

The European Knowledge Centre for Youth Policy

Key priorities for youth policies answers on
Voluntary Activities



Partnership between the European Commission and the Council of Europe in the field of youth policy, youth research and youth work.

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1 Statistics

1.1 Different types of voluntary activities that exist for young people

	Voluntary activities	Voluntary service	Civic service
Exists?	Yes	Yes	Yes

1.2 Number of young people who engage in voluntary activities

Total Number	552.500* <i>persons</i>
Total Female	N/A <i>persons</i>
Total Male	N/A <i>persons</i>

1.3 Number of young people who engage in voluntary service

Total Number	180 <i>persons</i>
Total Female	N/A <i>persons</i>
Total Male	N/A <i>persons</i>

1.4 Number of young people who engage in voluntary service abroad (excluding European Voluntary Service)

Total Number	N/A <i>persons</i>
Total Female	N/A <i>persons</i>
Total Male	N/A <i>persons</i>

1.5 Number of young people who engage in national voluntary civic service

Total Number	N/A <i>persons</i>
Total Female	N/A <i>persons</i>
Total Male	N/A <i>persons</i>

1.5.1 Number of young people who carry out their service period abroad

Total Number	N/A <i>persons</i>
Total Female	N/A <i>persons</i>
Total Male	N/A <i>persons</i>

1.5.2 Is the national voluntary civic service open to young people from outside the country?

~~Yes~~ No

1.5.3 If yes, number of young people from outside the country participating in your national voluntary civic service

Total Number	N/A <i>persons</i>
Total Female	N/A <i>persons</i>
Total Male	N/A <i>persons</i>

1.6 Clarification of the statistics used

Badelt/Hollerweger: #Volume of voluntary work in Austria#, Vienna 2001. Representative survey for Austria age 15+, age group 15 to 25 calculated.

2 Range of voluntary activities

2.1 Voluntary activities engaged in by young people and approximate number of people involved

	Exists?	Number
a. Community activity	Yes	N/A
b. Participation/self-governance	Yes	N/A
c. Emergency response	Yes	N/A
d. Community peacekeeping	No	N/A
e. Social assistance	No	N/A
f. Personal assistance	Yes	N/A
g. Children and youth	Yes	N/A
h. Environment	Yes	N/A
i. Human rights, advocacy and politics	Yes	N/A
j. Economic justice	No	N/A
k. Development aid	No	N/A
l. Humanitarian aid	Yes	N/A
m. Religious volunteering	Yes	N/A
n. Education	Yes	N/A
o. Arts/culture	Yes	N/A

	Exists?	Number
p. Sports	Yes	N/A
q. Recreation	Yes	N/A

Other voluntary activities
N/A

3 Finance

3.1 Amount of finance that is annually available for voluntary activities and allocation of this finance

Total : N/A

Explanation

The amount spent for voluntary activities can not be estimated since a big volume of voluntary activities are set in NGOs like youth organisations which are funded and supported through different public structures. Due to the federal organisations of youth policy an estimation of financial support could not be done.

3.2 Sources of finance

Main sources of finance are the Ministry of Social Security, Generations and Consumer Protection and the departments for youth policy and for social affairs in the federal states of Austria. But also big national and international companies and the chamber of commerce and industries fund voluntary activities

4 Main Actors

No answers available

5 Legal basis/legislation for voluntary activities in general and for young people in particular

5.1 Legal status of volunteers

No specific legal status for volunteers exists at this time. Their legal status is provided through the different laws for the NGOs

5.2 Taxation/tax exemptions for volunteers and volunteer organisations

At the time being, there does not exist a tax relief for donations. Voluntary organisations, organised on the basis of the private law relating to associations have special tax grants because of their public usefulness and non-profit-making. Compensations for voluntary activities are liable to taxes as all other income.

5.3 Existence of social protection of volunteers

If voluntary activities are compensated they have the same social protection as employees, otherwise no social security system exists for volunteers. But volunteers are insured through the NGOs they are working for. A legislative solution for the problem of social protection of volunteers is aimed for.

5.4 Legal situation of unemployed young people participating in voluntary activities

Compensations for voluntary activities are liable to taxation as other income. Unemployed young people participating in voluntary activities are treated in the same way as other volunteers.

6 Programmes

6.1 Programmes and plans on volunteering (national, regional, local)

The "Volunteers Action Programme" was unanimously approved by the Austrian Council for Voluntary Work and will be furnished to all federal ministers, provincial governors, competent provincial government members, the Austrian Association of Cities and Towns, the Association of Austrian Municipalities, the presidents of interest groups and chairpersons of NPOs represented in the Austrian Council for Voluntary Work for their information and appointment of experts responsible for implementation in the working groups. Furthermore, it is intended to submit the Volunteers Action Programme as a petition to the Federal Parliament and Provincial Diets. It defines voluntary activities and recommends - the survey of the measures to promote voluntary commitment, - the establishment of volunteering agencies, - the certification of voluntary work, - the implementation of a basic curriculum for further training of volunteers and for volunteers management - a research on the situation of voluntary activities in Austria - the establishment of a working group to discuss measures and proposals with regard to liability under civil law, - the enlargement of the General Social Insurance Act - and the discussion of other implications of volunteers work on legal status and the status of social protection

7 Relationship between different types of voluntary services

No answers available

8 Development of voluntary activities, including standards/instruments aiming at securing and enhancing quality in voluntary activities

8.1 Recent (this year) developments in the area of voluntary activities

Establishment of an #Austrian Council of Voluntary Work# in 2003 under the presidency of the Minister of Social Security, Generations and Consumer Protection. Last year the Volunteers Action



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Plan was approved by the Austrian Council of Voluntary Work to improve voluntary activities in Austria.

8.2 What are the trends concerning the range of voluntary activities?

Increasing Decreasing **Stable**

Explanation

The number of people participating in voluntary activities is decreasing like the memberships in organisations in general.

8.3 Description of quality standards used in voluntary activities

Development of quality standards is a work in progress. The recommendation to establish curricula for training for volunteers and for volunteers management is one step in this direction.

8.4 Description of measures to improve the quality of voluntary activities for young people

Measures recommended in the Volunteers Action Plan: Certificate voluntary activities: Volunteers are marked out by their special qualifications. In order to visualise this and turn it into a career asset, plans have been developed to introduce and disseminate a work certificate with which to recognise the voluntary work. Establishment of volunteering agencies in the major Austrian cities, to undertake the following tasks: #provision, counselling and monitoring of volunteers and organisations, #(further) training of volunteers and their co-ordinators, #development of framework conditions for voluntary commitment and creating awareness for issues of voluntary work, #interface between NPOs and for-profit facilities (corporate social responsibility), #initiating and handling of projects (e.g. through the education project exchange), #evaluation of projects. Nation-wide implementation of the basic curriculum to professionalise (further) training of volunteer activists in the form provided and evaluated.

9 Removing obstacles to young people's voluntary engagement

9.1 The facilitation of young people's voluntary engagement

Enhancing the status of volunteering in autonomous school areas (particular in school project work) Focus on volunteering by young people in extracurricular youth education Development of student and youth initiatives and projects Integrating the values of practised civil society in teacher training and continuing education Development of #citizens# centres for Young and Old# to regional volunteers exchanges for linking supply and demand Qualification of volunteers through the extension of basic and advanced training Cooperation and interface between paid staff and volunteers Standards, harmonisation and EU-wide recognition of courses and certificates in the field of voluntary work Curriculum for volunteer management Improvement of the legal framework of associations in 2002 (facilitating and accelerating official procedures for associations)

9.2 Recent (this year) measures to remove obstacles to young people's volunteering

Volunteers Action Plan recommends different measures to improve young people's volunteering like certification for voluntary activities, nation wide curricula for training, legal framework and social protection for volunteering.

9.3 Existing obstacles

The Volunteers Action Plan is still a form of recommendations. So up to this day no nation wide curricula for trainings exist, no certificates for volunteering that are accepted in the labour market exist and the problems of the legal status and the social protection of volunteering are not completely solved.

10 Promotion of voluntary activities for young people

10.1 Information channels and contacts for voluntary activities of young people

1. Austrian Council for Voluntary Work (Dr. Erika Winkler): Federal ministries, governments of the provinces, association of communities and cities, social partners, NGOs representing all sectors of voluntary commitment 2. www.freiwilligenweb.at 3. Youth information centres in the Federal States

10.2 Promotion activities for voluntary activities

Development of a national strategy for enhancing the status of voluntary work in public opinion (annual #Volunteers Award#) Integration of and cooperation with media in enhancing the status and recognition of voluntary work

10.3 Initiatives to promote voluntary activities among young people from disadvantaged backgrounds

N/A

11 Recognition of voluntary activities of young people

11.1 Initiatives for recognition 'good practices'

Establishment of the IT platform www.freiwilligenweb.at where models of good practice are shown and links to other platforms and NGOs are to be found. (Austrian Council for Voluntary Work) Promotion of voluntary activities in the youth field through the media (print and IT) of the youth departments of the Austrian Federal States. For the EVS see www.youth4europe.at

11.2 Measures of societal recognition



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Annually the #Volunteers Award# is given for all kinds of voluntary activities not just in the youth field. The winners of the awards are presented on the IT platform www.freiwilligenweb.at

12 Co-operations and networks, exchange of volunteers, transnational and international cooperation

No answers available

13 Studies & Surveys

13.1 Recent surveys or research on the topic of voluntary activities

A reasearch on voluntary activities in Austria is projected. The last research was held in 2001. Badelt/Hollerweger: The volume of voluntary work in Austria. Vienna 2001