



Federal Ministry for
Family Affairs, Senior Citizens,
Women and Youth



Jugendstrategie
der Bundesregierung



Shared responsibility: a policy for, with and by young people

The Federal Government's Youth Strategy

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Actively shaping one's own future and helping to determine it here and now, developing one's own potential and seizing opportunities – adolescence and young adulthood is all about becoming independent, gaining qualifications and finding a place in society. In order to successfully master these challenges, the Federal Government wants to offer all young people the best possible conditions. This includes equal opportunities, comprehensive participation opportunities and attractive prospects. The aim is to offer young people the encouragement and support they need so that they can develop into self-determined, independent and socially competent personalities. The Federal Government is aware of its responsibility towards the young generation and takes its interests and needs into account.

Background

Be it needs-based local transport, affordable housing or climate action measures, decisions in any policy area have a direct impact on the younger generation. For this reason, the Federal Government, in cooperation with all Federal Ministries, developed a Youth Strategy and adopted it in the Cabinet on 3 December 2019. This is the first time that the Federal Government has committed itself to its responsibility for the younger generation across all ministries. The Youth Strategy targets 14 million young people and young adults aged between 12 and 27, which is about 17 per cent of the German population as a whole.



"With its Youth Strategy, the Federal Government makes it clear that good youth policy goes beyond the limits of individual responsibilities."

Dr. Franziska Giffey, Federal Minister for Family Affairs, Senior Citizens, Women and Youth, press statement on the Cabinet decision on the Federal Government's Youth Strategy on 3 December 2019.

Key principles of the Youth Strategy

○ Involving young people

- Young people and young adults are experts in matters that concern them. The Federal Government takes young people seriously and involves them in decisions affecting them.
- The Youth Strategy itself is also being implemented using various forms of participation.

○ Making young people visible

- Youth is a separate phase in life that requires particular political attention.
- The Federal Government's Youth Strategy ensures that the interests and needs of young people are always taken into account in political action and across all ministries.

○ Shared responsibility

- For the first time in the history of the Federal Republic of Germany, there is a commitment by the entire Federal Government to act jointly for the young generation.
- Good youth policy is a cross-cutting task that affects all policy fields. Therefore, all Federal Ministries cooperate in a joint working group (IMA Jugend – Interministerial Working Group on Youth).



What happens in the implementation process?

The Cabinet decision marked the start of the implementation process of the Youth Strategy. The task now is to realise these Youth Strategy measures. Based on the need for action identified in the Youth Strategy, further projects that benefit young people and young adults are to be developed – in interministerial cooperation.

The Interministerial Working Group on Youth (IMA Jugend), which has already developed the Youth Strategy, is continuing to coordinate the implementation process. At IMA Jugend, representatives from all Federal Ministries exchange views on current projects and measures relevant to young people. The IMA also coordinates central participation instruments such as the Federal Youth Conference 2020 (Bundesjugendkonferenz 2020) and the Youth Policy Days 2021 (JugendPolitik Tage 2021). The Federal Ministry for Youth has the lead responsibility on this matter. The civic advisory council of the Federal Ministry for Youth ensures the involvement of youth interest groups as well as of the Länder and municipal umbrella organisations.

In the second half of 2020, Germany holds the Presidency of the Council of the EU. Politics for, with and by young people will also play a role in this context. The Federal Government plans to contribute to each of the three core areas of the EU Youth Strategy 2019-2027 (Engage, Connect, Empower).

Key participation elements in the implementation process of the Youth Strategy

Federal Youth Conference 2020 (Bundesjugendkonferenz 2020):

The Federal Youth Conference will take place in Berlin from 11 to 13 September 2020. At the conference, 200 young people and young adults will have the opportunity to discuss current youth policy issues and questions in various workshops with stakeholders from politics and administration as well as child and youth services. The workshop topics are determined by the participants and the ministries. The Federal Youth Conference is a working conference and connects the Youth Policy Days 2019 and 2021.

EU Youth Conference:

From 2 to 6 October 2020, the EU Youth Conference will bring together young people from all of the EU Member States in the city of Berlin. The central question is how to ensure that young people's views and ideas for democratic togetherness in Europe are heard. As the EU Youth Conference of the German Presidency, the event is part

of the EU Youth Dialogue in the context of the Trio Presidency with Portugal and Slovenia. It is entitled „Europe for YOUth. YOUth for Europe. Space for Democracy and Participation“: Until the end of 2021, young people and decision-makers in Europe will discuss how democracy and participation can be strengthened further.

Youth Policy Days 2021 (JugendPolitikTage 2021):

From 6 to 9 May 2021, the Youth Policy Days will offer 500 young people and young adults who are interested in politics a platform for exchange and discussion on the topics of the Youth Strategy. Participants will have the opportunity to give feedback to the Federal Government regarding the implementation process and to develop perspectives for future youth policy together with representatives from politics, administration and civil society. In addition to discussions with politicians, the Youth Policy Days offer the opportunity to get to know other active and interested young people, to network and to exchange ideas on how to shape a participative youth policy.

Further development of communication and participation formats

Strong Child and Youth Parliaments Initiative (Initiative Starke Kinder und Jugendparlamente)

In Germany, there are about 500 municipal child and youth parliaments and 300 youth forums in which a total of about 30,000 children and young people are involved. They offer young people hands-on experience of democratic structures and processes. With the initiative „Strong Child and Youth Parliaments“ the Federal Ministry for Youth, in cooperation with the German Children’s Fund, wants to contribute to make them visible, feel appreciated and strengthened through advice, networking and knowledge transfer. The aim is to get young people interested in politics and to include child and youth parliaments in a diverse local participation landscape as an important component.

“... that the Youth Strategy should be something that was created with young people’s input and should not be implemented without taking the views of young people into consideration.”

Dr. Angela Merkel, press statement on the Cabinet decision on the Federal Government’s Youth Strategy, 3 December 2019

Youth-friendly communication

The relationship between young people and politics is currently undergoing a process of transformation. On the one hand, more and more young people are interested in politics and have confidence in democracy; on the other hand, the majority of young people view politicians and political parties with a more distanced attitude. Successful communication between young people and politicians is the basis for constructive cooperation and thus the prerequisite for a living democracy. Therefore, one of the priorities of the Federal Ministry for Family Affairs, Senior Citizens and Youth within the Youth Strategy is to intensify the focus on young people as a target group for political communication and to develop suitable formats for improving the dialogue between young people and politicians.

Quality standards for child and youth participation

Children and young people should be directly and effectively involved in all decisions that affect them. In this context, child and youth participation must meet defined quality standards in order to take the concerns of children and young people seriously. The project aims to update and supplement the quality standards for good child and youth participation developed for various fields of practice in the NAP „Towards a child-friendly Germany”.

Fields of action in the Youth Strategy

In its Youth Strategy, the Federal Government describes the current situation in nine youth-relevant fields of action. It identifies areas in need of action and lists a total of 163 measures. These measures are either new or have been developed further to meet youth-specific needs. The needs for action and core statements form a guideline for the future design of youth policy.



Future, dialogue between generations, images of youth

Our ageing society needs young people – their ideas, their commitment and their potential. At the same time, the younger generation needs an appropriate social framework to master the challenges of this phase of life, to develop their potential in a self-determined manner and to look towards the future with confidence.



Participation, Civic Engagement & Democracy

Young people voice their opinions on matters concerning them. They want to be heard and involved. We want to inspire young people to become interested in politics and enthusiastic about democracy – so that we can shape good youth policy together.



City & Country, Living & Culture

Young people need equal living conditions and (youth-friendly) opportunities for development and creativity that are age-appropriate – regardless of where they grow up. They need access to affordable housing and an infrastructure that is suitable for young people. This includes comprehensive and demand-oriented services of youth and social work, culture and sport.



Diversity & Participation

There is not just “one” definition of youth. The circumstances of 12 to 27-year-olds in Germany reflect great pluralism. In order to enable all young people to participate, discrimination must be addressed and different disadvantages and burdens must be tackled effectively and inclusively.



Education, work & free space

Educational success is central to future employment and life opportunities. Due to everyday life becoming ever more intense and accelerated, due to the pressure to perform and self-optimise, young people are demanding more freedom, i.e. free places and time for self-determination.



Mobility & Digital world

A comprehensive, affordable and needs-based public transport system is particularly important for youth-friendly mobility services. The analogue and digital worlds are scarcely separable for young people and must be considered together, as must the aspects of self-determination, youth protection and media literacy.



Environment

The Federal Government recognises the urgency of the challenges posed by climate change, especially for the younger generation. Participation of young people and their representative bodies in shaping environmental policy measures should be strengthened.



Health

Most 12 to 27-year-olds in Germany spend their youth in good health. Key health-relevant aspects for young people are sufficient exercise, healthy nutrition, prevention of addiction and accidents, strengthening health competence, prevention of sexualised violence and a reduction in psychological stress.



Europe & the world

Crossing national borders opens up new opportunities for young people to experience and develop their talents. All young people need opportunities to engage with international developments and to actively participate in shaping Europe.



The Federal Government's Youth Strategy can be ordered or downloaded at the website of the Federal Ministry for Family Affairs, Senior Citizens, Women and Youth:
<https://www.bmfsfj.de/bmfsfj/service/publikationen/in-gemeinsamer-verantwortung--politik-fuer--mit-und-von-jugend/146332>

Contact:

For further information on the German Government's Youth Strategy, please contact the Youth Strategy Service Centre by email at: jugendstrategie@stiftung-spi.de

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