

German Welfare Council

Registered Charity Number:

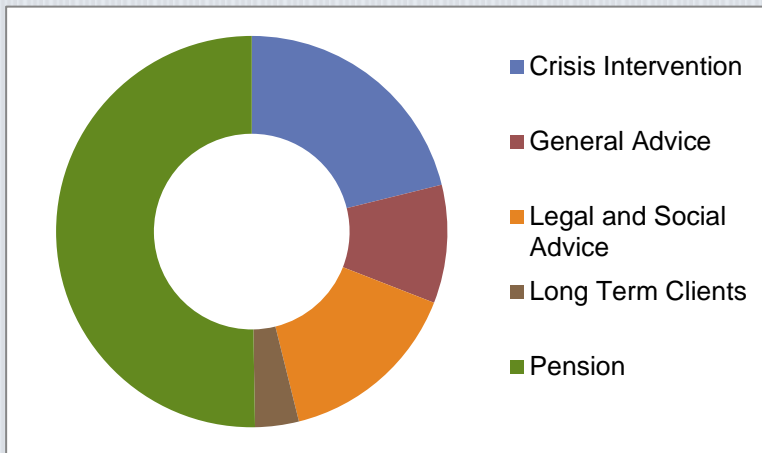
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Annual Report 2014

In 2014 we advised and supported 1,109 people known to the German Welfare Council and approximately 300 anonymous cases. As in recent years 20% of these were new clients referred to us by the German Embassy,

clients were seeking pension advice, crisis intervention and social security support (please see graph below).

Pension advice for German and British



other charities such as the Association for Jewish Refugees, homeless organisations or Citizen Advice Bureaus. Clients accessed our service through online searches or by recommendations from friends, neighbours or family.

We covered a wide range of matters within the German and British Social Security systems. The majority of

systems increased to half of our cases, whilst contact to long term clients slightly decreased. Family members of deceased pensioners asked us to support them in informing the German pension authority about the death. We then supported them in applying for survivors pensions if applicable.

Patron:

His Excellence the Ambassador of the Federal Republic of Germany
Mr Dr Peter Ammon

Committee:

Ms V. Gronewold – Chairwoman
Mrs K. Groombridge
Mr U. Maynard
Mrs U. Tottmann
Mr J. Rhys
Mr C. Dieckmann

Employees:

Mrs D. Scording (full-time qualified social worker)
Mrs A. Palmer (part-time qualified Social Worker)

Part-time seconded by German

YMCA:

Ms B. von Alten (social worker)

Independent examiner:

Leigh Saxton Green Chartered Accountants, Clearwater House, 4-7 Manchester Street, London W1U 3A

Bank:

HSBC sort code: 40 04 07
Account number: 31055909

Case study: Family H.

Mrs H.'s husband died a year ago and she and her family informed the German Pension authority about their loss. Mrs H.'s condition worsened over the grieving process and she suffered a stroke. Due to her medical conditions she could not live by herself anymore and needed to move into a care home. Because of the events she and her family were unable to look into the paper work the German Pension authority had requested in order to proceed with the widow's pension claim. A year later and with an unfinished widow's application form, which the family did not

understand, they contacted the German Welfare Council for help. We then collaborated with the German Pension authority in order to find out which documents and forms were needed and explained to the family, who by then had obtained Power of Attorney for Mrs H., on how to proceed. With clear instructions in English they were then able to complete the forms on Mrs. H.'s behalf. She is now in receipt of a widow's pension which helps cover her costs of living.

Our gratitude goes to:



The German Ambassador, Mr Dr Peter Ammon and his staff

Charities administered by the Kaiser Wilhelm II Fund

Our corporate members

Blick Rothenberg

German YMCA

The European Bookshop

The old and young volunteers

The German parishes in England

All organisations and individuals, not specially mentioned

Changes to the German Mother's state pension (Mütterrente) from July 2014 and income based Jobseeker Allowance for EEA Citizens

Last year we had a number of inquiries about changes for the so called "**mother's pension**" which is not a new form of pension but implements improvements concerning allowances in child rearing times. Its implementation is designed to bridge an unjust gap as the rearing of children born before 1992 were assigned only 1 average annual salary point (Entgeltpunkte) instead of 3. The pension increase for older mothers was implemented from July 2014, as a result mothers pensions were increased by up to 28 Euros per month per child. The improved recognition of child rearing times is an automatic process and needs no application. Fathers who claim child rearing times in their old age pensions are also entitled to the increase.

During the second half of 2014 we had increased contact with people affected by the rule changes in claiming **income-based Jobseeker Allowance (JSA)** after January 2014. The new regulations mean that one can claim JSA only after having been a UK resident for at least three months, more importantly though JSA will stop after six months unless there is 'compelling' evidence about a genuine chance of finding work. Most of our clients though should be exempt from this rule as they have been living in the UK for more than five years as students, workers, or had self-employed status or were a dependent of a worker. It seems that the Department of Work and Pension (DWP) does not always look into this option and our clients needed clear guidance on how to direct the DWP. Another important fact included in the regulation changes is that from April 2014 there is no access to Housing benefit for EU migrants whose status is that of a Jobseeker. We expect more inquiries to this change.