

POLITICS OF IN-BETWEEN

The promotion of public-private-
partnerships to bring computers into
West German schools in the 1980s

Carmen Flury, M.A.



Politics of In-between

Federal government (Bund)

BMBW



D. Wilms

BMFT



H. Riesenhuber

Bund-Länder Commission for
Educational Planning and Research
(BLK)



11 federal states



Politics of In-between

State

BMBW



BMFT



Computer education
for all

Private sector



SIEMENS



Computer education in the FRG

The situation in the early 1980s

1) **Broad consensus on the need to integrate computer education into general schooling**

→ Economic competitiveness of the FRG on the global market

→ Computer literacy as a basic cultural technique

“The school leaver should not be helplessly confronted with data processing as with a force majeure, but should be able to rationally integrate it into his understanding of the environment“

(Gesellschaft für Informatik 1976, p. 38, translated from German).

BUT: Vast differences regarding implementation between federal states and different school types

Computer education in the FRG

The situation in the 1980s

2) Concerted political efforts to bring computer technology into schools



- 1984 Establishment of a new funding area "New information and communication technologies in education" for pilot projects in the federal states
- 1984 Framework concept for IT education in general schooling and vocational training
- 1987 Extension of BLK framework concept to form an integrated concept for IT education (including higher education & continuing education)



- 1985 Decision of the Conference of Ministers of Education and Cultural Affairs to introduce IT education in all federal states from grade 8 onwards

Promotion of
Public-Private-Partnerships (PPPs)
to tackle the challenge of introducing
computer education into schools

- adequate technical equipment
(hard- & software)
- teacher training



19. März 1984

COMPUTER + Bildung

Mit der gemeinsamen Veranstaltung des Bundesministers für Bildung und Wissenschaft und des Bundesministers für Forschung und Technologie sollen Beiträge zur Verbesserung der informationstechnischen Bildung geleistet werden.

In drei Jahren sollen für die 25.000 allgemeinbildenden und berufsbildenden Schulen in ausreichendem Maße zur Verfügung stehen:

- unterrichtsggeeignete Geräte
- unterrichtsggeeignete Software
- Lehrer und Lehrerausbilder

Beiträge, die diese Ziele zu erreichen geeignet sind – auch Geldspenden – sind willkommen.

Fördergemeinschaft „Computer und Bildung“

„A joint initiative of the state, the private sector and science“

Vorsitzender

Karl J. Döring
Hewlett Packard GmbH

Stellv. Vorsitzender

Hermann W. Stähler
Philips Kommunikations Industrie AG

Geschäftsführer

Günther E.W. Möller
Fachgemeinschaft Büro- und
Informationstechnik im VDMA



Stellv. Geschäftsführer

Dr. Paul-Albert Ruhr
Fachverband Informations- und
Kommunikationstechnik im ZVEI



- Provision of hardware for schools
- Support in the development of curricula and teaching materials
- Teacher training courses (incl. use of company resources)
- Lobbying and public campaigns for computer education

VDMA: Mechanical Engineering Industry Association
ZVEI: German Electro and Digital Industry Association

Politics of In-between

Federal ministry of education



increase coordinating influence and gain more insight into procurement activities of federal states □

Private sector



FÖRDERGEMEINSCHAFT
COMPUTER UND BILDUNG

11 Ministers of education of the federal states

Sponsorship of computer hardware for schools

Positive PR, influence on trend-setting decisions

Fördergemeinschaft „Computer und Bildung“

"(...) the support association has so far not been able to fulfill the expectations that have been placed in it and raised by it in any way."

(BMBW, September 1984a, translated from German)

**Federal ministry
of education**



The association has clearly distanced itself from its previous declarations of intent with regard to its activities for the mobilization and coordinated allocation of donations. (...) The reason is probably that the companies use the donation activities primarily as part of their market strategy and therefore do not want to be involved in a coordinated action with competing companies.

(BMBW 1984a).



Fördergemeinschaft „Computer und Bildung“

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**Federal ministry
of education**



The BMBW did not bring the support association together with the states to help industry sell equipment. The support association is only accepted as a partner of the federal and state governments if more can be achieved with its help than in bilateral contacts with individual companies.

(BMBW 1984b).



Fördergemeinschaft „Computer und Bildung“

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**Federal ministry
of education**



Investments in education are investments in the future that cannot be obtained at no cost. The problem cannot be solved by donations from the business community. Considerable financial resources must be provided by the public sector for the hardware equipment of schools and teacher training (...).

(VDMA/ZVEI 1985).



Politics of In-between

State

BMBW



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FÖRDERGEMEINSCHAFT
COMPUTER UND BILDUNG



Private sector



NIXDORF
COMPUTER

IBM **SIEMENS** 

Politics of In-between

Conflicts between state & private sector

- (Public) financial & (corporate) social responsibilities
- Influence on development of educational concepts and curricula for ICT in schools
- Transparency & sharing of information

Conflicts between federal government („Bund“) and states („Länder“)

- Coordination / harmonization of ICT integration into schools in federal states
 - More centralized control over bilateral business contacts and insights into procurement processes of federal states
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POLITICS OF IN-BETWEEN

The Promotion of Public-Private-Partnerships to bring
Computers into West German Schools in the 1980s

Thank you for
your attention.

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