

BIG FOOT MEETING IN BERKOVITSA - BULGARIA

- 26th -27th March 2012 -

The representatives of the BIG FOOT project participated to a coordination meeting in one of the target areas - Berkovitsa, a community situated in North-West Bulgaria. At this occasion, they discussed the essential project activities, the future steps of the project and participated to an open meeting with the local stakeholders.

The coordination meeting focused on the “Participatory mapping” which remains crucial for the development of the project. It is based on **the local consultations within the target areas, in order to identify the local perspectives and the community needs**. It should give an overview of the activities in which the locals are really interested, both young and elderly people, and identify the workshops on the local know-how to be developed (i.e. handicraft, small scale agriculture, folkloric activities, cooking etc.), to boost the local development.

These consultations should serve as a basis to develop an **adapted intergenerational learning approach** - the main objective of the project.

In order to meet concrete needs and answer to local realities, it is necessary to remain closely connected to the field and to the feedbacks from the communities. Therefore, the second part of the meeting was dedicated to **an “on site meeting”**. It gathered different local representatives such as archeologists, environment professionals, former local authorities, folk group director, former employees of now closed local companies, farmers or craftsmen, in other words, the local heritage owners.



This meeting allowed, thanks to a very interactive dialogue, to **share different visions on the local needs, and to raise the most important challenges** such as the need of job opportunities for young people or the lack of political involvement. Despite of these challenging facts, it was also a proof of the proactive approach of the locals and their strong will to develop their territory. It confirms once again, the ability of mountain citizens to be actors of the change and the local development.