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Emiliya Velikova

Rousse, Bulgaria 2011



Europe for Citizens  
Programme



# RESULTS OF TRAINING UNDER THE PROJECT DANET



**Emiliya Velikova**

**Rousse, Bulgaria, 2011**

**The book contains the goals, the tasks, the activities, the methods of training, the results of the scientific research and the conclusions of the project DANET “DANUBE NETWORKERS – NEIGHBOURS AT WORK”, Project DANET: 512896-EFC-1-2010-1-DE-EFC-CP, www.danet-at-work.eu, implemented under the European program “Europe for Citizens” and with the financial support of the Baden-Württemberg Stiftung, Germany. The project partner is “Angel Kanchev” University of Rousse, Rousse, Bulgaria. The members of the Union of Pensioners’2004, Rousse branch took an active part in the project.**

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**Yordan Kazakov, President of the Union of Pensioners’2004, Rousse**

**By the author**

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## **INTRODUCTION**

All countries, including those that are developing fast like China, demonstrate a strong tendency of population ageing, which is a result of the better living conditions (new food production technologies, medicines, treatment, communications, etc.). That people live longer now is apposite phenomenon. However, the fact that there is a greater number of seniors than young people (from 0 to 14 years of age, for example), together with the effect from the migration of work force, will have an enormous impact on our society with significant consequences for the economic opportunities for people and their perspectives for education and cultural development. The countries targeted by the Danube Strategy of the European Union are facing the above-mentioned problem too and are looking for solutions.

The project DANET investigates the possibilities for changing the attitude of society to the senior citizens through education and stimulating the third age European citizens to participate actively in social life. The project has tried to attract politicians, local and national government representatives, who are responsible for decision-making, concerning the role of the senior citizens in society, and whose final goal should be to apply measures, which correspond to the highest degree to the needs of the entire society, including some groups that are insufficiently involved in politics and/or the social life like the group of the retired people.

*Results of Training under the Project DANET, Emiliya Velikova*

The project unites and applies scientific outcomes with the practical experience of renowned institutions like the Centre for general scientific continuing education ZAWIW of Ulm University, Ulm, Germany, The Slovenian Third Age University, Ljubljana,, The Public Open University for education of seniors in Zagreb, Croatia, and others.

The book “Results of Training under the Project DANET” presents the main European programmes „Europe for Citizens” and „Grundtvik”, which include education of pensioners, the content of the project DANET “DANUBE NETWORKERS – NEIGHBOURS AT WORK”, the activities, the research and the results of the Bulgarian partner, “Angel Kanchev” University of Rousse (RU) in cooperation with the Union of Pensioners’2004 - Rousse (UP’2004-Rousse), as well as the cooperative activities and results of all project partners.

## CONTENT

Introduction .....	3
Content .....	5

## CHAPTER I

### EUROPEAN PROGRAMMES FOR TRAINING OF ADULTS

<b>§1. PROGRAMME “EUROPE FOR CITIZENS”</b> .....	13
1.1. Background.....	13
1.2. General and Specific Objectives of the Programme .....	14
1.3. Priorities of the Programme .....	15
1.4. Structure of the Programme.....	18
<b>§2. PROGRAMME „GRUNDTVIG”</b> .....	21
2.1. Background.....	21
2.2. Objectives of the Programme .....	22

## **CHAPTER II**

### **THE PROJECT DANET**

<b>§1. PARTNERS OF THE PROJECT DANET .....</b>	<b>23</b>
1.1. Centre for General Scientific Continuing Education (ZAWIW) of Ulm University, Ulm, Germany .....	23
1.2. Slovenian Third Age University, Ljubljana, Slovenia .....	24
1.3. University of Craiova, Romania.....	26
1.4. International Association for Danube Research, Wilhering, Austria.....	27
1.5. Public Open University Zagreb – University of the Third Age, Zagreb, Croatia .....	27
1.6. „Angel Kanchev” University of Rousse, Bulgaria.....	28
1.7. Other Participants in the Project DANET .....	30

<b>§2. CONTENT OF THE PROJECT DANET .....</b>	<b>32</b>
2.1. Introduction .....	32
2.2. Aims of the Project .....	32
2.3. Pertinence of the Project and Methods Proposed.....	33
2.4. Expected Impact of the Project .....	36
2.5. Relevance of the Project DANET to the Objectives and Priorities of the Programme “Europe for Citizens” .....	37

## **CHAPTER III**

### **ORGANISATIONAL MEETINGS**

### **OF THE PROJECT DANET**

<b>§1. FIRST ORGANISATIONAL MEETING OF THE PARTNERS</b>	<b>39</b>
<b>§2. SECOND ORGANISATIONAL MEETING OF THE PARTNERS .....</b>	<b>43</b>
<b>§3. ORGANISATIONAL MEETINGS OF THE BULGARIAN PROJECT TEAM .....</b>	<b>47</b>





# **CHAPTER IV**

## **RESULTS OF TRAINING**

### **UNDER THE PROJECT DANET**

#### **§1. PANEL DISCUSSION I :**

##### **ACTIVE AGEING IN EUROPE /**

<b>SOLIDARITY BETWEEN THE GENERATIONS .....</b>	<b>55</b>
1.1. Content of the Panel Discussion I .....	55
1.2. Survey on Active Ageing .....	57
1.3. Analysis of the Results .....	59
1.4. Summary of Conclusions from the Panel Discussion I.....	61

#### **§2. PANEL DISCUSSION II :**

##### **SUSTAINABILITY OF CULTURAL HERITAGE /**

<b>NATIONAL AND EUROPEAN IDENTITY .....</b>	<b>66</b>
2.1. Content of the Panel Discussion II .....	66
2.2. Summary of Conclusions from the Panel Discussion II .....	67

**§3. PANEL DISCUSSION III :**

**MIGRATION AS A CHALLENGE /**

**INTEGRATION AS A CHANCE..... 70**

3.1. Content of the Panel Discussion III..... 70

3.2. Survey on Migration ..... 71

3.3. Analysis of the Results ..... 74

3.4. Scientific Survey on Migration, Family and Names ..... 79

3.5. Summary of Conclusions from the Panel Discussion III ..... 81

**§4. PANEL DISCUSSION IV :**

**ECOLOGY / ENVIRONMENT ..... 83**

4.1. Content of the Panel Discussion IV ..... 83

4.2. Summary of Conclusions from the Panel Discussion IV ..... 84

**§5. TRAINING FOR NEW INFORMATION TECHNOLOGIES**

**USAGE ..... 87**

**§6. OTHER RESULTS OF TRAINING UNDER THE PROJECT**

**DANET ..... 90**

<b>§7. DISSEMINATION OF THE PROJECT RESULTS .....</b>	<b>92</b>
7.1. Dissemination of the Results to Institutions and Representatives of the Local Government .....	92
7.2. Dissemination of the Results through Media .....	93
<b>§8. EVALUATION OF THE PANEL DISCUSSIONS .....</b>	<b>98</b>
8.1. Test for Evaluation of the Panel Discussions.....	98
8.2. Evaluation of the Expectations from the Project DANET of the Representatives of Non-government Pensioners Organizations.....	101
8.3. Evaluation of the Personal Expectations from the Project DANET.....	104
8.4. Evaluation of the Training under the Project DANET.....	109
<b>§9. EVALUATION OF THE ONLINE TOOLS USAGE FOR THE PROJECT DANET .....</b>	<b>115</b>
<b>CONCLUSIONS .....</b>	<b>119</b>

# CHAPTER V

## INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCES

### OF THE PROJECT DANET –

### REPORTING THE RESULTS

<b>§1. INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE IN CROATIA .....</b>	<b>121</b>
1.1. Program of the International Conference in Croatia .....	121
1.2. Results of the Workshop “Active Ageing” .....	128
1.3. Results of the Workshop “Identity” .....	129
1.4. Results of the Workshop “Migration” .....	131
1.5. Results of the Workshop “Environment” .....	132
1.6. Results of the Educational Game .....	135
<b>§2. FINAL INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE IN GERMANY .....</b>	<b>138</b>
2.1. Program of the International Conference in Germany .....	138
2.2. New Goals .....	147

## **FINAL STATEMENTS OF THE PROJECT**

**DANET** ..... 149

**REFERENCES** ..... 158



# CHAPTER I

## EUROPEAN PROGRAMMES FOR TRAINING OF ADULTS

### §1. PROGRAMME “EUROPE FOR CITIZENS”

#### 1.1. Background

The adoption of the Lisbon Treaty at the end of 2009 [29] led to a number of important changes with regard to the concept of European citizenship. Both the Treaty on European Union and the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union enshrine the democratic principles of the EU, stipulate the rights of Union citizens and outline the key methods of involving citizens and their associations in shaping the European political agenda [4, p. 4; 9; 33, 70]. Closely interlinked are:

- ✓ the expression of citizens' needs and the necessary deliverables to meet them [2; 3, p.10-13];
- ✓ the openness of the democratic system for civic participation;
- ✓ the rights of people including the knowledge about these rights are.

Developing a lasting sense of ownership for and belonging to the European Union requires that all three aspects are addressed equally and with the appropriate instruments.

Considering the European citizenship as an important element in strengthening and safeguarding the process of European integration, the European Commission continues encouraging the engagement of European citizens in all aspects of the life of their community, thus enabling them to participate in the construction of an ever closer Europe.

By Decision 1904/2006/EC of 12 December 2006 [11] the European Parliament and the Council adopted the "Europe for Citizens" Programme for the period 2007-2013 [4], which put into place the legal framework to support a wide range of activities and organisations promoting 'active European citizenship' and therefore the involvement of citizens and Civil Society Organizations (hereafter CSOs) in the process of European integration.

## **1.2. General and Specific Objectives of the Programme**

**General objectives are to contribute to [4, p. 5]:**

- ✓ giving citizens the opportunity to interact and participate in constructing an ever closer Europe, which is democratic and world-oriented, united in and enriched through its cultural diversity, thus developing citizenship of the European Union;
- ✓ developing a sense of European identity, based on common values, history and culture;
- ✓ fostering a sense of ownership of the European Union among its citizens;
- ✓ enhancing tolerance and mutual understanding between European citizens respecting and promoting cultural and linguistic diversity, while contributing to intercultural dialogue.

**Specific objectives shall be pursued on a transnational basis [4, p. 5]:**

- ✓ bringing together people from local communities across Europe to share and exchange experiences, opinions and values, to learn from history and to build for the future;
- ✓ fostering action, debate and reflection related to European citizenship and democracy, shared values, common history and culture through cooperation within civil society organisations at European level;
- ✓ bringing Europe closer to its citizens by promoting Europe's values and achievements, while preserving the memory of its past;
- ✓ encouraging interaction between citizens and civil society organisations from all participating countries, contributing to intercultural dialogue and bringing to the fore both Europe's diversity and unity, with particular attention to activities aimed at developing closer ties between citizens from Member States of the European Union as constituted on 30 April 2004 and those from Member States which have acceded since that date.

### 1.3. Priorities of the Programme

Under this Programme, priority is given to certain themes of particular relevance for the development of an active European citizenship [4, p. 6]. The focus on such themes will encourage synergies between projects working on the same issue and will ensure visibility and impact of the supported activities and of the Programme in general. In addressing these themes, applicants are invited to go beyond a national vision, and to tackle an issue from a European perspective, and/or by comparing different national points of view. This transnational dimension should be accompanied whenever possible by a strong local dimension.

These themes will be relevant for the whole period of the Programme and will therefore have a permanent character. Applicants under this Programme are invited to **address in their projects at least one of the Programme's permanent priorities.**



In order to be able to react to new or very specific topics arising on the European agenda, the annual work plan can identify specific themes of particular relevance. These annual focuses are published on the website of the Education, Audiovisual and Culture Executive Agency (hereafter the EACEA) at the address [9].

The gender balance and non-discrimination are also very important. Programme should therefore be accessible to all European citizens, including legal residents without any form of discrimination on grounds of sex, racial or ethnic origin, religion or belief, disability, age and sexual orientation.

### ***Permanent priorities***

#### **1. The future of the European Union and its basic values**

The core values of the EU – human dignity, freedom, democracy, equality, the rule of law and respect for human rights have been reconfirmed by the Lisbon Treaty and greater prominence given to solidarity, peace and the well-being of the Union's peoples [4, p. 6]. The legally binding Charter of Fundamental Rights represents a major step forward, becoming the compass for all EU policies. The Treaty also puts the role of the EU in the world on a new footing and introduces important changes in the functioning of the EU institutions, inter-institutional relations and interaction between the European institutions, national parliaments and citizens.

In the light of these developments the active involvement of citizens in debate and reflection on the EU and its values are crucial in fostering a sense of ownership and of European identity amongst citizens. The "Europe for Citizens" Programme is an important tool in this respect. Applicants are invited to consider how those values can be reflected in their actions.

#### **2. Active European Citizenship: civic participation and democracy in Europe**

President Barroso's "Political Guidelines for the next Commission" identify reinforcing EU citizenship and participation as key challenges facing the EU [4, p. 6-7]. The new provisions [30, 69] of the Lisbon Treaty [29, 69] significantly strengthen the opportunities to advance people's Europe. The implementation of these provisions – including the citizens' initiative - will

instigate new kinds of co-operation between the European Institutions and citizens and the different actors in civil society.

Volunteering is a key means of civic participation through which citizens identify and respond to needs arising in society [32]. By giving one's time for the benefit of others, volunteers play an active role in society. They develop the sense of belonging to a community thereby also gaining ownership. Volunteering is therefore a particularly powerful means to develop citizens' commitment to their society and to its political life. The 2011 European Year of voluntary activities to promote active citizenship provides a particularly timely opportunity to raise awareness and mobilise stakeholders.

The "Europe for Citizens" Programme [4] represents an important means of raising awareness of European issues and supporting citizens to make use of their right of initiative and participate actively in the democratic life of the EU.

### **3. Inter-cultural dialogue**

Intercultural dialogue plays a crucial role in creating a sense of belonging, of mutual understanding and of solidarity and is a necessary component of socially cohesive societies [4, p. 7]. In view of the increase in social divisions in recent years and the associated tensions of xenophobia, racism and intolerance, there is more need than ever to promote intercultural and interfaith dialogue. Participation in such a project should raise awareness on the richness of the cultural and linguistic environment in Europe. It should also promote mutual understanding and tolerance, thereby contributing to the development of a respectful, dynamic and multifaceted European identity. New forms of social innovation and the pivotal role civil society organisations play could be especially fruitful topics to explore and develop actions related to senior volunteering and links between generations.

### **4. People's wellbeing in Europe: employment, social cohesion and sustainable development**

The Europe 2020 strategy [31] puts the rights, prosperity and solidarity of Europeans at the heart of the EU agenda and recognizes that closing the gap

between the reality of European integration and people's perceptions requires that European policies are built more closely around the needs of citizens [4, p. 7]. The proposed main drivers of the new strategy are: creating value by basing growth on knowledge; empowering people in inclusive societies and creating a competitive, connected and greener economy. The Europe for Citizens Programme will encourage actions dealing with these issues, giving a European perspective to people's everyday life experience and demonstrating how the EU can improve their wellbeing in an evolving environment.

## **5. Impact of EU policies in societies**

Citizens' engagement with issues which constitute the European Union's political priorities is a key element of civic participation [4, p. 7]. The Europe for Citizens Programme represents a valuable tool for encouraging European citizens to share their views on how the agenda should be taken forward. In order to bring Europe closer to its citizens it is crucial to raise citizens' awareness of the results achieved through European policies and actions. Therefore the Programme should target the actions providing citizens with opportunities to recognize debate, assess and build opinions on these achievements.

### **1.4. Structure of the Programme**

The Programme is implemented through four Actions [4, p. 8]:

**Action 1:** Active European Citizenship (town twinning citizens' meetings, networks of twinned towns, citizens' projects, support measures).

**Action 2:** Active Civil Society in Europe (Support for projects initiated by civil society organisations (CSOs) and structural support for think tanks and CSOs).

**Action 3:** Together for Europe (high visibility events, studies and information and dissemination tools).

**Action 4:** Active European Remembrance.

In order to achieve its objectives, the "Europe for Citizens" Programme proposes different Actions supported within two types of grants:

**A. PROJECT GRANTS** - projects are actions with a limited lifetime during which proposed specific activities are implemented.

**B. OPERATING GRANTS** - operating grants<sup>1</sup> are different from project grants in that they provide financial support for costs required for the proper conduct of the usual and permanent activities of an organisation.

A short description of different Actions and Measures is provided hereafter:

## A. PROJECT GRANTS

### Action 1 – Active Citizens for Europe

"Active citizens for Europe" aims to bring together people from local communities across Europe to share and exchange experiences, opinions and values, to learn from history and to build for the future. It encourages meetings, exchanges and debates among European citizens from different countries and through different means:

#### *Measure 1 – Town Twinning*

This measure is aimed at activities that involve or promote direct exchanges between European citizens through their participation in town twinning activities and encourage networking between twinned towns. This measure therefore covers the following two types of activity:

#### **Measure 1.1 Town Twinning Citizens' Meetings**

**Measure 1.2 Networks of Twinned Towns.** *Twinned towns* must be understood in *largo sensu*, thus referring to the towns which signed or are engaged to sign twinning agreements as well as to the towns having other forms of partnerships fostering their cooperation and cultural links.

#### *Measure 2 – Citizens' Projects and Support Measures*

Under the **Measure 2.1 Citizens' Projects**, a variety of projects of a transnational and cross-sectoral dimension, directly involving citizens, can be supported. Those projects should gather citizens from different horizons, who will act together or debate on common European issues, at local and

European level. Innovative methods enabling citizens' participation should be applied.

In order to develop and strengthen all Programme Actions it is also necessary to develop support measures – covered under the **Measure 2.2 Support Measures** – to exchange best practices and to pool experiences between different programme stakeholders promoting active Europe citizenship.

## **Action 2 – Active Civil Society in Europe**

### ***Measure 3 – Support for projects initiated by civil society organisations***

The aim of this measure is to support cooperation on concrete projects of civil society organisations from different participating countries, on specific issues in relation with the objectives and priorities of the programme. A variety of organisations, established at local, regional, national or European level, can be involved.

## **Action 4 – Active European Remembrance**

This action aims at commemorating the victims of Nazism and Stalinism.

## **B. OPERATING GRANTS**

### **Action 2 – Active Civil Society in Europe**

#### ***Measure 1 – Structural support for European public policy research organisations (think-tanks)***

This measure is aimed at supporting the work of European public policy research organisations (think tanks), which are able to provide new ideas and reflections on European issues, on active citizenship at European level or on European values.

#### ***Measure 2 – Structural support for civil society organisations at European level***

This measure will provide civil society organisations of European dimension with the capacity and stability to develop their activities at European level. The purpose is to contribute to the emergence of a structured, coherent and active civil society at European level.

## §2. PROGRAMME “GRUNDTVIG”

### 2.1. Background



(1783-1872)

**Nicolai Frederik Severin Grundtvig** is a Danish author, philosopher, poet and teacher. He asserted not only learning, but also physiological needs for study. He is one of the most influential people in Danish history, his philosophy giving rise to a new form of non-aggressive nationalism in Denmark in the last half of the 19th century.

His name was given to this programme for studying about adult education.

The Grundtvig programme [5, 7, 8, 10] focuses on the teaching and study needs of learners taking adult education and ‘alternative’ education courses, as well as the organisations delivering these services. It aims to help develop the adult education sector, as well as enable more people to undertake learning experiences, notably in other European countries.

Launched in 2000, Grundtvig aims to provide adults with more ways to improve their knowledge and skills, facilitate their personal development and boost their employment prospects. It also helps to tackle problems associated with Europe’s ageing population.

It covers not only teachers, trainers, staff and organisations working in the sector, but also learners in adult education. These include relevant associations, counselling organisations, information services, policy-making bodies and others such as NGOs, enterprises, voluntary groups and research centres.

The programme funds a range of activities, including particularly those supporting adult learning staff to travel abroad for learning experiences, through exchanges and various other professional experiences. Other larger scale initiatives involve, for instance, networking and partnerships between organisations in different countries.

## **2.2. Objectives of the Programme**

The specific aims of the Grundtvig programme are to [10]:

- ✓ increase the number of people in adult education to 25 000 by 2013, and improve the quality of their experience, whether at home or abroad;
- ✓ improve conditions for mobility so that at least 7 000 people per year by 2013 can benefit from adult education abroad;
- ✓ improve the quality and amount of co-operation between adult education organisations;
- ✓ develop innovative adult education and management practices, and encourage widespread implementation;
- ✓ ensure that people on the margins of society have access to adult education, especially older people and those who left education without basic qualifications;
- ✓ support innovative ICT-based educational content, services and practices.



## CHAPTER II

### THE PROJECT DANET

#### §1. PARTNERS OF THE PROJECT DANET

##### 1.1. Centre for General Scientific Continuing Education (ZAWiW) of Ulm University, Ulm, Germany



Since 1994 the Zentrum für Allgemeine Wissenschaftliche Weiterbildung (ZAWiW) der Universität Ulm [40] designs and organises activating pedagogical approaches and education activities for older adults and mixed age groups, often on European themes. At the core of its work, ZAWiW sees the establishment of a bridge between science and society fostering social inclusion and participation of older adults. In this context, dialogue between young and old is especially encouraged in various projects.



One of its aims is opening Internet access to those who are presently not part in the digital world by designing targetgroup oriented approaches.

ZAWiW has co-operations with NGOs on regional, national and international level. It is one of the founders and coordinator of the European Network Learning in Later Life (LiLL, [21]) and initiator of virtual communities of older people i.e. the German network ViLE e.V. [19-21, 40].

**Web site: [www.zawiw.de](http://www.zawiw.de)**

**Contact: Carmen Stadelhofer and Gabriela Körting**

Phone.: +49 (0)731-50-23193

E-Mail: [carmen.stadelhofer@uni-ulm.de](mailto:carmen.stadelhofer@uni-ulm.de)

E-Mail: [gabriela.koerting@uni-ulm.de](mailto:gabriela.koerting@uni-ulm.de)

## **1.2. Slovenian Third Age University, Ljubljana, Slovenia**



Since 1984, when it was established through voluntary endeavours of a group of adult education experts and university teachers of andragogy, the Slovenian Third Age University has steadily grown to become a national network of 45 universities in 44 localities with about 21 000 students, more than 1000 mentors and volunteers [38]. Its practice has been extensively researched; as a result, today the University follows its own generalisations and is based on its own model.

Aims:

- ✓ to achieve better understanding of older people's needs and to better their life through culture and education;
- ✓ to facilitate integration of older people in the society through their personal growth, paid or voluntary work;

- ✓ to support active ageing in all its forms;
- ✓ to enable different generations to collaborate, study and work together;
- ✓ to conduct public campaigning in the field of older people's issues and education;
- ✓ to support older workers to stay on the labour market and /or to get back there;
- ✓ to research education of older adults and to disseminate the findings;
- ✓ to educate teachers, mentors and facilitators in the field;
- ✓ to provide education for professionals dealing with people in later life;
- ✓ to develop new innovative educational programmes for different groups of people in later life;
- ✓ to provide integrated counseling and guidance for active ageing (educational, psychological, legal, and guidance in the field of labour market);
- ✓ to ensure networking of civil and public organisations active in the field of education in later life.

Target groups: retired people, older workers, workers in the pre-retirement period

Supporting activities: research, publication, resource centre, education of younger university students, education of mentors, education of employers and social partners, integrated counselling and guidance for active ageing national and international projects

**Web site: [www.univerzazatretjeobd-drustvo.si](http://www.univerzazatretjeobd-drustvo.si)**

**Contact: Dušana Findeisen**

Phone: +386 1 433 20 90

E-Mail: [dusana.findeisen@guest.arnes.si](mailto:dusana.findeisen@guest.arnes.si)

### **1.3. University of Craiova, Romania**



The Teacher Staff Training Department (TSTD) is an academic unit of the University of Craiova [36], directly subordinated to the University Senate; it functions according to its own regulations and it cooperates with all the faculties which require a special training of the students for the teaching process; it develops and has a wide range of educational partnerships with the School Inspectorates, Teaching Staff Centers etc. More than 7,500 students follow the courses of TSTD. The academic staff consists of 12 professors (being specialized in Pedagogical Sciences, Psychology, and Educational management) and 41 Associate Professors (specialized in Didactics, Computer Assisted Training, and Pedagogical Training). TSTD is coordinating a project of creating a virtual university of the third age with national coverage. Departamentul pentru Pregătirea Personalului Didactic (DPPD), transl. The Teacher Staff Training Department (TSTD) of the University of Craiova has partnerships with many NGOs from all over the state in the field of seniors education, e.g. Constantin Brancusi Association from Timisoara and is directly involved in various educational activities with seniors in the South-West Oltenia region.

**Web site:** [cis01.central.ucv.ro/DPPD](http://cis01.central.ucv.ro/DPPD)

**Contact:** Alexandru Strungă

Phone: +40 753 056784, Fax: +40 251 422567

E-mail: [dppd@central.ucv.ro](mailto:dppd@central.ucv.ro), E-mail: [alexstrunga@gmail.com](mailto:alexstrunga@gmail.com)

#### 1.4. International Association for Danube Research, Wilhering, Austria



Eng. Harald Kutzenberger is the General Secretary of the International Association for Danube Research [35] and the leader of the Expert Group “Sustainable Development & Public Participation”. The members of the Association take part in many European projects, in the activities of the Danube Strategy and in the work of Wilhring region, Austria.

**Web site:** [www.tb-kutzenberger.com](http://www.tb-kutzenberger.com)

**http://www.iad.gs/content/structure.php**

**Contact:** Harald Kutzenberger and Gabriele Kutzenberger

Phone: 07274 7888

Email: [h.kutzenberger@tb-kutzenberger.com](mailto:h.kutzenberger@tb-kutzenberger.com)

Email: [g.kutzenberger@tb-kutzenberger.com](mailto:g.kutzenberger@tb-kutzenberger.com)

#### 1.5. Public Open University Zagreb – University of the Third Age, Zagreb, Croatia



The Public Open University Zagreb (POUZ) [34]. is the largest, non-profit adult education institution in the Republic of Croatia. Its tradition goes far back to the year 1907, when Dr. Albert Bazala initiated the idea of establishing a public university, while the first lectures started in 1912. The POUZ has witnessed dramatic times of Croatian history, thus being under



influence of changing political and economic circumstances. Nevertheless, its mission to meet the need for adult education has been continuing for over 100 years. The founders of the POUZ are the city of Zagreb.

Nowadays it has 300 educational programs, 20,000 students per year and 500 teachers and trainers. It offers a broad spectrum of educational programs – starting from elementary and secondary school programs, continuing to higher education, as well as trainings, including vocational training and retraining. In addition, there are activities and programs connected with culture and publishing. As an educational institution, we are open to all the people who are either starting their vocational training or participating in professional development courses as well as ‘third age’ students.

The University of the Third Age (UTA) is a department within the Public Open University. This program started in 1992 under the initiative of Dr. Maja Špan, professor at the Andragogy Department at the Faculty of Philosophy Zagreb and Jasna Čurin, who is now the head of the UTA.

It specializes in non-formal education by offering senior citizens a range of courses in foreign languages, IT-skills, lectures and workshops about history, art, health, etc. There are about 1300 students organized in 90 educational groups.

**Web site: [www.pou.hr](http://www.pou.hr)**

**Contact: Jasna Čurin and Gordana Radonić**

тел: +385 1 6003 043, факс: +385 1 6003 080 or +385 1 6003 049

E-mail: [kultura@pou.hr](mailto:kultura@pou.hr), [jasna.curin@pou.hr](mailto:jasna.curin@pou.hr)

E-mail: [gogarad@yahoo.com](mailto:gogarad@yahoo.com)

## **1.6. “Angel Kanchev” University of Rouse, Bulgaria**



The University of Rouse [37] has long traditions in education and in carrying out projects on local, national and international levels. The numbers



of implemented programs and projects are as follows: 95 in LLP (ERASMUS, ERSMUS MUNDUS, COMENIUS, MINERVA, LEONARDO da VINCI, GRUNDTVIG), 3 in CEEPUS and 12 in FP6 & FP7, 1 CIR-CE, 3 NATO, etc. The University has a total of 498 academic staff members, including 31 Full Professors and 177 Assoc. Professors, 12 DSc degree holders and 269 PhD degree holders. Establishing the centre for European Integration, International Cooperation and Mobility has strengthened the research and scientific potential of the University of Rousse.

The University of Rousse is situated in a city with a nineteen-century history, a place, where alongside the rich architectural, industrial and cultural heritage there also live the enterprising national spirit and the deeply rooted European influences. Our University is the successor of the first national higher technical school outside the capital of Bulgaria, established in 1954. As a result of its long traditions and the support of the European Union through the TEMPUS programme a wide spectrum of new courses has been introduced in the fields of technology, the humanities, management and economics. More than 12 000 students are taught in modern laboratories and classrooms.

The tradition and the geographical location of the University of Rousse determine its mission and its strategic role of an educational, scientific and intellectual center of the Rousse Region and North-East Bulgaria on both the national and the international levels.

**Web site: [www.uni-ruse.bg](http://www.uni-ruse.bg)**

**Contact: Nikolay Mihailov and Emiliya Velikova**

E-mails: [mihailov@uni-ruse.bg](mailto:mihailov@uni-ruse.bg)

[emily@ami.uni-ruse.bg](mailto:emily@ami.uni-ruse.bg), [evelikova@uni-ruse.bg](mailto:evelikova@uni-ruse.bg) [emivelikova@yahoo.com](mailto:emivelikova@yahoo.com)

Phones.: (+359) 885 635 874; (+359 82) 888 843;

Fax: (+359 82) 888 650

## **1.7. Other Participants in the Project DANET**

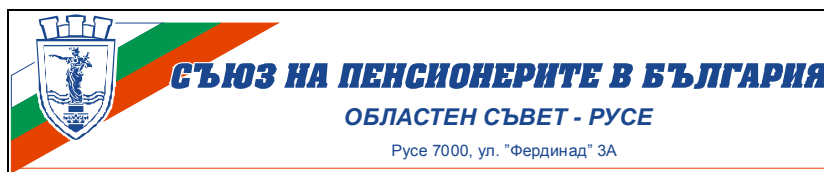
### **1) Baden-Württemberg Stiftung, Germany**



Besides the programme “Europe for Citizens” the project DANET was also supported by the Baden-Württemberg Stiftung in Germany, namely the Department for East Europe "Geschäfts- und Servicestelle Osteuropa" of the Baden-Württemberg Foundation [57, 58].

**Web site:** <http://www.bwstiftung.de/nc/en/the-foundation.html>  
<http://www.osteuropa-bw.de/>

### **2) Union of Pensioners’2004, Rousse Branch, Bulgaria**



The partner of the University of Rouse in the project DANET was the Union of Pensioners’2004, Rouse branch.

The Union of Pensioners’ 2004 [12] is the biggest organization of older people in Bulgaria at present numbering over 80 000 members, with local structures in 25 districts altogether.

The Union has been set up with the aim of protecting the rights and interests as well as the prestige and dignity of senior citizens in Bulgaria who are to be treated equally in our society. They are entitled to adequate medical care and transportation and have their cultural and intellectual needs to be met. The Union is also aiming at certain legislative changes regarding fair social and pension insurance so that our members should be better socially and economically integrated into our society.

Some 7200 seniors belong to our Rouse district organization. Local structures have been set up in all district communities such as 78 societies

and clubs and 67 groups for amateur art activities with more than 1000 participants. Our District organization is making every effort to improve the way of life of its members. Traditional festivities and amateur art festivals are being regularly organized. Many seniors enjoy the opportunities for summer recreation. Meetings are common among clubs within the country, as well as with clubs from neighbouring Romania.

**Web site:** <http://pension-bg.org/>

**Contact:** Yordan Kazakov

E-mail: [yordan\\_k@yahoo.com](mailto:yordan_k@yahoo.com)

### 3) Virtuelles und reales Lern- und Kompetenz - Netzwerk älterer Erwachsener (ViLE), Ulm, Germany



The project DANET was also supported by the Virtuelles und reales Lern- und Kompetenz - Netzwerk älterer Erwachsener (ViLE), Ulm University, Germany [59].

**Web site:** <https://www.vile-netzwerk.de/>

### 4) European house, Vukovar, Croatia

The partner of the University of the Third Age, Zagreb in the project DANET is “European house” in Vukovar, Croatia. Its strategic goal is to enforce peace in Eastern Europe and to prepare its population for the integration in EU [60].

**Web site:** <http://europskidomvukovar.com/about.html>

**Contact:** Ljiljana Gehrecke

E-mail: [ljiljana.gehrecke@vk.t-com.hr](mailto:ljiljana.gehrecke@vk.t-com.hr)



## **§2. CONTENT OF THE PROJECT DANET**

### **2.1. Introduction**

The countries covered by the EU Danube Strategy face an enormous demographic change [1, p. 33]. According to the newest Eurostat estimations (1/2010), 23.3 % of the population in the Danube region will be aged 65 and over in 2030 – considering that this rate is 16.5% in 2010, the next twenty years will bring an increase of 6.6% [16, 17, 18]. All Danube countries will be concerned by this development, their ageing rate even exceeding that of the EU-27 (average increase of 5.8 %). Many Danube regions are additionally touched by migration of the working population, aggravating the age shift. These changes imply major effects on societies, with consequences for the social, welfare and economic life as well as education and culture. Considering this transformation process, it is surprising that the importance of older adults for the whole society is often neglected.

Older adults (55+) can no longer be regarded as a homogenous group of passive people or a burden in need of care. Rather, they are an active age group with various life styles and social milieus differing considerably between and within countries – just like any other part of the population. These heterogeneous persons possess experiences and competences that are valuable to society and to younger generations. D. Findeisen remarks [16, p. 13] that older people, like anybody else, can become reintegrated into society only by being active. The active participation and social inclusion of this group of population fosters civil society and is absolutely necessary for the prosperity of society as a whole [14, p.14-22].

### **2.2. Aims of the Project**

The project aims at empowering older citizens in active participation in society and in actively shaping the environment they live in [1, p. 33]. By discussing subjects concerning the future of their local regions and the Danube region as a whole not only the national identity will be strengthened, but furthermore, a European identity will be developed and tolerance towards other cultures fostered. Through the structure of cross-national and national events, the diversity as well as the unity of Europe and the Danube region

will become apparent to the participants. By being able to compare the national findings on the cross-national events, an active European citizenship will be promoted.

Through the project, the participants will develop key competences for civic involvement. A dialogue between the citizens and the EU-institutions will be initiated, thus fostering active participation of the civil society in EU-matters. The development of key competences will be reinforced through the provision of the theoretical background of the topics followed by the practical application of the knowledge in discussions with experts and other participants. Also, awareness of how the EU influences every country and the union as a whole will be raised and through this knowledge, possible ways of participation will become more apparent.

The participation of women and intergenerational dialogue will explicitly be encouraged and through the combination of cross national events and events on location, participation will be ensured for a wide number of people with varying mobility.

By encouraging intergenerational dialogue as well as intercultural exchange, European values will be promoted and tolerance and understanding between people from the participating countries as well as among the participants of each partner will rise.

## **2.3. Pertinence of the Project and Methods Proposed**

### **Pertinence of the Project**

Each of the partners will have a coordinator and teachers/moderators that will work with the older citizens and provide them with support in the project. ZAWiW will be project coordinator and will manage the main process and administrative matters. Communication between the project partners will take place in the cross-national events, in partner meetings and in-between virtually over mailing lists and online conferencing tools. Partner meetings will have strategic and quality assurance functions.

Each partner including ZAWiW will design and conduct lectures and citizens panels on a local level, discuss the subjects with their groups and present the

teaching resources and outcomes of the discussions in the project website. Each partner will aim at establishing cooperation with other organisations on local and international level (NGOs providing education for seniors, decision-makers of municipalities, associations representing older citizens, experts, national EU representatives and representatives of the European Commission [24]) and their participation in the project events.

## **National Activities**

### **1) National Citizens' Panels**

Four per year in each location, with at least 30 older citizens per partner country. Events with dialogue between citizens and local politicians and experts. Issues with a thematic relation to the group's national region will be discussed. These proceedings will be moderated by the coordinators and documented duly, also in the Internet and an open forum, so that the discussions can continue. Cooperation and further events with NGOs will be promoted.

### **2) Impulse lectures**

Each partner prepares lectures on the project's thematic areas as impulses for the citizens' panel sessions and presents these to the participating older adults at each location.

Subject areas:

- ✓ Active ageing in Europe / Solidarity between the Generations
- ✓ Migration as a Challenge / Minorities as a Chance
- ✓ Sustainability of Cultural Heritage / National and European Identity
- ✓ Ecology / Environment

## **Cross-national Activities**

### **1) Cross-national citizens' panel in Sibenik, Croatia**

Three days, 5 older citizens plus 3 coordinator/interpreters per national group, invited experts (EU-representatives, experts in thematic areas addressed in the workshop, etc.).

The cross-national panel will discuss the themes already handled in relation to the individual regions and find common issues that concern the whole of the Danube Region and its future.

The presentation language in this event will be EN or DE or the language of the host country. Professional translation will be provided into the other national languages.

The key contents/outcomes will be documented in text/video and subsequently presented in the project website. The most important parts will be translated into all project languages. Continuation of the discussions in Internet-based forum.

## **2) Forum discussions**

Discussion of the selected themes in Internet-based cross-national citizens' panels in an online forum in the project website with the participation of further interested members of public and experts will be encouraged.

## **Partner Meetings**

Locations: Ulm, Germany; Rousse, Bulgaria

Each meeting will be in 2 days. There will be 5 seniors and 2 coordinators/teachers from each partner country.

## **Final conference**

The Final Conference will be in 1,5 day in Strasbourg, France with 5 seniors, 2 coordinators from each partner and invited guests.

Formulation of final resolution, lectures, guests from the European Commission [24].

## **2.4. Expected Impact of the Project**

The project aims at increasing the awareness of social, historical, political, intercultural and intergenerational themes in the context of each individual country as well as the Danube region as a whole. The active dialogue fostered by the project activities will improve mutual understanding and contribute to the development of a common European identity of citizens of all ages in the Danube Region.

Furthermore, the participants will develop and acquire knowledge and competences for social participation and active participation in the developments of civil society. By building on and utilizing the older citizens' informal experiences and knowledge, their competences will be valorized.

The participants will gain insight into the European Integration processes and the role of EU institutions in shaping policies. They will enlarge their knowledge on cross-national and cross-generational co-operations and will be able to utilize this knowledge for their own civic participation in the future as multipliers and disseminators. Examples of good practice will be shared and can become models in the Danube region. Older people have important impact as multipliers in the context of families and their involvement in the community.

The project will create a network of organizations able to coordinate seniors' education in the partner countries with special attention to European cooperation and will build a basis of participating seniors through the project. Establishing closer cooperation among institutions dealing with (senior) adult education will set up a framework for creation of common European educational area for the third age population. Exchanging ideas and practices among educators/practitioners will result in developing future common programs for seniors and encouraging their cooperation and mobility. The experiences of this project can then be utilised in further co-operations.

Activities of the project also go beyond mere awareness raising in the society; its objective is creation of advocacy coalition for public visibility of the third age population. This project will establish stronger connection among institutions which are involved in (senior) adult education in the Danube region and thus create conditions for closer cooperation, especially in initiating public discussion dealing with political and social issues in

connection with third age population. The agenda will include topics like health, transport, education and other common issues [26-28].

Another added value aspect is the opening of the use of ICT to older people, who through subject-oriented approaches find access to the new media [6, 13, 25].

## 2.5. Relevance of DANET to the Objectives and Priorities of the Programme “Europe for Citizens”

The project is relevant to the following objectives and priorities of the Programme “Europe for Citizens” [1, p. 31-33]

- ✓ Giving citizen the opportunity to interact and participate in constructing a tighter-knit Europe, which is democratic and world-oriented, united and enriched by its cultural diversity, thus developing citizenship of the European Union.
- ✓ Developing a sense of European identity, based on common values, history and culture.
- ✓ Fostering a sense of ownership of the European Union among its citizens.
- ✓ Enhancing tolerance and mutual understanding between European citizens, respecting and promoting cultural and linguistic diversity, while contributing to intercultural dialogue.
- ✓ Collecting the opinion of citizens on some key European challenges for the future.
- ✓ Exploring new methodologies capable of promoting active interaction and discussion between citizens on matters related to EU policies that affect their daily life.
- ✓ Creating mechanisms that allow European citizens to develop civic competences, to formulate their views and opinions on the European integration process in the form of recommendations for policy makers at European level.

*Results of Training under the Project DANET, Emiliya Velikova*

- ✓ Encouraging the dialogue between European citizens and the institutions of the EU.
- ✓ Civic participation in democratic life of the EU.
- ✓ Women's participation in political life.
- ✓ Integration of intercultural dialogue: methodological aspects.
- ✓ Impact and consequences of the current economic situation.
- ✓ The challenges of immigration.
- ✓ The EUROPEAN YEAR for Combating Poverty and Social Exclusion 2010.
- ✓ Promoting European Values (tolerance, mutual understanding, solidarity, etc.).
- ✓ Contributing to informal learning for active European citizenship.
- ✓ Fostering a transnational approach with a local dimension (able to reach European citizens in their everyday lives).
- ✓ Making the programme equally accessible to all.



# **CHAPTER III**

## **ORGANISATIONAL MEETINGS**

### **OF THE PROJECT DANET**

#### **§1. FIRST ORGANISATIONAL MEETING OF THE PARTNERS**

The First meeting of the partners of the project DANET was held from 15 till 17 December, 2010 in the University of Ulm, Germany.

After the partners' presentations there were discussed the following key issues:

1. Joint work on the panels.
2. International panel in Sibenik, Croatia.
3. Second partner meeting in Rousse, Bulgaria.
4. Final conference, Strasbourg, France.
5. Logo and website functions and concept.
6. Project communication.
7. Financial issues.



The panels were:

Panel I: Active Ageing in Europe/ Solidarity between the Generations

Panel II: Migration as a Challenge / Minorities as a Chance (which was changed by the Bulgarian team in: Integration as a Chance)

Panel III: Sustainability of Cultural Heritage / National and European Identity

Panel IV: Ecology / Environment

**The following decisions were taken.**

The panels periods and responsible partner:

Panel I: 15.01.-28.02.2011, the partner from Slovenia

Panel II: 01.03. - 31.03.2011, the partner from Croatia

Panel III: 01.04. -8.05.2011, the partner from Romania

Panel IV: 09.05. - 17.06.2011, the partners from Austria and Bulgaria

As the subject of cultural heritage and identity may be a good starting point for discussions about migration and minorities, which is a more difficult subject, ZAWiW proposed to swap the order of the panels II and III.

The partners were to be responsible for the coordination of the national panels concerning thematic focus, documentation of the panels' contents and results and their presentation in the website, moderation of the web-based forum discussions.

The participants in the panels were to be: seniors, adults who are interested in the discussed subjects, members of clubs, unions, associations, etc.

The panels were to start with impulse lectures by the specialists in the appropriate areas. The lectures were to stimulate discussions, workshops and generating of new ideas for future activities.

The moderators were to be specialists in the appropriate areas, seniors or researchers from the partner institutions.

The documentation were to include: short photo-clips and video-clips, summaries of the discussions, online exhibition of the painting/photos, participants tests, presentations and other materials, which would be discussed by the all participants of the partners on the web site.

### CHAPTER III: Organisational Meetings of the Project DANET

The plan also included:

- ✓ Writing of essays by the participants, which reflected their opinions, thoughts and feelings in relation to the panels. The essays would be in English by the seniors who were members of English language groups or in the language of the partner.
  - ✓ Painting of pictures by the seniors who were in the art groups.
  - ✓ Taking pictures by the seniors who were members of photos groups.
- Some of the most important tasks were:
- ✓ to invite experts, policy-makers, educators, who make decisions about the active ageing of elder people in the partner countries;
  - ✓ to present the project results in the media – regional and national, newspapers and e-media, radio and TV;
  - ✓ to develop surveys and to present the results at scientific conferences.

The panels should prepare seniors to participate actively in discussions, to formulate their ideas and to bring in their know-how, experience and knowledge. Furthermore, these events should activate the older (as well as the younger) persons for civic engagement. Experts, policy-makers will gain a view into the opinions of the older representatives of society.

The conference in Sibenik, Croatia to be from 18 to 21 June, 2011.

The decision about the place of the Final conference was to be made when the options for its conduction in France, Belgium or Germany were known.

The Second organisational meeting will be in Rousse, Bulgaria from 28 February to 2 March, 2011.

The project logo had to include an exact copy of the Danube flow and the logo for each partner country should include its flag.

The project web site:

- ✓ should be a spot for communication between all partners;
- ✓ upload of content should be done by the coordinator with initial technical support from ZAWiW;
- ✓ should provide open access to forum as it is easier for seniors.

**Meeting in Ulm, Germany, 15-17 December, 2011**



## §2. SECOND ORGANISATIONAL MEETING OF THE PARTNERS

The Second organisational meeting of the partners of the project DANET was held from 27 February to 1 March, 2011 in Rousse, Bulgaria. It included:

- ✓ Exchange of opinions on the conducting of the panel discussions, the program of the conference in Croatia, co-funding the conferences in Croatia and in France, developing of advertising materials (for example, [http://www.danet-at-work.eu/wp-content/uploads/flyer\\_danet\\_2011 .pdf](http://www.danet-at-work.eu/wp-content/uploads/flyer_danet_2011.pdf)), exchanging information and organizing flash-meetings, presenting the project in the media.
- ✓ Meeting with Prof. Dsc. Hristo Beloev, Rector of the University of Rousse.
- ✓ Meeting with Eng. Bozhidar Yotov, Major of the town of Rousse.
- ✓ Meeting with the representatives of the Union of Pensioners'2004 – Rousse branch – a cooperating partner of Rousse University.
- ✓ Meeting with representatives of the media.
- ✓ Visiting famous historical and cultural places of Rousse.

The partners put emphasis on:

- ✓ Quality documentation (including participant signature lists) and short presentations of the panles in the website in English and in the partners' languages.
- ✓ Formulation of the main theses from every panel as a base for further discussions on national and international levels.
- ✓ Encouraging the participants in the panels to continue discussing the theses online in the form of commentaries.
- ✓ Promoting cross-national discussion online.
- ✓ The exchange the methodologies used in the panels and the included training methods will be useful. An area in the website will be created where they will be posted.

**Meeting in Rousse, Bulgaria, 27 February – 1 March, 2011**



CHAPTER III: Organisational Meetings of the Project DANET



*Results of Training under the Project DANET, Emiliya Velikova*



### §3. ORGANISATIONAL MEETINGS OF THE BULGARIAN PROJECT TEAM

The organisational meetings of the Bulgarian project team were of two kinds:

- ✓ Meetings of the members of the Bulgarian team for implementation of the project.
- ✓ Meetings with the representatives of the University, regional government structures, NGO's, pensioner organizations, etc.

The meetings of the members of the Bulgarian team were as follows:

- ✓ Forming a team for working on the DANET Project. Presenting the content of the DANET Project. Analysis of the project goals and objectives. Assigning functions and tasks to the members of the Bulgarian team.
- ✓ Acquaintance with the results from the DANET partner meetings.
- ✓ Assigning tasks on development and dissemination of project information materials.
- ✓ Discussing the details of the types, design, price, production companies and distribution of informational materials for the panel discussions.
- ✓ Assigning tasks on the conducting of the panel discussions.
- ✓ Checking the fulfillment of tasks on the conducting of the panel discussions - development and dissemination of project information materials, informing seniors, inviting lecturers and guests, organizing coffee break, providing hall equipment, etc.
- ✓ Checking the technical equipment for the panel discussions - live broadcasting on Internet, audio and video recording, pictures of the event, synchronization.
- ✓ Conducting the panel discussions as follows
  - Panel I: Active Ageing in Europe/ Solidarity between the Generations, 4 February, 2011, Rouse, 52 participants.
  - Panel II: Migration as a Challenge / Integration as a Chance, 19 March, 2011, Rouse, 42 participants.



- Panel III: Sustainability of Cultural Heritage / National and European Identity, 29 April, 2011, Vetovo, 33 participants.
- Panel IV: Ecology / Environment, 24 June, 2011, village Tabachka, 102 participants.
- ✓ Analysis of the conduction of the panel discussions.
- ✓ Assigning tasks on organisation of the computer training course for seniors in New Information Technologies.
- ✓ Checking the fulfillment of tasks on the organisation of the computer training course for seniors. Open and closing ceremony.
- ✓ Meeting representatives of UP'2004-Rousse and assigning tasks about the conducting of organisational meeting of DANET in RU.
- ✓ Checking the fulfillment of tasks and conducting of the Second organisational meeting of DANET partners.
- ✓ Meeting of the DANET partners and representatives of UP'2004-Rousse.
- ✓ Taking part in the annual meeting of the Academic Body of the University of Rousse (RU) with the pensioners of RU. Representatives of UP'2004-Rousse were invited. Prof. N.Mihailov, Vice Rector of RU, presented the project DANET and invited pensioners to take part in the project panels (20 May, 2011, more than 100 participants).
- ✓ Taking part in the famous annual dancing meeting of pensioners from the Rousse region "Colourful Dance", 21 May, 2011. The event continued all day and the number of the participants was about 150. The meeting was organized by the UP'2004-Rousse. Eng. Y.Kazakov, President of UP'2004-Rousse, presented the project DANET and invited pensioners to take part in the project panel discussions.
- ✓ Taking part in the famous annual event "Talent Has no Age", 12 June, 2011. It is an annual meeting of seniors from the Rousse region for presenting customs and songs. The event continued all day and the number of the participants was about 450. The meeting was organized by the UP'2004-Rousse. Eng. Y. Kazakov presented the project DANET and invited pensioners to take part in the project panels.

### CHAPTER III: Organisational Meetings of the Project DANET

- ✓ Presenting the project DANET on the Academic Day, 14 June, 2011, organized under the project DASUN [www.dasun.eu](http://www.dasun.eu)
- ✓ Conducting regular pressconferences for presenting the project activities and results.
- ✓ Taking part in the project conferences in Croatia and in Germany.

Meetings with the representatives of the University, regional government structures, NGOs of pensioners, etc. were as follows:

- ✓ Reporting to the Rector of the University of Rouse, Prof. DSc. Hristo Beloev, the starting and the successful ending the project DANET.
- ✓ Conducting of the organisational meeting with the representatives of the UP'2004-Rousse: Presenting the aims and structure of the University of Rouse; Presenting the aims, tasks, activities and partners of the project DANET; Presenting the aims and activities of the UP'2004; Discussion; Forming a seniors' team for working on the project DANET; Planning common activities; Assigning general tasks.
- ✓ Meeting representatives of UP'2004-Rousse and assigning tasks about the conducting of the third panel discussion. Changing the name of the third panel, choosing participants for the project conference in Croatia.
- ✓ Meeting representatives of UP'2004-Rousse and preparing Bulgarian teams for taking part in the international project conferences in Croatia and in Germany and for reporting the results.
- ✓ Round table on 5 July, 2011 - organizing meeting of the Bulgarian project team and the UP'2004 representatives. Reporting the project results (25 participants).
- ✓ Inviting the Bulgarian representatives of the European parliament to take part in the Final conference of the project DANET.
- ✓ Inviting the Mayor of the town of Rouse, eng. B.Yotov, the Mayor of the Region of Vetovo, Dr Reyhan Habil, directors of schools and kindergartens, presidents of community centers, Father Elija and Hodga Ismail, representing Christianity and Islam, members of the University of Rouse, pensioners of the University, pensioners, members of UP'2004-Rousse and other organizations, representatives of the Region of Rouse, poets, etc.

**Meetings of the Bulgarian Project Team**



**Meeting of the DANET partners and representatives of UP'2004-Rousse**



**Meeting of the DANET partners and representatives of UP'2004-Rousse**



**Academic Body of RU  
and pensioners**



**Presenting DANET  
on the Academic Day**



*CHAPTER III: Organisational Meetings of the Project DANET*



**Meeting of the project team and representatives of UP'2004-Rousse**



**Meeting of the project team and UP'2004-Rousse, January, 2011**



**Pressconference, June, 2011**



**Training of seniors by university students, January, 2011**

*Results of Training under the Project DANET, Emiliya Velikova*



**Meetings with the Council of UP'2004-Rousse**



**Talent Colourful Dance, May, 2011**



**Talent has not Age**



**Colourful Dance, May, 2011**

*CHAPTER III: Organisational Meetings of the Project DANET*



**Round Table, July, 2011**



**Conference, Croatia, June, 2011**



**Final Conference, Germany, November, 2011**



# **CHAPTER IV**

## **RESULTS OF TRAINING**

### **UNDER THE PROJECT DANET**

#### **§1. PANEL DISCUSSION I:**

#### **ACTIVE AGEING IN EUROPE /**

#### **SOLIDARITY BETWEEN THE GENERATIONS**

##### **1.1. Content of the Panel Discussion I**

On 4 February 2011, in the building of “Angel Kanchev” University of Rousse was conducted the first panel discussion under the subject “Active Ageing in Europe/Solidarity between the Generations”, organized in the frames of the program “Europe for Citizens” as part of the project DANET. Participants in the discussion were over 50 adults from the Union of Pensioners from Rousse, the municipalities of Dve Mogili, Tsenovo, Slivo pole, Vyatovo and Byala, and also active and retired teachers from the University. The panel discussion was opened by the coordinator Prof. N.Mihailov.



The main questions of Panel Discussion I were.

Two levels: structural and personal to sharpen awareness of who can act on which level: self-determined life – how long can I keep up self-determined life (isolation, small families, mobility):

- ✓ Demographic development.
- ✓ Social security insurance and how to finance it.
- ✓ Pension systems and sustainability.
- ✓ Flexible security.
- ✓ Diversity of ageing – the meaning of „third age“.
- ✓ Dare to become older (some never grow up or get old).
- ✓ How are seniors seen in different countries and how can we change the image, if it is negative. How are seniors seen in their own country? Self-perception.
- ✓ Active ageing – possibilities for staying active.
- ✓ Necessity of learning in later life.
- ✓ Empowering older people.
- ✓ New technologies – how these can be used to bridge the generations.
- ✓ Is ageing society a benefit or a threat in social developments? The subject matter needs to be addressed from the viewpoint of all generations.
- ✓ Solidarity between generations – the importance of intergenerational learning – how this can be done, possibilities for meetings of generations, understanding younger generations (they are less and less as there are fewer children, etc.)?
- ✓ Social exclusion vs. Social inclusion (public places, opportunities).

Mrs. Lidya Naydenova, Head of Department “Pensions” in the Regional Department for Social Security from the National Social Security Institute gave a lecture on the problems of the demographic development, retirement systems and insurances.

Assoc. Prof. Petar Petrov from the department of “Pedagogy, Psychology and

History” of the Faculty of Natural Science and Education at the University of Rousse gave a lecture on the problems of the rights of pensioners, solidarity between generations, active ageing and the use of new technology by adults as well as and the need for life-long learning [2, 3].

The discussion was broadcast live on the Internet and widely publicized in the national and regional media [61].

## 1.2. Survey on Active Ageing

The representatives of the UP’2004-Rousse created a test for of the participants in the Panel I “Active Ageing in Europe / Solidarity between the Generations” which was ac a result of spontaneous discussing of the problems of adults.

The main aim of the test was to survey the opinion of participants about the items discussed and to apply the test results in the planning of future activities of the union members.

The results from the survey conducted have been analysed and discussed at a meeting between the project team and representatives of UP’2004 – Rousse, as well as at a session of the Union of Pensioners’ Management with the aim of defining future activities in compliance with the needs of the senior citizens in the Danube region.

### TEST

1. Are you satisfied with the flexibility in solving the demographic development problems, the reform of the retirement system in Bulgaria in accordance with the requirements of European legislation?

YES

NO

2. Is there fear of ageing in the people of the “third age”?

YES

NO

3. Do the pensioners have a positive or a negative attitude to their country with respect to the changes that are taking place?

YES

NO

4. Is it necessary to expand or improve the rights of pensioners in Bulgaria through new legislation?

YES

NO

5. Can we counteract fast ageing if we stay active longer, through studying and participation in social life?

YES

NO

6. Can using the new communication technologies to some extent create a bridge between generations?

YES

NO

7. Is “ageing society” useful for the social development of all generations in our country and in the European Union?

YES

NO

8. Can solidarity between generations be achieved based on the economic interests of the young through communication, understanding and studying the needs of the young generation?

YES

NO

9. Has enough consideration been given to the role of senior citizens for the development of a society of general welfare?

YES

NO

10. Will the goals for changing the environment and the civic society, related to the future development of the Danube region and solving the problems of the European Union be achieved?

YES

NO

11. Do you have a computer at home?

YES

NO

12. Write down your opinion about the other problems of seniors in Bulgaria which need to be addressed and solved.

.....  
.....

The results have been disseminated among the members of the Union.

### 1.3. Analysis of the Results

The results of the training in the demographic development, retirement systems, etc. (problems and solutions) are presented in Fig. 1.

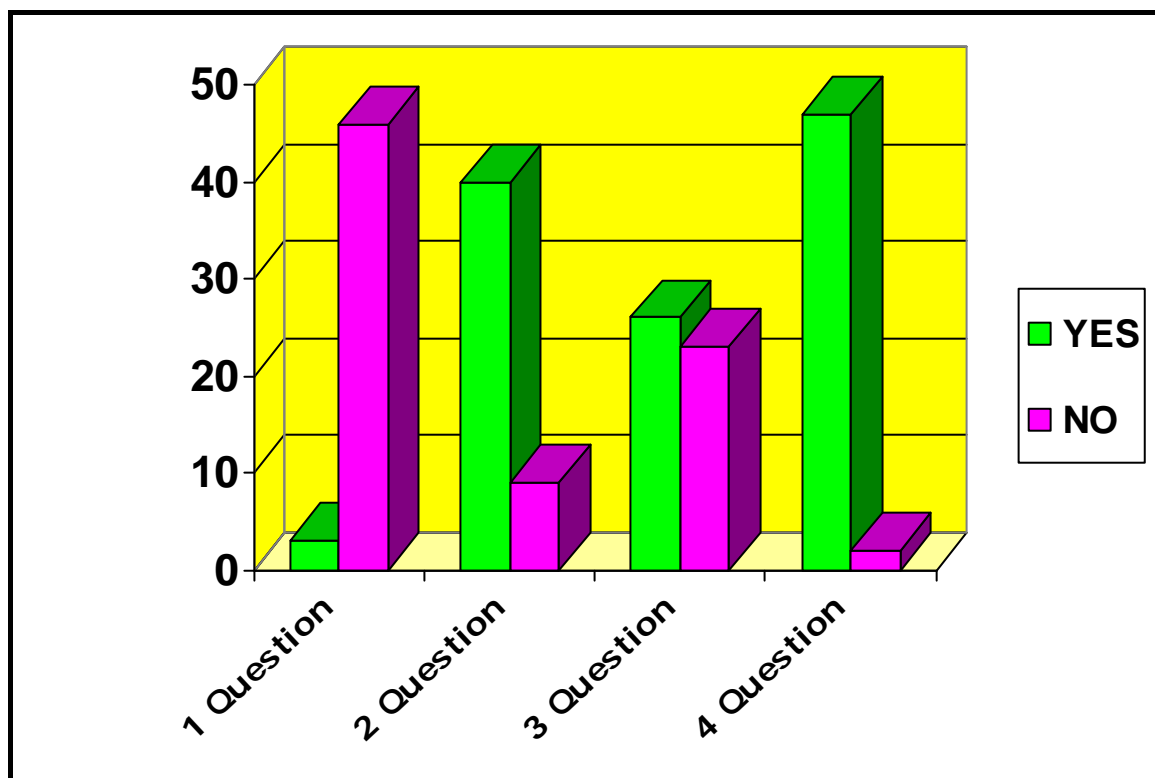


Figure 1

### CONCLUSIONS

**The pensioners are afraid of ageing.**

**They are not satisfied by the structure and functions of the retirement system.**

**There exists a necessity of increasing the rights of pensioners in Bulgaria through new legislation**

The results of the training in the solidarity between generations, the conditions for active ageing, the role of adults for society changing and development, etc. are presented in Fig. 2

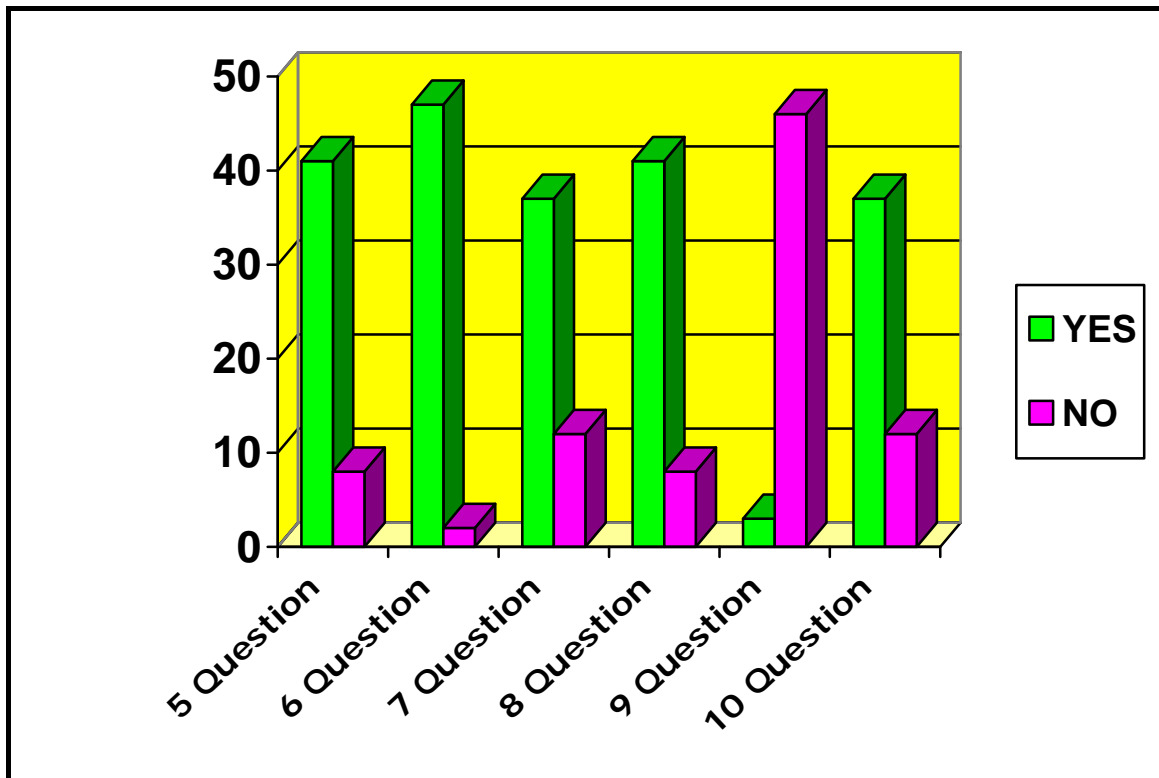


Figure 2

## CONCLUSIONS

The pensioners are convinced that they are useful for the society in which they live and they believe that through education and active inclusion they can resist rapid ageing.

They adopt new technologies in communications, and see them, combined with learning about the needs of the young, as an opportunity to create a bridge between generations.

They believe that civic society in Bulgaria will be changed with respect to the Danube region and the EU.

Almost all pensioners think that little account is taken of their role in achieving social welfare

## 1.4. Summary of Conclusions from the Panel Discussion I

The participants in the discussion were not satisfied by the way demographic problems have been tackled and suggested participation of pensioners in the preparation of a long-term strategy.

Politicians should put in the centre of public concern the demographic state of the Bulgarian nation, which is the foundation of efficient social policy.

There exists fear of ageing among pensioners.

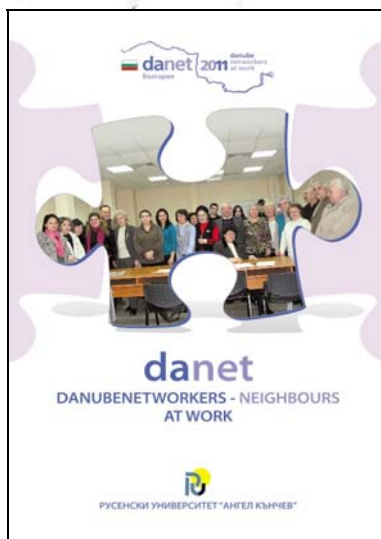
Active ageing is justified by the public need for pensioners' knowledge and experience, by their individual activity and positive attitude, by the use of advanced information and communication technologies, by their participation in various forms of education, encouraging amateur creativity and preservation of cultural and historical values, by the love of the people around us.

The pensioners' clubs are the centres which create conditions for active communication and overcoming the social disintegration (exclusion)

On one hand, solidarity is an important psychological pre-requisite for active ageing; on the other hand, it is a valuable foundation for passing experience and traditions down to the younger generation. An important aim to achieve in the communication between the generations is support and ignoring of conflicts through adopting of new attitudes and rationalizing the old status from new perspectives. This can be achieved through exchange of knowledge and experience in specific areas and breathing respect and trust in the state institutions.

Pensioners think that healthcare should support not medical treatment but a healthy way of living.

**Panel Discussion I, 4 February, 2011**



CHAPTER IV: Results of Training under the Project DANET





*Results of Training under the Project DANET, Emiliya Velikova*



CHAPTER IV: Results of Training under the Project DANET



## **§2. PANEL DISCUSSION II:**

### **SUSTAINABILITY OF CULTURAL HERITAGE / NATIONAL AND EUROPEAN IDENTITY**

#### **2.1. Content of the Panel Discussion II**

The Panel Discussion II was held on 19 March, 2011 at the University of Rousse with 42 participants. It was opened by the coordinator Prof. Nikolay Mihailov.

The main questions of the Panel Discussion II were.

Culture: as an issue in connection with entry in EU-membership

- ✓ Two half identities are less than one, but one can have more than one identity.
- ✓ Value of languages in Europe, language as an expression of culture.
- ✓ Language diversity as a chance.
- ✓ Developed national cultural identity as pre-condition.
- ✓ Multiculturalism on individual level.
- ✓ What are the shared values of European seniors (what is to be a national senior and a European senior, common human aspects)?
- ✓ How to protect our cultural identity towards power of multicultural concerns?
- ✓ Intergenerational views on the topics of culture and identity.

Professor Vassil Doykov gave a lecture on the panel topic. To illustrate the problems of the Bulgarian identity the lecturer presented characteristics of other nations that define their identity. He pointed out some national values of Bulgarians: rich and ancient culture, achievements in the field of literature, art, sport, social development. Some dramatic demographic trends were emphasized too such as a large number of pensioners, a small number of children, and emigration of young people. These trends are characteristic of all European states and even of countries like China and Japan.

It is expected that on joining the European Union, Bulgaria will preserve its identity, but it will adopt the European norms of civilized development,

tolerance, mutual penetration of cultures, foreign language acquisition for facilitating the communication between people, acquiring the new information and communication technologies, as well as continuous education (life-long learning).

The retirees expressed their desire to be actively involved in the social life in our country.

The participants in the discussion are confident that the DANET project is just the beginning in Rouse region but it will contribute towards the realization of those expectations to a great extent.

## **2.2. Summary of conclusions from the Panel Discussion II**

Meetings with elderly people from other countries are extremely necessary for the exchange of information and experience, for open acceptance of new ideas and good practices. The current project DANET is just a promising beginning.

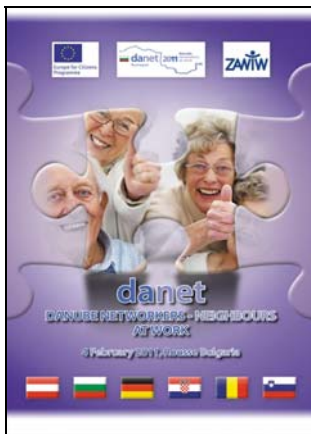
The Union of Pensioners'2004 – Rouse is instrumental in the preservation of cultural and historical heritage, the customs and traditions and their successful passing to the younger generation.

UP'2004 – Rouse is the organizer of the annual events “Colourful Horo Dance” (with over 150 participants) and “No Age for Talent” (with over 450) in Rouse. Both events are in full accordance with the ideas of the project panel about sustainability of cultural heritage and national identity.

Hatred, opposition, mistrust and aggression, which ‘soared during the transition period’ should be replaced by European tolerance, goodwill and mutual aid.

Our Bulgarian identity should be supporting our European individuality, not opposing it.

**Panel Discussion II, 19 March, 2011**



CHAPTER IV: Results of Training under the Project DANET



### **§3. PANEL DISCUSSION III: MIGRATION AS A CHALLENGE / INTEGRATION AS A CHANCE**

#### **3.1. Content of the Panel Discussion III**

The Panel Discussion III was held on 29 April, 2011 in the town of Vyatovo with 33 participant. It was opened by the President of the UP'2004-Rousse, eng. Y.Kazakov.

The main questions of the Panel Discussion III were.

- ✓ Concentration on medium scale migration (Danube region).
- ✓ Making conscious that migration is an opportunity to heal wounds.
- ✓ Seniors (from minorities) as a bridge between minorities.
- ✓ Religion as a barrier between minorities.
- ✓ Issues concerning old migrants, integrating new migrants (Chinese, Africans).
- ✓ How can good intercultural community, relations, could be build?
- ✓ What activities would be good for good living together?
- ✓ Benefits of mixtures of experience & knowledge.
- ✓ Migration in own country rural/urban (in Croatia, etc.).
- ✓ Terminology of “minderheit “/ “minority”, etc.
- ✓ Economic migration – inside the country and out.

Assoc. Prof. Lyubomir Zlatev from the Faculty of Natural Sciences and Education, the University of Rousse, gave a lecture on the topic of “Migration and Integration of Minorities”.

Mrs. Vyara Koseva, an ethnographer, commented on the ethnographic aspects of migration and the minorities in the region.

Dr. Reihan Kabil, Mayor of Vyatovo, commented on the issue of migration in his municipality as a sustainable process, influenced by the uniqueness of the multi-ethnic environment and the characteristic life signs – preserving the traditions, keeping an open mind for science, demonstrating religious and

ethnic tolerance.

Mr. Stancho Stanchev from the UP'2004–Rousse conducted a survey “Migration, family and names” or “Who was the child named after?”. The main purpose of the survey was to survey the trends for naming of children and grandchildren of the participants, a great part of whom had migrated. The main conclusion from the survey was that migration did not affect the choice of personal names in the surveyed group of children from various ethnic groups.

On the territory of Vetovo municipality there live several ethnoses – Bulgarian, Turkish, Tatars and Roma. The discussion brought out the ethnic tolerance in the relationship between those ethnic groups through a multimedia presentation. Father Elija and Hodga Ismail, representing Christianity and Islam, expressed their opinions about the existing religious tolerance with the slogan “Diverse but united”.

Representatives from the local school and library expressed their willingness to aid the education of adults on the issues of migration and integration of diverse ethnic minorities.

Michail Angelov, a poet of Roma origin, supported the ideas of the discussion through some impressive verses.

A survey on the issues of migration, its causes and its influence on the young and the old, as well as on the preservation of ethnic and religious traditions has been developed and conducted at the end of the discussion.

### 3.2. Survey on Migration

The representatives of the UP'2004-Rousse created a test for of the participants in the Panel III “Migration as a Challenge / Integration as a Chance” which was created in a discussion of the life of adults without migrated children.

The main aim of the test was to survey the opinion of participants about the items discussed and to apply the test results in the life of the union members.

The results from the survey conducted have been analysed and discussed at a



meeting between the project team and representatives of UP'2004 – Rousse, as well as at a session of the Union of Pensioners' Management. The results have been disseminated among the members of the Union.

### **T E S T**

1. Does the economic situation in the country affect the migration of the population?

YES NO PARTIALLY

2. The internal migration is due to lack of work places.

YES NO PARTIALLY

3. The external migration is due to:

a/ looking for jobs

b/ desire to learn about the world

c/ other

4. Does migration affect other forms of life of the people?

YES NO PARTIALLY

5. Is there a danger of folk traditions and customs to be forgotten by the emigrants?

YES NO PARTIALLY

6. Do relationships between parents and children change as a result of migration?

YES NO PARTIALLY

7. Do relationships in the families of young emigrants change?

YES NO PARTIALLY

8. Is it right for the seniors to take the duties and responsibilities of young parents in emigration concerning the upbringing of their children?

YES NO PARTIALLY

9. Do good neighbourly relations help seniors to overcome loneliness and missing their children?

CHAPTER IV: Results of Training under the Project DANET

- |  | YES | NO | PARTIALLY |
|--|-----|----|-----------|
| 10. Are ethnic and religious differences an obstacle for overcoming loneliness?  |     |    |           |
|  | YES | NO | PARTIALLY |
| 11. Is there any danger for foreign language practice to replace Bulgarian language in some spheres of communication?                              |     |    |           |
|  | YES | NO | PARTIALLY |
| 12. Is the Bulgarian national tradition in emigrant families affected when they choose the first names of their children ?                         |     |    |           |
|  | YES | NO | PARTIALLY |
| 13. Can the local government and the Union of Pensioners 2004 cooperate to some extent in overcoming the consequences of migration for pensioners? |     |    |           |
|  | YES | NO | PARTIALLY |
| 14. Do you have relatives who have emigrated abroad?   |     |    |           |
|  | YES | NO | PARTIALLY |
| 15. Do your relatives abroad help you financially?   |     |    |           |
|  | YES | NO | PARTIALLY |
| 16. Which country do you have relatives in?  |     |    |           |
|  | YES | NO | PARTIALLY |
| 17. Do your relatives have a desire or intention to return to Bulgaria?  |     |    |           |
|  | YES | NO | PARTIALLY |
| 18. Other opinions.....  |     |    |           |
| .....  |     |    |           |

### 3.3. Analysis of the Results

97% of the respondents reported that the economic situation in the country affects the migration of the population (Fig. 3).

Most of the respondents (91%) defined that internal migration as due to lack of work places and only 3% of the respondents didn't agree (Fig. 4).

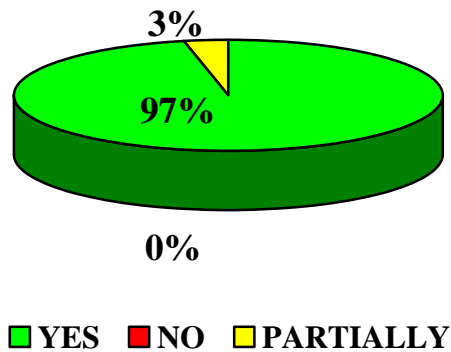


Figure 3

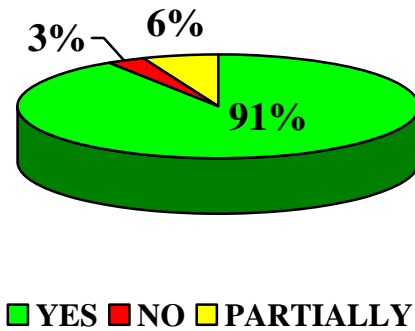


Figure 4

According to the opinion of the pensioners external migration was due to:

- a/ looking for jobs - 84%;
- b/ desire to learn about the world - 6%;
- c/ other – 10%.

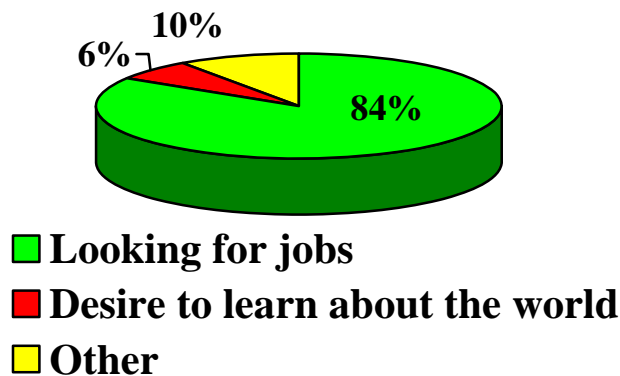


Figure 5

71% of the respondents agreed that migration affects other forms of life of the people, 10 % did not agree and 19% reported that the effect was partial (Fig. 6).

With respect to migration as a base for forgetting folk traditions and customs by the emigrants the respondents' answers could be divided into three approximately equal parts (Fig. 7).

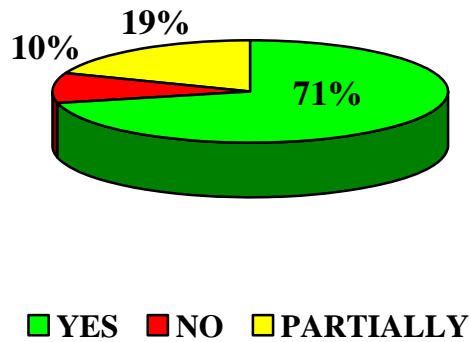


Figure 6

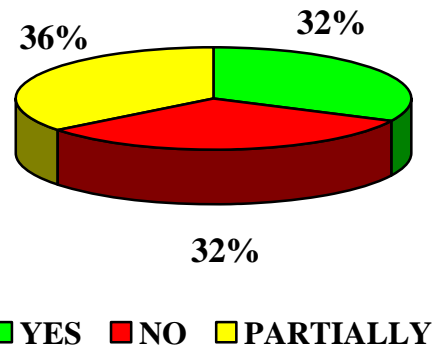


Figure 7

According to the pensioners, the migration changed much more the relations between parents and children (74%, Fig. 8), than the relationships in the families of young emigrants (65%, Fig. 9).

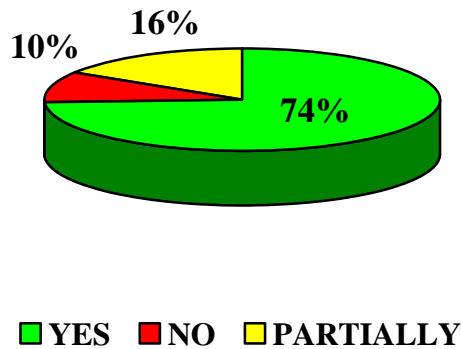


Figure 8

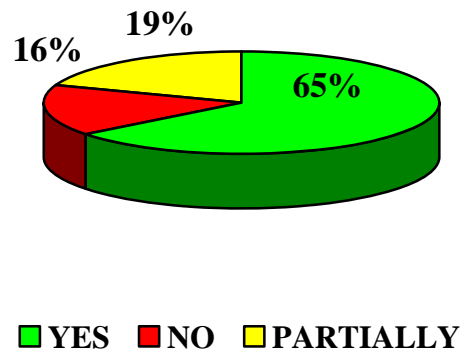


Figure 9

48% of the tested seniors (Fig. 10) did not agree to take the duties and responsibilities of young parents in emigration concerning the upbringing of their children.

The seniors who had children abroad reported that good neighbourly relations helped them to overcome loneliness and missing their children (97%) (Fig. 11).

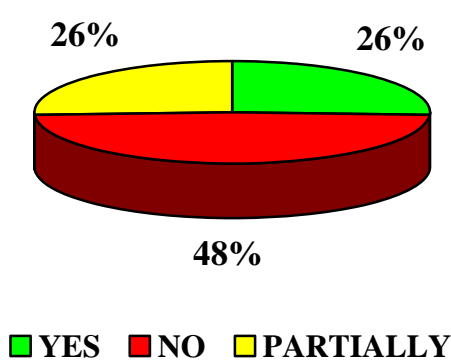


Figure 10

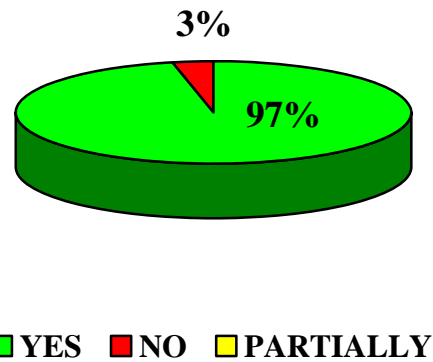


Figure 11

There are many respondents (65%) who did not definite the ethnic and religious differences as an obstacle for overcoming loneliness (Fig. 12).

There were only 39% of seniors who reported that there existed danger for replacing the Bulgarian language in some spheres of communication with the foreign language practice (Fig. 13)

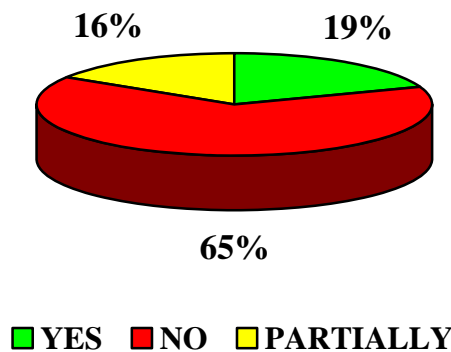


Figure 12

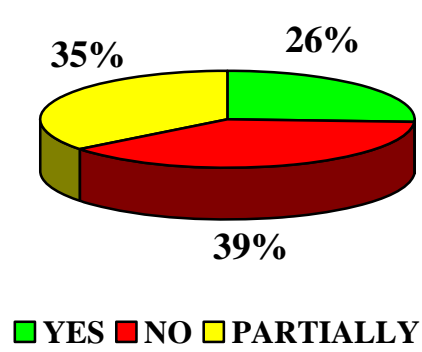


Figure 13

CHAPTER IV: Results of Training under the Project DANET

The opinion of over half of the tested seniors (52%) was that the Bulgarian national tradition in emigrant families had been affected when they had to choose the first names of their children (Fig. 14).

39% of the respondents reported that the local government and the Union of Pensioners'2004 could cooperate to some extent in overcoming the consequences of migration for pensioner (Fig. 15).

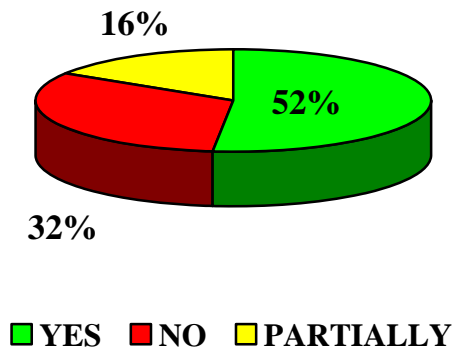


Figure 14

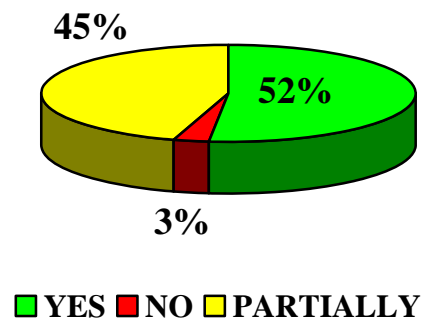


Figure 15

Over half of the respondents (52%) had relatives who had emigrated abroad (Fig. 16). Only 16% of the seniors had full and 16% had partial financial help by the relatives abroad (Fig. 17).

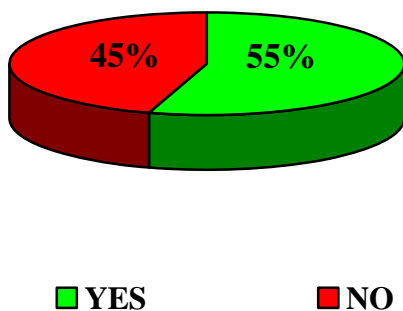


Figure 16

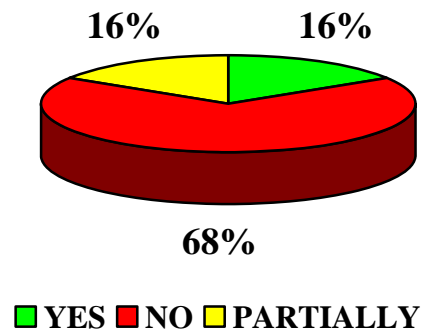


Figure 17

The seniors had relatives in the following countries (Fig. 18).

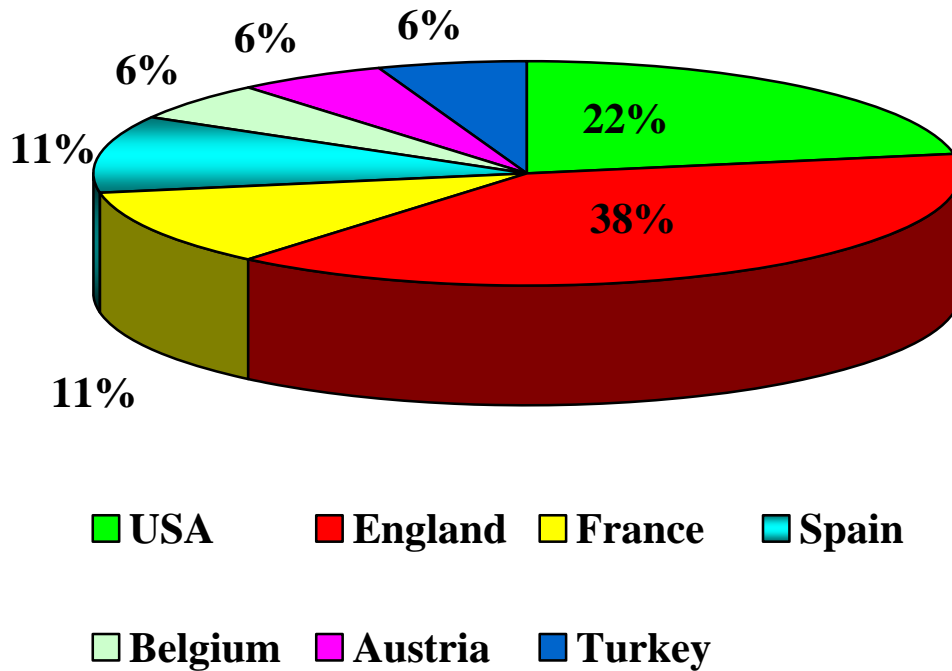


Figure 18

71% of the seniors' relatives had a desire or intention to return to Bulgaria.

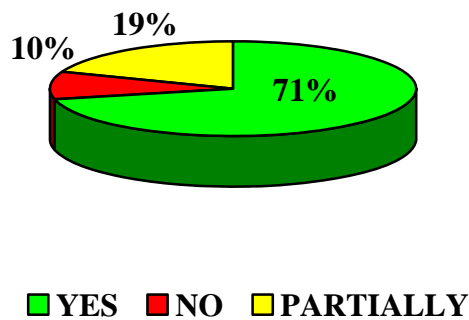


Figure 19

### 3.4. Scientific Survey on Migration, Family and Names

As most children of the participants in the Panel Discussion III are migrants, there is scientific interest in the influence of migration and ethnos on the names of children and grandchildren.

Mr. Stancho Stanchev conducted a scientific survey “Migration, family and names” or “Who was the child named after?” as part of the panel.

The goal of the survey was to determine the characteristics of personal names children’s names, parent naming practices, etc.

#### T E S T

1. Name of the child?.....
2. Full name (three names) of the father?.....
3. Full names of the father’s mother?.....
4. Full name of the mother?.....
5. Full names of the mother’s mother ?.....
6. Ful names of the godfather?.....
7. Who was the child named after?.....

The survey results are presented on the project web site:

<http://www.danet-at-work.eu/bg/category/paneli-bg/migracija/>

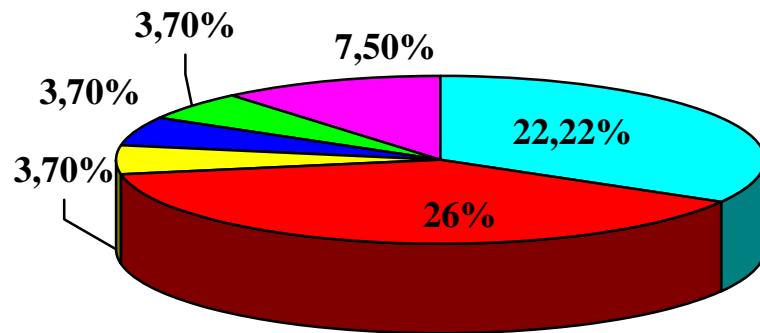
The choice of the children’s names (for boys and for girls) according to different factors is presented in the Fig. 20 and Fig. 21, respectively.

#### CONCLUSIONS

**The main conclusion of the results was that migration hadn’t affected the characteristics of the personal children’s names significantly.**

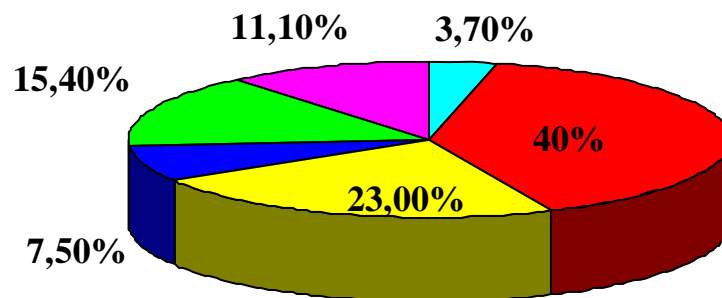
**The innovation is that the choice of personal children’s names was not significant.**





- |  |  |
|--|--|
| <span style="color: cyan;">■</span> Name of relative         | <span style="color: red;">■</span> First letter      |
| <span style="color: yellow;">■</span> Short form of the name | <span style="color: blue;">■</span> Root of the name |
| <span style="color: green;">■</span> Nick name               | <span style="color: magenta;">■</span> Nobody        |

Figure 20



- |  |  |
|--|--|
| <span style="color: cyan;">■</span> Name of relative         | <span style="color: red;">■</span> First letter      |
| <span style="color: yellow;">■</span> Short form of the name | <span style="color: blue;">■</span> Root of the name |
| <span style="color: green;">■</span> Nick name               | <span style="color: magenta;">■</span> Nobody        |

Figure 21



### 3.5. Summary of conclusions from the Panel Discussion III

The ethnic groups Bulgarian, Turkish, Tatars and Roma in Vyatovo live in the conditions of ethnic and religious tolerance.

The emigration and developing of small settlements will continue in the future. All countries experience a similar trend.

The problem of integration of minorities is social, not political.

Communication between the people, irrespective of their ethnic and religious diversity, is a value of civic society.

Both internal and external migration is due to the lack of work places, caused by the economic crisis.

Migration does not affect significantly the choice of personal names for children.

The slogan of the diverse religious groups will be “Diverse but united”.

It is necessary to have more discussions on similar topics in the region.

#### Panel Discussion III, 29 April, 2011



*Results of Training under the Project DANET, Emiliya Velikova*



## **§4. PANEL DISCUSSION IV: ECOLOGY / ENVIRONMENT**

### **4.1. Content of the Panel Discussion IV**

The Panel Discussion IV was held on 24 June, 2011 in the village of Tabachka, Region of Ivanovo in the nature park “Roussenski Lom”. More than 100 children, youth and participants from the pensioners clubs in Tabachka, Rousse, Slivo pole, Borovo, Ivanovo, Dve mogili, Byala, Vetovo, Tsenovo, from the University of Rousse and from the University of Eskisehir, Turkey took part in the discussion. The building was small for all youth and adults who wanted to discuss the topic “Ecology / Environment”.

The main questions of the Panel Discussion IV were.

- ✓ Transnational cooperation of organisations:
- ✓ Ecological catastrophes are a matter of cooperation between the neighboring countries (Hungarian disaster).
- ✓ Practical measures for species protection (e.g. frogs and traffic), preserving natural spots.
- ✓ National heritage and sustainable local development on local level (villages, etc.).
- ✓ Energy levels (European/African Desertec program) , destruction of resources, energy export, should be addressed in some depth.
- ✓ What concrete actions should be taken by young and old to improve this situation.

Mr. Lyubomir Atanasov and Mrs. Svetla Ivanova, experts from the Regional Inspectorate for Water and Environmental Protection gave lectures on the topic of “Environmental protection”. They presented the current legislature related to protection of the flora and fauna in Bulgaria, waste disposal, information systems developed, and the activities of the state for conservation of the biodiversity in the “Roussenski Lom” Nature park and “Sreburna” Nature reserve. The role of adults in educating the young generation and encouraging them to preserve the parks and other natural sights and take care of the protected plant and animal species was pointed out.

The participants expressed their concern about the deterioration of the environment and made proposals for aiding the state by active involvement on the information system of the Regional Inspectorate for Water and Environmental Protection.

The need for obtaining energy from renewable energy sources and using the nuclear power was emphasized.

The participants gathered herbs from the Nature park to commemorate the custom “Enjov den”. The active participants were granted special awards. Lively folk dances marked the end of the holiday.

A decision was made to inform the members of regional pensioners’ clubs about the content of the discussion and to encourage the organization of similar discussions with the aim of aiding the state in its struggle to preserve the environment clean.

#### **4.2. Summary of conclusions from the Panel Discussion IV**

It is advisable to obtain energy from renewable energy sources, including biomass as a source of energy.

It is necessary to support the use of nuclear power and the development of nuclear power plants in Bulgaria.

The elderly can aid the efforts of the state institutions for conservation by getting actively involved in the state information system.

It is advisable to produce and use organic foods (to develop organic agriculture).

The possibility for applying for a project with the purpose of improving the entrance-exit border points around the Danube Bridge should be investigated in cooperation with the pensioners’ syndicate in Giurgiu, Romania.

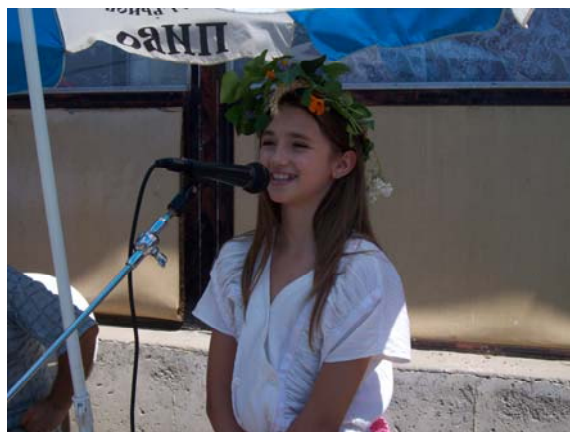
The energy potential of the river Danube should be used on the basis of innovative power technologies, which are not harmful for the environment and the climate.

CHAPTER IV: Results of Training under the Project DANET

Panel Discussion IV, 24 June, 2011



*Results of Training under the Project DANET, Emiliya Velikova*



## **§5. TRAINING FOR NEW INFORMATION TECHNOLOGIES USAGE**

The decision to organize a training course in New Information Technology Usage was taken on 11 January, 2010 at the organizational meeting of the Bulgarian project team from the University of Rouse and the council of the UP'2004-Rouse. The decision was relevant to the project aim to create international network for communication by Internet, e-mail, skype between adults on matters related to EU policies that affect their daily life and on some key European challenges for the future.

The training was organized by Assoc. Prof. Dr Emilia Velikova. The course was open on 31 January, 2011 and it was closed on 15 April, 2011 by Prof. Dr Nikolay Mihailov, Vice Rector of RU and Bulgarian project coordinator. The course started with 26 seniors

The instructors were university students from the course “Teachers in Mathematics and Informatics” and pensioners of RU.

It was held on 5, 12 and 19 February, 12, 19 and 26 March, 9, 10 and 15 April, 2011.

## **CONCLUSIONS**

**One of the main results was a new society created by seniors for exchanging organizational information, interesting presentations, music, etc. Such kind of society did not exist in Rouse region.**

**One of the insufficient outcomes of the project in Bulgaria, which will be a problem for further work, is that in spite of the cooperation on the part of students and lecturers from Ruse University, the training in computer literacy and the use of Internet was marked by;**

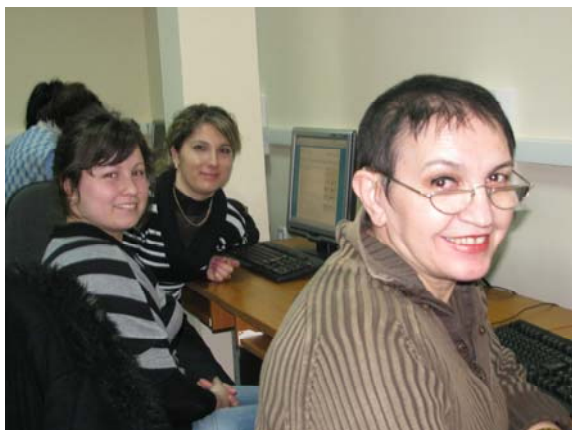
- ✓ **the small number of pensioners (20) who participated in it;**
- ✓ **a very small number of pensioners were willing to send a written input on the discussion topics.**



**Training of seniors for New Information Technology Usage,  
Instructors - university students  
in the course “Mathematics and Informatics”**



CHAPTER IV: Results of Training under the Project DANET



## **§6. OTHER RESULTS OF TRAINING UNDER THE PROJECT DANET**

Three surveys, 2 protocols, 5 essays, 2 scientific papers and many reports and presentations were developed by the participants in the training and in the international conferences which were organized under the project DANET.

1) Summary of Panel Discussion II (Protocol) [62]

Author: Yordanka Peneva

2) Summary of Panel Discussion III (Protocol) [63]

Author: Ginka Krumova

3) Impressed and elated! (Essay) 63, 64]

Author: Mihail Mitkov / artistic name Sevim Palauzov

4) Conclusions and Thoughts after the First International Conference under the Project DANET with Bulgarian Participation, 2011, Shibenik, Croatia (Essay)

Author: Tsvetaka Petrova

The author cited Mrs. Carmen Stadelhofer, Germany: Seniors should be considered a valuable human capital [65].

5) Croatia – one unforgettable experience (Essay) [65, 66]

Author: Reni Koleva

6) Conclusions and Evaluation of the Results of the Project DANET (Danube Networkers – Neighbours at Work with participation RU and UP'2004-Rousse, programme „Europe for Citizens” (Report).

Author: Yordan Kazakov, Presidents of UP'2004-Rousse

The report was included in the final report of the project.

7) Thoughts (Essay) [67]

Author: Rumyan Damyanov

8) Research on the employment of relatives of UP'2004-Rousse, who have emigrated abroad

Author: Rumyan Damyanov

**9) Announcements for media**

Author: Prof. Dr Nikolay Mihailov

**10) Announcements for media**

Author: Eng. Yordan Kazakov

**11) Scientific paper: Danube Networkers – Neighbours at Work: Aims, Activities and Results of the Project „DANET”**

Author: Assoc. Prof. Emiliya Velikova, PhD

Event: Scientific Conference of the University of Rousse and the Union of Bulgarian Scientists, Rousse, Bulgaria, 28-29.10.2011 [68].

Abstract. The paper presents the aims, the activities and the results of the project „DANET”, program “Europe for citizens”. This was one of the first projects in Bulgaria for education of adults, for stimulating their active participation in society and in actively shaping the environment they live in. The participants were members of the Union of Pensioners’2004 – Rousse, pensioners from the Region of Rousse. Their main result is changing the attitude

- ✓ of the pensioners to the continuing education and developing as active civil society;
- ✓ of the University of Rousse to the idea of creating a new Center for adult education;
- ✓ of the local government to support the center creation and other international activities of adults.

The project was managed by the Centre for General Scientific Continuing Education (ZAWiW) of the University of Ulm, Germany. Other partners of the project were from Austria, Slovenia, Romania and Croatia ([www.danet-at-work.eu/bg](http://www.danet-at-work.eu/bg)).

## **§7. DISSEMINATION OF THE PROJECT RESULTS**

### **7.1. Dissemination of the Results to Institutions and Representatives of the Local Government**

The results were disseminated as follows:

- ✓ Participating of representatives of the University of Rousse (RU) in the project activities and in the events for presenting the project – Prof. DSc. Hristo Beloev, Rector of RU, Prof. Dr Nikolay Mihailov, Vice Rector of RU, Assoc. Prof. Dr Borislav Angelov, Vice Rector of RU, Assoc. Prof. Dr Emiliya Velikova, Vice Dean of the Faculty of Natural Sciences and Education of RU and researcher of the project, Assoc. Prof. Dr Ivaylo Stoyanov, RU and a team member of the project, Eng. Yordanka Peneva, RU and a team member of the project, Assoc. Prof. Dr, lecturer of the project, Dept. of Pedagogy, Psychology and History of RU, Assoc. Prof. Dr Miroslav Mihailov, Director of the Information Center of RU, etc.
- ✓ Participating of representatives of the local government, who are responsible for making decision about the pensioners and seniors as: Eng. Orlin Lazarov, Vice Mayer of Rousse, Dr Rejhat Kabil, Mayer of Vetovo, Dr Rudenko Yordanov, President of the Bulgarian Red Cross (BRC), Dr Konstantin Kolev, member of BRC, Mrs. Lidya Naydenova, Head of Department “Pensions” in the Regional Department for Social Security from the National Social Security Institute, Mr. Lyubomir Atanasov and Mrs. Svetla Ivanova, experts from the Regional Inspectorate for Water and Environmental Protection gave lectures on the topic of “Environmental protection”, etc.
- ✓ Participating of representatives of some institutions which were important for the project as: board of the UP’2004-Rousse, Assoc. Prof. Dr Deyan Dragoev, Dr A. Nenov, Regional Historical Museum, Mrs D.Dimitrova, Ethnographic Museum of Rousse, Assoc. Prof. Dr Eyup Artvinli, Eskisehir Osmangazi University, Turkey, Pensioners from the clubs in Tabachka, Rousse, Slivo pole, Brovo, Ivanovo, Dve mogili, Byala, Vetovo, Tsenovo, club “Druzhba”, club “Nadezhda”, Sport club, Tourist club, etc.

## 7.2. Dissemination of the Results through Media

The Dissemination of the Results was also organized through media as follows:

- ✓ broadcast live on the Internet of the Panel Discussions I and II [61,63]
- ✓ Broadcast on TV Sever [61].
- ✓ Broadcast on Radio Shumen;
- ✓ Advertisements materials.
- ✓ Interviews.
- ✓ Pressconferences.
- ✓ Information in the newspapers [41-56]:

<http://www.akcent.bg/site/news.php?item=829>

<http://www.ruse.eu/index.php/ro/ruse>

<http://diploma.bg/?p=view&aid=4574>

<http://www.rusenews.eu/news/33589>

[http://www.ruseinfo.net/news\\_85132.html](http://www.ruseinfo.net/news_85132.html)

<http://news.ruse24.bg//227045.html>

<http://novini.dir.bg/news.php?id=7924886>

<http://aninikolova72.blog.bg/regionalni/2011/02/03/obsyjdat-stareeneto-v-ruse.679390>

[http://rss-bg.info/search.html?search\\_phrase=%D1%80%D1%83%D1%81%D0%B5&categories\\_id=0&skip=14&order=popular&limit=5](http://rss-bg.info/search.html?search_phrase=%D1%80%D1%83%D1%81%D0%B5&categories_id=0&skip=14&order=popular&limit=5)

[http://dariknews.bg/view\\_article.php?article\\_id=663266](http://dariknews.bg/view_article.php?article_id=663266)

<http://radioshumen.bnr.bg/News/Ruse/Pages/Aktivnoto-stareene-v-Evropa-obsajdat-v-Ruse.aspx>

<http://www.dunavmost.bg/novini-ruse/novini-obshtestvo-ruse/1775-active-aging-in-the-countries-of-europe.html>

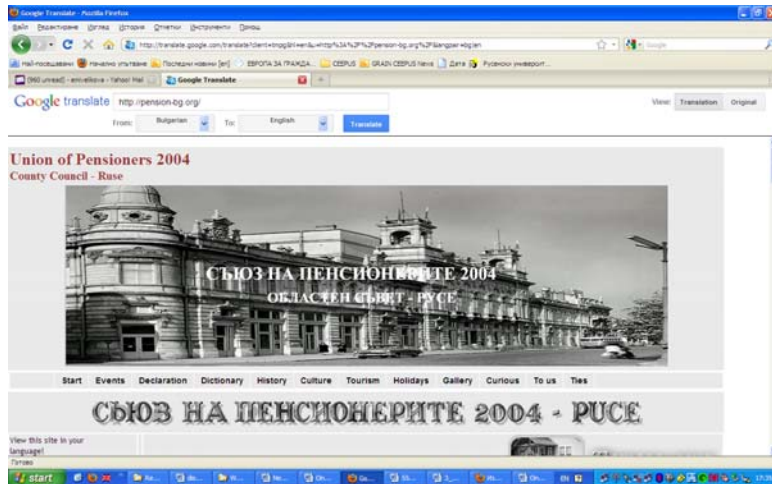
<http://dobrinite-news.com/40947>

<http://www.ruse.eu/index.php/ro/ruse/390-2011-02-03-12-45-47>

<http://www.ruse-news.com/modules.php?name=News&file=article&sid=35223>

<http://www.newbusiness.bg/articles/view/1030/pet-biznes-idei-koito-lipsvat-u-nas>

## Dissemination of the Project Results

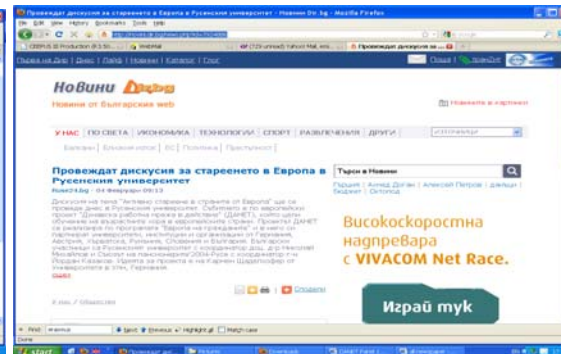
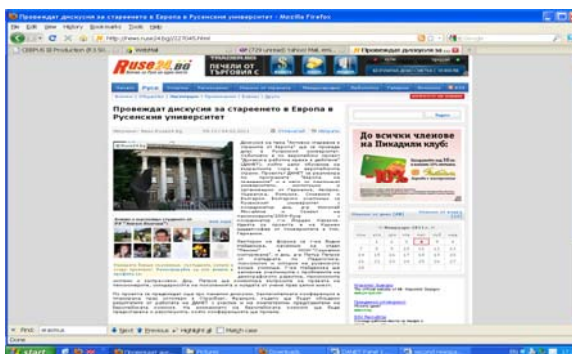
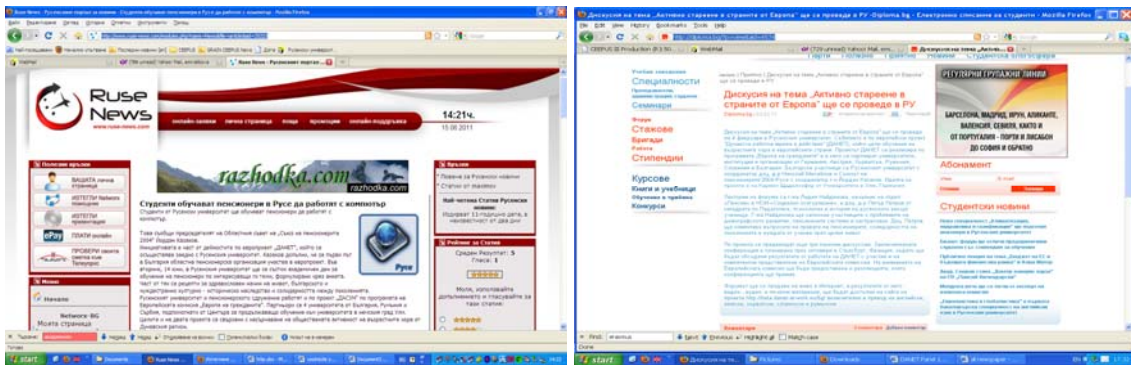


CHAPTER IV: Results of Training under the Project DANET

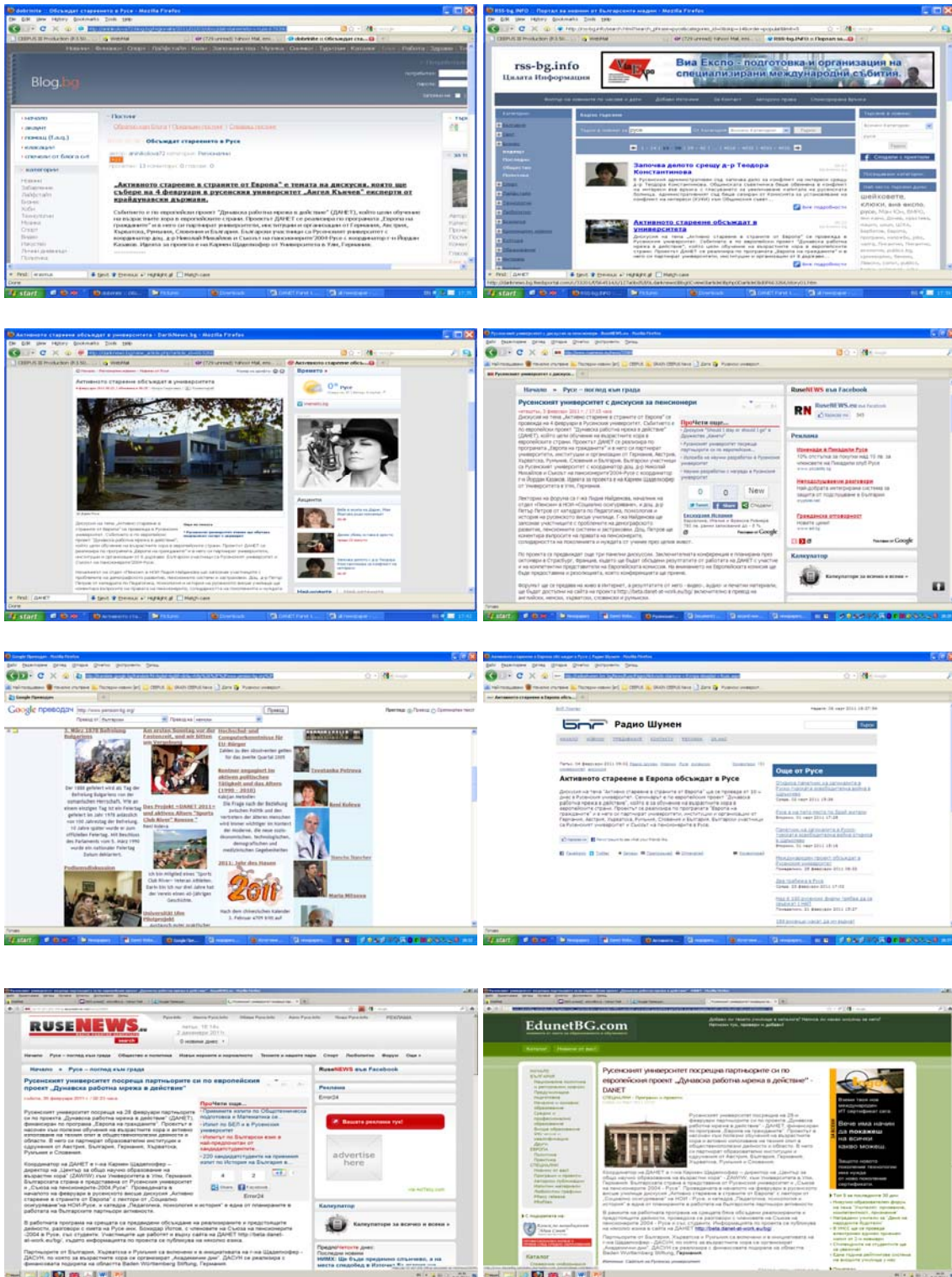




Results of Training under the Project DANET, Emiliya Velikova



# CHAPTER IV: Results of Training under the Project DANET



## §8. EVALUATION OF THE PANEL DISCUSSIONS

### 8.1. Test for Evaluation of the Panel Discussions

#### TEST

Answering with YES or NO

or rate your answers using:

1 for the lowest degree, ..., 5 for the highest degree

1	2	3	4	5
---	---	---	---	---

#### PART I

1. Is this your first participation in Europe for the Citizens project?

YES NO

2. What are your main expectations from Europe for the Citizens project?

a) expectations as a representative of a pensioners organization:.....

b) your personal expectations: .....

3. What are your main expectations from the DANET project?

a) expectations as a representative of a pensioners organisation:

- Activities with other organisations

1	2	3	4	5
---	---	---	---	---

- Knowledge exchange

1	2	3	4	5
---	---	---	---	---

- Development of materials for the pensioners

1	2	3	4	5
---	---	---	---	---

- Distribution of information in Europe about your organisation

1	2	3	4	5
---	---	---	---	---

- Distribution of information in Bulgaria about your organisation

1	2	3	4	5
---	---	---	---	---

- Others:.....

CHAPTER IV: Results of Training under the Project DANET

**b) your personal expectations:**

- Meetings with pensioners from Europe and discussions on specific topics of common interest

1	2	3	4	5
---	---	---	---	---

- Cooperation with the partners for finding correct solutions of the pensioners' problems

1	2	3	4	5
---	---	---	---	---

- Interest in developing materials for the pensioners

1	2	3	4	5
---	---	---	---	---

- Interest in the results from the discussions of pensioners from other countries

1	2	3	4	5
---	---	---	---	---

- Opportunities for traveling in Europe

1	2	3	4	5
---	---	---	---	---

- Others:.....

**4. To what extent has your participation in the DANET project been useful for you?**

1	2	3	4	5
---	---	---	---	---

**PART II**

**5. Do you think that the DANET project reviews problems that are significant for the pensioners?**

1	2	3	4	5
---	---	---	---	---

**6. To what extent are the issues discussed significant for the pensioners from the region?**

1	2	3	4	5
---	---	---	---	---

**7. How do you evaluate the organization of the panel discussion?**

- The materials for the discussion were sent on time

1	2	3	4	5
---	---	---	---	---

*Results of Training under the Project DANET, Emiliya Velikova*

- Uploading the materials for the discussion to the website was useful

1	2	3	4	5
---	---	---	---	---

- The aims, objectives and issues of the panel discussions are clear

1	2	3	4	5
---	---	---	---	---

- The programme of the discussion is elaborate

1	2	3	4	5
---	---	---	---	---

- You are satisfied with the discussion in general

1	2	3	4	5
---	---	---	---	---

- You had the opportunity to express your opinion

1	2	3	4	5
---	---	---	---	---

- You had the opportunity to meet people who think like you

1	2	3	4	5
---	---	---	---	---

- Did you like the materials you received – pen, notebook, poster, etc.

1	2	3	4	5
---	---	---	---	---

- Did you like the coffee break

1	2	3	4	5
---	---	---	---	---

- Others:.....

**8. How do you evaluate the preliminary organization of the panel discussion?**

- The preliminary meeting presenting the project was useful

1	2	3	4	5
---	---	---	---	---

- The training fore working with the project website was useful

1	2	3	4	5
---	---	---	---	---

- The help of the students was useful

1	2	3	4	5
---	---	---	---	---

- Others:.....



## 8.2. Evaluation of the Expectations from the Project DANET of the Representatives of Non-government Pensioners Organisations

The surveys were organized as follows:

- ✓ Panel Discussion I – 52 participants;
- ✓ Panel Discussion II – 42 participants;

The results are presented here in percentages and in rated scheme from 1 for the lowest degree to 5 for the highest degree

**Question: What are your main expectations from the DANET project as a representative of a pensioners organisation?**

a) Activities with other organisations (Fig. 22);

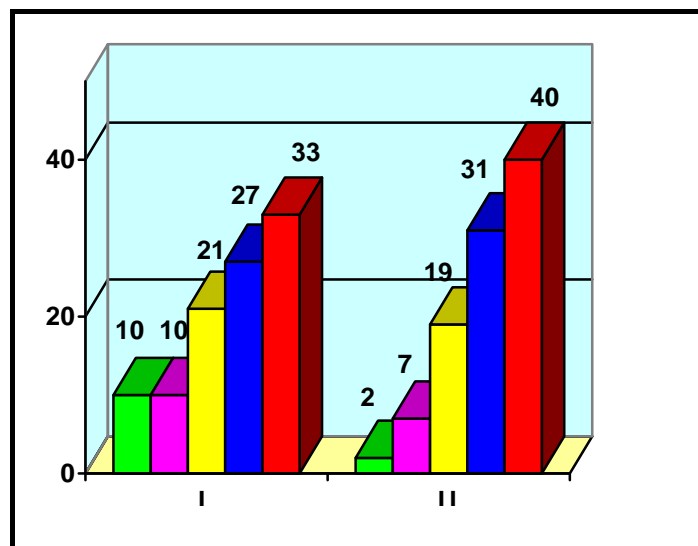


Figure 12

b) Knowledge exchange (Fig. 23);

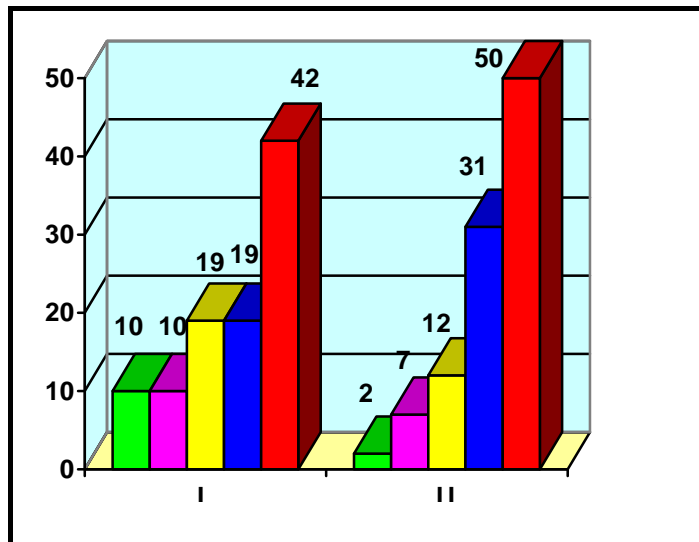


Figure 23

c) Development of materials for the pensioners (Fig. 24);

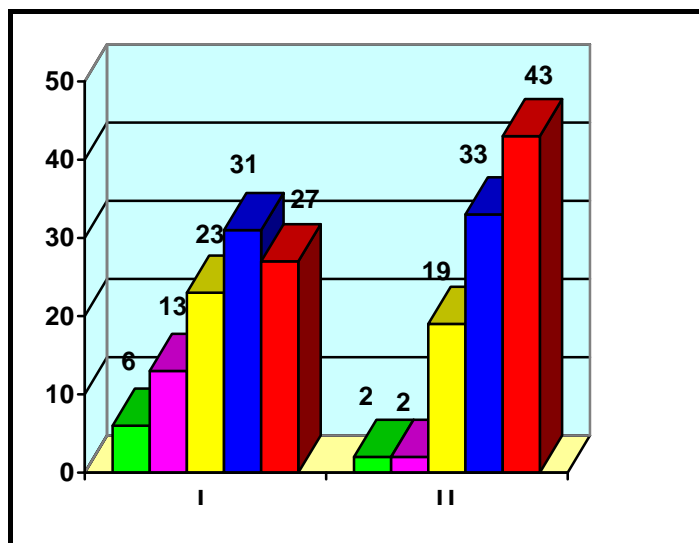


Figure 24

d) Distribution of information in Europe about your organization (Fig. 25);

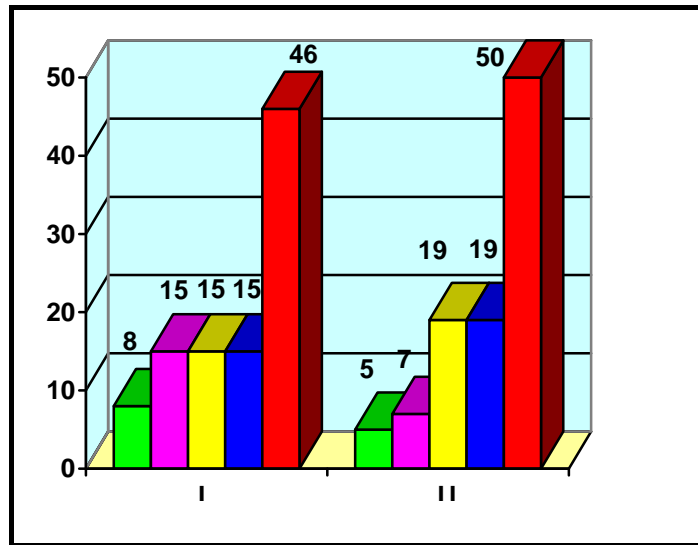


Figure 25

e) Distribution of information in Bulgaria about your organization (Fig. 26).

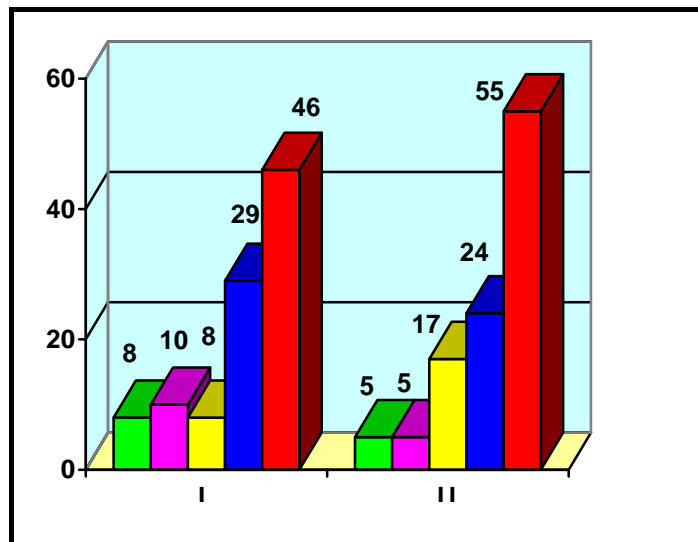


Figure 26

## CONCLUSIONS

The fact that there are answers with a low degree of expectation can be attributed to situations when some participants are involved in the



project activities for the first time.

Even before the start of the training under the project DANET the expectations of the pensioners for participation in the various activities in cooperation with other organizations of pensioners in our country and abroad, for exchange of knowledge, development of materials and distribution of information about the activities of their organization have been extremely high.

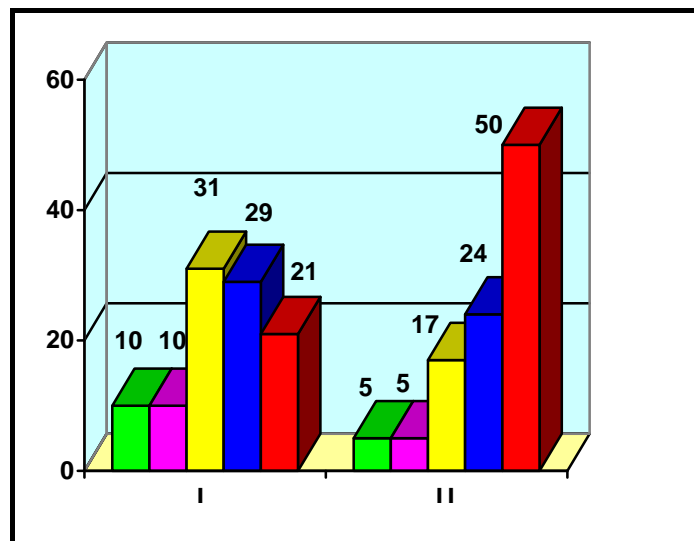
After the two discussions the degree of expectations has risen even higher.

Therefore, in the process of training the people surveyed see new opportunities for achieving different goals related to the NGO of pensioners whose members they are.

### **8.3. Evaluation of the Personal Expectations from the Project DANET**

**Question: What are your personal expectations from the project?**

a) Meetings with pensioners from Europe and discussions on specific topics of common interest (Fig. 27);



**Figure 27**

b) Cooperation with the partners for finding correct solutions of the pensioners' problems (Fig. 28);

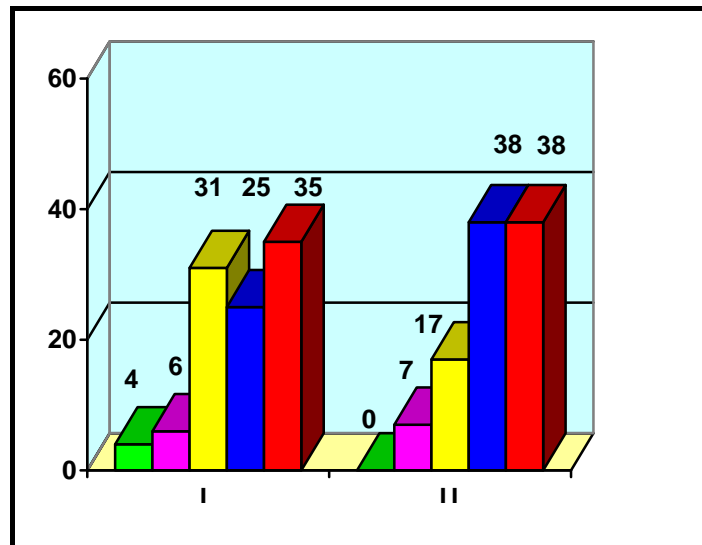


Figure 28

c) Interest in developing materials for the pensioners (Fig. 29);

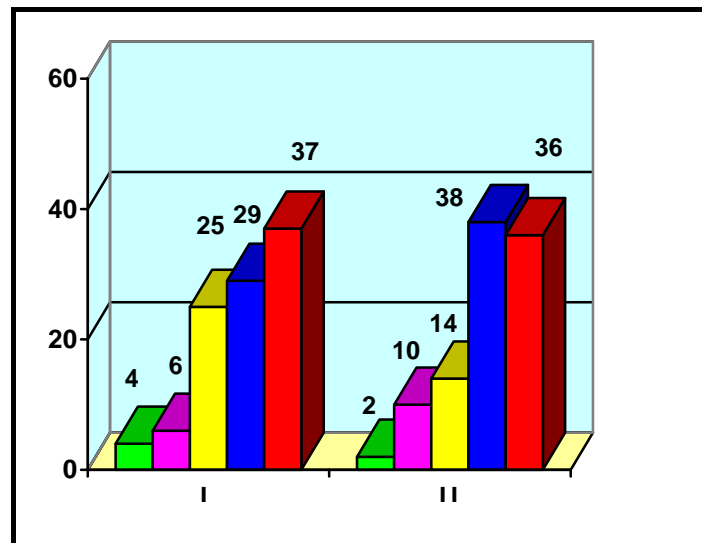


Figure 29

d) Interest in the results from the discussions of pensioners from other countries (Fig. 30);

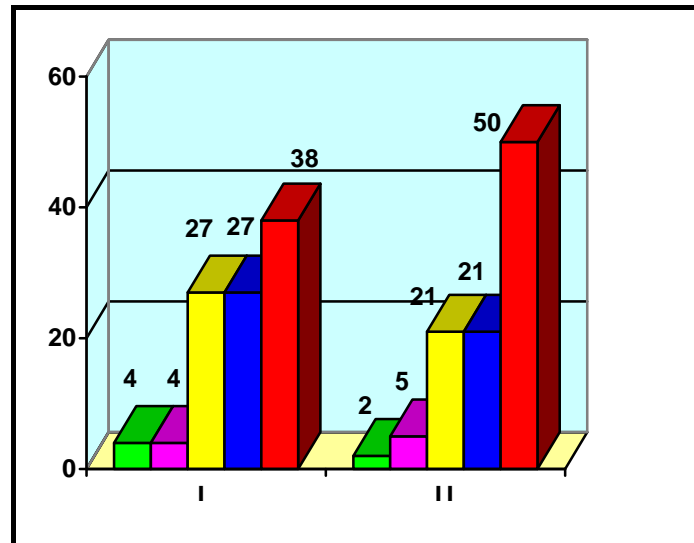


Figure 30

e) Opportunities for traveling in Europe (Fig. 31).

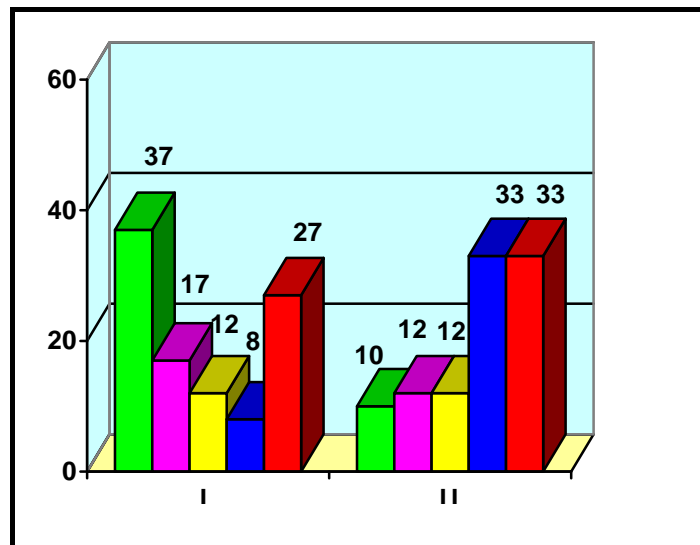


Figure 31

**Question: To what extent has your participation in the DANET project been useful for you? (Fig. 32)**

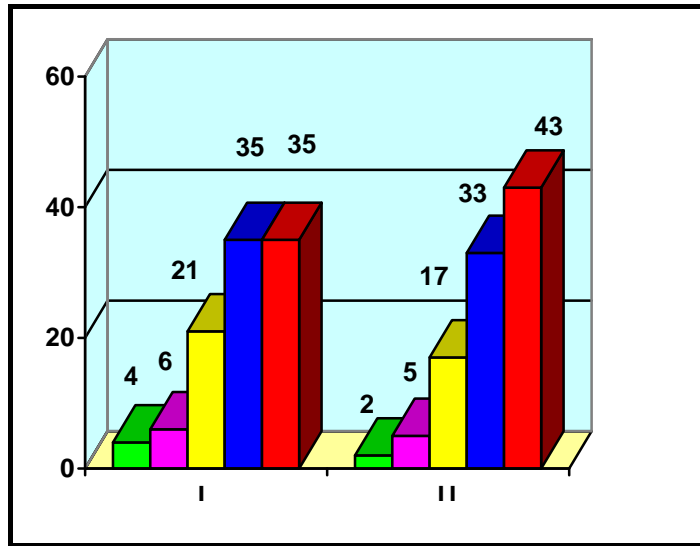


Figure 32

**Question: Do you think that the DANET project reviews problems that are significant for the pensioners? (Fig. 33)**

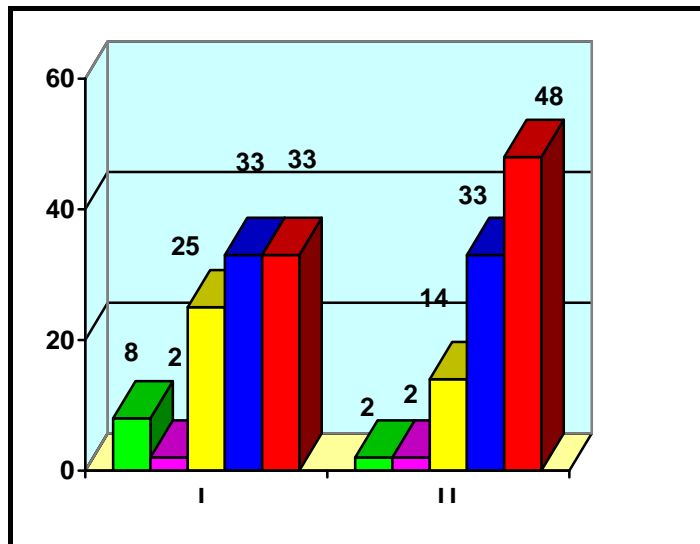
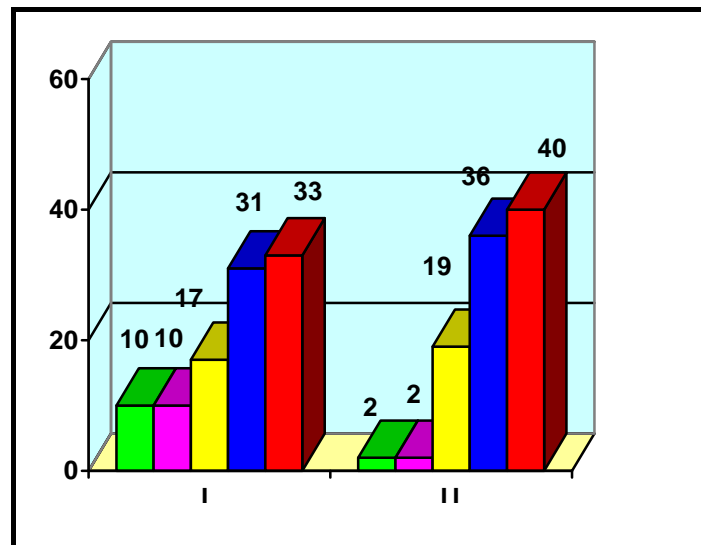


Figure 33

**Question: To what extent are the issues discussed significant for the pensioners from the region? (Fig. 34)**



**Figure 34**

## **CONCLUSIONS**

The people surveyed have high expectations about meeting pensioners from other countries, discussing common issues with the purpose of reaching appropriate solutions, developing materials of mutual benefit and interesting panel discussions in the partner-countries. In the course of work expectations rise as a result of the quality training under the project.

Over 60% of the participants are convinced that DANET deals with issues that are significant for the pensioners and the project has been beneficial both from a personal and from a social perspective for the seniors from the region.

The only low rate can be seen in connection with the expectations of the people surveyed about their participation in trips abroad. It is also growing in the process of training since the latter provides numerous opportunities for communication and cooperative activities without the need to travel abroad.

### 8.4. Evaluation of the Training under the Project DANET

**Question: How do you evaluate the organisation of the panel discussion?**

a) The materials for the discussion were sent on time (Fig. 35).

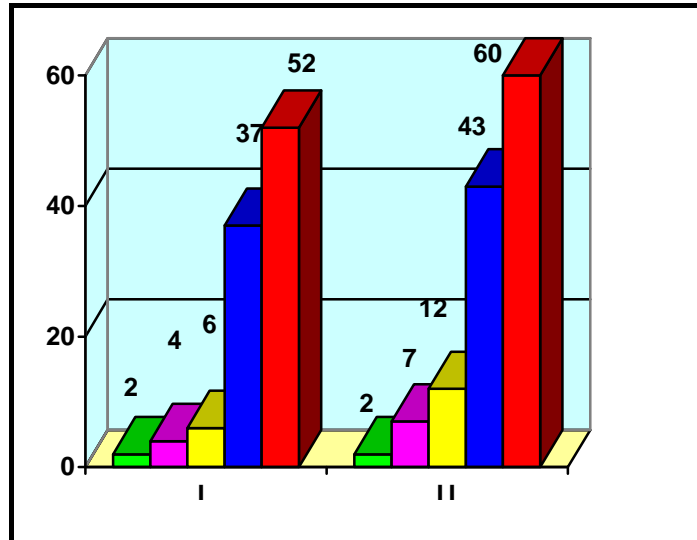


Figure 25

b) Uploading the materials for the discussion to the website was useful (Fig. 36)

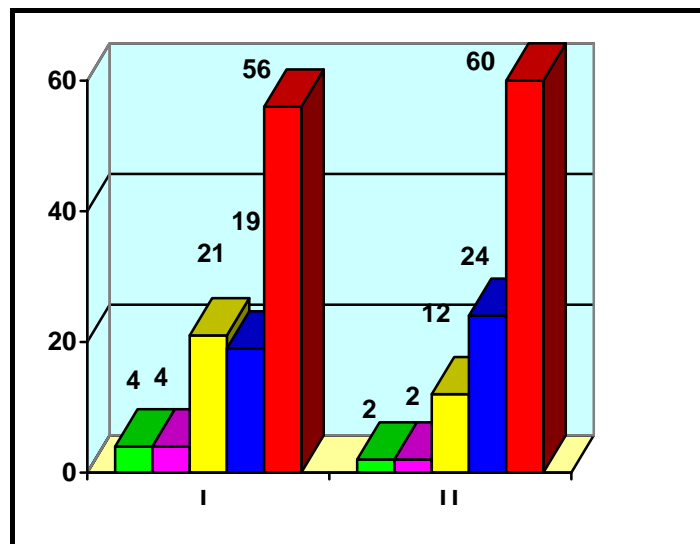


Figure 36

c) The aims, objectives and issues of the panel discussions are clear (Fig. 37)

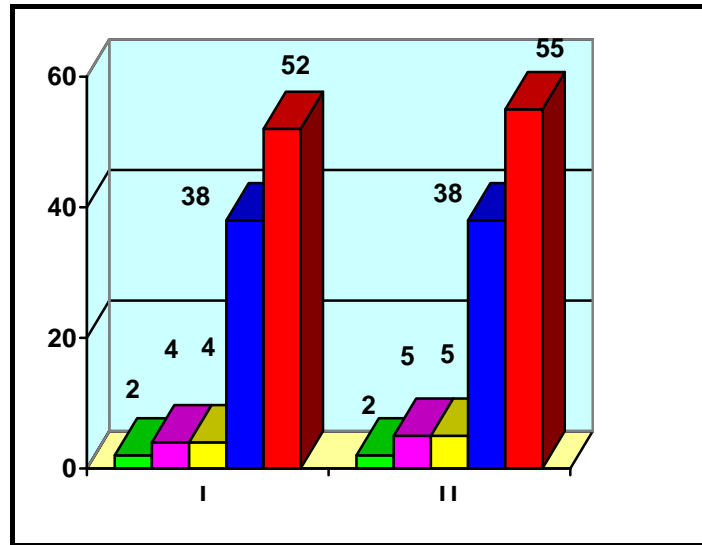


Figure 37

d) The programme of the discussion is elaborate (Fig. 38).

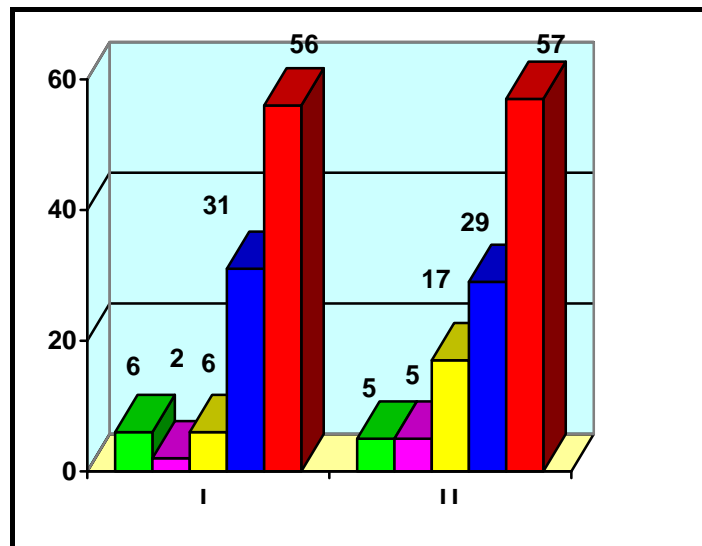


Figure 38

e) You are satisfied with the discussion in general (Fig. 39).

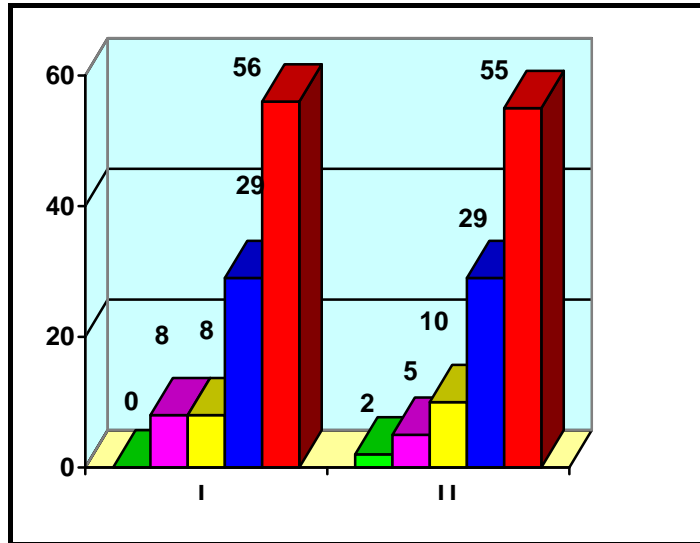


Figure 39

f) You had the opportunity to express your opinion (Fig. 40).

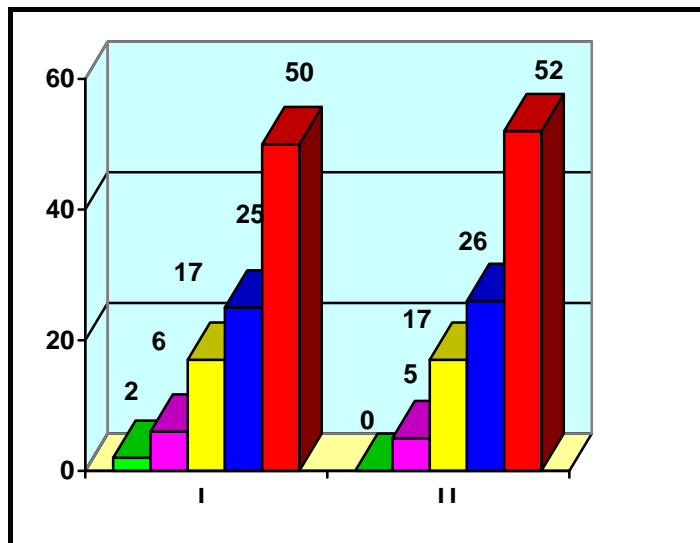


Figure 40



g) You had the opportunity to meet people who think like you (Fig. 41).

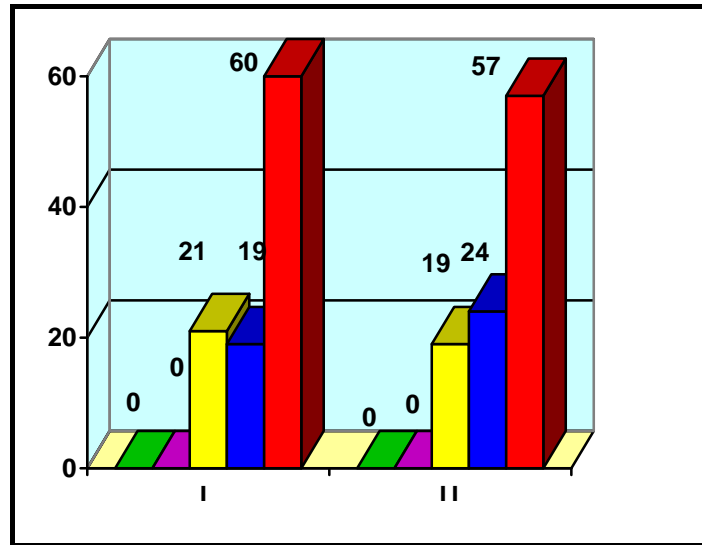


Figure 41

h) Did you like the materials you received – pen, notebook, poster, etc.? (Fig. 42).

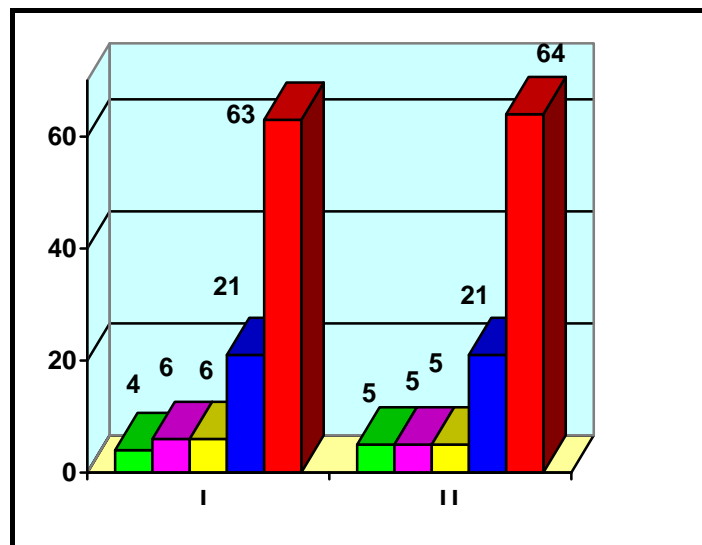


Figure 42

i) Did you like the coffee break (Fig. 43).

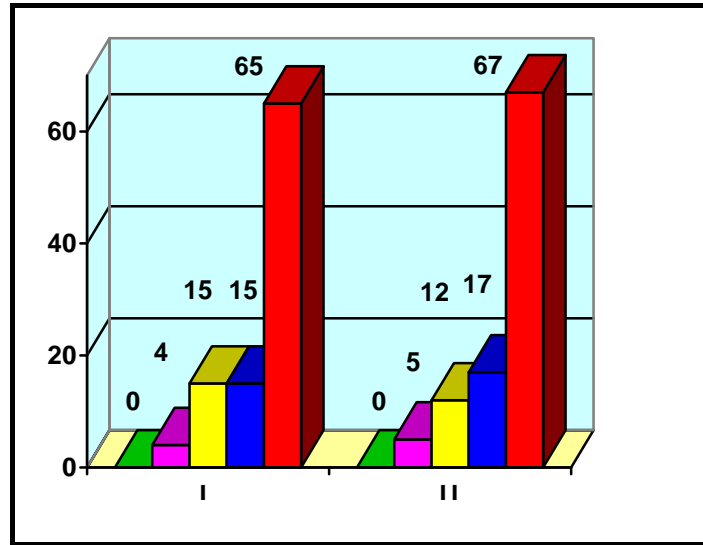


Figure 43

**Question: How do you evaluate the preliminary organization of the panel discussion?**

a) The preliminary meeting presenting the project was useful (Fig. 44);

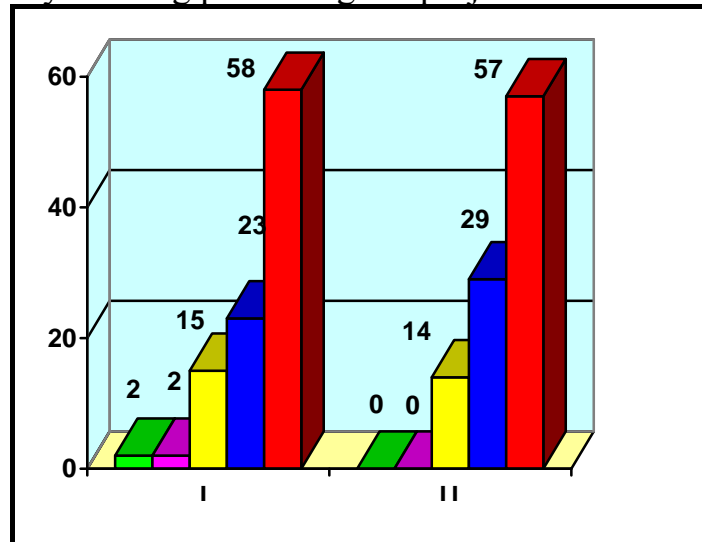


Figure 44

b) The training fore working with the project website was useful (Fig.45);

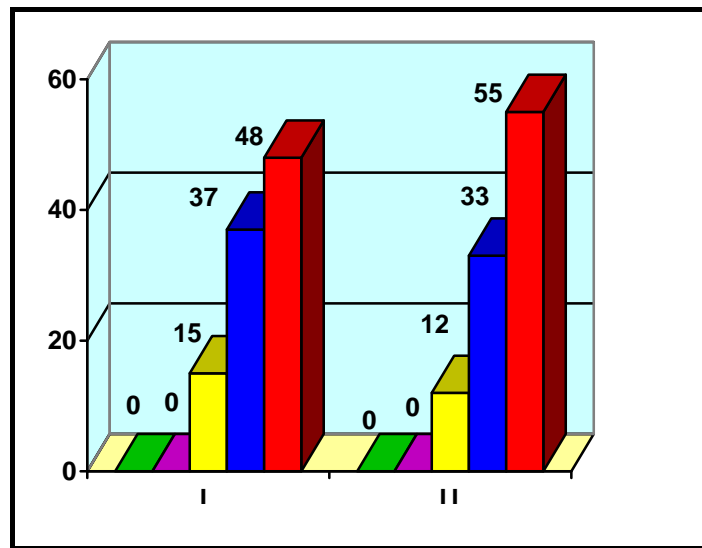


Figure 45

c) The help of the students was useful (Fig. 46).

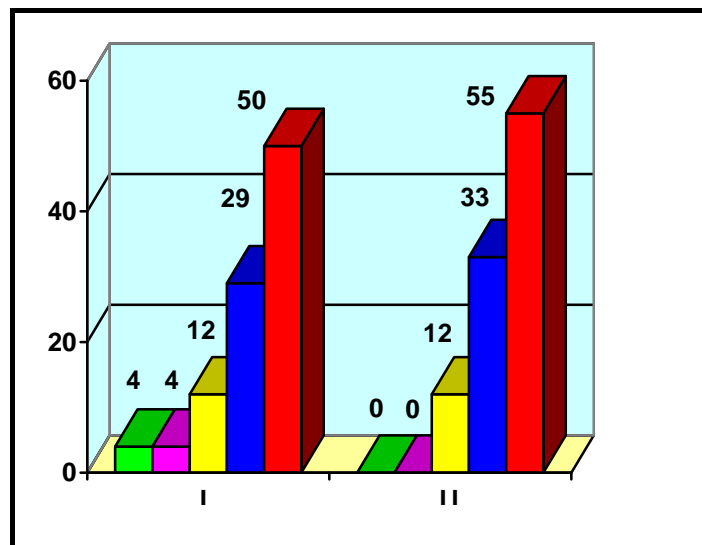


Figure 46

## CONCLUSIONS

The people surveyed rank highly the organization and implementation of the panel discussions, in particular, the development of programmes which include clear goals, objectives, issues and other important details, the timely distribution of the materials for the discussions through the websites and the structures of UP'2004 – Rouse, the University of Rouse and the media.

The level of satisfaction from participation in the discussions and sharing ideas and opinions is extremely high. People are satisfied with the opportunity to communicate with peers, with the materials developed for the discussions (notebooks, pens, badges, invitations, posters, etc.) and with the ample coffee breaks.

The high rates of the characteristics surveyed are preserved throughout the whole process of training.

Although only the management of the UP'2004 and a small group of active members participated in the preliminary meetings for the organization of the discussions, it becomes clear from the survey that all the members of the Union were well aware of the activities, namely, the organizational meetings, the training for using the website and the help provided by the students from RU and they rate the benefit from them very highly.

## §9. EVALUATION OF THE ONLINE TOOLS USAGE FOR THE PROJECT DANET

### 1. Internet use by the Institutions

How was the Internet used in the DANET-project?

The Internet was used widely for reading information about the project

activities, dates, participants, results, evaluation, media information, for finding pictures, etc.

How do the project workers use it?

The seniors used the Internet for finding information about DANET and its activities, results, for searching in e-media information about Bulgarian events under DANET, for uploading their papers about DANET.

Who used the Internet and who built the materials in the DANET-website?

Every senior who took part in the project DANET used the Internet. Eight seniors prepared papers about DANET events. The papers are on the web site of pensioners [12].

The materials for the project web site were built especially by E. Velikova

How does the partner institution use the Internet?

The University of Rouse as a partner used the Internet to inform the media and the pensioners about DANET activities through e-mails and its web site: [www.uni-ruse.bg](http://www.uni-ruse.bg)

## **2. Inclusion of seniors in the virtual discussion**

How was the Internet utilized in the panel discussions?

There was live broadcasting of the panel discussions “Active Ageing in Europe / Solidarity between the Generations” (4 February, 2011, 52 participants) and “Sustainability of Cultural Heritage / National and European Identity” (19 March, 2011, 42 participants) on the Internet.

Who participated in the discussions?

The participants were especially pensioners from the Union of Pensioners’2004 – Rouse who are leaving in the town of Rouse and in the towns and villages of the region of Rouse as Dve mogili, Vetovo, Tabachka, Byala, Slivo pole, Borovo, Ivanovo, Tsenovo, etc. There were also many pensioners from the University of Rouse and from the town of Rouse who are not member of UP’2004-Rouse.

Which seniors participated in it?

The participants were seniors of the University of Rouse.

What is the attitude of the seniors to the Internet? (technology-fan versus technology-distant).

The seniors were excited to use the Internet for searching information. There was a course for training seniors to use new information technologies. As a result there was created a community for exchanging information. But a very small number of seniors, 12, wanted and sent to the project web site a written input on the discussion topics.

Do you have other projects in which Internet is included?

The University of Rouse has many other projects in which the Internet is included.

### 3. Activating measures for Internet use

Which measures were tested to bring the Internet nearer to the seniors, respectively to include them in the virtual discussion?

Long-term training course in information technology usage with university students and teachers as instructors.

Individual work with seniors to show them how to use the Internet to present their thoughts about the DANET.

Working in small groups - searching for information about the DANET events on the Internet.

Joint creating e-mail accounts for all participants.

Exchanging information through e-mails.

How can new target groups be reached?

There has to be regular information in the media. It is also necessary to connect and to inform the councils of the pensioners' unions or any kind of organisations.

Where could new ways successfully be demonstrated to activate seniors for the online discussions?

The training in computer technology usage has to be for a long period of time. It has to include much more individual work. There have to be a trainer and many supporters (demonstrators) in the training classes. The organization of meetings through Skype is very motivating for the seniors and very attractive for the media.

Which measures/methods have proved to be ineffective?

The training period has to be not 3 but 9 months because this kind of training was for the first time for seniors.

The trainers have to be only young. In our case the main trainer was very old. It is necessary to organise training in writing essays.

#### **4. Difficulties and barriers**

What problems and inhibitions have played a role in the Internet use, respectively in the participation in the online discussions?

Most of the seniors have not got any habit to write. They speak a lot, but they are afraid to write because they don't believe in themselves, they think that people will not like their writing materials. There are only a few seniors who wrote papers and presented their feelings and thoughts about the project activities but they have such kind of skills and experience.

How was the DANET Internet platform accepted?

Excellently. The possibility to read in Bulgarian language was very comfortable for the seniors. They read all materials on the project web site.

Which problems have come up in the use of the platform?

Not any.



Which language issues/problems have come up?

Not any.

Could translation machines help?

Yes. The translation is clear and sometimes “funny”.

What should be improved in the Internet platform?

It is very good now.

### **5. Ideas and hints for future activities**

Where do you see the need for improvement?

The activities as the project activities were very useful for starting the process of changing the attitude of the Bulgarian society to the pensioners. They have to continue.

What advice, hints do you have for future projects?

We need projects with many meetings (through Skype or real) with common activities for reaching educational and social goals.

## **CONCLUSIONS**

**The topics of the four panel discussions were of interest for the pensioners from Rousse Region.**

**The organization and attendance of the discussion were at a very high level.**

**The media demonstrated interest in the project activities to a great extent.**

**The local communities and the local government, the religious centres and the pensioners appreciated greatly transferring two of the discussions to smaller local communities – Vetovo and Tabachaka.**



**The project activities found their place in the mass media and the electronic sites of Rouse University, the UP'2004–Rouse and the Project website.**



# **CHAPTER V**

## **INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCES**

### **OF THE PROJECT DANET –**

### **REPORTING THE RESULTS**

#### **§1. INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE IN CROATIA**

##### **1.1. Program of the International Conference in Croatia**

On the 17-20 June 2011, 48 participants, senior citizens and people in charge of the participating organisations, from Austria, Bulgaria, Croatia, Germany, Romania and Slovenia met in the Leca education centre of POUZ in Brodarica, Croatia, to discuss and to elaborate the issues handled in the frame of the four national panels and to identify common issues of transnational importance.

The participants from Bulgaria were:

- ✓ Assoc. Prof.Emiliya Velikova,PhD, Pr. Assist. Prof. Milena Popova, Yordanka Peneva, MSc, from the University of Rouse;
- ✓ Yordan Kazakov, MSc, Mrs. Tsvetanka Petrova, Mrs. Reni Koleva, Mrs. Veska Uzunova, Mrs. Ivanka Novakova from the Union of Pensioners'2004 - Rouse.

This “cross-national panel” provided opportunity for getting to know each other and for the promotion of communication and exchange amongst the older citizens and forms an important basis for continuing web-based discussions.

The meeting in Croatia provides conditions for presenting the results of training under the project through participating of all representatives of the partners in:

- ✓ small working groups for discussing the panel themes;
- ✓ educational game for presenting united Europe and the Danube region;
- ✓ international social evening for presenting songs, dances, culinary samples, home-made clothes, souvenirs, etc. of the Danube region

The participants had to apply their knowledge and skills which were formed and developed in the training process of the national panel discussions. They had to present solutions of the questions set by the project: Active Ageing, Identity, Migration, and Environment.

*CHAPTER V: International Conferences of the Project DANET –  
Reporting the Results*

**International Conference in Croatia, 17-20 June, 2011**



*Results of Training under the Project DANET, Emiliya Velikova*



CHAPTER V: *International Conferences of the Project DANET – Reporting the Results*



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CHAPTER V: *International Conferences of the Project DANET – Reporting the Results*



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## **1.2. Results of the Workshop “Active Ageing”**

The leader of the Panel I was **Dušana Findeisen**

She reported the results as follows.

### **Main question**

In Panel I we started by addressing the definition of active ageing and the European policy in this field. The main question discussed was whether *working longer as planned by national reforms and European policies is a good thing, be it on personal or/and on social level, or it is not a good thing.*

The participants seemed to agree that times have changed and that the situation is quite different now from the situation in Otto Bismarck's times: then life lasted 63 years on average, and retirement age was fixed at 65. Nowadays it happens in some countries that people spend up to fifty years retired. From the social point of view working longer is a good solution but not systematically; in countries where the rate of unemployment of young people is low, the fact that older people should work longer might cause serious social frictions.

In some European countries retirement age is not mandatory, but working longer is culturally unacceptable and it is a shame for older people to work longer.

If older people were to work longer, huge public campaigning and education would be needed, social changes should be induced and cultural changes should take place as well. National reforms and laws in this field should be accompanied by additional measures for older people not to be squeezed out of the market, getting long-term ill or ending up on social aid allowances. In case of companies going bankrupt there is little chance for older workers to get a job, or even to enter the labour market. In that case they have to spend the last years spending their savings. Older people should be encouraged to have savings... and younger people educated to have some.

Basically everybody should be free to either work longer or to get retired.

It would be interesting to have studies addressing older workers' reasons and conditions and motives to stay at work longer.

The Bulgarian representatives in the group suggested that couples should be able to get retired simultaneously.

### **Personal priorities in later life**

The participants in the Panel were asked to state their priorities in old age. In pairs and in threes the discussion gave the following results: The majority considers healthy ageing a priority, then comes personal growth and finally social engagement. Social engagement is less present for a very simple reason: society is not used to having active older people. Changes are needed in all generations and the relations between generations are to be transformed by means of policies, education, guidance and public campaigning.

### **1.3. Results of the Workshop “Identity”**

The leader of Panel II, **Alexandru Strunga**, reported the following.

The participants in this transnational workgroup discussed the Sustainability of Cultural Heritage and National and European Identity.

**The first part** of the discussion focused on the question: “Which are the values that are the center of the European Identity from an intergenerational perspective”. We agreed that there are several *core values* that are in the heart of the European civilization: Greek culture, Roman law and Christianity, as well as humanism, democracy and Universal Human Rights make up some of the most substantial parts, which we have all in common in *our* societies. However, in the context of the globalization process, there is the risk of ignoring (and maybe even forgetting) by the young generations the rich cultural heritage that exists at local, regional and national levels. And here is *one of the most important roles* that *seniors* have in the European society: to build a bridge between the past, present and future, helping the youngsters (and also other groups of people i.e. immigrants) to get in contact with the aforementioned values and to build identities. This role is of utmost importance especially in Central and Eastern Europe where there are a lot of people who emigrate (thus causing dangerous demographical phenomena

especially in the rural areas). Our participants also agreed that a very important problem is the *awareness* of seniors concerning their European (and Danubian) identity: how can we build bridges between seniors scattered all over Europe and how can we create liaisons between cultures which are sometimes relatively different (i.e. Eastern Europe vs. Western Europe)? In this respect we share the understanding that New Media and the Internet will have a *major* impact in constructing a cultural common ground for our seniors. We appreciate in this context, especially the importance of *Danube Region* as an intersection of populations, cultures and values that helps creating a regional and European identity and bringing people together. The Danube may be the *perfect example* of understanding this cooperation: we share similar traditions, customs, languages that are illustrating our belonging to a *greater family*.

**In the second part** of the discussion we analyzed the economic underpinnings of our societies and their respective influences on seniors and culture. It is obvious that the financial difficulties, low quality of life, being part of vulnerable groups (like the romani population or immigrants) can create big differences between European seniors. Moreover, the growing proportion of seniors from the total population can create pressure on the current economic establishments (i.e. pension system). In our discussion we concentrated on how to transform these apparent obstacles and barriers into *opportunities* for further development. Our participants agreed that the seniors' education can make the difference in this case but only in a European (cross-national and regional) cultural context and intergenerational setting, using New Media. We must involve the seniors in the civil society *making our voices heard* by the leaders of our communities.

**In the third part** of the discussion we've tried to identify some concrete ideas for our transnational panel and especially for the European parliamentarians we'll meet in Strasbourg, in the context of the Danube Strategy:

- ✓ Creating a system of *mobilities* for the seniors who live in the Danube Region.

- ✓ Creating *transnational projects and competitions* for the seniors from our region and also prizes (the Danube Poet, Composer, Musician, Writer, Actor, Scientist and so on).
- ✓ Developing a great *network* of public and private institutions in the Danube Region with the aims of helping seniors involve more in their communities and creating joint transnational projects for seniors' education (we need a substantial interaction in the virtual space as well, i.e. Website or social network for Danube seniors).
- ✓ Regional and local initiatives for helping seniors cope with financial difficulties.
- ✓ Involving *universities* in the process of seniors' education.
- ✓ Creating a *Danube third age university* (or maybe even a virtual third age university) to help seniors connect and share values.
- ✓ Creating an *educational strategy* for the seniors from Danube region.

#### 1.4. Results of the Workshop “Migration”

The leader of the Panel III, **Jasna Čurin**, reported the following.

Migrations constantly accompany a country's development. Their effects can be positive, but also negative in character. Positive effects can be enhanced, while the negative ones can be decreased through different measures that need to be implemented by the state, on the one hand, and NGOs, on the other, as well as by the citizens individually.

In order to decrease the emigration rates, especially emigrations of experts and young people, a state should first of all create conditions that would reduce the citizens' need to go to other countries. The measures include, first of all boosting economic development and increasing the employment rates, then creating conditions for self-realisation of the youth, balancing regional development, i.e. de-centralising ('de-metropolisizing') economic and social activities, etc.

In order to stimulate immigration of deficient occupations, a state should create favourable conditions for learning the languages that are spoken in the country, as well as providing conditions for professional development. In addition, it would be useful to create a kind of ‘Dos and Don’ts’-list for every-day life activities in the new environment, as well as to introduce a trial period stay for immigrants prior to making their final decision of staying somewhere permanently.

The NGO-sector has also a very important role in the context of migrations. NGOs should support and promote the concept of interculturalism as an important tool in harmonizing the community. In addition, they should influence the decision making processes in the area of migration policies, promote ecumenism, organise ecumenical activities and incent cooperation among religious communities in the country. Furthermore, they should organise different activities in the area of culture and art, which would foster learning about other ethnic minorities. Apart from that, NGOs are important in the area of providing psychological support.

In order to reduce the unwanted emigration, each citizen should carefully re-evaluate their decision to leave their home-land. Also, they should work on increasing their levels of tolerance regarding current problems in their home-land. Furthermore, they should inform themselves about the living conditions in the country they want to emigrate to, such as living costs, historical, cultural and art background, legislation, especially laws about foreigners, etc. In addition, it is very important to learn the official language(s) of the country they want to emigrate to.

Aiming to ease the integration of immigrants in their new setting, citizens should overcome the stereotypes and prejudices and accept the differences as a form of enrichment, and not as a cause for becoming distant.

## **1.5. Results of the Workshop “Environment”**

The leader of Panel IV was **Harald Kutzenberger**.

He reported the following results.

### **Ecological education and awareness**

- ✓ Empowerment of the older generation, eg. in public open universities.
- ✓ International exchange and cooperation of adult education within the whole Danube Region.
- ✓ Raising capacity of methods, eg. role models.

### **Inter-generational communication**

Every young generation needs to be sensibilised for nature and sustainability:

- ✓ Elderly people support the youth to develop relation and respect towards the nature, eg. showing the beauty of local nature by common walks.
- ✓ Know-how transfer from old to young on the local nature and changes of the environment.
- ✓ Explaining the risks of hazardous technologies to the youth, eg. nuclear power.

### **Getting active on local level**

Elderly people bring in their experience in their environment:

- ✓ Engagement of elderly people in ecological projects, eg. community gardens, separation of waste.
- ✓ Citizens´ participation in Local Agenda 21 helps to raise the motivation with elderly people to take responsibility for their personal environment and move political decisions.
- ✓ Analysing of the needs in the local environment and strengthening of the social community.
- ✓ Reflecting the personal way of mobility – adaptation related to the different needs and environmental aspects, eg. Car-sharing.

### **Implementation of sustainable development to public life**

The older generation expects clear perspective and responsibilities for a natural and save future for their children and grand-children:

- ✓ Consequent securing of water resources in public hands.
- ✓ Raising awareness for the limited availability of resources.
- ✓ Developing hydro-power only by innovative engineering solutions (eg. pump-storage-plants) with little negative effect on the eco-systems and no huge dam constructions along the Danube and the tributaries with strong negative climate and eco-system effects.
- ✓ Step-by-step reduction of nuclear power in all Danube Region within 20 years – no more investment and substitution by renewable energy sources (solar, wind, water, etc.).
- ✓ No abuse of South-eastern Europe for the ongoing increase of energy use in central European countries.
- ✓ Establishing of state-of-the-art Environmental Impact Assessments.
- ✓ Adapting the public traffic in a flexible and innovative way in regions to keep up or develop cost-effective high quality – eg. nation-wide tickets for all traffic companies, adapting bus size, etc.

### **Foster natural and regional food production**

In the upcoming programs on the Common agricultural policy (CAP) the following aspects need to be taken into account with priority:

- ✓ Regional, organic food is a main pillar of a healthy natural life style – it is necessary to raise the level of information for consumers to seasonal changes in the availability of products.
- ✓ Fair trade is a minimum standard for superregional products – eg. from Southern countries.
- ✓ Decentralised production secures the small scale structure of agriculture in Europe and reduces traffic – to develop the next period of support systems in the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) it is necessary to integrate the ecological footprint of production and the farm size as factors.
- ✓ Securing the system of decentralised agricultural production in the property of farmers.
- ✓ There is no acceptance for genetically modified organisms (GMO)

## 1.6. Results of the Educational Game

The representatives of all partners took part in an educational game, based on brainstorming. They had to generate ideas and to develop presentations about united Europe and the Danube region.

The main aim was working in a team and applying the knowledge and skills of the participants.

There was also organised international social evening of the partners. All participants presented national songs, dances, culinary samples, home made clothes, souvenirs, etc.

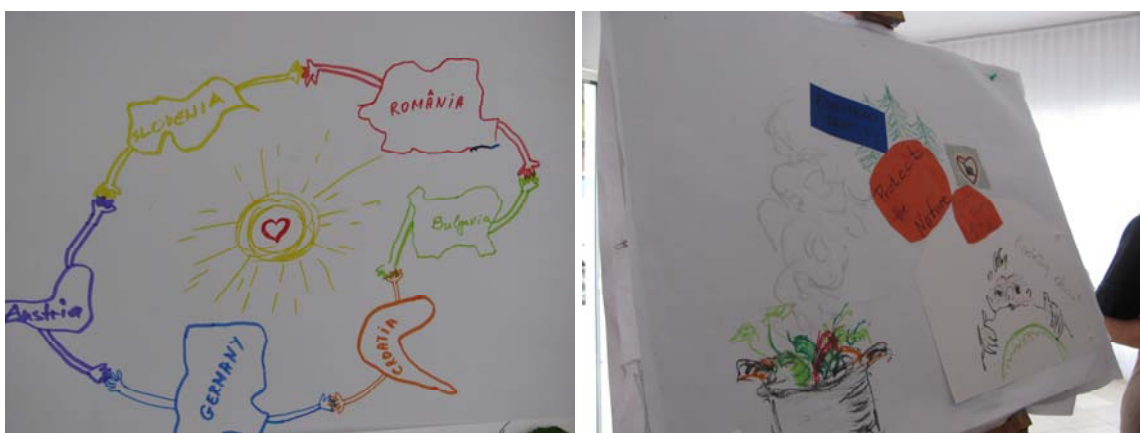




Results of Training under the Project DANET, Emiliya Velikova



CHAPTER V: International Conferences of the Project DANET – Reporting the Results



Europe for Citizens  
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## **§2. FINAL INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE IN GERMANY**

### **2.1. Program of the Final International Conference in Germany**

The Final International conference of the project DANET was held 6-11 November, 2011, in Wiesneck, Germany.

The main activities of the Final Conference were as follows:

- ✓ Workshop: Danube Networkers in Touch with European Politics
- ✓ Reporting the project results from the partners with focus on the main thesis from the DANET panel work and expectations from the project DANET and its political actions.
- ✓ Preparation for the meeting with the members of the European Parliament.
- ✓ Dr Karlheinz Dürr, Director of the State Centre for Civic Education Baden-Wuerttemberg, Wiesneck, Germany: lecture “Civil Society and European Identity”.
- ✓ Acad. Dir. Carmen Stadelhofe, Director of ZAWIW of Ulm University, Germany: lecture “Danube Strategy and Civil Society in the Danube Region and the DANET project”.
- ✓ Mr. Heinz Kälberer, the Head of the Service Institute East-Europe of the Baden-Württemberg Foundation: Presentation of the aims and activities of the Service Institute
- ✓ Mrs. Andrea Brendel: Creative workshop on the DANET results.
- ✓ Christian Rapp and Anna Sitnikova: Introduction to the method and the rationale of the European role game. Moderation of an European role game “Participation of Older Citizens in the European Union”.
- ✓ Mrs. Elisabeth Jeggle and Mr. Michael Theurer, Germany and Mrs. Silvia-Adriana Ticau, Romania, members of the European Parliament: Presentation of the results and theses from the seniors’ project groups followed by discussion.

*CHAPTER V: International Conferences of the Project DANET –  
Reporting the Results*

- ✓ Mr. Akos Toth, Hungary, Council of the Young Citizens Danube Network: Introduction of the Young Citizens Danube Network.
- ✓ Dr. Uwe Berndt: lecture “A history of conflict and cooperation in the three-country region between Germany, France and Switzerland as outlook for the Danube Region“
- ✓ Prof. Steinhoff: Introduction the programmes for education of seniors at the University of Education, Freiburg, Germany. Presenting the international projects of the University.
- ✓ “Get-to-know-each-other” activities.

**Final conference, 6-11 November, 2011 in Wiesneck, Germany**





**Mrs. Elisabeth Jeggle**

**Germany, member of the European Parliament**

**Mr. Heinz Kälberer**

**the Head of the Service Institute East-Europe of the Baden-  
Württemberg Foundation**

**Assoc. Prof. Emiliya Velikova, Ph.D.**

**Vice Dean of the Faculty of Natural Sciences and Education  
University of Rousse, Bulgaria**

CHAPTER V: International Conferences of the Project DANET – Reporting the Results



*Results of Training under the Project DANET, Emiliya Velikova*



CHAPTER V: *International Conferences of the Project DANET – Reporting the Results*





*Results of Training under the Project DANET, Emiliya Velikova*



CHAPTER V: International Conferences of the Project DANET – Reporting the Results



Europe for Citizens  
Programme



*Results of Training under the Project DANET, Emiliya Velikova*



## 2.2. New Goals

### Austria

Migration – dialogue between home and hostage countries: realistic information, regional development at home.

Euro atom – step-by-step reduction of nuclear power in all Danube countries within 20 years; no more investments!

Support renewable energies.

Regulate finance markets – support SME structures as basis for regional economic power.

Support decentral structures in a dominant concentration process (organic production, GMO, SME).

### Germany

Stronger support long-life learning in old age.

Codetermination in political decisions.

Retirement on demand.

Prevention of social exclusion by poverty, illness – structural changes.

### Croatia

Active Ageing - it is necessary to change the public image of the third age people (especially in Croatia).

European and National Identity – to be open to learn about each other and offer the possibility of learning in international summer school (e.g. in Croatia).

Migration as a Challenge – benefit from cultural diversities.

Ecology / Environment – to joint all actions regarding Danube region and keep it for the future generations.

## **Slovenia**

Equal access to voluntary activities regardless of age.

Access to health and healthy ageing is needed. Personal responsibility is to be encouraged.

Active ageing is not just a policy. It is a way of life. Legislative and cultural changes are needed.

Pluralism of values – not just work.

## **Romania**

Arts as means of promoting active ageing.

Entertainment areas for seniors along the Danube.

Creating new titles for Danube seniors with important cultural contributions.

Developing new attitudes towards older age.

## **Bulgaria**

Active ageing – activities that counteract the fear of ageing and boost confidence of the third age generation.

Active involvement of pensioners in the legislation, especially where the interests of this age group are concerned.

Active intergenerational exchange of knowledge and experience with the aim to preserve cultural heritage and national identity, as well as aging evolution of European identity.

Educating the third generation and helping the individual core in the condition of economic crisis.

Exchanging groups of pensioners with the purpose of learning about the culture, nature, history and everyday life “Be a host – be a guest”

# **FINAL STATEMENTS OF THE PROJECT DANET**

DANET's Statements Concerning the Role and Function of Lifelong Learning in Active Ageing and Older People's Social Participation in the Danube Region Formulated during the DANET final project meeting, 6-10. November 2011

We, the Danube Networkers, older citizens and representatives of educational and training institutions engaged in lifelong learning and education of older people have formulated the following final statements concerning the role and function of lifelong learning in active ageing and older people's social participation in the Danube Region. The statements result from the Danube Networkers - Neighbours at Work (DANET) project conducted in the framework of the programme Europe for Citizens.

## **1. Introductory Statements**

Having not only economic but also psychological, social, cultural, political and other implications, active ageing is a broad concept going far beyond the existing policy of active ageing. It is also a condition sine qua non for solidarity and above all for better and constructive older people's co-operation with their peers, as well as younger and older generations (intergenerational learning).

In our ageing society personally and socially active older people will have a considerable impact on the activity, productivity, personal growth and social development of all generations as well as on the development of localities and local communities in European regions.

Moreover, older people are a numerous social group, often more numerous than the group of young people from 0-14 years of age. For these and other reasons, older people's issues and their active contribution to society have to be considered and dealt with for both, their own sake and for the sake of the society as a whole.

Nevertheless, the importance of older people, their issues and contribution is too often overseen.

Older people have professional and experiential knowledge as well as culture needed in today's knowledge based and competitive society.

Older people possess valuable cultural and human capital which has to be maintained by means of quality employment and educational and learning opportunities if older people should remain active/ integrated back into the social mainstream for both their own benefit and the benefit of the community.

The lack of employment opportunities for older people is not an excuse for not enabling and encouraging older people's participation in social and economic development of the region.

Older people should be fully integrated in society not only through work, but also through voluntary participation in society as well as education. In today's society active ageing is a cohesive social force, but also a force that

will not come into being by it. On the contrary, it has to be supported by relevant multi-sectorial policies, educational structures and their networking

## **2. Socio-economic Situation in the Danube Region Statements**

We, the DANET members, agree that our countries share a number of demographic, economic, social, cultural and environmental issues that would need a common, and not separated approach.

In our capacities, we would like to contribute to solving urgent social problems and would like to improve our mutual understanding in the region. Saying this, we are aware that we cannot solve all the problems and remove all the obstacles but we can, at least, make key actors in the region aware of them.

We should help overcoming inequalities of ageing by trying to ensure equal access to education for all the disadvantaged and under-privileged older citizens like: older people from rural areas, older people with low income, and older people with disabilities, etc. Thus, wanting for instance to develop older people's ICT skills our endeavours should be accompanied by providing open and equal access to the needed resources. The same goes for public funding (i.e. in the fields of education, culture and tourism). Public bids' criteria are to be changed in order to include disadvantaged older people as part of the beneficiary target groups.

In the Danube Region there are diverse, but also common, contexts and settings for older people's education. Therefore, the needed infrastructures are to be developed first or in parallel i.e.: new institutions and new partnerships (between NGOs, governmental, public and private institutions).

With regard to what has been said above, developing new research institutions in the field of geragogy is urgent, while using local, national and European experience in developing a holistic regional approach.

Controversial however, remains the issue, how older people could participate in the society; working on the labour market or rather in the field of voluntary and civic engagement.



Older people should decide themselves when they should get retired.

Older workers need to be supported in getting back to the labour market.

Increasing retirement age needs accompanying measures so that older people would not be squeezed out of work and would not become a burden to the society.

New models and solutions for employment in older age are required.

Older people are to be identified both as a benefit to society and as a resource of the society and the respectful and fruitful relationships between generations are to be supported by means of policies, education accessible to everybody, guidance and public campaigning.

### **3. Education and Research Statements**

Older people's issues and ageing should be a part of all educational and training programmes on all levels and in all environments.

Older people should have access to all types of education/learning: formal, non-formal and informal.

Older people are to be regarded as a resource for education in later life and intergenerational learning and education.

In some areas and Danube countries there are no institutions for education of older people. Structures for learning in later life are to be developed and given sustainable financial support. Existing educational structures should receive financial resources so that they can provide good quality work.

National and international education networks of older people should be strengthened by project grants thus fostering the sustainability of their projects.

LLL programs should be a part of an "age-friendly" community (development of voluntary community-networks, local meeting points, development of self-directed learning groups).

In many institutions working with/for older people the new technologies are not applied as an instrument of continuing education and communication. Courses for trainers should be offered, so that these would be in a position to initiate/modernise virtual courses and to develop or to coordinate Internet-supported social communities.

Easy and affordable Internet access should be available to all citizens, especially in structures for older people and other public structures.

Academic continuing education should be made accessible also to older people in rural areas through the use of the new media.

Research results and statistical data concerning the role and function of lifelong learning for active ageing and older people's social participation have been gathered over Europe. They should be collected, structured, compared and presented on a special website to be easily accessible to foster ongoing exchange and discussion amongst stakeholders.

The collected, structured, compared and presented research findings and statistical data as well as information about examples of good practice from the Danube Region should be accessible so that they can be used in devising and delivering educational and training programmes by those involved in the education of older people.

Research organisations dealing with older people's issues (active ageing, andragogy of the third age, geragogy, education, etc.) should be established and/or supported.

#### **4. Identity and Cultural Heritage Statements**

We, the Danube-Networkers have discussed the subject of 'Identity' with the focus on the joint European values and their historical roots. In spite of our cultural differences we want to see each other as a 'large family' in the Danube Region.

There are many intergenerational learning paths which could improve mutual understanding.

Mobility, international meetings and multilateral projects of / for older people as well as intergenerational dialogue between members of the European civil society build an important prerequisite for the unification of Europe.

Older people are mediators between the past, present and future and ensure our cultural continuity. They are a bridge helping the youngsters (and also other groups of people i.e. immigrants) transmitting values and preserving and presenting tangible and non-tangible heritage to their peers and other generations, thus helping them to build identities. Moreover, they are a guarantee for the sustainability of cultural heritage, national and European identity.

Important here is the development of a system of mobility for older people in the Danube Region and creating transnational projects for older people and mixed-age groups from this region.

NGOs should support and promote the concept of interculturality as an important tool in harmonizing the community.

## **5. Migration Statements**

Migration is viewed as a chance and opportunity, but also a danger and threat to the majority.

Emigration of young and well educated people from their country with consequent increase of the share of older population and a shortage of skilled manpower are to be dealt with.

Migration is a chance for the regions concerned.

NGOs should influence the decision making processes in the area of migration policies to initiate cooperation among religious communities in the country.

Citizens should overcome the stereotypes and prejudices and accept the differences as a form of enrichment.

Cultural education of both sides and knowledge of respective languages are very important here.

In order to decrease the emigration rates, especially emigration of experts and young people, conditions that would reduce the citizens' need to go to other countries should be looked for by the state policies, measures should include boosting economic development and an increase of the employment rates, creating conditions for self-realisation of the youth, balancing regional development, i.e. de-centralising ('de-metropolizing') economic and social activities, etc.

## **6. Environment and Sustainable Development Statements**

Sustainable development has many aspects; ecological, economic, social aspects being only some of them. Education in relation to all the mentioned areas seems to be urgent.

Ecological education and awareness as well as international exchange are necessary within all Danube Region.

Every young generation needs to be sensibilised for nature and sustainability: inter-generational communication, know-how transfer between the generations can be decisive here.

Getting active on local level, older people bring in their experience in their environment by getting engaged in ecological projects. e.g. citizens' participation in Local Agenda 21 helps to raise the motivation with elderly people to take responsibility for their personal environment and influence political decisions; analysis of the needs in the local environment, strengthening the social community, etc.

Implementing sustainable development to public life: the elder generation expects clear perspective and responsibilities for a natural and safe future for their children and grand-children: e.g. consequent securing of water resources in public hands, raising awareness for the limited availability of resources, traffic issues, etc.

Fostering natural and regional food production such as the importance of regional, organic food as a main pillar of a healthy natural life style, fair trade, decentralised production, non-acceptance of genetic modified organisms are further important issues.

### **Project partners**

#### **Zentrum für Allgemeine Wissenschaftliche**

Weiterbildung (ZAWiW)

der Universität Ulm (Coordination)

Albert-Einstein-Allee 47

D-89081 Ulm, Germany

Web: [www.zawiw.de](http://www.zawiw.de)

Contact: Carmen Stadelhofer, Gabriela Körting

Email: [carmen.stadelhofer@uni-ulm.de](mailto:carmen.stadelhofer@uni-ulm.de),

[gabriela.koerting@uni-ulm.de](mailto:gabriela.koerting@uni-ulm.de)

Tel.: +49-731-5023193

#### **International Association for Danube Research**

EG Sustainable Development & Public Participation

Am Zunderfeld 12, 4073 Wilhering, Österreich

Web: [www.tb-kutzenberger.com](http://www.tb-kutzenberger.com)

Contact: Harald und Gabriele Kutzenberger

Email: [h.kutzenberger@tb-kutzenberger.com](mailto:h.kutzenberger@tb-kutzenberger.com)

[g.kutzenberger@tb-kutzenberger.com](mailto:g.kutzenberger@tb-kutzenberger.com)

Tel: +43-7274 7888

#### **Angel Kanchev University of Rousse**

Studentska 8

7017 Rousse, Bulgaria

Web: [www.uni-ruse.bg](http://www.uni-ruse.bg)

Contact: Nicolay Mihailov, Emilia Velikova

Email: [mihailov@uni-ruse.bg](mailto:mihailov@uni-ruse.bg),

[emivelikova@yahoo.com](mailto:emivelikova@yahoo.com)

Tel.: +359 82 888 250

**Pucko otvoreno učilište Zagreb ( POUZ)**

Sveučilište za treću životnu dob

Ulica grada Vukovara 68

10 000 Zagreb, Hrvatska

[www.pou.hr](http://www.pou.hr)

Contact: Gordana Radonic, Jasna Curin

Email: [gogarad@yahoo.com](mailto:gogarad@yahoo.com),

[jasna.curin@pou.hr](mailto:jasna.curin@pou.hr),

[kultura@pou.hr](mailto:kultura@pou.hr)

**Universitatea din Craiova**

Departamentul Pentru Pregatirea Personalului Didactic  
(DPPD)

Strada A.I. Cuza nr. 13

Craiova, România

Web: [www.ucv.ro](http://www.ucv.ro)

Contact: Lumini\_a Radu

Email: [accbrancusi@gmail.com](mailto:accbrancusi@gmail.com)

Tel.: +40 748 541 358

**Slovenska univerza za tretje življenjsko obdobje**

Raziskovalni inštitut

Poljanska cesta 6

Ljubljana, SI-1000, Slovenija

Web: [www.univerzazatretjeobd-drustvo.si](http://www.univerzazatretjeobd-drustvo.si)

Contact: Tamara Jare

Email: [institut.univerza@siol.net](mailto:institut.univerza@siol.net)

Tel.: +386-1-4272745

For more information visit the project website: [www.danet-at-work.eu](http://www.danet-at-work.eu)

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