



**September 2013**

The travel of the NanOpinion monitoring stations continues! Also during the summer period several

activities across Europe took place. The online questionnaire and the info materials are already available in 9 languages and more will come soon. Visitors fill in the questionnaire at the station, but the mobile version allows for filling in via smart phone or tablet or on the computer at home. So we are expecting an increasing number of participants of the questionnaire that is higher than the number of visitors at the monitoring stations. We are also expecting more pupils to participate as soon as the NanOpinion school activities will start in October.

The stations visit different locations with different settings. Waiting settings, such as at the entrance of the Zoo in Zemst or the fountain at Berlin Alexanderplatz turned out to offer best opportunities to approach people and engage them in conversation. Places at which people are already intending to stay for their interest, such as at the food festival in Aarhus or the museum night in Dortmund also offer more options for taking part at the station than rush through passages or places which are too crowded and busy. Time is a key factor, and most people don't have time to stop or fill in a questionnaire. The observed average stay at a monitoring station lies between 10 and 20 minutes. The numbers of participants at activities during the weekend are higher than those during the week.

We also experienced in-and-out scenarios, for example in front of a huge super market in Mechelen, where people could visit the station twice, before and after their shopping and used the time between the visits for reflection. Moderators of the station found that "during the shopping they thought about the things we said and wanted to share their considerations with us". Of course little gifts for participants, such as pens, sweets, balloons are mostly welcomed by our visitors.

Weather as expected is an obstacle. Although the orange mushroom itself proofed to hold heavy rain and wind as well, people obviously don't want to stay then, neither if it's too hot and sunny. Semi-public spaces or entrance areas are good options for bad weather conditions and the upcoming colder months of the year.

Another obstacle is the usage of the tablets. The three provided tablets at one station only allow three persons at the same to fill in the questionnaire, which is often not enough capacity for larger visitors groups. Many people are not yet familiar with tablet computers, outdoor light makes visibility of the display more difficult and also the internet connections via WIFI or 3G are mostly rather weak, therefore moderators of stations prefer offering the questionnaire as paper and pen versions, which turned out to work better.

Although people almost always express their interest to learn more about nanotechnologies, they do not use the offered tablets to look for further information (also available on the mobile version, too), but state to search for more information at home via the internet.

Topics that interest most are safety, labeling of consumer products, human health and environmental impact. Visitors are also very interested in nano products, areas of applications, costs and purchase options. Visitors are attracted by science busking activities, small experiments showing visible effects, but they are also willing to be engaged in discussions on long term effects.

Visitors appreciate the European dimension of the project and the anonymity of data. They do not feel that anything was sold to them, but rather that they are taking part in a bigger survey. We have

now reached more than 2.000 filled in questionnaires so far and expect more to come after the next visits of monitoring stations. They will continue their travels to Portugal, the Czech Republic and the UK in the next weeks.