

## Synopsis

The problem of being old is getting more and more important in nowadays reality what is caused by demographic reasons. Senior citizens is the social group which can be a source of traditions and history.

The role of the elderly people in social life is also important, which means full commitment to the local community both in terms of exercising their rights, as well as creating the image of the community and influencing decisions made within.

To sum up the potential of the elderly people, it should be emphasized that they have: intellectual potential in the form of life wisdom, social (relational) potential, family life potential, cultural transmission potential, potential as mastery in performing a profession, economic potential, biological potential, which consists of on social assets.

The phenomenon of population aging looks slightly different in the cities than in the countryside. The place of an old person in the rural society is also very different. When examining the social assets of the senior citizens, the author of the work focused on identifying the social potential of senior - rural residents, because she comes from and works in the countryside. The present rural environment is very diverse in social, economic and historical terms.

The presented dissertation is an attempt to answer the question of what social potential seniors living in the countryside have and whether it is used in the family. The aim of the research was to identify the social potential of the elderly people and its use in the family. The main problem is the question: What amounts of social potential do seniors have and how are they used in the family?

The work consists of three parts. The first part of the work is theoretical and contains four chapters. The first chapter presents the characteristics of social potential. The second chapter is devoted to issues related to the human aging process and old age. The third chapter presents issues related to the social assets of seniors. The fourth chapter, closing the first part of the work, discusses the issues of family and the issues of inter-individual and inter-generational relations, as well as the functions of older generations in present Polish families.

The second part of the work is the methodological assumptions of the author's own research. The third part of the work is an analysis of my own research. Research analyzes are presented in the area of the trust component, network of contacts, willingness to help in the family, senior citizens' involvement in the local community, as well as senior citizens' material capital and the use of senior citizens' social capital in the family. The research results are presented in the form of tables. The work ends with a conclusion, research conclusions and recommendations.

To summarize the conclusions from the conducted research, it should be stated that senior citizens living in rural areas trust family members, neighbours, representatives of the local community and public institutions. They trust the mass media the least. By examining the network of contacts of the senior citizens with family, friends, people from the same church and members of the organizations where they belong, it was found that senior citizens living in the countryside meet people from the same church and friends more often than with family. Senior citizens also evaluate relationships with family worse than with friends. The senior citizens engage in unpaid activities for the local community.

The author also analyzed the material resources and free time of the senior citizens. The surveyed senior citizens declare that they have material and immaterial assets and have free time. Almost all surveyed seniors declared that their immaterial assets and free time were spent in the family.