

FORMING CIVIL SERVANTS

Elements of Success and Ideas for Transfer Based on Germany's
Dual Public Administration Education

As a federally owned enterprise, GIZ supports the German Government in achieving its objectives in the field of international cooperation for sustainable development.

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FOREWORD

GIZ is a federal enterprise in the field of international cooperation for sustainable development and international education. It is active in more than 120 countries worldwide, supporting partner countries in implementing political, economic and social transformation processes for a better future. Over the past few years, our partners have increasingly sought a joint dialogue to exchange information on specific German policy experiences— for example the social-ecological market economy, decentralisation and fiscal decentralisation, or the dual system of administrative training.

Partner countries are keen to analyse these “Made in Germany” approaches, compare them with their own reform ideas and to examine which elements, approaches and experiences may be relevant for them. GIZ’s Governance Fund commissioned by the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ) addresses this specific demand. Through a network of experts, it makes German experience and knowledge available to partner countries around the world, helping policy makers shape reform initiatives and thus supporting various reform processes. The aim is not to treat the German policy experiences as a mere blueprint, but to use it as a basis for a necessary joint identification of successful and useful elements and an analysis of their relevance for the respective partner country.

As a basis for a dialogue with our partners, the Governance Fund commissioned four studies that illustrate German policy experiences. The studies were discussed and revised in a peer review process by experts with practical policy experience (e.g. former state ministers), with specialists from GIZ and from partner countries.

So far, the following studies have been prepared:

1. “Forming Civil Servants – Elements of Success and Ideas for Transfer Based on Germany’s Dual Public Administration Education”, carried out by the German Research Institute for Public Administration: Raphael Marbach, Carolin Steffens, Marius Herr, Prof. Dr. Dr. Jan Ziekow
2. “The Social-Ecological Market Economy in Germany”, carried out by DIW Econ, Prof. Dr. Alexander Kritikos and Dr. Anselm Mattes and commented by Jost de Jager, Schleswig-Holstein’s Former Minister of Economic Affairs
3. “Federalism and Decentralization in Germany – Basic Features and Principles for German Development Cooperation”, carried out by the University of Potsdam: Prof. Dr. Sabine Kuhlmann, Prof. Dr. Ulrike Fleischer and Prof. Dr. Harald Fuhr
4. “Reform and Future of Financial Equalization in Germany – Benefits for Development Cooperation”, carried out by Dr. Michael Thöne (Executive Board Member of the Institute for Public Economics at the University of Cologne) and Jens Bullerjahn (Former Minister of Finance of Saxony-Anhalt)

A team headed by Prof. Dr. Dr. Jan Ziekow of the German Research Institute for Public Administration wrote the comprehensive study on the system of the training of administrative staff in Germany - an interesting model for many partner countries of German development cooperation.

The study addresses policy makers from partner countries of German development cooperation as well as the broader professional public interested in capacity development of administrative staff, administrative reform processes and development policy. Our thanks go to the authors and to stakeholders and colleagues at home and abroad, whose valuable comments contributed to the success of the study.



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ABSTRACT

In recent years, partner countries of German development cooperation have voiced a growing interest in German public administration education. Against this background, we provide a systematic assessment of the system of public administration education – covering the vocational education and training (VET) program for the intermediate civil service, and the (dual) study program for the higher intermediate civil service. We identify elements of success within the German system and evaluate their relevance for an idea transfer to partner countries. Thereby, we identify four promising elements for partner countries: recruitment, „dualizing“ civil service training, institutionalizing fitness for transformation, and introducing a modularized concept. For each element we specify components and describe their potential benefits, basic conditions, and core ideas for exporting the element.

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1. INTRODUCTION

Educating and training civil servants is essential for capacity building in the public sector. A successful education and training program can contribute to an efficient and effective civil service that adheres to the principles of good governance.

In recent years, partner countries of German development cooperation have voiced a growing interest in public administration education in Germany. In this context, the Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) has commissioned the study at hand. The study focuses on general inner public administration, as other education programs (e.g. police, finance, justice, etc.) are all different. It provides a systematic assessment of the German system of public administration education and considers the question of which elements of this system can serve as a model for partner countries. The study focuses on vocational education and addresses two questions:

1. What are the successful elements of vocational education in public administration in Germany?
2. Which of those successful elements are relevant for an idea transfer to other countries?

In pursuit of an answer, we begin by defining quality in vocational education for public administration. We proceed by explaining our research design, next we provide an overview of Germany's system of public administration education and training. We go on to identify elements of success within the German system, evaluate their relevance for an idea transfer to partner countries and develop transferrable components of those elements

2. DEFINING SUCCESS OF VOCATIONAL EDUCATION FOR PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION

The education and training of civil servants is a key factor in the capacity of public administration to serve society and state. To define quality, we draw on the notion of "fitness for purpose and transformation"¹. Fitness for purpose means that vocational education contributes to fulfilling the objectives and caters to the demands of public administration. Fitness for transformation is the ability to adapt to an ever-changing environment as well as to changing objectives. The vocational education of civil servants can be considered of high quality if it retains the ability to adapt and contributes meaningfully to the capacity of the public administration to meet two types of expectation: those of society toward the state and its administration, and those of the state toward its servants.²

2.1 Fitness for Purpose

Societal expectations toward the state depend on the political, economic and socio-cultural system of a given country and may change over time. In Germany, general expectations toward the public administration are conformity to the rule of law, social justice, nondiscrimination, integrity and legitimacy. Additionally, citizens expect the administration to work effectively, efficiently and in a service-oriented way, and to guarantee an adequate quality of public services.³ The UN definition of good governance offers more generalized criteria to assess the quality of governance, including public administration: "[Governance] means the process of decision-making and the process by which decisions are implemented (or not implemented). [Good governance] is participatory, consensus oriented, accountable, transparent, responsive, effective and efficient, equitable and inclusive and follows the rule of law".⁴ The expectations of the state toward its (new) employees and thus their vocational education differ in part from public expectations. Public service systems emerge out of historical traditions and are sometimes slow to adapt to changing circumstances.

¹ This notion was introduced first by Ball (1985) and expanded by Harvey and Green (1993). See HarrisHuemert (2008: 35–38) for a concise discussion of quality in the higher education sector.

² Reichard/Röber (2009).

³ Reichard/Röber (2009).

⁴ UN Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (2009): 1.

2.2 Fitness for Transformation

Public administration has to adapt constantly to a changing environment and with it education has to adjust as well. While public service systems are strongly rooted in historical traditions, vocational education has to provide future administrators not only with skills to work competently in the current system of administration, but also in a reforming and evolving system. The German administration is currently dealing with at least three challenges: the first is digitalization – public administration is expected to make competent use of IT and e-government potentials, and to provide services to citizens and businesses on line. Second, demographic change – for example an ageing society – requires the administration to come up with new types of accessibility. Finally, privatization and outsourcing in the public sector require managerial and network management skills from public administrators in order to maintain the quality of public services.⁵

2.3 Education

A successful system of vocational education (in Germany) needs to foster certain values, impart a specific kind of knowledge and capacitate apprentices and students to acquire certain skills.⁶

- “Values: public interest orientation, loyalty toward the state, reliability, legal and ethical fundamental principles such as the rule of law, accessibility, and tolerance;
- Knowledge: legal and managerial basic knowledge, methods, an understanding of causes of problems and contexts;
- Skills: problem-solving ability, ability to learn, ability to deal with changing and new tasks, competent handling of the policy process, key competences regarding management and communication, negotiation and regulation.”⁷

3. RESEARCH DESIGN

In order to capture to what extent and how vocational education tries to impart the required values, knowledge, and skills, we drew on the literature on vocational education in public administration, assessed study curricula, regulations and laws, and conducted guided expert interviews.

Expert interviews are useful for acquiring detailed information and procedural knowledge which is often not documented. Furthermore, we were also interested in the interpretations and comprehensive assessments of the experts.⁸ We interviewed 32 experts⁹ from four different groups: (1) experts from universities of applied sciences with public administration programs, (2) experts from public administration schools, (3) instruction managers at government institutions, and (4) education experts with experience in development cooperation.

To gain information about the goals of vocational education we drew on the curricula and regulations in respect of the education programs, and consulted experts from schools and universities of applied sciences. The same experts also informed us about how education is done, including teaching methods, recruitment and training of educators, and the connection between theory and practice. Asking educators offered a first basis for evaluating success, whilst interviewing instruction managers complemented this view. Instruction managers informed us about how practical training is conducted and organized, about the problems of students and apprentices, and about the demands of the agency¹⁰ as an employer. As such, instruction managers provided information that helped assess the quality of the education and the fit of the education to the demand of the agencies. Both educators and instruction managers are directly involved in education and training; asking them to assess their own work may have led to a biased response, but asking instruction managers to assess the work of educators and vice versa may attenuate this problem. Finally, experts with experience in development cooperation helped us with background information in identifying relevant elements for partner countries.

⁵ Reichard/Röber (2009).

⁶ We refrain here from using the concept of competence as we deem it a concept that is common in German-speaking areas, but not as common elsewhere.

⁷ Reichard/Röber (2009): 114, own translation.

⁸ Gläser/Laudel (2010): 110.

⁹ An expert is a person who has knowledge concerning processes, contexts, or interpretations of research interest that cannot (efficiently) be acquired by other means. Bogner/Menz (2009): 46.

¹⁰ By using the term agency we refer broadly to every civilian state institution or state body including all levels of the state from national to local.

Public administration differs vertically between federal level, state level, and county and municipal level – and so does vocational education. Training also varies horizontally between the states. To capture these two kinds of variation, we selected the federal level and four states for in-depth analysis and interviews. The four states differ with regard to education for the higher intermediate civil service, their structure (being a city state or not) and their institutional legacy (Eastern/Western Germany). The last of these is especially relevant because new education institutions were founded in Eastern Germany after the Reunification. At federal level we interviewed the first three groups of experts. For each of the four states, we interviewed one expert from a university of applied sciences, one from a public administration school, and one human resources manager from the state's ministry of the interior. To capture the differences between state and county level, we also sampled human resources managers of one city and one rural county in each of the four states selected. We excluded small to medium-sized municipalities as only a small number of civil servants for the higher intermediate level are trained there each year. We assessed the information collected in the context of the German reform debate on public sector reform and specifically the reform of the vocational education system.

4. PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION EDUCATION IN GERMANY

German public administration has a continental European federal tradition with a strong legalistic culture and strong rule of law. All administrative action has to be based on or justified by law. Due to this strong federalism the subnational levels are highly important, as is the subsidiarity principle. According to the latter, social and political issues should be dealt with at the most immediate (or local) level that is consistent with their resolution. The importance of the subnational levels is also illustrated by the fact that of all employees in public administration, only 12% are employed at federal level, compared to 53% at state level, and 35% at county and municipal level.¹¹ Even though both counties and municipalities officially form part of the states, their autonomy is guaranteed by the Basic Law.¹² De facto counties and municipalities jointly constitute a third political and administrative level: besides selfgoverning tasks, they are also responsible for conducting transferred tasks on behalf of the federal or state level.¹³ Most state, federal and EU law (70-85%) is implemented and executed at this third level.¹⁴

The German civil service system is relatively lean with a 10% share of all employment, mostly because welfare is traditionally provided by the third sector but financed by the state. German civil servants are close to the Weberian ideal type of bureaucrats who apply laws and regulations and usually follow a lifetime career in public service.¹⁵ The German constitution (Basic Law) enshrines this traditional outlook by stating that “the public service shall be regulated and developed with due regard to the traditional principles of the professional civil service”¹⁶. These principles include a lifetime employment relationship of service and loyalty, neutrality and a system based on merit. Moreover, civil servants are bound to take responsibility for the free democratic basic order. The civil service system features two distinct forms of employment: first, a career-based personal system with lifelong tenure, high barriers for exit or entry after starting a career and a separate labor law for civil servants.¹⁷ Second, there are employees under regular labor law who are employed for specific positions. Unless specified otherwise, we mean both types of employee when speaking of civil servants. Compared to other (European)

¹¹ Kuhlmann/Wollmann (2013): 79.

¹² Art. 28 Grundgesetz [Basic Law].

¹³ Wollmann (1999): 196.

¹⁴ Kuhlmann/Wollmann (2013): 76 – 77.

¹⁵ Hajnal (2015); Schröter/Röber (2015a, 2015b).

¹⁶ Art. 33, Abs. 5 Grundgesetz [Basic Law], English translation: https://www.gesetze-im-internet.de/englisch_gg/englisch_gg.html [retrieved April 19, 2018].

¹⁷ Kuhlmann/Wollmann (2013): 26.

countries, the German civil service has medium levels of formal politicization; the position of heads of department in ministries is sometimes, but not regularly, distributed according to party affiliation. On the other hand, the influence of bureaucrats on policy-making can be considered high due to the strong influence of ministerial bureaucracy on drafting legislation.¹⁸

4.1 Historical Outline

The German civil service has its roots in the 19th century. The goal was to create an instrumental organ that would be at the service of the government independent of economic and social circumstances. At its heart stood the merit principle that rewarded performance and loyalty toward the law and superiors. At this stage, the civil service consisted of a small elite forming the ministerial bureaucracy, and entry was limited to the upper middle class and the aristocracy as administrative education and training were unpaid.¹⁹

During the German Empire from 1871 to 1918, the professional civil service assumed the form that – at its core – has persisted up to this date. The gradual inclusion into the civil service of workers and employees from the service administration of education, healthcare, social services and public transportation led to a surge in the numbers of civil servants. The goal was to bind a significant segment of the working class to the interests of the government in order to safeguard its rule. Until the end of WW I in 1918, higher civil service members were almost exclusively recruited from upper middle-class families and above in order to guarantee a conservative attitude and a homogeneous workforce. Civil servants were expected to be loyal to the government and had no right to become involved politically or go on strike. Rising political pressure increasingly gave them a position that was privileged and close to parliament. It was those privileges which kept the civil servants from siding with the working class.²⁰ The time between WW I and WW II was marked by existential threats to the German civil service system due to three regime changes: from the German Empire to the Weimar Republic in 1918, to Nazi rule in 1933 and to occupation by the Allied forces in 1945. Each change put the civil service at odds with the new regime, but each time it managed to

maintain its integrity by referring to its neutral position and serving its new master. At the same time, the loyalty of the civil service to the head of government and strong hierarchy made it possible for any elite that managed to get a firm grip on the apparatus of state to use the bureaucracy for its own ends. In the western occupation zones of the Allied forces, the goal of purging the administration of former Nazi members was abandoned, priority being given instead to that of creating democratic structures with the participation of occupied Germany. Only the regime change in the occupation zone controlled by the Soviet Union led to effective purging.²¹ Nonetheless, after WW II substantial changes were undertaken. Adherence to the law and human rights – even against orders from superiors – was embedded in the legal framework of the civil service. The duty to remonstrate requires civil servants to notify superiors if orders are at odds with legal requirements or violate human dignity. If orders would result in civil or penal law violations, civil servants have to refrain from executing them even after being specifically instructed to do so.²² In the 1970's further reforms were undertaken in the field, resulting in newly founded training institutions like universities of applied sciences specialized in public administration. In the reform process managerial skills and professionalization became important parts of the study programs.

Since 1805, professional training for public servants has remained remarkably constant, linking theory with practice and requiring several years of training before entering the job. Alongside this intense training, several principles were developed that still persist today: the merit principle requires applicants to meet high standards in exams before entering public service. Other principles are adequate salaries including provision for relatives, lifetime employment, and a highly differentiated disciplinary system.²³ Complementarily, civil servants are sworn into office, which demands at least passive support of the government and personal integrity. Jointly, this constitutes a system of rewards and punishment that binds the interest of public servants to the interest of the government. Overall, German public service was and still is remarkably effective.

¹⁸ Kuhlmann/Wollmann (2013): 38 – 39; Schnapp (2006); Schwanke/Ebinger (2006).

¹⁹ Wunder (1986): 67 – 68.

²⁰ Wunder (1986): 19; 146 – 147.

²¹ Wunder (1986): 147; 195.

²² Bundesbeamtenengesetz § 63

²³ Wunder (1981): 19; Fisch (2008): 87 – 88.

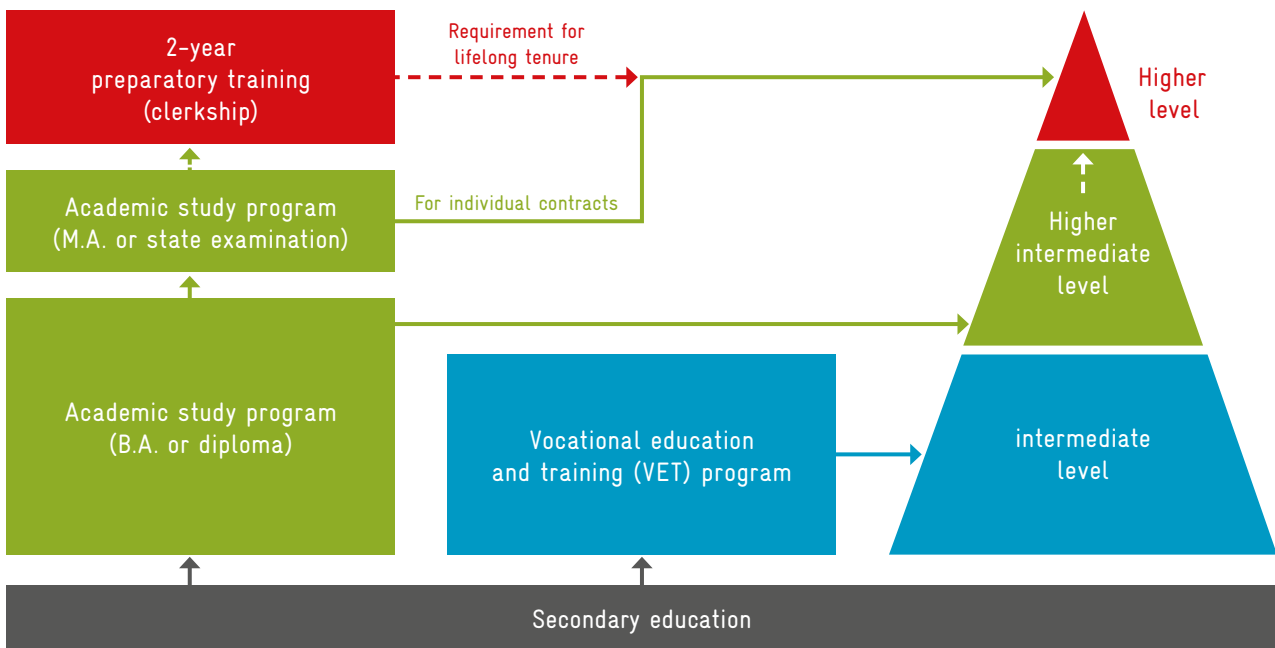
4.2 Educating and Forming Civil Servants

The German civil service is divided by qualification levels and by type of employment. As stated above, an employee may either be employed as a civil servant with an individual contract or as a civil servant with lifetime tenure including special rights and obligations. Both forms of employment exist at every qualification level. The German civil service is divided into three qualification levels: intermediate-level civil service, higher intermediate civil service and higher civil service (see Figure 1).²⁴ Higher-level civil servants take on management tasks; higher intermediate-level civil servants assess and decide at operational level, while intermediate-level civil servants carry out operations. Management tasks in local governments are also often carried out by senior civil servants belonging to the higher intermediate level.²⁵

The intermediate level can be accessed by applicants graduating from a vocational education and training (VET) program which combines schooling with an apprenticeship at a state institution. Higher intermediate civil service requires a bachelor's degree or equivalent (usually from a university of applied sciences). Finally, higher civil service can only be entered with a master's degree, state examination, or PhD.²⁶ Civil servants at the higher intermediate level can rise to higher civil service if they perform extraordinarily well. But even these high performers have to obtain a formal qualification via Master of Public Administration programs or other programs.

In the section that follows, the three qualification levels will be described in detail.

FIGURE 1: EDUCATION AND TRAINING SYSTEM FOR THE CIVIL SERVICE²⁷



²⁴ Due to rising professional requirements, the ordinary civil service ranking as the lowest level has become obsolete. Hence, it will not be discussed here.

²⁵ Eisenberg (2010): 53 – 58.

²⁶ 'Political bureaucrats' at the highest levels constitute an exception to this rule: they are employed only temporarily and recruited based on party affiliation in order to secure the implementation of government policies. See Fisch (2008): 108-110.

²⁷ Based on Reichard/Röber (2012): 14.

4.2.1 Intermediate Civil Service

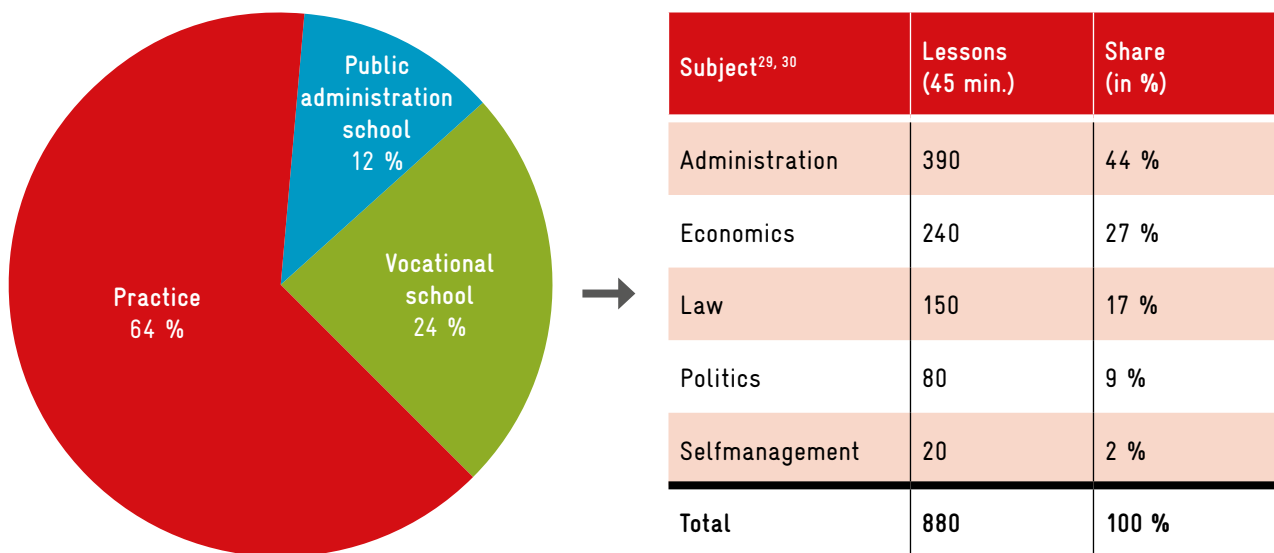
Germany's Dual Vocational Training System

Germany's dual vocational training system originates from historical apprenticeships which were a form of on-the-job training where practitioners passed their knowledge on in exchange for work. The dual vocational training system combines apprenticeships in a company or agency with vocational education at a vocational school.²⁸ After completing their vocational training, the apprentices are certified and attain the status of "journeyman". The system facilitates highly standardized and comparable education in combination with more specific on-the-job training, which allows employees fairly high mobility in the labor market.²⁹

The goal of the VET program for public administration is to train professionals who can work within the administration in a wide range of positions in a service-oriented, effective, and efficient manner. In a word, the goal is to form "administration all-rounders". Hence, the objective is to impart profound knowledge in the application and implementation of law, accompanied by management and organizational skills as well as communication skills. The main values taught are adherence to and belief in the rightness of the rule of law, welfare orientation and service orientation.³⁰ There are two different vocational education and training programs, one of which is based on individual contracts (*Verwaltungsfachangestellte*), whilst the other constitutes employment as a civil servant with a right of revocation (*Beamte/r mittlerer Dienst*). As the program for *Verwaltungsfachangestellte* is more common, and to avoid confusion, we describe only this program here. The program is standardized nationwide and codified in a framework detailing its aims, sequence, and formalities. Apprentices receive a salary of about 50% of the salary they will receive as professionals at job entry, and that increases to up to 70% during the program.

FIGURE 2: COMPONENTS OF VOCATIONAL EDUCATION AND TRAINING (VET) PROGRAM³¹

Share of weeks of three year VET program (in %)



²⁸ Stratman/Schlösser (1990).

²⁹ Euler (2013).

³⁰ Kultusministerkonferenz (1999); Interviews with agencies.

³¹ Kultusministerkonferenz (1999): 8.

TABLE 1: CURRICULUM OF VOCATIONAL EDUCATION AND TRAINING (VET) PROGRAM³²

No.	Learning field	Time in school hours (1 school hour = 45 min.) Total	Years of training		
			1st	2nd	3rd
1	Organizing own vocational training	20	20		
2	Placing the administration in the state organization	80	80		
3	Preparing the procurement of goods	80	80		
4	Concluding and fulfilling contracts for the procurement of goods	60	60		
5	Personal management and planning	80	80		
6	Legal basis for computing income and wages in the public sector	40		40	
7	Recording and documenting stocks and value streams in the double-entry bookkeeping system	40		40	
8	Providing administrative services economically and in a service-oriented manner	60		60	
9	Performing administrative processes in a citizen-oriented manner	80		80	
10	Preparing, executing and checking the administration of the restriction of rights	100		60	40
11	Executing tasks of the granting administration	60			60
12	Providing public services in alternative legal forms (privatizing service provision, cooperation between private and public sector)	20			20
13	Monitoring and controlling public services financially (cost and activity accounting)	100			100
14	Orienting state actions in the national and international economy (fundamentals of macroeconomics)	60			60
Total		880	320	280	280

The program lasts three years and allows for specialization at federal, state, or county and municipal level. As can be seen in Figure 2, the training is predominantly practical (64%) and takes place at the agency. Theory is provided by vocational schools (two thirds of theoretical training) and public administration schools (one third). The theoretical part at a vocational school amounts to 880 lessons (45 min. each) and overlaps with similar programs for the private or third sector.³³ The focus is on administrative and office work, public finances including budget and cash systems, and the execution of laws. (See the table in Figure 2 for an overview by subject and Table 1 for more details). Theo-

retical training at public administration schools accounts for 420 lessons and contains public-administration-specific contents such as public business administration, law, human resources, and job specialization at the respective level (county and municipal, state, or federal).

Theoretical training is provided by practitioners, vocational teachers and lawyers. In the public administration schools, most teachers are practitioners regularly employed in state agencies and teach only in their area of expertise. The education is both up to date and relevant to public administration practice. Practitioners are, however, not al-

³² Kultusministerkonferenz (1999).

³³ Kultusministerkonferenz (1999): 8.

ways sufficiently equipped with teaching methods. Schools therefore try to ensure their didactical training through workshops and other qualifications. Schooling is organized in blocks of several weeks. The final grade of the vocational training program is made up of three components. First, homework, exams, and classroom participation are graded throughout the program; second, a general intermediate examination takes place; and third, apprentices conclude the training program with a final examination.

The practical training at the agency is on-the-job training where apprentices usually rotate through 8 to 20 different branches of the agency and work under the supervision of qualified and certified trainers. Instructors in the agencies teach and supervise the apprentices. Instructors have to be qualified both professionally and pedagogically. For the latter, they attend a two-week course to acquire the necessary foundation.³⁴ The large number of practice stations help the apprentices to gain a full understanding of the inner workings of the agency and acquire comprehensive knowledge of administrative processes. Depending on the complexity of the tasks, the apprentices accompany professionals or take on tasks independently after a short period of on-the-job training.

The employing agencies and the schools cooperate in educating the apprentices. For example, the employing agencies give feedback to the public administration schools at an institutionalized yearly meeting with the goal of maintaining the quality of the VET program. Additionally, the agencies compile an apprenticeship plan which organizes the practice stations according to the schools' curricula, which allows the apprentices to draw on their theoretical knowledge in many practice stations.

4.2.2 Higher Intermediate Civil Service³⁵

Higher intermediate civil service constitutes the "backbone of the administration"³⁶. Most sovereign tasks are done at this level. The goal of professional training is to prepare the candidates in a wide range of subjects to make them universally deployable. Similar to dual vocational training at intermediate level, the study program consists of both theory and practice, the theoretical part usually taking between half and two thirds of the time. In most states, the students apply to a public agency as their future employer. On acceptance, they are granted the status of a civil servant

with lifelong tenure with a right of revocation at the beginning of their training program. The study program is salaried at approximately two thirds of their entry wage during both the theory and the practice phase. There are, however, also programs that do not follow the dual system. In these, students have the status of regular university students, do not receive a salary, and gain extensive practical experience through internships.

Theoretical training consists usually in a three-year bachelor's degree at small-scale universities of applied sciences specializing in public administration. There is considerable variation among these study programs. Many of them are offered by internal training colleges of the civil service and organizationally belong to the federal or state administration. Others are taught at regular universities of applied sciences that offer a variety of other subjects as well and enjoy scientific autonomy. Another difference between study programs is their degree of interdisciplinarity. There are different study programs such as public administration (and variations) and the more economically oriented public business administration. While many of the study programs provide the formal qualification required for becoming a civil servant (with lifelong tenure) after graduation, some programs at external universities with a stronger focus on business administration do not. Figure 3 gives an overview of the different kinds of study program including examples.

As regards educators, there is considerable variation between the states as well. Some employ mostly professors, some grant full-time teacher status, and yet others almost exclusively employ practitioners and others teaching part-time. The professors and employed educators are mostly legal scholars, as law dominates as a subject, followed by business management, administrative and social sciences. Between 30 and 50% of the education is covered by practitioners and part-time lecturers. This group of educators teach only a couple of hours in addition to their actual professional job.

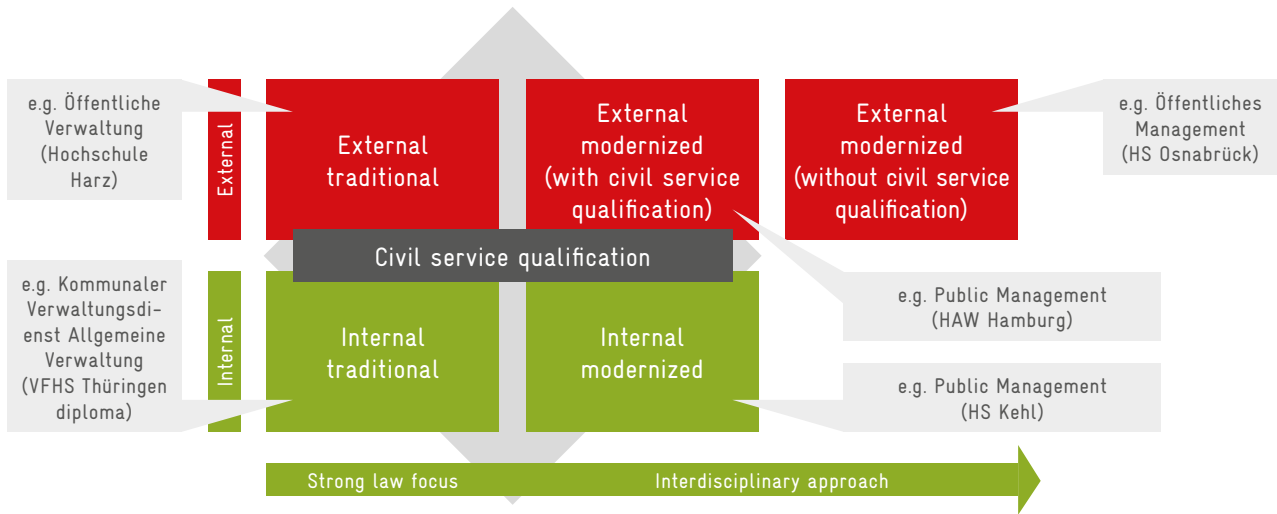
The shares of the different study subjects are shown in Figure 4, which is based on an analysis of 31 study programs of 21 different universities of applied sciences (see Table 2 for an overview of the sample). It illustrates the average share of subjects in total training, including practice stages. The practical part of the training lasts between 12 and 18 months and is split up into several stages during the semester breaks at the universities or in practice

³⁴ AusbEignV (2009).

³⁵ The study programs for the state level and the municipal and county level are designed at the level of individual institutions or at state level. As a result the programs may differ significantly. In order not to get lost in details, we focus here on the common characteristics.

³⁶ Reichard/Röber (2012): 67.

FIGURE 3: TYPES OF UNDERGRADUATE STUDY PROGRAM FOR PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION³⁷



semesters.³⁸ On average, it amounts to 27% of the entire study program. The practical stages are comparable to a trainee program, where the students get to know different departments of the same agency, different agencies, and in some cases also state agencies in other countries or administrative units in the private sector (see for example the training program of BadenWürttemberg). In several study programs, practical training includes working on small-scale projects. The projects are designed to link theory and practice and to apply project management skills taught at universities.

As can be seen in Figure 4, on average 23% of the content of study programs addresses law. This is closely followed by the share of business and economics with 18% on average. Interestingly, many programs also include electives in the coursework, which gives the universities and also the students some leeway to react to upcoming challenges in the public sector, for example the migration crisis or e-government. Even though the share of additional skills appears to be comparatively small at 5%, it does reflect the practical nature of the study program. As regards skills, there is a clear focus on the application of law (especially writing official orders – *Rechtsbescheide*).

TABLE 2: CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SAMPLE OF STUDY PROGRAMS

Characteristics	Number of study programs
Number of study programs	31
Bachelor's degree	28
Diploma	3
Internal programs	16
External programs	15
Number of universities	21
Entry qualification for higher intermediate civil service	Yes (24), optional (2), no (5)

* To avoid duplication, we picked only one program if it was optional to do the same program with two variations.

³⁷ This illustration is based on an analysis of 32 study programs taught at 22 different universities of applied sciences.

³⁸ As 23 of the study programs qualify for direct entry to higher intermediate civil service, they are bound to obey some regulations. They have to encompass at least 12 months of practical training. Of the remaining theoretical study program at least 30% has to be law. (IMK 2005).

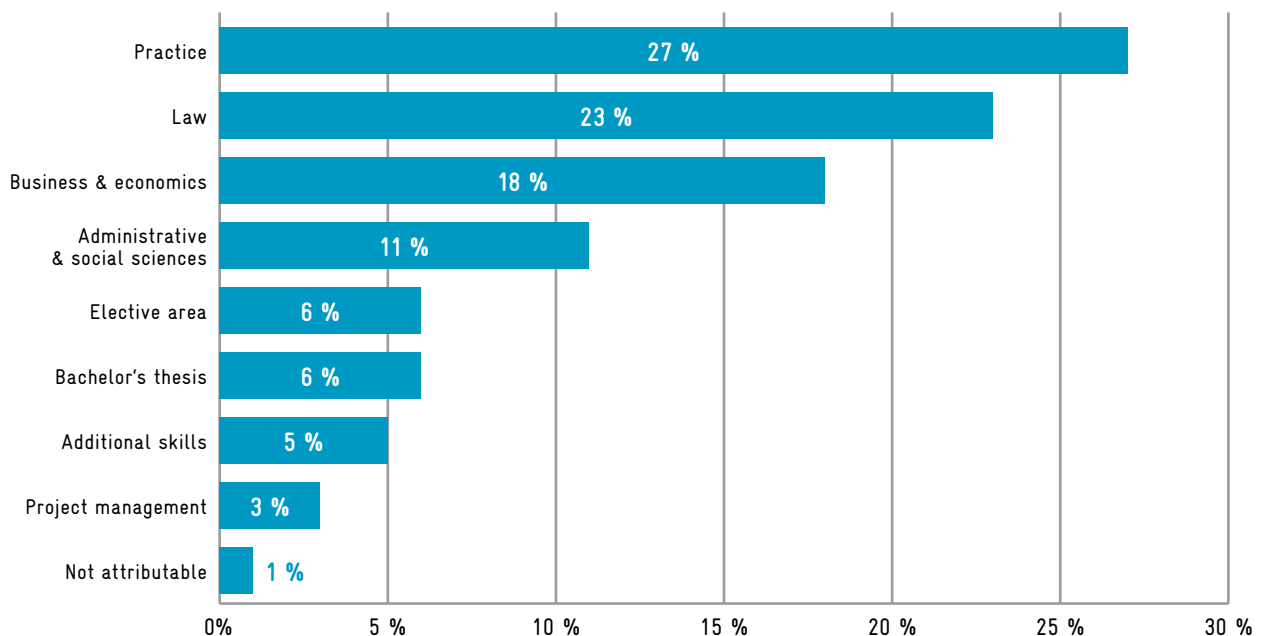
The cooperation between employing agencies and universities of applied sciences almost always comprises an institutionalized yearly meeting of practice instructors, professors and educators.³⁹ The rectors' conference of the universities for the civil service, held twice a year, enables the education institutions to exchange and share experiences and best practices. Quality management encompasses different levels. At the basic level, regular evaluations of courses, educators, and practice sections are conducted on a yearly basis. The results are discussed with students, within the faculty and in some cases also with agencies. One staff member is appointed as quality manager, which leads to clear responsibility. At a more general level, development plans for education institutions exist in some states, and these have to be updated every five years. One institution reported that it conducted alumni and employer surveys every five to eight years. For coordination between education institutions and agencies, informal contacts also exist to the conferences of cities, municipalities and counties at state and federal level.

4.2.3 Higher Civil Service

Higher civil service consists of the leading bureaucrats deployed mostly at federal or state level in ministries, departments and higher state agencies. They prepare drafts for legislation, and manage and monitor the implementation of laws. At county and municipal level, only a few higher civil servants are found – usually occupying leading positions.

Higher civil service is almost exclusively recruited from external university programs. As such, the transfer of reform ideas and innovation from universities is facilitated by an external educational background. The external education contrasts with other countries' civil service (e.g. France) where the bureaucratic elite is educated and socialized at specialized public administration schools.⁴⁰ For decades, the higher civil service in public administration was made up almost entirely of law graduates, which led many to speak of a “monopoly of lawyers” in the administration.⁴¹ Today, law graduates make up 50 to 70% of the newly recruited higher civil servants.⁴²

FIGURE 4: AVERAGE SHARE OF SUBJECTS IN DUAL STUDY PROGRAMS OF PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION (B.A.) IN GERMANY (IN %)



Note: The graph is based on 31 Public Administration study programs of which 28 culminate in a bachelor's degree (B.A. or LL.B.) and 3 in an equivalent diploma.

³⁹ One of the main goals of these meetings is to serve as a platform between practitioners and academic staff from the universities for a continuous needs analysis to focus skills to be targeted by provided trainings.

⁴⁰ Ziekow (2018): 89 – 105.

⁴¹ Bogumil/Jann (2009): 118 – 119.

⁴² Reichard/Röber (2012): 26.

4.3 Recruitment

4.3.1 Intermediate Civil Service

The selection criteria for the intermediate level usually require the following: completing ten years of schooling, grades above average in the subjects German and mathematics, occasionally also English. As dual vocational training is a basic training, no specific knowledge is required. With regard to skills, employers look for good communication skills, service orientation, and team orientation. In respect of values they seek thorough, reliable, efficient applicants who are also civic-minded and tolerant.

At the beginning of the application process the employer determines the demand for new personnel. The applicants are selected based on a written application and a personal interview at which those present include superiors, a human resources manager, and a representative of the staff council. Sometimes assessment centers are used as an additional step in selecting applicants before a personal interview.⁴³

The civil service is attractive to applicants mostly because of high entry salaries during training as well as the fairly high employment security in the case of the career-based system. In economically strong regions, state institutions are faced with the challenge of finding adequate applicants, which they confront by advertising their training programs. Most human resources departments find between 20 and 50 applicants per job offer and thus do not face a lack of applicants.⁴⁴

4.3.2 Higher Intermediate Civil Service

The selection criteria for higher intermediate civil service are based on school grades in German, mathematics and foreign languages, and the grade point average. Candidates need to have graduated from high school or have a vocational baccalaureate diploma (*Fachabitur*) which requires 12 to 13 years of schooling. As with intermediate civil service, employers look for social skills, but focus more strongly on analytical skills and self-reliance.

The application process depends on the type of study program. For dual study programs, agencies sometimes select candidates in cooperation with universities. For regular study programs, the universities of applied sciences handle the application and recruitment procedures. Of the 31 public administration study programs we analyzed, 20 were dual study programs. For the majority of these, the agency handles the complete selection process (85% of dual programs). In a few cases (15%), an additional written application and an assessment test at the university are required. Of the 11 regular study programs, almost all (91%) recruit through written applications to the university; only one university requires candidates to do an assessment test as well. The application process for dual study programs typically starts with an agency's job advertisement, which entails a job description, requirements and desired qualifications. Candidates apply in written form or in some cases on line. In some states (e.g. Baden-Württemberg and Bavaria) promising applicants are invited to a state-wide written assessment test, to evaluate their skills in German, mathematics, and other subjects. After passing the test the applicants receive an invitation to a job interview with their future employer or apply with their test results to future employers. The appeals of dual study programs of public administration are a salaried education and a secure job. In most cases the students become civil servants after signing the study-and-employment contract.

4.3.3 Higher Civil Service

In contrast to the dual vocational and study programs described before, candidates for higher civil service are recruited by agencies after they have graduated from their studies. The application process follows a structured procedure, typically including an assessment center. Recruitment for higher civil service is usually based on examination grades and additional jobspecific requirements. For lawyers, the legal examination provides effective pre-screening as the grades are comparable nationwide. For field experts of other disciplines, the selection is based more specifically on content-related competences which are sometimes assessed through entrance examinations. The merit principle requires the best applicants to be picked, but at the same time salaries in the public sector are lower than in the private sector.⁴⁵ To compensate, the state service advertises mainly with job security and the compatibility of work and family.

⁴³ Fischer et al. (2013): 155-169; Günther (2013): 161 – 187.

⁴⁴ Based on interviews with human resource departments.

⁴⁵ Ziekow (2018): 90-93.

4.4 Financing Administration Education

Vocational education and training for the intermediate level is financed like dual vocational education and training in Germany generally: the public administration schools and vocational schools are funded by the state while the agencies or companies pay for the practical share of the education and the salaries of the apprentices. The federal states pay the salaries of the teachers, while the counties or municipalities provide the facilities and the inventory.⁴⁶ The federal level supplements and supports measures to facilitate transition from high school to vocational education and from vocational education to job entry.

The higher intermediate-level education programs are usually dual study programs which combine study and practice stages. Usually the study contract is concluded between the student and the agency which means that the former is paid by the latter. In internal programs the student is taught at an internal university of applied sciences specializing in administration and has the employment status of a civil servant with a right of revocation. These administration universities of applied sciences are mostly financed by the respective states (usually the ministry of the interior) and to some extent also by the county and municipal level, as most students are educated for service at those levels. External study programs at regular universities of applied sciences are financed by the ministry of education of the respective state.⁴⁷

Higher-level civil service entrants are university graduates. In Germany, almost all universities are public and hence financed by the federal states. In the case of clerkships, the employing state finances the clerks during their two-year training period.

5. SUCCESSFUL ELEMENTS OF CIVIL SERVICE TRAINING IN GERMANY

Earlier, we defined success in public administration education as fitness for purpose and fitness for transformation, which, on the bottom line, means meeting the demands of society and state. Based on a systematic analysis of the expert interviews we conducted, this section evaluates elements of civil service training in Germany based on whether they are fit for purpose and transformation. We conclude the section by pointing out weaknesses of the German system identified in the interviews and in the academic literature.

5.1 Recruitment

The recruitment policies are regulated by the Civil Service Status Act (*Beamtenstatusgesetz*) which demands objective criteria for selecting candidates. The procedure is transparent and objective, focusing on selecting the best students. The selection criteria are well adapted to the demands of jobs in the administration, which means that they are based on performance in school as well as social skills. With the exception of the Free State of Saxony, qualified applicants were readily available wherever we asked, indicating that the civil service in Germany is still attractive. One selling point is the relatively high job security combined with a clear career system and an excellent work-life balance. Overall, the recruitment can be considered of high quality given the objective, performance-oriented selection procedure that focuses mostly on the relevant criteria and faces no shortage of candidates. A future challenge may consist in a retirement wave that may make it harder to ensure the quality of applicants in coming years. Most interviewees told us that the recruitment policy is to fill the vacancies when they occur. This works now, but it will be hard to implement when large numbers retire.⁴⁸

⁴⁶ Bundesministerium für Bildung und Forschung (BMBF) (2017a; b).

⁴⁷ Municipalities and counties employ most of the public administration graduates at the higher intermediate level. In some states, e.g. Baden-Württemberg, they therefore finance part of the training system via the municipal financial equalization system.

⁴⁸ Beckermann in Fischer (2015): 80.

5.2.1 Intermediate Civil Service

The vocational education and training program at intermediate level is practical in nature. Its basic structure has not changed since 1999. The subjects are kept up to date by standing committees at federal and state level. The apprentices spend most of their time in the agency receiving on-the-job training. Clear responsibilities are assigned in agencies that participate in the VET program. The instruction manager organizes the VET program, develops an apprenticeship plan, and liaises with schools and the respective departments that take in apprentices. In each department the apprentices should be partnered with a qualified instructor for their practical training. The rotation system during the program allows the apprentices to familiarize themselves with the key branches of the agency and develop a comprehensive understanding of its processes and organization. The rotation system is a key success factor which not only allows the apprentices to be universally deployable on graduation, but also to communicate effectively and cooperate with other departments, thus reducing transaction costs.

Interviews with the public administration schools and the human resources departments indicated that the quality of the on-the-job training is contingent on the value attributed to vocational education. Where being an instructor is just another task on top of the pile of daily work, high motivation cannot compensate for lack of time. Where the executive level rewards instructing departments and instructors factually with time, or symbolically via recognition and by offering them privileged access to the most promising apprentices, the quality of the instruction improves.

The education is an interdisciplinary mix of administration, economics, law, and politics. The administration section includes office work skills which are then trained in the practice stages. As Table 1 indicates, education at vocational schools addresses several administrative fields, preparing for the various practice stages. Theoretical education is usually provided by two separate schools: a general vocational school and a public administration school. The former provides the general educational background, whereas the latter imparts the knowledge and skills required for the specializations. The vocational schools are criticized by some experts as struggling to link theory and practice, as the teachers have no practical experience in administration. The public administration schools fared considerably better in the opinion of human resources managers. Cooperation was closer, the practitioners teaching subjects ensured that the topics were both practice-relevant and up to date, and they allowed students to reflect on the practice in the classes.

Three groups of educators take part in forming civil servants at intermediate level. First, vocational school teachers who have usually graduated with a general state examination which prepares them to teach a wide array of subjects

for different professions. Second, public administration school educators are usually practitioners who teach some classes, but work mainly in a specialized agency, which allows them to bring their expertise to the classroom. Their didactic skills are mixed and they are often recruited informally, which saves recruiting costs but results in fluctuating quality. Didactic qualification programs exist, but they are not an entry requirement for practitioners. Finally, instructors in the agencies are responsible for on-the-job-training and are required to have a formal qualification for instructing. In general, this mix can be considered fairly successful.

The link between theory and practice is fostered by alternation which is structured according to the respective levels of knowledge. The maximum duration of the individual stages should be a few weeks, so that the knowledge gained is linked to current practice and prevented from sinking into oblivion. Practitioners who teach part-time at public administration schools also help to provide practice-oriented theoretical training.

Taken together, all of the groups that take part in the VET program rate it as good or very good. The human resources departments we asked responded in unison that the graduates were universally deployable, were more of a help than a burden to the departments during their apprenticeships, and needed little time to adjust before working in their new position.

Thus, the VET program can be considered both fit for purpose and fit for transformation.

5.2.2 Higher Intermediate Civil Service

For higher intermediate civil service, the practice stages are of high quality, although they do have some potential for improvement. The practice terms have clear learning objectives, and the instructors guide the students. Instructors voiced that the effectiveness of the practice stages hinged on coordination with education institutions. Generally, the students' contribution to the agencies was greater than the amount of work they caused. The agencies wished for more time to socialize and train the students in practice. Only some study programs allowed the students to do internships in the private sector or abroad. Generally, the extensive practice periods worked very well in preparing the students for their future work and limited the amount of time needed for adjustment.

The theoretical part of the study program is well adapted to the required competences in practice. Law has the largest share with about 50% of the theoretical studies, but the focus is on the methods of how to use, apply and implement law and not on memorizing norms. The remaining share of the study programs is an interdisciplinary mix of business and economics, administrative and social sciences and, increas-

ingly, information technology. The interdisciplinary program is complemented by some additional skills training to foster social and other practice-related skills. The interdisciplinary approach allows the students to acquire multiple perspectives of administrative actions helping them to make well informed and balanced decisions in complex situations in the future.

The link between theory and practice is based on alternation of the study programs, teachers with practical experience, instructors and practice-oriented courses. The link is strengthened, for example, by project courses which follow a learning-by-doing approach and internship reports that combine reflection and repetition of theoretical knowledge. Additionally, the practice stages are opportunities to apply and develop project management skills. In the courses, the educators try to draw on the practical experience which the students acquired in earlier semesters.

The universities of applied sciences mostly evaluate the cooperation with agencies positively. For successful cooperation, both institutionalized and personal contacts between theory and practice institutions should exist on a regular basis. Personal contacts are important for communicating minor practice problems. Institutionalized meetings give both sides a platform on which conflicting interests and more major problems can be discussed. Taken together, the agencies evaluate the dual study program very positively. Within the departments there is often high competition for graduates, as the graduates need relatively little time to contribute fully as employees.

As regards educators, a mix of practitioners and professors is a successful combination that may ensure both academic standards and practice relevance, if not in each individual course then over the program as a whole. The academic and professional background of most educators is law, followed by management and economics, public management, information technology, and social sciences. Many teachers are involved in the continuing education of administration professionals, which leads to a mutual learning process between professionals and educators. This in turn contributes to the practice orientation of the educators and thus also to the quality of the education. Many federal states or education institutions also require professional experience outside academia, sometimes specifically in administration.⁴⁹ However, there are no standards concerning didactic qualifications. Nevertheless, many education institutions recommend or require (and pay for) didactic qualifications of their educators.

Legally, internal universities are subordinate to the ministry of the interior which signifies that they are bound not only to the agreement of the Conference of Ministers of the Interior (IMK), but also to the state decrees by which they were

founded by and the study program order, which is often a state decree as well. Thus, medium-sized or large changes necessitate the cooperation between university and ministry which may result in a somewhat lengthy reform process and occasionally cause frictions between the two.

The general assessment of agencies was that the dual study program is of high quality; the graduates need little time to adjust before working as full employees. Almost all graduates are guaranteed a job afterwards. In the interviews the human resources managers said that there were only a few things they would want to change about the study programs. Moreover, being considered a “well-trained public manager” can be advantageous in local elections. Most mayors are public administrators by training. For example, in Baden-Württemberg about 85% of mayors are former public administration students. Thereby, professional training improves directly the qualification of public servants and indirectly the qualification of elected local officials.⁵⁰

5.3 Quality Management

Managing evaluations is fundamental to keeping coursework up to date and detecting the need for reform in time. Evaluation management works at several levels ranging from individual classes and study programs to education institutions which have to obtain accreditation with their respective study programs. Some institutions have developed comprehensive evaluation management systems. In some cases, problems occur when the evaluations indicate the need to reform parts of the program as stated above.

5.4 Critical opinions in the reform debate

While we were able to identify several successful elements of civil service training in Germany, some experts and academics interviewed also voiced criticism on aspects of the system. We tried to consider these aspects in the determination of transferable elements and therefore give a brief description of them here.

A few experts argued that the focus on law is too strong in the public administration study programs, that there is a lack of social skills, and little room to include upcoming topics. Given the variety of the study programs, this criticism applies to some but not to others. Moreover, the recruitment of practitioners could be improved by formalizing it and by ensuring the provision of didactic qualifications.

⁴⁹ The state of the Rhineland-Palatinate, for example, requires 5 years of professional experience, of which at least 3 have to be outside academia (Verwaltungsfachhochschulgesetz 1981, §12).

⁵⁰ Bertelsmann Stiftung, Deutscher Städtetag, Deutscher Städte- u. Gemeindebund (2008): 37 – 38.

In the academic reform debate, the German system of civil service training has been criticized sporadically on the following grounds: an overly strong focus on law and its application, internal training structures which isolate civil service from the rest of the labor market and society, and a strong socialization of apprentices and students into hierarchical bureaucratic staff organizations during practical training.⁵¹

6. TRANSFERRING ELEMENTS OF CIVIL SERVICE TRAINING

Having described successful elements of civil service training that work in the German context, the questions remain: which of those elements are relevant for an idea transfer to other countries? Under what conditions could they be helpful for building or reforming civil service training in partner countries of development cooperation? In this section we introduce four successful elements and their components which we consider potential candidates for an idea transfer.

6.1 Basic Conditions for an Idea Transfer

Before going into detail, we must delineate some basic conditions necessary for an idea transfer. First, before transferring any idea, one should conduct a needs assessment in order to know what is required. While public administrations serve similar purposes all over the world, they do so in vastly different ways. Each system has evolved out of a unique historical context and thus faces different challenges. This applies to organizations, structures, and tasks. As a consequence, professions differ between administrations. The actual transfer has to be based on a careful analysis of the system and the situation at hand. In other words, one should know where to go before running in the wrong direction. This implies identifying competences needed and incorporating them into vocational training and study programs.

Second, there should be political consensus on professional civil service. This means that the administrative body

should serve the democratically elected executive irrespective of political preferences, and it should do so within the scope of the constitution and in accordance with human rights. To achieve this, the selection criteria for bureaucratic staff should be based on performance, social skills, and values, not on political loyalty.

Third, it is imperative that practice knowledge be valued and appreciated. The German professional education system is based on both theory and practice, and the conviction that only the combination of the two leads to competence and excellence. Purely theoretical education may lead to building sandcastles, while merely practical training hinders innovative thinking and the flexibility of employees to adapt to changing circumstances and new work fields.

Fourth, a career in the public sector needs to be attractive for employees in the long run. Otherwise, especially high-performance administrators will move to the private sector. This implies a comprehensive human resources development. This does not come at no cost, but the appeal of jobs is based not only on salary but also on working conditions. While the German public sector tends to pay lower wages to highly qualified state employees, lifetime earnings for civil servants with tenure are above those in the private sector.⁵² Often the public sector outperforms the private sector in terms of job security and family friendliness and thus has no shortage of qualified applicants.

In many partner countries of development cooperation, not all of these conditions will be met. Therefore, an idea transfer should be combined with careful consideration of the local conditions and their implications.

6.2 Elements for an Idea Transfer

We identified four elements of the German system which could be interesting for an idea transfer to partner countries: recruitment, “dualizing” civil service training, institutionalizing fitness for transformation, and introducing a modularized concept. Table 3 gives an overview of these four elements and their nine components. It specifies the potential benefit of each component, basic conditions for it to be successful, and core ideas for exporting the element. The sections that follow describe each component in more detail and cite additional ideas and examples from the German experience regarding specific questions.

⁵¹ Reichard/Röber (2009); Reichard (2008): 61; Hajnal (2015).

⁵² Tepe/Kroos 2010: 8.

TABLE 2: CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SAMPLE OF STUDY PROGRAMS

Element	Recruitment			"Dualizing" vocational education	
Component	1 Defining selection criteria	2 Multi-stage application procedure	3 Human resources planning	4 Increasing practical shares in training and studies	5 Theoretical elements for on-the-job training
Explanation and potential benefit	Choosing bestqualified candidates	Select best-qualified candidates in a transparent, objective and non-discriminatory way	Agency can make best use of its investments in training Attractive education/ training program due to good career prospects	Applying theoretical knowledge, acquiring practical knowledge, improving social skills	Making employees more versatile, effective and efficient
Conditions and assumptions	Political consensus on a professional civil service	Human resources departments with sufficient capacity		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Financial and human resources Appreciation of practical knowledge Support of head of agency 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Financial and human resources Political consensus on a professional civil service
Core ideas for exporting the element	Defining selection criteria based on occupational profiles which allow the fields and subjects in which high performance is needed to be identified and weighted	Procedure to assess the candidates, e. g.: 1. Written/ on-line application 2. (On-line) entry test 3. Job interview/ assessment center	Medium to long-term human resources planning as basis for recruitment for education programs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Defining practice stations and learning objectives Drawing up education program Adopting cooperation agreements Appointing and training instructors 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Defining job profile Finding education institutions Reconciling schooling and work Certification specifying competences and level of expertise

Element	Institutionalizing fitness for transformation			Modularized concept for public administration education
Component	6 Quality management	7 Rules and institutions fit for transformation	8 Clear rules and responsibilities	9 Basic module + modularized concept of continuing education
Explanation and potential benefit	Ensuring quality of training and education programs	Allowing education institutions to continuously adapt their programs while ensuring overall comparability	Clear framework that makes it possible to react to major changes and challenges for the public administration education	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Basic module ensures that employees are more versatile and effective • Modularized concept of continuing education as basis for specialized career paths
Conditions and assumptions	Consensus on the merit of ongoing improvement and transparency			Fiscal or other constraints prevent implementation of a fully-fledged program
Core ideas for exporting the element	Re-)accreditation of education programs <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Quality managers and standing committees for quality management • Evaluating courses and teachers • Exchange between education institutions and agencies' human resources managers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regulations that allow education institutions sufficient autonomy to keep coursework and teaching methods up-to-date • Commission at national or state level to update contents 	Clear procedures, decision rules and responsibilities for reforms and participation of all relevant stakeholders	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Defining values, skills, and knowledge that every employee should learn • Devising a basic module with theoretical phase(s) and on-the-job training • Modules of continuous education for different specializations and levels • Human resources development concept

6.2.1 Recruitment

The following elements refer to contexts where agencies recruit candidates for training and education programs or where such a system has recently been introduced. Some of the points may, however, also be relevant if candidates for public administration study or training programs are selected by universities or schools, not agencies.

Component 1: Defining Selection Criteria

Recruitment can be improved by defining selection criteria based on clear job descriptions or occupational profiles. This allows the fields and subjects in which high performance is needed to be identified and weighted, and helps those candidates to be chosen who are best qualified for the job. Most public administrators need to be articulate both verbally and in writing and to have a good mathematical understanding. Additionally, they need strong social skills and service orientation as well as orientation towards public welfare.

Component 2: Multi-stage Application Procedure

A multi-stage application procedure based on the adequate criteria needed for the job is an effective and efficient tool for picking the most qualified candidates. In the first stage, a written application with a letter of motivation, the relevant diplomas and certificates and a CV may serve to preselect candidates. At the second stage, promising applicants write an entry test that helps to assess necessary competences that were not able to be assessed on the basis of the written application. Additionally, it may be helpful to check that the grades and diplomas reflect true understanding. The less comparable or meaningful diplomas and school grades are, the more one should invest in and rely on entry exams. When transportation costs or travel time constitute high barriers for participants, on-line tests should be considered – though the higher risk of fraud should be taken into account. At the third stage, a job interview and/or assessment center should follow in order to assess the motivation, personality, and social skills of the candidates. By following a multi-step approach, a large number of applicants can be processed by the human resources division with a fairly good chance of selecting the best candidates based on transparent, objective and non-discriminatory criteria. To reduce discrimination based on origin, name, or appearance, the first two steps of the application could be conducted anonymously.

Who should be responsible for the application process for combined study-training programs?

Experiences from Germany

For dual study-training programs where students are simultaneously employed by an agency, that agency or a higher-level agency (e.g. at regional level) is responsible for the selection of candidates. The agencies register their candidates for the study programs at the university of applied sciences after they have selected them. In some cases, candidates need to send a written application to the university as well, and undergo an assessment test.

If the study program does not follow a dual system, students apply to the universities of applied sciences and sometimes have to go through assessment tests. During their studies, they apply to agencies for internships.

Component 3: Human Resources Planning

If the number of people in apprenticeships and dual study programs is the result of medium to long-term human resources planning, the agency is subsequently able to offer all or most of its apprentices or graduates a job. This in turn results in more applicants due to higher job security when entering an apprenticeship. At the same time, the agency makes the best use of its investment in training if most of the qualified staff continue working there.

How to avoid brain drain to the public sector? Experiences from Germany

Offering a training or study program of high quality for the civil service bears the risk of brain drain if the same sets of skills are also sought in the private sector and working in the private sector is more attractive than working in the public sector. This risk is high if the study program is salaried and if the private sector offers higher salaries and better career prospects. In the case of brain drain, the investment of time and money would not pay off for the public sector.

In Germany, the following mechanisms are used to prevent graduates from leaving civil service after they have graduated or finished their training:

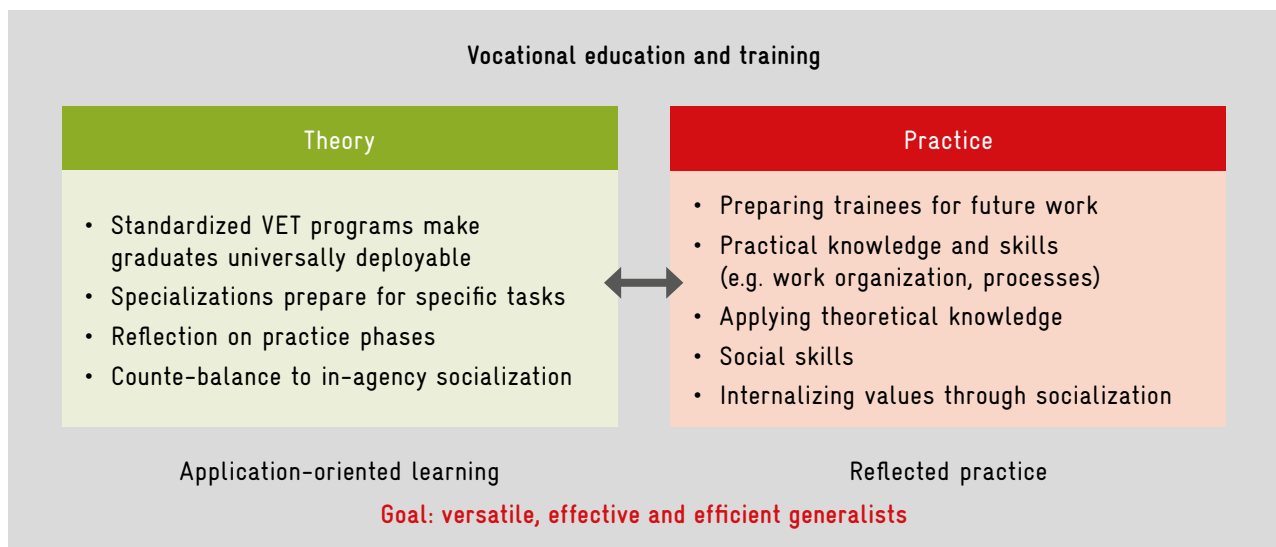
- The civil service is traditionally a career-based system with lifelong tenure. This provides civil servants with higher job security than the general labor market. Students are incentivized from the beginning of their training or study program: they often receive the status of civil servant with a right of revocation from the beginning and can get lifelong tenure after a probationary period of two to three years after graduation.
- Students with a status of civil servant on revocation are obligated to continue working in civil service for a minimum of five years after their graduation. If they quit earlier, they have to pay back part of the salary they received during their studies.⁵³ This rule is stipulated in an administrative regulation and is an integral part of each study-work contract.

6.2.2 “Dualizing” Vocational Education

The “dualization” of public administration education is a two-pronged approach which involves increasing the practical components where programs are highly theoretical and increasing the theoretical components where vocational education is reduced mainly to on-the-job

training. Combing theoretical and practical training helps students to work independently in different fields.⁵⁴ Figure 5 illustrates the potential benefits of introducing such a combined system. The preconditions are financial and human resources for setting up such a system. Regulations are needed to delineate a clear framework for cooperation between theory and practice.

FIGURE : TYPES OF UNDERGRADUATE STUDY PROGRAM FOR PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION



⁵³ N° 59.5.2 BBesGVwV.

⁵⁴ Eisenberg (2010): 58.

Component 4: Increasing Practical Shares in Training and Studies

Practice phases during training and study programs give students the chance to apply their theoretical knowledge, acquire practical knowledge and improve soft skills such as service orientation and working in a team.

To increase practice shares, several aspects need to be considered. A clear job profile entails a catalog of competences that should be acquired or fostered throughout vocational education. Most of those competences require theoretical knowledge (e.g. regulations or laws), but also practical knowledge (concerning an agency's structure and organization) and skills (writing official orders etc.). It is necessary to define what should be taught in school and what in practice, but this is not sufficient. Additionally, the education program needs to be structured in a way that allows apprentices and students to draw in practice on knowledge previously taught in school and, subsequently, to reflect on or repeat the subjects in school.

Additionally, cooperation agreements need to be set up between schools and agencies. Responsibilities for cooperation should be laid down clearly. In the human resources department, an instruction manager or head of instructors should be nominated who coordinates the practice stages and is the contact person for apprentices and students, schools and instructors. Instruction managers need to find professionals motivated and capable of instructing others. The head of the agency needs to support the education program and free capacities of the instructors to give them

time, first to acquire teaching skills and qualifications, and second – and equally important – to free up capacities on a regular basis for practice instruction. First and foremost, the individual practice stations should serve the goal of granting an informed perspective on administrative action to the learners. When the future position is already clear, it can also be used to train the apprentices or students in the same department and related departments to shorten the period of their adjustment after the education program.

Component 5: Theoretical Elements for on-the-job Training

Increasing the theoretical share of on-the-job training programs may make the employees more versatile, effective and efficient. The basis is a job profile that is more general than the tasks of the specific positions; this needs to be defined in advance. A certification should be granted to those finishing the joint theory-and-practice program, detailing what competences have been acquired and at what level of expertise. The agencies need to see the merit in dual education programs. Furthermore, adequate education institutions need to be found as cooperating partners. These may often be vocational schools in the private sector, or schools of continuing education. At an academic level, universities of applied sciences or regular universities may be valuable partners. Looking for competences more than for specific subjects often increases the number of qualified partner institutions. Schooling and work need to be reconciled, and this could be done through blocks of theoretical training, weekend seminars or by conducting the vocational training in the agencies given a sufficient number of students.

How to combine theory and practice without a dual system?

While Germany's dual-system approach has gained considerable international attention in recent years, a note of caution is in order: reforming education systems is a complex task, but reforming or introducing a system that is positioned between a society's education system and its labor market is even more complex.

Depending on the specific needs of a country, it may be advisable to work with a modularized system instead of a full-blown VET program with a duration of three years (see component 9).

In the same vein, introducing practical elements into study programs does not necessarily require the implementation of a "dual system" where students are simultaneously employed by agencies.⁵⁵ As in some study programs at universities of applied sciences in Germany, it is also possible to include in-agency orientation periods and/or internships in study programs. In these cases, students do not have combined study-work contracts, but primarily search for work placements in agencies themselves during their studies.

⁵⁵ Euler (2013).

6.2.3 Institutionalizing Fitness for Transformation

Fitness for transformation should be rooted in institutions, rules, and procedures forming a quality management system. Such a system is needed to ensure the quality of training and education programs and to allow institutions and agencies to continuously adapt programs to new challenges. At the same time, the overall comparability of the programs and compliance with general standards should be guaranteed. A quality management system can only work effectively if there is a shared understanding among all stakeholders that ongoing improvement is important and should be fostered through a culture of openness and transparency.

Component 6: Quality Management

Quality management should encompass the accreditation and re-accreditation of education programs, the appointment of quality managers, the evaluation of both courses and teachers, and finally a standing committee that discusses quality management on a regular basis. Additionally, education institutions should hold regular discussions with human resources managers to ensure that vocational education meets the agencies' needs in practice.

Component 7: Rules and Institutions fit for Transformation

Rules and regulations should allow the education institutions some autonomy to keep coursework up to date and experiment with new teaching methods. A commission of several stakeholders should ensure at federal state or national level that educational contents are up to date.

Component 8: Clear Rules and Responsibilities

There should be clear procedures and decision rules for reform that make it possible to react to major changes and challenges for public administration education. During a reform process all stakeholders should participate. Nevertheless responsibilities should be assigned clearly concerning the respective reform phases of elaboration, decision-making, and implementation. This helps to prevent deadlock or non-compliance in reform processes.

6.2.4 Modularized Concept for Public Administration Education

Component 9: Basic Module and Modularized Concept of Continuing Education

Even in contexts where implementing vocational education programs with a duration of three years does not seem feasible because of fiscal or other constraints, introducing at least a basic module of administration education should be considered. The rationale is that it shortens the on-the-job training period and ensures that employees are more versatile and effective, which saves money in the long term. Drawing on the basic requirements of working in public administration, one should devise foundational values, skills, and knowledge that every employee should learn. This should be combined with practical learning periods that enhance the understanding of administration structures, organization, and procedures.

This basic module could be integrated into a modularized concept of continuing education with a human resources development concept that allows for different career paths, and links those paths to corresponding salaries (which can be modified by performance criteria). To devise such a modularized concept of continuing education there are various concepts in the respective states of Germany, some of which are promising candidates for future research and potential transfer, but were not part of this study.

7. CONCLUSION

The system of education for public administration in Germany can be considered as successful regarding several aspects. In recent decades, reforms have introduced some managerial elements into public administration, requiring certain competences of employees in that area. At the margins of the public employment system, e.g. in public enterprises, there has been a normalization of employment structures and qualification requirements vis-à-vis the private sector.

Successful elements of German vocational administration education lie in the fields of recruitment, contents and organization of the education, quality of teachers, and a fairly adaptable system. In all of those fields, the German experiences may inspire an idea transfer to improve administration education in partner countries. Especially the combination of practical training and an educational program at vocational schools or universities could be an interesting approach for other countries. If implementing a fully-fledged dual training and education system is not an option, this can also take the form of internships in study programs or a modularized vocational education program. The main work consists in developing specific measures for changing administration education based on the ideas offered in this study and a country's existing system.

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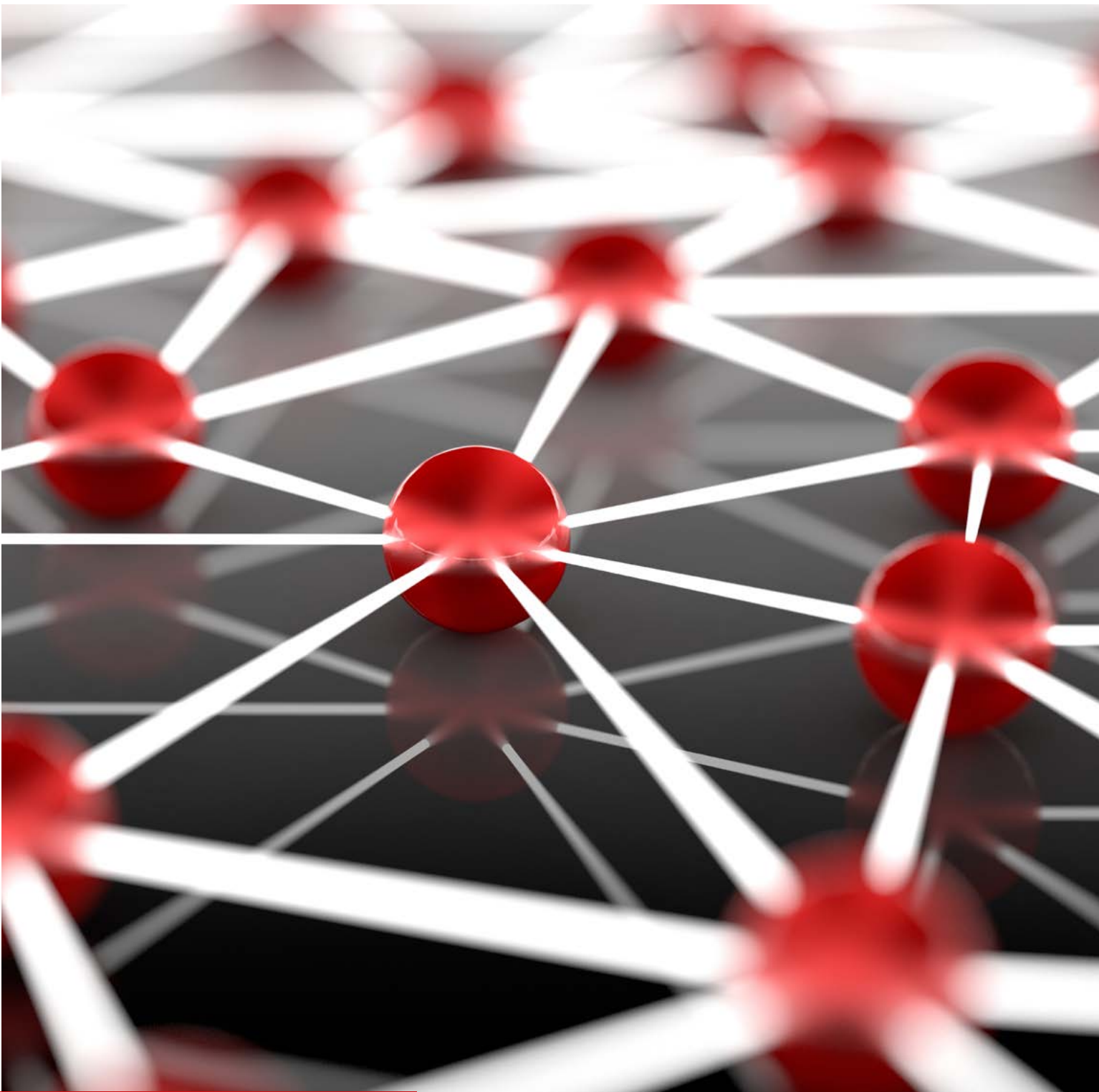
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