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**“Multi-Generational Centers“ in Germany**  
**Experiences from a Federal Program to**  
**Support Municipalities in Responding to Demographic Change**

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## **Agenda**

- I. Idea and Federal Program “Multi-Generational Centers”**
  
- II. Core Concepts of the work of “Multi-Generational Centers”**
  
- III. Impact and Good Practice Examples**

## „Multi-Generational Centers“ in Germany

- “Multi-Generational Centers” (MGC) were established to be „central meeting places, where social cohesion between the generations is actively promoted“,
- are funded by the Federal Ministry for Family Affairs, Senior Citizens, Women and Youth and co-funded by the respective municipalities/districts,
- exist currently in almost 540 municipalities/districts nationwide,
- support communities in promoting tailored solutions for challenges of demographic change on a local level („social infrastructure“).

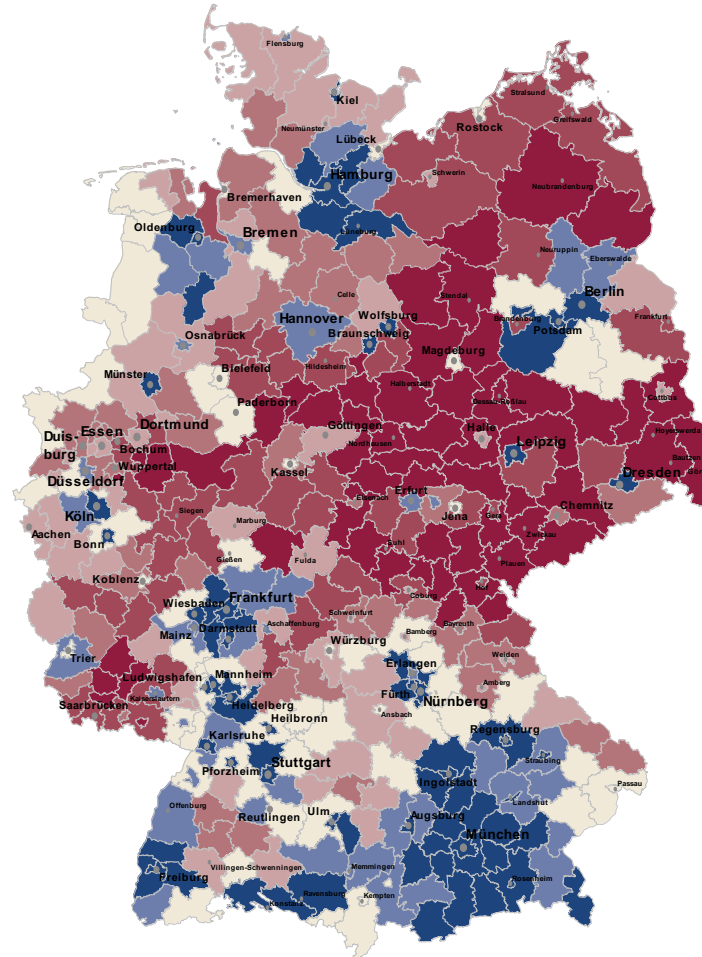


**Mehr  
Generationen  
Haus**

*Wir leben Zukunft vor*

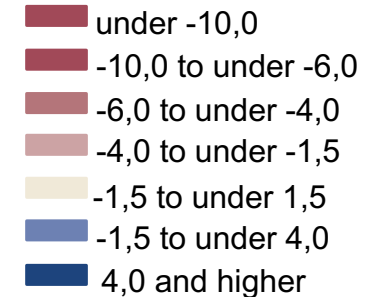
## Demographic Change in Germany

- Overall, Germany's population is aging, is becoming more diverse, and going to shrink.
- Different regions face different developments and challenges (prosperous vs. shrinking communities).



Example Forecast by Bertelsmann Stiftung

Population trend 2012-2030 in municipalities/districts



Source: Bertelsmann Stiftung (2015). Bevölkerungsentwicklung 2012 bis 2030 in Landkreisen und kreisfreien Städten in Deutschland [translated by INTERVAL].

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## Core Concepts of „Multi-Generational Centers“

### cross-generational approach

People of all ages and backgrounds are given the possibility to...

- „meet“,
- „do something together“,
- „learn from each other“.

### support of voluntary work

Volunteers...

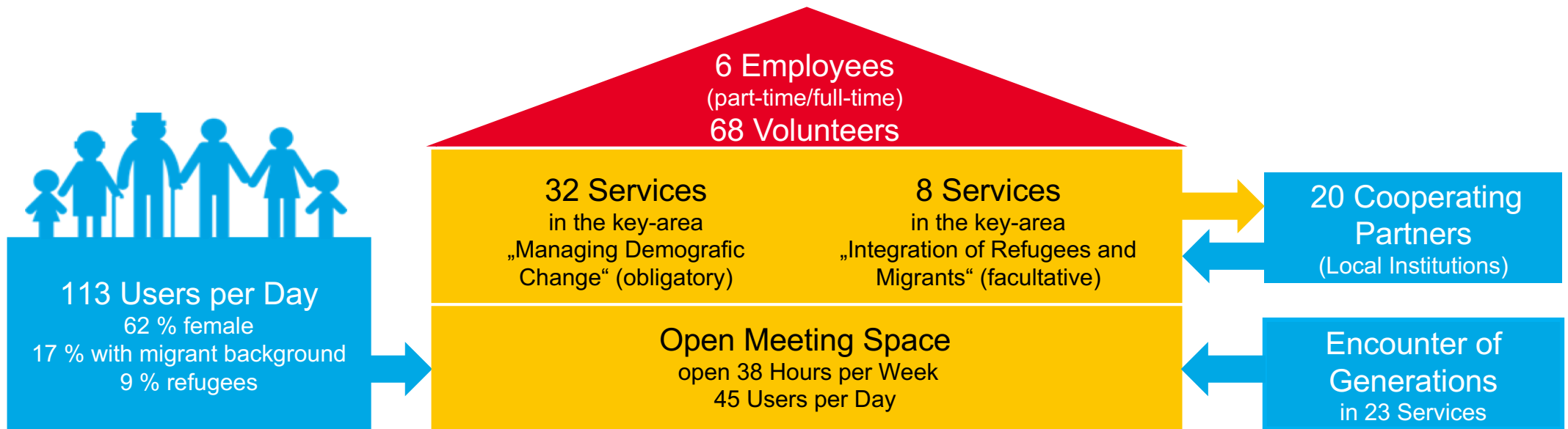
- get support/guidance of MGC-staff and other Volunteers,
- serve the common good,
- strengthen their social integration and/or skills  
(poss. participation in Programs like National Voluntary Service).

### orientation to social space

Multi-Generational Centers design their work on actual needs and in exchange

- with users, volunteers and other residents,
- local authorities and cooperating-institutions, and with regard to demographic developments.

## The Average “Multi-Generational Center“ in Numbers



Source: Bundesministerium für Familie, Senioren, Frauen und Jugend (Federal Ministry for Family Affairs, Senior Citizens, Women and Youth, in short: BMFSFJ): Monitoring 2018, State: March 2019 (N=538), all stated numbers are averaged data on program level [translated by INTERVAL].

**Services and Activities of “Multi-Generational Centers“**



Illustration: BMFSFJ [translated by INTERVAL].



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## Strengths and Impact of "Multi-Generational Centers"

**cross-  
generational  
approach**

**support of  
voluntary work**

**orientation to  
social space**

- Impact of "Multi-Generational Centers" is very diverse
- Overall empirical results (Program-level, Selection):
  - Local authorities report of high positive impact of MGC on inter-generational work, support of voluntary work and stronger networking of institutions through activities of MGC in their communities (over 90 %)
  - Volunteers report a high support through MGC (around 90 %) and positive experiences of social participation
  - Visitors feel very welcome (over 95 %) and experience social interaction with different generations (around 50 %)
- Specific impact can be shown in exemplary cases (Solutions for local requirements), see "Generations' Lunch Table", „Computer & Mobile Phones Consultation Hours“

Source: Surveys (quantitative and qualitative) within the scientific evaluation of the Federal Program by INTERVAL 2017-2019.

## Example: “Generations’ Lunch Table”

- Need: lunch for individuals and groups, who cannot or do not want to eat at home (alone) like elderly, employees/job seeking persons, pupils (problem esp. in rural areas, small municipalities).
- Services/Activities: Meals cooked by in-house kitchen of MGC or local restaurants at reasonable prices are served by volunteers, who are guided and coordinated by the MGC,
  - offered in the open meeting space of the MGC to all who come to the MGC,
  - and partly also delivered to the homes of (elderly) people.
- Voluntary involvement: allows personalized, individual approach,
  - volunteers not only serve food but also take their time to talk, help „with little things“,
  - Interlinkage with other services/acitivities like after-school care programs for students, „Grandma-/Grandpa-Sitting“ or mobility-/pick-up-services for elderly or handicapped persons.

*Services fill gap in supply of provision of meals, prevent social isolation, foster inter-generative contact.*

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## **Example: „Computer and Mobile Phones Consultation Hours“**

- Need: support for (elderly) people, who do not have the ability to use mobiles phones, computers or other digital devices
  - for leisure activities (reading newspaper online, staying in contact with friends and family, etc.) AND
  - to organize their daily life (booking train ticket, making an appointment at doctor/municipal office/etc.).
  
- Services/Activities: “digital natives”, (young) volunteers of the MGC or students in cooperation with schools, who are guided and coordinated by the MGC, teach basic digital skills in a course or offer regular consultation hours.
  
- Cross-generational approach: by matching adolescence with persons, who need assistance in acquiring digital competences, different generations come into contact through a shared interest.

*Services foster inter-generative contact through shared interest and, hence, contribute to mutual respect.*

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## Further Information on „Multi-Generational Centers“

Website of the Federal Program (in German): <https://www.mehrgenerationenhaeuser.de/>

Short Summary provided on the Website of the Federal Ministry (in English):  
<https://www.bmfsfj.de/bmfsfj/meta/en/publications-en/federal-program-multi-generational-centre/115802>

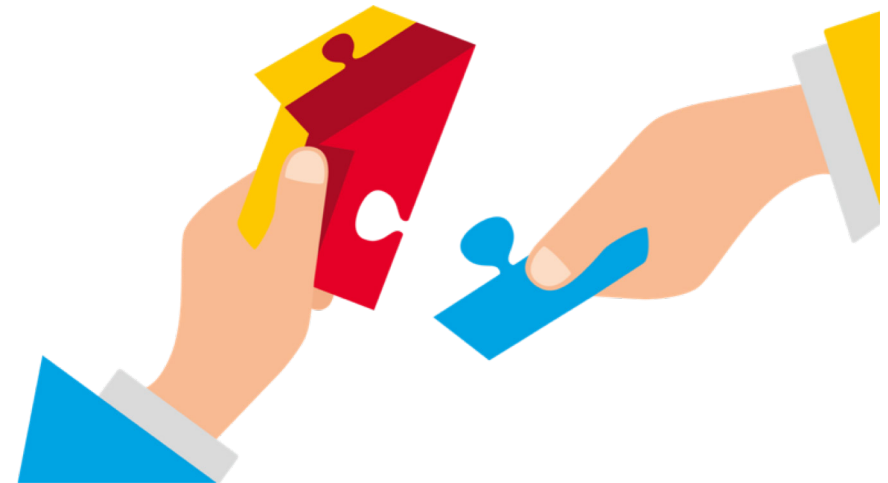


Illustration: BMFSFJ.

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