



Lifelong Learning Programme



**Lifelong Learning Programme 2007-2013
Support for European Cooperation in Education and Training (ECET).
Transversal programme. Key Activity 1: Policy Cooperation & Innovation**



Project Number: 190986-LLP-2010-1-GR-KA1ECETB

Case study on the LLL needs, capacities and potentials of the district of Lindau (Lake Constance), Germany

(Part of Deliverable No.6: Consensus building on indicators for socio-cultural dynamics)

August 2012

With the support of the Lifelong Learning Programme of the European Union

Task No:	3
Work Package:	WP4: Valorization
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Status, Version No.	Final
Due date of deliverable:	September 2012
Actual submission date:	September 2012
Start Date of Project:	01 March 2011
Duration:	24 months
Dissemination Level:	Public
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Financing:	Project funded by the European Commission, Lifelong Learning Programme

This project has been funded with support from the European Commission.

This publication reflects the views only of the author, and the Commission cannot be held responsible for any use which may be made of the information contained therein.

Summary

The district of Lindau is an Alpine resort and international conference venue in the triangle of Germany-Austria-Switzerland. In Lindau the percentage of jobs with high skill requirements is above average, just as the density of high-tech companies. The district bills itself as a knowledge region. Lindau is also a part of a European cross-border region around Lake Constance. This region is characterised by traditional medium-sized businesses, and the increasing development of global corporations and young high-tech companies. Cross-border networks in the three countries bordering Lake Constance turn out as success factors in global competition.

The socioeconomic situation of Lindau is characterized by very low unemployment, a high share of engineers among the work force, and high availability of apprenticeship and training places on the one hand - and a high public debt and quite high labour costs on the other hand. With regard to the educational situation, citizens of Lindau show a high affinity towards informal learning activities, e.g. reading books and visiting museums. Cultural offers like the "children's cultural compass" provide further informal learning activities. Also the situation in general education is quite favourable: Pupils show skills in German, English, reading, mathematics and science skills above the nation-wide average. Furthermore there is a high involvement in church and religious activities as well as civic commitment to children and older people.

In the past years there were two major LLL projects in Lindau. There is the current program "Learning on site" (2007-2013) and the previous program "Learning Regions" (2000-2006), both financed by the European Social Fund (ESF). The programmes are based on some substantive intersections; however, a novelty is the structural approach of a public-private partnership with a view to facilitate local educational approaches.

The district is responsible for the educational infrastructure in schools; however, it has only little influence on learning content and learning material. With regard to continuing learning, the district of Lindau enjoys a relatively high degree of autonomy. Because education policy is not a mandatory task of the municipalities, the crucial point is the question of financing. The financial capacity of the district of Lindau is quite good because of its advantageous economic condition, low unemployment and a high proportion of skilled workers in the work force. The district administration provides good basic education and forms partnerships with civic society for a better local LLL governance. The costs of education in the district of Lindau are relatively low – especially in comparison with the neighbouring countries Austria or Switzerland. Consequently, the district of Lindau benefits from a kind of "training tourism".

The biggest challenges for Lindau are the demographic change and attracting and retaining young professionals. The absence of a university in the district of Lindau is probably the most decisive factor for the involvement in LLL. Lindau has to respond with a good location development and marketing concept. In the rural areas of the district the orientation towards values and traditions is quite strong; this implies the question of gender and LLL. Another important factor is the aging of the population of Lindau; this implies the challenge of context sensitive LLL strategies. The most committed players in LLL are the adult education centre (VHS), chamber of commerce (IHK), kindergartens and schools.

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1. Introduction

This case study was produced in the context of the project “MASON – Mainstream SocioCultural Dynamics to enhance NLLs”. It sets a focus on the LLL needs, capacities and potentials of the district Lindau (Lake Constance), Bavaria, Germany. Additional case studies on other European cities and regions were conducted by the MASON partnership. The aim of the case studies is to explore background information and an inside views of local actors on the LLL needs, abilities and potential of a city or a region and then develop conclusions and recommendations for the improvement of LLL policy.

Methodological Approach

The case study at hand offers inside views on the selected district of Lindau (Lake Constance), with its socio-cultural issues and perspectives framing the concerns of the civic society and LLL stakeholders. A multi-method approach was used: an analysis of official documents and an interview. The interview was based on a common interview framework and guide for all MASON partners. The University of Federal Armed Forces Munich (UniBwM)¹ conducted a telephone interview in July 2012 with an official of the education department of the district of Lindau (Lake Constance). The interview took about 60 minutes. At the start of the interview, the respondent was informed that anonymity in the analysis will be guaranteed and the statements will be used only for the purposes of the project. The main goal of the interview was to analyses how the respondent perceives and discusses various factors related to widening the participation of the district at various levels and aspects of LLL, and how he/she interprets them based on his/her own understanding and experience.

Background on the district of Lindau (Lake Constance)

This chapter provides background information on major events and economic, social, cultural, religious, and population aspects that have shaped the modern history of the district under study. The aim is to identify overarching, shared visions or strategies adopted at district level which have direct implications on LLL.

The district

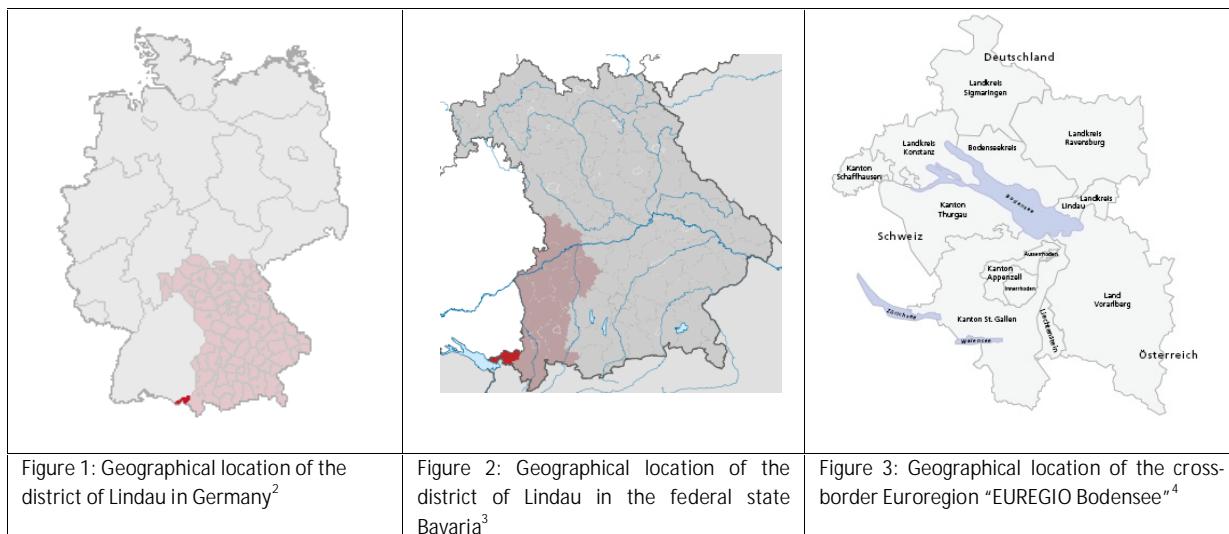
The district of Lindau (Lake Constance) is an Alpine resort and international conference venue in the border triangle Germany-Austria-Switzerland. Lindau (NUTS-Code DE27A) belongs to Bavarian Swabia (NUTS-Code DE27), which is an administrative region in the south-west of Bavaria, on the border to the neighbour state Baden-Württemberg (see figure 1/2). The district capital city is the city Lindau, which consists of a historic town centre on an island in the Lake Constance, while the other parts of the city are located on the mainland. A bridge and railway embankment connects the historic island city to the mainland. In the following text, the term Lindau refers to the whole district; if specific information on the district capital city is provided, a notice to that effect is made

Located “at the centre of Europe”², growing business parks attest the fact that Lindau is also of increasing importance as a business location. In Lindau the percentage of jobs with high skill requirements is above average. The district bills itself as a knowledge region and leads to regular scientific meetings, like the Lindau Nobel Laureate Meeting, an annual meeting of Nobel Prize winners. And it is famous for the density of high-tech companies, e.g. the aircraft manufacturers Liebherr

¹ University of Federal Armed Forces Munich/ UniBwM (2012): Mainstreaming SocioCultural Dynamics to Enhance National Lifelong Learning Strategies. Retrieved 10.08.2012 from: <http://www.unibw.de/paed/personen/ertl/MASON>

² Pro Lindau Marketing (2012): Economic Location of Lindau. Retrieved 10.08.2012 from: <http://en.lindau2.de/index.php?sid=1040>

Aerospace or the MDAX-company¹ Continental, a producer of Advanced Driver Assistance Systems in Lindau.



The region

The Euroregion "EUREGIO Bodensee" is a cross-border region around Lake Constance (see figure 3). The Euroregion was officially founded in 1997, but the historical roots of the cultural area of Lake Constance go back to the year 882. The Euroregion aims at supporting cross-border co-operation in culture, public transport and mainly economics. In 2010, over 3.8 million people lived in the area.⁵ The Euroregion consists of six German districts (including Lindau), six Swiss provinces, one Austrian province and the Principality of Liechtenstein. The region is one of the most dynamic economic regions in Europe. The region is characterised by traditional medium-sized businesses, and the increasing development of global corporations and young high-tech companies. Cross-border networks in the three countries bordering Lake Constance turn out as success factors in global competition⁶. The globalization proceeds in the Euroregion Lake Constance, not necessarily for the better, since the quite high labour costs are a commercial disadvantage of the location.

Socioeconomic factors

In order to display the socioeconomic situation of the district of Lindau it is useful to look at the regional ranking of the "Initiative New Social Market Economy" (INSM), which compares the capacity of German cities and districts⁷.

¹ Börse Frankfurt (2012): List of the MDAX companies. Retrieved 09.08.2012 from: <http://www.boerse-frankfurt.de/de/aktien/indizes/mdax+DE0008467416/zugehoerige+werte>

² Wikipedia (2006): Geographical location of the District of Lindau (Lake Constance) in Germany. Retrieved 10.07.2012 from: http://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/e/e1/Lage_des_Landkreises_Lindau_%28Bodensee%29_in_Deutschland.PNG

³ Wikipedia (2009): Geographical location of the District of Lindau (Lake Constance) in Bavaria. Retrieved 10.07.2012 from: <http://t3.gstatic.com/images?q=tbn:ANd9GcTGjUbYTK8jxcBrAOz2ro3SiZMKvUz1xspGu6NrIRcXtiFNtOysOA>

⁴ Bodensee Standortmarketing (2010): Overview of the EUREGIO Bodensee. Retrieved 10.07.2012 from: http://www.bodensee-standortmarketing.com/tl_files/bsm/images/karte_wirtschaftsstandort.jpg

⁵ Statistik Bodensee (2011): Population. Retrieved 10.07.2012 from: <http://www.statistik-bodensee.org/index.php/bevoelkerung.html>

⁶ Euregio-Bodensee (2012): Welcome to the Euregio-Bodensee. Retrieved 10.07.2012 from: <http://www.euregio-bodensee.ch/>

⁷ Initiative for a New Social Market Economy (2009): Profile of the district of Lindau. Retrieved 10.07.2012 from: http://www.insm-regionalranking.de/2009_k_landkreis-lindau-bodensee.html

The unemployment rate in the district of Lindau was at 2.3 percent (May 2012). The nationwide unemployment rate was 6.6 percent. In 2011, Lindau belonged to the top-25 of the 409 urban districts and counties in Germany with the lowest unemployment rate. In the district of Lindau, 4.3 of 100 persons of the work force are engineers. All over Germany, the share of engineers is at 2.2 percent, which positions Lindau on rank 9 out of 96 in the Bavarian comparison. Statistically, the availability of apprenticeship and training places in the district of Lindau is 102.3/100. In comparison, the average of the availability of training places per 100 applicants is 98.9 throughout Germany. The public debt of municipalities and municipal associations in the district of Lindau amounted to € 1734 per capita. Nationwide there is an average public debt of € 1456. This leads to a position in the bottom third of the INSM ranking. The labour costs per employee in the district of Lindau amount to € 33 613. Labour costs are composed from the gross salary and social security contributions. As a comparison: In the German national average these costs are about € 31 846. While high labour costs are advantageous for the individual employees, the companies face financial burdens from high labour costs. In consequence, companies in Lindau have a disadvantage in comparison to the German national average. With regard to day care Lindau is below average: only 50.5 percent of all children (under six year olds) were in day care facilities; nationwide, the figure is 54.3 percent.

Learning factors

In order to display the learning factors of the district of Lindau it is useful to look at the regional ranking of the "German Learning Atlas" of the Bertelsmann Foundation, which compares the capacity of German cities and districts according to the four categories: "learning to know", "learning to do", "learning to live together" and "learning to be"¹. These categories identify the broad span of lifelong learning. The four categories of LLL (defined by the UNESCO and used for the German Learning Atlas by the Bertelsmann Foundation) are displayed in the following table².

Learning to know	By combining a sufficiently broad general knowledge with the opportunity to deal in depth with a small number of subjects. This also means learning to learn, so as to benefit from the opportunities provided throughout life.
Learning to do	In order to acquire not only an occupational skill but also, more broadly, the competence to deal with many situations and work in teams. It also means learning to do in the context of young people's various social and work experiences which may be informal, as a result of the local or national context, or formal, involving courses, alternating study and work.
Learning to live together	By developing an understanding of other people and an appreciation of interdependence – carrying out joint projects and learning to manage conflicts – in a spirit of respect for the values of pluralism, mutual understanding and peace.
Learning to be	So as better to develop one's personality and be able to act with even greater autonomy, judgment and personal responsibility. In that connection, education must not disregard any aspect of a person's potential: memory, reasoning, aesthetic sense, physical capacities and communication skills.

¹ German Learning Atlas/ Bertelsmann Foundation (2011): Profile of the district of Lindau (In German Language only). Retrieved 10.07.2012 from: <http://www.deutscher-lernatlas.de/index.php?id=330&engine=/elli/profile/profile-bodySearch.do>

² Bertelsmann Foundation (2011): European Lifelong Learning Indicators (ELLI). Developing a Conceptual Framework. Working Paper - Version 2.0. October 2008. Retrieved 10.08.2012 from: http://www.bertelsmann-stiftung.de/cps/rde/xbr/SID-252BA379-8294CD26/bst/ConceptualFramework_081022.pdf

In the field of "learning to know" Lindau is well ranked, especially in the area of general education. At secondary school level, German, English, reading, mathematics and science skills of pupils in the district of Lindau are constantly among the top 5 in the comparison group. A weak point is that there is no university or university of applied sciences in the district of Lindau. Most of the young people who decide to study go to other German university cities – or even abroad. In the field "learning to do", there is a rapid integration of unemployed people in training courses, with the aim to support their fast return to work. However, compared to other regions, there is a low rate of participation in training during the everyday working life. In the field "learning to live together" the district of Lindau took the first place in the involvement in church and religious activities. Also among the top 10 is the commitment to children and older people, e.g. in intergenerational reading projects. In the "learning to live together"-field the involvement of the residents in political parties or the voluntary fire brigade is rather low. Additionally, the low supply of facilities for youth work was evaluated negatively. In the field „learning to be“ a very high tendency to read books (top 3) was reported and many people visit museums (top 5)¹. On the other hand, there is a very small number of sports clubs in the region.

LLL projects in the district of Lindau

In the past years there were two major LLL projects in Lindau. The initiative "Learning on site" is financed by the European Social Found (ESF) of the European Union. It is the follow-up of the program "Learning Regions" (2000-2006) and is set up for the ESF-Promotional Period 2007-2013. "Learning on site" allows all project districts to develop a coherent local E&T management and to implement good practises. Thus, the institutions supporting lifelong learning are systematically linked. "Learning on site" is a central part of the training initiative of the German federal government, an energetic step for more and better education and training in all areas of life. "Learning on site" is built in particular on the results and experiences from regional networks in the programme "Learning Regions". The programmes are based on some substantive intersections; however, a novelty is the structural approach of a public-private partnership with a view to facilitate local educational approaches.

As part of the project, structures for an active learning region are developed. The focus is the establishment of a municipal education management with networking and cooperation structures. In the field of education counselling, a counselling centre with a focus on "educational and career counselling" will be established in the district town of Lindau, supplemented by mobile services in other areas of the district. In addition, a special course for "transition management" was designed to make the transition from school to work more efficient and transparent. The "analysis of the overlap of competences and responsibilities" recognized educational systems which cooperate with regard to the timing and process of transitions. It also recognized the services and institutions involved in the respective transitions, and their influence on educational structures in Baden-Württemberg and Vorarlberg (Austria) in the district².

Furthermore, the development of monitoring system for the regional education market is planned, supplemented by a separate advisory service for parents. Parents can take courses and acquire the so called parents' passport (Elternpass), a kind of driving licence for parenting³. All training programs are increasingly intercultural oriented to provide people from educationally disadvantaged conditions with educational opportunities.

The district town of Lindau is a former partner of the "Learning Region of Lake Constance" (2000-2006) and can be considered as a good example for the success of the sustainable development of learning regions.

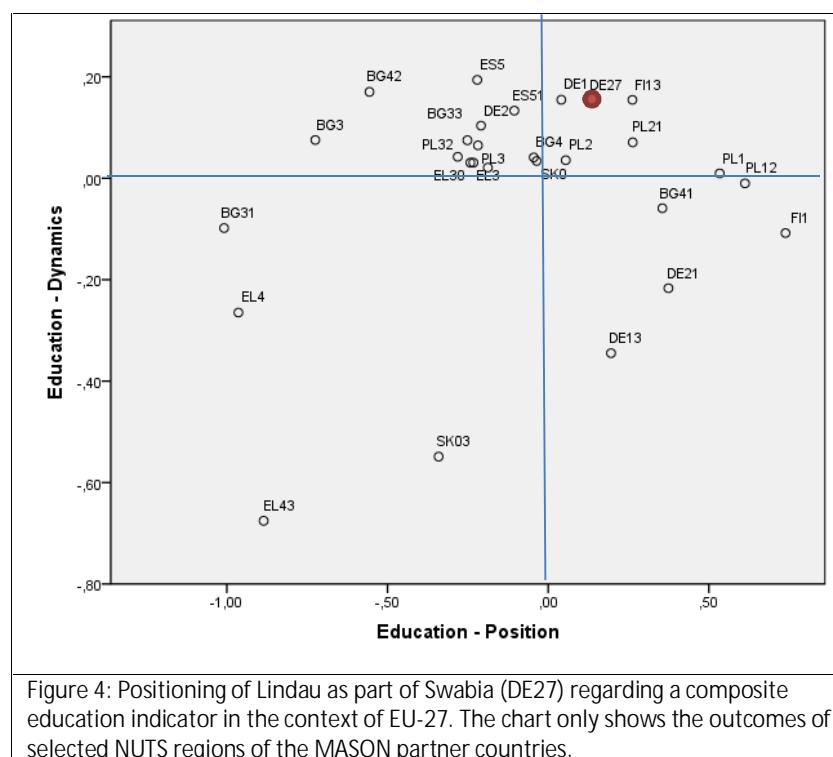
¹ The number of museum visitors includes tourists; the district of Lindau plans to consider this in their next educational report.

² Federal Ministry of Education and Research/ BMBF (2012): Lernen Vor Ort – Landkreis Lindau (In German language only).

Retrieved 30.08.2012 from: <http://www.lernen-vor-ort.info/de/188.php>

³ Lernende Region Bodensee: Teilprojekt 12: TP 8: Erziehen und Lernen: Elternschule. Retrieved 20.08.2012 from: http://www.lernende-regionen.info/dlr/3_projekt_686_2.php?reg=bay&PHPSESSID=f5ff.

Figure 4 shows the positioning of Lindau as part of Swabia (DE27, marked in red) regarding a composite education indicator¹ compared to the EU-27 countries. On both axes, the value zero (blue lines) can be interpreted as the average of all EU-27 regions, with regard to the education indicator. DE 27 is placed on the position axis with a value slightly above average. This means that the performance of DE27 in 2010/11 is better than that of other regions. Similarly, DE27 is slightly above average on the dynamics axis. The dynamics value describes how much efforts the regions made during the last years: DE27 had a better progress over time than other regions.



2. Education and training governance in the district

The following three chapters display the results of the telephone interview with an official from the Lindau educational administration, conducted in July 2012.

The section at hand analyses the empowerment of district level authorities to define and implement their own LLL policies and strategies and identifies the degree of autonomy they enjoy from the central government. The aim is to analyse the balance of responsibility in the public education and training system between the national, regional and city level authorities. These include the definition and implementation of LLL policies and strategies, the definition of curricula and selection of school books and other learning materials, the management of E&T personnel, the setting of quality assurance standards and mechanisms.

The degree of autonomy of the district of Lindau in defining and implementing E&T policies is quite high. Because education policy is not a mandatory task of the municipalities, the crucial point is the question of financing. The funding by external programmes, e.g. the European Social Fund (ESF), supports policy makers in their pursuit of autonomy from the central government. The cooperation between the various public levels is characterised by a division of responsibilities and competencies. The central government and the federal states are financing the LLL program with financial resources of

¹ Based on EUROSTAT data. For more information about these indicators see the MASON indicator building documentation. Available at: <http://www.unibw.de/paed/personen/ertl/MASON>

the ESF. In addition, the "Nationale Stiftungsverbund Lernen vor Ort"¹ finances a third of the programme. Any interventions by the federal government with such programmes in the cultural sovereignty of the federal states require alignment with the respective federal states. It has to be discussed with the Standing Conference of the Ministers of Education and Cultural Affairs of the Federal States in the Federal Republic of Germany².

In addition, there are always "parallel development" programmes with the Free State of Bavaria. In the first place there was a collaboration of Lindau with neighbouring districts in the so called "Allgäu GmbH"³. Secondly, there were meetings with representatives of the Bavarian Ministry of Education and Culture (StMUK). Third, there were networking meetings with all the "Learning on site"-municipalities, which are Munich, Nuremberg, Mühldorf am Inn and Kaufbeuren, to shape a uniform "Bavarian strategy".

The district is responsible for the "Sachaufwandsträgerschaft", which means the educational infrastructure, e.g. for the number of personal computers in schools and the architectural condition of gymnasiums (academic high schools). There are informal discussions between the federal school authorities and the local representatives. However, the district of Lindau has only little influence on learning content and learning material.

3. E&T budget and finance instruments and mechanisms in the district

The aim of this section is to identify the financial capacity and autonomy of the district to invest in education and training of its inhabitants. In addition, focus is set on the identification of implications of potential or actual cuts on spending in E&T in the district.

Basically, the financial capacity of the district of Lindau is quite good because of its advantageous economic condition, low unemployment and a high proportion of skilled workers in the workforce.

The public sector has always paid attention to its mandatory tasks. They have to be distinguished from the voluntary tasks of the public sector, which often require the solicitation of local sponsors to solve a task at a higher extent and a better quality.

The responsibility of training and continuing education lies in the hands of the Industrie- und Handelskammer (IHK; chamber of industry and commerce) or Volkshochschulen (VHS; adult education centre) – and the companies that train their apprentice in the dual vocational training system. As the IHK and the VHS are statutory corporations, the municipality is not engaged directly in their programmes or their funding. The status of a "statutory corporation" enables the IHK and the VHS to take decisions independent of the state or national government. Nevertheless, the IHK and VHS – and their learners – benefit from the generally good economic situation in the district of Lindau.

In the "Learning on site" programme, the district of Lindau cooperated with local foundations and formed a kind of "Lake Constance pact for education". There are many small foundations from the Lake Constance region that are active in the field of education. Donations of those foundations are collected

¹ Federal Ministry of Education and Research/ BMBF (2011): Stiftungsverbund "Lernen vor Ort" - Civic commitment for quality education. Retrieved 10.07.2012 from: <http://www.lernen-vor-ort.info/de/99.php>

² The Standing Conference of the Ministers of Education and Cultural Affairs of the Länder in the Federal Republic of Germany (2012): Foundation and Composition of the Standing Conference (Information in English language). Retrieved 17.07.2012 from: <http://www.kmk.org/information-in-english/standing-conference-of-the-ministers-of-education-and-cultural-affairs-of-the-laender-in-the-federal-republic-of-germany.html>

³ Allgäu GmbH/ Gesellschaft für Standort und Tourismus (2012): Weiter durch Fortbildung. Retrieved 17.07.2012 from: <http://www.bildung-allgaeu.de/>

and accumulated in a fund. The basic idea was to keep these funds separated, i.e. a budget for costs that cannot be covered from any other regular source of funding. Thus, both sides benefit: the district and the foundations. Such collaborations between the public sector and foundation sector generally do not focus on mandatory tasks, but on special disadvantages and problem areas, such as tuition for children from immigrant families.

Concerning the financial capacity and willingness of companies and citizens in the district of Lindau to invest in education there are outdated attitudes as well as new developments. In the tourism sector, participation in continuing education is traditionally very high. However, many other companies always consider the criterion of "return on investment", which influences a company's decision to invest in continuing education of their employees. The costs of education in the district of Lindau are relatively low – especially in international comparison with the Austrian federal state Vorarlberg or Switzerland. In those neighbouring regions trainings are much more expensive. Consequently, the district of Lindau benefits from a kind of "training tourism".

In addition, the German Federal Employment Agency supports participation in continuing education by issuing the so called „education voucher"¹ for the financing of training. The approval of the education voucher is subject to certain preconditions, and is hereby decided on an individual basis. Applicants must normally have either completed an apprenticeship or three years exercised an occupation. Applicants must take advice by the Federal Employment Agency before the training begins. Further, home loan savings contracts can be converted to finance further education. However, this is a fairly recent development².

4. Demands for E&T, availability and accessibility of E&T services, and opportunities for engagement in LLL activities in the district

This chapter reports the typical capacity of the district to serve the learning needs of the local inhabitants and its readiness to respond to socio-economic, cultural, technological challenges which may have direct and indirect implications on the LLL system.

In the district of Lindau, there are 53 kindergartens, 22 elementary schools, and 23 nursing homes, of which 8 provide personal care at home and 15 are fully inpatient care facilities (which is a relatively high number)³. There are also 4 large training facilities, which are the VHS, the local IHK, a vocational training centre of the Bavarian employers' organization (bfz gGmbH⁴) and the catholic social organisation Kolping. So far, there are no statistics about the student population in non-formal programmes of study, but a survey is planned for the next "Lindau education report"⁵.

¹ Federal Employment Agency/ Bundesagentur für Arbeit (2012): About the education voucher (In German language only). Retrieved 17.07.2012 from: http://www.arbeitsagentur.de/nr_26396/zentraler-Content/A05-Berufl-Qualifizierung/A052-Arbeitnehmer/Allgemein/Bildungsgutschein.html

² Aspect-online.de (2010): The conversion of home loan savings to further education capital (in German language only). Retrieved 17.07.2012 from: <http://www.aspect-online.de/artikel/bausparplan-fuer-die-weiterbildung-verwenden/>

³ District of Lindau (2012): Lindau education report (In German Language only). Retrieved 10.07.2012 from: http://www.landkreis-lindau.de/PDF/Bildungsbericht_2012.PDF?ObjSvrlID=1188&ObjID=3371&ObjLa=1&Ext=PDF&WTR=1&_ts=1330681129

⁴ Berufliche Fortbildungszentren der Bayerischen Wirtschaft/ bfz gGmbH (2012): bfz-vocational training center of the Bavarian employers' organization in Lindau (in German language only). Retrieved 10.08.2012 from: http://www.bfz.de/wwwpubroot/Standorte/bfz_BodenseeOberschwaben/bfzlindau/bobli_start.rsys

⁵ District of Lindau (2012): Lindau education report (In German Language only). Retrieved 10.07.2012 from: http://www.landkreis-lindau.de/PDF/Bildungsbericht_2012.PDF?ObjSvrlID=1188&ObjID=3371&ObjLa=1&Ext=PDF&WTR=1&_ts=1330681129

Although the accessibility of public buildings (such as schools and libraries) has been improved considerably in recent years, there are still other problems in the infrastructure that lead to educational disadvantages. There is a large unsatisfied demand for mobility. People in Lindau who do not have a car are limited in their mobility due to the rural structure of the district. Unfortunately, the public transports are not adequately developed. This problem often affects single parents, the elderly and people with low income.

In addition, there is a discrepancy between supply and demand in early childhood education. A lack of nursery places has a negative effect on reconciling work and family life. If both parents are working, it is not always easy to get day care. The offer depends on the place of residence within the district of Lindau.

The opposite is true for the training programmes of IHK and VHS. Partly, there is an oversupply of training offers, which is not demanded by people and companies. There are considerations that the training programmes should be aligned to the actual demand more closely.

In a 100km-radius around Lindau, there are very attractive higher education offers, however, there is no university or university of applied sciences in the district itself¹. As a consequence young people with a lot of potential leave the district for their studies. The critical point is: who returns to Lindau? Who supports local businesses? Who provides jobs for people with a university degree in future? Today, if a young academic couple moves to Lindau, there is usually only an appropriate job for one of them.

Lindau citizens have direct access to formal or informal learning. The cultural offers in the region are very numerous and diverse. For example, within the "Learning Region Lake Constance" the district administration has created a "children's cultural compass"² for the city of Lindau and the surrounding district. It provides an informal learning opportunity to explore the city and district. There are activities for children and for adults in the district town of Lindau. However, the citizens from the rural area of Lindau have to be mobile in order to take part in these offers. In addition, activities such as theatre or opera, although subsidized, are sometimes too expensive for people from of low-income families. For children this problem is often solved in the school context by parental support associations (so called Eltern- und Fördervereine) or sponsors, who enable children from low-income families to take part in cultural activities. This is a good example for the well working civic society in the Lake Constance region.

Socio-economic, cultural, technological and environmental challenges faced by the district and their implications to the lifelong learning system

The aim of this sub-section is to identify emerging or long standing challenges faced by the district, and their implications to the LLL needs of the inhabitants, the capacity of the LLL system to respond to such needs and the LLL potentials of the region/city to sustain and grow. As described above the absence of a university in the district of Lindau is probably the most decisive factor for the involvement and

¹ Universities in a 100km-radius around the district of Lindau: Zeppelin University Friedrichshafen (private), University Ulm, The International University of Lake Constance (a University cooperation/ network), ETH Zürich (Swiss Federal Institute of Technology Zurich), University of Applied Sciences Sankt Gallen, University of Applied Sciences Vorarlberg , University of Applied Sciences Kempten, University of Applied Sciences Sigmaringen, University Konstanz, University of Applied Sciences Konstanz, University of Education Weingarten, University of Education Thurgau, University of Education Vorarlberg, University of Education Kreuzlingen

² Lindau (2011): Kinderkulturkompass (In German language only). Retrieved 10.08.2012 from:
<http://www.lindau.de/files/007/kinderkulturkompass.pdf>

participation in "lifelong learning". In the so called "war of talents"¹ the district of Lindau has to respond with a good location development and marketing concept. Demographics show an increase in the population of older age groups (see figure 5/6). This tendency results from the fact that Lindau is for many people a very attractive retirement, i.e. because here the number of spa and health facilities is above average. In the same time many young people move to bigger cities. Those two developments lead to the tendency of an aging society.

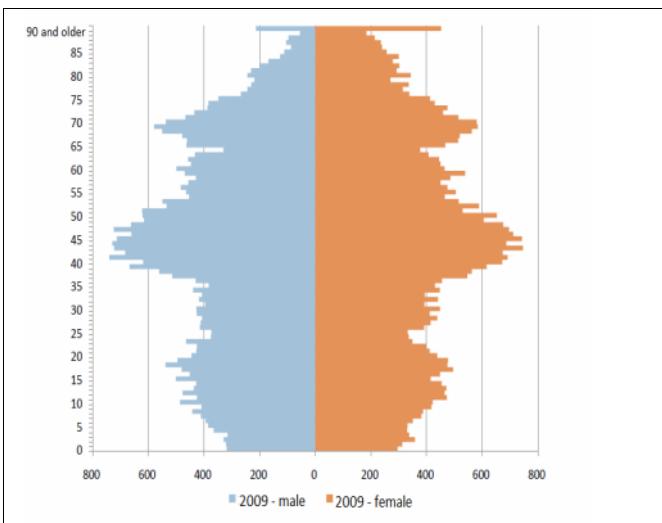


Figure 5: Age structure of the population of the district of Lindau (Lake Constance) years by age and sex in percent (Source: Bavarian State Office for Statistics and Data Processing)²

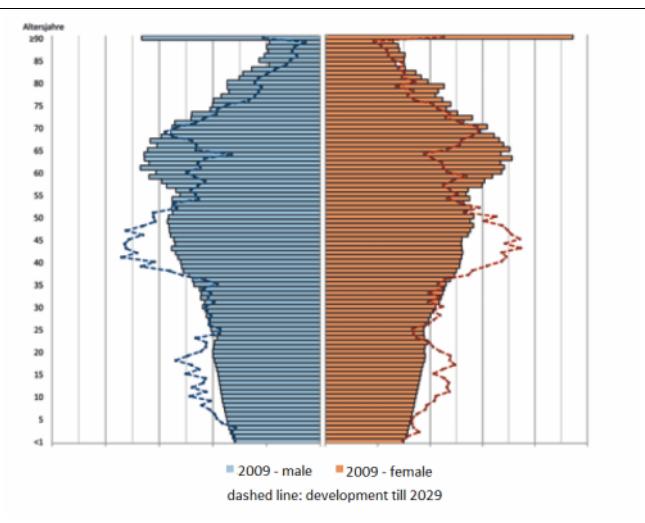


Figure 6: Population changes in Lindau (Bodensee) from the year 2029 compared to 2009 in age groups. Dashed line: forecasted status in 2029. (Source: Bavarian State Office for Statistics and Data Processing)³

The violence and crime rate is extremely low. Poor neighbourhoods, like the city quarter Lindau-Zech, within the project "Social City"⁴ received infrastructure upgrades. To reach the goal of preventing segregation apartment units were modernized to attract a more diverse population. The program "Social City - Districts with Special Development Needs" is a program for urban development in Germany. It was set up by the Federal Ministry of Transport, Building and Urban Development and the Länder. A central premise of the program is a massive social and economic change in cities. Particularly small-scale segregation since the 1990s, presents different challenges for the development of city districts. The programme responded with a comprehensive integrated approach to neighbourhood development. Until 2009 the programme was implemented in 571 areas in 355 municipalities all over Germany.

In the rural areas of the district of Lindau the orientation towards values and traditions plays quite a role. In such areas, the population is dominated by a very traditional and conservative structure. This has an influence on the attitude to immigration, the family or gender roles. In simplified terms: The father goes to work; the mother cares for the children at home. In these traditional contexts, this

¹ Financial Times Deutschland (2010): War of Talents. Extras für den Nachwuchs. Retrieved 10.08.2012 from: <http://www.ftd.de/karriere-management/karriere/:war-of-talents-extras-fuer-den-nachwuchs/50143198.html>

² District of Lindau (2012): Lindau education report (In German Language only). Retrieved 31.08.2012 from: http://www.landkreis-lindau.de/PDF/Bildungsbericht_2012.PDF?ObjSvrlID=1188&ObjID=3371&ObjLa=1&Ext=PDF&WTR=1&_ts=1330681129

³ District of Lindau (2012): Lindau education report (In German Language only). Retrieved 31.08.2012 from: http://www.landkreis-lindau.de/PDF/Bildungsbericht_2012.PDF?ObjSvrlID=1188&ObjID=3371&ObjLa=1&Ext=PDF&WTR=1&_ts=1330681129

⁴ Deutsches Institut für Urbanistik gGmbH (2011): Social City - Districts with Special Development Needs (In German language only). Retrieved 10.08.2012 from: <http://www.sozialestadt.de/programm/>

concept still works well, simply because the salary of one working adult is sufficient. This setting is not actively chosen, but widespread among the non-academic population.

5. LLL partnerships, involvement and mobilisation of local and regional stakeholders

The most committed players in "lifelong learning" are the VHS, IHK, kindergartens and schools. The kindergartens and schools are very important because they set the course for all future learning activities and experiences.

The most active stakeholders in the field continuing adult learning are the VHS and the IHK. In promoting the transition from school to work the local youth office is active, too. There are viable networks and working groups, for example, the working group of school business, or a working group on demographics.

In the context of "Learning on Site", the district administration acted as a kind of moderator between the different stakeholders.

6. The learning culture(s) of the district

This chapter looks at the extent to which the value of LLL is recognized and accepted among the Lindau citizens. Another question is, if there are any negative stereotyping and discriminatory practices against old people, migrants or low-income families. The last point of interest is the availability of networks and structures of guidance and counselling dedicated on learning opportunities, and providing information on lifelong learning offers in the district.

Due to the specific demographic situation in Lindau, which is the over-representation of older people, the educational participation of older people is a major challenge for the district administration and the local civic society. Older people are often intimidated by a negative stereotype about their decreasing ability to learn. However, it is known that older people remain capable of learning, although, learning processes differ from those of younger people. In Lindau, there are many activities to make the expertise of older people and young people available for each other. There is for example an initiative of volunteers who try to unite the different interests. There is an intergenerational tandem-programme, coordinated by the IHK. In this way, young people can learn from the working and life experience of the old people and the young people can show them how to cope with challenges of the information society, e.g. using a computer and accessing the Internet.

The acceptance of the guiding principle of "lifelong learning" is penetrating the population as a holistic approach, however, not on all levels. Although the district has conducted no survey on this subject, people seem to accept continuous learning, especially, if it serves career advancement or if it takes place in an informal context, unconsciously, as leisure activity (keywords: theatre, museum and reading). Nowadays Lindau, despite the conservative tendencies in rural areas, shows hardly any social stigmatisation of minority groups such as immigrants or low-income families.

In the context of educational guidance and counselling services the focus is on the strengths and empowerment of people, and not on their deficits. Formerly, from a deficit perspective some teachers were focused on the German language deficit of children with migration background, only. This deficit orientated approach does not exist anymore. It is considered to be positive that school children with migration background know a second or third language and have broad inter-cultural knowledge. Counsellors examine the kind of strengths that people have and how these can be used. In this context,

the project "Learning Regions" developed a so-called "Qualipass"¹, based on analysis of potential and existing strengths.

7. Conclusions and recommendations

The aim of this section is, based on the findings and views reported in the previous sections, to provide an analysis of the strengths and weaknesses of the system of LLL in Lindau. Further it offers some recommendations to the regional/local education authorities on how to promote participation, quality and inclusiveness of the system of LLL in the district.

Strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats (SWOT Analysis)

Based on the above research and interview results, positive and challenging aspects of lifelong learning in the district of Lindau were identified with a SWOT analysis. In general, this approach aims at the identification of strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats (SWOT) of a given field of interest. According to the Federal Ministry of Internal Affairs, the SWOT analysis is a strategic management tool which allows the identification of strengths and weaknesses of an organisation (internal view) and of chances and threats of its environment (external view)^{2 3 4}. The aim is the identification of solutions and strategies which are necessary for the achievement of the organisation's goals. The SWOT analysis can also be used for the evaluation of specific organisational projects. In the context of this case study the SWOT approach has been used for evaluating the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats of lifelong learning strategy in the district of Lindau.

„Internal view“ on specific LLL policies of the district	
Strengths	Weaknesses
Reasons for success? Synergies?	Weak points to avoid?
„External view“ on factors that influence LLL in the district	
Opportunities	Threats
Future trends and opportunities worth following?	Situation of society? Existing regulations? Changes in policy?

SWOT matrix, adapted from BMI (2010)⁵;

¹ Kreisjugendring Lindau/ KJR Lindau (2010): Der Qualipass im Landkreis Lindau (In German language only). Retrieved 23.08.2012 from: <http://www.kjr-lindau.de/download/qualipass/qualipass.pdf>

² Bundesministerium des Inneren – BMI (2007). Organisationshandbuch. 6. Methoden und Techniken. 6.3. Analysetechniken. 6.3.4. Starken/Schwächen-Analyse (SWOT-Analyse). Retrieved 23.08.2012 from: http://www.orghandbuch.de/cln_116/nn_413746/OrganisationsHandbuch/DE/6_MethodenTechniken/63_Analysetechniken/634_SWOT-Analyse/swot-analyse-node.html?__nnn=true

³ Lee, S. F., & Ko, A. S. O. (2000). Building balanced scorecard with SWOT analysis, and implementing "Sun Tzu's The Art of Business Management Strategies" on QFD methodology. Managerial Auditing Journal, 15(1/2), 68-76.

⁴ Lombriser, R. & Abplanalp, P. A. (1998). Strategisches Management. Zürich: Versus.

⁵ Bundesministerium des Inneren – BMI (2007). Organisationshandbuch. 6. Methoden und Techniken. 6.3. Analysetechniken. 6.3.4. Starken/Schwächen-Analyse (SWOT-Analyse). Retrieved 23.08.2012 from: http://www.orghandbuch.de/cln_116/nn_413746/OrganisationsHandbuch/DE/6_MethodenTechniken/63_Analysetechniken/634_SWOT-Analyse/swot-analyse-node.html?__nnn=true

The **socioeconomic situation** and the **learning factors** of the district of Lindau show the following strengths and weaknesses, opportunities and threats. The table combines the results from the document analysis and the expert interview conducted in the frame of the case study.

Socioeconomic situation	
„Internal view“ on specific LLL policies of the district	
Strengths	Weaknesses
<p>Vocational training: Statistically, the availability of training places is slightly above the demand of training places; nation-wide, this ratio is reversed.</p> <p>Unemployment rate: Lindau belongs to the top 25 urban districts, with an unemployment rate clearly below the nation-wide average.</p>	<p>Day care facilities: The percentage of children (under six years old) in day care is below the nation-wide average. The lack of facilities is challenging for families which have to combine work and family life.</p>
„External view“ on factors that influence LLL in the district	
Opportunities	Threats
<p>Work force: The share of engineers is above the nation-wide average; the district of Lindau is positioned on rank 29 in the national comparison.</p>	<p>Ageing society and traditional structures: Young people tend to move away due to lack of higher education opportunities; older people are attracted by the districts provision of e.g. good health care, nursing homes, and spas. Especially in rural areas, traditional and conservative attitudes prevail with regard to family and gender roles.</p> <p>Public debt: The district Lindau has a higher public debt per capita than the nation-wide average.</p> <p>Labour cost: High labour costs mean heavy financial burdens for the local companies. The economic location of Lindau has a disadvantage in comparison to the nation-wide average.</p>

Learning Factors	
„Internal view“ on specific LLL policies of the district	
Strengths	Weaknesses
<p>Informal learning: People in the district show a high affinity towards informal learning activities, e.g. reading books and visiting museums. Cultural offers like the “children’s cultural compass” provide further informal learning activities.</p> <p>General education: Pupils show skills in reading, German, language, mathematics and science above the nation-wide average (top 5 in the national comparison).</p> <p>Religious and community engagement: High involvement in church and religious activities as well as with regard to the commitment to children and older people.</p>	<p>Continuing education: There is a relatively low participation rate in work-related continuing education and training. Differences between sectors exist (e.g. high training rate in tourism sector). Although the cost for continuing education is relatively low, the “return on investment” for education influences the companies’ decisions, to send their employees to training courses.</p> <p>Extracurricular offers: A low supply of youth work facilities was reported for the district, as well as a small number of sports clubs.</p> <p>Learning content and materials: At school level, the district has only little influence on the selection of materials.</p>
„External view“ on factors that influence LLL in the district	
Opportunities	Threats
<p>LLL projects: The district of Lindau initiated two major projects “Learning on site” and “Learning Regions” with a focus on regional networking and partnerships, and counselling.</p> <p>Unemployment policy: The employment agency supports the rapid integration of unemployed into training courses for a faster return into the labour market. The participation in training is supported by the “education voucher” and home loan savings for education.</p> <p>Degree of autonomy: Relatively high degree of autonomy in defining and implementing E&T policies, through various funding structures, including foundations and local sponsors. The independent VHS and IHK (which are among the most committed players in lifelong learning in the district) support the overall LLL policy.</p> <p>Educational counselling: The focus of the offers is on an empowerment approach, based on the strengths of the people seeking advice.</p>	<p>Higher education: There is no university or university of applied sciences in the district of Lindau. Consequently, young people go to university in other cities, or even abroad. Also, the job structures in the district do not attract people with university degree.</p> <p>Access to learning: The rural structures of the district Lindau limit the mobility of people who do not own a car. Additionally, older people are often intimidated by existing negative stereotypes about their learning abilities.</p> <p>Political and voluntary engagement: The involvement of inhabitants of the district in political parties or the fire brigade is rather low.</p>

Recommendations for policy making

The socioeconomic strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats need to be considered in relation to the overall situation and learning factors of the district of Lindau. While the low unemployment rate and high number of engineers generally attest a positive situation on the job market, with knowledge intensive businesses, the high availability of training places is a two-fold situation. Statistics may show an over-supply of training places, however, given the fact that young people tend to move away from the district, further analysis is required to find out if the training places are offered for the professions demanded by these people. Many young people decide not to participate in vocational training of the dual system, but continue their education at higher education institutions outside of the district. Their chances to return to Lindau are low, because job offers for academics are few (except in the field of engineering). The low unemployment rate would also be supported by the fact that unemployed people are integrated into training courses offered by the employment agency. While this leads to a lower unemployment rate (people in training courses are not counted among the unemployed people), the actual re-integration of these people into the labour market might be more challenging.

- ➔ Develop the higher education infrastructure in the district and promote academic distance education simultaneously, to provide opportunities for the acquisition of higher education degrees within the district.
- ➔ Support local enterprises in the development of dual higher education offers (duales Studium), an integration of regular university studies and practical work placement in a company.
- ➔ Increase number of job offers for academics from all fields of study to motivate the return of people who acquired their degree in a higher education institution outside of the district.
- ➔ Develop school programmes for career orientation and counselling, with a focus on the introduction of various training professions.

While older people are attracted by the regions good health offers and nursing homes, the low availability of day care facilities in some parts of the district makes the region less attractive for families, since they have to face the challenge of combining family and work life. The public transport situation limits the mobility of people without a car especially in rural areas; consequently their access to lifelong learning opportunities is limited, too. In general, a high motivation for non-formal and informal learning activities can be reported. These activities include reading books and visiting museums. However, since the district Lindau is a touristic region, the actual number of visitors in museums needs to be relativized. At the same time, the quantity of extra curricular offers such as youth work facilities and sports club does not meet the demand.

- ➔ Improve the situation of day care through synergies, e.g. by supporting enterprises in setting up day care offers for their employees; by facilitating intergenerational housing projects, including the training of older people to take care of children from families living in the same housing complex.
- ➔ Support programmes for the recognition and validation of informal learning outcomes¹ by formal education institutions and companies, e.g. through portfolio development, presentations, examinations, practical evidence, etc.
- ➔ Assess the local demands for non-formal and informal learning offers and support the development of facilities, respectively. At the same time, increase access to lifelong learning opportunities, e.g. through improving public transport in rural areas and promotion of online learning activities for less mobile people.
- ➔ Perform "social library services" to support informal learning. A bookmobile could provide old, ill and disabled people with the opportunity of carriage-free delivery, e.g. in 4-week rotation.

¹ CEDEFOP (2009): European guidelines for validating non-formal and informal learning. Luxembourg: Office for Official Publications of the European Communities. Retrieved 23.08.2012 from: http://www.cedefop.europa.eu/EN/Files/4054_en.pdf