

**THE MIL CHALLENGES OF READING  
FOR THE AGEING POPULATION  
IN CONTEMPORARY COMMUNICATION ECOSYSTEM**

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# SUBJECT FRAME

- Media and Information Literacy
  - focus on UN and EU publications on media and ICT literacy
- Media policies on ageing
  - focus on UN and EU anti-age discrimination policies
- Transformations of reading in mediatized society
  - focus on quantitative and qualitative study on e-reading practices conducted in Bulgaria

# AIM AND TASKS

**Aim:** To identify the impact of the e-reading challenges to the media and information literacy of the ageing population

**Tasks:**

- To specify the tendencies in ageing regarding MIL;
- To analyze the impact of the technological changes affecting the reading practices;
- To identify the reading preferences;
- To discuss the content suitability of e-reading and writing.

# METHODS

- **QUANTITATIVE:** A representative survey among 1120 people across the whole country, selected on a quota principle
- **QUALITATIVE:** Focus groups specified in one of its variants – the “world café”

*\* Some of the results of both surveys have been presented in 2016 at the 18th International conference on Human-Computer Interaction, held in Toronto, Canada.*

## RESULTS

The surveys have been developed within the framework of:

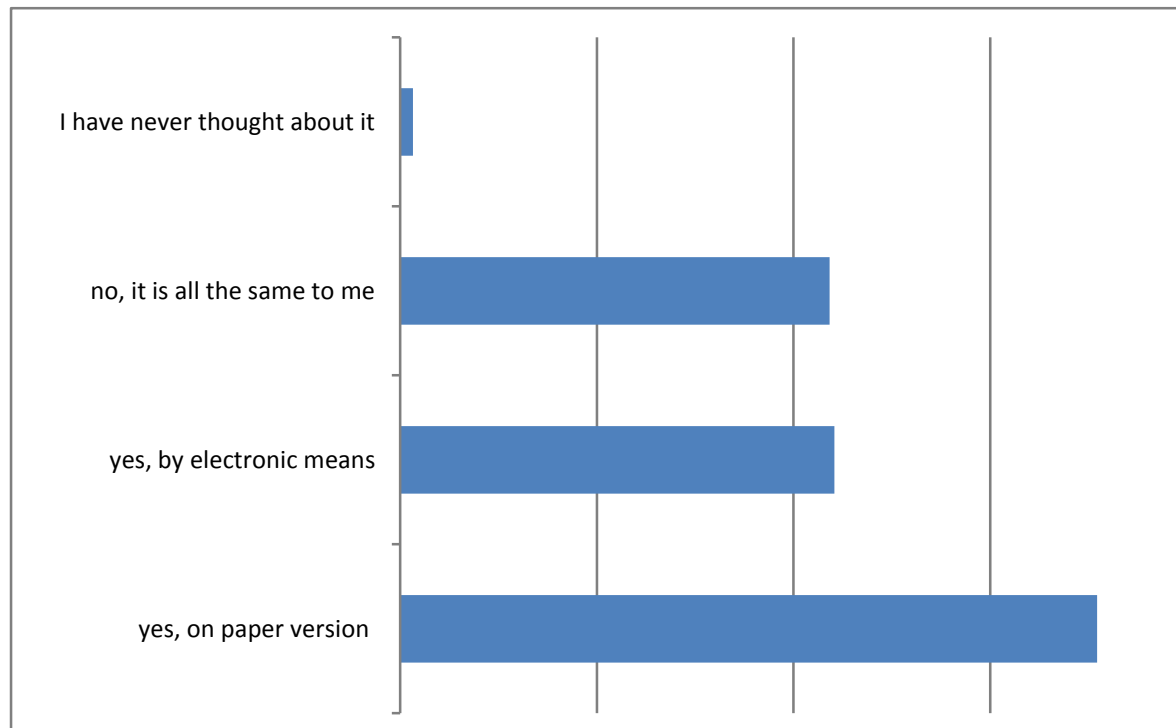
- Research project: *Transformations of Reading in Mediatized Society*, 2016. The Neophyte Rilski Southwestern University - Blagoevgrad. Team Leader: Assoc Prof. DSc Dobrinka Peicheva
- Research project: *Reading Practices in Bulgaria*, 2014. The St. Kliment Ohridski Sofia University. Team leader: Prof. Dr Aleksandar Kyosev

# **RESULTS – QUANTITATIVE SURVEY**

For all age groups, reading on paper is still predominant over electronic reading.

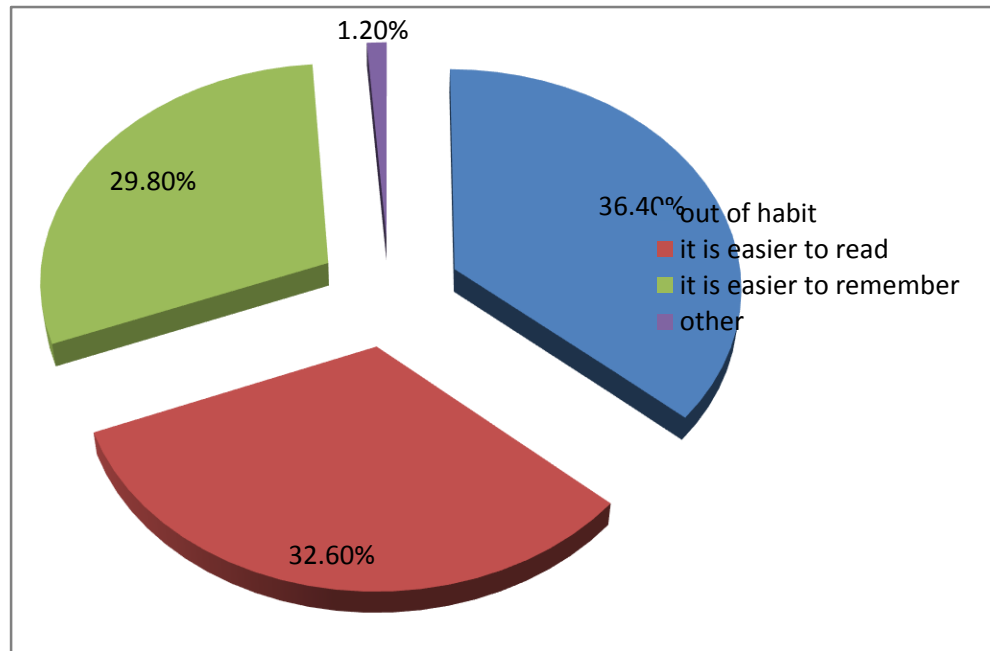
# RESULTS – QUANTITATIVE SURVEY

- Reading preferences



# RESULTS – QUANTITATIVE SURVEY

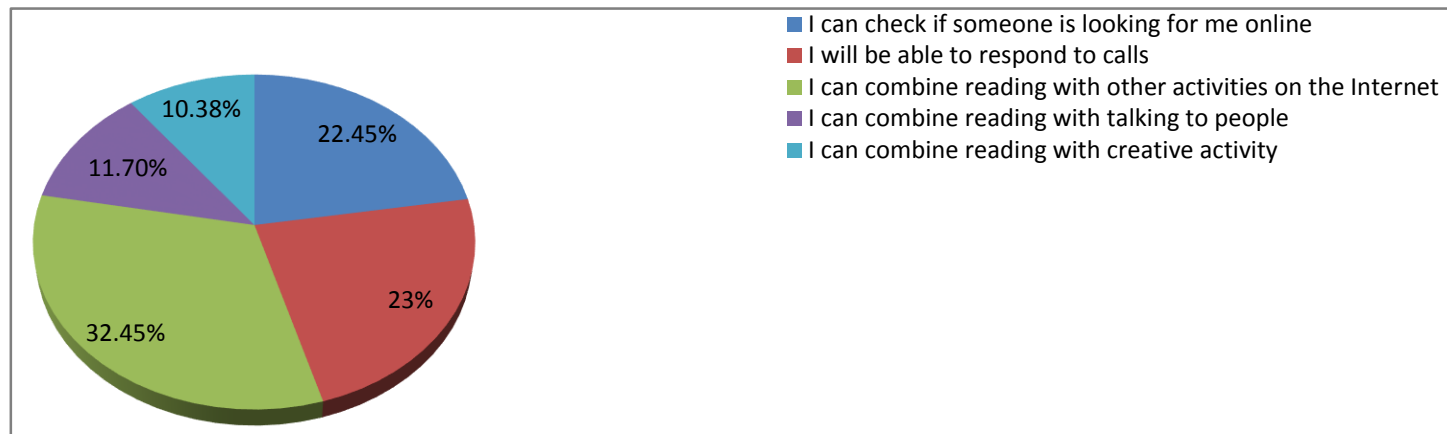
- Reasons for preferring paper support in reading





# RESULTS – QUANTITATIVE SURVEY

- Combining reading with other communication activities



# RESULTS – QUANTITATIVE SURVEY

Most customary ways for people to read :

- Reading on paper – 67.3%
- Hardly reading at all – 19.9%
- Reading on a computer – 17.3%
- Usually not reading on a computer but doing various things – on it – 7.6%
- Reading on a tablet or smartphone – 6.9%
- Reading on an electronic reader – 4.4%
- Listening to audio books – 0.5%

# RESULTS – QUALITATIVE SURVEY

Causes for preferences in e-reading and e-writing:

- increased MIL of the population in all age groups;
- accessible cost of most electronic carriers disseminated in society;
- facilitation offered by the new communication devices, which overcome space and time;
- compatibility between communication devices;
- mutual interchangeability between communication devices in different spaces;

# RESULTS – QUALITATIVE SURVEY

Causes for preferences in e-reading and e-writing:

- multi-functionality of the communication devices, incl. reading, writing, listening, viewing, recording;
- simultaneous interpersonal contact and mass communication;
- combining of written text with sound and image;
- possibility for achieving various kinds of creativity;
- possibility of overcoming isolation;
- possibility for personal involvement and solidarity.

# RESULTS – QUALITATIVE SURVEY

Explanations regarding the limited usage of e-readers:

- decreased amount of books reading in Bulgaria;
- the possibility of reading books and articles by electronic devices, other than e-readers;
- relatively high prices of e-readers;
- ignorance on the technical characteristics of e-readers;
- lack of the multi-functionality, typical for other e-reading devices (tablets, smartphones, etc.);
- lack of the specific aroma of paper and of the possibility for underlining.

# RESULTS – QUALITATIVE SURVEY

Some positive features of e-readers:

- the possibility to possess a very large variety of books and magazines;
- convenience for usage everywhere, even in bed;
- better for the eyes compared with computers, tablets, and smartphones;
- low-cost access to books, including free books downloaded from torrents, etc.

# CONCLUSION

## AGEING POPULATION

- Prejudices and negative stereotypes concerning the life of the ageing population in the modern information environment identify the ways in which these prejudices may be overcome.
- Social distancing, discrimination based on age in key spheres of the labour market, in healthcare, in education, in access to services and information, are not, and cannot be, productive for society.
- Communication skills, including e-reading and e-writing skills, are a prerequisite for the social inclusion of ageing people and for the use of their diverse potential.

# CONCLUSION

## MEDIA:

- The mediatized reality is becoming filled with unprecedented and incomparable so far cultural transformations and communication centers with new cultural and behavior practices.
- The model of traditional searching for and reading on paper has shifted to electronic versions.
- E-reading and e-writing are the prevalent communication activities and are the new structure-forming elements of communication.



# CONCLUSION

- Intensive improvement of ICT competences and digital literacy are critical to the effectiveness of any media strategy and to the further advancement of ‘user-centered’ to ‘user-driven’ developments for achieving the universality of the digital media and information services.
- All these issues are very important to MILID – the MEDIA AND INFORMATION LITERACY AND INTERCULTURAL DIALOGUE

# ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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