

Perspective on Youth Work Developments

GERMANY FACT SHEET

The 3rd European Youth Work Convention (EYWC) plays a key role in launching the implementation of the European Youth Work Agenda (EYWA) as a strategic framework for further developing and strengthening youth work practice and policies in Europe. The goal of this fact sheet is to provide basic information about the perspective on youth work developments in a specific country. All information has been gathered from national contact points, reports or country sheets and profiles available online. The purpose of this fact sheet is to stimulate discussion before, at and after the 3rd EYWC among the members of the national delegations. This information is a suggestion only and a starting point for further development by the delegation when planning actions for implementation of the EYWA.

FACTS

Youth work as a recognised occupation: Partly yes (social workers and social pedagogues with youth work profiles)

Legislative framework for youth work: YES

Main youth work actors: (ministries, youth NGOs, municipalities etc.)

Federal Ministry for Family Affairs, Senior Citizens, Women and Youth is the main actor at the national level. In the federal states, the responsible ministries for youth affairs and youth offices initiate and support youth work activities. At the local level, statutory (youth offices) and voluntary (youth associations, social (welfare) services, local initiatives and organisations) run local facilities and plan, support and deliver youth work.

Other important youth work actors in Germany include:

The German Federal Youth Council;

Regional youth councils;

Local youth councils;

Youth and youth work NGOs;

The Child and Youth Welfare Association;

German National Committee for International Youth Work

Highlights with regard to youth work development:

- In Germany, participation is an integral component of youth work, as such, young people are to take part in the planning, implementation and evaluation of youth work projects and thus have a say in youth work services;
- The activities are voluntary and oriented to the needs and interests of young people: youth work by and for young people;
- Volunteer work plays an important role in youth work; it has been an expression of the underlying principle of autonomy in youth work since the beginning;
- Youth work is supported by around 30 000 youth work professionals nationwide;
- Youth work is financed and structured primarily at a local authority level;
- Some youth work services are provided by non-statutory organisations; cooperation between statutory authorities and non-statutory organisations is enshrined in German law.

STRENGTHS & SUCCESSES	CHALLENGES
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• A joint youth strategy of the Federal Government was developed aiming at involving young people in all decision-making processes concerning them;• various programmes and initiatives were launched aiming at strengthening the role of children's and youth parliaments as an important component of a diverse range of participation opportunities for young people at the local level;• as part of the "digital literacy" focus topic an initiative to teach media literacy to young people (entitled "Gutes Aufwachsen mit Medien") was launched to offer activities designed to strengthen media literacy skills amongst children, young people, parents and youth work professionals;• open youth work takes place in cities and municipalities, including (open) youth centres, child and youth clubs, mobile play busses, adventure playgrounds, youth centres, youth houses. These offerings are open to all young person, free of charge, and not linked to any membership	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Establishing a legislative framework for youth work definition and recognition, where differences can be valued and connections can be promoted under a common frame of theory, ethical standards, competences, education/training requirements, evaluation methods for accountability and quality improvement;• balancing between on- and offline youth work interventions;• making a clear distinction between youth work and child work and care;• the precariousness of the employment conditions of youth workers;• reaching out to young people with fewer opportunities and from rural areas;• promoting a balanced provision of different cultures and traditions of youth work in the local context (e.g. between faith-based and secular youth work, different religious or political background, different specialisation on specific youth needs and interests etc.)

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • differences in the youth work recognition and resources allocations in each federal state; • differences in youth work provision and infrastructure availability between urban and rural areas.
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SUPPORT NEEDED

- promoting a stronger integration of support measures for quality youth work in the youth policy developed at the regional level, together with a stronger connection with the European debate on youth work;
- promoting cooperation and peer-learning among member States and neighbouring countries;
- connection to and learning from well-established European networks;
- promoting and supporting the development of educational and training pathways for professional youth work;
- developing transnational youth work projects;
- providing support to youth cultural projects;
- providing support to youth vacation camps;
- providing support to youth projects on political education.

GREATEST NEED FOR FURTHER DEVELOPMENT OF YOUTH WORK IN THE NEXT THREE YEARS

Ensuring and expanding the provision of youth work.

ADDITIONAL SOURCES

- EKCYC youth work country sheet: https://pjp-eu.coe.int/documents/42128013/47262550/Germany_info_youth+work_Nov_2017.pdf/f97a6fd9-6f20-dc56-de47-df6da1622889
- Youth Wiki youth work chapter: <https://eacea.ec.europa.eu/national-policies/en/content/youthwiki/10-youth-work-germany>
- RAY report if mentioning the specific country: <https://www.jugendfuereuropa.de/ueber-ife/projekte/ray/>