

## Volunteering in Germany and Baden-Württemberg

European Network – Enzkreis  
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## Structure

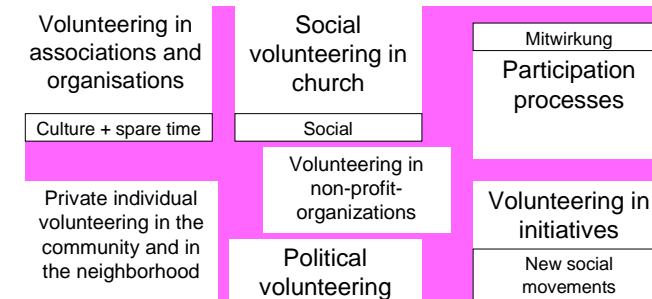
- Barriers to volunteering in the civil society (“Bürgergesellschaft”) in Germany
- State and development of the volunteering in the generation 60+
- Discussion

## Five terms describing Volunteering in Germany

- **„soziales Ehrenamt“**  
honour and duty in a social ethic view
- **„Bürgerschaftliches Engagement“**  
The engagement for a social and democratic society
- **„Politisches Ehrenamt“** honour and duty in a public view
- **„Freiwilligendienste“**  
6 months or 1 year
- **„Beteiligung“** citizens participation and community action

The term Volunteers/Volunteering is not very often used in Germany

## People form her community / living together



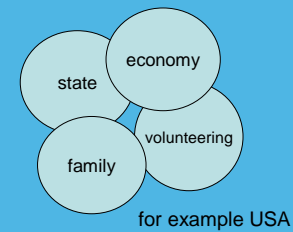
## Thesis 1

In the Federal Republic of Germany there is a long tradition of volunteering.

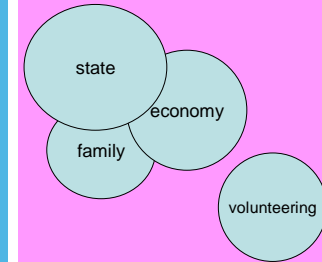
Nevertheless, this tradition seems to be based on personal, individual, ethic motivation than on active participation in a civil society development.

## Differences in societies

### ▪ Civil society view



### ▪ Welfare state view



## Strong traditions in Germany restrain civil society developments

### 1. Germany is a welfare state based on solidarity

- Solidarity insurances and benefits based on employment, for example health insurance, pension
- Welfare in special circumstances, for example child benefits
- Social work (well developed personal help, mostly from tax revenues)
- Infrastructure of supports (hospitals, schools etc.)
- Subsistence benefit for the unemployed and the elderly with little pensions
- Basic wages (not yet completed)

## Strong traditions in Germany restrain civil society developments

### 2. Federalism and subsidiarity are an other basis for solidarity

- Families
- Public institutions of social welfare and non-profit-organizations
- Federal government – states – communities

⇒ are the three foundations of the social society.

- The fourth foundation, the volunteering completes only the upper three foundations.

## Strong traditions in Germany restrain civil society developments

- Professional social workers increased in the period 1960s till the 1990s strongly and edged out the voluntary engagement.

## Thesis 2

### Changed realities which opened the public mind for civil society developments

- Demographic change
- Social change, risk society
- Decrease of the meaning of the families
- From the value conservatism to the postmodernism
- Participation discourse / integration course
- Reflexion about social capital (Putnam, Coleman, Bourdieu)
- Affordability of the social state?
- Sustainability discourse

## Thesis 3

Since about 15 years we are in a phase of intensive support of the volunteering "top down".

That is a way to make the social system more flexible.



## Promotion of volunteering since 1995

Research

Projects and project consulting

Further training education

Voluntary agencies

Promoting directives

main focus:  
seniors

## Promotion of volunteering since 1995

The Federal Government initiates research on volunteerism:

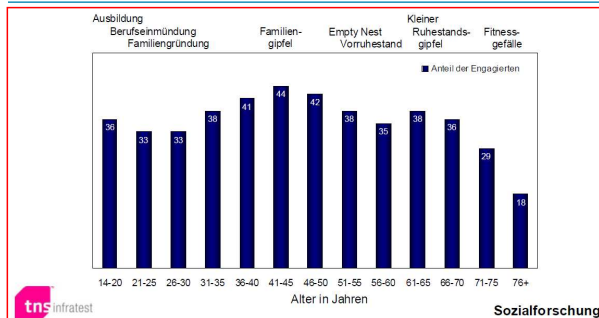
- Enquêtekommission demografischer Wandel
- Enquêtekommission bürgerschaftliches Engagement
- Freiwilligensurveys (alle 4 Jahre)
- Alterssurveys und Altenberichte (alle 4 Jahre)
- Monitor Engagement im nationalen und internationalen Vergleich

## The surplus of engagement for elderly people

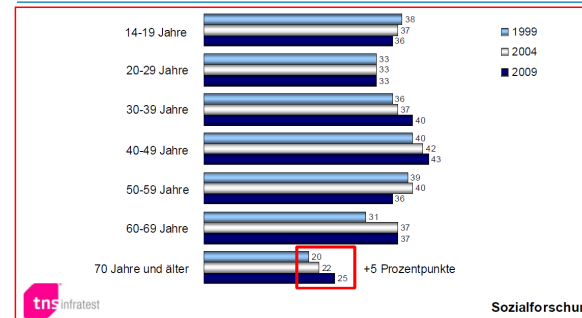
Opportunities:

- Engagement makes competent, healthful
- Engagement integrates
- Engagement gives a chance to retribute
- Engagement is participation
- Participation is the basic for engagement

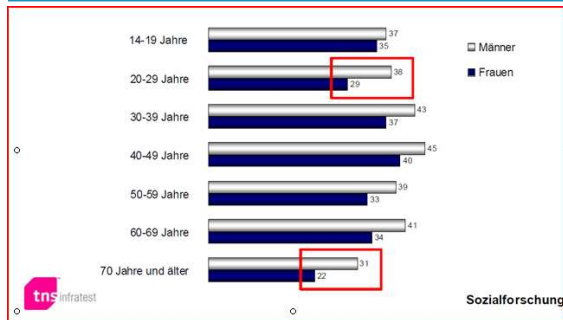
## Cycle of engagement – volunteering during life course



## Volunteering – seniors do it more frequently



## Volunteering – men and women



3. Freiwilligensurvey 2009

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## Where are seniors engaged in Baden-Württemberg?

Areas of volunteering:

- sports, culture
- social affairs (also intergenerationally)
- tendance and care



2. Freiwilligensurvey 2004, Auswertung Baden-Württemberg

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## Who is engaged among the elderly?

- People with secure, middle and higher income
- People with good educational level
- More men than women
- Rather working persons than unemployed people
- People with early experiences in volunteering

2. Freiwilligensurvey 2004

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## More interesting results of engagement research

1. Engagement in the new federal states is lower.
2. Rural space higher than urban space.
3. Engagement by people with migration background more often takes place in systems of migration than in typical german systems.
4. The growth rates seem to be limited.

2. Freiwilligensurvey 2004

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## Risks

- We need our working population in professional work;
- People with traditional, conservative attitudes decrease;
- People with modern, hedonistic attitudes increase;
- The „middle-class“ decreases;
- People with a migration background increase.

## Thesis 4

Many good integrated people play an active role and get an extra profit out of it.  
Other people do not get the chance for engagement. Because of that they are disadvantaged in a second way.

## The access to the engagement socially differs

- The more deprived people are, the less active they are.
- The less education they have, the less active they are.
- The less integrated they are the less active they are in German systems.

## But: who is involved, profits

For example

- Self-esteem, self-assurance, life satisfaction increases (Wieson 2000)
- Psychological distance increases, stress decreases (Meijman & Mulder 1992)
- Recreational effects increase (Elzion 1998)
- Competence increases (DJI 2003)
- Social support by networks increases (Bourdieu 2006)

## Thesis 5

The positive effects of civil engagement become bigger if the volunteers are associated.

## Situation in Germany

- No independent, approved volunteer associations (no bottom up strategy)
- Interlinking of the volunteers by non-profit-organisations, state organisations and local authority districts (only top down strategies)
- This leads to (further) functionalization of volunteer work

## Discussion - questions

Which positive experiences have the other countries in supporting the volunteer work "top down"?

## Discussion - questions

Which chances see the other countries, to expand the positive effects of the volunteer work to socially deprived people?

## Discussion - questions

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Which effects see the other countries in an association of volunteers?

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## Thank you for your attention

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