

In the frame of the international project “Discovering European Neighbours in the Third Age (DENTA)”

Reports of our partners on the topics:

- the current situation in the partner countries due to Covid-19
- the situation in the institutions of our partners
- cooperation with our local DENTA groups
- programs for older people in the partner countries during the Corona crisis

April 2020

Partner from Belgrade, Serbia: Zavod za proucavanje kulturnog razvitka (Zaprokul)

Date: 15.04.2020

State of emergency in Serbia was announced at 15. March 2020. At first, this meant that coffee shops and bars can't work after 8pm, and that public transportation system works with reduced capacity. Government recommended to work from home. From 18. March measures to fight Corona were more strict – forbidden movement from 8pm to 5am for all people except those working third shift; forbidden movement for older than 65 years in urban sites (70 years in rural sites).

One day after, public intercity traffic was aborted and city transport followed soon after. In the next three weeks restricted movement hours were changed from 5pm to 5am, with no movement on weekends and restricted time to take pets out for a walk. Citizens over 65 years can go outside only once a week for a few hours. Many volunteers help older people and bring food and other necessities to them. Beyond this, there are various free of charge services helping older people to buy food and other necessities. Also there are phone lines for psychological support. However, important number of older people have children, friends, neighbors who take care about them in this Corona situation so they do not need any further help.

Shops are still working, but for shorter hours. Food delivery is stable and is running 24/7. Majority of people is working from home office.

Partner from Ruse, Bulgaria: University of Ruse Angel Kanchev

Date: 15.04.2020

Current situation regarding COVID-19 and decisions of the governments in your country:

The emergency situation was officially announced on the 13th March and was supposed to last until 13th April. However, due to the rapid spread of the coronavirus, it was extended until 13th May.

All classes, be it at schools or universities, are conducted online, and most businesses work from home.

People are only allowed to go out for grocery shopping or going to pharmacies, and travel from one city to another is only allowed if you commute to work.

Elderly people over 60 can only do their shopping between 8:30 and 10:30, and senior citizens over the age of 65 are strongly advised against leaving their homes.

As of 13th April, all citizens are obliged to wear masks when they go out, and if they break the rules, they will be fined.

The Government has started large-scale testing for the coronavirus of specific communities in order to identify the pattern and ratio of the coronavirus spread in the country.

No public or social events can be conducted under any circumstances, and people have to stay at a safe distance of 2 metres from each other. All religious ceremonies are to be conducted outdoors and people are advised to observe Easter in the safety of their homes.

The measures are not totally restrictive. Companies which produce high quality protective wear, food, commodities providers, social services and the like are functioning full time, whereas grocery stores, hairdresser shops, medical practices and some other small businesses are allowed to work but only after complying with the safety measures.

The Government has adopted laws and negotiated protective measures for the Bulgarian businesses, the unemployed and other social groups that have been affected by the pandemics.

The Ministry of Healthcare and the government have provided protective gear for the medics, police and all officials who work with the citizens, diagnostic tests and medical equipment for the hospitals.

Due to the timely measures taken by the Bulgarian government, the summary of the situation looks as follows:

735 persons have been officially diagnosed as people that have contracted the coronavirus.

Of these: 105 persons have recovered and 36 have died.

Current situation in your institution:

There is only distant learning by specialized software which is <https://bbb.uni-ruse.bg/b/>

The university entrance exams will be held online by the same system.

The academic councils of the faculties and the university have meetings online too.

The lecturers had to digitize their lectures and exercises within a very short time.

The scientific work of the lecturers continues.

Current cooperation with the members of your groups:

The cooperation is continuously communicating by e-mail, skype, and phone (Viber, WhatsApp).

Partner from Sofia, Bulgaria: AGORA Platform - Active Communities for Development Alternatives Association

Date: 18.04.2020

- **The Bulgarian Parliament** voted on March 13, 2020 a nation-wide state of emergency till April 13, 2020.
- **Ministry of Health** - Order № ПД-01-124/13.03.2020 declares state of emergency till March 29, 2020 – closing of educational institutions (launching of distance learning), public

gatherings and events are banned, nonessential foreign travel is banned and employers introduce working from distance (home office).

- On March 17, 2020 the **Chief State Health Inspector** issued additional guidelines to prevent the spread of COVID 19 among the employees that were sent to the employers (namely working from distance – home office when applicable).
- **The Ministry of Health** prohibited as of March 21st 2020 walking in parks, gardens, sport and playgrounds. Inside and outside sport and fitness grounds are not allowed to be visited. Only pets are allowed to be walked, but social distancing and not gathering with other pet owners in groups. Restrictions in the shopping hours and access to supermarkets (local food shops) and pharmacies are introduced – people over 60 years of age go shopping between 8:30 am to 10:30 am.
- **Ministry of Health** - Order № ПД-01-154/23.03.2020 extension of the state of emergency till April 12, 2020.
- **Ministry of Labor and Social Policy in Bulgaria** is allocating a further 45 million leva (about 23 million EURO) under the Human Resources Development Operational Programme in support of elderly people living alone and people with disabilities. As of March 30, 2020 municipalities could apply for funding for projects to provide care for people. For the projects, personnel may be hired to provide services to the homes of elderly people and people with disabilities during the emergency situation declared due to Covid-19. Those hired will supply food, medicines and other essentials to those in need, using the money of those being provided with the service. Users of the service could also be assisted in paying their household bills or in requesting and receiving urgent administrative services. The municipal staff will be provided with personal protective equipment and disinfectants.
- **The Bulgarian Parliament** adopted on March 24, 2020 a new Law on Crisis Measures (with specific COVID-19 measures prescribing, inter alia, extra powers to employers). Following several public announcements, the new law introduced promised economic measures for businesses, aiming to outweigh the negative results of the crisis. Although a budget of approx. 4.5 Billion BGN (approximately 2.3 Billion EUR) is defined to support business (whereas, it can be increased if necessary), only part of it will be directly accessible as a state subsidy.

Namely, the adopted state subsidy will compensate (some) employers with 60% of the insurable income of their employees, for the period of the crisis but not more than 3 months. Reading the text of the new law, there are few immediately noticeable downsides of the offered subsidy, namely:

a) not all but only a limited scope of companies will be eligible to use these subsidies - a decision of the Council of Ministers is expected to set the exact criteria, however, following initial information these will only be companies that were ordered to close down due to the state of emergency (e.g. tourism, restaurants, leisure/culture, etc.). All companies which indirectly suffered the outcomes of crises, including labour intensive sectors such as automotive and other productions, may not be able to benefit. Moreover, the subsidy will apply pursuant to additional conditions – including, a possible obligation for any recipients to keep workforce untouched for another 3 months.

b) the subsidy will only cover 60% of the insurable income, but not of the actual salary of the employees. Currently in Bulgaria applies a cap on the insurable income of BGN 3,000

(approx. EUR 1,500). This means that sectors where employees get higher salaries exceeding BGN 3,000 (e.g. IT, engineering, consulting) – if at all eligible for subsidy under a) – may only benefit with a 60% of the maximum insurable cap, not the actual salary.

c) the subsidy will be at the expense of the social fund "Unemployment", operated by the National Insurance Institute. It is expected that this fund may be heavily overloaded as result of the crisis. Also, many employees may find it more beneficial to get dismissed and subscribe for state compensation for unemployment (up to 70% of the insurable income for a maximum of 12 months) than to put up with the crisis measures of employers. This is another argument why a very limited scope of companies will be given access to the state subsidy.

The rest of the defined budget is planned to be distributed through various programs of the Bulgarian Development Bank (e.g. commercial loans for the business, consumer loans for employees using a non-paid leave but still in continuance employment, etc.) and social schemes. These are yet to be determined and shall be accessible also for companies outside the state subsidy' criteria. Lastly, the Parliament voted for simplified procedures and timelines for obtaining financial aid from the European structural and investment funds (ESIF). The local operating authorities in charge of the management of the ESIF funds shall further update their aid participation rules.

- **The Bulgarian Parliament** voted on April 03rd, 2020 to extend the state of emergency till May 13, 2020.
- **Ministry of Health** - Order № ПД-01-184/06.04.2020 Ministry of Health launches a National Information System in the fight with COVID 19 including: web portal for citizens with updated information about the epidemiological situation in Bulgaria; mobile application for citizens where they can post their health status; information about the people under quarantine and maps with visualization of people under quarantine, hospitalized, deaths and recovered.
- **Ministry of Health** - Order № ПД-01-195/10.04.2020 extension of the state of emergency till May 13, 2020.
- **Ministry of Health** - Order № ПД-01-197/11.04.2020 for obligatory wearing of masks by citizens in public spaces (inside and outside) valid till April 26, 2020.

A paragraph on AGORA's situation

"AGORA Platform adopted the working from home practice as of March 17, 2020, email and phone communication is operational. As for the DENTA group due to the involvement of members from the country and lack of technical options at their end - email and phone communication is preferred. More people were identified for interviewing but as face to face and live contact is needed, the interviews are postponed."

Programs for elderly in Bulgaria:

Programs in Bulgaria for elderly which for health safety reasons must/should must stay at home.

Older people represent one of the largest groups of people with social service needs and accordingly commit a large proportion of resources to providing them. Due to the progressive aging of the population in Bulgaria, this trend will intensify in the coming years. A large proportion

of people over 65 who have retained their ability to live independently suffer from serious concomitant health problems that progress with increasing age and in some cases lead to sensory, physical or other disabilities. This necessitates the provision of adequate services in accordance with the deterioration of general health and disability.

The Ministry of Social Welfare provides the following institutional care for the elderly:

Community Social Services - Day Care Centers for the Elderly;

Community Residential Social Services - Family-type Residential Care Centers; Sheltered Homes for the Disabled.

Elderly people are also accommodated in specialized institutions for people with mental disabilities, dementias and others.

In addition to state-delegated services, a number of activities have also been carried out in connection with the implementation of projects for the provision of services in the home environment: Personal Assistant, Social Assistant and Home Assistant, to support people with disabilities and the elderly, who are partially or completely unable to self-serve and / or at risk of social exclusion.

A network of home-based services has been set up under the procedure "Patronage care for the elderly and people with disabilities" and hourly mobile health and social services have been provided in the homes for disabled people and the elderly over 65 years of age with no self-care. The services are provided by the municipalities in Bulgaria and include the following activities: 1. Providing hourly mobile integrated health and social services for the needy disabled and the elderly. 2. Provision of psychological support, counseling. 3. Staff training and supervision. 4. Repairs, furnishing and equipment of suitable premises, including the purchase of vehicles for mobile work.

A similar model has already been implemented under the project "Home Care for an Independent and Decent Living" by the Bulgarian Red Cross in partnership with the Social and Health Ministry and funded by the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation.

Many municipalities in Bulgaria support the Municipal Enterprise "Social Patronage" with the object of providing social services in the community, namely preparation and delivery of food in homes with specialized transport, domestic services, assistance in obtaining general and specialized medical care, social work. to support the social reintegration of single elderly, children, young people and elderly disadvantaged people. The preparation of the food for the persons using the services of the enterprise is carried out in specialized kitchens.

Measures taken to resolve the Crown virus crisis

In connection with the unprecedented challenges associated with the pandemic outbreak of COVID 19, additional public resources have been mobilized to prevent and secure access to services for vulnerable persons, incl. people with disabilities or self-care who are most at risk of COVID-19, as well as persons with a quarantine period.

On 30.03.2020, the Managing Authority of the Operational Program "Human Resources Development" announced the application procedure "Patronage Care for the Elderly and the Disabled" - Component 3 worth BGN 45 million for municipalities.

The program provides for the provision of home services in the context of the emerging epidemic situation in the country. The activities of the procedure are aimed at people over 65 with disabilities or self-care, as well as people with disabilities and their families, people who are quarantined by health authorities and for whom there is a social need for hourly services such as this protects the public interest and responds to the needs of the population to prevent the spread of COVID-19.

The program aims at providing vital home care products for the elderly, the disabled and people at risk for the protection of the elderly, such as: food delivery, food and necessities, incl. medicines (purchased with consumer funds or by means other than the contract), payment of household bills, requesting and receiving urgent administrative services (consumer funds or donations).

Partner from Timisoara, Romania: Association Writers' League Timisoara Banat

Date: 18.04.2020

Current situation in Romania in the context of coronavirus crisis:

Romania entered in the second month of state of emergency. The first decree establishing the state of emergency for 30 days in Romania was in 16th of March and the second decree extends the state of emergency until May 14. So, Romanians are in a state of emergency - from middle of March until middle of May.

The people must have a declaration with them when they go to work (if allowed), shopping or going out with the animals. It is as recommendation to wear mask.

The people older than 65 years can go out from 11.00-13.00 for shopping where they have priority, and from 20.00-21.00 with the animals. In case of medical needs they can go out whenever it is needed.

In Romania, the news regarding the daily coronavirus cases are told at 13 at the televisions.

On 18.04.2020, there are 8418 cases, 1730 healed persons, 417 deceased persons. The number of processed tests is 90991.

Official dates can be found at <https://datelazi.ro/>

The peak of the coronavirus cases is expected to be at 2 weeks after the Easter, between 1-5 May.

People are not allowed to go to churches, but on Easter, the Holy Light from Jerusalem will be brought at homes.

Regarding Timisoara, there are 361 coronavirus cases.

Timisoara is a university city and the courses are kept online. The pupils from 8th grade and 12th grade will have their exams on July.

The Association "The Writers' League" Timisoara Banat Branch LSFTB continues its work and activities online. An important role has the zoom application, which was introduced to us by the Ulm team.

Timisoara Denta group is in contact through e-mails, phones, Skype and zoom.

Timisoara Denta group can phone and ask about the situation of the interviewed people.

In Romania, the Strategic Communication Group asked every county for the lists with the elderly in need, who are lonely or with difficulties. At local level, the town halls are involved in helping the vulnerable groups. Also, the care homes are open during the state of emergency.

The Orthodox Church is involved very much in helping the elderly, people in need and the hospitals; and the Metropolitan Church of Banat has an important role.

The students from different faculties made voluntary activities in helping the seniors with the necessary items.

Also, people of all ages formed different groups that go and help the seniors.

Partner from Vannes, France: Association pour la Diffusion et l'Animation du Patrimoine Historique du Morbihan

Date: 15.04.2020

Situation on April 15, 2020 in France (presented every night on television)

Number of confirmed cases = 103,573

Number of cases in intensive care = 6,730

Hospital leave = 28.805

Since the start of the epidemic

Number of dead = 15,729

Government announcements

Friday, March 13: the President of the Republic announces the closure of all educational establishments

Monday, March 16: the Prime Minister announces the containment of the population.

Monday, April 13: the President of the Republic mentions the date of May 11 for a progressive deconfinement. Universities will remain closed until september

Brittany is a region which has been started. Its hospitals, for exemple the one of Vannes, has received intensive care patients from other French regions.

The ADAPH M (Association for the Diffusion and Animation of the Historical Heritage of Morbihan) is closed, probably until next September or October.

We communicate through mail and phone

Coordinator from Ulm, Germany: ILEU

Date: 15.04.2020

Current situation in Germany due to COVID-19:

Status: 15.04.2020, 9 am

- 132.210 confirmed corona-virus cases in Germany
- 67.056 recovered cases
- 3.495 deaths due to Corona

Measures of our Germany government of 12th March 2020 (Bund-Länder-Beschluss):

- Schools, Universities, public institutions, etc. are closed
- all events are cancelled
- social distancing: reducing social contacts to a minimum
- keep a minimum distance of at least 1.5 m in public
- the stay in public is only allowed alone, with another person not living in the household or members of the own household
- possible activities are the way to work, emergency care, shopping, visits to the doctor, participation in meetings, necessary appointments and examinations, help for other or individual sports or exercise in the fresh air and necessary activities
- restaurants are closed, exception: food for delivery and to take away
- penalties for parties in private or public places
- service businesses such as hairdressers, beauty salons and the like are closed. Medical treatments are possible
- hygiene rules and protective measures must be complied with in all establishments

There are regional differences.

Situation in our institution:

- All ILEU employees work in the home office (except Claudia)
- Communication via daily video conferencing, whatsapp group, E-mail, telephone
- ILEU encourage people to join the COME TOGETHER sessions by videoconferencing to celebrate our cultural diversity with friends from the Danube community and all over the world. During our sessions we sing, make music or present poems. The sessions take place every Sunday 5 pm.

Current cooperation with the DENTA Group Ulm

- 15 constant members
- weekly meetings every Tuesday at 5 pm
- via videoconference the group works on texts and discusses about the project and other contents
- interviews are discussed and edited in the group
- supported by journalists
- whatsapp group for exchange of information

Programs and measures to support older citizens:

- In the cities, towns and villages many neighbourhood programmes have been launched by churches, institutions, associations and private individuals. They coordinate volunteers and the jobs they do for the elderly and those seeking help, such as buying food, doing other errands or repairing things.

- Many actors and groups call on families to paint pictures, do handicrafts and write letters for elderly people in old senior homes or they sing in front of old people's homes and carry out many creative actions.
- The situation for older people in senior homes is not easy. They belong to a particularly vulnerable risk group, which is why visits to many homes are not possible at all or only to a very limited extent. Isolation of old and sick people is unacceptable for their psychological and physical condition. Therefore, protective clothing, programs and ideas for exchange are important.

Partner from Frankfurt, Germany: Universität des 3. Lebensalters an der Johann Wolfgang Goethe Universität Frankfurt a. M. e. V.

Date: 19.04.2020

Situation in the federal state Hessen, where Frankfurt is situated, update March 15

Current restrictions on contact for people in Hessen and the other federal states are generally extended until at least 3 May. This means that people in Hessen are still only allowed to be alone or in pairs in public. This was agreed by the federal and state governments during their consultations on the corona crisis on Wednesday, April 15.

On 30 April, the federal and state governments will again discuss further steps.

It is recommended that citizens wear protective masks for everyday use when shopping and on public transport. However, there should not be a general nationwide obligation to wear masks.

Major events will be banned until 31 August - even public festivals and football matches will be affected. Concrete regulations, such as the size of the events, are to be made by the federal states.

School operations in Hessen could be resumed as of April 27th, starting with the final classes of grammar schools, secondary schools and junior high schools. Primary schools are to reopen later.

Daycare centres will have to remain closed for quite some time. However, there are plans to expand emergency care - especially for single parents. Up to now, emergency care has been available for day-care centre children as well as for pupils in grades 1 to 6, if their parents go to work and belong to certain occupational groups. These include physicians, nurses, police officers, etc.

Economic life is also to be gradually revived: Starting Monday, shops with a sales area of up to 800 square meters will be allowed to reopen. This also applies to car dealers, bicycle dealers and bookstores, regardless of the sales area. Hairdressers will also be allowed to reopen in Hessen from 4 May under certain conditions. Restaurants, bars, and pubs are to remain closed as before.

Churches, mosques, synagogues remain closed for the time being. It will be discussed with the churches and religious communities how religious events in places of worship could be made possible again in future, subject to distance and hygiene regulations.

In old people's and nursing homes, the strict ban on contact and visits is to remain in place for the time being. It is very difficult to keep older people away from relatives for weeks or months, so it is planned to develop ways of maximum protection while at the same time providing opportunities for contact.

After a recent moderate increase, the number of registered coronavirus infections in Hessen has increased again significantly: By Wednesday, the Covid-19 pathogen was detected in 6,334 people, 155 more than the day before, according to the Ministry of Social Affairs. The number of deaths rose by 27 to 174.

The current situation of University of third Age (U3L)

Since the U3L operates in the context of the Goethe University, the strategy of the university is crucial for us. At the moment the whole university is closed. The staff of U3L, six persons, is working in home office. We meet twice a week online and have adjusted all our working conditions to the home office situation.

Till June 2 there will be only online teaching at the Frankfurt University. In the beginning of May the decision will be drawn, if the online teaching will continue even longer. The U3L has cancelled attendance events for the entire summer semester. We have put together an online program in a very short time. The U3L Online-Semester will start on April 20. So for Angela and myself this was a big work and our main focus in the last weeks.

Frankfurt DENTA group

In view of the general situation of physical distancing our DENTA-group can't meet in person at the moment. Nevertheless we are continuously in contact via e-mail and telephone. Starting April 20 we will work together online. Then we will have a zoom-meeting and organize the next tasks. However, our group clearly felt that the Corona pandemic has led to great uncertainty. For the time being, business-as-usual was not possible for us. Only gradually do we get back into the situation of getting back to the interview-tasks and making plans for the next steps.

Partner from Carbonia, Italy: UNISULKY - UNIVERSITÀ POPOLARE DEL SULCIS

Date: 18.04.2020

On 9 March 2020, the government of Italy under Prime Minister Giuseppe Conte imposed a national quarantine, restricting the movement of the population except for necessity, work, and health circumstances, in response to the growing pandemic of COVID-19 in the country. Additional lockdown restrictions mandated the temporary closure of non-essential shops and businesses. This followed an earlier and smaller-scale lockdown of eleven municipalities in the province of Lodi (Lombardy Region) that had begun in late February.

The measures include the shutdown of schools and universities across the country, and also our institution has completely suspended its cultural and educational activities. Regarding our current cooperation with the members of our project groups, we are working remotely.

Following the Decree of the Italian Ministry of Infrastructures and Transports in agreement with the Italian Ministry of Health (nr. 153 of 12 April 2020) and the Ordinance of the President of the Autonomous Region of Sardinia (nr. 19 of 13 April 2020), passenger air traffic from and to Sardinia is guaranteed until 3 May 2020. Flights will operate exclusively from Cagliari airport and travel will be possible only for urgent reasons such as work engagements, health, specific needs or to return to the place of residence.

Passengers who need to travel for the above reasons will have to request an authorization to travel 48 hours before flight departure, by filling the form available on the Sardinia Region website. The authorization will be given within 12 hours from departure and must be shown during boarding, together with boarding pass and an identification document.

Please find below a short report of the restrictions applied to Italy:

Movement of people, with public or private means of transport, to a municipality different from the municipality where they currently are, with the exception of well-founded business reasons, urgent matters, movement due to health reasons, is prohibited. Movements will be possible only if justified by business needs or circumstances of need or health reasons to be proved with a self-declaration that can also be made on the spot filling in forms supplied by police authorities.

<[Compliance checks of mobility restrictions](#) will concern **roads and highways, trains and railway stations, airports** (with the exception of transferring passengers. For Schengen and non-Schengen departures, self-declarations will be requested only for residents or people living in the areas subject to restrictions. For Schengen and non-Schengen arrivals, passengers will have to justify the purpose of their trip upon entry), **cruise ships** (Venice).

- **Movement to a house different to one's place of residence**, included second homes used for holiday, on holidays and pre-holidays, and on the days immediately preceding or following holidays and pre-holidays is prohibited.

The measures include the shutdown of schools and universities across the country

- Entry to **parks, villas, playgrounds and public gardens** is prohibited.
- **Outdoor recreational activities** are prohibited. It's possible to **exercise** only close to one's home.
- Suspension of **events and sports contests** in public and private places.
- Suspension of **shows and events** in public and private places like cinemas, theatres, pubs, dance schools, discos and other indoor places.
- Opening of **religious sites** is conditioned by the adoption of organizational measures that guarantee a safety distance of at least one meter to attenders.
- Shutdown of **museums, institutes and cultural spaces** (museums, libraries, archives, archaeological areas, archaeological parks, historical complexes).
- Suspension of activities in **gyms, sports centers, swimming-pools, wellness centers, thermal resorts** (with the exception of services considered essential levels of care), cultural centers, social centers, recreation centers.
- Suspension of **civil and religious ceremonies**

Transport

The Presidents of the Regions may order the reduction or suppression of **local public transport services** (bus, metro, tram). The Ministry of Infrastructure and Transport, upon agreement with the Ministry of Health, may order the reduction or suppression of **railway, interregional road** (for example by coach), **air and sea transport**. Anyway, **essential services will be guaranteed**.

Business activities

All retail businesses are suspended with the exception of listed **grocery stores and shops selling consumer staples**, that are **open**:

All open shops and allowed businesses have to **guarantee a safety distance of at least one meter**.