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Education for Everyone. Worldwide.
Lifelong.

The background of the slide features a large, light grey circle. Overlapping this are several other circles: a small yellow one at the top left, a large yellow one on the right, a medium blue one overlapping the large yellow one, and a small orange one at the bottom center.

Adult Learning for Active Citizenship in Germany

Kyiv, 18 December 2019

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DVV International

*„For our society and its citizens **political education** is a matter of self-preservation. A free democracy will collapse without political education ...“*



*Dr. Johannes Rau
Former Federal President of Germany*

Beginning of the modern system of Adult Citizenship Education

The development of democratic attitudes within Germany was understood to be an indispensable ingredient in building a stable democracy in the Federal Republic after **1945** and in reunited Germany again in **1989**.

- „**Reeducation**“ (under the ‚Allied Control Council‘ 1945-1949)
- Establishment of the **Federal Agency for Civic Education** in 1952
- Re-establishment of ‚**Volkshochschulen**‘ (AECs) and establishment of various other providers

„Democracy needs democrats“

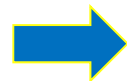
- underlying credo for the

concept of citizenship education in Germany

Understanding of tasks/aims of citizenship education initially partly varied:

- from the believe that the goal of citizenship education is to help citizens **make rational judgements**
- to the believe that the task of citizenship education is **to teach citizens how to emancipate themselves** from those who might seek to seize power.

*Despite competing ideas of citizenship education,
widespread agreement was achieved in three basic principles known as*



„Beutelsbach Consensus“

Citizenship Education in Germany is today

non-partisan but not impartial.

It is grounded in the values and interpretation of democracy
in the **Constitution.**

„Beutelsbach Consensus“

In **1976**, a conference of educationalists from different didactic schools addressed the need **to avoid indoctrination**.

Conference participants agreed on a set of **basic common principles**:

- **The first principle** prohibits educators from overwhelming students with political opinions, attitudes or values;
- **Second**, educators are expected to reflect on the variety of perspectives and plurality of interests, and the problems they present. If a topic is controversial in science, politics or society in general, then citizenship education must also teach it as controversial;
- **The third** postulates that students are to be taught to analyse their own political interests, and to influence society in a realistic way so as to pursue those interests.

Overview of the **main actors** in the field of Adult Citizenship Education in Germany

- **Federal Agency of Civic Education**
- **Agencies for Civic Education of the 16 German ‚States‘** (*‚Länder‘*)
- **Volkshochschulen** (Community based Adult Education Centers)
- **Political foundations and their educational establishments** (afiliated with the political parties represented in the Federal Parliament)
- Educational institutions afiliated with **Catholic and Protestant Churches**
- Educational institutions afiliated with **Trade Unions**
- **NGOs**
- **Memorial sites**
- Various foundations, academies, independent institutions . . .

The Federal Agency for Civic/Political Education (BpB)

- Federal Public Authority (*subordinated to the Federal Ministry of Interior*) provides **citizenship education** and information on political issues **for all people** in Germany;
- Issues **publications**, organises **seminars**, **events**, **study trips**, **exhibitions** and **competitions**, provides **trainings for journalists** and offers **films** and **on-line products**;
- **Supports** events organised by more than **400 approved educational establishments**, foundations and NGOs;
- Provides **support and services for teachers/educators** and anyone involved in education and youth work;



State Agencies/Centers for Civic/Political Education

- There are State Agencies/Centers for political education **in each of the 16 German States**;
- 11 Agencies were established in the States of West-Germany since **1954**; in the 5 ‚new‘-States (East Germany) Agencies were established after the reunification of the country (**1990**).
- Agencies are **subordinated to governments or parliaments** of the States;
- **Tasks** are **similar** to those of the Federal Agency for Civic Education;
- Additionally, State Agencies provide **strong support to** educational establishments dealing with ‚**Memorial Sites**‘.

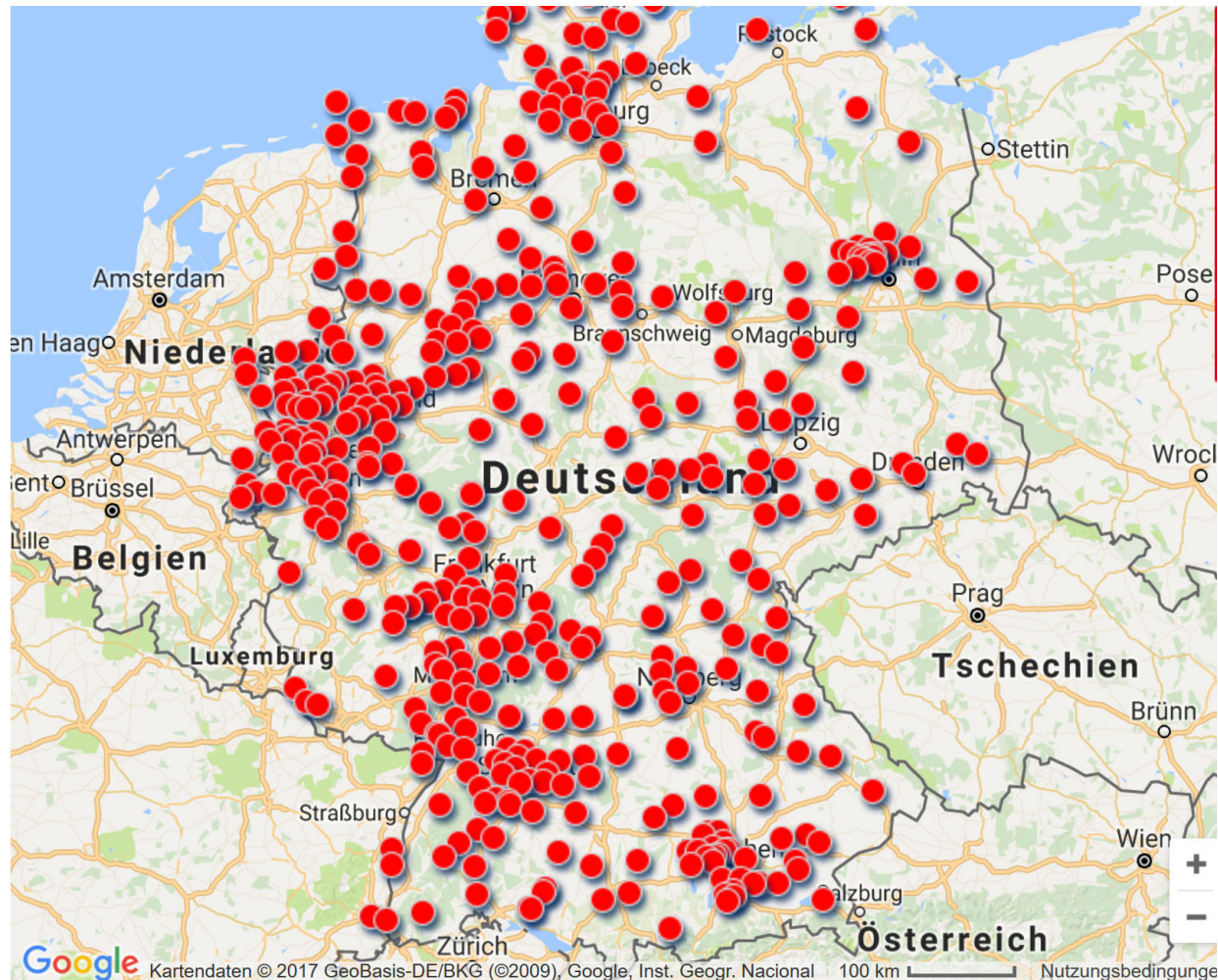
Manifest of Munich (26.05.1997)

Regarding the Tasks of the Federal and State Agencies for Political Education

1. Political/civic education supported by public funds should be **pluralistic, non-partisan, and independent**;
2. The Agencies for political/civic education **have to promote political participation** of citizens;
3. The Agencies **have to prepare citizens for global tasks of the future**;
4. The Agencies **have to work for the stability of democracy** also in economically difficult times;
5. In the **‘New’-States** political/civic education has **special tasks**;
6. **Critical reflection of the German history** is a most important task of political/civic education;
7. The political/civic education comes with **a broad range of methods and types of activities**.

VHS network country-wide

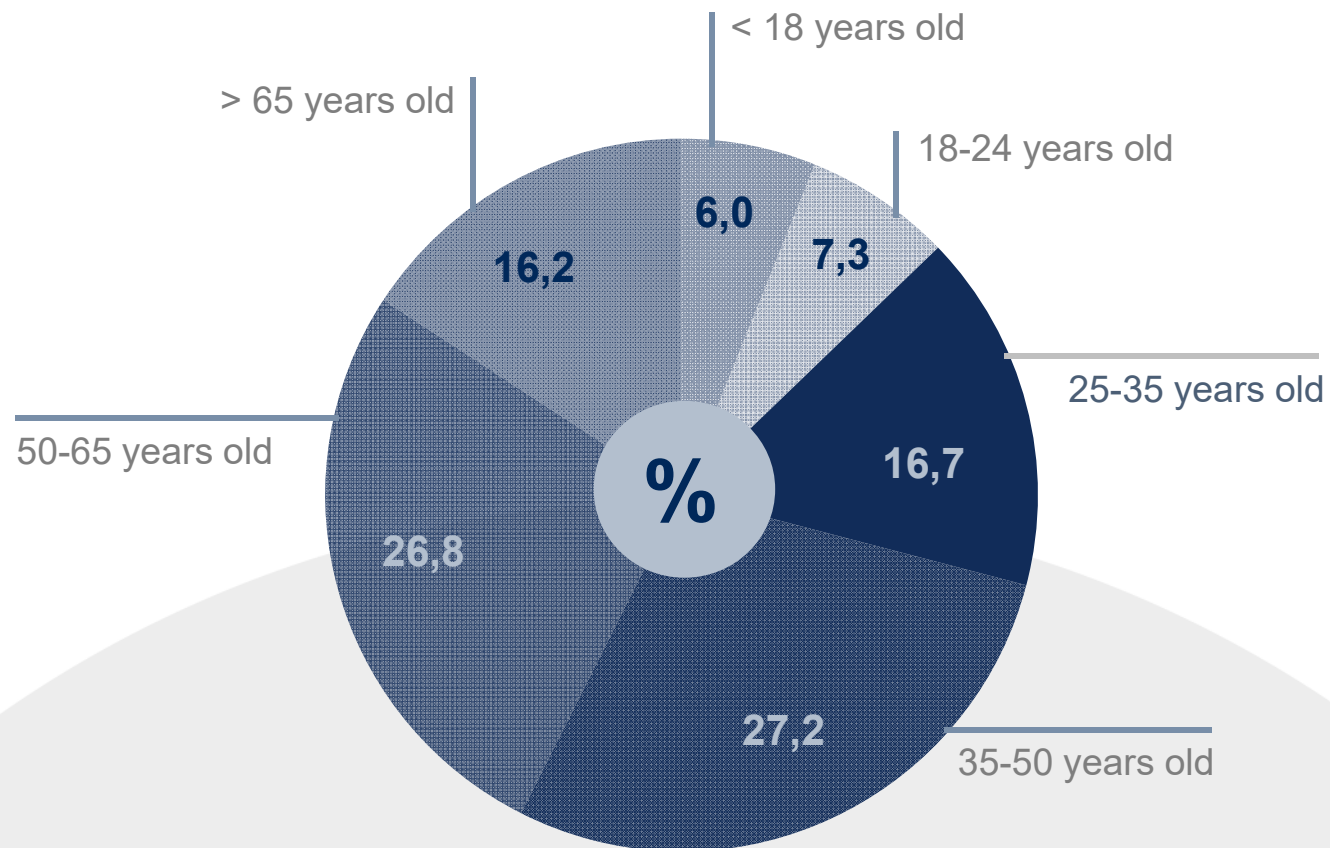
Adult Education as public responsibility



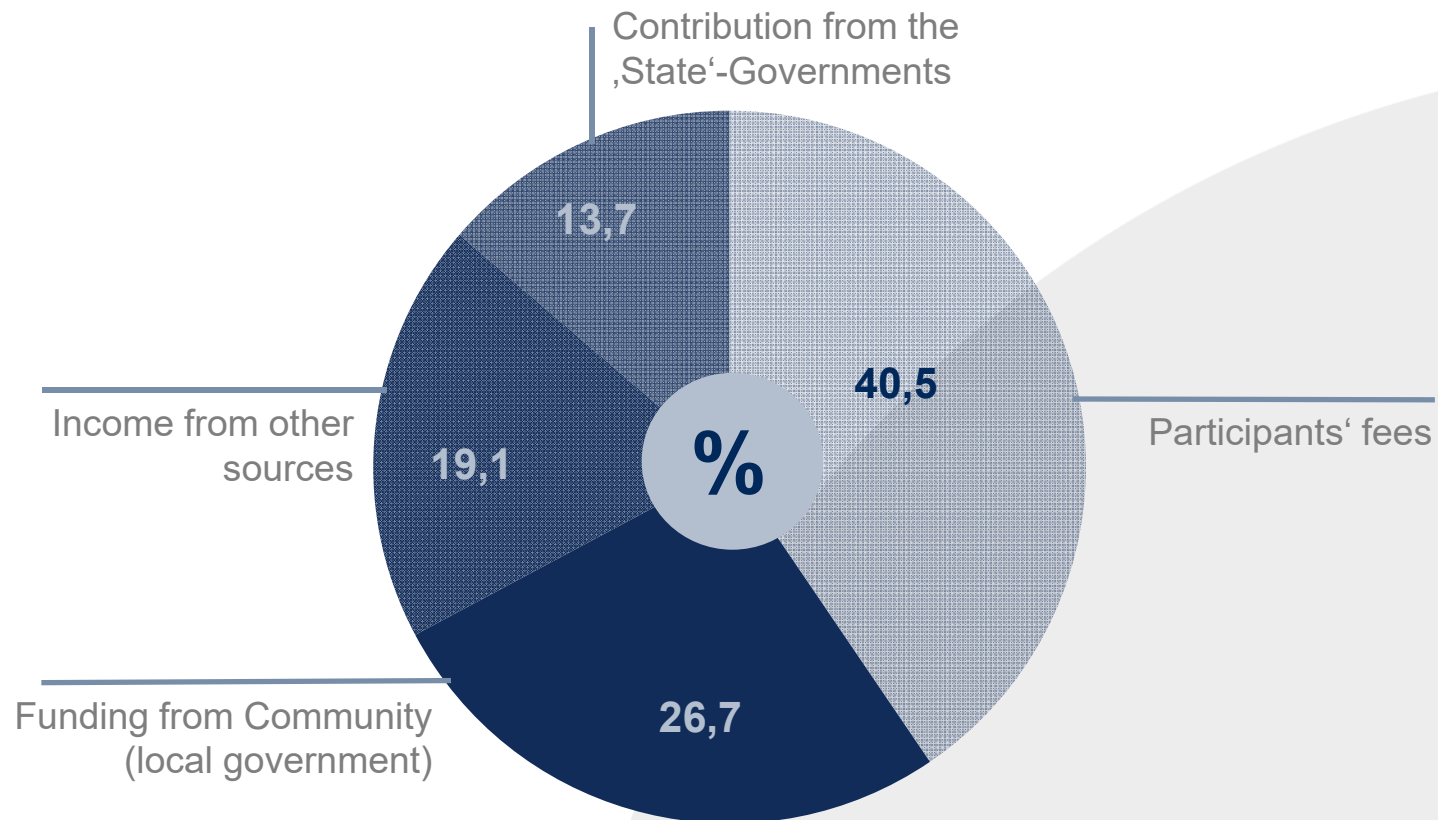
German network of **Adult Education Centres** (***‘Volkshochschulen’***) at a glance

- More than **900 Adult Education Centres (VHS)** and **over 3,000 regional outposts**
- **Largest Adult Education providers** in Germany (17 Million hours of teaching per year)
- About **700.000 Adult Education offers** per year
- Around **9 million participants** per year
- Over **8.000 employees**
- **192.000 freelance trainers** teaching the courses

Distribution of participants by age



Funding data





Vielen Dank!

Thank you!

www.dvv-vhs.de
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