

# **Lifelong Learning for All**

*Andreas Kirchner*

*Federal Ministry of Education and Research  
Germany*

*Seminar “Making Lifelong Learning a Reality”  
Cologne 7<sup>th</sup> to 9<sup>th</sup> March 2004*

# Philosophy of the Action Programme "Lifelong Learning for All"

- + Greater responsibility and **self-management of learners**
- + **Reducing inequality**
- + **Cooperation of education providers**
- + **Closer cooperation between educational sectors**

# Fields of Action of the Action Programme

- ❑ Networking between providers **across educational sectors** at regional and supraregional level
- ❑ **Quality assurance**
- ❑ **Certification and recognition** of professional qualifications and skills, including those acquired in **informal learning processes**
- ❑ Increased transparency of programmes, **improved information and counselling**
- ❑ Promotion of **new cultures of teaching and learning** (e.g. informal, self-managed learning; use of new media)
- ❑ **Intensified exchanges and international cooperation**, promotion of international skills

# Programme "Learning Regions - Providing Support for Networks"

- ❑ Launched 2001, in 2003 we have **72 Learning Regions**
- ❑ Estimated funding until 2006: € 66 million from the Federal Government and about € 51 million from the European Social Fund (ESF).
- ❑ Initial financing and sustainability
  - over a 12-month planning phase 100%
  - **declining funding rate** in the implementation phase (during 2 years **80%** and during additional 2 years **60%** of the financial requirements with growing contribution of funds raised by the projects themselves)
- ❑ Support is therefore provided for the development and extension of networks at regional level which develop, test and implement - on long-term basis - innovative measures in the area of lifelong learning

# Aims of the Programme "Learning Regions - Providing Support for Networks"

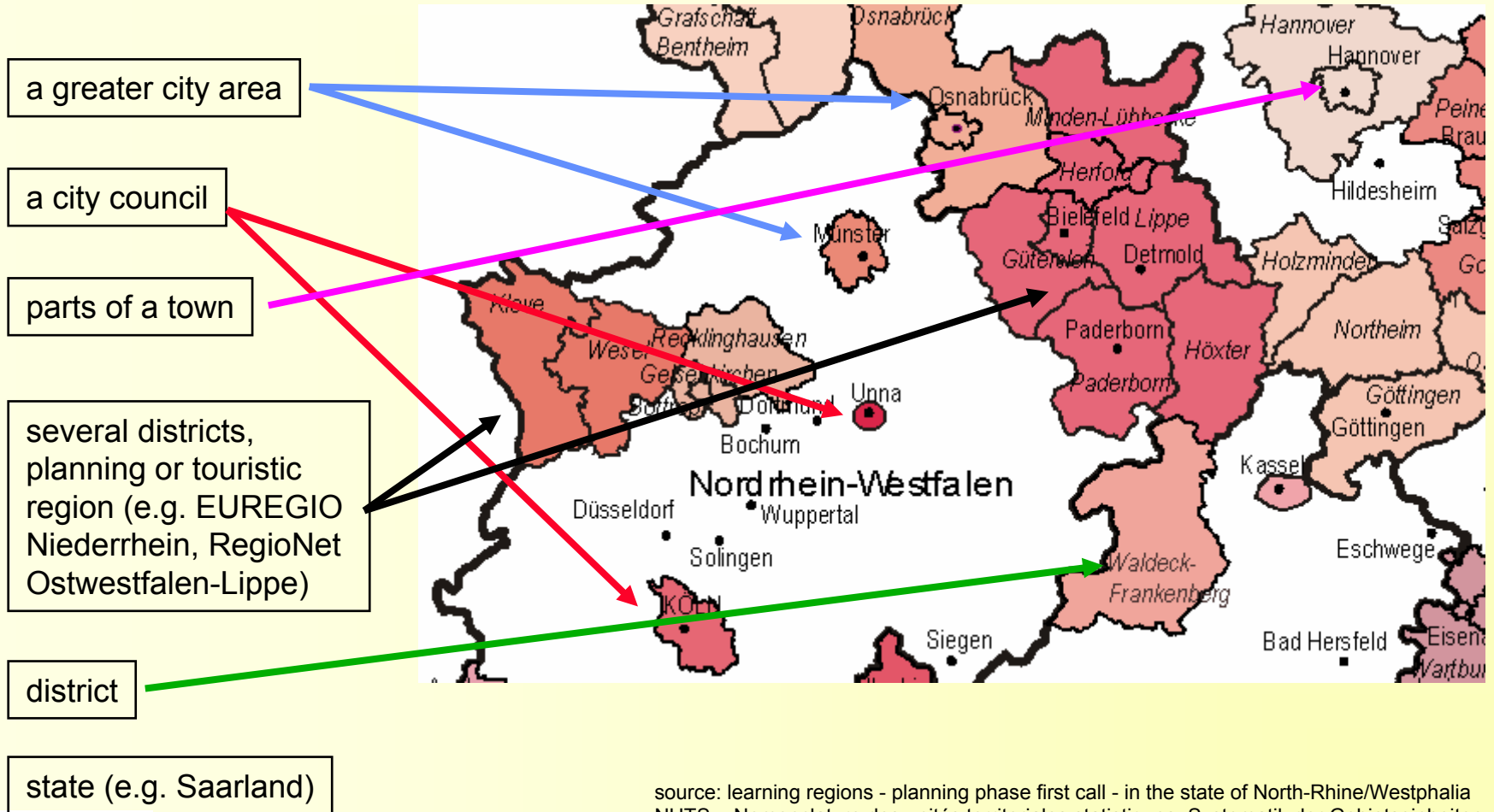
- ❑ Increased motivation and promotion of the ability for **self-directed learning**
- ❑ Encouraging personal development and the ability to act; enhancing people's **employability**
- ❑ Qualitative and quantitative improvement of education programmes, also in the sense of **greater user-orientation**
- ❑ **Structural innovation** to brush up the Education System

# The 72 networks of the Learning regions



# The bottom-up approach

- Learning regions define themselves
- All types of „NUTS-regions“ are represented




source: learning regions - planning phase first call - in the state of North-Rhine/Westphalia  
 NUTS = Nomenclature des unités territoriales statistiques, Systematik der Gebietseinheiten für die Statistik nach der Regionalgliederung der EU

# Conditions for the Funding of Networks - Part 1

Joint implementation of innovative measures (profiling):

- ❑ Better interlinking of general, political, cultural and vocational education
- ❑ Closer cooperation between education, employment and labour market policies
- ❑ Improved quality of education programmes
- ❑ Increased transparency of education programmes in order to achieve greater user-orientation, development and testing of continuing education modules for staff
- ❑ Strengthening of creativeness and responsibility of participants in both formal and informal learning
- ❑ Development and testing of procedures for certification of results of informal learning activities and
- ❑ Promotion of access to new ICT, improved media skills and testing of new learning arrangements

# Conditions for the Funding of Networks - Part 2

 Networks should consist of **important regional education institutions and other players**, particularly from the labour market and employment policy areas as well as from economic assistance agencies, such as:

- Education counselling institutions, youth authorities, employment offices (mandatory) and other administrations, employment companies
- General and vocational schools, institutions of higher education, funding agencies and institutions of out-of-school and out-of-firm and inter-firm education and training, trade-union's education organizations and educational organizations of industry, adult education centres, education funding agencies of the churches, commercial providers, distance learning institutes and other educational establishments
- Companies (especially small and medium-sized commercial enterprises), chambers of industry and commerce, trade unions, organizations for the promotion of economic development

# Conditions for the Funding of Networks - Part 3

- ❑ Self-organised groups of learners, representatives of consumer protection organizations, teachers and in-company instructors, lecturers and developers of teaching materials
- ❑ Cultural and socio-cultural institutions such as libraries, museums, colleges of art and music as well as groups and projects for young people, senior citizens, women, sports and the environment

## Sustainability of networks

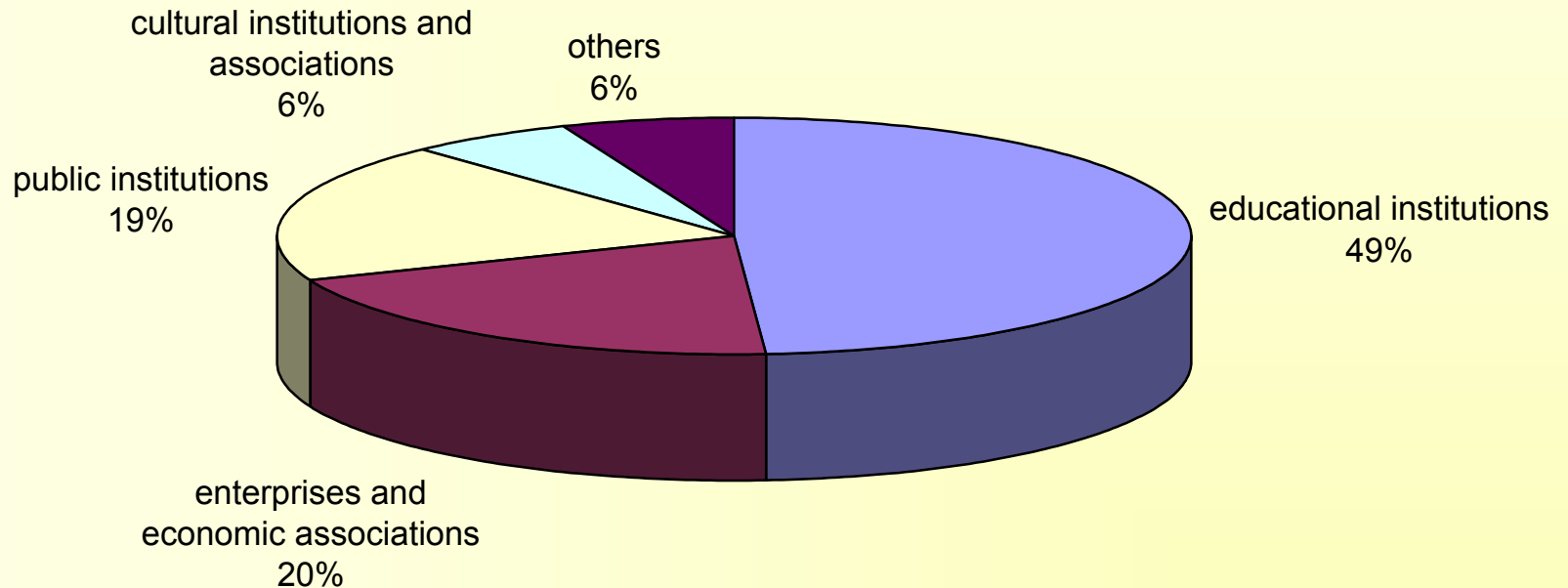
- ❑ Networks are always given a **long-term orientation**
- ❑ Equal rights for all partners to the network, networks to be given the legal form of an association or a gGmbH
- ❑ **Declining funding** with increasing contributions of funds by the networks themselves (**own funds** and **external funds**)



## Another example: A Learning region in Bavaria

district of "Schwandorf" with 87 main stakeholders

types of stakeholders



# Implementation Status and Prospects for Further Development

- ❑ At present almost all networks have entered the implementation phase
- ❑ 2004: systematic **workshops on business management for network staff**
- ❑ **Intensification of transfer and exchange of experience** by means of transfer projects and transfer events
- ❑ Support for the participation of **Learning regions near the border** (e.g. with Denmark, the Netherlands, Belgium, Luxembourg, France, Poland, the Czech Republic) responding to proposals of the European Commission "European Networks to promote the local and regional dimension of Lifelong Learning" (search for suitable international partners)