

The National Clearing House for the Encouragement and Support of Self-Help Groups (NAKOS) is Germany's nationwide institution for information, service, and networking in the field of self-help.

All services are free of charge and available to the general public.

Objectives

- The main objective of NAKOS is to inform self-help groups and citizens interested in self-help and to foster contacts among interested parties.
- NAKOS represents the common interests of those working in the sector to improve the facilities and the financial funding of institutions that support self-help. NAKOS also endeavours to introduce these issues into national policy debate.
- NAKOS fosters co-operation among self-help associations and institutions providing professional care.
- Acting as an independent organisation, NAKOS oversees the sharing of knowledge and expertise among the staff of institutions that support self-help and contributes to the development of common quality standards within the sector.

Focus and Approach

- NAKOS focuses primarily on supra-regional networking to bring together players from the areas of health, social services, and politics. To achieve this, NAKOS co-operates with a wide variety of organisations who have a vested interest in supporting and promoting the self-help sector.
- NAKOS works closely with the many professional institutions advocating self-help that have been created throughout Germany.
- NAKOS facilitates the exchange of scientific knowledge and expertise aimed at developing self-help among the general population as well as other issues concerning research in the field.

Services

Phone services providing information on issues concerning self-help and support for self-help

Address directories and databases

- GRÜNE ADRESSEN (GREEN ADDRESSES: Nationwide self-help associations and relevant institutions in Germany) • ROTE ADRESSEN (RED ADDRESSES: local and regional self-help support in Germany) • BLAUE ADRESSEN (BLUE ADDRESSES: people with rare diseases and conditions searching for others with similar problems and self-help groups) • ORANGE ADRESSEN (ORANGE ADDRESSES: self-help associations across Europe [only on the Internet])
- GELBE ADRESSEN (YELLOW ADDRESSES: institutions and contacts supporting self-help in European countries and abroad [only on the Internet])

Nationale Kontakt- und Informationsstelle zur Anregung und Unterstützung von Selbsthilfegruppen – NAKOS

Wilmerdorfer Straße 39, D-10627 Berlin, Germany

Tel: +49 030 / 31 01 89 60 Hours: Tues. Weds. Fr. 9:00 am - 1:00 pm; Thurs. 1:00 pm - 5:00 pm

Fax: +49 030 / 31 01 89 70 Email: selbsthilfe@nakos.de

Internet: <http://www.nakos.de>

Publications

• Brochures on establishing self-help groups and on the structures and approaches used by these groups • The NAKOS-INFO magazine (published quarterly) • The NAKOS-EXTRA series on current debates among professionals in the field • The NAKOS Studies series on self-help support and financial funding

Events

• Training programmes for professionals and others working in the field of self-help • Conferences to promote the idea of self-help and generate financial funding for self-help at an institutional level and in society at large

Who we serve

People interested in self-help

• People who are either directly or indirectly affected by certain psychological, social, or health problems and who want to find out more about existing self-help groups, establish contacts, or form a new group themselves • Members of self-help groups and self-help organisations who are looking for advice concerning general issues as well as information on ways of gaining support and funding for their activities

Professionals who support self-help groups, work with them, or act as multipliers

• The staff of special local institutions supporting and counselling self-help (self-help clearing houses) • the staff of counselling centres, social service offices, and clinics • Doctors • Scientists • Journalists

Decision-makers in a variety of institutions seeking greater recognition and an enhanced role in society as well as increased funding for self-help groups

• Politicians and administrators • Charitable institutions, trade unions, vocational and professional associations, and foundations • Health insurances, pension and accident insurances labour administrations

Structure

NAKOS is an institution of the Deutsche Arbeitsgemeinschaft Selbsthilfegruppen e.V. (DAG SHG). NAKOS was established in 1984. NAKOS is financed through a variety of grants: from the German Ministry for Families, Senior Citizens, Women, and Youth (BMFSFJ), NAKOS also receives funding from the German Ministry for Health (BMG), for health-related work through the National Associations of Statutory Health Insurances (according to Article 20 c SGB V).

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