

The general meeting of the DAGV on 02.10.2016 - for the first time in the 67-year history of the umbrella organization - approved a policy statement which is presented here:



# The DAGV Policy Statement

## *Preamble*

We, the Deutsche Arbeitsgemeinschaft genealogischer Verbände e.V. (DAGV), are the umbrella organization of the genealogical and heraldic societies and a voice for historical sciences. It is our goal to advertise genealogy and heraldry publicly, to enthuse and to motivate as many people as possible for family-history research and heraldry, to engage itself in societies, as well as (particularly) to work towards an unhindered access to the research sources at state and church administrations. As an umbrella organization, it is our wish to strengthen the identity as well as the cooperation of the societies by regular exchange and personal contacts, thereby to support the individual societies in their work. Genealogy and heraldry live from personal exchange and a high flow of information concerning where a given specialized information is available, and which technical means can be used for this.

The DAGV organizes not only the German Genealogist Day as an annual showcase of genealogy but also more-frequent special events. The web site as well as the DAGV-News serve for the exchange of and the report on activities of the umbrella organization and its individual members. Questions from within and from outside Germany to the umbrella organization are answered by the executive board and by members of the member societies.

## *I*

For the first time in the history of the DAGV, the members of the umbrella organization formulate a policy statement of their own in which the current and future work is described. The organized genealogy and heraldry in Germany consists of innumerable individual societies, which in turn find themselves in an umbrella organization. The DAGV is supported by its member societies. The members of the executive board are recruited from these societies.

Family-history research (genealogy) devotes itself to the collection and evaluation of historical sources for the purpose of reconstructing historically families and relationships. Similarly also for heraldry. Together with experts from science, archives and libraries we work with the goal of collecting historical facts as exactly and precisely as possibly. State, church as well as private archives are our natural partners with whom we want to maintain and extend intensive contacts as well as exchanges.

We consider it our responsibility to promote the publishing of the research results in any form and to find adequate solutions for the preservation of research results/estates.

## *II*

Genealogy becomes quickly a passion which does not stop at local or national borders. An international exchange is possible, however, only if both good will with all our neighbours exists and the specialized knowledge, including the necessary language and place knowledge, is shared. We are as researchers also dependent on the general global political situation, e.g., if access to sources is required.

Europe and particularly Germany have been characterized by migration for centuries. The DAGV motivates its member societies to initiate studies of the roots and biographies of new immigrants, to seek out "Germans worldwide," and to stimulate research possibilities for immigrants. Not only the traces of former emigrants but also those of immigrants as well as those of their descendants should be researched. The goal is to restore or to build up partially forgotten connections. To accomplish this goal, modern means of communication and social media offer possibilities undreamt of till now and reach also younger generations, which about these researches should be increasingly attracted.

All participation in the individual societies is honorary. In principle, we welcome making the thoughts, sources and research results freely accessible. Genealogy and heraldry always should be open for new ways in research, development and documentation. The societies decide themselves regarding the form of access.

### III

Family-history research is not a state but an individual matter which must orient itself to legal specifications. Genealogists often have far-reaching wishes. It is a task of the DAGV to discuss these wishes with responsible authorities and institutions and to develop them further. Access to sources which are important for genealogists and heraldists stands at the midpoint of interests represented by the DAGV.

The DAGV and her member societies are concentrating on the preparation for the future of organized genealogy and heraldry by consciously attracting members and their off-spring. As opposed to commercial suppliers, the value of the genealogical and heraldic societies consists in the personal exchanges between individual members, the construction and maintenance of society archives and libraries as well as in the individual development of genealogical methodology.

### IV

Germany is a strong base for genealogy and heraldry with respect to sources and available organizational structures. Genealogists take on responsibility. They stand for values such as international understanding and the maintenance of an essential part of our cultural heritage. Genealogists and heraldists of both sexes do thereby outstanding work for the society and for the next generations.

Only together can we be successful intergeneratively in the societies and the DAGV. Everyone can bring in his knowledge and abilities. The genealogy (in Germany and internationally) is so extensive that everyone finds his place in the gigantic genealogist family.

The genealogist and heraldist family includes large and small societies, which can use and transform chances quite differently depending on the activity of its members and its financial strength. Under the umbrella of the DAGV, a solidarity with each other arises (among other things, the concept of regionalization).

The special value of genealogy is the investigation of the family past against the background of temporal historical developments. The exchange of research results is a chance to avoid duplicating researches and to enable new researches. The DAGV, together with societies and umbrella organizations abroad (internationalization), is called on to provide impulses for cooperative genealogical and heraldic projects and to organize their formation, in order to safeguard the results for future generations and to guarantee the future ability of genealogy and heraldry, in which we learn from each other.

(Translation: Eldon Knuth, IGS, CA).