International Organizations and Lifelong Learning

From Global Agendas to Policy Diffusion

Anja P. Jakobi

Salus publica
Suprema lex esto

Pursuit of Happiness

From cradle to grave

Transformations of the State

Series Editors: **Achim Hurrelmann**, Carleton University, Canada; **Stephan Leibfried**, University of Bremen,Germany; **Kerstin Martens**, University of Bremen, Germany; **Peter Mayer,** University of Bremen, Germany.

Titles include:

This illustration is taken from the original etching in Thomas Hobbes' *Leviathan* of 1651.Palgrave Macmillan and the editors are grateful to Lucila Muñoz-Sanchez and Monika Sniegs for their help in redesigning the original to illustrate what "transformations of the state" might mean.The inscription at the top of the original frontispiece reads "*non est potestas Super Terram quae Comparetur ei*" (Job 41.33): "there is no power on earth which can be compared to him".In the Bible, this refers to the sea-monster, Leviathan. (Original Leviathan image reprinted courtesy of the British Library.)

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Policy Diffusion**

Anja P. Jakobi
Senior Researcher, TranState Research Centre
University of Bremen, Germany

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Abbreviations

ASEAN	Association of South East Asian Nations
ASEAN+3	ASEAN plus China, Japan and South Korea
ASEM	Asia Europe Meeting
BA	Academic Degree of Bachelor of Arts
CERI	OECD Centre for Educational Research and Innovation
CONFINTEA	Conference Internationale d'Education des Adultes
ECU	European Currency Unit
EFA	Education for All
EQF	European Qualification Framework
EU	European Union
GATS	General Agreement on Trade in Services
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GNI	Gross National Income
GNP	Gross National Product
HRK	Hochschulrektorenkonferenz
IAEA	International Atomic Energy Agency
IBE	UNESCO International Bureau of Education
ICE	International Conference on Education
ILO	International Labor Organization
IMF	International Monetary Fund
IO	International Organization
MA	Academic Degree of Master of Arts
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
NGOs	Non-Governmental Organizations
NQF	National Qualifications Framework
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
OEEC	Organisation for European Economic Co-operation
OMC	Open Method of Coordination
PRC	People's Republic of China
SSCI	Social Science Citation Index
UK	United Kingdom of England, Scotland and Wales
UN	United Nations
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme

UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
UNODC	United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime
UIS	UNESCO Institute for Statistic
USA	United States of America
WDE	World Data on Education
WTO	World Trade Organization

Series Editors' Preface

Over the past four centuries, the nation-state has emerged as the world's most effective means of organizing society, but its current status and future are decidedly uncertain. Some scholars predict the total demise of the nation-state as we know it, its powers eroded by a dynamic global economy on the one hand and, on the other, by the transfer of political decision-making to supranational bodies. Other analysts point out the remarkable resilience of the state's core institutions and assert that, even in the age of global markets and politics, the state remains the ultimate guarantor of security, democracy, welfare and the rule of law. Does either of these interpretations describe the future of the OECD world's modern, liberal nation-state? Will the state soon be as obsolete and irrelevant as an outdated computer? Should it be scrapped for some new invention, or can it be overhauled and rejuvenated? Or is the state actually thriving and still fit to serve, just in need of a few minor reforms?

In an attempt to address these questions, the analyses in the *Transformations of the State* series separate the complex tangle of tasks and functions that comprise the state into four manageable dimensions:

- the monopolization of the means of force,
- the rule of law, as prescribed and safeguarded by the constitution,
- the guarantee of democratic self-governance, and
- the provision of welfare and the assurance of social cohesion.

In the OECD world of the 1960s and 1970s, these four dimensions formed a synergetic constellation that emerged as the central, defining characteristic of the modern state. Books in the series report the results of both empirical and theoretical studies of the transformations experienced in each of these dimensions over the past few decades.

Transformations of the State? (Stephan Leibfried and Michael Zürn (eds), Cambridge 2005) and *Transforming the Golden-Age National State* (Achim Hurrelmann, Stephan Leibfried, Kerstin Martens and Peter Mayer (eds), Basingstoke 2007) define the basic concepts of state transformation employed in all of these studies and provide an overview

of the issues addressed. Written by various interdisciplinary teams of political scientists, lawyers, economists and sociologists, the series tracks the development of the post-World War II OECD state. Here, at last, is a state-of-the-art report on the state of the state and, we hope, a clearer view of its future.

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Achim Hurrelmann, Stephan Leibfried,
Kerstin Martens, and Peter Mayer

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Acknowledgements

1
Introduction: The Global Interest in Education Policy

When asked for a selection of useful and sustainable investments, most people would probably have education on their list. Education is widely acknowledged as a precious good, intended to serve individual and collective progress. Much has been done by individuals, communities and governments to deliver their fellow citizens a good education. But while, most of the time, schooling was seen as the appropriate means to realize educational goals, this book shows how political interest in citizens' education has continuously expanded over recent decades, resulting in a global discussion on lifelong learning processes. Governments and international organizations, as we can see in this book, have never been more concerned about learning processes of individuals than they are today.

Compared with debates on economic globalization or the retreat of the state, the growing governmental interest in education can be puzzling. Haven't market mechanisms already been introduced in many fields of social policy and welfare? Hasn't the liberal state reduced its direct influence on society and individuals more and more? Or could it just be that expanding state activity and liberal policies go hand in hand? And, to further complicate matters, could it be that a changing interest in education is an international phenomenon, which is independent from the economic situation of a country?

By the analysis of global lifelong learning policies, this book sheds light on why and how the interest of states in education has grown, such that countries are increasingly eager to extend education over the life span of individuals. This development, as I will demonstrate, has to a large part been promoted by international organizations, leading to the diffusion of policies that should ensure lifelong learning processes.

The global history of education is to a large extent bound to the state. Over time, most countries set up compulsory schooling or comparable

policies. By introducing such regulations, states established a system serving national identity, the economy and individual development. Young citizens were taught national history and, partly, democratic thinking. They were prepared as a new generation of the labor force and expected to develop into responsible adults. This system has undergone dramatic changes in the last decades, and education is widely perceived today as a lifelong process. Following such an approach, schooling today is only one step among many on the path to lifelong learning; it follows preprimary education and precedes higher or adult education. As a result, states are nowadays interested not only in the learning that takes place in school, but also in the learning that precedes and follows this period. Efforts to structure these phases have grown immensely, as is shown in this volume. As a result, there is often little evidence of state retrenchment or state retreat in this niche of social policy, even if the number of private education providers has increased.

How can we explain such a change toward intensified state activity? In this book, it is argued that recent decades witnessed the emergence of an international norm that sees the promotion of lifelong education as a necessity for modern statehood. This norm of lifelong education is above all linked to such expectations as economic competitiveness, but also to values of democracy and participation. As the subsequent chapters show, international organizations have played a large part in establishing this concept and in diffusing it to countries worldwide. One of the outcomes of this process is that education policy statements, including their aims and means, sound increasingly and astonishingly similar all over the world. There appears to be little choice over whether or not governments address lifelong learning issues.

It is the task of this book to show and explain the rise of this norm and the subsequent policy diffusion related to it. Linked to this assessment, however, is the theoretical aim of contributing to a political theory of global policy processes. In the long run, such a theory should enable researchers to conceptualize global politics with tools comparable to the ones applied in domestic politics. In this introductory chapter, I outline three conceptual perspectives on how norm emergence, policy diffusion and global governance can be brought together with a view to such theory development. These strands provide an introductory background to this study on international organizations and education policy. First, I show how international organizations are linked to the internationalization of public policies, constituting a global policy field marked by processes of policy diffusion and global governance. In a second step, I present the idea of global policy development,

the emergence and spread of policies within such global policy fields. Third, I introduce sociological institutionalism as a theoretical frame to explain the increasing orientation of countries toward the international level. After these conceptual perspectives, a fourth part of this chapter provides an introduction to lifelong learning, its history and related policies. The final section provides a plan of the book.

Getting started: International organizations and the internationalization of public policy

When analyzing the global debate on lifelong learning, researchers quickly find that international organizations are central institutions for the formulation of global education policies of all kinds. Through continuous work on education, the introduction of new governance instruments, innovative policy proposals and important data, international organizations have shifted education policy from the national to the international level of policy-making.

Education, although often neglected in political science and left to scholars in education science, sociology or economics, has undergone intense changes in recent decades. It has been transformed into a field in which adults are increasingly seeking learning opportunities, worldwide business is developing and the state is closely supervising the sector's development as a proxy for future competitiveness. A first step toward this changed role of education was the interest aroused by a US commission in 1983. In its report, the commission drew a dark picture of US education and compared the country's situation with competing nations across the world – which were perceived as being successful economies building on a well-trained workforce. The development of the world economy was interpreted against the background of 'a redistribution of trained capability throughout the globe' (National Commission for Excellence in Education 1983).

Although this analysis was carried out a quarter of a century ago, increasing foreign human capital still raises concern in many economies of the world. The diffuse feeling of lagging behind has probably become even more widespread since the idea of decreasing human capital first caught public attention. Since political agendas are sensitive to the fear of lagging behind, education has become a hot topic in many nations and is linked to the expectation of securing future progress. As I show in this book, different countries have established various programs to build up a highly skilled and continuously learning workforce adequate for a knowledge-based economy. However, strategies to enhance the

intellectual base of a nation are seldom bound to a country's very particular situation, and it is often impossible to deduce these only from changes in the economy and demands for labor qualification. Rather, the widespread policy change toward lifelong learning programs is to a large extent influenced and partly determined by policy goals outlined on the international level itself. Among the global players in that field are international institutions such as the Organization of Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), the European Union (EU), the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) or the World Bank. As will be shown, a country that is closely linked with such organizations and involved in their discourses is generally more likely to adopt such ideas as a national strategy than other countries.

The fact that international organizations teach norms (Finnemore 1993) is not new to social scientists and some countries have derived large parts of their political institutions from international organizations and their political advice: As a consequence, constitutions or human rights have become wide-spread in the nations of the world, and countries are increasingly converging in central aspects of modern statehood (Meyer *et al.* 1997a). What is new, however, is the extent to which such organizations form coalitions, build policy networks and execute programs to diffuse policy ideas. By tracing how the idea of lifelong learning has been promoted on the international level, this book also reveals the influence of global governance networks (for example Slaughter 2004). Without a central authority, yet with widespread political influence and activity, issues are shaped on the global level, agendas are set and, as a consequence, countries broadly align themselves with these internationally promoted policies.

Such widely triggered change in the frame of internationalized public policy in fact brings together two important discussions in political science, namely that of policy convergence and that of global governance. Policy convergence is the establishment of similar policies across countries (Holzinger *et al.* 2007). The inclusion of global politics in analyses of domestic processes is thus likely to become a necessity and, as a consequence, international relations and comparative politics are increasingly merging (see also Finnemore and Sikkink 2001). This link is visible in particular in fields like education policy or human rights, where much research has been carried out to prove that a common world culture exists (Meyer *et al.* 1992, 1997a; Meyer 2005).

Another aspect of policy convergence linked to global governance becomes visible when we focus on international organizations. These organizations are an important source of policy diffusion (see Jakobi and Martens 2007). The influence of international organizations is not

restricted to one or a few countries, as comparative studies could ascertain. Rather, the effects on a specific country tie only into a minor part of the organization's overall activities; they represent only a fragment of a wider process that consists of multiple bilateral "organization–state relations." The impact of international organizations is thus best assessed when viewing them as central hubs of a network, having in mind that they can also influence countries that remain outside the focus of the researcher.

By analyzing of policy diffusion and global governance together, two fields are linked which have remained widely unconnected but could nonetheless constitute "globalization" *per se* (see also Jahn 2006). As will be shown, global governance is not only international organizations penetrating specific fields of policy development, but also a potentially homogenizing process in which countries start to converge around international – and thus widely shared – ideas. By investigating the worldwide spread of lifelong learning policies, the book outlines such a process in the area of education. Although education is a common institution in any nation-state, education policy has remained an under-researched field in political science (Jakobi *et al.* 2009). This sharply contrasts with the value of education for many individuals and societies, and also neglects the fact that education for citizenship is an important precondition for democratic societies. Moreover, social policy and economics have increasingly pointed toward qualifying citizens through education (Becker 1964; OECD 2005b), which moved the field even more center stage. However, while school systems have been established for a long time, the idea of lifelong learning and securing ongoing learning processes constitutes a new development for many states. Unlike in the past, when education was mostly concerned with schooling, lifelong learning results in the creation of institutions or in the regulation of markets that serve the educational needs of citizens throughout their lives. Many states worldwide have initiated corresponding policy steps, and most of them at least proclaim the importance of constant development of knowledge and skills among citizens. It is a core task of political science to explain such developments, their preconditions and effects. I argue that international organizations play a major role in this process, fostering the internationalization of this foremost national policy field and establishing common aims for countries worldwide.

Global policy development: World politics reconsidered

How can we relate policy diffusion and global governance coherently to current international politics? Policy analysts of domestic politics have

a broad variety of concepts at hand to explain agenda-setting, policy formulations or policy outcomes across different subfields of public policy. Talking about internationalized public policy thus includes some transfer of these conceptual lenses to world politics.

In this book, I apply the notion of "global policy development" to the process of the development and worldwide dissemination of political ideas. The notion unifies global governance and policy diffusion processes, and outlines a common political focus of countries in the respective policy field. Global policy development is nothing empirically new, but a new theoretical concept of understanding world politics. Empirically, it is common knowledge that international policy agendas exist and that they are an outcome of a global political process, rather than a logical outcome of obvious problems. As Mitchell puts it for environmental policies: "State and international institutions generally do not look for problems to resolve but respond to issues put before them [...] The international policy agenda is neither a systematic ranking of global [...] risk nor simply a list of problems whose resolution provides large benefits and entails few costs" (Mitchell 2002:503). In that sense, global agendas reflect the positions and means of all policymakers and political actors involved; they are not simply derived from "objective need." On the global level, this facilitates the role of international organizations that cooperate with a multitude of actors and have a central position in many policy networks.

When policies are dealt with in this way, international organizations and global policy development are seen as rather decoupled from the needs and the immediate control of the national level and thus generate their own momentum as they advance their respective policy ideas. Unlike the national level of policy-making, which shows similar processes of agenda-setting, the particular potential of global processes is their worldwide spread, and the large number of states that they may influence their impact can thus be much higher. Global agendas are likely to stimulate a "large-N" policy development, a parallel change in many countries, and a fact that is likely to be overlooked when focusing on only a small-N of case studies.

The idea of global policy development can easily be applied to the case of lifelong learning, as this volume illustrates. In particular, because, from an international point of view, each country's positive attitude toward lifelong learning is not as individual as it seems from the national perspective – while international promotion activities are obvious – the study is skeptical about explaining the outcome with the clear function that lifelong learning could have for the national political systems. Too

often, political solutions are introduced not because they are evaluated as being the most functional, but because they were the ones that could be agreed upon in a given political context (Stone 1989; Kingdon 2003). The fact that very different states in very different contexts turn to the solution of lifelong learning suggests that this solution has, in metaphorical terms, a life of its own and cannot be reduced to serve as a solution for clearly identifiable, preexistent problems. Therefore I argue that changing global policies, rather than newly emerging national problems, caused the shift toward lifelong learning, and that many countries adopt an idea that other actors consider to be important. Some states have invested heavily in education systems that implement aspects of lifelong learning. For others, lifelong learning is a symbol of modernity rather than a necessity, and, as I argue, international organizations have contributed much to establish that symbol.

The implications of education policy are, therefore, also interesting for scholars who analyze international organizations and international policy networks in other contexts. The case presented in this book, however, differs from many other policy issues since it stems from a policy area that is marked by intense "institutionalization," as sociologists would call it (Jepperson 1991). This means that the subject debated – education – is established as something "normal" and is widely perceived uncritically. In consequence, political debates on education usually do not question whether it is useful to have education; rather, they focus on questions which already presuppose that education should be readily available to everyone. In a comparable manner, western democracies have, for example, established the rule of law, so people may debate whether a particular regulation is necessary, but not whether regulations should exist at all. The idea of global policy development that I develop in this book is thus derived from an observation about a highly consensual area. Countries do not really differ in their attitude toward education – education is widely seen as something positive, and the current trend toward lifelong learning also shows that countries even tend to follow a principle of "the more, the better."

By focusing on policy diffusion and global governance as well as on public policy and international organizations, the volume has in fact two potential audiences. First, the book brings together the development of lifelong learning with issues of global governance, contributing to debates in international studies and political science. In essence, I show that global governance and policy diffusion by international organizations are two sides of one coin, namely global policy development. International coalitions of like-minded actors effectively shape

national policy-making, both by acting as means of global governance and by aligning countries according to common policy ideas and goals, preparing the ground for a future of an even more effective and perhaps more centralized governance.

Second, coming from public policy analysis, the book shows how the idea of lifelong learning has been spread widely by international organizations and how countries, searching for adequate policies for a knowledge society, increasingly emphasize lifelong learning. Here I contribute to a debate on education policy in the academic disciplines of comparative politics, education and sociology.

The big picture: World society and the global diffusion of ideas

So far, against a background of a state-based international society, the question remains of why countries are actually oriented on the international level at all. So, why is there actually any opportunity for international actors to gain influence on national public policy? The idea of global policy development and the constitution of an international policy field is based on sociological institutionalism and its idea of a world society. As sociological institutionalists have emphasized, the development of political and social ideas is not necessarily bound to national paths; rather, they are shared worldwide (for example Meyer *et al.* 1997a,b). A basic assumption is that the adoption of ideas is a source of state legitimacy. This decisive thought has been derived from organizational sociology, where researchers found that organizations follow principles of legitimacy even if they are not necessarily functional. Even in the absence of formal rule-setting, the environment of organizations suggests ideas about appropriate characteristics and behavior, and organizations respond to them. Under such conditions, organizations show the tendency to become more similar over time, and "isomorphism" occurs (DiMaggio and Powell 1983). Institutionalists transferred the concept of isomorphism to the world of states – which are also embedded in world politics and are therefore confronted with world culture, including expectations about the characteristics a state should have. As one of the core institutions of modernity, education has been one of the earliest and broadest research areas in sociological institutionalism. It has been shown that states have become increasingly similar, not only with regard to school curricula and science bureaucracies, but also with regard to human rights and environmental concerns (Meyer *et al.* 1997a; Finnemore 1993, 1996a).

In the perspective of sociological institutionalism, the universal spread of such institutions is a result of world culture and its ideas of proper statehood. Commonly shared ideas are transmitted from the world level to countries and are thus diffused. Basically, diffusion can be defined as "the process by which an innovation is communicated through certain channels over time among the members of a social system. It is a special type of communication, in which messages are concerned with new ideas" (Rogers 2003:5). Innovation in this sense does not only cover inventions that are objectively new; rather, an innovation is something new to its recipient, even if others have known about it for a long time. The sum of communications and their adoption by different recipients leads to an observable diffusion pattern, a process that can easily be underestimated when analyzing only a few actors and their individual adoption processes, "such as when a change agent seeks to persuade a client to adopt an innovation. But when we look what came before such an event and what follows, we often realize that the event is only one part of a total process" (Rogers 2003:5–6). Focusing on diffusion thus means conceiving single communicative acts as being embedded in and being part of an overall communication that involves many additional actors.

The diffusion of commonly shared values – world culture – is central to sociological institutionalism since it explains why states change and why they strive toward common aims. In political science, the first analyses of policy diffusion examined processes across US states (Walker 1969), while international diffusion patterns were later assessed as well (Collier and Messick 1975). Generally, explanations of diffusion can focus on the internal determinants of an adopter or on the external source of diffusion (Berry and Berry 1999). Internal determinants are, for example, socioeconomic status, while the source of diffusion can be the interaction with other actors. Over the years, research on diffusion has multiplied, and a large variety of research questions, methods and results can be found (see for example, Holzinger *et al.* 2007; Mintrom and Vergari 1998; Mintrom 2000). A basic feature of diffusion research is nonetheless the concern with a decreasing variance of the adopters, in this case countries.

Sociological institutionalism is skeptical about diffusion studies as simple stories of adoption; instead, authors assume that diffusion processes often represent processes of identity construction, not the simple spread of information (Strang and Meyer 1994:103). This turns diffusion into a central cause for changing actors' preferences, instead of being a variable subjected to these preferences. Only in a second step

will changed preferences lead to the adoption of the new idea. In consequence, this means that the very idea of given preferences does not hold true in diffusion processes; rather, the diffusion process itself constitutes new ideas on what a good choice would be. If diffusion agents communicate, they do not only offer information but also set standards for appropriate behavior. Innovations are thus a further kind of expectation that an organization – or a state – is confronted with.

It is important to realize the consequences of such a perspective. Concerning the case studied, individual state activity related to lifelong learning would not primarily be seen as a manifestation of national interest, but as an expression of worldwide trends – although each of the adopters probably has good and reasonable justifications for putting the issue on its education policy agenda. From that perspective, an analysis of world politics would focus on the ways of building political consensus, the ways by which actors establish ideas, and how they pass from one country to another. International organizations quickly attract attention in that context. Empirically, their importance has become more and more obvious, triggered by developments such as comparative OECD studies, the Bologna Process concerning European higher education or the General Agreement on Trade in Services (GATS). International influences on national education policy have thus become stronger and more widespread, and several authors have turned to studying the interplay of the national and international levels (Mundy 1998; Dale 1999; Martens *et al.* 2007; Rinne *et al.* 2004). Theoretically, it is apparent that worldwide communication does not take place incidentally, but that international organizations effectively shape "world cultural agendas" by starting broad discussions on particular issues, thereby setting standards for the political state of the art. Global events such as world summits or world conferences are important means in that respect (Lechner and Boli 2005:81–108).

Sociological institutionalism thus allows researchers in this field to conceptualize international influence on national policy development theoretically and to view international organizations as an important element of this process. Moreover, as we focus on the important role of international organizations as large-scale agents of diffusion, it becomes obvious that sociological institutionalism can also help to develop a new idea of global governance. International institutions not only influence national policy-making on a case-by-case basis, but also cause widespread policy change with a potentially homogenizing effect. World society theory thus provides an important background to the study of world politics and contributes to the development of

international political theory. Using the example of lifelong learning, this volume is one starting point, showing how global governance and policy diffusion are intrinsically linked, constituting a process of global policy development.

The case study: Education policy and the rise of lifelong learning

Lifelong learning provides a particularly suitable example of global policy development. Researchers dealing with contemporary education policy can hardly avoid confrontation with this idea. Basically, lifelong learning represents the political goal of extending education over the life span. Consensus on the value of lifelong learning has been "one of the most remarkable features of the education policy discourse, nationally and internationally, of the past decade" (Papadopoulos 2002:39). Although lifelong learning encompasses all educational stages from early childhood to later life, its history is foremost one of adult education. Intellectually, education throughout life was first inspired by the Enlightenment, which emphasized learning and knowledge for the purpose of continuous individual development. Later, specific adult learning opportunities were established. In Germany and Great Britain, for example, workers began to establish educational associations, which were predecessors of parties and unions (Pöggeler 1996:136). The aims of adult education were contested over history by different political groups. The dispute regarding whether adult education should follow liberal ideals of self-fulfillment or practical demands of the labor market has been an ongoing subject of debate (Entwistle 1996:186). Additionally, adult education was often seen as a highly political issue that fostered political participation (Pöggeler 1996:136).

   A first global emphasis on adult education and lifelong learning could be observed in the second half of the twentieth century. In the context of the 1960 International Conference on Adult Education, the idea of "éducation permanente" emerged, a term that was first translated as "permanent education", but later superseded by "lifelong education" or "recurrent education" (Sutton 1996:28). In the late 1960s, a major report by a high-ranking UNESCO staff member on the crisis of education attracted much attention and led to a vital international debate on the role and future of education (Coombs 1969). The report emphasized that education should be concerned with "learning to learn," such that individuals could adapt to a continuously changing environment. To this end, formal as well as informal education was to be used (Gerlach

2000:21–4) and learning was thus to take place not only in certifying institutions such as schools, but also at the workplace or in day-to-day interactions. The report and further work of UNESCO in that decade were the starting point for debates on "lifelong integrated education" in the framework of the 1970 International Year of Education, which also included the milestone "Learning to Be" (UNESCO 1972). Then, a large part of lifelong learning discussions focused on the right to learn and on individual development, and these issues were also raised within other international organizations. Olof Palme introduced "recurrent education" at a OECD ministers' meeting in 1969, based on activities that a Swedish commission on adult education carried out in those years (Papadopoulos 1994:112–13). The International Labor Organization also dealt with lifelong learning, in particular by setting up the paid educational leave standard (ILO 1974a,b; Salt and Bowland 1996). However, despite small steps toward success, the debate did not trigger major changes in national education systems (Kallen 1979:50).

This does not hold true when we analyze the situation today; in the 1990s, a new interest in lifelong learning could be observed. Several international organizations initiated activities again and were then joined by many others. The OECD has proclaimed "lifelong learning for all," the EU promoted the European Year of Lifelong Learning in 1996, the ILO has renewed its human resource development recommendation, and even the World Bank published statements on the importance of this concept for national development (for example, OECD 1996; EU Commission 2000; World Bank 2003b; ILO 2004b). Unlike in the 1970s, a huge number of nation-states now seem to be responding to the international debate and starting to adopt corresponding policies across different educational stages. This is also demonstrated in this volume. Countries such as Mexico and Peru have introduced new preprimary education concepts such as compulsory preprimary schooling or a kindergarten curriculum. Other countries are participating in this trend, and the lifetime of learning is thus expanding into the younger years. At the other end of the educational span, qualification frameworks can be identified as new support for adult education. These legally fixed frameworks link several educational stages to each other and allow us to identify individual and collective qualification gaps – which are, in turn, to be compensated by additional learning. In addition, higher education also increasingly serves the purpose of continuing learning, even in countries that used to see this type of learning reserved for a very minor part of the population. The European-wide emphasis on the Bologna Process has also included lifelong learning as one of its

goals, redefining universities as places for more general adult education over the life span (Prague Communiqué 2001). In contrast to the 1970s, establishing lifelong learning policies has thus been common among many countries in recent years.

However, in comparison with the earlier emergence of lifelong learning, its current prominence and support are a puzzle. Why do policies sometimes become widespread, while sometimes they do not? A first attempt to establish lifelong learning principles had mostly failed. Hence, this case provides a rare opportunity to study the conditions for diffusion and for explaining change – the latter being a major problem for many theories (Finnemore and Sikkink 1999:254). In this book, changes in lifelong learning support are explained by reference to a framework of global policy development, emphasizing the role of international organizations in this process. By analyzing the development of lifelong learning in this way, the book applies an analytical instrument that can also be transferred to other cases of global policy development, and that will, therefore, allow us to draw more general conclusions on the working of global political structures.

The plan of the book

This introduction has outlined several elements that provide the background for the following case study of lifelong learning diffusion. This assessment consists of four main parts, starting first with the theoretical framework in Chapter 2. It is followed by, second, an analysis of global developments in Chapter 3 and Chapter 4. Third, national reactions and their implications are presented in Chapters 5 and 6, while, fourth, the conclusions on the study and its implications are drawn in Chapter 7.

Chapter 2 sets the theoretical framework which mainly builds on sociological institutionalism of the 'Stanford School' (for example Meyer *et al*. 1997a). Here I merge sociological institutionalism with more specific theories on governance by international organizations. These thoughts are linked to theories of agenda-setting in order to develop a model of a global policy development. While new institutionalism and its idea of world society emphasize the role of international organizations in the diffusion of ideas and policies, the reasons why ideas are successful and become institutionalized have remained largely unexplored. In agenda-setting theories, however, the conditions for successful policy-making have been formulated for a long time (see Kingdon 2003). Both kinds of theories are combined and recast into a heuristic model. The chapter

sheds light on the process that arose due to increased cooperation and exchange in policy formulation, and provides a model for conceptualizing global policy-making.

In Chapter 3, conditions in 'world time' (Finnemore and Sikkink 1999:269) are presented that influenced the development of lifelong learning and its political environment over three decades. Following the theoretical distinction of agenda-setting and its three streams – politics, problems and policy – the chapter first deals with the changing role of international organizations as a part of global governance: the shift that has been central for promoting lifelong learning, since this idea was mostly developed on the international level. In addition, education has been understood differently over time. While, in the 1970s, lifelong learning was linked to questions of equality and was mainly seen as an alternative to a model of youth education without follow-up, today it is linked to securing national economic progress in a knowledge-based society. Moreover, lifelong learning also adds a new element to social policy, supplementing or conditioning redistributive policies. The chapter thus provides a theoretically based historical account leading us to the current situation in education policy.

International organizations and networks for promoting lifelong learning are presented in Chapter 4. The chapter includes an analysis of global organizations such as the UNESCO or the OECD, which were both already promoting lifelong learning ideas in the 1970s. Their ideas, however, have gained momentum only in the 1990s. Since then, lifelong learning has been promoted by conferences, policy reviews, standard-setting instruments and so forth, and it has become a widely acknowledged concept of education policy in the UNESCO and the OECD, even if they differ in emphasis and in the way they communicate the importance of lifelong learning. By analyzing World Bank and ILO activities, I also show that lifelong learning has even become a part of the agendas of very different organizations that are less central for its promotion. The World Bank has recently addressed lifelong learning, often promoting private education providers as important agents for offering educational services. The ILO, in turn, was already part of the early discussion of lifelong learning in the 1970s, inventing paid educational leave.

The regional spread in the promotion of lifelong learning is examined by the example of the European Union and its exchange forum "Asia Europe Meeting." The European Union has invested much effort in promoting lifelong learning since the 1990s, considering this policy as one prerequisite for becoming the world's most competitive knowledge-based economy. A first peak was the 1996 European Year of

lifelong learning, and since then the Union has continuously underlined and extended the role of lifelong learning in its education policy. In their interregional contacts with Asia, the European countries have also established a forum for lifelong learning issues in Asia.

Moreover, the chapter explores transnational activities, the efforts of different nongovernmental organizations that have also contributed to lifelong learning promotion within countries and at international meetings. Finally, academic interest in lifelong learning has formed a continuous background for policy development, providing a further source for the spread of this idea.

The overall analysis of these different actors shows that most of them are interlinked and that they often refer to each other's activities, reinforcing the idea of lifelong learning as an important element of modern education systems on a global scale, and doing so in a penetrating way. Countries participating in international education policy meetings rarely have a chance to avoid discussions about lifelong learning.

Chapter 5 presents an assessment of the effects of the international emphasis on lifelong learning at the national level. Based on an analysis of education policy reports from nearly 100 countries from 1996 to 2004, I illustrate the spread of the idea of lifelong learning over time. Then different reforms in preschool, adult and higher education are outlined, as these are policy areas that receive more attention in lifelong learning discussions. From a comparative and large-N perspective, countries increasingly refer to the idea of lifelong learning, although reforms are less frequently implemented. Countries in fact link very different strategies to the realization of lifelong learning. This is also shown in illustrative case studies from different regions. In Europe, the countries presented (Germany and the United Kingdom) are very much aware of the lifelong learning debates and countries are partly investing substantial financial resources in supporting individual learning over the life span. In Asia and Oceanian countries, specifically China and New Zealand, the importance of learning is acknowledged, but increasingly private providers cater to the demand for education. In the Americas, the United States presents a system with low federal responsibility for education, and a large number of private providers at different levels, while other countries, such as Mexico, struggle to build up a system that guarantees continuing education comparable to other OECD countries. In Africa, exemplified by Nigeria and South Africa, the lifelong learning debate is also taking place and many measures are being invented. But given difficult social situations, countries partly conceive lifelong learning as a means for enabling adults to become literate or to

obtain basic education. Thus, progress toward this policy aim of learning differs widely, but the idea's diffusion nonetheless transgresses the boundaries of very different states.

In Chapter 6, I assess implications of the global diffusion of lifelong learning. As a first step, international organizations, their instruments and effects are examined, including a quantitative analysis of their effects contrasted with national preconditions, like wealth or type of economy. International organizations such as the OECD are shown to be decisive for lifelong learning diffusion, but they are more relevant for the spread of ideas than for the introduction of reforms, where national conditions become more important. Next, I come back to the implications of lifelong learning as it is linked to the knowledge society. I argue that this type of society represents a new type of modernization theory – and that being or becoming part of the knowledge society is a global cultural element, but not necessarily an empirical reality. In the third step, the chapter sheds light on some social and individual implications linked to the spread of lifelong learning. For example, I outline how the extension of education over the life span favors education providers, but is also likely to result in an individual obligation. Lifelong learning altogether has a status in education policy that is reminiscent of a norm. Countries that do not consider lifelong learning as an element of their education system are likely to be seen as misguided in some way.

In Chapter 7, I present the book's main findings. Then I link the study's findings to debates on internationalization and the state. I conclude that, although the international sphere has become an important part of national policy-making, the state is far from being made redundant or from having weakened. I also provide an outlook on future education policy and a review of the linkage between global governance and policy diffusion. I conclude by presenting further directions for research, also with regard to sociological institutionalism and global policy-making in general.

2

Tracing Global Governance: Policy Development in an International Arena

Political science offers different accounts of what world politics actually is, how it works, and what the most important underlying processes are. While in simplified terms the realist tradition emphasizes the role of the state and its interests in comparison to other states' interests, liberal intergovernmentalists mainly consider the interest of states in solving common problems. Constructivists tend to see states as being embedded in common worldviews and being shaped by ideas. The theoretical model that I develop on the next pages follows the latter concept, without denying that states have interests and pursue goals. The main aim, however, is to analyze how states are influenced by world politics, and which central actors, mechanisms, and processes exist in this context.

Analyses of world politics can focus on their subject primarily in an actor-centered manner, which means that the focus is on actors and their activities. Alternatively, analyses can be carried out in a way that mainly focuses on the policy field, which means that they focus on the processes involved in developing a specific range of policies. The perspective in this book is more closely related to the second model and conceives the international sphere as an arena for common policy development of different actors. Arguing from this perspective, I intend to show that political globalization and increasing harmonization are essentially a consequence of a global policy cycle – an international political structure that is likely to affect numerous states in their internal policy-making procedure. This global policy cycle is an analytical model relevant to the discussion of global governance and global public policy (for example, Reinecke 1998; Held and McGrew 2002; Stone 2008). It helps to explain the process of policy diffusion and the role of international organizations and allows us to define temporal conditions. It

is based on sociological new institutionalism, in particular its idea of a "world society," the structuration of a world political system (Meyer *et al.* 1997a,b).

Mitchell (2002) also links the development of international issue-areas to different stages in the policy process. He analyzes international environmental policy and distinguishes stages such as agenda-setting, policy formulation, and policy implementation. From his perspective, such a distinction can serve as a useful tool to bring together different theoretical traditions and to cross these boundaries in light of the priority of policy issues. "Most importantly, a policy-process approach highlights how structural constraints on choices, on the one hand, and the participation, choices, and influence of state and nonstate actors, on the other, vary across policy stages" (Mitchell 2002:500). The theoretical model developed in the following also distinguishes the different policy stages, but it perceives them as being strongly interlinked, analogous to the model of a national political process. Compared to Mitchell, this framework is broader in the sense that it is conceived to serve as a framework for the global processing of policies, from agenda-setting to policy implementation. It is, however, more constrained in the sense that it starts from a constructivist framework, to which other theories can be linked.

The idea that a global policy process exists needs some initial clarification. It is obvious that we cannot find any structure on the world level that is comparable to the nation-state; a world political system, therefore, looks very different from a country's polity. Global politics in this sense is first and foremost built upon a common culture that has developed – world culture. A visible consequence of this culture is a common development toward universally shared aims, a process that cannot be explained by considering national paths and conditions only (Meyer *et al.* 1997a; Boli and Thomas 1999b). The very basic idea in this context is that the pursuit of specific ideas or the adoption of particular policies is a source of state legitimacy. Legitimate policies represent internationally shared standards concerning proper statehood, like having a constitution or respecting human rights, and states strive for legitimacy and recognition as "real states" from their counterparts in international society.

World society is thus a source of national policy change. In this chapter, I will illustrate how this idea can be developed into a systematic picture of the political process that takes place within global society. For this purpose, a theoretical account of world politics derived from sociological institutionalism is given in the following subsection, and

international organizations are identified as central actors. Further, I complement this background with theories on the policy-making process, subsequently presented in the other sections. Taken together, the different pieces result in a model of a global policy cycle which brings together debates on world society, global governance, and policy diffusion.

Sociological institutionalism and world politics

Originally, sociological institutionalism was developed within the field of organizational sociology. Since the 1970s, researchers have demonstrated that the structure and working of organizations are not guided by functional aspects only. Rather, legitimacy as a form of expectations from others often plays a crucial role. Norms have to be fulfilled, such as the implementation of certain practices or the creation of specific organizational structures, if an organization wants to be considered as legitimate – independently of whether or not such innovations are beneficial to it (Hasse and Kruecken 1999; Walgenbach 2001).

Researchers have found that organizations, for example firms, sometimes are not structured according to a functional logic, but follow those principles that appear to be the most legitimate (Meyer and Rowan 1977). In fact, the wider environment has specific expectations concerning organizational features and characteristics, which make it difficult to interact when organizations do not correspond to these. Even if it were not required by law, people would expect an organization to have a bank account, regardless of whether it always pays its transactions in cash. Moreover, organizations unfamiliar with computers would probably raise suspicion concerning their ability to keep pace with changes, even if, upon closer inspection, none of the actual business activity requires any electronic data management. Organizations are thus exposed to ideas from the wider environment concerning their identity. Even if the field in which they interact does not define explicit rules, it suggests ideas on a "proper" actor and his or her characteristics, and the organizations respond to them. Under such conditions, they show a tendency to become more similar and the phenomenon known as "isomorphism" occurs (DiMaggio and Powell 1983).

Later, sociological institutionalists transferred this approach to the world of states, based on the assumption that issues of legitimacy would also play a crucial role in this particular community of organizations. States are thus considered to appear more legitimate if they feature the same characteristics as other states, for example a national constitution,

an education system, a democratic order or the entitlement of individual rights (Meyer *et al*. 1997a). In fact, isomorphism also occurs in this context and states become increasingly similar over time. Policy convergence between countries has been shown empirically by time series analyses in different policy fields such as education, environment, and law. Contrary to assumptions, such convergence is not caused by, for example, a common economic development that states face, which in turn, leads to the establishment of certain school curricula or environmental standards (Meyer *et al*. 1992; Meyer 2005). Instead, these phenomena can better be explained by the idea of a commonly shared world culture – a world society in which states participate while they are embedded in international exchange. In this world society, specific institutions like education systems or constitutions are disseminated as constitutive elements of states (Meyer *et al*. 1997a), and international organizations function as diffusion agents that promote and disseminate the specific institutions.

The sociological institutionalist perspective has increasingly been applied to different contexts of political science, particularly in international relations and research on Europeanization (for example, Finnemore 1993, 1996a; Börzel and Risse 2000; Radaelli 2000; Schimmelpfennig 2003:404–5). It offers an approach that recognizes the influence of international organizations on national activities and, for example, assigns them the role of agenda-setters. As such, it enables theorizing on issues of global influence, legitimacy and change through international organizations. In the following, I will elaborate on important actors in world society, the main characteristics of world culture, and central processes that take place within the international community.

Actors

Important actors in world society are international organizations, both governmental and nongovernmental, epistemic communities in science and beyond, as well as states themselves. Taken together, these entities promote and diffuse world cultural principles and help foster policy change. However, they carry out such tasks in different ways. While, for example, international organizations can disseminate and coordinate the political goal of environmental protection, science provides the argumentative background for this, and nation-states are the addressees of such policy change – which means that they are compelled to set up specific regulations on their territory. In the meantime, nongovernmental organizations are concerned with local implementation, for example by the formation of activist groups. Another example could be

nongovernmental organizations and states lobbying for human rights during conferences of an international organization, which are backed by reports of local activists.

As central actors, international organizations are principally an instrument of states, but they can also influence them. Realists assume that international organizations follow interests that reflect those of the most powerful actors, while intergovernmentalists see such organizations as a means to solve common problems effectively. The idea that international organizations themselves are important sources of policy change is somewhat contrary to that perspective. In that sense, organizations can influence countries through mechanisms like standard-setting, priorities or the ability to coordinate policy development (McNeely 1995:28; Karns and Mingst 2004; Jakobi and Martens 2007). These activities have effects, although the development is easier in some fields than in others. The ILO influenced countries' welfare spending and its Convention on Paid Educational Leave had effects on workers' rights to education while being employed (Strang and Chang 1993; Schütze 1996). The UN discussion on population control led to a worldwide perception of uncontrolled population growth being a problem (Kirby and Kirby 1996; Barrett and Frank 1999). The UNESCO spread science bureaucracies to countries that had no clear functional need for them, while the World Bank has established primary education as a means for national development in developing countries (Finnemore 1993, 1996a). From this perspective, states primarily seem to have the role of recipients of international policies.

However, institutionalists also identify the state as a central entity on the world level. They conceive states themselves to be the result of a world culture that sees statehood as the only adequate form of political organization. As Finnemore and Sikkink put it (1999:273), "actors no longer think seriously about whether 'the state' is the best or most efficient form of political organization (it almost certainly is not). They just set up more and more states to the exclusion of other forms." Today, states are thus the only legitimate entity for representing a society on the international political level. This fact also explains why the idea of a state is still upheld despite the existence of organizational entities that are unable to enforce political rule over their territory, as in the case of so-called "failed states." It also sheds light on the fact that some societies declare their will to become an independent state, even if their resources are so scarce that no effective form of independence is conceivable. Nonetheless, besides declaring statehood only, some additional features are needed to resemble a "state-like" entity: legitimacy grows,

for example, from having a constitution or introducing democracy and citizens' rights, because they are elements of the broader world cultural frame. Today, many features of the nation-state are shared by almost the whole state community. Obvious examples for that can be found by looking at mass schooling and its curriculum, economic and demographic record-keeping, welfare systems, definitions of disease and health care or environmental policies – all thought to serve the aim of individual and national progress, and all also enhancing a state's legitimacy in world society (Meyer *et al*. 1997a:153).

As additional actors in world society, nongovernmental organizations lobby states and international organizations for policies, implement them at the local level, and campaign for political aims such as human rights, free press or others. By doing so, they are concerned with "enacting, codifying, modifying, and propagating world-cultural structures and principles" (Boli and Thomas 1999a:19). Since the existence of nongovernmental organizations was first recorded in the late nineteenth century, their number has grown constantly (Boli and Thomas 1999a:23–30). Their aims and ways of influence, in particular concerning international organizations, are complex: nongovernmental organizations often lobby for policy change and they can also mobilize international awareness if they observe massive policy failure (for example, Risse *et al*. 1999). However, they can support states by implementing projects that – maybe for reasons of targeting or of financing – states would find difficult to implement by themselves. Nongovernmental organizations have, in part, strong linkages to the UN and other international organizations. In this context, they provide information on issues that they are concerned with and lobby for their specific aims (Martens 2005b). Moreover, nongovernmental activity can also lead to the founding of new governmental organizations because increased civil activity can well be the starting point for governmental action. Environmental problems had been identified by civil society long before governmental activities reached a significant level (Meyer *et al*. 1997b). However, nongovernmental activity can also be stimulated by international organizations. For example, when the EU was starting discussions on women's affairs in Europe, a nongovernmental counterpart was lacking at the EU level. Therefore, the organization stimulated and partly financed the founding of the European Women's Lobby (see Hoskyns 1991:67).

Most nongovernmental organizations pursue aims that can be summarized under the label of "friendly progress." As Boli and Thomas state (Boli and Thomas 1999a:34), they "encourage sager and more efficient

technical systems, more powerful knowledge structures, better care of the body, friendly competition and fair play. To achieve their goals, they emphasize communication, knowledge, consensual values and decision-making, and individual commitment." Nongovernmental organizations have promoted and established a large number of now popular regulations. The Red Cross disseminated regulations for behavior in wars; the women's movement was concerned with suffrage or employment rights; and development itself has become an international concern due to nongovernmental activities (Berkovitch 1999; Chabbott 1999; Finnemore 1999). Their activity can even be more successful than the work of governmental organizations. Child labor, for example, was reduced not so much because of ILO standards, but rather because of substantial nongovernmental activities in the respective area (Abu Shark 2002). However, nongovernmental organizations are not the only organizations engaged in fields linked to humanity and development; business lobbyists are also organized in such activities, for example the European Roundtable of Industrialists.[1]

As a further, but more diverse, actor, epistemic communities also influence world politics (see Adler and Haas 1992; Haas 1992). Science is a major source for problem definition, even if it describes phenomena that cannot be observed by individuals outside science. Its authority defines complex and abstract problems that need to be solved in politics, while the layman's perception is disqualified (Hajer 1995:10). Science is often the basis of political problem definition, and, on new terrain in particular, scientists provide politics with ideas on how the world works (Stone 1989:295). In sociological terms, the scientists' "authority is rooted in ultimate principles of moral and natural law" (Meyer *et al.* 1997a:166); they incorporate neutrality toward the world and are seen as "disinterested rationalized others" (Meyer *et al.* 1997a:165). Because of this assumed detachedness, it is particularly easy for scientists to gain access to political decision-making, and what they claim is widely believed. This is not to say that these individuals would try to disseminate their personal political opinion. It only points to the fact that scientists, through their profession and what is linked to it, have a special status in modern society and in the political process. In such a role, scientists can easily establish and support specific "world cultural scripts" and, through this support, these are much more likely to be accepted by the other actors.

Characteristics

One of the main characteristics of world culture is its influence on individual and collective behavior by institutionalization and the

establishment of constitutive norms. Institutions are a "social order or pattern that has attained a certain state or property" (Jepperson 1991:145). They are standardized forms of interaction, produced by routines and taken-for-granted beliefs. As such, institutions are the result of a social construction and do not exist independently from their specific societal context. "Technical progress, bureaucracies, capitalist organization, states, and markets are embedded in cultural models, often not explicitly recognized as such, that specify the 'nature of things' and the purposes of action. These cultural concepts do more than provide orientation for action; they also constitute actors" (Boli and Thomas 1999a:17). Individuals rely on these models when they act, drawing on cultural concepts linked to individualism. Institutions in fact most often constitute those parts of the social world that seem most familiar and obvious to us.

Among the various institutions established by world culture, some, namely rationality, functionalism, and individualism, are the most central ones, and they are deeply embedded in our daily life. When we approach the world, we simply assume that rationality is the right way to analyze the surrounding environment, while a belief in spiritualism or other nonrational approaches would immediately be suspicious to most of us. Similarly, it is presumed that things have a function: a status quo thus responds to an underlying, causal constellation and fulfills a specific need. This is not to say that sociological institutionalists would deny that things have causes or fulfill needs. However, they warn that explaining the world by such models is only one of several possibilities, and functionality itself is part of a societal worldview. In Meyer's terms, the functional model is seductive because "the functional theories involved fit the culture of the system itself, and its languages for describing itself. The [...] naïve usage of the model [...] does not take into account that the model itself is a main cultural element and functions more as culture than as some sort of technical reality" (Meyer 1992:91). The ease with which we generally grasp the world in such models shows that rationality and functionalism are not only central world cultural elements and important ideas of modernity, but deeply rooted in many individual or collective approaches toward the world.

Similarly to the way in which the world is analyzed in a rationalistic and functionalist manner, individualism moves center stage when it comes to analysis: individual actors are most often the crucial factor for explaining social structures, activities, and results. The existence of actors is an axiomatic assumption for a large part of social theory, and society is conceptualized as aggregated individual activity

(see, for example, Esser 1999). Sociological institutionalists conceive such agency of individuals or organizations as a social construct, as society creates and legitimizes these entities defined as actors (Meyer *et al*. 1994:9). From such a perspective, the idea of the individual, its "actorhood" and interests is a world cultural model. As Meyer states, we should conceive ">individual< or >actor< not only as some supposedly natural or primordial entity, but as one of the most culturally elaborated and legally supported constructions of the modern system [...]" (Meyer 1988:56–7). Accordingly, an actor's characteristics and choices are not just generated internally, but they represent an enactment of cultural scripts (Meyer *et al*. 1994:10) that reinforces an idea of the individual coined by Enlightenment and liberal tradition. Institutionalists thus counter the idea of a freely choosing individual by reference to social structures that channel and enable specific preferences. "Modern systems are organized so that individuals must choose, and must often give reasons for their choice in terms of motives of the self" (Meyer 1986:205). To give an example: I may give good individual reasons for choosing a university education, but, essentially, I did not have much choice when I followed the socially established idea of pursuing a good and high-quality education. When it comes to institutions, my choice is simply linked to the available options.

The quest for progress and the fight for individual rights and development are a further universal characteristic of statehood in world society (Meyer *et al*. 1997a:153). Modern societies intend to secure progress and justice (Finnemore 1996b) and the notion and scope of rights is continuously being expanded – much in contrast to earlier societies, where only small groups, if any, could rely on a social construct called "right." Today, however, rights are granted not only to individuals and groups, but also to many "other entities outside society – like whales or other species, or the ecosystem as a whole, or social entities who are not yet proper actors [such as ...] fetuses, uninformed social groups and so on ..." (Meyer 2000:239). Partly linked to the expansion of rights, an expansive structuration within the different nation-states has taken place, which means that they have become responsible for more and more areas of life and begun to correspond with – that is, structure – political activities. Examples are the worldwide establishment of welfare arrangements, globally spread environmental policies, and science bureaucracies (Collier and Messick 1975; Meyer and Hannan 1979; Finnemore 1996a; Meyer *et al*. 1997b).

While policy aims are expanded, implementation does not necessarily follow the same path. The consensus on legitimate state policies

can – and often does – lead to dysfunctional policy proposals in poorer countries (Meyer *et al*. 1997a). This is a visible consequence of states reacting to a world cultural environment that is widely detached from their specific conditions, the problems they have, or the solutions they would need. As do other organizations, states declare aims and create structures that remain "myth and ceremony" (Meyer and Rowan 1977), in particular when their environment is known to highly acknowledge these targets.

Processes

So far, world society has been analyzed in terms of actors and characteristics, but the processes involved are still to be outlined. As sociological institutionalists argue, world culture exerts its effects through the interplay of different actors and widely shared ideas; the latter are subsequently transformed into policies. Three central processes can be identified. The first – the emergence of an organizational field – is mainly related to the international sphere; the second – decoupling – applies to the country level, and the third – diffusion – is concerned with the outcome.

Organizational sociology, the origin of sociological institutionalism, analyzes organizations as being embedded in an organizational field in which appropriate standards of behavior develop (DiMaggio and Powell 1983). The field is constituted by a group of organizations that are concerned with common subject matters, ranging from firms in a production chain to political actors in a specific policy field. Once part of the field, members tend to orient themselves toward the other members, and, in the long run, they become increasingly similar. This social process of establishing a common playing field requires specific conditions. Common interorganizational structures must be available, such as departments that work together on certain topics cross-organizationally. Members of the field need to develop common goals, as in the case of pursuing the common political aim of establishing adequate laws for a specific problem. Moreover, an increase in information among the field members is necessary, for example when organizations increasingly exchange their points of view. Finally, interactions among the organizations are visibly intensified through conferences, fairs, and other meetings (see DiMaggio and Powell 1983:148).

The creation of an organizational field is a social event itself, which has consequences for the members because isomorphism – that is, "the tendency to become alike" (Radaelli 2000:26) – may take place. This is a result of a constraining process, in which one organization

"is forced to resemble other units that face the same set of environmental conditions" (DiMaggio and Powell 1983:149). The constraints of isomorphism can result from different sources, and different mechanisms of change are possible. Coercive isomorphism occurs in the case of laws that enforce, for example, certain environmental standards or accounting procedures. Mimetic isomorphism is related to uncertainty and ambiguity. In this condition, organizations look for models to copy. Appropriate models stand out in terms of their perceived success or legitimacy. Normative isomorphism mainly results from professionalization, a process in which common and appropriate methods of working and statuses are defined. Isomorphism can thus occur through different ways of influencing organizational behavior. In the case of world society, this shows that changing state behavior is not necessarily restricted to hard law – which would represent coercive principles. Instead, like other organizations, states follow rules of what they find appropriate, either because they are insecure about the best strategy in a specific situation or because it just seems appropriate for a "proper" state. This is, in essence, what the principles of mimetic and normative isomorphism declare.

However, even if a certain policy is identified as an aim of the state, it is not yet implemented. For sociological institutionalists, "decoupling" refers to the inconsistencies that arise when the formal structure is subject to isomorphism, but the organizational practices do not correspond to this development. This scenario occurs when a state adopts an international role model, but domestic practice has yet to change. The norm is thus not internalized when, for example, women's rights are formally pronounced, but their actual status has not changed at all (Finnemore and Sikkink 1999). Another case would be compulsory schooling in countries where school enrollment *de facto* only covers some groups of children. There are different reasons for such frictions between wording and practice; sometimes it is simply the lack of resources (Meyer *et al*. 1997a). Nonetheless, the "countries in the furthest periphery, with little capacity to do anything, [...] write the new forms into their identities, and their national constitutions are often some of the most progressive documents in the world" (Meyer 2000:244). This has been visible, for example, in the case of Iraq, where the new constitution contains civil and political liberties comparable to the freedoms in many other states, but the daily situation is widely detached from that document. Moreover, despite many societal and economic problems compared with other countries, South Africa has set up a constitution that government information services themselves consider to be "one of the most

progressive in the world" and to enjoy "high acclaim internationally" (South African Government Information 2008a). Constitutions, thus, are much more than the expression of the will of the people; they can also be an "entry pass" to international society.

A further reason for decoupling is that social practice, unlike the formal structure, does not necessarily have a model to rely on as long as only a formal structure is adopted. This means that a country might well introduce women's rights into its constitution, but, if society does not offer any alternative to the situation before, this introduction is likely to fail on the individual level. In contrast, social models may well change, even if this is not yet formalized. Consequently, this also means that policy adoption is not necessarily a precondition for implementation, but both levels can operate rather independently (Meyer 2000).[2] The nation-state and its subnational structure are thus penetrated independently by world models, and the internalization of global norms is not necessarily caused by formal adoption but by subnational exchange. Accordingly, instead of just changing national regulations to correspond to world norms, it may be more effective to change practice on another level. A wide range of institutionalist research pays attention to this fact, mainly by focusing on nongovernmental organizations (Boli and Thomas 1997; Abu Shark 2002). Political discussions recognize the importance of such actors when emphasizing the role of civil society in implementing policies. For example, the empowerment of women through nongovernmental activists in rural areas might promote equality much more than a changed wording of the constitution.

Diffusion is the third major process ongoing at the world level; it is the spread of features within the organizational field. Institutionalists have identified several conditions for diffusion, of which perceived and theorized similarity is central. If units, in this case states, perceive themselves as being in some way similar or comparable, a specific practice or idea seems equally applicable to them and is thus more likely to diffuse. Perceptions of similarity "make it sensible for an actor to use another's choices and the consequences of those choices as a guide. Perceived similarity may also enhance rates of diffusion in less rational ways, as actors find themselves enmeshed in the effort of 'keeping up with the Joneses'"(Strang and Meyer 1994:103). In the context of policy transfer, for example, researchers have pointed to the fact that transfer is a sort of evaluative policy-making, in which a policy is imported because it is seen as appropriate for problem-solving in the recipient country (Mossberger and Wolman 2003). This process presupposes the idea of perceived similarity outlined above, since it is assumed that the

solution is applicable to the recipient. This in fact draws on the argument that comparativists also put forward: to be able to compare, units must have something in common (see Sartori 1970:1035). While, since the Treaty of Westphalia, states have recognized themselves as in some way equal, modern international organizations have enhanced this perception of similarity: when exchanging best practices, publishing ranking and benchmarks or developing worldwide development strategies, the idea of similar and comparable countries is further reinforced.

Institutionalists have identified further conditions that enhance diffusion, such as the idea that something is modern – and thus more legitimate – or the fact that something is theorized (Strang and Meyer 1994:107–9). Theorization links causation and effects to each other and thereby determines lines of action, an important precondition for determining political activity (Stone 1989). Elements that are seen as important elements of a "welcomed" causal chain are more likely to be diffused than elements that are not.[3] Again, international organizations prove helpful in that respect because they theorize the success and failure of specific practices, for example in recommendations or publications.

The role of international organizations

It is widely acknowledged that international organizations generate different kinds of policy outputs and, depending on the specific organization, have different means at hand to influence national policy-making (for example, Rittberger and Zangl 2006). There is a lack of systematic typologies that help assess the different governance instruments applied in an international policy field, across these or across organizations. Moreover, international organizations as political actors are often not embedded in a theoretical framework that is comparable with the inquiry of national politics – researchers also assess a lack of process-oriented theories there (Sabatier 1999b). In comparison with the analysis of domestic politics, research in international relations shows that international organizations exert influence and develop and diffuse policies, but the theorization of the policy process of that "world polity" remains in some ways underdeveloped.

Based on the sociological idea of a world society, one can expect international organizations to create conditions for the constitution of organizational fields. For example, membership of international organizations creates common cross-organizational structures, such as committees or agencies, one of the organizational field's preconditions. Furthermore,

through agenda-setting capacities, international organizations can urge members to set common goals, for example when the UN declares a literacy decade. Moreover, the publication of policy proposals, statistics, and surveys by organizations systematically provides more information to the field, as does, for example, Europol for crime-related activities. Finally, international organizations monitor and coordinate member states' activities, and thus increase interactions among them, as in the case of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), which monitors nonproliferation.

The central position international organizations generate by constituting the organizational field also enables them to behave differently from many other field members (compare Borum 2004; Dorado 2005). Since they survey much of the field – even the members' internal processes – they are the organizations that can easily behave strategically. The fact that they are likely to know most, if not all, parts of the field enables them to anticipate much of the field's developments, which, in turn, enhances their position as knowledge brokers. As central actors, they perceive the field as transparent and are seldom surprised by its overall development. The impact of that position and the social capital it generates can best be comprehended by contrasting the case of a state bureaucrat, who has not attended a UN meeting for several years, with the position of the organizer when both arrive at the venue. The former has much formal power, perhaps even a veto, but the latter has more opportunity to influence policies indirectly, by setting the agenda, selecting speakers, or diffusing and restricting the information she or he possesses.

World societal activities

In the context of their world conferences, international organizations offer other actors a public opportunity to spread their views. Such meetings are important focal points where national delegates can meet other governmental representatives as well as nongovernmental activists, or where scientists can elaborate on world problems and possible solutions. Although it does not represent "hard law," a conference can nonetheless influence national policy development, and UN meetings have been a ritual in disseminating world cultural perspectives to countries (Lechner and Boli 2005:81–109). But, as such, these gatherings can also be used by other actors in world society to place issues on the global agenda, and, with a varying rate of influence, nation-states, nongovernmental organizations, and epistemic communities can use international organizations to diffuse political ideas that seem important to them.

Ways of placing issues on the agenda of organizations range from formal speeches or items in meetings to lobbying or professional networks. In addition, the fact that another organization devotes attention to a particular issue can have a legitimizing effect for initiating activities in further contexts; international organizations can therefore also be agenda-setters for other organizations. In the case of lifelong learning, for example, early OECD activities were stimulated by a speech by Olof Palme held at an OECD meeting (Papadopoulos 1994:112–13), and activities in the 1990s were influenced by the fact that OECD staff were aware of UNESCO activities (Interview OECD). Accordingly, international organizations can serve as central organizational platforms for established as well as newly emerging political issues.

As such, international organizations are an important element in constructing what sociological institutionalists call the "world polity," the increased structuration of political activity at the world level (Meyer *et al.* 1997a,b). International organizations channel and guide political activity; their position is central for addressing an increasing number of political issues with global implications. When addressing new political problems, for example a new environmental hazard, the already established international structuration supports the political process. Either new organizations are set up to target such political aims – existent structures are thus copied – or, if an organization with similar aims is already in existence, its mandate can be enlarged. The new governmental activity can also substitute for private political activism. For example, the establishment of governmental environmental organizations has led to the decreased inception of nongovernmental environmental organizations (Meyer *et al.* 1997b). International organizations are thus critical arenas for pushing forward items on the agenda, and they serve as a platform for world societal concerns. In such sense, international organizations have become crucial players in developing global public policy (Reinecke 1998; Reinecke and Deng 2000) and they provide an organizational structure in which state representatives can meet and discuss future political approaches, thereby contributing to the emergence of disaggregated sovereignty (Slaughter 2004). Their impact on implementation is less obvious and, from a perspective of sociological institutionalism, it is most effective in the interplay with other actors, such as nongovernmental organizations and epistemic communities, since they usually easily cross the boundaries of the international and national spheres.

International organizations can stimulate national policy development through their agendas and legal capacities. UN environmental

activities have led to national policy changes and the establishment of national agencies (Meyer *et al.* 1997b). Binding regulations of the EU affect member states in many areas. But international organizations can also be an important reference point for civil society that facilitates political change. In many countries, nongovernmental organizations that defend human rights have successfully referred to international governmental agreements that had taken place beforehand (Risse *et al.* 1999). By these means, they work toward coupling the often decoupled international political rhetoric and national practice. In other words, nongovernmental activities can cause national societal change if the international level provides a corresponding ideological background. In a similar manner, international organizations can incorporate opinions of epistemic communities whose expertise fell on deaf ears in the national policy-making process. In the case of the OECD's Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA), the international study stimulated a broad discussion on the German education system and its educational and social failures due to an early selection of pupils in schools with different reputations. Despite critics in international social science, this system has been a central and ideological pillar in German education politics, and only international scientific evaluation has been able to cause some policy change in recent years.

World society also has an impact on the kinds of policies that are exchanged by international organizations. Policies in line with world culture are those that rely on central values like functionalism, rationality, individualism, national development or progress, and, accordingly, the success of such policies is more likely. Two examples are the worldwide success concerning the need for birth control or the idea of sustainable development and the establishment of science bureaucracies. Birth control was increasingly defined as a national problem, and its control has been viewed as an important step for planning national development (Kirby and Kirby 1996; see also Lechner and Boli 2005:81–108). Sustainable development has been an idea promoted heavily by the UN. Unlike any previous policy proposal, sustainable development unified central cultural goals, like national progress and economic development, with the need to avoid environmental damage (Hajer 1995). While earlier environmental strategies mainly focused on reducing consumption, sustainable development legitimated rather unrestricted progress and expansion.

Thus, international organizations support worldwide political exchange. They are involved in establishing and diffusing the construction of one global political space in which decisions are of common

interest; they define global public policy. The assessment of global policy is increasingly common across many policy fields, but first analyses were already conducted some decades ago, under the heading of so-called "networks of interdependence" (Jacobson 1979). Networks of interdependence, held together through international activity, have shaped such areas as the economy, security or welfare, and now many regulations in these fields are known and applied universally across countries. Examples are trade regimes, workers' rights, and nonproliferation.

Instruments

The capacities of international organizations that help to establish global public policy have remained rather abstract so far. It is obvious that they can in some ways make states move in a suggested direction, but it is also obvious that the daily work of an international organization differs across policy fields, and is influenced by the organization's status and privileges. There are many categories that are derived from the observation of specific organizations or a specific policy field. In the case of education, where the governance of international organizations mainly relies on soft instruments, authors distinguish, for example, the exchange of information, charters and constitutions, standard-setting instruments and technical and financial resources (McNeely and Cha 1994). Other authors develop a typology of opinion formation, coordination, and resources or refer to OECD mechanisms in education, such as agenda-setting, formulation, and coordination (Jakobi and Martens 2007). These categories, however, are specific to the respective field and they are not necessarily transferable to other cases.

However, some general instruments are shared by nearly all international organizations, but research has come up with different names for them. Some researchers speak of capacities linked to information or monitoring (Karns and Mingst 2004:9), while others refer to outputs such as policy programs, operational activities, or information activities (Rittberger and Zangl 2006). In the following, I develop a typology of general instruments by which international organizations – irrespective of a specific policy field or their standing as binding or less binding authorities – can influence national policy development. It is inspired by an early analysis of global policy and international activities (Jacobson 1979). However, while this early typology had at least an implicit emphasis on binding instruments, I rearrange the original categories to also include very soft instruments. In my view, five categories of instruments can be isolated in an inductive way: discursive dissemination,

standard-setting, financial means, coordinative functions, and technical assistance. They all have an impact on the relationship between the state and an international organization.

Discursive dissemination means establishing ideas on national political agendas. It pertains to the state's instruments for informing and guiding the choice of its citizens, but it also includes rather implicit rules or assumptions about how political problems should be tackled. Generally, ideas about cause-and-effect relationships, the impact of political decisions, and the link to already established policy aims are important preconditions for setting agendas (Stone 1989). Discursive dissemination is thus a very important instrument of international organizations, in particular because it often precedes the other instruments. Ideas pave the path for following policy initiatives and they are also the first element of political change. A currently important international idea is, for example, the internationally acknowledged importance of fighting corruption, redefining local practices as criminal (for example, Rosenau 2003:349–68; Andreas and Nadelmann 2006:55–6). In education policy, as is shown in this book, lifelong learning has been another important idea. Its establishment led to the design of many other related policies, such as securing early preprimary education or establishing support for adult education.

This means that policy ideas can be categorized into different levels, ranging from those that establish new policy frameworks to those that are restricted to change-specific practices on the implementation level, causing what Hall (1993) would call first, second or third order policy change. The capacity of international organizations to disseminate policy goals discursively is concerned with all three levels, which are thus linked to large or small-scale reforms. In the case of lifelong learning, international organizations have been concerned with disseminating the idea of lifelong learning processes and their importance for economic development (OECD 1996), but they have also been concerned with the role of secondary schools in this context (OECD 2002c) or the discussion of financing schemes (World Bank 2003b). The complexity of this procedure already denotes that the dissemination of ideas by international organizations seldom stands alone, but rather is most often linked to other instruments.

Standard-setting is a well-known strategy, even if it is often reduced to binding standards only. Standard-setting by international organizations in some ways equals the nation-state's capacity to regulate, even if states are not able to execute collective decisions in the same way. Conventions or recommendations represent the classical standard-setting function,

but many other, more informal means such as benchmarking, explicit aims, and rules, with which countries should comply, are also defined. Examples for this category range from the General Agreement on Tariffs in Trade to regulations within the IAEA or the benchmarks formulated in the EU's Open Method of Coordination.

Financial means are payments by the organization to a country for establishing programs or institutions related to an international policy aim. As a parallel to governmental capacities on the state level, incentives are set for guidance toward a specific behavior. The financing of projects by the World Bank and the implementation of specific EU projects, as well as many other projects established by international organizations, work in this way.

Coordinative functions are instruments of surveillance, and parallels to the state level are more difficult to find. Legal overview of political processes or a general focus on whether citizens obey the public regulations would come closest to this idea. Coordinative functions are intended to explore the progress of countries toward a common policy aim. They range from monitoring and sanctioning false state behavior, as in the case of IAEA verification measures or the World Trade Organization's dispute settlement body, to softer means like the coordination of country groups, the EU's Open Method of Coordination (OMC) or the publication of comparable policy outcomes in international league tables compiled by the OECD.[4]

The instrument of *technical assistance* is concerned with supporting or enhancing a state's capacity to move toward an internationally outlined policy aim, and it is comparable with social support programs on the national level. International organizations mostly apply this instrument in relation to developing countries that often lack the expertise or administrative capability to implement international policies. In such cases, support can range from model legislations to expert advice and expert education or just the offer of ready-made public awareness campaigns for poor countries that could not produce them by themselves (for example, see UNODC [United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime] 2008a,b). Technical assistance is also an instrument for reconstructing countries after war. In the 1950s, for example, the OECD established specialist programs to educate national administrations in methods of data collection and program development (Papadopoulos 1994). Another current form of technical assistance is international police cooperation that takes place in postwar settings to educate the new police force and to help countries maintain the new public order, as has been done in Afghanistan and in Kosovo. In Table 2.1, I summarize

Table 2.1 Governance instruments of international organizations

Governance instrument	Dominant function	Example
Discursive dissemination	Establishing ideas	UN Promotion of Sustainable Development OECD Promotion of Lifelong Learning
Standard-setting	Prescribing behavior	UN Recommendations OECD Benchmarks
Financial means	Transfer payment	World Bank Financing EU Project Financing
Coordinative activities	Execute surveillance	EU Open Method of Coordination OECD Peer Reviewing
Technical assistance	Support structures	IAEA Trainings in Radioactive Detection UNODC Model Laws

the different instruments with their dominant function, and give some examples.

Consequences

The categories presented above are in principle applicable across policy fields. Their distribution, however, differs depending on the specific area. When analyzing education only, we can identify a tendency to apply instruments such as discursive dissemination, coordination or technical assistance most frequently. In the case of security, states more often rely on standards that restrict all countries in the same way and on coordinative activities that monitor compliance. Emphasis, however, does not mean exclusiveness. The field of education has standard-setting instruments such as UNESCO conventions, and the definition of crime as a threat to security has been a consequence of discursive dissemination (UNESCO 2005a; Andreas and Nadelmann 2006).

At the same time, international organizations differ in their authority over member states, which could be assumed as having an effect on the instruments applied and on their consequences. While the OECD is, formally, a weakly binding program-organization, the EU can generally exercise a stronger binding authority (Marcussen 2004a; Rittberger and Zangl 2006:12), which at least implicitly suggests that the latter is the stronger one. Without overlooking the difference between both

categories, this view will be challenged in this book, illustrating that it is mostly the interplay of different instruments that helps to establish political ideas widely. International organizations start discussions in their fora and may later switch to legal instruments such as conventions or recommendations. Further, such activities can be accompanied by financing related projects on the national level, by supporting implementation, and by overseeing collective success.

Nonetheless, it needs to be stressed that the list of instruments presented here does not imply that each governance activity always includes all instruments. For a long time the EU has financed student mobility programs, but it has only recently become active in regulating the EU-wide internationalization of higher education. Governance instruments may thus be restricted to specific organizations or to specific policy fields of an organization's overall activities. Moreover, some organizations may have several instruments at hand but do not apply all of them. This is the case with the OECD, an organization which has no financing capacities and applies binding regulations only sporadically, but successfully disseminates policy ideas (Marcussen 2004b; Mahon and McBride 2008). Moreover, international organizations differ in the instruments they apply to countries. While industrialized countries usually do not receive technical assistance, it is more common in developing countries. However, in all these cases, ideas remain central. They deliver the guiding principles toward which an activity is oriented and they are a precondition for implementing any follow-up measures.

The idea of global governance put forward here is nonetheless not only about the different capacities of international organizations to disseminate issues of their interest. I also intend to show how policies are developed and diffused by the interplay of several international organizations and their different instruments, partly as a process of taking the activities of one organization as a legitimization of another organization's activities, but also by establishing competing policy frameworks concerning the same idea.[5] Analyzing the interplay of different actors in world society reveals a picture that – in its essence – has many parallels to politics within the national sphere.

Global policy development

A very basic instrument to analyze the domestic policy-making process is the so-called stage heuristic. Although the model has been criticized for oversimplifying the process and for its lack of explanatory power (Sabatier 1999a), it is nonetheless useful for providing helpful

categories and as a starting point on which more elaborate theoretical explanations can be based (de Leon 1999). The idea of a policy stage can thus be supplemented by additional frameworks to gain explanative potential.

   In the following, I will stretch the concept to analyze worldwide processes, linking them to the theoretical background already outlined. Since sociological institutionalism mainly provides an idea of an established and widely spread culture, but not of its conditions or its link to politics, the stage approach helps to further conceptualize global policy development in world society. I bring together sociological institutionalism with theories concerning the policy process, resulting in a notion of world politics as a diffusion process. The overall value is that the idea of the stage approach unifies the macro-theoretical idea of sociological institutionalism with actor-centered analyses. Furthermore, it links such analyses to discussions on policy diffusion and it defines overall conditions of the global political process.[6]

Policy selection

When a stage heuristic of the policy process is applied (de Leon 1999), world society and world culture can essentially be conceived as agenda-setters of national politics. International debates thus impact on national policy processes by the new ideas and solutions they present. Political ideas, however, do not exist without their proponents and they are not automatically placed on the political agenda because they are important in an objective sense. Even their importance is politically contested, a fact that has been elaborated on by political scientists concerned with agenda-setting. Following such an approach, agenda-setting consists of the coupling of three independent streams: problems, policies, and politics (Kingdon 2003). For an issue to be successfully placed on the agenda, these streams need to be coupled, which constitutes the window of opportunity for the respective policy proposal.[7]

   The first stream consists of *problems*. However, they do not exist as primordial entities to the extent that it is always clear what the problem actually is. Instead, it is a very basic presumption for political activity that a problem has to be perceived as such. Moreover, it must be related to human agency in some way – otherwise it remains part of destiny, divine will or a similar act of nature beyond control. In other words, "difficult conditions become problems only when people come to see them as amenable to human action. Until then, difficulties remain embedded in the realm of natural accident, and fate – a realm where there is no choice about what happens to us" (Stone 1989:281). Specific

conditions can only be framed as a problem if the conviction grows that something can and should be changed. The conditions thus require framing as a problem, so that people can view social facts in a specific way and conclude that a specific activity is needed to solve that problem (Kingdon 2003:115).

The number of potential problems is virtually endless, but some events draw attention, such as major crises or accidents. A major bus accident could increase the recognition of safety issues and could lead to awareness of drivers' working conditions as a general problem. The same crash, however, could also be used to advocate measures to combat traffic density. The problems put forward demand solutions, a process that is highly political, because social life is complex and causalities are difficult to assess. High unemployment rates can be assumed to be caused by a weak economy or by excessive protection of workers' rights. Both explanations might be right, but they are likely to result in quite different political activities. Problems are thus framed: some possible causes are never mentioned at all, later dropped, or perhaps reinvented; others remain involved and are further processed in the policy process. Problem definition is a crucial point in the policy process because it specifies the political problem and the locus of future political activity and state intervention. Policy entrepreneurs then link the defined problem to an intended policy outcome. The definition of problems becomes the "active manipulation of *images* of conditions by competing political actors. Conditions come to be defined as problems through the strategic portrayal of causal stories" (Stone 1989:299).

Establishing political problems and their solutions is thus a social process, not merely a function related to objective necessities, and the fora of world society are particularly suitable for these political interactions. There, participants can broadly discuss and frame issues such as environmental pollution, fertility or education, and world society can provide the national political process with new political problems and possible solutions. Scientists, for example, discover new ways to promote national progress through a specific policy, non-governmental organizations point out needs at the local level, and international organizations like the UNESCO, OECD, World Bank or others provide a forum and compile material which compels nation-states to intervene in various areas.[8] A main difference between the national political process and global politics is its potential reach. If a successful link between problems and solutions is established on the world level, it is very likely to cause policy change not only in one specific country but in many.

Such success, however, still requires coupling with other streams, such as the *policy* stream. It represents the specific solution that can be used to solve a problem, and it consists of political proposals which are discussed, drafted, revised and upon which policy-makers ultimately might agree. In such cases, the proposal finds its way through the decision-making bodies as a solution to a specific problem. It is important to conceive these policies as rather independent from the problems they are attached to. A policy might fail to succeed with one problem but it can be linked successfully to another. For example, proponents of security features in passports will probably find it easier to organize supporters when they link their proposals to the threat of terrorism than if they link them to illegal migration only.

While terrorism as well as other problems may emerge suddenly, a policy usually needs preparation within the community of policy-makers. A network of policy stakeholders shares and discusses ideas, thereby testing how far they go and whether they are convincing. In the end, only a few proposals are seriously considered and pursued. The process of drafting, circulating, and revising policy proposals is a continuous "softening up" of the policy community (Kingdon 2003:116–31). Policy-makers, lobbyists, and the interested public need preparation for a specific policy direction. This is time-consuming, and abrupt policy changes due to a new proposal are very unlikely. World society fora are particularly suitable for these activities, since they bring together ideas and proposals from very different countries and also enable policy-makers to expand their horizon of comparison. An idea that is unusual in a specific national context can become more legitimate and thus be established more easily if reference to another, successful country and its experiences can be made. Global meetings in this sense "soften up" the international community, while they also help soften the national context.

The third stream that needs to be connected for political success is the *politics* stream. In a domestic setting, it consists, for example, of attitudes that are dominant in the group of policy-makers, or it reflects election results and public opinion. Also, key personnel involved in the policy-making process and its opinions are decisive and can push or restrict the ongoing process (Kingdon 2003). In international specialized meetings, the knowledge and attitudes of policy-makers – such as ministers and bureaucrats – are likely to be more decisive than those of the national population represented. International bargaining regularly needs consensus, which further fosters a culture of common ideas. Moreover, the international sphere is accessed by new players. Some

decades ago, for example, nongovernmental organizations were not as widely involved in policy-making and the EU was not yet such an important entity. Today, this has changed, and with it the arena of the politics stream.

The three independent streams of problems, policies, and politics are joined together in the so-called *window of opportunity*. Within it, a policy has the chance to become prominent and to pass through the decision bodies. It is sometimes a predictable process, for example with regard to the national formulation of laws that assure compliance with European regulations. In such cases, policy stakeholders know that some issues will be put on the agenda and that they can push their policy proposals. Most often, however, the window is unpredictable and policy entrepreneurs have to be prepared for such cases, as the window may be closed again very quickly. In fact, policy entrepreneurs very often possess papers with solutions and link them to adequate, currently fashionable problems afterwards. Hence, they seek to profit from problems that are high up on the agenda. As one interviewee of Kingdon put it: "When you lobby for something, what you have to do is put together your coalition, you have to gear up, you have to get your political forces in line, and then you sit there and wait for the fortuitous event" (Kingdon 2003:165). The outcome of coupling the streams is, thus, that problems, solutions and players find each other and create new policy directions.

In the context of global policy development, these ideas on agenda-setting outline some conditions for the spread of world cultural models. For successful diffusion, elements of world culture must be linked to a problem perceived as being important by national policy-makers. The problem definition thus becomes crucial for policy diffusion. According to institutional theory, urgent problems for states are likely the ones that touch upon core institutions of states and, for example, question legitimacy and modernity or diminish collective progress. Moreover, the problem and its solution should be widely applicable, since if only a few states were attracted to them that would restrict diffusion. As a further precondition, events are required that bring together problems, policies, and supportive policy-makers to couple the different streams and to establish a broad consensus on the problem and measures to be taken. Such events are usually international meetings that connect adequate problems with policies and supporters at a common place.

Declarations, which are often published after major events, illustrate the policies upon which the participants were able to agree. Not only does the success of such central ideas remain a discursive fact, but they

also set the ground for new political arrangements and thus have a large impact on the political activities that follow (Blyth 2002:17–39). A main effect is that they reduce uncertainty, because they work as a blueprint of analysis concerning the situation policy-makers face. Since a problem may have very different causes, successful ideas structure the situation and allow actors to place an emphasis on identified areas of action. In consequence, they also make some forms of collective action and coalition-building more probable than others. Without the conviction that education determines economic growth, there would be much less involvement of firms in education policy. If the idea of sustainable development had not been successful, environmental policies would still be seen as an obstacle to economic growth (Hajer 1995). The success of central ideas is thus a result of putting together the streams of problems, policies, and politics. These successful ideas on political activity determine the follow-up measures. It is important to see this event as a selection process: some policies, however promising they might be, will not be considered after a competing policy idea has succeeded.

Policy change and policy diffusion

Depending on the specific ideas established at the international level, the follow-up encompasses different policy changes. Once lifelong learning was successfully placed on the agenda, learning over the whole life span could be linked to it and proposals could range from establishing preprimary education to offering more adult education opportunities. When education ministers discuss measures of quality assurance in higher education, the policies presented are much more directly focused on specific instruments. Comparably, establishing global prohibition regimes for illegal migration is very different from discussing passport security for preventing the distribution of undesirable visas. In theoretical terms, policies discussed can thus range from the slight and medium adjustment of instruments – normal policy-making – to fundamental change of goals and means – a paradigm change (Hall 1993). The three forms are different in their extent and in whether they influence other policy decisions. Normal policy-making deals with policy instruments and their settings, for example a change in budget during the fiscal year or the introduction of new mechanisms for accountability. These are first and second order policy changes. A third order change is a change in the policy paradigm. This is a more radical form of change because it is linked to an overarching framework in which the policy is situated.

The categories of policy change developed by Hall can be applied to both the national and the international level. Thus, policies discussed

within world society may imply either a first, second or third order shift. This is foremost a relative category, depending on the status quo in a country and the specific policy discussed. Lifelong learning discussions, for example, entail much more of a paradigm shift for the German education system than for the British system, where the university system has traditionally involved adult education, and vocational education was not so closely linked to young adulthood. World society and its policy proposals thus can, but do not have to, cause national policy change. Mediating factors within the countries determine how far policy change is implemented. National veto-players as well as cultural factors can principally hinder or support the implementation of international policies (Leuze *et al.* 2008). The impact of the international level is thus a dependent variable of the international source as well as of the country's national conditions.

Policy change that takes place within one country due to international activities, however, represents only one aspect of the impact of international organizations. While I have so far mainly emphasized the vertical dimension of global policy-making – from world society to the nation-state – the consequences of such a global policy process are most visible from a horizontal perspective, because countries all over the world start adopting a specific kind of policy and policy diffusion takes place. Such a diffusion pattern does not only represent the sum of individual adoptions, but is also a process of social change among a group that involves communication among its members (Rogers 2003:5–6). In essence, it means that adopters – in this case countries – subsequently implement a specific idea that, in consequence, spreads within the social system of world society.[9] Hence, even in the case of only minor adjustments in the countries, an overall move toward the international goals could become visible. As a consequence, the impact of international organizations should be measured not only by analyzing the depth of policy change within the countries, but also by the breadth of policy change across countries.

Policy diffusion and world society have been brought together primarily by research on norm dynamics (Finnemore and Sikkink 1999). Norms, like the protection of human rights, are a special kind of policy and are closely linked to institutions. They have been the most obvious subject of policy diffusion within world society and it has been shown that, instead of a constant diffusion of norms on the world level, norms are first established reluctantly in some countries only, while in a later phase they are spread quickly and widely across countries. In order to explain such nonlinear developments, the idea of a norm life cycle and

its three stages were developed (Finnemore and Sikkink 1999). In the first stage, a norm is promoted only by a single actor or a small number of like-minded people – policy entrepreneurs. They invent and frame the norm by calling attention to a particular issue and by presenting it as being problematic in some way. Organizational platforms, such as international organizations, are important for the diffusion of this perspective. In the case of a successful diffusion process, this early stage results in a *tipping point*, at which a critical mass of actors adopts the norm. In this respect, and also depending on the specific policy field, actors are not equal. If some important actors adopt the norm, this might quickly lead to a critical mass and to an earlier tipping point than if a huge mass of less important actors adopts it. The tipping point causes a widespread norm cascade. At this second stage, the norm has already spread to a wider audience of policy-makers and is widely known. As peer pressure emerges in the international community, states become familiarized with the changed standard of appropriate statehood. Finally, the stage of internalization is reached. This stage is related to the country level and the policy impact which the norm has on it. Unconscious compliance can be observed at this stage and conformity is the central motive. The internalized norms become nonpolitical issues and are taken for granted. The last point in some way distinguishes policy diffusion from norm diffusion, because policies – which are usually based on functional assumptions – can easily be challenged if they show unexpected results, even if they are widely implemented. In contrast, norms follow the logic of appropriateness (March and Olsen 1999), so that, once internalized, they are hardly ever subjected to functional criteria.

A model of global political processes

It is possible to bring together the different ideas on world society, agenda-setting, policy change, and policy diffusion to construct a model of global policy development. Such a model starts with a background of sociological institutionalism, formulates some conditions that successful policies require for diffusion and unifies ideas on vertical and horizontal policy change. In short, it can be summarized as follows. Policy entrepreneurs, in the framework of international organizations and their platforms, bring up policies that are discussed and diffused if the streams of problem, policy, and politics are successfully coupled. The tipping point of a norm life cycle can be interpreted as the window of opportunity that arises in the context of global conferences or meetings. The norm cascade is a policy diffusion process that is linked to the success of central ideas, policy changes, and policy formulation

according to the national status quo. Such a model illustrates a policy process that interlinks the global and national spheres. Agendas are set and policies are proposed in the global sphere, while policy change is implemented on the national level.

Figure 2.1 illustrates the whole process. World society and world culture are basic theoretical elements of sociological new institutionalism. World society refers to a world wide structure in which actors such as international organizations, nongovernmental organizations, nation-states, and epistemic communities operate and to which they refer in their activities. Culturally, they are embedded in a framework of rationality and individualism, and pursue goals such as progress and justice, which are central features of world culture (see Stage A). The window

A

World society
IOs – Nation-states – NGOs
– Epistemic communities

B

Window of opportunity
Problems – Policies – Politics

C

Success of central ideas

D

IO instruments
Discursive dissemination –
Standard-setting – Financial means –
Coordinative activities –
Technical assistance

E

Domestic policy change

F

Tipping point

Policy diffusion
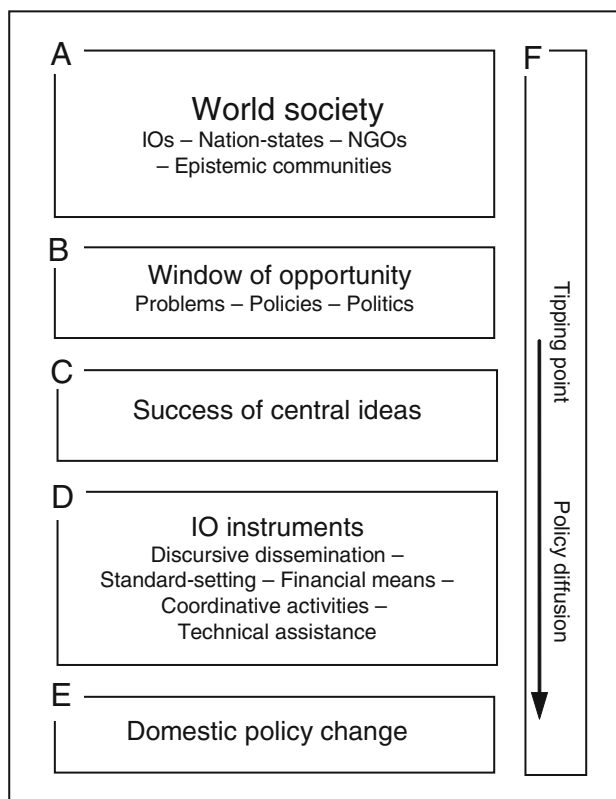
Figure 2.1   A model of global policy development

of opportunity is the momentum that allows successful agenda-setting for selecting and processing specific policies. The streams of problems, policies, and politics are coupled and a policy proposal can be asserted (see Stage B). The success of central ideas is crucial for further policy development. It is the outcome of the window of opportunity and it is institutionalized in politics, thereby constituting new worldviews, goals, and identities, thus transforming preferences and lines of action (Stage C). After the consolidation of new central ideas, policy change is proposed on the global level (Stage D). Its different forms can lead to quite distinct forms of policy formulation in the country (Stage E). Finally, when the model is seen as a whole, it ties into the already exist-ent thoughts of a norm life cycle and links them to the developed model of global policy diffusion (Stage F).

Conclusion: Global policy development and international organizations

This chapter outlined a basic model for understanding policy processes within world society. The added value of the model is the isolation of different processes and actors involved in the diffusion process within world society. It is a theoretical framework that allows us to identify causal chains and processes that interact with one another. As a heuris-tic model, it cannot explain politics by itself, but serves as a framework for analyzing contemporary world politics and the development of glo-bal public policy.

Four central theoretical assumptions follow from the framework. First, the start of a global policy process requires a window of oppor-tunity that allows the coupling of politics, policy and problem. Only in such cases can a policy successfully be placed on the global agenda. Such an idea is comparable to the more widely known concept of "world time" (for example, Finnemore and Sikkink 1999; Risse *et al*. 1999). Researchers of global agenda-setting or the diffusion of norms, for example, can therefore formulate favorable or nonfavorable condi-tions for these three streams. Secondly, successful policies are promoted and diffused in a network of international organizations, states, and nonstate actors such as nongovernmental organizations and epistemic communities. International organizations serve as central platforms to disseminate the successful policies. Thirdly, the implementation of policies within the countries is dependent on the political system of the country and how international policies and politics intervene. However, the basic link to sociological institutionalism also explains

why policies, fourthly, might be diffused and adopted without having any obvious added value for a respective nation-state: for many countries, policies promoted on the world level also take on a status linked to legitimacy and modernity. Therefore, functionality and adequacy are not always the main cause for adoption.

Each of the following four chapters deals with one of these theoretical assumptions. In Chapter 3, I show how the political scene has changed considerably in the last decades, so that policies of lifelong learning faced a window of opportunity in the 1990s, a precondition for their overall success. In Chapter 4, I analyze the activities that international actors have started to promote lifelong learning, namely international organizations and transnational actors. In Chapter 5, national policy change and its varieties are outlined. Finally, in Chapter 6, I show how these activities, in sum, resulted in the norm of lifelong learning. To a wide extent, the idea and its realization have become a symbol of modern education policy.

Seen separately, large parts of these assumptions and findings coincide with much of what is already established thinking in International Relations theory. For example, regimes have always been influenced by the above-named actors, while implementation has been influenced by national preconditions. Taken together, however, the idea of a policy cycle allows for a more systematic assessment of the emergence, diffusion, and spread of policies than the focus on only one of these parts. The processing of policies becomes a central factor, bringing together many other analyses of current political processes on the world level into one scheme. A political process should show all phenomena outlined above if we want to categorize it as a global policy development.

As such, global policy development can be conceived as a special variety of global governance in which a policy is developed and spread worldwide. It accords with the idea that policy diffusion and globalization effects are often closely intertwined (Jahn 2006). When nation-states increasingly become part of a global political process, the issues and problems they face often stem from the same underlying causes or are framed in the same way. This, in turn, explains why policy-makers are increasingly oriented toward international development, or, as Jahn assumes, "that the whole logic of politics may have shifted from a domestic to an international orientation..." (Jahn 2006:403). The idea of a global policy cycle is one instrument to conceptualize such a process and to reframe policy developments in contemporary world politics. International organizations are crucial in that respect, because they provide the platforms from which policies can be spread across countries.

Concerning the empirical case presented on the following pages, however, the idea of a global policy cycle does not only focus on international actors as major forces for spreading lifelong learning, but also has some implications concerning timing: the recent acceptance of lifelong learning needs to be linked to events that formed a window of opportunity which the actors could use. The following chapter, therefore, analyzes the changes world politics has faced since the 1970s, which supported the current rise of lifelong learning. As the results reveal, "world time" has changed significantly with respect to the streams of problems, policies, and politics.

3
World Time: International Developments in Education Policy from the 1970s to the 1990s

Political developments cannot take place independently of their context. Furthermore, not only is the spread of policies always bound to specific actors, their position and ability to organize support, but also, at the most basic level, timing must be right for such activities (Pierson 2004:54–71). In the framework of a global policy cycle presented in the preceding chapter, the necessary conditions of timing come together in the second stage, resulting in the window of opportunity. At this moment the streams of politics, policy, and problem merge (Kingdon 2003) and "world time" (Finnemore and Sikkink 1999:269; also Risse *et al.* 1999) is supportive of the respective policy proposal. Tracing the development of different streams linked to lifelong learning and identifying the corresponding window of opportunity thus clarifies necessary preconditions for the policy's subsequent spread.

By analyzing these different streams and their juncture, this chapter illustrates how the time for lifelong learning has ripened over three decades. Firstly, it describes how the actors' influence has changed. International organizations, which have traditionally been very strong proponents for the idea of lifelong learning, have generally increased their influence in education politics over time. As will be shown, today their policy initiatives and recommendations in that field are much more part of daily politics than they used to be. Secondly, the idea of lifelong learning itself has been transformed into a key component in active social and labor market policy. Therefore, it is no longer conceived as being central to individual development or as an intrinsic wish to know more about the world, as it was mainly viewed during the 1970s. Nowadays, it rather serves as an element of education programs

for qualifying individuals. As such a function, it developed into a widely applicable solution to contemporary political problems such as high unemployment, changing labor markets, or technical innovation. Thirdly and lastly, the problem that is coupled to lifelong learning today is very different from those in the 1970s, when the idea arose for the first time. Today, it is closely related to the problem of a knowledge-based economy, a framework that was only of minor interest before. The knowledge society is conceived as having a huge impact on the basis of national economic activity. And, for sustainable economic growth, the knowledge and skills of the labor force must be continuously updated.

In the following, I analyze the development of world time linked to lifelong learning. I pursue the theoretical route outlined in the preceding chapter and differentiate three streams – politics, policy, and problem. Each of the following sections explores changes related to one of them. The basic idea is that the 1990s provided an opportunity for the successful coupling of these three streams and for the successful promotion of lifelong learning – opportunities that did not exist in the 1970s.

The growing importance of international organizations

The first stream to be analyzed is that of politics. In recent years, political science has often assessed the increasing influence of international organizations on national policy-making, most often under the title of "global governance." In many policy fields, international organizations have developed activities that shape the national perception and treatment of political issues. In such processes, methodological nationalism – the search for explanations within the nation-state as the decisive entity – is challenged. The nation can no longer be presumed to be the dominant organizing principle of politics. Instead, conditions on the international level and the interdependence of countries become increasingly relevant (Zürn 2002:248). This changing statehood can be understood as a political orientation toward nonnational political processes, their aims and results. Moreover, the influence of international law has increased and national legislation must consider already existing international agreements (Raustiala and Slaughter 2002:538). In the case of WTO agreements, for example, countries must pay attention to international principles when thinking about national regulations in the realm of food safety, higher education services or tariffs. At the same time, international policy networks become more and more important in governing different policy fields: governmental officials deal with

their counterparts from other countries in order to find common agreements that can serve national interests (Slaughter 2004).

The interdependence that states currently face has had a deep impact on the policies they pursue – for example the regulation of business in a way that corresponds to other countries' policies – and furthermore the very nature of politics has changed. Instead of a policy-making process in which national officials and representatives develop solutions that come from and are debated within national society, politics in times of global governance has increasingly been oriented toward the international level. Nowadays, it is common in the process of policy-making to refer to international organizations, other states, multinational corporations and nongovernmental organizations as incentives for policy change. On the one hand, such an orientation bears the potential of enriching the national debate with additional perspectives, that is, adding an understanding of what others do and which possibilities exist for creating respective policies. On the other hand, this process may also constitute a problem for democracy (Wolf 2000). International regulations can be used to confront the national public with policies that would not have been possible without the international framework. In 1998, the IMF influenced Brazil's public spending against the wishes of the majority of people in the country, relying on the support of the president who had negotiated the conditions with the organization (Wolf 2000:17).

Thus, international actors and influences have become a more regular part of the national policy-making process. This is particularly visible in the realm of education, where international exchange and its impact have visibly increased over the last decades, and three interrelated developments can be identified. First, countries have begun to see their education system as part of a globally operating market, and pursue policies to make the system as attractive as possible for potential foreign students. New Zealand, for example, has turned education into one of its most advanced export industries (Martens and Starke 2008). Such commodification of education has led to the consequence that education systems are increasingly shaped by competition with other countries and managed in economic terms.

Second, besides this economization of education, the field of education policy, which was for a long time perceived as a core domestic issue, has become subject to growing exchange and transfer. Countries "borrow" policies from other countries, or they serve as a model and thus "lend" policies (Steiner-Khamsi 2004). In effect, a growing number of education policy concepts today do not originate within the

domestic framework, but rather are from international sources, such as international organizations or other countries (Dale 1999). The increasing overlap of national policy development and international sources is another effect of globalization in education policy. Education policies are not only related to global dynamics by an immediate and unmediated reaction to a global market or other necessities, but are also the subject of global debates and common trends in policy-making.

Third, the very functions and activities of international organizations in the field of education have changed, which has transformed their function into diffusing agents and policy-making bodies.[1] While UNESCO has been a source for world models of education policy since its inception, other organizations have begun to establish regular and effective activities in education only recently – and are in part more successful than UNESCO. In education statistics, the organization has lost turf to the more politically oriented indicators of the World Bank and OECD (Cusso and D'Amico 2005).

The increasing importance of these newly emerging education organizations becomes obvious when we analyze more closely the cases of the World Bank, OECD, and EU. The World Bank, although initially only marginally concerned with education, is the world's largest education financer today, providing funding for many educational projects in countries all over the world. While in its early years the organization mainly provided resources for developing infrastructure, lending is nowadays either project-based or policy-based. This means that the Bank supplies money for a specific infrastructure as well as for implementing changed policies. Despite the fact that the human capital approach has formed a continuous background for the Bank's activities in education, the field has undergone many changes within the last decades (Mundy 2002). In its first years of education financing, the Bank lent funds for technical education, training and secondary schooling. The aim was to build up mid-level management and students for higher education. Later, it was recognized that primary education should be a main focus of the Bank (Finnemore 1996a). In the 1980s, in the context of the "Washington Consensus" (Bonal 2002), the discussion on the privatization of education and the introduction of market mechanisms increased within the Bank and loans were increasingly bound to the obligation to charge fees and promote privatization. The Bank has increasingly defined the state's role as a monitoring agency, not necessarily as a provider (Jones 1997:125–7; World Bank 1999:18). Over the years, the Bank's financing volume for education increased from less than 200,000 million US\$ to more than 1,600,000 million. In 1985 and 1995, the Bank even lent more

than 2,000,000 million (Mundy 2007:23, in constant 2004 US$). The Bank was able to broaden its influence on countries and their education system accordingly.

While the Bank's activities are mostly concerned with developing countries, the rest of the world has also witnessed the changing role of international organizations. Among these, the OECD is a particularly good example for the current worldwide reach of education policy recommendations. From its very beginning, the organization has been concerned with education policy, but has only recently turned into a major actor in that field. The OECD's current main instruments in education are policy reviews, education indicators, and the "Programme for International Student Assessment" (PISA). They are supplemented by conferences on educational issues, coordination of the countries' policy activities, and policy proposals formulated through experts (Jakobi and Martens 2007). After its inception in 1969, the inner-organizational think-tank on education, the "Centre for Research and Innovation in Education" (CERI), was not even financed publicly, but was supported by funding from Shell and the Ford Foundation and restricted to a short mandate of five years only (OECD 1972:43). Since then, it has been transformed into a major institution dealing with education. The center carries out the major part of OECD's work on education and has initiated a large number of programs and approaches to education policy. It "is oriented toward innovation in the sense of identifying and analyzing new trends and issues in education" (Schuller 2005:171). Further work on education within the organization is done by the Education Committee or the directorate. While the committee was established in 1970 (OECD 1972:17–18), it was more than three decades until the Directorate for Education was set up in 2002. Consequently, education has become an even more prominent issue within the organization and its communication toward the member states and the public. During the 1970s, OECD countries were much more resistant toward the organization's influence on education policy than they are today. In the 1960s, Germany perceived education as a predominantly domestic issue, and any concessions to the organization were opposed (Papadopoulos 1994:39). In 1964, even the creation of an Education Committee failed due to the concerns of the member states (Papadopoulos 1994:63). A growing acceptance of OECD education policy-making was accompanied by a shift in the organization's work on education (Jakobi and Martens 2007). In the 1970s, the OECD was restricted to the role of an agenda-setter. It tried to set the ground for education policy issues that were proposed to be solved autonomously by the member states. For example, reports

on lifelong learning remained strongly descriptive and they did not present best practices or compare the countries. Educational indicators were not used to assess progress or to point out efficiency or failure. Today, such measures are common OECD practices and countries are continuously under observation. The organization goes beyond being an agenda-setter; it formulates policy advice and coordinates countries and their education policy activities. By doing so, it delivers a package of common goals, problems to be solved, and solutions to them. Countries have thus become part of continuous assessment through the OECD. By establishing regular exchange, setting up indicators, and undertaking reviews, the organization is much more closely linked to national policy development than it was some decades ago. It has effectively created a way to promote education policy ideas that it assumes to be important (Jakobi and Martens 2007).

The same holds true for the case of the European Union. As in the case of the OECD, European activities in education used to be opposed by the member states, and only the Treaty of Maastricht 1992 officially established education as a European activity: Articles 126 and 127 contain the aim of developing a European dimension in education, but "harmonization" was explicitly excluded (Jakobi and Rusconi 2008:5–6). However, since the late 1990s, the European level of education policy has gained strong influence on national education policy reform, and education policy is today a common European issue. In March 2000, the European Council proclaimed the so-called Lisbon strategy to make Europe the most competitive knowledge-based economy in the world by the year 2010 (European Council 2000). The strategy has helped education in its ascension onto the European agenda and nowadays it is broadly conceived as being an important European-wide issue (Interview EU). Since education has turned into a strategic economic resource, national resistance toward European educational policy has diminished. It is strategically important because it is seen as the foundation of future European economic development and because it could constitute an attractive education market for non-Europeans.

The summit further established the Open Method of Coordination (OMC) as a means for coordinating European-wide policy activities in areas where a common interest has been identified but where no treaty base exists (Schäfer 2004). The method's main purpose is "to achieve greater convergence toward the main EU goals by helping member states to progressively develop their own policies towards them" (EU Commission 2002b:7). The OMC involves, for example, guidelines combined with timetables, indicators, benchmarks, comparisons of European

countries with others outside Europe, periodic monitoring, and other instruments for facilitating policy learning (European Council 2000, quoted in Zeidlin 2005:20; De Ruiter 2009). These guidelines, indicators, and monitoring activities have all been applied to education policy.[2] Thus, the Commission further enhances the European level of education policy-making by delivering new proposals, ideas, and agendas to the member states (Interview EU). Although the principle of subsidiarity is still applied, education has been identified as a field in which coordinated international activity has become necessary. This is also reflected in the decision on a European program on lifelong learning, which was seen as necessary because its objective, "namely the contribution of European cooperation to quality education and training, cannot be sufficiently achieved by the member states because of the need for multilateral partnerships, transnational mobility and Community-wide exchanges of information" (European Union 2006:4).

These examples of the World Bank, OECD, and the EU have shown the growing relevance of international organizations for education policy-making in general. Their increased influence has, as a consequence, particularly fostered the standing of lifelong learning. Traditionally, its policy development – beginning with the "world educational crisis" declared by a UNESCO staff member – has been strongly linked to international organizations and not to specific nation-states. The organizations substantially contributed to the prominence of lifelong learning. Although its origins are partially Scandinavian, the concept was generated without having a specific education system in mind but as a truly new idea. Linking this fact to the increasing influence of international organizations on education policy-making sheds light on new politics concerning lifelong learning: in the 1990s, a policy which was mainly developed in the context of international organizations was more likely to be successfully transferred to the countries than in the 1970s. The changing influence of these organizations thus constitutes a major change in the stream of politics and has supported the success of lifelong learning.

The economic importance of lifelong learning

A second stream that has changed in the course of the years is the policy stream of lifelong learning, the actual content of this idea. Traditionally, education systems are conceptualized to fulfill three main aims. First, in the tradition of Enlightenment, education systems enable personal development. That way, education fosters the formation of

individuality, and individuals gain knowledge with which they determine the priorities of their lives. Second, education has been a compulsory element of most nation-states, and as such a function it has served national integration. Citizens learn a common history and ideology and they are taught about the national political system and its function. Third, education has prepared students for the labor market, and as such it has served as a basis for ongoing economic progress. From this standpoint, education is the basis for individual and collective productivity in the economic system.

Debates on lifelong learning oscillate between these different functions, but a clear shift of emphasis can be observed. In the 1970s, debates on lifelong learning were characterized mainly by a discussion about individual development, while today it is primarily discussed in terms of its economic relevance (for example Kallen 2002; Tuijnman and Boström 2002). While the earlier discussions on lifelong learning in the context of Keynesianism put an emphasis on strong state activities and thereby included redistributive measures in social policy, nowadays neoliberalism ideologically leans toward an emphasis on enabling people to act on their own. It intends to make state intervention superfluous and potentially avoids redistributive measures (Braun and Giraurd 2003:159). Thus, lifelong learning debates today not only reflect the different functions of education, but also mirror the move from a rather state-centered perspective to dominantly liberal reforms of a market economy. Two main aspects of this development can be isolated that constitute the foundation for this change: the increased emphasis on education as means of international competitiveness and the rise of new social policy arrangements.

Education and the economy have been linked for a long time, and well-operating education systems continue to be viewed as a main precondition for economic success (Becker 1964; Rubinson and Browne 1994). However, the emphasis on national education systems has become more pronounced ever since education was linked to diminishing international competitiveness. A major step in developing this idea was the 1983 US report "A Nation at Risk" (National Commission for Excellence in Education 1983). The report outlined consequences of a low-skilled population for the United States, thereby making explicit references to the skills of other nations and establishing the notion of competition over skilled qualified people and the nation's standing in a global economy: "America's position in the world may once have been reasonably secure with only a few exceptionally well-trained men and women. It is no longer. [... The current economic] developments

signify a redistribution of trained capability throughout the globe" (National Commission for Excellence in Education 1983). Such a statement mirrors the concern that an untrained workforce is a cause of national economic decline, and it outlines the urgency in particular by contrasting the national economic development with that of other nations. Over the following years, the United States tried to initiate policy change within international organizations such as the UNESCO and the OECD so that the performance of education systems could be better monitored (Martens 2005a; Martens and Wolf 2006). In that context, the UNESCO discussed the creation of outcome indicators for measuring national and subnational performance. The organization's other members, however, refused to follow the United States' economic rationale in education policy-making. After its withdrawal from UNESCO membership, the United States' contribution was subsequently focused on education policy development in the OECD, and, as a consequence, the organization set up the indicator program (Interview OECD).

Moreover, discussions on education policy within the OECD again turned to more economic approaches. In the course of the 1980s, the OECD thus further underlined the need for educational reform in view of economic and technological change in the countries (OECD 1989). This continued over the years – for example, the 1994 OECD Jobs study also underlined the need to qualify people (OECD 1995). A similar development has taken place within the European Union. The 2000 Lisbon Summit declared that, within ten years, Europe should become the most competitive knowledge-based economy worldwide. This has been the starting point for the so-called Lisbon strategy, in which education has become one of the key issues. In this context, education, as one interviewee reports, "has the aim to provide education beyond employability – for the citizen as a human being, as a person, as part of the democratic community, also concerning lifelong learning. But in the end – it's about a competent citizen who is educated for being competitive, so that Europe is competitive" (Interview EU). Such a shift in emphasis can also be found in the context of business, which has also focused its attention toward adult learning. At the end of the 1980s, the European Roundtable of Industrialists, an influential Brussels-based lobby organization that involves high-ranking managers of the major European companies, initiated a study concerning further training and education (Kairamo 1989). From that perspective, education and long-term economic success were directly linked, a view that Tony Blair also shared when stating: "Education is the best economic policy we have" (quoted in Merricks 2001:13). The shift toward economic concerns has

been particularly obvious in the case of lifelong learning: since lifelong learning, as one of its consequences, offers the possibility of a constantly trained and up-to-date workforce and should, in principle, enable permanent employability, the idea has become more and more attractive to policy-makers and industries. In part, this has also had consequences for education and lifelong learning as part of social policy.

Education and social policy have been intertwined for a long time, but it is only recently, and from different angles, that the two fields have moved closer. Traditionally, they have been linked as the base of participation in society, and education's function in the line of social policy provision has been the provision of life opportunities (Leisering 2003). Education opens or restricts opportunities that individuals may have over the course of life, not only in economic but also in personal contexts. Therefore, social policy has increasingly distinguished between productive and consumptive social policy measures, the former being educational measures, the latter being, for example, redistributive programs. Following that line of thought, public expenditure should be spent in a way that enables increased individual participation, instead of funding a status that is not immediately productive, for example, providing unemployment benefits without requiring necessary qualification. Such a distinction, however, constitutes a shift in social policy provision. Traditionally, "pedagogical intervention" has been only one kind of social policy intervention (Kaufmann 2002:102–4). It has aimed to enhance a person's capacity for action based on new knowledge of her or his own situation regarding, for example, individual or collective rights or health care.[3]

While education was oriented toward the young, social policy measures in adulthood have been mainly concerned with the management of risks, such as providing compensation for unemployment. The acceptance of such arrangements is questioned by the new idea of "productive social policy," which suggests that effects of social policy could principally be compared to investments in other sectors. In that sense, as Andersson puts it, "the metaphor 'productive social policies' functions as a bridge between the social and the economic, describing interventions into the organization of social resources as creating a surplus and leading to productive effects in economics as well as in social terms [...]" (Andersson 2005:3). In the context of such ideas, welfare spending can politically be classified as an investment or a cost, depending on the specific state activity. While education would constitute an investment, spending on unemployment would represent a cost (Andersson 2005:12).

Current lifelong learning policies can serve important functions in such a context. Basically, the described emphasis on education falls in line with the observed shift away from Keynesianism toward economic liberalism – or "neo-liberalism" (*inter alia* Blyth 2002; Hall 1993). Liberalism is not only concerned with restricted state functions, but also underlines the value of meritocracy, or the idea of an individual as an autonomous and responsible self. From this viewpoint, ideas such as redistribution or equality of outcomes are perceived as inappropriate, while ideas regarding investment and equal opportunity are central. The shift toward learning – education being a classical liberal means of enabling people to make their own informed choices (Kymlicka 1996:174) – supports the idea of a public sector that does not intervene but enables people to manage their lives on their own. This further coincides with approaches from human capital theory that see investment in people as the best investment, in particular in the context of a knowledge-based economy. Making individuals productive thus becomes a political priority, and education is particularly appropriate to fulfill such a role. While the traditional "front-end model" of education was focused on empowering children and did not address adults, the idea of lifelong learning opened up educational provision across the whole life span and thus, theoretically, enables opportunities at later points in life.

The "enabling state" (Gilbert and Gilbert 1989) can be characterized as such framework in which "social welfare policies are increasingly designed to enable more people to work and to enable the private sector to expand its sphere of activity" (Gilbert 2002:43). In contrast to a welfare state in a more classical sense, the promotion of work and the emphasis on the formation of human capital are a main element in building up an enabling state.[4] The concept of an "enabling state" was addressed in the early 1990s by an OECD scenario of "active society," accompanied by the recommendation to improve human resources (Dingeldey 2005:4). Lifelong learning supports such policy development, because it can be seen as a core tool for employability. Frequently, technical progress can "deskill" individuals: the qualifications they once gained are eventually based on outdated techniques and there is not adequate demand for them in the changing labor market. This, in turn, results in problems for both the individual and the economy. In particular, rapid technical progress can leave large parts of the workforce unqualified. Through continuous learning processes, however, workers can adapt to changing working environments and society can avoid the loss of human capital and unemployment.[5]

The emphasis on lifelong learning and employability is clearly mirrored in international policies. Since 1997, lifelong learning has

become a horizontal objective of the European employment strategy, and political statements on lifelong learning underline the importance of the issue for competitiveness (EU Commission 2000; European Council 2002a). In the context of the OECD, the 1994 Jobs study also prominently underlined the importance of active labor market policies (OECD 1995:15).[6] Lifelong learning is thus a relatively perfect piece in the puzzle of current social policy. It guarantees education throughout life, and thus constitutes the basis for a competitive workforce, while it can also help to prevent unemployment through deskilling. This, however, marks an obvious difference from the early policies developed in the 1970s: these were restricted to adulthood only, and they were mainly discussed as a right for personal development. Consequently, they would have rendered increased responsibility and state expenditure necessary. In contrast to that decade, the debate since the 1990s tends to support decreasing public expenditure by emphasizing individual activity. With lifelong learning today, the state can "empower" instead of redistributing. From an agenda-setting perspective, the economic importance of lifelong learning thus nowadays constitutes an important change in the stream of policies.

Education and the knowledge-based society

A final condition to be fulfilled for successful agenda-setting is having a prominent and important problem to which a policy can be linked. Again, major changes are visible when the case of lifelong learning is analyzed from this perspective. During the 1970s, when lifelong learning was mainly discussed in a context of individual development, the discussion was focused on collective progress to only a minor extent.[7] Obviously, a society can profit from well-educated and self-confident individuals, but, without any other urgency coupled to individual education, its absence remains mainly an individual problem. The current link between lifelong learning and the knowledge society, however, is very different from this early approach. This new educational problem is assumed to have wide-ranging collective consequences, and it delivers a suitable and important rationale for many countries' education policy reforms (see also Jakobi 2007b).[8]

   The terms "knowledge society" and "knowledge economy" were first made prominent in the late 1960s by Ferdinand Drucker's book "The Age of Discontinuity" and a corresponding article "The Knowledge Society" (Drucker 1969a,b). Drucker, a famous management thinker, was the first to label the changing value of knowledge for business as

"knowledge society."[9] He referred to the growing role of knowledge, its development and dissemination, and to the increased number of knowledge workers, "professional, managerial and technical people." He described the modern working world that is more and more intertwined with life outside the office and distinguished clearly between knowledge in the context of the new society and knowledge as understood by intellectuals (Drucker 1969b:629). Moreover, he saw implications for education because, in his view, "knowledge workers" should be able to start a second career during their lives. As a consequence, education courses should be adapted to the learning desires of adults (Drucker 1969b:630–1). In his writings Drucker outlined major changes in work, industry, and beyond.

In 1973, a seminal work on new modes of production was published: Daniel Bell's "The Coming of Post-Industrial Society" (Bell 1999). According to his "venture in social forecasting,"[10] knowledge and education have a central role to play in postindustrial societies. Bell went beyond focusing on the role of knowledge for the economy, and in addition tried to evaluate the implications of the increased importance of knowledge for the society in general. In his view, a postindustrial society is more than an enlarged service sector, but some services are more important than others, such as health, education, research, and government. These constitute the decisive sector for postindustrial societies (Bell 1999:15). Bell expected social changes to occur due to the increasing importance of human capital, which formed a new basis of societal stratification (Bell 1999:lxiv–lxx). Consequently, human capital, as well as individual or collective education, is increasingly important (see, for example, Bell 1999:213–42).

With his work, Bell outlined a rationale for education policy-making. If such a new type of society arises, education has to play a major role in integrating people into the state of the art of their professions. Political consequences derived from such an approach could include, for example, increased adult learning to update knowledge or more higher education to master the challenge of complex knowledge. Early policy proposals on lifelong learning, however, mentioned the idea of a knowledge society only sparsely. The 1973 OECD report contained a reference to Drucker's work and outlined that a new type of economy could be expected (OECD 1973). This vision, however, was only a minor point, and the main emphasis was placed on other aspects linked to lifelong learning. Thus, although the arguments were quite similar to those of today, they remained in the background of education reforms and were not made prominent.[11]

This stands in sharp contrast to the discussion conducted today (see Jakobi 2007b). The knowledge society has moved center stage in education policy. When, for example, the EU decided to strive to become "the most competitive knowledge-based economy of the world" (European Council 2000) it also identified the need for adequate education policies. Countries also respond to this type of framing and widely include references to the "knowledge society" and the anticipated changes in their education policy reasoning, as some examples from policy reports illustrate. An Austrian report refers to the changing conditions in the economy, society and culture that the knowledge society brings with it, stating that it "is the task of schools and universities to create the necessary foundations which will enable us to successfully handle the changes affecting all areas of life and work" (Österreichisches Bundesministerium für Bildung Wissenschaft und Kultur 2004:2). The United Kingdom mentions a "knowledge-intensive, technology rich and globally competitive environment" and acknowledges that higher education "educates and skills the nation for a knowledge-dominated age" (UK Education Policy Report 2004:67,76). In Germany, one of the future tasks of education is declared to be "the change towards the knowledge society and new media" (Federal Republic of Germany 2004:36).

The central role of knowledge for national development is also part of education policy arguments in the developing world. Pakistan, for example, aims at strengthening its higher education sector to lay the foundations for the knowledge-based economy, since "a well-educated graduate is the fundamental building block of a knowledge-based economy" (Ministry of Education of Pakistan 2004:23). Bangladesh states that its education system "is continually undergoing reforms in order to meet the current and future needs and challenges of the socio-economic developments of the country as well as the imperatives of a global knowledge economy" (Ministry of Education of Bangladesh 2004:24). These examples show how central the idea of a knowledge society has become for education policy in general, and for the concept of lifelong learning in particular. Lifelong learning has become a key to solving the problems that are assumed to emerge in the course of transforming into a knowledge society. It, for example, serves the transforming resource – information. It helps to build up the strategic resource – human capital. And it responds to the axial principle – the codification of theoretical knowledge. It thus corresponds to many changes that Drucker and Bell outlined in their work, such as the necessity to start a second career, to update knowledge, and so on.

To conclude: in the 1970s, the idea of a knowledge society did not provide a fertile ground for the idea of lifelong learning. The idea was

not widespread, nor did policy-making bodies prominently refer to it when discussing lifelong learning. Instead, the main background problem linked to lifelong learning approaches has been one of personal development. As a consequence, early lifelong learning debates lacked an important and urgent political problem to which the policy could be attached. While the significance of continuous knowledge development for economic and societal development was not yet widely recognized three decades ago, today its implications are summarized under the term "knowledge society." As a consequence, nowadays expanding learning and education over the entire course of life is seen as a critical issue for overall national development, a view less common in the 1970s. From a perspective of agenda-setting, it can thus be said that the rise of the knowledge society as an idea and political argument has been an important and supportive change in the stream of problems concerning lifelong learning.

Conclusion: A window of opportunity in the 1990s

Conditions for lifelong learning have thus changed widely in the course of recent decades. First, international organizations have become more relevant in national policy-making processes, which entailed more prominent support for this idea. Second, lifelong learning itself changed from a mainly rights-based policy to an instrument for future economic growth and an element of active social policy and the "enabling state." Third, the widely acknowledged requirements of the knowledge society have delivered an unprecedented rationale for the urgency of education policy reform. We can analyze these developments in Kingdon's terms of policy streams (2003): the rise of international organizations constitutes a change in the politics stream, the policy development of lifelong learning is a change in the policy stream, and the knowledge society represents a new problem. In fact, the reemergence of lifelong learning in the 1990s was based on a favorable world time for the policy and its spread, that is, a window of opportunity. Nonetheless, the global process that led to the policy diffusion has in fact spanned a long period of time (see Figure 3.1).

In the 1970s, international organizations were not yet important players in education policy. Their ideas on lifelong learning were very wide-ranging and innovative, but could essentially be perceived as an additional burden to the public budget. There was also no pressing collective problem to which the policy, as a solution, could have been attached. Given the conditions at that time, lifelong learning could
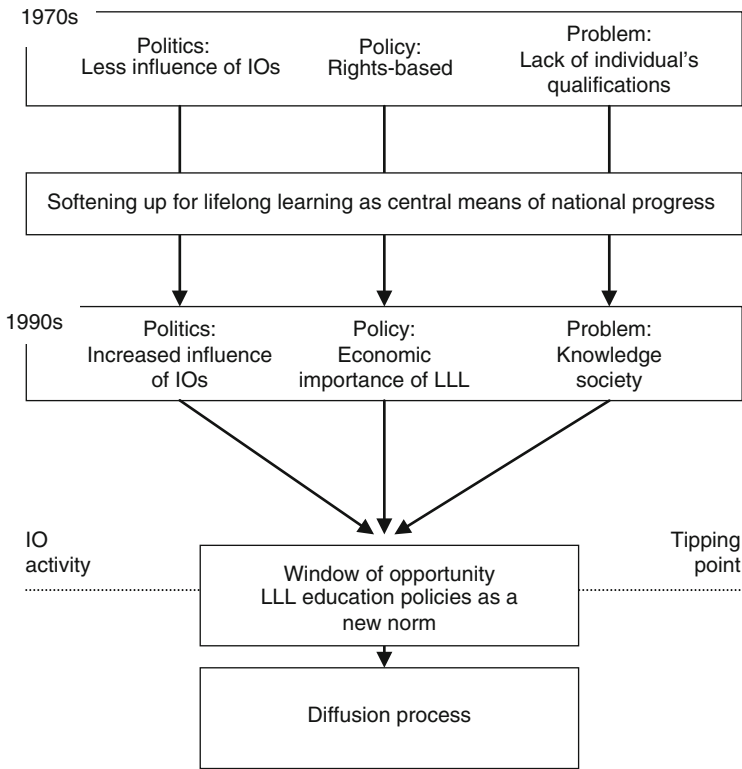
Figure 3.1   Changing world time concerning education policy and lifelong learning

not "resonate" (Risse 2002:267) with the wider policy environment in the 1970s. It would have required more "softening up" in the policy community when it was first proposed. "Many good proposals have fallen on deaf ears because they arrived before the general public, the specialized publics, or the policy community was ready to listen. Eventually, such a proposal might be resurrected, but only after a period of paving the way" (Kingdon 2003:130). The 1980s can be seen as the phase of such "softening up" of the international political environment. In this decade, there was space to construct and invent arguments concerning education as an investment and to push the analysis of a quickly changing world, as the OECD did, for example (OECD 1985, 1989). In the 1990s, the situation for lifelong learning changed very much from that in the 1970s. International organizations

had a growing influence on education policy-making, which made their proposals increasingly important. Moreover, the knowledge society constituted a policy problem, because states became convinced that they were moving toward new modes of production, and – being rational actors in the sociological sense – that strategies were needed for this transformation. Once the idea of lifelong learning had moved away from a rights-based discussion linked to personal fulfillment toward one of personal and collective economic prosperity, the international policy community was sufficiently "softened" for the adoption of lifelong learning. In particular, the 1996 activities were catalytic events that constituted the tipping point of the diffusion of lifelong leaning. UNESCO proclaimed the importance of the issue, while the wealthy European and OECD countries also followed that route. A successful agenda-setting process on the international level had thus taken place for the first time in the 1990s, and was then followed by wide-ranging national attention to the issue. International organizations worked at different angles to make this happen and supplemented each other in their activities. Through these efforts, it quickly became important to do something about lifelong learning. As a result, we now are witness to the worldwide spread of the idea today.

Coming back to the assumptions derived from the theoretical framework presented in the first chapter, we can indeed assess major changes in all three streams. The increased influence of international organizations was a favorable condition in politics, while the increased economic importance of education was a favorable condition in the policy stream; and, lastly, the rising awareness of the knowledge society was a favorable condition for lifelong learning in the stream of problems. The coupling in the mid-1990s formed the window of opportunity, derived from international collaboration. This in turn constituted the tipping point for policy diffusion. The developments presented in this chapter can thus explain the timing of the diffusion of lifelong learning, linked to the first assumption derived from the theoretical framework. The following chapter analyses whether the second assumption – that policies are mainly diffused in the context of international networks, in particular by international organizations – also holds true.

4
World Action: International Networks for Promoting Lifelong Learning

As in the case of other policies and norms, the diffusion of lifelong learning is not only bound to a favorable "world time," but is necessarily linked to the activities of actors in world society. In this chapter, I show how international governmental organizations, in particular, have spread the idea around the world. As can be seen, they have established interorganizational networks of exchange dealing with lifelong learning, and they have also incorporated nongovernmental or scientific activities. As a result, a broad consensus on the value of lifelong learning can be observed, even in very different organizations.

To illustrate the several linkages established by international organizations, I begin with an analysis of organizations that have a global reach and have been central actors in diffusing lifelong learning. In general, global international organizations have contacts with countries worldwide, either because they have universal membership, such as the UNESCO or the ILO, or through a selection of member countries and partner countries, as in the case of the OECD. The relations between countries and the organizations can be very different, depending on the status of the country or the main modus operandi of the organization. World Bank membership alone, for example, does not tell whether the organization's policy has any relevance for the country. Instead, it is more reasonable to assume influence if a country receives a loan from the Bank, and the number of influenced countries is thus lower than the number of member countries. By contrast, the OECD has relevance not only for its member countries, but also for so-called partner countries included in its policy programs. "Global organization" thus involves a category of organizations that can, but do not necessarily

need to, have a worldwide reach. On the following pages, I first present two organizations that were already prominently promoting lifelong learning in the 1970s: UNESCO and OECD. Today they are still heavyweights when it comes to the promotion of the idea, although this has not been a linear development in either case. As the third and fourth organizations, I shall discuss the World Bank and ILO. Both are less active than UNESCO or OECD, but their cases illustrate how organizations with different agendas and ideologies tackle the issue. Although presented mainly as diffusing agents, their cases in addition show that international organizations themselves are dependent on global policy developments and are not independent of international policy trends.

Unlike global organizations, regional organizations are constituted within specific geographic boundaries and thus have a more limited membership. Examples are the European Union in Europe, Mercosur in the Americas and the African Union. Such a limitation, however, does not necessarily imply that the impact of an organization is restricted to this area only, since linkages between different regional organizations usually exist. This is also the case for lifelong learning. The European Union itself has developed a large program for promoting and implementing lifelong learning. Through an interregional forum, the Asia Europe Meeting (ASEM), a sustainable discussion on lifelong learning has also been established in the context of an Asian organization. The meeting is not a formal organization and it has no official governance capacities, but it is an established forum in which the EU and "ASEAN +3" countries[1] meet and discuss issues of common interest. The impact of the Union's policies is thus not limited only to the European continent, but can also be diffused interregionally.[2] Governmental organizations and fora are not the only international players dealing with lifelong learning in world society. At least two other agents can be identified, the first being nongovernmental organizations, the other the international community of social scientists. Although very different, both have influenced the promotion of lifelong learning. Nongovernmental organizations were engaged as lobbying or service organizations or as important diffusing agents of political and social ideas; social science has established the conviction that lifelong learning is an important element of current education policy.[3]

The traditional education organization: UNESCO

The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization was established in 1946 by 37 founding members. Today, almost every

country in the world is a member of the organization (around 190, including associate members).[4] The organization seeks to "contribute to peace and security" through educational, cultural and scientific exchange among the countries (UNESCO Constitution 1945:Article 1(1)). It has various branches, such as the UNESCO Institute for Statistics (UIS), the International Bureau of Education (IBE), or the Institute for Education (UIE), to name the most relevant in this context.[5] As with other UN organizations, UNESCO works with a range of standard-setting instruments, in particular conventions, recommendations, and declarations. Conventions are subject to ratification and are accepted in the general conference by a two-thirds majority; and recommendations are instruments intended to influence law and practice. They are not subject to ratification, and are accepted by a majority vote of the general conference. However, even if a country does not intend to ratify an adopted convention or to apply rules laid out in an adopted recommendation, it is obliged to submit the UNESCO regulation to its "competent authorities" within one year after adoption (UNESCO Constitution 1945:Article IV B4; UNESCO 2005c). Declarations follow the same formal procedures as recommendations, but they are seen as expressing fundamental issues and as being statements with a high moral authority. A prominent example is the "Declaration on Human Rights." Declarations are rarely used within the UNESCO context. After the first "Declaration of Principles of International Cultural Co-operation" only nine further declarations were adopted until 2003 (UNESCO 2005b), while the number of conventions and recommendations during that period was more than twice as high: 26 conventions – including regional conventions – and 30 recommendations were adopted (UNESCO 2005a,d).[6]

Besides these formal standard-setting instruments, UNESCO sets up technical projects that support countries in educational planning and in establishing new educational programs, etc. This is often done in cooperation with other international organizations, for example in the case of Botswana, where UNESCO and ILO conducted a study that subsequently led to the establishment of the Botswana technical and vocational education program (UNESCO 2003c:Botswana). Moreover, projects are also often carried out in cooperation with nongovernmental partners. In 2003, 350 nongovernmental organizations were officially accredited as contacts of UNESCO, but many more were partners in the organization's numerous projects across the world (UNESCO 2003b:3). Furthermore, the organization has arranged "world public events," for example serving as lead agency for the UN literacy decade since 2003,

or by promoting the World Year on Education in 1970. A major current project is "Education for All," which is a worldwide coordinated activity of governmental and nongovernmental organizations with the aim of establishing universal education opportunities (UNESCO 2003b:5).

A main instrument used in UNESCO's activities is information dissemination. The organization publishes around 120 titles a year, either under its own imprint or in cooperation with academic and commercial publishers (UNESCO 2003b:4). It also uses instruments such as bulletins to spread information (UNESCO 2003a). The organization holds meetings at which stakeholders meet and discuss issues, and it "serves as a clearinghouse – that disseminates and shares information and knowledge – while helping member states to build their human and institutional capacities in diverse fields" (UNESCO 2003b:2). UNESCO in addition calls for indicators and exchange concerning education systems in general: "National education systems should be helped to gain strength by encouraging alliances and co-operation between ministries at regional level and between countries facing similar problems" (UNESCO 1996:x). Through its approach based on translating organizational features of a few states to the rest of the world, stimulating debates, and delivering common visions, UNESCO has become a facilitator of worldwide isomorphism (Finnemore 1993; Meyer and Ramirez 2005). However, increased activities of other organizations, such as those of the World Bank, have led to competition in the field of education policy. Tools such as educational statistics have become a contested field, and the OECD and World Bank have succeeded in their approach to indicators, which is much more output-oriented and directly comparative than UNESCO statistics used to be (Cusso and D'Amico 2005).

First steps with regard to lifelong learning

The organization is a main creator and disseminator of the idea of lifelong learning, having dealt with the issue already during the 1960s and 1970s. At the end of the 1960s, P.H. Coombs, Director of the UNESCO Institute for Educational Planning, published "The World Educational Crisis" (Coombs 1969). This work explicitly asserted that education should be a continuous process throughout life. Coombs's report was well received and initiated a wide debate about the future of education systems, further featured by the 1970 International Year of Education (Gerlach 2000:25). The issue gained further importance through the subsequent publication of the 1972 "Faure Report" – named after the Chairman of the Commission, Edgar Faure (UNESCO 1972). This report, originally titled "Learning to Be," undertook an assessment of the state

of the art concerning education and outlined the future of a "learning society." Four central assumptions guided the publication: the idea of a world community that is developing toward a common goal, the belief in democracy and in individual development and that, in the future, only lifelong education could adequately address the needs of society (UNESCO 1972:v–vi). The outlined reform principles recognized all forms of learning, formal and informal, the importance of pre-school education, and the development of adult education (UNESCO 1972:185–92,205–7). Its first and most basic principle was that of lifelong education. As the report put it: "We propose lifelong education as the master concept for educational policies in the years to come for both developed and developing countries" (UNESCO 1972:182). The comprehensive report outlined many features of policy proposals discussed in the following years, and it has often been called one of the most remarkable education policy documents of the twentieth century (Gerlach 2000:14,24).

In the UNESCO context, the report was followed by recommendations. The 1974 "Recommendation concerning Technical and Vocational Education" explicitly mentioned that "education must now be seen as a lifelong process" and that the objectives of technical and vocational education are part of a lifelong education system (UNESCO 1974:Preamble,II 6). Technical and vocational education was proposed as a part of general education, that is, preparation for an occupational field or as a part of continuing education. Following the ideas outlined in the Faure Report, vocational education was to be integrated in an education system that allows flexible transition from one learning part to another and in which recognition of prior learning is granted (UNESCO 1974:III 13). A second recommendation that underlined the new principle of lifelong learning was the 1976 "Recommendation on the Future of Adult Education." It was prepared by the third international conference on adult education, which took place in Tokyo in 1972 and which was concerned with "adult education in the context of life-long education" (Gerlach 2000:58).[7] The 1976 recommendation defined "life-long education and learning" as "an overall scheme aimed both at restructuring the existing education system and at developing the entire educational potential outside the education system" (UNESCO 1976:I (1)). The recommendation outlined the objectives and principles of adult education as a part of lifelong learning. It stated that "Each member state should […] recognize adult education as a necessary and specific component of its education system and as a permanent element in its social, cultural and economic development policy; it should, consequently,

promote the creation of structures, the preparation and implementation of programs and the application of educational methods which meet the needs and aspirations of all categories of adults [...]" (UNESCO 1976:II 4). The recommendation dealt with the content of adult education, methods, means, evaluation, and structures. Furthermore, it made proposals on the status of adult educators and financing issues. As in other proposals of that time, educational leave was promoted (UNESCO 1976:VIII 49 (c)).

The successor to the recommendations, the 1989 "Convention on Technical and Vocational Education," was more reluctant concerning lifelong learning. Although the convention included regulation on technical and vocational education for youth and adults, as well as a list of features that educational programs should have, the prospect of learning over the entire life span was not stressed and the term lifelong learning was mentioned only once (UNESCO 1989). Such reluctance mirrors a trend within the organization as well as within its political environment: the emphasis on lifelong learning in the 1970s did not continue throughout the following years, either in UNESCO or in other organizations. At the end of the 1970s, the debate on lifelong learning declined and did not resume until the 1990s. The fourth International Conference on Adult Education in Paris, 1985, served as an example of this lack of emphasis: although issues of high relevance for lifelong learning were dealt with, the recommendations at the meeting referred to this idea only very sporadically and its declaration only mentioned the universal right to learn (UNESCO 1985).

UNESCO and lifelong learning since the 1990s

Ten years later, however, this situation had completely changed once again. The fifth International Conference on Adult Education took place in Hamburg in 1997 (CONFINTEA V). With the participation of several governmental and nongovernmental organizations, the conference adopted a declaration on adult learning – the Hamburg Declaration – and an "Agenda for the Future" in which detailed steps for the development of adult learning were listed. In contrast to the 1985 declaration, the Hamburg declaration mentioned lifelong learning several times and placed it much more centrally, for example by mentioning a right to education throughout life (CONFINTEA 1997:Hamburg Declaration Section 7). During the following years, the UNESCO Institute for Lifelong Learning,[8] the organizer of the Hamburg conference, pursued follow-up measures by researching nonformal and informal learning accreditation procedures, promoting an adult learner week and discussing

strategies for lifelong learning (UIE 2000:14, 2001, 2005:3). As in the case of the 1989 convention, the shift of the conference mirrors a more general trend. From the very beginning, the 1990s had brought much support for lifelong learning and even enlarged its focus. In Jomtien, 1990, a world conference on Education for All, coordinated by several international organizations such as UNESCO, World Bank and UNDP, adopted the "World Declaration on Education for All: Meeting Basic Learning Needs." The declaration included an emphasis both on preprimary education and on the inclusion of adults as potential recipients of basic education. Further, it underlined the importance of basic education as a precondition of lifelong learning and requested an integrated system of educational opportunities that should contribute to lifelong learning (World Conference on Education for All 1990:Art 1(4),3 (1),5). The meeting's goals could not be reached in the following decade, but it had reestablished an idea of education over the entire life span, this time from early childhood to adulthood.

In 1991, the UNESCO General Conference decided to establish a commission for reflecting on the future of education systems. The "International Commission on Education for the 21st Century," under the chairmanship of Jacques Delors, was formally set up by the Secretary General at the beginning of 1993 and published its report in 1996, underlining the importance of lifelong learning for future education systems (UNESCO 1996:Part 1). The publication explicitly mentioned the base of a "World Society" characterized by growing exchange and increasing interdependency. Education is seen as being based on four pillars: "learning to know," based, for example, on learning to learn; "learning to do," being able to deal with different situations; "learning to live together" as a basis for pluralism; and "learning to be" as a basis for personal development. Lifelong learning is explicitly seen as the foundation of future education systems: "The concept of learning throughout life is the key that gives access to the twenty-first century. It goes beyond the traditional distinction between initial and continuing education. [...] It should open up opportunities for learning for all, for many different purposes – offering them a second or third chance, satisfying their desire for knowledge and beauty or their desire to surpass themselves, or making it possible to broaden and deepen strictly vocational forms of training, including practical training" (UNESCO 1996:111).

While the Delors Report also included proposals to conceptualize universities as institutions for continuing adult education and argued for their opening to grant access to a variety of learning opportunities

(UNESCO 1996:134), more recent UNESCO activities in addition promoted the idea of educational expansion in early childhood. A major event in this context was the 2000 World Education Forum in Dakar, which emphasized the value of lifelong learning for several development goals (World Education Forum 2000:18). Regional frameworks have been adopted and all underline the importance of early childhood education and care. The Caribbean and Latin American Framework even declares that it bases its work "upon the recognition of the universal right of everyone to high quality basic education from birth" and criticizes the previous lack of attention toward education for children under the age of four (World Education Forum 2000:36). Moreover, all regional frameworks agree on including adults in the provision of basic education, but some go beyond that: the African framework, for example, explicitly states the need to link formal and nonformal education, while the European framework speaks about the learner at the centre of interest, about learning how to learn and key skills (World Education Forum 2000:28–30,64–6). In the tradition of the Jomtien meeting ten years earlier, the meeting followed a broad concept of education and explicitly included early childhood and adulthood in its goals (World Education Forum 2000:12). Governments were requested to design early childhood education plans and adult education was to be expanded and diversified (World Education Forum 2000:15–16). The same trend can be observed in the UNESCO (2000) report "The Right to Education: Towards Education for All throughout Life." It also applies the right to education to all age groups and describes ways to implement lifelong learning (UNESCO 2000).

Aiming to set standards, the 2001 revised "Recommendation concerning Technical and Vocational Education" also conceptualized vocational education and training as an element of lifelong learning (UNESCO 2001:I). As a consequence, barriers between different levels and kinds of education were to be largely abolished, and flexible structures were required that would guarantee individual entry and reentry into education as well as continuous learning.

Thus, UNESCO fora subsequently extended the idea of education over the entire life span. This was stated even more explicitly in the organization's first world report, published in 2005 and titled "Towards Knowledge Societies." This report defined five educational stages from birth to retirement. The first is preprimary education; the second is compulsory education; the third is education and training following compulsory schooling; the fourth is continuing training; and the fifth is education after the working life (UNESCO 2005e:78). The report was

most explicit concerning the early years. It argued for a consequent inclusion of preprimary education as part of education policy, stating that "pre-primary education can no longer be considered to lie outside the sphere of political action" (UNESCO 2005e:78–9). The proposed integrated educational system from birth to later life encompasses a wide range of educational pathways and forms of provision. The report also proposed individual learning accounts and study-time entitlements that would guarantee a fixed time of learning over the life span, a tool that was already developed with the Delors Report (UNESCO 2005e:79–84).

From an organizational perspective, the UNESCO made lifelong learning more prominent by renaming its Institute of Education as Institute of Lifelong Learning in 2006. The tasks of the institute are the promotion of lifelong learning, in particular adult learning, and the support of literacy in developing countries. The institution is based in Hamburg and it is in charge of organizing the next conference on adult education, CONFINTEA VI, in 2009, where the main topics will again relate to adult education and lifelong learning (UNESCO Institute for Lifelong Learning 2007:2–3).

To summarize the different activities that UNESCO has carried out over the years, it becomes clear that the organization has invested much effort into promoting lifelong learning (see table 4.1). Classic standard-setting instruments of the organization, declarations of world conferences and publications all underlined the importance of the issue. The organization emphasizes the importance of the idea for developed and for developing countries: "Basic education is still an absolute priority.

Table 4.1   Major UNESCO activities concerning lifelong learning

Year	Activity
1972	Report: "Learning to be"
1974	Recommendation concerning technical and vocational education
1976	Recommendation on the future of adult education
1990	Jomtien summit
1996	Publication: Learning. The treasure within
1997	Hamburg Declaration on Adult Education & Agenda for the Future
2000	Dakar Summit: EFA
2001	Recommendation concerning technical and vocational education
2005	World Report: Towards Knowledge Societies

But adult education, which might seem irrelevant for countries that still have a long way to go to meet basic education needs, has nevertheless become decisive as essential condition for development" (UNESCO 2005e:24–5).

As also proposed in the Delors Report, several linkages to other agencies have been established for the promotion of lifelong learning (UNESCO 1996:189). Traditionally, UNESCO and ILO have worked together intensively, beginning with the signature of a "Memorandum on Collaboration in Matters of Technical and Vocational Education and Related Matters" in 1954 (UNESCO and ILO 2002:4). In 2002, they published a joint statement to express their ongoing common interest in this issue. It encompassed the 2001 UNESCO "Recommendation concerning Technical and Vocational Education" and the 2000 "Conclusions concerning Human Resources Training and Development" of the ILO General Conference. Both statements are seen as providing benchmarks concerning training, but they also specify a division of labor between the two organizations: while UNESCO is concerned with technical and vocational education in the context of the Education for All initiative, the ILO focuses on training for employment in the context of the "Global Employment Agenda" (UNESCO and ILO 2002:3). There are further opportunities for collaboration between UNESCO and other agencies; for example, the 1997 CONFINTEA was attended by the EU and OECD (Gerlach 2000:140). The recent report on knowledge societies takes up issues already promoted by the OECD, such as the linkage between neuroscience and education science in exploring how learning works (UNESCO 2005e:62). UNESCO activities are thus not separated from activities of other agencies.

Worldwide acknowledged activities: The OECD

The OECD is primarily concerned with securing economic progress in its member states. Its predecessor, the Organisation for European Economic Co-operation (OEEC), was initiated in the context of the Marshall plan in 1948 and was an exclusively European organization. In 1961, the OECD was set up, also including non-European members such as the United States and Canada. Today, the organization has 30 member states, most of them being western high-income states. In 2007, it began to establish closer relations with several other countries with the prospect of future membership. The OECD's headquarters are in Paris, but four regional offices exist in Washington, Berlin, Tokyo, and Mexico City. The organization's convention declares that the OECD

promotes policies designed "(a) to achieve the highest sustainable economic growth and employment and a rising standard of living in Member countries [...] (b) to contribute to sound economic expansion in member as well as non-member countries in the process of economic development; [...]" (OECD Convention Article 1).

From its beginning – ever since the OEEC – the OECD has been concerned with education policy and was foremost oriented toward economic implications. In the beginning, the organization mainly followed modernization theory and dealt with technical and scientific education. Later, educational equality moved to center stage, while labor market policies were emphasized after the oil crisis (OECD 1972; Papadopoulos 1994; Rinne *et al.* 2004). The OECD is an authority in education policy, a "grey eminence" whose policies can have a large impact on countries (Rinne *et al.* 2004). The organization includes some nonmembers as partner countries in its structure or projects. The OECD's current main instruments in education are policy reviews, education indicators, and the "Programme for International Student Assessment" (PISA). They are supplemented by conferences on educational issues and the coordination of the countries' policy activities and policy proposals formulated by experts (Jakobi and Martens 2007).

In 1969, the OECD established its "Centre for Research and Innovation in Education" (CERI), whose initial tasks were "(a) to identify the major obstacles to long-term qualitative improvement in educational systems and practice and (b) to promote research and experimentation in member countries which would reveal and test practical ways around these obstacles" (OECD 1972:43). CERI was originally set up through sponsorship from Shell and the Ford Foundation and later its budget was provided by member countries, but its mandate needs to be approved every five years (OECD 1972:43). The center carries out the major part of OECD's work on education and has initiated a large number of programs and approaches to education policy, such as "recurrent education," educational indicators and much more. Although the financing countries have to decide on the center's working program, it is to a certain extent free with regard to the areas of investigation it pursues. It accumulates knowledge on education, and "is oriented toward innovation in the sense of identifying and analyzing new trends and issues in education" (Schuller 2005:171). Further work on education within the organization is done by the Education Committee or the directorate. The committee was established in 1970 (OECD 1972:17–18), although it took more than three decades until the Directorate for Education was set up in 2002. Since then, education has become an

even more prominent issue within the organization and its communication activities.

Early steps concerning lifelong learning

As in the case of UNESCO, the OECD began working on lifelong learning at the end of the 1960s. The concept was called "recurrent education" at that time, a term introduced by Olof Palme at a 1969 OECD education ministers' meeting. He was influenced by a Swedish commission that worked on adult education at that time and suggested alternating phases of education and work throughout life. This was the first systematic attempt to further develop the education systems of industrialized states (Papadopoulos 1994:112–13). "The essence of the concept is that it distributes education over the life-span of the individual in a recurring way. This means a development away from the present practice of a long interrupted pre-work of full-time schooling" (Gass 1976:5).

In the years following Palme's speech, the OECD began to work systematically on the issue. From 1972 to 1977, the organization successively published country studies concerning recurrent education (Papadopoulos 1994:113,119). These reports were intended to describe existing educational provisions which qualify for classification under the heading of recurrent education, and also attempted to anticipate future developments in the field (Gass 1976:5). The reports provided a critical assessment of the policy. In general, they were short, outspoken, and often rather pessimistic about the issues (for example Cantor 1974:23–5; Hansen, 1976:32). They contained only a small number of specific proposals on how to make recurrent education a reality in the countries. Moreover, this advice was not the product of consultation with the countries, but, rather, work authored by individual scientists. They differ widely from current OECD reports that are published by the organization itself. The early series did not attempt to make any comparisons and did not generate best practices.

The programmatic development on recurrent education in the OECD reached its peak as early as 1973 with the publication of the "Clarifying Report" (OECD 1973). Titled "Recurrent Education – A Strategy for Lifelong Learning," it is still one of the main documents on lifelong learning development in the 1970s. The study proposed to shorten the length of secondary schooling and to plan education over the whole life span. Education was seen in the context of personal development, equality, and working life. The need for research was outlined and the linkage to labor market policy was discussed. The report was, however, not intended to deliver specific proposals, but was seen as a base

for discussion on the topic (OECD 1973:6). It was mainly intended to clarify the issue and stimulate discussion, and was to a minor extent also linked to the implications of a knowledge society (see Schuller *et al.* 2002). Although some measures, for example educational leave, were discussed, the report did not outline very specific policy consequences. When it was presented at the meeting of education ministers in 1973, sharp critique was raised by some governments, in particular the British government. As a compromise, they decided to dedicate the next conference to the discussion of recurrent education. At that conference, ministers agreed on a declaration on recurrent education, in which the concept was seen as a long-term strategy to restructure education systems. This late peak was not followed by any increased activity (Papadopoulos 1994:114), but this time the organization submitted reluctant – but more specific – proposals for policy change, such as the establishment of commissions or a changed admission policy for certain education stages (OECD 1975:40–9). In 1977, a further meeting concerning recurrent education took place, in which it became clear that progress toward lifelong learning remained very restricted (Papadopoulos 1994:115). The OECD emphasis on the issue ended with the publication of the last country report in the same year.

As in the case of UNESCO, OECD activity in the area of recurrent education was reduced in the following decade. In the 1980s, two conferences on financing recurrent education were organized, and later in that decade a 1984 education ministers' meeting took place that reaffirmed the need for educational opportunities throughout life (Levin and Schütze 1983:7; OECD 1986:1). Moreover, a report was published in 1986 on the issue, titled "Recurrent education revisited." Retrospectively, this report can be seen as an intermediate stage between the discussion during the 1970s and that during the 1990s. It ascertained that the climate toward recurrent education had changed over the years. While the 1960s and 1970s were analyzed as being rather radical in their proposals, the following years were seen as opening up space for a less comprehensive approach, and marked by caution and retrenchment (OECD 1986:2). Three central issues of the recurrent education debate were listed, which were assumed to serve as the basis for further work: issues of participation, recurrent education and the labor market, and the question of financing (OECD 1986:v). However, it was suggested that lifelong learning should be considered in another way than it had been before – with "dampened enthusiasm for all-embracing, prophetic reports and greater interest in practical aspects of recurrent education reform" (OECD 1986:v). The report analyzed the achievements so far,

listed obstacles to the success of recurrent education and gave an out-
look on future developments. However, it was not followed by any great
discussion within OECD fora. Only some countries started to work on
lifelong learning as early as the 1980s, for example Japan (Japanese
Ministry of Education 1996).

OECD and lifelong learning in the 1990s

Lifelong learning visibly began to reemerge in the 1990s. The 1994
"OECD Jobs Study" had already emphasized the need for further quali-
fying the labor force (OECD 1995:15). The results of the "Adult Literacy
Survey" had further illustrated a lack of competencies, in some cases
serious, among adults, which underlined the importance of further
qualification (OECD 1996:237–8). Having been inspired by the par-
allel activities of UNESCO (Interview OECD) the OECD's 1996 meet-
ing was concerned with "Lifelong Learning for All." There, ministers
unanimously agreed on the importance of the issue and declared that
"Lifelong Learning will be essential for everyone as we move into the
21st century and has to be made accessible to all [...]" (OECD 1996:21).
The meeting further outlined strategies on how to facilitate lifelong
learning on the individual level. In this context, four areas were high-
lighted: preschooling and schooling as preparation for lifelong learning
processes; the linkage between work and learning; the role of different
stakeholders; and the creation of incentives.

   The conference was an initial event for the success of lifelong learn-
ing within the OECD, its members and beyond. There was no other
concept that would have been better for CERI to enter the new century
(Interview OECD). Lifelong learning today serves as a framework con-
cept or as an overarching theme for very different policy topics within
the OECD – a development that, in turn, enables the organization to
intervene in the most disparate policy areas by showing a relevance to
lifelong learning. Under the umbrella of lifelong learning, the OECD
examines such issues as motivation for lifelong learning, the role of
schools in this context and whether school buildings are suited to the
needs of lifelong learners (OECD 2000, 2002a,c; Istance 2003). In the
meantime, research on the issue is strengthened by, for example, the
foundation of a "lifelong learning network" that is concerned with
combining pedagogy and neurology (Hinton 2005).

   As in the 1970s, the organization began to publish reports dealing
with the implementation of lifelong learning. However, these were not
descriptive reports written by external scientific observers, but rather
provided specific advice elaborated in cooperation with the countries

concerned. One example is the 1999 review of lifelong learning in Hungary (OECD 1999); another is the country review that took place in Norway from 2000 to 2002 (OECD 2002b). Both studies were dedicated to closely examining the education systems and outlining recommendations concerning their future development. Moreover, countries are explicitly compared with each other today, for example with regard to the participation rates in preschooling or adult education (OECD 2001b:43–71). A comprehensive project that compared and evaluated lifelong learning policies in different countries was set up in 2000: "The Role of Qualification Systems in Promoting Lifelong Learning" explored which instruments are particularly successful for facilitating participation in adult education (Reuling and Hanf 2004:96). Working groups were established and 15 country reports were published to enhance the exchange of information between the countries concerning the creation and management of their qualification systems. One part of the project was the development of "National Qualification Frameworks," in which 24 countries and other international organizations such as the European Commission, World Bank, and ILO participated (OECD 2004b). The 2001 education ministers' conference decided that future emphasis should be placed on financing questions, which can also be linked to taxation (OECD 2001a, 2005a). The OECD emphasizes the importance of lifelong learning in various ways and in close collaboration with relevant bodies of the member states. Germany, for example, has established an Expert Commission on Financing Lifelong Learning in 2001 (Expertenkommission zur Finanzierung Lebenslangen Lernens 2004) and, in cooperation with the OECD, this commission organized a conference that dealt with questions of financing (OECD 2004a). Lifelong learning will also remain a priority of future OECD activities and recent working plans specify that the OECD should help members as well as partner countries to realize lifelong learning for all (OECD 2005c:10–11).

Summarizing the overall development within the OECD, it can be stated that the organization has carried out a wide range of initiatives, trying to bring lifelong learning closer to the countries (table 4.2). The organization has become a central player in pushing the idea and has coordinated the different countries' activities to calibrate their policies. In contrast to earlier activities, the OECD has now elaborated a method of combining different tools: it sets agendas, gives advice, and coordinates country policies (Jakobi and Martens 2007). A main instrument of the OECD is information exchange concerning lifelong learning, and it can thereby influence national policy preferences.

Table 4.2 Major OECD activities concerning lifelong learning

Year	Activity
1969	Conference
1972–1977	Descriptive country studies
1973	Conference and publication
1975	Conference and publication
1980	Conferences on "Financing Lifelong Learning"
1986	Report concerning the "State of the Art" and future perspectives of "recurrent education"
1996	Conference and publication
2000–2005	Project "The Role of Qualification Frameworks in Promoting Lifelong Learning"
2001	Conference
2003	Conference concerning cofinancing lifelong learning
2003	Working program 2003–2006
1999; 2002	Country reviews in Hungary and Norway

Source: Adapted from Jakobi and Martens (2007).

Furthermore, the OECD is well connected to other international education policy actors, which secures a wide dissemination of its perspectives and sensitive handling and framing of emergent issues. Earlier proposals concerning recurrent education, such as paid educational leave, were already linked to ILO activities (OECD 1973, 1975). Nowadays, OECD representatives promote lifelong learning in, for example, the context of the European Bologna Process, in World Bank workshops or at ASEM meetings (Wurzburg 2003; ASEM 2005b; Norwegian Ministry of Education and Research 2005). In addition, the OECD work on qualification frameworks has been accompanied by the EU, World Bank, and ILO. The organization is therefore a central part of an international network of organizations that promote lifelong learning.

Education and development: The World Bank

The World Bank was founded in 1944 together with its sister institution, the International Monetary Fund. The Bank[9] follows three main lines of activities: it provides capital for projects intended to enhance national economic development; it carries out research; and it provides policy

advice. While the organization mainly supported means for developing infrastructure in its early years, today lending is either project-based or policy-based. This means that the Bank supplies money for a specific infrastructure as well as for implementing changed policies. Since the end of the 1990s, the organization has attempted to become a "knowledge bank," a central agency on the world level for knowledge on national developments (Gilbert and Vines 2000:29–33; but see also Klees 2002:459–60). The decision-making process in the organization heavily depends on the main financing countries, especially the United States. Although part of the UN framework, the World Bank does not follow a rule of "one country, one vote;" rather, voting rights correspond with a country's economic capacity to support the World Bank financially. The success of World Bank activities is difficult to assess since it heavily depends on the criteria used and the alternatives provided, but critics often speak of massive failures (Klees 2002; Nunnenkamp 2002). A large number of countries are indebted due to excessive credits in the past, and Bank advice has not always been helpful for national development. Such failures "have a long tradition in the Bank, and this far, no one has been able to answer the question of who is accountable" (Heyneman 2003:331). For these and other reasons, the organization is the subject of much critique.[10]

Despite all the changes in the Bank, its approach to lending in education has barely changed in the course of its existence: it is "a celebration of the elegance of human capital theory" (Jones 1997:118). While the human capital approach has formed a continuous background for the Bank's activities, education policy has nonetheless undergone many changes over recent decades (Mundy 2002). Since the beginning of lending for education, the Bank published four education sector strategy papers in 1971, 1974, 1980, and 1999, as well as a policy review in 1995. They set the framework for the Bank's lending guidelines and disseminate the Bank's arguments to the interested public in agencies and the scientific community. In its first years of education financing, the Bank lent funds for technical education and training and secondary schooling. The aim was to build up a mid-level management and candidates for higher education. Under the presidency of Robert McNamara, it was recognized that primary education should be a main focus of the Bank (Finnemore 1996a). In the 1980s, in the context of the "Washington Consensus" (Bonal 2002), the discussion on the privatization of education and the introduction of market mechanisms became stronger within the Bank, and loans were increasingly bound to the obligation to charge fees and promote privatization. Although in the 1990s some

commitments beyond economic goals were made (Bonal 2002:13), the 1995 paper "Policies and Strategies for Education" still explicitly restricts public intervention into education to reducing inequality, compensating for market failures, and information about the benefits of education. The state's role has increasingly been defined as a monitoring agency (Jones 1997:125–7). The 1999 "Education Sector Strategy" continues this trend and sees nongovernmental actors as the more efficient and effective educational providers (World Bank 1999:18).

The Bank was not involved in the 1970s movement concerning lifelong learning and, compared with its earlier activities, the organization's recent turn toward the issue was somewhat surprising; during the 1980s, the Bank's emphasis on primary education led to the closing of many adult and nonformal education programs. During the preparations for the 1990 Jomtien summit, the Bank was about to withdraw its contribution if the summit's focus on basic education included adult education. Moreover, funding for adult education was further reduced during the 1990s (Klees 2002:461). Thus explicit activities on the issue have been initiated only recently. In January 1999, for the first time, World Bank President Wolfensohn mentioned lifelong learning in the context of the comprehensive development framework (World Bank 1999:iii). Later that year, the *Education Sector Strategy* paper stated that " 'countries that provide opportunities for people to learn at all ages – as their work or lives change, and as new knowledge replaces old – will have an edge over those who do not" (World Bank 1999:8). Moreover, the need to recognize lifelong learning is expressed by its inclusion in one of the checklist questions that the World Bank integrates into its project developments (World Bank 1999:40–1). However, the 1999 sector strategy did not move far beyond mentioning the issue and lacked more specific recommendations.

For some time now, nonetheless, the Bank has prominently featured lifelong learning, and it has become a concept disseminated in various contexts. The organization stated that a "lifelong learning framework encompasses learning throughout the life cycle, from birth to grave and in different learning environments, formal, non-formal and informal" (World Bank 2005). In its most prominent publication on the subject, the Bank identified four main issues that the countries need to deal with: it analyzed the societal needs that derive from the knowledge economy to the education system, and it elaborated perspectives on how lifelong learning should be promoted, on what a governance framework should look like, and on how it should be financed (World Bank 2003b). Moreover, the Bank also developed an approach to measure a country's progress toward lifelong learning (World Bank 2003b:104–7).

Concerning lending practice, the first project, established in Chile, encompassed the goals of providing new opportunities for adult learning and training, improving the quality and increasing the coverage of technical–professional education, establishing instruments that support the provision of learning and training services, and strengthening the institutional basis for the project in Chile (World Bank 2002). Other projects explicitly targeted at lifelong learning were established in Mexico and Argentina (World Bank 2007b,c). Furthermore, the Bank has promoted lifelong learning through distance education, for example through the "African Virtual University," or other means related to different educational stages (World Bank Institute 2001:2).

The Bank also organized seminars and workshops that addressed the necessity of lifelong learning for developing countries or for specific regions (World Bank 2005, 2007a), or where speakers of other organizations were invited to give talks on the subject (Wurzburg 2003). In Germany in 2002, a global conference on "Lifelong Learning and the Knowledge Economy" took place, organized by the World Bank and German donors. The conference identified policies needed to support lifelong learning systems, such as qualification frameworks (World Bank 2003a:1–2,14). The idea of the global knowledge economy and the new emphasis have clearly enhanced the Bank's commitment to lifelong learning. In comparison with its position of rejecting the need for adult education in the 1990s, the Bank's statement in the context of the conference reveals an impressive turnaround, since, as it says, "In the 21st century, workers need to be lifelong learners, adapting continuously to changed opportunities and labor market demands of the knowledge economy. Lifelong learning [...], is not a luxury for any country. Education systems in all countries will have to evolve in that direction" (World Bank 2003a:v).

While this statement includes childhood education, most of the Bank's analyses in the context of lifelong learning focus on postbasic education. Such increased attention to learning during adulthood, however, does not imply that the Bank sees the need for governments to finance it. As in other policy fields, the Bank favors private educational investments and provision. The state is mainly restricted to regulation and information services, or to assuring equity in education. Public spending should, purportedly, be mainly restricted to basic education, while financing further stages remains an individual responsibility and should be considered to be a private investment (McMahon 2003:54; Palacios 2003:10–11).[11] In line with its overall agenda, the role of the state is largely restricted to coordination activities or to creating

incentives (Fretwell and Colombano 2000:33; World Bank 2003b:59). In its communication, the bank states that it has been concerned with lifelong learning for more than a decade (World Bank 2003b:109), but most of the early activities had only a weak link to specific lifelong learning targets. The first projects concerning lifelong learning have only been implemented or planned in recent years, for example in Chile and Mexico. Overall, the Bank has only recently turned to lifelong learning and has financed corresponding projects only to a minor extent. The organization has nonetheless already published documents on the issue and has promoted it in various contexts such as international conferences or workshops.

Education and work: The International Labor Organization

The ILO's tradition, aims, and overall program differ largely from those of the World Bank. Founded in 1919 as part of the League of Nations, it is the oldest organization in the UN system. The organization has a tripartite structure, so that representatives of governments, employers, and employees attend its meeting with full voting rights (Strang and Chang 1993:240–2; Willers 1998:98–9; ILO 2004a).[12] This structure is unique in the UN system, and it represents a model of social partnership and a social democratic or "corporatist" tradition. The organization's aim is to "formulate international policies and programs to improve working conditions [...] and to develop international labor standards to serve as guidelines for national authorities in putting these policies to action" (Salt and Bowland 1996:705).

   The ILO's main instrument is standard-setting through recommendations and conventions. These are adopted by a two-thirds majority of the International Labor Conference and have to be submitted to the national authorities. If ratified, the conventions are legally binding. Even if countries do not ratify the conventions or recommendations, they are obliged to regularly inform the ILO about the country's position toward them (§19 ILO Constitution). Recommendations provide guidance on policy legislation and practice (ILO 2001c:7). These are not legally binding but they are subject to the same procedural regulations as conventions as soon as they are adopted (§19 ILO Constitution). ILO supports governments in meeting their obligations derived from adoptions (Strang and Chang 1993:242).

   Beside such norm-setting activities, the organization provides technical assistance through programs that develop national capacities for employment-related training, especially in developing countries. In the

context of education, such technical assistance is often linked to programs for implementing or enhancing vocational education and training (ILO 2005b). Other ILO activities include, for example, research on all aspects of working life, information dissemination, collection of statistics, and educational activities (Strang and Chang 1993:241; Willers 1998:98).[13] Generally, ILO activities receive less attention than those of other organizations. This is also expressed in government representation. As Taylor observed, meetings of the Bretton Woods organizations have usually been attended by British senior officials, while junior staff are delegated to ILO meetings (Taylor 2002:88). As in the case of the World Bank, the assessment of the success of ILO activities depends heavily on the criteria used and the countries investigated: ILO conventions have led, in part, to increased welfare spending (Strang and Chang 1993). Moreover, the conventions can serve as a framework of reference and are important for the activities of social movements and other political actors, who then implement policy change (Abu Shark 2002).

Unlike the World Bank, the ILO was already involved in the debate on lifelong learning during the 1970s, mainly through its discussion on paid educational leave. The organization set up related standards with the 1974 Paid Educational Leave Convention, the 1975 Human Resource Development Convention, and their corresponding recommendations in 1974, 1975, and 2004 (ILO 1974a,b, 1975a,b, 2004b). All are directly linked to issues of lifelong learning, politically and historically. In the 1970s, paid educational leave was seen as a means to enhance work-related and general education of adults (Schütze 1996:303). The Convention reacted to that development and stated that a paid educational leave should be granted to employees for the purpose of training at any level – general, social and civic education or trade union education. Like lifelong learning discussions today, the convention and recommendations referred to the need for continuous education due to changing societal conditions, such as "scientific and technological development and the changing pattern of economic and social relations" (ILO 1974a:Preamble). Paid educational leave was defined as "leave granted to a worker for educational purposes for a specified period during working hours, with adequate financial entitlements" (ILO 1974a:Preamble Article 2). The corresponding recommendation further specified implementation, for example through reference to systems of guidance and the need to promote the educational leave among employers and employees (ILO 1974b). On the national level, paid educational leave could be implemented by law or settled through collective bargaining, or both. Although only 34 countries ratified the leave,

the convention had a large impact (Schütze 1996).[14] It was a first means to promote and implement continuous learning processes over the lifetime, and even in 2001, a reexamination of convention and recommendation led to the conclusion that it would still fit into the organization's ongoing lifelong learning debate (ILO 2001a:3, 2001b:1).

In 1975, the ILO adopted the Human Resource Development Convention and its corresponding recommendation. The act was mainly intended to promote policies and programs concerning vocational training, "closely linked with employment, in particular through public employment services" (ILO 1975b:II 4). The recommendation only mentioned vocational training as a means to develop resources, and the different programs were meant to progress in stages. This is quite distinct from the current understanding of human resource development, which emphasizes forms of learning besides vocational training and tries to establish modular, individualized learning programs. The recommendation contained references to the initial training of persons who had never received such training before, and was ambitious in integrating and qualifying disabled persons and minority groups. Special paragraphs were dedicated to rural areas or industries in decline.

The recommendation has recently been revised, due also to a new consensus that had emerged in developmental assistance during the 1990s, which perceived human resource development as a critical factor for successful economic development (Salt and Bowland 1996:707). This fact, linked to the idea of lifelong learning as a means for the continuous rise of qualifications, led to a revision of the recommendation proposed by the ILO general conference in 2000: "There is a need for a more dynamic instrument that is more applicable and used by the member States and the social partners in formulating and implementing human resources development policies, integrated with other economic and social policies, particularly employment policies" (ILO 2000). Instead of focusing on implementation issues, the new recommendation was expected to clarify policy targets, framework, and priority fields (ILO 2003:3). Partly accompanied by joint meetings with other international organizations (CEDEFOP 2003), the recommendation was elaborated in the following years and adopted at the 2004 general conference. It represents a comprehensive approach to education and training, and references to the idea of lifelong learning can be found on nearly every page. Policy proposals are formulated concerning the development and implementation of education and training policies, education and preemployment training; the development of competencies; training providers and the introduction of qualification frameworks. While the

old recommendation mentioned educational stages, the new one sees the need to develop and build upon individual skills. Issues of social inclusion are dealt with less thoroughly, but some remarks on special needs of youth, low-skilled people, migrants and other vulnerable groups are given. The new recommendation further contains an explicit reference to private training providers, and the governmental role in this context is seen as defining a framework for certification, identifying the role of government and social partners in training, quality assurance and quality standards.

Besides its normative instruments, the ILO further provides technical assistance for countries in lifelong learning affairs. Projects implemented are, for example, handicraft promotion in Jordan, which aims to develop a handicraft subsector. It includes technical training, self-employment skills, design, and marketing as well as "core and lifelong learning skills" (ILO 2005c); another project is concerned with supporting the Albanian employment service in its efforts to redeploy "redundant public employees." It includes training for the individuals and capacity-building at the national level to enable the country to provide the service autonomously in future (ILO 2005d).

Today, lifelong learning has become a general framework in which vocational education is seen as an important element. Nowadays, the organization is mainly concerned with national qualification frameworks as very practical means to assess individual learning throughout the life span. The 2000 resolution and the recommendation both mention the importance of the frameworks, and the ILO established a project linked to their promotion. It disseminated information about selected national qualification frameworks and their background. Key questions in the recommendations follow-up have been the recognition of prior learning and the feasibility of national qualification frameworks (Dyson and Keating 2005; ILO 2005a; Young 2005). Research published by the ILO underlines the importance of qualification frameworks for developing countries and describes ways to implement them (Young 2005:32–4). The most recent publication contains a comprehensive introduction to the setting up and management of qualification frameworks (Tuck 2007).

Moreover, in its efforts to implement lifelong learning policies, the organization is linked to other UN agencies, for example through a joint UNESCO and ILO project in Botswana. There, additional vocational training and education were intended to build up a broad skill base as well as the specialization needed for higher-level skills and technician training. As a consequence, Botswana launched a technical

education program that was "designed to a high international standard, includes strict quality assurance measures, prepares for first employment, opens doors for further and higher education, and provides a base for lifelong learning" (UNESCO 2003c:Botswana). This is only one example illustrating how measures currently promoted in industrialized countries – such as quality assurance, education in modules, qualification frameworks, and lifelong learning in general – are transferred to the developing world through the activities of international organizations.

To summarize ILO's activities, instruments like standard-setting and technical assistance are the organization's main tools in the field of lifelong learning. Education policy is not a central activity of the organization, but it is linked to international discussions on lifelong learning related to work and employment. The organization supports several forms of adult and continuing education. Its standard-setting in education deals with paid educational leave and human resource development. By featuring qualification frameworks and providing information on them, the ILO also actively advocates policy transfer from one country to another.

Regional diffusion: The European Union and partners

Within the European Union, the field of education has traditionally been a core national task. Although the EU is a supranational entity and states have delegated some sovereignty to it, education has not been an issue of European concern for a long time (see Balzer and Rusconi 2007; Jakobi and Rusconi 2008). In the context of the Treaties of Rome, European activities in education were restricted to training and mutual recognition; the first activities with regard to the harmonization of higher education in the 1970s failed (Teichler 1998; Hackl 2001) and European activities were continuously opposed by the member states. However, supported by the European Court of Justice, education has increasingly become an international policy field of the Union (compare Walkenhorst 2008). The treaties of Maastricht officially established education as a European activity: Articles 126 and 127 expressed the aim of developing a European dimension in education, whereby harmonization was explicitly excluded. However, since the late 1990s, the European level of education policy has gained a strong influence on national education policy reforms and education policy is a common European issue today (Jakobi and Rusconi 2008). This is perhaps most obvious in the case of the Bologna Process, which entails the stepwise

convergence of European higher education systems. This process started in 1998 as an intergovernmental initiative, but many of the proposals are in line with those of the Commission, which has also increasingly taken part in the process (Balzer and Rusconi 2007).

The European Union and lifelong learning

Lifelong learning has been part of European policies since the 1990s. The 1993 White Paper "Growth, Competitiveness, Employment" (EU Commission 1993) already emphasized the critical issue of employability and the need for training. The 1995 White Paper "Teaching and Learning: Towards the Learning Society" further states: "In the face of unemployment and technological upheaval, training must go beyond the framework of initial education [...]" (EU Commission 1995:4). The paper further outlines the launch of a "European Year of Lifelong Learning" (EU Commission 1995). This event, held in 1996, was the first major event concerning the explicit promotion of lifelong learning in the EU. Eight themes were at the center of interest, among them high-quality general education, the promotion of continuing education and training, and the development of a European dimension of initial and continuing education. Framed by the European Year, national coordinating bodies organized, for example, seminars, conferences, open door events or competitions. More than 500 projects were financed with an overall contribution of around eight million ECUs. The year has been judged as a success and as a starting point for a large number of national activities and legislative initiatives as well as the creation of linkages among different education stakeholders (EU Commission 1999:12–15). At the end of the European Year, the Council adopted conclusions on a strategy for lifelong learning. These conclusions were comprehensive and included diverse areas of education, from preschool to accreditation of teachers (European Council 1996).

Central aims of the European lifelong learning policy were employability and active citizenship (EU Commission 2000:5). Therefore, since the 1997 Luxembourg European Council and its emphasis on employability, lifelong learning has become "a horizontal objective of the European employment strategy" (European Council 2002a:1). This development reached a peak with the 2000 Lisbon summit and the establishment of the Lisbon strategy with education as a key issue, a context in which lifelong learning became central for the development of an active labor market policy. The European Council agreed to give it a high priority, in particular by linking it to a European social model (European Council 2000). It has, in addition, become "the guiding

principle of the resulting program of work on the concrete objectives of education and training systems [...] which now constitutes the single comprehensive framework for community cooperation in this field" (EU Commission 2003a:4).

Moreover, the meeting established the Open Method of Coordination as a means of promoting coherent policies throughout Europe. In consequence, the 2000 Memorandum on Lifelong Learning included thoughts on indicators, benchmarks, and best practices for each objective, including non-European initiatives (EU Commission 2000:24–36). Being a "Commission Staff Working Document," the memorandum was conceived as a means for stimulating the discussion between the Commission, member countries, and other stakeholders (see for example EU Commission 2003b,c). It stated that: "Lifelong learning is no longer just one aspect of education and training; it must become the guiding principle for provision and participation across the full continuum of learning contexts. [...] All those living in Europe, without exception, should have equal opportunities to adjust to the demands of social and economic change and to participate actively in Europe's future" (EU Commission 2000:3). The Commission presented six key messages on how lifelong learning could become reality, and special emphasis was placed on linking together diverse stakeholders. Important cornerstones were, for example, a guarantee of access to learning and raising levels of investment in human resources. Further, it is underlined that all forms of learning – formal, nonformal and informal – should not only be lifelong, but rather life-wide (EU Commission 2000:9). This means that learning should be brought closer to the home and the very local dimension of lifelong learning should be strengthened. This would include a diversification of learning opportunities, such as learning centers in everyday locations like "village halls and shopping malls, libraries and museums, places of worship, parks and public squares, train and bus stations, health and leisure complexes, and workplace canteens" (EU Commission 2000:19).

A consultation process on the memorandum was carried out before, in 2001, the memorandum's successor "Making a European Area of Lifelong Learning a Reality" was published as a communication from the Commission (EU Commission 2001). The publication emphasized the role of lifelong learning in empowering citizens and serving the economic goals of the Union. The European area of lifelong learning linked together different initiatives that had been separated before, but were seen as coherent: the "European Employment Strategy," the "European Social Agenda," the "Skills and Mobility Action Plan," the "eLearning

Initiative," and the "White Paper on Youth." Special consideration was given to issues like assessment and recognition of learning, resources, guidance, and "innovative pedagogy." In addition, a database of good practice, indicators, and benchmarks was developed. It was planned that this agenda would be followed up by the Commission in cooperation with other European institutions and the member countries as well as with nongovernmental organizations and other international organizations such as the Council of Europe, OECD or UNESCO (EU Commission 2001:5).

The emphasis on lifelong learning continued in the following years. In their 2002 work program on education and training, the European Council and the Commission again underlined the importance of lifelong learning as an element of future education systems. They set the target that, by 2010, "for the benefit of citizens and the Union as a whole [...] Europeans at all ages should have access to lifelong learning" (European Council 2002b:3). Increased information dissemination and advice, and providing more flexible forms of learning, were seen as measures to stimulate a growing demand (European Council 2002b:11–12). In the same year, a Council resolution on lifelong learning was adopted, emphasizing a "cradle-to-grave" principle of education and its provision in different settings. The resolution stated that "lifelong learning must be understood as all learning activity undertaken throughout life, with the aim of improving knowledge, skills and competencies within a personal, civic, social and/or employment-related perspective" (European Council 2002a:2).

European activities concerning lifelong learning were increasingly targeted at the local and individual levels. A proposal concerning "European networks to promote the local and regional dimension of lifelong learning" was published in 2002 (EU Commission 2002a). Among the objectives of the initiative were "strategies for regional networks for lifelong learning," promoting "lifelong learning and active citizenship in the region" and establishing "lifelong learning and the promotion of economic growth in the region" (EU Commission 2002a:8–9). One hundred and twenty regions all over Europe participated in the initiative (EU Commission 2005a). Further projects in the context of lifelong learning were the implementation of "Europass," the establishment of a common European CV, the Copenhagen process, and activities concerning a European qualification framework. All initiatives had the aim of documenting individual qualifications under a common scheme. Europass and the CV were targeted at the individual level, the Copenhagen process was intended to harmonize vocational

education and training, and the European qualification framework enabled the comparison and linkage of educational phases across countries and over the life span. The European Council requested the creation of a framework in 2005, following former recommendations by education ministers (EU Commission 2005b:4). The Framework encompassed eight common educational stages and it was envisioned that countries would first establish national qualification systems which would subsequently be linked to the European framework as a meta-framework (EU Commission 2007).[15]

A further peak in lifelong learning policy development was the 2006 decision of the European Parliament and the Council to establish a lifelong learning action program. It was established with the aim of further developing a European knowledge society with a high-quality education and training system. The agenda included programs linked to educational phases from preprimary and secondary to higher education, vocational education and adult education. It was thus targeted at education over the whole life span. Access was given to different groups of society, ranging from pupils and students to education institutions, business, nongovernmental organizations and more. From 2007 to 2013, more than 6.9 billion Euros are to be invested and the program has enabled the Community to develop wide-ranging education policies at the European level, including financing of programs and technical assistance or the exchange of policies and their evaluation (European Union 2006:2–10).

To summarize the organizations' activities so far, the EU is the only organization presented in this book that, in principle, could establish supranational legal regulations for the implementation of lifelong learning. However, the treaties restrict its influence and, therefore, project financing or soft law like the Open Method of Coordination is mainly used for assuring progress toward the targets. Not until 2006 did the Union adopt a formal decision of both the Council and the Parliament on a lifelong learning program. Since the European Year of Lifelong Learning in 1996, however, the issue has become increasingly important for Europe, and various activities have been initiated over the years, ranging from Council decisions to Commission proposals, funded programs or the establishment of the qualification framework (see table 4.3).

As in the other cases, linkages to other international organizations can be observed. In particular, the case of the European Qualification Framework illustrates in real time how similar the policy development is within quite different organizations, since both OECD and the ILO

Table 4.3 European activities linked to lifelong learning

Year	Activity
1993	• White Paper on Growth, Competitiveness and Employment
1995	• White Paper on Teaching and Learning: Towards the Learning Society
1996	• European Year of Lifelong Learning • Council Conclusions on a Strategy for Lifelong Learning
1997	• Luxembourg European Council introduces training as a priority in its employment guidelines
2000	• Lisbon Strategy with lifelong learning as a key element • Feira Council requests the identification of coherent strategies and practical measures to promote lifelong learning • Memorandum on lifelong learning
2001	• Education Council stresses the role of lifelong learning as a clear priority in national employment policies • Ministers of Education give mandate for report "Quality Indicators of Lifelong Learning" • Communication "Making A European Area of Lifelong Learning a Reality" • Lifelong learning becomes part of the Bologna Process
2002	• Work Programme on Education and Training in the Union until 2010 includes lifelong learning • Council of the European Union adopts a resolution on lifelong learning • R3L Initiative
2003	• Questionnaires concerning the Follow-Up of 2002 Resolution and Communication "Making a European Area of Lifelong Learning a Reality"
2005	• Publication "Towards a European Qualification Framework for Lifelong Learning" • Lifelong Learning Session at the Bergen Meeting of the Bologna Process
2006	• Decision of the European Parliament and the Council on an action program in the field of lifelong learning
2007	• European Qualification Framework

are working on exactly the same issue. However, this is not the only case of parallelism. As illustrated, the year 1996 marked a starting point concerning EU activities on lifelong learning: with the activities of the European Year on lifelong learning, the organization secured widespread and increased attention. This success was also enhanced by the

work of other international organizations – OECD member countries were lobbying for the year within the EU (Interview OECD). Moreover, the Commission explicitly acknowledges that policy activities of other international organizations, particularly those of the OECD, have supported the diffusion of lifelong learning within EU countries (EU Commission 2003a:4). Furthermore, future cooperation with other organizations – such as the Council of Europe, OECD or UNESCO – regarding "the development of lifelong learning policies and concrete actions" is explicitly demanded by the member states (European Council 2002a:3).

The Asia Europe Meeting

In 1996, the ASEM process began with a first summit in Bangkok. Ministers met every two years, until the extension to annual meetings was decided in 2001 (EU Website 2005b). The ASEM process has three pillars: an economic one, a political one, and a social, cultural, and intellectual one. In the realm of the latter, the Asia Europe Foundation was established, which is the only formal organization linked to ASEM, and which deals with educational exchange. Since 2001, it has organized a fellowship program for student and faculty exchange between the regions, and it is administering the "Education Hub" program. This program was established in 1998 and it brings together European and Asian Universities as centers of excellence (EU Website 2005a). It aims to establish the personal and thematic exchange between universities in ASEM countries (ASEM 2005a; IIAS 2005).

In 2001, the ASEM Foreign Ministers' meeting approved a proposal on the "ASEM Lifelong Learning Initiative." This initiative was carried out during the following year; it held three international conferences in 2002 and presented conclusions to the head of the ASEM states in September 2002. The initiative resulted in a shared commitment and understanding of the different states regarding lifelong learning. As a document states: "During the activities undertaken, a common understanding of challenges, key issues and visions in the field of lifelong learning has been identified and further developed. Exchange of experiences, discussions and in depth studies of key themes and practices in lifelong learning have provided substantial input to the formulation or recommendations on the promotion of lifelong learning in ASEM member countries as well as to the issue how cooperation between ASEM countries can be strengthened in future" (ASEM 2002a:9). Corresponding to the EU idea, lifelong learning included all learning activities – formal, informal, and nonformal. The importance

of lifelong learning was linked to its role concerning employability and active citizenship as well as securing social inclusion and personal fulfillment (ASEM 2002a:10). The issue was treated in three separate working groups, one dealing with basic skills, a second one with questions of recognition, and the third one evaluating policies for granting access to lifelong learning (ASEM 2002b,c,d).

Like other international activities, the ASEM lifelong learning project is linked to other international organizations. In 2003, together with, for example, the EU, World Bank and the ILO, it was part of a conference on lifelong learning in Greece (CEDEFOP 2003). A further activity was the 2005 conference on lifelong learning that took place in Copenhagen. The conference dealt with further expanding the cooperation within the "education hub" and underlined the importance of lifelong learning particularly in that context. A central entrepreneur for lifelong learning was included, too: the head of the OECD's Center for Educational Research and Innovation gave a presentation on "Life Long Learning – A challenge to the Knowledge Economy" (ASEM 2005b:2). ASEM has maintained its emphasis on education with the establishment of regular ministers' meetings on education since 2007, including activities such as the lifelong learning initiative (ASEM 2007). The meeting is thus a further example of how countries are continuously involved in discussions, working groups, projects, and communication concerning lifelong learning. It is one additional forum in which countries not yet caught by the idea of lifelong learning can be convinced that it is important to deal with it.

Building bridges and promoting change: Transnational activities

By elaborating on international organizations and their activities, this chapter has so far foremost presented governmental activity. As outlined before, however, world society consists of more than the state world. This section therefore illustrates the activities of nongovernmental organizations in the field and shows how science, an important element of policy development, has increasingly turned toward the issue of lifelong learning and hence also provided a rationale for further political engagement.

Nongovernmental organizations

The role of nongovernmental organizations in disseminating social practices and their power to facilitate the implementation of international

values are widely acknowledged (for example Risse *et al.* 2002; Karns and Mingst 2004:211–48). Nongovernmental organizations can put issues on the political agenda and they can support implementation at the local level. They can reach parts of the population that are difficult or impossible to be reached by the state and they can even protect individuals against oppressive state activity. Their influence, however, varies across different stages of the policy process. Nongovernmental organizations are particularly influential with regard to agenda-setting on the international level and the internalization of international values (Risse 2002:265). New institutionalism conceives such organizations as a central force for establishing and enforcing world cultural models. They are in part more successful in implementing policies than governmental organizations (Boli and Thomas 1997; Abu Shark 2002). In particular, the diffusion of cultural models to the individual level is mainly caused by local nongovernmental activism, so that such organizations are a source of worldwide societal convergence (Meyer 2000:243–4).

Nongovernmental organizations are linked to the development of lifelong learning in three ways, depending on the specific organization and its way of working. First, nongovernmental organizations can be providers of education. As such, for example, they establish schools, pay teachers or finance books. Since poor or weaker states in particular often cannot accommodate citizens' education needs, these activities are widespread and are often met with applause from donors, in particular because it is assumed that education is one of the best investments in a country's future. While schooling has been a central concern in most development programs for a long time, adult and early childhood education have only recently become additional educational opportunities. The delivery of education is the most direct way for nongovernmental organizations to influence the educational situation in a country. Through this direct practice, world cultural ideas of adequate education can thus be established locally.

A second way of influencing policy development is to participate and lobby in international contexts. Nongovernmental organizations can participate in international conferences, deliver background information or lobby toward political aims. As participants and observers of governmental lifelong learning activities, such organizations have taken part in meetings such as CONFINTEA or the Dakar conference. A less typical, but nevertheless important, case is presented by the "European Roundtable of Industrialists," an industrialists' association of high-ranking managers and also a nongovernmental entity. The organization has well-established contacts with the EU, regularly meets with

EU presidencies and is also interested in education policy. For example, the organization promoted the implementation of lifelong learning principles as part of education and training (Kairamo 1989; ERT 2003). By lobbying internationally, nongovernmental organizations can thus help to establish and diffuse world cultural ideas.

A third means of influence by nongovernmental organizations is direct or indirect participation in education policy development at the national level, for example through direct administrative assistance in formulating policy proposals or by campaigning for certain goals. In 2001, the Open Society Foundation – a well-funded organization concerned with educational development in Eastern Europe – developed a reform proposal for the education system in Montenegro. The outcome, the so-called "Book of Changes," has been a blueprint for the Montenegrin educational reform – including an emphasis on lifelong learning for all citizens (Serbia and Montenegro 2004:17). Obviously, nongovernmental organizations not only enhance capacities at the very local level, but can also supplement administrative deficits. By doing so, they can implement world cultural ideas in a very direct way at the national level.

The concrete form of influence by an organization depends on its activities. Some only deliver education, while others are mostly concerned with policy development, and yet again others might decide to carry out several activities. As already indicated by the industrialists' association, lifelong learning is of interest not only to human rights activists interested in individual development, but also to businesses. Accordingly, the types of organizations that promote lifelong learning can range from those that are specifically interested in lifelong learning as a concept to others that are interested in some of its elements, such as further education or preprimary schooling. An analysis of the yearbooks of international organizations illustrates this pattern (see also table A-1, Annex). The latter group, organizations concerned with elements of lifelong learning, has grown consistently over the last decade. Preschooling, for example, was a main issue for eight organizations in the early 1990s, while in 2003/2004 there were 15 dealing with it. During the same time, the number of organizations involved in further education grew from 81 to 182.

Lifelong learning as a particular issue, however, has only recently been established as a central aim of nongovernmental organizations, and the explicit promotion of lifelong learning as a comprehensive concept is rare. Moreover, a bias toward a specific type of organization can be observed when they are analyzed more closely. The first organization

was the European Lifelong Learning Initiative, founded in 1990 by a Brussels-based association concerned with cooperation in education and IBM Europe. In 1994, the World Initiative on Lifelong Learning was founded, linked to the European Initiative (Union of International Associations 2005). It initiated projects like "learning regions" and "learning cities" (Longworth 2003:180–3), but it has remained at a very basic stage and it is not an important global player. For about one decade, these two organizations were the only ones explicitly dealing with lifelong learning. In 2001, the European Association of Regional and Local Authorities was set up as a forum of public authorities concerned with lifelong learning, this being the third organization. In 2003, the European Civil Society Platform of Lifelong Learning was founded. It is an association of different education associations and is involved in lobbying activities toward the Commission (Union of International Associations 2005).[16]

Unlike other topics of global interest, lifelong learning seems to be a concept that is explicitly promoted less often by classical nongovernmental organizations but, rather, by entities more closely linked to business or politics. However, concerning the actual implementation and participation in educational conferences, the usual type of nongovernmental organization comes into play. In such cases, the diffusion of lifelong learning policy resembles other norm diffusion processes. However, the different types of organizations active in the field of lifelong learning also mirror the different concepts of lifelong learning, either as a means of personal development or as an important precondition of economic development in the tradition of human capital theory.

Social science

The importance that lifelong learning has reached within world society is facilitated not only by governmental or nongovernmental organizations, but also by its scientific backing. In daily life and in political discourse, science is an important source of legitimacy for social practices (Stone 1989; Haas 1992; Meyer *et al.* 1997a). If scientific results illustrate that political activity has or will have intended effects, a policy is more likely to be credible than if science were to claim the opposite or could not offer any judgment – even if this is not a strictly causal consequence (Stone 1989:295). The prominence of lifelong learning within science can therefore help to estimate the extent to which public policy-makers are confronted with scientific claims. For example, when publications of social scientists in the United Kingdom are analyzed, it is evident that

science has paid increased attention to lifelong learning and the pub-
lication rate has increased over the years – in parallel to the discussion
in politics. Academics publish on the "age of learning," on the relation
between social capital and lifelong learning, on the ability to learn in the
third and fourth ages, on lifelong learning and the university, or on life-
long learning constituting a "new educational order" (Watson and Taylor
1998; Field 2000, 2005; Jarvis 2001a,b) – to name only a few prominent
books. There are numerous further articles published on the issue as well
as entire journals dedicated to it (Jarvis 1982ff). In addition, academics
are undertaking efforts to develop programs to include underrepresented
groups in continued learning, such as Muslim women in British higher
education (Pickerden 2002). Social science has partly criticized the pol-
itical emphasis on lifelong learning, since it can partly be attached to
obligatory education in adulthood – a measure whose outcomes can be
doubtful – but it is also widely viewed as common sense in science that
learning in general has positive effects and that lifelong learning can
help to produce such results over the whole life span of an individual.

The backing within the academic community can also be assessed
quantitatively. Analyzing the publication rate in the Social Science
Citation Index reveals an overall increase in scientific publishing on
lifelong learning since the 1970s (see figure 4.1). The two waves of life-
long learning are clearly observable: a first peak in publishing was in
the 1970s, the second has taken place since the 1990s.[17]

This growth is not caused by an increase in the overall rate of
scientific publishing. An analysis of established education journals
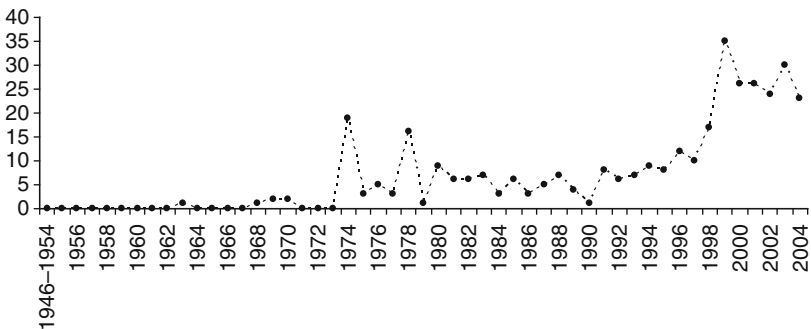that deal with education policy reveals that there is indeed a growing

Figure 4.1   Publications on lifelong learning in the SSCI
Source: SSCI, last accessed March 2005.

interest in absolute terms and that the number of articles and reviews that include lifelong learning in their titles has also increased over the years (figure A-1, annex). Even special issues that particularly deal with lifelong learning have been published.[18] Both figures illustrate that science, too, has discovered the importance of lifelong learning, and it can be assumed that it delivers arguments to the political debate of international organizations, countries, and nongovernmental activists.

In addition, borders between science and other diffusion agents are not necessarily clear-cut: some individuals actively involved in the policy development of lifelong learning within international organizations have been social scientists, or they are in regular contact with science as part of their professional ethic. This is particularly obvious in the case of the OECD: this organization has the image of a technocratic expert organization, and its staff attend scientific meetings regularly to be informed about new developments (Marcussen 2004b; Rinne *et al*. 2004). Furthermore, many former or current OECD staff members publish scientific work on education and lifelong learning on a regular basis. They frequently switch from academia to the OECD and back. Their publication list is impressive, including encyclopedias on adult learning and general assessments on the importance of lifelong learning (Tuijnman 1996; Istance *et al*. 2002).

Generally, social science has been supportive of the policy development of lifelong learning. Scientists have published more and have underlined the importance of lifelong learning continuously by linking its value to several positive outcomes on the individual and collective levels. Moreover, individual staff members of international organizations have regularly participated in education policy-making and scientific inquiry, so that findings can easily and directly be translated to politics, where they have a legitimizing effect.

Conclusion: Exchanges, interactions and references

In this chapter, I presented a review of global policy development of lifelong learning in the context of different organizations. As seen, several organizations have started activities in this field, partly around the same time and always with the aim of increasing state interest in this particular field of education policy. Analyzing the different ways in which international organizations interact in promoting the policy idea reveals that four types of interorganizational linkages can be distinguished, constituting networks of national and international, public and private actors.

First, one international organization can refer to the activities of another when starting its own policy process. This was the case, for example, when the ILO once referred to the G8 and its emphasis on lifelong learning. Second, a division of labor can take place. This can be observed in the case of UNESCO and ILO, both of which deal with vocational education together, but the former sets it in the context of Education for All, while the latter links it to the Global Employment Agenda (UNESCO and ILO 2002:3). Third, conferences can be organized together or with the participation of different organizations. CONFINTEA V was one example, in which UNESCO hosted the conference, but the OECD, World Bank and others were also present. Finally, an international organization can function as a central source of information – and legitimacy – for the others.

In the case of lifelong learning, OECD activity seems to stand out: not only does the organization convene major meetings like the meeting on Lifelong Learning for All in 1996, but OECD speakers appear on many lists of very different organizations that also deal with lifelong learning. The head of CERI explained the importance of lifelong learning in the context of the 2005 Bergen meeting of the Bologna Process (Norwegian Ministry of Education and Research 2005) and at the 2005 ASEM Working Group meeting on lifelong learning (ASEM 2005b). OECD staff have held presentations on World Bank workshops (Wurzburg 2003) and the OECD conducts reviews on lifelong learning paid for by the European Investment Bank (OECD 1999). As with other networks, the network of lifelong learning promotion thus has central and peripheral players. The OECD is one of the former, while the ILO, given its restricted mandate for education and the comparatively few activities it has developed so far, would be in a more peripheral position.

The organizations' collaborative efforts have a common effect on a country that is a member or otherwise affiliated to the organizations: the numerous activities overlap each other, and the more memberships a country holds or the more active it is on the international level, the more often it is confronted with the lifelong learning agenda. A Western European state, for example, faces lifelong learning debates in the context of the EU, the OECD, ASEM, the ILO, and the UNESCO. Developing countries are included with the issue in the context of many other organizations, such as the ILO, the UNESCO, the World Bank and, to some extent, ASEM. Moreover, proponents of lifelong learning can be found in science and among nongovernmental actors in many countries.

In sum, the different organizations and actors have constituted a diverse, but powerful, coalition for establishing lifelong learning as

a central element of education policy. Their activities have been only partly coordinated; while some organizations acted more strategically, other actors simply turned their attention to an issue that seemed to deserve attention. Most nongovernmental organizations, for example, would probably not see themselves as strategic actors in that sense, while the OECD has emphasized the spread of lifelong learning over different organizations from the very beginning of lifelong learning's second wave. Nonetheless, in consequence, the different groups tend to deal with lifelong learning simultaneously and countries can easily become involved in a wide-ranging consensus on the world societal value of lifelong learning. In the following chapter, I will illustrate whether and in which ways the international debate on lifelong learning has been reflected in national policy-making, thus taking the step from world society to the nation-state.

5
Consequences: National Lifelong Learning Agendas

While in the preceding sections I presented policy activities linked to the international sphere, in this chapter I analyze whether national policies are congruent with world societal activities; that is, whether countries' lifelong learning policy-making corresponds with activities outlined by international organizations. Obviously, a first and very basic need in this context is to assess what a lifelong learning policy actually is. Since education policy-makers and researchers subsume very different learning activities under such a notion – including, for example, informal learning at the workplace, perhaps even by mere observance of what others do – a more restrictive definition is needed to assess policy efforts.[1]

To this end, I draw on literature on social policy and the idea of the life course that can provide a more clear-cut idea of the function that lifelong learning serves from a policy-making perspective. Very basically, the individual life course and social policy interventions are linked to each other, which means that social regulations such as pensions or compulsory schooling have an impact on the life individuals live. In many parts of the world, social policy has established a tripartite life course that is structured around the three phases of youth, adulthood and old age (Leisering 2003). Life phases and statuses linked to them – such as being a pupil or being in retirement – are thus indirectly a product of state intervention (Mayer and Mueller 1986:220), since such specific forms have been invented by governmental activity or regulation. In short, children are not born as potential pupils, working adults or pensioners, but exist in these roles due to societal regulations and expectations. Researchers distinguish three different categories of welfare policies that are usually linked to the different phases of life. First, education in childhood is intended to provide life opportunity.

Second, risk management – social assistance, social insurance and personal services – intends to secure continuity, while, third, old age pensions allow security of expectations (Leisering 2003).[2] Early proposals in the context of recurrent education already considered that such a structure can be changed through emphasis on education (Bengtsson 1979). Against a social policy background, ongoing learning activities principally enable continuous life opportunities at different ages, and current policies on lifelong learning are indeed bringing together several educational stages and integrate education from preprimary to adult education, including higher education. In that sense, lifelong learning is a new life course policy (Leisering and Leibfried 1999), a "cradle-to-grave" approach to education that is intended to support the individual throughout life. From a perspective of welfare state intervention, lifelong learning is linked to expanding education over the life span, with the aim of integrating more people into educational measures for a longer time during their lives. In the meantime, it not only serves the aim of providing life opportunities, but also enables continuity in a changing world.

This idea of extension allows a more precise definition of what lifelong learning means in the context of social and education policy: policies related to lifelong learning constitute an extension of governmental activity related to education over the whole individual life span. In the meantime, such a definition fixes the main anchor for an empirical inquiry of national policy processes: a national lifelong learning policy is the governmental reference to the idea of a lifelong educational process – expressed by verbal statements on lifelong learning and reforms linked to it. These reforms can be systematized into three categories of expanding education over the years: *policies concerning preschool, adult and higher education.* Examining these allows us to investigate which countries try to implement lifelong learning policies and how far they have progressed in which areas. As we will see, governments have created various instruments intended to enable lifelong learning, which range from compulsory preprimary education to learning accounts for adults or a growing number of part-time courses in higher education for working adults. Nonetheless, a systematic account of what has been done around the world has not yet been undertaken.[3]

For this purpose, I will first provide an overview of global lifelong learning policies, understood as accumulated activities in the three fields of preschool, higher school and adult education worldwide. This broad analysis is, in further steps, supplemented by a closer analysis of what countries located in different areas have undertaken with regard

to lifelong learning, such as those in Europe, Asia and Oceania, the Americas and Africa. By presenting short illustrative national case studies as well as general data, I highlight specific conditions that can be found in the different regions. Although restricted to short insights, the results nonetheless show how the global debate on lifelong learning is mirrored in many national activities, although to a different extent. At the same time, however, there exist specific national strategies by which the expansion of learning is realized. In a last step, I summarize the findings and conclude by looking at the spread and extent of lifelong learning policy development.

Lifelong learning globally

Lifelong learning is not an entirely new concept to all countries, and differences exist concerning the extent to which countries have been affected by the current international emphasis on the issue. Finland, for example, had already established a wide-ranging system of adult education following a 1978 government decision. Nonetheless, in 1996, the country initiated a council for drafting a national strategy for lifelong learning (Report Finland 1996). Japan had already, in the 1980s, created a national council on education reforms that was concerned with the future development of Japanese education. Its proposals included an emphasis on lifelong learning, which was subsequently implemented in Japanese education policies (Japanese Ministry of Education 1996; Report Japan 2004:14; UNESCO 2003b:Japan). Nonetheless, these two cases do not represent typical developments in national education policy, and lifelong learning has only recently become prominent on a large scale.

    An analysis of a collection of education policy reports (UNESCO 1971) reveals that there was hardly any reference to the idea of lifelong learning some decades ago. At the end of the 1960s, only six of 136 mention the idea:[4] Argentina refers to studies on lifelong education (UNESCO 1971:136), and the People's Republic of Congo writes about "continuing (lifelong) education" as an addendum to literacy training (UNESCO, 1971:342). Mauritius reports the development of an encompassing adult education system that serves the idea of lifelong education (UNESCO 1971:817). The Federal Republic of Germany refers to lifelong learning as a concept that, besides being important for working life, supports civic understanding and helps older people to understand the world (UNESCO 1971:495–7). Cuba seems to be the most enthusiastic "early adopter" of the idea, stating that the "…idea of lifelong education

is deepening; the development of scientific technology and culture is continuous, and the possibilities of education are unlimited; thus man will never cease to learn and will never aspire to greater heights of education, culture, science and technology" (UNESCO 1971:355). Besides, only a few of the countries mention any attempts of adult education besides literacy at that time. Examples are the UK and its Open University or – classically because it has been a forerunner concerning lifelong learning development – Sweden and its system of adult education (UNESCO 1971:1084–5, 1088).[5]

An overview of more recent education policy reports submitted to the International Conference of Education – a major conference hosted by the UNESCO International Bureau of Education in Geneva – reveals important changes. From the mid-1990s until 2004, countries have more and more often referred to lifelong learning in the context of education policy (Table 5.1). Seventy-eight of 99 countries mention lifelong learning at least once in this period, and their number has grown over time. Nearly 80 percent is an impressive number given the fact that these reports come from all over the world and include many developing countries.[6]

These figures, however, only refer to whether or not countries mention lifelong learning, not whether they start policy implementation or whether people learn more. While the spread of the idea alone might be impressive, we should nonetheless have a look at whether any consequences can be assessed.

Table 5.1 Diffusion of the idea of lifelong learning 1996–2004

	1996	2001	2004
Percentage of countries referring to lifelong learning			
in the respective year	62.8	70.6	72.0
accumulated (from 1996)	62.8	71.8	78.8
Number of countries referring to lifelong learning			
in the respective year	27	36	59
accumulated (from 1996)	27	51	78
Number of countries analyzed			
in the respective year	43	51	82
accumulated (from 1996)	43	71	99

Sources: Policy Reports submitted to ICE 1996, 2001, 2004, own calculations.

Preprimary education

Preprimary education is the earliest stage of education, and, like "kindergarten," it is also a very widely known idea. Invented by the German educator Friedrich Froebel around 1850, kindergartens spread within 20 years over Europe and to North America. In the 1910s, kindergartens could be found almost everywhere, diffused through colonial power, missionaries and educators who studied in Froebel's pedagogic institute in Berlin (Rogers 2003:63–4). However, the original idea linked to kindergartens – children should enjoy learning through playing – has changed in the course of lifelong learning discussions. In that context, early learning activities are seen as preparing the ground for later learning abilities and, thus, early childhood education should also include systematic learning processes. The changing emphasis can be observed in countries over time. In post-World War II Norway, for example, it was questioned whether early childhood education and care should be defined as part of the education system. But these thoughts remained without immediate follow-up measures in the reorganization of the public education system. Only in the 1990s, beginning with a "cradle-to-grave" approach to education, did the government start to include this educational phase in the overall education system (UNESCO 2003a:1).

Early learning in preprimary education is emphasized because it introduces learning activities and prepares for continuing learning – which is assumed to be a precondition for success in contemporary and future society. The emphasis on lifelong learning thus includes a new idea of early childhood and the need to develop the ability of lifelong learning during that period. For example, a Bulgarian policy report argues that preprimary education creates a positive attitude towards learning and education, and that the "early formation of motives for studying guarantees a lasting positive attitude towards this activity and creates conditions for the formation of life-long studying" (Report Bulgaria 2004:19). On the one hand, the intervention into early childhood can be justified by giving opportunities to children, in particular to those from disadvantaged backgrounds. On the other hand, the argument that the earlier abilities are formed, the better, also strictly complies with human capital theory (Becker 1964).[7]

As a clear concept beyond kindergarten, early childhood education has, however, been established only recently and its institutionalization is still in progress. One accompanying condition is an increasing professionalization, so that academic teacher training has now become an issue even for preprimary education. The University of Guyana,

for example, introduced a bachelor's degree in nursery education as early as 1991/1992 (UNESCO 2003b:Guyana). In Germany, academic education for preschool teachers is currently being discussed and has partly been introduced. International organizations actively support the development of early childhood education. The World Bank, for example funds preprimary education in Nepal (Report Nepal 1996) and UNICEF launched a kindergarten development centre in the United Arab Emirates (Report United Arab Emirates 1996). Early childhood education has also been a major issue for the "Education for All" initiative, where expanding early childhood care and education has been a core goal (EFA/UNESCO 2007).

On the national level, increased attention to preprimary education is mirrored in different facets of policy reforms. First, countries increasingly introduce *compulsory preprimary education*, even if it is difficult for them to enforce it. In 1993, Peru made preschool education a compulsory part of its elementary education – although still today only around 85 percent of children attend that stage (Report Peru 2001:7–8). Cyprus approved compulsory preprimary education in 2004; currently, all children aged 4 years and 8 months or older should be enrolled (Report Cyprus 2004:15–16). Further countries are thinking of introducing compulsory preprimary education, for example Iran. The country states that it is attempting to improve preprimary education, to integrate it into the formal education system and to gradually make it compulsory (Report Iran 2001:44–5). International activities and exchange stimulate the further spread of that trend. For example, Swaziland observed the South African debate on the introduction of one year of compulsory preprimary education before schooling and evaluated how this could be adopted to the country's own needs (Report Swaziland 2004:2).

A further trend in early childhood education is the establishment of learning goals through a *preschool curriculum*. By these means, the learning process can be extended towards early childhood even if there are no changes in the formal organizational structure. Countries that introduced curricula are located all over the world: Syria completed and introduced a kindergarten curriculum in 1998/1999 (Report Syria 2001:7); Poland introduced a framework curriculum for pre-primary education in 1999 (Report Poland 2001:35); and Malaysia introduced such a national curriculum in 2003 (Report Malaysia 2004:19–20). In Australia, some districts have begun to implement learning curricula that begin at birth (Report Australia 2001:42–3). Ghana established preprimary education as a part of the formal education system in 2002. The curriculum for this educational stage includes psychosocial

skills, language and literacy, mathematics, environmental studies, creative activities, health, nutrition and safety (Report Ghana 2004:3). In Jamaica, the newly introduced curriculum is said to be "eclectic in its approach to preparing children for formal education. It focuses on the affective, psychomotor and the cognitive domains for the four to five years old. The curriculum aims at making children ready to access primary level education" (Report Jamaica 2004:3).

Other policy reforms to extend preprimary education are, for example, increased state financing of such education. In Israel, one year of compulsory kindergarten was introduced as early as 1978, but recent proposals are concerned with introducing free tuition for three to four-year-old children – because an earlier start in education is seen as more advantageous (Report Israel 2004:18–19). Moreover, even if countries do not have a special system of preprimary schooling, education can begin very early: since 1985, although the Netherlands do not provide separate preschools, but schooling has been compulsory at five years. Nonetheless, most pupils enter school one year earlier than that (UNESCO 2003b:Netherlands). Other countries, such as Japan, have started programs to emphasize the importance of preprimary education; for example a five-year program to promote early childhood education was set up in 2001 (Report Japan 2004:17). Sometimes, the emphasis on early education is expressed by the renaming of institutions. In 1996, Brazil reformed the organization of its education system. One of the changes was that day care and preschool are now called "early childhood education," and this stage is now a part of basic education, alongside primary and secondary education (Report Brazil 2001:7).

In sum, the preprimary education sector has undergone a major structuring process since the beginning of the 1990s. Although compulsory schooling has still been established in only a minority of countries, it has become a common part of education policy that the preschool phase of life, and the learning that takes place at that time, should be regulated by government.

Adult education

Adult education is the core field in which lifelong learning was already being discussed in the 1970s. While earlier debates focused on individual development and changed educational phases over the life span, current political ideas mainly rely on the rapidly changing environment and the need for up-to-date qualifications. A policy report from New Zealand delivers a good example of that argument, as it states that "opportunities to gain good qualifications and training are equally

important for those already in the workforce as for those entering it. All school leavers and working-age adults need to participate in further learning to acquire new skills and knowledge [...]" (New Zealand Ministry of Education 2004:2).

Countries try to support individual learning efforts by different political instruments. As a very comprehensive measure, *qualification frameworks* are being established. Such frameworks categorize learning achievements according to a list of possible qualifications, and they can assess and, when qualifications are lacking, stimulate learning in adult life. These frameworks are often linked to discussions on lifelong learning because they enable the description, analysis and comparison of individual learning records, even when the learning process took place in very different settings. They can thus support transitions from one learning path to another, and they can incorporate multiple ways of learning into one framework. Depending on its specific characteristics, such a framework allows the accumulation and transfer of achieved learning across diverse sectors, including higher education. It is best understood as a credit accumulation system like the ones used in higher education contexts, but extended to – theoretically – all forms of learning, all educational stages and all education and training sectors. The Scottish Qualification Framework is seen as the most advanced system. Built upon older initiatives, it allows assessment of vocational education as well as higher education and places individual progress within a common framework, while other national frameworks do not necessarily include the higher education sector (ILO 2005a:Scotland; Eurydice 2005b:7).

Despite the individual differences among the frameworks, it is obvious that, since New Zealand introduced the first framework in 1990, this idea has spread around the globe to very different countries in the following years (see Table 5.2). Analyzing this diffusion pattern allows some speculation about its cause. At a glance, it is obvious that the diffusion pattern is not restricted to high-income countries, even if no very poor country is listed.[8] It is thus difficult to explain the establishment of a qualification framework by relating it to common national economic needs. There are, however, some regional effects, such as the diffusion from New Zealand to Malaysia, Australia, Singapore or the Philippines (Asian-Pacific Region); or from South Africa to Namibia or Mauritius (Africa). There are further small clusters in Europe (UK, Ireland and Slovenia) and in the Caribbean (Mexico and Trinidad and Tobago). Nonetheless, the linkages between these regional diffusions cannot only be regional or interregional, since, as the timing of adoption shows, the diffusion does not develop directly from one cluster to another, but occurs in parallel.[9]

Table 5.2 The diffusion of national qualification frameworks 1990–2004

Country	Year of adoption
New Zealand	1990
Malaysia	1993
Mexico	1995
South Africa	1995
Australia	1995
Namibia	1996
Netherlands	1996
UK (England, Wales and Northern Ireland)	1998
Ireland	1999
Singapore	2000
Slovenia	2000
UK (Scotland)	2001
Trinidad and Tobago	2001
Mauritius	2002
Philippines	2003

Source: Author, based on Data from ILO (2005a) and UNESCO (2003b: Netherlands).

Countries further mention that there are specific transfer activities that exceed regional contacts: Mauritius received support from a Scottish advisory group (ILO 2005a:Mauritius). Saudi Arabian experts studied frameworks established in the UK, Australia, South Africa, New Zealand, Malaysia, Jordan and Korea with the aim of establishing a national qualification framework in the future (Report Saudi Arabia 2004:88).[10] Furthermore, several international organizations have started activities concerning qualification frameworks – among them mainly the ILO (ILO 2005a) and recently the EU (EU Commission 2007). With the example of qualification frameworks it is thus possible to observe in "real time" how international organizations reinforce the worldwide establishment of such frameworks by promoting them, showing best practices and their applicability in very different contexts. Moreover, they deepen the idea of lifelong learning in national contexts through such activities.

Besides establishing qualification frameworks, another possibility for extending adult education is setting up *laws and programs* related to lifelong learning. Among the laws that countries have introduced is the Japanese "Lifelong Learning Law" of 1990, which set up a bureaucracy and was part of a package of measures intended to create a learning society (Japanese Ministry of Education 1996). In Estonia, the 1993 Law on Adult Education established a legal guarantee for adults to continue their studies. The 1998 education act further regulated adult education and, in 2003, an amendment extended opportunities to receive secondary and vocational education during adulthood (UNESCO 2003b:Estonia; Report Estonia 2004:16). In 1998, Australia established a new vocational education and training system that allows a wide range of options for learners. It is widely used by older participants to acquire new skills and to reenter the labor market: Australia has one of the highest participation rates of middle-aged and older people in education (Report Australia 2004:xi–xii). As a further case, the 1999 Thai National Education Act refers to lifelong learning extensively, defining it as "education resulting from integration of formal, non-formal and informal education so as to create ability for continuous lifelong development of quality of life."[11] The act additionally stipulates that educational provision shall be based on the principle of "lifelong education for all" (Report Thailand 2001:46–9). It includes explicit references to nonformal and informal education, the possibility of recognition and transfer of learning credits (Report Thailand 2001:53–4). Furthermore, the widespread acknowledgement of adult education does not stop at the political borders of democratic societies: since 1997, Myanmar has a "National Centre for Human Resource Development" and, among other things, the center aims to establish new programs for training and retraining (Report Myanmar 2004:57–8).

Besides introducing qualification frameworks or setting up laws and programs, countries can, in principle, provide *additional funding* for learning efforts in adulthood, or they can try to stimulate the establishment of private institutions to foster lifelong learning. However, increased financing for lifelong learning activities seems to be a rare case. Country reports often contain information that the public contribution has increased, but it is not always clear whether this is due to increased access or for other reasons. The most comprehensive activity reported was the establishment of the British learning accounts for adults, which implied governmental funding for individual adult learning activities. Other activities that needed increased resources have been established, for example in the Netherlands, where a tax exemption scheme was

introduced in 1997 that supports training contracts with adults (Report Netherlands 2004:149–50). In the same year, Brazil implemented a program on vocational education and training that included increased financing by means of a loan from the Inter-American Development Bank. In total, 106 schools were set up to expand access to such training (Report Brazil 2004:71).

In sum, adult education has been extended across countries and, by means of qualification frameworks, this diverse field is increasingly regulated. While education has, for a long time, been linked mostly with children, recent developments in the sector show substantial changes and the regular establishment of education during adulthood.

Higher education

Higher education has undergone a massive increase all over the world (Ramirez and Riddle 1991) and discussions about lifelong learning are likely to reinforce this phenomenon. Traditionally, the university is seen as the unique place that can create new knowledge and, at the same time, disseminate it to its students, who are often assumed to come directly from school to higher education. Higher education in this traditional sense thus constitutes the preparation of students for their first entry to the labor market. This educational sector, however, can also be understood as one among several opportunities to gain qualifications, i.e. while working, or during a temporary leave. In that sense, higher education institutions develop in places where qualifications of an already skilled workforce can be further updated.

In addition, borders between higher education and other educational pathways are increasingly blurring, as the example of the Scottish Qualification Framework illustrates. It integrates higher education into one overall framework, and there is no elementary distinction between continuing education obtained elsewhere and grades obtained in universities (ILO 2005a). Besides, recognition procedures that assess the candidates' professional experience and transfer it into academic grades facilitate entrance and smooth transition through higher education (Jakobi and Rusconi 2008). In France, a professional who has worked five years as an engineer can obtain the academic grade of engineer, without having studied (Qualification Framework Working Group 2005:138–9).

While such cases signify a move towards higher education as a form of a standard further education, countries cope differently with the challenge of expanding higher education. A first opportunity is to set up *laws* and *programs* or found *new institutions* to increase access. Countries vary widely concerning such measures. In 1998, South Korea

established a higher education law that was intended to strengthen the possibilities for learners, "such as part-time registration, expanded opportunity for transfer between schools, establishment of independent graduate schools, improvement of college entrance examinations, and enrichment of vocational education at junior colleges" (Report South Korea 2001:2). This reform was one of many that the country introduced in the 1990s in order to make its education system more accessible and flexible (Report South Korea 2001:2–3; UNESCO 2003b:South Korea). In 1994, Austria established its first university for postgraduate studies, the Danube University in Krems, which offers courses for postgraduate and continuing professional education (UNESCO 2003b:Austria; Report Austria 2001:161).[12] Starting from a very different background, Uganda underwent an increase of education opportunities through private universities. In 2001, the government set up the University and other Tertiary Institutions Act to provide an improved legal framework for the management and administration of higher education institutions and to cover their expansion (Report Uganda 2004:7). In the early 1990s, Sudan set up a higher education law that was intended to expand higher education. New institutes were established and distance education opportunities were created (UNESCO 2003b:Sudan).

There is, however, much silence concerning the *increased financing* of higher education as a further option to support the higher education sector; it is thus not clear whether the new emphasis on enlarged educational opportunities is always accompanied by effectively growing governmental spending. Such a finding, however, does not necessarily indicate that expenditure on education is not generally increasing. *Private institutions* and private or individual funding are a further governmental means for increasing participation rates without raising public investment in education. Egypt, for example, encourages the establishment of private providers. These also help "to relieve the burden on governmental university establishments. It also creates growing opportunities for those who wish to obtain education in return for reasonable school fees, instead of having to travel abroad" (Report Egypt 2004:117). In Romania, the private sector was also established in the early 1990s and remarkably expanded the possibilities for higher education: in 1998/1999, nearly one-third of all higher education students were enrolled in private institutions (Report Romania 2004:40). A similar development can be observed in Cambodia, where the private institutions were a principal cause for a fast-growing number of students (Report Cambodia 2004:2). In Mauritius, the number of private tertiary institutions, either providing distance education courses or being local

providers, has risen sharply. While the sector was almost nonexistent a decade ago, the number of institutions rose to over 20 in 2000 and further increased to 30 in 2003. Additionally, more than 50 other institutions promote their overseas studies (Report Mauritius 2004:12).[13]

Although higher education is still often seen as prolonging the period of formal schooling, being the final stage of an educational career, the sector is increasingly being expanded as a place for updating knowledge beyond the role of the classical student. As a special form of adult education, higher education offers specialized knowledge to older age groups in society – whether attending university for the first time, or returners. Countries have invested various efforts to ensure this provision.

Efforts and outcome

A systematic analysis of the reforms across the different educational sectors thus reveals diverse outcomes with regard to lifelong learning policies. Including the reforms initiated since 1996, the year when major public activities took place at the international level, a total of 53 countries have introduced lifelong learning reforms of various kinds. Among these, 34 countries have reformed the field of preprimary education to increase coverage by compulsory education, to structure learning by a curriculum or by other means. In the field of adult education, a total of 33 countries have initiated reforms such as qualification frameworks, new laws concerning adult education for lifelong learning, and others. Reforms in the higher education sector, for example the establishment of new institutions or new laws for expanding access, have been carried out by 19 countries. In sum, these figures show that countries are generally active in that area. However, compared with the spread of the idea of lifelong learning, there is obviously more talk than action. While nearly 80 percent of the countries mentioned the idea in their policy reports, countries are less eager to introduce corresponding reforms: only 53 of the countries have initiated at least one reform linked to lifelong learning (Table 5.3).

Despite the different efforts and political measures, enrolment statistics show a very uniform trend – the expansion of education. We cannot reduce this trend to lifelong learning policies alone, but we can use it as a proxy to find out how long individuals learn. The number of preschool attendees increased worldwide during recent years (see Table 5.4, also EFA/UNESCO 2008:31–96), the regions with the highest growth being Central and Eastern Europe and South and West Asia. Forty percent of all children were enrolled in preprimary educational programs worldwide in 2005, compared with 33 percent in 1999. Unfortunately, comparative figures to assess participation in adult

Table 5.3 Number of lifelong learning reforms 1996–2004

Reform	Number of countries
Preprimary	
Compulsory preprimary education or introduction of curriculum and other reforms	34
Adult education	
Qualification frameworks, new laws, programs and institutions, increased financing and other reforms	33
Higher education	
New laws, programs and institutions, increased financing and other reforms	19
Number of countries with at least one of the reforms	*53*

Source: Table A.2, this volume.

education are hard to find. One reason for this might be that the variety of programs is so high that statistics are difficult to construct, in particular when developing countries are also included. At least some Eurostat data are available, showing that, in the EU-25 countries, learning activities of 25–64-year-olds have increased over time from 7.5 percent in 2000 to more than 10 percent in recent years (Eurostat 2007). Higher education, in contrast, is easier to categorize, and statistics concerning tertiary education – a term that encompasses not only university education but also comparable programs – also show the trend of rising participation (see Table 5.4). In 2004, almost every fourth individual in the corresponding age group has been enrolled in tertiary education, while half a decade before not even every fifth person was enrolled. As in the case of preprimary education, Central and Eastern Europe shows the strongest growth, from 39 to 57 percent between 1999 and 2005. But East Asia and the Pacific have also increased their participation rates sharply, from 14 to 24 percent over the same period. In North America and Western Europe, the countries that already had the highest participation, the rate has also further risen to 70 percent, which is 14 times higher than in the slowly growing region of sub-Saharan Africa (5 percent).

While the rising participation rates in the beginning and end of the educational process already indicate that education is being expanded, data on school life expectancy, the expected duration of formal schooling from primary to tertiary education, give even more detailed information. As we can see, the time individuals are expected to spend in school has risen from 1999 to 2005. The world average increased

Table 5.4   Gross enrolment rates and school life expectancy 1999 and 2005

	Preprimary education		Tertiary education		School life expectancy Primary to tertiary education	
	1999	2005	1999	2005	1999	2005
World	33	40	18	24	10	11
Countries in transition	46	60	41	56	12	13
Developed countries	73	78	55	66	15	16
Developing countries	28	34	11	17	9	10
Arab States	15	17	19	21	10	11
Central & Eastern Europe	49	59	39	57	12	13
Central Asia	22	28	19	27	11	12
East Asia & the Pacific	40	43	14	24	10	12
Latin America & the Caribbean	56	62	21	29	13	13
North America & West Europe	76	79	61	70	16	16
South & West Asia	22	37	8	11	8	10
Sub-Saharan Africa	10	14	4	5	7	8

Sources: EFA/UNESCO (2008:274–5,322,283), modified (all weighted averages, rates in percent, expectancy in years).

from 10 to 11 years, showing a one-year increase across the groups of developed and developing countries as well as those in transition. In East Asia and the Pacific, the average number of years increased further, from 10 to 12 years. Lifelong learning policies are thus not only a phenomenon debated in education policy circles; the expansion of education is also carried out on the societal and individual levels.

In sum, the analysis of national policies worldwide illustrated that there is an increasing consensus on lifelong learning. A small majority of countries are also trying to reform their education system in order to implement lifelong learning measures. Nonetheless, both the policies and the outcomes show large differences among the countries, even though the idea of lifelong learning is widely appreciated. The following sections will offer a more in-depth overview of several world regions and lifelong learning policies, showing different stages and ways of implementing lifelong learning. This is not to say that these regions are necessarily uniform and do not show any internal differences. Two

countries analyzed are not necessarily representative of the whole continent, but such a procedure gives us a better picture than a worldwide perspective alone. As we will see, there are many ways of establishing lifelong learning systems – and also ways not to do so.

Outlining change: Europe

European states have been the leaders of lifelong learning policy development, although the models of educational provision, the main reasons for the policy, and the responsibility for its implementation differ widely, showing differences which are in part similar to those for overall welfare regimes (see Esping-Andersen 1990). Despite these differences, the region can nonetheless be characterized as an area that demonstrates substantial changes in many of its education systems.

Germany

In Germany, lifelong learning has been a subject of debates in education policy since the mid-1990s, stimulated by a major study in 1996 (Dohmen 1996). In the course of the following decade, a strategy for lifelong learning was developed, a report on financing education was published and several recommendations were made. This led to a lifelong learning action program that unified several measures under one roof.[14] In 2008, state and federal government initiated the qualification strategy, which places emphasis on the role of education for individual social mobility as well as for continuing economic growth (Bundesregierung 2008). Besides the better integration of youth in working life, the strategy emphasized higher education as a means of continuing education, the role of preprimary education, and different paths to school degrees. It also announced a bonus for continuing education of low and middle-income earners, which was introduced several weeks later by a special initiative for lifelong learning, as well as the financing of learning for lower and middle incomes (BMBF 2008a,b). In sum, these recent developments represent a major step towards lifelong learning policies, but their implementation is still in its early stages.

In sum, only minor steps in lifelong learning policy development have been taken in previous years. Preprimary education was debated for some time, both as a means of enabling female participation in the labor market and as a means of assisting children from immigrant families before the start of school. Germany faces severe problems in both fields, since the birth rate is dropping and migrants face integration problems in school and in the labor market. Since 1996, kindergartens have been

obliged to pursue the goal of the personal and educational development of children. This aim goes beyond their former status, which was not explicitly educational (Forum Bildung 2001b:15). The emphasis on education outside the family is opposed to the deeply rooted German idea that a child is best educated by its mother – regardless of her status and life circumstances. Since preprimary education outside the home has thus not been identified as a collective need – but rather as something to be avoided – places for preprimary education are generally hard to find, do not necessarily offer full-time care and are rather expensive, even though every child has the legal right to preprimary education. Nonetheless, education ministries started to emphasize that early childhood is important for developing individual learning activities (Forum Bildung 2001:11; Bund-Länder-Kommission 2004). In some parts of the country, such as Berlin, one year of preprimary education is compulsory for children who lack language skills. In general, learning has become a more important part of German preschool activities, but recent changes to the system have mainly been caused by other political concerns, for example the inclusion of women in the labor market or social policy concerns.

Lifelong learning is a more central issue in the context of vocational education and training and adult education in general, as reflected in the 2004 strategy for lifelong learning (Bund-Länder-Kommission 2004). Due to Germany's tradition of a fixed apprenticeship model with defined skills to learn, German discussions on continuing education tend to be based on an idea of formalized continuing training (Deissinger 2002:186). Against this background, the proposed modularization of continuing studies and step-by-step qualification (Bund-Länder-Kommission 2004:22) can be seen as an important element of enhancing increased and repeated participation in learning while guaranteeing a coherent learning scheme. There is also discussion over certifying informal learning activities that could lead to formal qualifications and over whether counseling for interested learners should be offered (Forum Bildung 2001:18–23; Bund-Länder-Kommission 2004:22). Self-directed learning is seen as an important means of cooperation with the EU. Thus "learning regions" were set up for this purpose, where increased cooperation between different educational institutions is established in order to facilitate transitions and to promote the necessity and opportunities for lifelong learning (BMBF 2004). In 2002, a qualification framework for information technology was formally established that encompasses all industrial working profiles and defines which qualifications should be obtained for which level of occupation. This is

a first attempt to decouple qualifications from the strict idea of a fixed occupation ("Beruf") and to allow the lifelong accumulation of qualifications and comparison of individuals who have different backgrounds in education and work. Other sectors are as yet reluctant to introduce such a scheme, although a need is seen (Reuling and Hanf 2004:60–4).

A further step in lifelong learning policy development was the establishment of an expert commission that dealt with financing lifelong learning. The commission was initiated at the federal level in 2001; its mandate was exclusively concerned with adult education and training, and it therefore did not focus on higher education or non-adult learning. The commission operated from 2001 to 2004, and it consisted of five professors who are active in the field of adult education in general or financing lifelong learning in particular (e.g. Timmermann 1996). It has resulted in different reports on issues regarding continuing education in Germany and two main reports by the commission itself (Expertenkommission zur Finanzierung Lebenslangen Lernens 2002, 2004). The commission's proposals were developed in cooperation with the OECD and in comparison with other countries' experiences. A major reform proposal is the creation of a law for continuing education that unifies the different means of governmental support for adult learners, the establishment of individual learning accounts, and financial support for learning activities. The 2008 measures on lifelong learning can be interpreted as the realization of some parts of the proposals, for example the financial support for specific groups of adult learners.

In higher education, the government is also rather reluctant to implement lifelong learning measures, but the institutions, most of which are still state institutions, have favored a more important role in adult continuous learning for a long time (HRK 1993:Vorwort, 1991:12–15). The German Rectors' Conference made early statements on a two-tier structure, on shortening the length of studies, and on the possibility of combining tertiary education and apprenticeship (HRK 1992). In 2000, initial plans were made by the organization for dual programs that combine apprenticeships and higher education. These programs are to be established by higher education institutions in cooperation with employers and are seen as an important element of future higher education and industrial development (HRK and BDA 2000).[15] Furthermore, the introduction of a Bachelor and Master structure in German higher education, instead of four to five-year diplomas, will probably enhance the return of graduates to the university during their working life. The new structure further paved the way to a range of degrees for continuing education that could not be easily linked to

the traditional higher education system. The government also created opportunities for the increased recognition of learning outside the university, so that, since 2002, up to 50 percent of prior learning can count as equivalent to higher education if it corresponds to the study program (Kultusministerkonferenz 2002). In 2005, a qualification framework was introduced for higher education with prospects for the recognition of non-higher education as well (Kultusministerkonferenz 2005).

In sum, German efforts to facilitate lifelong learning have for a long time remained restricted to mainly regulatory or coordinative activities. The responsibility for implementation has mainly been seen at the individual level or partly as part of training on the job or while unemployed. Major attempts to increase public financing for lifelong learning, such as the qualification strategy, have only been made recently; and the importance of the issue is increasingly acknowledged. Lifelong learning policy proposals have only been followed according to a piecemeal approach and the implementation of such principles has begun only recently.

United Kingdom

The United Kingdom has pursued a different approach.[16] As the country states in one of its education policy reports: "Lifelong learning is at the heart of our agenda. By this we mean learning across the whole of life – not just post-19 or post-16 learning, but the development of learning communities from the cradle to the grave" (UK Education Policy Report 2004:71).[17] Major policy changes have been introduced with the aim of transforming the country into a "Learning Society." The emphasis was already reflected by the introduction of a "Minister for Education and Lifelong Learning" in Wales and the establishment of a telephone hotline with a capacity of 80,000 calls a year through which information on educational career planning can be obtained (UK Education Policy Report 2004:72). However, such emphasis on learning is not restricted to verbal statements but is linked to specific policy measures throughout the UK.[18]

Preprimary education in the country is concerned with the age group of three to five years, when compulsory schooling begins.[19] A framework for early child education was published in 2002 (UK Education Policy Report 2004:England 9,19,23). It established a foundation stage, which implies that children aged from three to five should work towards six curricular, so-called early learning goals. There are plans to introduce this stage in Wales and Northern Ireland as well (Eurydice 2005a:2). Additional preschool places have been created and public expenditure has been invested in preprimary education (UK Education Policy Report 2004:Wales 12,19–20). Although the UK also has the needs of working

parents in mind when expanding preprimary education, this educational stage has nonetheless faced a massive expansion of public support with regard to learning activities for young children.

The fact that the UK has emphasized lifelong learning for years is mirrored by its activities regarding adult education and training. Various reforms have taken place, such as the setting up of a "National Advisory Group on Continuing Education and Lifelong Learning" and the "National Skill Task Force" (Expertenkommission zur Finanzierung Lebenslangen Lernens 2004:174). Qualification frameworks have been created that allow transfer across different educational pathways and over the life span (Eurydice 2005b:7). The qualification of adults has generally been a serious concern in British education policy, and the financial investments in continuing education exceed the investments in the initial training of young adults (Expertenkommission zur Finanzierung Lebenslangen Lernens 2004:176). Moreover, a policy with regard to basic education qualifications was recently introduced, which abolishes tuition fees for all adults seeking education up to the second qualification level (UK Education Policy Report 2004:England 81,85). After two years of regional pilot projects, a major attempt was made to increase participation in learning by means of individual learning accounts set up in 2000 (Expertenkommission zur Finanzierung Lebenslangen Lernens 2004:180–1). Individuals older than 19 years could receive public funding for education courses if they had set up such an account and paid a minor amount of the course fees by themselves. In 2001/02, the British government spent more than £223 million on the program. Nevertheless, at the end of 2002, it had to be stopped due to massive fraud by education providers. There are plans for a renewed attempt, because the program was very successful in stimulating learning activities among people with a low income or lower educational level – groups that are usually difficult to reach.

In higher education, a traditional means for flexible and accessible studies in the UK is the Open University. Even in its early phase, the institution was conceived to expand higher education to meet demands for highly skilled workers (UNESCO 1971:1188). It is a university that provides distance courses and is thus easier to integrate into the life of working adults than full-time studies. Nonetheless, higher education is generally accessible even without formal qualifications, since applications from mature candidates with appropriate experience are welcomed by most institutions, which decide autonomously on admission (Eurydice 2006:7/13,5/11). It is prominent government policy to widen access to higher education and to enable increased participation

in higher education, and "Foundation Degrees" were introduced to facilitate access to higher education via a vocational path (Department for Education and Skills 2003a,b). Participation in higher education is, however, mostly financed by individuals, since British universities introduced tuition fees some time ago. Compared with Germany, higher education and vocational training in Britain are less distinct (Deissinger 2002:183), and British universities emphasize the importance of coherence between a higher education area and a general qualification framework that includes non-higher education (Europe Unit 2005:4–5). Against this background, it is planned to extend qualification frameworks to other learning procedures as well, such as qualifications of professional bodies or learning in the voluntary sector (Eurydice 2006:10/11). Moreover, higher education institutions in the UK offer a range of opportunities for those studying while working or for those who return to university after having worked for some time (Eurydice 2000:505–6; British Department for Education and Skills 2005:6,11).

Concerning policy change, the UK has introduced a wide range of policy measures, ranging from preprimary to adult and higher education. It is also evident that the government not only introduced policy measures, but also supplemented its emphasis with major financial investments.

General trends and outcomes

These cases show that the realization of lifelong learning can be quite different in European countries and that the expansion of education is frequently linked not only to lifelong learning debates, but also to other considerations, such as helping working parents through expanded preprimary education opportunities. Moreover, other European countries with a different welfare background have discussed and conceived lifelong learning in yet other ways. In Sweden, for example, lifelong learning has been an issue for a long time, and in 1997 an adult education initiative was established that was intended to increase the educational level of adults up to at least three years of upper secondary education. The government provided a study grant to the target groups (Swedish Ministry of Education and Science 1999). Preprimary education has also become more important, and a curriculum was established in 1999 (Report Sweden 2001:17). In Central and Eastern European states, lifelong learning discussions have quickly gained momentum. For example, Estonia introduced several adult education acts and a national curriculum of preschool education (Report Estonia 2004:16; Report Estonia 2001:17; UNESCO 2003b:Estonia), while Latvia introduced compulsory preschool education (Report Latvia 2004:7).
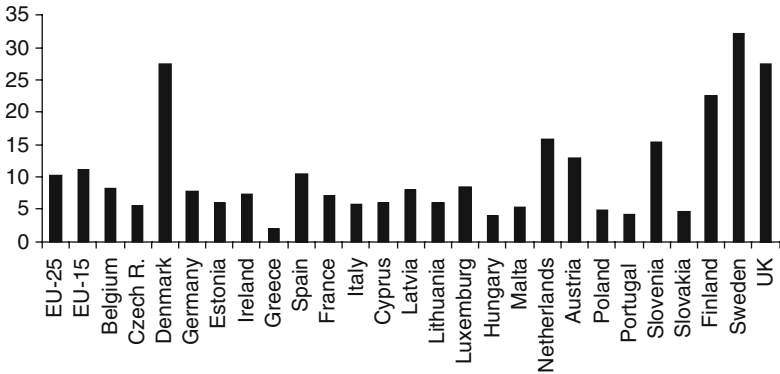
Figure 5.1 Lifelong learning realization in Europe

Note: Eurostat defines the indicator as follows: "Life-long learning refers to persons aged 25 to 64 who stated that they received education or training in the four weeks preceding the survey (numerator). The denominator consists of the total population of the same age group, excluding those who did not answer to the question 'participation to education and training'. Both the numerator and the denominator come from the EU Labour Force Survey. The information collected relates to all education or training whether or not relevant to the respondent's current or possible future job."

Source: Eurostat (2007), refers to the year 2005.

In sum, lifelong learning is a common European debate, even if progress towards this aim is very different in different countries. While some countries have invested many political and financial efforts, other countries do not show substantial changes. These results are also mirrored by the outcomes linked to lifelong learning policies. Eurostat data show that the number of learners is generally growing (Eurostat 2007), but also that major differences among the countries persist. Data from 2006 reveals that in Sweden adult learning is around three times as common as in the EU-25 average (figure 5.1). Only in eight countries do more than 10 percent of the people report having pursued learning activities, while in five countries not even 5 percent reported this. In such countries, politics thus still has much to do to implement lifelong learning measures across the population, while the examples of the UK and Sweden seem to show that a favorable political program can influence individual learning activity.

Establishing markets: Asia and Oceania

While most of the European countries have solid economic foundations, strong state institutions, and widespread public schooling, the

situation in Asia and Oceania is very different. Although we find well-funded public school systems to some extent, there is nonetheless also a strong trend towards privately funded education or public–private partnerships. The intention of these arrangements is to extend educational opportunities to more people as well as for a longer time in their life. However, such increased emphasis on education also creates a strong market for educational services, and some Asian and Oceanian countries have responded to this incentive by setting up educational institutions as an industrial branch.

China

Although China does not have comparable economic resources to most of the countries in Europe, the country continuously strives for educational expansion, including an emphasis on lifelong learning. A first attempt to extend education began in the 1950s with the strategy "walking on two legs," which emphasized widespread provision of education by the government and with the help of citizens. Although this strategy often resulted in low-quality education due to poorly educated teachers or inadequate school buildings, government viewed it as an advancement compared with no education at all (UNESCO 1971:31). After years of socialism, the stronger orientation towards capitalism led to the establishment of "special economic areas" in some parts of the country in 1980. Today, China sees itself in the transition to a "socialist market economy" (UNESCO 2003b:China). Education is clearly defined as a means for national progress as declared, for example, in the "three orientations instruction" by Deng Xiaoping: "Education must be oriented to modernization, to the world and to the future" (Chinese Ministry of Education 2001:15). Although adult education institutions have existed for a long time in China, the political system has only laid emphasis on adult education in the most recent decades, starting with the formation of the Association for Adult Education in 1981, and spanning initial definitions of adult education in official documents in 1985 and a State Council Decision on a reform of adult education in 1987. In the 1990s, adult education was a key element in the "Basic Program for the Reform and Development of Education in China" (Makino 2005:288–90). The 1995 education law included education from infant age to adult life (art. 17 and 19) and was based on the country's intention to establish "a modern education system for life long learning" (Chinese Ministry of Education 1995:7). Separate laws for higher education and vocational education were subsequently adopted (Chinese Ministry of Education 1996, 1998) and a "Lifelong Learning Law" has been planned (Chinese National

Commission for UNESCO 2004:3). In recent years, and in collaboration with international organizations, China emphasized education as one means for sustainable economic growth, but has also relied on private educational providers for its delivery. For ideological reasons, these are only partially acknowledged (Dahlman and Aubert 2001:71–2).

The expansion of preprimary education has also become an issue in Chinese education policy, although it featured as only a minor goal in the ninth "5-year Development Plan for China's Educational Development" (Chinese Ministry of Education 1995:7). Laws have been drafted on the local and national levels which should further promulgate preprimary education (Chinese Ministry of Education 2001:8). But rural areas in particular are difficult to reach with offers of regular kindergartens or preschools. As a consequence, several forms of preprimary education have been established, including tutorials at home when economic conditions do not allow specialized institutions (Chinese Ministry of Education 2001:8). In 2001, China planned to establish a 3-year preschool enrolment rate of more than 55 percent; and in large and medium-sized cities enrolment should be universal. In rural areas, 80 percent should receive at least one year of preschool education. It was intended to establish various forms of childcare, and parents were to receive nursing education (Chinese Ministry of Education 2001:19). Whether these goals have been met remains unclear due to a lack of adequate data, but the stated intentions show that China also increasingly emphasizes preschool education.

One emphasis in Chinese adult education is the eradication of illiteracy, because approximately 10 percent of adults are illiterate in China today (EFA/UNESCO 2005:262). However, adult education is not restricted to this field, and during the 1990s China turned to methods such as on-the-job training and continuing education to increase the human capital in the country. Reforms in adult education were the subject of an exchange between China, international organizations and bilateral meetings (Chinese Ministry of Education 2005b). Article 19 of the 1995 National Education Law stipulates that "the state shall adopt a vocational system and an adult education system." The 1996 vocational education law further refers to the need for adult continuing education, and it is planned gradually to set up a lifelong learning system. The country reports that flexible and diversified adult education opportunities have been created for this purpose (Chinese National Commission for UNESCO 2004:4). China plans to further develop "pre-service and in-service training, job-transfer training and continuing education" and to set up "a comprehensive, modern system

of social education and lifelong education" (UNESCO 2003b:China). Among the means for lifelong education are night schools, university for workers, correspondence colleges, self-studies, and broadcasting and television schools (Chinese National Commission for UNESCO 2004:4). Recently, more and more tertiary education institutions were established for adult education; 607 of these existed in 2002 (Chinese Ministry of Education 2005a), constituting a significant part of Chinese adult education (Kai-Ming *et al*. 1999:121). In China, the distinction between higher education and adult education is less clear-cut than it is in Germany. But, in contrast to the UK, "normal" higher education is much more acknowledged than adult higher education (Kai-Ming *et al*. 1999:122–4).

The expansion and the diversification of higher education have been the two "keys" for Chinese development, as stipulated by the 1994 National Conference on Education (UNESCO 2003b:China). Since then, numerous higher education institutions have been founded, partly in cooperation with foreign universities or as private institutions. China wants 85 percent of the age group of 18 to 21 years to be enrolled in higher education. Higher education is thus becoming the usual degree after secondary education, especially because short cycle degrees are promoted (Chinese Ministry of Education 1995:6). Furthermore, since 1992, private universities have become a more and more common means to meet the increasing demand for higher education in the country (Makino 2005:303). Private spending on tuition fees amounts to at least 30 percent of the financing of higher education, a very high figure (Dahlman and Aubert 2001:75). This does not include the private sector in education, which serves those students who were unable to attend public institutions. The market for private higher education, as well as for private education in general, is expected to grow over the coming years, since the demand for qualifications is high, but access to public institutions remains restricted (LaRocque and Jacobsen 2000). This overall marketization of education is not only a political issue, but also coincides with the views of a large number of people – around 70 percent – who see themselves as responsible for paying for education (Mok 2001:91).[20]

Concerning policy change, it is thus evident that – in line with the overall transformation of the country – China is carrying out many reforms of its education system to offer diverse education opportunities to its people. Since it still invests fewer public resources than other countries in education, private funding and the private sector play a much more important role in educational supply than they do, for example, in most wealthy European countries. In general, "the state

has deliberately de-monopolized its role as a service provider. Local initiatives, individual efforts and the private sector have all tried to create more educational opportunities, resulting in a division of labor between the state, local governments, the community and the school" (Mok 2001:110). The push for lifelong learning, which has also found its way to China and meets the country's will for long-term economic growth, is likely to cause an even higher demand for education that cannot be met by public financing, but will largely be satisfied by the private sector. As a consequence, the education market in China, or the educational demands of Chinese people in foreign countries, can be expected to grow fast in the coming decades. In terms of policy change, lifelong learning is likely to have a major impact. However, only initial steps have been taken and implementation is still in an early stage.

New Zealand

As the first country to introduce a comprehensive qualification framework in 1990, New Zealand has laid out a strategy for continuous learning progress – across different educational settings and over the life span. The unification of qualification levels across different educational pathways has also led to a very integrated education system in the sense that adult, continuing, vocational and higher education are less strictly differentiated than in other countries. Tertiary education, for example, encompasses all postsecondary education, independent of the institutions that it offers (New Zealand Ministry of Education 2004:6). Consequently, adult education programs are offered by universities as well as community colleges, even if their content differs. Regardless of the specific institution, they are supposed to be aligned with national educational priorities, such as "targeting learners whose initial learning was not successful [...] raising foundation skills [...] encouraging lifelong learning" (New Zealand Ministry of Education 2007:17). In particular the success of Maori and Pasifika in the country's education system is a very important issue (New Zealand Ministry of Education 2002:7, 2007:21). Like other countries, New Zealand generally promotes education as a tool for a highly skilled labor force and has invented several measures to ensure individual and collective educational progress. The 1997 government strategy for education claims that, to secure the economic and social future, the education system should contribute "to a highly skilled, adaptable and motivated workforce by promoting lifelong learning" (New Zealand Ministry of Education 1997). Tertiary education is expected to contribute to the "success of all New Zealanders through lifelong learning" (New Zealand Ministry of Education 2007:5–6).

   Besides the governmental focus on raising the skill levels of New Zealanders, the country also stimulates and caters to the international demand for education. The country has developed the education sector into one of its major export sectors, constituting 12.8 percent of its overall exports in 2003/4 (Martens and Starke 2008:3). New Zealand is among the preferred destinations for international students, in particular students from Asia who prefer studying in English – but close to their home country and with comparably low living costs. The global efforts to continually increase skills have thus not only led to changes in education policy focusing on the domestic population, but also caused the development of a commercial sector that caters to fee-paying foreign candidates.[21] The international exchange of students, however, also relates to New Zealanders, and the government intends to internationalize the educational careers of its people, in order to further strengthen the linkages of the country to other parts of the world (New Zealand Government 2007).

   In 1989, the country introduced an early childhood curriculum (UNESCO 2003b:New Zealand). As in other countries, early childhood education is seen as the basis for individual educational development and future learning activities. New Zealand has a very diverse, but comprehensive, early childhood education system, and sees itself as a world leader "in providing integrated care and education under one curriculum" (New Zealand Ministry of Education 2002:6). Participation is not compulsory, but the "government's vision is for all New Zealand children to have the opportunity to participate in quality early childhood education" (New Zealand Ministry of Education 2004:3). Most children leave preprimary education at the age of five to go to school, which is compulsory from the age of six (UNESCO 2003b:New Zealand). Following the Ministry's 10-year strategy, which began in 2002, the participation rates in early childhood education, which are already high,[22] are to be increased, and teacher training is increasingly important.

   The most remarkable feature in the structuring of education has been the comprehensive qualification framework. It covers not only adult education, but also the school level, although in a less differentiated way. The framework was first initiated in the 1980s, when New Zealand faced increasing difficulties with its education system. The system produced a high rate of school leavers without any formal qualifications, who were likely to be unemployed in the future. At same time, New Zealand lost its preferred trade status with the UK. The country's reliance on agricultural products caused economic problems and outlined

the need for a transition to other economic sectors, also resulting in the need for a changed education system (Smithers 1997:83). The qualification framework was introduced after some study of qualification systems in Scotland and Great Britain, where smaller systems of qualification recognition and assessment could be found. New Zealand, however, transformed these ideas to a comprehensive system that covered the whole spectrum of education. Schools, for example, typically teach level 1 to 4 qualifications. Higher education entrance is usually possible with a grade 4 qualification, doctoral studies represent a grade 10 qualification, and so forth (ILO 2008b). The system is managed by one agency, the New Zealand Qualification Authority. The body is closely linked to the Ministry of Education. It further develops the framework and its implementation and oversees quality assurance and learning outcomes (UNESCO 2003b:New Zealand). The different educational phases, such as schooling, adult and higher education, are all to be seen as parts of the overall framework. In sum, relying on public and private funds, New Zealand has thus created an integrated education system with educational opportunities over the life span.

General trends and outcomes

As in Europe, countries in Asia and Oceania have made efforts to facilitate lifelong learning processes among their inhabitants. While a country that has few resources, such as China, needs to rely mostly on private initiative, private contributions or private providers, New Zealand has established an integrated education system that can cater to educational demand with state support as well. Private providers are particularly important in creating revenue from the demand of foreign students. In 2003, nearly two-thirds of all foreign students in New Zealand were of Chinese origin (Martens and Starke 2008:12). The demand from countries like China has triggered the further development of the education market in neighboring countries, in particular New Zealand. Another example would be Singapore, where the government developed the brand of a "global schoolhouse." There, western education institutions have established branches and cooperation with local educational providers to cater to the Asian educational market (Singapore Development Board 2006; Ministry of Education Singapore 2004).

   The trend towards private providers is also visible in other regions of the world, although countries differ in terms of their economic situation (see Table 5.5). It is striking that the countries in Western Europe and Northern America in particular, which constitute the group with the wealthiest population, mostly rely on governmental education providers,

Table 5.5   Private enrolment as a percentage of total enrolment

	Preprimary education		Primary education		Secondary education	
	1998 /89	2002 /03	1998 /89	2002 /03	1998 /89	2002 /03
World	38	40	7	7	11	11
Countries in Transition	0.1	1	0.3	0.4	0.2	0.4
Developed Countries	10	8	4	4	6	7
Developing Countries	52	59	11	11	16	15
Arab States	89	86	7	13	8	9
Central & Eastern Europe	1	1	0.3	0.9	0.6	1
Central Asia	1	1	0.5	0.8	0.2	0.8
East Asia & the Pacific	NA	60	NA	4	NA	12
Latin America & Caribbean	42	41	13	16	25	25
North America & Western Europe	26	25	7	7	7	9
South & West Asia	NA	33	NA	9	NA	25
Sub-Saharan Africa	51	62	10	8	16	13

Notes: No data for tertiary education available. NA stands for not available.

Source: EFA/UNESCO (2006:382), modified.

whereas in sub-Saharan Africa private providers cater to a larger share of the population. Wealthy countries obviously see the need and have the capability to publicly finance the education of their population. In the long run, it thus remains questionable whether development goals can be met, in view of the difficulties of poor countries and poorer inhabitants in receiving education.

Different public investments: The Americas

While lifelong learning has, at least to some extent, found its way into all of the countries' policy agendas by now, the case studies of the Americas show a slightly different pattern. On the one hand, the continent is divided into very different countries and is less homogeneous than, for example, Europe and the European Union. The United States can be assumed to be relatively autonomous in terms of policy

development, since international organizations traditionally do not have a large impact. On the other hand, the continent still has some very poor regions, and also regions in which statehood is less institutionalized, for example in some Latin American countries that face difficulties with rebel groups. I choose the examples of the US and Mexico to show that, despite these difficulties, lifelong learning has also caught some attention in the Americas.

United States of America

Traditionally, the federal government of the United States has only a very restricted responsibility for education. The US Constitution stipulates that any issue not determined to be a federal issue, nor prohibited to the states, is by definition to be governed on the state level (US Department of Education 2003:6). The federal Education Department as an entity responsible for education policy-making was only created in 1979 and was a politically sensitive issue, as the early Reagan administration even had plans to close it (Davies 2007:221–75). Today, the department advises the President, prepares legislative proposals, helps implement policies and raises public awareness of important education issues (US Department of Education 2003:31).

Despite the strong role of the states, support for federal activity had been generated by the perception of the poor quality of public education as a national problem, as discussed in the prominent publication "A Nation at Risk." In this report, malfunctions in the education system were seen as endangering the economic progress and prospects of the United States, as it would not be able to cope with the growing human capital in foreign countries (National Commission for Excellence in Education 1983). In the aftermath of the debate on excellence, the United States not only sustained national programs, but also intended to initiate international activity, in particular the development of better indicators to assess educational development (Martens 2005a).

Since the United States is a powerful state in the international political system, the influence of international organizations may be considered to be low in American politics, constituting a critical case for showing the influence of world society. Nonetheless, the government sees its education system as having been influenced by examples from other countries (US Department of Education 2003:3) and the idea and concept of lifelong learning also did not remain unnoticed in the US. Federal and partisan interest in the concept has increased: after the 2006 elections, the House "Subcommittee on 21st Century Competitiveness" was renamed the "Subcommittee on Higher Education, Lifelong

Learning and Competitiveness" in 2007 (Council for Higher Education Accreditation 2007); studies on participation in lifelong learning were conducted (Kim *et al*. 2004); and a think tank oriented towards the Democratic Party published a policy paper on lifelong learning (Bosworth 2007). As part of adult education, lifelong learning had already been discussed in the 1970s, resulting in the "Lifelong Learning Act," the 1976 Enactment of Part B of the Higher Education Act. These early efforts nonetheless remained fruitless, since no adequate financing could be appropriated, and many stakeholders show only minor interest in a federal program (Hartle and Kutner 1979). The National Institute on Post-Secondary Education, Libraries and Lifelong Education was only established in 1994 (UNESCO 2003b:USA) and some legislation linked to lifelong learning was enacted in the 1990s.

Lifelong learning is thus discussed primarily in the context of adult education, while preprimary education has also received increased attention over recent decades. With the adoption of the 2001 "No Child Left Behind" Act, and also with the earlier "Educate America Act," the notion of "school-readiness" has become even more important: the 1994 act stated that by 2000 all Americans should start school ready to learn (UNESCO 2003b:USA), which requires preschool preparation and resulted in increased efforts to structure learning activities before school (Kamermann and Gatenio 2003:9). The early childhood education system is diverse, builds upon a variety of providers and programs, and is governed at different levels (US Department of Education 2003:14). Federal initiatives have grown by expanding the Head Start program, which focuses on young children from disadvantaged backgrounds and helps them learn. Several years ago the age coverage was expanded to birth (Kamermann and Gatenio 2003:16–17).[23]

Concerning adult and higher education, the United States, like the other Anglo-Saxon countries presented here, has a rather integrated system of higher and adult education, often subsumed simply as postsecondary education. Adult education that focuses on basic skills is understood as adult basic education or adult secondary education and is covered by the Workforce Investment Act, a major program for increasing the skills of underqualified workers (see Elliott 2004:8,20). Learning for adults has been facilitated by several tax exemption or credit schemes, in particular the Lifetime Learning Tax Credit established in 1998. In the same year, the Workforce Investment Act emphasized continuing education for workers.[24] Linked to the improvement of employment services, the act established centers where job-seekers gain information on educational opportunities and introduced individual training accounts to assist

adults receiving further education (see US Department of Labor 1998). During the discussions on changes to the act in the Subcommittee on Higher Education, Lifelong Learning and Competitiveness in 2007, references were made to the aim of enabling lifelong learning and thus securing national economic growth. As the representative of the Governors' Association states in the hearing: "Our workforce system must be transformed to support lifelong learning and restore our nation's competitive edge [...]. workers should have the opportunity to equip and reequip themselves for different careers through training, education, and professional development" (Ware 2007:5). On the individual level, participation in adult learning has changed over the years, as the national household education survey shows. Participation in courses increased from 40 percent in 1995 to around 45 percent in 2001. The figures also reveal a stronger focus on job-related qualifications. While participation out of personal interest had been nearly equal to participation because of work-related interest in 1995, the latter increased by nearly 10 percent to 30 percent from 1995 to 2001, while personal interest remained rather stable (Kim *et al.* 2004:11).

Academic education is valued highly in US society and economy, but its quality differs because it is offered by a variety of providers, ranging from top universities to small local colleges, providing different levels of degrees and different quality (see UNESCO 2003b:USA). As the world's largest national economy, the United States views high-level education as a key for national and individual progress. The number of Americans with postsecondary or higher education has steadily increased over the years. Although private investment in tertiary and higher education is high, the growing costs for colleges and universities are currently raising concerns over whether they are not too high for ensuring broad participation and for securing a well-educated workforce (US Congress 2008).

In sum, the international debate on lifelong learning is only to a minor extent mirrored by policy change in the US. The country has traditionally placed a high emphasis on education, and facilitating lifelong learning is only one among many educational reforms. Nonetheless, the United States shares its educational aims with many other countries: e.g. the emphasis on preprimary education for enabling effective future learning processes and the introduction of support for adult learning opportunities, as well as the overall framework of education for economic competitiveness.

Mexico

Mexico's difficult political and economic conditions are clearly reflected by its education policy. The country has a young, but aging, population. While in 2000 only 5 percent of the population was older than 65 years,

this group is expected to grow to 25 percent by the year 2050 (Mexican Ministry of Public Education 2006:6). The public debt is high and tax revenue low, constituting only 18.5 percent of the GDP and thus the lowest in the OECD. Although Mexico invests a comparably high share of government spending in education, the share of educational expenditure as part of the GDP is only slightly above the OECD average (OECD 2004c:19, 2006:383). Around 40 percent of all households are estimated to live below the poverty line, which makes education a necessity for better salaries, but also difficult to obtain given the short-term need for available income. The 1993 General Education Law has again underlined the role of the national government in promoting education at different levels (Secretaría de Educación Pública 2001:5). The country's education system includes preschool education as the first part of basic education. Higher education and adult education are separate, and target different groups. Lifelong learning is only of minor importance in the country, although it has established a qualification framework and has major problems with school dropouts.

A major reform that took place in 2002 was the Law on Obligatory Preschool Education. The law introduced compulsory preschool education for children from three to six years old, to be implemented stepwise until 2009. It also unified the former heterogeneous preschool education, which used to be administered by different bodies, so that it is now governed by state and federal education ministries only (OECD 2006:377–81; Secretaría de Educación Pública 2004:6). As an outcome, Mexico has thus expanded the overall period of compulsory education to children from three to 15 years, even if not all children who are required to go to school are actually present.

As early as 1995, Mexico established a qualification framework that encompassed a wide array of qualifications and occupations, but is still in implementation and subject to restructuring (ILO 2008a). Given the high number of people who have not completed nine years of basic education – which applies to 50 percent of the population over the age of 15 (OECD 2004c:8) – adult education is needed to improve the skill levels of workers as well as to provide basic education. There are several projects that bring education to rural areas as well as labor laws that require training for employees.[25] Educational services were in part transferred from the national to the state level to allow for better provision and higher rates of success (Secretaría de Educación Pública 2001:24,28–9). In 2002, the National Council for Education for Life and Work was established, with the purpose of coordinating and developing education programs in the context of work and beyond, "with the

aim of forming a national system that consolidates and strengthens the unity of the social function of education throughout the country and facilitates access [...] to continuous learning processes throughout their lives" (Secretaría de Educación Pública 2004:5). Nonetheless, the government's emphasis on adult education as a means for economic growth may be diminished by the fact that public investments in this sector are generally low, in particular with regard to adult basic education (OECD 2004:20–1).

The Mexican higher education system is also diverse and heterogeneous, consisting of nearly 2,000 institutions. Only a minority are public entities, but these cater to two-thirds of the students (Mexican Ministry of Public Education 2006:8). The sector has seen an increase of 65 percent between 1990 and 2000, and, as the country reports (Secretaría de Educación Pública 2001:18–19), "One of the greatest challenges faced by higher education has been the suitable diversification of the supply that responds to the need of the country's development." Higher education is mainly seen as the continuation of secondary schooling, while updating qualifications or forms of high-level adult education are only on the long-term agenda (Mexican Ministry of Public Education 2006:59–60). Currently, the country faces problems of quality in higher education, due, among other things, to less qualified faculties, as well as access problems for economically disadvantaged people (Mexican Ministry of Public Education 2006:16–18, 21–3).

In sum, Mexico has implemented lifelong learning policies to only a minor extent. The increase in compulsory education is a powerful instrument to increase education from birth onwards. However, the diversity of the sectors of adult and higher education, together with serious problems of financing in particular, has so far restricted wide-ranging policy change toward lifelong learning.

General trends and outcomes

Lifelong learning has so far only partly caught attention in the Americas, and implementation is not comparable to that in the other countries featured. As shown, the national realization of lifelong learning policies thus depends not only on the social welfare system, or the available financing, but also on the educational levels that the population has attained, as a base on which lifelong education could be built. While, in the US system, private financing is an important part of overall educational spending, this also means that many educational regulations are less state-centered than in countries that have established mainly governmental responsibility for education throughout life. In Mexico, the diverse range of educational

providers, together with a lower capability for nationwide implementation of regulations, has also led to only a partial realization of lifelong learning policies, although regulations have been introduced. Other countries in the Americas have also begun to introduce lifelong learning policies, for example Peru and its compulsory preprimary education (Report Peru 2001:7–8) or Trinidad and Tobago and its qualifications framework (ILO 2005a). Overall, the need for lifelong learning is thus acknowledged, but implementation is still at an early stage.

This is also due to comparably restrictive public budgets for education. Analyzing the policy reports made it clear that the will to enlarge education has been widely emphasized, but increased public financing

Table 5.6   Financing of education in 1999 and 2005

	Total public expenditure on education as % of GNP		Education as % of government expenditure		Total aid to education (constant 2005 US$ million)	
	1999	2005	1999	2005	1999/ 2000 average	2005
World	4.5	4.9	NA	14	NA	NA
Countries in transition	3.7	3.6	NA	16	NA	NA
Developed countries	5.0	5.5	11	13	NA	NA
Developing countries	4.4	4.7	NA	NA	NA	NA
Arab States	NA	NA	NA	NA	1,057	1,283
Central & Eastern Europe	4.3	4.9	NA	NA	396	295
Central Asia	3.7	3.2	NA	NA	104	118
East Asia & the Pacific	4.8	NA	NA	NA	1,252	1,265
Latin America & the Caribbean	4.7	5.0	16	13	576	660
North America & Western Europe	5.0	5.7	12	13	3	1
South & West Asia	2.9	3.6	NA	15	812	1,101
Sub-Saharan Africa	3.7	5.0	NA	NA	2,279	2,810

Note: NA stands for not available.

Source: Adapted from EFA/UNESCO (2008:355,388).

has remained nearly unmentioned. Nonetheless, the figures on public expenditure in education in Table 5.6 show that public educational expenditure generally has grown in recent years. The share of educational expenditures relative to the GNP has increased nearly universally, the only exception being Central Asia. It is, however, difficult to assess whether this increase occurs in parallel to an overall governmental budget increase. Figures are not available for every region, but this amounts to about 3 percent at least in Latin America and the Caribbean. Such cumulative figures, however, do not indicate which educational institution faced more or less public support; they also do not tell us whether the private investment in education may have exceeded the public increase, and how far they relate to lifelong learning at all.[26] As recent UNESCO figures show, the percentage of private investment in education may be quite high, totaling more than 10 percent of the total education expenditure in more than half of the 47 countries (UNESCO Institute for Statistics 2007). Additionally, international aid also contributes significantly to the extension of educational opportunities and to its financing. As shown in Table 5.6, international aid to countries rose between 2000 and 2005, the only exception being North America and all parts of Europe, areas that enjoy widespread economic prosperity. Creating lifelong learning opportunities, therefore, does not necessarily mean that budgets dedicated to education are multiplying. Instead, funds can be contributed from private households, or from international aid, or even both. Nonetheless, a low share of governmental expenditure for education signifies the relative unimportance of lifelong learning or education in general.

Preparing the ground: Africa

Although the countries analyzed before showed major differences in terms of how to implement lifelong learning and to guarantee a highly skilled population, all countries had a prosperous economy or at least a mid-term prospect of creating one. Many countries in Africa, in contrast, are known for the various economic and social difficulties they face. Nonetheless, the norm of lifelong learning has also established itself here and countries are beginning to establish education from birth to adulthood. In the following section, approaches to the implementation of lifelong learning in Nigeria and South Africa are presented. Although both countries have severe problems with regard to the reach and quality of their education systems, they are very different in terms of their history, their political systems and current status of development (Mazrui 2006).

Nigeria

Nigeria is one of the poorest countries in the world – with a GNI of only US$390 per capita in 2004 – and its history of independence is strongly influenced by coup d'états and nondemocratic regimes.[27] Despite rich crude oil resources, policy-makers usually did not put education high on the agenda, and the World Bank criticized sports events that cost more than the annual national budgets of education and health combined (BBC 2003; see also Lewis 2007:249).

Nonetheless, in its country report, Nigeria acknowledges the importance of lifelong learning: "there is the urgent need to ensure relevance of educational content and a reorientation of education philosophy, teaching and learning strategies, and the infusion of knowledge and skills beyond schooling for lifelong learning, for a knowledge and information society" (Nigerian Federal Ministry of Education 2004:25). The country's first education system was established by the British colonists; later the model was reformed to conform to the US structure (Aborisade and Mundt 2002:78–9), and today the Nigerian education policy still considers itself to be oriented towards international trends and to be linked to development all over the world (Nigerian Federal Ministry of Education 2001:6).[28]

Attention to preprimary education has increased in previous years, but the major part of preprimary education financing is paid by parents. In recent years, the government evaluated ways to increase the participation rate, since preprimary education is seen as an advantageous "early start" (Nigerian Federal Ministry of Education 2004:10). In 2007, the goal was set to increase participation rates in specific early education programs up to 70 percent by 2015 (Nigerian Federal Ministry of Education 2008:10). The professionalization of early childhood education in the country began in the early 1990s through cooperation with UNICEF on an "Early Childhood Care Development and Education Project." Early childhood care has been taught in university courses and there have been plans to expand such teaching to colleges throughout the country (UNESCO 2003b:Nigeria). Moreover, curricula for infants aged up to five years have been set up (Nigerian Federal Ministry of Education 2008:35). Nonetheless, participation in preprimary education is still low: in 1999, about 18 percent of children aged from three to five years were enrolled in preprimary education, with significant differences between 37 percent in urban and 12 percent in rural areas (Nigerian Federal Ministry of Education 2004:10). For 2001, the UNESCO Institute for Statistics estimated a gross enrolment rate of 8.2 percent for the whole country (EFA/UNESCO 2005:276). [29]

Since 1999 Nigeria has also defined "basic education" with regard to adult education. It introduced the basic education scheme, which focuses on the provision of primary and junior secondary education for youth, as well as on functional literacy programs for adults (Nigerian Federal Ministry of Education 2004:4). This is an extension of primary education to later life and exceeds the regulation of the former "Universal Primary Education Program," which was only concerned with school children. Moreover, the Nigerian scheme explicitly mentions flexible exits and entrance points to education, the inclusion of nonformal education and, eventually, the transition from the nonformal to the formal level (Nigerian Federal Ministry of Education 2004:5). Nonformal programs were established to educate illiterate people or out-of-school youth. No current data is available, but there was a considerable increase during the 1990s: in 1991, around half a million adults were enrolled, while in 1996 more than one million learners took such courses (UNESCO 2003b:Nigeria). Such courses nonetheless differed widely, ranging from basic literacy to continuing education, vocational education or prison education.

A recent change in the Nigerian higher education system has been the opening of the Nigerian Open University in 2003 (Nigerian Federal Ministry of Education 2004:15).[30] Besides state universities, private universities have catered to the demand for higher education since the beginning of the 1990s (Nigerian Federal Ministry of Education 2001:18). The enrolment in universities steadily increased during the 1990s, from around 170,000 students in 1991/1992 to nearly 350,000 in 1998/1999. Colleges or polytechnics did not follow that trend but remained on an overall low level (Nigerian Federal Ministry of Education 2001:25).

In sum, Nigeria has taken the first steps to ensure increased learning activities, but the scope of the political aims and the implementation process are not comparable to those of the other countries presented here.

South Africa

After the end of the apartheid regime, South Africa introduced many reforms to establish an education system that breaks with the former system of discrimination and the low literacy and schooling rates. The Constitution declares a right to basic education, including adult education, and to further education, which the state has to implement over time. The Ministry of Education was established in 1994, and important bodies, such as the Education Department, the South African Qualifications Authority, councils and institutes followed immediately or in the following years (UNESCO 2003b:South Africa). All sectors of

education policy have been reformed stepwise, and an extensive restructuring was carried out in early childhood education, adult and higher education.[31] For this purpose, South Africa has cooperated with international organizations and engaged in bilateral cooperation to establish a comprehensive education system (e.g. South African Department of Education 2007:18). Lifelong learning had quickly been identified as a central concept in reforming education policy, and international policy ideas were adopted (see Aitchison 2004:518–19).

Today, the system is classified into three levels: general basic education, further education and training, and higher education (South African Government Information 2008b). Lifelong learning is a prominent concept in education policy reforms, ranging from preparation in early education to adult basic education and continuing education. The Department of Education's vision is "a South Africa in which all people will have access to lifelong learning, education and training opportunities, which will, in turn, contribute towards improving the quality of life and building a peaceful, prosperous and democratic South Africa" (South African Department of Education 2007:9). In 2001, South Africa outlined its human resource strategy, and two of its four objectives are directly linked to the education system; a third is concerned with the labor market demand for education (South African Ministry of Education and Ministry of Labor 2001a:11–17).

In early childhood education, South Africa has introduced the so-called reception year. Since 1997, the last year of preprimary education prepares children for school and makes an additional year of education possible (South African Ministry of Education and Ministry of Labor, 2001a:21; UNESCO 2003b:South Africa). The year is not yet compulsory, but it is nonetheless intended to cover all children by 2010 (South African Ministry of Education 2001:5). Expanding access to early childhood education is one of the current education priorities, and early childhood education is viewed as preparation for schooling and the basis for future lifelong learning (South African Department of Education 2007:4; South African Ministry of Education 2001:8–10).

Like other countries, South Africa is attempting to integrate its qualification structure into one framework and, in doing so, also trying to dissolve the strict separation of academic and vocational paths (UNESCO 2003b:South Africa; South African Department of Education 2001:9). The country has begun with the implementation of a qualification framework in 1995, building upon discussions on a more equal training and education system under apartheid (South African Ministry of Education and Ministry of Labor 2001b:i). Although the intended targets of qualification

levels were hard to realize (Aitchison 2004:533) and the implementation proved to be difficult, the framework has been perceived as an important tool to unify the fragmented education system and to enable continuous learning processes. Its implementation has in turn been supported by international organizations and several bilateral contacts (South African Ministry of Education and Ministry of Labor 2001b:3,10,21–34). Nongovernmental actors also supported the framework's establishment, perceiving it as an opportunity for disadvantaged groups to proceed along the different educational levels (Fehnel 2006:229).[32]

Besides the formal adult education covered in the framework, South Africa is also investing in adult basic education, a widely perceived need given that a large number of adults did not attend school at all, or left within the first years. Adult basic education is perceived both as a right and as a necessity in the changing economy. Moreover, not only is it seen as a compensatory experience for basic schooling, but effort is being expended to make this basic level the starting point for further education and training. Hence, it "progressively initiates adult learners onto a path of lifelong learning and development" (South African Department of Education 2001:1–2,5). Several organizational steps have been taken to implement this policy. For example, an agency for literacy has been founded, while an act on adult basic education regulated the establishment and quality of training centers, and multiple projects have been created to support the basic education of adults (South African Government Information 2008b; see also South African Department of Education 2001:15–19).

Higher education is also part of the efforts to put the principles of lifelong learning into practice. A first phase of restructuring the higher education sphere entailed the integration of the college sector and the merger of many institutions in order to create a more coherent system (UNESCO 2003b:South Africa). Additionally, private higher education has become more widespread, and boundaries between academic and vocational education, and between contact and distance education, have blurred since the 1990s (Cloete and Fehnel 2006:246–7; Fehnel 2006). The reform processes were intended to allow broader and more representative access from all groups of society, and were also linked to the establishment of the qualification framework and its different ways to define qualifications. The system was supposed to "open its doors, in the spirit of lifelong learning, to workers and professionals in pursuit of multiskilling and reskilling, and adult learners whose access to higher education had been thwarted in the past" (South African Ministry of Education 1997:17; see also Cloete and Fehnel 2006). The system is

intended to serve the country's human resource development by updating knowledge, and it provides high-level skill training for the younger generation (South African Government Information 2008b).

Overall, lifelong learning debates are prominent in the education system of South Africa, and many efforts have been undertaken to implement its principles in different sectors of the education system, even if implementation has turned out to be difficult and has been realized only to a minor extent (see Aitchison 2004). The country is well aware of the ongoing global debates on lifelong learning, for example in the case of the qualifications framework, and has continuously worked with international collaborators to expand its education system.

General trends and outcomes

The examples of African countries show that very different countries are implementing notions of lifelong learning. On the one hand, this takes place in a universal manner when countries align themselves

Table 5.7   Development of adult literacy

	Adult literacy rate (15 and above)	
	1990	2000–2004*
World	75.4	81.9
Countries in transition	99.2	99.4
Developed countries	98.0	98.7
Developing countries	67.0	76.4
Arab States	50.0	62.7
Central & Eastern Europe	96.2	97.4
Central Asia	98.7	99.2
East Asia & the Pacific	81.8	91.4
Latin America & the Caribbean	85.0	89.7
North America & Western Europe	97.9	98.7
South & West Asia	47.5	58.6
Sub-Saharan Africa	49.9	59.7
Nigeria	48.7	66.8
South Africa	81.2	82.4

Note: *Data refers to the most recent year available in the period.
Source: EFA/UNESCO (2006:398), modified, weighted average for regional values.

with the global discourse on lifelong learning. On the other hand, they frequently adapt the significance of lifelong learning to their national needs, which means that they often emphasize adult literacy and basic education, which are a less pronounced requirement in European countries. Yet countries like South Africa have nonetheless introduced large-scale reforms such as qualifications frameworks. Overall, the educational level has generally increased in African countries, as illustrated by the literacy rate (see Table 5.7). As well as South Asia, where countries like Bangladesh only have a small literate population, Africa has remained a region with many illiterate people, but the percentage has remarkably dropped during the last 10 years, resulting in an average increase in literacy of nearly 10 percent. In Nigeria the literacy rate has increased even further, by about 20 percent, in the same time frame.

These figures show the effects of education, but it is uncertain to what extent lifelong learning is responsible for this progress. Comparative data on these developments is hard to find, but the growing gross enrolment rates in preprimary education (Table 5.4 above) at least give some hint that Africans are spending more time in education than they used to do some years ago.

Conclusion: Leaders, laggards and very different approaches

A summary of the developments illustrated in this chapter reveals that the idea of lifelong learning has been widely acknowledged, and spread across the world, but approaches for its implementation are very different. Countries may adopt wide-ranging policies in all three fields of preprimary, adult and higher education, or they many choose only some elements. Nonetheless, the overall move towards regulating and promoting the prolongation of individual education is obvious. In preprimary education, states have begun to introduce curricula or to oblige children to attend preschools. These efforts are matched by an increased enrolment rate in this educational stage, so that the political efforts are also reflected on the individual level. In adult education, countries have introduced large frameworks that regulate and assess adult learning, or they have introduced individual measures to enable people to spend more time in education. Although figures for this stage are difficult to find, the experiences of some countries illustrate that adult learning has also increased. Besides, higher education has also undergone changes and in many countries it is currently being redesigned to serve as another part of the adult learning sector. Overall, participation has also increased at that stage.

In sum, what do these developments tell us? First, some countries are obviously more engaged in lifelong learning policy development than others. Thus we can speak of leaders and laggards in this process. More importantly, the wide range of countries engaging in lifelong learning, as well as the different national conditions they face, demonstrates that the motive for the adoption of lifelong learning policies cannot simply be reduced to national circumstances. After all, there are substantial differences in the economic, demographic and social situations, the welfare systems and the current state of education of the countries mentioned. Many of the countries, indeed, are taking part in a global move to restructure and expand education over the lifetime, and the sources of this policy diffusion are likely to be found on the international level rather than on the national. The debate on education and lifelong learning, its aims, goals, justifications and its means, is thus to a large extent globalized, and national discussions on lifelong learning can be understood as one variant of an international debate.

Yet the globalization of this policy goal – to the extent that it is less unique than national politics would assume – does not mean that the state is no longer central to policy-making. Nor does the focus on lifelong learning, which enables individuals to continuously adapt to changing circumstances, render state intervention redundant. The globalization of lifelong learning policies mirrors the fact that, in times when nearly all political issues are debated in international fora, the idea of a truly national, unfiltered policy-making process is extremely rare among internationally represented countries. And there are few countries that are not internationally represented and do not participate in debates. Nonetheless, world society does not determine countries' activities, and the translation of global policy proposals to local circumstances and their implementation are still national tasks. Hence, the state remains a potent actor. The idea of lifelong learning is often ideologically based on the conviction that qualified individuals are an investment for a nation. Nations, in turn, are compelled to spend less on compensatory social policies. However, nations must first make substantial investments in enabling people to learn over their life span. This does not mean that countries are necessarily in a position to finance lifelong learning, but that the state is, at least, a central institution for addressing the coordination of different educational spheres and for supporting individual learning activities. Regardless of whether or not countries used to promote educational progress beyond schooling, the debate on lifelong learning has transformed states into actors who are more concerned with whether and what small children and adults are learning.

While up to here the book has concentrated on illustrating the timing and activities on the world level as well as analyzing national activities, several questions remain unanswered. Despite the strong parallels between global and national policies, it is still uncertain whether we can really hold international organizations responsible for the turn towards lifelong learning. Moreover, a general explanation for the fact that education policies have spread so easily across countries is still needed, in particular because education is a core field of national responsibility. Finally, the implications of lifelong learning for individuals and societies are not yet clearly obvious. The next chapter addresses these questions, illustrates the implications of the emphasis on lifelong learning from different angles in world society, and shows how they meet at the common point of lifelong learning as a new norm in education policy.

6
Implications: A Tool for Progress and a Symbol of Modernity

The spread of lifelong learning is not only an empirical finding related to diffusion studies and restricted to education policy. Instead, the fact that a policy can be found in many countries irrespective of their national preconditions sheds light on the ability of world society – and particularly international organizations – to establish policy goals. While world society researchers used to show that worldwide exchange influences national policy development, the spread of lifelong learning in a way represents a new quality of diffusion. Researchers in sociological institutionalism most often analyze long-term historical developments (for example Meyer *et al.* 1992), while this book's findings highlight a development which has progressed over approximately three decades. However, we must still assess the implications of this diffusion, resulting from its causes, its background and its consequences. I argue that lifelong learning, in the end, has become a norm in education policy-making around the world. It has thus taken on a central role in policy-making that also ranges down to the individual level.

To substantiate this conclusion, I will first elaborate on the causes of the diffusion of lifelong learning, international organizations, the background of the process, the idea of a worldwide knowledge society, and the implications this has for society and the individual. The preceding chapters have highlighted the activities of international organizations in lifelong learning policy development as well as national efforts to implement this idea. In this chapter, I show that international organizations can be considered a causal factor for the diffusion of lifelong learning, and that they can also be more important than national wealth or the geographical area of a country, factors that diffusion theorists also often consider to be important (Berry and Berry 1999). Although the role of international organizations cannot be underestimated when it

comes to the diffusion of lifelong learning, there is also an additional element that has made the exchange of education policies particularly prominent in recent decades – the idea of the knowledge society as an imagined community (Anderson 1991). Unlike the functional argument that the knowledge society requires specific educational measures, the phenomenological role of the knowledge society is one of community-building and setting common goals. In this context, lifelong learning is for many countries merely a symbol of modern education policy, an element that signifies they are modern societies. Besides, lifelong learning, if realized, has some important implications for societies and individuals. The role of education in society is currently being extended from social policy intervention into childhood to a recurrent individual activity. It is perhaps publicly promoted, but not necessarily supported. Learning is thus likely to turn into a lifelong obligation, which also has important consequences for the education system, for both public and private providers.

Taken together, these different developments result in the finding that lifelong learning is currently becoming a norm in education policy, on the political as well as on the societal and individual level. This chapter analyzes these implications and shows that the policy development of lifelong learning is an interesting finding not only for researchers of policy diffusion and international relations, but also for those interested in the characteristics of contemporary social and education policy.

International organizations and their effects on education policy

The preceding chapter illustrated that lifelong learning has been increasingly established as part of education policies worldwide. Although countries are more reluctant to implement the idea than to refer to it – after all, talking about reforms is easier than introducing them – the spread of lifelong learning has crossed geographical, political and economic boundaries between countries. Given the theoretical framework of global policy development and the important role of international organizations, one implication is that international organizations are a main cause for this diffusion pattern. As outlined in the theoretical part, international organizations, in principle, have five instruments at hand to influence national policy development: disseminating ideas, setting standards, providing financial means, coordinating policy efforts and offering technical assistance. Applying this typology to

Table 6.1 Instruments for the diffusion of lifelong learning

Instrument	Ideas	Standard setting	Financial means	Coordination	Technical assistance
Examples	– OECD Meeting "Lifelong Learning for All" – European Year of Lifelong Learning – UNESCO Commission on Education for the 21st Century	– UNESCO Recommendation concerning Technical and Vocational Education – ILO Recommendation on Human Resource Development – EU OMC Benchmarks	– World Bank Project Financing – EU Lifelong Learning Action Program	– UNESCO/ EFA Monitoring Reports – OECD Country Reviews – OECD Project "Role of Qualification Frameworks in Promoting Lifelong Learning"	– ILO Projects Supporting e.g., the Albanian or Jordanian Government

lifelong learning reveals that all of them were used to promote this policy (see Table 6.1).

Essentially, international organizations have promoted the idea that lifelong learning is an important tool for national and individual progress. They have underlined its role in ensuring economic development at the advent of the knowledge society, for industrialized countries as well as developing nations or countries in transition. They have also emphasized the need for lifelong learning in the context of individual employability and self-development, although the latter aspect was more prominent in earlier decades. Examples of international organizations that disseminated the idea of lifelong learning are the UNESCO and its "Commission for Education in the 21st Century," the OECD meeting on "Lifelong Learning for All," the European Year of Lifelong Learning, and the World Bank Conference on Lifelong Learning (OECD 1996; UNESCO 1996; World Bank 2003a). Standard-setting activities have been undertaken by UN organizations such as UNESCO or ILO and their respective recommendations in the context of adult education, as well as benchmarks created within the framework of the OMC education (UNESCO 2001; ILO 2004b; De Ruiter 2009). Financial means, as a third instrument for lifelong learning promotion, have been invested by the World Bank and the EU. The Bank financed projects in borrowing countries, while the EU sponsored projects in the framework of the European Year of Lifelong Learning or, more recently, in the context of the working program on lifelong learning (World Bank 2002, 2004; EU

Commission 1999; European Union 2006). The coordination of activities, including monitoring, has been documented in OECD country reviews or in the organization's project on qualification systems and lifelong learning, and also in publications such as the UNESCO/EFA monitoring report, which assesses countries' progress towards common aims (OECD 1999, 2002b; EFA/UNESCO 2005, 2007). Technical assistance has been offered by the ILO, which initialized projects that dealt with establishing learning opportunities in several countries (ILO 2005c,d).

While these activities highlight the influence of international organizations on lifelong learning, a detailed assessment of their effects is nonetheless necessary. Following a core assumption of this book, organizational linkages to international organizations should have an impact on a country's lifelong learning policies. To test whether this assumption holds true, I classified countries according to whether they are involved in education policy programs of international organizations, namely the OECD and the EU, or whether they have education policy contacts with a nongovernmental organization. In the case of the OECD, this meant that countries which were part of a review process or which had been part of the PISA study, or other comparable activities, were coded as linked to the OECD. In the case of the European Union, members and candidates have been coded as part of its education policy agenda. This also applies to all ASEM members. In the case of nongovernmental organizations, countries were coded according to whether they mentioned such organizations in the context of their education policy-making in their education policy reports.[1]

Subsequently, the organizational linkage was correlated with the lifelong learning policy development in the respective country. This analysis reveals that the organizations have an effect (see Table 6.2). Among them, the OECD seems to be the most prominent organization with regard to lifelong learning and the reforms linked to it. This corresponds with the fact that the OECD has had lifelong learning on its agenda for more than a decade and oversees very different linked educational reforms. The effects of the EU appear to be less significant, even when combined with ASEM. As for the idea of lifelong learning, the organization seems to have a less significant effect than the OECD, and the effects of reforms linked to lifelong learning appear to be even less pronounced. Without ASEM, the correlation is not significant. There is a positive correlation between reported activities by nongovernmental organizations in a country's education system and lifelong learning, but no significant correlation between these activities and reforms.

Table 6.2 Correlations of lifelong learning, organizational linkages and national preconditions

	Idea of lifelong learning	Reforms linked to it
Organizational linkage		
OECD influence	.307***	.293***
EU influence	.260***	.090
EU influence incl. ASEM	.285***	.082*
NGO influence	.235***	.118
National preconditions – Area		
Africa south of Sahara	.042	.072
Asia and Oceania	−.170*	−.012
Central Europe and former USSR	.172*	−.033
Latin America and the Caribbean	.018	.007
Middle East and North Africa	−.121	−.141
North America	−.107	−.010
Western Europe	.121	.122
National preconditions – economy		
– low income	−.229**	−.204**
– lower middle income	−.009	−.040
– upper middle income	.208**	.108
– high income	.037	.135
National preconditions – service sector		
– small service sector	−.341***	−.266**
– medium service sector	.096	.137
– large service sector	.241	.127

Notes: *significant at 0.1; **significant at 0.05; ***significant at 0.01.
Coefficient: Spearman-Rho, two-tailed test.

Alternative explanations for diffusion focus on a country's national preconditions, and Table 6.2 also includes such variables. In contrast to the organizational influence that links a country to other countries across the world, regional diffusion takes place when one country emulates its neighbors' policies (Berry and Berry 1999). This would result in regional clusters of lifelong learning. It has already been shown that the idea of lifelong learning is widely spread over the globe, so a transfer between neighboring countries is unlikely to be the cause. The correlation analysis verifies this impression.[2] With

regard to the idea of lifelong learning, it shows low and negative correlation coefficients for Asia and Oceania, while they are slightly positive in Central Europe and the former USSR. However, these small coefficients represent the most extreme cases in the dataset. The analysis of reforms linked to lifelong learning shows an even less distinct pattern of correlation. None of the regions demonstrates particular activity and, at first sight, the reforms seem to have taken place randomly around the globe.

Regarding national development as a precondition for the diffusion of lifelong learning, a country's economy can be used as a proxy. In this case, however, two conditions may be possible causes for the diffusion of lifelong learning. First, the wealth of a country could make it particularly capable of offering or demanding education that covers the entire life span. Second, a large tertiary sector of a country could generate a high demand for education, because a service-based economy may require more up-to-date knowledge than a traditional agrarian or manufacturing-based economy (see, for example, Halliday 2005: 94–6).[3] A correlation analysis reveals that low-income countries, and countries with a small service sector, do indeed refer less often to lifelong learning than other countries, and they introduce reforms linked to it less frequently. However, this could represent a sort of baseline, because there is no significant linear relation: the other types of countries do not differ greatly; only the upper-middle-income countries mention lifelong learning more often than the others.[4]

This correlation analysis, however, is only a start and does not illustrate how the organizational influence is related to other factors. Table 6.3 presents three multivariate models that assess the impact of the OECD and the EU, also including ASEM, in interplay with the other factors.[5] The model that includes the OECD, nongovernmental organizations and the service sector explains 27.3 percent of the variation, and each of the variables is significant. At the world level, the EU, without including the ASEM, is not a significant variable, which is likely to be the case because it is regionally limited. The organization's influence is only significant when the EU is linked with the ASEM, and the model explains even more variation than the OECD – which is to be expected, because the EU including the ASEM consists, in fact, of two organizations. In general, the models cannot explain more than around 30 percent of the overall variation. However, this small amount can be traced back to the fact that the data are mainly binary coded and not aggregated.

The emphasis on the role of the OECD as a key organization immediately raises the question of whether the income structure of a country is

Table 6.3   Variables influencing the diffusion of the idea worldwide[a]

	OECD		EU		EU incl. ASEM	
	A	**B**	**A**	**B**	**A**	**B**
OECD	**1.30***	**2.66**	—	—	—	—
EU	—	—	1.809	8.00	—	—
EU/ASEM	—	—	—	—	**1.575***	3.79
NGO	**1.262***	**2.28**	**1.350****	**2.41**	**1.267***	**2.29**
Service Sector	**.048***	**1.00**	**.053****	**1.00**	**.061****	**1.00**
Constant	**–2.401***	**(0.03)**[-]	**–2.455**	**(0.03)**[-]	**–2.914****	**(0.02)**[-]
Chi^2	**15.64****		**15.835****		**16.801****	
Nagelkerke-R^2	.273		.276		.291	

Notes: **significant at 0.1; ****significant at 0.05; *****significant at 0.01.
A: Logistic regression coefficient.
B: Weighted effect coefficient.
[a]Nested models, *n* = 84.

more important. OECD activity in education is widespread, but OECD activity is positively correlated with a high income of a country (Jakobi 2006:104). Nonetheless, the OECD demonstrates some significance beyond high-income countries, indicating that the national income is not the decisive factor for the organization's influence (Jakobi 2006:104–5).[6] While the correlation analysis showed that the regional clustering of lifelong learning policies due to policy transfer among neighboring countries is unlikely, there may nonetheless be different decisive variables across the geographical areas. This is likely to be the case, for example, in sub-Saharan Africa. Countries located there show a combination of a high correlation with activities of nongovernmental organizations and a negative correlation with OECD and EU activities (see Table 6.4).[7]

A closer analysis thus shows that the variables cannot explain the variation equally across all geographical areas. Activities of nongovernmental organizations are mostly directed towards sub-Saharan countries, and their effect decreases if these countries are taken out of the sample (Jakobi 2006:105–6). As a second special case, the Central European Countries and the former USSR refer more often to lifelong learning than other areas, and their education policies are strongly influenced by the OECD and EU. In fact, the OECD loses its significant explanatory power when the countries of Central Europe and the former USSR

Table 6.4   Correlations of organizational linkages and different areas

Region	OECD	EU[a]	NGO
Sub-Saharan Africa	−.424***	−.296***	.310***
Asia and Oceania	.019	−.326***	−.008
Central Europe and former USSR	.257***	.460***	−.015
Latin America and Caribbean	−.036	−.222***	.007
Middle East and Northern Africa	−.224**	.093	−.115
North America	.142	−.90	.111
Western Europe	.385***	.553**	−.256**

Notes: **significant at 0.05; ***significant at 0.01.
Coefficient: Spearman-Rho, two-tailed.
[a]Without ASEM since ASEM per definition exceed the EU's influence on Asia.

are taken out of the sample (Jakobi 2006:107). A third special case is the Middle East, which is not highly exposed to OECD influence and only has a small number of countries that mention the idea of lifelong learning. The absence of the OECD in this geographical area seems to have an impact on the absence of lifelong learning there. The variation explained by the OECD decreases when the area of the Middle East and Northern Africa is taken out of the sample (Jakobi 2006:107). Although regions thus differ in the extent to which they are influenced by international or nongovernmental organizations, it can nonetheless be seen that the diffusion of the idea is mainly promoted through these organizational linkages. Organizational linkages are thus more decisive for this process than a country's economic preconditions or the area where it is located.

However, all these findings have so far only referred to the idea of lifelong learning. As shown before, the diffusion of the idea is not congruent with linked reforms and, accordingly, conditions for both processes may well be different.[8] The diffusion of reforms thus demands other explanations, and, theoretically, national preconditions or variables inherent in a national political system are likely to become much more relevant at this latter stage of a global policy development. It is nonetheless possible to explain a variation of 14.5 percent by only a country's linkage to OECD activities and having a higher income (upper middle income and high income, Table 6.5). Linkage to the OECD is thus also important with regard to initiating reforms, and the organization's influence exceeds that of national income.[9] Hence, the organizational

Table 6.5   The influence of organizational linkages and higher national income on reforms linked to lifelong learning worldwide[a]

	OECD		EU		EU incl. ASEM	
	A	B	A	B	A	B
OECD	1.004**	1.56	–	–	–	–
EU	–	–	–.056	(0.97)[-]	–	–
EU/ASEM	–	–	–	–	.349	1.17
Higher Income	.800*	1.43	1.014**	1.59	.900**	1.49
Constant	–.721**	(0.77)[-]	–.293	(0.92)[-]	–.383	(0.89)[-]
Chi^2	10.883***		5.642*		6.206**	
Nagelkerke-R^2	.145		.077		.085	

Notes: *significant at 0.1; **significant at 0.05; ***significant at 0.01.
A: Logistic regression coefficient.
B: Weighted effect coefficient.
[a]Nested models, n = 95.

influence on initiating reforms is still restricted to a certain group of countries marked by a higher GNI per capita. Generally, countries with a lower income – low-income and lower-middle-income countries – initiate fewer reforms than countries with higher income, and a lower income significantly reduces a country's probability of adopting reforms linked to lifelong learning (Jakobi 2006:108–9). Thus, it is evident that the conditions for the establishment of reforms linked to lifelong learning are different from those that explain the diffusion of the idea. Although the OECD still plays an important role, national preconditions, in particular national income, are increasingly important.

Nonetheless, the findings illustrate that international organizations can be very successful in disseminating education policy ideas and in establishing common goals. Although the impacts of the organizations differ, the frequency and the different ways by which they communicate the importance of lifelong learning obviously have an effect. Lifelong learning, although implemented to a much smaller extent, is almost universally acknowledged as an important element of current education policy.

The global knowledge society: An imagined community

The diffusion of lifelong learning, like the diffusion of any policy, is not possible without a common background that enhances the spread of the

policy and attracts all countries equally to a specific idea. The preceding chapters have already highlighted the role of the knowledge society in the diffusion of lifelong learning. Following that argument, education has become crucial because it is the basis for a qualified workforce and industrial innovation as well as for personal participation in a knowledge-intensive environment. Beside this functional argument, the knowledge society has a further effect – its assumed globality. Very often, policy statements include the idea that this new type of society is truly global, as a short example from an Austrian policy report states: "The road to the 'knowledge society', on which Europe and indeed the whole world are travelling, is characterised by rapid structural changes in economic, societal and cultural respects..." (Österreichisches Bundesministerium für Bildung Wissenschaft und Kultur 2004: 2). While Daniel Bell's idea of a postindustrial society sketched the future of industrialized countries, the political framework of the knowledge society is nowadays a phenomenon in countries all over the world. Thus countries outside the wealthy and industrialized OECD-world see themselves as potential members of such a society, for example Pakistan or Bangladesh, but also Namibia (Ministry of Education of Pakistan 2004:23; Ministry of Education of Bangladesh 2004:24). According to the Namibian policy plan "Vision 2030," the country is attempting to facilitate the transformation to a knowledge-based economy, an "innovative, knowledge based society, supported by a dynamic, responsive and highly effective education and training system" (Namibian Ministry of Basic Education Sport and Culture 2004:3).

As is obvious in such statements, the knowledge society is often more a goal than an empirical reality. It is primarily an idea of worldwide exchange and the shaping of globalism. Nonetheless, despite its often lacking empirical status, the knowledge society is used as an argument for education policy reforms worldwide. It constitutes a plausible argument for policy reforms, and, like other political arguments, it provides a framework to which reforms can be linked, even if it does not yet exist but is anticipated (Stone 1989). Countries can argue that the knowledge society creates, or will create, pressure. In both cases, the argument has consequences for education even if the knowledge society is not present.

While the knowledge society in that sense is the nearly universally shared idea of the future society, it has been accompanied by life-long learning as the means to tackle future challenges. Policy reports submitted to the International Conference on Education 2004 show a positive correlation between lifelong learning and the knowledge society (Value: 0.244; Spearman-Rho, significant at <0.05, two-tailed test). Of the 82 reports analyzed, 50 percent refer to the idea. Only 12 of them

are OECD members; the 29 others include countries such as Mauritius, Myanmar, Cyprus or Syria (see also Jakobi 2007b).

The idea that all countries are members of such a society also facilitates "perceived similarity," which in turn enhances diffusion processes (Strang and Meyer 1994). In that sense, the idea of "imagined communities," which was first analyzed by Benedict Anderson using examples of nation-states, is useful (Anderson 1991). The collective belief in the long history of the national community is strictly opposed to the point of view of historians who date the origin of the nation-state to much more recent times. Nevertheless, nationalism is an important means of mobilizing collective support. Analogies to the knowledge society are present when one examines the ability of the argument to create new meanings of collectivism. For education policy, this idea thus had the often felt consequence that countries are becoming increasingly similar in their ambitions for adequate education policy reforms. Many current collective – not solely national – education policy activities can probably be explained by the fact that states are striving towards a common goal and that they can therefore have a fruitful exchange on the most suitable approaches and instruments. Moreover, the knowledge society has several important ideas as a consequence, among them, prominently, lifelong learning. The current emphasis on lifelong learning in that sense is also a symbol of modernity, a symbol of the fact that countries are trying to invent adequate and ambitious education policies suitable for a new type of society. The idea of a common knowledge society thus also creates a normative pressure on countries and education policy-makers. Countries that do not align themselves with the idea that education is a lifelong process and that education systems should enable continuous learning are likely to be viewed as laggards. The reference to lifelong learning thus also has a social function in world society.

Societal and individual implications of lifelong learning policies

While international organizations diffuse the policy of lifelong learning and the idea of the knowledge society provides fertile ground for its global diffusion, the implications of this policy idea still remain uncertain. So far, the findings of this study offer some insights and reasonable expectations of upcoming changes caused by the emphasis on lifelong learning.

On a very basic level, lifelong learning is currently confronted by a large number of expectations from different actors. It is seen as the solution

to problems for which other political solutions have become difficult. As the EU Commission argues: "Traditional policies and institutions are increasingly ill-equipped to empower citizens for actively dealing with the consequences of globalisation, demographic change, digital technology and environmental damage" (EU Commission 2001:3). While education is an institution in modern society, lifelong learning is, in a way, "education squared," because the expectations linked to education in the early years have now been enlarged and projected over the whole life span. However, it seems unlikely that all these desired results linked to lifelong learning will become reality. It is more likely that, after the current wave of lifelong learning has passed, people will learn much more but overall changes in their lives will remain modest. Even policy actors sometimes have doubts, as a Canadian education policy report illustrates: "In the end, will these reforms allow the provinces and territories to build a society whose members are educated and cultured, who have achieved their own personal and professional development goals, while also participating in the socio-economic prosperity of their community, province or territory, and country? Only the future will tell" (National Report Canada 2001:108). However, education seems to be the most accepted strategy in dealing with social problems, and in some ways it constitutes a strategy for compensating for collective uncertainty over future societal and economic conditions.

As an element of social policy, lifelong learning is clearly pointing towards an "enabling state" (Gilbert and Gilbert 1989) that does not redistribute collective wealth, but invests in individuals to make them capable of leading their own lives independently of state support. Lifelong learning, in this aspect, is shifting the emphasis and the responsibility to the individual. However, it is less clear how to cope with the obviously different abilities of individuals, and whether the focus on learning in this sense neglects the fact that people not only have different opportunities in life from the very beginning, but also have different abilities when it comes to learning and qualifications. Whose fault is it, really, if someone cannot use the manifold educational opportunities in the way others do? And what are the consequences of this? The emphasis on empowering people through education resembles the idea that enabling a positive start or restart would render other aspects of inequality rather redundant, but this is still to be proven. Another aspect in the context of lifelong learning is linked less to the social policy dimension than to the idea of human activity and human relations more generally. In the political discussion, learning is seen as a key to adapting flexibly to different circumstances, learning new

things and coping with change. Such political statements reinforce the idea of the modern individual, described by Meyer as: "The actor is to find *self-esteem*, but not in any fixed moral frame. A sense of *efficacy* and an *internal locus of control* are desirable in unspecified domains. Activity and initiative are appropriate, and shyness and anomie are to be avoided. Effective attachments to an unspecified environment – but attachments only so secure that freedom and independence can be retained – are desiderata; isolation is defeat. Note what is missing here. There is no virtue in commitment or in moral continuity independent of the demands of the institutional life course" (Meyer 1986:209, emphasis in original). These societal demands on the individual can in fact be very difficult to fulfil, but they nonetheless provide a normative background of western individualism on which ideals such as development and progress are built. The current discussion on lifelong learning reinforces such ideas and seems to ignore the fact that a high level of personal commitment is required to adapt to changing circumstances during life, even though the individual gain may sometimes be questionable. Political statements on lifelong learning are biased towards the potential positive results of learning, but it seems that the age of learning may be an age not only of personal and collective development but also of obligations.

Conclusion: The norm of lifelong learning

The preceding chapters assessed global policy development with regard to lifelong learning, on the national as well as the international level. Nation-states are being influenced by the international debates in world society and the ideas and policy changes promoted there. International organizations, as well as nongovernmental organizations and social science, have continuously promoted the value of lifelong learning, in order to establish it as an element of modern education policy. The idea of a knowledge society, which is in some sense nowadays a version of a modernization theory, has reinforced the idea that all countries are moving towards a common aim and that lifelong learning is a much needed tool for progress. On the political level, lifelong learning has also been emphasized. On the societal level, this has the consequence that education and learning, although already strongly institutionalized, are becoming even more central. On the individual level, people are expected to ascribe weight to ongoing learning efforts.

Nonetheless, public support for learning processes over the whole lifetime does not mean that the states consider themselves to be the providers

of such opportunities. In fact, international organizations and countries that deal with lifelong learning often do not assume that all stages of education are provided by the public system (Expertenkommission zur Finanzierung Lebenslangen Lernens 2004; Palacios 2003; Fretwell and Colombano 2000). The extension of education is hence mostly an extension of regulation, not provision. This fact coincides with current overall tendencies in social policy that underline the increased governmental activity of "regulation" (Leisering and Davy 2002). The movement towards lifelong learning is therefore rather paradoxical: on the one hand, the state is increasing its field of educational responsibility from "cradle to grave;" on the other hand, this space is often linked to the private provision of education. This in turn is likely to enhance the education service sector, which is currently developing and which is also already part of WTO negotiations (see, for example, Scherrer 2007). The emphasis on lifelong learning can thus not only change a national education system, but also enhance the growth and expansion of international education service providers.

There is, finally, a very central aspect linked to successful global policy developments with regard to learning. When policy ideas are as widely disseminated and promoted as in the case of lifelong learning, they are likely to take on a norm-like status. Conceptualizing lifelong learning as a norm implies that states consider it appropriate to initiate such policies because of their identities as states. This is based on the definition of a norm as "a shared understanding of appropriate behavior for actors with a given identity" (Finnemore and Sikkink 1999:251). It is a consequence of countries being embedded in a world social system that communicates appropriate features of statehood and constructs specific elements as a necessity of modern states (Finnemore 1993; Meyer *et al.* 1997a), which thus become part of a global policy cycle. As a norm, lifelong learning today represents a rather unquestioned approach to education policy-making, a necessity that seems to be so obvious that one can only become suspicious when analyzing its spread across a large variety of countries.

Calling lifelong learning a norm, however, does not imply that it has the same status as norms in the context of human rights or environmental standards. These are much more prominent, obvious and intended to counter a defined behavior, such as killing wounded soldiers or polluting the environment. Their normative essence is obvious. However, policies that are meant to serve more functionalistic goals can also become norms, for example science bureaucracies (Finnemore 1993). Therefore, we could view classical norms, such as human rights,

and other policies, such as health care plans, as the ends of a continuum, whereas norms based on rationalization, such as science bureaucracies or lifelong learning, constitute the field in between. As Finnemore and Sikkink argue, "the frequently heard arguments about whether behavior is norm-based or interest-based miss the point that norm conformance can often be self-interested, depending on how one specifies interests and the nature of the norm" (Finnemore and Sikkink 1999:272). When education policy-makers talk about lifelong learning they partly follow a framework that sees lifelong education as crucial in modern societies. This can be called rational, since the framework is consistent and resonates in the wider policy environment. Nonetheless, it is currently a standard to support lifelong learning ideas, meaning that countries follow a norm and align themselves with a symbol of modernity when referring to it.

7
Conclusions: Studying Global Policy Development

"Lifelong learning for all" is not yet reality, but many states are trying to realize it. This study has shown how the states' interest in education was deepened through international activity and how this interest led to expanded educational opportunities for the states' citizens. International society, in particular the activities of international organizations, has been an important source for national policy change in education. It has delivered models for the increasing regulation of formerly unregulated policy areas and outlined a vision for developing education policy. The result has been a global shift toward lifelong learning, albeit with very different national strategies. Countries can adopt policies that are focusing on skilled adults, young children or illiterates. In sum, the diffusion of lifelong learning has reached a scope and spread that shows that countries are not only reacting to national requirements. Rather, lifelong learning has become a norm in education policy, a symbol of modern education policy.

To embed these findings in a larger context of political science and international relations, this chapter will provide a review from different angles. As a starting point, I first sum up the different steps of my analysis and present the main findings. In a second step, I elaborate on the future of globalized education policy, its content and the instruments applied. Third, I then elaborate on the transformation of the state in circumstances of globalizing policy targets. I show how the international and national levels are linked and dependent on each other, and I also readdress the link between policy diffusion and global governance. As the case of lifelong learning has shown, these can be two sides of the same coin. In the final part, I outline some areas for further research, which the findings of this book may stimulate.

The spread of lifelong learning

The book started by developing a theoretical framework for global policy development. In basic terms, this means that the analysis of policy processes is extended from the national to the international sphere and that international organizations become an important part of policy-making. In consequence, the theoretical idea brings together two approaches of international relations and comparative politics, namely global governance and policy diffusion: while international organizations as actors govern specific issues, they also diffuse these issues toward individual countries, causing policy change in various countries across the world. The number of observations is decisive in this context: an assessment of policy change in national case studies reveals global governance capacities, while assessing it across countries shows a pattern of policy diffusion. Only when taken together does the whole impact of global policy development become visible: it is the outcome of international activity, mainly that of international organizations and their networks, and constitutes a source of policy change at the national level.

As revealed by research related to norms, however, policies are not automatically diffused, nor are they independent of their political context. A policy may fail at one time, but succeed at another. This thought also applies to global policy developments, and theories of agenda-setting were used to link questions related to conditions such as timing and political support for the overall model of global policy development. As a result, my model contains specific assumptions on which preconditions must be met for a policy to become a global success. In a further step, such preconditions were defined to distinguish the theoretically derived streams of politics, problems and policies. In politics, the transformed role of international organizations in education and general world politics has been an important change compared with earlier attempts at promoting the concept of lifelong learning. Since this idea originates foremost from a wide range of organizations, the changed actor set was also able to enhance the promotion of lifelong learning. Moreover, compared with earlier times, lifelong learning is currently linked to the important problem of the knowledge society, an expected structural change in the economy and beyond. Lifelong learning provides a solution to an expected difficult transition, and this makes it particularly attractive to policy-makers. Moreover, the policy of lifelong learning itself has changed. While some decades ago it was an idea mainly related to issues of personal fulfilment, it is now brought together with questions related to professional qualification

and adapting to a changing environment. This also makes it attractive for current politics, since it places its main emphasis on individual ability, not on state support. In sum, politics, problems and policies have changed, so that measures to promote lifelong learning have found a fertile ground for their diffusion.

The diffusion of lifelong learning can be attributed to international organizations that have initiated manifold activities for promoting it. This was shown by examples of global and regional activity. UNESCO was already actively advocating lifelong learning in the 1970s, but with minor success. After a rather silent decade in the 1980s, the organization set the agenda with the Delors Commission and made lifelong learning a prominent issue in contexts such as adult education, literacy and preprimary education. The OECD also dealt with lifelong learning in the same time frame and, similarly, increased its efforts in the 1990s. The organization established a range of international projects and conferences that disseminated the principle of "lifelong learning for all" in various contexts. The parallelism of lifelong learning debates in UNESCO and the OECD may be striking, but it has continued in very different organizations, such as the World Bank and the ILO, which also promote lifelong learning, albeit with a differing emphasis. Additionally, the EU has invested in a range of different instruments to establish lifelong learning among its member countries, for example through its policy papers, Council decisions or events such as the European Year of Lifelong Learning. By its link to the Asia Europe Meeting, the organization has also diffused lifelong learning at the interregional level, so that Asian countries are also linked to this European debate. In sum, the analysis shows that the organizations have extensively increased activities related to lifelong learning, applying different instruments and emphasizing different aspects of the idea. Furthermore, the organizations do not deal with the issue separately, but are interlinked and mutually refer to their policy efforts, for example by establishing working groups in which representatives of other organizations take part, or by setting up common meetings on a specific issue. Besides, not only has governmental activity increased, but also other societal groups, such as nongovernmental organizations or epistemic communities in social science, have increasingly turned to lifelong learning and hence backed corresponding policy activities.

Yet international efforts should not be confused with national activities. In a further step, therefore, the national level was analyzed to assess the extent to which lifelong learning has been integrated into domestic policy-making. A large-N analysis revealed that many countries refer

to lifelong learning in their policy reports and that they have grown in number over the years. Fewer of them are introducing reforms or policy steps to implement this idea, but the impact of lifelong learning ideas is nonetheless visible and countries have begun to introduce major reforms. Also, statistics show a trend toward prolonged individual learning and growing enrolment rates in education beyond schooling.

As the case studies show, the idea of lifelong learning is being pursued in many countries, albeit by different means. For example, many countries in Europe have turned to lifelong learning policies, but the investment is very different. While the United Kingdom invested a large amount of public financial means in education, Germany is mainly attempting to reregulate its educational sectors and has only recently increased financing for some sectors. In other countries, educational provision is frequently widely privatized, and countries such as China and New Zealand are taking part in a global education market, either to facilitate access or to generate revenue for institutions. Principles of lifelong learning have nonetheless been introduced. In the Americas, the examples of the United States and Mexico illustrate that lifelong learning has become widespread in policy circles as well. However, the implementation of this principle is difficult, for example because the nation-state traditionally only has a weak position in that field or because of difficulties in effectively governing the education system. Nonetheless, policy steps such as the introduction of compulsory preprimary education or qualification frameworks can partly be found there, too. In Africa, finally, the two case studies show that the debate on lifelong learning can also be linked closely to adult basic education and literacy, since large parts of the population there could not obtain sufficient schooling. But, even in this case, some education systems have been widely reformed along principles of lifelong learning. An example is the South African qualification framework and the government's aim to send all children to preprimary education for at least one year. In sum, both the large-N analysis and the case studies showed that countries are increasingly concerned with implementing principles of lifelong learning in their education systems. Although they take different paths and cannot put into practice all elements that could be implemented in theory, the overall picture is one of a global shift toward expanding education – even under very difficult national conditions. In such sense, countries "translate" the global policy to their national conditions.

By assessing the significance of the parallelism of lifelong learning within different international organizations and countries, the final

step served to evaluate the implications of such findings. The quantitative analysis demonstrated that international organizations have indeed diffused lifelong learning ideas to countries, even if they influence reforms less frequently. This, however, is the consequence of global policy development, which implies international agenda-setting and national implementation: while ideas can spread rather easily, corresponding reforms are linked to historical paths of education policy.

An additional factor linked to the spread of education policies, unifying countries in their policy ambitions, is the idea of the knowledge society. This type of society is assumed to be global and comprehensive, involving developed as well as developing countries. As such, it constitutes an imagined community that strives for the most effective education reforms and shares a belief in the crucial significance of lifelong learning.

Finally, the spread of lifelong learning ideas has important social and individual implications. Education is becoming much more a part of adult life, reinforcing the idea of individuals who constantly strive for progress and development. From a perspective of sociological institutionalism, this reinforces the "actorhood" of modern individuals, and in fact it delegates much responsibility for abilities, skills and employment to the individual.

Taken together, the case of lifelong learning shows how widely shared and universal modern and innovative education policy ideas are. Although countries may emphasize specific ways of realizing lifelong learning, it is not a specifically German, British or other idea, but a widely disseminated policy concept. International organizations have been active in this area, outlining change in education policies much earlier than many national governments. In fact, the different activities of international organizations have created a dense web of references to the importance of lifelong learning in different contexts, and by different means, so that it became increasingly difficult for states to ignore this agenda. As such, the case of lifelong learning delivers a further example of the ability of international society to shape national agendas (Finnemore 1996a). It became a common state interest to pursue lifelong learning policies.

The future of internationalized education policy

To what extent is the case of lifelong learning representative of other education policies? As numerous education scientists have recognized, the international level becomes increasingly important for national

education policy development (e.g. Dale and Robertson 2002; Robertson *et al*. 2002; Dale 2005; Steiner-Khamsi 2004; Verger 2008). For the content of education policy, this can mean that we are increasingly confronted with converging agendas and common political developments. One part of this development is, for example, the linkage of education policy to questions of migration and social policy. Several international organizations have emphasized this, ranging from the OECD to the Education for All Initiative (EFA/UNESCO 2009; OECD 2008c). In the context of lifelong learning, the dimension of social policy becomes particularly important since it is often assumed to be linked to labor market policies.

However, the growing importance of an international level of education policy-making also goes hand in hand with new instruments of governance, even if these differ in various organizations and also in terms of the extent to which they involve civil society. Although the policy development of lifelong learning involves many aspects, it does not cover all possible ways in which the international level can influence the national level. As was shown, international organizations can disseminate policy ideas; they can coordinate activities between countries aimed at a common goal; they can set standards or provide financial or technical assistance.

All these means have been applied in the case of lifelong learning, but two prominent and effective instruments in other sectors of education policy remained nearly unmentioned – rankings and marketization. International organizations such as the OECD have begun to rate and rank education policy development (Martens 2007). This has proven to be quite an influential instrument of coordination and monitoring, in some ways also pressuring states to adopt the perspective of the ranking institution and to measure their progress in the terms of this ranking. Comparative studies linked to school policies, such as the PISA study, have been a prominent example of this development.

So far, lifelong learning policies have not been the subject of explicit rankings, but first steps are underway. Early childhood education has been assessed comparatively by the OECD and UNESCO, and tests for measuring the knowledge of adults are currently being developed: the OECD has started the "Programme for International Assessment of Adult Competencies" (PIAAC). The first round of data collection is planned for 2011 (OECD 2008a,b). Given the success of PISA in stimulating several countries' education reforms, the results of PIAAC may further facilitate lifelong learning reforms. Moreover, the very process of such assessment denotes that it is becoming a more widespread policy

tool across several policy fields, and is not necessarily restricted to education policy. It is conceivable that hospitals, armies or other public services could be the object of such assessment studies, catering to the need of "evidence-based policy-making" in politics.

In addition, another mode of international education governance is reflected by the General Agreement on Trade in Services (GATS). As one service among others, education has become part of trade liberalization, influencing the structure of educational provision and public finance (Scherrer 2007; Verger 2008). Such a development impacts directly on the provision of education, but is not necessarily the subject of major debates in organizations concerned with education. Rather, unions and civil society have organized campaigns and lobbied against wide-ranging liberalization in the framework of GATS (Verger 2009). The consequences for lifelong learning are likely to concern educational offers. When education providers are granted market access, educational services are likely to become a larger business sector, in particular when the individual need for further training is constantly emphasized. The realization of lifelong learning will thus allow for an expansion of the educational sectors, most likely those catered to by private providers.

In sum, the historical process of establishing world cultural principles in education has accelerated in recent decades, due also to new information and communication techniques that can disseminate information faster and to all areas with an internet connection. At the same time, the talk of globalization and the idea of a common knowledge society of which education is an important element have supported political orientation toward international standards, comparative analysis and global discourses. It is only reasonable to assume that education policy will be further internationalized in the coming decades.

Globalization and state interest

Summarizing this study and taking this widely shared acknowledgement of lifelong learning as only one example, what general conclusions can we draw about state interests in times of globalization? As the example of lifelong learning suggests, the interests of states are not necessarily bound to national preconditions, but are to a large extent influenced by international activities, even if this may differ across countries. The perceptions of the effectiveness of education policy and the main challenges have become astonishingly similar around the world. The interests of states are thus subject to external influences, which are not solely derived from national prerogatives (Finnemore 1996a). International

organizations have intensively promoted the value of, and regulations linked to, lifelong learning, and thereby established a broad consensus on the principle that leaves little room for other views. Globalized state interest is therefore strongly linked to global consensus-building, to the sharing of equal interests and the awareness that countries are moving in the same direction. However, such a conclusion should not be drawn without further consideration. The value of education as a strong social institution is to a large extent uncontested – after all, other policies do not necessarily show the same characteristics and may be less universally shared. For example, when national security is at stake, global consensus-building and the influence of international actors can be assumed to be less straightforward. It would be worth inquiring whether and to what extent global policy developments such as those presented here have also taken place in such areas.

State interest and global policy development also touch upon a further issue in current political debates: the role of the state in a globalized world. As seen in this book, education policy-making has clearly faced internationalization processes, new actors have become important, private providers have grown and new instruments have been introduced (see also Martens *et al.* 2007). Nonetheless, the state is still a central institution and the tendency to globalize education has not relieved it from establishing the framework for adequate educational provision and progress. Education is thus still an area with particularly strong state intervention, and the emphasis on lifelong learning is therefore not to be underestimated. States, in fact, are aiming to include more and more segments of the population in education for longer periods of time. It may be the strong positive bias toward educational goals that makes us often unaware of the basic and strong state intervention in education. If states were to integrate their population into other duties or activities, for example military service, for a comparable length of time, researchers would likely also quickly focus on such developments. This is not to say that both duties are equal, or that education should be viewed more critically, but it points to the fact that the cultural idea – a world cultural idea – of education as a positive and necessary component of our lives is very deeply rooted in our understanding, which can make us unaware of how far and how strongly it is actually enforced.

An analysis of the consequences of lifelong learning for social policy also underscores the centrality of education. Once again, the state is far from being superfluous. When education is no longer solely related to youth, but also to adulthood and old age, its role in the framework of social policy does not necessarily change. When combined with

labor market integration, it is still concerned with providing opportunities, such as traditional education, and it thus stands in contrast to other social policy interventions that have a redistributive character (Leisering 2003). However, the boundaries between the fields of social policy for risk management, such as unemployment insurance, begin to blur. High-quality education is in fact not only a preparation for life, providing opportunities, but also a risk-management strategy, despite being very different from a traditional insurance system. Education is likely to become more important and to be applied under very different circumstances, and it is beginning to be considered as a crucial approach for continuously securing or enabling opportunities throughout life. It is no longer restricted to preparing children for and integrating them into life; rather, it is also aimed at enabling adults to "readjust" to different circumstances throughout their entire lives.

Globalization, understood as shifting parts of the political decision-making process to the international sphere, thus does not simply cause a weak state. To paraphrase Wendt (1992), globalization is what states make of it, and it is highly dependent on the policy area under investigation and the aspects analyzed. For example, tax policies may be based on entirely different parameters than education. As a provider of education, the state may have a diminished role, but it can also enhance its role in previously less prominent fields of education, as it has done in many countries.

On a more abstract level, the widespread interest in education points to a difficult task that states face, which has also been discussed in other contributions on global governance (e.g. Slaughter 2004). In a world in which countries, or at least their representatives, as well as parts of international organizations, increasingly share goals, instruments and visions, it is even more complicated to discern whether the global debate is also in the interest of citizens, or whether global discourse instead outlines visions that are rather detached from local needs. Is the national ministry, and perhaps its bureaucrats, the clearinghouse that sorts out "suitable" and "unsuitable" international policy ideas? Is this the correct place to do that? Or does it merely depend on who, by coincidence or by profession, is familiar with international debates and selects issues that she or he later tries to implement in national politics? In theoretical terms, the international sphere adds policies to the policy stream, from which policy-makers select adequate strategies. In practical terms, the international public is small and policies are not widely known, so that selection or nonselection cannot be assumed to be a representative process. Yet how can such a process be avoided?

And is this not just a problem that national, regional and local policy-makers may also face in some way, albeit on a smaller scale? Globalized state interest may be a problem of neither diminished nor transformed statehood, nor of increased homogenization, but rather of legitimacy. Since education has a positive bias in large parts of society, the case presented here does not immediately raise such a question, but the obvious linkages and interactions between international organizations for promoting lifelong learning denote that these mechanisms should not be completely new to other areas either. The circle of promoters, however, leaves little room for states to maneuver around the specific issue. As described, fora dealing with lifelong learning have multiplied over the years, and a country could nowadays almost be regarded as ignorant for not declaring lifelong learning to be important.

The idea of convincing states of their own interest also points to the fact that the diffusion of lifelong learning is also of interest for questions of global governance. Obviously, international organizations proved to be effective in governing the issue of lifelong learning. However, it should be noted that effective governance in this case did not mean that a common problem was solved at low cost, but that a problem – insufficient education – and its solution were made known to countries and corresponding policies were implemented in different ways. This is where global governance meets policy diffusion. Both ideas can be brought together well. While global governance often refers to an entity, i.e. an actor that governs, policy diffusion denotes that a specific policy is finding its way into a large number of countries; in effect, this is what successful global governance would assume. In the case of lifelong learning, we could see how international organizations promoted the issue, and how it was successively addressed by the states and hence developed into a new norm in education policy.

International organizations in fact have a range of different tools at hand to govern issues, and hard instruments do not necessarily always succeed. Until now, there has never been any convention or otherwise binding decision on lifelong learning, but it is mentioned on nearly every page in an ILO recommendation on human resource development, it is a goal in the restructuring of European higher education, and the OECD has devoted great attention to it for many years. International organizations obviously have other tools at hand to govern and diffuse issues that are considered to be important. They set up meetings, invite important speakers, review and monitor national policies, diffuse best practices and the like. Their influence even increases when different organizations are pushing toward the same goals, by the same or other means.

In this context, it is also worth looking more closely at how issues travel from one organization to another. Is it, for example, the case that issues are more likely to travel by "unofficial" means, such as through informal personal contacts between staff members of different organizations? Or is an "official" statement of other organizations required before an issue is taken up by an international organization? Although this book showed that international organizations are cooperating and referring to each others' activities in promoting their ideas, it is not yet clear what are the most effective channels of global interaction.

Yet once again, since global governance is closely linked to state interest, the crucial issue of democracy also emerges. When members of international organizations exchange views or participate in different fora where they promote specific policies that find their way into national agendas, it remains unclear whether they are representing anyone else beyond the organization to which they belong. This is not to say that these people do not stand for valuable issues or promote positive developments, but it remains in question at what point democratic principles come into play. As I have outlined in the theoretical section, this may be a very effective way to implement international programs on the very local level by grass-roots nongovernmental organizations, and also by financing specific local issues through donors. At this level, however, it is not necessarily guaranteed that elected representatives can freely decide on important policy directions. Moreover, this already presupposes that issues need such legislative support and are not just programs that can be invented by bureaucracies or entities far beyond or below the parliament. Such means of policy implementation may be much more effective locally than formal standards that require ratification. Effective global governance in that sense does not need to be related to democratic decision-making, a finding that parallels national governance.

From a methodological standpoint, the assessment of global policy developments denotes that research in international relations should be systematically combined with research on policy diffusion, convergence and transfer or with research on policy networks. This would in fact coincide with Finnemore and Sikkink's thoughts about bringing comparative politics and international relations closer to each other (Finnemore and Sikkink 2001). The idea of global policy development presented here bridges these fields by its focus on international actors as well as on the national sphere, and it also links them to research on norm dynamics, where both comparativists and IR scholars are active.

In this combination, however, global policy development also raises a further methodological issue. It implies an alternative idea of policy

diffusion, which, however, makes empirical assessment more difficult. When assuming that states align themselves with global policy goals, but react differently – for example in the sense that only some elements linked to an idea are implemented – the empirical assessment of policy diffusion becomes much more difficult. Policy diffusion in this sense is not always "invention or not," but might be a slow process of adjustment to international ideas that differs from country to country. This has the methodologically difficult consequence that policy outputs can be assessed only very broadly – as in the case of this study, where the indicator for "reforms linked to lifelong learning" has been only a rough indicator compared with the range of activities countries can actually undertake. However, even such rough indicators enable observers to see patterns, and the result is that even diverse forms of policy adoptions add up to one common policy development. The door is wide open to further inquiries on global policy development, to identifying such patterns in other policy fields, and to elaborating on their emergence, their expansion, their conditions or their effectiveness.

Further research on world society and global policy-making

How can this study of lifelong learning provide a basis for further research on world society and global policies? Besides the issues already mentioned, there are three broader fields that I consider will be particularly important and fruitful in future inquiries concerning sociological institutionalism, political internationalization and world politics.

First, an often neglected part of sociological institutionalism is the emphasis on "individual actorhood." The individual, her or his freedom and rational choice are a basic world cultural element. Research on the introduction of human rights, the empowerment of women or the importance of individual life courses has underlined this strand of the theory (Berkovitch 1999; Meyer *et al.* 1994; Ramirez *et al.* 1997; Meyer 1986). While the state supports such individualization when granting specific rights to social groups, it can also create some tensions in fields where the state is still "in charge" or where the state at least emphasizes one specific individual activity. Education has been one example, where states are pursuing policies that oblige large parts of the world population to attend school. The movement related to "homeschooling" has been one way to bring together individual freedom and the political obligation to educate. Other areas where such tensions could exist are military service, where the state needs to rely on individuals for reasons

of security, but needs to respect individualism and the choice not to fight for collective aims. Future research could link sociological institutionalism more explicitly to areas where individualism and the state are in some way opposed to each other, also investigating which of the principles is actually preferred over the other, nationally as well as cross-nationally.

Moreover, sociological institutionalism has underlined the growing structuration in fields where world culture develops. This has mainly been investigated in the fields of human rights, education policy, environment, and sometimes social policy (Meyer *et al.* 1997a,b; Drori and Inoue 2006; Boli and Thomas 1999b). In the context of globalization and the widely perceived need to govern problems globally, it could be fruitful to check more systematically to what extent structuration now also concerns policy fields that used to be areas of core national activity, such as crime. Moreover, it could be interesting to compare whether and how basic human needs, such as food, water, health care and others, are part of global structuration, and what the reasons are for the structuration or nonstructuration.

Linked to this concern, finally, is the question of how world problems actually become world problems. It is obvious that some problems are not put on the agenda, while others are, not to mention the corresponding policy outputs and outcomes. This question has already been researched in several policy fields, among them environmental policy (see Mitchell 2002). However, a process-oriented theory that explains the rise of issues, their success and failure in a way comparable to national politics is still missing (see Sabatier 1999b, 2007). Although it is clear that developing a testable idea of world politics is far from being easy, it should be one goal of further exploration of world politics.

In sum, there is still much left to explore for future research on internationalized policy-making, in education policy and beyond. This book has been just one step toward such an endeavor.

Annex 1
Additional Information – Chapter 4

Table A.1 Number of NGOs active in promoting lifelong learning 1970–2003/04

	1970	1981	1990/ 91	1995/ 96	1997/ 98	1999/ 2000	2001/ 02	2003/ 04
Preschooling	1	1	8	8	7	9	12	15
Adult education	5	19						
Higher education	1	19						
Further education			81	42	94	108	126	182
Explicitly LLL	—	—	1	2	2	2	2	5

Note: Numbers from the years 1970 and 1981 are not directly comparable to the others, because of different categories and method of data generation.

Sources: Yearbooks of the Union of International Associations. Data of 2003/2004 stems from the online version of the Yearbook (last accessed 30 December 2005). This version is, however, constantly being changed, so that it is not identical with the printed version.
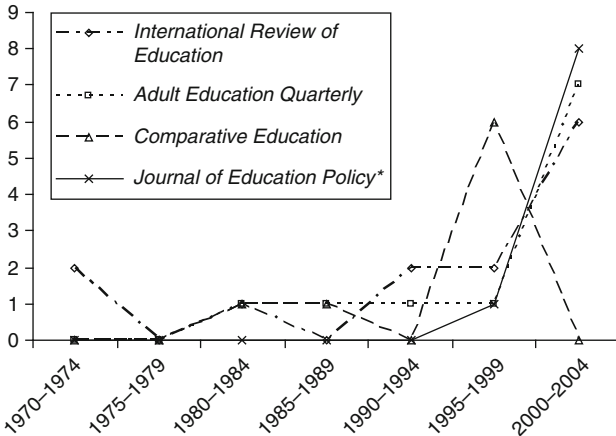
Figure A.1 Publishing on lifelong learning in selected SSCI education journals

Note: *articles only. Published since 1986. Until 1998 checked in original publication, afterwards via SSCI.

Source: SSCI, last accessed October 2005.

Annex 2
Additional Information – Chapter 5

Table A.2 Systematizing lifelong learning reforms since 1996

	Country	Code	Reform
1	*Australia*	C	Reform Package "Our Universities. Backing Australia's Future" 2003/2004 (2004:x)
2	*Belgium*	B	"Decree of 2 March 1999 concerning some matters on Adult Education" (Integration of Courses in a common Framework) (2001:39,126)
3	*Botswana*	B	Botswana Technical Education Programme 1997 (2004:16)
4	*Brazil*	B	Vocational Expansion Training Programme, end of 1990s (2004:71)
		B	Decree 2.208, 1997 (WDE: Brazil)
5	*Bulgaria*	B	Vocational Education and Training Act and others, 1999 and later (2001:11)
6	*Canada*	A	Early Childhood Development Initiative 2001 (2001:19, Increased Financing)
7	*China*	B	Vocational Education Law 1996 (WDE)
		C	Higher Education Law 1998 (WDE)
8	*Costa Rica*	A	Reformation of Article 78 of the Political Constitution, 1997 (2004:28)
9	*Croatia*	A	Law on Pre-School Education, 1997 (WDE, Entitlement to Pre-School Education)
10	*Cyprus*	A	Legislation on Compulsory Education, 2004 (2004:15–16)
11	*Czech Republic*	A	Framework Curriculum for Pre-School Education, since 2000 (2004:35)
12	*Denmark*	B	Reform of the Vocational Training and Continuing Education System, 2001 (2001:21)

Table A.2   Continued

	Country	Code	Reform
13	Egypt	C	Decree 355, 1996 (2004:117, private universities)
14	Estonia	B	Adult Education Act 2003 (2004:16)
		B	Adult Education Act 1998 (WDE)
		A	National Curriculum for Pre-School Education 1996 (2001:17)
15	Ethiopia	B	New Education and Training Policy (2004:7, Modernisation of Programmes)
15	Finland	A	National Core Curriculum for Pre-Primary Education 2000 (2004:7)
		B	Program "NOSTE", 2003 (2004:11)
		C	Regulation on the Eligibility of Vocational Education for Higher Education, 1998 (2001:15)
		C	Decision on the Establishment of Polytechnic post-graduate Degrees (2004:10)
16	Germany	A	Kinder-und Jugendhilfegesetz 1996 (Bildungsauftrag für Kindergärten) (WDE 2003, Forum Bildung 944:15)
17	India	A	Constitution (86th Amendment) Act, 2002 (2004:38) (Right to Pre-Primary Education)
		C	University Grants Commission Program for Universities in Backyard Regions, *ca.* 2003 (2004:58)
18	Ireland	B	White Paper on Adult Education "Learning for Life", 2000 (2001:16)
		A	White Paper on Early Childhood Education "Ready to Learn", 1999 (2001:17)
		B	National Qualification Framework (ILO 2005)
19	Israel	A	Curriculum Reform 2000 and earlier (2004:21)
20	Jamaica	A	Establishing a Curriculum for the 4–5 Year Olds, *ca.* 2002, (2004:3)
		A	Establishing an Early Childhood Commission, 2002 (2004:3)
21	Japan	C	Establishing Professional Graduate Schools, 2003 (2004:72)

Table A.2 Continued

	Country	Code	Reform
		A	Five-Year-Programme to Promote Infant Education, 2001 (2004:67)
22	*Jordan*	A	Education Reform for the Knowledge Economy Project, 2003 (2004:21–4)
23	*Latvia*	A	Implementation of Compulsory Pre-School Education, 2002 (2004:7)
		B	Vocational Education System Development Programme 2003–2005 (2004:5)
24	*Malawi*	A	National Policy on Early Childhood Education, *ca.* 2004 (2004:20)
25	*Malaysia*	A	National Pre-School Curriculum, 2003 (2004:19–20)
		C	The Private Higher Educational Institutions Act, 1996 (2004:3)
26	*Mauritius*	B	National Qualification Framework, 2002 (ILO 2005)
27	*Mexico*	A	Decree on the Introduction of Compulsory Pre-School Education, 2002 (2004:7)
		A	New Pre-School Education Program, 2004 (2004:13–14)
28	*Myanmar*	B	Establishing the National Centre for Human Resource Development, 1998 (2004:57f)
		C	Establishing Local Centres for Human Resource Development (2004:57f)
29	*Namibia*	A	National Early Childhood Development Policy, 1996 (WDE)
		B	National Qualification Framework, 1996 (ILO 2005)
30	*Nepal*	A	Establishment of an Early Childhood Development Section in the Ministry of Education, 1999 (WDE)
31	*Netherlands*	A	Basic Childcare Provision Bill, 2004 (2004:56)
		B	National Qualification Framework, 1997 (WDE)
		B	Adult and Vocational Qualifications Act, 1996 (2004:138)

Table A.2 Continued

	Country	Code	Reform
		C	Higher Education and Research Act, 1997 (Regulation concerning the Open University) (2004:133)
32	*New Zealand*	A	Strategic Plan for Early Childhood Education "Pathways to the Future", 2002 (2004:4)
33	*Nigeria*	B	Basic Education Scheme (2004:4)
		C	Open University 2003/1983 (2004:15)
34	*Norway*	B	Education Act Reform, 2000 (Adult Education) (2004:13)
		C	Higher Education Act Reform (Admission), 2000 (2004:7)
35	*Philippines*	B	National Qualification Framework, 2003 (ILO 2005)
36	*Poland*	A	Ministry Regulation on Core Curricula in Pre-Primary Education, *ca*. 1999 (2001:35)
		C	Act on Schools of Higher Vocational Education, 1997 (2001:17)
37	*Portugal*	B	Program for the Educational Development in Portugal (2004:20–1)
38	*Republic of Korea*	B	Lifelong Education Law, 1999 (2001:3)
		B	Law for Promotion of Vocational Education and Training, *ca*. 1999 (2001:3)
		C	Higher Education Law, 1998 (2001:3)
39	*Russian Federation*	C	Law on Further Professional Education, 2000 (2001:28)
40	*Saudi Arabia*	C	Introduction of Colleges of Technology 1996 (2001.62)
41	*Serbia and Montenegro*	B	Law on Adult Education, Montenegro, 2002 (M2004a:10,M2004b:72)
		A	Law on Pre-Primary Education, Montenegro, 2002 (M2004a:10, M2004b:36)
42	*Seychelles*	A/B	National Education Reform 1998 (2004:6–7)
43	*Sierra Leone*	C	Polytechnic Act 2001 (2004:6)
		C	University Act 2004 (2004:6)
44	*Slovenia*	A	National Curriculum for Pre-School Institutions 1999 (2001:17)

<div align="right">Continued</div>

Table A.2 Continued

	Country	Code	Reform
		B	National Qualification Framework 2000 (ILO 2005)
		C	Amendments to the Higher Education Act 2004 (2004:29)
45	*South Africa*	B	Skill Development Act 1998 (2004:3–4)
		B	National Skills Development Strategy, ca. 2003 (2004:3–4)
46	*Suriname*	A	Action Plan on Early Childhood Education 2000 (2004:16)
47	*Sweden*	A	Curriculum for Pre-school Education 1998 (LpFö 1998) (2004:5)
		B	Adult Education Initiative 1997 (2004:16)
48	*Syrian Arab Rep.*	A	Introduction of Kindergarten Curriculum 1998/1999 (2001:7)
49	*Thailand*	A	Establishment of free 14-year Basic Education 2004 (2004:10)
		B	National Education Act 1999 (2001:45–87, 49)
50	*Trinidad and Tobago*	A	Establishment of Early Childhood Care and Education Centres, 1996ff (2004:25)
		B	National Qualification Framework 2001 (ILO 2005)
51	*Uganda*	C	University and other Tertiary Institutions Act 2001 (2004:7)
52	*United Kingdom*	B	Qualification Framework 1998/2001 (ILO 2005)
53	*Zimbabwe*	A	Recommendation of the Presidential Commission of Inquiry into Education and Training on the Integration of Pre-school Education 1999 (2004:2)

Notes: These reforms do not present all reforms ongoing worldwide. For a more comprehensive perspective, please see Jakobi (2006:chapter 4). Codes – **A**: Preprimary education; **B**: Adult education; **C**: Higher education.

Sources: Adapted from Jakobi 2006: 82–4; 2004: Country Report for the ICE 2004; 2001: Country Report for the ICE 2001; 1996: Country Report for the ICE 1996; WDE: Country Report in the WDE 3003; ILO: Project on National Qualification Frameworks. Webpage www.logos-net./ilo/ngf/topics/ow/htm (last accessed 7 August 2005).

Annex 3
Methodology

This book is based on a mixed method design, including document analysis and logistic regression analysis. Additionally, the author has been granted permission to use interviews conducted by Carolin Balzer and Kerstin Martens during the research project "Internationalization of Education Policy," University of Bremen, SFB 597. These were used to provide some background information and are quoted without names to safeguard the anonymous interviewees. The following information is related to the quantitative assessment:

It is assumed that the idea of lifelong learning has diffused to a country when its education policy report contains the following wording: "lifelong learning," "lifelong education," "life-long and continuous education," "learning is a continuous and lifelong process," "long-life learning," "learning throughout life," "education throughout life," "lifelong training," "lifelong learners," "education in a lifelong perspective" (in multiple spellings, as upper or lower case or "life-long" and "life long"). The policy reports from 1971, 1996, 2001 and 2004 were analyzed accordingly. Secondly, for the purpose of the multivariate analysis, a database has been created that contains the data of 99 countries, including information on whether the country refers to the idea of lifelong learning or had started any reforms linked to it. The countries are selected according to the following three criteria:

1. They provided an education policy report for the ICE in 1996, 2001 or 2004; this report is written in English and can be read electronically.
2. It is assumed that a country has an "*idea of lifelong learning*" in its education policy if it mentions lifelong learning (as defined above) in its policy reports.
3. "*Any Reform linked to lifelong learning*" is assessed when reforms in preprimary education, adult or higher education are reported.

Reforms such as laws and major regulations (thus policy outputs) concerning the extension of these subfields are coded and listed. (See also Jakobi 2006:chapter 2.)

Analyzed country reports of the year 1971

Afghanistan, Albania, Algeria, Andorra, Argentina, Australia (incl. Papua New Guinea), Austria, Bahrain, Barbados, Belgium, Bhutan, Bolivia, Botswana, Brazil, Bulgaria, Burma, Burundi, Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republic, Cambodia, Cameroon, Canada, Central African Republic, Ceylon, Chad, Chile, China

(mainland), China (Taiwan), Columbia, Congo (Democratic Republic of), Congo (People's Republic of), Costa Rica, Cuba, Cyprus, Czechoslovakia, Dahomey, Denmark (incl. Faeroe Islands and Greenland), Dominican Republic, Ecuador, El Salvador, Ethiopia, Federal Republic of Germany, Finland, France (including overseas departments and territories), Gabon, Gambia, German Democratic Republic, Ghana, Greece, Guatemala, Guinea, Guyana, Haiti, Honduras, Hungary, Iceland, India, Indonesia, Iran, Iraq, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Ivory Coast, Jamaica, Japan, Jordan, Kenya, Korea (Democratic People's Republic of), Korea (Republic of), Kuwait, Laos, Lebanon, Lesotho, Liberia, Libya, Liechtenstein, Luxembourg, Madagascar, Malawi, Malaysia, Maldives, Mali, Malta, Mauritania, Mauritius, Mexico, Monaco, Mongolia, Morocco, Muscat and Oman, Nauru, Nepal, Netherlands (incl. Netherlands Antilles and Surinam), New Hebrides, New Zealand (incl. Cook Islands, Niue Island, Tokelau Islands), Nicaragua, Niger, Nigeria, Norway, Pakistan, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, Philippines, Poland, Qatar, Romania, Rwanda, San Marino, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Sierra Leone, Sikkim, Singapore, Somalia, Southern Yemen, Spain (incl. Spanish provinces in Africa), Sudan, Swaziland, Sweden, Switzerland, Syria, Tanzania, Thailand, Togo, Trinidad and Tobago, Tunisia, Turkey, Uganda, Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic, Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, United Arab Republic, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland (incl. UK territories), United States of America (incl. US territories), Upper Volta, Uruguay, Venezuela, Vietnam (Democratic Republic of), Vietnam (Republic of), Western Samoa, Yemen, Yugoslavia, Zambia,

Analyzed country reports of the year 1996

Australia, Austria, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Belize, Bulgaria, Canada, China, Czech Republic, Denmark, Egypt, Finland, Germany, Ghana, India, Indonesia, Iraq, Israel, Japan, Jordan, Kenya, Malawi, Malaysia, Maldives, Malta, Namibia, Nepal, Netherlands, Nigeria, Norway, Oman, Philippines, Poland, Qatar, Russia, Slovakia, South Korea, Sudan, Tanzania, Thailand, United Arab Emirates, Zimbabwe

Analyzed country reports of the year 2001

Argentina, Australia, Austria, Bahrain, Barbados, Belarus, Belgium, Botswana, Brazil, Bulgaria, Canada, Croatia, Cyprus, Denmark, Egypt, Estonia, Ethiopia, Finland, Germany, Ghana, Hungary, Iran, Iraq, Ireland, Kenya, Republic of Korea, Kyrgyzstan, Latvia, Libya, FYR Macedonia, Malaysia, Mauritius, Republic of Moldova, Namibia, Norway, Peru, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Russia, Slovakia, Slovenia, Sudan, Swaziland, Sweden, Syria, Thailand, Turkey, Uganda, Zambia, Zimbabwe

Analyzed country reports of the year 2004

Afghanistan, Argentina, Australia, Austria, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Belarus, Bhutan, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Botswana, Brazil, Bulgaria, Cambodia, Canada, China, Costa Rica, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, DPR Korea, Egypt, Estonia, Ethiopia, Finland, Germany, Ghana, Greece, Guyana, India, Indonesia, Iraq,

Israel, Italy, Jamaica, Japan, Jordan, Kenya, Kuwait, Latvia, Lesotho, Libyan Arab J., the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Malawi, Malaysia, Mauritius, Mexico, Myanmar, Namibia, Netherlands, New Zealand, Nigeria, Norway, Oman, Pakistan, Portugal, Republic of Korea, Republic of Moldova, Romania, Russian Federation, Saudi Arabia, Serbia and Montenegro, Seychelles, Sierra Leone, Slovakia, Slovenia, South Africa, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Suriname, Swaziland, Sweden, Syrian Arab Republic, Thailand, Trinidad and Tobago, Turkey, Uganda, Ukraine, United Kingdom, United Republic of Tanzania, United States, Yemen, Zimbabwe

Analyzed country reports in the World Data on Education 2003

Albania, Armenia, Australia, Austria, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Barbados, Belarus, Belgium, Belize, Bhutan, Botswana, Brazil, Brunei Darussalam, Bulgaria, Cambodia, Canada, China, Cook Islands, Croatia, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Dominica, Egypt, Eritrea, Estonia, Ethiopia, Finland, Gambia, Georgia, Germany, Ghana, Greece, Grenada, Guyana, Hungary, Iceland, India, Indonesia, Iran, Iraq, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Jamaica, Japan, Jordan, Kazakhstan, Kenya, Republic of Korea, Kuwait, Kyrgyzstan, Latvia, Lesotho, Liberia, Libya, Lithuania, FYR Macedonia, Malawi, Malaysia, Maldives, Malta, Mauritius, Moldova, Mongolia, Mozambique, Myanmar, Namibia, Nepal, Netherlands, New Zealand, Nigeria, Norway, Oman, Pakistan, Papua New Guinea, Philippines, Poland, Qatar, Romania, Russia, Saint Lucia, Saudi Arabia, Serbia and Montenegro, Singapore, Slovakia, Slovenia, South Africa, Sri Lanka, St Kitts and Nevis, Sudan, Swaziland, Sweden, Syria, Tanzania, Thailand, Trinidad and Tobago, Turkey, Turkmenistan, United Arab Emirates, United Kingdom, United States, Uzbekistan, Vietnam, Zambia, Zimbabwe

Countries referring to lifelong learning 1996–2004

Argentina, Australia, Austria, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Barbados, Belarus, Belgium, Belize, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Botswana, Brazil, Bulgaria, Canada, China, Croatia, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Egypt, Estonia, Finland, Germany, Ghana, Greece, Guyana, Hungary, India, Indonesia, Iraq, Ireland, Israel, Jamaica, Japan, Jordan, Kenya, DPR Korea, Republic of Korea, Latvia, Libya, the former Yugoslavian Republic of Macedonia, Malawi, Malaysia, Malta, Mauritius, Mexico, Republic of Moldova, Myanmar, Namibia, Netherlands, New Zealand, Nigeria, Norway, Oman, Pakistan, Philippines, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Russian Federation, Serbia and Montenegro, Seychelles, Slovakia, Slovenia, South Africa, Sudan, Suriname, Swaziland, Sweden, Thailand, Trinidad and Tobago, Turkey, Uganda, Ukraine, United Arab Emirates, United Kingdom, United Republic of Tanzania, Zambia, Zimbabwe

Annex 4
Definition of Independent Variables

Table A.3   Definition of the variable "organisational linkage"

Dimension	Definition
Influence of OECD	*A country has been either a member of the OECD or partner country in education.* Current OECD members are Australia, Austria, Belgium, Canada, Czech Republic, Denmark, Finland, (France,) Germany, Greece, Hungary, (Iceland,) Ireland, Italy, Japan, Korea, (Luxembourg,) Mexico, Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Slovak Republic, (Spain,) Sweden, (Switzerland,) Turkey, United Kingdom and United States.
	The OECD is also in regular contact with many non-OECD members concerning their education policies, too. Such partner countries take part either in reviews, in the indicator program or in PISA. Nonmember review countries 1996–2005 are (Albania,) Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Chile, Croatia, Estonia, (Kosovo,) Latvia, Lithuania, FYR Macedonia, Moldova, Montenegro, Romania, Russian Federation, Serbia (*Source*: OECD Bookshop www.oecdbookshop.org; query: "Reviews of National Policies for Education," last accessed 13 October 2005).
	Nonmember indicator Countries 1996–2004 are Argentina, Brazil, (Chile,) China, Egypt, India, Indonesia, Israel, Jamaica, Jordan, Malaysia, (Paraguay,) Peru, Philippines, Russian Federation, Sri Lanka, Thailand, (Tunisia, Uruguay,) and Zimbabwe.
	Non-member PISA countries are Brazil, (Hong Kong,) Indonesia, Latvia, (Liechtenstein, Macao-China,) Russian Federation, Serbia, Thailand and (Uruguay).
	Forty-nine of the countries are influenced by the OECD, twenty-five of them are OECD members.

Table A.3   Continued

Dimension	Definition
Influence of EU	*A country is an EU member, EU accession country, EU candidate or potential candidate.* Current EU members are Austria, Belgium, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Ireland, Italy, Finland, (France) Germany, Greece, Hungary, Latvia, (Lithuania, Luxembourg,) Malta, Netherlands, Poland, Portugal, (Spain,) Sweden, Slovenia, Slovakia and the United Kingdom (EU Website, 2005d). EU Candidate countries and accession countries are Bulgaria, Romania, Croatia and Turkey. Potential candidates are (Albania,) Bosnia and Herzegovina, FYR Macedonia, Montenegro and Serbia. Twenty-eight countries in the dataset are influenced by the EU education policy, twenty-one of them are members.
Influence of EU incl. ASEM	*A country is influenced by the EU or participates in ASEM.* This includes the countries defined as influenced by the EU and additionally the ASEAN+3 countries: Burma/Myanmar, (Brunei,) Cambodia, Indonesia, (Laos) Malaysia, Philippines, (Singapore) Thailand, (Viet Nam,) China, Japan, South Korea. Thirty-seven countries are influenced by the EU including ASEM.
Influence of NGOs	*A country mentions NGOs as actors in the education system in the 1996, 2001 or 2004 ICE reports or in the WDE (WDE 2003).*It is the result of a nonstandardized text analysis of the policy reports, where the variable is coded "1" if NGOs are mentioned as providing any service in the education sector. Examples are: "The major sources of educational financing are the central government's budget, local communities, international and non-governmental organizations, and the private sector" (WDE: Nepal), or "In the past years, the government and the NGOs have provided training to enhance the professional abilities of the service providers. The parent's awareness of the importance of the early stage of life is being raised. Various NGOs are actively engaged in this field" (Suriname 2004:15). Sixty-two countries in the dataset are influenced by NGOs.

Table A.4   Definition of the variable "area"

Area	Countries in the dataset
Sub-Saharan Africa	Botswana, Ethiopia, Ghana, Kenya, Lesotho, Malawi, Mauritius, Namibia, Nigeria, Seychelles, Sierra Leone, South Africa, Sudan, Swaziland, Uganda, United Kingdom of Tanzania, Zambia, Zimbabwe
Asia and Oceania	Afghanistan, Australia, Bangladesh, Bhutan, Cambodia, China, DPR Korea, India, Indonesia, Iran, Japan, Malaysia, Maldives, Myanmar, Nepal, New Zealand, Pakistan, Philippines, Republic of Korea, Sri Lanka, Thailand
Central Europe and former USSR	Belarus, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Kyrgyzstan, Latvia, Poland, Republic of Moldova, Romania, Russian Federation, Serbia and Montenegro, Slovakia, Slovenia, The Former Yug. Republic of Macedonia, Ukraine
Latin America and Caribbean	Argentina, Barbados, Belize, Brazil, Costa Rica, Guyana, Jamaica, Mexico, Peru, Suriname, Trinidad and Tobago
Middle East and North Africa	Bahrain, Cyprus, Egypt, Iraq, Israel, Jordan, Kuwait, Libya, Malta, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Syrian Arab Republic, Turkey, United Arab Emirates, Yemen
North America	Canada, United States of America
Western Europe	Austria, Belgium, Denmark, Finland, Germany, Greece, Ireland, Italy, Netherlands, Norway, Portugal, Sweden, United Kingdom

Table A.5 Definition of the variable "national preconditions"

Dimension	Definition
National income	*Gross National Income (GNI) of a country (either metric data or categories, then called a country's "Type of Economy"), mean of 1996, 2001 and 2004.* The classification as type of economy is based on a World Bank Classification (2005).
	Low income: GNI $825 or less Lower middle income: GNI$826–3,255 Upper middle income: GNI $3,256–10,065 High income: GNI $10,066 or more
	In some calculations, the categories low income and lower middle income add up to "lower income," the categories "upper middle income" and "high income" add up to "higher income." The data has been acquired through a query of the World Development Indicators. Information on four countries is missing.
National economic structure	*Percentage of the service sector of GDP (either metric or if categoric, then called "type of service economy"), mean of 1996, 2001 and 2004.* For some calculation purposes, these metric values have been recalculated as categories of "service economy," following a principle of approximately the same size on any category in the dataset.
	Low service economy: Services up to 48% of the GDP Medium service economy: Services from 49 to 62 % of GDP High service economy: Services higher than 62% of GDP
	The data has been acquired through a query of the World Development Indicators. Information on 13 countries is missing.

Notes

2   Tracing global governance: Policy development in an international arena

1   See www.ert.be (last accessed 4 October 2005). There is partly a biased tendency to see NGOs as grass-roots organizations or as social movements, for example, linked to solidarity or humanistic values. This is puzzling, since most nongovernmental organizations exist in the field of industry and trade (see data from the International Yearbook of International Organisations 1988, quoted in Boli and Thomas 1999a:42). In Brussels, 828 interest groups were registered in 1996 (Buholzer 1998). In contrast to the classical NGOs, who are often seen as "the good guys," these associations are mainly concerned with the economic prosperity of their members.
2   However, such linkages exist between governmental standard-setting and NGO activities, such as when an NGO refers to the formal adoption of a standard to enforce internalization (Risse *et al.* 2002).
3   This coincides with a rationalist perspective that "useful practices" are more likely to be adopted. But this usefulness itself requires an *a priori* theorization about the effects of the practice (compare the issue of theorization in Strang and Meyer 1994).
4   Note that coordination is not the same as defining benchmarks, even if the OMC is mentioned in both cases: benchmarks are defined without implying the need to coordinate the countries' policy development, and coordination of countries does not necessarily include benchmarks. One characteristic of the OMC is that it combines both categories.
5   See also Koenig-Archibugi (2006) for a typology of forms of global governance.
6   See Stone (2008) for a similar concept, but with a focus on networks and a global "agora."
7   No actor is conceptualized as being superior to another by definition. According to Kingdon's concept, policy-making is organized anarchy and agenda-setting is the outcome of complex interaction. Therefore, it is particularly appropriate to explore policy processes at the world level that have no fixed or centralized structure of important policy-makers.
8   Science influences causal theories and problem definition through its truth-seeking character as a social institution. Although scientific authority does not guarantee a political victory, it helps to construct causal stories (Stone 1989:295).
9   In contrast to this more holistic view based on Rogers (2003), Eyestone defines diffusion as the sum of single adoptions: "Any pattern of successive adoptions of a policy innovation can be called diffusion" (Eyestone 1977:441). This line of thought is not followed here because it cannot distinguish a social process of diffusion from a spurious diffusion pattern.

3   World time: International developments in education policy from the 1970s to the 1990s

1   For changes in UNESCO and World Bank activities, see Mundy (1998). For the contestation of education policy between different international organizations, see Cusso and D'Amico (2005). For the OECD and EU see also Martens and Wolf (2006), Martens (2007) and Balzer and Rusconi (2007).

2   The OMC is not a completely new method of policy-making, but it is in fact very similar to OECD activities (Schäfer 2004). The OMCs differ across the policy fields. For example, education policy is less strictly handled by the Commission than employment policies (De Ruiter 2009).

3   In Anglo-Saxon countries, social policy and education have traditionally been perceived as being closely linked. In Germany, this development has begun only recently, see in particular Opielka (2006).

4   See Gilbert (2002:43–7) for a more comprehensive comparison of the welfare state and the enabling state.

5   Moreover, the enabling state's current emphasis on the individual and her or his responsibility to upgrade qualifications also shifts the responsibility of who actually should be concerned with deskilling. In principle, the state, the employer or the individual could be the entity responsible for addressing the problem, but the main responsibility is most often placed on the last of the three.

6   However, lifelong learning also links social policy and education in other ways, by the emphasis on early childhood education. For several years, early childhood education has been a new topic in education policy, and countries have started structuring this early phase of life through different means, such as compulsory early education or the establishment of a curriculum. Such activities are based on the conviction that an early start to social policy can not only foster individual development more effectively, but also better compensate for any deficiencies in the social, economic or cultural capital of parents. Early state intervention into presumably problematic life situations can also be perceived as being a less expensive possibility for providing comparable opportunities. Moreover, the offering of early childhood education opportunities also enables women to return to work quickly without having the feeling that no adequate childcare is available. Organized early childhood education therefore also supports the social aim of equality of women and men in working life.

7   An additional problem linked to lifelong learning has been the redistribution of educational phases over the life span to reduce educational expenditure. Moreover, due to the idea of a public education system, the so-called front-end model, that is education exclusively in youth and adulthood, has been challenged as an inadequate preparation for working life.

8   The characteristic of a problem construction is that it is linked to the solution in a functionalistic way. This does not imply that the knowledge society is linked to education in that way alone (see Chapter 6 for an additional interpretation of the knowledge society).

9   In his article, Drucker uses the terms "knowledge society" and "knowledge economy" synonymously. This book will follow that route, because the

question here is not primarily whether "knowledge economy" is more restricted than "knowledge society" (it certainly is) or what differences exist between them. It focuses, rather, on their communalities, the centrality of "knowledge" in contemporary society and its economy and the implications for education.

10 This was the subtitle of the book.

11 See Schuller *et al.* (2002) for a review of this report and its reference to the "knowledge society."

4   World action: International networks for promoting lifelong learning

1 Until 2006, the Asian countries comprised Burma/Myanmar, Brunei, Cambodia, Indonesia, Laos, Malaysia, Philippines, Singapore, Thailand, Vietnam, China, Japan and South Korea. In 2006, ASEM additionally admitted Mongolia, India, Pakistan, and the ASEAN secretariat as well as the new EU members to the ASEM process.

2 In principle, this chapter could also have included the regional activities of the Council of Europe, which had promoted lifelong learning as early as in the 1970s. However, it is nowadays less active than the European Union and would only have doubled the European perspective in this book, whose explicit aim is to cover more than just the OECD world. For the Council of Europe and Lifelong Learning in the 1970s see Council of Europe (1975).

3 A third form of transnationalism, professionalism, is not further illustrated here, although it can have a large impact on the individual realization of lifelong learning. Training programs are an institution in modern organizations and conceived as an important element of successful professionalism (Scott and Meyer 1994). Having up-to-date knowledge is an expectation placed on serious professionals and it creates pressure to comply on the very individual level. Since this book mainly emphasizes policy developments, this source of diffusion is not further pursued here.

4 The US and the UK withdrew from the organization in the 1980s due to a debate about management and further issues, in particular education indicators, which caused a serious drop in the budget (UNESCO 2003b:4). Both states have become members again; the UK returned in 1997, the US in 2003.

5 A division of labor is arranged between these institutions. For example while the IBE deals with the International Conference on Education, the UIL is concerned with adult education, and the UIS with statistics.

6 Of which six recommendations and one convention are concerned with the regional recognition of higher education degrees.

7 This was the third conference on adult education, after predecessors in 1949 and 1960. For some details on the content of the recommendation, see Gerlach (2000:83–5).

8 Until June 2006, the Institute was called UNESCO Institute for Education, but was then renamed UNESCO Institute for Lifelong Learning (UIL) since this name better reflects its specific activities (see UNESCO Institute for Lifelong Learning 2007).

9   Although it is a more differentiated structure, the terms "World Bank" and the "Bank" in this study refer to the overall World Bank Group, without differentiating its parts.

10 See, for example, Bonal (2002), Tomusk (2002:343–50), Klees (2002), Hickling-Hudson (2002), Ilon (2002) and Heyneman (2003).

11 Therefore, it could be concluded that the Bank's emphasis on the need for individual lifelong learning combined with the emphasis on private providers mainly constitutes a phase of political "softening up" (Kingdon 2003) for later formulating policies on creating large educational markets.

12 Every member country sends four delegates to the organization: two governmental representatives, one representing employers and one representing employees.

13 Educational activities in a strict sense, such as training through the organization's training center in Turin. These activities, as well as the ILO's continuous work on teacher training, are not further followed here.

14 See http://www.ilo.org/ilolex/cgi-lex/ratifce.pl?C140 for current information on ratification (last accessed October 2007).

15 For the process see http://ec.europa.eu/education/policies/educ/eqf/index_en.html (last accessed October 2007). For Europass see http://europass.cedefop.europa.eu/europass/home/vernav/Europasss+Documents/Europass+CV/navigate.action?locale_id=1 (last accessed October 2007). For the Copenhagen process see http://europa.eu.int /comm/education/copenhagen/index_en.html (last accessed October 2007).

16 A fifth NGO listed in 2005 was the European Centre for Life-long Learning, an Athens-based organization mainly dealing with distance education and e-learning, affiliated with the Hellenic America Union.

17 This additionally illustrates that the relation between science and politics is not a one-way track, but that science also reacts to political developments.

18 Issue 2/1999 of Comparative Education in 1999, or Compare 3/2006. The special issue in Comparative Education constitutes the sharp peak in 1995–1999 visible in figure A-1 in annex 1. The number has fallen since that issue, which could partly be explained by the fact that the journal compiled the articles on lifelong learning in the special issue and did not publish much on the issue in the following editions. A decreasing interest in the issue is so far not observable, since another comparative journal published a special issue in 2006.

5   Consequences: National lifelong learning agendas

1   This does not mean that no empirical assessments are available yet. A stock-taking of how far lifelong learning has been implemented has, for example, been carried out by the EU and the OECD (OECD 2001b:Chapter 2; EU Commission 2003a). EU results illustrate that there are many policy papers and strategies concerning lifelong learning, but that specific legislation is less frequent (EU Commission 2003:6). However, OECD or EU data is not applicable for this study, since their focus is typically restricted to industrialized countries, while this book is concerned with assessing a worldwide development. A further possibility would be to refer to an assessment tool

presented by the World Bank (2003b:104–7). However, although designed for developing countries and thereby potentially transferable to industrialized countries too, this instrument is not suitable because it is designed for the Bank's purposes and includes political and economic indicators that are theoretically not consistent with the aim of this book. For example, when elaborating on the measurement approach, an advance towards life-long learning is expressed by "openness to the international community," exemplified by the open investment policy for foreign direct investment in Costa Rica (World Bank 2003b:106). The approach followed in this book needs more specific categories.

2 This model is in some ways oriented towards a male breadwinner, because a traditional women's life course would include shifts towards family life. For the purpose of assessing lifelong learning, however, this aspect can be neglected.

3 See Jakobi (2007a) for detailed methodology. I relied mainly on policy reports submitted to the UNESCO and conducted a content analysis, standardized and nonstandardized. The resulting overview on reforms mentioned in the policy reports as well as additional information is contained in Table A.2, annex, this volume.

4 Author's calculation based on content analysis of UNESCO (1971).

5 Besides those mentioned, Algeria also mentions the development of its education system towards the introduction of lifelong education(UNESCO 1971:119), but, unlike the other country reports, this particular report was written by the UNESCO Secretariat itself. Compared with the others, it is therefore critical to evaluate it as a self-reported statement of the country.

6 For a complete list of the reports, see Annex 3.

7 Furthermore, organized early childhood education can also facilitate female participation in the labor market.

8 Among the listed countries, the Philippines has the lowest GNI per capita (atlas method), totaling US$1,170 in 2004 (Source: World Development Indicators). It can thus be classified as a lower-middle-income country.

9 See also South African Ministry of Education and Ministry of Labor (2001b:Chapter 4) for a survey on the international activities concerning national qualification frameworks.

10 The reports of Jordan and South Korea do not indicate a national qualifica-tion framework. Thus, the Saudi Arabian study probably focused on smaller qualification frameworks, such as for teachers.

11 The act is contained in the 2001 Thai education policy report (Report Thailand 2001).

12 However, this establishment does not necessarily signify increased finan-cing since its financing is mainly tuition-based – in contrast to other Austrian universities.

13 Besides the establishment of private universities, additional funding is often received through tuition fees. In many countries, fee policies have been liberalized during recent years, for example in Australia (Report Australia 2004:28), Germany and the UK (Jakobi and Rusconi 2008).

14 See also Bund-Länder-Kommission (2004), Expertenkommission zur Finanzierung Lebenslangen Lernens (2004), Forum Bildung (2001a,b), KMK (1994, 2001) and BMBF (2003:9–11). German education policy is divided

into federal policy and state policy (Länder). The description will mainly focus on developments on the federal level, which usually sets the framework for state policies, whereas concrete measures are taken on the state level.

15 The changing concept of lifelong learning towards a more economic-oriented policy can clearly be seen in the positions of the Rectors' Conference: while earlier statements focused on offering education for different groups (HRK 1993: BIII), recent proposals mainly concern paying customers.

16 Education policy in the UK is difficult to analyze as a whole since it is different in England, Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland. Their specificities are most visible in the school system, less in higher education or training (UNESCO 2003b: Report UK). As the aim of this section is to show which different possibilities exist to establish lifelong learning policies, examples from throughout the UK are presented.

17 Wolf (2002) offers a critical assessment of these trends.

18 For an additional survey on lifelong learning in England which is further deepening and expanding some of the following policy measures, see Everiss (2002).

19 It is three to four years in Northern Ireland, where compulsory schooling begins at the age of four.

20 See Xu (2002) for the history of private education in China.

21 New Zealanders also pay fees in specific educational institutions, but they range below those of foreign students.

22 In 1997, almost 86 percent of children at the age of three years attended early childhood education, and 96 percent at the age of four years (UNESCO 2003b: New Zealand).

23 See also the "Improve Head Start for School Readiness Act" of 2007.

24 Public Law 105–220, 7 August 1998, Workforce Investment Act. Online at http://www.doleta.gov/usworkforce/wia/wialaw.pdf (last accessed March 2008).

25 The implementation of laws is difficult or partly favors only those groups that have already received training, leaving little room for the training of people who lack education (OECD 2004c:25).

26 More detailed information is only available for OECD countries, where it can also be seen that educational expenditures have grown relative to other public expenditures, from 12.3 percent in 1995 to 13.4 percent in 2004 (as well as from 5.2 to 5.4 percent of GDP) (OECD 2007:230).

27 Source: World Development Indicators, Atlas method (for comparison: the German GNI per capita is $30,120 in the same period, the UK's is $33,940 and China's is $1,290).

28 Compared with the other countries, an outstanding feature is the education tax that Nigeria stated it had introduced during the 1990s (Education Tax Decree 1993). This tax has to be paid by all enterprises with more than 100 employees, which were obliged to pay two percent of their pre-tax earnings to the fund (Nigerian Federal Ministry of Education 1996; UNESCO 2003b:Nigeria). However, it is difficult to get any information concerning the actual implementation and the effectiveness of this tax.

29 Since both sources and their numbers are not necessarily comparable, it remains unclear exactly how the participation rate developed.

30 Actually, it is the second time that the Open University was established. Initially opened in 1983 – shortly before the beginning of military rule – it was closed down shortly afterwards (Nigerian Federal Ministry of Education 2004:15).

31 See South African Constitution 1996: Bill of Rights 29/1, in South African Government Information (2008a). See also South African Department of Education (2007:6–7) for a list of legislative instruments, also South African Government Information (2008a). Several White and Green papers also outline the political agenda (for example South African Ministry of Education 1998; South African Department of Education 1998). For a survey and critique concerning several policy papers on lifelong learning, see Aitchison (2004); for early education policy proposals after apartheid, see Unterhalter *et al.* (1991); for a historical account see Christie (1991).

32 It is intended to implement new regulations concerning the framework from 2008 onwards. See South African NQF Gateway (2008).

6 Implications: A tool for progress and a symbol of modernity

1 OECD influence was assumed when a country was either a member of the OECD or a partner country in education. Partner countries were defined as having been part of an education policy review, the PISA study or the indicator program between 1996 and 2005. Influence of the EU was assumed if a country was a member, accession country, candidate or potential candidate. ASEM influence was assumed if a country was influenced by the EU or participated in ASEM. Influence of nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) was assumed when a country mentioned NGOs as actors in the education system in the policy reports (see Jakobi 2006:Chapter 3). Since organizational influence requires variation, the influence of the UNESCO and ILO could not be verified, because of universal membership. Analysis of contacts with the World Bank revealed that, counterintuitively to its assumed positive influence, countries linked to the organization do not appear to pursue the idea of lifelong learning and reforms linked to it (Jakobi 2006:106). The correlation coefficient was negative and significant. There are different explanations for this pattern. It might be caused by the fact that the Bank has not drawn any consequences for its overall education financing from its 2003 report on lifelong learning. However, it could also be a problem of this study's timing: the World Bank opposed lifelong learning for a long time, and project countries probably avoided mentioning the idea for reasons of "project law." This can be clarified by using the same indicator a few years later, when the effects of the World Bank's turnaround will have had more time to manifest themselves.

2 The geographical areas follow a classification of UNESCO/IBE (UNESCO 2003c), so that these categories here are not congruent with the categories presented in various tables of Chapter 5.

3 The data has been acquired through a query of the World Development Indicators. These metric values have been recalculated as categories of "service sector," following a principle of approximately the same size for any

category in the dataset. This means that a "small service sector" represents services up to 48 percent of a country's GDP, a "medium service sector" ranges from 49 to 62 percent of GDP and a "large service sector" represents more than 62 percent of the GDP.

4 The parallelism of economic wealth and service sector visible in the table is based on the fact that these variables are highly correlated (Jakobi 2006:167).

5 The GNI has also been tested in combination with the same variables, but has shown no impact. The EU and OECD have been separated in the analysis because they are highly correlated.

6 The same argument applies to the EU. Unlike the OECD, the EU has no significant effect on non-high-income countries (Jakobi 2006:104–5). Given its restriction to mainly high-income, i.e. European, countries, this finding can reasonably be expected.

7 An assessment of whether organizational linkages have an impact in this region is again confronted with the problem of a small-n of only 18 cases and nearly without OECD or EU influence. Only one country in sub-Saharan Africa has an organizational linkage to the OECD, none to the EU.

8 This has also been tested, and the conditions that explain the diffusion of the idea could not explain the variation of reforms linked to it, nor did the inclusion of the GNI show any effect (Jakobi 2006:170). The same applied to NGO influence, which did not show any correlation with reforms linked to lifelong learning (Jakobi 2006:170–1).

9 The possible argument that OECD and higher income are correlated can be countered by illustrating that high-income countries and OECD are correlated even more highly and that there is no significant effect observable when including high-income countries only (Jakobi 2006: tables A.10, A.22).

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