

SCOHPICA (Swiss COhort of Health Professionals and Informal CAregivers) cohort symposium series



The Nursing profession and the transition from work to retirement – a German perspective.

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Older Health Workers and the transition from work to retirement – a German perspective

Overview

1. Background
2. Work and health in Nursing: The German case
3. Transition to retirement
4. Nurses' resources
5. Pulling the threads together: The new WEITBLICK project
6. Conclusions



1. Background: *(early) exit in Germany*

- Germany is one of the fastest ageing societies in Europe
- In the next ten years: > 9 Million baby boomers (born 1955-1965) will reach retirement age
- of > 1 Million new pensions in 2021:
 - 16 % disability pensions
 - > 26 % early old age pensions *without* deductions
 - 21 % early old age pensions *with* deductions
 - 35 % regular old age pensions
- For 20 years employment rates among older workers in Germany have been greatly increasing
 - but not for the “older old” > 63 years.
- **“What are the reasons for early labour market exit among many baby boomers in Germany?”**



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2. Work and health in Nursing: The German case

- Health Sector
 - over 5 Million workers, 13.2 % (2019) of total work force
- Nursing profession
 - over 1.8 Million nurses (12/2022)
 - 2/3 Health Care Nurses, 1/3 Geriatric Nurses
 - pronounced shortage: 500,000 more nurses needed until 2034
 - profession is ageing





NEXT-Study 2002-2005



Nurse's Early Exit Study, NEXT

- 2002-2005
- Questionnaire assessment among 56,000 Nurses in 11 European countries
- ICOH-Scientific Committee OH for Health Care Workers central



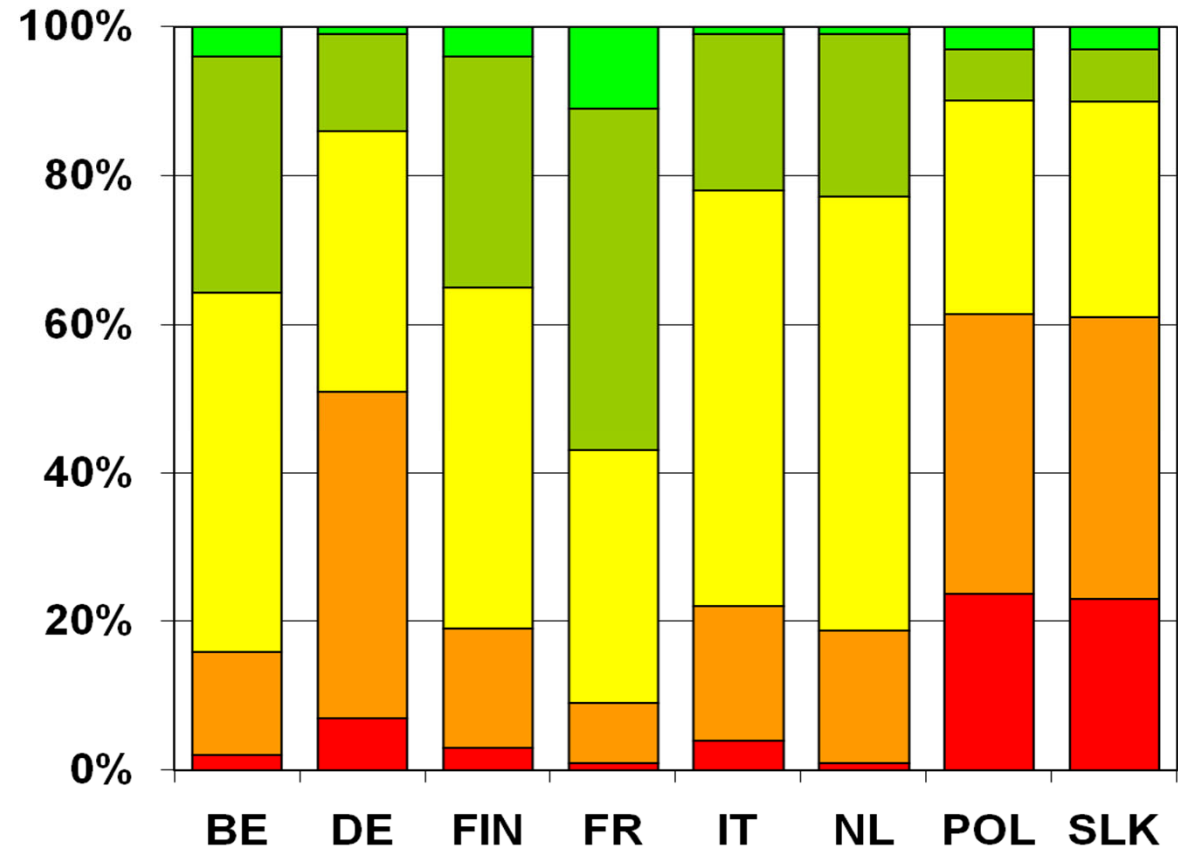
	BE	GER	FIN	FR	UK	IT	N	NL	PL	SLK
<i>Structure</i>										
Job insecurity				😊				😊	●	●
<i>Work content</i>										
Quantitative demands		●	●				😊	😊	●	●
<i>Social work environment</i>										
Social support from colleagues					😊	●		😊		
<i>Work organisation</i>										
Professional development	●			😊	😊	●	●			
Working time quality		●			😊	●	😊	😊	●	●
Leadership quality	😊	😊		●	😊		-		●	😊
Decision latitude, control			●		😊		😊	😊	●	●
<i>Outcomes</i>										
Burnout				●			😊	😊		●
Work ability		●		●			😊	😊	●	
Considering leaving profession	😊	●			●	●	😊	😊	😊	😊



How did nurses rate their own professional image?

“In my country the image of the nursing profession is ...”

- very good
- good
- normal
- poor
- very poor



Source: data from the European NEXT-Study, 2003, N=22,170



Past 20 years

- new challenges: COVID, Climate change
- deterioration of care-indicators
such as *staffing, length of stay in hospitals*
- (slow) increase in professional re-organisation



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1. Background
2. Work and health in Nursing: The German case
3. Transition to retirement among older workers
 - a) How long do they want, plan, can (to) work?
 - b) Why do many older workers want to leave early?
 - c) Under which circumstances would they work longer?
 - d) What are the reasons for early exit among early retirees?
4. Nurses' resources
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Our study: lidA - leben in der Arbeit

“German Cohort Study on work, age, health and work participation”



- Participants

- birth cohorts 1959 and 1965 and 1971_(2022/23)
- representative for socially insured workers of that age

- Wave 1 $N_{2011} = 6.585$

- Wave 2 $N_{2014} = 4.244$

- Wave 3 $N_{2018} = 3.586$

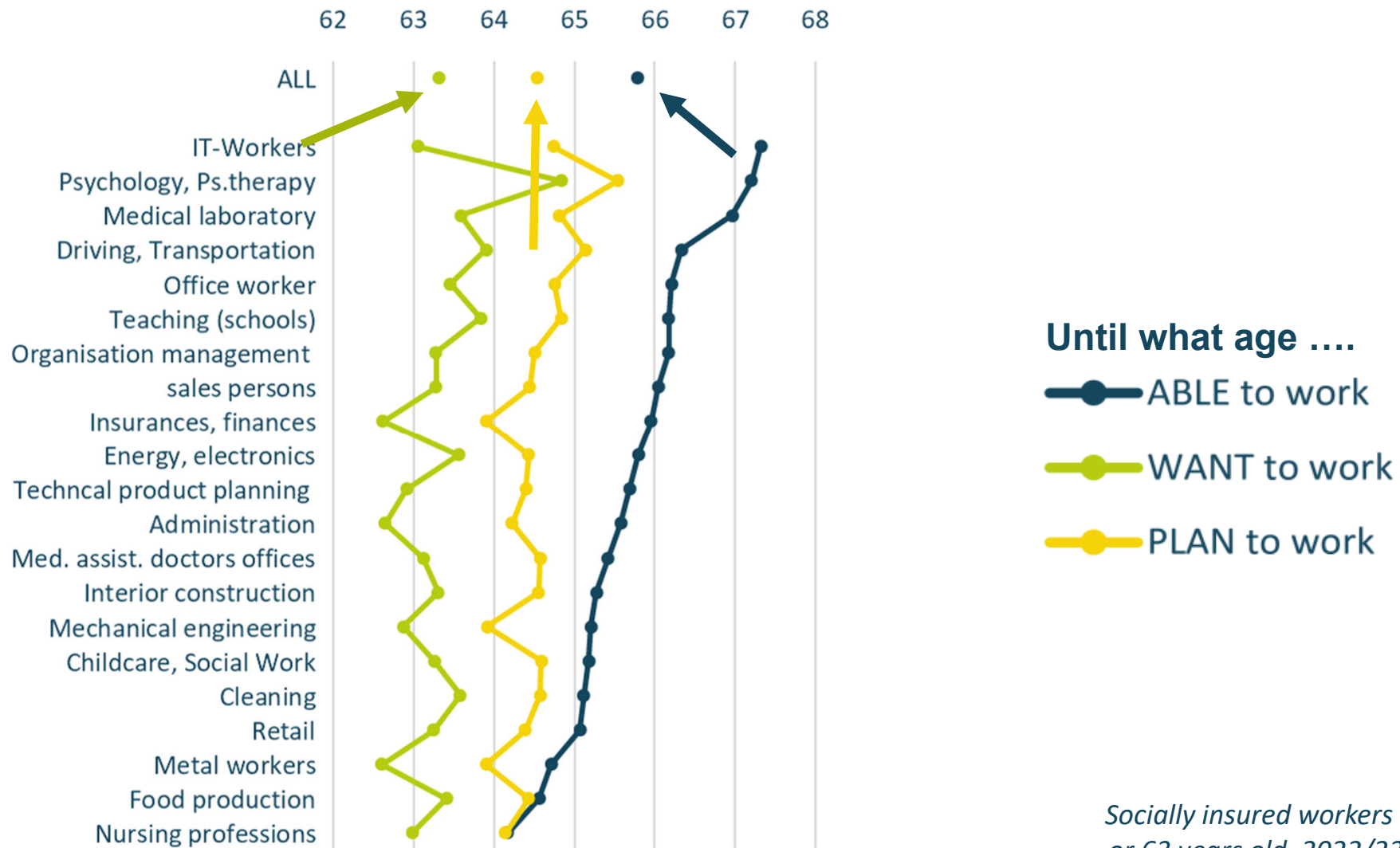
- Wave 4 $N_{2022/23} = 8.884$ **this presentation**



- every three years: personal interview (CAPI) at home (2022/23 also phone) covering: work, health, perspectives, private life...
- more: www.lida-studie.de



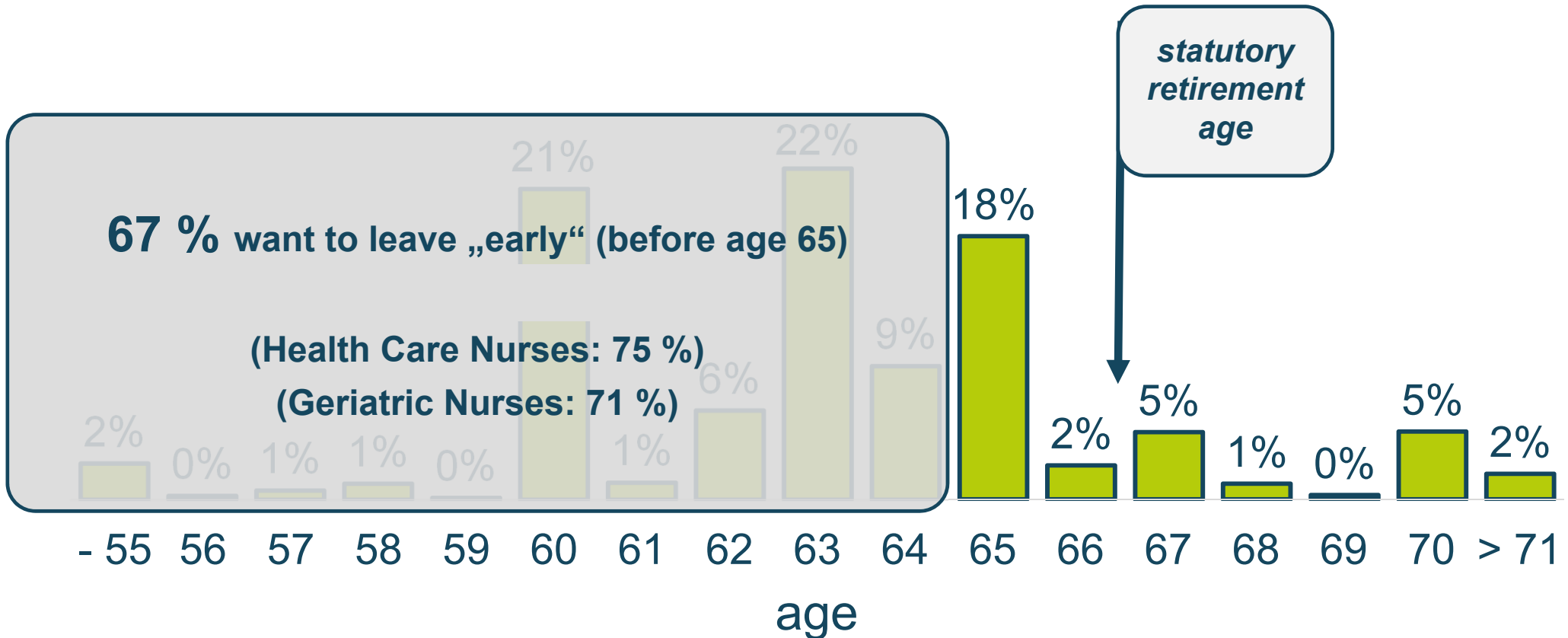
targeted age (group means)



Socially insured workers in Germany, 51, 57 or 63 years old, 2022/23, N=7.470 to 7.481



“Until what age do you want to work?”

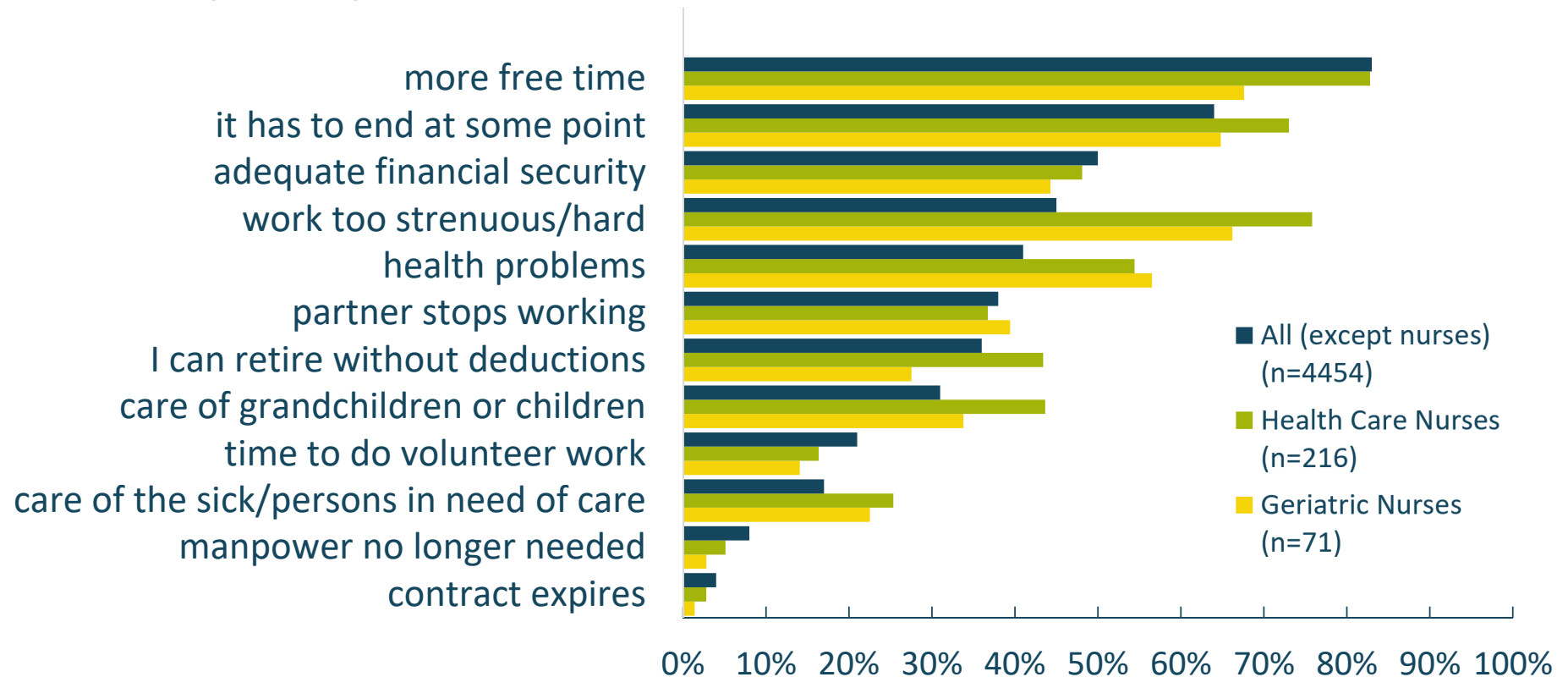


Socially insured workers in Germany, 51, 57 or 63 years old, 2022/23, N=7.294, Sum = 97.0%. 2.5 %: “I don’t know”



3b. Why do many older workers want to leave early?

“this reason plays a major role“



Only workers wanting to work until max. 64 years, 2022/23

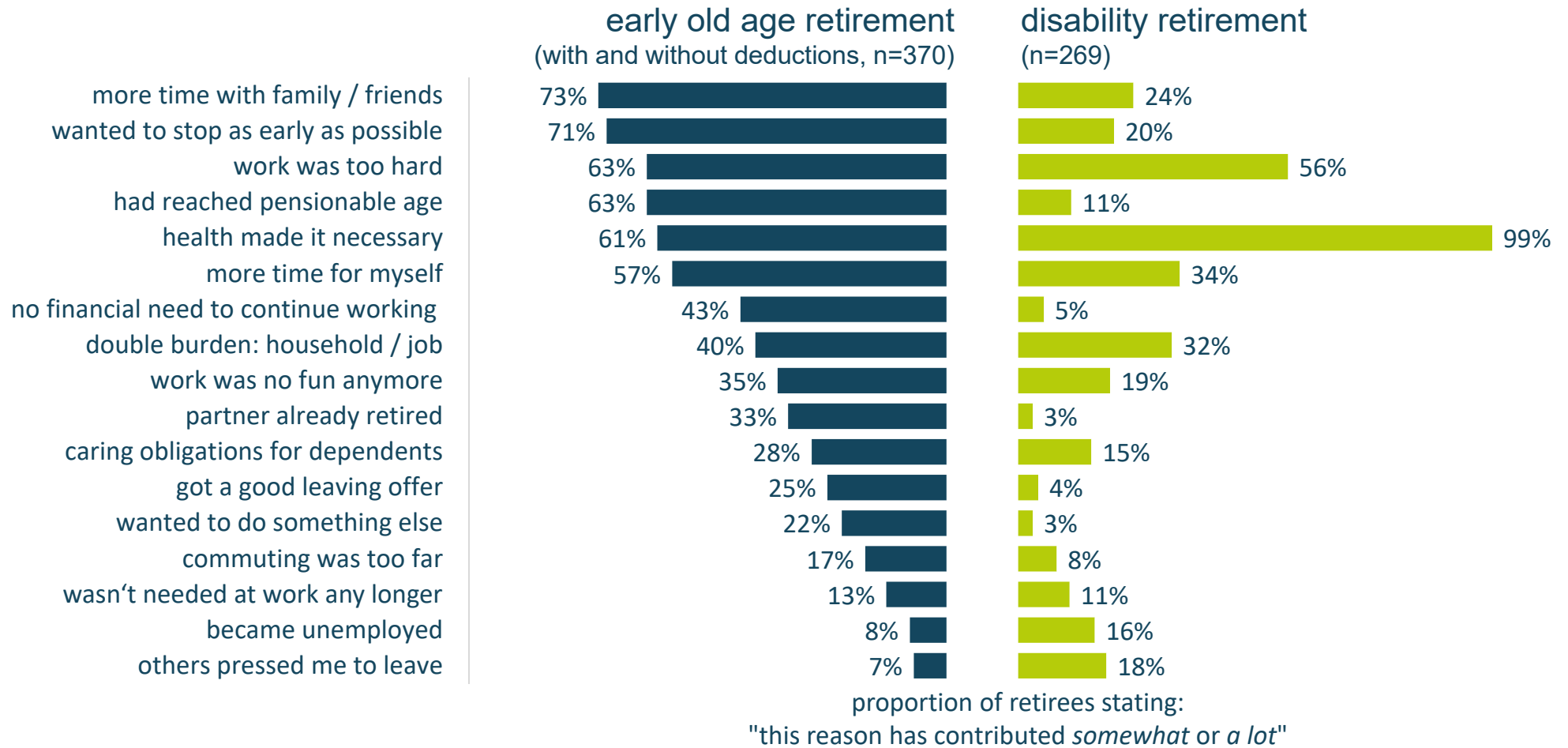


3c. Under which circumstances would they work longer?



Only workers wanting to work until max. 64 years, 2022/23

3d. What are the reasons for early exit among early retirees?



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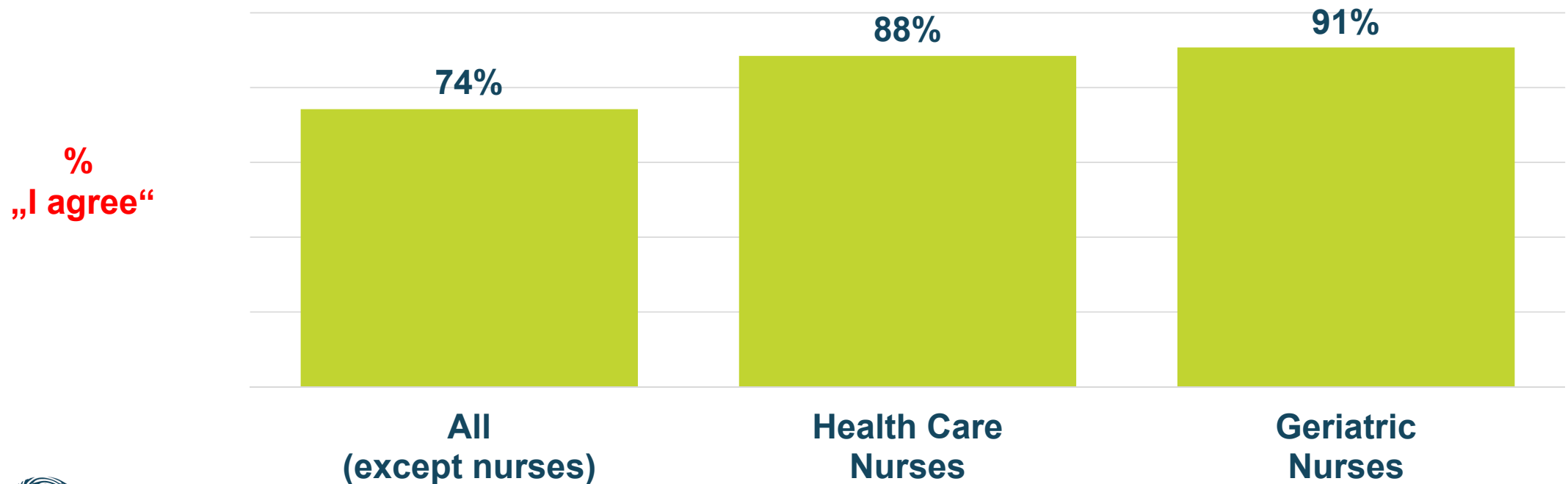
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„The work that I do, means a lot to me“

Please, let me know to which degree the following statement reflects you and your current working situation: **„The work that I do, means a lot to me“**



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New project „Weitblick“

Three observations

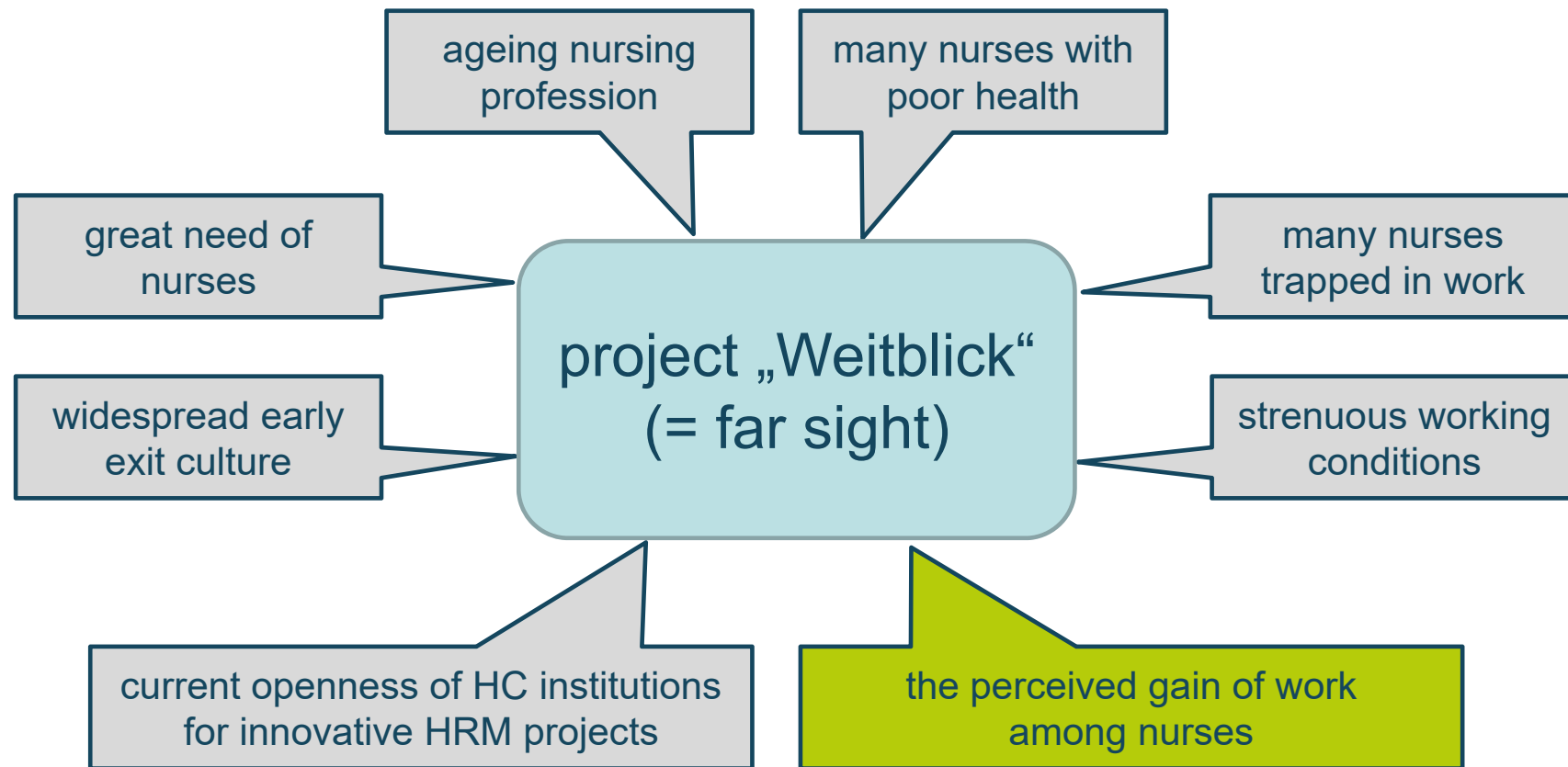
- Many older workers in Germany regard their last working years as a *phase of transition* and not as *valuable life years*.
- Many older workers in Germany regard the question of when to leave work and to enter retirement as a *purely private matter* - and only consider it by themselves and their private surrounding.
- When they finally let the enterprise know that they will be stopping work and retire early, then this decision is often irreversible.

A hypothesis

- A higher awareness for the last working years and an earlier, open and respectful discourse with their superior about this, could – among many older workers – increase quality of work and life - and might extend their years in employment.



New project: „Weitblick“ („farsight“)



„Weitblick“ - Aim

Intervention project aimed at supporting older nurses
to improve – and possibly extend – their last working years

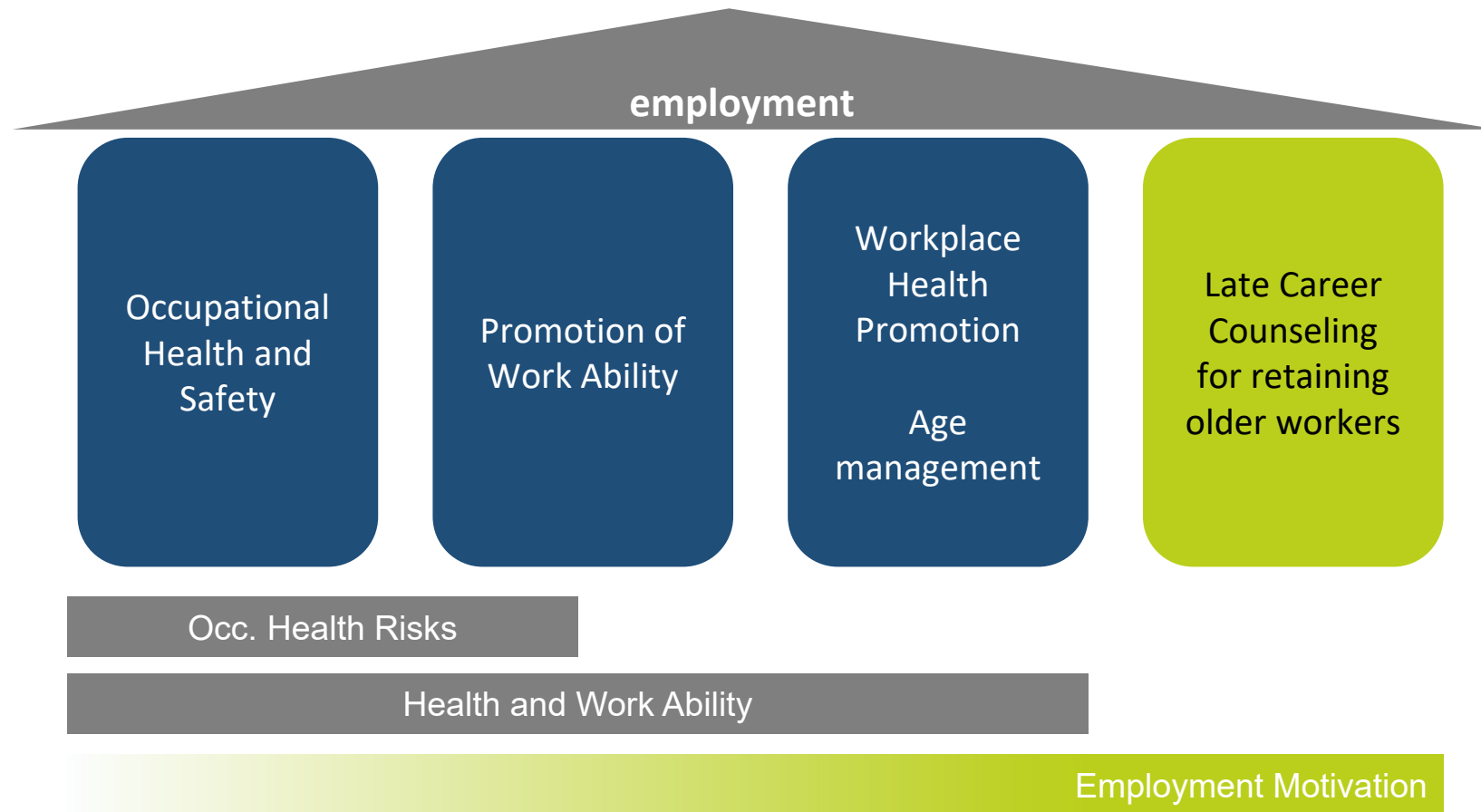
- by reflecting their career and work
- by finding / enforcing personal resources and motives for their work
- by defining individual aims for the successful continuation of their work and
- by encouraging them to follow them,
- AND by creating awareness in the organisation's leadership level

Concept based on Danish project „Pre-retirement Counselling“ by Poul-Erik Tindbaek et al.

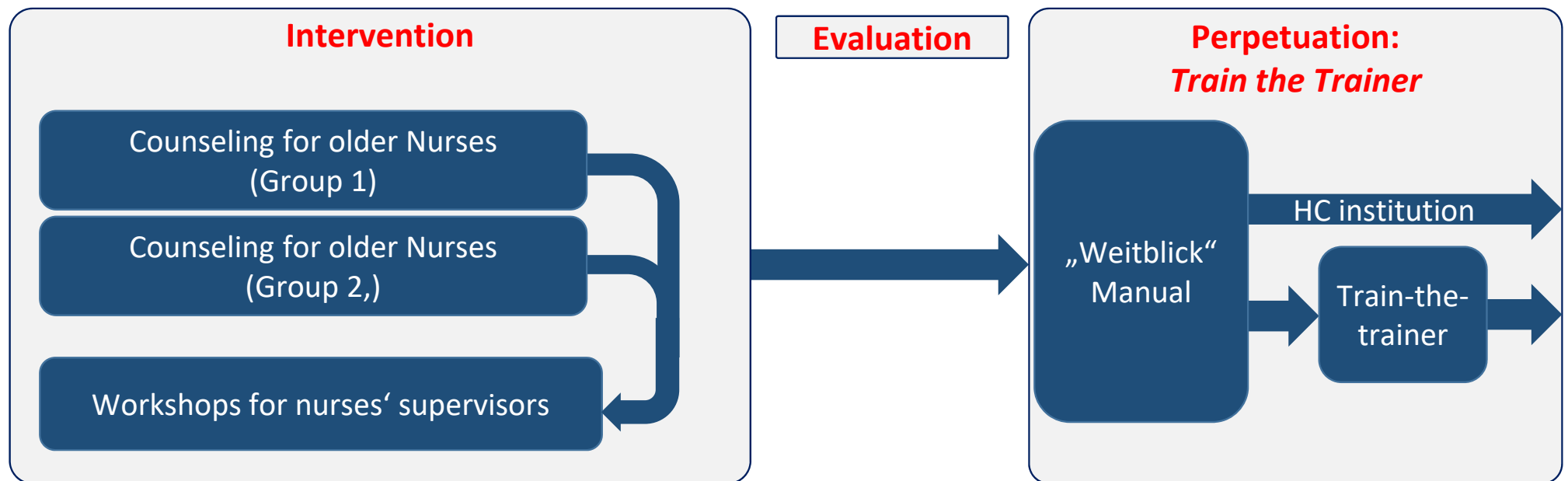
<https://www.en3karriere.dk/wp-content/uploads/2013/03/Pre-retirement-counselling.-A-shotcut-to-active-ageing-1.pdf>



„Weitblick“ - Concept



„Weitblick“ – Dual Career Counseling Design



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bringing it to the point

- In the older working population in Germany, an early exit culture prevails.
- Most of those who can afford to retire early do so.
- The dominant reasons are **self-determination** of life and **feeling of entitlement**, rather than **poor work & health**.
- The (ageing) nursing profession continues to have hard working conditions, but also reports strong psychological gains from work.
- Many, but not all, are trapped in work.
- An intervention programme to create awareness for the last working years among the nurses and their supervisors might improve the workers' *quality of work, quality of life* and the motivation to continue working.



References

lidA study

- Hasselhorn HM, Peter R, Rauch A et al. (2014) Cohort profile: The lidA Cohort Study – a German Cohort Study on Work, Age, Health and Work Participation. International Journal of Epidemiology, 2014, 1736-1749. doi: 10.1093/ije/dyu021

Early exit culture in Germany (lidA findings Wave 4, 2022/23, in German)

- Hasselhorn HM, Ebener M (2023) Frühzeitiger Ausstieg der Babyboomer aus dem Erwerbsleben – Ergebnisse der lidA-Studie. Deutsche Rentenversicherung 02/2023 152-174

Project „Pre-retirement Counselling“ by en3karriere, Poul-Erik Tindbaek

- <https://www.en3karriere.dk/wp-content/uploads/2013/03/Pre-retirement-counselling.-A-shotcut-to-active-ageing-1.pdf>



Thank you!

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