

2.4 Youth volunteering at national level

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National Programme for Youth Volunteering

There is no National Programme for Youth Volunteering in the DG. Volunteering is only regulated by the federal law on the rights of volunteers on 3 July 2005 and the decree of 6 December 2011 governing the funding of Youth Work in the DG.

Funding

There are a number of (semi)public and private organisations that support volunteer work/voluntary activities. One of the major sources is the König Baudouin Stiftung (King Baudouin Foundation), an independent and pluralist foundation that aims at improving the living conditions of the population. This foundation supports some 1,000 projects a year. Its budget – 44,8 million EUR in 2015 – is divided over these organisations.

Characteristics of youth volunteering

As volunteering addresses all young people in the German-speaking Community and no official statistics on the level or trends of participation exist (yet), information on the characteristics of youth volunteering, e.g. on specific target groups or the main fields of activities cannot be delivered yet.

Support to young volunteers

Volunteering plays a significant role in the associative sector, which is why the support to young volunteers is of high priority for the government of the German-speaking community. In the DG, volunteers get a **free insurance**, a lot of **information** and further **training**. The free insurance is

especially important for small non-profit organisations, who couldn't afford to insure their volunteers. As already mentioned before, organisations and volunteers are offered personalized advice on request and a lot of information by the support point for voluntary work located at the Ministry of the German-speaking Community. A dedicated [website](#) offers regular updated information, policy papers, good examples, concepts and methods for volunteering and provides an overview of the various possibilities of volunteer work in the DG. Moreover, regular information sessions are organized and a [compendium](#) on volunteering in the DG was issued in 2013. Another important aspect about the support of young volunteers in the DG is the promotion of volunteer trainings and the opportunity to participate in various exchange programs.

Volunteers can never be remunerated for their work, but the expenses incurred by volunteers can be reimbursed. Volunteers can obtain fixed compensation or real compensation for costs incurred. Cost reimbursement is exempt from taxes and from paying social security contributions. Organisations are, however, not obliged to provide a payment but must inform the volunteer of this matter. Both payments cannot be combined for one volunteer. If the volunteer prefers the repayment of real costs, he has to prove the reality and amount of these costs by means of documents with evidential value. If the volunteer prefers a fixed compensation, the amount of expenses actually incurred does not have to be proved if the total amount of allowances received does not exceed 32.71 EUR per day or 1308,38 EUR per year (valid in 2016). However, proof has to be provided for allowances exceeding the aforementioned amounts. The maximum kilometre compensation for work trips with your own vehicle, motorbike or scooter amounts to 0,3412 EUR per km (valid from 1.07.2015 until 30.06.2016) with a maximum of 2000 km a year and each organisation decides who receives this kilometre based reimbursement. These costs must be proven by the volunteer.

Quality Assurance

No proper system of quality assurance for evaluating the volunteering activities available to young people exist in the German-speaking community.

Nonetheless, the German-speaking community participates actively in the Erasmus+ programme, where the [EVS quality standards](#) (support to the volunteer, information and Youthpass) apply. The quality assurance is assured by the National Agency for Erasmus+ in the DG (*Jugendbüro*) and the sending and hosting organisations.

Target groups

As there is no specific national programme for Youth Volunteering in the DG, a specific target group hasn't been defined. Due to its nature, volunteering can be carried out by anyone, regardless of background, level of education, etc. Volunteering can be a pool for special target groups to develop experiences, to reintegrate themselves into society, to be a forum in which isolated people can establish social contacts.