

Germany Network “Science in Schools”

Lead organisation(s) and contact details

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Other organisations in the wider Science In Schools network

Companies & Industry Organisations	Education Organisations Inc Government and Not-for-Profit
•	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • econsense • KonTaxis

Maths, Science and Technology Education in Germany

Germany’s federal structure has a profound influence on its education system: There are a various types of education systems in the different federal states in Germany. Traditional scientific subjects such as biology, chemistry or physics are to be found both at secondary and grammar schools. In addition secondary schools offer a subject called “Work – economy – engineering“, while grammar schools deal with technological themes during the teaching of scientific subjects.

According to the results of the Pisa studies since 2000 a lot of challenges dominate the policy agenda in MST Education in Germany, e.g.:

- Insufficient involvement in early childhood or primary education
- Too little hands-on learning when it comes to scientific phenomena and their technical implications
- Too few technically specific offers in pre-school and general education
- Improvement in the collaboration between extra-curricular offers and school

In Germany, against the background of increasing demographic development and a shortage of young professionals in the areas of science and technology, numerous initiatives such as special schools, in-depth study, extra-curricular offers etc were created in recent years.

Countless large- and middle-sized companies have information and laboratory presentations on offer especially for scholars, or have their own extra-curricular locales (factory tours, laboratories for scholars etc). These offers are usually only available locally or regionally. No national i.e. state-specific standards or education parameters concerning the collaboration between schools and companies, exists. The Autostadt’s mobility curriculum is an exception to this (education around the topic of mobility for the state of Lower Saxony since 2002).

Schools occasionally make use of extra-curricular offers when engaged in projects, competitions or subject enrichment (project weeks, teaching practice etc). Activities are predominantly company specific. There are company lobbyists who engage with

educational issues (EU-CSR-Lab “Science in Schools”, MINT-initiative, wissensfabrik).

Priorities and aims of Science In Schools Network in Germany

The Initiative CSR Lab “Science in Schools” is an open partnership for companies and Non-Profit-Organisations that are actively concerned in the area of education in Germany.

The aims of the network are:

- foster interest for scientific-technical education in children, young adults and students
- increase the number of MINT graduates significantly
- bring to public attention the activities participating companies are already engaged in at national level
- raise awareness among teachers and involve them in activities
- intensify and strengthen networks between business, politics, associations and school authorities and interlink at national and EU level

The goal of the Germany Network is to

- foster in children, scholars and young adults an interest in a scientific-technological education and promote experiential learning
- build up a network of actively participating companies and extra-curricular learning opportunities
- strengthen the educational initiatives at elementary school level (bridging function)
- to develop an experiential e-platform which documents network partners’ activities in, and makes them available to, schools

Completed activities

04th / 09th July 2008, Network Meeting in Wolfsburg (Autostadt, IBM Germany, Econsense, Kontexis): The aim of both meetings was the possibilities of an involvement of the Science In Schools Initiatives to Non-Profit-Organisations dealing with CSR in Germany (econsense, Business Network for CSR in Germany) and to a youth care association (KonTaxis).

09th October 2008, Conference “Science Learning in a Europe of Knowledge” in Grenoble (French Presidency in the European Union): Autostadt as participant in the panel “Science and technology: what interactions?”: presentation of the German Science In Schools-Initiative

Planned activities

10th 14th February 2009, Didacta in Hanover (one of the most important exhibitions for education in Europe): Symposium “Science teaching and learning: interactions between schools and companies in a national and EU-wide perspective” with representatives from policy, companies, Non-Profit-Organisations and educational research

March 2009, Network meeting Wolfsburg: regular network meeting to plan the activities and to increase the network in 2009