SEVR2026 Country Profile: Germany (based on the information available in April 2026)

Germany's profile is shaped by federalism. There is no legal framework or definition for volunteering at federal level, with competence resting with the Länder. The planned federal engagement strategy is described as an aspiration in the 2021–2025 coalition agreement rather than an adopted document. Overall there is a working federal coordination role led by the Ministry for Family Affairs with civil-society input, and a flagship German Volunteering Award. Funding exists but its sufficiency is doubtful.

Germany's reported picture is one of federal coordination without federal codification. Broader conclusions are constrained by limited information concerning several indicators: co-financing; education; insurance and accessible information. The core associative story in Germany is institutional contraction with fewer new associations and pandemic-driven recruitment difficulty, set against a still-vast existing organisational base. A structural shift toward non-profit corporations and cooperatives is the one clearly positive signal, and it accrues to Businesses rather than to traditional associations.

	Indicator	SEVR2026 Country Profile: Germany
Emerging Volunteering Patterns **Source: Trends section of CFS**	Flexible/short-term/episodic engagement	No evidence of this trend has been recorded.
	Digitalisation/online/e-volunteering	No evidence of this trend has been recorded.
	Rise/dominance of informal volunteering	No evidence of this trend has been recorded.
	Decline/falling volunteer numbers	Decline framed as institutional contraction, with fewer new associations founded against a still-vast existing organisational base.
	Ageing/loss of older volunteers	No evidence of this trend has been recorded.
	Professionalisation/skills-based management	No evidence of this trend has been recorded.
	Widening inequality barriers to access	No evidence of this trend has been recorded.
	Corporate / employee / CSR volunteering	No evidence of this trend has been recorded.
	Rising youth/student participation	No evidence of this trend has been recorded.
	Skills/employability-driven motivation	No evidence of this trend has been recorded.
	Crisis-driven engagement	No evidence of this trend has been recorded.
	Recruitment & retention difficulty	Recruitment and retention difficulty, driven in part by the pandemic.
	Public-institution partnership/socialisation	No evidence of this trend has been recorded.
	Formalisation/legal recognition	No evidence of this trend has been recorded.
BEV2030 indicators 1.3.2 Volunteer time that does not replace paid jobs can be used for the	1.3.2 Co-financing with volunteer time	**Not reported.** No evidence reported on mechanisms for recognising or co-financing volunteer time.

co-financing/ co-resourcing of grants.		
1.4.1 Not for profit volunteer centres and platforms receive sufficient public funding.	1.4.1 Sufficient funding	**Partial/emerging.** Most organisations operate with very limited resources. Funding exists but adequacy is doubted.
1.5.2 The co-creation of public policies becomes the norm and the opportunities offered by participatory decision making processes are fully explored and exploited.	1.5.2 Co-creation of public policies	**Established.** The Federal Ministry for Family Affairs coordinates development with civil-society input via the German Foundation for Civic Engagement and the National Network for Civil Society.
2.1.4 Suitable and sufficient public support is provided to volunteer infrastructure organisation to have the capacity to support and guide these **new forms** of volunteering.	2.1.4 Suitable & sufficient support to 5 volunteering contexts: informal groups, local administrations, national public authorities, educational institutions, business sector actors.	**Partial/emerging.** Support provided to the five contexts is thinly reported. National public authorities are reported as not having suitable and sufficient support, reflecting the absent federal framework.
2.3.3 Every volunteer has a suitable and accessible point of information or reference point to channel their questions and suggestions.	2.3.3 Accessible point of information	**Not reported.** No evidence reported at national or regional tier.
3.1.1 Civic education and Service Learning are introduced more widely into the formal education systems to increase awareness of volunteering and civil society not only for children and young people but also their wider networks of families and friends.	3.1.1 Education: Civic / Service Learning	**Not reported.** No evidence reported on civic education or service learning.
3.3.2 Suitable volunteering development strategies that are crosscutting and transversal for different policy fields and sectors are developed.	3.3.2 Strategy	**Partial/emerging.** The federal engagement strategy is something the parties aim to create. Prospective, not adopted.
3.4.1 Legal frameworks for volunteering are adapted and evolve to take this, and other societal and behavioural changes into account. In this way, in addition to the more formal and structured engagement that legal frameworks are frequently focused on, they will be more suitable to facilitate and enable different forms of voluntary engagement, rather than restrict engagement as can be currently the case, unlocking further potential.	3.4.1 Legal framework	**Absent.** There is no legal framework or definition for volunteering in Germany on a federal level. Competence sits with the Länder.
4.1.2 Opportunities for public recognition for the action of volunteers, citizens and associations through awards, volunteer weeks and festivals etc. are provided and increased.	4.1.2 Recognition	**Established.** The German Volunteering Award / Civic Engagement Award is the most significant national accolade.
5.2.1 Volunteering is included as an integral part of the community planning for crisis prevention and response.	5.2.1 Crisis prevention & response	**Not reported.** Pandemic-era volunteer recruitment but without integration of volunteering into crisis planning.
5.4.2 Volunteers are provided with the	5.4.2 Insurance	**Not reported.** No evidence reported on insurance.

necessary support and protection through suitable accident and third party liability insurance.		

Updates

Date	Source	Data/ Evidence / Information
November 2026	BBE	The German Federal Government adopted its Engagement Strategy on 4 December 2024, following a year-long civil-society consultation process. Since 2025, responsibility for engagement policy has been centralised within the Federal Chancellery under the Minister of State for Sport and Volunteering. The adoption of the strategy should be distinguished from its implementation: further evidence is required to assess progress and the adequacy of support and funding across the different volunteering contexts. The Federal Ministry for Family Affairs led the development of the Federal Government's Engagement Strategy, with input from civil society. The German Foundation for Engagement and Volunteering (DSEE) organised participation opportunities, while the National Network for Civil Society (BBE) contributed to civil-society engagement. Since November 2025, responsibility for federal engagement policy has rested with the Minister of State for Sport and Volunteering at the Federal Chancellery. The German Engagement Award (Deutscher Engagementpreis) has been organised by the German Foundation for Engagement and Volunteering (DSEE) since 2024. It is under the patronage of the Minister of State for Sport and Volunteering at the Federal Chancellery.