



Federal Ministry for
Family Affairs, Senior Citizens,
Women and Youth

Country Report – Bundesrepublik Deutschland

15 Years since the Second UN World Ageing Plan
(Madrid International Plan of Action on Ageing – MIPAA),
Madrid 2002

and

15 Years since the UNECE Regional Implementation
Strategy (RIS), Berlin 2002

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Part I

1. Summary

The present Country Report appears 35 years after the adoption of the First UN World Ageing Plan in Vienna and 15 years after the adoption of the Second UN World Ageing Plan in Madrid (MIPAA). The voluntary commitments made by the 56 UNECE member states in their UNECE Regional Implementation Strategy (RIS) have also been in existence for 15 years.

It is based on the German National Plan of Action to implement the Second UN World Ageing Plan and the UNECE Regional Implementation Strategy “Challenges and Opportunities of Ageing Societies”, which was presented to the German Federal Cabinet in 2007, and the 2012 Country Report to mark 10 years since the MIPAA and RIS.

Initially, the national ageing situation in Germany is described. The description of the methodological procedure is followed by the presentation of six main points in the policy for older people developed by the Ministry of Family Affairs, Senior Citizens, Women and Youth. These are all of equal importance, even if they are listed one after another.

The demography strategy as a comprehensive measure bears the expanded title “Every age counts – For greater prosperity and quality of life for all generations”. The strategy, which is interdepartmental and interdisciplinary, covers the many different aspects of the ageing of German society.

The “Active Ageing” Round Table explains the potential and participation of older people. Various working groups are developing action strategies to define how society can more effectively encourage the growing group of active older women and men who are willing to contribute and make better use of their potential.

The Acts on Long-Term Care Leave and Family Care Leave are further important points. By further relieving the pressure of work and providing financial support, the many family members providing care are supported in combining care and a career.

In particular, caring for women and men with dementia presents those affected, their families and the whole of society with particular challenges in the day-to-day provision of long-term care. With the “Alliance for People with Dementia”, the Ministry of Family Affairs, Senior Citizens, Women and Youth is creating possibilities at local level throughout the country for meeting these challenges.

A further working area is the implemented reform of the nursing professions by combining the training programmes provided in geriatric nursing, general nursing health care and paediatric nursing and health care.

The theme of provision for retirement benefits, which is important for the future, is covered by a chapter agreed with the responsible Federal Ministry for Labour and Social Affairs.

Each of the main points described also highlights the developments foreseeable now and the measures planned.

With the conclusions and the presentation of priorities for the future, the Ministry of Family Affairs, Senior Citizens, Women and Youth would like to provide broader insights into the planning measures that can already be foreseen today.

Involving civil society is a well-established objective of the Federal Government. This also complies with the bottom-up approach preferred by the United Nations. A position statement from the German National Association of Senior Citizens' Organisations (BAGSO) with 114 member organisations which bring together around 13 million older people therefore rounds off the report.

2. General information

1. Country Report of the Federal Republic of Germany, 2016:

15 Years since the Second UN World Ageing Plan
(Madrid International Plan of Action on Ageing – MIPAA), Madrid 2002

and

15 Years since the UNECE Regional Implementation Strategy (RIS),
Berlin 2002

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3. National Ageing Situation

Over the next years and decades, the population structure in Germany will continue to change dramatically: Women and men in Germany are growing older, an additional burden is being imposed on the social security systems and society is becoming more diverse – not least because of the major rise in immigration. These changes are fundamental and being felt increasingly in our society. Their causes are primarily the steady increase in life expectancy and the consistently low birth level.

According to current forecasts, the total population in 2030 will be roughly the same as it is today.

The working population aged from 20 to under 67 will probably decline considerably in the coming decades. On the other hand, the number of elderly and aged people is set to rise. At the moment, there are around 30 senior citizens for every 100 people of working age. In the year 2040, there will actually be 49 senior citizens for every 100 people of working age. This takes into account an immigration level of 200,000 people. By all model calculations, the decline in and ageing of the population are irreversible.

The employment ratios of women and men aged between 54 and 65 have risen in the last two decades and have come closer together. However, women in all age groups – including this one – are still working proportionally in much lower numbers and for much fewer hours than men. In their paid employment they achieve, on average, lower gross hourly rates of pay than men. In 2015, the average gross hourly wage for working women was 21 % lower than the average gross hourly wage for working men. The lower level of participation in the labour market and the lower wages affect the independent pension insurance payments. In 2015, women drew 53 % lower independent pension insurance payments than men.

The actual retirement age has increased almost continuously and in 2014 was 64.3 years on average for women and 64 years on average for men. The central source of income in retirement is revenue from statutory pension insurance. For women, this source of income is slightly more important than it is for men. However, the old-age pensions for women in Germany are lower than those for men.

For over 40 years, women in Germany, statistically seen, have given birth to around 1.4 children each. Every generation of parents is only two-thirds replaced by the following generation of children; to maintain the population level, 2.1 children per woman would be necessary, but despite the slightly increased birth rate of 1.5 children per woman at the moment, this has not been achieved.

The life expectation of women is greater than that of men. However, since 1960, men have gained on average 11,3 years and women 10.7 years of life expectancy. Life expectancy will probably continue to increase in the future. Increasing numbers of men and women are reaching advanced age with better physical and mental capabilities.

Women generally and those aged between 70 and 85 state more often than men that they are in a poor state of health subjectively. They also need care more frequently than men. Older women in need of care are cared for at home less frequently than men in need of care and live more frequently in nursing homes. They are generally younger than their partners. In addition, men have a higher mortality rate than women, so that the potential for women to be cared for in the family is much lower than it is for men. What both older men and women have in common is that they assess their living situation overwhelmingly as very good or good.

Many older women and men have adult children with whom they are in close contact. More than 80 % of older women and over 70 % of older men with children have contact with them every day or several times a week.

Immigration numbers have been clearly rising since 2010. Net immigration has increased since 1950, despite upward and downward variations. The reasons for this are the increased immigration from EU states, migrant workers from third countries, as they are known, and the rising number of migrants who come to Germany for humanitarian reasons. After standing at 369,000 people in 2012, the migration balance reached 429,000 people in 2013. In the years 2014 and 2015, an enormous rise in net migration was recorded. The total migration balance was 1.1 million.

It is difficult to predict what effects current and future immigration will have. In 2013, 16.5 million people with a background of migration lived in Germany; this was 20.5 % of the total population. 36.6 % percent of these people came from the EU member states.

Of the 81.4 million inhabitants of Germany in 2015, around 17.1 million people, which is a fifth of the population, had a background of migration.

Demographic change represents a major challenge for people, politics, administration and business. The Federal Government takes this challenge into account within the scope of its demographic strategy.

4. Method

The present Country Report lists six main points of German senior citizens' policy in the past five years. It will be presented at the UNECE Ministerial Conference in Lisbon 15 years after the adoption of the Second World Ageing Plan of the United Nations in 2002 in Madrid (Madrid International Plan of Action on Ageing – MIPAA).

The UNECE is one of the five regional commissions of the United Nations, which, in addition to the EU states, covers other countries with similar political, economic and social state characters such as Canada, the USA, Russia and Israel. In 2002 at a Ministerial Conference in Berlin hosted by Germany, it agreed on the UNECE Regional Implementation Strategy (RIS) to implement the Second World Ageing Plan of the United Nations. The RIS contains ten commitments with 103 paragraphs to implement the MIPAA.

With this, the Country Report is following on from the German National Plan of Action to implement the Second World Ageing Plan of the United Nations, which was submitted to the Federal Cabinet in 2007, and the 2012 Country Report, which was presented at the UNECE Ministerial Conference in Vienna in 2012 ten years after the adoption of the Second World Ageing Plan of the United Nations.

The present Country Report was prepared by the National Focal Point of Ageing on behalf of the Ministry of Family Affairs, Senior Citizens, Women and Youth. The Report has been agreed within the Federal Government.

With its position statement on the status of the implementation of the MIPAA and RIS – as previously with the Government's National Plan of Action to implement the MIPAA and RIS in 2007 and the Country Report in 2012 – civil society has been involved. This is in line with the Federal Government's understanding of the policy and the bottom-up approach preferred by the UN.

For better comparability and in preparation for an overall report from the UNECE-Working Group on Ageing, the format is based on the guidelines of the UNECE Working Group on Ageing (WGA) prepared by its steering group (bureau), the vice-chairmanship of which has been held by Germany for a number of years.

The six main points of ageing policy in Germany described here were selected with the aim of presenting the full spectrum of national activities in relation to the implementation of the MIPAA and RIS and the 2012 Vienna Ministerial Declaration.

In addition to presenting the concepts, contents and measures, the heading "Future measures" looks forward, in each case, to further planned activities.

A summary of the six main points in table form is provided in the appendices. These are aligned in Appendix 1 and 2 to the ten policy commitments of the UNECE states to the 2012 Vienna Ministerial Declaration.

Part II

1. National Measures and Progress in Implementation

I. The Federal Government Demography Strategy

In its policy, the Federal Government emphasises the need to overcome the challenges of demographic change:

- In 2011, it presented a Demography Report describing demographic developments and their medium- and long-term consequences for Germany.
- In 2012, a comprehensive demography strategy was adopted with the title “Every age counts”. An accompanying working group process goes back to the first Demography Summit on 4 October 2012, for which working groups had been formed for the various action areas of the Federal Government’s demography strategy. Since then, together with representatives from the Federal Government, the Federal states, local authorities, business, the academic world and society, they have discussed and fleshed out the main thematic points of the demography strategy in an overarching working process. The aim is to develop a general consensus that provides a broadly accepted basis for the necessary political decisions.
- Various thematic areas are covered in currently ten different permanent working groups led by expert, prominent political leaders. Among these, four working groups focussing on the area of older people, the family, people with dementia and young people have been established under the auspices of the Ministry of Family Affairs, Senior Citizens, Women and Youth. In 2015, the further development of the demography strategy under the title “Every age counts – For greater prosperity and quality of life for all generations” was agreed.

The Federal Government is thus focussing the objectives of its activity and pointing out what has already been achieved and where further efforts are being made. In addition, it is making the main points needed to shape demographic change clear.

Future measures:

The next Demography Summit is planned for 2017, with the participation of the Federal Chancellor. The working results to date are to be summarised and proposals for further action submitted.

II. Active Ageing

Under the patronage of the Minister for Senior Citizens, the Round Table on “Active Ageing” is developing action strategies for shaping the transitions out of working life and through various life stages. This moves the growing group of active and capable older women and men and their potential more into the focus of society. The central objective of the Round Table is to appeal to and activate the group of citizens aged 55 and over more than previously and before their transition into retirement.

After the curtain-raiser event in June 2015, three working groups were formed in which representatives of civil society plus specialists from the Federal Government, Federal states and local authorities develop action strategies.

“EIP on AHA National Reference for Excellence in Promoting Innovation for Active and Healthy Ageing”

In summer 2016, the EU Commission adopted the Round Table as a “Reference Site” and awarded it the “EIP on AHA National Reference for Excellence in Promoting Innovation for Active and Healthy Ageing”; it was the only project to receive such an award. Since 2012, the European Innovation Partnership on Active and Healthy Ageing (EIP AHA) has been presenting ideas on active and healthy ageing on its web site as a reference site in order, in this way, to allow an exchange at European level with stakeholders dealing with questions relating to active and healthy ageing.

“Shaping transitions” working group

The life phase after leaving working life, which is getting longer all the time, is characterised by great diversity. Many older women and men are fit and perfectly happy to contribute actively to society. For this reason, the working group is to look at the 55+ age group and firstly to adapt well proven routes for active ageing for this age group and secondly to develop new opportunities for them.

“Active Ageing Index (AAI)” working group

The Active Ageing Index (AAI) developed by the UNECE (United Nations Economic Commission for Europe) in cooperation with the EU makes the unused potential of older women and men over the age of 55 transparent. Using available German data sources, it is to be calculated in Germany in such a way that local authorities can determine the unused potential of older people and measure progress in the area of active ageing.

“Education” working group

For older people – both young older people and those in advanced old age – education is an important precondition for participating actively in the life of society. Here, education is not merely limited to the acquisition of knowledge and qualifications; it also covers tasks and demands in the family, in leisure time or in civic involvement. The aim of this working group is to highlight action approaches and action opportunities. The working group has three central areas of activity: “Education as an element of municipal general services and rural areas”, “Difficult accesses” and “Political education”.

Within the two-year in-depth discussion process, all working groups will develop recommendations and key points which can be adapted to the relevant situations locally and the available resources.

Future measures:

The final sessions of the three working groups are planned for 2017. The results will be presented by the Ministry of Family Affairs, Senior Citizens, Women and Youth in summer 2017 in a final plenary session of the Round Table and discussed with the participants. The action recommendations and analysis papers developed on the basis of the three working groups and the concluding plenary session are to be implemented in the second half of 2017 and discussed in corresponding special forums.

III. Compatibility of family, caring and a career

Law on the Improved Compatibility of Family, Caring and a Career

On 1 January 2015, the Law on the Improved Compatibility of Family, Caring and a Career implemented a number of major changes to improve the compatibility of caring and care in the Act on Long-Term Care Leave, the Act on Long-Term Family Care Leave and the Eleventh Social Code. The existing provisions of the Act on Long-Term Care Leave and the Act on Long-Term Family Care Leave were dovetailed and further developed.

The existing right to short-term absence from work, within which employees can be off work for up to ten working days if this is necessary to organise appropriate care for a close relative in need of care in an acute care situation or to ensure long-term nursing care during this time has been supplemented by the introduction of a right to care support benefit to balance any lost salary.

In order to care at home for close relatives requiring care, employees can, in addition, be released completely or partly from their work obligations for up to six months (long-term care leave). Since 1 January 2015, employees can make use of a release from work corresponding to the long-term care leave in order also to provide care outside the home for close relatives in need of care who are minors. They have a right to complete or partial release from work for up to three months to support close relatives in the last phase of life. The right to a release from work under the Act on Long-Term Care Leave does not apply for employers with 15 or fewer employees as a rule.

Since 1 January, 2015, employees have had a legal right to family care leave, i.e. partial release from work obligations for up to 24 months if they work for at least 15 hours a week, from employers unless these generally have 25 or fewer employees. Employees can also be released from work under the Act on Long-Term Family Care Leave for the provision of care outside the home for close relatives in need of care who are minors. The minimum working time of 15 hours a week helps to ensure that employees do not give up their employment activity completely to provide long-term care. Long-term care leave and long-term family care leave combined may not exceed a total period of 24 months per close relative in need of care.

For the duration of releases from work under the Act on Long-Term Care Leave and the Act on Long-Term Family Care Leave, a financial subsidy in the form of an interest-free loan is possible. The subsidy can also be provided if, in small companies, a release from work on a voluntary basis has been agreed. The interest-free loan is intended to cushion the loss of earnings during releases from work under the Act on Long-Term Care Leave and the Act on Long-Term Family Care Leave and is paid out in monthly instalments. Following the release from work, the loan is to be paid back within 48 months of the start of the release from work, in monthly instalments which should if possible be equal. To avoid any particular hardship, a hardship regulation has been incorporated to allow for the possibility of a deferral, a partial loan waiver or even a cancellation of the loan debt.

“Law on the Improved Compatibility of Family, Caring and a Career for Federal Government Employees and Soldiers and on the amendment of other service regulations”

With the new “Law on the Improved Compatibility of Family, Caring and a Career for Federal Government Employees and Soldiers and on the amendment of other service regulations”, the Federal Government is making a further advance in offering its civil servants and soldiers a modern working environment in which they are respected for caring for their relatives and find the framework conditions that will enable them, alongside their paid work, to cope with caring for relatives on a flexible time basis and with the financial support of their employer. The main provision of the law is the redefinition of family care leave or care leave with advance payment. This essentially grants the same rights to civil servants and soldiers as those provided under the Law on the Improved Compatibility of Family, Caring and a Career which has been valid since 1 January 2015 for private industry and for those working under collective agreements. A right to family care leave and care leave has been introduced for civil servants and soldiers, both male and female; they can also make use of an advanced payment in order to cope better with living costs during their (partial) release from duties.

Future measures:

The Advisory Council for the Compatibility of Caring and a Career established by the Ministry of Family Affairs, Senior Citizens, Women and Youth (BMFSFJ) deals with general questions about the compatibility of caring and a career, supports the implementation of the relevant statutory provisions and advises on their effects. Every four years, starting on 1 June 2019, the Advisory Council will submit a report to the BMFSFJ, in which it can provide recommendations for action. In addition, the BMFSFJ has commissioned a scientific study to examine the possibilities for improving the compatibility of family, caring and a career created with the Act on Long-Term Care Leave and the Act on Long-Term Family Care Leave and to develop recommendations for possible further development.

IV. Acts to strengthen long-term care and people with dementia

Acts to strengthen long-term care

The Federal Government has made the strengthening of long-term care its particular priority. The three acts to strengthen long-term care comprehensively restructured social long-term care insurance and improved benefits, both in terms of quantity, by 5 billion euros per year, and also in terms of quality.

The main focus of the laws is the introduction of the new concept of the need for long-term care which in particular provides dementia patients equal access to long-term care insurance benefits for the first time, plus a clear expansion of services for all those in need of long-term care, in particular to strengthen care at home and to improve additional support in in-patient facilities. To finance this, the long-term care insurance contribution rate was increased by a total of 0.5 contribution rate points.

The role of the local authorities in long-term care in terms of shaping the services, advising and funding support facilities on an everyday basis locally and in the regions is enhanced by the Third Act to strengthen long-term care, which came into force on 1 January 2017.

Nationally, in ten regions in Germany, the many different changes brought about by the acts to strengthen long-term care are discussed by around 50 long-term care practitioners in each region. By the end of 2017, three events in each region will take place which build on each other thematically.

Alliance for People with Dementia

The Federal Government supports improving the life situations of women and men with dementia and their relatives in various areas – for example, at national level, with the Alliance for People with Dementia and locally, directly amongst those affected, with 500 Local Alliances for People with Dementia.

There are currently around 1.6 million people with dementia living in Germany. Two thirds of dementia patients are supported and cared for by their relatives at home. A broadly based Alliance for People with Dementia aims to improve the living situations of dementia patients and their relatives and lay the foundations for a national dementia strategy. The agenda entitled “Together for People with Dementia”, which was developed within the Alliance, launched a number of measures to improve the living situations of people with dementia and their relatives. The focus is on self-determination and participation of people with dementia. It has been possible to incorporate the interests of people with dementia through a cooperative, participation-oriented process.

The agenda defines four areas of action:

- Science and research
- Social responsibility
- Support for people with dementia and their families
- Structuring the support and care system

These areas of action incorporate more than 90 target agreements with 155 concrete measures. The agenda is constantly being implemented under the sponsorship and responsibility of the members of the Alliance. An interim report on implementation was presented on 21 September 2016 for World Alzheimer’s Day. It has been agreed that the implementation process will be completed by 2018.

The 500 Local Alliances offer support and advice locally. They offer for people with dementia and their relatives the best possible support immediately, in their own environment. Their aim

is to help men and women with dementia to live in their own social surroundings for as long as possible.

Dementia Partner

The “Dementia Partner” initiative is run by the German Alzheimer’s Society and subsidised by the Federal Government. Courses held throughout Germany provide information about the symptoms of the illness along with tips on dealing with people with dementia. Those who take part in the 90-minute long free courses are presented with a certificate of attendance and a badge describing them as a “Dementia Partner”. It is modelled on the “Dementia Friends” campaign run by the UK Alzheimer’s Society, which took up the initiative from Japan. Several million people now participate in the scheme in the UK, Canada, Nigeria, China and other countries.

The German Alzheimer’s Society

The Deutsche Alzheimer Gesellschaft e.V. [German Alzheimer’s Society] – Dementia Self-Help is not only an organisational partner in the Alliance for People with Dementia; it is actually the co-chair. The Society’s work is supported continuously by the BMFSFJ on a project-related basis.

The first Alzheimer’s Societies were founded in the 1980s: At various locations in Germany, the relatives of people with dementia, supported by professional helpers, came together in self-help groups to offer each other mutual support and to improve the situation of those affected. The umbrella organisation was founded as the Deutsche Alzheimer Gesellschaft e.V. on 2 December 1989. The German Alzheimer’s Society and its member societies continue to be self-help organisations, and work throughout the country to improve the situation of men and women with dementia and their families. Today, the German Alzheimer’s Society is made up of 136 Alzheimer’s societies organised at national and regional level.

Together, they work to promote understanding and a willingness to help amongst the population as far as Alzheimer’s disease and other dementia illnesses are concerned and stimulate socio-political initiatives. They aim to help those affected to better manage the illness and to help relatives to help themselves; in addition, relief is to be provided for carers through the provision of information, emotional support and local help. They also support scientific research into dementia illnesses and care possibilities. New forms of support and long-term care are also developed and trialled.

The Alzheimer’s telephone

In addition, the German Alzheimer’s Society, supported by funds from the Ministry of Family Affairs, Senior Citizens, Women and Youth, provides the Alzheimer’s telephone service. Help is offered nationwide in the form of professional advice via a single telephone number. This service is aimed both at relatives and sufferers and also at professional carers.

Future measures:

The implementation of the Agenda of the Alliance for People with Dementia is being continued. A final report is to be prepared in 2018. The results of the Agenda and the national “Local Alliances for People with Dementia” programme are to form part of a national dementia strategy.

V. Nursing training

Demographic change is defining and changing our society. New developments in the area of careers and employment call for a comprehensive reform of nursing training courses. A future-proof professional training system must enable nurses to care for people of all age groups in all forms of nursing care. It must also take into account that nursing will continue to be characterised by constant change and that older men and women will make up the vast majority of those in need of care in the future.

Act to Reform the Nursing Professions (Nursing Professions Act)

On 13 January 2016, the Federal Government adopted the Draft Act to Reform the Nursing Professions submitted jointly by the Ministry of Family Affairs, Senior Citizens, Women and Youth and the Ministry of Health, and this is now going through the legislative process. The aim is to create the necessary basis for a modern, permeable nursing training system, to further improve the quality of nursing care and to make nursing more attractive as a career.

Nursing care training, which had hitherto being regulated separately according to age groups – geriatric care, general healthcare and nursing and paediatric health care and nursing – is to be reformed and combined into a new, generalist nursing training with a uniform final professional qualification. In addition, the uniform financing of the new nursing training programme is proposed, with the particular focus on exemption from tuition fees, the students’ right to a reasonable training remuneration and the introduction of a nursing degree as a supplement to vocational nursing training as a further route to qualification.

The new nursing training programme is intended to prepare nurses for work in all areas of nursing work, facilitate changes between the various areas of nursing and thus at the same time allow nurses themselves to work near where they live and open up additional work and promotion opportunities. It will enable nurses to provide nursing care to people whatever their age in all forms at a continued high quality standard.

“Nursing training on the move” pilot project

The “Nursing training on the move” pilot project, supported by the Ministry of Family Affairs, Senior Citizens, Women and Youth and the European Social Fund, is designed to test out approaches to combine nursing training programmes. Innovative forms of nursing care training involving around 300 trainees were tested between 2004 and 2008 within eight pilot projects.

Future measures:

The Draft Act to Reform the Nursing Professions is to come into force in stages. Legislative decrees must be issued at national level. Implementation acts are also required at Federal state level before the first year of training can start on 1 January 2018 (subject to updating).

VI. Provision for old age

The development of provision for old age is the subject of constant discussion in Germany. The following legislative proposals were approved in 2016:

Law concerning payment improvements in statutory pensions insurance

- Increase in the child rearing period allowable under pensions legislation for children born before 1992 from one to two years (the “mothers’ pension”)

Minimum Wage Act

- Introduction of a comprehensive statutory minimum wage as from 1 January 2015
- Establishment of a Minimum Wage Commission, which will submit a proposal each year for adjustment of the minimum wage, which can then be made binding by the Federal Government by legislative decree

Law to increase the flexibility of the transition from working life to retirement and to strengthen prevention and rehabilitation in working life:

- Improving the possibility, before reaching the standard retirement age, of supplementing part-time work with a part-pension (combining a part-pension and additional earnings will be possible more flexibly and individually)
- Regular increase in pension entitlement through continuing to work in addition to drawing an early full old-age pension
- Possibilities for waiving insurance exemption once standard retirement age has been reached and increasing pension entitlement
- The possibility of paying additional contributions to pension insurance earlier and more flexibly than before in order to balance out pension reductions
- Specifically targeted information about the possibilities for structuring the transition from working life to retirement (from the age of 55, information in particular about the effects of early or postponed retirement)
- Improved regulations to strengthen prevention and rehabilitation in the area of pensions insurance
- Employment of older employees will become more attractive for employers (separate employer contribution to unemployment insurance for employees above the age limit will lapse for five years)

Pension adjustments as from 1 July 2016

Pensions from statutory pension insurance rose in Germany on 1 July 2016 in the old Federal states by 4.25 % and in the new Federal states by 5.95 %.

Future measures:

The Federal Cabinet has approved the following bills and forwarded them to the German Bundestag:

■ *Bill to strengthen company old-age pension schemes*

■ *Bill to improve payments in the case of pensions due to reduced earning capacity*

This proposed the gradual extension of the “supplementary period” by three years from the 62nd year of life to the 65th. From 2024, reduced earning capacity pensions for new entrants are to be calculated in such a way as if the early retirees had worked until their 65th year of life.

■ *Bill concerning the conclusion of the alignment of pensions*

The pension value (East) in the New Federal States is to be aligned to the higher pension value for the Older Federal States in seven steps until 2024.

Equal participation in working life

The causes of women’s low independent pension insurance payments lie in their lower participation in the workforce over the course of their lives and their lower wages, on average. Therefore, in order to improve old-age pension prospects for women, the primary measures that are useful here are those which improve participation in the workforce and close the wage gaps.

2. Conclusions and priorities for the future

The Federal Government continues to pursue the fundamental goal of the demography strategy “Every age counts – For greater prosperity and quality of life for all generations”. Here, it is a particular concern of the Ministry of Family Affairs, Senior Citizens, Women and Youth to help ensure that intergenerational fairness is maintained.

The immediate local environment is of particular importance in the everyday life of older people. In the Federal Republic of Germany, as a federalist state, supporting and caring for the elderly also come within the competence of the Federal states and their local authorities. The infrastructure, the social networks on the ground and, in particular, the accessibility of primary care facilities and services substantially determine the quality of life in old age. In the provision of public services, the State and in particular the local authorities take responsibility for the provision of particular infrastructural services.

Demographic change, reinforced by changes in the economic structure and the limited financial leeway of many cities, communities and administrative districts, is heightening the problem and presenting local authorities with new challenges. The facilities and structures of public service must therefore be adapted, within the financial constraints, to these changed framework conditions and modified in order to allow older people to live a self-determined life. Administrative districts, cities and communities require broadly based support in this (from civil society, all state levels and federations).

The project “Demografiewerkstatt Kommunen” [Municipality Workshop on Demography] picks up individual elements within this. Using the example of eight local authorities, the pilot project examines how the consequences of demographic change can be shaped by the administration with the involvement of the population. The developments and results from this five-year project will be incorporated into the Federal Government’s demography strategy within the coming legislative period.

Active Ageing is increasingly gaining significance, as people are living longer, healthier lives. Older men and women often wish to become involved in society. Appreciating their wishes, possibilities and needs is therefore a consistent, important policy area for the Ministry of Family Affairs, Senior Citizens, Women and Youth. The use of the Active Ageing Index (AAI) at local authority level is a vital instrument in this. Its calculations will help to make demographic change visible locally, where people live, and definable for policy purposes.

Demographic change also presents the social insurance systems, especially old-age pension schemes, with major challenges. With pension levels falling, the avoidance of poverty in old age is an urgent priority. An important starting point here is integration in the employment market with a permanent paid activity, a corresponding income and a complete pension biography. The comprehensive statutory minimum wage introduced in this legislative period helps here. A further contribution is made by the improved ability to reconcile a family and a career, which also includes reconciling caring and a career.

Family care leave allows carers to better combine caring for relatives with a career. The further development of the path that was adopted here opens up helpful prospects for the people affected. The reports on the compatibility of caring and a career prepared by the parallel Advisory Council will provide new impulses and encourage social and political discussion about the conditions within which caring relatives operate.

In the past 15 years, the increase in dementia illnesses associated with the demographic changes has not only become a hot political topic. Dementia awareness has now arrived in the centre of society. The challenge of supporting and caring for people with dementia in a way that meets their individual needs continues to be a task that cannot be solved by laws alone.

Whether men and women with dementia and their relatives can lead a good life depends to a considerable extent on society’s attitudes and the support it provides. Work will therefore need to be targeted at equipping citizens with dementia skills.

A further aspect will focus in the future on achieving the involvement and participation of people with dementia. It is becoming possible to diagnose the illness increasingly early, even in middle age. Creating possibilities for giving those affected social participation and a voice in their own interests is a specific matter for future attention. This commitment is the result of the signature and ratification of the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.

Ultimately, the aim is to develop a National Dementia Strategy, which is also called for by the EU.

In the face of the further development of long-term care structures, the rising standards for the quality of long-term care and the increasing number of older people requiring care, ensuring the adequate training of nursing staff is essential. The reform of the nursing professions is making this career area more attractive for young people. At the same time, nurses are obtaining a better qualification. Importantly, the professional qualification opens up a wide range of career prospects. With the desired permeability of educational courses from carer training to university courses, the aim is to place this career area on a modern footing and to be able to cover the steadily rising demand for specialist workers.

People of foreign origin living in Germany are becoming increasingly older and need support in line with their own culture and customs. Shaping their living environments at local level is being treated as an important priority by the Ministry of Family Affairs, Senior Citizens, Women and Youth.

The policy for older people in Germany is continuing to create framework conditions that allow older people to lead self-determined lives in dignity with a high level of social security even if their strength is failing or when help and support become necessary because of mental or physical restrictions. This is true for older men and women not just in Germany, but throughout Europe and the rest of the world. We are therefore continuing to be deeply committed to the realisation of the Second World Ageing Plan of the United Nations and its implementation in the countries within the UNECE region.

Efforts in determining the best way to strengthen the human rights of older people must be intensified and existing divergences in approaches to the protection of the human rights of older people must be overcome. We are therefore taking part openly in discussions about this at international level.

Supporting the living conditions of older people, e.g. their social security, nutritional situation, health care, nursing and the establishment and strengthening of self-help groups, is also becoming more important in development cooperation. In developing countries, older women are often particularly affected by poverty in old age and by isolation.

The overall objective is to achieve self-determination, participation and adequate social old-age provision for all people living in Germany, even those of advanced age. The flexibility in the start of retirement already achieved will be supplemented in the future by a strengthening of company pension schemes. Measures are constantly being implemented at all political levels, some of which are described in this report. Germany is also working on strengthening the rights of older people internationally, by integrating these topics, for example, into the agenda of the Open-Ended Working Group on Ageing, being committed to the implementation of the International Plan of Action on Ageing von Madrid (MIPAA) and being involved in the Regional Implementation Strategy (RIS).

3. Position statement of the part of civil society

Position statement by the BAGSO on the status of the implementation of the Second World Ageing Plan

The German National Association of Senior Citizens' Organisations (BAGSO), which, with its 113 member organisations, represents 13 million older people in Germany, has worked over the past 15 years in many different ways for the most effective implementation of the Second World Ageing Plan and the Regional Implementation Strategy possible at national level. It has seen some major successes, but there continue to be challenges in the national implementation.

Positive developments and necessary further steps

Under the leadership of the Ministry for Family Affairs, which has had a department focussing on senior citizens' policy matters since 1991, the Federal Government has been working closely with the organisations in civil society. The value placed on this commitment can also be seen from the fact that German Chancellor Angela Merkel opened the 11th German Senior Citizens' Day, a major event attended by around 15,000 people, with an address. The conference was held in Frankfurt am Main from 2 to 4 July 2015, under the heading "Into the future together!". The Frankfurt Declaration written by the BAGSO organisations begins with the question: "How do we want to live tomorrow and what can we do to achieve this?". The we stands here for the common aim of living together with commitment, in social justice, with all generations, with different life experiences, and also with setbacks. The motto of the Second World Ageing Plan "Building a society for all ages" thus stayed as up-to-date as ever.

The Seventh Report on the position of the older generation in the Federal Republic of Germany (Seventh Report on Ageing) was published in November 2016 and bears the title "Care and Shared Responsibility in the Municipality – establishing and securing future-proof communities". The system of reports on ageing introduced in 1989 by Federal Minister Ursula Lehr is an important building block in any sustained examination by the political stakeholders of questions relating to the ageing of individuals and of society. At its core, the most recent report on ageing deals with the question of how local authorities, city areas and villages can be more successful in enabling older people to lead the most independent, active, involved life possible in familiar surroundings even if support is required. In this return to the assessment and decision-making competence of the local authority, the BAGSO sees a great opportunity for further development; however, the legal aspects of such competence and the financial conditions must first be established here. Supporting independence also defines the need for care as from 2017. This new approach, which represents a welcome paradigm change from "minute-based care", will help to improve the provision of care in families and with professional support from a nursing service.

The present Country Report selects six measures as examples that reflect the commitment of the Federal Government over the last five years. The demography strategy, as the first measure presented, shows that the Federal Government is comprehensively discussing questions relating to demographic developments, also, in particular, with the relevant stakeholders in civil society. The BAGSO welcomes this; however, the discussion process must now be followed by actions. The demography summit announced for 2017, which should once again incorporate the viewpoint of civil society, is a good opportunity to set a course for this and also to take into account current immigration developments.

The second measure described, the Round Table on “Active Ageing”, is developing action strategies to determine how transitions from working life into the post-employment life phase can be planned early and structured in a way that is active and flexible. The spotlight here is on differentiated images of ageing which also pay particular attention to the potential of older people. It is important that the necessary framework conditions for voluntary involvement are created and that these are adapted to changing needs, particularly those of older women and men. This involvement should not become an obligation; it must always be of a voluntary nature. There should be a strong focus on groups that have not so far engaged a great deal in voluntary activities. The reasons for this must be analysed more closely.

Thirdly, the Country Report describes various measures to improve the compatibility of family, caring and a career. Successfully combining family tasks, caring and a career would fulfil the desire of the overwhelming majority of employees not to have to give up work to meet family obligations, but merely to interrupt it and, if necessary, continue on a part-time basis. In addition, returning to paid employment promptly makes a major contribution to ensuring future pension benefits. The ten-day release from work to organise the start of long-term care arrangements is warmly welcomed, but it is not enough. In the longer term, it will be a question of harmonising state support benefits for caring relatives step by step with those offered to parents.

A model for the longer-term balancing payment aimed at improving the compatibility of caring and a career could be the ElterngeldPlus [Parental Allowance Plus], which is now paid more flexibly. In particular, it encourages the resumption of employment by both genders and buffers temporary income losses caused by part-time employment. This could also create a particular incentive for more men to take responsibility for long-term caring. The Advisory Council on the Compatibility of Caring and a Career can add emphasis to this demand.

The fourth measure described focuses on people with dementia. Whilst the financial benefits from long-term care insurance have improved for sufferers and their families in recent years as a result of the Acts to Strengthen Long-Term Care, the “Local Alliances for People with Dementia” provide information and coping skills locally. An envisaged national dementia strategy should be established. If more people become more confident in their everyday dealings with people with dementia, it becomes increasingly possible for dementia patients to continue living in their familiar surroundings for longer and for families in which dementia patients live to become less isolated and maintain a greater involvement in local activities. Breaking down insecurities and barriers in dealing with dementia patients can make it possible for us, as a society, to deal in future with the increasing numbers of people affected. For this, the activities of the 500 Local Alliances must be consolidated throughout Germany. For migrant groups, specific, culture-sensitive information, advice and living facilities must be expanded; the Dementia Service Centre for people with a history of migration (Gelsenkirchen) has an important function as a role model here.

The reforming of the nursing professions in Germany is described as the fifth measure. Whilst training in geriatric care has so far been separated from general nursing and paediatric nursing, there is to be a joint training programme, probably from 2018. This aims to make the nursing profession more attractive and to facilitate permeability between the various nursing settings. Even if this does achieve the aim of enabling future trainees to nurse people of all age

groups and in all forms of nursing, care must be taken to ensure that the reform is not at the cost of nursing older people both in permanent nursing homes and in the family with the support of professional out-patient services. For this it is necessary in particular to establish similar, rising salary levels in the various nursing settings.

As the last measure, the current development in German old-age pension provisions is described. The focus here is on a flexible transition to retirement which makes it possible to combine part-time working and a part-time pension, even if the standard retirement age has not been reached. Preventing increasing numbers of pensioners from being dependent additionally on basic income support must continue to be the policy objective. Further measures are therefore required that will help stop this development. The absolute cornerstone of the old-age pension scheme is and remains the pay-as-you-go statutory pension insurance. In particular, the need should not arise for women, whose working lives are characterised particularly frequently by time off to raise a family and by part-time employment, to have to continue to work beyond the standard retirement age in order to achieve a sufficient pension level. Family care leave and long-term care leave must therefore be taken more into consideration for later pension entitlements. The current discussion about a legal right to return to full-time work after a part-time phase is welcomed. In addition, payments in the event of reduced paid employment and the group of those receiving company retirement pensions in order also to stabilise old-age income in this way.

Additional challenges

We regard the implementation of the recommendations of the Seventh Ageing Report as one of the priorities for the coming years. The BAGSO has commented comprehensively on this in a Position Statement, available at www.bagso.de.

Other pressing challenges are:

- Consolidating measures that effectively achieve the aim of lifelong learning at work and outside work
- Triggering structural and other measures to make the inclusion of people with limitations possible, which should also be the requirement in a local community that is intergenerational and dementia-friendly

Finally, we wish to draw attention to the particular challenges arising in developing countries. Article 7 of the Second World Ageing Plan calls on nations to place questions of ageing on their development policy agenda. The BAGSO recalls this obligation to support developing countries in improving the living conditions of older people. Alongside traditional development policy measures, it also considers, in this context, the discussion of the need for a specific international instrument to strengthen the rights of older people to be important and has published a Position Statement on this in German and English, which can be viewed at www.bagso.de. It welcomes the fact that the Federal Government is open to these matters, thus allowing a continuing discussion in the UN Open-Ended Working Group on Ageing.

Appendix 1: Assignment of the main points of the national ageing policy to the commitments of the UNECE Regional Implementation Strategy

10 commitments of the UNECE Regional Implementation Strategy (RIS), Berlin 2002, to implement the Second UN World Ageing Plan (Madrid International Plan of Action on Ageing – MIPAA), Madrid 2002.	Main points of national ageing policy					
	1. Demography strategy	2. Active ageing	3. Compatibility of family, caring and career	4. Acts to strengthen long-term care and people with dementia	5. Nursing training	6. Provision for old age
I: Inclusion of the dimension of ageing into all policy areas in order to bring societies and economies into harmony with demographic change and to achieve a society for all ages	X	X	X	X	X	X
II: To ensure the full integration and participation of older people in society	X	X	X	X		X
III: To promote equitable and sustainable economic growth in response to population ageing	X	X	X			X
IV: To adjust social security systems in response to demographic change and its social and economic consequences	X	X	X			X
V: To enable labour markets to respond to the economic and social consequences of population ageing		X	X		X	X
VI: To promote life-long learning and adapt the educational system in order to meet the changing economic, social and demographic conditions		X		X		
VII: To strive to ensure quality of life at all ages and maintain independent living including health and wellbeing	X	X	X	X		X
VIII: To mainstream a gender approach in an ageing society	X	X	X		X	X
IX: To support families that provide care for older people and promote intergenerational and intragenerational solidarity amongst their members		X	X	X	X	X
X: To promote the implementation and follow-up of the Regional Implementation Strategy through regional cooperation	X	X		X		

Appendix 2: Assignment of the main points of the national ageing policy to the main points of the UNECE Ministerial Declaration, Vienna

Main points of the UNECE Ministerial Declaration, Vienna, 2012	Main points of national ageing policy					
	1. Demography strategy	2. Active ageing	3. Compatibility of family, caring and career	4. Acts to strengthen long-term care and people with dementia	5. Nursing training	6. Provision for old age
I. Working to achieve a longer working life and maintaining the capacity to work	X	X	X		X	X
II. Participation, non-discrimination and social integration of older people	X	X	X	X	X	X
III. Promoting human dignity, health and independence in old age	X	X	X	X	X	X
IV. Maintaining and improving solidarity between the generations	X	X	X	X	X	X

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