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Integration Council

## Cultural exchange during intergenerational cooking

### **Intergenerational cooking continues // Senior citizens and young people meet up to cook together**

Following the conclusion of the IHELP project last year, the organisers of the intergenerational cooking event decided to continue the format. Senior citizens and young people met at the family education centre for this year's first intergenerational cooking event.

The event was organised by jusina e.V. in cooperation with the family education centre (FABI), the association Leben im Alter e.V. (L-i-A), the integration office of the city of Bocholt and the Committee for Equal Opportunities and Integration (ACI). The Berufskolleg am Wasserturm also supports the project. The aim is to bring people of all ages and backgrounds together and to inspire volunteers to get involved.

## **Cooking together**

The cooking was supervised by Ataf Chaudhry and his wife Kanwal Chaudhry, who come from Pakistan and have lived in Bocholt for many years. Ataf Chaudhry is not only deputy chairman of the ACI, he has also been giving cookery courses at the FABI since 2018 and enjoys sharing his enthusiasm for Pakistani cuisine with other people.

"I'm always happy when I can inspire people from three different continents with our dishes and even if none of the guests knew the recipes, they still managed to do a great job", says Chaudhry. After a short round of introductions, the guests cooked together in four colourful groups. People from different generations with roots in Ukraine, Greece, Guinea, Pakistan, Romania, Afghanistan, Syria, Croatia, Turkey and Germany worked hand in hand.

## **Cross-generational cooperation and diversity**

"In the kitchen, age doesn't matter - it's all about working together", said Susanne Rademacher from the family education centre. "Even if we already know some of them, it's always nice to meet new people, regardless of age", she explains.

It is clear that the event was not just a culinary evening, but a valuable contribution to greater understanding, openness and co-operation in a diverse urban society. Or as participant Mohamad Omar puts it: "I got to know new faces - I really enjoyed it. I hope we cook together again soon".

Bruno Wansing, integration officer for the city of Bocholt, would like to continue offering the format: "It is precisely because the exchange between young and old and also between people with and without an international family history, which we have experienced here today, is so important to us that we will continue to organise the intergenerational cooking event twice a year". Agnes Wellkamp from jusina was also enthusiastic: "My thanks go to everyone who has brought our new 'never walk alone' project to life with this format."



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*Young people and senior citizens with roots from 11 nations met at the FABI for intergenerational cooking*