

Building Communities of Belonging: “First Look” Findings from the 2025 National Census of Villages

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Background

- Villages are grassroots, member-led organizations that help older adults age in community—connected to their neighbors, their neighborhood, and a network of mutual support.
- The Village to Village Network® (VtVN) supports hundreds of Villages nationwide operating as community-based organizations on aging.
- The census was designed and administered by the Rutgers Hub for Aging Collaboration in partnership with the VtVN® Data & Evaluation Committee.
- All known Villages in the U.S. were invited to participate, with data collection from August 2025 – January 2026.

Project Aim

- The last comprehensive national survey of Villages was conducted in 2016.
- The 2025 census aim was to provide an up-to-date “snapshot” of Villages today—how they are organized, what they offer, and their key operations.

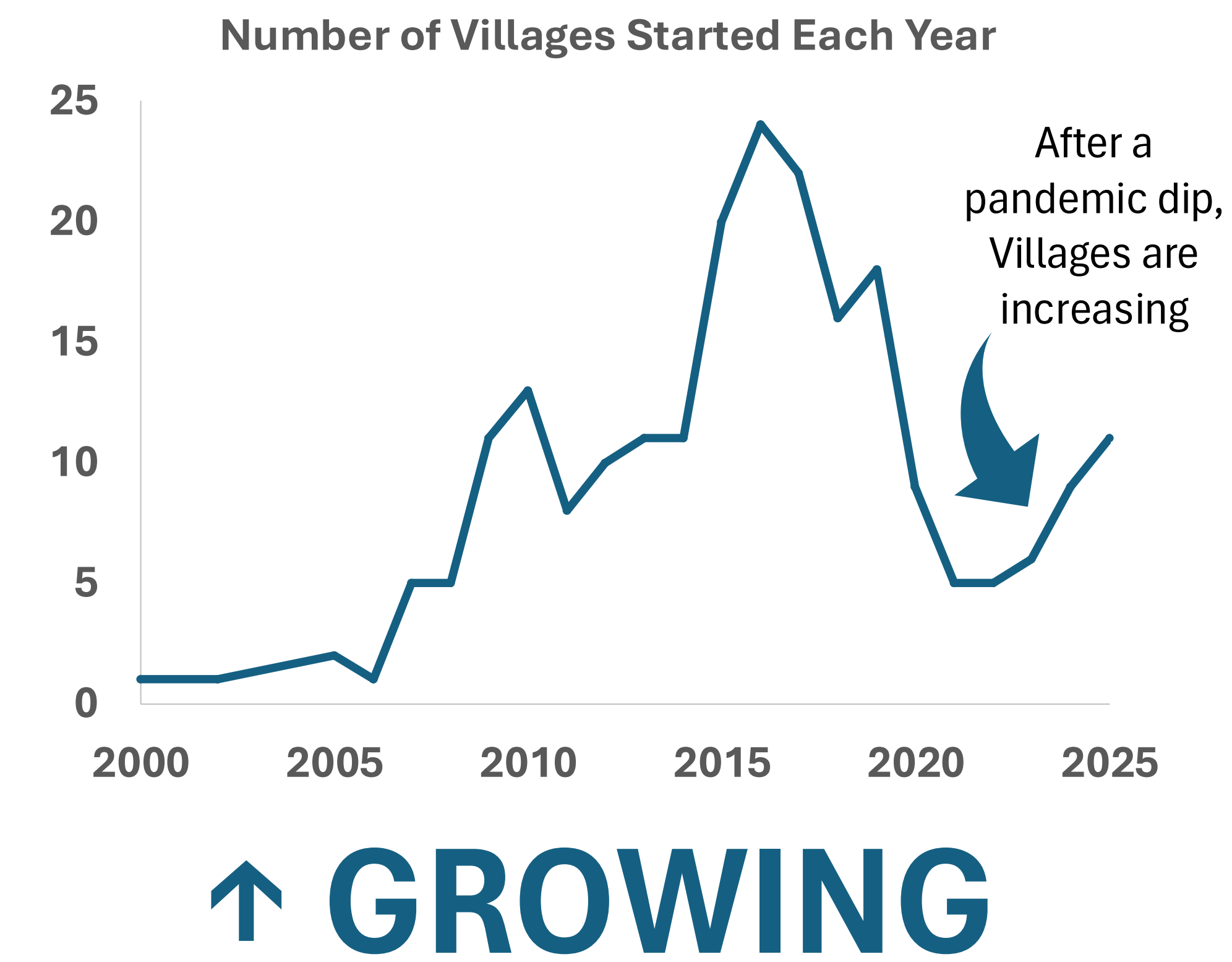
Acknowledgements

We thank all members of the VtVN® Data & Evaluation Committee for their essential partnership on the 2025 Census of Villages. We also thank Leslie Mulligan and Barbara Thomas of the VtVN® Communications Committee for their feedback on earlier versions of this poster.

BELONGING AT SCALE

Villages are showing up across the U.S.

- 245** Number of Villages Represented in the Census
- 88%** Survey Response Rate
- 37** States Represented by Villages in the Census
- 25%** In Rural Settings (v. urban or suburban)



BUILT ON CONNECTION

Neighbors helping neighbors, from the ground up

Powered by
Volunteers:

100%

Villages that offer services do so through volunteers

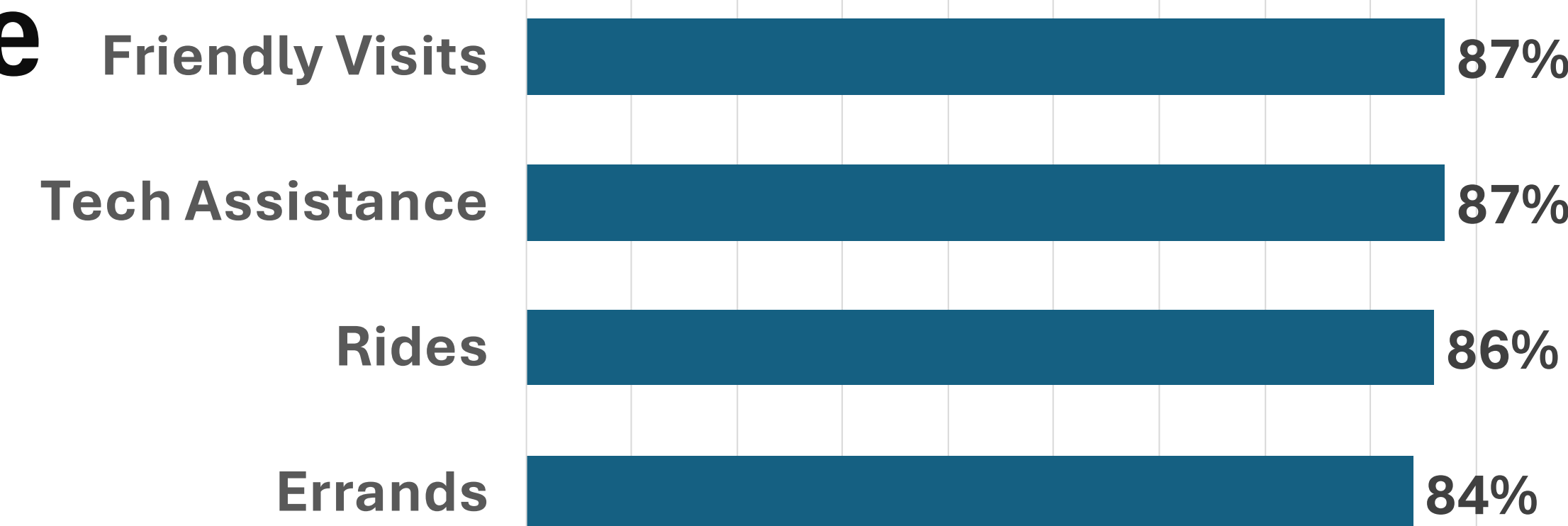
60%

Offer services only through volunteers

74%

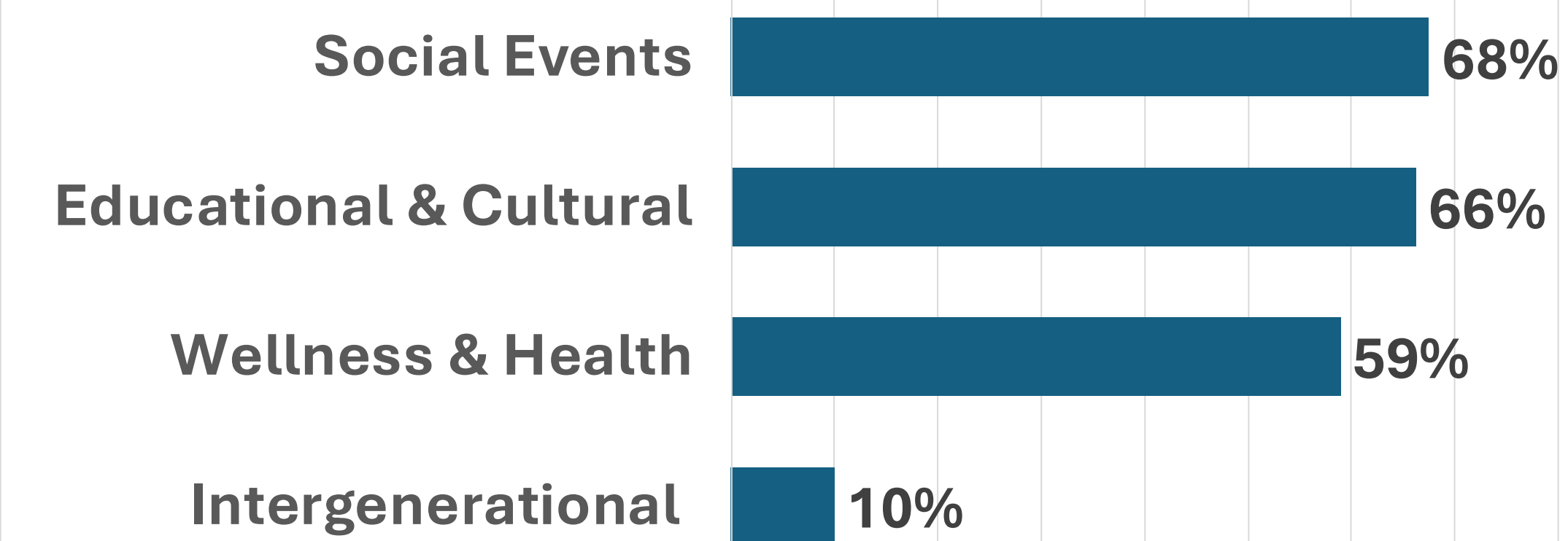
Average % of Village Board members that are Village members

Services that Connect People



% of Villages offering each service type.
Not an exhaustive list of all services offered by Villages.

Services that Build Community



% Villages offering each event type monthly or more.

A DIVERSE ECOSYSTEM

Villages are local, flexible, self-determined, and part of the fabric for aging in community

Engaging People & Organizations

- 50,000+** Estimated total number of Village members nationwide
- 140** Median number of members
- 5 - 2,806** Range in number of members
- 45%** of Villages have annual budgets <\$50k
- \$337** Mean annual individual membership fee (range: \$10-\$1,100)
- 86%** of Villages with membership fees offer reduced or sliding scale
- 6** Average reported partners (range: 1-14)

Community Partners

- 58%** Older Adult/Senior Center
- 55%** Area Agency on Aging
- 44%** Age-Friendly Initiative
- 43%** Home Health Agency
- 42%** Hospital, Health Clinic, or Health System
- 32%** Licensed Care Facility for Older Adults

Take-Aways

- Villages are an infrastructure for belonging and connection—in addition to services.
- Villages generally operate on small budgets.
- Villages are membership-based organizations with widely varying membership fees.
- Villages typically operate in partnership with other organizations.
- While the pandemic disrupted Village start-up, growth has resumed.

Next Steps

- Use results to help align communications by, for, and about Villages.
- Strengthen and standardize national data collection.
- Build out future collaborative projects on Village development, implementation, and impact.

Learn More

- Digital Copy of Poster
- National Research w/ Villages
- Rutgers Hub for Aging Collab
- Village to Village Network®

