

# **In the Right Place at the Right Time? Contents and Factors Influencing German Social Science Teachers' Participation in Professional Development Courses from 2018 to 2022**

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*Lifelong learning* is synonymous with the teaching profession. German teachers are expected to attend professional development (PD) courses although only three federal states specify this obligation further. Lower Saxony is not among those. It is among those where there is no initial teacher education for interdisciplinary subjects like *Gesellschaftslehre* (Social Studies). Those teachers work mostly out-of-field and thus rely on PD. Unfortunately, only a fraction of teachers' weekly working hours is spent on PD. Evidence from Brandenburg and Baden-Württemberg suggests that supply and demand are often misaligned. Little is known about the contents of PD courses and factors influencing their participation, which leads to the following questions:

1. What type of PD courses were offered to social science teachers in Lower Saxony from 2018 to 2022?
2. Which factors explain their participation rate?

A data set containing all PD courses is being analysed using both quantitative and qualitative methods. Preliminary results show no marked drop in the supply of PD which speaks to the robustness of the PD governance system during the COVID-19 pandemic. However, most courses failed to reach their participation limit by a sizable margin which indicates misalignment between supply and demand found in other federal states.

## **Keywords**

Professional development (PD) • teachers • supply and demand • lifelong learning • longitudinal