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# „Senior educational programs for compensating future student decline in German universities“

The Silver Market Phenomenon – Business Opportunities and Responsibilities in the Aging Society

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## 1. Problem description

### 2. Background

- a. Demographic change
- b. Third Agers and their leisure activities
- c. Business opportunities – educational Silver Market

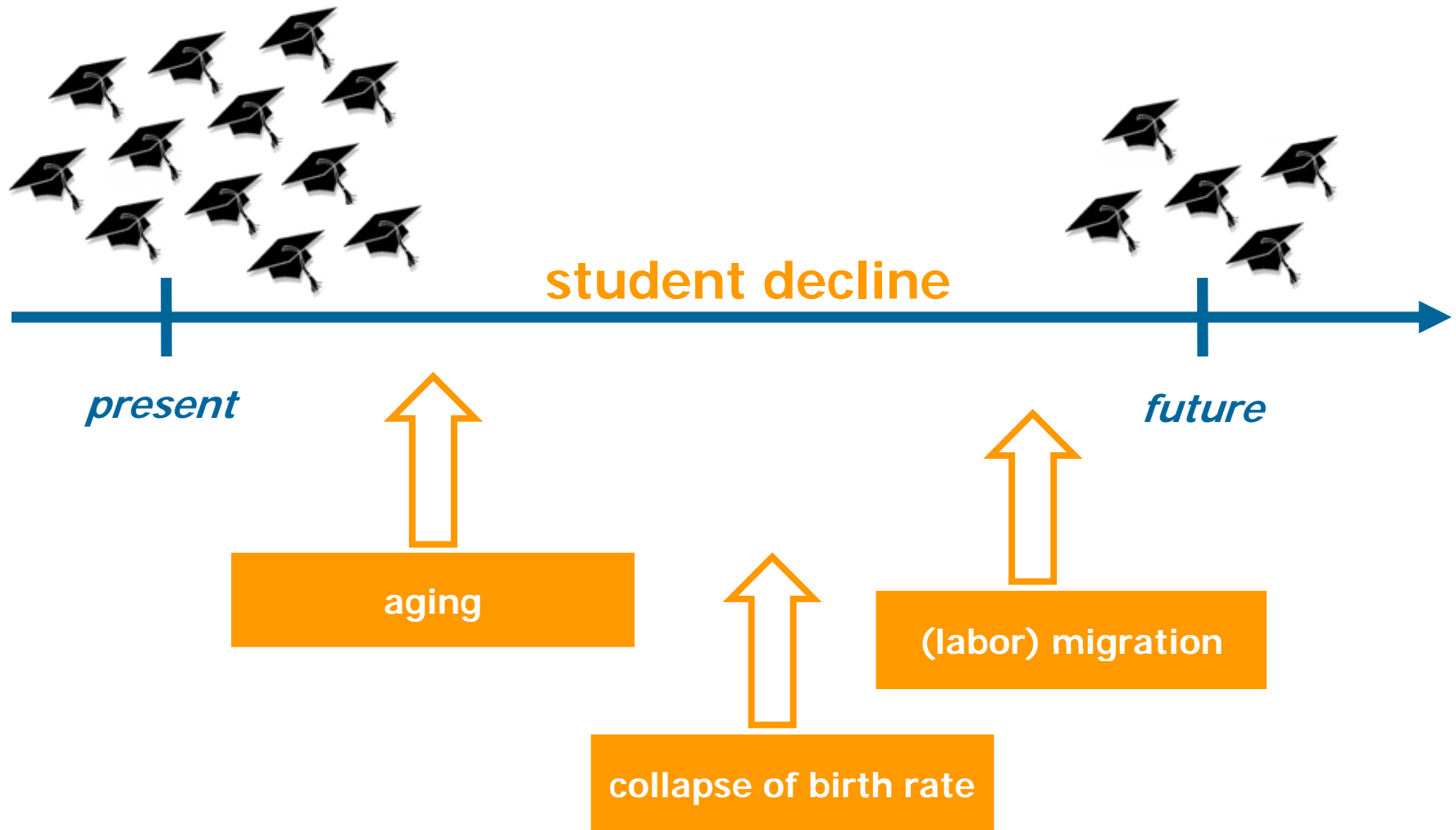
### 3. Universities of the Third Age (UTA) in answer to student decline

- a. Facts of UTAs in Germany
- b. Example of the Brandenburg University of Technology Cottbus, Germany
- c. Dilemma of the educational Silver Market

### 4. Strategies to enlarge the benefit for universities

### 5. Conclusion

1. Problem description



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# Content

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## 4. Strategies to enlarge the benefit for universities

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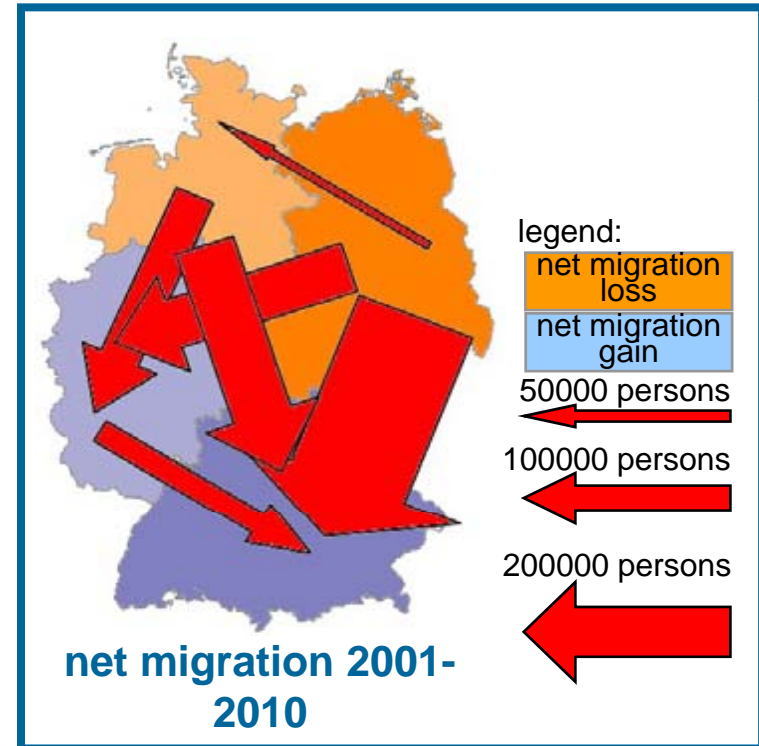
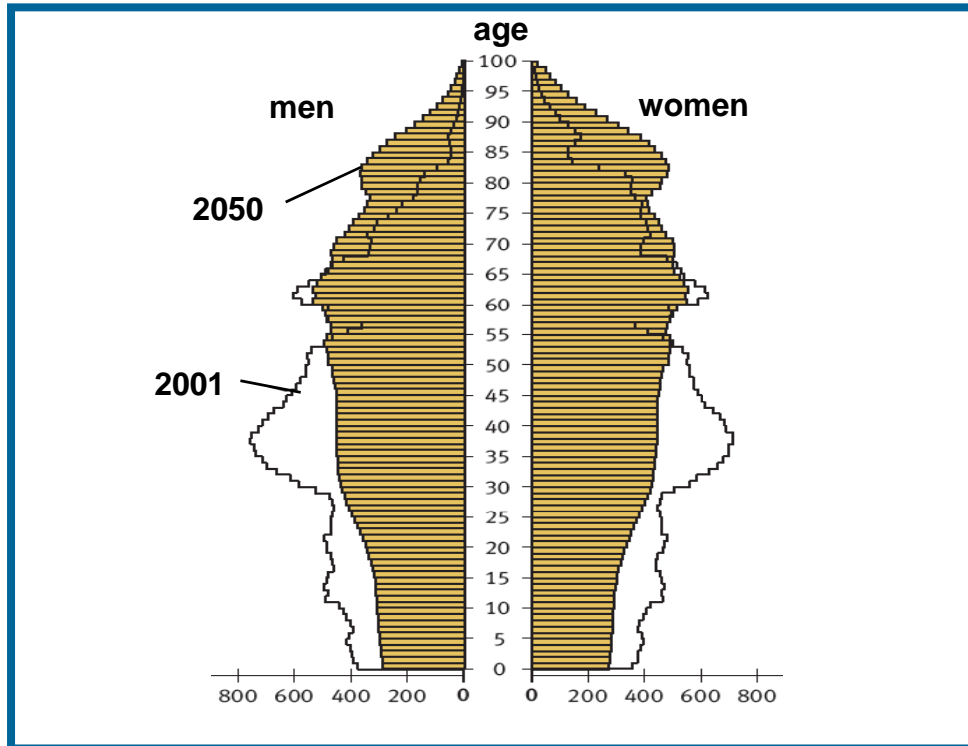
### a. Demographic change in Germany

The shrinking of the population in Eastern Germany seems to be dramatic primarily due to ...

aging

collapse of birth rate

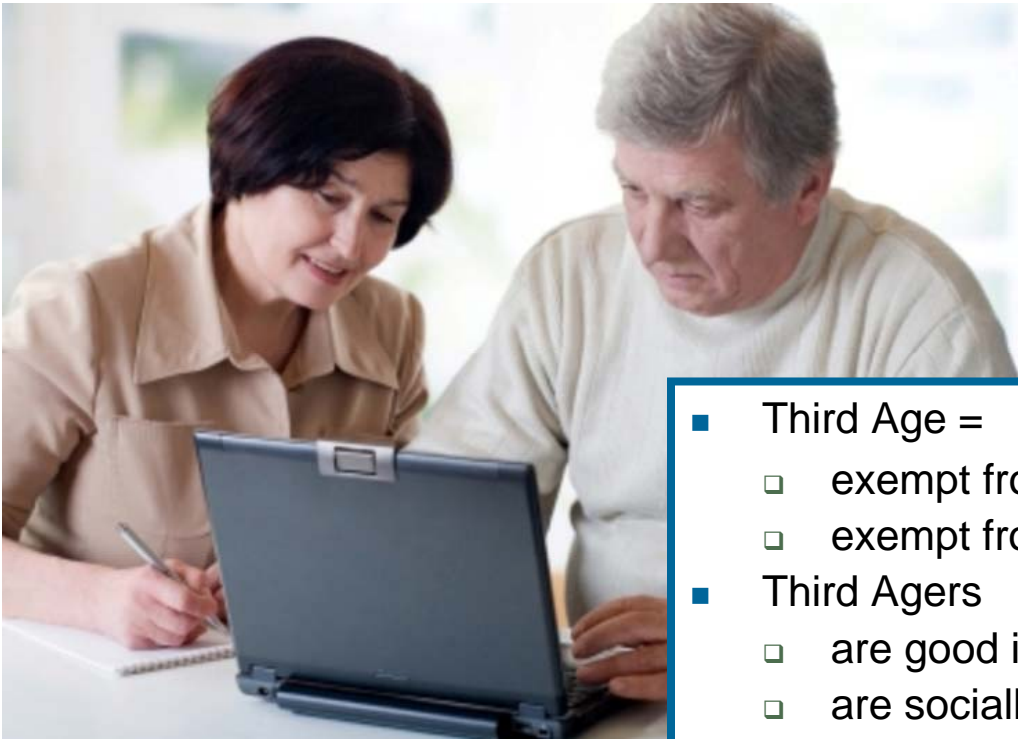
(labor) migration



© Federal Statistical Office Germany 2006, 5-17; BBR, 2006.

## 2. Background

### b. Third Agers and their leisure activities



- Third Age =
  - exempt from regular employment
  - exempt from raising a family
- Third Agers
  - are good in health,
  - are socially and politically engaged,
  - aim for personal self-fulfillment
  - enjoy life more than the previous generations,
  - are willing to spend time in consumptives activities like education

© Swindell 2002, p. 419; Neugarten 1974, p. 192; Engstler et al. 2004, p. 217; Minichiello 1992, p. 409; Timmer & Aartson 2003, p. 643; Wenzke 2007, p. 28; image: Minnesota Policy Soup 2008.

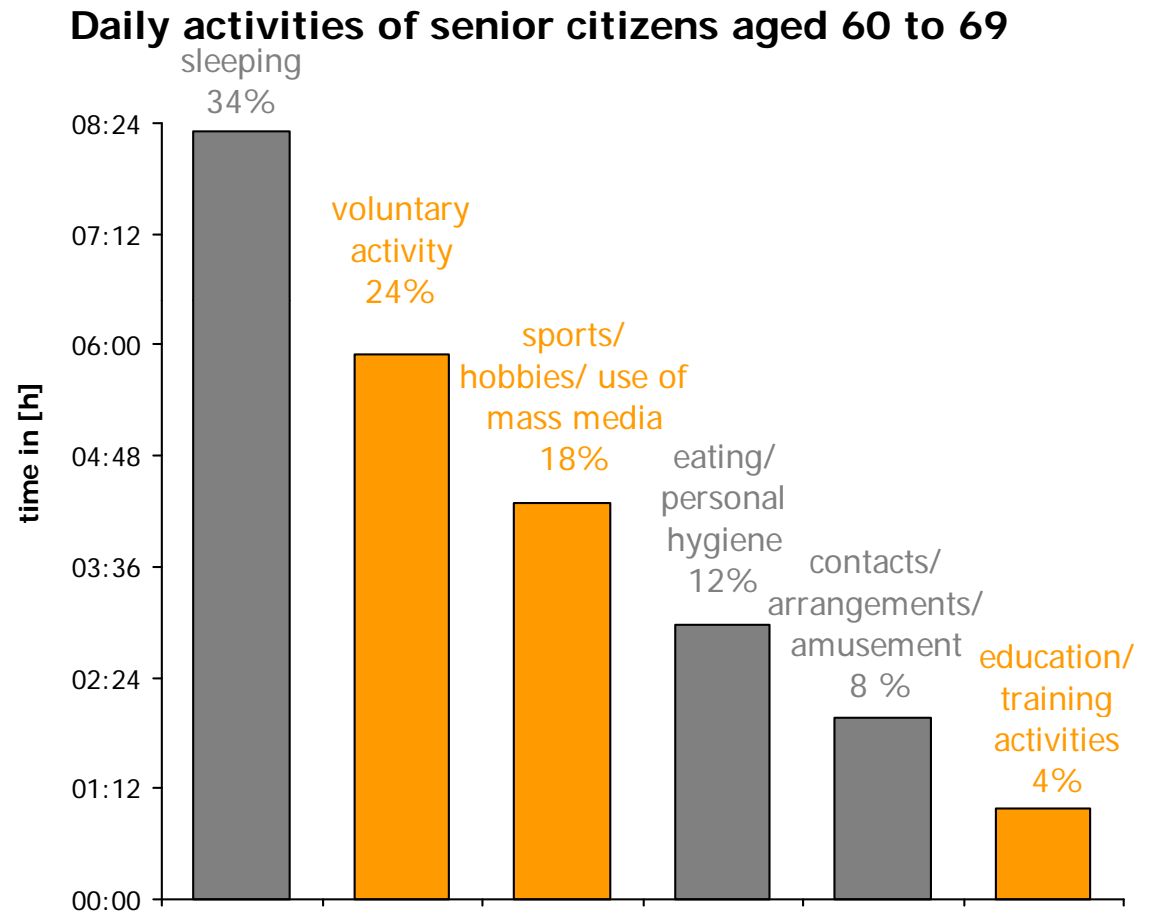
## 2. Background

### b. Third Agers and their leisure activities

in average, they spend most of their active time on voluntary activities

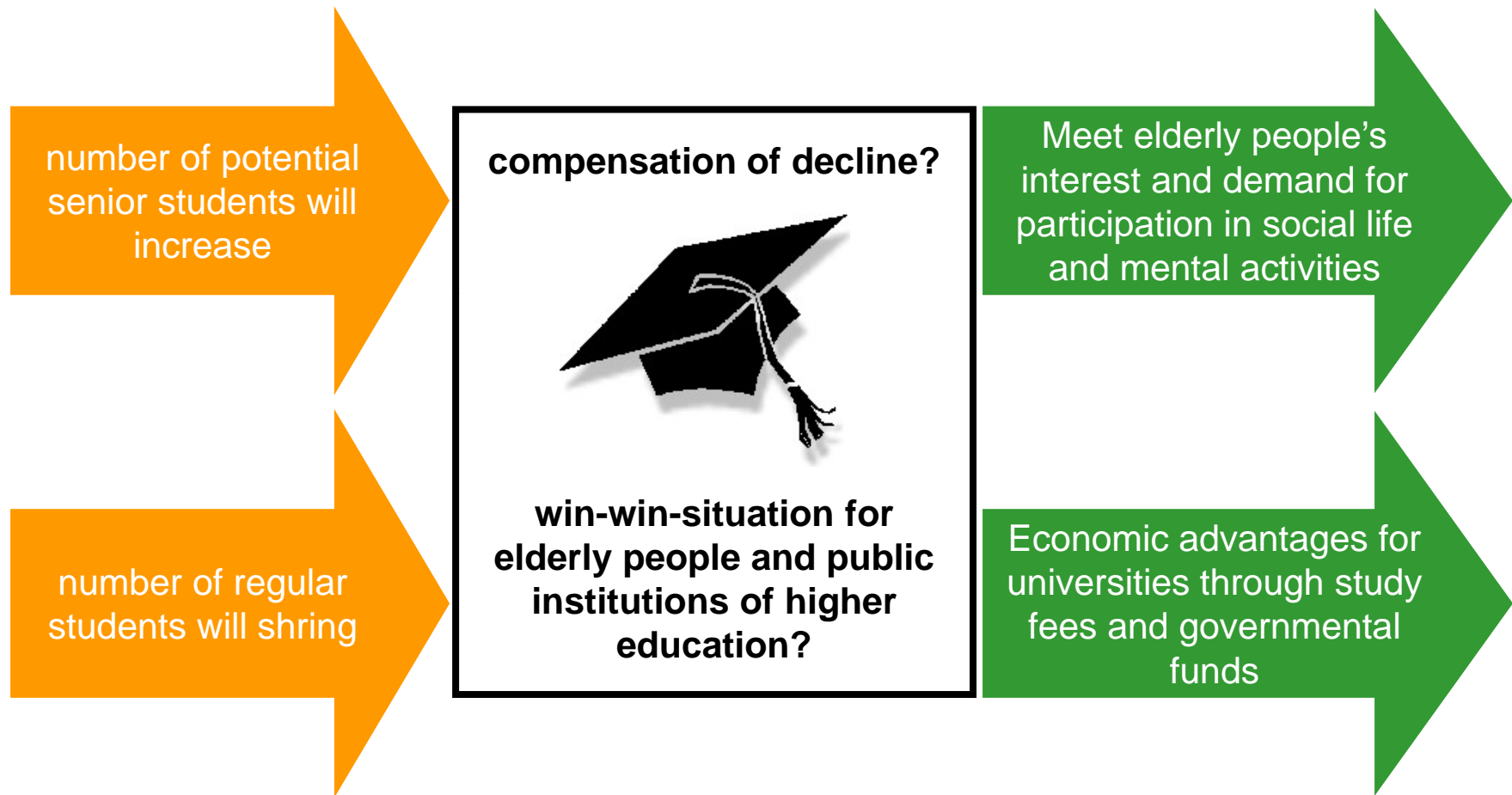
followed by sports and special hobbies

averaged they spend around 60 minutes on education and training



## 2. Background

### c. Business opportunities – educational Silver Market



© Author's illustration; Vellas n.d.; Wenzke 2007, p. 78; Meynen 2003, chapter IV, 2.



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## 3. Universities of the Third Age (UTA) in answer to student decline

### a. Facts of UTAs in Germany

#### **UTA-institutions** (Wenzke 2007, 158)

- institutions for senior citizens, e.g. day-care centers, senior clubs, service center (20%),
- admitted senior groups (13%),
- educational institutions, e.g. senior universities (13%)
- adult education centers (12%) and
- cultural and municipal institutions (9%)

#### **Possibilities for studying at UTAs** (Saup 2001, 18)

- register as an ordinary student, participating in required courses & taking examinations
- participating as guest auditors without requirements & without educational achievements
- registration as specific guests with specific offers like advisory courses, regular courses
- post-professional training, and lecture series

#### **Current motivations for studying** (Hirsch 1980, 59; Saup 2001, 15; Meynen 2003, Chapter IV, 4)

- compensating the gap of previous education, renew study abilities, discuss questions
- qualifying for honorary work or extend employability
- satisfying the need for participating in a desired study
- keeping able to communicate with younger generations or avoiding loneliness
- securing physical and mental mobility

### 3. Universities of the Third Age (UTA) in answer to student decline b. Example of Brandenburg University of Technology Cottbus



BTU



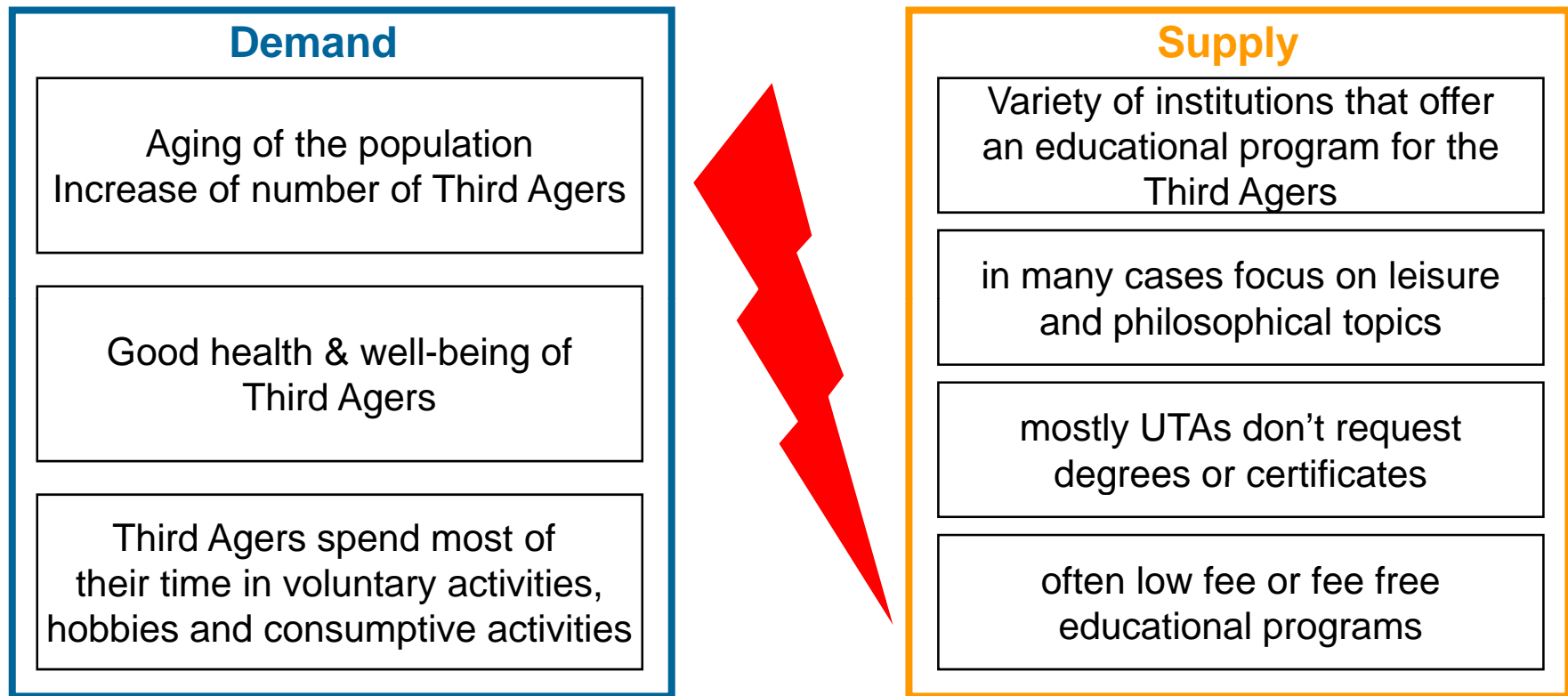
#### UTA at the BTU Cottbus

- founded in 2001
- focus on increasing the general competencies and competencies to qualify for honorary/ regular employment
- number of participants increased from 87 persons in 2001 to 1186 registered senior students in 2006

#### Offer

- sports courses (23.8%)
- lectures and series of lectures (19%)
- lectures including discussions (17%)
- computer courses (16%)
- self-organized project groups (11%),
- sightseeing (8%),
- no admission requirements, but a semester fee of 30 €

### 3. Universities of the Third Age (UTA) in answer to student decline c. Dilemma of the educational Silver Market



**Although there is an attractive offer by UTAs the participation & the benefit for universities is still low.**

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## **4. Conclusion: Strategies to enlarge the benefit for universities**

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### Marketing

- analysis of seniors needs  
© Meynen 2003; Picton 1995
- improvement of information
- improvement of public relations

### Incentive System

- Low-cost learning programs versus
- specific curricula with educational achievements  
© Williamson 1997; Picton 1985, cit. in Minichiello 1992; Lemieux 1995

Improvement in ...

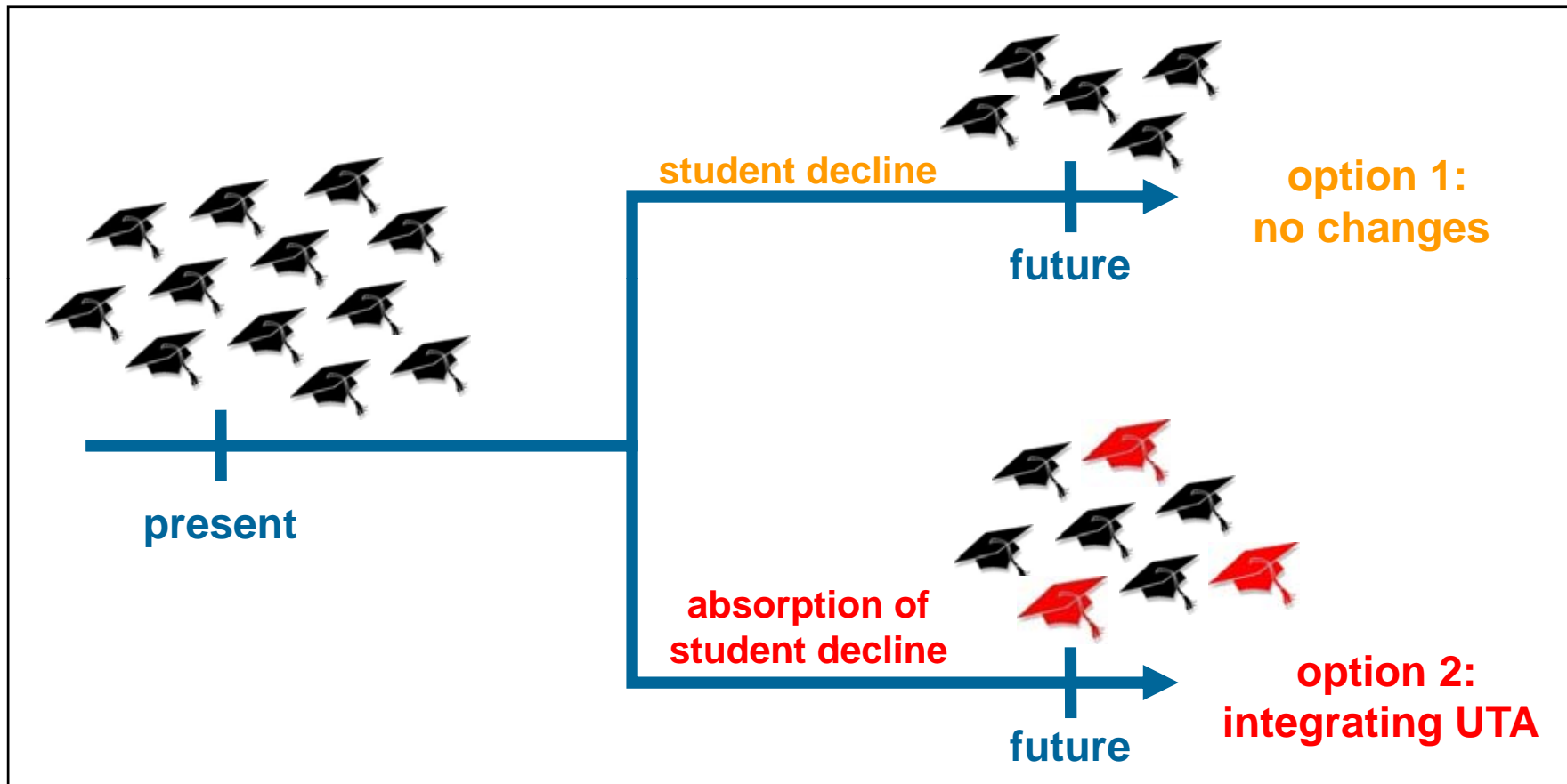
### Program of the UTA

- enlargement of the offer  
© Argote & Ingram 2000; Barney & Zajac 1994; Barney 2001; Clough 1992
- improvement of the quality
- realization of a unique program  
© Swindell 2002; Swindell & Thompson 1996

### Support

- governmental (financial) support  
© Marginson 1990
- honorary work  
© Swindell 2002; Timmer & Aartson 2003; Clough 1992; Williamson 1997; Graney & Hays 1976; BMFSFJ 2004
- synergies through networks  
© Wenzke 2007

## 4. Conclusion: Strategies to enlarge the benefit for universities



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## 4. Conclusion: Strategies to enlarge the benefit for universities

We have to get a new understanding  
of ...

### The Third Agers:

- acceptance as an active & interested generation
- as customers in the near future

### Senior education:

- as an option to benefit from Silver Market growth
- as a win-win-situation

... and should connect them in a  
beneficial way!



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***Thank you for your attention!***

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