

DGFG Annual Report 2025



Dear partners and interested parties,

The year 2025 was a record year for the DGFG: Never before have so many tissues been donated in Germany as in the past year. Although the percentage of consents was not higher than in 2024, the number of notifications, the number of informational consultations and next of kin interviews, and thus the number of people who donated tissue all increased compared to the previous year. A total of 9,789 patients received a transplant from the DGFG network – an increase of 17 percent, marking a record high and underscoring the overall positive trend in tissue donation in Germany. The fact that more donations were realized despite a slight drop in the consent rate to 37.8 percent is primarily due to the steadily growing number of hospitals and staff members who promote tissue donation on a daily basis and integrate it into their daily work.

We would like to take this opportunity to express our special thanks to the donors and their families and loved ones, because their altruism and solidarity are what make tissue donation possible in the first place.

– Martin Börgel, Managing Director

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Annual Report 2025
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Tissue donation in numbers

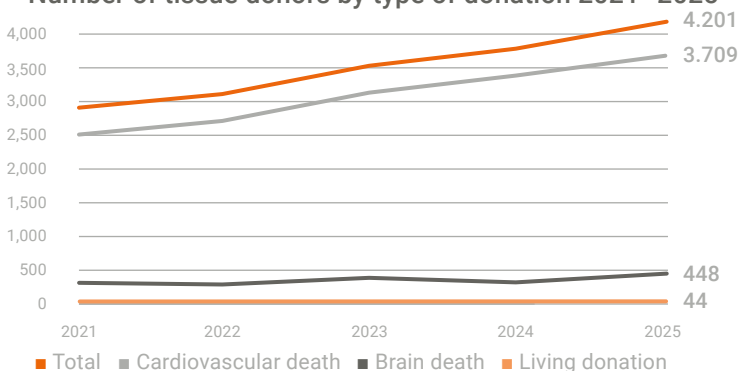
4,201 ^{↑+12.1 %} people donated tissue in 2025.

This corresponds to **8,945** ^{↑+13.6 %} donated tissue preparations.

9,789 ^{↑+17 %} tissue transplants were allocated in 2025.

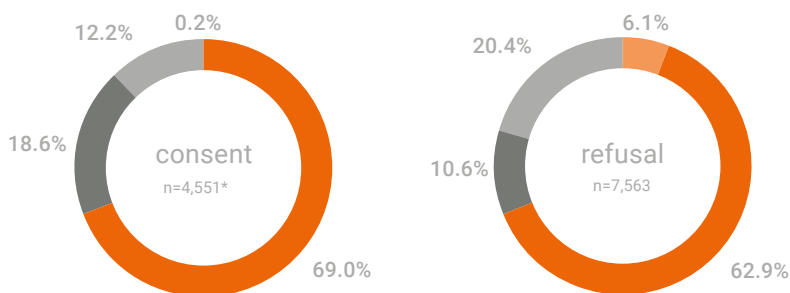
The consent rate to tissue donation in 2025 was **37.8 %** ^{↓-0.3 %}.

Number of tissue donors by type of donation 2021–2025



In 2025, the DGFG was able to realize 4,201 tissue donations. 88.3 percent of donors were cardiovascular decedents. The number of living donors (placenta and heart valves) remained relatively low, at 44 in 2025 compared to 38 in 2024. The number of tissue donors from organ donation who died from an irreversible loss of brain function (brain death) has risen from 400 in 2024 to 448 in 2025.

Expression of will for tissue donation 2025



*excluding the consent of living donors (47)

■ Presumed will ■ Written will
■ Oral will ■ No indication

In 2025, 30.8 percent of tissue donations were based on a verbal or written declaration of intent. About 31 percent of potential donors decided against tissue donation during their lifetime. The decision to donate tissue is still based predominantly on the presumed will of the deceased – 69 percent in the case of consent and 62.9 percent in the case of refusal. The will of the deceased is often unknown to the relatives. A conversation during their lifetime, a registry entry, or a completed organ and tissue donor card can relieve the relatives in the decision-making process.

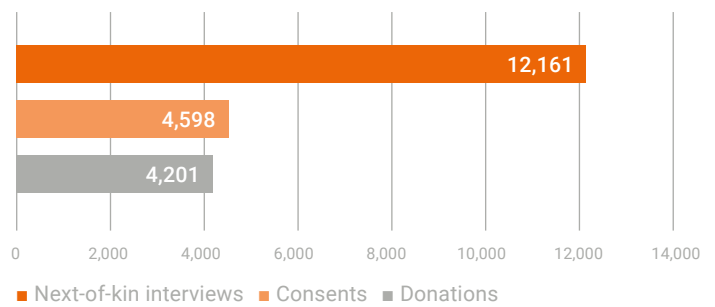
Access to the Organ Donor Registry will begin shortly

Since March 18, 2024, citizens have been able to record their wishes regarding organ and tissue donation online at www.organspende-register.de. An efficient connection between tissue donation facilities and the Organ Donor Register is intended to make the tissue donation process more transparent and accessible. Following the collapse of the government in November 2024, linking tissue donation organizations to the registry initially seemed out of reach, as the legislative process could not be completed. After the new government resumed the legislative process in the first half of 2025, the amended law is now expected to take effect in the second quarter of 2026.

The amendment provides tissue donation organizations with a legally sound basis to access the registry. However, the additional burden this could place on the daily tissue donation practice remains a concern: Accessing the registry does not replace a conversation with the next of kin. It represents an additional step, as the query must be made before the conversation with the next of kin in the already very time-sensitive donation process. Overall, it remains to be seen whether the registry will lead to greater clarity, efficiency, and safety in the tissue donation process.

In 2025, the DGFG received 62,265 donor notifications. If there are no medical contraindications and no organizational obstacles to a donation, our tissue donation coordinators conduct next-of-kin interviews. In 2025, this occurred 12,161 times. A total of 4,598 people or their relatives agreed to tissue donation. The 69 tissue donation coordinators were ultimately able to realize 4,201 tissue donations.

Next-of-kin interviews vs. consents and donations 2025



Donated tissue preparations 2021–2025

	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025
Cornea	5,612	6,022	6,736	7,287	8,139
Heart valves	445	328	508	399	536
Blood vessels	335	278	259	145	210
Placenta (amnion)	30	21	24	27	28
Bones and ligaments	0	30*	44*	18*	32*
Total	6,422	6,679	7,571	7,876	8,945

In 2025, 8,945 donated tissues were processed by the tissue banks in the DGFG network. The increase in the number of organ donations also led to a rise in donations of cardiovascular tissue. In 2025, the DGFG was able to continue its donation program for musculoskeletal tissues (bone and soft tissue) and realized 32 donations of these tissues. The tissue preparations obtained were sent to the non-profit German Institute for Cell and Tissue Replacement (DIZG) in Berlin for further processing.

*Number of donations without individual tissue preparations

The number of tissue transplants successfully distributed by the DGFG in 2025 increased by 17 percent compared to the previous year: The DGFG was able to provide a total of 9,789 tissue transplants for patients, including 6,345 corneal transplants. Among the 3,129 amniotic transplants distributed to clinics, 210 were Amnio-Clip-plus. There was also a significant increase in the allocation of heart valves: 204 patients received a heart valve from the DGFG network. In 2024, the figure was 167.

Number of tissue grafts allocated 2021–2025

