



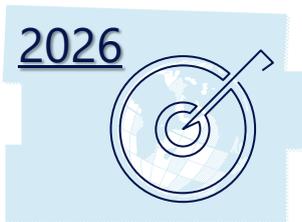
Paper: focus on financial education 2026

Berlin, 24. March 2026

Financial education in focus – a call for equal opportunities, financial provisions and economic stability in 2026

Financial education is a key issue in 2026 for Germany's stability in the future, and involves much more than teaching basic economic terms. Right now, we are facing profound economic, technological and demographic disruptions. As such, financial competencies play a decisive role in determining individual opportunities, financial provisions and overall economic stability.

Now is the time to focus on financial education



Germany in 2026 is under financial pressure: the country is facing the looming threat of poverty in old age, a strained pension system and economic uncertainties (stagnation, increased cost of living and a challenging geopolitical situation).

Financial education is key, allowing those **living in Germany** to make well-founded financial decisions, realistically assess risks and grow their assets responsibly. Financial education does more than just contribute to individual wealth; over the long term, it provides relief for the welfare state.

Nevertheless, financial education in Germany is not treated with the urgency it deserves, given its overall societal significance. **Considering the challenges we are facing in 2026, financial education is not a minor issue.** It must be understood to be in **urgent need of reform** and anchored structurally within our society.

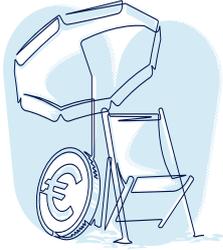
Everyone needs financial education

Managing your money independently

People who understand income, outgoing expenses and investments can make **independent financial decisions**, set financial goals and create a **sustainable life that works for them**.

Not to mention that those who understand contracts, loans, interest and payment deadlines can make responsible consumer decisions and are better protected against over-indebtedness, including at young age (mobile phone contracts; online purchases; buy now, pay later).

Financial competence promotes agency when dealing with money and opens the door for equal opportunities.



Provision and protection for life

A solid **financial education prepares people to make important financial decisions**, such as whether to enter into an apprenticeship or go to university, what to buy, whether to invest in real estate, what insurance coverage is necessary and how to adequately save for retirement. Financial education opens the door to the capital markets and therefore paves the way for **sustainable old age provisions**.

Improve flexibility

Members of the public are **encouraged** by financial education to manage changes to the market as well as uncertainties pertaining to their own income. It provides guidance and therefore improves their flexibility within a volatile economic environment. People who receive financial education can make their own financial decisions, make financial provisions and therefore, over the long term, provide relief for the **welfare state**.

Financial education initiatives

In order to **quickly** improve financial education **across all of Germany**, we suggest **three measures** to be introduced in **2026**:

1

National financial education strategy

Germany needs a national financial education strategy, and it needs it now. The draft published by the **OECD proposes appropriate measures** and should serve as a guideline. Germany is the only G20 country without its own financial education strategy.

2

Coordinating body

National implementation of financial education is a Herculean task, requiring commitment and networking. There are many people and initiatives already active in this space. In order to network them effectively and take advantage of synergies, Germany should create a coordinating body to function as a **link between governmental, public and private stakeholders**. One best-practice example is the coordinating body for financial education in Austria, which is anchored in their financial education strategy.

3

Community

Financial education must be understood as **community education**. One very important measure will be the introduction of **Economics and Financial Education** as a **mandatory subject in schools**, in order to introduce students to this subject matter. Until this subject has been introduced, financial education must be better integrated into existing subjects (such as Economics and Law, Social Studies, etc.). This will also require training and professional development for teachers, to ensure that they can provide optimal financial education to their students.

Financial education is, however, not just an important subject for students. It is also **vital for the general public** and should be integrated into **daily life in a way that matches the needs of the people receiving it**. The broader population in Germany could receive appropriate financial information when they interact with social, health care and financial institutions (such as the unemployment office, medical practices, when applying for a parental allowance (Elterngeld etc.). This would allow people at all stages of life to receive financial education.

Financial education needs strong partners

Financial education is a **decisive factor** in Germany's future, and so we must **establish it as a key component of society in 2026** - if we do not, structural deficits will get steadily worse. Improving financial independence also improves personal responsibility, equal opportunities, safeguarding and economic resilience.

Financial education must become a pillar of political and societal action. But it is also clear that strong partners are needed for proper implementation. Now is the time for the **state to work together with public and private institutions** to ensure that financial independence can become a reality.



The Association of German Banks has been committed to financial education for over 30 years. The Association of German Banks provides, among other materials, free, neutral and readily available teaching materials on economics and money for schools, competitions for students (SCHULBANKER and the European Money Quiz) as well as free, neutral and readily available information on finances for every stage of life.

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Published by

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Lobby Register No. R001458

EU Transparency Register No. 0764199368-97

USt-IdNr.: DE201591882

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