

**GEWERKSCHAFT ERZIEHUNG UND WISSENSCHAFT
TRADE UNION FOR THE EDUCATION SECTOR**

**Response to the OECD Study Attracting, Developing and Retaining
Effective Teachers**

September 2003

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GEWERKSCHAFT ERZIEHUNG UND WISSENSCHAFT

TRADE UNION FOR THE EDUCATION SECTOR

Response to the OECD Study Attracting, Developing and Retaining Effective Teachers

The GEW welcomes the decision, reached after some hesitation by the Standing Conference of Ministers of Education and Cultural Affairs of the Laender in the Federal Republik of Germany (KMK), to participate in the OECD study "Attracting, Developing and Retaining Effective Teachers". The GEW supports the declaration by the OECD Ministers of Education of April 2001, to make teaching and learning one of their priorities. Germany, like many other OECD countries, is confronted with an ageing teaching force, suffers from a loss of status of teaching and has serious problems of recruitment. In common with the OECD Ministers of Education, the GEW has for years requested new strategies for recruiting and retaining highly qualified teachers and head teachers. A sustainable contribution to the improvement in quality of learning institutions can only be achieved once this task has been successfully achieved. The PISA-study has served as a much-needed wake-up call.

The GEW regards the initiative taken by the OECD as an important external impulse to inject new life into the debate on teacher training, which had been initiated with the Terhart report. In spite of some positive attempts to change teacher-training regulations, re-consider curricula and testing closer co-operation between classroom teaching, colleges and universities, there is a lack of systematic and coordinated action on the part of the KMK. The promised dialogue between KMK on the one side and GEW and other teachers' associations on the other side has not proceeded past informal first meetings requiring little commitment. It is the GEW's view that new forms of participation are required in order to reach agreement for the development and implementation of – as well as accountability for – structural changes, yet these do not seem to be on offer. Too much time for overdue changes has been lost already.

National Background Surveys

According to the OECD proposal, the national body responsible for the National Background Survey is supposed to commission a research institute or a university to draw up the report. The proposal envisages a national coordinator whose job is to make sure that the report is submitted in time and a national consultative committee, made up of the most important groups affected by the measures which will contribute their different perspectives. The report will be produced in consultation with workshops and focus groups, in which the trade union as well as other professional teachers' organisations participate (cf. sections 95-99).

Unfortunately, the KMK has decided otherwise. The KMK secretariat itself has drawn up the document and as a governmental report it is therefore in many respects a justification, rather than an impartial critique of the status quo. For

example, measures to develop and secure standards of quality (KMK-Report clause 2.1.4.) had been introduced prior to the international comparative studies “in all the regional states.” Although the GEW had offered its active participation, no national advisory board was established. Had the KMK taken up this offer, the lack of reference to, inter alia, the experiences in curriculum studies and teacher training in the German Democratic Republic could, to a large extent, undoubtedly have been avoided.

To make hardly any reference to the East German development between 1945 and 1989 in a **national** report on the situation and the historical aspects of the German education system is highly irresponsible. It is necessary and urgent to make up for this in order to evaluate relevant differences in a more distinct manner. The GEW is perplexed that the national body initiated neither workshops nor discussions on the subject. It is impossible to create a movement capable of carrying out the necessary changes in this way. This constant top-down communication about what mistakes have been made and what improvements should be implemented does not motivate or encourage engagement and commitment of the teaching profession.

It is for this reason that the GEW has taken an independent initiative to inform itself about the OECD project. Paolo Santiago introduced the OECD policy in a colloquium organised by the European Trade Union Committee for Education (ETUCE) in Potsdam in June 2002. In a GEW forum on teacher training held in November 2002 he explained the series of OECD questions; a GEW study group visited the OECD in Paris in May 2003 in order to obtain further information about the international comparative survey on teacher training. It may have been more sensible, had there been an opportunity, to have shared this learning experience with other bodies.

The National Context (OECD Guidelines, section 1)

Any practical measures the German national and regional governments take are determined by a growing **gap between political semantics and actual budget policy**. The higher the political expectations (“education is the key to the knowledge society”, “education and research guarantee Germany’s economic status” or “education is not a commodity but a public asset”) the smaller the part of public spending on education compared to total public expenditure. According to the KMK’s report, spending has been reduced from 3.2 per cent in 1975 to 2.2 per cent in 1999.

The full-bodied resolutions at the European level with regard to setting priorities in the fields of education and research need to be contrasted with decisions, reached as afterthoughts, at the national level. The public services are bearing the brunt of the increasing impoverishment of the country, brought about by asymmetrical tax cuts benefiting the few. As a result, the welfare state loses its power to promote economic modernisation and social cohesion; in particular, this applies to the period after 1990. An added factor has been the economic and social transformation taking place within the East German regional states which could not have been achieved without state intervention.

Budget problems have certainly contributed to the new perspective on financial adjustments between the national level and the regional states ("Laender"). The aim has been to disentangle national and regional tasks and responsibilities from their financing. Regional states with stronger economies and concomitantly better financial positions are more reluctant now to share their wealth with the poorer – mostly East German – regional states and with the national government to the same extent as in the past. They advocate federal competition, which would favour their interests, as they are less affected by unemployment and therefore have lower levels of social spending; within a looser, more relaxed, pay structure for public servants they can afford to augment salaries or pay bonuses and thus become more desirable as employers. It is inexplicable that the poorer regional states do not put up more of a fight against this erosion of living standards and conditions of work, especially as they have constitutional support guaranteeing regional equality. Added to this must be that structural disadvantages, which could be offset by measures adopted at the national level, have had even more of an impact due to tax cuts and the lack of adequate recompense. The effect of this policy for the education sector is the continuation of differential remuneration between East and West German teachers.

The tasks of the "Bund Laender Commission for Educational Planning and Research Promotion (BLK), which so far has handled the coordination of national and regional activities – undoubtedly with varying success – is in the process of losing some of its power. The majority of the regional states oppose an all-embracing (universal) educational policy on the grounds that it will stand in the way of federal competition; consequently they are in favour of its abolition. Further decentralisation, though, would create new impediments for mobility and create new social disparities. It also means that the **mobility of teachers and students**, which is meant to increase at the European and international level, is reduced internally.

Although the GEW regards a re-examination of the BLK's tasks as well as the division of labour between the national level and the regional states with reference to education as necessary, it is also in favour of the BLK arranging for an all-embracing comparable educational and financial statistic as well as for a socially just educational plan which is balanced in regional terms. The example of the "Forum Bildung" has shown the extent to which such a common policy can work.

The BLK should also become the place where central government and regional states can develop a common position and participate actively in shaping a European policy for education and research. When it comes to the debate on European educational initiatives, the German policy has been pointedly not to intervene rather risk standing out with substantial contributions. As far as this practice is concerned the **federal education system** is a disadvantage, governed as it is by the principle of unanimity in the proceedings of the Conference of Ministers of Education and Cultural Affairs of the Laender (KMK) by which the slowest determines the pace of the convoy. Some evidence will have to be provided for the statement contained

in the KMK report that “the Conference of Regional Ministers of Culture also regards itself as an instrument of co-operation on an equal basis.”

The different demographic developments in the East and West German regional states necessitate an educational policy transcending regional interests. For example; whereas today in the West German regional states there is a shortage of teachers, in the East German regional states, due to a declining birth rate, younger teachers cannot find jobs. In order to achieve a balanced age structure and a stable recruitment policy, an “all-German” policy, i.e. national employment market in the education sector, must be operated. Both, a balanced age structure and a stable recruitment policy are necessary to put a halt to the increasing age profile of the teaching force. However, as the experiences gained by the, albeit occasional, employment of teachers from the East in West German schools have shown, such a course of action requires considerable sensitivity.

Germany has been an immigration country for many years. Of the population of 82 million, about 7.5 million are from abroad. The challenge is to create conditions in which, on the one hand, immigrants can keep up, maintain and cultivate their cultural identity while on the other they are integrated into the world of work and society as a whole – this challenge has yet to be met. Lacking knowledge of German and of employment often result in social tensions which do not stop at the school gate. Teachers feel isolated in having to deal with these questions. The advancement of children from migrant and immigrant families is an unsolved problem though there are positive signs. Children of migrant families, especially those from underprivileged backgrounds, are particularly disadvantaged; and teachers feel that they are held responsible for these and all other unresolved societal problems. Many politicians have indulged in “teacher bashing” and thus contributed to the public defamation of the profession and the demotivation of teachers. The Ministers of Education waited a long time before they started to defend teachers from these attacks.

The Education System and Teachers (OECD Guidelines, section 2)

The KMK description of school structure suffers from the non-inclusion of problematic points. Some examples:

Foundation Stage, Early Childhood Education

- International comparative studies underline the importance of the foundation stage. Nurseries and other pre-school institutions must do more than childminding; they need their own curriculum – yet this is not elaborated in the KMK Report. In the area of early childhood education there is a clear demand: quantitatively, particularly as regards full-time provision and available places for under-threes, qualitatively, with reference to accountability of this sector to the education authorities. The GEW has made many proposals and also referred to the connection between pre-school education and the primary sector as well as to a smooth transfer from one to the other. Too many children in Germany are exempted from starting schooling due to a so-called

“lack of maturity”; a practice which leads to a steady increase in the average age of starting primary school. There must be smoother transfers and early individual support for children in order to overcome disadvantage and ensure social inclusion.

Secondary Education – Early Selection

- The GEW is of the opinion that it makes neither educational nor social sense to make a decision on a child’s education following completion of year 4 at the tender age of 10. The segmentation of lower secondary education as well as the hierarchy of the system with its different schools and qualifications, which is closely connected to this, strengthen and entrench discrimination instead of overcoming it through purposeful individual support in heterogeneous groups. Permeability in the German educational system is largely from top to bottom. Only a minority of pupils manage to “climb up”. There are marked differences in the various regional state school sectors, particularly in lower secondary schools. The national PISA comparative study brought to light considerable differences in performance. This too, points to the necessity for an increase in and strengthening of coordination among the regional states instead of an extension of federal competition.

At present, selection criteria dominate while opportunities for support are neglected, as clearly demonstrated by the PISA study. The GEW regrets that in the debate on the conclusions reached in the PISA study the question of the structure of schools has again and again been evaded due to political considerations. Some regional states refuse to learn from the experiences of those neighbours who combine diversity and social inclusion in a unified lower secondary stage. These regional states have even “immunised” themselves in order to not catch the dynamic which e.g. the examination of the Scandinavian model, albeit temporarily, created. In order to undermine the encrusted school structures, the GEW is hoping for new impulses from a European benchmark.

The GEW’s position is based on a strategy for individual and early support instead of permanent selection, as well as differentiation and clarity. This requires a change in teacher training, which needs to include teaching in the context of heterogeneity to a much greater degree.

Inclusion of Disabled Pupils

- The KMK Report does not address the following problems satisfactorily: the **inclusion of pupils with disabilities** and problems which have arisen when pilot projects have been adopted and transferred to the mainstream, additional challenges for teachers in educational establishments in areas of high incidence of social problems and migrant populations, additional problems of motivation to learn connected with long-term youth unemployment in the area, lack of vocational training opportunities in some regions, particularly where training is provided by both enterprise and college on a day-release basis, and in the Eastern regional states.

Whole-day Schooling

- The GEW strongly recommends the introduction of more whole-day schooling, hardly touched upon in the report. Any initial financing by the federal government will only lead to success if the regional states have a clear educational strategy for the changeover from part-time/half-day schooling to whole-day schooling. This change requires adequate staffing – of both teaching and non-teaching personnel – and sufficient space and equipment. Systematic preparation of teachers for whole-day teaching, which requires new skills and poses new challenges, is restricted to very few regional states.
- The GEW has brought together the varying challenges facing education in its paper on educational policy (Schulpolitische Positionen), in order to help overcome the feelings of powerlessness caused by changes and to provide assistance in reorientation with reference to new educational practices.
- In terms of **administration**, the GEW supports the changeover from central/national management of schools to increasing responsibility at local level as long as this is not used as an excuse for the state to extricate itself of its responsibility for proper financing and the maintenance and regulation of standards. This happens to be a real danger as both local authorities as well regional states – the latter having responsibility for staff – suffer from shortages of public funds.

There has, in the past few years, been a loss **of participatory rights of teachers**; in some cases this has even contravened the constitutions of some regional states. Yet de-centralisation calls for a substantial improvement of democratic participation rights for teaching staff at local level. Likewise, there must be no reduction in public responsibility for schools, for example through a transfer of influence to private industry. First signs of this practice can be observed in the regional states of Hamburg and Lower Saxony.

Teachers' professional identity is defined by **quality**. Therefore the GEW participates actively in debates on quality safeguards and evaluation. The GEW is aware of ambivalences and possibilities of misuse of such markers and attempts to gear education towards the interests of private companies. It is for this reason that the GEW demands that decisions on curricula and school development, working hours regulations and decisions on staffing are reached on the basis of agreed aims and objects. This is to make sure that moves to modernise the system include accountability in terms of social justice. The GEW rejects the tendency to appraise quality externally through standardised tests only. Internal and external quality safeguards are intertwined and numerous academic studies clearly confer the greater significance to internal evaluation.

Agreed aims and objects are also vital to protect teachers from continual requests for additional responsibilities without regard to linked improvements in remuneration. This trend can be observed, for example, in the deterioration

of the **teacher-pupil ratio**. In the West German regional states the pupil population has increased much faster during the 1990's than the number of teachers. In the East German regional states the demographic decline has not been utilised as much as it could have been to improve educational opportunities. On the contrary, because of the breakneck speed of adaptation to the standards valid in the West in terms of class sizes and statutory number of lessons, a surplus of positions was created which, in addition, brought with it a deterioration of working conditions.

The GEW published a detailed study on this subject in 2003. The comments on this important issue in the KMK Report are rather weak. The complexities of grading of teachers in different educational establishments – a result of historical factors – have resulted in considerable differences in status, and these need to be examined carefully. Today there still exist differences in status between teachers in upper secondary schools (Gymnasium) and those in the elementary (primary and early secondary) sector (Hauptschule), resulting in a lower status of primary (elementary) teachers – a situation thus exists which has lost any validity. Early childhood/foundation stage teachers, who, in other countries are part of the teaching force, and primary school teachers (both groups mainly women) are on the lowest points of the salary scale.

A further problem lies behind the distinction between employee and civil servant, mainly in the East German regional states, which extends to individual schools. The majority of teachers in East German regional states are in part-time employment. Although the GEW has been able to avert the threat by regional governments to reduce the number of teaching posts in all regional states by accepting contractual changes to terms and conditions and part-time contracts, it has to be said that these changes have led to considerable reductions in income for most teachers so affected. As the salaries of East Germans employed in the public sector are very low in the first place, these have a cumulative effect. It is urgent that the regional governments implement harmonisation to avoid a “brain drain” of particularly young, newly qualified, teachers from East to West.

There is no reference to **personnel other than teachers** (page 31) in the KMK Report. The OECD statistics on “teachers at the workplace – support staff”, state that German schools perceive themselves to be held back to a greater or lesser degree (the range stated is from being hampered to **some** extent to **a lot**) by lack of support staff for classroom teachers. Teachers also feel overstretched because excessive demands are made on them to perform the tasks of educational psychologists or educational social workers for which they are not trained.

It is for this reason that the GEW supports closer co-operation between teachers and educational social workers where they work with schools. However, there is a shortage of educational psychologists and educational social workers to fulfil needs in all regional states. There have been some new initiatives in this matter taken in Berlin, where a new qualification, a B.A., has been introduced for school assistants in the faculty catering primarily for

teacher training. Some misgivings are justified in case these turn out to be used as **teachers on the cheap**, to be introduced to cover up teacher shortages.

Back in the late 1970's, the GEW had already developed its touchstones for **teacher requirements**, an at-a-glance, definite, and comprehensive number of indicators (e.g. optimal class sizes, manageable workload and working hours for teachers, volume of timetable, additional and special needs provision for classes with a high number of pupils for whom German is a second language), based on GEW calculations for teacher requirements at national and regional levels. These were meant to form a transparent basis for our arguments for teacher employment in negotiations with Ministers of Finance, at the same time as informing the public. A common basis was beginning to emerge but was opposed by the education administrations citing their short-term political concerns as excuses.

Gewerkschaft Erziehung und Wissenschaft – The Trade Union for the Education Sector

The GEW has about 275,000 members, the majority of whom work in schools. As the **trade union for the education sector** the GEW organises nursery nurses who work with children aged 0-6, educational social workers, teachers in schools and vocational training institutions, academics and researchers in the tertiary sector and research institutes as well as those working in further education. Among the GEW's activities are representation of interests (safeguarding jobs, terms and conditions at work, working hours, and remuneration, etc.) and professional representation (initial training, further and specialist training, career prospects). In addition the GEW is interested in participating in work on the aims and objects of teaching (curriculum development, educational planning, etc.), and, in co-operation with other trade unions affiliated to the DGB, the umbrella organisation of German trade unions, works towards the achievement of a socially just and democratically run economy and society. The GEW is a member of the European Trade Union Committee for Education (ETUCE) and Education International (EI) and furthers the aims of UNESCO's policy "Education for All" at the European and global level; thus the GEW is opposed to the neo-liberal view that education is a commodity which should be subject to market forces.

Nationally and internationally the GEW works towards building and extending a **social dialogue**, bringing together all those involved in education to the negotiating table. The GEW is of the opinion that necessary structural changes in the economy and in society can only be implemented through negotiations and not through unilaterally issued decrees. The GEW's position can be summarised as **Innovation through Participation**. However, we do think it is somewhat euphoric to state that the GEW and other teachers' associations are "in constant contact" with Ministers of Education. Even the "Bremer Erklärung" is, in the GEW's opinion, not yet the means by which a common policy can be formulated or even arrived at. For this there needs to be commitment to structures which encourage equal participation from all those involved in the discourse.

The GEW is critical of education administrations both at national and regional level because of their restrictive interpretation of existing rights to participate and co-determine policy; they react either with fear or outright rejection to requests for new forms of participation. But trade unions will not consent to be part of a restrictive **autonomy or self-government by default**. Trade unions are ready to take responsibility for difficult changes too, as long as measures are developed and worked out with their participation. Collective bargaining and agreements on working conditions between the GEW and the East German regional states are a first step away from the culture of issuing decrees towards a culture of negotiation. As in Germany civil servants are denied the right to industrial action, negotiations between equals are somewhat of a pipedream in most regional states. The GEW has been on record for some time with its demand to abolish this state of affairs, which also conflicts with international law.

Recruitment of persons suitable to be teachers (OECD Guidelines, section 3)

Unfortunately, the Ministers of Education have neither a transparent, nor a sustainable policy in relation to the **recruitment** of highly qualified teaching personnel. There is a lack of reliable information about teacher requirements and recruitment policy. There is some publicity but it is rather vague, it consists often just of short-term declarations, not very useful to students deciding on a subject. The recruitment of staff from unconventional backgrounds, i.e. those with no teacher training or only partly qualified to teach, seems without system and exclusively determined by requirement. The Education Ministries determine, on their own, what basic qualifications are essential and the measure of further training which may be necessary. The GEW considers teachers with unconventional qualifications as positive assets for work in education, though insisting on clearly defined measures to ensure professional and didactic training, including any necessary time off from work.

In order to find persons suitable for the teaching profession, the GEW proposes to include teaching practice periods right from the start of study courses and for these to be expanded through dialogue between school and training provider (university, training college). At present, the Scientific Council's (Wissenschaftsrat) proposal for the introduction of Bachelor and Master courses for teachers is in diametric opposition to GEW policy. Since the Bachelor course is solely concerned with the academic subject and educational subjects, both theoretical and practical, are only introduced at the Master stage, students at the beginning of a course will not be able to explore their own interests and to reach clarity about their suitability to follow a career in teaching. It is for this reason, too, that the GEW is opposed to a Bachelor for teachers only based on special academic subjects, though it may possibly make sense for training courses for specialists in other areas for reasons of employment market policy. Furthermore, the Bachelor/Master teacher training model is rejected by the GEW as it will further increase hierarchical structures. The GEW also opposes proposals to restrict the qualification of some teachers, namely primary teachers or teachers in vocational schools catering

for day-release students (Berufsschulen), to a Bachelor degree. Teachers only trained to this level will not be able to do justice to the increased expectations and challenges facing the profession and as a result would contribute to the growing decline of qualified applicants.

Employment Prospects

- Job opportunities are an important factor for students when they make the decision to enrol for a teacher-training course. The KMK has been unable to stabilise the recruitment policy of the regional states during previous decades. Shortage and excess, boom and bust, have determined the employment market to such an extent that the comparison with the pig or hog cycle of the cobweb theorem is befitting. This situation could be much improved if the Ministers of Finance, who determine the framework for recruitment, consulted the KMK's predictions for teaching staff requirements, which could then be published as guidelines. Universities and colleges would obviously benefit from such data, as it would enable them to plan sensibly. An anticyclical recruitment policy could prevent the effects of drastic demographic changes taking place in the coming decade as well as in periods of teacher shortage; it is only a question of time before the present situation in the Western regional states will be repeated in the Eastern part of Germany. It is therefore necessary to restrict the extent of decentralised planning so that future staffing requirements in schools and training institutions in the regional states can be harmonised and balanced on a regional and, possibly, national level. The lack of planning for future requirements of teaching staff in favour of a largely deregulated employment market will have a further negative effect on the quality of teacher training. Instead of reliable and sustainable decisions on courses, short-term measures will prevail to eliminate bottlenecks.
- Further thought should be given to the function of **role models** to assist in the recruitment of suitable candidates for the teaching profession. The KMK Joint Commission for the Training of Teachers (Gemischte Kommission LehrerInnenausbildung) has drafted a role model for teachers, which would serve as a good introduction for a wider discourse. But, like for happiness, it is impossible to prescribe a role model for teachers to aspire to from on high. Teachers' associations need to play a part too.
- Students often report that their decision to train to be a teacher was their second choice. This indicates a need for career guidance. Yet schools, which want to do justice to their growing functions in society require highly motivated and highly qualified new teachers; the tertiary sector has a special responsibility here. There has to be a system of early recognition in case there is any loss of motivation and signs of students considering dropping out.

- Material terms and conditions need to be improved. It took the regional state governments a long time to recognise the mistake they made to **cut the starting salaries** of teachers. It seems obvious that the intention was to use the economic crisis to cut wages, yet, equally clearly, they had underestimated the effect that measure had, namely to deter candidates. The GEW opposed these measures right from the offset.
- During discussions with the KMK, the GEW has expressed its willingness to work jointly to improve the **image of teachers**. It is the GEW's view that this must include
 - That universities accept their joint responsibility for teacher training;
 - That schools and education administrators initiate a wide discussion on a new role model for teachers;
 - That regional governments plan teaching staff requirements reliably and practise a sustainable recruitment policy;
 - That schools and training institutions evaluate the quality of their work and are accountable to society;
 - That the public is invited to take part in the further development of schools and the quality of learning and teaching.
 This needs to be done in an atmosphere of understanding and support rather than defamation and accusation.

Training, Development, and Certification of Teachers (OECD Guidelines, section 4)

The KMK's **historical review** of teacher training has, whether consciously or not, ignored the practice prior to 1990 in the East German regional states. This gap has to be closed by further work on the survey. There were promising aspects, particularly in teacher training, which could be relevant in the present debate on the reform of teacher training. The denial of this part of history also shows ignorance in terms of the remaining professional basis of teachers who received their training in the GDR.

Parallel to the activities of the KMK, the Standing Conference of Ministers of Education and Cultural Affairs of the Laender (KMK), the Conference of Universities and other Higher Education Institutions (HRK), and of the German Science Council (Wissenschaftsrat), the GEW initiated its own discourse on the reform of teacher training. The GEW held a summer school in 1998 where the state of teacher training was considered under the heading of **Professionalism and Polyvalence**. After regional workshops and the **Hamburg Teacher Training Conference** of February 2001 the Executive Committee of the GEW agreed **14 points for the reform of teacher training** on 23rd June 2001. These will receive further consideration on the basis of the results of international comparative studies. The GEW is in favour of fundamental changes in teacher training which have to start immediately if future teachers and schools are to benefit from them. The pending succession of generations of teaching staff should be utilised for structural changes. The GEW predicts the following problems: lack of profile of education courses and

the marginal place occupied by teacher training courses, related to this, insufficient synchronisation of the three phases of courses (theory, practice, induction), neglect of problems commonly encountered by newly qualified teachers starting out in their careers, the missing thread tying the courses together – all this makes it more difficult for students to develop and learn systematically, and yet they are to carry out important tasks in society.

This is a short outline of the points isolated and agreed upon by the GEW in relation to teacher training:

Point 1

Teacher training must be guided by professionalism

The core of a teacher's professional activities is the school. The diverse processes pupils experience in terms of development and learning are central to a teacher's work. If pupils are "learning to learn", teachers need to build on their abilities, both on the level of social interaction and knowledge, this in a society which is marked by contradictions. The development of competence must be the cornerstone of teacher training courses.

Point 2

Recognition and productive handling of diversity

The realities of school life demand constructive handling of heterogeneity. School classes are not homogeneous, neither in cultural, nor in linguistic, nor in gender terms. Teachers must be able to recognise and counter the reasons and mechanisms of exclusion and discrimination. The GEW works for a school in which diversity is regarded as positive and seen to be valued.

Point 3

Lifelong learning as part of professional identity

Lifelong learning and in-service training is as important for teachers as it is for other professionals. Individual initiatives as well as hands-on training with colleagues and further professional courses are central to the development of the school. Keeping up with developments in education is essential for professional growth. Lifelong learning measures and facilities are also an element of developing staff in individual schools.

Further professional development is an integral part of the duties of a teacher and an intrinsic part of professionalism. It increases a teacher's commitment to work and obliges the education authority and employer to make available necessary resources.

Point 4

New forms of teacher training

Lack of communication between training providers catering for the three phases of teacher training prevents continuity and harmonisation of study courses. It often leads to breaks and crises among individuals. Students and beginning teachers are left alone with their problems. The GEW demands that teacher training is organised as a **process**

that is both comprehensive and unified. **Core curricula** should be developed in order to overcome the arbitrariness and disconnectedness of teacher training as practised until now. In order to reach a consensus, all participants in teacher training should be involved in the formulation of these core curricula. Training should be modular. Modules should be constructed to link learning processes to make sense didactically, create transparency, increase mobility and broaden students' choices and combinations. A consecutive, synchronised arrangement of modules (spiral curriculum) in terms of lifelong learning is necessary and must not be dependent on short-term budgetary considerations ("market, fads and fashions").

Point 5

Unified teacher training with differentiations

Professional identity is the same for all teachers; they are specialists in development, learning and teaching processes. The GEW opposes the early and definitive choice students have to make for a particular educational sector, i.e. primary or secondary, as much as a different duration of training and the separation of different forms of training. The GEW also opposes **graded courses** (Bachelor/Master) if this is used as a reason to reduce teachers' professionalism and/or leads to the establishment of a hierarchy in the teaching force. The GEW demands a unified minimum duration of teaching courses of eight semesters.

Point 6

Effecting new ways of teaching and learning in teacher training

The GEW demands a methodologically varied and exemplary training, which also includes the appropriate handling of new media and reflection on the learning environment. Learning workshops, educational days or weeks, open space projects, theme related interactions, moderation methods, inclusion of innovative classroom teachers, etc. should be added to or substituted for traditional teaching and learning practice.

Point 7

Introduction of actively considered examination practices

The GEW notes that measuring and evaluating knowledge are part of a teacher's working life. A democratic system of examining teachers includes transparency, reflection, and accountability so that the danger of an uncontrolled use of power can be eliminated. The GEW is also of the view that **evaluation** of their own training and working practices is part of the professional identity of teachers. How (not if) this is to take place needs to be tested.

Point 8

Expansion in subject teacher training

Many training institutions have drastically reduced their facilities to teach subject-specific methodology during previous years, lowering the quality of teacher training. The GEW works actively for the strengthening and the contextual expansion of subject-specific faculties

and departments and for them to become more actively involved in academic research. Appropriate research qualifications and experience must be a prerequisite for professors recruited and appointed to lecture in specialist subjects. Much will depend on the **support given to young academics**.

Point 9

Integration of teaching practice into teaching courses

There can be no academic training in courses leading to teaching qualifications without periods of teaching practice. Teaching practice enables students to prepare themselves for interaction with children, and to organise learning and teaching. Teaching practices help to gain exemplary knowledge and experience in co-operating with other students and teachers. It is not a question of putting theory into practice but of developing an approach of reflecting, critically distanced, i.e. objectively and academically, on a **practice that is informed by theory**. The GEW is critical of the marginal value which is attached to teaching practices at present and demands their early and increased integration into training courses.

Point 10

Centres for teacher training

Teacher training needs a central place for students to obtain guidance, network, access research, and communicate. The GEW therefore recommends that such centres for teacher training are opened or developed further. These focal points should be established in universities as academic centres with their own posts and resources. Their tasks should not be restricted to servicing and coordinating functions but also to guidance and decision-making. They should bridge the gap between academic study and early career experience. The GEW regards it as necessary to expand **research into teacher training** and the school as workplace or part of the job market in conjunction with these centres. The validity of this statement was confirmed in an academic forum of the Max Träger Foundation held in February 2003, which considered a critical analysis of German pedagogy by Prof. Dr. Hans N. Weiler.

Point 11

New ways of handling transition into working life

The GEW is in favour of a **transitional phase between training and work** (induction) that should begin immediately after completion of formal training but be part of training. Beginners should thus be given the opportunity to use and develop their acquired knowledge in a process which they themselves organise and account for. However, they would be entitled to supervision and advice, as well as didactic and methodological support if they deem it necessary. It is appropriate for beginning teachers to work together on problems with teachers experienced in projects of school development. The GEW recommends a detailed evaluation of induction as practised at present.

Point 12

Long-term personnel planning

Temporary and/or structural bottlenecks, increasing age profile of staffs, lesson cancellations and understaffing mark the educational employment market.

The GEW requires of the employing public authority longer-term planning, so that a balanced age structure and continuous employment opportunities are given. On the one hand, students must have dependable career prospects; on the other hand, teachers, teacher training colleges, and schools must be in a position to plan reliably for their staffing needs

Point 13

Changes in national regulatory practices

The GEW demands a fundamental change in the national supervisory practice for the totality of teacher training – instead of statutory regulation as at present, teacher training should be regulated by agreements. Teacher training is a public task and should remain so if the autonomy of schools is to be increased. Within this framework, the professional freedom of teachers should be respected; accountability and self-determination are important aspects of professionalism.

Point 14

Development of European and international dimensions

Communication and exchanges with people from other countries and cultures, the exploration of common experiences and acceptance of differences are important tasks for schools and teachers. The GEW demands, as does the European Trade Union Committee for Education (ETUCE) and Education International (EI) an increase in requirements for **mobility** of students of education as well as qualified teachers. Experience in other countries should become an ordinary part of teacher training. We also have to accept that the integrated European employment market will have some influence on employment practices in the educational sector.

The **14 Points for the reform of teacher training** form the basis for the GEW's statement on the activities of regional states for the reform of teacher training.

The following are central points in these statements:

Bachelor/Master

- Should **Bachelor and Master courses** be introduced for teachers?
(Rhineland Palatinate, Bremen, North Rhine-Westphalia, Berlin...)

Teachers with unconventional qualifications

- How can the **shortage of teachers in vocational colleges** be solved?

(Teachers with unconventional qualifications)

Centres

- Which functions should **centres for teacher training** perform, how are they to be provided with staff and equipment?

The GEW is preparing comments on these central points.

Evaluation

- The GEW attempts to convince all those connected to teacher training of the advantages of self-evaluation. Appraisal should be on the basis of self-determination and self-organisation/structuring. This should apply to university training as well as to teaching practice, induction and further in-service training.

Recruitment, selection and nomination of teachers (OECD Guidelines, section 5)

There are formulae governing teacher requirement calculations, which vary from regional state to regional state. They include lesson indicators (number of teaching periods, non-teaching time, etc.) pupil related indicators (class size, elective subjects, proportion of non-German speaking pupils, etc.) and teaching factors (allowances, subjects, reduction of functions and reductions due to age, etc.). **Their reliability** keeps being questioned by decisions based on budgetary considerations. Again and again the basic indicators are determined by political decisions on the basis of budgets. For example: in times of increasing pupil numbers class sizes were increased, lessons reduced and in all regional states, in some more than once (at present this is again topical) working hours of teachers increased through a rise in teaching load. Also included are cuts in special needs provision or, for example, mother tongue lessons for children from migrant backgrounds. This not only influences the quality of lessons and of schooling considerably but it also has an effect on teacher requirements.

Decisions on recruitment of beginning teachers are taken on the basis of suitability and achievement, i.e. according to subjects studied and exam grades. The GEW is critical of the seeming rationality of this method as often minimal differences in grades determine whether a candidate is offered a job or not. Aptitude and factors such as interest in educational work, creativity, ability to work in a team or capacity to work are hardly considered at present. The GEW supports the exploration of new selection criteria which include these skills, which are more difficult to measure quantitatively. Experiences in other areas of work or in other countries should be considered as well. The GEW is in favour of trying out local approaches to advertising for jobs and decisions on employment. A condition for these new approaches is agreement between school management and staffs, and between employers and trade unions, so that transparency is ensured and standards can be maintained.

Also worthy of consideration are the different demographic developments in East and West German regional states. While in the West pupil numbers are increasing, in the East they are falling drastically (up to 60 per cent). This illustrates the importance of looking ahead to arrive at transparent predictions for teacher requirements. Measures introduced by the KMK to prevent bottlenecks are obviously not sufficient. The segmentation of teacher training into many, mutually incompatible, courses prevents mobility, as do the barriers which regional states have erected, with the result that qualifications are not mutually recognised. This situation is simpler among the member states of the European Union than in German federalism.

For many years the authorities have made the situation worse by reducing starting salaries for young teachers and only offered them fixed-term part-time employment as employees (not as civil servants). There have been some corrections as teachers took jobs in other regional states which were prepared to make more lucrative offers. However, the negative effects of restrictive budgetary policies of Ministers of Finance can still be seen, particularly in the East German regional states. Migration from East to West increased shortages in some subjects and school sectors. Special schools and vocational schools suffered in particular, but also foreign languages and art subjects.

In order to lessen the effect of particularly large bottlenecks in the recruitment of vocational teachers in day-release schools, most regional states have introduced programmes for teachers with unconventional qualifications. In 2001, three in every 100 newly recruited teachers in all educational institutions had unconventional qualifications; the figure for vocational teachers in day-release colleges is much higher. In view of the alternative, i.e. cancellation of day-release classes and, on the positive side, the additional impulses this practice brings to teaching, the GEW is not in principle opposed to this. However, the GEW expects that those from unconventional backgrounds receive appropriate **additional in-service training in education and teaching methods**. Individual certification and agreements between the regional states on training programmes are necessary, so that national recognition of such qualifications and mobility between schools and school sectors can be guaranteed. Equally important are working conditions, as a reduction in teaching hours is necessary in order to achieve swift further training.

Retention of effective teachers in schools/employment (OECD Guidelines, section 6)

One of the most pressing problems is the increasing age profile of teaching staffs. Around two thirds of practising teachers are over 45, or, expressed differently, only 13 per cent are under 35. At present the average age is lower in the Eastern states than in the West, but due to fewer new appointments it will only take a few years for the East to catch up. Many schools lack a mixture of young and old. The effect of this is difficulties in communication between teachers and pupils; this state of affairs restricts the ability to innovate and, in many cases, the willingness to implement changes. A lot of

older staffs suffer from **burn out**. Occupational medical surveys show that one third of teachers are affected by this, and are consequently often unfit for service; in 2001 only 6 per cent of teachers worked up to regular pension age.

Demands on teachers have increased considerably during the past few years without relief or increased support by other professionals, e.g. educational social workers or educational psychologists, being forthcoming. Schools were required to combat drugs and violence, at the same time as dealing with insufficient socialisation in families and unlimited access to media. All this leads to a situation of overload, of constant “not completing jobs or never finishing”; at the same time teachers are publicly reproached and suffer deterioration of their working conditions. The effects are long-term or chronic illnesses, early retirement, and, above all, demotivation and fatigue. There are hardly any opportunities to leave teaching either permanently or on a temporary basis without financial losses.

The opportunities to develop staff systematically are underdeveloped at school level. Apart from some exceptions, neither head teachers nor colleagues are trained to provide motivating personnel management. Career prospects are limited and, where available, are insufficiently remunerated. This problem is also shown by the difficulty in some sectors to recruit head teachers.

The GEW has produced a number of **surveys on teacher workload**, yet regional governments have not acted on these findings with any seriousness. Although there have been academic surveys for some time now which show that permanent exposure to e.g. noise, pressure of time, demanding children who need particular support, managers who only give instructions, etc. are material causes for early retirement and the illnesses of many teachers, no recognisable preventative health measures have been instituted. The GEW and staff councillors have campaigned for years for the application of statutory health and safety regulations in schools, yet in most regional states without success.

All this increases the frustrations connected with the lack of support from “their” employing authority, and instead teachers are held responsible for all the problems which society cannot solve.

The GEW demands the introduction or extension, respectively of **development of personnel and organisation**, which has the task of addressing these tendencies.

A systematic survey of factors deleterious to teachers’ health and measures to prevent them as well as a medical service for teachers in each regional state would be the first step to reduce stress factors, and, most of all, to increase job satisfaction and motivation.

Working hours

Teachers' working hours are not restricted to lessons. Yet, in Germany, the Ministries of Education arbitrarily count only lessons as working hours. The obliqueness (to the public) of the full workload of teachers is continually being used as an instrument to compress work further. At the latest with the introduction of full-time education in Germany there has to be a basic agreement between the ministries and the teaching profession about a change in definition of teachers' workload and working hours. However, this must not be misused to extend further the time spent in lessons and to save money.

Quality and attractiveness of work in schools is also dependent on opportunities to take part in **in-service training**. The GEW supports evaluations or appraisals, made by teachers of their own strengths and weaknesses, on the basis of which they can then attend appropriate courses. **In-service training** is, in the view of the GEW, part of the professional identity of teachers. It is a debt to educational freedom and responsibility to society, it is a duty and voluntary task. It is both in the interest of the individual and the school. Aims and objects must be guided increasingly by individual needs and the requirements of individual schools. But further education and in-service training should be part of working time. Teachers already do courses to further their careers in their own time if they feel they need to acquire additional skills and knowledge. But, as in other professions, time for further and in-service training should be negotiated between employer and trade unions. Those that strive for a "learning staff" and a "learning school" must take acknowledgement, certification, and remuneration for readiness to undertake further training into consideration.

Research into school as a workplace and teacher training

As can be seen from the OECD questionnaire, there is a need for further systematic **research into the school as a workplace and teacher training** in Germany. Teacher training centres, as proposed by the GEW, could become the focus for this research. The discussion about standards of teacher training, initiated by Terhart, could be developed further as could Klemm's findings on teacher requirements. Schaarschmidt's and Schönefelder's debate on working hours and workload needs to be intensified and continued, as does Combe's research into teachers' job satisfaction. Experiences of personnel development and organisational issues made in other countries should also be given attention.

The GEW recommends a broadly defined process of **evaluation**, which should culminate in agreements between the KMK, universities and training institutes and colleges, and teachers' organisations, to reform teacher training.