

QUESTIONNAIRE

“VOLUNTARY ACTIVITIES”

AUSTRIA



Table of contents

1 Which types of voluntary activities exist in your country for young people, explain the different fields of activities and if possible give numbers of how many young people engage in them per year, in total and by gender?	3
2 Which kind of voluntary service exist in your country and how many young people engage in them per year, in totals and by gender.....	3
3 Financial and legal status of voluntary activities	4
4 Name the main actors of voluntary activities of young people on national, regional and local level in your country	4
5 What is the social protection of young volunteers in your country and are voluntary activities compatible with social benefits?	5
6 What Programmes and plans are there in your country on volunteering (national, regional, local)?	5
7 Does a strategy (plan) or specific measures (link to the glossary) for the development of voluntary activities of young people exist in your country?	5
8 Obstacles to volunteering of young people existing in the country and measures to remove them.....	6
9 How are voluntary activities of young people promoted in your country, particularly among young people with fewer opportunities?.....	6
10 Explain how (by which means) voluntary activities of young people are recognised in your country. Name certificates and other measures used for that purpose	7
11 Which co-operations, networks and exchange programmes do exist in your country for supporting voluntary activities of young people?	7
12 Do collective volunteering projects exist in your country?.....	7
13 Which recent survey or research has been carried out on the topic of voluntary activities?	8

1 Which types of voluntary activities exist in your country for young people, explain the different fields of activities and if possible give numbers of how many young people engage in them per year, in total and by gender?

In Austria voluntary activities in formal (NGOs) and in informal way exist. For the age group of the 15 to 30 year olds research shows that the majority of voluntary activities are carried out in given structures of NGOs so being formal voluntary activities.

The latest study on structure and amount of voluntary activities in Austria shows that approximately 682.000 young people between 15 and 30 are active in NGOs or in an informal way. This equals about 44.4 % of the whole youth population in this age group in Austria. About 373.000 young men and 209.000 women are engaged in voluntary activities.

Round 460.500 young people are engaged in formal structures like NGOs and about 397.000 young people are voluntarily active in informal ways. This numbers show the overlaps between the two fields, indicating that one fourth of all people being voluntary active are in and out of structures active.

The main fields of activities are recreation, culture and arts; emergency response like rescue service and fire brigades; and religious volunteering (latter give only the field where the activity is carried out, but not the aim, which goes very often into recreation, culture, arts, and social issues). Within the fields that are listed in the Austrian survey most young people are active in the area of emergency response and disaster relief operations (55.700), in sports (50.300), culture, arts and recreation (41.000), and in religious filed (35.000).

(Statistik Austria: Struktur und Volumen der Freiwilligenarbeit in Österreich, aktualisiert 2008, Wien, 2008)

2 Which kind of voluntary service exist in your country and how many young people engage in them per year, in totals and by gender

Furthermore voluntary service – understood as voluntary activities in a fixed period (no matter if short or long-term) with clear objectives, contents and tasks, in a defined structure and framework do exist. Voluntary service exists mainly in the fields of emergency medical service, in rescue service or in other emergency response like fire-fighting. But these structures are not specially surveyed in Austria, so no concrete numbers can be provided.

3 Financial and legal status of voluntary activities

The total 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 organisation of youth policy an estimation of financial support could not be done.

Main sources of finance are the Federal Ministry for Economy, Family and Youth and the Federal Ministry for Social Affairs and Consumer Protection and the Austrian Foreign Ministry. Furthermore sources for finance are the departments for youth policy and for social affairs in the nine federal states of Austria. But also big national and international companies and the chamber of commerce and industries fund voluntary activities

Organised on the basis of the private law relating to associations, NGOs have special tax grants because of their public usefulness and non-profit-making. Any compensation for voluntary activities is liable to taxes as all other income.

4 Name the main actors of voluntary activities of young people on national, regional and local level in your country

Main Actor/National:

Federal Ministry of Social Affairs and Consumer Protection – Department of voluntary work - <http://www.bmsk.gv.at/> - 01/71100-0

Actors in the youth field:

National Level – financial support, youth programs

Federal Ministry for Economy, Family and Youth – Department II/5 (youth politics) – www.bmwfi.gv.at - 0043/1/711003327

Austrian Development Agency www.ada.gv.at 1010 Wien, 0043/1/903990

Regional Level – federal state youth units

Vienna – Federal state government - MA 13 (Education and extracurricular youth services) – Department of youth and education - 0043/4000/84341

Lower Austria: Federal state government – Department of youth; 0043/2742/9005/13267

Upper Austria: Federal state government – Department of education and Society - 0043/732/7720/15501

Burgenland – Federal state government – Department 2; 0043/2682/6002902 -

Styria – Federal state government – Department 6A (youth, women, family and generation) – 0043/316/877/2647 -

Carinthia – Federal state government – Department of youth - 0043/50/536/41361

Salzburg – Federal state government - Department 2/07 (youth) - 0043/662/8042/2117

Tyrol – Federal state government – Department of education, culture and sports – JUFF
0043/512/508-3560

Vorarlberg - Federal state government – Department of youth and family –0043/5574/511/24125

Non-governmental actors

There are many different nongovernmental actors in every field of voluntary activities of young people in Austria, which range from emergency response to sports.

The main youth NGOs are member organisations of the Austrian Youth Council (*Bundesjugendvertretung*) and a list of these youth NGOs can be found on the [web-page](#) of that umbrella organisation.

5 What is the social protection of young volunteers in your country and are voluntary activities compatible with social benefits?

In many cases if volunteers are working for organisations these organisations have special insurance for accidents in the time of their voluntary work.

For the volunteers, doing the “Freiwilliges Soziales Jahr” www.fsj.at, exists the same social protection system as for all workers.

Otherwise no social security system exists for volunteers.

A legislative solution for the problem of social protection of volunteers is aimed for.

6 What Programmes and plans are there in your country on volunteering (national, regional, local)?

N/A

7 Does a strategy (plan) or specific measures (link to the glossary) for the development of voluntary activities of young people exist in your country?

On the basis of the need for action analysed by the working groups in the International Year of Volunteers 2001 and summarised in the "Volunteers' Manifesto, these four committees have now drawn up specific recommendations for its implementation. This was unanimously approved as the "Voluntary work action programme" by the Austrian Council for Voluntary Work at its second meeting on 20 October 2004.

The "Voluntary work action programme" is structured according to three categories. First of all, it is necessary to create a legally valid definition of voluntary work and honorary office. On this basis, the legal safeguarding of voluntary work can take place, particularly through personal liability and accident insurance, but also within the framework of employment legislation. As soon as the recommended measures for the improvement of the framework conditions for voluntary work have been implemented, an image campaign to increase the perceived value of voluntary work is to be carried out with the objective of finding new activists, young and old.

For the implementation of this "Voluntary work action programme", concerted cooperation is required at the level of the federal government, the provinces, the towns/cities and municipalities, interest groups and the NPOs themselves, in order to then be able to find new activists for all areas of voluntary work via the above-mentioned image campaign to raise the perceived value of voluntary work.

8 Obstacles to volunteering of young people existing in the country and measures to remove them

Still no nation wide curricula for trainings exist.

The problems of the legal status and the social protection of volunteers are not completely solved.

A legislative solution for the problem of social protection of volunteers is aimed for.

9 How are voluntary activities of young people promoted in your country, particularly among young people with fewer opportunities?

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).

The development of a national strategy for enhancing the status of voluntary work in the public opinion (an annual “Volunteers Award”) is in progress. The integration of and cooperation with media in enhancing the status and recognition of voluntary work is seen as an important tool for promoting voluntary activities .

10 Explain how (by which means) voluntary activities of young people are recognised in your country. Name certificates and other measures used for that purpose

For volunteering a certificate that is accepted in the labour market exists - the “Freiwilligenpass”. 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.
[Freiwilligenpass](#).

11 Which co-operations, networks and exchange programmes do exist in your country for supporting voluntary activities of young people?

Youth information centres in the 9 provinces inform about possibilities. For the Youth in Europe Programme the regional offices in the 9 provinces are in charge. The umbrella organisations of youth organisations (BJV) and of open youth work (KOJE) are also engaged in voluntary activities and their promotion.

12 Do [collective volunteering](#) projects exist in your country?

“72 Stunden ohne Kompromiss”: every second year the Catholic Youth organises this project where groups of 5 to 20 young people engage voluntary for 72 hours to work in different local projects. Without compromise means that the young volunteers do not know what task they should fulfil in the following 72 hours. In the year 2006 5.000 youngsters participated in this event. If foreigners living in Austria are interested they can apply to be part of one of the projects in the frame of “72 Stunden ohne Kompromiss”.

13 Which recent survey or research has been carried out on the topic of voluntary activities?

The last research was held in 2006 on behalf of the (former) Federal Ministry of Social Security, Generations and Consumerism (BMSG) - Bundesministerium für soziale Sicherheit, Generationen und Konsumentenschutz.

Statistik Austria: Struktur und Volumen der Freiwilligenarbeit in Österreich (Structure and Volume of voluntary work in Austria). Vienna, 2007, Bases on the Mikrozensus 2006, age group calculated: 15 to 29, actualised 2008.