

Voluntary Year of Social Service and Federal Voluntary Service

What is a “Freiwilliges Soziales Jahr (FSJ)” or “voluntary social year”?

A good alternative to an internship is the voluntary social year. If you **have completed compulsory education and** are under 27 years old, you can take an FSJ. You can gain valuable experience at a social or cultural institution.

Where can I do an FSJ?

- Medical-nursing tasks
(especially in hospitals, in care for the elderly, in centres for people with disabilities)
- Educational-pedagogical tasks
(especially in kindergartens, schools, youth welfare, social work, church communities)
- Administrative and office tasks
(especially in parishes, cultural institutions, youth work)
- Domestic and caretaker duties
(possible in all social centres, as in centres for elderly or disabled people)

Where can I find services?

On the right-hand side of the page of the [Lower Saxony State Office for Social Affairs, Youth and Family](#) you will find a [list of FSJ](#) providers with all the recognised providers who offer a Voluntary Year of Social Service.

In order to find a place in your desired field of activity for a social year, you should **apply for an FSJ at as early as possible**. Preferably half a year in advance. Sometimes, it is also possible to start an FSJ at short notice within four weeks.

Is an FSJ paid?

Voluntary service is paid. The payment for the FSJ is an allowance. This amounts to **about 360 euros** per month. The amount consists of 320 euros allowance and 40 euros food allowance. The allowance is paid out by the organisation for which you are volunteering. Some places of employment offer an FSJ position with free accommodation.

Will I get a certificate?

At the end of your voluntary service, you will receive a **certificate** about your work at the assignment location. You will also receive a **certificate** confirming days spent in an educational setting.

What are the advantages of an FSJ?

- Social commitment and doing good
- Personal development, broaden your own horizon and experience new things
- Professional orientation in the FSJ - not only in the social sector
- Getting practical experience

- FSJ for a university of applied sciences, pre-study internship, probationary year
- Take time out and gain more time

Please note: An FSJ must be approved by the “Ausländerbehörde” (Immigration Office) if an unrestricted work permit is not available.

BufDi - Federal Voluntary Service

What is a Federal Voluntary Service (BufDi)?

Asylum seekers and **recognised refugees** can take up employment in the Federal Voluntary Service (BufDi). **Young people who have completed their compulsory education** work for 6 - 24 months in a social or cultural institution. The Federal Voluntary Service is a **service to women and men of all ages** to commit themselves to the common good outside of work and school - in the social, ecological and cultural field or in the field of sport and integration, as well as in civil defence and disaster control.

Which advantages does a BufDi have?

- Gain practical experience and knowledge
- Gain initial insight into the professional world
- Learn from the rich life experience of older people
- and much more!

Where can I become involved the Federal Voluntary Service (BufDi)?

- Health care
- Help for people with disabilities
- Integration
- Child and youth welfare, youth education, youth work
- Culture, monument preservation, adult education
- Senior citizens' aid
- Sports
- Environment, nature conservation and sustainability
- Welfare work
- Civil protection and disaster relief

Once completed, you will also receive a **certificate**.

Note: A BufDi must also be approved by the “Ausländerbehörde” (Immigration Office).

Here you can find [further information](#) on the Federal Voluntary Service.