



Europe for Citizens
Programme

Project from Bulgaria in EU programme „Europe for Citizens”

**Unveiling European Union citizenship rights through Powerful messages,
Developed in Attractive Technological Environment**

Applicant: Daniel Vankov

Partners: Partners are non-governmental organizations from Hungary, Belgium and the Netherlands

Action: Support to projects initiated by civil society organisations

Project realisation year: 2013

Contact information: Daniel Vankov – chairman@open-youth.org

Project web page: <http://update.open-youth.org>

Description:

Unveiling European Union citizenship rights through Powerful messages, Developed in Attractive Technological Environment (UPDATE) - that's what the young people from "Open Youth" are doing in the recent months with the support of the "Europe for Citizens" programme, DG "Education and culture" of the European Commission. Partners in it are non-governmental organizations from Hungary, Belgium and the Netherlands.

UPDATE aims to develop a genuine comics book, explaining to the young people in an interesting and understandable way their basic EU rights and how they can appeal to the European Ombudsman, and to adapt it to the world of mobile devices. The project consortium believes that there are synergies that can be explored by cross-fertilizing regular channels with those innovative ones for promoting European citizenship rights to young Europeans.

The book can already be downloaded in five language versions from the project website <http://update.open-youth.org> in a PDF version for and, following the links on the same page, young people can download it directly to their mobile devices, working under Android and iOS. In addition, "Open Youth" disseminates the paper version among young people in a variety of actions, combining the work with other interesting activities.

This already happened during:

1. the "Drive responsibly" campaign on April 22 and 23, 2013 in the Southwestern University "Neophyte Rilski" in Blagoevgrad, together with the Student Council;
2. the "Victimless Week" kick-off on May 8, 2013 in the hall of "Metropol" cinema, Vratsa, in cooperation with the Municipality of Vratsa;
3. the "Europe Day" held on May 9, 2013 on the square in Belogradchik in cooperation with the Youth Information Center, Vidin;
4. the Forum-Exhibition "Career with a cause" held on May 18, 2013 in the courtyard of Sofia University in cooperation with "Re-act" association.

All these activities are carried out under the motto "Europe Air first class" together with using an interactive questionnaire to collect information about the knowledge of young Bulgarians on their rights as European citizens. 518 people responded to the questionnaire so far. It is far too early to draw conclusions from the available data, especially when there is still no basis for comparison with our colleagues from Hungary, Belgium and the Netherlands. Nevertheless, the overall impression is positive.

Young people know more about their rights. From another perspective, however, we consider the improvement an insufficient achievement for society. 72% of EU citizens know that if they live in another Member State they have the right to elect or be elected as members of the European Parliament. Europe-wide knowledge in this area continues to improve compared to 2007, for example, when 54% gave the correct answer (data March 2013, Flash Eurobarometer 364 - "Election rights").

According to our study, the correct answer to the same question was given by only 53% of the young Bulgarians, which is better than our previous data (39% in 2008 and 46% in 2012), but is far below the European average result and places us even lower than the EU result in 2007. This is another reason to continue with the UPDATE project.