

About the NGOs in Germany: definitions and brief statistics

Definition 1:

“A non-governmental organization (NGO) is a non-for-profit, voluntary citizens’ group, which is organized on a local, national or international level to address issues in support of the public good.” (United Nations)

Definition 2:

“Non-governmental organizations, institutions, associations or groups operating internationally, nationally, regionally or locally. Today they are internationally recognized as independent development agencies and form an important element in international conferences, especially in the context of the United Nations. The spectrum of NGOs ranges from local groups and initiatives to global organizations such as Doctors Without Borders, Greenpeace or Amnesty International, from church organizations such as Misereor and Brot für die Welt to political foundations and solidarity-based organizations (eg Terre des hommes, Medico International, Weltfriedensdienst).” (Bundeszentrale für politische Bildung 2018 - <http://www.bpb.de/nachschlagen/lexika/lexikon-der-wirtschaft/20162/nichtregierungsorganisationen> - Original in German)

Definition 3:

“Non-governmental organizations (NGOs) are in principle all associations or groups that represent common interests, are not profit-oriented and do not depend on governments or government agencies. These include, for example, trade unions, churches and citizens’ initiatives as well as employers’ associations or sports clubs. In general parlance, the term NGO has become especially popular for organizations, associations and groups that are socio-politically involved. Some important and typical fields of activity for NGOs are development policy, environmental policy and human rights policy.” (Bundesministerium für wirtschaftliche Zusammenarbeit und Entwicklung 2018 . <https://www.bmz.de/de/service/glossar/N/nichtregierungsorganisation.html> - Original in German)

In Germany NGOs are called NROs (Nichtregierungsorganisationen). In part, the term NSO (nichtstaatliche Organisation) is also used. They are seen as "non-state" in the sense of "state-independent", "government-independent". In addition to that the term is currently used by and for non-governmental organizations. They have a permanent, viable structure and their own seat. In Germany they can be organized locally, nationally or internationally. Not all of the NGOs in Germany are only non-for-profit but most of them are. The most important issue is

that they are non-for-profit in their core field of activities. And not in all cases they are coming with a voluntary approach. Most of them address issues in support of the public good. They are often associations, foundations or federations. Through their many years of experience, NGOs have often developed sustainable development-supporting structures and networks. Therefore, there is an intensive exchange of opinions and experiences between states (Länder and Bund) and NGOs in Germany. Non-governmental organizations play a key role in raising the importance of development cooperation to the general public. In Germany, there are several thousand non-governmental development NGOs - funding associations, initiative groups, action alliances, working groups, solidarity groups, partnership institutions, foundations, development networks and many more. In Germany NGOs depend heavily on volunteer work and donations. In 2014 the German Bundestag agreed on a Legal framework for the activity of Non-governmental organizations in Germany (Aktenzeichen WD 7 – 3000 - 243/14 vom 20.11.2014 -

<https://www.bundestag.de/blob/412504/d8dc54b2c14ea05f7effec07d878c2e8/wd-7-243-14-pdf-data.pdf> - Original in German)

There is said:

“The term "non-governmental organization" (NGO) is not defined by law in Germany. Associations and institutions that act as NGOs are not subject to any legal demands that are and are linked to their character as NGOs accordingly in the choice of their legal form none special Subject to restrictions. German-based NGOs are predominantly registered associations ("registered associations" – e.V.) constituted. In addition, NGOs are also considered a non-legal association and occasional foundations with legal capacity under civil law.” (Aktenzeichen WD 7 – 3000 - 243/14 vom 20.11.2014 -

<https://www.bundestag.de/blob/412504/d8dc54b2c14ea05f7effec07d878c2e8/wd-7-243-14-pdf-data.pdf>)

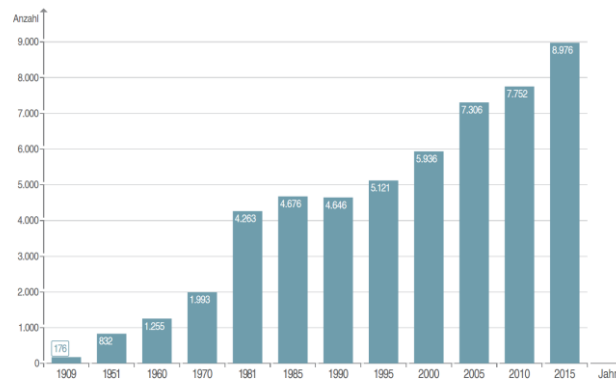
The first German NGO report was established in 2011 (http://www.nordlicht-consultants.com/sites/default/files/discussions/nordlicht_ngo_branchenreport.pdf).

Table 1: NGOs worldwide from 1909 to 2015

(Source: BPB 2018 - <http://www.bpb.de/nachschlagen/zahlen-und-fakten/globalisierung/52808/ngos> with special regard to Union of International Associations (UIA): Yearbook of International Organizations)

NGOs – Nicht-Regierungsorganisationen

Anzahl in absoluten Zahlen, weltweit 1909 bis 2015



Quelle: Union of International Associations (UIA): Yearbook of International Organizations

Legend:

Jahr = year; Anzahl = number

Table 2: Which topics are currently important for your organisations

(Source: Nordlicht Management Consultants - 1. Deutscher NGO-Report: 2011, p. 7
http://www.nordlicht-consultants.com/sites/default/files/discussions/nordlicht_ngo_branchenreport.pdf)



Legend:

Thema = Topic, Häufigkeit der Nennung = here: frequency in percent
 Profiling and positioning for the public = Profiling and positioning for the public
 Gewinnung zusätzlicher Finanzmittel = Gaining additional funds
 Gewinnung neuer Fördermitglieder = Gaining new support members
 Weiterentwicklung der Projektpolitik bzw. der Angebote für Mitglieder bzw. Hilfeempfänger = Further development of the project policy or the offers for members or beneficiaries
 Gewinnung neuer ehrenamtlicher Mitarbeiter = Gaining new volunteers
 Aufbau neuer Netzwerke = Building new networks
 Kostensenkung = cost cutting
 Auslagerung von Prozessen = Outsourcing of processes



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