

# BAYERISCHER JUGENDRING

Youth work in Bavaria



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## About BJR

Bayerischer Jugendingring (the Bavarian Youth Council or *BJR*) is the standing conference of youth leagues, youth organisations and youth initiatives in Bavaria. With 103 district and regional youth councils as members, BJR is represented across Bavaria.

More than two-thirds of all Bavarian children and adolescents utilise and design the offerings and facilities of youth work organisations. These dedicated young people come to learn what it's like to be independent, to be accepted and to be valued. And in doing so, they shape their own futures. •





## Objectives

The main aim of the BJR is to represent the interests of young people in Bavaria by developing youth work policies that meet their needs and promote youth work in its widest sense.

BJR communicates with the society at large about the needs and concerns of children and adolescents, often collaborating with associations, public bodies, institutions, and organisations. •

## Principles

All of the members of BJR share a common understanding of the core principles of youth work: being voluntary, non-profit, self-governing and democratic. With this as their foundation, the youth organisations actively participate in the decision-making process of the BJR.

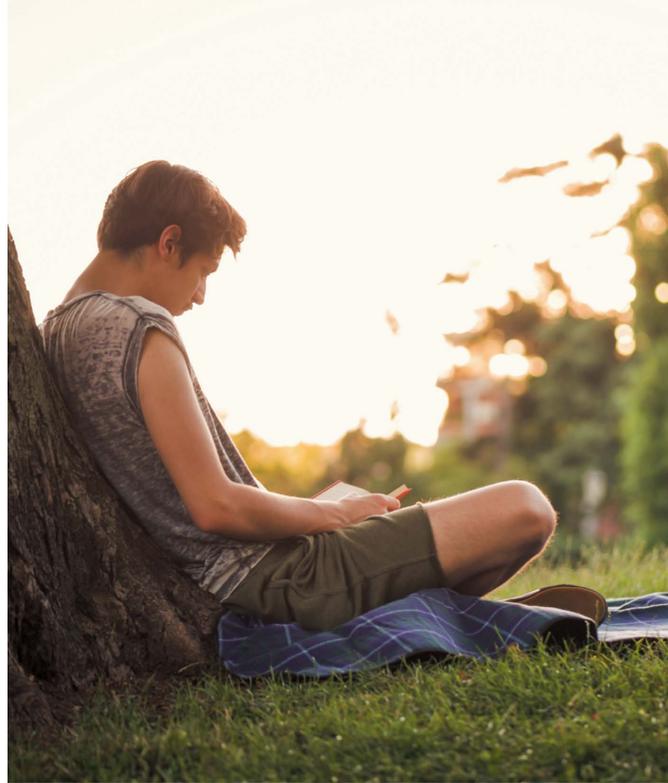
Since its founding in 1947, BJR has assumed a role that is unique to Germany. Its committees, which are democratically elected by the individual youth organisations, perform functions that are traditionally the responsibility of public authorities in other federal states.

By statutory order passed in 1993 the BJR is authorised to perform all of the key tasks of a state youth authority as stipulated in Section 85(2) of the *Sozialgesetzbuch VIII* (German Social Code or SGB VIII). •

## Legal status

BJR is both the association of youth organisations and a public body recognised by the Bavarian government as a provider of youth services. As a *Körperschaft des öffentlichen Rechts* (public sector entity), BJR performs a large share of the state's youth-related public functions. The BJR charter governs the actions of the organisation.

The 8th Volume of the German Social Code (SGB VIII) and the corresponding Implementation Act of Bavaria (*Ausführungsgesetz or AGSG*) provide the legal basis for the BJR. Most of BJR's financial resources come from the State of Bavaria's public funds for children and youth programmes. •



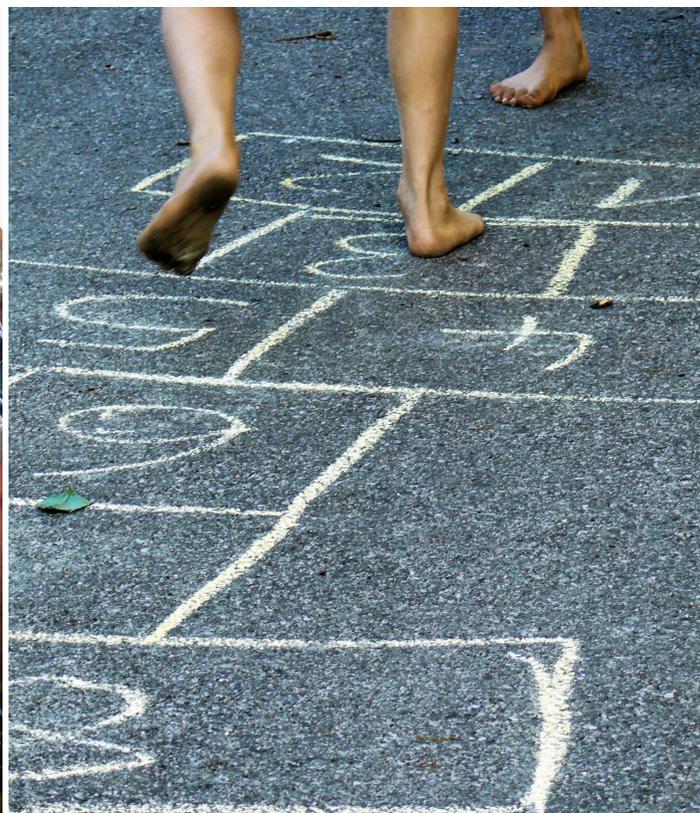
## Members

BJR relies on the commitment of its member organisations – youth leagues, youth organisations and youth initiatives – to work in democratically elected committees at all levels. After all, BJR's member organisations are the lifeblood of Bavaria's youth work activities.

The member organisations represent a broad spectrum of youth services, including faith-based, environmental and cultural organisations as well as sports clubs and scouting groups. At present, 32 state-wide and 39 regional youth councils are active in the BJR, as well as 346 local youth organisations.

In addition to their own specific focus, these organisations pursue a common goal: enabling young people to participate in the political decision-making process, thereby shaping and securing their futures. •





## Structure

BJR's structure reflects the principle of democratic participation and advocacy. Elected delegates participate independently and democratically in the plenary assemblies of the 96 city and regional youth councils, in the committees of the seven district youth councils and at the federal level in the plenary assembly as well as in the state executive board.

Representatives of youth leagues participate in these committees at all levels and pass resolutions on the core principles of future-oriented youth work and youth policy. •



## Committees

The executive bodies of the BJR – the plenary assembly, the state executive board and its commissions, committees and advisory boards – focus on policy issues for the overall organisation. They make decisions on youth policy and strategies involving the affected target groups as they work towards establishing a shared point of view.

The plenary assembly is the BJR's top decision-making body. It debates the fundamental issues and needs of youth work and youth policy. Its delegates draft state-wide guidelines and adopt the BJR's budget. The nine members of the state executive board, including the president of the BJR, are elected every two years. •





## Stakeholders and services

BJR uses the diverse range of issues, providers and forms of youth work to build an extensive network: BJR's services are available to the expert staff from youth leagues as well as municipal and non-institutional youth organisations, youth welfare agencies, youth education and information centres. They act as stakeholders for youth work at all levels, availing of the services provided by BJR staff and staying in constant contact with all those involved: at conferences, in on-site counselling sessions and in working groups.

BJR provides support with issues like applying for and obtaining grants from Bavaria's children and youth programme. It develops directives for financial support. It provides information about external funding, designs pilot projects for new youth work strategies and experiments with new methods. It provides consulting services for international youth work organisations and organises international school and youth exchange programmes.

BJR acts as the central contact partner for all issues relating to youth work. Its staff is always on hand with advice and assistance for initiatives like solving accessibility issues for a youth centre, initiating a project in cooperation with a local school or providing training for youth leaders. •

## Support

Open youth work for children and adolescents provides programmes and services that are an integral part of the civic infrastructure of towns and cities. They make a significant contribution to the social development of children and adolescents in their youth centres and recreational facilities, working to prevent problem areas from arising.

Street work and mobile youth work are entirely independent programmes in this context. They address the needs of young people that are either not being met sufficiently or not at all by conventional youth work programmes. The young people they serve often face a reality plagued by social disadvantage and stigmatisation.

Other forms of open youth work are city farm or adventure playground programmes that target mainly urban children with experience-based educational offerings.

Towns, cities, districts and regions contribute to the success of youth work through public funding and scientific expertise. In return, the BJR provides advice on issues of youth welfare planning, child and youth protection services and promoting youth work activities within its sphere of influence, for instance for educational and recreational measures as well as basic grants for youth organisations and councils and their projects. BJR also offers training opportunities, information and materials for the youth welfare counsellors and youth liaisons within the community. •



## International network

BJR has international partnerships and collaborations far beyond Bavaria and Germany's borders. They focus on intercultural exchange to promote peace and understanding – building the foundation for open-minded, compassionate interaction.

BJR pursues youth work initiatives with an international scope, advocating for a pan-European youth welfare network, promoting collaboration with international partner organisations to shape youth policy and establishing contacts around the world.

A key pillar of international youth work is the individual school exchange programme, offering adolescents the opportunity to live abroad with a guest family and host their exchange partner for two or three months. BJR establishes contacts for Bavaria's youth organisations, creates sustainable structures to facilitate exchanges and takes part in international youth encounters for Bavarian adolescents with young people from places like Israel, Poland and France. •



## Head office

The head office in Munich is the operational and organisational service centre for Bavaria's youth work activities. The staff provides information, support and advice for municipal, district and regional youth councils as well as member organisations, institutions and Bavaria's youth workers.

Head office provides advice and support for the 103 divisions of the BJR in operational and organisational matters, ranging from human resources to legal and budget issues. With its specialist advice, services and framework agreements, the head office helps youth councils carry out safe, competent youth work programmes. •

## Institutions

The *Institut für Jugendarbeit* (Youth Work Institute) in Gauting is BJR's main training facility. The institute's programme addresses the need for qualification, quality assurance and professional development in the area of youth work, providing a wide range of conferences, seminars and in-service training.

The German-Czech youth exchange centre *Tandem*, based in Regensburg, promotes youth encounters as well as the exchange of youth workers with the Czech Republic. On the basis of an agreement between the Federal Government, Bavaria and Saxony, BJR is the main support provider for *Tandem*. •



## Public functions

As the non-local public provider of youth work, BJR acts as the state youth welfare authority. This includes above all offering specialist and legal counsel for youth authorities, non-governmental youth organisations and their specialist staff as well as drafting recommendations.

BJR also has a mandate to provide financial support for youth work activities under Bavaria's children and youth programme and to continue to organise and develop international school exchange programmes. The BJR trains employees and volunteers from municipal and open youth work organisations and helps non-governmental youth work organisations obtain official recognition. •



## Funding

Young people need scope for development and opportunities to engage with their communities in order to develop a vision for their lives and to discover the opportunities open to them. Extracurricular training courses, youth recreation and accommodation centres, international exchange, training for volunteer youth leaders, school-related youth work activities and projects to integrate young people from immigrant families into youth work programmes – these services do not come for free. But they are all vital investments in the future of our young people, the leaders of tomorrow.

BJR supports publicly-funded youth work activities in Bavaria through a variety of programmes. It develops funding guidelines and provides recommendations for grant recipients. •



## Programmes

BJR focuses on the issues and concerns of children and adolescents in Bavaria. It is committed to ensuring that

- ❖ as many young people as possible work to achieve lasting and sustainable protection of our natural resources
- ❖ young people have access to education as well as opportunities to participate in society and overcome disadvantage
- ❖ youth organisations open up to more intercultural exchange and better integration of young people from immigrant families
- ❖ youth work institutions become places that offer informal learning and needs-based opportunities to take on responsibility
- ❖ volunteer youth workers are well prepared for their duties through extensive basic and advanced training
- ❖ international exchanges through cross-border youth work activities promote intercultural exchange and support personal development



[www.bjr.de/themen](http://www.bjr.de/themen)



## Projects

- ❖ Volunteering \_\_\_\_ *Juleica für alle!* Qualification of voluntary youth leaders
- ❖ Integration \_\_\_\_ *Go together* – participation, integration and broadening of intercultural horizons
- ❖ Youth work and schools \_\_\_\_ school-related youth work
- ❖ Media skills/active media engagement \_\_\_\_ *KIFINALE/JUFINALE* – Festival of young film in Bavaria
- ❖ Environment and sustainability \_\_\_\_ *Lighthouse* projects
- ❖ Preventative youth protection \_\_\_\_ *Check's ab* – prevention of alcohol abuse
- ❖ Prevention of sexual violence \_\_\_\_ *Prätext* expert service
- ❖ Civil society \_\_\_\_ *Landeskoordinierungsstelle* (state-wide coordination centre or LKS) for Bavarians against right-wing extremism





## Credits

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