

## Management Summary

### Situation

In previous years, different forms of housing for the aged population emerged. The conventional residential nursing homes exist alongside with other concepts of housing. The homes for the aged adjusted their services, and today, for many elderly they represent an adequate place to live. However, what are the specific motives, attitudes and expectations of elderly towards various forms of housing and homes for the aged in particular? To find out, in 2013, the “Altersheime der Stadt Zürich (AHZ)” initiated a postal survey intending to investigate the motives and expectations about the form of housing “home for the aged”. Also, the aim was to explore the stage in one’s life where the decision is made for or against living in a home for the aged.

### Method

Among 1586 older inhabitants of the city of Zurich, by the means of a postal inquiry, responses were collected about their attitudes towards different forms of housing in higher age and in particular about homes for the aged. On the one hand 532 people were questioned who had registered to a public home for the aged in the city of Zurich but were still waiting their admission. On the other hand an additional group was questioned, namely 1033 individuals from the age of 75 in the city of Zurich who had not yet enrolled to a home for the aged. The corresponding status for the remaining 21 respondents is unknown. Thus, the survey engaged with people who occupied themselves with the subject of the home for the aged, with people who did not bother or individuals who had a different attitude.

### Results

Most of the interviewed people positively assess their current state of health, autonomy and individual aging. Many participants are satisfied with the current housing situation, that is to live in rented apartments. Nevertheless, most of them consider various forms of housing for their own age and evaluate potential forms of housing as well as care and service models. Most people prefer to live in their private home being assisted by care and nursing services. But also, most respondents well envisage the home for the aged as their prospective place to live.

The broad majority attributes positive images, opinions and features to homes for the aged, especially highlighting aspects like security, nursing and caring services, social contacts and the discharge of household-duties. Negative aspects, if at all, are associated with subjects like privacy, self-confidence and dependence. Entering a home for the elderly is motivated by various reasons, though they reflect the positive features mentioned above. Thus, many respondents hope to feel well protected and being cared for at the home for the aged.

It was shown, that a positive image of the form of housing “home for the aged” and an existing contact there positively influence the opinions about this particular form of housing. People who are registered for a home of the aged do – on average – live by themselves, are aged already, disregard their own aging and are in less healthy conditions than people who are not yet registered. In the presence of these conditions, the advantages of the home of aged outweigh the disadvantages and justify an early entrance into a home for the aged.

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