Study on volunteering in the EU
Volunteering in sport – Germany

VOLUNTEERING IN SPORT – GERMANY

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1 GENERAL INFORMATION ABOUT VOLUNTEERING IN SPORT

1.1 Tradition and contextual background

Accounting for around 11% of all volunteers in Germany, sport is the largest sector in which voluntary work is carried out in Germany\(^1\).

Volunteering in sport has existed in Germany as long as organisations have existed, dating back to the middle ages. As far as recent key developments are concerned, in the mid 1990s, there was a move towards increased professionalisation in volunteering in sport. Another important milestone for volunteering in sport was the adoption of the legislation ‘Hilfen für Helfer’ (‘Help for helpers’) in 2007. Through this piece of legislation, 2.3 billion euro is provided to voluntary organisations on an annual basis, of which a large proportion is provided to sport organisations.

Since 2007, another law concerning the further strengthening of volunteering\(^2\) has also been in force in Germany. This piece of legislation, which targets all volunteers in organisations, is also used by sport organisations. The aim of the legislation is to provide a more generous framework for public profit organisations and donations, and better support to donators, organisations and leaders / trainers.

Volunteering is essential for the German sport system. More than one in ten of citizens over the age of 14 years volunteer in sport. Of these volunteers, more than 90% engage in a sport organisation. Indeed, of all the different types of voluntary activities carried out in Germany, volunteering in sport is distinct in that it has the greatest level of organisation.

The over 90,000 sport organisations offer enormous benefits for the German society by promoting \textit{inter alia} good health, leisure, and performance sport. Without them, an adequate supply of sport activities in Germany is difficult to imagine. This applies in particular to children, youth and seniors; 56,500 sport clubs offer activities for small children, 84,000 for children and youth and about 84,000 for seniors over 60. At the same time, sport clubs offer these possibilities normally at affordable prices. Fifty percent of all sport clubs require member contributions of less than 3.5 euro from children, 4.5 euro from youth and less than 7.5 euro from adults. Thirty percent of all sport organisations in Germany offer programmes specifically aimed at health promotion, prevention and rehabilitation. Just over 10% (13.7\%) of the sport organisations in Germany are engaged in performance and professional sport.

Sport organisations also, for example, promote social integration and an active population – not only by engaging in sport, but also through volunteering. A stakeholder from the federal Ministry of Interior suggested that ‘\textit{in a sense it holds Germany together – and makes people healthy}’.

\(^1\) This estimation has been made on the basis of 7.7 million volunteers in sport in Germany (both "regular" and "irregular" volunteers), of a total population of 70.4 million aged 14 and above. Federal Institute of Sport Science (2007): Sportentwicklungsbericht 2005/2006; p. 54.

\(^2\) Gesetz zur weiteren Stärkung des bürgerschaftlichen Engagements.
1.2 Definitions

A representative from the Ministry of Interior, which is responsible for volunteering in sport at federal level, confirmed that there is no generally recognised definition of volunteering in sport in Germany. Similar to what is the case for volunteering in general, several different terms are currently being used, such as ‘Freiwilliges Engagement’ (‘voluntary engagement’) and ‘Bürgerliches Engagement’ (‘civic engagement’). Both of these terms are rather informal and very broad; they involve all types of volunteering, including for example parents baking cakes when their child is involved in sport etc. Other definitions, which refer to volunteering undertaken in the framework of organisations, are ‘Ehrenamt’ (‘honorary office / work’) and ‘Freiwilligen Dienste’ (voluntary services). According to the Ministry of Interior, in political terms there is no problem that no common definition exists. However, the definition of sport and related activities is imperative for estimations of the scale of volunteering in sport.

Another distinction can be made between:

- Formal volunteering related to a position/function which implies a continuing engagement over a long period of time; and,

- Informal volunteering which is not related to a particular position and occurs on an irregular basis, e.g. occasional voluntary assistance.\(^3\)

However, a stakeholder from the German Olympic Sports Confederation (DOSB) emphasised that there are no formal definitions of these types of volunteering either; distinction is only made in colloquial language.

1.3 Number and profile of volunteers in sport

In Germany estimations of the number of volunteers in sport have been made on a biennial basis since 2005 in ‘sport development reports’ (Sportentwicklungsbericht)\(^4\). Figures are also available from the national Surveys on Volunteering that were undertaken in 1999 and 2004 (commissioned by the Federal Ministry of Family Affairs, Senior Citizens, Women and Youth).

Although the total number of volunteers in sport has remained stable since 2005 (around 7.7 million)\(^5\), according to the Federal Institute of Sport Science there is a general negative trend in the number of volunteers in sport; both the number of female and male volunteers in sport has declined in recent years. According to a representative from the Federal Institute of Sport Science, the decline is, however, not an indication of ‘crisis’, but can be explained by the demographic development in Germany.

In relation to earlier years, the number of volunteers in sport was reported to have remained stable between 1999 and 2004, however, the proportion of women increased slightly relative to the number of men in this period. Indeed, whereas the proportion of men engaging in voluntary activities in 1999 was 65.5% (compared to 34.5% women), the proportion of women increased to 40.3% in 2004.\(^6\) In this respect, it can be mentioned that

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\(^4\) A ‘Sportentwicklungsbericht’ (‘sport development report’) has so far been published for 2005/06 and 2007/08.


\(^6\) German Olympic Sport Federation: Freiwilligensurvey 1999-2004 (Langfassung / long version), p.29.
the proportion of women carrying out voluntary activities outside of the field of sport in Germany is higher than men (56.2% in 2004).  

**Volume of voluntary work**

The vast majority of volunteers (71%) spend up to 5 hours per week on volunteering activities. An estimation of the number of hours spent by volunteers per month on volunteering was included in the two sport development reports (available for 2005/2006 and 2007/2008). The 2005/2006 report estimated that on average 16.2 hours is spent on volunteering each month by one volunteer. On the basis of this estimation, which, however, only refers to persons involved in an organisation, in the sport sector alone volunteers account for 557 million working hours of unpaid work per year. The contribution to the economy was estimated at 8.5 billion euro per year. According to the 2007/2008 report, the average number of hours spent by one volunteer per month increased to 17.6 hours. Nationwide, it was estimated that volunteers contributed a total of 36.6 million hours per month or 439.2 million hours per year of their free time to volunteering in sport. The value of this at the national level was estimated to 550 million euro per month or 6.6 billion euro per year.

However, stakeholders from the Ministry of Interior and the Federal Institute of Sport Science emphasised the need to be very careful when using these figures to make economic estimations and aggregate information. Some individuals are extremely active, and in order to be able to make solid economic estimations, the figures need to be linked to the education level of the volunteers as well as to their level of involvement. Furthermore, it is very difficult to estimate the level of volunteering outside of organisations. Only looking at the numbers involved in the relevant organisations does not provide a correct picture of the level of volunteering; account must also be taken of, for example, neighbourhood sport, informal sport sessions on Sundays and prison sport.

The stakeholders also underlined the social need to have volunteering in sport. This is a value on its own; as not only the economic value counts.

**Age**

Information on the percentage of the population who are active in volunteering in sport is available by age group for 1999 and 2004. For all age groups except for 14-30 year olds there was a slight increase in the proportion who volunteers. The greatest increase was shown to be in the age group 46-65 (1.5%). On the other hand, the proportion of citizens aged 14-30 who engaged in volunteering decreased by 1%.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age group</th>
<th>1999</th>
<th>2004</th>
<th>Difference</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>14-30</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td>-1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>31-45</td>
<td>12%</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td>+1%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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Table 1.1 - Proportion of the population who are active in volunteering in sport by age group (1999 and 2004)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age group</th>
<th>1999</th>
<th>2004</th>
<th>Difference</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>46-65</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>11.5%</td>
<td>+1.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>66+</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>5.5%</td>
<td>+0.5%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Gender**

Since the beginning of the 1990s, there has been a vast increase in the proportion of women who are volunteering in sport. In 2005/06, around one third (32.6%) of all volunteers were women, compared to around one fifth (22%) in 1991. In 2007/08, of the 2.1 million persons who were active in sport organisations, there were 1.4 million men and 670,000 women.\(^{13}\)

However, there are still differences with regard to the type of voluntary activities women perform compared to men. This is clearly shown, for example, when looking at the proportion of women and men who held a managerial or administrative role in 1999, 2004, 2005/06 and 2007/08 (although completely comparable data are not available). In 1999 and 2004 the proportion was as follows\(^{14}\):

Table 1.2 – Proportion of volunteers in sport with a managerial or administrative role by gender (1999 and 2004)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>1999</th>
<th>2004</th>
<th>Difference</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>44.2%</td>
<td>38.2%</td>
<td>-6.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>29.7%</td>
<td>24.7%</td>
<td>-5.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total average</td>
<td>39.2%</td>
<td>32.7%</td>
<td>-6.5%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In 2005/06, it was reported that only 9% of the positions at the management level were occupied by women. At administrative / organisational level, women held 27% of the positions and 36% at operational/executive level.\(^{15}\)

In 2007/08, it was estimated that women occupied approximately one quarter of the board functions, including administrative and management posts\(^{16}\). The proportion of women was slightly higher at execution level (functions such as coach, referee etc.); 30% of such posts were occupied by women. This was identified to be a significant increase compared to previous years.

At administrative and management levels, women held the following posts:

Table 1.3 – Posts held by women at administrative and management levels (2007/08)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of task</th>
<th>Proportion</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Secretary</td>
<td>47%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\(^{13}\) Federal Institute of Sport Science (2009): *Sportentwicklungsbericht 2007/2008*

\(^{14}\) German Olympic Sport Federation: *Freiwilligensurvey 1999-2004* (Langfassung / long version); p. 16


Table 1.3 – Posts held by women at administrative and management levels (2007/08)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of task</th>
<th>Proportion</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Treasurer</td>
<td>33%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Youth director</td>
<td>32%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Club manager</td>
<td>17%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deputy chair</td>
<td>17%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chair</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

At the execution level, the proportion of women volunteering as coaches is almost twice as high as that of referees.

**Level of education**

Generally, persons with higher levels of education engage in volunteering to a greater extent than those with lower levels of education. However, according to stakeholders this is not as relevant for volunteering in sport as for other types of volunteering. Programmes have been established to involve persons with lower levels of education.

No figures on the education level of volunteers in sport are available for Germany. According to a representative from the Ministry of Interior, such information is ‘neither available nor desirable’. What is important is the involvement in volunteering activities, not the level of education of the volunteers.

**Socio-professional status**

Some information on the socio-professional status of volunteers is available from the National Survey on volunteering in 1999 and 2004. As can be seen in Table 1.4, close to two thirds of the volunteers were employed (full or part time). Unemployed, on the other hand, showed the lowest level of engagement. As far as trends are concerned within the categories of socio-professional status, the proportion of employed however decreased; from 64.1% in 1999 to 61% in 2004. There was also a small decrease in the proportion of women/men at home (-0.1%). Increases were, on the other hand, reported for ‘pupils or persons completing a vocational or higher education programme’ (+1.6%), unemployed (+1.2%) and retired (+.08%).

Table 1.4 – Socio-professional status of volunteers in sport (1999 and 2004)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Socio-professional status</th>
<th>1999</th>
<th>2004</th>
<th>Difference</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Employed (full or part time)</td>
<td>64.1%</td>
<td>61%</td>
<td>- 2.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pupils or persons completing a vocational or higher education programme</td>
<td>12.2%</td>
<td>13.8%</td>
<td>+ 1.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Retired</td>
<td>12.2%</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td>+ 0.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Women / men at home</td>
<td>5.4%</td>
<td>5.3%</td>
<td>- 0.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unemployed</td>
<td>3.4%</td>
<td>4.6%</td>
<td>+ 1.2%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

17 German Olympic Sport Federation: Freiwilligensurvey 1999-2004 (Langfassung / long version): p.30
1.4 Number and types of sport organisations engaging volunteers

Volunteering in sport takes place at all levels across the country. Overall, there are more than 90,000 (approximately 94,000) sport organisations in Germany. Of these, around 12,400 concern ‘high performance sport’.

A vast number of associations and federations draw together individual sport organisations in Germany, and they are generally organised by the type of sport. The German Olympic Sport Federation (Deutschen Olympischen Sportbund; DOSB) acts as an umbrella organisation for German sport clubs with a non-profit status.

The DOSB has 97 member federations, of which:

- 33 are Olympic;
- 16 regional;
- 20 have ‘special tasks’ (religion, sport teacher, university sport - national organisations etc.).

The remainder are ‘not Olympic’. In total there are around 27.5 million memberships of these federations, which are spread throughout approximately 91,000 organisations.

There are also sport federations at the regional level. In each of the 16 regions, there is one sport association. Other associations include, for example, the German Catholic Sport Association (DJK-Sportverband).

According to a representative of the German Federal Institute of Sport Science ‘Non-profit organisations are the classic organisations for volunteering in sport; commercial organisations do not really have a role to play in volunteering in sport.’

Share of volunteers and paid staff in the sport sector

In 2004, on average 27% of sport organisation members were in some way or another involved as volunteers. In 2005/2006, the average proportion of volunteers in sport organisations had increased to an estimated level of 29%. In the 2007/08 report on the development of sport, the proportion of volunteers (on average, per organisation) was estimated at 23%.

On average there are 30.3 volunteers per organisation. Of these, 12.7 were performing tasks at organisational/administrative level and 18.8 persons at operational/executive level (i.e. acting as coach, trainer, referee, etc.). According to the sport development report covering 2005/06, volunteers were particularly predominant in management/administrative positions compared to employed staff. The ratio of voluntary work and remunerated work was estimated to be as follows:

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At managerial/administrative level: on average 12.7 volunteers per organisation and 0.3 paid staff per organisation (including 0.2 part-time paid staff, 0.1 full-time paid staff and 0.1 paid freelancers).

In the area of 'sport' (i.e. training and competitions): on average 5.4 persons employed per organisation (including 0.5 part-time paid staff, 0.1 full-time paid staff and 4.6 paid freelancers).

In the area of 'technology' (maintenance of equipment and sport grounds): 0.5 paid staff per organisation, including 0.4 part-time, 0.1 full-time and 0.1 freelancers (no information on the proportion of volunteers in this category).

In 2007/08, the total number of volunteers in sport organisations was estimated at 2.1 million, of which around 1 million were active at the board level and 1.1 million at the execution level. Furthermore, in the report on the development of sport for 2007/08, it was indicated that of the total of approximately 94,000 sport organisations, about 30,000 have salaried staff. These organisations employ nearly 1 million staff. Of these, 13% have management and administrative tasks, around 26% are engaged at 'implementation' level (trainers etc.) and 17% have technical and other support roles.

As far as trends relating to the ratio of volunteers to employees are concerned, some stakeholders believe that the level of professionalisation is stagnating, whereas others suggested that the level of paid staff is increasing.

According to some stakeholders, professionalisation brings about some negative consequences in terms of tensions between those involved on a voluntary basis and those who are paid; the ones doing volunteering start questioning why they are not paid for the work they are doing when others are being paid. Furthermore, one positive consequence of volunteering which is not seen to the same degree in professional organisations relates to informal learning. Persons who volunteer often do not have a background in e.g. handling salaries and taxes, which means that through volunteering they build knowledge and develop skills as they work in the organisations. This is extremely valuable and a positive outcome that is less visible in professional organisations.

1.5 Main voluntary activities

Level of volunteering in different sport segments

As indicated above, of the round about 94,000 sport organisations in Germany, 12,400 (or 13.7%) concern 'high performance sport'.

Level of volunteering in different sport disciplines

Stakeholders from the Ministry of Interior and the Federal Institute of Sport Science indicated the most important disciplines to be (in order of priority):

- Football;
- 'Gymnastics' (however, the term 'Turnen' in German is broader than gymnastics only, and for example includes orientation); and,
- Swimming.

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This was confirmed by a representative of the DOSB; this stakeholder from this organisation explained that around 5-6 million persons volunteer in football.

Stakeholders suggested that membership statistics from DOSB could provide a picture of the level of volunteering in different sport disciplines. However, these only provide a reliable picture of the level of volunteering to a certain degree, depending on the proportion that is involved in organisations compared to the proportion that is doing volunteering outside of the organisations. For example, sport shooting is only allowed in clubs.

**Type of activities carried out by volunteers**

Comparable information on the type of tasks volunteers carry out is available for 1999 and 2004 (from the National Survey\(^25\)). The two most common categories in both years are quite broad, the most common category being ‘Organisational tasks / carrying out of activities and events’ (with over 50%) followed by the category called ‘practical tasks’. In both years over one third of the respondents also referred to pedagogical support. Trends are increasing for all the categories.

\(^25\) German Olympic Sport Federation: *Freiwilligensurvey 1999-2004* (Langfassung / long version)
### Table 1.5 – Types of activities carried out by volunteers (1999 and 2004)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of task</th>
<th>1999</th>
<th>2004</th>
<th>Difference</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Organisational tasks / carrying out of activities and events</td>
<td>51.2%</td>
<td>59.9%</td>
<td>+ 8.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Practical tasks</td>
<td>31.6%</td>
<td>42.2%</td>
<td>+ 10.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pedagogical support and team management</td>
<td>33.7%</td>
<td>37.0%</td>
<td>+ 3.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Personal support</td>
<td>18.9%</td>
<td>21.8%</td>
<td>+ 2.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interest representation</td>
<td>15.9%</td>
<td>17.9%</td>
<td>+ 2.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Administrative tasks</td>
<td>17.3%</td>
<td>17.8%</td>
<td>+ 0.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Information- and Public relations work</td>
<td>15.9%</td>
<td>17.6%</td>
<td>+ 1.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Counselling</td>
<td>14.4%</td>
<td>14.7%</td>
<td>+ 0.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Organisation and implementation of projects</td>
<td>11.5%</td>
<td>13.4%</td>
<td>+ 1.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fundraising</td>
<td>9.9%</td>
<td>2.1%</td>
<td>- 7.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Networking</td>
<td>3.0%</td>
<td>4.7%</td>
<td>+ 1.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>None of the above</td>
<td>5.7%</td>
<td>4.5%</td>
<td>- 1.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No answer</td>
<td>0.2%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>- 0.2%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The 2005/06 report on the development of sport provides numbers as well as the proportion of tasks / positions. Since the focus of the report is on sport, the categories covered are specific to the field of sport (compared to the information obtained in the National Survey, which covered all voluntary activities). The most common task is coach, followed by board member and referee.  

### Table 1.6 – Number and proportion of tasks performed by volunteers (2005/06)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of task</th>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Proportion</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Coach</td>
<td>1,062,000</td>
<td>38.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Members of sectional boards</td>
<td>380,000</td>
<td>13.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Referee</td>
<td>357,000</td>
<td>12.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other board members</td>
<td>202,500</td>
<td>7.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Treasurer</td>
<td>100,000</td>
<td>3.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deputy chair</td>
<td>99,500</td>
<td>3.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chair</td>
<td>93,500</td>
<td>3.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Youth leader</td>
<td>85,500</td>
<td>3.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Manager of sport organisation</td>
<td>73,500</td>
<td>2.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Public relations</td>
<td>53,000</td>
<td>1.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Head administrator / director</td>
<td>28,500</td>
<td>1.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>2,787,500</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Overall, approximately one quarter of all volunteering takes place in managerial and administrative positions.

According to stakeholders, as far as the skills needed to carry out these activities are concerned, except for work undertaken as part of the Management Board or administrative work, all others require knowledge of or expertise in the discipline concerned – some roles more than others. For example, being a trainer requires a high level of expertise. With regard to instructing and coaching, in Germany a license system exists. At present, around 400,000 valid licenses are issued. 40,000 persons are trained per year. No data on the actual level of education are, however, available.

2 INSTITUTIONAL FRAMEWORK FOR VOLUNTEERING IN SPORT

2.1 Main public bodies and other organisations involved in volunteering in sport

Competences concerning volunteering in sport are split between federal, regional and local levels, which have different responsibilities:

- **Federal level (responsibilities include high performance sport):** Sport falls under the responsibility of the Federal Ministry of Interior. Other Ministries are also involved, such as the Ministry of Finance, which is overseeing the legislation ‘Hilfe für Helfer’ (Help for helpers).

- **Regional level (responsibilities include school sport):**
  - Every regional government has a specific department dealing with sport. This department is usually part of the Ministry of Culture or the Ministry of Interior.
  - A co-ordinating body also exists at the regional level (the ‘Sportministerkonferenz’ or the ‘Conference of Ministers of Sport’), which brings together the 16 regions on the one hand, and on the other hand acts as an intermediary between the regional governments and the federal government.

- **Local level (responsibilities includes provision of sport facilities).**

No officially appointed ‘main volunteer body’ for sport at national level or other non-governmental organisation overseeing volunteering in sport exists in Germany. The German Olympic Sports Confederation (DOSB) draws together non-profit sport organisations, but does not oversee volunteering in sport.

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28 The Conference of Ministers of Sport represents joint interests of regions concerning in particular coordination of sport funding in the regions and protection of sport interests at national and international levels. The Conference consists of regional sport Ministers and collaborates with the German Olympic Sport Federation, the Federal Ministry of Interior, the Permanent Conference of regional culture ministers, the Federal Council / Upper house of the German parliament, regional and peak sport associations. From 2009 to 2010 the office of the Conference is affiliated by the Ministry of the Interior of the Schleswig-Holstein region.
Volunteering in sport is promoted at all levels, e.g. through the DOSB, foundations, municipalities, EU level etc. For example, municipalities organise volunteering awards, at regional level volunteering campaigns are carried out and awards are given to organisations. These are just a few examples.

**Volunteering in sport on the political agenda**

The Ministry of Interior confirmed that in 2009, volunteering in general is a high priority in Germany. For example, a draft strategy for volunteering is being discussed. For example, a draft strategy for volunteering is being discussed.

As a result of the prioritisation of volunteering, a multitude of different initiatives are being implemented, including competitions, commercials, round tables etc. to encourage involvement. Sport is one of the areas that are involved in these initiatives.

Other stakeholders consider that although it is increasing, there is not yet sufficient prioritisation of volunteering at the political level. Volunteering became a ‘hot topic’ in the 1990s but after that the interest in this field has stagnated somewhat.

### 2.2 Policies

**National strategy for volunteering in sport**

No national strategy for volunteering in general or for volunteering in sport exists. A strategy for volunteering is being prepared (a draft was ready to be discussed in the summer 2009); however, this only concerns volunteering in general and not specifically sport.

**Indicators**

In Germany, no specific targets for volunteering in sport exist. Information on the level of volunteering in sport has been collected as a part of different studies. However, different indicators were used, the result being that it was not possible to compare the information collected. Some information was, for example, collected as part of the National Surveys in 1999 and 2004 (concerning volunteering in general).

In order to address this, the preparation of biennial reports on the development of sport was initiated upon request from various stakeholders, including the DOSB. To date, two editions have been published, the first covering the period 2005/06 and the second 2006/07. As part of these reports, information has since 2005 specifically and periodically been collected concerning volunteering in sport. This is done through nation-wide surveys of sport organisations, carried out by the German Sport University in Cologne²⁹. The two existing reports present an analysis of developments in the sport sector, including indicators concerning volunteering in sport.

### 2.3 Programmes

Some initiatives to promote volunteering in sport are supported by the Federal Ministry for Family Affairs, Senior Citizens, Women and Youth. In particular, the project “JETST! – Youth Engagement in Sport” by the German Sport Youth (part of the German Olympic Sport Federation) aims at encouraging people with migration origins and limited education to engage in voluntary activities in sport³⁰. Another initiative co-ordinated by the German Sport Youth is the ‘Social Voluntary Day in Sport’³¹.

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²⁹ German Olympic Sport Federation: *Freiwilligensurvey 1999-2004* (Langfassung / long version)
³⁰ [http://www.dsj.de/](http://www.dsj.de/)
3 REGULATORY FRAMEWORK FOR VOLUNTEERING IN SPORT

3.1 General legal framework

The legislation 'Hilfen fur Helfer' (Help for Helpers), which was adopted in 2007, is the main legal instrument in the field of volunteering both in general, as well as in the field of sport. This piece of legislation substantially improved the taxation framework through tax reductions and exemptions. There are also rules e.g. on insurance (health / accident, liability).

Furthermore, in existing legislation on income it is established that large sport events (such as the football World Cup) are exempted from tax. This legislation was recently reformulated; previously it was necessary to establish whether these events would lead to benefitting the public. With the legislation changes (as of 1 January 2009) this is no longer necessary.

3.2 Legal framework for individual volunteers in sport

No specific rules for volunteering in sport exist.

3.3 Legal framework for sport organisations engaging volunteers

National legal framework

No specific legal framework exists for sport organisations engaging volunteers. The legislation that is applicable to volunteering in general is also applicable to volunteering in sport.
4 ECONOMIC DIMENSION OF VOLUNTEERING IN SPORT

4.1 Public financing of volunteering in sport

Public funds are the most important form of financial support for sport organisations. The total amount of public funding, including grants from sport associations and federations, is approximately 500 million euro per year.\(^{32}\) Some of these funding allocations come from the lottery, ‘lucky wheels’ and Toto. The latter system is very complex, and there have been two court cases between Germany and the EU concerning that the system is not sufficiently transparent. With regard to the first (lottery), 50% is allocated to 35 different non-profit areas.

In recent years there has been a reduction of public funds available for sport clubs, which has had a negative impact on the budget balance (only 63.3% of sport organisations had a balanced budget in 2007/08, compared to 70.6% in 2005/06). While more than half of the sport organisations receive grants or subsidies from the regional sport associations and from the local or regional government, only about 4.5% of sport organisations participate in other funding programmes (e.g. through job centres) and only 0.5% receive EU funds. Many sport clubs have not been able to fully compensate for the decline in public funding through higher membership contributions.\(^{33}\)

Information on the average proportion of revenue by income category is available for 2005/06:\(^{34}\):

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of income</th>
<th>Average amount organisation (in euro)</th>
<th>Proportion of total income</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Membership fees</td>
<td>33,130.83</td>
<td>30.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Federal state grants for sport promotion</td>
<td>16,374.24</td>
<td>15.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sport events</td>
<td>10,553.60</td>
<td>9.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Donations</td>
<td>6,972.96</td>
<td>6.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Advertising contracts: jerseys, equipment</td>
<td>5,545.52</td>
<td>5.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>5,504.58</td>
<td>5.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Advertising contracts: broadcasting rights</td>
<td>5,244.38</td>
<td>4.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social events</td>
<td>4,696.20</td>
<td>4.4%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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\(^{33}\) Other income includes, for example, membership fees and one time admission fees. In terms of monthly membership fees, 50% of all sport clubs take up to max. €3.50 for children, max. €4.50 for young people, max. €7.50 for adults and max. €14 for families. According to the report, these relatively low fee rates help to make participation in sport affordable to everyone and prevent the development of economic barriers. Nevertheless, it was noted that sport clubs were forced to raise their membership fees significantly in the last 2 years. Federal Institute of Sport Science (2009): Sportentwicklungsbericht 2007/2008; pp. 14, 19, 22-23.

An important indirect subsidy for many sport organisations is the possibility of being able to use local sport facilities that are owned by the municipalities at no direct cost. The proportion of sport organisations that are using local sport facilities has, however, declined in recent years. This is explained as a consequence of a change in attitude among local councils faced with greater budgetary constraints. As a result, the proportion of sport organisations that are required to pay fees for using local sport facilities has increased dramatically over the last two years. On average, sport organisations pay user fees for 35.6% of the time they use the local municipal sport facilities.35

In 2007/08, around 56,000 sport organisations used local sport facilities. Of these:

- 29.1% used the facilities free of charge and without being required to provide any services in return (e.g. maintenance and cleaning)
- 48% used the facilities free of charge but provided services in return.
- 43% paid user fees for the sport facilities.

Stakeholders from the Ministry of Interior and the Federal Institute of Sport Science, however, emphasised that the available data on the level of public funds only refers to organisations. Hence, the estimations need to be viewed with caution.

4.2 Other support schemes and benefits

There are different types of reductions and exemptions for non-profit work, amateur sport etc. Volunteers can claim a tax reduction on the expenses incurred as part of their

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volunteering activity. In 1999 to 2004 around 20% of volunteers in sport reported that they regularly made use of this provision, while 58% only occasionally did and 22% never used this provision.\textsuperscript{36}

\section*{4.3 Private financing and support schemes}

\textit{See above.}

\subsection*{4.4 Specific issues: state aid, public service and general interest}

Stakeholders from the Ministry of Interior and the Federal Institute of Sport Science confirmed that currently there are tensions between the rules on state aid and the allocation of grants, subsidies and other donations to sport activities; when money is allocated there are always tensions with regard to who should receive it. However, such tensions only affect organisations as those that are not involved in an organisation do not request funding. They may, however, benefit from indirect subventions.

As indicated above, large sport events (such as the football World Cup) are exempted from tax. Previously it was necessary to establish whether these events would lead to public benefits, however, due to an amendment of existing legislation (which entered into force on 1 January 2009) this is no longer necessary.

\section*{4.5 Economic value of volunteering in sport}

\textit{Estimate of the economic value of the voluntary sector workforce in sport}

In the 2005/06 report on the development of sport it was estimated that the economic value of the voluntary sector workforce in sport amounted to 8.5 billion euro per year, based on a presumed hypothetical hourly wage of 15 euro and a total of 557 million hours of volunteering per year.\textsuperscript{37}

The following report on the development of sport, covering the period 2007/08 estimated the economic benefit (added value) resulting from volunteering in sport to be 550 million euro per month, or 6.6 billion euro per year. This estimation was made based on a contribution by volunteers in sport of 36.6 million hours per month or 439.2 million hours per year of their free time to volunteering in sport.\textsuperscript{38}

Similar to previous estimations, stakeholders from the Ministry of Interior and the Federal Institute of Sport Science, however, emphasised the need to treat these figures with caution. A stakeholder from the Ministry of Finance suggested that Eurostat data on this issue would be very useful.

\textit{Share of volunteers in the sport sector in relation to the country’s total paid workforce in the sport sector}

Stakeholders from the Ministry of Interior and the Federal Institute of Sport Science indicated that it is not possible to estimate the proportion of volunteers in the sport sector in relation to the country’s total paid workforce on the basis of available data; not the least as it would require a definition of sport.

\textit{Recognition of the economic value of volunteering in sport}

\textsuperscript{36}\textit{German Olympic Sport Federation: Freiwilligensurvey 1999-2004 (Langfassung / long version); p. 15.}


The importance of volunteering for the sport sector is widely recognised and highlighted through numerous studies as well as by stakeholders from the Ministry of Interior and the Federal Institute of Sport Science. Volunteering is generally considered to provide the very basis for the functioning of sport organisations in Germany. \(^{39}\)

5 SOCIAL AND CULTURAL DIMENSION OF VOLUNTEERING IN SPORT

5.1 Key benefits of volunteering for sport volunteers, the community and direct beneficiaries

Volunteers

Information on the main motivation of respondents to volunteer in sport was collected as part of the 1999 and 2004 National Surveys. The most important factors were:

- To have fun (64.1%)
- To meet interesting people (50.6%)
- To help other people (35.8%)

These ‘motivations’ also provide a picture of the key benefits of volunteering. Stakeholders from the Ministry of Interior and the Federal Institute of Sport Science added that other benefits for volunteers include social capital, demographic competences and informal learning processes. A very high proportion of volunteers in sport are involved in organisations (generally 43%), which means that this plays a particular role.

Another stakeholder referred to prevention of health problems, better health, youth activities and participation in events.

Direct beneficiaries

The Ministry of Interior and the Federal Institute of Sport Science suggested that volunteering makes it cheaper to participate in sport; without volunteering it would be much more difficult to participate as it would be necessary to pay.

This is in line with the report on sport development for 2005/06, which indicates that volunteering in sport is important as it makes sport accessible and affordable for everyone.

Community

According to the 2005/06 sport development report, volunteering inter alia:

- Promotes values such as fair play and tolerance
- Offers a low-cost option for everyone to participate in sport
- Improves social coherence and solidarity
- Improves the quality and range of sport activities

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40 German Olympic Sport Federation: Freiwilligensurvey 1999-2004 (Langfassung / long version); p. 11.
Volunteering in sport is also considered to have the added strategic value of providing ‘training/a school for democracy’, especially for young volunteers. The long-term benefits for the society are seen as particularly high if the volunteering structures in sport organisations provide the opportunity for young people to get involved as volunteers. According to the sport development report for 2007/08, young people are generally given sufficient opportunity to get involved as volunteers in Germany:

- Of the 91.4% of sport organisations that have young members, 49% have the post of youth representative (‘Jugendvertreter’) with a seat on the board of the organisation.
- In 29% of the organisations a young person holds the post of youth representative.
- In 21% of the German organisations there is a separate youth board or committee (‘Jugendvorstand’ or ‘Jugendausschuss’).
- In 37% of the organisations young people vote for their youth representative themselves.
- In 35% of all clubs young people have voting right in the general assembly.

The integration of people with a migration background is also seen as a major contribution that volunteering in sport makes to social cohesion. Close to 15% (13.5%) of all sport organisations have volunteers with a migrant background. Migrants are predominantly active at the execution level (coach, referee, etc.) and are less involved at the board level. However, of all the volunteers in sport, only 2.6% have a migrant background. This means that volunteers with a migrant background are underrepresented in relation to the number of sport organisation members with a migrant background.

Stakeholders from the Ministry of Interior and the Federal Institute of Sport Science confirmed the positive impact of volunteering in sport on integration; this is an area where major positive impacts are clearly shown, both with regard to migrants as well as to other groups. For example, volunteering in sport is also important for persons who are inclined to use violence (who instead volunteer in sport) and elderly, as it breaks down barriers (elderly serve as role models). Indeed, the 2007/09 sport development report also emphasised the importance of sport organisations in the context of an ageing society (‘demographic competences’) as well as the potential contribution of sport to public health. As much as 30% of the sport organisations in Germany offer programmes that are explicitly targeted at promoting health, prevention and rehabilitation. Of all the sport activities offered by these sport organisations, 14% have an explicit goal of contributing to health and well-being.

At the local level, volunteering in sport functions as social ‘cement’ by bringing people together and promoting networking. In many local districts sport is one of the few meeting points in the villages. It also leads to professional and individual recognition.

Volunteering also provides opportunities for informal learning processes, self-organisation, bridging-over class differences (everyone can participate in sport independent of what their parents do) and encourages people to stay active and engaged.

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Finally, sport organisations in Germany also contribute to society by providing **infrastructure for sport activities**, thereby relieving government budgets. Across the country, 38,300 sport clubs maintain their own sport facilities, as shown below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of sport facility</th>
<th>Number</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sport fields for football or hockey</td>
<td>23,500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shooting ranges</td>
<td>22,200</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gymnasia</td>
<td>11,800</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bowling alleys</td>
<td>6,200</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Equestrian facilities</td>
<td>5,800</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fitness venues</td>
<td>4,700</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Athletics venues</td>
<td>3,200</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Swimming pools</td>
<td>700</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Approximately 5.5% (or 5,000) of all sport organisations have invested more than 10,000 euro in their own construction projects.  

### 5.2 Factors that motivate individuals to volunteer

*Issues in relation to the motivations of volunteers are integrated in the general report on Volunteering in Germany.*

### 6 EU POLICIES AND VOLUNTEERING IN SPORT

According to stakeholders, EU activities have had no impact on national policies and programmes. The White Paper was only very recently discussed and it is necessary to ‘put money behind activities’ in order for the EU to have an impact on what is happening on the ground.

**EU competition law**

According to some German stakeholders, tensions between EU competition law and the sport sector exists. For example, there are tensions with regard to the ‘6 plus 5 rule’, football broadcasting rights and internet; and income tax.

According to one stakeholder, there are some issues in relation to the possibility of being able to choose the place of work and teams. However, it is not relevant to talk about tensions.

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7 MAIN OPPORTUNITIES AND CHALLENGES FOR VOLUNTEERING IN SPORT

7.1 Main challenges

What are the challenges?

In recent years the main reports in the area of volunteering in sport (the National Surveys 1999 and 2004 and the sport development reports for 2005/06 and 2007/08) all mention recruitment and retaining volunteers as one of the main challenges, in particular of coaches, referees and assistants. For example, the report on the results of the National Survey 1999-2004 indicated that 42% of the surveyed sport organisations reported difficulties finding volunteers. With regard to the reasons for the difficulties to engage volunteers, the 2005/06 report on the development of sport suggested that this is a result of the reduced spare time of individuals rather than to a general decline of interest in volunteering among the population. The 2007/08 further suggested that demographic change and greater competition among local sport clubs for volunteers could lie behind this trend. Finally, there is a specific challenge in recruiting volunteers in East Germany, since more and more people move away from this part of Germany to the West German regions. This means that there are fewer persons living there who can volunteer and participate in sport, leading to East German organisations ‘disappearing’.

According to the 2005/06 report, the three main challenges sport organisations are faced with were (all related to the decreasing number of volunteers):  

- Decreasing readiness of members to get involved as volunteers (36%)
- Lack of coaches, referees and assistants (20%)
- Problems finding volunteers for certain functions/positions (17%)

Other challenges referred to in the reports are:

- Increasing demands on volunteers (in terms of time and skills) due to professionalisation of sport activities
- Cumbersome legislation and regulations which pose a burden on the day-to-day activities of sport clubs.
- Increasing complexity of voluntary work and the blurring of borders between paid and unpaid work.

50 German Olympic Sport Federation: Freiwilligensurvey 1999-2004 (Langfassung / long version)
Stakeholders added that demographic challenges also need to be addressed; the type of offers must be adapted to the membership market. Furthermore, it was considered imperative to ensure high quality training and qualifications (better qualifications lead to optimisation) as well as the involvement of women in management boards. Stakeholders referred to research that show that companies perform better when more women are involved at the steering level. It has been proven that this is also relevant for sport organisations.

Finally, stakeholders also pointed out that a culture of recognition needed to be built, the administrative burden needed to be reduced and that it was necessary to recognise the role volunteering can play in terms of life-long learning.

With regard to the specific needs of the voluntary sport sector in national and European policy-making, stakeholders suggested that it is important that sport organisations ‘speak with one voice’. At present organisations are split with regard to implementation; there is a division between those who promote remunerated services and those who promote ‘pure’ volunteering. The following issues were also found to be important:

- Funding for exchange programmes.
- Simplification of legislation, including tax and employment legislation.
- To gather Eurostat data on volunteering:
  - To include the concept of the third sector in Eurostat data.
  - To gather Eurostat data on the economic value of sport.
- Often existing structures are not being used, but new structures are being built instead of looking at those that already exist - and how they can be better used. Furthermore, EU funding is often provided for project work, but not for building structures that can manage these projects. If structures are strengthened, important spin-off effects can result.
- Further co-ordination on the topic of doping.

How are the challenges being addressed?

The report on the development of sport covering 2005/06 indicated that the following measures were taken:

At the level of individual sport organisations:\(^{53}\):

- Creation of smaller-scale volunteering activities to allow for greater involvement of volunteers with limited availability
- More targeted initiation and training of volunteers
- More explicit role description for different functions and positions, which increases transparency and the ability of volunteers to plan their involvement
- A more active documentation and communication of the advantages and the individual benefits of volunteering in sport

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At regional/national levels:

- Introduction of the Volunteering Card ("Ehrenamts-Card"), in order to increase the attractiveness of volunteering

7.2 Main opportunities

When asked what measures sport organisations and federations could take to increase the attractiveness of volunteering as part of the national Survey in 1999 and 2004, the outcome was as follows54:

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54 German Olympic Sport Federation: *Freiwilligensurvey 1999-2004* (Langfassung / long version); p. 27.
### Table 7.1 – Measures to be taken by sport organisations and federations to increase the attractiveness of volunteering (1999 and 2004)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Measures to be taken</th>
<th>1999</th>
<th>2004</th>
<th>Difference</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Financial support for specific projects</td>
<td>64.1%</td>
<td>64.1%</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Provide adequate rooms and equipment for project and group work</td>
<td>49.1%</td>
<td>47.8%</td>
<td>-1.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unbureaucratic reimbursement of expenses</td>
<td>34.8%</td>
<td>34.1%</td>
<td>-0.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Opportunities for further education and training</td>
<td>37.7%</td>
<td>31.2%</td>
<td>-6.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Qualified support of volunteering activities</td>
<td>34.1%</td>
<td>29.3%</td>
<td>-4.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Recognition of voluntary work by the statutory staff of the organisation</td>
<td>29.4%</td>
<td>27.1%</td>
<td>-2.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Monetary compensation for the voluntary work</td>
<td>29.3%</td>
<td>24.1%</td>
<td>-5.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>None of the above</td>
<td>13.3%</td>
<td>14.2%</td>
<td>+0.9%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

When asked what the government and society could do to give better support to volunteering in sport, the following results were obtained\(^{55}\):

### Table 7.2 – Measures to be taken by sport organisations and federations to increase the attractiveness of volunteering (1999 and 2004)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Measures to be taken</th>
<th>1999</th>
<th>2004</th>
<th>Difference</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Better information or counselling concerning opportunities to get involved as a volunteer in sport</td>
<td>50.9%</td>
<td>47.5%</td>
<td>-3.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tax relief for volunteering related non-monetary expenses</td>
<td>54.7%</td>
<td>44.3%</td>
<td>-10.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tax relief for volunteering related expenses</td>
<td>58.1%</td>
<td>42.2%</td>
<td>-15.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Public recognition through media coverage of volunteering</td>
<td>43.2%</td>
<td>40.6%</td>
<td>-2.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Indemnity and accident insurance</td>
<td>43.3%</td>
<td>37.1%</td>
<td>-6.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Recognition of voluntary activities as vocational</td>
<td>39.7%</td>
<td>32.3%</td>
<td>-7.4%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The report on the development of sport for 2007/08 suggested that there is a significant scope for sport organisations to explore alternative sources of funding, in addition to regional or federal subsidies. Furthermore, it was suggested that closer co-operation between sport organisations and schools could help to promote youth work and volunteering in sport.

Finally, stakeholders suggested that opportunities include increased involvement of women and the elderly (better demographic mix and gender representation) and volunteers with better qualifications. Stakeholders also suggested that it is important that non-remunerated involvement becomes a stable element as well as the building of sustainable structures.

Table 7.2 – Measures to be taken by sport organisations and federations to increase the attractiveness of volunteering (1999 and 2004)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Measures to be taken</th>
<th>1999</th>
<th>2004</th>
<th>Difference</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Internships/ professional</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>further education</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Public recognition (e.g.</td>
<td>26.7%</td>
<td>23.4%</td>
<td>-3.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>through awards)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>None of the above</td>
<td>12.7%</td>
<td>15.6%</td>
<td>+2.9%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Study on volunteering in the EU
Volunteering in sport – Germany

SOURCES

Reports
German Olympic Sport Federation (2006): Freiwilligensurvey 1999-2004 (Langfassung / long version)

Stakeholder interviews
Ministry of Interior
Federal Institute of Sport Science
Ministry of Finance
German Olympic Sports Federation