

From Laeken to Lisbon: The Reform Process of the European Union in German Textbooks for Political Education. A Computer-Assisted Content Analysis. Dissertation, submitted by Marret Bischewski. Published as Open Access Publication (eDiss) at Göttingen State and University Library (SUB) 2020.

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Abstract:

In this dissertation, the chapters on the European Union (EU) from German textbooks for political education are analyzed in their context. It is assumed that textbooks are pedagogical, cultural and political media whose texts (understood as written and visual materials) are produced in the context of socio-political negotiation processes. Hence, the socio-political context - which includes institutional reform as well as educational policy measures - influences textbook contents. This study combines the perspectives of textbook research, political education and political science on the subject of school textbooks for political education. The subtitle "A Computer-Assisted Content Analysis" refers to the methodological implementation of this work, namely the use of Qualitative Data Analysis (QDA) software (MAXQDA11) to perform the analysis.

The EU reform process – initiated by the Laeken Declaration (2001), introducing the idea of a European constitution and ultimately leading to the Treaty of Lisbon – aimed to make the EU more democratic and the political processes more transparent and effective after the large expansion round in 2004. While institutional change took place in the EU, there were also important changes in political education in the 2000s in Germany. Encouraged by the nationwide introduction of educational standards and the new competence orientation of school education, possible implications

for political education were debated. Challenges of teaching the EU, due to its dynamic changes, complexity and the apparent distance between the EU and its citizens, were also discussed during this time. In Lower Saxony - which is the primary case of this study - new curricula were introduced in the mid-2000s, which changed the requirements for teaching the EU as a subject in political education.

In this dissertation, the EU chapters from a total of 87 textbooks (that were approved for political education in Germany between 2003 and 2012/2013) were examined with a combination of computer-assisted qualitative and quantitative content analysis. The focus of the study was on 30 books that were approved for political education in Lower Saxony during the study period. The concepts of democracy, participation and legitimacy of the EU inform the analytical view on the research subject and justify the selection of the thematic categories and research questions that are examined in this study.