



Federal Ministry for
Family Affairs, Senior Citizens,
Women and Youth



Male Educators in Kitas

A Study on the Situation of Men in Early Childhood Education

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A research project of the
Catholic University of Applied Social Sciences Berlin and
Sinus Sociovision GmbH, Heidelberg/Berlin

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Preface

Early childhood education sets the course for life! It is aimed at giving all children a fair opportunity to participate; it provides children of preschool age with the possibility of learning how to interact and cooperate with their peers, and it helps parents – both mothers and fathers – reconcile job and family.



In Kitas, girls and boys learn for their lives. And the educators serve as role models. “When I grow up, I want to be like ...” Yet, Kitas rarely feature male role models, since women form the overwhelming majority of the employees in these facilities – and this holds true not only for Germany. But why is that so? And: ‘Does it have to remain this way?’ The survey at hand – the first of its kind as to scope and coverage – has researched into these issues and provides instructive findings. And I’m pleased to see that male educators are welcomed to work in Kitas; this isn’t just the opinion of the pedagogical “professionals”, but also of most parents. Men in Kitas are welcomed by all parties involved. They are perceived as an enrichment to the facility.

The current gender equality policy debate has increasingly attracted notice to boys. We appreciate this because it shows that gender equality policy is not only widely accepted, but in fact has finally become a policy for women and men, for girls and boys. Gender equality policy as social lifecourse policy can only be successful if it keeps in mind the life challenges of both sexes. Therefore, the call for “more men in Kitas” is of importance to boys and men as well as to girls. Both girls and boys need female and male role models in order to see what women and men can do and how women and men deal with each other. The labour market in Germany and in Europe is shaped by profound changes; job opportunities increasingly are shifting from the secondary to the tertiary sector. In addition to classic “men’s careers” there are “new occupations for men”, e. g. the educator profession, which offer new prospects and thus higher chances on the labour market. I’m convinced that the manifold findings of this survey can serve as a sound scientific basis in this discussion.

I hope this survey will find many attentive readers – in and beyond the professional audience.

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Kristina Schröder".

Dr. Kristina Schröder
Federal Minister for Family Affairs, Senior Citizens,
Women and Youth

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Preliminary remarks on defining the terminology used in the English version

In Germany there are different terms for day-care facilities for children. In both the German and the English version, we have decided to use the term “*Kita*” throughout. The term *Kita* refers to all day-care facilities, which care for, bring up and educate children who are not yet of school age. These include mixed-age and same-age facilities, which have an integrated after school care club. Pure after-school care clubs, however, do not come under the scope of the term *Kita* used below.

Qualified pedagogical personnel in Kitas have the professional title “*Erzieher*” in Germany, which means “*educator*”; the term “*teacher*” is not used in connection with pre-school children. Educators often work in Kitas, but may also be employed in other areas of child and youth welfare work. The training lasts five years altogether and includes preparatory job training as well as a three year course of education at a vocational school. Over the past years, an increasing number of universities and colleges have introduced educator degree programmes as well.

Kitas in Germany are run by municipalities, churches, or non-statutory welfare services (e. g. the German Red Cross). These are “*Kita providers*”. “*Kita provider programme director*” is a person responsible for a number of Kitas in a certain region, city, etc.

“*Kita administrator*” is the head of an individual *Kita*.

Introduction

Kitas are institutions that are charged with a highly relevant social assignment. They contribute essentially to ensuring the integration of future generations into society. Thus, it is only logical that the social recognition of Kitas as educational facilities has been increasing for years and that Kitas are undergoing a **reappraisal and upgrading in matters of education policy**. Clear signs of this reassessment can be seen in Germany through the child promotion act (Kinderfördergesetz) which guarantees the continued extension of child care places until 2013, and educational programmes which have been implemented in each federal state specifying the high quality training objectives of the educational work in Kitas.

The social reappraisal and upgrading of early childhood learning and education comes at a time when a **paradigm shift** is also taking place in **German gender equality policy**. In addition to gender equality policy initiatives aimed at enhancing equal opportunities for women, politics is increasingly focussing on men and boys with the goal of opening up new horizons for them beyond traditional and restrictive masculine lifestyle concepts.

This study is positioned within these two social policy topics, and its emphasis is on the situation of men in Kitas and in educator training. However, the study also sheds light on the attitudes and practical experiences of female trainees and early childhood educators. Given that the empirical documentation and practical knowledge of the situation of men in Kitas is extremely small in Germany, as in other countries, the study constitutes a unique empirical basis in terms of its form and level of detail. The qualitative and quantitative findings provide representative information on the level of acceptance and desirability of having male early childhood educators, as well as on reservations about and barriers to increasing the proportion of men. Furthermore, they allow for conclusions to be drawn on the concrete strategies, initiatives and actions required to achieve an increase in this proportion.

Why is the number of male educators in Kitas so low?

Even though there are some encouraging trends in Germany which point to the possibility of increasing the percentage of men in Kitas – for example younger men are showing increased interest in working as early childhood educators, and there is evidence of national and international strategies which have led to an increase in the proportion of male educators –, in today's reality the percentage of male educators in Kitas only amounts to 2.4 %.

One of the main reasons for the low proportion of men in Kitas is founded on a traditional gender order which leads to stereotypical gender images and a corresponding division of labour: a gender order which is partly distinguished by the fact that early childhood education is assigned to women and that so-called women's careers (such as the profession of early childhood educator) is marked by low social recognition and are generally less well paid than so-called men's careers. These reasons act as barriers and block men's paths into the early childhood educator profession. Moreover, they result in the fact that the few men who have opted for the profession of educator in a Kita often feel out of place and "alone among female educators".

Taking into account the low proportion of men in Kitas and the barriers to increasing the ratio of men it becomes clear that more men can only be attracted to work in Kitas if equal opportunity policy continues to focus on upgrading pre-school learning and education and on changing or expanding traditional gender concepts and gender roles.

In addition, continual and targeted measures, as well as the use of personal and financial resources from diverse players and decision makers, are necessary to actually implement strategies to increase the proportion of male educators in Kitas.

Yet are these efforts worthwhile? The findings of this study speak for themselves:

What are the arguments for more men in Kitas?

The findings of the study prove **unambiguously** that the doors of Kitas are wide open to men and that the few qualified male educators there are seen and valued as greatly enriching educational work. Most male and female interviewees cite a large number of reasons for male educators being important in Kitas: they consider it important for girls and boys to be cared for by both female and male educators and for children to see the most diverse possible range of men and women in Kitas as real-life attachment figures. Moreover, many parents expect male early childhood educators to provide a new impetus to the way they raise their children.

In this sense it is encouraging and pleasing that the **Catholic University of Applied Social Sciences Berlin** and the research institute **Sinus Sociovision** were given the opportunity to address the subject of “male educators in Kitas” within the framework of a comprehensive research project sponsored by the **Federal Ministry for Family Affairs, Senior Citizens, Women and Youth** (abbreviated in German to “BMFSFJ”).

The findings from the research project offer **a strong and empirically substantiated basis** which – at least according to the hopes of those implementing the project – will enrich both national and international discussions in the (professional) community.

The establishment of the coordination centre “Männer in Kitas“ at the **Catholic University of Applied Social Sciences Berlin**, sponsored by the BMFSFJ, already signifies a considerable achievement of the study. Since January 1, 2010, the coordination centre has made it its business to increase the ratio of qualified male educators in Kitas in both the medium and the long term.

Michael Cremers, Jens Krabel, Stephan Höyng and Marc Calmbach

I.

Gender equality and education policy background of the research project

The scientific study of male educators¹ in Kitas² is part of the current equal opportunity policy alignment of BMFSFJ. The equality and education policy background for the study is outlined in brief below.

Paradigm shift in gender equality policy

Alongside the traditional gender equality policy which is primarily directed at women – for example, by combating the gender pay gap, or by efforts to increase the ratio of women in administration positions and combat violence against women³ – gender equality policy in recent years has increasingly aspired to address and include men. By way of example, the following studies, booklets and expert reports have been sponsored and/or published by the **Federal Ministry for Family Affairs, Senior Citizens, Women and Youth**: “Neue Wege – Porträts von Männern im Aufbruch” (BMFSFJ 2008), also in English: “Exploring New Avenues – Portraits of Men in Transition”; “Männer im Aufbruch”/“Männer in Bewegung” (Volz/Zulehner 1998, 2009); “Wege zur Gleichstellung heute und morgen” (Sinus Sociovision 2007); “Männer: Rolle vorwärts, Rolle rückwärts” (Wippermann et al. 2009); and “Neue Wege für Jungs” (Cremers 2007).

An additional goal of gender equality policy is to widen outdated and increasingly dysfunctional male role models and to attract more men and boys to work in areas that have so far tended to have a female connotation (upbringing, care and early childhood education). Examples here include reforms such as those in the Child-raising Allowance and Parental Leave Act of 2001 and 2007⁴, initiatives such as the **New Paths for Boys** project launched in 2005, with three main areas of focus, “expanding the range of career choice”, “making the male role more flexible” and “promoting social skills”, or even the specialist campaign “Modern for the Elderly” carried out between September 2008 and March 2009 (www.die-moderne-altenpflege.de).

1 In Germany, the term “educator” (“Erzieher”) describes qualified personnel who work in Kitas or in other areas of child and youth services. The training lasts five years including the preparatory on-the-job training and a three-year education at a vocational school. Over the past years, an increasing number of universities and colleges have introduced educator degree programmes as well.

2 The term “Kitas” refers to all day-care facilities, which care for, bring up and educate children who are not yet of school age. These include mixed-age and same-age facilities, which have an integrated after-school care club. Pure after-school care clubs however do not come under the scope of the term Kita herein below.

3 Coalition Agreement 2009 “Growth, Education and Cohesion” (cf. www.bmfsfj.de).

4 According to the BMFSFJ this parental allowance – introduced at the beginning of 2007 – marks a paradigm shift in family policy (Family Report 2009, pg. 6).

But the Coalition Agreement of 2009 “Wachstum, Bildung und Zusammenhalt” (“growth, education and solidarity”, see www.bmfsfj.de) is also testimony to the fact that the scientific treatment of male educators in KitAs has become part of the current gender equality policy alignment of the Federal Government:

Boys’ and men’s policy

We want to develop an independent policy on boys and men and to continue and intensify existing projects for boys and young men. As a result, we can open broader horizons for them in educational and caring professions (Coalition agreement 2009, p.74).

Gender equality policy is intended to extend gender-stereotypical career orientations

Whereas the educator profession is currently among the “top ten” careers for young women, it remains uncommon for young men. Why is this so?

1. Within the framework of division of labour and stereotypical gender concepts, children’s pre-school education is traditionally seen as “women’s work”. It is commonly assumed that women, by virtue of their so-called “natural qualities”, are especially well suited to caring for and educating children. Not least therefore, the early childhood educator profession is considered a “women’s career” – and most young men don’t want to learn a profession which allegedly isn’t appropriate for their gender.⁵
2. Looking at the history of professions, the low ratio of men can also be explained historically: most training centres have been offering men any prospect of early childhood educator training only since the 1970s (see Rohrmann 2009). Thus, the low proportion of male educators in KitAs has long been a “homemade” problem.
3. The low intake of male early childhood educators is primarily accounted for both in the professional community and in the public in general by the low pay and social recognition of this career area. Yet monetary aspects alone do not sufficiently explain the low ratio of male educators in KitAs. This is indicated not least by the statistics which show that there are several professions where the proportion of men is substantially higher than in the early childhood educator profession, though the salary level is similar to, or even below, the average pay of early childhood educators (see Figure 1).

⁵ A look at current training statistics shows that gender-stereotypical career orientations are not only recurrent among young men. A high gender concentration can be established in many professional groups. Young women are found disproportionately often in administrative and office-based jobs, in personal care, household and cleaning jobs, product and personal service professions, healthcare professions and textile clothing jobs (ratios of between 55 % and 80 %). Young men, on the other hand, are dominant in metal and electrical professions, construction jobs and traffic-based occupations.

Fig. 1: Comparison of professions: training, remuneration and ratio of men

Profession	Training	Minimum salary	Remuneration in training ⁶	Ratio of men
Early childhood educator	vocational school	2,130 €	non-paid	16.62%
Carer for the elderly	vocational school	2,140 €	966 € (civil service collective agreement)	19.87%
Paramedic	vocational school	2,140 €	non-paid (in practical training max. 1,254 €)	73.09% ⁷
Electrical engineering assistant	vocational school	2,390 €	non-paid	96.25%
Assistant – information technology	vocational school	2,332 €	non-paid	89.62%
Logistic specialist	apprenticeship	1,989 €	733 € – 812 €	89.49%
Chef	apprenticeship	1,815 €	541 € – 649 €	74.46%
Baker	apprenticeship	2,019 €	450 € – 580 €	80.39%
Butcher	apprenticeship	1,326 €	399 € – 667 €	95.86%
Painter and varnishing specialist	apprenticeship	2,132 €	453 € – 493 €	88.69%
Vehicle engineer	apprenticeship	2,169 €	548 € – 760 €	97.83%

Sources: <http://infobub.arbeitsagentur.de/berufe/index.jsp>, Federal Statistical Office 2009, year of training 2008; Federal Statistical Office 2010, school year 08/09.

Players involved in science and policy-making demand an increase in the ratio of male educators in Kitas

Greater importance is being attached to increasing the ratio of male educators in the current debate on educational reform and improving the professionalism of elementary education. An increase in the proportion of men in the professional area of Kitas is being demanded by representatives from science, educational practice and politics, both in Germany and internationally (see Rabe-Kleberg 2005; OECD 2001, 2005). The necessity for increasing the ratio of male educators is generally justified by the fact that ...

- male educators would cushion a shortage of male parental figures in the family (see OECD 2001; Aigner/Poscheschnik 2009),

⁶ Minimum salary subject to collective bargaining agreements, according to the Federal Employment Office (training remuneration – 3rd year of training). Contrary to full-time vocational training courses, for which in most cases schooling fees are to be paid, training remuneration is a fixed component – largely secured through collective bargaining agreements – of the apprenticeship. There are considerable differences in salary between the various training professions. Training courses with the highest levels of remuneration are done substantially more frequently by young men than young women, while the lowest levels of remuneration are found in several typical “women’s careers”.

⁷ Whereas women tend to attend vocational school for individual-related jobs in healthcare, care and early childhood education as well as for medical and commercial assistance jobs, young men are primarily interested in technical training courses, for example in a career as electronic assistants or in communications and information careers from the relatively new area of IT.

- | a lack of male parental figures has an adverse effect on bonding⁸, conduct (as to aggression and violence), and on educational prospects⁹ for boys (see Ahnert 2004; Ahnert et al. 2006; Fabes et al. 2003, 2007; Rabe-Kleberg 2003, 2005),
- | male educators would extend the range of games and contacts in Kitas (see Rohrmann 2009),
- | an increase in the ratio of men in the professional area of Kitas may contribute to extending men's range of career choice and scope of action (see Krabel/Stuve 2006; Cremers 2007/2008).

But: these demands have so far been virtually ineffective, since the shortage of male educators is regretted almost everywhere, "yet measures are scarcely ever taken to establish a more balanced ratio between genders in training and employment" (OECD 2004, page 59).

Education policy reappraisal and increasing the professionalism of early childhood education

Kitas have undergone an education policy reappraisal and upgrade in recent years:

- | Education programmes have been launched in all federal states, with demanding educational goals, tasks and areas for the educational work in Kitas (see Bock-Famulla 2008). The demand for an increase in the ratio of men has now been included in several education programmes (see Rohrmann 2009).
- | The fact that training is becoming more academic is also testimony to the increasing professionalism and the education policy reappraisal of pre-school education. Whereas elementary education "only appeared in trace elements" at German colleges and universities until 2004 (König/Pasternack 2008, p. 1), there are now 54 academic training courses in the area of elementary education throughout the country (status as of 05/2008). The hope of achieving a higher proportion of men among early childhood educators is related to making early childhood educator training more academic (see König/Pasternack 2008, p. 72), since this would also improve career prospects and opportunities for advancement as a whole. Making the profession and the institution of the Kita more academic and "more scientific" is not, however, uncontroversial (see GEW [German Education Union] 2008), not least because the salary classification and the continuance of graduates in this occupational field have not yet been clarified.

But: the notion still widely held outside the occupational field that educators in Kitas should or do primarily carry out maternal care tasks conflicts with the education policy reappraisal and upgrade of early childhood education.

8 Above all, the results of attachment research (see Ahnert et al. 2006) suggest that the gender of the educational attachment figures is of major importance for the quality of the relationship between educators and children. However, there are currently no empirical research results available on the positive significance of male educators in Kitas, and further detailed research is required, which is to reveal the exact relationship between educators and children (see Rohrmann 2009).

9 The discourse on boys' behavioural problems and poor performance has been going on for a long time, both nationally and internationally. The reasons and arguments used to explain these phenomena are very different and strongly debated within professional discourse (see Foster/Kimmel/Skelton 2001; Cremers 2007; Rohrmann 2009; Bundesjugendkuratorium 2009).

II.

Current figures on the ratio of men in Kitas

As already referred to by way of introduction, current data¹⁰ confirm the everyday perception that men are an absolute rarity in early childhood educator professions: the nationwide ratio of male employees in the educational area of Kitas is no more than 3%, and this figure already includes male interns, those completing a voluntary social service year, those doing compulsory civilian service and job creation scheme personnel (ABM), with a total share of 0.6%. In absolute terms: from a total of 362,215 registered employees in Kitas, there are a total of 10,745 men.¹¹

It is striking, though, that the ratio displays a strong variation between the different federal states and administrative districts.

On the federal state level, the city states of Bremen and Hamburg have the highest ratio of men in Kitas – the proportion of men is particularly low in the East German federal states, in Baden-Württemberg and Bavaria

The ranking of federal states with the highest ratio of men is headed by the city states of Bremen and Hamburg (Bremen: 9.6%, Hamburg: 8.5%). Schleswig-Holstein (5.1%), Berlin (4.5%) and Hesse (4.5%) are also above average. The East German federal states, Baden-Württemberg and Bavaria are bottom of the rankings, with a ratio of (sometimes significantly) below 2%.

However, looking at the absolute figures for male employees in Kitas – an important factor, for example, if we intend to link male educators on a federal state level – it can be seen that approx. 6,000 men (which means more than half of all men working as educators in Kitas) are working in the federal states of Baden-Württemberg, Hesse, Lower Saxony and North Rhine-Westphalia. With 2,422 employees, North Rhine-Westphalia has the highest number of men in this occupational area. Permanently qualified male educators (not including interns, those on a voluntary social service year¹² and others¹³) are extremely rare in the East German federal states in particular.

¹⁰ Unless indicated otherwise, all data relate to 2008.

¹¹ This study focuses on qualified male educators, who work with children aged 0 to 6 years in Kitas. Those in administrative jobs in Kitas and in after-school childcare programmes, which exclusively care for schoolchildren aged 5 to 14 years, are therefore excluded from the calculations. However, the precise number of men who work exclusively with pre-school children cannot be ascertained, since some variable and mixed age-group facilities care for pre-school and schoolchildren, and in particular it is not possible to trace which children the men work with in such facilities.

¹² Persons who complete their voluntary social service year (abbreviated in German to “FSJler”).

¹³ “Others” include those doing compulsory civilian service and people employed in Kitas because of job creation schemes.

Fig. 2: Educators, interns, those on a voluntary social service year and “others” in Kitas in 2008, broken down by federal states

		Educators, including those on voluntary social service years, interns and “others”			Educators			Those on voluntary social service years, interns and “others”		
		Men	Women	Total	Men	Women	Total	Men	Women	Total
Schleswig-Holstein	n	586	10,953	11,539	474	10,504	10,978	112	449	561
	%	5.1	94.9	100.0	4.3	95.7	100.0	20.0	80.0	100.0
Hamburg	n	734	7,893	8,627	621	7,404	8,025	113	489	602
	%	8.5	91.5	100.0	7.7	92.3	100.0	18.8	81.2	100.0
Lower Saxony	n	1,138	31,593	32,731	876	30,362	31,238	262	1,231	1,493
	%	3.5	96.5	100.0	2.8	97.2	100.0	17.5	82.5	100.0
Bremen	n	332	3,111	3,443	192	2,628	2,820	140	483	623
	%	9.6	90.4	100.0	6.8	93.2	100.0	22.5	77.5	100.0
North Rhine-Westphalia	n	2,422	74,136	76,558	1,819	69,010	70,829	603	5,126	5,729
	%	3.2	96.8	100.0	2.6	97.4	100.0	10.5	89.5	100.0
Hesse	n	1,399	29,660	31,059	963	27,363	28,326	436	2,297	2,733
	%	4.5	95.5	100.0	3.4	96.6	100.0	16.0	84.0	100.0
Rhineland-Palatinate	n	580	20,650	21,230	400	18,982	19,382	180	1,668	1,848
	%	2.7	97.3	100.0	2.1	97.9	100.0	9.7	90.3	100.0
Baden-Württemberg	n	1,008	46,450	47,458	705	42,550	43,255	303	3,900	4,203
	%	2.1	97.9	100.0	1.6	98.4	100.0	7.2	92.8	100.0
Bavaria	n	720	46,991	47,711	461	43,635	44,096	259	3,356	3,615
	%	1.5	98.5	100.0	1.0	99.0	100.0	7.2	92.8	100.0
Saarland	n	103	3,986	4,089	74	3,725	3,799	29	261	290
	%	2.5	97.5	100.0	1.9	98.1	100.0	10.0	90.0	100.0
Berlin	n	758	15,981	16,739	693	15,633	16,326	65	348	413
	%	4.5	95.5	100.0	4.2	95.8	100.0	15.7	84.3	100.0
Brandenburg	n	229	11,288	11,517	185	11,064	11,249	44	224	268
	%	2.0	98.0	100.0	1.6	98.4	100.0	16.4	83.6	100.0
Mecklenburg-Western Pomerania	n	134	7,817	7,951	93	7,525	7,618	41	292	333
	%	1.7	98.3	100.0	1.2	98.8	100.0	12.3	87.7	100.0
Saxony	n	331	19,037	19,368	240	18,609	18,849	91	428	519
	%	1.7	98.3	100.0	1.3	98.7	100.0	17.5	82.5	100.0
Saxony-Anhalt	n	136	11,874	12,010	80	11,516	11,596	56	358	414
	%	1.1	98.9	100.0	0.7	99.3	100.0	13.5	86.5	100.0
Thuringia	n	135	10,050	10,185	104	9,807	9,911	31	243	274
	%	1.3	98.7	100.0	1.0	99.0	100.0	11.3	88.7	100.0
Total	n	10,745	351,470	362,215	7,980	330,317	338,297	2,765	21,153	23,918
	%	3.0	97.0	100.0	2.4	97.6	100.0	11.6	88.4	100.0

Source: Research Data Centre of the federal states at the Berlin-Brandenburg Statistical Office. Statistics on child and youth welfare, part III.1 (statistics on children and active persons in Kitas) 2008

Male educators are particularly concentrated in urban Kitas

Differentiation based on administrative districts reveals that there are administrative (country) districts and/or urban districts in each federal state in which the ratio of men working in education is sometimes considerably higher than the average for the federal state. The federal states of Schleswig-Holstein and Hesse, which have several urban districts with a

high proportion of male Kita employees, are particularly notable here. Schleswig-Holstein, with Flensburg (10.8%) and Kiel (10.8%), has the urban districts with the highest ratios of men working in Kitas in Germany. Similarly, there are also several urban districts in Hesse with an above-average ratio of male educators, interns, men on a voluntary social service year and other male employees in the area of education (Frankfurt am Main: 9.8%, Kassel: 8.5%, Offenbach am Main: 6.9%, Darmstadt: 6.1%).

In the other federal states it is generally the larger cities which have an above-average ratio of men in Kitas. For example, the cities of Freiburg (6.4%) and Dresden (4.4%) have the highest ratio of men in Kitas in Baden-Württemberg and Saxony.

The ratio of men is highest in the under 30 age group – the high proportion of young male early childhood educators in Berlin, Brandenburg and Saxony is particularly notable

Differentiating the group of male early childhood educators (not including men on a voluntary social service year, interns and others) by age groups, it can be seen that the ratio of male educators is slightly higher in the young educators group. The ratio of male educators in the **under-25** age group is **2.9%**. The ratio of men is highest in the **26 to 30** age group, reaching 3.6%. The ratio of men in the **31 to 40** age group is **2.9%**, while in the **41 to 50** age group the proportion of male educators comes to **2%**. The lowest ratio of men is among the **51 to 60** age group, where the figure is just **1.4%**. In case of male and female educators aged **over 60**, the proportion of men increases slightly again to **2.6%**.

The ratio of men in the group of early childhood educators aged 26 to 30 (not including men on a voluntary social service year, interns and others) is far above the federal state averages, in particular in Berlin, Brandenburg and Saxony.¹⁴ In Berlin, within the group of 26 to 30-year old early childhood educators, the total ratio of male educators is 8.9% (federal state average: 4.2%), in Brandenburg the figure for male educators within that age group is 6.8% (federal state average: 1.6%) and in Saxony 8.7% (federal state average: 1.3%). In the other federal states the ratio of men in the group of 26 to 30-year old educators is also slightly higher than the average proportion of men in each federal state. However, the difference is not as clear as it is in Berlin, Brandenburg and Saxony. It seems that the increasing demand for qualified educators in the East German federal states (see below), and especially in the eastern urban districts of Berlin, in Brandenburg and Saxony, has resulted in young men increasingly opting to work in Kitas.

¹⁴ Data on the number of male educators aged under 26 were not available for all federal states. The data records provided by the Research Data Centre of the federal states "Statistics on child and youth welfare, part III.1" indicate the ratio of male and female employees in Kitas. The statistical analyses were reviewed by employees of the federal state statistics agencies for the specified protection of data privacy criteria: in order to preserve privacy, no administrative districts may be identified in which fewer than three men are employed in Kitas. Given that the total number of men working in Kitas in Germany is already very low, our statistical analytical framework resulted in entire data tables being deleted by the research data centre because of anonymity regulations. Data identifying the number of men on the level of administrative districts, their age and employment relationship, and the providers that employ them were no longer available. These circumstances impeded the statistical analysis.

Reasons for the differing ratios of men in the individual federal states and administrative districts

The clear differences among federal states and administrative districts with regard to the number of men in Kitas raise the question of how to explain these differences (at least approximately):

- I Certain kinds of work in Kitas are better paid in some federal states, not least due to the requirement for academic training. For example, the usually academically trained Kita integration educators in **Bremen** and Kita administrators¹⁵ in **Hamburg**¹⁶ earn a relatively high salary. In Hamburg the ratio of men in Kita administration who are exempt from educator duties is 15.3% (national average: 5.7%), while the ratio of men among integration educators in Bremen comes to 18.5% (national average: 4.5%).
- I **Schleswig-Holstein** has a large number of Danish Kitas which feature a high proportion of men. For example the Danish School Association “Dansk Skoleforening for Sydslesvig” operates 55 facilities in Schleswig-Holstein, with a ratio of men of 13%. Educators employed in the Danish School Association are required to have a degree from a Danish college or university and are correspondingly better paid than their German colleagues.
- I In the federal states of **Berlin, Bremen, Hamburg, Schleswig-Holstein** and **Hesse**, and in several large cities, such as Freiburg and Kiel, a larger than average number of Kitas are organised in the form of parents’ initiatives. The ratio of men in parents’ initiatives (at an average of 6.6%) is roughly twice as high as the national average.
- I Initiatives to increase the ratio of men in Kitas are clearly paying off. The assumption is that the comparatively high ratio in **Hesse** and in particular in the **Frankfurt** area can be attributed to the fact that in comparison with the rest of the nation, the highest number of studies and initiatives dealing with the situation of men in Kitas and in day-care have been conducted there (see chapters “Status of research” and “Campaigns and practical examples”).
- I The two vocational schools run by the military (in German “Bundeswehrfachschule”) which train former soldiers as early childhood educators are located in **Hamburg** and **Berlin**. The ratio of men at these vocational schools is 100% in many classes. In view of the fact that few men work in Kitas nationwide, the students from these vocational schools – not all of whom take on a job in Kitas after training, but who have to complete a practical placement there during the course – carry statistical weight.
- I **Bremen** has a higher than average ratio of male interns in Kitas (see Figure 2). This may be accounted for by the fact that educators in Bremen are not generally able to complete their recognised practical placement in a youth facility, as is the case in other federal states, since practical training places are reserved for special needs educators there.
- I The low ratio of men in the **East German federal states** can be explained by the fact that the early childhood education was almost exclusively practised by women in the GDR, to an even greater extent than in the old Federal Republic of Germany. Given that the birth rate strongly declined in the East German federal states after the reunification process and that many Kitas abolished care places and jobs as a result, it was very difficult for men, even if they had wanted to, to find employment in Kitas in the East German federal states. Only in recent years an increasing number of early childhood educators have been taken on in the East German federal states, since the birth rate is now rising again and many older educators are retiring.

15 Kita administrator is the head of an individual Kita.

16 The framework agreement on early childhood education in Hamburg allows for state-recognised educators to fill Kita administration positions. It is, however, common practice of Kita-providers to employ special needs teachers as Kita administrators.

III.

Men in early childhood education: status of research

Male educators in early childhood education – a national and international field for research

Apart from several diploma theses (see for example Marth 2005, Tünte 2006), very few studies have been dedicated to the subject of “male educators in Kitas” in Germany so far.¹⁷ The empirical basis for these studies is generally very narrow, and therefore their findings should be evaluated with an appropriate level of caution. The following studies represent the status of research in Germany:

- I The **Uhrig/Englert** research team examined the situation of educators in Kitas in Frankfurt am Main in the period from October 2004 to November 2005. Using a quantitative questionnaire, all male educators and those doing compulsory civilian service¹⁸ were interviewed as to their everyday work and their career choice motives and backgrounds within the framework of a comprehensive survey. Furthermore, half-standardised, qualitative interviews were conducted with 29 men to explore the results, and male secondary school leavers, high-school graduates and vocational school students were surveyed as to their images of the early childhood education (see Uhrig 2006).
- I Another study on the situation of male employees in Frankfurt’s Kitas was commissioned by the independent organisation **Beratungs- und Verwaltungszentrum (BVZ, “Consulting and Administration Centre”) Frankfurt** in 2005. Using a standardised questionnaire, 108 male educators, interns and those doing compulsory civilian service at BVZ Frankfurt were interviewed as to their self-image, job situation and the motivation for their career choice in the framework of a comprehensive survey (see BVZ Frankfurt 2006, Kress 2006). For the sake of comparability of the job satisfaction of men and women at **BVZ Frankfurt**, a survey was conducted with female employees of the Kita provider in 2007 (see Kress 2008).
- I On behalf of the Equal Opportunities Office of the administrative district of Göttingen, **Watermann** carried out guided interviews with 14 male trainees and trained early childhood educators in 2005/2006. The men were surveyed about their motivation for choosing this career, their career expectations and their career experiences. In terms of content, the survey focussed on equal opportunity issues and the special status of males in the field of early childhood education (see Watermann 2006).
- I Within the scope of a project to promote gender-atypical career choice decisions, **Kasiske/Krabel/Schädler and Stuve** each conducted three guided interviews with male early childhood educators and carers in 2005. Questions on the training and professional experience

¹⁷ Moreover, there is a series of evaluation reports which describe the situation of male educators in Kitas and after-school childcare programmes, but they are not mentioned in further detail here (see Bienek/Stoklossa

of educators and carers were at the centre of the interviews. By virtue of the low number of interviews, the study is primarily explorative in nature (cf. Kasiske et al. 2006).

The situation of male educators in the area of early childhood education has barely been highlighted in other countries either. In particular, the studies by **Cameron/Moss/Owen (1999)**, **Vandenbroeck/Peeters (2008)** and **Rolfe (2005)** have made their way into the debate of German experts.¹⁹

I Cameron et al. interviewed a total of 21 male and female educators from ten different Kitas in England about their entry into the profession and job situation, and on their perceptions of (assumed) gender differences in the context of work. In addition, Cameron et al. conducted 77 interviews with mothers and fathers on the subject of “men in nurseries” (cf. Cameron et al. 1999).

I Vandenbroeck and Peeters accompanied two qualitative studies in which a total of 46 male trainees were interviewed in Belgium, and analysed the textbooks used in Belgian pre-school teaching vocational colleges (see Vandenbroeck/Peeters 2008).

I Furthermore, on behalf of the Equal Opportunities Commission (EOC), **Rolfe** analysed literature and research reports on the subject of “men in early childhood education” as well as a State recruitment campaign in England, one of the goals of which was to increase the ratio of men in early childhood education (see Rolfe 2005).

I It is also worth mentioning a study conducted in England by the **Children’s Workforce Development Council** (CWDC). In June 2008, through an online survey, around 1,000 parents were surveyed about the level of acceptance of male educators in early childhood education (see www.cwdcouncil.org.uk/press-releases/1591_parents-demand-more-male-childcare-workers).

Summary of findings

The studies mentioned here come to similar conclusions, which are presented in brief below:

I Positive practical experiences in areas of social work obtained in the framework of practical placements at schools, voluntary child and youth work, the voluntary social service year or compulsory civilian service are important factors for men in deciding to become educators (see Cameron et al. 1999; Kasiske et al. 2006; Uhrig 2006; Vandenbroeck/Peeters 2008; Watermann 2006).

I A relatively large number of men find their way into the early childhood educator profession by switching careers (see Cameron et al. 1999; Kasiske et al. 2006; Kress 2006; Uhrig 2006; Vandenbroeck/Peeters 2008; Watermann 2006). Men’s career realignment at a later phase of life is described in the research as a “second career chance” for men (see for example Cameron et al. 1999, p. 50).

I Several studies imply that most (young) men predominantly receive positive feedback from their social environment on their career choice (see Kasiske et al.; Vandenbroeck/Peeters 2008, Watermann 2006). This applies in particular to the reactions of parents and close relatives. Vandenbroeck/Peeters state, however, that the young men interviewed in Belgium anticipated deprecatory comments from male and female friends and acquaintances, though these ultimately failed to materialise. This is contradicted by the results

¹⁹ Rohrman also cites a Norwegian pilot study by Lysklett/Emilsen (2007), which examines the reasons for the high ratio of men in so-called open-air kindergartens. However, the study is presently only available in Norwegian.

of Cameron, Moss and Owen, who state that male educators tend to receive ironic and deprecatory reactions to their career choice (see Cameron et al. 1999).

- All studies reach the following conclusion: once men and women are employed in an early childhood education centre team, the educators tend to perform gender-typical activities. Male educators are generally responsible for any manual trade work that arises in the early childhood education centre, prefer to perform a range of sports and movement-based activities, romp about and wrestle more with the children and are more likely to have confidence in allowing children to behave in a high-risk way than female educators. Male trainees and educators are also occasionally confronted by their female colleagues and children with gender-typical expectations, which the men find unnerving (see BVZ Frankfurt 2006; Cameron et al. 1999; Kasiske et al. 2006; Uhrig 2006; Vandebroek/Peeters 2008; Watermann 2006). In a summary of the overall findings, Uhrig states that such situations necessitated a clarification process with children and the team, but none of the interviewees described this as problematic (see Uhrig 2006, pg. 34).
- The prejudice that all men are potential child abusers is unsettling for some male trainees and educators. Except for the study by Cameron et al., however, none of the studies describe the suspicion of child abuse as a central barrier blocking men's path into the educator profession (see BVZ Frankfurt 2006; Vandebroek/Peeters 2008; Watermann 2006).
- Male trainees and educators have a special role by virtue of their minority status in training facilities and Kitas. Merely by their presence, they stand out from the majority of female trainees and colleagues. Their views, comments and behavioural patterns thereby have gender-loaded significance, along the lines of – “what have you got to say then, as a man?” (see Kasiske et al. 2006; Watermann 2006).
- The low pay and lack of esteem in the educator profession is seen as a central factor for the low ratio of male educators in early childhood education in all studies (see Cameron et al. 1999; Kasiske et al.; Kress 2006; Uhrig 2006; Vandebroek/Peeters 2008; Watermann 2006).
- In particular, the studies by Kasiske et al., Uhrig and Watermann highlight the significance of gender-reflexive team debates for conflict-free cooperation between men and women (see Kasiske et al. 2006; Uhrig 2006; Watermann 2006).
- Vandebroek/Peeters state in their analysis of several textbooks used in training facilities in Belgium that male educators and fathers are almost completely absent. In the rare cases in which fathers are the central theme, they are depicted negatively as to their child-rearing (see Vandebroek/Peeters 2008, p. 711).
- Cameron et al., Rolfe and the **Children's Workforce Development Council** (CWDC) indicate that the majority of parents in England are in favour of more male educators in early childhood education (see Children's Workforce Development Council 2009, Rolfe 2005). Cameron et al. emphasize, however, that mothers frequently put more trust in female educators than in male educators (see Cameron et al. 1999, pp. 99 ff.).

Current developments in research

The “**Elementar**” research project is presently being conducted in Austria at the University of Innsbruck. The lives, motives and experiences of men in child-care facilities are at the centre of this comprehensive project. The results of the “Elementar” project, however, are only being made public in summer 2010. The current status of the research project is available on the project website (see www.uibk.ac.at/ezwi/elementar/).

In recent times, researchers and people working in early childhood education from various countries in Europe involved in the subject of “men in early childhood education” have been striving to improve their mutual links. The purpose of forming an international network is to collate the results of empirical studies and best practice examples to increase the ratio of men, and to make them available for further national and international projects. As a result, in 2008, the European research network KOME (Knowledge on Men in Early Childhood Education) was founded in Berlin at the national closing conference (sponsored by the Federal Ministry for Family Affairs, Senior Citizens, Women and Youth) on “Gender-conscious early childhood education”²⁰ within the European project **Gender Loops**. Members of the network met for a second time at the EECERA Conference²¹ 2009 in Strasbourg, and an additional meeting is planned at the 2010 EECERA Conference in Birmingham.

Campaigns and practical examples on increasing the ratio of men in Kitas

Germany and other countries already have a wide variety of experience in practical projects and initiatives with the objective of increasing the number of male educators in Kitas. This should be taken into consideration when implementing strategies to increase the ratio of men, which is why the most important campaigns, practical projects and initiatives (known in Germany) are presented below.

State-run campaigns to increase the ratio of male educators in Europe

The most comprehensive state-run campaign to recruit male educators to date was organised in Norway. Since 1996, several action plans have been compiled with regard to gender equality policy in early childhood education, one of the goals of which was to increase the ratio of men in early childhood education to 20%. Examples of promotional measures within the scope of these action plans include²²:

- | Annual gender equality policy conferences on a national level, at which experiences are exchanged on initiatives and local developments aimed at increasing the ratio of men.
- | Support for local and regional networks of men working in early childhood education.
- | Public relations, for example setting up a national website for male educators (www.mennibarnehagen.no).
- | Booklets with information and practical tips on increasing the ratio of men.
- | Annual gender equality policy prize from the Ministry of Education. This prize has already been awarded to several facilities that advocate the employment of more men in this vocational field.
- | Promotion of several research and practical projects on the situation of men in early childhood education.

20 Within its two-year term, the European project Gender Loops set itself the objective of developing gender mainstreaming strategies for training facilities in respect of educators and Kitas. Increasing the ratio of men in Kitas was also a declared goal of the project (see www.genderloops.eu).

21 EECERA (European Early Childhood Education Research Association): the EECERA e. g. pursues the goal of distributing research results from the area of elementary education and initiating new research projects, respectively (see www.eecera.org).

22 See below Krabel/Cremers 2008, pp. 42f.

- Setting up regional working groups in which public bodies, early childhood education centres and training facilities are represented. The regional working groups decide on matters including the allocation of financial resources for increasing the ratio of men in early childhood education centres, and organise study trips, conferences, events, etc.
- Publicizing of example project

Unlike in Norway, however, these measures have failed to produce any significant increase in the ratio of male educators in England (see Rolfe 2005, www.childcarecareers.gov.uk/index.cfm).

Unemployed men acquiring qualifications for the early childhood educator profession

In **Brandenburg**, the second group of unemployed men are doing their 2-year training as early childhood educators, the first group having finished in 2007. The **Berliner Institut für Frühpädagogik** (BIfF) is responsible for this scheme. Cooperation partners are the **Ministry for Education, Youth and Sport** of the federal state of Brandenburg as well as the **Sozialpädagogische Fortbildungsinstitut Berlin-Brandenburg** (SFBB). The qualification scheme is promoted and financed by the **European Social Fund** (ESF) and the Spree-Neisse administrative district. The target group for the scheme is constituted by long-term unemployed men in the federal state of Brandenburg with intermediate secondary education and completed vocational training.

The total period for the qualification is two years, in which time the curriculum developed by the **Berliner Institut für Frühpädagogik** is implemented, with 2,100 hours spent in the Kita, and 1,200 seminar hours. Facilities at which men spend their training period must fulfil the following conditions:

- | Allow for practical experience with children between 0 and 6 years.
- | Have at least one suitably qualified member of staff who, as a mentor, provides professional assistance in the participants' qualification process.
- | Ability to ensure that development discussions are held and development reports compiled.
- | Ensure the involvement of mentors at mentoring meetings.
- | Facilitate semestral internship observations.
- | Allow the participant time for daily preparation and post-evaluation, in total periods of around 60 minutes.

The Brandenburg Social Careers Act guarantees these men an equivalence statement as a state-recognised educator in Kitas of the federal state of Brandenburg, following successful graduation. 18 out of 20 participants in the first group passed the final graduation exam, with a state-recognised equivalence statement. All these men have since started work at Kitas. Such a qualification should not be limited to the federal state of Brandenburg and would of course be conceivable for women, too. Moreover, it would not necessarily have to focus on those afflicted by long-term unemployment. Such a project would be just as feasible for any individual interested in retraining.

Since March 2010, an evaluation by the Freie Universität Berlin has been available, which deals with the pedagogical practice of part of these men who are currently working in Kitas and who participated in the first qualification scheme from 2005 – 2007 as described above. The authors of this evaluation perceive it as a “first explorative survey in the addressed field of study“ (päd quis gGmbH, p. 29); the population examined was small and “not all of the men who participated in the qualification scheme and received an equivalence statement could be reached.“ (ibid). Against this background, they state under point 1: “To qualify long-term

unemployed men (possessing the given educational level) in the described way seems to be a feasible way to achieve both objectives: to relieve the labour market and to attract male educators to Kitas. Taking into account the available findings from the practical experience of this particular group of people, there is no reason not to continue and intensify respective efforts.” (ibid.).

In **Scotland** the organisation **Men in Childcare**, in cooperation with training facilities for educators, provides three different courses leading to a qualification for men, during which they are trained in social auxiliary work and to work as qualified educational personnel in early childhood education centres. The scheme is divided into a 16-week introductory course of 2 hours a week, a 16-week “fast-track course” of 2 hours a week, and a 12- or 18-month so-called “Higher National Certificate Course” (HNC) in which men are trained as state-recognised qualified education personnel. The introductory and fast-track courses are exclusively reserved for men, while the HNC courses are open to both men and women. In the meantime, training courses are being held in several Scottish cities, financed by the Scottish Government and the European Social Fund. Courses leading to qualifications demonstrably produce an increase in the ratio of men. For example: the proportion of male educators in Edinburgh was increased from 1% to over 10% within four years (2001–2005). Around 1,200 men have now attended one or more qualification-based courses, as can be seen from the organisation’s current homepage: <http://www.meninchildcare.co.uk> [status as of 11.12.2009].

Publicity campaigns

In 2007/2008 the advertising campaign “Education needs more men” was launched by the **Ministry for Education and Women** of the federal state of Schleswig-Holstein, in cooperation with the **Federal Employment Office/Northern Regional Directorate**, the **Association of Protestant Kitas** in Schleswig-Holstein and the equal opportunity and gender representatives of the Northelbian-Protestant-Lutheran Church. The goal was to bring men closer to the teaching and educator professions through posters and information flyers (see posters for the campaign in Schleswig-Holstein below).



There is no evaluation report available on this recruitment scheme of the federal state of Schleswig-Holstein.

In the Flemish part of **Belgium** the project **Mannen in de Kinderopvang**, financed by the European Social Fund, was carried out between 2001 and 2004. Within the framework of this project and in addition to running a media campaign to attract male educators, the manual “Werken met mannen en vrouwen in een gemengd team” (Collaboration of men and women in a mixed team) was produced²⁴. Moreover, a study group from the University of Ghent interviewed male educator trainees about their training situation²⁵. At the same time, the Flemish regional government launched a quality offensive which was intended to improve the work of early childhood education centres in general. Within the scope of this quality offensive, the salaries of qualified educational personnel in early childhood centres were raised by 30% at the beginning of 2000, and the designation of the educator profession changed: employees in early childhood education centres are no longer called “kinderverzorger” (child carers) but rather “kinderbegeleider” (child attendants). According to Vandebroek and Peeters, the ratio of men in the Flemish part of Belgium increased from 0.9% to 2.3% between 2002 and 2006. Evidently the media campaign was particularly targeted at individuals wishing to switch careers (see Vandebroek/Peeters 2008; www.vbjk.be/nl/projecten/mannen-de-kinderopvang).



The posters from the Belgian media campaign were translated into German and have been distributed in Germany since 2004 through the publishing house **das Netz** (see posters for the campaign in Belgium above).

Practical projects to increase the ratio of male educators

There are already a large number of Kitas which, at their own initiative or within the scope of larger projects, have put gender-conscious education to the test (see, among others, Krabel/Cremers 2008, Rohrman & Team Kita Fischteichweg 2008). In several cases, the cooperation between men and women has been reflected upon and structured in a more

²⁴ The manual offers advice and information to early childhood centres with gender-heterogeneous teams on how men can be attracted to work in early childhood education and how male and female educators can cooperate without conflict.

²⁵ The results of this survey also had an impact on the conducting of two qualitative studies within the scope of which a total of 46 male trainees were interviewed (see Chapter: Status of research, pp. 20ff).

gender-conscious way within the team, or attempts have been made to improve the integration of fathers into the Kita. More rarely, this specifically involved attracting men to work in the Kita. The Kita “Vorsfelde” in **Wolfsburg** for example set itself this objective as part of a model project implemented by the city council of Wolfsburg under the title “Fairness Adventure” which introduced gender mainstreaming from 2004 to 2006. The female educators of the Vorsfelde Kita contacted vocational schools and colleges of further education in order to recruit male trainees and students for practical placements. Moreover, on Girl’s Day, they held an open day for male students within the scope of the **New Paths for Boys** project, and developed proposals to enhance the integration of fathers into the Kita. The goal of attracting a male employee to the Vorsfelde Kita has not been achieved, however, nor is any evaluation report available on this project.

Within the scope of the Hessian pilot project **Child day-care – quality and professionalism through continuity and safeguarding conditions** (2007 to 2009), the **Men in day-care** project was initiated by **Hessenstiftung – Familie hat Zukunft**. This project primarily involved making initial contact with the few male day-care employees in **Hesse**, offering a platform for their specific challenges and experiences and including them in the entire pilot project. In a workshop held at the end of 2008, male day-care employees and experts from various institutions developed initial recommendations as a response to the question of how day-care could be structured in a way that is more attractive to men. The recommendations and an initial evaluation of the project are documented on the website of **Hessenstiftung – Familie hat Zukunft** (www.hessenstiftung.de) under the title of “Männer in der Tagespflege – Ergebnisse des Gesamtprojekts”. Increasing the ratio of men in day-care is also a declared objective of the Hessian **Ministry of Employment, Family and Health**.

The **Netzwerk Schulische Bubenarbeit** (NWSB) launched the project “Men into the Lower Grade!” (MiU!) in **Switzerland** in 2004. The project pursues the goal of attracting men to the professions of early childhood educator and primary school teacher, improving the image of such careers, and making training and further education facilities aware of the subject. The following measures have so far been implemented:

- | Networking key individuals from educator training colleges, academic careers advice centres, the VPOD (Federation of Public Service Employees) trade union, and the umbrella organization for Swiss educators (LCH).
- | Setting up a project website (see www.unterstufenlehrer.ch).
- | Compiling portraits of early childhood educators and primary school teachers.
- | Organisation of open days at which male students are allowed to observe early childhood education centres with qualified male educators for one day.
- | Drawing up of information and publicity materials (brochures, posters and postcards).
- | Additional public relations work, targeting the press.

Within the scope of this project, the **Schweizer Krippenverband** (Swiss Federation of Crèches) drafted a manual for early childhood centres with gender-heterogeneous teams on the basis of the Belgian booklet “Werken met mannen en vrouwen in een gemengd team” (see www.kitas.ch/index.php?id=98). The manual provides advice on how men can be attracted to Kitas and how cooperation in mixed teams can be managed productively and without conflict.

Networks, symposia, working teams and men's representatives

In 2005, the **Federal Ministry for Women, Senior Citizens, Family and Youth** initiated the pilot project **New Paths for Boys** which, in part through short-term practical placements in so-called women's professions, strives to expand the range of career choices for boys. Around one third of all short-term practical training placements completed by boys throughout the country within the scope of **New Paths for Boys** take place in Kitas and after-school care clubs. The **New Paths for Boys** project includes an office to serve opinion formers, and is seen as a platform for specialist dialogue and exchange, as well as a networking agency for a wide variety of players. Information, background data and specific materials on the implementation of projects and short-term practical placements are available on the website www.neue-wege-fuer-jungs.de. The **New Paths for Boys** project is increasingly being noticed in the general public, in schools, city councils, at private and public funding institutions, organisations and businesses, and the number of network partners supporting the cause through a range of offers, such as project days, workshops, seminars and cooperation with schools, is continually rising. The network currently consists of 138 contributing initiatives.

In recent time several symposia have been held in Germany and various other countries on the situation of male educators in the area of early childhood education. The first nationwide symposium for men in Kitas was held in the **Netherlands** (Amsterdam) on April 15, 2009 (see Rohrmann 2009, p. 31). In **Germany**, around 200 male educators and experts and some vocational school teaching personnel met in **Hanover** on October 23 and 24, 2009, at the second nationwide symposium for "men in Kitas". In various workshops the male participants – and a few female ones – discussed issues and problems such as suspicion of child abuse, cooperation with fathers, and gender mainstreaming strategies for Kitas. The "men in Kitas" symposium is set to continue every two years, due to the high level of interest. Two other small regional specialist conferences have been held in **Frankfurt am Main** in recent years under the titles "More men in early childhood education" and "Gender-conscious educators as players involved in a culture of recognition". With the help of the Frankfurt women's department, the "Elementar-AG Männer in Kitas" was founded in October 2008, with the goal of intensifying exchange of experience between male educators and attracting more male educators to work in Kitas. There are also working groups networking male educators in a few other cities, such as Dresden, Hanover and Cologne. Similarly, Frankfurt has the country's first men's representatives in a Kita at the private Kita-provider **pme Familienservice**. The job of the men's representative is to promote the process of exchange between male educators within the company, as well as among male early childhood educators in the Greater Frankfurt area generally. Moreover, he is meant to pass on relevant information to male and female employees and to campaign for the positive effects of mixed-gender teams.

Networks for male educators also exist elsewhere. In **New Zealand** the **EC-MENZ** network provides a website, coordinates regional working groups and arranges regular conferences (see: www.ecmenz.org). Other networks operating in a similar way can be found in the **USA** (**MenTeach**, see: www.menteach.org), in **Australia** (**Males in Early Childhood – Australia**, see: www.malesinearlychildhood.bravehost.com) and in **Norway**. On a global level, the

working forum “Men in Early Childhood Education” has been established as part of the **World Forum Foundation** – a network intended to improve the quality of early childhood education systems. This working forum last met in Honolulu in May 2008 in order to exchange information on matters such as research results on the subject of “men in early childhood education”, reasons for the low ratio of men in the field of early childhood education and the significance of mixed teams at early childhood education centres (see: www.worldforumfoundation.org/wf/projects/men_ece/index.php). The working forum now has its own website displaying international initiatives and projects to increase the ratio of men in early childhood education (see www.meninchildcare.com).

Integration of offers of sports, movement and outdoor activities into early childhood education centres and training facilities

Norway and **Denmark** have early childhood education centres and training institutions for educators which are making efforts to increase the ratio of men in their facilities by means of offering an enhanced range of sports, movement and outdoor activities. In Norway, the so-called “open-air kindergartens”, which place the emphasis of their educational work on adventures and natural experience already exceed the benchmark figure of 20% in terms of qualified male personnel (see Friis 2009, p. 32). To a limited extent, training facilities for educators in Denmark have the opportunity of specialising in certain fields. **Kolding College** took advantage of this specialisation opportunity and in 2000 decided to integrate sports, movement and outdoor classes more strongly into its training course in order to attract more men into educator training. As a result, students of **Kolding College** can, for example, be trained as swimming instructors. Three years after introducing the new movement-oriented and outdoor lesson content, the ratio of men rose from 15% to roughly 24% (see Wohlgemuth 2003).

What is the significance of the present campaigns, initiatives and practical projects for future strategies to increase the ratio of men in early childhood education?

It is difficult to give a conclusive evaluation of present national and international campaigns, initiatives and practical projects aimed at increasing the ratio of men, given that very little has been published on this subject and, in particular, no scientific evaluations are available. International efforts to increase the ratio of men cannot simply be automatically transferred to Germany, since pre-school learning, training and further education systems differ considerably from one country to the next.

A longer-term state-run campaign, however, incorporating various players from the areas of practice, training and administration, initiating a wide variety of promotional measures, and making financial resources available, would promise to produce the highest degree of success. One example of such a course of action involves Norway. The English example, however, shows that state-run campaigns to increase the ratio of men fail if they are not sufficiently long-term in design, and if responsibility for the implementation of initiatives and schemes remains at a regional level.

At the present time it is not possible to assess the extent to which the Danish strategy to increase the ratio of men in all caring work areas will prove successful. However, this comprehensive strategy may be integrated very easily into current German gender equality policy (see Chapter: Gender equality and education policy background of the research project, pp. 11ff).

Programmes to qualify unemployed men with an interest in retraining are promising, as the examples of Brandenburg and Scotland show. Close cooperation and coordination between organizers of the qualification scheme and Kitas or training facilities is decisive for men successfully gaining qualifications. Against the background of pre-school education becoming increasingly professionalized, and of Kita provider programme directors and Kita administration making it clear that any increase in the ratio of men cannot be allowed to take place at the expense of educational quality (see pp. 87f.), training programmes for unemployed men with an interest in retraining must conform, in terms of volume and standards, to vocational educator training. The practice-based qualification from Brandenburg, with a curriculum of 2,100 hours in a Kita and 1,200 hours in the classroom, as well as an equivalence statement as a state-recognised educator, complies with these high requirements, whereas the Scottish model does not sufficiently do so.

The wide variety of publicity campaigns, practical projects and networking activities are further important and promising examples of ways of increasing the ratio of men. They indicate the wide range of strategic options for making men visible in the early childhood educator profession and getting men interested in teaching. Media campaigns, projects and networking activities are particularly promising when, as in Norway, they are integrated into a coordinated, longer-term strategy to increase the ratio of men. The example of Belgium moreover makes it clear that a publicity campaign, in conjunction with a major quality offensive for early childhood education centres, may increase the proportion of men at least to some extent.

The evaluation of the strategy to increase the ratio of men by means of wider provision of sports, movement and outdoor activities in early childhood education centres and training facilities is very successful, though not uncontroversial. The Norwegian open-air kindergartens and the Danish Kolding College, which pursue this strategy, have a high ratio of male educators and/or trainees. However, there is a risk that existing stereotypical gender concepts and divisions of labour in early childhood education (see pp. 44ff.) will be further reinforced if the provision of sports, movement and outdoor activities is explicitly regarded and highlighted as a male-only domain. Pia Friis describes this risk in her booklet "Männer im Kindergarten. Wie man sie anwirbt – und dafür sorgt, dass sie auch bleiben". She points out that a certain type of man often works in Norwegian open-air kindergartens, one who cultivates a close-to-nature "boy scout image" and tends to follow a traditional model of masculinity (see Friis 2008, pp. 12 ff.). Moreover, she also points to the risk of a campaign that exclusively promotes such a male image in early childhood education centres deterring other men who are unable or unwilling to conform to this sporting and close-to-nature model.

Basically it is regrettable that there are hardly any scientific evaluations available for the campaigns, practical examples and networking activities described here, which makes it impossible to conduct a systematic review of successful and less successful strategies.

IV.

Study questions and methodical system of the research project

The research project was conducted between September 1, 2008 and November 30, 2009, and was subdivided into three project phases.

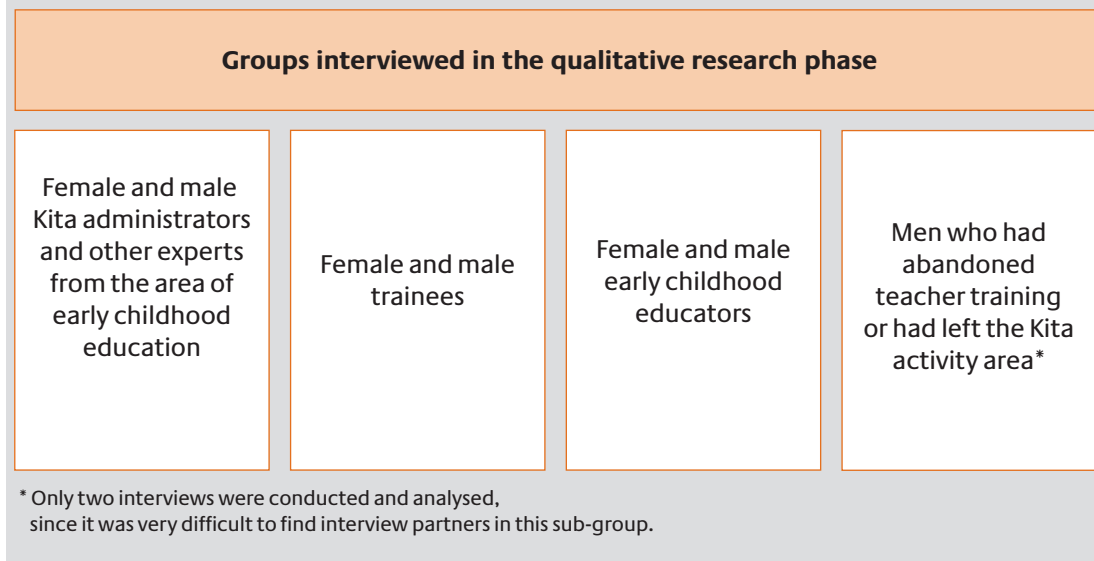
1. In the first project phase the status of national and international research on the subject of “men in Kitas” was appraised.
2. In the second project phase the following questions were investigated using qualitative social science methods:
 - What should general learning conditions be like in respect of educator training so that men opt for such a training and can – during training – be motivated to work in Kitas?
 - What should general working conditions in Kitas be like so that men opt for work in Kitas and (want to) remain there over a longer period?

These were followed by further questions:

- Is the public and political interest in more male educators also reflected among Kita-providers and in Kitas themselves?
- Are those responsible for training policy and education in these facilities interested in increasing the ratio of men in early childhood education?
- Are strategies being pursued to attract men to work in Kitas?

The survey period extended from October 20, 2008 to March 19, 2009.

Fig. 3: Groups interviewed in the qualitative research phase



A total of 40 group and individual interviews were conducted with 78 persons from relevant sub-groups.²⁶

In addition, the Research Data Centre of the federal states was assigned the task of providing data on the number of male educators employed in Kitas in every administrative district in 2007 and 2008. On the basis of these data, Berlin and three other cities (Bremen, Freiburg, Dresden) were selected for conducting the interviews. These cities were chosen because of their above-average proportion of male educators in Kitas compared to the respective regions. The selection of these cities was also linked to the expectation of having the greatest chance of being able to find Kita providers or Kitas which had already developed strategies to increase the ratio of men.

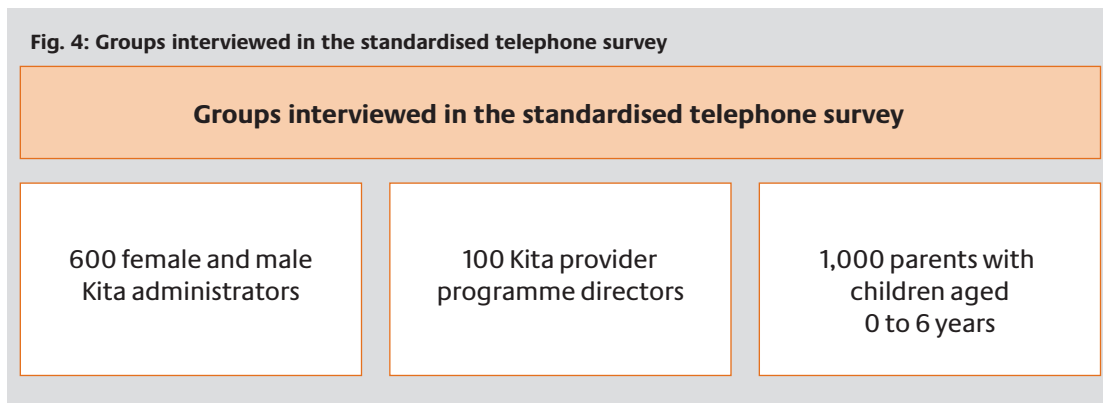
3. In the third project phase, in cooperation with the research institute Sinus Sociovision, the findings of the qualitative study were placed on a broader base by means of a quantitative, representative survey. Within the scope of a standardised telephone-based survey, the attitudes of 1) Kita administrators, 2) Kita provider programme directors²⁷, and 3) parents of children aged 0 to 6 were interviewed on the subject of "men being trained as early childhood educators and in Kitas". Many of the findings of the qualitative study were turned into a series of questions and statements for a standardised survey. The quantitative survey was to establish on a representative basis ...
 - l the reasons for the shortage of male educators in Kitas from the point of view of the groups surveyed;
 - l the attitudes of the surveyed groups towards male educators in Kitas;

²⁶ Interviews were conducted with 17 male and 15 female trainees, 18 male educators (2 of whom had already left the Kita activity area) and 10 female educators, 1 male Kita administrator and 6 female Kita administrators, as well as 1 male expert and 10 female experts in the field of early childhood education. These experts included many Kita provider programme directors such as female managing directors and consultants from Kita providers.

²⁷ Kitas in Germany are run by municipalities, churches, or non-statutory welfare Services (e. g. the German Red Cross). These are Kita providers. Kita provider programme director is a person responsible for a number of Kitas in a certain region, city, etc.

- the arguments used by Kita provider programme directors, Kita administrators and parents in favour of men in Kitas and in which respect they express scepticism or even anxieties;
- whether any strategies (and if so which ones) aimed at increasing the ratio of men have been considered.

The standardised representative survey was conducted by means of a CATI investigation. 600 Kita administrators, 100 Kita provider programme directors and 1,000 parents with children aged 0 to 6 years were interviewed.



The following diagrams provide information on the demographic structure of the groups studied in the standardised survey.

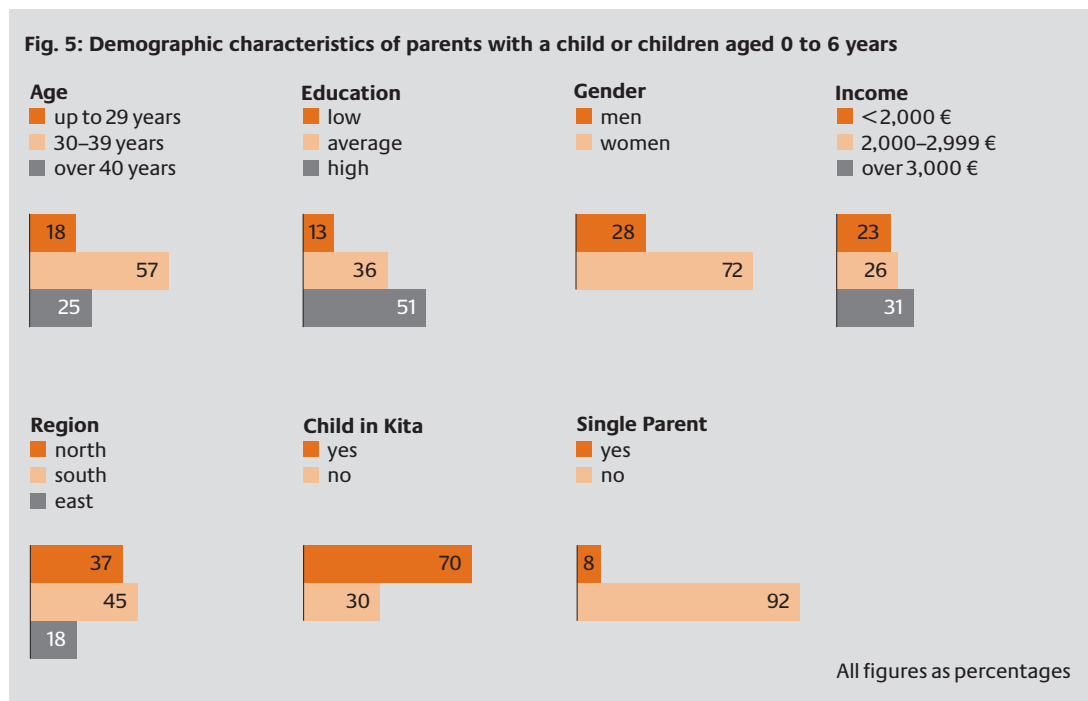
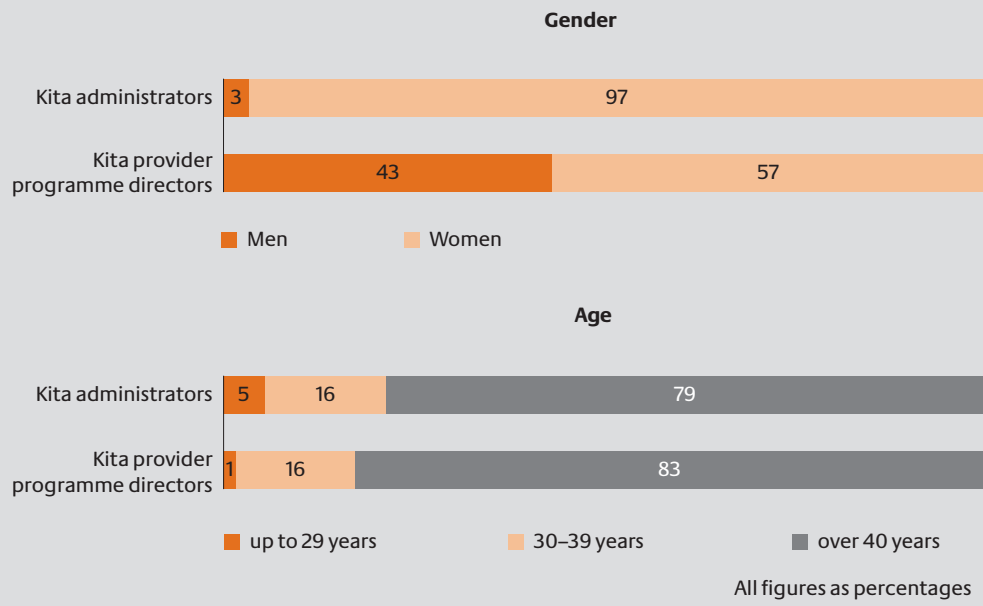


Fig. 6: Gender and age of Kita administrators and Kita provider programme directors



V.

Central findings of the qualitative and quantitative survey

The results of the surveys are presented below. The following factors should be noted:

- A four-grade scale has generally been employed when presenting quantitative data. Unless noted otherwise, only the first answer option or the **highest agreement rate** (“completely agree”) is reported.²⁸
- Only few men were interviewed in the group of Kita administrators – for the simple reason that only relatively few administration positions are filled by men. The statements made by the subgroup of men are therefore only to be interpreted as trends.
- Only noticeable socio-demographic differences are recorded. If no explicit reference is made to distinctive demographic features in the individual questionnaire statements, there are either no differences at all or only very minor ones.
- In respect of regional differentiation, the classification of federal states into the groups “north”, “south” and “east” was conducted as follows:
East: Berlin, Brandenburg, Mecklenburg-Western Pomerania, Saxony, Saxony-Anhalt, Thuringia.
South: Baden-Württemberg, Bavaria, Hesse, Rhineland-Palatinate, Saarland.
North: Bremen, Hamburg, Lower Saxony, North Rhine-Westphalia, Schleswig-Holstein.

5.1 Career paths, access and prospects for early childhood educators

5.1.1 What are career paths and access like for early childhood educators?

“Yes, well, it runs in the family. My mother is a special needs educator, my father did his training here at the school, my aunt is a special needs educator.” **Male trainee, aged 20**

“In principle it runs in the family for me, too. My aunt works in youth education, my mother was an early childhood educator.” **Male trainee, aged 22**

²⁸ The answer options in the four-grade scale were: “completely agree”; “agree”, “disagree”, “completely disagree”.

Different ways of joining the educator profession

How do people get into early childhood education? On the basis of trainees and educators interviewed in the qualitative survey, four means of career entry can essentially be distinguished²⁹:

1. The relatively unmotivated, **“non-deliberate”** slide into early childhood education without consciously opting for a future job as an educator. In particular, this group includes young women who begin educator training because the career is recommended to them by society. As a rule, the “non-deliberate” assume that the primary activities of early childhood educators are looking after and caring for children.
2. The **“convinced”** opt for the early childhood educator profession quite early while still at school or after completing compulsory civilian service or a voluntary social service year. The “convinced” group includes many women who relate in interviews that they wanted to become educators “from an early age”, even without having previously collected any practical experience, for example within the framework of a practical placement or a voluntary social service year. They have never questioned this career wish and it has always been viewed positively by their immediate social environment. But also among men we can find “those who act from conviction”, though – in contrast to female educators - “sampling” the profession plays an important role for men in the process of looking for a career. They primarily opt for the educator profession due to positive experiences in the close family environment, during practical school placements in Kitas, on a voluntary social service year or in the course of compulsory civilian service. In short: while some women “always” wanted to be educators, men only develop this career desire out of positive work experiences with children or young people.
3. **“Men and women who switch careers within the professional sector”** initially begin a training course or an academic education in another social career area after school (for example as a nurse or special needs educator) or in another so-called “women’s profession” (for example as a housekeeping assistant). After completing or abandoning the first training, they opt for training as an early childhood educator.
4. **“Men and women coming from outside the professional sector”** only find their way into early childhood education from a large number of other (not necessarily social or educational) career backgrounds. This group consists mainly of men. Many of them have worked for years in conventional “men’s professions”. Apart from being made redundant, general job insecurity or health problems, men in particular cite the lack of social contact with people as a reason for switching profession. Male trainees and educators in this group explain their (late) professional wish to be an “early childhood educator” through earlier positive work and care experience with children and young people. Compulsory civilian service, voluntary work with children and young people in the parish and care assignments at children’s leisure or sports clubs are described as enriching times with which they want to reconnect through educator training. Evidently, such (usually voluntary) activities represent bridges into the educator profession.

²⁹ The career entry groups outlined here constitute a first typology. However, the extent to which they can be quantified and retraced in a clearly distinguishable way is left to further investigations. A representative survey of educators would certainly be interesting for Germany.

The situation looks different for the women in this group. For a majority of them the educator profession was only the second choice at a certain stage of life, because, for example, female migrants were disadvantaged on the labour market and could not find work in their preferred or previously learned profession. These women frequently took up the educator profession in a relatively unmotivated way because they no longer wanted to be unemployed or to search for a training place for yet another year.

An educator career-oriented family background encourages men to decide to become early childhood educators

For many male educators the profession is something of a family inheritance. Many of the interviewed male trainees and early childhood educators grew up in families in which the mothers and/or fathers also worked as educators or in other social professions. However, these men cannot be assigned to any special career entry group.

As young people or adults they enter the educator profession as “convinced”, “men who switch careers within the professional sector” or “men coming from outside the professional sector”.

Subjective and institutional gender constructs recommend different fields of activity to male and female educators and trainees

After training, female educators mostly find jobs in KITAS and male educators often work in other areas of child and youth welfare. This professional development is not always clearly a matter of the different workplace desires of men and women. The interviews make it clear that career paths are frequently already being laid out in training. Male trainees, for example, find it difficult to get a practical training placement at a crèche and to acquire appropriate work experience there because they are not always thought capable of working with the “very little ones”. Women, on the other hand, frequently have difficulties in getting a practical training placement in a home or public child and youth welfare organisation because, for example, it is assumed that they would be overtaxed by working with aggressive boys.

5.1.2 Educator career – and then what?

“I still have an urge to know more about people, about children. As a result I’d be quite happy to go on to university.”

Male educator, aged 31

“Well, of course I wouldn’t have such an all-consuming interest in working in a crèche now. I’d do it if I had to. I would have no problem with it. But if I were in a position to choose, I wouldn’t necessarily go there.”

Male trainee, aged 28

While the majority of female educators would like to stay at the Kita, the majority of male educators are striving for a administration position or further study

Although the surveyed male educators enjoy their jobs, very few of them can imagine staying at the Kita in the long term. For the majority of male interviewees staying at the Kita depends on whether they can climb the career ladder. Obtaining a degree is also on the agenda for many. Others are looking for a new challenge in working with older children. The majority of surveyed female educators, on the other hand, are planning to continue working at the Kita. Only a few of them want to switch areas and work as a street worker in future for example. Compared to men, few female educators can imagine themselves taking on the role of deputy or even Kita administrator.

The majority of male trainees can easily imagine themselves working in a Kita, while female trainees on the other hand prefer to work with young people or to go on to university

Surprisingly, the situation for trainees appears to be different from that of trained educators. Among trainees the Kita field tends to represent a realistic option for men after training, even if they consider other fields of activity conceivable in principle. Some of the male trainees, however, explicitly rule out working with children under the age of three. The majority of female trainees, on the other hand, hope to work with young people or tend to continue training by going on to university³⁰.

5.1.3 Are men holding more than their fair share of administration positions? – A look at the statistics

“But my prospect or my career desire is to take on something in some area of administration.”

Male educator, aged 48

Both the statistical data and the qualitative interviews indicate that administration of a Kita represents a career prospect for a large number of male educators and makes it easier for them to decide to stay in the Kita. In particular:

³⁰ A representative survey could provide information to which extent these surprising findings mark a new trend and can be generalised.

The Kita becomes more attractive to men by taking on a Kita administration position

A total of **5.7% of all Kita administrators who are exempt from educator duties** were men in 2008³¹. Placing these 5.7% in the context of the total of all male educators in Kitas (2.4%), it becomes clear that working in a Kita becomes more attractive for men if they are able to take on a Kita administration position.

The 2.4% of male educators work in different divisions of Kitas (as Kita administrators exempt from educator duties, group leaders, early childhood education teaching assistants, educators in inter-group activity, or integration educators pursuant to SGB [Social Security Code] VIII. Looking at the distribution of the 2.4% of male educators over the individual areas of work, we can see that around **10%** of male educators in Kitas are employed as Kita administrators exempt from educator duties.

Male educators switch to Kita administrator at an earlier age

Compared to female educators, male educators tend to become Kita administrators exempt from educator duties at a younger age. This is shown by the age-based statistical analysis of educators employed in Kitas: in the group of educators aged between **26 and 30**, the ratio of men among Kita administrators is **8.6%**. The ratio of men among Kita administrators exempt from educator duties falls to **7.2%** in the **31 to 40** age group and to **5%** in the **51 to 60** age group.

Men working in Kitas over a longer period frequently aspire to the position of Kita administrator

Looking at the 10% of male educators who worked as Kita administrators exempt from educator duties in 2008 we can see that the older the male educators become, the more often they work as Kita administrators. In the group of male educators aged **31 to 40**, **5.5%** worked as Kita administrators who are exempt from educator duties in 2008. In the group of male educators aged **41 to 50**, **15.8%** were working as Kita administrators, and in the **51 to 60** age group the ratio of men working as Kita administrators exempt from educator duties increased to **27%**.

5.1.4 To what extent does the image of the early childhood educator act as a barrier to joining the profession?

“Well, before training, I used to think what is there still to learn really? You do your thing and then eventually you have your... but that’s not right at all, is it? Well I’m really astonished about the rich variety of experience which I get through the lessons alone. I was really astonished by that.”

Male trainee, aged 29

³¹ Kita administration personnel are only exempt from educational work with children starting from a specific number of children being cared for in a Kita. The statistics only record such Kita administrators who are exempt from educator duties. Those Kita administrators who also perform educational work with children are not identified in the statistics as Kita administration. But given that in a large number of Kitas the Kita administrators take on both administration functions and educational tasks, the existing data do not allow for precise statements on the number of male educators working as Kita administrators and deputy Kita administrators.

The outdated stereotypical career image makes the educator profession seem unattractive

The career image of the Kita educator is only changing slowly. In general both men and women – notwithstanding their education – have stereotypical or sub-complex ideas about this profession. Even those who have opted for the educator profession display negative and simplified concepts about work in Kitas. The prejudices that educators in Kitas only play, do handicraft work, care for and look after the children seem to persist obstinately. Other attitudes include the following:

- The profession does not really require (several years') training. Working with children primarily requires the right “gut instinct”.
- Only those people become educators who cannot find any other training place or who can't think of anything better to do.
- Kitas are dominated by a certain type of female educator who pursues outdated educational concepts, sits around, drinks coffee and, what's more, treats children badly because female educators are embittered and overworked.

Prior to beginning their training course very few educators and trainees are aware of the high relevance now given to parental work, the documentation of development and learning, and teaching.

The interviews convey an impression of the stereotyped images associated with the professional field of Kitas and the efforts that are still required to make sure the career of Kita educator is given prominence as an attractive job which can also inspire men and women with higher-level school qualifications. Especially in the case of individuals from an academically-oriented background, there is a risk of them not entering the educator profession because the job description does not appear sufficiently exciting and challenging.

The handed-down, simplified prejudices referred to above result in the fact that men in particular only choose the educator profession because they want to have the prospect of working with **older children** or **young people**. As a consequence some of the interviewed men argue that the ratio of qualified male educators could be increased by clearly conveying to the general public that educators do not only work in Kitas, but are also trained for other areas, such as youth welfare.

Men's own positive experiences in professional Kitas, on the other hand, encourage them in their desire to work in such a facility.

5.1.5 Are areas of work in Kitas divided according to gender?

“Well I only know that at the beginning, when the computer was introduced here, it was a question of: Heiko³², can you help? Heiko, will you do it? Heiko, can you do it? (...). Well the... computer as far as many people are concerned, including the boss and deputy, it was all Greek to them back then. This is no longer quite the case today. Women are now doing it, too. (...). And also... well a lot of things were discussed at length. Sometimes, as a man, you just said: okay, it’s a women’s thing – Let them do it like that, but I’m going to do it differently. But for that you need some degree of professional experience. Well because there are certain things I can’t do as a man. Women can definitely do them better.”

Male educator and deputy Kita administrator, aged 41

“In the first year of training I was also at a large Kita with six groups. There were three male educators there, with just two... so two of them were at the after-school child-care programme. (...). And it was already very noticeable that the male educators are always very popular with the children. Because there is more romping about and wrestling; games of football ... that has a special value for the boys. Of course women play football too, but there is simply a different quality to it with men. And then, there’s just high recognition if there are men around. They somehow create different games or deal quite differently with the children. And to me this was already very noticeable.”

Female trainee, aged 19

Essentially we can see that gender-typical allocation of tasks pervading everyday jobs in Kitas is largely a matter of (unconscious) mutual agreement. Typical gender-differentiated areas and activities are outlined below.

Male educators romp about and wrestle more often

The majority of interviewees highlights that men, in comparison with their female colleagues, more often romp about, wrestle or scuffle with children. **But:** the survey reveals the existence of a smaller group of younger female trainees who explicitly tend to romp around as well.

Moreover, younger male trainees report that – having romped about and wrestled a great deal at the beginning of their practical training placement – they were sometimes taken less seriously by the children as a result, and lost their authority. Some also report having been notified of this problem by their instructors.

Male educators are more frequently responsible for wild boys

In mixed teams, men tend to deal with wild and noisy boys more frequently than women. They also tend to let them get away with more, for example if they make a lot of noise or are bickering. The argument is that men should be more able to empathise with boys, since they would have had similar biographical experiences.

32 The name has been changed.

Male educators are more frequently responsible for technical equipment and for sporting and movement activities

Once male educators are employed in Kitas, they automatically seem to become responsible for **technical and computing matters**. Female educators frequently ask men to come to their aid in case of technical problems. Male educators react in differing ways to such requests. Several of the male trainees and educators are happy to assume the role of a technical and computer expert, because they have obtained the necessary skills to do so in their previous jobs, or because it makes their everyday work “more colourful”. **But:** some of the surveyed male trainees and educators become edgy and react unwillingly if asked too frequently to respond to technical or computing questions.

A focus of many male educators lies in encouraging movement and sport for children. Male trainees and educators usually explain their fondness for providing movement and sport activities by the fact that ...

- | they are happy to move and play football themselves;
- | they remember how much they loved sporting activities as children;
- | they fill niches which are not filled by female educators.

Another reason for gender-typical divisions of tasks is that educators choose the range of their activities according to their own strengths and weaknesses. By comparison, sport and movement often come (even) more naturally to men than women. Several of the interviewed women report that they do not enjoy, or do not share the same level of enthusiasm for, such activities as male educators do, and emphasize that the range of sporting activities offered to children by male trainees and educators had a “different quality”. **But:** the majority of female educators are aware of the importance of providing sporting and movement activities for children and serve the demand for movement in diverse ways. In some Kitas, for example, a sports group – run by sports coaches – ensures more movement activities if the team is left with the impression that this area of education is coming up short.

Male educators more often have confidence in allowing children to test their limits physical activities

Male trainees and educators have more confidence than female educators in allowing children to act in ways which at first glance appear dangerous. Male educators allow children to climb higher, for example, or even run around with a pair of scissors. Female educators tend to interfere more quickly in such situations due to anxiety about the possibility of children being injured. The surveyed female trainees and educators definitely appreciate the way many men handle such situations in a less safety-oriented manner. **But:** in the way they speak about this subject it becomes clear that the different safety requirements in working with children are not always easy to reconcile. The demand to interfere in certain situations or just not to do so is not only a question of educational style or knowledge. Feelings such as anxiety and security or insecurity are “physically inscribed” into male and female educators through different trends in their socialisation experiences. Therefore, changes in educational practices must continually be established, rehearsed and reflected within the team.

What truth is there in these stereotypes – ultimately?

The qualitative interviews with educators and trainees show that educators often practise gender-typical activities in Kitas. Female and male educators set different priorities and have different strengths and preferences, which they (want to) implement in their work. Several interviewees hold the opinion that it would be good if educators could engage in activities they are good at and interested in, since it is just such activities which would be well received by the children, or at least better received than if they were carried out by individuals with less interest in them. To some extent, interviewees were aware that children would be offered gender-typical activities in this case. This development is questionable from a gender equality policy perspective, since as a result traditional, stereotypical images of masculinity and femininity would be conveyed to children in Kitas.

On the other hand, in practice educators repeatedly “move across” the various gender-typical fields of activity or explicitly behave in a “gender atypical” way. For example, on the one hand we came across male educators reluctant to get involved in technical issues and who did not enjoy romping about and playing football, and on the other hand there are female educators who feel responsible for computers, enjoy playing football, and feel happy to see children climb up high trees.

Moreover: male trainees and educators only rarely report having been openly confronted with gender-typical expectations such as “it’s great that we now have a man to play football”.

5.2 Acceptance and desirability of having male educators

5.2.1 Is it desirable to have male educators in Kitas?

“Well, if you look at the Berlin Kita-curriculum, it says there that we should prepare children for life. Life in Berlin is colourful. And each Kita really must take a look itself to see if it is colourful. And that includes men, too. And the widest possible variety of men. Big, small, fat, round, quiet, loud (...). Otherwise we won’t get the curriculum implemented.”

Female Kita administrator, aged 50

“I think that the whole team here – starting from the administration floor – has always been open to the possibility of men working here. When I started working here back then, I was the first male educator (...). As I said, they were already very open to this possibility. Which I think in itself is quite important.”

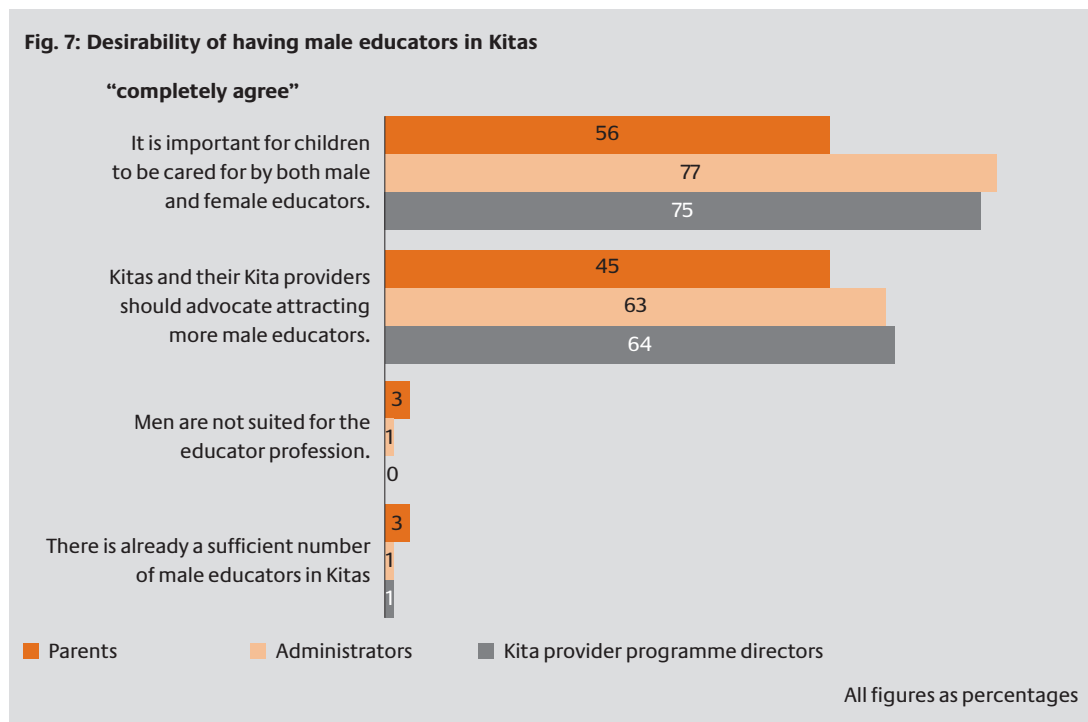
Male educator, aged 34

There is undoubtedly a strong desire to have more male colleagues in Kita teams and training classes as far as all interviewees participating in the survey are concerned, from parents through to Kita provider programme directors.

It is remarkable in the qualitative survey that the desire to have more male educators is particularly strongly expressed by Kita administrators. Moreover, it should be pointed out that female trainees and educators assess working with male trainees and educators very positively. Even for the (few) female trainees and educators who have also had negative experiences in cooperating with male trainees or educators the relevance of increasing the ratio of men in Kitas is beyond question.

The qualitative interviews also make it clear that male educators are assessed as being just as competent as female educators. In addition, male trainees and educators feel welcome in Kitas. They are aware of the openness and esteem shown and view this as reassurance and a “motivational boost”. Several of the men surveyed are sure it is precisely this support that caused them to work in a Kita as an educator, or to stay there.

Nor do the results of the quantitative survey allow for any doubt about the importance attached to increasing the ratio of men in Kitas. In detail:



The majority of Kita provider programme directors, Kita administrators and parents think that children should be cared for by gender-heterogeneous Kita teams

Only an insignificantly low proportion of Kita provider programme directors, Kita administrators and parents think that there already is a sufficient number of male educators in Kitas. Around three quarters of respondents on the Kita provider and administration side, on the other hand, regard it as important for children to be cared for by male and female educators.

In conclusion, it is to be maintained that Kita provider programme directors and Kita administrators demand – **even more** clearly than parents – that Kitas and their Kita providers should stand up for the cause of increasing the ratio of men.

Hardly any Kita provider programme directors, Kita administrators or parents have doubts about the suitability of men for the educator profession

The stereotype that men are not suited for the educator profession is decisively rejected by Kita provider programme directors, Kita administrators and parents. Among Kita provider programme directors and Kita administrators, practically nobody questions the suitability of men for this career. In case of parents, just 3% indicate that men are not suited for the educator profession.

The majority of parents trust male educators

The majority of parents (60%), regardless of gender, say that they would entrust their child to male educators in the Kita without any misgivings. **And yet:** there is definitely a share (even if very small) of 5% who express a huge degree of scepticism with regard to male educators in Kitas.

Male educators make Kitas more attractive for many parents – also with regard to providing new impetus for their own upbringing approach

At least one third of parents consider Kitas in which male educators are employed more attractive than Kitas that exclusively employ female educators. Parents also hope male educators will provide new impetus to their own upbringing approach.

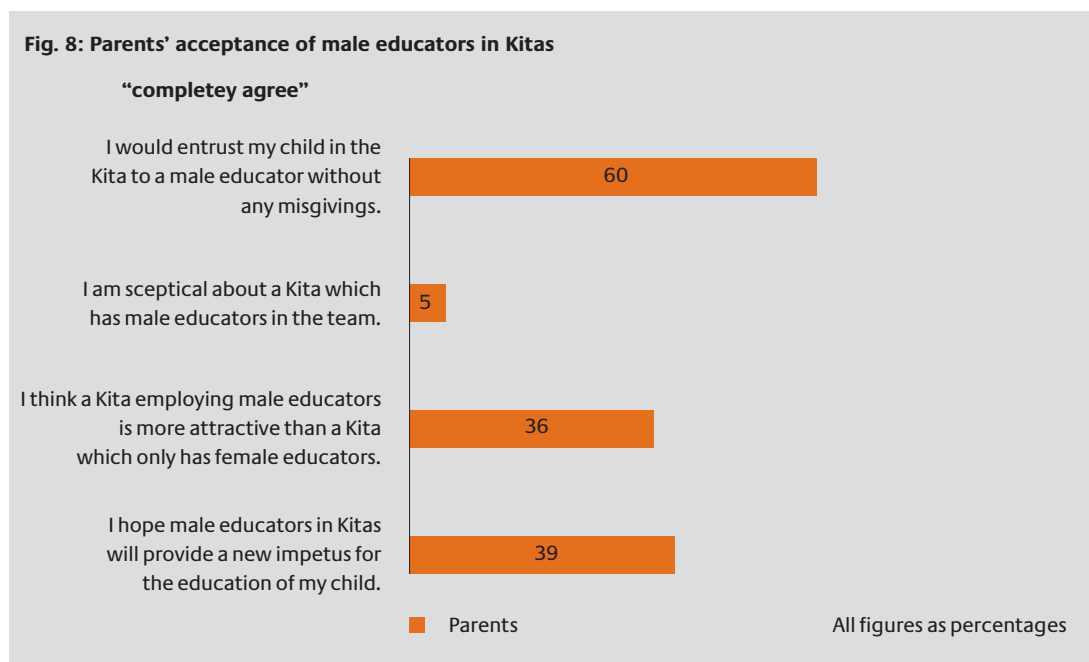
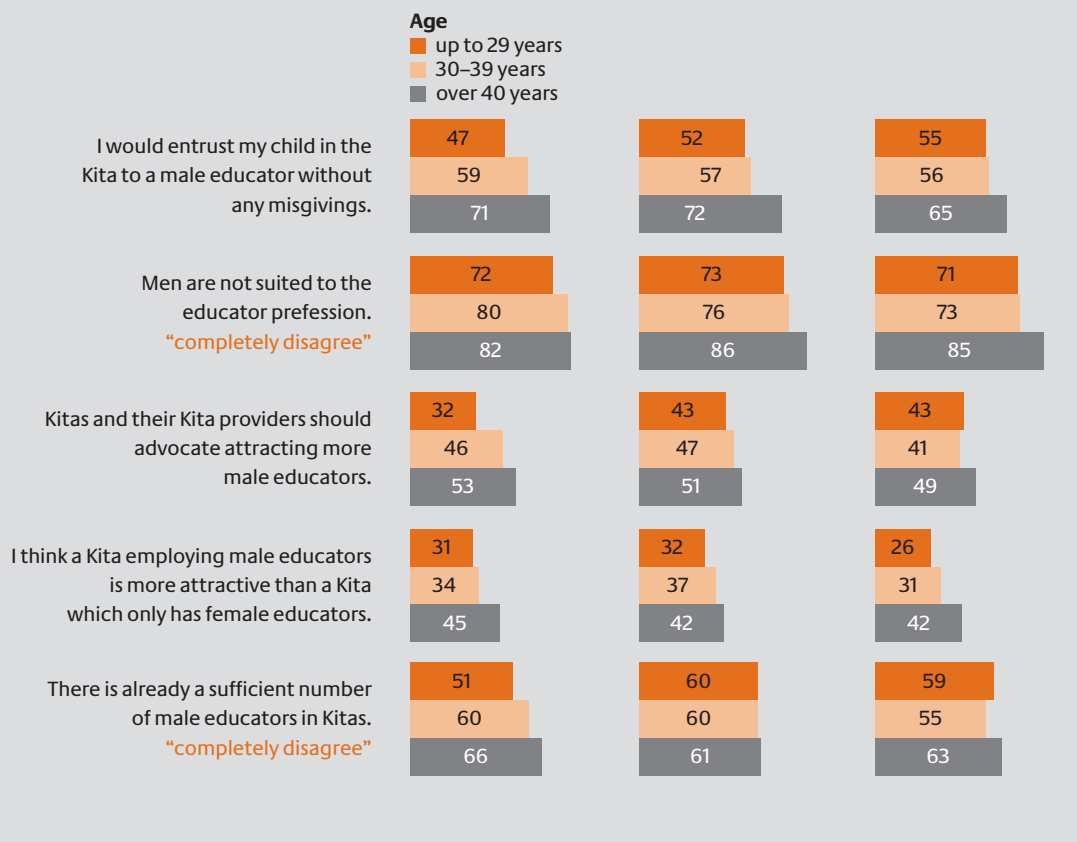


Fig. 9: Demographic differences among parents in openness towards male educators in Kitas



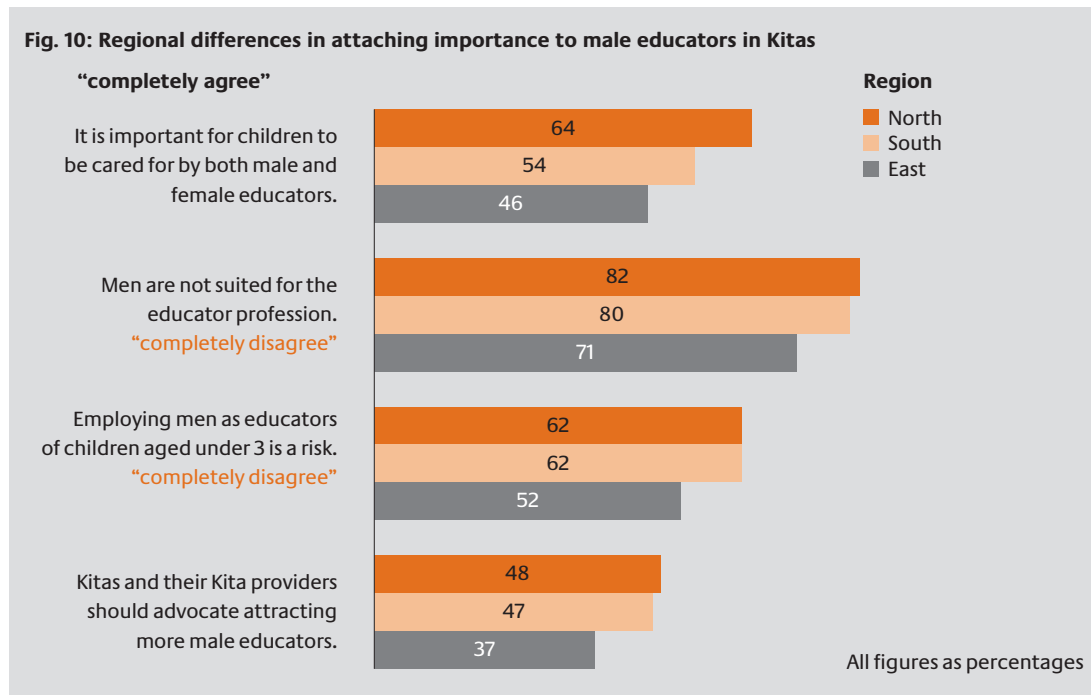
Younger parents show more reluctance than older parents with regard to male educators in Kitas

There is sometimes a large gulf between younger parents (aged up to 29) and older mothers and fathers (aged 40+) on subjects related to male educators in Kitas.

- For example, over two thirds of parents aged over 40 consider the statement that there are already enough male educators in Kitas to be completely inappropriate. Among younger parents (aged under 29) the figure is “only” some 50%.
- “Merely” 47% of parents under the age of 29 would entrust their own child to male educators without any misgivings. With parents aged 40+, this figure is 71%.
- Only one third of parents aged under 30, in contrast to half of those aged 40+, demand that Kitas and Kita providers should concern themselves more with attracting male educators.

Parents in the West German federal states ascribe greater importance to the subject of “male educators in Kitas” than parents from the East German federal states

The question of whether it is considered important for children to be cared for by gender-heterogeneous Kita teams is answered differently in the various regions of Germany.



While the majority of parents in the West German federal states (and especially in the north) completely agree with the statement that it is important for children in Kitas to be cared for by both male and female educators, just under half completely agree with this opinion in the East German federal states.

Evidently, the stereotype of men not being suited for the educator profession persists slightly more in the East German federal states than in the West German states: whereas approx. 80% of parents from the West German federal states decisively reject the statement “Men are not suited for the educator profession”, the figure in the east is slightly lower, at 71%. Parents from the east of Germany are also slightly more cautious about disassociating themselves from the statement “Employing men as educators for children aged under three is a risk” than parents in the west of the republic.

Against the background of these findings it is no surprise to discover that only around one third of parents from the East German federal states demand more commitment from Kitas and Kita providers with regard to increasing the ratio of men, by comparison with around half of mothers and fathers from the West German federal states.

There are no discernible differences between mothers and fathers, or between parents from urban and rural districts in terms of the acceptance of male educators in Kitas

The level of acceptance of male educators in Kitas is not related to the gender of parents, nor to the size of their place of residence. Both mothers and fathers, and parents from urban and rural districts differ only marginally from one another in respect of statements which a) ask about concrete scepticism with regard to male educators in Kitas, and b) take into account openness towards or demand gender-heterogeneous educator teams. This relates to the following statements:

- I am sceptical about a Kita which has male educators in the team.
- I would entrust my child to a male educator in a Kita without any misgivings.
- Employing men as educators of children under the age of three is a risk.
- Even if this does an injustice to many men, I have already considered the risk of possible child abuse by male educators.
- It is important for children to be cared for by both male and female educators.
- There are enough male educators in Kitas already.
- Kitas and Kita providers should advocate attracting more male educators.
- I regard a Kita that also employs male educators as more attractive than a Kita which only has female educators.

Single parents do not differ noticeably from two-parent families in their fundamental openness to male educators

Whether someone is essentially open-minded towards male educators in Kitas, or demands more male educational personnel in Kitas, clearly has nothing to do with whether they are single parents. Single parents and non-single parents do not respond (significantly) differently to questions about the level of acceptance and the importance of male educators.

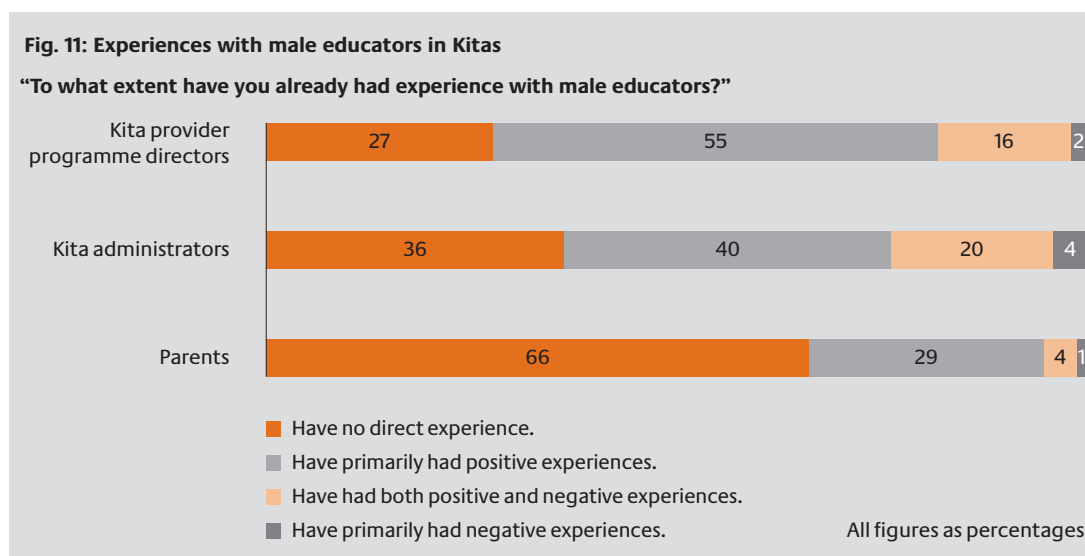
5.2.3 To what extent have the surveyed groups already had experience with male educators?

“As an educator I have found it very ... cooperative and very ... very friendly and favourable, being a man in a women-dominated team. (...) On the whole, positive and favourable. It has, I believe, made the team, the Kita team, more relaxed, the fact that we men were there, the two of us. So, on the whole it produced a different momentum. The women themselves later told me that they enjoyed the fact that we men were there.”

Male Kita administrator, aged 35

Kita provider programme directors, Kita administrators and parents have almost exclusively positive experiences with male educators

All surveyed groups, but in particular Kita provider programme directors and Kita administrators, emphasize – in the qualitative interviews – that they are very satisfied with the work of male educators, that male educators are a valuable addition for children and the team, and that cooperation between male and female educators runs smoothly. This assessment is confirmed by the quantitative data:



The high ratio of Kita provider programme directors, Kita administrators and parents who have already had experience with male educators points to a high “turnover” of men in Kitas

In view of the low numbers of men working in Kitas, the high ratio of parents, Kita provider programme directors and Kita administrators who have already had experience with male educators is astonishing. The following explanations seem likely:

- | A large share of male educators with whom parents have had experience are male interns, those doing compulsory civilian service, job creation scheme personnel and “one-euro jobbers” who (have to) complete their practical training, service or scheme in Kitas, but do not then take up permanent work in a Kita.

- Almost all Kita provider programme directors have had occasional experience with male educators in job interviews.
- Male educators do not stay very long in the “Kita” area of work. They find other fields of activity, switch relatively quickly to the areas of after-school childcare programmes, (children’s) homes or youth work, or begin studying for a degree.

5.2.4 What qualities or skills should male educators ideally bring along?

“And then it was the case that we also had several recognised male interns. And since I was also interested, well, to take them on (...), clearly you look at both women and men. And I wouldn’t say now that in practical terms less is expected of men. Or that you think, oh well, the main thing is he’s a man! No, it’s not like that. They have to bring something along. (...) Yes, also bring some male features along. (...) And within an open-minded concept it is also the case that all the children benefit from all the adults. It is therefore positive if there is a wide variety of characters, and so on. (...) The first one really was someone like that, a kind of strong man. And then someone else came along, who was ... well, bigger or younger or older. And then in between we had a man from a Turkish background.”

Female Kita administrator, aged 42

In an open question (i.e. without fixed answer categories), we asked Kita provider programme directors, Kita administrators and parents about the qualities or skills male educators should ideally bring along to the educator profession. Individual responses were classified under more general categories.

Fig. 12: Classifying responses to the open question (selection)

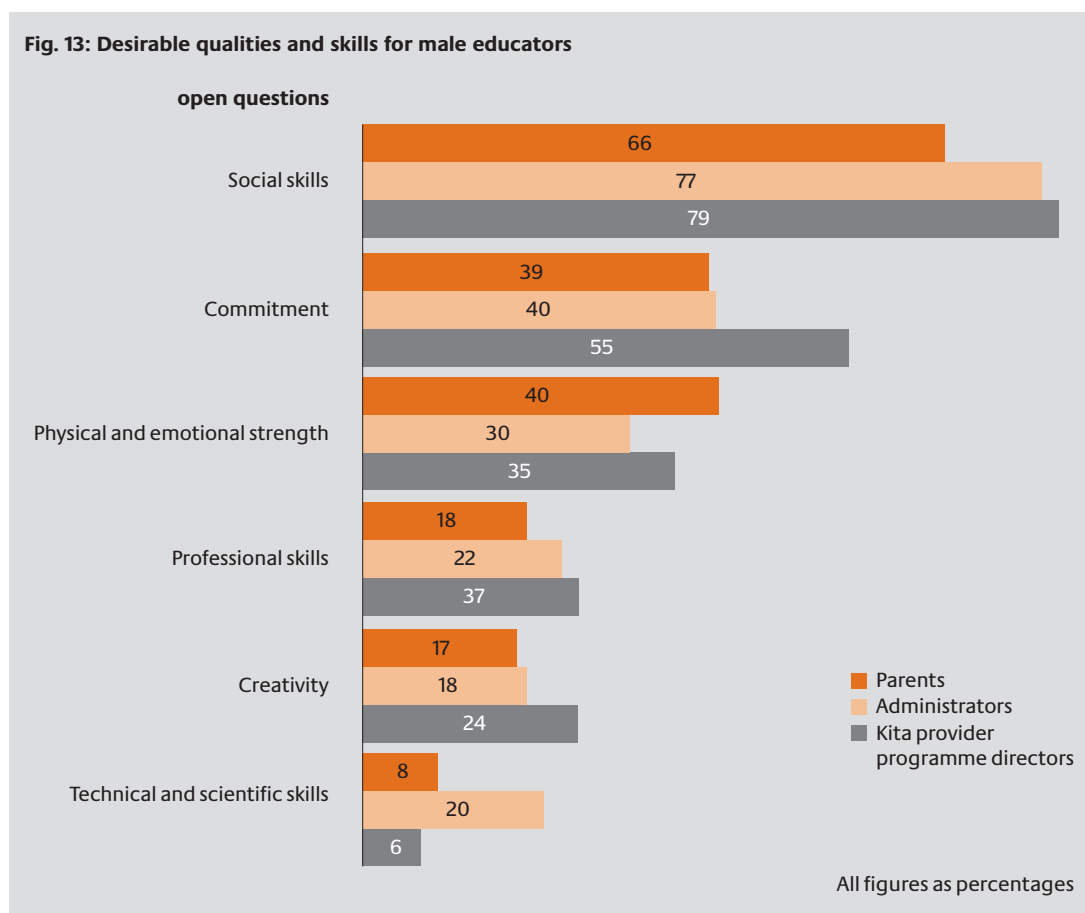
Classifying responses to the open questions (selection)					
Social skills	Commitment	Physical and emotional strength	Professional skills	Creativity	Technical/scientific skills
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> empathy, respect tactfulness friendliness thoughtfulness adaptability communicative skills ability to compromise conflict solving critical faculty sensitivity social conscience team skills tolerance circumspection sense of belonging ability to comfort 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> commitment willingness to act motivation willingness to attend further training energy enjoyment of job open-mindedness enthusiasm willingness to learn independence love of career enterprising spirit 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> patience perseverance sporting ability assertiveness resilience humour/good spirits self-awareness composure strong nerves considerateness stress resistance courage, bravery strength of character 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> expertise educational aptitude domestic skills language skills general knowledge power of observation career experience 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> willingness to experiment creativity fantasy artistic skills musicality 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> handcraft skills technical skills computer skills interest in experiments construction and design

Social skills, commitment, and physical and emotional resilience are the essential requirements for male educators

Kita provider programme directors, Kita administrators and parents all agree that **social skills** are the most valued attributes in respect of male educators. Two thirds of parents and around three quarters of those on the Kita provider and administration level emphasize social qualities as important character traits for male educators; and empathy is designated in particular (by around 40% of all respondents). Approx. 20% of Kita provider programme directors and Kita administrators also emphasize team skills. Readiness to make a high level of **commitment** is also an important precondition: approx. 40% of Kita administrators and parents require this, and for Kita provider programme directors the figure is even as high as 55%.

Physical and emotional resilience is also seen as important – in particular by parents (40%). Fathers and mothers primarily highlight tolerance as a necessary character trait for male educators in this regard (23%).

Professional qualities (above all educational expertise) and **creativity** are more demanded by Kita provider programme directors than by parents and Kita administrators. It is remarkable that 20% of Kita administrators also include **technical and natural science skills** in the profile of requirements for male educators. Such qualities are only deemed important by relatively few parents and Kita provider programme directors.



Mothers compared to fathers lay more emphasis on a high level of commitment, friendliness to children and creativity as important qualities for male educators

With few exceptions, mothers and fathers agree about the requirements for male educators. However, it is striking that 42% of mothers, in comparison to 29% of fathers, demand a high level of commitment from male educators. 22% expressly expect men to have a fondness for children. Only 11% of fathers refer to this factor within the scope of the open question. 20% of mothers, compared to 10% of fathers, also consider creativity to be an important quality for male educators.

5.2.5 Why are male educators important in the eyes of the surveyed groups?

“But it is such an unusual encounter between a very small child and a man – as a substitute father, you could even say – how much contact there can be. How much love and care. This really is something that not all children, or even all adults, experience in their everyday life. And to see and experience this at work, in my view, also helps to break down gridlocked role models.”

Female Kita administrator, aged 51

“Well, this was quite clear when this Turkish man was working here. Naturally this really was an opportunity for many Turkish fathers to come here and get something off their chests or say something or get into a discussion with him. They knew there was someone who understood their language, and so on. And what’s more he was also a man. They were sometimes surprised. Because, in practice, he was on our side. Or in our view ... he was here for training purposes. But this already built some bridges. This much is clear.”

Female Kita administrator, aged 42

From the perspective of educators, trainees, Kita provider programme directors and Kita administrators who participated in the qualitative interviews, there are a large number of reasons for more male educators in Kitas. Respondents primarily agree that classroom learning, the Kita team and children have a lot to gain from men. Some interviewees also associate an increase in the ratio of men with the hope for reappraisal of the profession or a change in traditional male role models. All arguments in support of increasing the ratio of men in Kitas expressed in the qualitative interviews were operationalised for the quantitative questionnaire. The extent to which Kita provider programme directors, Kita administrators and parents agree with the reasons for increasing the ratio of men expressed in the qualitative survey is indicated below. It is remarkable that:

Awareness of the advantages of men in Kitas is considerably more pronounced among Kita provider programme directors than among parents

The findings clearly show that the awareness of the advantages of men in Kitas is, on the whole, more pronounced among Kita provider programme directors and Kita administrators than among parents. The assumption is that many parents tend to regard the Kita as

locations for care, where children should feel comfortable and be in safe hands (Rabe-Kleberg 2003). Parents evidently consider male educators less suited for creating such conditions than female educators.

Male educators enrich the range of activities of Kitas

Male educators are important in expanding the range of activities for children in Kitas: two thirds of Kita provider programme directors and Kita administrators, and half of the parents see male educators as a valuable “gain”, because it is assumed they enhance the variety of provision.

They do not only have boys in mind in this respect. The majority of Kita provider programme directors, Kita administrators and parents state that **male educators are not only important for boys, but for girls, too**. This point is emphasized much more strongly by Kita provider programme directors and Kita administrators than by parents (Kita provider programme directors: 82%, Kita administrators: 80%, parents: 55%).

Furthering the development of children requires gender-heterogeneous teams

Half of Kita provider programme directors and approx. 40% of parents and Kita administrators also regard improved support for children in completing development tasks as being safeguarded by gender-heterogeneous Kita teams.

Male educators are important role models in Kitas

The majority of Kita provider programme directors (70%) and Kita administrators (61%) share the opinion that through gender-heterogeneous Kita teams children learn how men and women are able to form positive relationships. Just under half of the parents also hold this opinion.

As far as the majority of Kita provider programme directors and Kita administrators is concerned, there is no dispute that boys in particular need male educators as role models. Parents are considerably more reluctant in their replies here: only one third of them feel that boys need male role models in Kitas.

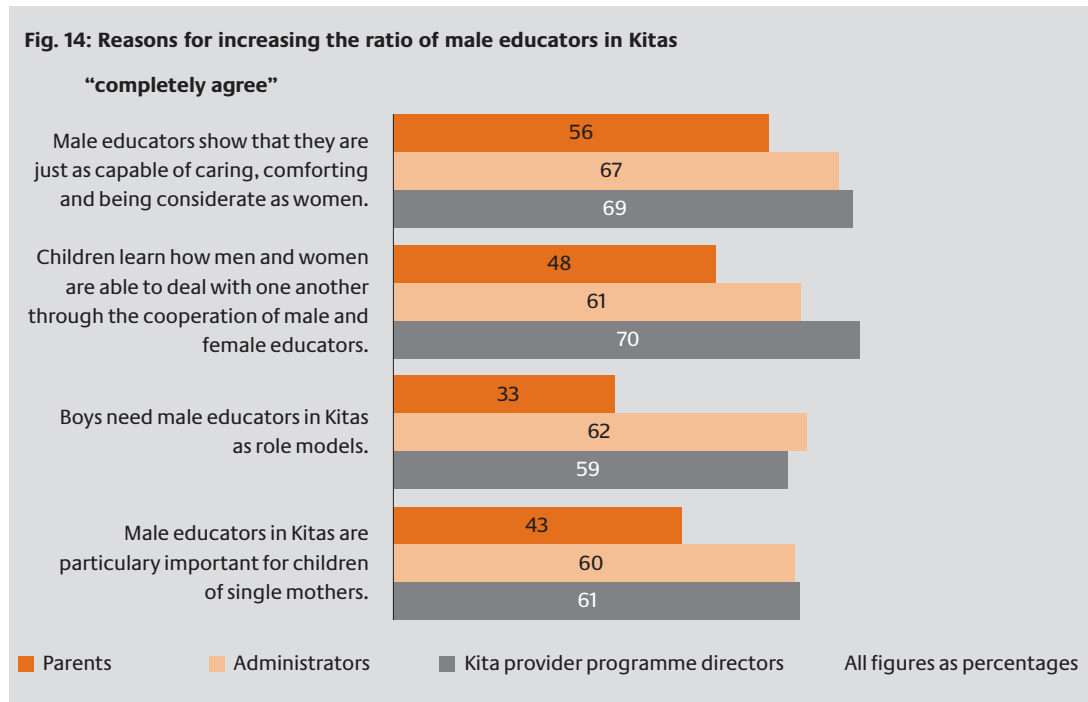
Parents also differ considerably from Kita provider programme directors and Kita administrators on the question of whether male educators are of particular importance for children of single mothers: whereas 60% of Kita provider programme directors and Kita administrators regard male educators as important parental figures for children of single mothers, the figure amounts to “just” 43% among parents.

Male educators constitute a valuable (educational) gain for the Kita team

Around half of the Kita provider programme directors and Kita administrators point to the fact that men are an enrichment for Kitas as to interests and views which have so far been given little consideration. Parents are considerably more sceptical in this regard (30%).

Approx. 80% of Kita provider programme directors and Kita administrators, and two thirds of the parents do not dispute that male and female educators can learn from one another in their educational work.

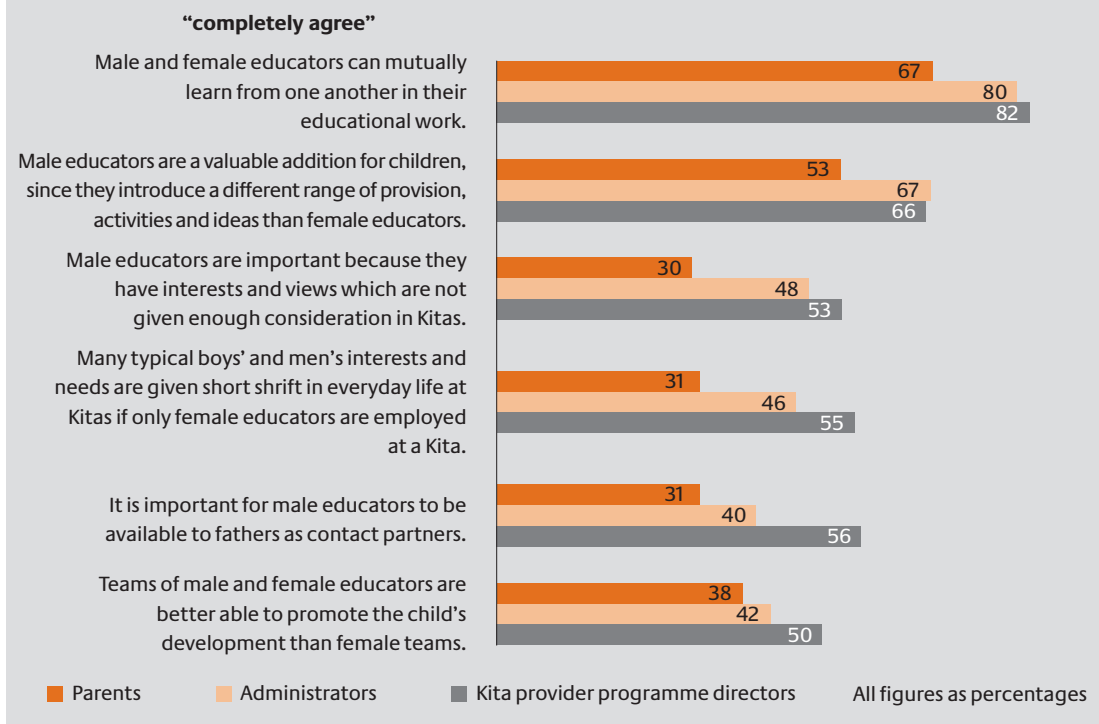
Kita provider programme directors and Kita administrators also associate an increase in the ratio of men in Kitas with the hope for a “fresh breeze” in educational matters: a quarter of Kita provider programme directors and approx. one fifth of the parents and Kita administrators assume that more men in Kitas would result in education styles being reconsidered and changed.



Parental work profits from male educators

Respondents do not only see advantages for the children and the Kita team in increasing the ratio of men, but also for parents. 56% of Kita provider programme directors and 40% of Kita administrators emphasize that male educators in Kitas are important, given that they can act as contact persons for fathers. However, only 31% of the parents view male educators as an important point of contact for fathers.

Fig. 15: Reasons for increasing the ratio of male educators in Kitas



More male educators in Kitas increase the social recognition of the educator profession

46% of Kita provider programme directors and 42% of Kita administrators expect that an increase in the ratio of men in Kitas would mean an increase in the social esteem of the educator profession. Parents are considerably less optimistic in this respect (26%).

Male educators may contribute to traditional pre-conceived roles and gender images being expanded

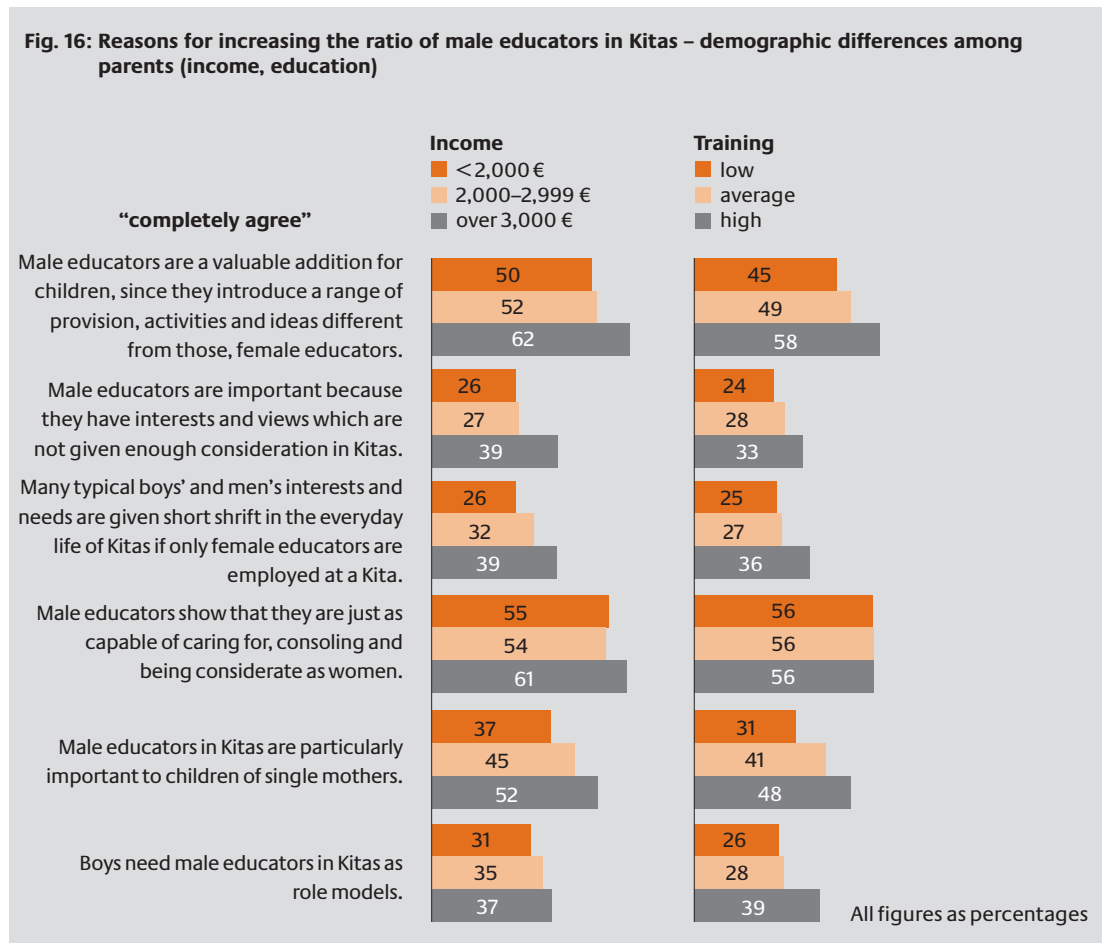
The majority of Kita provider programme directors, Kita administrators and parents hold the opinion that men in Kitas make an important contribution to extending traditional male images by showing that being a man also involves changing diapers, caring and comforting.

And 20% of Kita provider programme directors and only a slightly lower share of Kita administrators (16%) and parents (17%) also expect an increase in the ratio of men in Kitas to cause fathers to get more involved in the education of their children.

The level of agreement regarding reasons for an increase in the ratio of men in Kitas is dependent on the social status of respondents (CDP control level 7.5%) and push and pull factors (CDP control level 7.5%) and push and pull factors (CDP control level 7.5%).

hold the opinion – more strongly than younger parents and the more socially disadvantaged – that male educators in Kitas ...

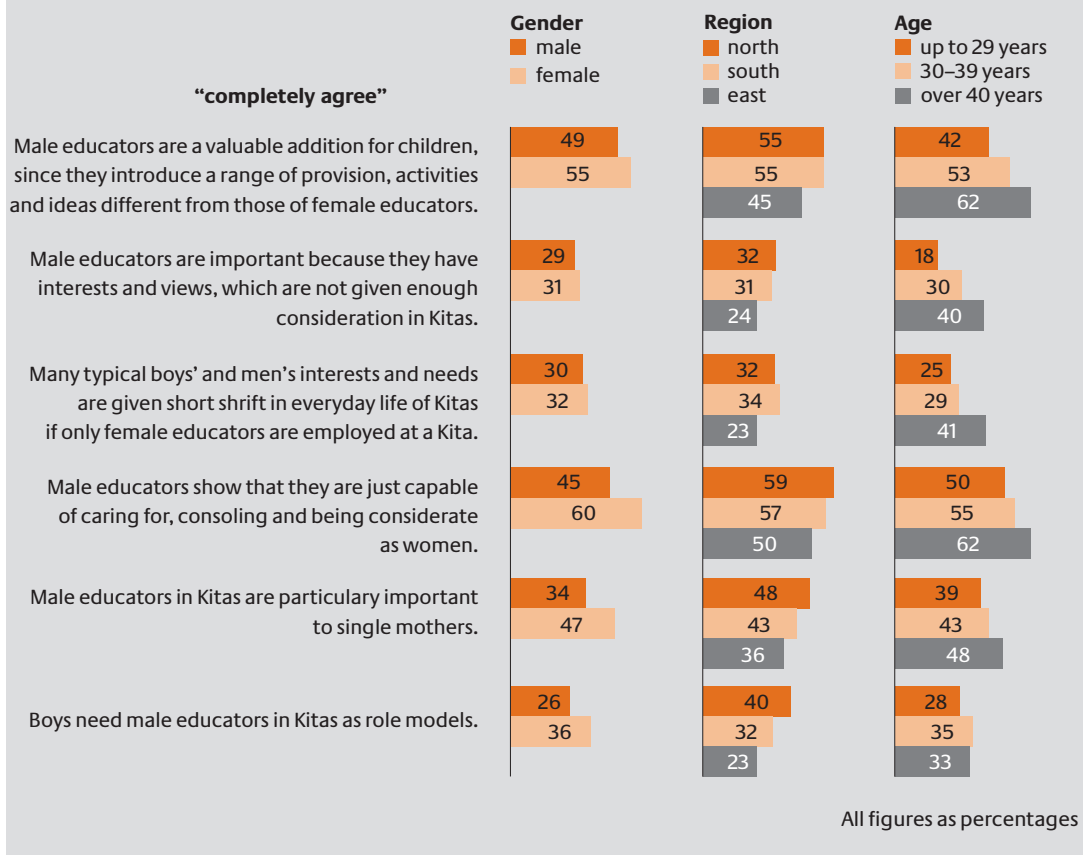
- | constitute a valuable addition to the Kita, because they increase the diversity of activities;
- | ensure that the typical interests of boys and men are covered;
- | show that they are just as capable of caring and comforting as women;
- | are important parental figures for boys.



In addition, gender and regional differences are revealed among parents:

- | Mothers tend to highlight the reasons for increasing the ratio of male educators in Kitas to a slightly greater extent than fathers.
- | Parents from federal states in the north and south emphasize the advantages of male educators in Kitas to an even greater extent than parents from federal states in the east. It is particularly remarkable that parents from the northern and southern federal states place much greater emphasis on the role model function of male educators than parents in the eastern federal states.

Fig. 17: Reasons for increasing the ratio of male educators in Kitas – demographic differences among parents (gender, region, age)



5.3 Scepticism and reservations

Is there any scepticism with regard to male educators in Kitas?

“Well you always open your mouth a bit, when men in our class say: Yes, from the start, I intend to go into the crèche. If you're fully acquainted with this profession yourself, you always think: really, are you going to do it? (...) And then you think: okay, I'll have to get a little used to the idea that you're going to the crèche now. Although, of course, I have full confidence in him.”

Female trainee, aged 22

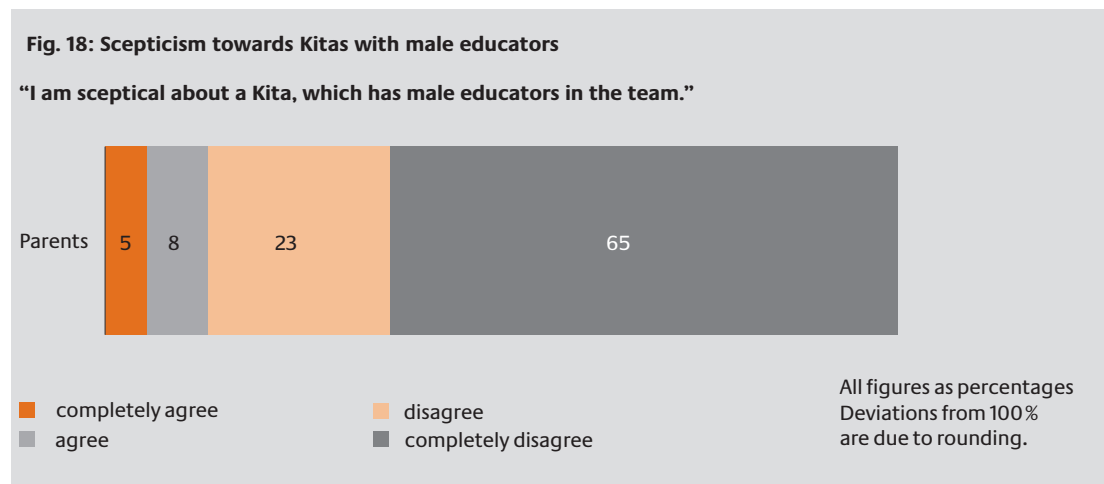
“For me there are two decisive points which made me reflect for a very long time and where I didn't know whether I really wanted to take up the career. (...) And then just the role as a man in the Kita. This handicap, as a man, that they just ... that you will be watched so closely and well that ... I have already given a lot of thought to this. Because the media always portray the man as an offender with regard to children. And I didn't know how this ... in my everyday job ... how this would affect me. And as a result I only did the practical placements to see what staff recognition is like there, from those working with me. (...) And, yes. If there had been any kind of resistance there, I would probably not have chosen the career at all.”

Male trainee, aged 23

The introductory quotes show: male educators aren't a matter of course in Kitas, they aren't a "normal phenomenon" (yet). Men aspiring to the educator profession cause a certain irritation, and they ask themselves whether they will be watched closely because men in Kitas (also) trigger ideas about possible "assault" and "malefactors". And indeed, 15% of the Kita administrators and 18% of the parents confirm the assessment of the male trainee: they state that they have thought of the risk of possible child abuse by male educators – a fact which, however, makes the overwhelming approval of male educators as revealed in both surveys even more impressive: Kita provider programme directors, Kita administrators, female educators and parents only rarely show a strong degree of scepticism towards male educators and trainees. Hardly anyone considers it a risk to employ men as educators in Kitas.

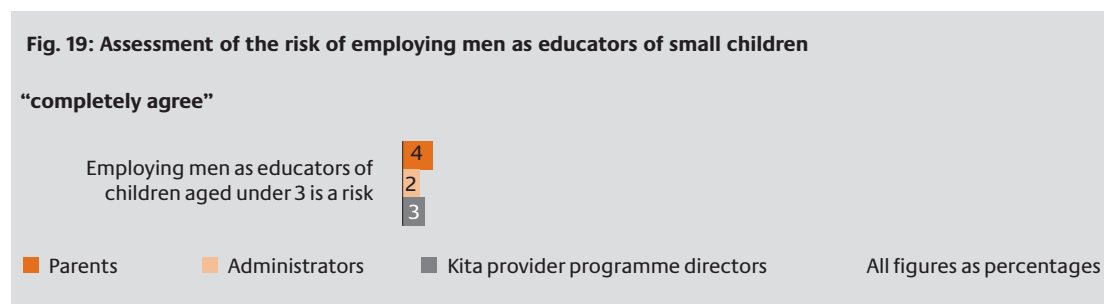
Very low scepticism among parents

Only 5% of parents are intensely sceptical about male educators in Kitas. By way of contrast, 65% do not express any kind of anxiety.



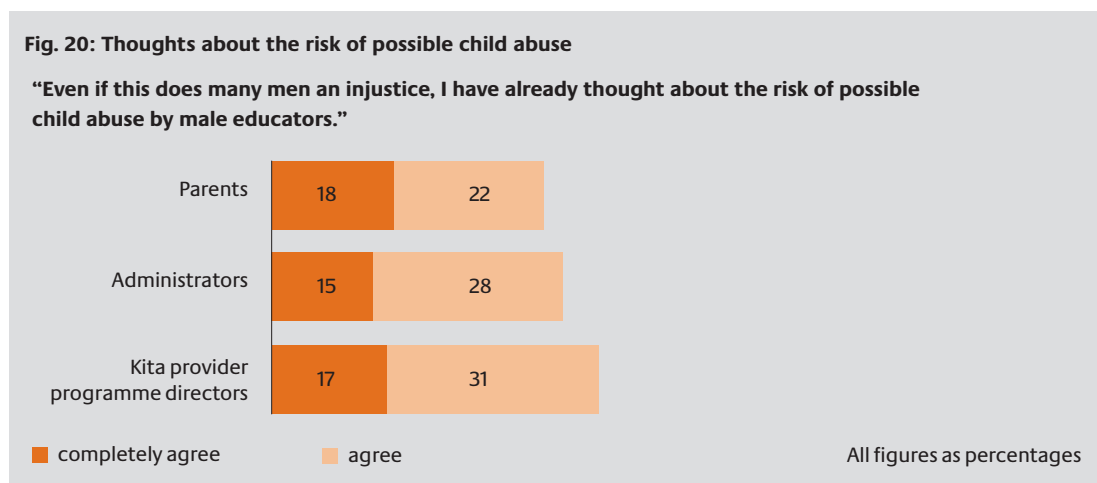
Hardly anyone considers employing men as educators of small children to be a risk

Is it seen as a risk if male educators look after children aged less than three? Only 3% of Kita provider programme directors, 2% of Kita administrators and 4% of the parents harbour misgivings in this respect.



Kita provider programme directors, Kita administrators and parents are aware of suspicion with regard to male educators in Kitas

As indicated, very few respondents see a risk in male educators working with children of crèche age (0 to 3 years). In fact, all respondents think that men fulfil tasks with an assumed female connotation, which arise in a Kita (comforting, caring, etc.), just as well as their female colleagues. Yet this doesn't mean that they are completely free of suspicion towards male educators in Kitas. 15–18% of the respondents (Kita provider programme directors, Kita administrators, parents) answer the following question in the affirmative: “Even if this does many men an injustice, I have already thought about the risk of possible child abuse by male educators.” Taking both answer options “completely agree” and “agree” into consideration, it is revealed that 42% of the respondents have – more or less intensely – thought about the risk of possible child abuse by male educators (Kita provider programme directors: 48%, Kita administrators: 43%, parents: 40%).³³



Well-considered approval of male educators in Kitas

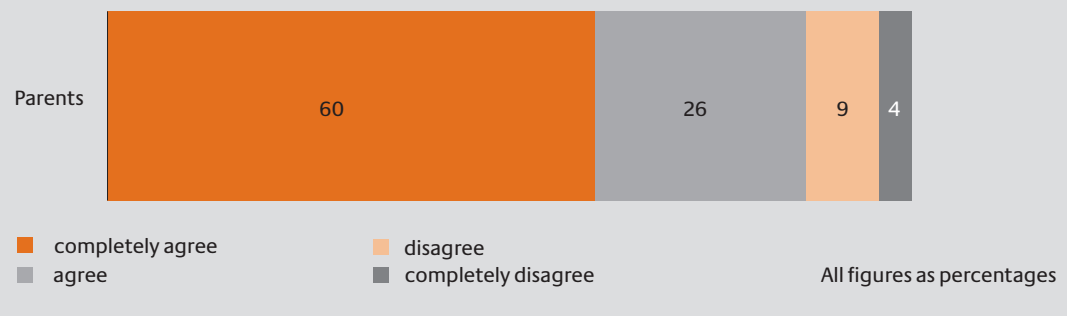
Approximately half of the Kita provider programme directors, Kita administrators and parents have thought about the risk of possible child abuse by male educators. This, however, neither causes Kita provider programme directors, Kita administrators and parents to assess it a risk to employ male educators to look after children aged less than three, nor does it cause parents to be sceptical about male educators in general.

Comparison of the findings shows: the approval of men as educators is by no means a naive, uncritical approval, but an approval based on the awareness of a special challenge due to the child abuse issue. The respondents take up a well-considered stance on male educators. In spite of having thought about the risk of possible child abuse by male educators, Kita provider programme directors, Kita administrators and parents only voice little scepticism about men as educators. This analysis is substantiated by another finding: A total of 86% of the parents completely or rather agree with the statement “I would entrust my child in the Kita to a male educator without any misgivings”.

³³ In addition, in the 16 Kitas and vocational colleges where we conducted surveys, there was only one facility and vocational college, respectively, where “child abuse” was not an issue.

Fig. 21: Trust in male educators in Kitas

"I would entrust my child in the Kita to a male educator without any misgivings"



Suspicious affect the career choice of men and the pedagogical practice

In summary, it must be assumed that male educators time and again are associated with the topic "child abuse". On the one hand, this "association" acts as a barrier to young men in their choice of training and, on the other hand, it has impacts on the pedagogical practice. In particular:

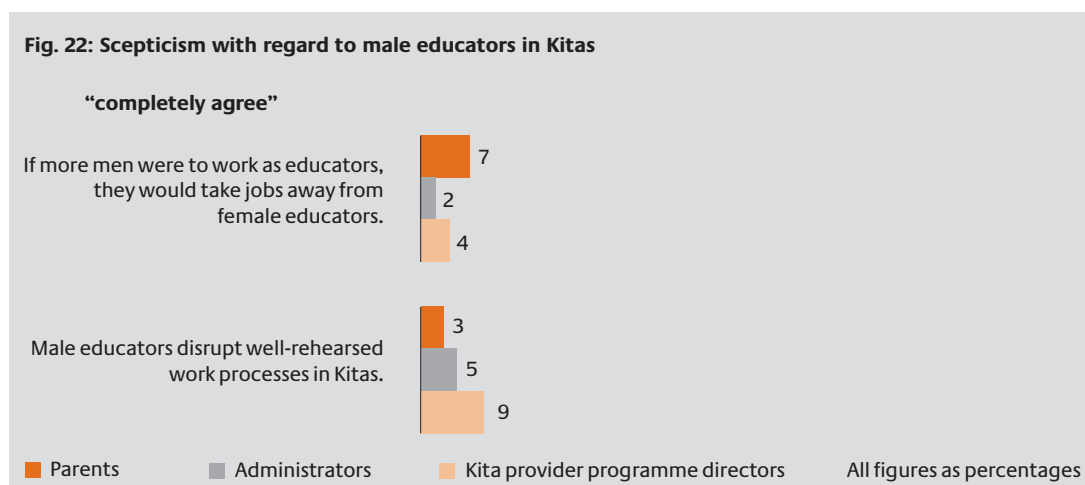
- The suspicion of abuse primarily generates uncertainties among male trainees (but also among male educators) and restricts them in their daily professional work. In order to protect themselves against suspicion, male educators and trainees are often demonstrably reserved in their work, in particular with girls. Men, for example, do not dare to take children onto their lap, kiss them on the cheek, or they abstain from giving hugs and close physical gymnastics exercises. Some of the men interviewed have also explicitly been advised by their superiors or colleagues to leave the door open when changing diapers, for example, or not to look after children alone in the sleeping area.
- The worry about being seen as a potential child abuser makes it difficult for many men to decide to enter the educator profession. Even trained male educators are very well aware of possible stigmatisation and therefore frequently ask themselves whether working in the Kita as a man is "strange".
- Kita administrators are confronted with the subject of abuse in different ways, for example where parents do not wish to entrust their children to any male educator, or when male trainees or educators are uncertain with respect to close physical contact with children. The interviews reveal that it can be easier for male educators if Kita administrators seek direct contact with men in such situations and jointly discuss how suspicion can be dealt with.
- Female trainees and educators repeatedly report in the interviews that male colleagues have difficulties in getting a practical placement or a job in a crèche, or are not allowed to practice certain activities involving close physical contact due to suspicions, or are exposed to accusations of abuse. In general the women interviewees react with compassion and sometimes stand up for the men.

Only a very small share of Kita provider programme directors and Kita administrators regard established systems in Kitas as being endangered by male educators

The low skepticism as to male educators remains unchanged by other drivers: only 5% of Kita administrators, 9% of Kita provider programme directors and 3% of parents answer in the affirmative that male educators disrupt well-rehearsed work procedures in Kitas. Even in the qualitative interviews, the issue of styles of work and communication and the range of game playing introduced by men being perceived as disruptive and burdensome was only raised sporadically.

Only a fraction of respondents anticipate a deterioration in career opportunities for women due to an increase in the ratio of men in Kitas

The qualitative interviews displayed isolated fears that male colleagues might take jobs away from female educators. The findings of the standardised survey indicate that this fear is only shared by a very low proportion of respondents (Kita provider programme directors: 4%; Kita administrators: 2%, parents: 7%).



There is less confidence in men working with those aged under three, and men themselves are more interested in working with older children

Data from the **Federal Statistical Office** show the following: the smaller the children in the facilities, the fewer male educators work with them as educators. Less than 1% of men are employed in pure crèches.

In working with children aged under three, care tasks are primarily at the fore. The study suggests that men are not regarded as a risk to those aged under three, but nevertheless: care tasks seem less likely to be assigned to men, or men do not dare to perform such tasks.

Moreover: many of the interviewed men express a great interest in working with older children. For example, you can “communicate better” with older kids and “movement and sport activities (would) not go so well” with the “smaller kids”. And many male educators regard precisely these activities as their favourite ones.

Clear references can be found in the qualitative survey to the fact that access to the crèche area of work is even more closed off to men than the Kita area:

- Men don't want to work in a crèche or prefer other areas of work.
- Kita administrators tend to employ men more often in work with older children.
- Female trainees, educators and Kita administrators may not be totally free from the prejudice that men are potential child abusers. This caveat more often affects men who (want to) work with children aged under three.

The assumption therefore is that in the future the ratio of men in the area of crèches will continue to be lower than in the areas of Kitas and after-school childcare programmes. This is alarming, because a shortage of specialist personnel is primarily expected in crèche care in the future.

Kita provider programme directors and Kita administrators see reservations on the part of female educators towards their male colleagues

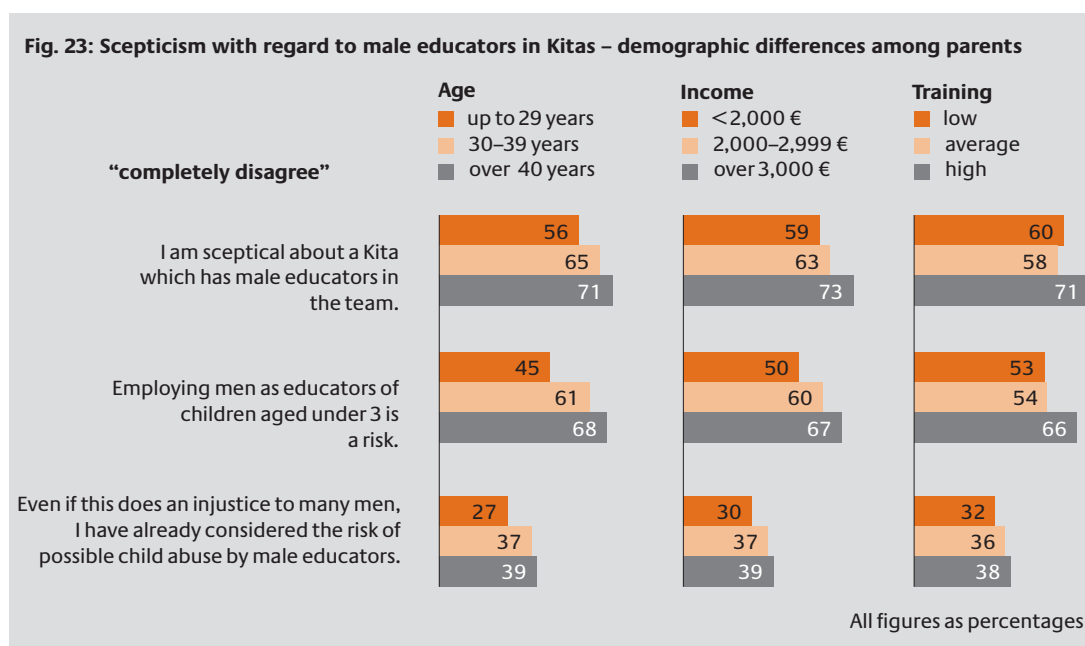
11% of Kita provider programme directors, 4% of Kita administrators and 7% of parents assume that female educators have reservations towards male educators.

Also in the qualitative interviews, Kita provider programme directors and Kita administrators raised the issue that female educators might have reservations about male educators. In this context they hold the opinion that ...

- reservations among female trainees and educators are quite rare;
- this primarily seems to be rather a matter of generation-based reservations than of gender-based ones – since both male and female trainees report controversies with older female colleagues. In particular, different styles of working and organisation are at the heart of inter-generational conflicts;
- some female trainees harbour feelings of envy towards men, since they would frequently be given a special role in Kitas and would be “praised to the skies” only because of their gender;
- in a few cases, female trainees and educators could not completely free themselves from seeing men as potential abusers (see above).

Younger parents and those with lower levels of education and income are the most sceptical about male educators in Kitas

Among parents, which are the demographic sub-groups that show the greatest level of scepticism with regard to male educators in Kitas? As shown, younger parents and socially disadvantaged parents (low income, low formal education) place less emphasis on the advantages of male educators in Kitas than older parents and those in higher social positions. At the same time, does this mean that scepticism with regard to male educators is the greatest in these groups? It is indeed remarkable that scepticism about male educators is clearly strongest in the youngest age groups and among parents with the lowest income and the lowest level of education. This is shown by the fact that these groups disassociate themselves least from the following statements: **“I am sceptical about a Kita which has male educators in the team”**; **“Employing men as educators of children aged under three is a risk”**; **“Even if this does many men an injustice, I have already thought about the risk of possible child abuse by male educators”**. Fathers and mothers do not noticeably differ from one another in respect to these statements.



5.4 Barriers and obstacles

5.4.1 How is the low ratio of male educators in Kitas essentially accounted for in the surveys?

“Recognition is quite essential. (...) And I believe that men in Kitas are more insistent about recognition and want to get it. And if they don’t get it then they’ll really leave. (...) Then pay is another thing. At the latest when they have children themselves, when they feel they are the breadwinner or should be the breadwinner, then it can happen that they might switch to administration. Or they get out completely, and do something completely different. Well, something must be done.”

Male Kita administrator, aged 35

“Well the stereotypes tended to come earlier. When people somehow said ... well in schooldays. What are the prejudices against men in Kitas? Either they are gay or they want something from children, or both. Yeah? And then I also thought: okay, it could be strange if you're in the Kita then.”

Male educator, aged 30

“I don't really want to say everything here is bullshit. Which it really isn't! For goodness' sake. But I think there is something missing ... well one or two things, where you could just also ... also find some self-fulfilment somehow. Well I was just thinking now, there is no “technical” area here in the Kita at all. I raised this with the Kita administrator. And she said: yes, go on and do it then. But to just do it is always difficult. Without having anything... doing something, somehow. And perhaps it would be great to have another colleague, who would say then okay, let's build a technical area.”

Male educator, aged 31

Low pay, low social recognition and low opportunities for advancement are the central barriers

On the basis of the empirical data, **three** essential reasons can be cited for the low ratio of male educators in Kitas:

- | The statement: **Career prospects and opportunities for advancement must be improved** holds good as far as two thirds of Kita provider programme directors and Kita administrators are concerned – unless this happens, it is hardly possible to attract more men into the educator profession.
- | Above all, Kita administrators believe that this career only involves low social recognition in relation to the high requirements. This opinion is much less pronounced among Kita provider programme directors and in particular parents (Kita administrators: 61%, Kita provider programme directors: 54%, parents: 44%). The qualitative interviews also clearly reveal that trainees and educators routinely experience low social recognition outside the career area. In the perception of respondents, lack of esteem for the profession is demonstrated:
 - | through a negative career or educator image outside the profession. Educators would frequently still be regarded as coffee-drinking aunts and uncles doing handicraft work;
 - | through low pay in the profession;
 - | through non-recognition of health risks in the profession, such as the continuously high noise level in Kitas;³⁴
 - | through a poor ratio of staff to children which considerably hampers high-quality educational work;
 - | to some extent through the negative reactions of family and friends to the respondents' career choice. In particular, female trainees and educators with higher-level school-leaving qualifications highlight this point in the interviews. Some trainees then develop an “inner distance” from their career and, for example, deny their professional training in discussions, pretending to be students instead.

³⁴ The new collective wage agreement between the **VDK (Association of Municipal Employers Federation)** and the trade unions Ver.di and GEW, which entered into effect on November 1, 2009, now recognises the health risks in the educator profession and, for the first time, provides for compulsory health protection for educators. In so-called healthcare circles, health risks are analysed for each job, and possible solutions worked out to improve the situation (see GEW 2009, pg. 16).

- | Closely related to this is the question of fair remuneration for educational work. The majority of Kita administrators believe that the educator profession is unattractive as a result of low pay. It is remarkable in this respect that parents and Kita provider programme directors regard the monetary aspect as a barrier to a significantly lower extent than Kita administrators (Kita administrators: 65%, Kita provider programme directors: 46%, parents: 38%). Low pay in the educator profession is also isolated as an issue in the qualitative interviews, in several respects:
 - | Some interviewees associate the increase in the ratio of men with the hope that there will be a general rise in the salary level of educators.
 - | In areas of activity in which male and female educators cooperate with other professional groups who are better paid (for example in primary schools) educators view their lower salary (even) more clearly as a devaluation of their own work.
 - | Other possible fields of activity for educators offer better prospects than Kitas. In particular, work in homes and residential communities is attractive for male educators for several reasons:
 - | more full-time work options;
 - | better pay (as well as weekend and shift allowances);
 - | higher social esteem, since work with older “difficult” children and young people enjoys higher social recognition.

Given that a clear majority of male trainees and educators can only imagine career prospects in Kitas in a full-time position, the increasing share of part-time jobs in Kitas represents a barrier for men in this area. Just under 40% of educational personnel in Kitas are employed full-time and one sixth of employees work less than 20 hours a week. On the whole, the proportion of employees working only a few hours a week is increasing significantly (see Deutsches Jugendinstitut 2008).

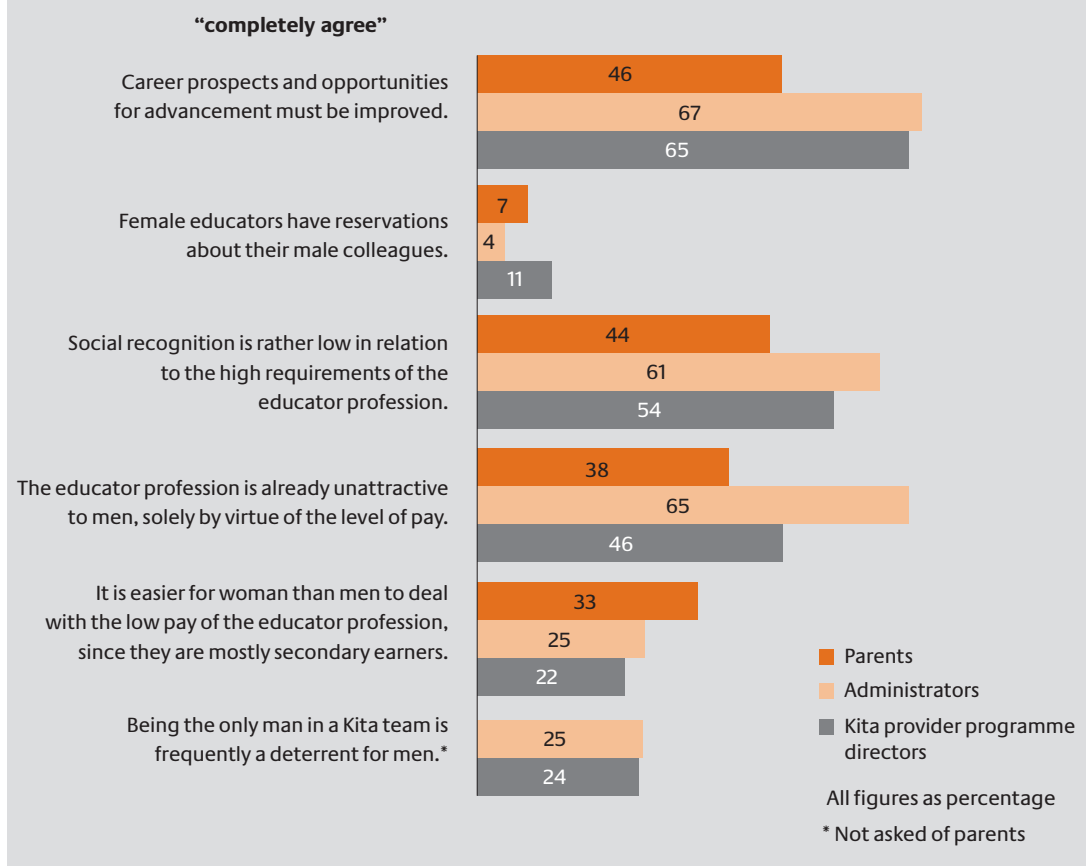
Furthermore, as far as prospective educators are concerned, not earning any money during the three or four years of training is very problematic. Without state funding (student grants and loans) or without financial support from parents, training cannot be carried out at all, or only with strong additional burdens. Some of the trainees therefore describe their current situation as dramatic: a lot of moonlighting jobs, low consumption, lack of sleep, and physical and mental exhaustion. Because of the difficult financial situation many trainees toy with or indeed have toyed with the idea of giving up training.

Frequently, the qualitative interviews include the opinion that men would find the educator’s salary too low in particular because they would not be able to support a family on it. It appears that most of the interviewed men and women assume that men continue to focus on the traditional (male) role model of the breadwinner in the family. This assumption can be found in equal measure in the West and East German federal states.

In fact, among the male trainees and educators surveyed, the model of the male family breadwinner as a cultural role model and as a social (male) requirement is retained. They describe a pressure to follow such role models and speak about biographical moments when they were concerned with such ideas on family planning, although frequently they themselves do not aspire to a lifestyle with a traditional division of roles.³⁵

³⁵ The representative study “Wege zur Gleichstellung heute und morgen” (Sinus Sociovision 2007) shows that some 50% of men do not wish to have the major responsibility for the family income.

Fig. 24: Reasons for the low ratio of male educators in Kitas

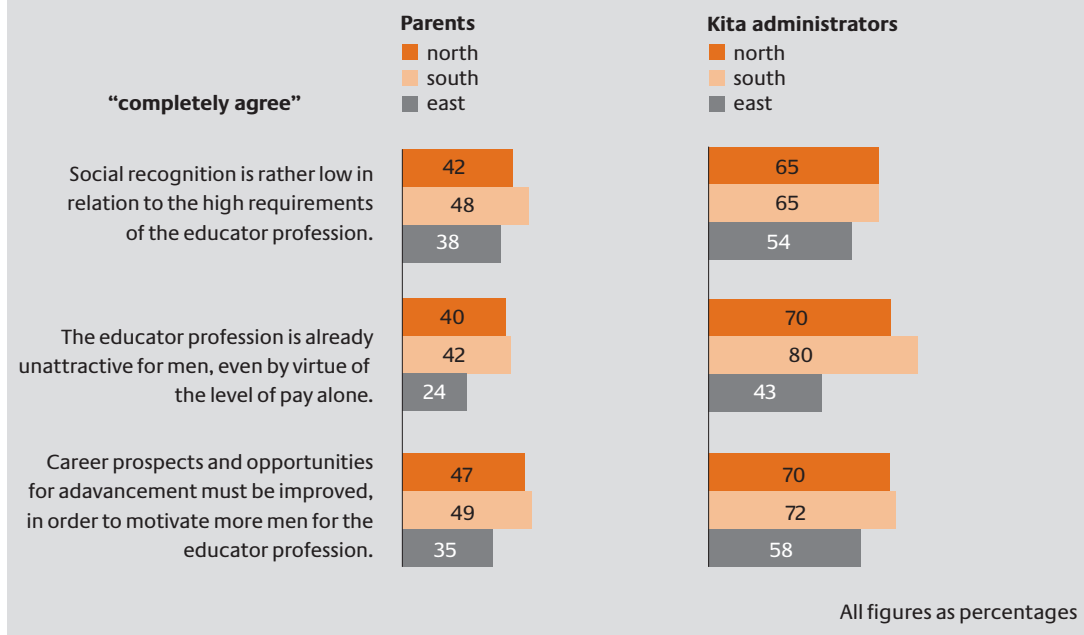


Low pay, low social recognition, poor career prospects and poor opportunities for advancement are clearly viewed as less significant barriers to joining the educator profession in the East German federal states than in the West German ones

It is remarkable that parents and Kita administrators in the East German federal states do not view career prospects and low social recognition quite as negative as parents and Kita administrators from the West German federal states. This finding might be attributed to the fact that a substantially more important teaching and educating function was assigned to the Kita in the former GDR and it therefore had higher social-political significance than in the Federal Republic of Germany. This meant that (almost) all children in the GDR were provided with all-day, standardised learning and education. In addition, the educator profession had the character of a modern profession – comparable with the engineering profession – through training, transfer of expertise and political appreciation, and was almost exclusively practised by women, even more so than in the Federal Republic of Germany. But, unlike in the Federal Republic of Germany, it did not have the low significance of a traditional women’s career (see Rabe-Kleberg 1993, 1999, 2003).

An east-west difference is also shown in respect of the remuneration criterion: parents, Kita provider programme directors and Kita administrators from the East German federal states subscribe to a much lower extent to the opinion that the educator profession is unattractive solely due to low pay.

Fig. 25: Regional differences in assessing reasons for the low ratio of men in Kitas



The overall lower salary level in these federal states certainly plays an important role in this respect.

Traditional gender concepts and career images, and a “female Kita culture”, may act as further barriers to men

- | The qualitative interviews reveal that, alongside the role model of male family breadwinner, the stereotype of male educators being gay or the education of children being a matter for women, primarily acts as an inhibitor in career choice orientation among young men.
- | The still ubiquitous concept entertained beyond the field of employment that educators in Kitas “only” play and carry out handicraft activity with the children and otherwise continue the care tasks of mothers also makes the Kita professional field seem unattractive to many men. This makes it all the more important for Kitas to be clearly recognisable by the outside world as professional educational institutions.³⁶
- | The “female culture” – perceived as dominant in the Kitas – is regarded by the trainees, educators and Kita administrators surveyed as another barrier, since they assume these factors may trigger “displacement effects” for men. The term “female culture” has the following meaning:
 - | Women are said to discuss “personal” and “insignificant” issues more than their male counterparts. For men, classroom or team discussions are frequently not sufficiently targeted. The impression they have is that no clear decisions are produced.

³⁶ Pia Friis writes that many early childhood education centres in Norway tend to furnish rooms in such a way that they are more reminiscent of being at home than in an education centre. Curtains, coasters for potted plants, or a couch with cushions and patchwork rugs are intended to convey the feeling to parents that their children are safe and well protected in the centre, and that they should not have a guilty conscience about handing their children over (see Friis 2008, pp. 23 ff.). No doubt there are also Kitas in Germany to which this description applies.

- | Women are said to place more value on a nice, harmonious atmosphere in team discussions than on professional, well-structured handling of upcoming agenda items.
- | Women are said to weigh up the pros and cons instead of taking quick uncomplicated decisions.
- | Women are said to emotionalise their working relationships. In the perception of male educators, this generates personal conflicts in which the entire team is repeatedly involved.
- | Women encourage children to play more cautiously in a manner that avoids risks. Male trainees and educators, on the other hand, place more confidence in the children, let them climb higher up trees, or romp about more wildly.
- | Women set different priorities in their educational work. According to men, many female trainees and educators focus, for example, on musical and artistic provision and neglect sport and movement-based activities (see statements on gender-typical activities of male and female educators, pp. 44ff.).
- | Women place great value on improving the appearance of the interior, even if this results in children being restricted in terms of freedom of movement and playing.

The assessment that the needs and interests of boys at Kitas that exclusively employ female educators are given short shrift (Kita provider programme directors: 55%, Kita administrators: 46%), and the assumption that male educators may enrich Kitas through interests and views which have not yet been given sufficient consideration (Kita provider programme directors: 48%, Kita administrators: 53%) underline these qualitative findings. Accordingly, one quarter of Kita administrators and Kita provider programme directors think that the fear of being the only man in a Kita team also has a deterrent effect for men.

The interview statements on “female Kita culture” are **conspicuous** in two ways:

- | Some male trainees and educators have a tendency to describe activities and communication styles with female connotations in a deprecatory way and disassociate themselves from them.
- | Male trainees and educators who criticise certain working or communication methods in a class or Kita frequently blame this on a generalised “female culture”. This attitude is expressed for example when male trainees complain in the interviews about the possibility of too little specialist instruction taking place because of their female student colleagues frequently discussing personal matters. On the other hand, female trainees in the same class view the situation with regard to instruction completely differently. They tend to blame individual teachers for prolonged discussions and unstructured lessons, and not a “typical female culture”.

5.4.2 Do male educators and trainees in Kitas see the same central reasons for the low ratio of male educators?

“Well then, first off the fact that job prospects are pretty good. Well, what I’ve always heard, at least here at the school, is that a very large number of graduates really do get a job, which these days no longer can be taken for granted, also being able to get a job having completed a training course. Which in itself is a very large incentive for training in any case.”

Male trainee, aged 25

“It was an incentive, the money. And it’s secure. So this was quite important. That it is certain. And it is acceptably well paid.”

Male trainee, aged 28

Male educators and trainees clearly assess career prospects and social recognition considerably higher than female educators

The low pay, the traditional image of the male breadwinner and non-remunerated training are essentially cited by the men interviewed as reasons for the low ratio of male educators in Kitas. However, it is remarkable that – by comparison with other survey groups – male educators and trainees see the level of pay as quite satisfactory. It seems that – once men have consciously decided not to earn anything during training and to practise a low-paid profession – the “money” factor increasingly moves into the background and other factors come to the fore: for example, educational work “even with very young kids”; “great fun working with children”, or even the fact that “there is at least one laugh every day”. The decision is also made easier for them because they have a relatively positive assessment of their prospects and job opportunities in Kitas. This played no small part in their choosing to enter the educator profession. This applies in particular to respondents in regions that suffer from high unemployment or shortages of qualified personnel. The educator profession is seen as a good career prospect for men in such regions, because the job seems relatively safe in the medium term.

In addition, male trainees and educators report that they frequently experience recognition in Kitas from children, parents and female colleagues, and recognition from passers-by outside the Kita who watch them in the course of child care. In general the feedback for men relates to how good it is that they are taking on educational responsibility and “at last men, too,” are working in Kitas. In addition, it is remarkable that the majority of male educators and trainees also experience positive reactions to their choice of career from their social environment.³⁷ Some of the male educators were surprised by these responses, since they obviously expected derisive and contemptuous reactions (see Chapter “Career paths, access and prospects”, pp. 35ff.).

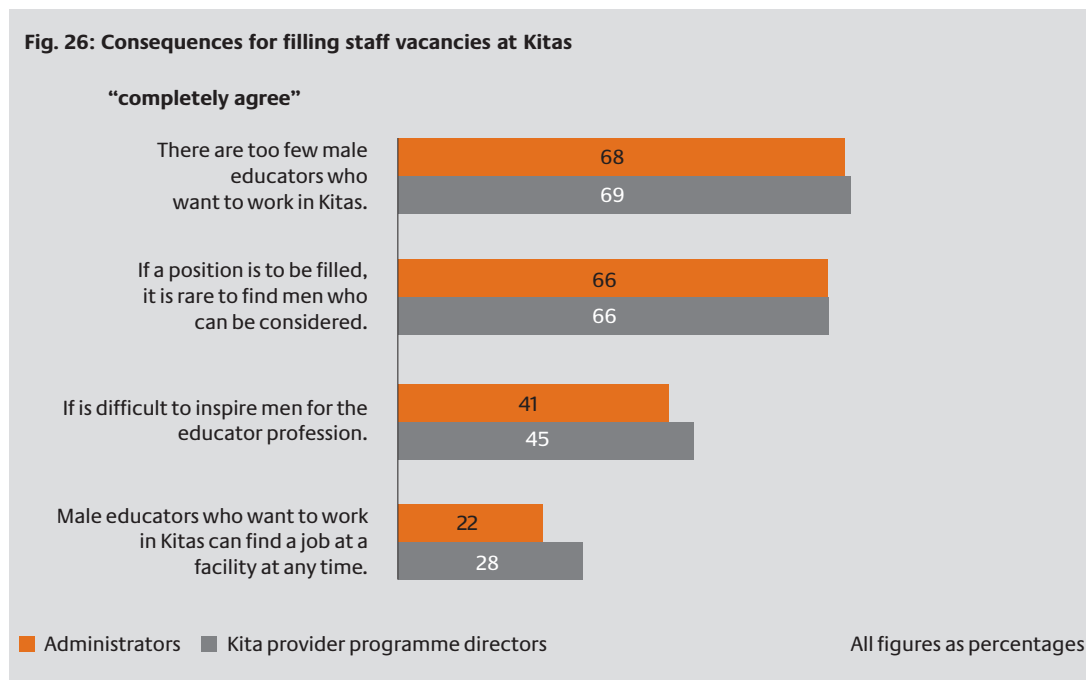
³⁷ Female trainees report with much greater frequency that their social environment has commented on their career choice with contempt.

The qualitative interviews show that the few men who opt to work at a Kita have a special status by virtue of their gender, which may produce displacement effects but also leads to recognition being given to their career choice. They are received in Kitas with “open arms” and their role in the educator profession, which usually has low esteem, is reappraised.

5.4.3 What are the consequences of the central barriers to filling posts in Kitas?

“Male applications or applications from men are received when the training year comes to an end. In other words, this is a clear sign that with the new Kita year, when posts should be filled, the men sell like hotcakes. This is hardly the case during the year. It is very, very rare for there to be a male applicant.”

Female Kita administrator, aged 48



The question now arises what the consequences of the identified barriers for filling vacant posts at Kitas are:

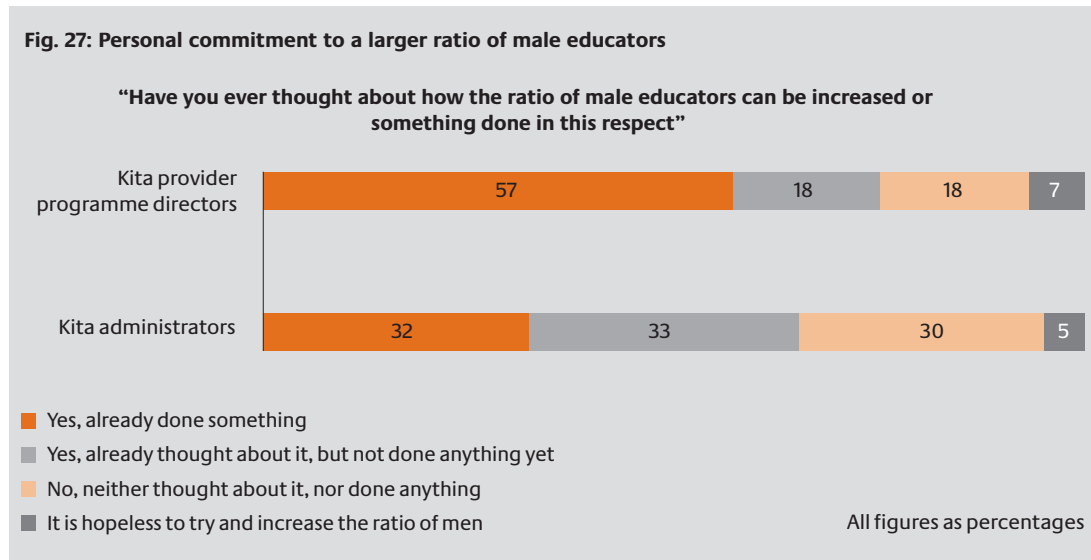
1. Slightly more than 40% of Kita provider programme directors and Kita administrators complain that **men can hardly be inspired to join the educator profession.**
2. It is remarkable that Kita provider programme directors and Kita administrators share the view that the **Kita workplace is evidently not attractive to already trained male educators:**
 - Around two thirds of both Kita provider programme directors and Kita administrators note that there are too few male educators who **want** to work in Kitas.
 - This finding is confirmed: roughly two thirds of Kita provider programme directors and Kita administrators know from experience how hard it is – following a job advertisement – to find men suited for the vacancy.

3. As a result of the low number of male applicants, 28% of Kita provider programme directors and 22% of Kita administrators believe that male educators could find **a job at a Kita without any problems.**

5.5 Actions, strategies and initiatives to increase the ratio of men

5.5.1 Have Kita provider programme directors and Kita administrators already thought about strategies to increase the ratio of men in Kitas?

Respondents do not only hope for an increase in the ratio of male educators, but the majority of them have already thought about how this can be achieved.



Increasing the ratio of men is an important issue in Kita administration and especially on the Kita provider level

Three quarters of Kita provider programme directors have already given consideration to increasing the ratio of men, while among Kita administrators the figure is “only” two thirds. These data point to a high level of interest in the issue.

Evidently, Kita administrators and Kita provider programme directors see the question of implementation as a task on the side of Kita providers, and less so among Kita administrators: whereas over half of Kita provider programme directors have already tackled an increase in the ratio of men in Kitas in a practical way, only a third of Kita administrators have done something in this respect.

The majority assess an increase in the ratio of men as a realistic scheme

As shown, it is clear to the majority of Kita administrators and Kita provider programme directors that they have a responsibility to advocate more men in Kitas. Yet how realistic is the project of “increasing the ratio of men in Kitas” assessed to be (on the level of concrete action)? It can be seen that neither Kita provider programme directors nor Kita administrators take a pessimistic view with regard to increasing the ratio of men at Kitas: in each case only a fraction consider the attempt to ensure more male educators in Kitas to be a hopeless undertaking.

But: binding internal organisational strategies to attract male educators have so far been a rarity

In the qualitative survey, Kita provider programme directors and Kita administrators were also asked about measures to increase the ratio of men. The qualitative analysis shows that Kita provider programme directors and Kita administrators have a whole host of the most diverse schemes and strategies at their disposal to increase the ratio of men in Kitas. For example ...

- | cooperation with schools, vocational colleges or employment agencies;
- | male applicants are always invited for job interviews and preference is given to them in employment, in case of equal qualifications;
- | male educators – where possible – are not distributed over various Kitas according to the principle of equal shares for all.³⁸

Kita provider programme directors and Kita administrators also point to the fact that male educators (want to) work in Kitas at which male educators, interns, men on a voluntary social service year or those doing compulsory civilian service are already employed. Kitas with male employees thereby find it easier to recruit an additional male employee than Kitas at which exclusively women are employed.

But: binding strategies or quality objectives to increase the ratio of men implemented within the organisation have not yet been pursued in a sustained way either by Kita provider programme directors or by Kita administrators. Kita provider programme directors and Kita administrators account for this in the interviews by stating that there are too few men who would have any interest whatsoever in working at Kitas. **Moreover:** other education issues and everyday challenges result in hardly any resources or time being available for dealing with the issue of “increasing the ratio of men”. The same reasons could also be crucial to the fact that 18% of Kita provider programme directors and 33% of Kita administrators have considered increasing the ratio of men at their facilities, but have not yet done anything in this respect. Kita provider programme directors and Kita administrators were therefore also asked about the importance of the issue in their **current** everyday work.

³⁸ This means that Kita providers ensure that – where possible – at least two male educators are employed at one Kita. They also accept the consequence that there will be fewer Kitas in which men are active. Vocational colleges/academies for special needs education mostly proceed in a similar way: the few male trainees, where possible, are jointly assigned to one class.

5.5.2 What level of importance is attached to the subject of “male educators” in the current everyday work of Kita provider programme directors and Kita administrators?

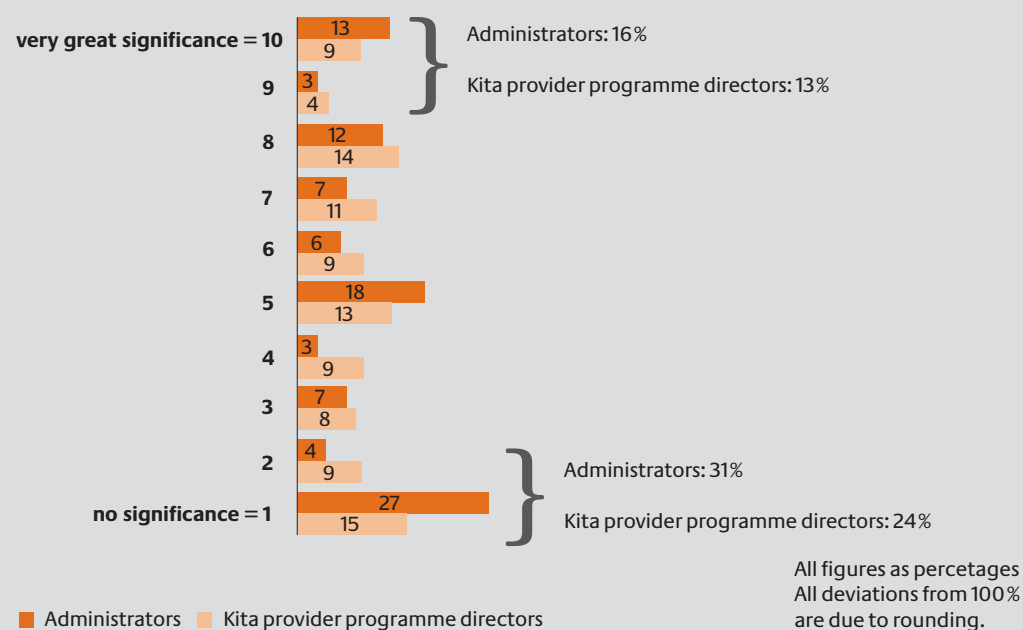
“Well, here at the Kita provider at the present time (...) there are quite simply other burning issues. I think it has something to do with that. Yeah. We are also swamped with this entire internal evaluation, external evaluation, PQF programme – we are pretty much overcharged. Yeah? And that’s one reason for all this, I think. The fact that we simply have no time for it. Some individuals give themselves leeway, those who have an interest. (...). That the Kita provider would in principle refuse – I don’t really think so. Because it is an issue. (...). But at the moment there are so many other important matters on which the financing also depends. The fact is that there is simply no room there.”

Female Kita provider programme director, aged 52

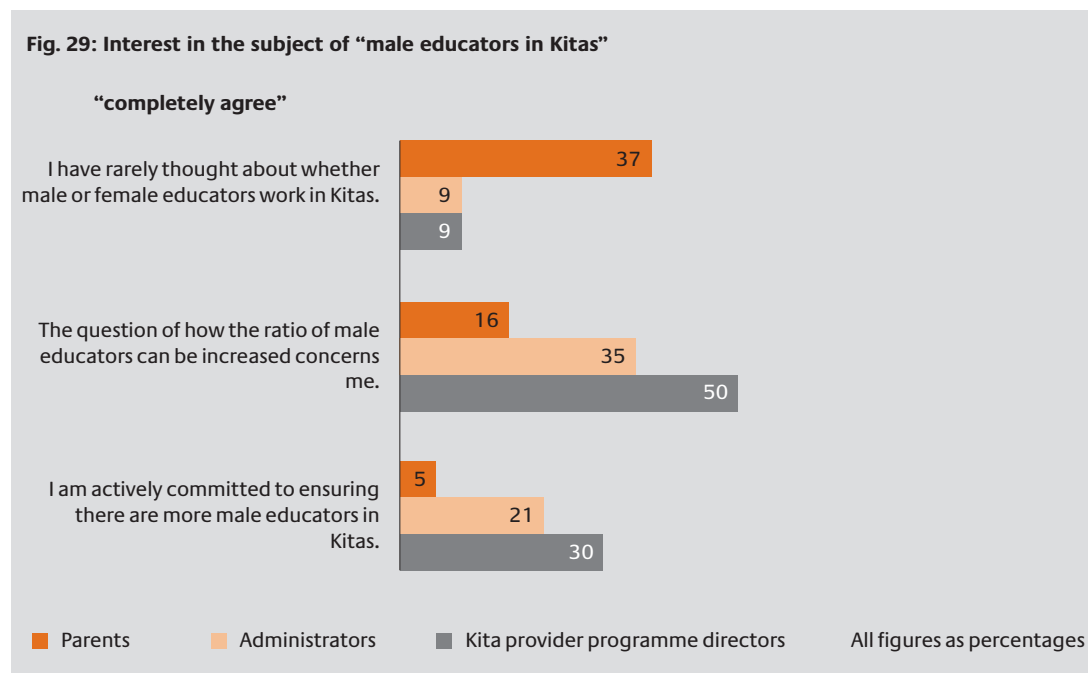
Though the issue of “male educators” is deemed very important, it is not of the highest priority in current everyday work

As the findings clearly demonstrate, the subject of “male educators in Kitas” is essentially viewed as important, and something has already been done (especially on the Kita provider side) to increase the ratio of men. However, by asking about the relevance of the subject in **current** everyday work, it can be seen that both on the Kita provider and administration side only around 15% of respondents attach very high current significance to the issue.³⁹ As far as 31% of Kita administrators and 24% of Kita provider programme directors are concerned, the

Fig. 28: Significance of the subject of “male educators” in current everyday work



There are other figures in support of the assumption that the issue of “increasing the ratio of male educators in Kitas”, although present, is only actively tackled by a minority – by around one third of Kita provider programme directors and one fifth of Kita administrators. Once again it becomes clear that increasing the ratio of men is more of an issue for Kita provider programme directors and less so for Kita administrators. Similarly, the finding that parents are only involved in the subject of “more male educators in Kitas” at the margins is confirmed – which, however, does not necessarily mean that the majority of them regard the issue as unimportant. **This means:** the findings underline the view that other educational issues and everyday challenges result in Kita provider programme directors and, to an even greater extent, Kita administrators not having sufficient time and resources available to deal with the issue of “increasing the ratio of men”.



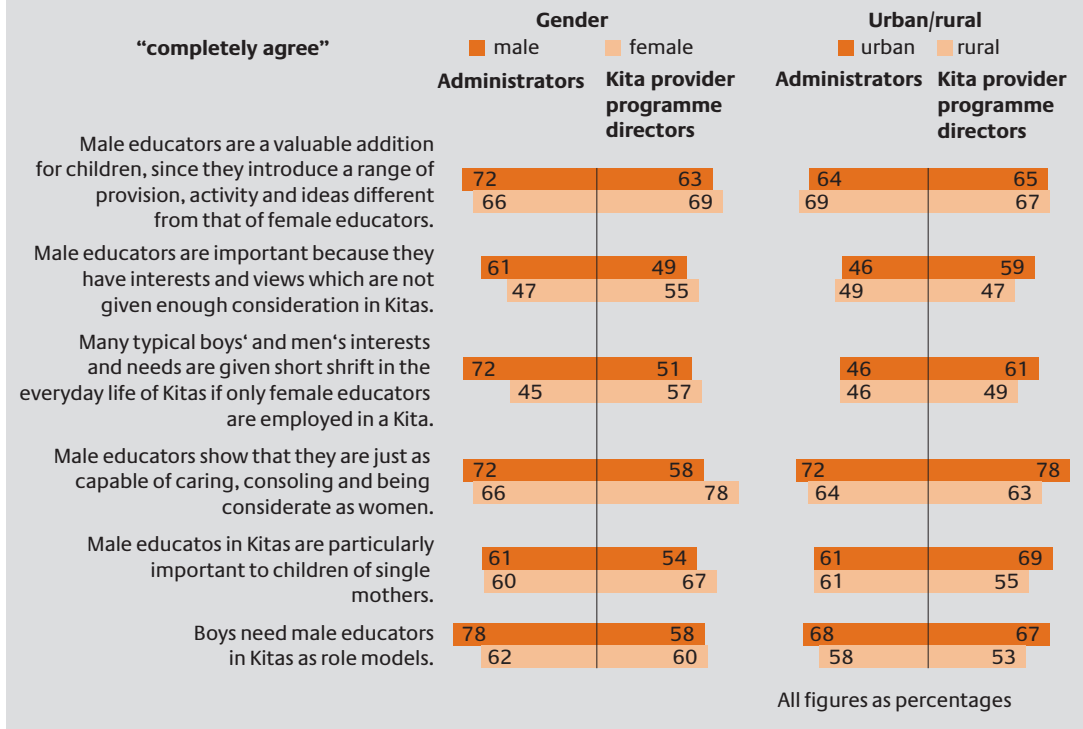
5.5.3 Is increasing the ratio of male educators on the Kita provider and administration level a “men’s issue”?

Increasing the ratio of male educators is more of a “men’s issue” on the administration level and more of a “women’s issue” on the Kita provider level

Gender differentiations within Kita administrators and Kita provider programme directors show:

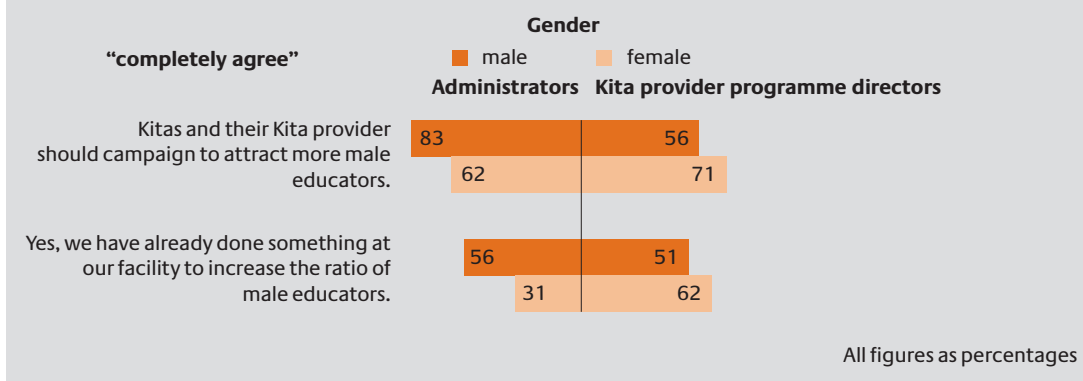
- On the administration level, men argue slightly more frequently than women for an increase in the ratio of male educators. Among Kita provider programme directors, on the other hand, it tends to be women who highlight the importance of male educators.

Fig. 30: Reasons for increasing the ratio of male educators in Kitas – demographic differences among Kita provider programme directors and Kita administrators



- On the Kita administrators' side, men demand (even) more clearly than women that Kitas and their Kita provider programme directors should campaign to attract more male educators (men: 83%, women: 62%). Moreover, male Kita administrators are also more active in matters of increasing the ratio of men in Kitas: while only around one in three female Kita administrators has already done something to increase the ratio of men, the figure for their male colleagues is more than one in two.
- On the Kita provider side, on the other hand, more women than men demand a stronger commitment from Kitas and Kita providers to attracting male educators (men: 56%, women: 71%). Women are also slightly more active than their male colleagues in this regard: 62% of women state that they have already done something to increase the ratio of men in Kitas. Among men the figure is "only" 51%.

Fig. 31: Required and active efforts to increase the ratio of male educators – demographic differences among Kita provider programme directors and Kita administrators

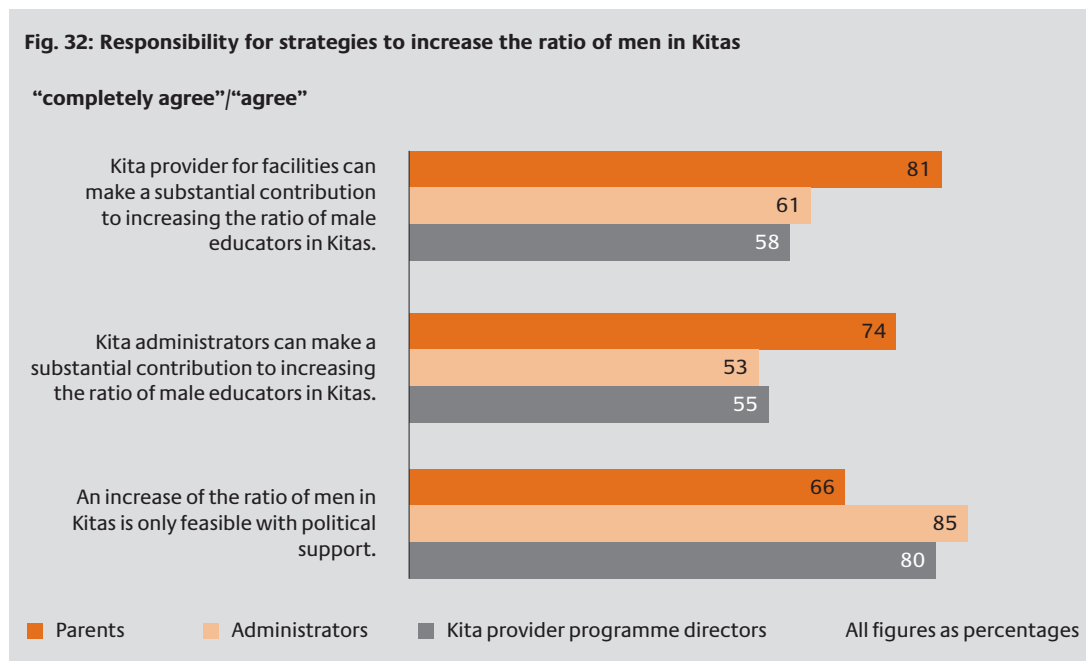


■ This difference is also shown with respect to the question of the level of importance of the issue of “male educators” in current everyday work: on the administration level it is more important for men than women (men: 56%, women: 34%), and on the Kita provider side it is more important for women than men (men: 30%, women: 43%).⁴¹

5.5.4 Who is responsible for increasing the ratio of men in Kitas?

The majority of Kita administrators and, above all, Kita provider programme directors believe they can increase the ratio of men

Over 50% of Kita administrators and Kita provider programme directors hold the view that Kita administrators can make a significant contribution to increasing the ratio of male educators in Kitas⁴². Kita providers are seen as even more influential: around 60% of Kita provider programme directors and Kita administrators hold the view that Kita providers can significantly contribute to increasing the ratio of men in Kitas.



But: in the views of Kita provider programme directors and Kita administrators, increasing the ratio of men in Kitas primarily requires political support – and in their opinion this has not yet been provided

Though over half of Kita provider programme directors and Kita administrators indicate that their own facilities can make an important contribution to increasing the ratio of male educators, 80% also think that an increase in the proportion of men at Kitas is only feasible with political support. The majority of parents also assume that increasing the ratio of men

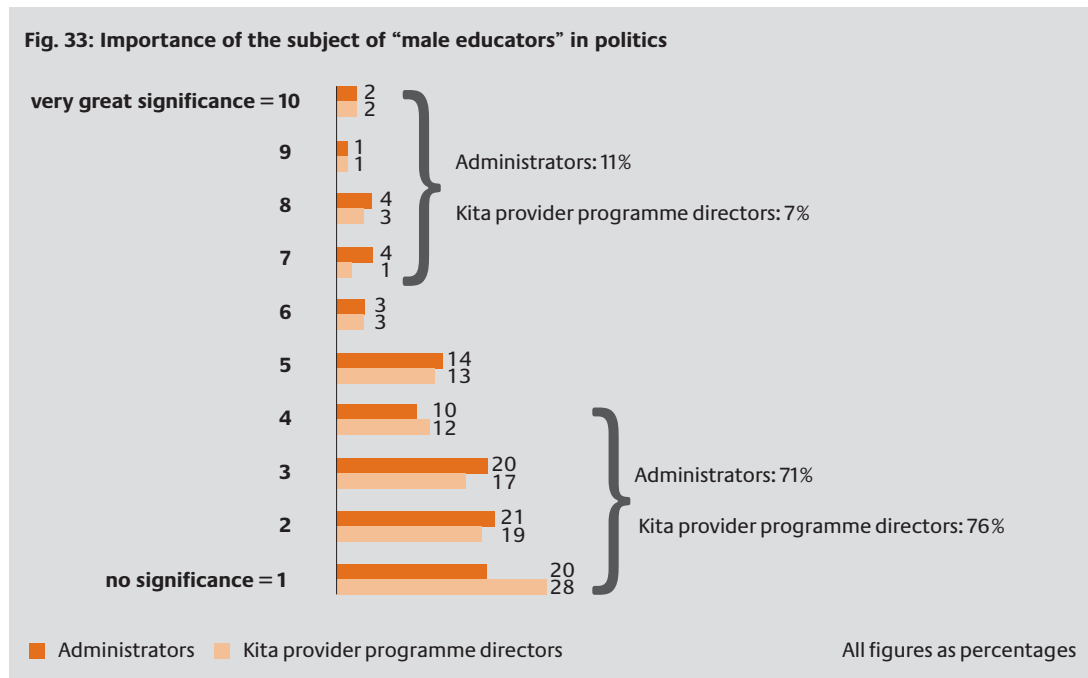
⁴¹ Here, the values 7 to 10 on a scale of ten were added up in each case (1 = no significance to 10 = very great significance).

⁴² In order to show that Kita provider programme directors and Kita administrators in principle believe they are able to increase the ratio of men in their facilities, the highest and second-highest degree of agreement are shown here (“completely agree”, “rather agree”).

requires political support. However, they hold politics accountable to a smaller extent than do Kita provider programme directors and Kita administrators. Parents assume – to an even more significant extent than Kita provider programme directors – that Kita provider programme directors and Kita administrators themselves can make a large contribution to increasing the ratio of men in Kitas.

However, at present only a fraction of Kita provider programme directors and Kita administrators see the issue of “male educators” as being established on a political level:

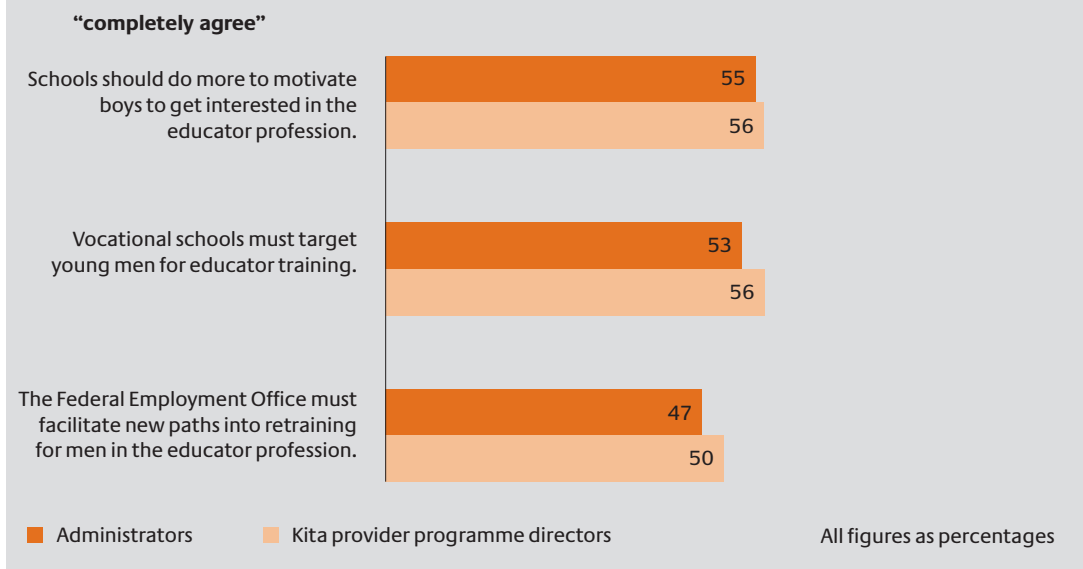
- Hardly anyone on the Kita provider and administration side holds the view that a great deal of attention is being devoted to this issue on a political level.
- By contrast, slightly over 70% of both Kita provider programme directors and Kita administrators think that hardly any importance has been attached to the issue of “male educators” by politicians. A quarter of Kita provider programme directors and one fifth of Kita administrators believe that politicians are not interested in this issue at all.



Kita administrators and Kita provider programme directors think it to be the training and education system’s duty to strongly advocate more male educators

Kita provider programme directors and Kita administrators also agree the matter of putting responsibility on the training and education system: there is a demand for (vocational) schools to attract boys to the educator profession, and the **BA (Federal Employment Office)** is expected to facilitate retraining courses for men to become educators.

Fig. 34: Importance of players involved in training as to increasing the ratio of male educators in Kitas



5.5.5 In the view of respondents, what ought to be done in order to attract more men as educators in Kitas?

“Yes, so just one other point is simply the pay in Kitas in general, I believe (...) And I believe ... so if we were to pay even better we would have a much better supply of men, I believe.”

Female Kita provider programme director, aged 39

Increase in salaries and social esteem, and an improvement in awareness that the profession is highly relevant for society

The question about strategies to increase the ratio of men in Kitas is naturally closely related to the barriers which prevent men from opting for an educational career in a Kita. It is therefore no surprise that Kita provider programme directors and, in particular, Kita administrators emphasize that first of all **salaries** should be **raised** and secondly the **social recognition of the educator profession** must be **increased** – given that the low proportion of male educators in Kitas was predominantly explained by means of these arguments.⁴³ Both Kita provider programme directors and Kita administrators assume that **awareness of the social relevance of the educator profession is low** among men at present: two thirds of Kita provider programme directors and Kita administrators think that men should be more clearly told that they are making an important social contribution through their work in Kitas.

In addition, almost half of the respondents emphasize that **more retraining opportunities** have to be provided for men, and that the **educational quality** of Kitas must be enhanced.

⁴³ The desire of a relatively large number of qualified male personnel to fill an administration position within the Kita and the high proportion of male integration educators in Bremen and male Kita administrators in Hamburg who acquire a higher salary due to their degree (see also Chapter “Current figures on the ratio of men in Kitas”, pp. 15ff.) confirm the demand for and positive effect of increased salaries.

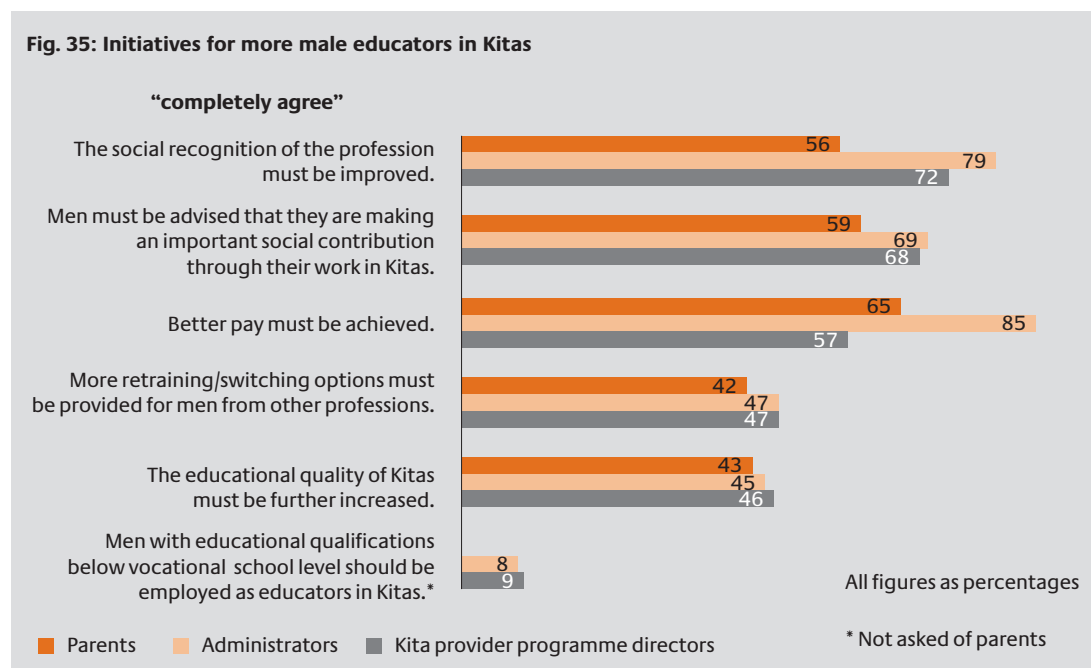
The majority reject employing male educators at any price

Despite the shortage of male educators in Kitas, it is important, as far as the majority of Kita provider programme directors and Kita administrators are concerned, to note that any increase in the ratio of men at the expense of educational quality is out of the question. In short: men are not employed at any price.

The fact that male educators are just as highly qualified and have to comply with the job description to the same extent as female applicants is highlighted by more than half of Kita provider programme directors and Kita administrators, without any ifs and buts. In addition, Kita administrators point out in the qualitative interviews that for them it is not just a matter of “men per se”, but that they, where possible, wish for a wide variety of different types of men forming a “colourful” team.

Employing men with an educational qualification at below vocational school level is categorically rejected (65%), especially by Kita provider programme directors in urban districts. This strategy encounters a slightly greater level of acceptance among Kita provider programme directors from more rural areas where it is massively condemned by “only” 51%.

But: In any case, around 10% of Kita provider programme directors and of Kita administrators can imagine employing male educators with below vocational school level qualifications



5.5.6 Do the various Kita providers differ from one another with regard to the subject of “male educators in Kitas”?

“I called a Catholic vocational school. And then they asked whether I am a man. I said yes and then they said oh no, we only take women.”

Male trainee, aged 20

As the findings have so far revealed, “increasing the ratio of male educators” is primarily an issue among Kita provider programme directors. The question to be examined below is whether the various “Kita provider types” differ with regard to their opinion on male educators in Kitas. Since “only” 100 Kita provider programme directors we surveyed, the following distinctions cannot be regarded as representative findings, but rather as empirically supported trends.

First of all, it should be noted that **no Kita provider attaches low importance to the subject of “male educators in Kitas”**. Nevertheless, differences can be seen: the Catholic Kita providers in particular seem to adopt a special position.

Catholic Kita providers clearly have a more reticent view of the subject of “male educators” than other Kita providers

Some examples:

- ▮ Whereas on average 75% of Kita provider programme directors hold the view that children should be cared for both by male and female educators, the figure among programme directors of Catholic Kita providers is “only” 58%.
- ▮ Among all Kita provider programme directors, Catholic programme directors are least concerned with the question of how the ratio of male educators in Kitas can be increased (42%, in comparison to the average of 50%).
- ▮ Only 33% of Catholic Kita provider programme directors have already done something to increase the ratio of male educators in Kitas. As a result, they are clearly below the average of 57%.

5.6 Digression – compulsory civilian service in Kitas

Since the end of 2006, those on compulsory civilian service have been allowed to support educators in supervising and caring for children.⁴⁴ On November 1, 2008, there were 3,013 places in Kitas for those doing compulsory civilian service, of which 1,860 were actually taken – meaning that approx. one third of these places were left unfilled.

⁴⁴ Excerpts from the reply of the Federal Government (Drucksache 16/11380) to a minor interpellation of the FDP (Liberal Democrats) parliamentary group (Drucksache 16/10976 “Bildungs- und Entwicklungschancen von Jungen”) are presented below.

The following activities come under the scope of possible assignments for those doing compulsory civilian service in Kitas:

- Assistance in supervision (playing and romping around in the interior and outdoor areas of the Kita, homework support for children aged up to 14)
- Assistance in practical instructions, e. g. handicraft activities and cooking
- Assistance in daily activities (washing, dressing and undressing, cleaning teeth, changing diapers, handling zippers, tying shoelaces)
- Assistance in exercises, language learning and guidance on everyday life (colours, seasons, numbers, letters, reading the clock)
- Accompanying services on trips or on the daily journey to the Kita and back home (see German Parliament 2008 p. 14).

Can compulsory civilian service in Kitas make a reasonable contribution to increasing the ratio of male educators?

First results from the research project “Zivildienst als Sozialisationsinstanz für junge Männer” (Compulsory civilian service as a socialisation device for young men)⁴⁵ confirm the accuracy of this assumption. Many of those doing compulsory civilian service opt for a social profession later due to positive experiences in the course of the compulsory civilian service (see BMFSFJ [Federal Ministry for Family Affairs, Senior Citizens, Women and Youth] press release dated 15.12.2008). This outcome is also confirmed by the findings of the present study (see pp. 39ff.). Motivating those doing compulsory civilian service to work in Kitas and creating additional compulsory civilian service places in Kitas appears to make sense against the background of the following results:

- Kita provider programme directors and Kita administrators see the opportunity to attract more men to work in their Kitas by employing those doing compulsory civilian service. Based on their experience, male interns and educators are more willing to work in a Kita if there is already a man present in the educational division. Evidently, it does not really matter much whether this man is an educator, an accredited trainee, someone on a voluntary social service year, or doing compulsory civilian service.
- Parents who have had positive experiences with young men doing compulsory civilian service are even more open-minded on the subject of “men in Kitas” and more strongly demand an increase in the ratio of men than the average for all parents surveyed (see Figures 36 and 37).

⁴⁵ The three-year research project began in January 2008 and is being carried out by the **Gesellschaft für Innovationsforschung und Beratung** (GIB), in cooperation with **TU Dresden** (Dresden University of Technology).

Fig. 36: Personal relevance of more male educators

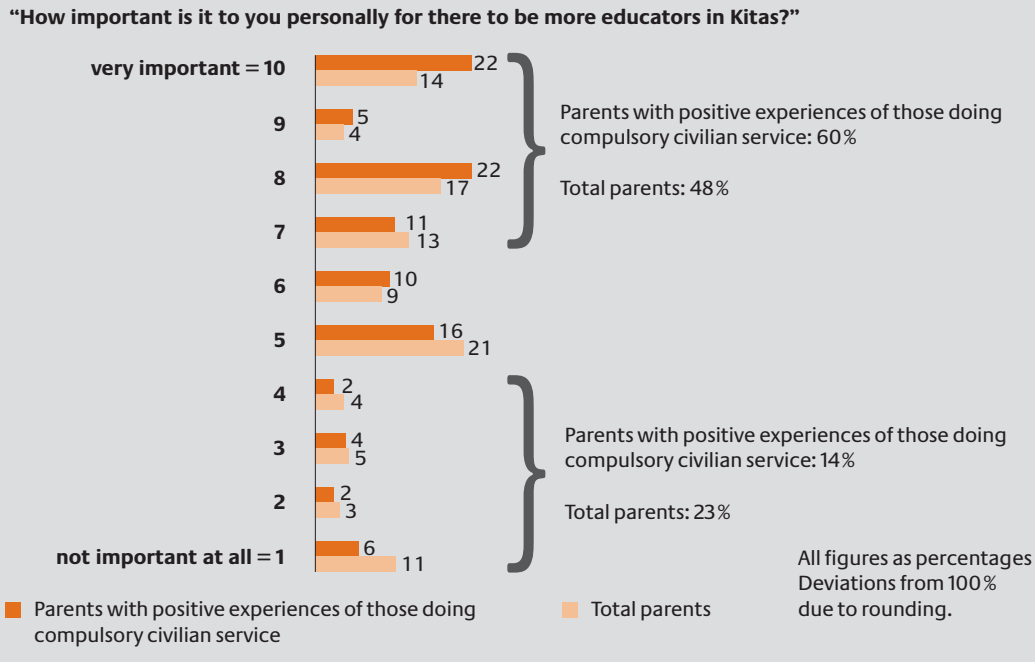
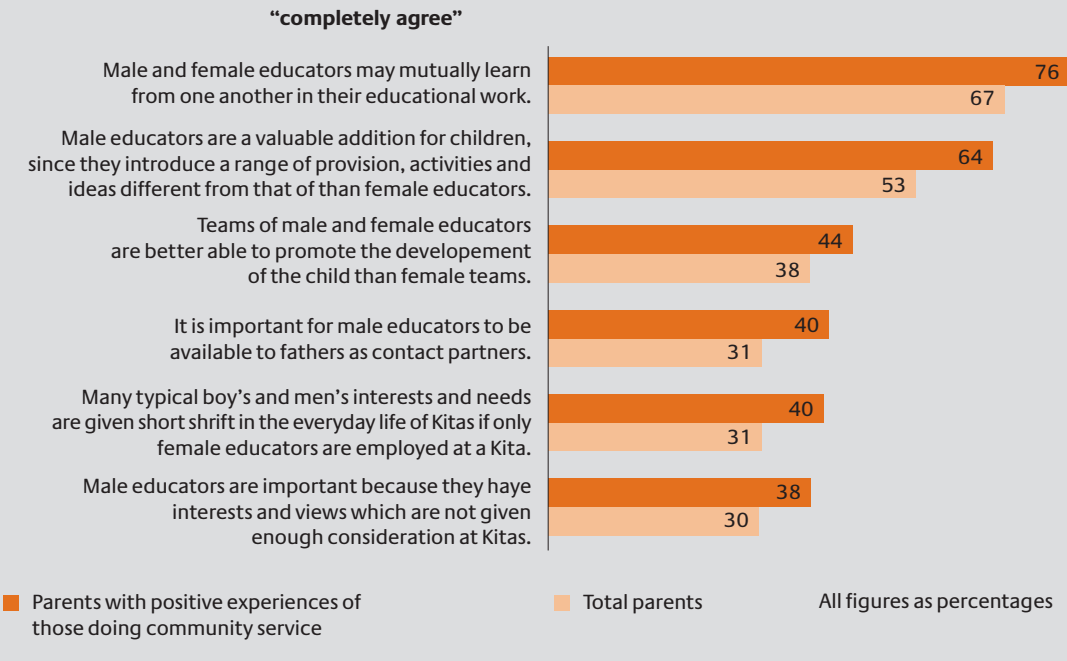


Fig. 37: Reasons for increasing the ratio of male educators in Kitas



In addition, compulsory civilian service makes it easier for young men to gain formal admission to educator training. This is because, in general, compulsory civilian service completed in a Kita is recognised as a professional qualification by vocational schools for special needs education and is thereby regarded as a possible formal requirement for admission to a vocational school.

Against the background of these findings, a sustained increase in compulsory civilian service and volunteer services is logical

The statements about compulsory civilian service may be transferred to the voluntary social service year in many respects, since there young men also have the opportunity of accumulating positive social experiences, and they can contribute to an increase in the ratio of men in Kitas.

Employing men on a voluntary social service year is also an interesting prospect for Kitas: pursuant to Article 14c of the Compulsory Civilian Service Act (Zivildienstgesetz), young men may complete a voluntary social service year in a Kita instead of doing their compulsory civilian service.

Compulsory civilian and voluntary service should therefore play an important role in the development of strategies to increase the ratio of men. It therefore seems to make sense to develop both services in such a way as to make them more attractive.

5.7 Summary of central findings

The results of the surveys show that ...

- nationally and internationally, there are currently only a few studies available on the subject of “male educators in early childhood education” (see pp. 19ff.);
- throughout the country the ratio of male employees in the educational division of Kitas is presently around 3% (see pp. 15f.) and male educators are primarily concentrated in urban Kitas (see pp. 16f.);
- positive experiences of caring for and working with children and young people, e. g. in compulsory civilian service or in voluntary work with children and young people, frequently constitute bridges into the educator profession for men (see pp. 35ff.). In addition, parents from social professions encourage men to enter educator training;
- the professional area of Kitas becomes more attractive for men if they (are able to) attain a Kita administration position (see pp. 38f.) or are better paid, for example in the case of those usually holding a degree as Kita integration educators (see p. 18), or in Kitas of the Danish School Association **Dansk Skoleforening for Sydslesvig** in Schleswig-Holstein (see p. 18);
- male educators attach lower importance to the relatively poor remuneration of their work as long as they get social recognition for their work and their working conditions provide for sufficient resources and for professional educational work and child care (see p. 69);
- men who have enjoyed positive and valuable experiences in Kitas tend to stay at the Kita and campaign for their choice of career outside the Kita (see pp. 70f.);
- men are more interested in a position at a Kita if other men are also employed there (see p. 72);
- having male educators and trainees at vocational schools and at Kitas is very desirable for parents, Kita provider programme directors, Kita administrators, female educators and female trainees (see pp. 43ff.). Only a very low level of scepticism is displayed towards them and only a very small share of respondents see established systems at Kitas as being at risk due to male educators (see pp. 57ff.);

- | Kita provider programme directors and Kita administrators do not employ men at any price. Male educators must be just as highly qualified and comply with the job description to the same extent as female applicants (see p. 79). Social skills, commitment, and physical and emotional resilience are described as essential qualitative requirements for male educators (see pp. 50ff.);
- | Kita provider programme directors, Kita administrators, female trainees and educators, and parents assess their experiences with male educators as very positive and enriching (see pp. 49ff.);
- | Kitas which employ male educators are more attractive to many parents – in part because they hope male educators will provide a further impetus to their own upbringing approach (see p. 46);
- | cooperation between male and female educators is described as positive on both sides (see p. 49);
- | male educators are not only important for boys, but also for girls (see p. 53).

The survey, however, reveals **barriers and obstacles** which get in the way of increasing the proportion of men. It has become apparent that ...

- | remuneration and social recognition of the educator profession do not conform to the level of performance (see pp. 63ff.);
- | advancement and career prospects are low in the educator profession (see p. 64);
- | non-remunerated training without state financing (student grants and loans) or without the financial support of parents cannot be completed, or can only be carried out under strong additional burdens (see p. 65);
- | the outdated stereotypical career image and the still ubiquitous idea that educators in Kitas “only” play and romp around with the children, and otherwise continue the care tasks of mothers makes the educator profession seem unattractive (see pp. 39f. and pp. 67f.);
- | latent concerns still exist about male educators in early childhood education (see pp. 57ff.);
- | a “female culture” – seen as dominant – may trigger “displacement effects” among male educators and trainees (see pp. 67f.);
- | Kita provider programme directors and Kita administrators have not yet pursued any binding and sustained strategies and quality goals, respectively, to increase the ratio of men, since they assume that too few men are interested in the educator profession. Moreover, other education issues and everyday policy challenges result in Kita provider programme directors and Kita administrators hardly having time and resources available to deal with the issue of “increasing the ratio of men” (see pp. 73ff.);
- | politics has not (yet) attended to the issue (see pp. 76f.).

As a consequence an explicit commitment and a clear political will is required in order to increase the ratio of men in Kitas. Essentially the following factors are necessary ...

- | improvement in advancement and career opportunities;
- | increase in remuneration and social recognition;
- | improvement in general conditions of training;
- | improvement in career access for “men switching careers” and “men interested in retraining”;
- | political support and effective publicity for Kita providers and Kita administrators working for an increase of men in Kitas,

- | focus on the professional profile of the educator profession in everyday work and in external presentations;
- | greater visibility of men already involved in this career area in external presentations.

It has been shown in principle that everyday work in Kitas is pervaded by gender-typical task division which is usually conducted – consciously or unconsciously – with the mutual agreement of male and female educators (see pp. 44ff.).

On gender equality policy grounds, it is therefore important for training and further education facilities and for Kita providers and Kitas to initiate and evaluate “gender awareness processes” among their educator personnel, not only in order to increase the ratio of men in Kitas, but also to analyse and if necessary change the specified gender-typical divisions of activity, prejudices, and methods of operation and communication on an institutional level (see pp. 44 ff.).

In addition, the following findings in particular illustrate very succinctly that the current gender equality policy aimed at changing traditional gender ideas, as described in the chapter “Equality and education policy background of the research project”, must be continued in order to achieve the goal of increasing the ratio of men in Kitas:

- | men in Kitas make an important contribution to expanding traditional male images by showing that being a man also includes changing diapers, caring and comforting (see p. 59);
- | focussing on the traditional (male) role model of the family breadwinner results in men finding the early childhood educator’s salary too low, in particular because they can not support a family on it (see p. 70);
- | latent existing stereotypes such as the concept that educating and caring for children is a women’s matter and that male educators are gay, prevent (more) men from opting to work in a Kita (see p. 72);
- | suspicion towards male educators make the decision to enter the profession more difficult for men (see pp. 64ff.).

There is a need for action in particular with respect to ...

- | social reappraisal and upgrading of the areas of **care** and early childhood education;
- | development of further initiatives, projects and schemes, with the goal of attracting boys and men into the family and professional areas of early childhood education and **care work**;
- | critical debate on the simplified and generalised role assignment of who is victim and who is offender in order to successfully and permanently counteract the general suspicion of child abuse.

VI.

Recommendations

Kita provider programme directors and Kita administrators, as significant players in the professional area of the Kita, regard the subject of “male educators in Kitas” as very important. Their interest in and commitment to increasing the ratio of male educators in Kita is correspondingly great. Kita provider programme directors and Kita administrators therefore are important and motivated allies in developing the statutory, administrative and education policy conditions required for tackling the problem of increasing the ratio of male educators in Kitas.

But: despite the high level of interest in male educators, there has so far been a shortage of sustained, coordinated strategies to increase the ratio of men. **A nationwide action plan or a joint initiative of the federal and state governments is urgently required for the recruitment of male educators for Kitas.** Important goals of such plans or initiatives should be ...

1. picking up on the huge interest in male educators,
2. developing and implementing well-targeted strategies to increase the ratio of men in Kitas in cooperation with the most important professional players involved in the area of early childhood education.

In order to achieve these two objectives, a **coordination centre** is required which makes important players in the area of early childhood education aware of the subject of “men in Kitas”, and integrates them into a network for cooperation. It is important to support the respective players in developing and implementing their specific strategies, and to coordinate these strategies. Consideration is to be given here to the jurisdiction of the federal states in educational matters, the different federal state-specific training systems, and the heterogeneity of the Kita provider landscape. The coordination should enable policy-makers on both national and federal state level to realise the various projects in a coherent and cooperative manner.

The experiences, skills and resources of the following players should be incorporated into the development and dispersal of strategies to increase the ratio of men in Kitas:

I Players involved in national policy-making

Among other things, these players should promote an action plan or a joint initiative to increase the ratio of men, and to attract the federal states to get involved in a cooperation. Furthermore, national players are supposed to promote the cause of “more men in Kitas” through relevant public relations work and to provide financial resources for strategies to increase the ratio of men and for pilot projects.

I Players involved in federal-state policy-making

The individual federal states are important players in the implementation of strategies for facilitating access for more men to educator training and to an educator career in Kitas in two respects. They are responsible for the financing of and the curricula for Kitas as well as for the curricula for vocational schools and universities. Both areas come under the jurisdiction of the federal states and can thus only be changed with the consent and support of the federal states.

I Churches and welfare associations

As they represent Kita providers, the churches and welfare associations are important actors and facilitate the exchange of experience and expertise within their structures. They themselves are networked into a variety of formal and informal working groups and bodies. It is essential to make good use of these networks when implementing projects and strategies aimed at increasing the ratio of men. They have the opportunity of promoting the cause of “more men in Kitas” and to encourage their member organisations to become active in this respect. Besides, the **Catholic Men’s Fellowship of Germany (GKMD)** and the **Men’s Association of the Protestant Church in Germany** have a long tradition and many years of experience in the area of work and research related to men, which should definitely be made use of.

I Kita providers and Kitas

The overriding goal of the cooperation with Kita providers and Kitas is to recruit men and improve the gender awareness of employees.

I Umbrella organisations of vocational schools for special needs education and other (further) training institutions for educators

These umbrella organisations are also important players in the implementation of strategies to increase the ratio of men in educator training and in Kitas, not least by recruiting men and by implementing strategies for awareness raising (see for example the EU project **Gender Loops** and the Brandenburg Project, carried out by the **Berlin Institut für Frühpädagogik (BIfF)**, aimed at providing practice-based qualifications for unemployed men to become educators in Kitas).

I German County Association, German Association of Towns and Municipalities, German Association of Cities and Towns

The three local government umbrella organisations **German County Association, German Association of Towns and Municipalities and German Association of Cities and Towns** represent the interests of administrative districts, municipalities, all independent cities and most cities forming part of larger administrative districts, which, among other things, function as Kita providers for municipal Kitas. The local government organisations are important allies in developing strategies to increase the ratio of men in Kitas in two respects. On the one hand, they have an impact on collective bargaining negotiations for Kita employees, and thereby on the salaries and working conditions of educators. On the other hand, they advise and inform their members about important processes and developments for local government. As a result, local government central associations have the opportunity, via their boards and specialist committees, to attract administrative districts, municipalities and towns and cities to the cause of increasing the ratio of men and to advertise flagship projects of municipal Kita providers.

| **Federal Employment Office**

The **Federal Employment Office** has an impact on the image of the educator profession in the general public. A political initiative to increase the ratio of men in Kitas depends on the modern and professional career image of an educator. Retraining and qualification initiatives for unemployed men particularly aimed at the educator profession can be supported and conducted by the Federal Employment Office.

| **Trade unions**

The trade unions **Ver.di (Combined Services Union)** and **GEW (German Education Union)** play a decisive role in the attempt to upgrade the professional area. For example, they have long been committed to higher pay, improved working conditions and higher social recognition for the educator profession. The trade unions also have a decisive impact on the process of making educator training a degree course.

| **Employer federations**

The Association of Municipal Employers negotiates the collective wage agreements for educators with the Ver.di and GEW trade unions and is thus largely responsible for salaries in the educator profession.

| **National and international experts in the area of early childhood education**

The various national and international players from research and practice who also aspire to increase the ratio of men in Kitas are dependent on improved networking and exchange of experience. As a result, the building of national and international networking structures should definitely be continued and supported by the coordination centre (see European Research Network **KOME**).

| **The New Paths for Boys nationwide network and service office**

The **New Paths for Boys** project plays a decisive role in the institutional implementation of promotion of boys, for example at secondary schools and in the public debate on the issue of “boys/men and care work”. The number of its network partners who support the cause of the **New Paths for Boys** project through a wide variety of provisions such as project open days, workshops, seminars and cooperation with schools has now risen to 138. The **New Paths for Boys** office therefore has a large number of allies with a comprehensive knowledge of how boys can be supported in making a gender-atypical career choices.

| **Parents' associations**

The **Berliner Landeselternausschuss**, which initiated the popular referendum petition “Kita – education from the outset = a benefit to Berlin” and was able to achieve an improvement in the educator-child and administrator-child ratios, bears witness to the great significance which parents can have in the implementation of measures aimed at upgrading the quality of early childhood education, especially by means of increasing the ratio of male educators.

| **Federal Office of Civilian Service**

The study at hand has revealed that young men often opt for a social profession at a later stage of their career by virtue of positive experiences during compulsory civilian service. The **Federal Office of Civilian Service** may contribute to this by intensifying the efforts of making compulsory civilian service a service for learning.

| **Individuals on compulsory civilian service and men on a voluntary social service year working in Kitas**

Those doing compulsory civilian service and men on a voluntary social service year who work in Kitas may, for example, be supported and accompanied via special mentoring programmes. This enhances the probability of them experiencing their activity in Kitas as positive.

Fields of action and recommendations for the coordination centre and the players described above are listed below:

1. Fields of action: occupational orientation for young men

- | Changing of the career description by the **Federal Employment Office** so that the professional image of the educator appeals to men, too. A look at the current task and job specification of the Federal Office reveals, for example, that the education mandate of KITAS is not referred to in the description for the educator profession.
- | Carrying out of smaller regional model projects, in which, for example, schools and KITAS cooperate in a way that allows boys to attain in-depth occupational orientation. These regional model projects should be initiated and financed on national and federal-state level.
- | Training fairs and specialist conferences should be used to promote educator training.
- | The BMFSFJ, in cooperation with the **New Paths for Boys** office, should inspire secondary schools to cooperate with KITAS in order to allow boys to gain insight into the educator profession by short-term practical placements. Furthermore, secondary schools should be encouraged to become integrated into the **New Paths for Boys** network.

2. Field of action: public relations work

- | National, federal state and local government should publicly campaign for the cause of “more men in KITAS”. In the course of such campaigns, strategies should also be developed which allow for the **diversity** approach in order to show the existing diversity of “men”.
- | A regularly updated map of administrative districts should be compiled on which the number of male educators in KITAS is noted at the level of each administrative district. This map of administrative districts should be presented to the public (and if need be, integration of this map of administrative districts into the Equality Atlas).
- | Players involved in national and federal state policy-making should offer equal opportunity awards to KITAS. KITAS which implement equality schemes such as strategies to increase the ratio of men (see the relevant state campaign in Norway) should be awarded a prize.
- | A coordination centre for “men in KITAS” sponsored by the BMFSFJ should contribute to this research report being presented to the national and international (specialist) public, and discourse on the subject of “men in early childhood education” being intensified. Furthermore, such a coordination centre should contribute to exchanging examples of national and international best-practice.
- | A coordination centre, in cooperation with the umbrella organisations of vocational schools for special needs education, the KITAS providers, churches and trade unions, should forward the results and recommendations of this research report to their respective member organisations and should discuss them on the relevant boards.
- | The Federal Government and the Federal State Governments should get in contact with immigrant associations and develop joint strategies in order to campaign for the educator profession among men with migration backgrounds.
- | National government and federal state governments, in cooperation with parents and their federations (for example the “Landeselternausschüsse”), should publicly campaign for the cause of “more men in KITAS”.

3. Field of action: training and further education of educators

- | Players involved in national and federal state policy-making should contribute to improving the general training conditions, for example by transferring standards in dual-system professional training to educator training (cf. the efforts being made in care for the elderly training).
- | Players involved in national policy-making should make public reference to the fact that trainees with already completed training or another comparable professional qualification who are learning the educator profession may also be supported by virtue of the Support of Advancement in Further Education Act (Aufstiegsfortbildungsförderungsgesetz).
- | Players involved in federal-state policy-making should call for a stronger integration of sporting, movement and outdoor experience activities into the curricula of vocational schools for special needs education (see the sport, movement and outdoor tuition at the Danish **Kolding College**).
- | Training and further education facilities should initiate organisational and personnel development processes, with the goal of establishing measures to increase the ratio of men as an institutional task (for example in guidelines, quality standards, quality agreements).
- | Training and further education facilities should, where appropriate, alter their public relations work and external presentations, in order to present educator training as an attractive career choice for men. When compiling materials for public display, the depicted men should represent the widest possible variety of male images.
- | Training and further education facilities should integrate the topics “abuse” and “general suspicion” into the curriculum. Male trainees should receive an education which prepares them for the possibility that they may be perceived as potential abusers in Kitas. In coordination with both federal-state administrations responsible for educator training and universities and vocational schools for special needs education, the coordination centre sponsored by the BMFSFJ should weigh up whether and to what extent improved access opportunities for men may be created.
- | In coordination with universities and vocational schools for special needs education, the coordination centre should weigh up the extent to which training and professional qualifications of educators may be credited to pedagogic BA and MA courses of study, allowing training courses to achieve greater permeability.

4. Field of action: qualification of unemployed men and those interested in retraining

- | The Federal Employment Office and the players involved in national and federal state policy-making should develop a nationwide programme, sponsored by the **European Social Fund** where applicable, for practice-based qualifications for unemployed men or those interested in retraining for educator (cf. the Brandenburg Project, conducted by the Berliner Institut für Frühpädagogik (BIfF) in the years 2005 to 2007, aimed at practice-based qualifications as educator for unemployed men).
- | Players involved in federal state policy-making should create general conditions which allow for the employment of not (yet) qualified men and women in Kitas. The Berlin Kita Act, for example, offers Kita providers the opportunity to employ up to 5% non-pedagogically trained employees in Kitas. Berlin Kita providers may use this 5% provision explicitly to employ men who subsequently complete on-the-job educator training.

5. Field of action: quality, personnel and organisational development in Kitas

- | Players involved in federal state policy-making, trade unions and employer federations should contribute to improving the general conditions in Kitas (recruitment, pay). Moreover, they should (financially) support Kita providers in pursuing the objective of increasing the ratio of men in Kitas.
- | Kita providers and Kitas should set the increase in the ratio of male educators as a quality objective.
- | Kita providers and Kitas should initiate organisational and personnel development processes with the objective of setting out measures to increase the ratio of men as an interdisciplinary task (for example in guidelines, quality standards, quality agreements).
- | Kita providers and Kitas should enter into cooperation with universities and vocational schools for special needs education in order to attract male interns to the facility/facilities.
- | Kita providers and Kitas should enter into cooperation with employment agencies in order to recruit male educators;
- | Kita providers and Kitas should address the subject of “child abuse” and develop institutional strategies for dealing with it (for example by appointing a child protection representative).
- | Kita providers and Kitas should convey their efforts to become more professional to the outside world.
- | Kita providers and Kitas should visibly highlight male educators, interns, men doing compulsory civilian service or a voluntary social service year in external presentations.

6. Field of action: distribution and enhancement of concrete practical ideas for developing strategies to increase the ratio of men

- | Players involved in national and federal state policy-making should initiate further research projects which supplement the currently available scientific findings on the subject “men in Kitas”. The new scientific findings may be channelled into enhancing new practical projects and materials to increase the ratio of men.
- | Handouts and checklists for Kita providers, Kitas, training and further education facilities (which present best-practice examples and so-called flagship projects) should be produced providing information on how men can be attracted to work in Kitas or to training, and how any potential gender conflicts may be dealt with (see the Belgian manual “Cooperation between men and women in a mixed team”).
- | A coordination centre should develop concepts for so-called in-house further training courses providing Kita and vocational school teams with information and practical ideas on how their facilities can recruit men for training or work.

7. Field of action: compulsory civilian and voluntary services

- | The BMFSFJ and the **Federal Office of Civilian Service** should publicly make reference to the fact that compulsory civilian service may also be completed in Kitas.
- | The BMFSFJ and the **Federal Office of Civilian Service** should publicly make reference to the fact that young men who complete a voluntary social service year at a Kita pursuant to Article 14c of the Compulsory Civilian Service Act (Zivildienstgesetz) are of particular interest to Kitas.

8. Field of action: gender equality policy strategies and gender awareness

- | The coordination centre should support the introduction of gender equality policy strategies in training and further education facilities for educators.
- | In addition, it should develop workshops, seminars and instruction modules on gender awareness, and introduce them into training and further education facilities, as well as Kitas. (In this context, the topics “abuse” and “general suspicion” should also be dealt with.)
- | Furthermore, gender training courses should be held for careers advisers of the Federal Employment Office in order to ensure that gender-stereotypical career choice advice is avoided and the profession of educator is also recommended to young men when careers advice is offered.

VII.

Conclusion

The current Federal Government announced the development of an “independent policy for boys and men” in its coalition agreement, one of the objectives of which is to expand male career orientations to include educational and caring professions.

This study offers the Federal Government several starting points for the implementation of such a scheme. An action plan or a joint initiative, flanked by a public campaign, would back up those players who already consider an increase in the ratio of male educators in Kitas to be important, and would support them in taking concrete steps and measures to pursue this objective. Moreover, a national joint initiative would provide the opportunity to make (additional) players aware of the subject matter and to attract cooperation and support.

By means of such an initiative, the Federal Government might also trigger projects in other EU states pursuing the goal of increasing the ratio of male educators in Kitas.

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