

Children and youth work in child and youth organisations

Child and youth organisations have different focuses and goals that arise from their sectarian, cultural, ecological or party political background. One common denominator, however, is a holistic and participatory approach to education. This means that children and youth work in child and youth organisations is always focused on the concerns and needs of the target group. Child and youth organisations see themselves as social space to grow and a place where young people can learn about democracy. The idea is for young people to discover and develop their talents and discover self-efficacy.

In Austria, many people often equate youth work with children and youth work in child and youth organisations. This may be because the child and youth organisations have mostly been around for decades and offer a wide range of age-appropriate services. Many child and youth organisations also publicly stand up for the concerns of children and young people, for example with their own campaigns and events.

Children and youth work in child and youth organisations is predominantly carried out by volunteers and reaches over 1.6 million young people up to the age of 30. Child and youth organisations mostly work with groups that meet regularly and are broken down into various age groups. Most organisations have well designed structures from local groups through to regional or national groups and on to federal organisations.

Austrian National Youth Council (BJV)

Most federal youth organisations are members of the Austrian National Youth Council (BJV), which was established by law.

Many child and youth organisations have an international network, for example in the European Youth Forum (YFJ) or their own international umbrella organisation.

According to the Federal Youth Promotion Act (B-JFG), youth organisations carrying out youth work are entitled to basic funding provided they are designed for the entire federal territory and are represented in at least five provinces. At least 3,000 young people across

the country must also be members and the organisation must have existed for at least ten years (Federal Youth Promotion Act B-JFG; Federal Law Gazette No. I 126/2000).

Figures

- In 2022, a total of 37 federal youth organisations with 1,677,933 members were entitled to basic funding according to the B-JFG.
- A total of 198,051 youth workers worked or volunteered for the organisations entitled to funding according to the B-JFG in 2022 (full-time: 6,137, voluntary: 191,914).

Further information

- Members of the National Youth Council www.bjv.at/english-information/
- European Youth Forum www.youthforum.org/
- Federal Youth Representation Act (in German only)
www.ris.bka.gv.at/GeltendeFassung.wxe?Abfrage=Bundesnormen&Gesetzesnummer=20001059
- Federal Youth Promotion Act (in German only)
www.ris.bka.gv.at/GeltendeFassung.wxe?Abfrage=Bundesnormen&Gesetzesnummer=20001058

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The task of the Youth Competence Centre is to implement and coordinate the Austrian Youth Strategy and provide data and facts on youth policy and youth work. If you have any suggestions, please contact jugendstrategie@bka.gv.at