

initiative
„Safe senior in secure home”

1. Achievement of aims and results

Main aim of this project was defined as limitation of incidents in which elderly people become victims. This goal could have been successfully achieved thanks to activities performed by the police officers and due to support provided by other institutions involved. Outcomes of preventive work could be annually evaluated on the basis of: the feedback collected from target group (seniors), indications of level of interest in having contact to the police officer, but first of all – on the analysis on statistic data of criminal incidents which included victims aged over 65. There have been 1106 elderly victims recorded in the first semester 2013 within the West Pomeranian province, and this number **dropped** in similar period of 2014 by approximately **30%** till 809. Basing on information provided by the Criminal Department, in the third decade of October 2014, approximately 20 ‘grandson tricks’ offence attempts have been made and **18** of these turned out to be **unsuccessful**. That means, preventive actions in order to make the society aware of existing treats bring the expected result. Both, the police officers and employees of various authorities make effort to address with the leaflets and good advise the possibly widest target group, including seniors and people somehow less incapable to handle life situations. Anyway, it was also noticeable that due to number of different factors existing, such as: age, intellectual disability or health irregularities relating to age, the safe behaviour rules could not always be applied in every situation which occurred. Obviously, this project has contributed to enhance local partnerships for public safety and the counteraction of crime incidents involving elderly victims, as it enabled mutual flow of information in seniors’ environment.

2. Topics, scale of actions

Above mentioned initiative has been implemented in West Pomeranian province from 2009 and keeps all police units involved. In the time frame November 2013 – the end of September 2014, the police officers in the cooperation with other relevant institutions have conducted **315 meetings with total number 7043 senior participants**.

The most talked topics during those meetings were as follows:

- various types of ‘grandson tricks’, such as so called ‘chimney sweep trick’, ‘payment collector trick’, ‘police officer trick’, ‘prosecutor trick’, and frauds related to the development of computer technology and possible threats of manipulation stemming from this process.
- cyber threats (ex. secure Internet transaction, purchase, sale, banking),
- non-cash transactions,
- safety in traffic (drivers under the influence of alcohol, passengers accepting such situation, the role of reflective elements),

- proper attitude in case of facing assault or robbery,
- family violence (different forms of violence against elderly people: economic and/or psychological abuse, physical violence, etc.),
- aggressive dogs (including issue of cruelty to animals/pets),
- first aid,
- carbon monoxide poisoning, particularly as regards the use of domestic heaters in winter

Leaflets and dissemination

Within the range of this project, every year there have been some preventive materials prepared and disseminated as leaflets (among other, referring to the topic of burglary thefts, non-cash transactions and reasonable trust to strangers), posters, comic books and year 2015 calendars.

Due to new threats occurring, the West Pomeranian police focused on newly directed actions in order to raise awareness among the elderly persons on: fraudulent take-over of residential property/apartment (for instance in return for balancing the debts or fraudulent apartment exchange on the basis of unaware authorization) and driving under the influence of alcohol. These themes' examples have been presented in leaflets and provided to the target group of 'Safe senior' programme. The innovative approach has been here presented by the 'Safe senior' initiative run in Koszalin/Poland – certain parts of preventive materials were printed in **Braille** to address the target group of visually impaired (ex. members of Polish Association of the Blind).

The most interesting examples

This year, the police officers have put particular attention to the subject of safety in traffic to make elderly people aware of threats as regards drunk drivers and of proper approach to such dangers.

The police managed also to invite the fire brigade representatives to tackle the issue of possible threats of carbon monoxide poisoning, particularly as regards heat season. Important tips were given how to avoid possible fraud risks by purchase of carbon monoxide detectors and trainings of first aid were delivered.

Students and teachers of 4th Primary School in Wałcz/Poland in cooperation with the police have presented the theatre performance titled 'The good grandmother', with scenario referring to frauds and being addressed to the seniors of Day Help Centre in Wałcz/Poland. Seniors were also trained how to handle the situation if being attacked by aggressive dog.

The City Police in Koszalin/Poland responded to noticeable increase in number of people being interested of self defense techniques, use of pepper spray and necessary defense in extreme circumstances. As the topic of safety in traffic turned out to be the next issue of similarly high extended interest, from September 2014 the City Police in Koszalin have opened so called 'traffic training area', where various 'safety in traffic' related events were held for seniors and approximately 200 reflective elements were disseminated.

On 29 May, 2014 during the Veterans Day National Ceremony in Szczecin/Poland, the leaflets were spread among seniors and the possibility to label their bicycles against larceny was arranged.

In some regions of the province, the district constables have established cooperation to security service in supermarkets and local open air markets in order to ensure security of elderly shoppers (leaflets were disseminated and posters presented on information boards).

'Safe senior' initiative was actively participated in by sanatoriums and churches. During the service, the police information on current threats was read, with particular recommendation to behave with deliberation, caution and special attention when contacting strangers. This message was displayed also on parishes' information boards and some parish's clubs hosted and arranged series of trainings for this topic.

Inter-institutional cooperation

The police never stand alone in their actions. While this project was implemented, parts of publication (particularly posters) were donated to institutions, which gather senior residents or provide their services to this particular society group. The essence of project was thus the interdisciplinary collaboration between those authorities which tackle the issue of safety of seniors and get gladly involved in common actions. These were mostly: local government, uniformed services, social institutions, senior associations and/or associations for impaired, banks, national authorities as: State Postal Administration and National Insurance Authority, medical centres, churches, culture houses, libraries, Village Housewife Association, energy-gas, electricity and water supplies.

Social debate as a form of communication and public consultation

In year 2014, the local and city police in West Pomeranian region have arranged **9** social debates addressed to elderly residents. Till the end of 3rd quarter 2014 it estimated to have **2 more social debates** with seniors conducted.

Examples of the Internet web-sites, where the information on this project was presented:

<http://www.szczecin.kwp.gov.pl/wydarzenia/35-garnizon/17231-o-bezpieczestwie-z-seniorami-w-dniu-ich-wita-geuropejskiego-dnia-seniorag>

<http://goleniow.policja.gov.pl/wydarzenia/38-wydarzenia/831-z-seniorami-o-bezpieczestwie>

<http://goleniow.policja.gov.pl/wydarzenia/38-wydarzenia/818-uważaj-na-wnuczka>

<http://goleniow.policja.gov.pl/wydarzenia/38-wydarzenia/786-o-bezpieczestwie-z-seniorami>

<http://www.szczecin.kwp.gov.pl/wydarzenia/34-kryminalne/17159-podajc-si-za-wnuczka-policjanta-lub-funkcjonariusza-cb-oszukuj-seniorow>

<http://www.szczecin.kwp.gov.pl/wydarzenia-profilaktyka/17099--z-seniorami-o-bezpieczestwie>

<http://www.szczecin.kwp.gov.pl/wydarzenia-profilaktyka/17045-spotkanie-z-seniorami>

<http://www.szczecin.kwp.gov.pl/wydarzenia/34-kryminalne/17032-areszt-dla-oszustki-wyudzajcej-pienidze-od-seniorow>

<http://www.szczecin.kwp.gov.pl/wydarzenia-profilaktyka/17011-seniorze-nie-daj-si-oszuka>

<http://www.szczecin.kwp.gov.pl/wydarzenia-profilaktyka/16963-dobra-babciaq-spotkanie-z-seniorami>

<http://www.szczecin.kwp.gov.pl/wydarzenia-profilaktyka/16954--qstop-wariatom-drogowymq-w-choszcznie>

<http://www.szczecin.kwp.gov.pl/wydarzenia-profilaktyka/16894-bezpieczny-senior-bezpieczny-pieszy>