

About the current status and possible future of professional youth work in Baden-Württemberg in southwest Germany

As part of a team consisting of six researchers - from the German Youth Institute (DJI), the Technical University Dortmund and the German Institute for International Educational Research (DIPF) - Prof. Dr. Stefan Borrmann, Faculty of Social Work of the University of Applied Science Landshut, Germany, and member of the ERIS network, took a closer look at professional youth work in the southwestern part of Germany.

In Baden-Württemberg, a state in Germany, there is a “Bündnis für die Jugend” (alliance for the youth) between the state government and professional youth work agencies. Part of this alliance is to gain knowledge about future possibilities for professional youth work in times of demographic change.

In parts of Baden-Württemberg the population aged 14 to 25 will decrease by up to 25 % percent by the year 2020. Based on empirical data the research report develops three possible scenarios on the future of professional youth work.

1. The first one is based on a status quo on per capita funding of youth work through local authorities. The scenario shows that in this case professional youth work will be no longer able to reach out to the youth in rural areas.
2. The second scenario is based on a status quo on the total of funding which means a slight increase in per capita funding because of the decreasing population in the relevant age group. In that case professional youth work will only be able to maintain the status quo since it has to increase efforts to reach its clients.
3. The third scenario takes into account that – as shown in the research report before – professional youth work is facing new challenges in the near future, i.e. reaching out to new target groups or being in competition with commercial services to youth. This scenario suggests increasing funding and putting special efforts to youth work in rural areas.

The research report was presented to the state government and the professional youth work agencies on a state-wide public hearing in July 2010. Several conference and public hearings on the regional and local level followed and some others are upcoming. The near future will show if the research project will have an impact on the decision-making-process of the relevant stake holders and therefore on the future of professional youth work in this part of Germany.

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The research report (in German) can be found here (please insert link below)

http://www.abafachverband.org/fileadmin/user_upload/user_upload/%202010/offene_arbeit/Expertise%20KJA%20in%20BW%202010.pdf