

Forms of **formal CPD** include courses for which a provider-specific certificate is awarded (e.g. for leadership competence) which can be important for career progression within the practitioner's employer structures; in some cases a state-recognised certificate may be awarded. In Rhineland-Palatinate, for example, in the context of the introduction of official curricular guidance in early childhood education, a cooperation initiative established by the ministry for employers/providers, municipal umbrella organisations, the state-wide parent committee and the trade unions led to a mutually agreed professional development series (of at least 15 days). A series of

qualifying modules for service providers is also currently on offer. Participants who have completed eight seminar units are awarded a certificate: 'Recognising provider responsibility: managing and supporting quality development in childcare and education settings' (Kommunal Akademie Rheinland-Pfalz e.V. 2017).

Extra-occupational advanced studies with an early childhood specialisation or Master study programmes also belong to the formal forms of CPD. However, a nation-wide framework system of modules for which agreed credits are awarded and lead to career progression or an accredited system of cross-provider modules which are recognised as an entry point to advanced studies has not as yet been established – at least not as a visible system (Oberhuemer et al. 2012, 77).

Leave entitlement

Leave entitlement for participation in professional development activities is regulated in different ways in each *Land* – both for core practitioners and assistant staff. In most *Länder* it is possible for employees to apply for educational leave. Employees mostly are entitled to five days of fully paid leave per year. According to a link posted on the German Education Portal (Deutscher Bildungsserver), these entitlements do not apply in Bavaria and Saxony (vgl. InfoWebWeiterbildung 2017).

Duties and rights

In general, early childhood personnel are not obliged to participate in professional development activities in Germany. However, some *Länder* do have a regulation which requires participation (e.g. in Mecklenburg-Pomerania staff are required by law to attend five days of CPD annually and in Thuringia two days per year).

Employers are neither obliged to offer CPD nor to prescribe it - unless a specific agreement has been set out in the employment contract (Schumann 2016).

Participation and coverage of costs

According to the assessments made by CPD providers in the nation-wide WiFF survey (Beher and Walter 2010, 30) almost half (46 %) shared the view 'completely' that work pressures are a considerable barrier to participation in CPD. Between 43% and 47% of respondents agreed that paid leave was not a frequent occurrence and that attendance fees are not met adequately by the employers of early childhood staff.

Regulations regarding the coverage of costs for CPD depend on the agreements made between employer and employee. The employer is not automatically obliged to cover the costs. Modalities concerning CPD are often specified in the employment contract. If an employer specifically requires an employee to attend a CPD activity, then the employer must bear the costs (Schumann 2016).

CPD providers

According to the nation-wide survey by Beher and Walter (2010), the diverse group of non-governmental service providers are by far the largest group organising CPD for (early) childhood staff in Germany. They represent 45% of all CPD providers, offer 63% of overall CPD provision and 57% of the total number of programme hours. Commercial providers represent 34% of all CPD providers and public sector providers 19% (Beher and Walter 2010, 8). Baumeister and Grieser (2011, 16) came to a similar conclusion on the basis of their analysis of the CPD programmes: approx. 20% of CPD activities are organised by public sector bodies and approx. 82% by private organisations (e.g. welfare associations, church associations, academies and research institutes).

The CPD provider types are particularly diverse in Germany. They include one-person enterprises, welfare associations, education institutes/academies, religious associations, vocational



schools, companies, higher education institutions, professional associations and well as commercial CPD providers (Behr and Walter, 9). In some *Länder* (e.g. Baden-Württemberg, North Rhine-Westphalia), the vocational technical colleges are also recognised as official CPD providers (Diller und Leu 2010). Looking at the proportion of programme hours organised by the individual provider types, almost a quarter of CPD programmes are organised by welfare associations (23%), 18% by research institutes/education academies, 14% by adult education centres and 8% by public sector authorities. The other provider types mentioned above do not cover more than 6% of the total CPD programmes on offer. The higher education institutions account for only 6%.

Cooperative initiatives

In some *Länder* cooperation initiatives exist between diverse stakeholders in continuing professional development. In 2016, a long-standing example of this kind in Bavaria – *Forum Fortbildung* at the State Institute of Early Childhood Research (IFP) – celebrated its 25th anniversary as a consortium of CPD providers and representatives from IPS and research – a unique example of sustained and state-wide cooperation on conceptual and structural issues regarding the further development of CPD. Since 2010, all the programmes of the participating associations and organisations can be viewed on the homepage of the IFP (www.ifp.bayern.de). This is a significant step in terms of providing state-wide and cross-provider transparency for early childhood practitioners.

Qualification requirements for Centre Heads

Requirements for taking on a position as Centre Head in an ECEC setting vary from *Land* to *Land* and from provider to provider and in general are not explicitly regulated. A qualification beyond initial professional education/training is rarely expected. Often a position of leadership requires no more than being a 'suitable person', but criteria in this respect are rarely described in detail, leaving the decision up to the ECEC setting provider (Strehmel 2017). It is often the case that certain tasks are only indirectly attributed to the provider or the Centre Head, which can lead to decision-making difficulties in the everyday running of the centre. The AQUA study (Schreyer et al. 2014) revealed that Centre Heads are more satisfied with their work and feel less stressed if the assignment of tasks between provider and Centre Head is clarified in a binding way.

Research projects on the topic of CPD

As part of a drive to increase the number of empirical studies on professionalisation issues in the early childhood field, the Federal Ministry for Education and Research – within the framework of the Early Years Professional Development Initiative WiFF (AWiFF) – funded 30 research projects, four of which also focussed on the continuing professional development of early childhood practitioners (DLR 2014):

- Competence-based monitoring and feedback procedures in different early childhood IPS and CPD structures
- Review of recruitment, deployment and competence profiles of the teaching staff in CPD programmes for early childhood personnel
- Kindergarten and child protection – the effects of professional training for Educators to become specialists in child protection
- Doing – supporting – educating? (TUF) – a multi-perspective study of activities of ECEC staff in the context of CPD needs

6. Recent policy reforms and initiatives relating to ECEC staffing

Early Years Professional Development Initiative (*Weiterbildungsinitiative Frühpädagogische Fachkräfte - WiFF*)

In 2009, the Federal Ministry for Education and Research and the Robert Bosch Foundation, together with the German Youth Institute, launched an Early Years Professional Development Initiative - the *Weiterbildungsinitiative Frühpädagogische Fachkräfte* (WiFF 2017a), which is currently in its third phase of funding (up to the end of 2018). This initiative is one of the most far-reaching – if not *the* most far-reaching – professionalisation initiatives for early childhood personnel in Europe (Oberhuemer 2014, 22).

Aims of the initiative are: to strengthen early childhood pedagogy as the basis of the education system in Germany; to establish more transparency in the early childhood CPD system, to guarantee the quality of CPD activities and to strengthen compatibility and permeability in the system of continuing professional development.

WiFF provides a framework for strengthening the knowledge base in the ECEC field – through commissioning topical expert reports, field evaluations and studies which are then made available free of charge as a print and/or online publication. Beyond these publications, the Federal Ministry of Education and Research funded a special series of empirical studies which also examine professionalisation and personnel issues (see e.g. Schreyer et al. 2014). WiFF also acts as a professional network for the growing number of stakeholders in early childhood education – persons involved in IPS, CPD and policy development as well as service provider organisations and researchers. In the context of conferences and workshops, current challenges in the system of early childhood education and care can be discussed from different stakeholder perspectives (Flämig, König, and Spiekermann 2015).

Staff monitoring – The Early Education Staffing Barometer

A sub-project of the Early Years Professional Development Initiative (WiFF) is The Early Education Staffing Barometer (FKB 2017). The first edition of this comprehensive compilation of data was published in 2014; in June 2017 the second edition became available.

The Barometer presents detailed information about staff in ECEC settings and their qualification structures, about the settings teams, the employment situation, the qualification routes into the early childhood education professions, the diversity in staff composition and future personnel needs. A comprehensive appendix of tables presents statistical data which are partly disaggregated according to the situation in individual *Länder*.

The data sources include employment, earnings and higher education statistics, also child and youth welfare and school statistics. The WiFF Barometer also monitors developments in the early childhood and childhood pedagogy higher education study programmes.

Staff recruitment – recommendations from an expert group

From 2012 to 2014, the Ministry of Family Affairs, Senior Citizens, Women and Youth constituted an expert working group comprising representatives of the federal and regional ministries and of key organisations in the field, e.g. public and private provider agencies, professional organisations and trade unions, employer and technical school associations and other stakeholders (BMFSFJ 2014). The aim was to develop recommendations to cope with the drastic staff shortages in the ECEC system by working out strategies for staff recruitment and retention. A special focus was placed on groups who had been given little attention up till then, such as career changers (lateral entrants), men, persons with a migration background or persons with qualifications gained in other countries.

The following key steps and procedures were agreed on (BMFSFJ 2014).

At the level of service providers and provider associations:

- to encourage those who have dropped out of the profession to return;
- to stock up the number of part-time posts;

At the Länder level:

- to explore the possibilities of employing support staff who are in the process of acquiring a further education qualification;
- to provide for the speedy and uniform recognition of qualifications acquired in other countries;
- to explore ways of employing equivalent professional groups;
- to examine the funding options for re-qualification courses;
- to seek a possible broadening of the capacities needed for the examination of external applicants (also for lateral entrants).

State by state monitoring – A Bertelsmann Foundation initiative

A monitoring initiative was started in 2008 with a particular focus on childcare and education settings which publishes a state by state report biannually. The report describes the status quo of the ECEC systems in the 16 *Länder* according to three main criteria: guaranteeing participation; implementing investments effectively; promoting education – guaranteeing quality (see Bock-Famulla et al. 2017 for the most recent edition). Possibilities are provided online to compile comparisons between *Länder*. The accounts are based on data from the official child and youth welfare statistics and also from questionnaires addressed to the responsible ministries at the *Länder* level. Within this framework, data on personnel are also presented. The 2015 *Ländermonitor*, for example, includes data on staffing allocation within (E)CEC centres, on lead staff, on the volume of employment and on temporary/short-term appointments.

7. Recent country-specific research relating to ECEC professionalisation and staffing issues

Working conditions and work satisfaction in (E)CEC centres

Source: Schreyer I. et al. 2014 (see *References* for full details).

Background: The following study on Educators' working conditions and work satisfaction was one of the projects sponsored by the Federal Ministry for Education and Research in the framework of the AWiFF empirical research funding (see *Section 5*).

Aims: This nation-wide, representative study (conducted from August 2011 up to May 2014 at the State Institute of Early Childhood Research in Munich aimed to describe in detail the conditions under which staff in (E)CEC centres in Germany work and to relate these to factors such as the subjective work satisfaction of staff. The pressures which staff experience during their everyday work were also the focus of the detailed examination.

Procedure: Both the staff in childcare and education settings and the corresponding service providers were asked to respond to a questionnaire (either in paper form or online). A pilot study was carried out in the spring of 2012 in order to scrutinise the questionnaire, which was composed of items constructed by the project team as well as established items and rating scales from other authors. The responses led to a revision of certain questionnaire items. The main study was conducted during autumn 2012. Roughly 10% randomly selected childcare and education settings from all settings in Germany were chosen and asked in writing whether they would participate in the study. A total of 5,414 questionnaires were sent to childcare settings and 4,278 to service providers. The sample was stratified according to *Länder* and provider affiliation. Three groups were asked to respond: (1) Educators and other staff in different setting

types, (2) Centre Heads in different setting types and (3) the legally responsible service providers of these settings.

The response rate was 35.8% for the service providers and 32.8% for the childcare centres contacted. After cleansing redundant data, the data base comprised responses from 1,455 Centre Heads, 5,152 practitioners without a leading function and 1,542 service providers.

Alongside person-related information, the questionnaire asked staff to assess the importance and existence of over 40 working conditions, and also to give their views on work satisfaction, commitment to profession and employer (in this case the service provider), dedication, team climate, relationship to staff in a leading function and perceived stress factors.

The so-called AQUA Index was constructed on the basis of the responses. The Index categorises working conditions as 'good', 'mediocre' and 'poor' and makes it possible to correlate the emotional aspects of working life with the quality of working conditions.

Selected findings: Overall, it could be shown that the working conditions in (E)CEC centres in Germany vary considerably. Not surprisingly, good working conditions have consistently positive effects on different aspects of the work: the better the working conditions, the more pronounced in positive terms were all the variables examined (work satisfaction, commitment, dedication, etc.).

Staff are particularly satisfied if they consider their work to be interesting, if they can work in an independent and autonomous way and if they are supported by superiors and colleagues. An understanding of the profession as 'vocation' seems to be particularly applicable to pedagogical staff. Moreover, commitment to their specific employer is very strong – particularly in the case of Centre Heads. Many Centre Heads emphasise the importance of a supportive stance by the service provider. If this is the case and they also feel that the division of responsibility between them and the provider is clarified in a binding way, they are more satisfied and feel less stressed.

The findings also show that the greater majority of staff (approx. 72%) feel stressed by their work and find themselves in a so-called gratification crisis (Siegrist et al. 2014): they think their work efforts far exceed the recognition and rewards they receive for them. As in the STEGE study (Viernickel und Voss 2013) and various other studies, Centre Heads are particularly affected - 87% find themselves in a gratification crisis. This strong occupational stress is linked to less satisfaction and dedication, a poor assessment of superiors and the team climate and less commitment. Stress factors include growing external expectations and an increasing work load, overtime resulting from staff shortages, lack of substitute staff, and so on. The Centre Heads in particular often have to complete assignments outside regular working hours which are not remunerated, or attend meetings in their free time.

Pay, working conditions and career development possibilities are the aspects of work with which the staff in ECEC and other settings are least satisfied. In the AQUA study approx. 10% of the respondents indicated that they were working alongside their main job because they need the additional earnings. It is not only the service providers who should be expected to improve this situation, since they often do not have the capacity to provide higher wages. The providers also stated that they see the area of financing as that needing the most attention, both within their own provider frameworks and in terms of policy making.

Closely linked to this is the lack of societal recognition of the work of pedagogical staff. Only 2% of the respondents indicated that their work was 'completely' valued in society.

Pay and recognition are important for the staff, but they do not stand at the top of the list of priorities. Instead, aspects such as having enough time for pedagogical work, experiencing a good working climate, being able to work independently, and being able to identify personally with their job were ranked more highly. Staff who indicated that they have sufficient time for their pedagogical work showed a considerably higher level of work satisfaction and a lower perception of stress factors.

Implications: Overall, the AQUA study suggests a strong ambivalence: on the one hand pedagogical staff are satisfied with their job and the work it involves; on the other hand they experience



considerable stress. It seems that under the present working conditions, pedagogical workers experience too little respect for their work, and that the level of pay and lack of promotion prospects are significant contributory factors.

Sustaining and raising the attractiveness of the work in ECEC and other childcare and education settings therefore remains a challenge. Changes can only be successful if both the conditions under which pedagogical staff work and their specific needs are taken into account. In future both the providers of childhood education and care services and policy makers will need to consider not only economic aspects and the interests of parents and children, but also to focus more strongly on the needs of (early) childhood practitioners.

Educational tasks and working conditions in ECEC: the views of early childhood staff

Source: Viernickel, S., I. Nentwig-Gesemann, K. Nicolai, S. Schwarz, and L. Zenker. 2013 (see *References* for full details).

Procedure: The study is organised in a qualitative and quantitative part. The latter examined the structural and organisational conditions under which pedagogical staff work. In a random sample (stratified according to provider and location), 8,058 questionnaires were sent to 2,686 settings in 2011. Following post-clearance of data, the responses of 704 settings provided the basis for the computations.

In the qualitative part, the experiences, views and orientations of the staff were examined – with a focus on observation and documentation, language enhancement, cooperation with families, transition from kindergarten to school and quality assurance and quality development. For this purpose, 21 focus group discussions were conducted: 15 with centre teams, five each in three large towns in three different *Länder*. One focus group was held additionally in each town with the Centre Heads of the participating settings and one with the local provider representatives. The evaluations and interpretations of the discussions were conducted according to the Documentary Method (Bohnsack, Nentwig-Gesemann, and Nohl 2013), by means of which both explicit knowledge and implicit and tacit experiential knowledge can be reconstructed. A whole-team approach was utilised. Moreover, ‘typical’ structural patterns and links were presented in detail.

Findings: Although the official early childhood curricular frameworks have been accepted in general, in terms of their implementation, the teams find themselves in an ‘implementation dilemma’ in terms of the everyday realities of their working situation and the theories behind the curricular programmes. Three approaches could be observed: (1) teams which work according to pedagogical values and the needs of children/families and actively explore new approaches (‘core values orientation’), (2) teams which view the curricular framework as a binding orientation (‘implementation orientation’), and (3) teams which explicitly distance themselves from the curricular framework (‘distancing orientation’).

Implications: Two basic conclusions can be drawn from the quantitative and qualitative data: the demands and expectations which curricular programmes place on staff need to be adapted to the specific structural framework conditions, the available resources, the competence profile and the professional attitudes of the staff. Approaches to quality assurance and quality improvement also need to be directed towards the concrete needs of the setting. Implications can be drawn for steering and development strategies in the following areas, among others: staff can only realise the high expectations placed on them through *improved staffing allocations*. These should be calculated and presented in a way that they can be compared across the country. *Time allocated for indirect pedagogical work* is mostly insufficient, leading to increased feelings of stress among staff. *Reflecting on professional attitudes and dispositions* needs to have a firm place in continuing professional development. CPD courses designed to strengthen the *qualifications of Centre Heads* need to be systematically expanded. The implementation phase of the curricular frameworks needs to be followed by a *phase of critical reflection* so that sustainable developments can be initiated. Not least, *more public recognition* of the field of work is

needed to strengthen the professional self-image of the staff, including attractive career development options and appropriate remuneration.

The study concludes with policy implications resulting from findings: sustained improvement of staff-child ratios; freeing Centre Heads of direct work with children; promoting and supporting the societal status of pedagogical staff; adapting and securing the necessary funding for childcare and education settings; as well as a systematic expansion of continuing professional development opportunities.

Job profile of Centre Heads in (E)CEC centres

Source: Strehmel, P. and D. Ulber 2014 (see *References* for full details).

Aims: The occupational profile of Centre Heads in ECEC centres has received little previous attention in research studies in the German-speaking countries. The aim of the current study was to develop a profile of job requirements based on theoretical foundations, compiled as a criteria matrix which could be used to examine the extent to which these can be found in educational programmes, textbooks and manuals, and in conceptual frameworks for initial and continuing professional development. In this way it should be possible to show what exists in terms of well-founded approaches and empirical findings and where there are identifiable gaps.

Procedure: The diverse tasks of a Centre Head were organised according to the seven dimensions of a leadership kaleidoscope developed by Simsa and Patak (2008): (1) mandate/task, (2) self-management, (3) staff leadership, (4) organising cooperation, (5) developing the organisation, (6) assessing relevant conditions and trends, and 7) developing a strategic framework for leadership.

A systematisation of selected material was made, based on qualitative content analyses of texts from curricular frameworks, textbooks and manuals, relevant professional journals and professional development programmes. Materials from different *Länder* were included in the further (non-representative) analyses and the various descriptions of the leadership role and tasks were viewed in terms of the seven dimensions.

Selected findings: A broad range of qualifying courses with a focus on leadership tasks, self-management, staff guidance and team work are available. The programmes themselves focus mostly on leadership competencies; topics such as reflecting on one's own leadership role, ensuring compliance with legislative and structural frameworks, team development and community networking are included in almost all course offers. However, the topics that tend to be missing relate to health aspects (concerning the Centre Heads themselves and the centre team), organisational development (including programme and mission development and needs analyses) and an assessment of the contextual framing and trends.

Implications: Summarising these findings it can be maintained that an abundance of material is available regarding the tasks of heads of childcare and education settings; however, the job profile is rarely clearly defined. 'A research-based discourse on formulating and clarifying the requirements and work processes of heads of childcare and education settings as well as the corresponding competence specifications is only just beginning in Germany' (Strehmel and Ulber 2014, 84). Continuing professional development for lead practitioners needs to include all the dimensions of the leadership kaleidoscope and to be firmly inserted into the time budget. It is primarily the responsibility of the settings providers as employers to provide for such programmes which are also directed towards current needs. Those working on the ground show great interest in relevant CPD course offers; currently they very often do not provide an effective framework for professional discourse between research, practice and policy makers.

8. General workforce issues

8.1 Remuneration

The pay of staff in (E)CEC centres varies according to the provider they are employed by. Whereas in the private, mostly non-profit sector it is generally the providers who decide on the level of earnings, in the public sector pay as a rule is linked to collective agreements.

The system of grouping into different pay categories is made according to the job characteristics, such as 'Educator with demanding tasks' (e.g. Educators who work with children with special educational needs), 'Group Leader' or 'Centre Head in a centre with more than 100 places'. Depending on the length of service, increments are added to the basic salary. In most cases, employees also receive a 'Christmas bonus' and staff may be paid extra for living in some cities/locations.

Following the collective bargaining talks in Spring 2017, the gross basic starting salary of a Child-care Assistant 'without demanding tasks' is 2,106.31€ per month, that of an Educator 'with demanding tasks' 2,599.20€. In the highest salary scale for each occupation the gross basic salaries amount to 2,579.59€ and 4,014.09€ respectively. A Centre Head in a centre with more than 180 places starts with a salary of 3,610.85€ per month; in the highest salary scale the respective amount is 5,446.34€ (Infoportal Öffentlicher Dienst 2017a).

Since there are as yet no job characteristics for the comparatively new Bachelor study programmes in Childhood Pedagogy, the pay category used for these degree holders is that of 'other employees' who 'carry out appropriate tasks on the basis of equivalent skills and experience'. This means that the specific salary group applied is usually a matter for negotiation and often takes place according to the specifications for those with (particularly) demanding tasks (Infoportal Öffentlicher Dienst 2017d).

The salaries of (Social) Pedagogues with a *Diplom* qualification are roughly the same as those for Educators with demanding tasks. They range between 2,570€ and 4,091€ per month (PMSG 2017). In general, having a higher education qualification does not have much influence on the salary level of persons working in (E)CEC centres. Persons with degree-level qualifications earn considerably more if working in business or research.

Although the most recent collective bargaining round did result in pay rises, it is not easy to meet the costs of living in one of the larger cities, for example as a single mother, on these basic salaries.

Staff working in the childcare and education field are paid at a significantly lower rate than Primary School Teachers who - in the western *Länder* - are mostly civil servants (Infoportal Öffentlicher Dienst 2017b).

8.2 Full-time and part-time employment

In 2017, according to the Federal Statistical Office there were 692,643 persons working in (E)CEC centres (*Kindertageseinrichtungen*), including outside-school-hours services. Full-time employees work 38.5 hours/week or more, part-time employees less than 38.5 hours. There are hardly any differences between the public sector and private sector providers. The decision about whether to work full time or part time is made between the provider/employer and employee.

In 2017, a total of 40% of pedagogical staff in (E)CEC centres worked on a full-time basis (Destatis 2017a). Very considerable regional differences were observed in 2016: in the western *Länder* 43.3% worked full time and in the eastern *Länder* (including Berlin) 29.9%, which again ranged from 19% in Berlin to 54.1% in North Rhine-Westphalia (Bock-Famulla et al. 2017).

If all staff are included (not only pedagogical staff but also administrative, housekeeping and technical personnel), then 32.9% of staff in the western *Länder* and 24.0% in the eastern *Länder* were employed on a full-time basis in 2017 (Destatis 2017a).

Table 13

Germany: Pedagogical staff – full-time and part-time employment in (E)CEC centres, 2017*

Number of working hours	Number of employees (excluding administrative personnel)	Proportion in %
38.5 and more	238,552	40.0
32 to under 38.5	113,068	19.0
21 to under 31	150,574	25.2
10 to under 21	73,657	12.3
under 10	20,566	3.4
Total	596,417	100.0

*Destatis 2017a; own calculations

8.3 Staff support measures in the workplace

In principle, Pedagogical Counsellors (*Fachberatungskräfte*) employed by the individual service providers are available to support staff in the workplace in the broadest sense. On the one hand, Pedagogical Counsellors are part and parcel of the ECEC system in Germany, on the other hand, there are no legal protection measures for these posts, no cross-provider agreements on the task profile and no binding qualification requirements for this coordinating role. However, in professional circles the support role of Pedagogical Counsellors in the mentoring of staff practices, in advising Centre Heads and service providers, in quality development and steering of the field is undisputed (see e.g. Deutscher Verein 2012; Preissing et al 2017). According to the findings of a survey commissioned by the Federal Ministry of Family Affairs, Senior Citizens, Women and Youth, with responses from 367 Pedagogical Counsellors in the field of childcare and education services, the five most frequent work assignments are: quality assurance and development (84%); pedagogical consulting (82%); organisation of professional development activities (57%); advising centre providers (57%); knowledge transfer between research and practice (51%) (BMFSFJ 2017). From their own point of view, Pedagogical Counsellors are themselves currently in need of support, such as: having better chances for collegial exchange, having less childcare and education centres to supervise, having more time for and finding more appropriate task-related CPD courses for their own professional development (BMFSFJ 2017).

8.4 Non-contact time

Non-contact time varies considerably across the *Länder* and may also be regulated by the individual service providers. In Saxony Anhalt and Bavaria, for example, there is no related legislation, in Berlin and Brandenburg non-contact time is calculated as a proportion of hours per child, in Lower Saxony 7.5 non-contact hours are awarded per group per week which the staff have to allocate amongst themselves (Ministerium für Bildung, Jugend und Sport Brandenburg 2013).

8.5 Staff shortages and staff recruitment

For many years now there have been substantial staff shortages in the German (E)CEC system. The reasons for this are manifold: a major one is the expansion of provision following the introduction of entitlement to a place in a centre-based or home-based setting for 1-year olds in 2013 which has led to an increased demand for staff. Another reason is that a large number of staff – particularly in the eastern *Länder* – are due to retire, for whom there is no adequate replacement available. Dissatisfaction with the working conditions, particularly with the level of pay in the case of the more recent graduates with a Bachelor's degree, means that many only remain in the field for a short time and then go on to seek a job in teaching at the higher education level or research.

In a context of – among other things – an increasing birth rate, immigration, departing employees and the need for improved staffing ratios, a study conducted by the Research Consortium German Youth Institute/Technical University Dortmund (Rauschenbach et al. 2017, 27) came to the conclusion that – depending on a forecasted future scenario – in the years up to 2025, up to

313,000 additional core practitioners will be needed in infant-toddler centres, kindergartens and in outside-school hours settings, 15,000 for posts in family day care and 5,000 posts for full-day schools.

Apart from this, not all staff decide to remain in the field for a longer period of time; however, there is no exact information available on this. It is assumed that roughly 1% of staff working in early childhood settings leave the field for good (FKB 2017, 179).

Staff shortages are particularly marked in the metropolitan areas, whereas in rural areas groups may even have to be closed because of a lack of enrolments.

Responding to the staff shortages was one of the concerns of the grand coalition government. The Federal Ministry of Family and Youth Affairs therefore set up a working group between 2012 and 2014 comprising key stakeholders in the field to engage in developing alternatives to the traditionally recognised qualifications and professionalisation pathways (BMFSFJ 2014) and to develop recommendations for the individual providers, provider organisations *and Länder* (see Section 6). A number of *Länder* are currently instigating innovative ways of recruiting staff for the (E)CEC field. In Bavaria, for example, Primary School Teachers may work as support staff in kindergartens, infant-toddler centres and outside-school-hours provision without an additional qualification. However, in order to gain the status of specialist staff they have to successfully complete an examination for external applicants. As set out in the childcare legislation in Baden-Württemberg (Baden-Württemberg 2017, §7.2), Primary School and Special Needs Teachers can be employed as core practitioners if they have either completed a one-year supervised practicum or a part-time 25-day CPD course. Furthermore, ‘other suitable persons’ may be allowed to join the workforce on an individual basis.

9. Workforce challenges – country expert assessment

Subjective assessment by Sigrid Ebert⁶

New strategic concepts are required both in terms of education policies and employment policies in order to instigate the necessary thrust to the long overdue process of modernisation in the ECEC field.

The problem of **staff recruitment** is the top item on the agenda of workforce challenges in Germany. The vocational technical colleges/academies for social pedagogy which traditionally provide initial professional studies for Educators have not only been able to maintain their position as a vocational education/training institution but also to expand it. And with a view to the estimated demand for specialist staff (FKB 2017) in (E)CEC centres, the need in future for high level quality in the qualifying routes for the profession – both in terms of breadth and depth – will continue. However, the enormous surge in technical college places is already impeding the policy-related and conceptual implementation of the ‘Competence-oriented Qualification Profile’ for prospective Educators at *Fachschulen/Fachakademien* (resolution adopted at the Conference of Education Ministers in 2011), not least because only a small number of the teaching staff at *Fachschulen/Fachakademien* possess a teaching qualification for the social pedagogy professions.

In order to cope with the staff shortages on a short-term basis at the *Länder* level, so-called Practice-Integrated Qualification Routes are being offered at the *Fachschulen/Fachakademien*, in cooperation with the providers of (E)CEC centres. This is in effect a dual vocational training/education approach which in formal terms cannot be considered equivalent to the qualification route for prospective Educators which is now placed at Level 6 of the German Qualifications

⁶ Formerly: *Fachschulstudiendirektorin*, Pestalozzi-Fröbel-Haus, Berlin

Framework (DQF). In some *Länder* a shortening of the length of initial professional studies can be observed, and also a drop in standards. Depending on *Länder*-specific legislation, the regulations for admitting so-called ‘career changers’ to the profession and for recognising previous qualifications and/or experience varies considerably. In the case of applicants from abroad, permeability and recognition of relevant professional experience tends to be lacking in transparency and impeded by bureaucratic procedures.

One consequence of the expansion of childcare and education services is that the average number of pedagogical staff in (E)CEC centres has risen to 10.4%. However, depending on the federal state and the provider, there are considerable regional variations in the size of teams and the **qualifications mix** within the teams. Despite the rising demands and expectations in the field, 43% of staff teams overall are mono-professionally organised. The overall (too) low proportion of employees with a higher education qualification (5.3%) is not least a result of the varying *Länder*-specific regulations regarding the staffing of (E)CEC centres (FKB 2017).

It is undisputed in the field that the growing range of tasks in (E)CEC centres demands a more **differentiated qualification profile**. One of the cornerstones of a Quality Development Act, which was agreed in May 2017 by the federal government and the Youth and Family Ministers of the *Länder*, is a federal-level regulation regarding the qualification profile of staff in (E)CEC centres.

Within the framework of such a Quality Development Act it would be desirable to align the certification quality seal ‘State-Recognised’, which regulates entry into the profession for both award-holders of a technical college qualification and degree-holders of study programmes in childhood pedagogy, to a nationally agreed examination format. However, whether these urgently required regulations at the national level will be part of legislative procedures in the new parliamentary term will depend on how viable the agreement between the federal and *Länder* levels is in reality.

The immense personnel requirements in the field of early education underline the growing societal significance that this branch of the person-related services has reached in Germany, not only from an educational perspective but also from a social and child policy point of view (BJK 2008). And although an agreed ‘Common Framework for Childhood Education and Care’ at the ministerial level includes cornerstones for the further development of initial and continuing professional development at *Fachschulen* and higher education institutions, there is still today **no unified, occupation-specific job profile or studies profile** that is open for interconnections between vocational and academic education and which sufficiently acknowledges the ‘utmost importance of workplace-based learning as an integral component of initial professional studies at technical colleges, technical academies and higher education institutions’ (JFMK/KMK 2010). This is because in Germany – at least in the ‘household-related’ service professions – the vocational education system and the higher education system are situated alongside one another in a more or less unconnected way, follow different goals and are based on different frameworks of regulations and responsibilities. The recognition of the early childhood education job profile as an ‘education profession’ (FKB 2017, 19) does not implicate a trend-setting decision for the one or the other ‘learning site’. What is needed is the organisation of (E)CEC centres as ‘educational institutions with an independent profile’ (Ebert 2015; JMK/KMK 2004).

‘Education, upbringing and care’ seen as a holistic mandate of (E)CEC centres comprises a complex, person-related service in the ‘interactive work’ category (Baethge and Baethge-Kinsky 2017). From a sociology of work perspective, meeting the requirements of such work demands comprehensive key competencies which can only then lead to the necessary professional knowledge if they are acquired through a longer-term learning and development process at the performance level of the stakeholders in the context of specific work situations in which other persons, and different time and organisational structures of the workfield are involved (Baethge and Baethge-Kinsky 2017).



Bearing in mind the knowledge-intensive service mandate of the (E)CEC centres and their responsibility for ensuring quality in early childhood education, an upgrading of the workplace-based components of initial professional studies – whether they take place at a *Fachschule/Fachakademie* or at a higher education institution – can in my view only succeed if ‘the workplace as learning site’ (*Lernort Praxis*) is further developed into an ‘education site with an independent profile’ considered to be of equal value to the ‘college as learning site’ (*Lernort Schule*).

In the longer term, this represents a challenge for both systems in terms of rethinking anew the professional careers of early childhood pedagogy specialists.

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