



# Youth work in Austria recent developments and challenges

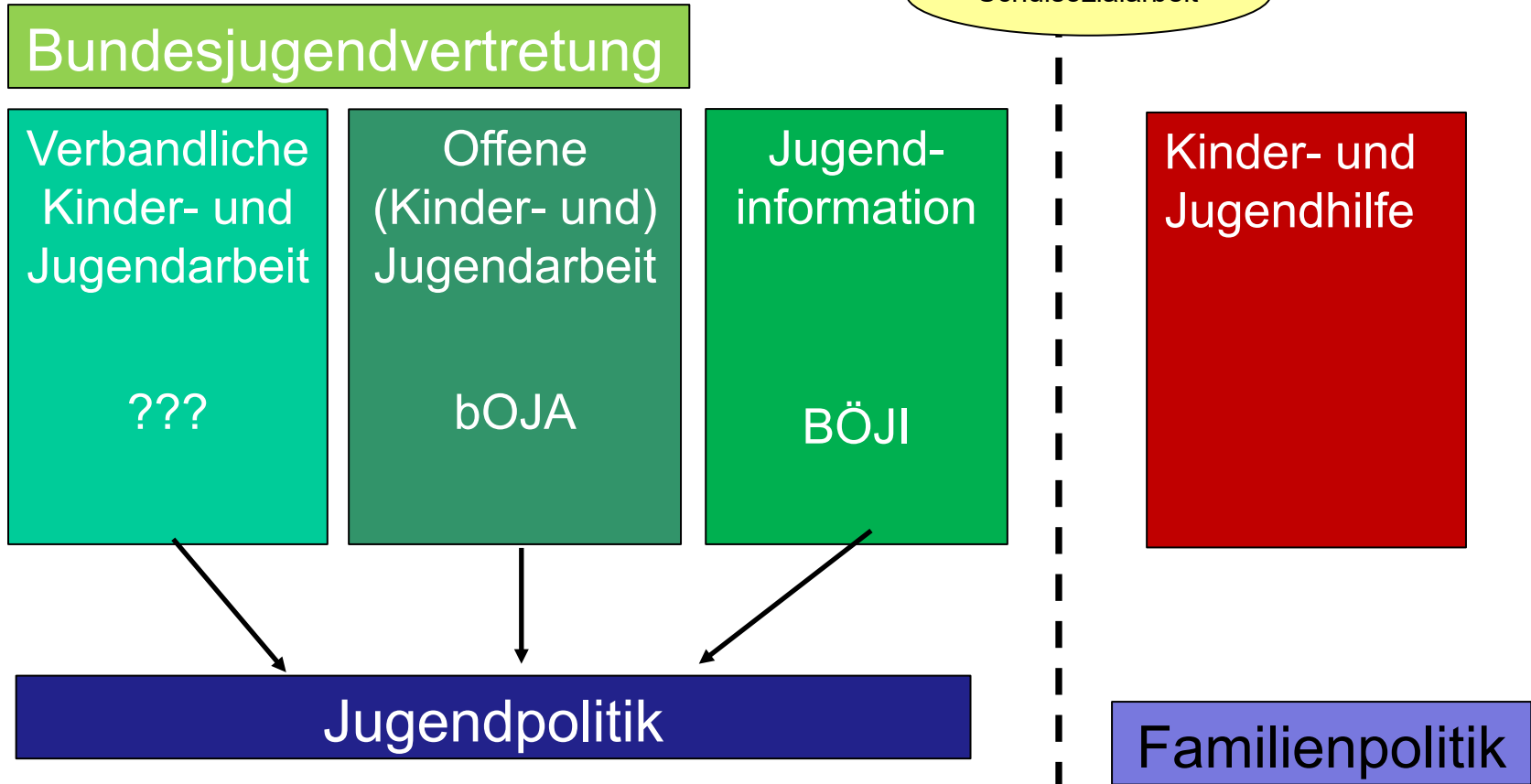


## Youth work in Austria

- Extra-curricular children and youth work (**Außerschulische Kinder- und Jugendarbeit**) is a socio-pedagogical field of action and a field for out-of-school education.
- Federal Youth provision act – **Jugendförderungsgesetz**
- Youth work in Austria is based on three pillars:
  - **traditional youth organisations and associations (verbandliche Jugendarbeit),**
  - **open youth work and**
  - **youth information.**
- Due to Austria's **federal system** youth work also falls also/mainly into in the agenda of the federal provinces' youth policies (Bundesländer) which lay different foci on the direction of youth work.



## Youth work / Jugendarbeit in Austria





## Youth work in Austria – developments

- 2016 was declared the year of youth work and since then an award for exceptional projects and initiatives of extra-curricular youth work is established – run on annual basis.
- Thus, youth work is recognised on the national level – not just by awarding the price to a small number of projects but by highlighting the importance of the sector as a whole.
- Professionalisation of youth work (quality standards, training standards, youth work competences in NQF)
- Payment of youth workers following a collective labour agreement
- Ongoing: development of a Federal youth work agenda
- Impact assessment of youth work
- Youth work research as part of youth research



## Youth work training – quality assurance

- Professional youth workers regularly are trained **social workers**, some are **socio-pedagogues**, and – since there is no Federal recognition of the profession youth worker – many are career changers with additional qualification.
- No university-based course for youth work exists in Austria, but special basis and further training courses are offered in cooperation with universities for applied research.
- The aufZAQ certificate ensures the quality standards of the internal training courses of the youth NGOs. It furthermore developed a competence framework for youth workers.



## Current challenges – and consequences

- Ongoing discussion on a Federal standardised **occupational profile** of youth workers.
- Funding of different fields of youth work (regional & local)
- (Open) youth work primarily social work, association-based youth work mainly pedagogical (value based)
- Migration and integration
- Indoor- and media orientation of youth – different ways of using public space
- Regional differences:
  - Big cities: concept of out reach youth work, dominance of open youth work, challenge of super-diversity of youth and the consequential intersectionality
  - Towns: cooperation of youth associations and open youth work, division of target groups, issue based approaches
  - Rural areas: traditional youth work organisation, challenge of mobility and lack of education offers



**Thank you for listening**