

DGFG Annual Report 2020

Dear partners, dear readers,

First of all, I would like to express my thanks: thank you for the trust and for your unwavering support in maintaining patient tissue care. We all look back on a challenging year. But the number of donations and transplants in the DGFG network increased again in 2020, which underlines that tissue donation is still understood as a joint task. More than 2,800 people donated their tissues; more than 6,300 transplants helped patients throughout Germany to gain more sight, mobility, and health. You can read about these and other important developments in tissue donation, processing, and transplantation in the DGFG network in this summary report. We publish the full report online - this year for the first time with interactive elements!

Martin Börgel, Managing Director



The DGFG Annual Report 2020 in its full version: interactive and for download.

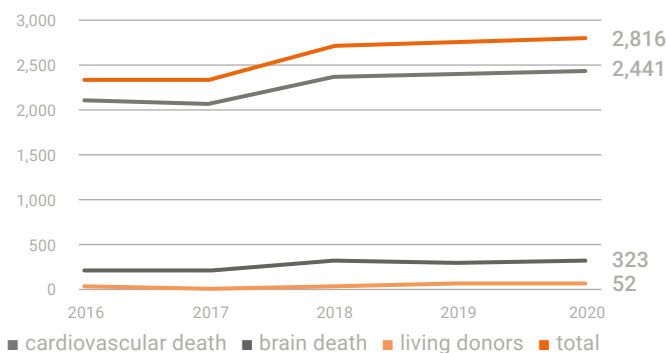
Tissue donation in 2020 at a glance

2,816 ^{↑+2%} people donated their tissue in 2020.

The consent rate for tissue donation was 41% ^{↑+1%} in 2020.

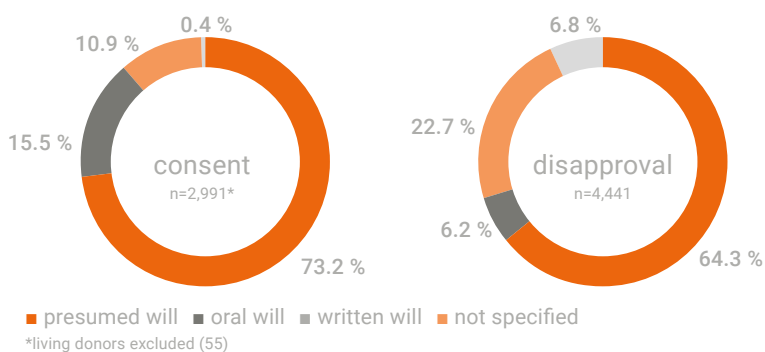
6,364 ^{↑+9%} transplants were provided in 2020.

Number of tissue donors 2016–2020 by donation type



In 2020, a total of 2,816 people donated tissue in the DGFG network. This corresponds to an increase of two percent compared to the previous year. 86.7 percent spent their tissues after cardiovascular death. The number of living donors (placenta and heart valves) decreased from 65 in 2019 to 52 in 2020 and thus remains on a relatively low level. The number of brain-dead donors from organ donation, who also spent their tissues, increased by 16 to 323 compared to the previous year.

Expression of will for tissue donation 2020

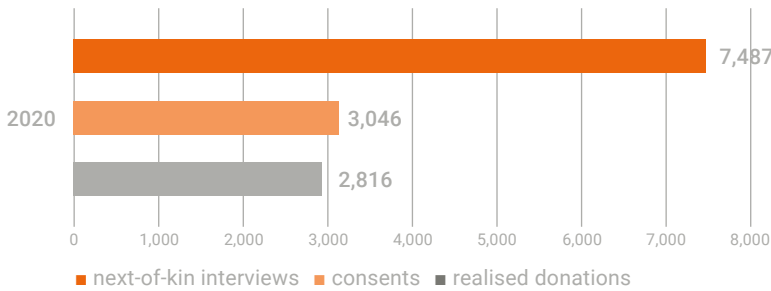


Around 26 percent of tissue donations are based on an oral or written consent. A similar picture emerges in the case of rejections: 29 percent have documented their will in writing or communicated it verbally during their lifetime. In almost every third case, however, the relatives do not know the will of the deceased, which is why the decision is often based on the presumed will. A conversation during one's lifetime or an organ and tissue donor card can provide security and relieve relatives.

Tissue medicine in times of the Corona pandemic

The SARS-CoV-2 virus (severe acute respiratory syndrome coronavirus type 2), known as coronavirus, which broke out at the beginning of 2020, continues confronting the world with new kinds of challenges. Analogous to society dealing with the pandemic, the DGFG and its partners arranged themselves with the challenging circumstances. Thanks to the commitment of everyone involved in the donation process, the DGFG has been able to maintain patient care and stabilise the level of donation and transplantation in comparison with other European countries. Exceptional situations such as this pandemic illustrate the value of a resilient yet flexible network of cooperating tissue banks, donation hospitals and transplanting institutions, all committed to the joint task of tissue donation, combined with the central management of all relevant processes by the DGFG's central allocation unit in Hanover, Germany.

Conversations vs. consents and donations 2020



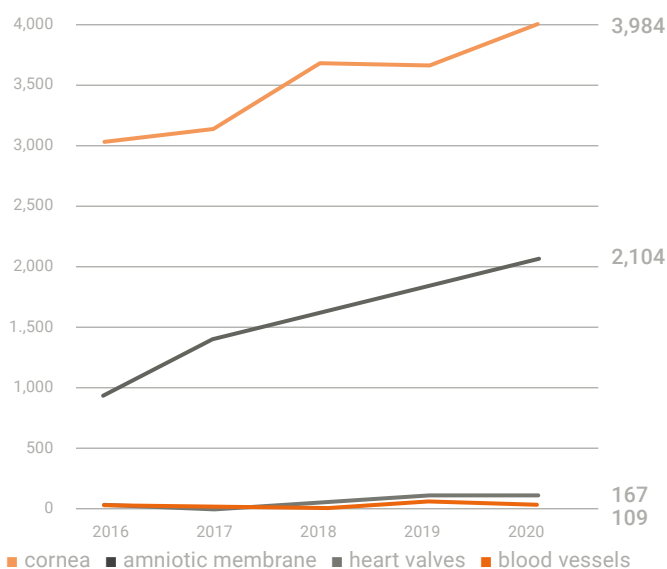
In 2020, the DGFG coordinators reviewed more than 41,000 reports of deceased persons. A total of 7,487 interviews were done with relatives and living donors about tissue donation. 3,046 people or their relatives consented to a tissue donation, of which 2,816 donations could ultimately be realised.

Donated tissue 2016–2020

	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
cornea	4,512	4,507	5,249	5,234	5,401
heart valves	148	196	313	378	393
blood vessels	142	177	195	206	267
placenta (amnion)	21	15	29	40	20
total	4,823	4,895	5,786	5,858	6,081

The tissue banks in the DGFG network received 6,081 tissues for processing in 2020. The donation programme for cardiovascular tissue after cardiovascular death continued successfully. This programme has been intensified since 2018 to complement the donation of heart valves and blood vessels beyond organ donation.

Number of transplants 2016–2020



In 2020, the DGFG has provided a total of 6,364 tissue transplants to patients. With 3,984, more than half of the corneal grafts provided by German eye banks come from the DGFG network. In addition, the DGFG delivered twelve percent more amniotic membranes compared to 2019. The DGFG could also allocate 100 AmnioClip-plus. This amniotic membrane placed in a ring-system is applied similar to a contact lens to treat severe injuries or diseases of the eye. In contrast, the number of cardiovascular tissue transplants declined slightly with 167 heart valves and 109 blood vessels.