

**Sociological study in Mohylyov
(Podolsk District, Vinnitsa Oblast)**

Case subject:
“Information and environmental tour of the Dniester group”

Vinnitsa Oblast
Year 2007

The main subject of the survey is the study of the social and environmental problems pertinent to the Dniester PSP in the villages of Lipchany, Kozliv, Bernashovka, Mohilyov (Podilsky District) and in the city of Mohilyov – Podilsk. The survey was carried out on the territories located in close vicinity to the Dniester PSP construction site. The following methods of survey were selected:

- a street interview;
- an individual interview; and
- an expert questioning.

The fifty respondents who participated in the survey represented all age groups from eighteen to seventy years old of various strata of the population. The margin of error of the representative sample did not exceed three per cent. Employees of various departments, deputies of the local councils and local residents were invited as experts.

The questionnaire contained four questions:

1. Do you know about the construction of the Dniester PSP?
2. What main environmental problems are in the region of your residence?
3. Do you face problems with the drinking water in the region of your residence?
4. Would you like to have information about the construction of the Dniester PSP?

Do you know about the construction of the Dniester PSP?

Most people answered positively with the proviso that they do not know what is being built and what impact it will have on the environment. The majority of the residents of the region, in particular of the villages adjacent to the construction know nothing about the construction of the Dniester PSP except for the fact that such construction is underway. Since most of the respondents said that they had not been kept informed about the construction and the public consultations regarding the Dniester PSP project, the conclusion can be made that the public consultations held on 02.09.2006 in the town of Novodnistrivsk were ineffective.

The dissemination of information about the Dniester PSP project was done at the level of the administration of the district and oblast in such a way that the party which conducted the hearings had not properly informed the people and the administration about the project and the subject of the hearings. As a result, the participants of the hearings failed to acquaint themselves with the project and duly prepare their remarks. The comments and remarks which did emerge during the hearings were neither heard nor recorded.

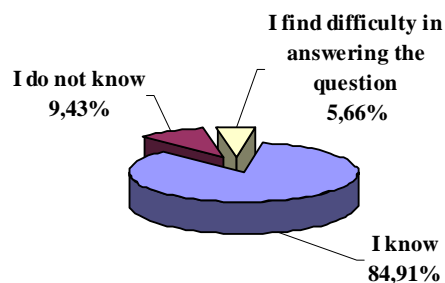
Doubts also have to be raised with regard to the hearings dedicated to the power lines under construction, because the majority of the respondents have no idea about such hearings and have not participated in them.

Survey results:

I know – 45;

I do not know – 5;

I find difficulty in answering the question – 3.



Are there any environmental problems in your city /village?

Most of the respondents gave a positive answer:

- 90,38 % of the respondents confirm that there are environmental problems in their city / village;
- 5,77 % of the respondents said that there are no environmental problems in their city / village;
- 3,85% of the respondents find difficulty in answering this question.

Survey results:

Yes, there are – 47;

No, there are not – 3;

I find difficulty in answering this question – 2.

The main environmental problems of this region can be formulated as follows:

- Problems with the drinking water – 26.46 %;
- Air gas pollution – 21.16%;
- I find difficulty in answering this question – 3.70 %.

Survey results:

Problems with the drinking water – 50,

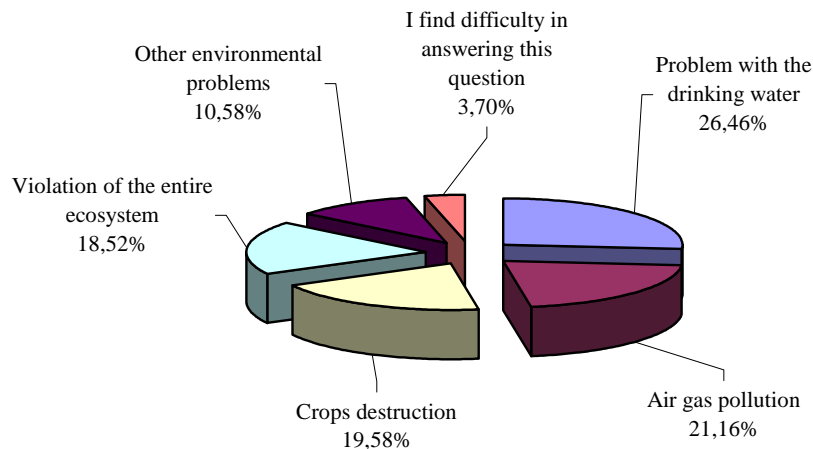
Air gas pollution – 40,

Crop destruction – 37,

General violation of ecosystem – 35,

Other environmental problems – 20,

I find difficulty in answering this question – 7.



The following social and environmental problems caused by the construction of the Dniester PSP can be identified on the basis of the survey:

- **Problems with the respiratory system among the residents** due to the gas pollution and dust caused by heavy trucks.
- Construction of the PSP drainage system caused problems with the drinking water: the drinking water either disappeared in the wells and artesian wells or became unfit to drink.
- Negative impact on crops, trees, and green plantations. *Agriculture is one of the main sources of revenue for the local population.*
- Degradation of forests adjacent to the construction site, soil erosion. *Experts in this area should be invited to consider this in details and assess the damage caused.*
- Destruction of houses and auxiliary buildings due to the explosion works.
- Destruction of roads by heavy trucks.
- Destruction of the irrigation system.
- Pollution of homestead yards by heavy trucks.
- Absence of a warning system for the population in case of an accident

Would you like to have information about the Dniester PSP construction? Please give your contact details

Most of the residents refused to give their contact details but at the same time most of them would like to have information about the Dniester PSP construction and its social and environmental consequences, and about their opportunities to exercise influence on the construction process and decision making.

Conclusions

On the basis of this sociological study the conclusion can be made that the EIA was devised with an extremely low level of information and involvement in the public consultation process of the citizens of Ukraine residing on the territory in question. The opinion of the local authorities and residents has not been taken into consideration during development and decision making on the Dniester PSP construction project.

The results of the study are grounds for doubting that the Dniester PSP construction is legitimate. The local residents already have social and economic problems pertinent to the Dniester PSP construction.

Provisions of Ukrainian and international legislation regarding access to information, environmental expertise and procedures of public consultation were infringed.

Recommendations:

1. to suspend the construction of the Dniester PSP unless and until the project has been brought into compliance with Ukrainian and international legislation and the question of compensation for the already caused and expected harm to the local residents as a consequence of the construction and planned operation of the Dniester PSP has been solved;
2. to carry out once again EIA procedure taking into account the interests of the local residents and environmental risks, which can emerge during the construction process or operation of the structure in question;
3. to hold once again public consultations on the Dniester PSP construction project with the involvement of all the interested parties.