



**School of Applied
Psychology**

Psychological Institute



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University of Luxembourg

BEGIN – Enhancing social integration of immigrants with an intergenerational mentoring program

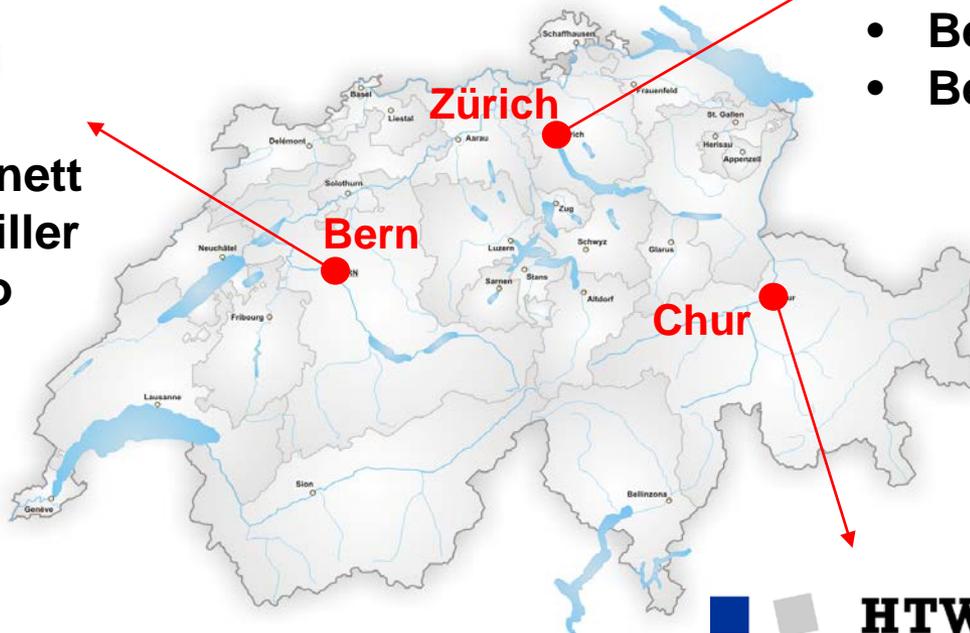
Beate Schwarz, Belinda Berweger, & Jonathan Bennett

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Principal investigators: Jonathan Bennett, Beate Schwarz, Michèle Métrailler, & Peter Indergand
In cooperation with the Swiss Red Cross

Project team



- Jonathan Bennett
- Michèle Métrailler
- Diana Romano
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Zürcher Hochschule
für Angewandte Wissenschaften



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Psychologisches Institut

- Beate Schwarz
- Belinda Berweger



Hochschule für Technik und Wirtschaft
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- Peter Indergand
- Annette Roemer

Project goals

BEGIN is a mentoring program that...

- **aims at persons with an immigrant background who attend a course for care aides**
- **and older Swiss volunteers as mentors**
- **to promote an intercultural and intergenerational exchange**
- **that is based on professional didactics**
- **and will benefit all involved participants:**

- Promote the social integration of immigrants in the Swiss culture
- Enhance the vocational integration of immigrants in the Swiss labour market
- ... in a vocational field that has a shortage of trained workers
- Foster intergenerational solidarity between older volunteers and immigrants
- Promote generativity and voluntary work of older people



Identifying main topics by interviews

- To identify topics, i.e. patterns of cultural misunderstandings, which might emerge when foreign care aides work with elderly Swiss
- Interviews were conducted with different members involved in the elderly care
- 14 structured interviews (from both outpatient and stationary care areas)
 - 7 foreign care aides
 - 5 care managers
 - 2 trainers for care aides
- 5 larger topics were identified
 - **Language barriers**
 - **Lack of cultural knowledge regarding Swiss culture**
 - **Cultural differences regarding family and generational relationships**
 - **Hierarchy and limit setting**
 - **Dealing with rejection**

Language barriers

There is the dialect, that's not easy. [...] Swiss German from the canton Bern and in the nursing home there are a lot of persons from other cantons. And there are different dialects and that was really difficult at the beginning.

Care aide from Senegal

Learning objective:

Improved understanding of Swiss German and enhanced application of German.

Lack of cultural knowledge regarding Swiss Culture

It's about values, norms, rules. For example, we always wait for everyone before we start eating. It's important that they know about such things, especially when they work in the age care.

care manager of nursing home

Learning objective:

Through mutual exchange, mentees expand their knowledge of Swiss culture and learn to better understand and interpret cultural behaviors and norms.

Cultural differences regarding family and generational relationships

We should tell them about our family systems, because many of them don't understand why we 'put' older people into a retirement home [...]. We have to get them familiar with our system, which is probably different from the system in their homeland.

care manager

Learning objective:

The mentees gain a better understanding of the interaction between family support and the support provided by the health care system in Switzerland for the care of the elderly.

I can not say that something bothered me or that I would do something different there. Yes, maybe with families, where I notice and see that the children do not even look at their parents. I found that really sad.

Care aide from Macedonia

Learning objective:

Mentees identify cultural differences in the design of family and generational relationships and learn to understand those differences.

Dealing with rejection

The old people didn't accept me immediately. I have made a lot of experiences with that, I can describe it this way: they first have to know my good character and my appearance. After that it comes.

Care aide from Turkey

Hierarchy and limit setting

Many of the immigrants come from family clans where the family structure is still very traditional. Where hierarchy and the awe for the old age is still present, much more than in our families.

care manager of outpatient care

Learning objective:

Mentees learn to better represent their own interests and opinions and set limits, which promotes personal responsibility in everyday working life.

Principles of the mentoring program

- not only focussing on problems but on strength of the immigrants (e.g., positive view on old people, patience, their efforts to adapt to a new culture)
- Mutual exchange and mutual learning, no teacher-student relationship
- Based on the 5 topics 6-8 modules will be developed which can be chosen by the mentors and mentees according to their needs and interests
- The conversation guide includes topics such as
 - Social relationships (e.g. emotional and physical proximity)
 - Biographical aspects (e.g. transition into the retirement age or the migration process)
- Innovative audio-visual materials will be produced by our partners in Chur
 - Short video sequences
 - Collaboration platform
 - Application Software



Evaluation

- Process Evaluation
 - Satisfaction of the participants
 - Program-Monitoring
 - Optimization of the basic conditions
 - Quality of implementation
 - Treatment fidelity
 - Usability of the material
- Efficacy
 - Did the participants benefit from the program?



Provisional start of the implementation: September 2018

Contact

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