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## New DNA project aims to map Germany's genetic history

*Living DNA initiative seeks to identify patterns of DNA within Germany and surrounding regions*

An international group of researchers from the UK and Germany today launched a large-scale appeal for people with four locally-born grandparents, to contribute to a long-term DNA project that will map the genetic history of Germany.

One Family - The German People / Eine Familie - Die Deutschen, is a collaborative project by European ancestry firm Living DNA and Germany's largest genealogy society, Verein für Computergenealogie e.V. (CompGen). Individuals with four grandparents all born within 80 kilometres (50 miles) of each other, are being sought to take part in the project by taking a simple DNA test.

The project's aim is to map the genetic structure of contemporary Germany and surrounding eastern regions, which have been part of Germany prior to WWI, with a special focus on the former eastern provinces (now part of Poland and Russia): Schleswig Holstein, Lower Saxony West, Lower Saxony East, Mecklenburg Vorpommern, Brandenburg, North Rhine-Westphalia North, North Rhine-Westphalia East, North Rhine-Westphalia West, Rhineland-Palatinate, Saarland, North Hesse, South Hesse, Saxony, Thuringia, Saxony-Anhalt, Upper Rhine & Black Forest, Württemberg, Swabia, Franconia & Palatinate, Upper & Lower Bavaria as well as the former eastern provinces of Silesia, Posen, Pomerania, East Prussia and West Prussia.

By focusing on people whose grandparents were all born in close proximity, the team aims to build up the most detailed and accurate regional map of Germany's genetic history – prior to the loss of territory and mass departures from the eastern parts of Germany that occurred as a result of WW 2.

One of the biggest challenges the project faces will be identifying people across all regions of interest, some of which now lie outside of contemporary Germany (Silesia.

To encourage suitable people to come forward, individuals who fit the criteria will be able to claim a discounted DNA test at only €89 + return postage (RRP €159), which includes lifetime membership to Living DNA.

Qualifying people who have already had their DNA tested, can transfer their results to the project free of charge and receive a complimentary lifetime membership to Living DNA, which means that they will receive updates to their ancestry results as the Living DNA database grows.

David Nicholson, managing director of Living DNA comments: “Within our DNA is the fact that we are all connected. At Living DNA our One Family project aims to map and connect the world’s DNA. Ultimately producing a one family tree of the world.”

Mr Nicholson also adds: “It’s a great honour to work with CompGen on this project, they have a vast understanding of the complex population structures of Germany and surrounding regions and we are all excited to see the results of the project”.

Dr. Tobias Kemper, genetic genealogist working for CompGen, says: “We are thrilled to be working on this project which will show how the history of middle Europe – from the Roman Empire through the middle ages and the early modern period – until now has left traces within German DNA and their regional distribution.

“This project is of the utmost importance for genealogy in Germany, because it will lead to the creation of the first databank containing a large amount of German DNA samples. DNA genealogy, which has already established itself in many other countries, through the special link between historical research and natural science, will finally also be available in Germany on a large scale.”

Susanne Nicola, chair of the Verein für Computergenealogie e. V. adds: “We’re very pleased the society will be able use its expertise to make a sizeable contribution to a publicly available mapping of the genetic structure of “Germany”.

The DNA research team, under the leadership of Living DNA, made a name for itself in 2015 through its work on a similar landmark study entitled “The People of the British Isles”. This study, which was published in Nature magazine was the first to map the genetic history of Great Britain and Northern Ireland in high detail. Key members of CompGen under leadership of German genetic genealogist Dr. Tobias Kemper, are also closely involved in the project to ensure it is as academically robust

as possible.

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For more information, interview requests and images, please contact Rhiannon at Highlight PR on 01225 444 268 or [rhiannon@highlightpr.co.uk](mailto:rhiannon@highlightpr.co.uk)

### **About Living DNA**

Living DNA is a personalised DNA service, designed to help people understand more about themselves and where they came from in unparalleled detail. Developed by world-leading scientists and academics, the Living DNA ancestry test is the most sophisticated product of its kind on the market. It is the only test which can show people a breakdown of their UK ancestry at a regional level, and the first to allow users to view their 'ancestry family' at different points in history. In so doing, people can see at what point in the past they were connected to their friends and family through their DNA, and discover how ultimately, we are "all made up of all of us".

**Website:** <https://www.livingdna.com/onefamily>

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### **About Verein für Computergenealogie e.V. (CompGen)**

With 3,700 members the Verein für Computergenealogie (CompGen) is the biggest genealogical society in Germany. Their goal is to "advance science and research regarding genealogy and history including heraldry, sigillography and onomatology. CompGen stands for open access to information for genealogical and historical research and the database on their website (with over 40 million datasets) invite anyone with an interest to contribute and make an important contribution to all genealogists.

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