

## Contribution from **Germany** to the call for inputs for the **Report on Youth and Human Rights**

11 January 2018

- 1. Is there a national law on youth in your country? If yes, please describe it (including how youth is defined within the specific law).***
- 2. What are the main challenges that young people face in your country?***

Child and Youth Support Services support children and young adults in their development and helps to overcome particularly challenging situations. The objectives of Child and Youth Support Services are laid down in the German *Sozialgesetzbuch (SGB) VIII*. Its principal tasks encompass:

- support of young people in their individual and social development and help to avoid and reduce disadvantages
- provide parenting support to parents and other legal guardians
- protect children and young people against threats to their physical or mental well-being
- contribute to creating positive living standards for young people and their families as well create or sustain a family- and child-friendly environment

Child and Youth support services are principally available to all young people living in Germany regardless of their nationality.

The main principles can be found under § 1 SGB VIII: Every young person has a right to assistance in his or her development and to an appropriate upbringing so that he or she can become a responsible and socially skilled personality. Care, upbringing and education of children are the natural right of parents and their primary duty. The state polity monitors the fulfilment of that duty. This definition sets forth the state's responsibilities for youth which guarantees the personal development of young people, a positive living environment and welfare protection.

- 
- 3. What measures is the Government taking to ensure the full implementation of young people's rights (civil and political rights and economic and social rights)?***
  - 4. Could you please give examples of policies and programmes adopted to support and empower young people in the exercise of their rights?***

### **Support goals and programs (Project support or institutional support):**

- Political education
- Cultural education
- Youth and sports
- Protection of children and young persons
- International youth work
- Integration of young people with a migrant background
- Equal opportunities for girls and boys, work with girls and boys

### **Aims and objectives:**

- Increase social recognition for young people
- Coordinate the promotion, support and assistance of all actors
- Develop the individual potential of all young people

- Allow young people greater participation in society
- Create spaces and time for young people to have new experiences and explore their creativity

### **Political empowerment of young women**

For young women who are interested in political and social issues, the Federal Ministry for Family Affairs, Senior Citizens, Women and Youth offered a workshop with the title “It’s our turn” in 2016. 20 women between 16 and 20 years old got the chance to learn more about political practices, with visits, discussions, groups and training sessions in Germany’s capital city Berlin. The workshop has been organized twice for women with a German nationality and with a migrant background by the EAF Berlin. The EAF has been active as an independent nonprofit organisation providing an interface between politics, the economy and science. In students’ workshops we draw attention to stereotypes and focus on creating equal opportunities for girls and boys to develop their potential. Please find more information in the flyer attached.

### **Sex education for young people**

Sex education was confirmed as a public task by the German act on Assistance for Pregnant Women and Families (SFHG) in 1992 and has thus increased in significance. Sex education for adolescents is based on this act and is regarded in a comprehensive context covering all aspects of sex education. SFHG commissions the German Federal Centre for Health Education (BZgA), together with the supreme Länder authorities and the family counselling institutions of all providers, to develop concepts and to elaborate and disseminate nationally uniform measures for sex education and family planning. The details of this commission were first set out in a framework sex education concept that was coordinated with the Federal Länder. The framework concept is based on a comprehensive definition of sexuality, according to which sexuality is an existential, basic human need and a central element of a person’s identity and personality development. The aim is to promote a responsible, healthy and self-determined approach to sexuality and family-planning in the widest sense. Young people have the right to determine their sexuality and lifestyle for themselves, and to be empowered to make responsible decisions. They can best do this when they are comprehensively informed about sexual and reproductive health and their rights in this area.

In this spirit, the Federal Government in Germany promotes:

- sexual and reproductive health, supported by WHO’s important work;
- a social climate that is well-disposed towards sexuality and the family, and at the same time open towards different lifestyles, orientations, attitudes and values; and
- a robust system of assistance for avoiding and resolving pregnancy conflicts.

### **Youth integration courses for young immigrants, sponsored by the Federal Office for Migration and Refugees:**

The integration courses aim to promote the integration of immigrants with a view to ensuring social participation and equality of opportunity. Integration courses are set up in particular for young immigrants who are no longer subject to compulsory schooling and younger than 27. The acquisition of German language skills and general knowledge helps prepare them for secondary school or university attendance or for another type of vocational training. In the integration courses, young adults acquire all the linguistic skills and knowledge they need for a smooth transition to the German educational system or the German labour market.

### **Teaching materials for welcome classes published by the Federal Agency for Civic Education (Bundeszentrale für politische Bildung - bpb):**

School instruction for refugee children or young asylum seekers - which is provided for example in welcome classes - serves to meet part of the obligations resulting from the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child which stipulates that children and young people are entitled to unrestricted access to the education system of their country of asylum. In Germany, it is up to each federal state to make the necessary arrangements for the schooling of children and young people who have immigrated to Germany. As a rule, the objective is to provide foreign children and young people in welcome classes with initial basic German language skills so that they can then as soon as possible be integrated into regular classes. The Federal Agency for Civic Education offers teaching materials which can be used for teaching welcome classes. Further information can be found at <http://www.bpb.de/lernen/themen-im-unterricht/212105/unterrichtsmaterial-fuerwillkommensklassen>.

Here is a list of best practice examples from the Federal Agency for Civic Education:

#### **Fact sheets for elementary schools**

**“Fundamental rights: Always together, peaceful and fair”** (updated edition 2016)

Article 1 of the Basic Law stipulates that “Human dignity shall be inviolable” which is considered the most important rule contained in our constitution. The fourth edition of the “Fact sheets for elementary schools” offers possibilities to familiarize elementary school pupils in a playful manner with this human right. Hints for teachers on how to deal with cases of bullying and how to foster the school community provide examples of the way in which this material is to be used and serve as an inspiration for further methodological experiments. Based on this material various topics from the elementary school curricula can be addressed together in the classroom. Inspiring methodological hints for the teachers complete the offering. Since the material is presented in a non-verbal form, it may be used both in elementary and remedial schools and in welcome classes.

[www.bpb.de/shop/lernen/36934](http://www.bpb.de/shop/lernen/36934)

#### **Compasito**

##### **Handbook on human rights education for children**

COMPASITO is a German-language compilation of material edited by the Council of Europe, the German Human Rights Institute (Deutsches Institut für Menschenrechte) and the Federal Agency for Civic Education which offers suggestions and support for teachers wishing to learn more about human rights education for children aged 7 to 13. The book explains the key concepts in the field of human rights and rights of the child and provides theoretical background knowledge on 13 human rights topics such as democracy, peace, gender equality or poverty. Based on 40 activities, children are made aware of human rights issues and how they affect their own lives. In this context, they develop critical thinking and a sense of responsibility and justice. They learn how to improve the situation at their school or in their community by means of concrete action.

<http://www.bpb.de/shop/lernen/themen-und-materialien/37210/compasito>

## **Use of fact sheets in conjunction with the memo sheet “Spicker Politik”**

### **Child soldiers; children’s rights**

Estimates indicate that there are 250,000 children and young people who are active as soldiers worldwide. This means that the rights of minors which are enshrined in the Convention on the Rights of the Child, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and other legal instruments are violated and that these children and young people are continuously being traumatised. What are the tasks of child soldiers, what is their everyday life like? Which rights are supposed to protect minors from getting involved in military action? And how can this abuse be stopped? These and other questions are raised in the fact sheets no. 116. Additional materials including a memo sheet do not only look at the experience of former child soldiers and the question of how to deal with traumata but also refer to legal requirements and the discussion on minors in the Federal Armed Forces (Bundeswehr).

[www.bpb.de/shop/lernen/259915](http://www.bpb.de/shop/lernen/259915)

[www.bpb.de/shop/lernen/260703](http://www.bpb.de/shop/lernen/260703)

### **Worksheet folders and the kimemo card game**

#### **United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child**

The UN Convention on the Rights of the Child represents the worldwide obligation to guarantee the civic, political, economic, social and cultural rights of children and to protect every child under the age of 18 against violence, abuse or exploitation. The new Extra worksheet folder which is published in the A0 format, features a hidden object scene on the cover where children from the age of 6 can discover the topics covered by the articles which guarantee the rights of children. On the reverse side the contents of the Convention are presented in a language that is easy to understand for children and in such a way that they are printed exactly on the reverse side of the place where the respective topic appears in the hidden object scene on the front side.

For the kimemo card game details from the hidden object scene were selected and matched pairwise in a memory format. This way the card game complements the worksheet folder and can be played as a picture lotto in class or privately as a traditional memory game.

<http://www.bpb.de/shop/lernen/falter/194570/kinderrechte>

### **Peer network teamGLOBAL**

teamGLOBAL is a nationwide, participatory and open network of teenagers and young adults between 16 and 27 years of age. It provides educational offerings for young people on all aspects of globalisation. The purpose is to work together with young people in order to identify the ways in which globalisation affects their everyday life and to develop options for action to respond to these developments. Apart from the peer-to-peer-character of this network, teamGLOBAL is characterized by its participatory structure: the approximately 60 teamers help shape the network’s activities at almost all levels; this includes among other things the development of methods, the organisation of internal trainings and public relations work. In 2004, teamGLOBAL was launched by the Federal Agency for Civic Education which continues to support the project both financially and in other ways. Since 2014, the network has been coordinated by [DENK GLOBAL!](#). In 2013, teamGLOBAL was designated an official action of the United Nations World Decade “Education for Sustainable Development” (ESD).

<http://teamglobal.de/>

### **Young European Professionals (YEP)**

The Young European Professionals (YEP) Network considers itself to be a grouping of young multipliers aged between 16 and 24 years who want to promote Europe, the EU and its policy among young people. In this context, the focus is on European policy issues and questions that are of relevance to the lives of young people. The YEP network depends on the active engagement of its approximately 50 members. At training workshops which are held at regular intervals, they expand their knowledge, reflect on current developments and foster the exchange within the network. The network is a peer-to-peer project which was launched by the Federal Agency for Civic Education in cooperation with the regional representation of the European Commission in Bonn in 2005. Since 2016, the project has been managed by edu:impact.

<http://youngeuropeanprofessionals.de/das-netzwerk>

### **Congress series “Kinder zum Olymp” (Children to Olympus)**

Artistic positions are a suitable tool for promoting educational processes because they are by nature subjective and controversial. They can serve as a starting point for children and young people when it comes to addressing central social questions in an age-appropriate way. In this respect and for the purposes of Article 31(2) of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child which enshrines the right of children to participation in recreational and leisure activities, cultural and artistic life, the Federal Agency for Civic Education also dedicates itself to cultural education. Since 2004 and in cooperation with the Cultural Foundation of the *Länder* and the Federal Cultural Foundation, it has organized the congress series “Kinder zum Olymp” every two years; this series of congresses relies on multipliers to provide children and young people with an age-appropriate access to art and culture focusing on social issues. In practice, the stakeholders in the field of cultural education are constantly faced with new scenarios and socio-political challenges that need to be addressed, whose momentum needs to be taken up and from which lessons can be derived. The congresses provide expert input and offer a forum for exchange.

## ***5. How are youth organisations or youth-led structures involved in developing, implementing, monitoring and/or evaluating policies and programmes on youth in your country?***

“Taking action for a youth appropriate society” – under this motto, the Federal Ministry for Youth redefines its Youth Policy 2015-2018. It focuses on young people between the ages of 12 and 27 years. Various partners come together under the umbrella of this strategy and young people and their representatives will be included as much as possible. The participation of young people has been introduced into or strengthened in every youth policy project pursued by the Ministry.