

# Chapter 6

## Aging

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**Abstract** Aging poses important challenges for regional housing, mobility and social infrastructure as well as nursing care. In this chapter, the planning and implementation process of Pilot Actions in three model regions is described. In South

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Tyrol, the potential demand for a shuttle service and a home delivery service for the elderly was surveyed. In a sample of residents older than 55 years, 19 % of respondents were interested in using a delivery service and 27 % in using a transport service regularly. Together with regional stakeholders, options for the realization of such services were assessed, specifically involving volunteers. In Bavaria, structures for the care of dementia patients were strengthened. In cooperation with a qualified association, trainings for relatives of demented people, volunteers and nurses were realized at varying locations within the region. A regional network of actors was built and inputs about dementia care were given at relevant regional conferences and meetings. In the canton of Nidwalden in Switzerland, a union with the objective to realize multigenerational housing projects in the regional municipalities was established. The formation of this union and a concept for the realization of its objective was elaborated in a regional focus group. Additional members were recruited at a public conference and local politicians were sensitized at municipal council meetings.

## 6.1 Aging as Primary Demographic Challenge

The aging of the society represents an important factor to which spatial planning and regional development need to respond, if they want to ensure the fulfillment of the basic needs of the population. A special focus must to be set on the needs of the older generations for several reasons:

Firstly, population projections are suggesting such a specific focus on “silver agers” as the population older than 65 years in the Alpine countries (Austria, Germany, France, Italy and Slovenia) is expected to increase from 41.7 million in 2010 to 57.9 million in 2030 and to reach 65.8 million in 2050 (European Commission 2011: 52). The share of people older than 65 years of the total population in these countries was 18.7 % in 2010, is estimated to reach 25.5 % by 2030, and 30.6 % in 2050 (Eurostat 2012).

Secondly, during the participatory development of Pilot Actions in different Alpine regions, both community representatives and local political leaders identified aging as one of the primary demographic challenges of the future. Amongst the challenges related to an increasing number of elderly citizens, the following fields of action turned out to be (inter)nationally significant “hot spots”:

- Implementation of mobility solutions for elderly people to counteract isolation and loneliness
- Provision of elderly-specific social infrastructure like specialized elderly care facilities
- Organization and improvement of care for the elderly
- Construction of flexible houses and new residential forms as well as adaptation of living environments according to the needs of different generations.

Solutions for these issues will be discussed in following chapters.

## **6.2 Public Transportation: Decentralization of Mobility Concepts and New Mobility Services**

**Matthias Jud, Gerlinde Haller, Emanuel Valentin, Oswin Maurer, Hans Karl Wytrzens**

### ***6.2.1 Description of the Pilot Action***

In view of general aging, Alpine societies face the challenge of ensuring mobility, home assistance and social integration for elderly people. A group of South Tyrolean communities (Mühlbach/Rio Pusteria (Fig. 6.1), Vahrn/Varna, Natz-Schabs/Natz-Sciaves, Rodeneck/Rodengo) has tried to develop joint mobility and delivery services for elder citizens.

#### **6.2.1.1 The Model Region**

The South Tyrolean model region comprises a relatively small geographic area of 200 km<sup>2</sup> with about 12,000 inhabitants, which is embedded in the Eisack/Val Isarco Valley, one of the main valleys of the Italian province of South Tyrol. The region extends from the bottom of the valley at 600 m above sea level up to mountain villages at 1,400 m above sea level. Settlement is scattered and dispersed into 18 villages and numerous isolated farms, many of which are located on mountain slopes.

In the model region, overall 2,618 inhabitants were aged 55 years and older by the reporting day of 1 January, 2012. Hence, the average share of elderly of the total population is 24 %, with a maximum in Mühlbach/Rio Pusteria of 28 % and a minimum in Vahrn/Varna of 21 % (Fig. 6.2).

The pilot action aims at improving the lives of the elderly by ensuring greater independence and flexibility. Furthermore, it tries to better integrate the elderly into social life by providing transport facilities to prevent them from social isolation and simultaneously enabling them to live a more independent and self-reliant life.

The main objective of the pilot action is to establish an inter-municipal shuttle service, as well as to institute a special home delivery service for elderly citizens.

#### **6.2.1.2 Method**

Based on statistical data, collected for demographic analysis and future perspectives, several local “hot spots” of demographic change and the according challenges were identified (Valentin et al. 2011). One of them was “mobility, home assistance and social integration of elderly people” and a specific focus group was formed to develop and implement this pilot action.



Fig. 6.1 The municipality Mühlbach in the model region

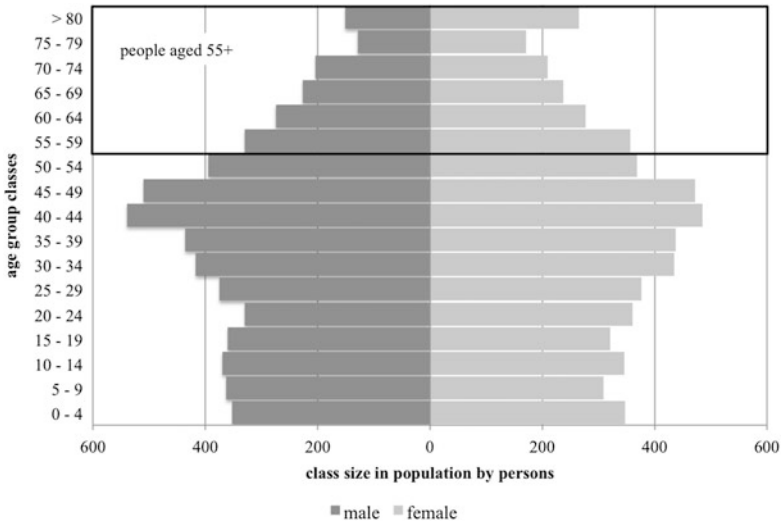


Fig. 6.2 Age structure of the population in the South Tyrolean model region

For the development of an effective delivery and mobility concept, the actual needs of the target group were assessed by means of a two-stage survey. In the first stage, an explorative telephone survey on mobility and purchasing behaviour was conducted, including 40 respondents being 55 years and older. Based on this initial survey, a series of standardized face-to-face interviews with 502 persons older than 55 years were carried out in a second stage.

The communities involved provided address lists of citizens older than 55 years who reside in the municipalities permanently. From these lists, a sample was selected randomly to be interviewed on their need and perception of services.

Interviews were carried out using a standardized questionnaire at the home of respondents during a period of 2 months. The questionnaire included a series of detailed questions. Each interview lasted between 20 and 60 min. Approximately 30 % of the persons in the sample selected did not participate in the survey, mainly due to lack of interest or time.

### **6.2.1.3 Results**

Of the sample, 98 (19 %) of the respondents stated that they are interested in using a service delivering groceries and consumer goods directly to their homes. The majority of these people, 80 %, would use the service at least once a week or even more often. Since the results are taken from a representative sample, it can be concluded that of the total population of persons older than 55 years in the pilot region about 500 persons would be interested in using such a service.

A further 122 people (27 %) would envisage to use the offer of a transport service on a regular basis. This pick-up service is to bring older people to events, public offices, medical practices during consultation times, or to other places, and back to their homes afterwards. Hence, about 600 people older than 55 years of age and living in the pilot action region would be a target group interested in such a service, with 75 % of these potential users willing to pay an amount of € 5 per trip for the transport service and/or the delivery service, respectively.

The pilot action also includes the planning and implementation activities for establishing such transport and delivery services. People from the region involved in the pilot action such as steering group members and/or stakeholders have started to introduce the idea during meetings of relevant organisations and associations, as well as other local meetings. In a fact-finding mission, international best practice examples were studied together with four members of the steering group of that pilot action.

### **6.2.1.4 Major Players Involved**

In order to develop DEMOCHANGE pilot actions in South Tyrol, a steering group was installed, organized by those responsible and researchers of that work package from the Free University of Bolzano. The steering groups included the mayors of the four participating municipalities, as well as other representatives and stakeholders in the region.

The focus group on “mobility, home assistance and social integration of elderly people” included representatives of municipal administrations, elderly citizens’ associations, family associations, churches and labour unions who, together with the scientific work package leaders, jointly developed the pilot action. During three meetings, a representative of the church was consulted as well. All members of the focus group had a dual role, being municipal council members and representatives

of various associations as well, since this ensured for a certain commitment and also helped to facilitate the implementation of pilot actions.

Public transport is certainly available in the model region, but as the province and not the local communities are in charge of public transport, transport providers were not involved in the pilot action. In 2012, for the first time in recent years, services on two bus routes in the pilot action region were extended to weekends, as well as two new and additional services were established to connect remote villages.

### ***6.2.2 Reasons for the Implementation of the Pilot Action***

All municipalities in the model region are characterised by dispersed settlements some of them poorly connected to public transport, and partly with difficult access to shopping facilities, medical care services, post offices, etc.

Individual farms and small villages can be reached by public transport only at considerable cost. Utilisation rates of public transport means are modest, due to the low population density. Therefore, some people rather take advantage of neighbourhood and family assistance.

Due to demographic changes, i.e. the increasing number of elderly people, besides current activities, a new approach for securing mobility and a vital infrastructure needs to be found. The idea of delivery services has been developed with the aim of preserving the independence of elderly people and facilitating and maintaining social contacts (Fig. 6.3).

In the model region, elderly people do not yet represent the majority of the population. In 1995, 10.8 % of the total population were over 65 years old, in 2009, their share was already 13.2 %. During the same time period, the proportion of persons older than 80 years increased from 2.1 to 3.5 % of the total population.

Simultaneously, a decrease of the average household size has been observed. The number of large families has been declining while there are increasingly single person households and part family (single parent with children) households. In 1995, the average household size in the model region was 3.1 persons, decreasing to 2.6 persons per household in 2009. In the future, however, people will face more and more difficulties in getting informal support from family members or from people in their neighbourhood. To counteract this, voluntary transport and delivery services need to be established.

### ***6.2.3 Lessons Learned During the Pilot Action Implementation***

The improvement of local delivery services and mobility are urgently needed. Because of the scattered settlement pattern and the low population density in rural Alpine regions, high monetary and non-monetary costs of transportation arise.

A cost-effective and demand-based offer can be provided by involving volunteers. Healthy and agile elderly citizens who work as volunteer drivers are provided

**Fig. 6.3** Excerpt of the paper “Mühlbacher Marktblatt” on “The challenge of demographic change” (Photo: Free University of Bolzano)



with a fulfilling task, albeit the risk associated with legal and insurance issues has to be clarified. Since this transport offer by volunteers may be perceived as a kind of competition by commercial taxi companies, a certain resistance to introducing a volunteer driving service in the region can be expected from this segment of local business.

The home delivery service of groceries and consumer goods could provide for a higher level of autonomy for the elderly when purchasing the necessities of daily life. It definitely could reduce the level of potential intervention from family members in the selection of products and goods. For local groceries, such a transport service is not expected to generate a highly profitable business, due to the high costs of transport and the small quantities purchased per customer. A solution to lowering costs of that service may also be achieved by involving elderly citizen volunteers.

The particular difficulty of a volunteer based solution is that it takes a person who is willing to commit her-/himself to the project and to organise the service on her/his own behalf. The members of the focus group and stakeholders will evaluate best practice examples during the pilot action time frame to gather on site information about implementation steps and the results achieved by such projects.

The pilot action project can be transferred to other Alpine regions with comparable socio-economic and settlement structures. Because of these Alpine settlement structures, there is a strong need for additional mobility services. Besides the responsibility of public authorities, proactive community support and volunteer work is required.

## **6.3 Supporting Nursing Care: Voluntary Dementia Help**

**Marion Anwander, Angelika Martin**

### ***6.3.1 Description of the Pilot Action***

The pilot action Voluntary Dementia Help Allgäu is located within the model region Allgäu in the south of Germany. The goal of the pilot action was to initiate several dementia care trainings at locations which have a high demand for such training and to start networking. The target groups for the training sessions were relatives of demented people, volunteers and nurses. Besides the professional training, the sessions also served to enable families and potential helpers to get to know each other. For that reason, the sessions should not take place separately for the individual target groups.

Another goal was the consulting of regional clubs to ensure their activities in the area of dementia in the long term. During the project period, they were advised regarding possible funding through government resources and health insurers, and whether these had been used up.

As an initial step, a qualified association was found, the Family Health Association, which hired a specialist in nursing care matters. This person took over the project management part-time at 20 h/week and took care of the implementation of the project. He contacted all clubs and elderly representatives of the municipalities as well as elderly officers of the districts to discuss personally and in meetings in which places the need for training was the highest. Depending on these highest regional needs, trainings were pre-organized by local clubs together with the Family Health Association. The marketing of the training events was done predominantly by the local clubs. The dementia trainings totalled 40 h, took place on 10 evenings each 4 h, and were free of charge for participants. The financing of the instructors was not paid out of DEMOCHANGE project funds.

To build the network, the specialists participated in regional conferences and meetings as well as in discussions on the subject of age and dementia care. In addition, a network meeting of stakeholders was held successfully and press-effectively.

### ***6.3.2 Reasons for the Implementation of the Pilot Action***

In the widely rural and traditional Allgäu, reliance on care of elderly people by family members is high. However, offers which support persons who take care of their relatives are not sufficient and often situated in major towns only. The situation is especially difficult for those who take care of dementia patients. For example,



if a person who takes care of somebody needs a day off, several hours of this day are spent driving around to bring the patient to a day care institution. Therefore there is a need to improve the support of people who care for their relatives, and to bring support offers closer to the people that need it. Additionally, due to the demographic structure, in the future there will be less family members available for care, and many retiree immigrants lack appropriate social networks. So it is important to build structures which can absorb this gap.

Thus, the need for well-trained professionals and voluntarily working people is rising in the field of elderly care, especially for people with dementia, for which special nursing skills are required. This Pilot Action is therefore focused on the development of the capacities for the care of demented patients, particularly in the area of volunteering.

The topic of dementia and volunteering plays an important role, and all the more so in rural areas. In many areas, such as clubs, volunteers are active and maintain the structures. But there are also many people who are so far nowhere actively involved, but want to become involved with a flexible time commitment and high level of responsibility, who want to qualify, gain recognition and complete tasks with personal gain and pleasure. Due to demographic change it is to be expected that men and women will be in great demand in the labor market. Consequently, the question of the balance between work, child care and care of the elderly will be increasingly relevant in the coming years. Thus, not only the feasibility of the principle “outpatient before inpatient” with all its cost effects for the public sector will have to be evaluated, but also the attractiveness of the labor market of the Allgäu region in general will become crucial.

Expansion of structures in dementia help for the entire Allgäu is necessary in order to better exploit the currently still existing potential of volunteering better and to sustainably secure more offers for relatives and volunteers in dementia help. Moreover, in the field of volunteering in general, an increasing competition for dedicated citizens can be expected. By consulting initiatives involved in dementia-help towards professionalization, statutory funding can be applied for and the sustainability of aid for dementia-affected citizens can be secured. Through the strengthening of family care in the home, expensive inpatient hospital days can be avoided. This relieves the municipalities as responsible social assistance agencies. In addition, unnecessary stays in hospitals can be avoided or shortened.

Through the objective of enabling people affected by dementia staying at home as long as possible, such sponsored offers make important contributions to the politically desired inclusion of disabled people. By addressing their own aging, the health of the active voluntarily engaged citizens is also promoted. The establishment of appropriate structures thus encourages the approach to the WHO targets “Health 21—Health for all” for the European region. In particular to the objectives “healthy aging”, “equity in health”, “improving mental health”, “an integrated health sector” and “mobilizing partners for health”, the pilot action is a lasting contribution.

### ***6.3.3 The Path from Workshops to Implementation***

The idea for the pilot action was, like the other nine ideas, born in workshops which were held on the subject of health and care. The fixing of this workshop topic came from a previous initial workshop session with 80 participating stakeholders from business, government and education. The pilot action was selected from the pool of project proposals based on several criteria: urgency, chance of continuation and follow-up funding through the Allgäu region, existing staff capacity for implementation through a project leader or an institution and area of effect for the population. The project ideas were developed by experts in the workshops to more detailed project proposals. This included a definition of work packages, a project plan and a cost estimate.

The regional economic development agency Allgäu GmbH appointed on behalf of the district Oberallgäu a project manager who designed and organized the process for the selection of the pilot actions. The Allgäu GmbH operates across districts and is well established in economics and politics, which was a key requirement for the motivation of stakeholders to participate in workshops or projects.

### ***6.3.4 Potentials Used and Barriers Experienced During the Implementation of the Pilot Action***

The procedure to go through two rounds of workshops to generate project ideas was very effective. In the first round, strengths and weaknesses as well as fields for action were identified. In the second round, project ideas were elaborated. Likewise, the structured procedure to choose pilot actions through a list of criteria and prepared project proposals made sense.

In the implementation, it was important that the project leader received support from the district office Oberallgäu in the areas of project management and controlling. Moreover, it made sense to outsource the task of communication packages, graphics, press and public relations work to external service providers. This way, the project leader could concentrate on the network structure, the organization of training events and consulting of clubs during the short implementation period of 1 year.

A further advantage was that all municipalities in the Allgäu region have an elderly officer, who can assess the need for training and knows the local structures. A meeting of elderly officers in September 2011 served for the project leader to present the pilot action and himself, and to arrange subsequent meetings with the elderly officers and the clubs active in the respective municipalities.

Other important contacts were the elderly officers of the districts which were already represented in the two initial rounds of project idea generation workshops. They have an overview of the need for action and the respective district administrations are the central point of contact in the topic of dementia and were also happy

to make use of the related skills and experiences of the Family Health Association. The elderly officers also have to work on the design and implementation of district-related elderly people concepts which created additional pressure for action and interest in the topic. They were door openers for events such as debates and discussions which were initiated on the part of districts.<sup>1</sup>

## **6.4 Future Living Facilities: Inter-generational Living Concepts and Services for Disabled People**

**Beatrice Durrer Eggerschwiler, Rike Stotten**

### ***6.4.1 Description of the Pilot Action***

The pilot action Future Living Facilities is being implemented in the DEMOCHANGE model region Canton Nidwalden in Switzerland. The main objective of the pilot action is the creation of affordable multi-generational housing in all communities of Nidwalden, but also the integration of elderly or handicapped people in such multi-generational housing is focused. Such housing shall guarantee a high level of possibilities of interaction and neighborhood assistance, so that the elderly remain integrated in society (see Figs. 6.4 and 6.5). This should be achieved by the provided infrastructure on the one hand, and on the other hand by sociocultural animation. Multi-generational housing shall also serve to encourage people to change from their often too large living space to smaller units as a

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<sup>1</sup>List of persons and institutions which are involved and support the pilot action:

AKKU Treff, Obergünzburg; Alzheimer-Gesellschaft Allgäu e.V.; Arbeiter Samariter Bund Oberallgäu, Immenstadt; Berufsfachschule für Altenhilfe bfz – Kempten Außenstelle Immenstadt; Betreuungsstellen der Landkreise Ober- und Ostallgäu; Bezirkskrankenhaus BKH Kempten; Bezirkskrankenhaus BKH Kaufbeuren; Bezirkskrankenhaus BKH Memmingen; Bezirk Schwaben; Bildungsportal Allgäu; Bildungswerk Allgäu; Allgäu GmbH/Landkreis Ostallgäu; Caritasverband Kempten-Oberallgäu, Kempten & Sonthofen; Demenzbegleitung Immenstadt-Oberallgäu - NEU dabei -; Ehrenamtlicher Besuchsdienst Oy-Mittelberg; Ehrenamtliche Demenzhilfe Memmingen; Ehrenamtliche Demenz-Hilfe Unterallgäu; Wohngemeinschaft Künersberg – Memmingerberg; Freiwilligen-Agentur Oberallgäu; Haus der Elderlyen, Kempten; Initiativkreis Helfende Hände e.V., Obergünzburg, Katholischer Frauenbund, Immenstadt; Katholischer Frauenbund, Oy; Kirchliche Sozialstation Marktoberdorf-Obergünzburg, gGmbH; Krankenpflegeverein Oy-Mittelberg, Mehrgenerationenhaus Memmingen, Netzwerk Altenhilfe und Gerontopsychiatrie Kaufbeuren/Ostallgäu Allgäu e.V., Elderlyenbeauftragten der Gemeinden und Städte, evangelisch-lutherische Kirchengemeinde Buchloe, Gemeinde Lamerdingen, Landratsamt Ostallgäu Elderlyenfachstelle, Landratsamt Ostallgäu Betreuungsstelle, Landratsamt Oberallgäu Fachstelle Soziales, Landratsamt Unterallgäu Elderlyenfachstelle, elderlyenfachstellen der städte Kaufbeuren, Kempten und Memmingen, Haus der Elderlyen Oberstdorf, bfz Kempten Außenstelle Immenstadt, Dampfsäg Sonthofen and others.



**Fig. 6.4** Multi-generational housing area Bürgenberg in Stans, Nidwalden (Photos: Leo Wolfisberg, Copyright: atlantis-wbg.ch)

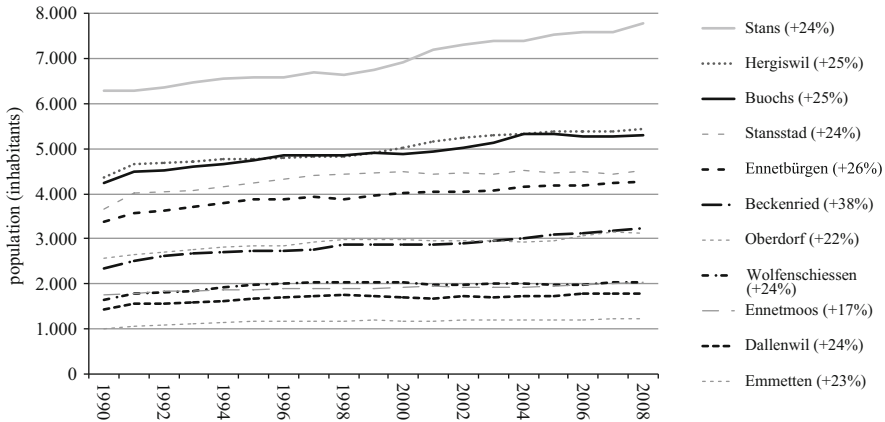


**Fig. 6.5** Pasta dinner in the common building of the multi-generational housing area Bürgenberg in Stans, Nidwalden (Photos: Leo Wolfisberg, Copyright: atlantis-wbg.ch)

decrease of financially feasible housing especially for families has been recognized by several communities in Nidwalden.

In the model region's steering group, several people from the political as well as the civil level are represented to accompany the progress of the DEMOCHANGE project. Several ideas for pilot actions arose in this group, and health and social issues arose as one major topic. As a consequence, a special working group focusing on the topics of health and social issues was initiated by the steering group. The members of this working group were partly recruited from the steering group, but also additional members from government, from institutions and from a housing cooperative as well as "ordinary" citizens are represented. In the working group for health and social issues several ideas were fleshed out and a rough concept for the realization of multi-generational housing was drawn up during three meetings. This concept was presented at the DEMOCHANGE Public Conference in September 2011 in Stans, Nidwalden to the public where it was chosen by the participants of the event as one of three ideas together with "Revitalize Old Knowledge" and "On the Tracks of Nature and Culture", which should be realized within the DEMOCHANGE project as a pilot action. At the public event, also new participants were gained as active members of the working group.

In cooperation with the Lucerne University of Applied Sciences and Arts, the pilot action "Future Living Facilities" was presented during meetings of the



**Fig. 6.6** Population development of the individual communities in Nidwalden 1994–2009, (Matti and Stotten 2011)

municipal councils to several municipalities within the canton of Nidwalden to sensitize politicians for the topic of demographic change and to promote the idea of the Pilot Action idea. In these meetings, the idea of the pilot action Future Living Facilities was received positively. In the following meetings of the working group a union “Wohnwandel Nidwalden” was designed and will be established in November 2012 as a result of the DEMOCHANGE project. This union will follow the objective of realizing multigenerational houses in the future. Another crucial task for the union will be promotion and awareness-raising of the issue on the political level as well as among civil society, and to organize public events to this end. For the further development and planning of the actual houses, contact has been made to the Lucerne University School of Engineering & Architecture, where students will draw up ideal floor plans.

#### **6.4.2 Reasons for the Implementation of the Pilot Action**

The canton of Nidwalden still has a growing number of permanent resident population (see Fig. 6.6). One of the reasons for this is the low tax policy of the canton: there is a steady flow of wealthy, older immigrants who are attracted to the canton for financial reasons. This also results in an increase of the price of real estate and land. As far as the population structure is concerned, aging is accelerated and the birth rate is lower compared to the national average. Also, the number of persons per private household is decreasing. Together with the rising number of permanent residents, this results in a growing demand for living space and smaller housing units as well as a need for other forms of living. This poses challenges for spatial planning with regard to the provision of a suitable living space for the population, also for

those who are elderly. At the same time, building land is a valuable and shrinking resource. The pilot action Future Living Facilities addresses these processes and presents the concept of an innovative and sustainable way to cope with them.

### ***6.4.3 Potentials Used and Barriers Experienced During the Implementation of the Pilot Action***

The pilot action was chosen during the DEMOCHANGE Public Conference by the participants as an issue of importance. Due to this approach, awareness of the issue already existed. In the beginning of the working group one person who is involved in a residential building cooperative was the driving force for the idea of the pilot action. He is persuaded that there is a need of new living facilities and convinced other members of the idea. This person has the professional background and expertise for the topical focus of the pilot action, which was very important for the further formulation and development of the procedure to realize the idea. After the Public Conference more people engaged themselves in the working group for the realization of the pilot action and gave crucial input for the establishment as a union. For that reason, a public conference is crucial to raise awareness for the topic and to find experts to participate in the project development and implementation.

In the review, members of the working group found it very helpful, that the Lucerne University of Applied Sciences and Arts have been acting persistently to motivate them for the realization of the pilot action.

Potentials to disseminate the basic idea of the pilot action are given as the aging of the population as well as the creation of housing space is an issue in several Alpine areas. However, the development and implementation process has to be evaluated on the regional level and cannot be easily transferred. For a sustainable realization the local or regional backing is crucial.

## **6.5 Further Good Practice Examples from Alpine Regions**

**Madeleine Koch, Heidrun Wankiewicz**

### ***6.5.1 Social Inclusion of the Elderly in a Remote Area: A Housing Project in the Province of Parma/Italy***

In 2004 an innovative housing project was started in a remote area within the province of Parma in Northern Italy, dealing with population aging and shrinking. The agricultural settlement Tiedoli, a small hamlet located in the valley of the river Taro which is part of the municipality of Borgo Val di Taro, had been losing

population to the regional centers and bigger cities like Parma for more than six decades. The outward migration of mostly young individuals and families shaped the demographic structure of the municipality. Only a few elderly people stayed in the settlement—no grocery store, no social and medical services and no public transport remained. Vacant houses were left to decay. Questions such as these came up: Who will take care for the elderly? And why should they not be free to choose where to live: either in a familiar surrounding like the home village or in a nursing home far away in a regional center?

Mario Tommasini, a social affairs politician, initiated together with the mayor of Borgotaro a housing project for the elderly of Tiedoli, in order to facilitate an elderly-friendly living environment and to stimulate the local economy. Four abandoned houses located around the old village's church were refurbished and readjusted for disabled people. The renovation of these old houses was cheaper than to build a new retirement home. The now called "Le Case di Tiedoli" enables elderly people, who have to leave their homes for various reasons, to live an independent and high quality life in a familiar surrounding. In addition to daily care, a 24-h customized care service was realized, as well as new accommodations for caregivers and further employees.

The financing of the project was supported jointly by the foundation "Cari-parma", the provincial government and the local parish. Since the housing project started, the region is undergoing an economic recovery. A new settlement for young families arose, people are starting new enterprises e.g. in agritourism, and public transport improved due to a privately organized and telephone based bus service connecting the village to the regional center Borgo Val di Taro. The retirement home in Borgotaro is nowadays well connected to Tiedoli. Residents visit the community of Tiedoli a few times a week and participate in social activities like gardening, playing cards and collective meals. Further information is available at: <http://www.lecasesditiiedoli.it/>

### ***6.5.2 INNOVAGE: Experiential Knowledge and Competences of Retired People as Resource for Civil Society Initiatives in Switzerland***

"Aging" is often reduced to economic questions, like how to organize and to finance the pensions and the care costs of the "baby boomers"; by this, elderly and retired people suffer from stereotyping. However, aging could also be seen as enormous progress and potential for the society; this was the starting point for the project INNOVAGE. INNOVAGE puts the focus on the enormous competences, experiential knowledge and the networks of highly qualified people, like CEOs, consultants and managers of Swiss enterprises at the end of their (regular) working careers. The project has been conceived by the Lucerne University of Applied Sciences and Arts,

School of Social Work, together with MIGROS-Kulturproduzent in 2006 with the following goals:

- The experiential knowledge of people experienced in leadership, management and consulting careers shall be provided for civil society/non-profit activities
- Retired people have the opportunity to shape their life after the professional career with like-minded colleagues
- Support and development of the civil society

Today, INNOVAGE consists of seven independently acting regional networks of about 150 experts/members and is on the way to initiate two more networks. The independent networks meet in yearly conferences. INNOVAGE offers competences for non-profit projects and civil society organisations free of charge in the following fields: project development and implementation, human resource management (coaching, training, teambuilding, transfer), support of organization development and profiling of associations, project negotiation and support in cooperation with public authorities, event organisation, facilitation of exhibitions, meetings, development and analysis of job profiles and of training material, public relations and management (controlling, informatics, communication and conflict management).

More than 80 projects have been realized with the support of INNOVAGE members: e.g. the construction of a rope bridge for a historical bath road in Simmental, the management of a project to introduce a special form of rhythmic gymnastics in homes for the elderly, coaching of the youth organisation okaj in Zurich to implement a “house for youth”, “Gastro-Ladys”, an initiative for young women with migrant background to start a business or get a job in gastronomy, Drumrum—workshops and sensitization for kids and young adults to learn how to shape their built environment, Surprise Choir—support of the foundation of a choir for an existing association, Elternet.ch—to provide knowledge about new media for parents.

### ***6.5.3 Accessibility as a Key to Dealing with Demographic Change in Regions: Cooperation of Building Designers and Local Businesses***

A variety of initiatives and studies provide concepts for various areas in which municipalities or regions can address demographic change. Comprehensive studies can inform on a region’s specific demographic situation today and in the future. On such a basis, recommendations on how to prepare a region best possible for its coming population structure can be developed.

Exactly at this point, however, it becomes crucial that the concepts and recommendations developed are actually implemented. Often good ideas and approaches are not pursued because it is unclear with which implementation measures to begin, which actors need to be involved and in particular how the measures can be anchored in the region in the long term.



How concrete and practical measures can be successfully implemented in a region shows an example from the district of Bad Tölz-Wolfratshausen and the city of Bad Tölz. In a common project to prepare the region for demographic change, concrete measures related to accessibility were implemented on the basis of an analysis of regional aspects and characteristics. An extensive public relations effort for the population and regional companies—especially addressing those from the trades as well as building planners and architects—made clear that accessibility is not only advantageous for physically limited, but for all people. For example, stairs or steps are just as much an obstacle for people with a walker as for parents with a baby carriage. Moreover, accessibility is not only the avoidance of physical barriers such as thresholds, but includes also easy access to information and readability of information. In addition, accessible environments and services can also be realized by training staff and providing innovative offers.

Against this background, a training session for interested companies on “barrier-free building” was realized in the town of Bad Tölz and in the district of Bad Tölz-Wolfratshausen, since this issue requires additional knowledge amongst the providers of construction services and products. This training session and especially the support of the business development agencies of the city as well as the district were the trigger for the formation of a cooperation of building companies and planners. The cooperation now accompanies consulting, implementation and follow-up of barrier-free conversion and new construction. This provides the customer with a product from a single source, without having to worry about taking care of the coordination of the various trades involved—which is a very elaborate task particularly in barrier-free building.

This example shows how long-term added value for the whole region can be created by concrete and practical implementation measures. Not only does the population benefit from a new offer tailored to a demand arising from demographic change. The regional economy is also strengthened by the expansion of the range of services on offer. Thus it is entirely possible to take demographic change, which is often perceived as negative, as an opportunity for a region—and to seize this opportunity.<sup>2</sup>

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