

## **10.8 Current debates and reforms**

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## **Forthcoming policy developments**

### **Evaluation of the Decree for the Promotion of Youth Work**

Since March 2017, the department of Culture and Youth of the Ministry of the German-speaking Community is conducting an evaluation of the Decree for the Promotion of Youth Work ([Dekret zur Förderung der Jugendarbeit](#)). One of the main focuses of the evaluation targets the current structure of open youth work in the German-speaking community, which clearly doesn't meet the needs of young people anymore.

The evaluation process was started 5 years after entry into force of the decree in January 2012. As with the drafting of the decree, the evaluation process is entirely participative and transparent. An online survey was conducted in 2017 with all the actors in the youth field. The survey results were discussed during an open space conference in May 2018, leading to the formation of a steering group composed of representatives from the government, the ministry and the youth sector. Concrete recommendations for actions were formulated by the steering groups, which were again discussed with all actors in the youth field.

The current proposal relies on the principle of subsidiarity and foresees a distinction between regional and municipal youth work. In concrete terms, this modification would mean full autonomy for the municipalities in the organization of youth work on their territory, with the help of Government funding. Some restrictions on the use of the funds will be unavoidable, but they should only guarantee that the funds benefit young people in the German-speaking Community.

Further consultations and discussions with the youth sector are planned before the approval by the government and the adoption by the parliament. The time goal for the revision of the decree is January 2022.

### **Drafting of the next Strategic Plan for Youth**

The term of the current Strategic Plan for Youth was foreseen to end on December 31, 2020. Due to the current decree evaluation, the term has been prolonged for 2 years. Meanwhile, initial considerations are being made by the steering group (see [1.3 - National Youth Strategy](#)) for determining the thematic priorities of the next strategic plan.

### **Development of outreach youth work**

Alongside the development of open youth work, outreach youth work in the German-speaking Community is also being expanded. Previously mainly active in the north of the community, new youth workers have been hired and are still being hired in order to establish outreach youth work in the south of the German-speaking Community which consequently has partially begun.

## **Ongoing debates**

There are a few ongoing debates in the field of youth work, which are being investigated in the current decree evaluation (see [10.8 - Forthcoming policy developments](#)). These debates concern the following subjects:

- Securing skilled personnel in the field of open youth work
- Expansion of outreach youth work
- municipality-specific youth work to better suit the needs of young people