

An assessment of the implementation of the Madrid International Plan of Action on Ageing in Germany from a civil society perspective

Preliminary remarks and overview

This statement is a contribution by the German National Association of Senior Citizens' Organisations (BAGSO) to the review and appraisal of the implementation of the Madrid International Plan of Action on Ageing (MIPAA) of the United Nations and its Regional Implementation Strategy (RIS) in Germany. The implementation is reviewed every five years at national and international level.

This review and appraisal process of the United Nations (UN) includes a participatory element, involving both civil society and older people themselves. It is designed to complement the national reports produced

by member states and to help provide critical feedback on the policies and programmes they have implemented.

BAGSO participates in the Standing Working Group on Ageing of the UN Economic Commission for Europe (SWGAGE, UNECE), which deals with the implementation of the Action Plan in this region of the United Nations. In addition, BAGSO has participated in the national reporting on the implementation of MIPAA of the German Federal Government since its first cycle, as well as in the preparation of the National Action Plan for the Implementation of MIPAA presented in 2007.

To prepare this statement, BAGSO asked its member associations and other civil society stakeholders to give their assessment of the implementation of MIPAA in Germany. For this purpose, the UNECE Guidelines for National Reporting¹ have been used to develop a questionnaire which was published and disseminated in June 2021. The written feedback from around 20 organisations was first compiled and then presented and discussed at a virtual workshop in July 2021 with about 35 representatives from inter-

ested member associations and cooperation partners.²

In addition, this statement incorporates existing BAGSO statements and position papers on the respective topics drafted in the BAGSO expert commissions and adopted by the Executive Board.

The aim of this statement is to complement the national report of the German Federal Government with the perspective of the civil society. We focus on the following key aspects specified by the UNECE:

1. Review of the main progress achieved as well as necessary action required in ageing policy with regard to the voluntary commitments of the German Federal Government according to MIPAA/RIS since 2017 and MIPAA in general since 2002.
2. Analysis of the implementation of the goals and measures of the Lisbon Ministerial Declaration 2017³, which comprises three main goals over the last five years:
 - I. Recognizing the potential of older persons
 - II. Encouraging longer working life and ability to work
 - III. Ensuring ageing with dignity
3. Analysis of the implementation of policies on healthy and active ageing in a sustainable world, with a particular focus on the 2030 Agenda, the UN Decade on Healthy Ageing and the COVID-19 pandemic.

Part I: General achievements and aspects to be improved since 2017

The German National Association of Senior Citizens' Organisations (BAGSO), a federation of about 125 associations and federations of civil society that are supported by older people or that are committed to the concerns of senior citizens, notes the following achievements for the period since 2017 with regard to older people and ageing:

- The conditions for growing older (e.g. an expansion of preventive health care) have improved.
- More differentiated images of ageing have emerged and the concerns of older people have been increasingly perceived and taken into account.
- The framework conditions for the political and social participation of senior citizens have already improved. Above all, the strengthening of older people's organisations, new laws on the participation of older persons and the revision of previous laws should be mentioned here.

Despite these successes, BAGSO still sees a great need for action to improve the living conditions of older people. With regard to the implementation of MIPAA in Germany, securing the following rights should play a central role:

- the right to social and political participation,
- the right to social security, including affordable housing and measures to combat poverty in old age,



- the right to work, including through labour market adjustments, and
- the right to education through comprehensive and low-threshold learning opportunities for senior citizens.

In addition, BAGSO makes demands which are explained in more detail in Part IV of this statement. These are primarily concerned with the following areas:

- access to digital media and the right to analogue access,
- care, including hospice and palliative care, also in the domestic sphere,
- public services in the municipalities, also in rural areas, and integrated neighbourhood development,
- accessibility, also with regard to the mobility of older people.

Furthermore, in the view of BAGSO, the following aspects should play a central role in policymaking, also in the international cooperation of the Federal Government:

- the promotion of a diverse society in which people of different lifestyles, cultures and generations can live together,
- strengthening the rights of older people, including measures to prevent age discrimination,
- a decisive push for climate protection.

Part II: 20 years of MIPAA and the Regional Implementation Strategy

1. Recognising the potential of older people

Achievements and areas needing improvement

With regard to the implementation of the goals to recognise the potential of older people, we generally note that Germany is – with some reservations – on a good path. BAGSO is in favour of actions taken at federal and state level, but also in the municipalities and cities, to create differentiated images of old age. The so-called “Images of Ageing programme” (Programm Altersbilder) of the Federal Ministry for Family Affairs, Senior Citizens, Women and Youth (BMFS-FJ) is a specific example. In addition, the participation of older people has improved, e.g. through political bodies or in the context of voluntary work. The strengthening of older people’s organisations represents a significant contribution towards this.

With regard to the thinking, feeling and dealing with ageing over the last twenty years, it should be noted that overall a greater awareness of the urgent need for action has developed on the part of politics and the population. In addition, the heterogeneity of old age and the recognition of it have increased during this period and topics that have been made a taboo for long, such as sexuality in old age, can now be addressed.

Despite this progress, BAGSO sees the need for further investment, particularly in the following areas, to empower individuals to realise their lifelong potential for physical, mental and social well-being and to participate in and contribute to society according to their capacities, needs, and desires:

- **Education:** BAGSO calls for a systematic, national and state-wide coordinated promotion of educational opportunities for older people. For example, low-threshold educational formats close to home must be recognised and promoted nationwide. Educational offers must be inviting, individually designed and target group oriented and specific due to the diversity of age. Further demands in the field of education are summarised in our position paper “Commitment and Education in Old Age” (Engagement und Bildung im Alter)⁴.
- **Digitalisation:** BAGSO calls for an examination of the opportunities and risks of increasing digitalisation, especially for older people; the promotion of the acquisition of digital skills by senior citizens and, at the same time, the safeguarding of the right not to have to use digital technologies. Further information on BAGSO's demands in the area of digitalisation can be found in our Statement on the 8th Government Report on Older People⁵.
- **Municipal public services:** A central demand of BAGSO is to close the gaps in municipal public services. Assistance for older people and senior citizens' work need a binding legal basis. Part of this demand is to create age-friendly structures and to offer accessible and af-

fordable housing. The right to education should also be part of municipal public services and be seen as a health prevention measure. BAGSO's position paper “Now more than ever!”⁶ concretises demands for municipal public services.

Measures taken by Germany in the context of global activities

Campaign by the World Health Organisation

With regard to current global activities, such as the Global Campaign to Combat Age Discrimination, which is being led by the World Health Organisation (WHO), BAGSO welcomes Germany's participation. However, it is also clear that this participation could be expanded and that there is a need to inform the public about these measures. Germany has a global responsibility and should accordingly participate more in campaigns such as that of the WHO and use them both for ageing policy at home and in the context of international cooperation to contribute to improvements in the living conditions of older people worldwide.

Discussion on better protection of the human rights of older people

BAGSO acknowledges that the UNECE has included specific questions for discussion on better protection of the human rights of older people in its Guidelines for the Review of the Implementation of MIPAA. Since BAGSO first participated in these discussions in 2012, it has explicitly supported the fact that the effectiveness of the existing human rights system has been reviewed by the United Nations Open-Ended Working Group on Ageing (OEWG-A) since 2010.



Regarding the guarantee of comprehensive protection of older people's rights through national policies, BAGSO notes that the guarantee is often given on paper but not put into practice. There are regulatory gaps, especially in the area of care. In its statements, BAGSO therefore repeatedly pointed out gaps in protection in German family and social law on the one hand, and the special need for protection of older people worldwide on the other.

It is also important for BAGSO to note that although MIPAA has references to human rights, it is not a human rights instrument and deals with aspects of ageing mainly from a development perspective. From BAGSO's point of view, the two processes complement each other, although only an internationally binding legal instrument for the protection of the rights of older people provides a legally binding basis for the differentiation of fundamental rights in national laws. The statement on a UN Convention published by BAGSO in 2020⁷ summarises the most important demands concerning the human rights of older people.

BAGSO acknowledges that the German Federal Government is generally open to this discussion, addresses it in bilateral and multilateral relations and actively participates in the meetings of the OEWG-A. However, information on the participation and positioning of the Federal Government should be publicised more. Furthermore, and more importantly, Germany should become more active and take a leading role in initiating the next steps for the adoption of a UN Convention on the Rights of Old-

er Persons. BAGSO welcomes the fact that almost all democratic parties are in favour of better protection of the human rights of older people worldwide as noted in BAGSO's Election criteria for the 2021 elections for the German parliament⁸ and that the majority explicitly supports a UN Convention on the Rights of Older Persons. BAGSO's call for a convention is also supported by the organisations that contributed to this statement.

2. Encouraging a longer working life and ability to work

Achievements and areas needing improvement

As far as measures to promote a longer working life and the ability to work are concerned, BAGSO notes initial progress in the area of reconciling work and care activities as well as in the area of lifelong learning for the period since 2017. However, it is problematic from BAGSO's point of view that measures to employ older workers mainly benefit people with a higher level of education and higher income.

For the period since 2002, a greater appreciation of older workers has emerged. In addition, working hours and the transition to retirement have been made more flexible. There have also been successes in the area of occupational health and safety, although the requirements now urgently need to be adapted to the changed world of employment.

In order to achieve the goals of the regional implementation strategy, BAGSO be-

believes that it is necessary to invest more in age-friendly working environments. Measures to promote health in the workplace and in the field of education and qualification of older workers are necessary to give older people the opportunity to remain longer in working life. In addition, the compatibility of family, work, care and further education must be further promoted through more flexible working life models. In BAGSO's view, it is important that the individualisation and flexibilisation of working life takes place on a voluntary basis. BAGSO also calls for additional measures to prepare for the transition to retirement. In order to maintain and promote the ability of older persons to work, contemporary educational offers for older people, including state-supported further education and retraining offers, must be offered nationwide.

There is also a need for improvement in the area of old-age security. From BAGSO's point of view, the stability and security of the statutory pension insurance is becoming increasingly important.

The amount of a person's pension is determined by his or her life and career history. In order to combat poverty in old age, new working life models must be developed that counteract social inequalities in old-age provision at an early stage.

With regard to measures to compensate for gender-related income differences and to close gender-related pension gaps, BAGSO welcomes the introduction of the Mothers' Pension (Mütterrente) II and the Basic Pension (Grundrente). In addition, the expan-

sion of childcare contributes to more gender equality.

However, BAGSO notes that generally too little has been done to take into account the special situation of older women. Old-age poverty continues to be a major problem, especially among older women, also because child-rearing and care periods as well as work in the low-wage sector and part-time or in poorly funded projects and job creation schemes are not sufficiently taken into account. Measures are therefore needed in the workplace, but also in other areas of society, that give women equal opportunities and enable them to work longer and more flexibly throughout their lives. Incentives must be created for people of any gender to increase the compatibility of family, work, care and further education.

3. Ensuring ageing with dignity

Measures to protect human rights

With regard to measures to protect older people's enjoyment of all human rights as well as their dignity, BAGSO notes that these have been implemented insufficiently and not across the board. BAGSO assesses as progress the increasing attention to the diversity of older people and the first steps towards reforming the caring professions. Furthermore, BAGSO positively welcomes developments, especially in the field of care, such as the entry into force of the Care Strengthening Acts (Pflegestärkungsgesetze) II and III, the Concerted Action on Care (die konzertierte Aktion Pflege), the first National Prevention Report and the Act on the Re-

form of the Caring Professions. It should also be noted that higher quality standards have been developed overall over the last 20 years. In addition, there have been successes in the field of social planning and neighbourhood management.

In order to achieve the goals of the regional implementation strategy with regard to human rights, BAGSO calls for closing gaps in municipal public services. To this end, assistance for and work with older people must be given a binding legal basis. Standard structures must be created so that municipalities can develop sustainable care structures that enable people to live independently and in a self-determined manner. In addition, outreach services in neighbourhoods must be expanded in order to avoid loneliness. BAGSO has made further statements and demands on the provision of services and care in the position papers "Now more than ever!"⁹ and "The future of help and care at home".¹⁰

BAGSO calls for better pay for care workers to be more widespread as well as improved working conditions, greater recognition and support for family caregivers (especially to relieve women in home care) and a social reevaluation of care. In addition, aspects of diversity must be taken into account as a standard in all areas of care work and assistance to older people. Intercultural competencies must also be strengthened. There is also a need for improvement in the area of palliative and hospice care. Here, a nationwide implementation of the Hospice and Palliative Care Act (Hospiz- und Palliativgesetz) is required. In addition, BAGSO

demands a regular dynamisation and flexibilisation of the benefits of long-term care insurance, which would better meet the differing needs, as well as a limitation of personal contributions. In order to prevent the need for long-term care, BAGSO calls for an expansion of health-promoting conditions and the provision of nationwide services. These must be accessible in older people's differing living environments and for people with limited mobility. In addition, conditions must be created for people to remain at home. BAGSO also advocates that the opportunities of digitalisation be used more effectively in the field of care and public services.

For the past twenty years, BAGSO sees the following achievements in protecting the enjoyment of all human rights by older people: In general, human rights have been increasingly discussed since the foundation stone was laid in 1949 by the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. BAGSO also sees that the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities has contributed to strengthening the human rights of older people and welcomes the overall increased debate about human rights at international and European level. With regards to Germany, the inclusion of the characteristic "age" in the General Equal Treatment Act (Allgemeine Gleichbehandlungsgesetz) is a success. However, there is a need for improvement here, because age discrimination, e.g. in the field of insurance, so far could not be avoided by the Act.

BAGSO therefore calls for a specific human rights instrument for the protection of older

people, which can form an important basis for the differentiation of fundamental rights in national laws worldwide, including in emerging and developing countries. From BAGSO's point of view, a UN Convention on the Rights of Older Persons is an important instrument to oblige national legislators to legally enshrine a ban on discrimination based on age for all areas of life. A decline in abilities at an older age in individual cases cannot and must not be a reason for general age-related unequal treatment. Fixed age limits are therefore also inadmissible and must, if necessary, be replaced by case-by-case assessments. BAGSO published further demands concerning the protection of the human rights of older people in a statement¹¹ in April 2020.

Part III: Healthy and active ageing in a sustainable world

1. Contribution of ageing-related policies to the implementation of the 2030 Agenda

BAGSO appreciates that the assessment of the implementation of MIPAA makes a concrete link to the 2030 Agenda and the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). In its guiding principles, BAGSO explicitly commits to the SDGs of the 2030 Agenda. In the position paper "Protecting the climate – an intergenerational task for tomorrow's world"¹² BAGSO sets out demands for the implementation of the SDGs. Even before the publication of this position paper, BAGSO joined forces with other civil society organ-

isations at national level (the Network 2030 Agenda¹³) and internationally (the Stakeholder Group on Ageing – SGA¹⁴) to increase the pressure on politics, business and society to achieve these goals. Through these groups, BAGSO has called attention to the interests of older people in the civil society statement on Germany's Voluntary National Report (VNR).

In BAGSO's view, insufficient links have been made so far, both at international and national level, between ageing issues and the 2030 Agenda. Older people play a minor role in the voluntary reporting of the German Federal Government. For example, older people are not mentioned in the assessment of the implementation of Goal 4 on education and lifelong learning, probably due to the definition of the indicators. On the other hand, BAGSO takes note of the fact that the UN Decade on Healthy Ageing 2020–2030 is supported in Germany's VNR in 2021. Conversely, the SDGs have so far received little attention in important documents on ageing issues, such as the Federal Government's Reports on Ageing.

2. Dealing with the consequences and impacts for older people during the COVID-19 pandemic

In the context of the COVID-19 pandemic, BAGSO was pleased to note the policy brief "The Impact of COVID-19 on Older Persons"¹⁵ published by the UN Secretary-General in May 2020. In this brief, he calls for an acceleration of the OEWG-A's efforts to present a draft text for an internationally binding

human rights instrument. BAGSO is also pleased that Germany, along with 145 other member states, has issued a statement¹⁶ pledging to support the UN Secretary-General's appeal and to strengthen international cooperation to "fully promote and respect the dignity and rights of older persons".

Overall, especially at the beginning of the pandemic in the spring of 2020, the protection of senior citizens was also the focus in Germany. As early as March 2020, BAGSO, together with the Federal Ministry for Family Affairs, Senior Citizens, Women and Youth (BMFSFJ), appealed to all generations to protect older people and vulnerable groups in a press release¹⁷. In addition, BAGSO formulated recommendations in several statements on how to improve the situation of older people during the pandemic.

In this context, BAGSO called attention to the fact that old age was one-sidedly and sweepingly associated with ideas of needing protection and assistance, and with vulnerability and frailty. This led to a stigmatisation that many older people rightly perceived as discriminatory and patronising.

Despite the need for contact restrictions and hygiene regulations, BAGSO also criticised that many of the measures led to a reduction or discontinuation of health promotion and prevention services, as well as medical check-ups. External quality audits in care facilities were also discontinued in order to protect residents. Restrictions on visiting and going out, as well as the often complete cessation of social life in facilities, were critically assessed by BAGSO. In order to

assess the appropriateness of these restrictions on visiting and going out, which often led to extreme social isolation, BAGSO commissioned a legal opinion piece¹⁸ in autumn 2020. This showed that these restrictions on visiting and going out in nursing homes violated Germany's Basic Law to a considerable extent and were thus to be judged as inappropriate.

From BAGSO's point of view, the special regulations for care services, such as the reimbursement of costs for alternative care solutions or extended possibilities to claim the relief amount, are to be recognised as measures that have made a significant contribution to the protection of older people during this pandemic. In addition, the prioritisation of older people and medical/nursing staff for vaccinations should be mentioned. In order to strengthen social inclusion and solidarity in times of "physical distancing", the countless support services created through voluntary involvement were indispensable. Offers came mainly from civil society or the private sector. Through assistance with shopping, telephone helplines and assistance in digital participation, an important contribution was made to older people's care. The shift to digital services and inclusion of digital communication tools were important steps to maintain prevention and rehabilitation measures and nurture social contacts. Since access to digital services is not available for many older people, BAGSO called for basic digital services for residents in German nursing homes in a statement¹⁹ in June 2020.

Political approaches have changed since the beginning of the pandemic given ongoing new findings and insights. For example, improvements have been made in the area of care to prevent the complete social isolation of residents in nursing homes as well as people in home care situations. Some federal states, for example, have reopened care facilities for visits by relatives under certain conditions. In addition, the introduction of COVID-19 tests and protective measures has made more possible again.

In Germany, older people were affected by COVID-19 mainly through isolation and more difficult provision of everyday goods and services, as well as restrictions on all of those services that contribute to a healthy and active lifestyle.

On the issue of difficult health care decisions affecting older people, medical societies and advocacy groups engaged themselves early on in policy and societal discussions to ensure dignity and the right to health. For example, clinical/ethical recommendations for decisions on the allocation of intensive care resources in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic²⁰ were jointly adopted by a large number of medical associations.

Overall, the pandemic has accelerated developments and revealed the areas in which policy reforms for older people are urgently required to sustainably improve their living conditions and be better prepared for future crises. BAGSO has summarised its ten most important demands, drawn from the lessons of the pandemic, in the position paper "Now more than ever!"²¹.

3. Activities for the preparation and implementation of the WHO Decade of Healthy Ageing 2020–2030

With regard to the activities within the framework of the Decade of Healthy Ageing 2020–2030²², BAGSO welcomes the fact that the Decade adopted by the 73rd World Health Assembly was designated a UN-wide Decade²³ by the UN General Assembly in December 2020. BAGSO is not aware of any measures taken by the German government to implement the UN Decade at a national level. Isolated work by civil society or local stakeholders is addressing the measures pushed by the UN Decade and the goals to be achieved. From BAGSO's point of view, a coordinating body would be desirable which, in addition to coordination and networking at national level, should also be responsible for international networking. For example, the work already carried out and planned in Germany should be fed into the digital platform of the United Nations²⁴ developed for this purpose and international partners should be provided with information about it.

Part IV: Conclusions and future priorities

Overall, with regards to the implementation of MIPAA in Germany, BAGSO notes that older people and ageing-related issues are increasingly becoming the focus of public and political attention. For the period since the adoption of MIPAA in 2002, BAGSO perceives positively the increase in coordinated activities and the greater consideration of senior citizens' concerns in legislation and programmes. In the context of positive developments, a further increase in life expectancy and the emergence of more differentiated images of old age should also be mentioned, as well as the "lust for life" of many older people who are involving themselves in a variety of ways.

For the future, despite this progress, BAGSO sees a great need for action in order to implement the goals of MIPAA in Germany. Important aspects here are the further promotion of opportunities for participation, also through the establishment of a better environment for voluntary involvement, the prevention of loneliness, the fight against age discrimination, old-age security and poverty reduction (incl. affordable and age-appropriate housing and corresponding mobility), as well as exploiting the opportunities of digitalisation and ensuring analogue access.

BAGSO's key demands, which must be taken into account in the context of future measures to implement MIPAA in Germany, are:

- strengthening municipal senior citizens' policy and promoting older people's organisations,
- improving protection against age discrimination and violence, ensuring a voice in in-patient care and standing up for the rights of older persons in the EU and internationally,
- combating old-age poverty, improving the income situation of statutory pension insurance, strengthening occupational and private pension provision, avoiding double taxation and relieving the burden on directly insured people,
- promoting the voluntary involvement of older people (also across generations), creating full-time contact points throughout the country and enabling participation for all, expanding low-threshold offers for lifelong learning and promoting the political participation of older people,
- strengthening health promotion, prevention and rehabilitation, introducing preventive home visits nationwide, expanding care structures close to home and strengthening the role of local authorities,
- further developing long-term care insurance, improving the situation of outpatient care, ensuring that those affected have a greater say, and improving disaster prevention and crisis management,
- promoting affordable housing, developing accessible and age-appropriate housing, creating an accessible living en-

environment and neighbourhoods for every generation, and ensuring mobility, and

- recognising the internet as part of public services, maintaining analogue access, making digital participation more socially just, enabling accessible participation and improving data protection and data security

These demands are derived from BAGSO's set of questions addressed to all democratic parties for the 2021 election for the German parliament²⁵.

From BAGSO's point of view, the future viability of our society is one of the biggest challenges. In order to build a sustainable society for all ages, the coexistence of the generations must be strengthened and the potential of old age must be exploited. Creating a viable – sustainable – society is a generational task. In the position paper "Protecting the climate – an intergenerational task for tomorrow's world"²⁶, BAGSO sets out demands that are directed at every generation and every level: from local to global.

With regard to the work of international organisations, BAGSO sees the need to include the topic of ageing as a cross-cutting issue and to increasingly consider the concerns of senior citizens in international cooperation. BAGSO sees Germany in an important pioneering role and calls on the Federal Government to make greater use of its experience in the field of ageing policy in bilateral and multilateral relations, especially in development cooperation. In addition, international organisations in the field of

ageing should have the opportunity to further promote the international exchange of good practice, especially in terms of municipal capacity development, and to advance the discussion on strengthening the rights of older people. In this context, BAGSO notes that access to existing good practice exchange activities needs to be improved and existing barriers, e.g. due to language, need to be reduced.

All in all, from BAGSO's point of view it can be stated that since the adoption of MIPAA, or already since the adoption of the International Plan for Action on Ageing in 1982, many positive developments have taken place to improve the living conditions of older people. Nevertheless, these developments have to be reassessed again and again and existing programmes and laws have to be readjusted on an ongoing basis. As MIPAA is only an action plan with recommendations, BAGSO – together with hundreds of older people's organisations from all over the world that have joined forces in the Global Alliance for the Rights of Older People (GAROP²⁷) – calls for the urgent adoption of a UN Convention on the Rights of Older Persons, a binding international human rights instrument.

This statement is based on a large number of up-to-date statements and position papers by BAGSO supplemented by contributions from member organisations and cooperation partners and was adopted by BAGSO's board in August 2021.

Further information

The most important documents – the MIPAA, the RIS and the Ministerial Declarations – are available in English, French and Russian at the following link: <https://www.unece.org/population/ageing.html>

The BAGSO special issue “A Society for All Ages”, which gives further information on MIPAA and its implementation, is available in English and German: <https://www.bagso.de/publikationen/themenheft/eine-gesellschaft-fuer-alle-lebensalter/>

- 1 <https://unece.org/population/ageing/review-and-appraisal> (retrieved on 10/08/2021)
- 2 For a summary of the results of the consultation please go to: https://www.bagso.de/fileadmin/user_upload/bagso/03_Themen/Internationale_Altenpolitik/Annex_to_the_statement_of_BAGSO.pdf
- 3 <https://www.bmfsfj.de/resource/blob/120588/12af9acc48565b8f508a0ed4bf9e2239c/unece-ministererklaerung-lissabon-2017-data.pdf>, https://unece.org/fileadmin/DAM/pau/age/Ministerial_Conference_Lisbon/Declaration/2017_Lisbon_Ministerial_Declaration.pdf (in English) (retrieved on 10/08/2021)
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BAGSO – The voice of older people

BAGSO, the German National Association of Senior Citizens' Organisations, represents the interests of older generations in Germany. It stands up for active, healthy and self-determined ageing in social security. BAGSO is an umbrella organisation of about 125 civil society organisations that are run by or work for older people.

In a colourful and diverse society, BAGSO promotes a differentiated image of old age. This includes both the various opportunities arising from longer lives as well as times of vulnerability and the need for care.

BAGSO calls on politicians, society and businesses to offer conditions that allow for a good and dignified life in older age – in Germany, Europe and worldwide.

At the United Nations, BAGSO is actively involved in the development of a UN Convention for Older People. BAGSO is also a member of the Global Alliance for the Rights of Older People (GAROP), an international alliance of over 200 civil society organisations that advocates for the rights of older people. BAGSO's Secretariat for International Policy on Ageing provides information on current international developments in ageing policy and contributes the interests of civil society to international processes.