

# DEVELOPMENT NEEDS IN LOCAL PUBLIC MANAGEMENT. VIEWS OF THE LOCAL COMMUNITY MEMBERS FROM VALEA MOLDOVEI COMMUNE, SUCEAVA COUNTY, ROMANIA

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## **Abstract:**

*A key element for improving the quality of life in administrative-territorial units, local development must be a desideratum of both members of the local community and local public administration authorities, being necessary that the latter's efforts to be oriented according to the real needs declared by inhabitants. From such a direction, the purpose of this micro-research is to analyze the views of the inhabitants of Valea Moldovei Commune on real problems at the local level to identify ideas and project proposals for the development of the locality to which they belong. By interpreting the answers received from members of the local community who were questioned in carrying out this scientific approach, the following findings were possible: lack/ insufficiency of jobs, lack/ insufficiency of opportunities for cultural and leisure activities and the situation of the sewerage service are the main problems in the commune; the electricity and water networks satisfy the inhabitants to the greatest extent, by contrast with the sewerage network to which they declare themselves very dissatisfied; almost all the inhabitants support the need to implement projects for the development of the commune; the locality needs for development, mainly, projects in areas such as education/ training, social infrastructure and certification of traditional products specific to the area; most of the inhabitants declare themselves satisfied and pretty satisfied with living in the commune.*

**Key-words:** local development, local public management, inhabitants, local community, commune, questionnaire-based survey, local needs, development projects, living satisfaction

**JEL classification:** H79, H83

## **1. INTRODUCTION. PLACE AND SUBJECTS OF THE MICRO-RESEARCH**

Valea Moldovei commune is situated in the NE part of the country and located in the central-southern part of Suceava county, being made up of two villages, Valea Moldovei and Mironu. The territory of the commune borders to the N with the commune Capu Câmpului, to the N-E with the communes Păltinoasa, Drăgoiești and Cornu Luncii, to the SE with the communes Slatina and Mălini and to the N-V with the territory of the Gura Humorului city. (Section Valea Moldovei Commune Hall, Suceava County, web page State Institutions)

Valea Seacă was the original name of the village of Valea Moldovei, named after the stream that crosses the village from west to east. The new name of Valea Moldovei was given in 1967, after the new territorial administrative division.

The locality of Valea Moldovei, under the old name of Valea Seacă, is documented, for the first time, in a deed from the time of Alexandru Vodă from 1453, which confirms the dominion of the logophat Mihail over this village. It is believed that the only historical traces are the five mounds on the communal pasture, where the soldiers of Stephen the Great were buried after the battle of Baia on December 14, 1467. The inhabitants of Valea Moldovei found traces of spears, arrows, pieces of old links and coins from previous eras which proves that battles were fought in these places. (Website of Valea Moldovei Commune Hall)

The micro-research carried out in the pages of this paper aims to analyze the views of the inhabitants of Valea Moldovei Commune on the real needs and problems existing at local level to identify ideas and project proposals for the development of the locality to which they belong.

According to the 2011 census, the population of Valea Moldovei commune amounts to 3,838 inhabitants, up from the previous census in 2002, when 3,538 inhabitants were registered. (National Institute of Statistics, Population of Valea Moldovei Commune)

This micro-research is based on collecting responses from the population aged 20 to 50 years. We selected this category because at this stage of age people generally show interest in developing and improving living conditions in the territorial unit to which they belong.

The sampling base brings together a number of 1,356 inhabitants, the percentages for each age category being found in the following table. The collection of answers took place between 13-17 September 2020 through the Google Docs page, after the application of the questionnaire, the sample bringing together 217 valid tools, as follows:

**Table no. 1. Population structure according to age and sample composition**

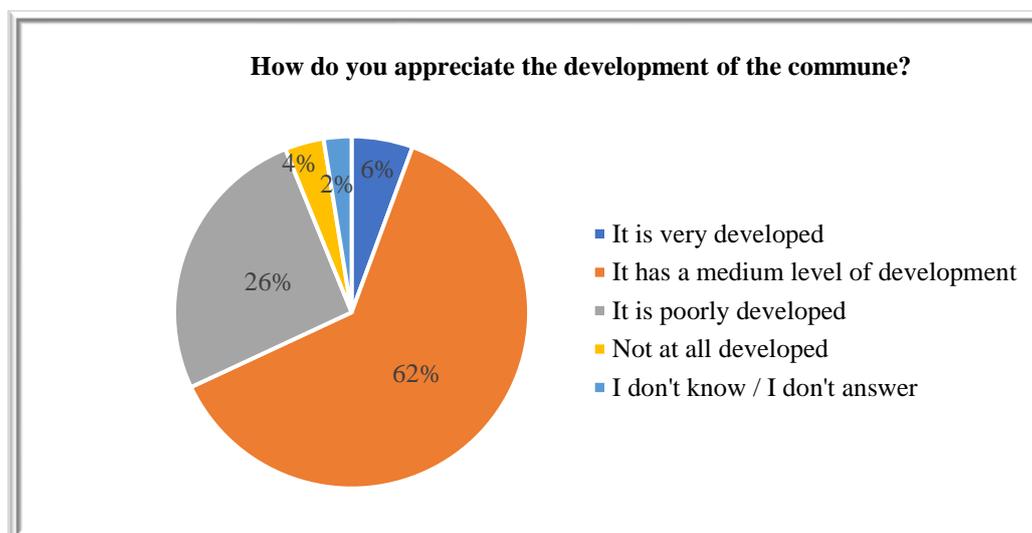
Age categories	Sampling basis		Sample	
	Population number	Percentage	Population number	Percentage
20-30 years	517	38.12%	82	37.62%
31-40 years	478	35.25 %	78	36.11%
41-50 years	361	26.62%	57	26.27%
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,356</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>217</b>	<b>100%</b>

Source: own processing based on data provided by the National Institute of Statistics, <http://www.insse.ro> and data collected through Google Docs,

[https://docs.google.com/forms/d/1xskjNHcBhhOkOQ\\_zOmFqTeFqXAYXlp6rQnLF9jBoliI/edit?hl=ro](https://docs.google.com/forms/d/1xskjNHcBhhOkOQ_zOmFqTeFqXAYXlp6rQnLF9jBoliI/edit?hl=ro)

## 2. IDENTIFYING EXISTING NEEDS AT LOCAL COMMUNITY LEVEL

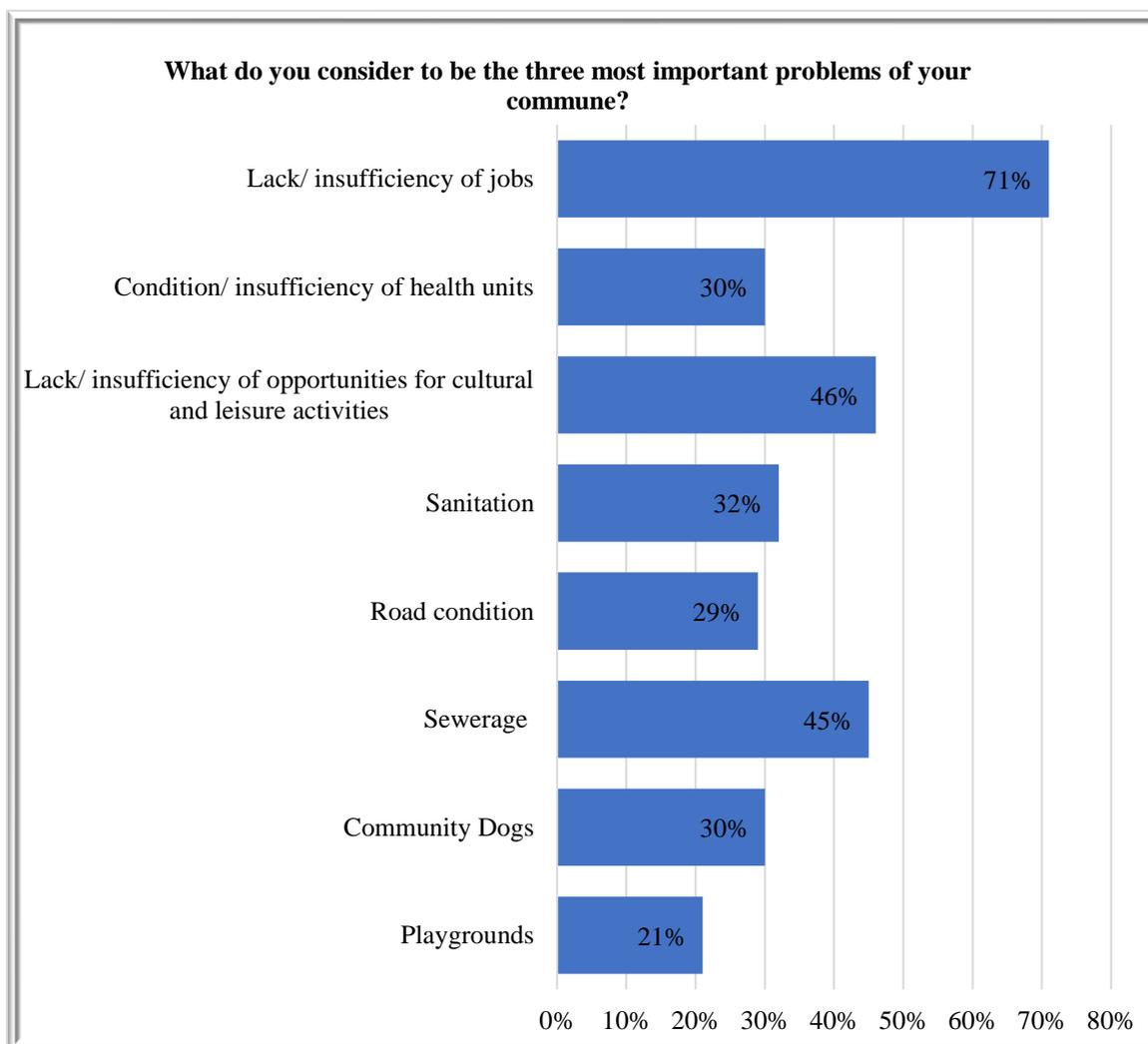
When asked about the level of development of the commune to which they belong, most of the respondents (62%) are of the opinion that the locality has an average level of development. This result can be explained by the fact that on the territory of the commune there are forest wood sawmills, producer of houses on prefabricated wooden structures, animal farm, restaurant-pizzeria, all these units being seen as potential sources of development of the locality. However, it can be seen that almost 1/3 (30%) of the respondents say about their locality either that it is poorly developed (26%) or that it is not developed at all (4%):



**Figure no. 1. The development level of the commune**

The interpretation of the opinions of the commune inhabitants continues with the identification and estimation of the real needs of the community, as basic orientations for the local development.

As such, the views expressed by the members of the local community show that the main three problems that describe the concrete situation existing in the commune are: lack/ insufficiency of jobs, this need registering the highest share of answers (71%); the following position is occupied by the lack/ insufficiency of opportunities for cultural activities and leisure (46%) and an almost similar percentage is registered for the situation of the sewerage service (45%) in the commune:



**Figure no. 2. The main existing needs at the commune level**

Regarding the satisfaction with the existing utilities in the locality, most of the respondents say they are satisfied and very satisfied with the electricity network (77% / 16%) and the water network (71% / 22%) in the commune. It is noted that the respondents are very dissatisfied only with the unfinished sewerage network due to lack of financial resources, being recorded a percentage of 33%, a result corroborated with the answers received to the previous question. Regarding the telecommunications network, an almost identical share of respondents say they are satisfied (36%) and, respectively, dissatisfied (35%), results that can be attributed to the fact that in the locality there are areas where the telephone/ internet signal is weak:

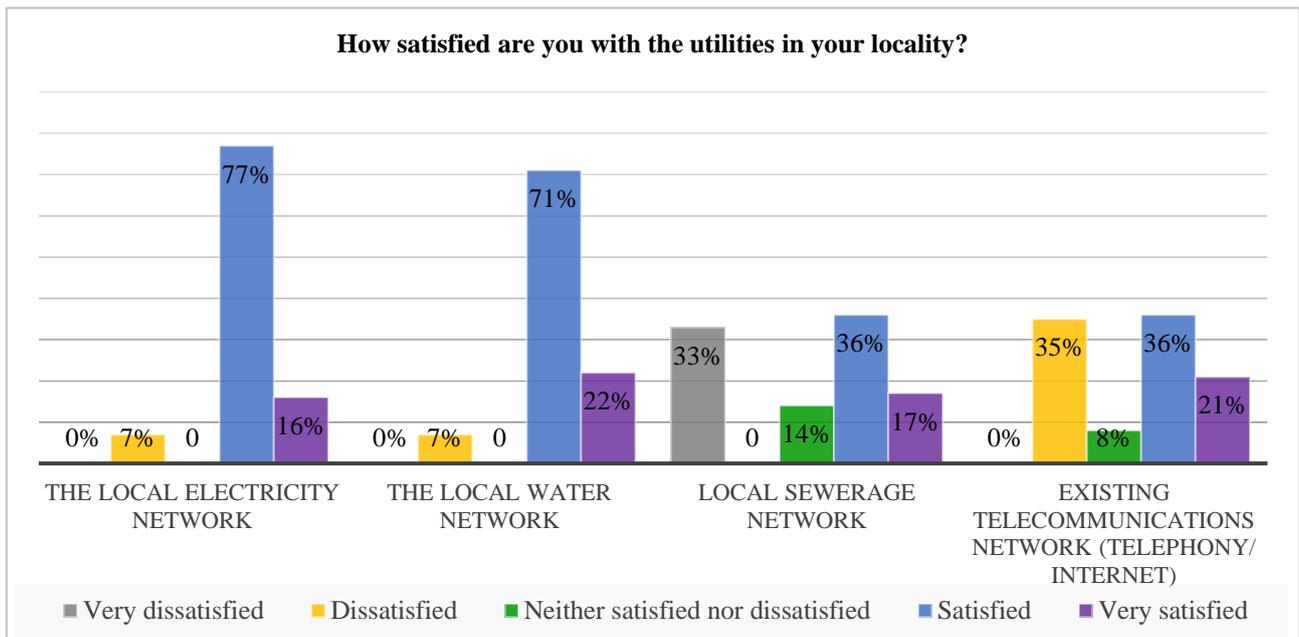


Figure no. 3. Satisfaction of the inhabitants regarding the existing utilities in the locality

### 3. NEEDS FOR LOCAL DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS AT THE COMMUNE LEVEL

In relation to the need to implement projects, almost all respondents (93%) support this need for the development of the commune to which they belong. The difference of 7% is given by the inhabitants who either appreciate that the locality is quite developed (2%) or state that they do not know or do not want to give us an answer to this question (5%):

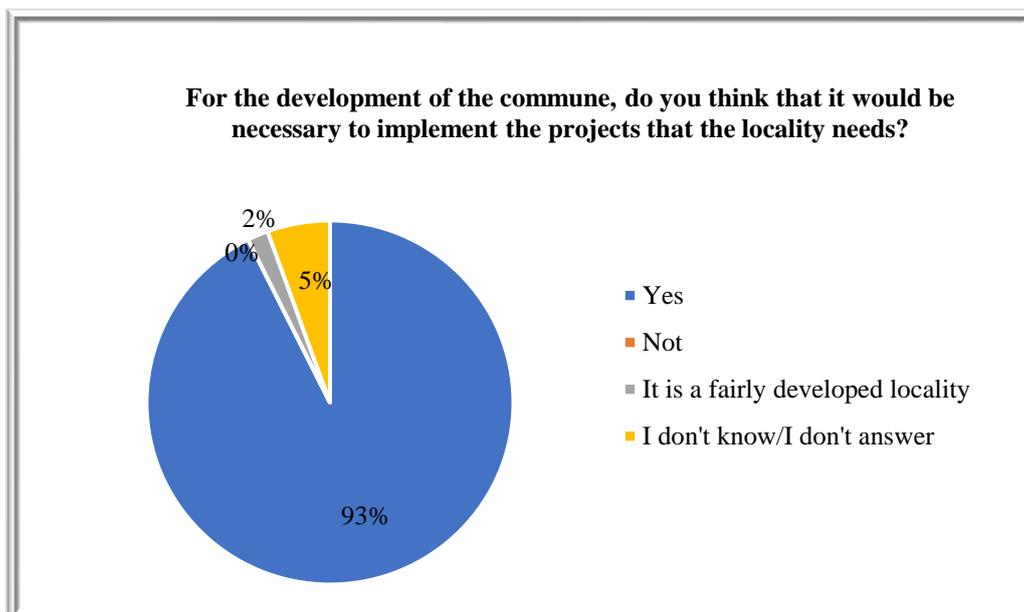


Figure no. 4. The need to implement projects for the development of the commune

The orientation of the activities of the public administration authorities in the commune regarding the submission, support and financing of projects for the development of the locality must take into account the views of the inhabitants expressed in this direction. On the background of the

affirmative answers of the 93% of respondents who support the need to implement projects and viewing the data recorded in the following figure, it is observed that the locality needs for development, mainly, projects in areas such as education/ training (80%), social infrastructure (61%) and certification of traditional products specific to the area (52%). The lowest percentage (19%) is registered by the project idea aiming at internet connectivity in the local community, an unexpected result in the current context that requires digitalization in all areas:

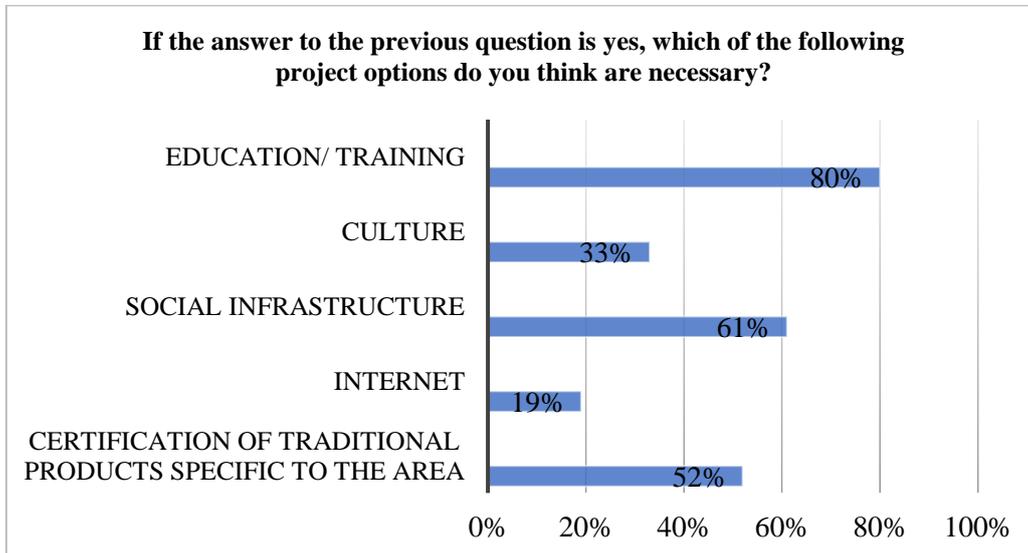


Figure no. 5. Project ideas for the commune development

**4. SATISFACTION OF LOCAL COMMUNITY MEMBERS REGARDING THE LIVING STANDARD IN THE COMMUNE**

The opinions of the members of the local community are different regarding the standard of living in the commune. Over 2/3 of the commune's inhabitants (67%) say they are satisfied and pretty satisfied with the standard of living in the locality, and on the other hand we find that 16% of respondents say they are not very satisfied (13%) and not at all satisfied (3%) regarding the standard of living in the commune:

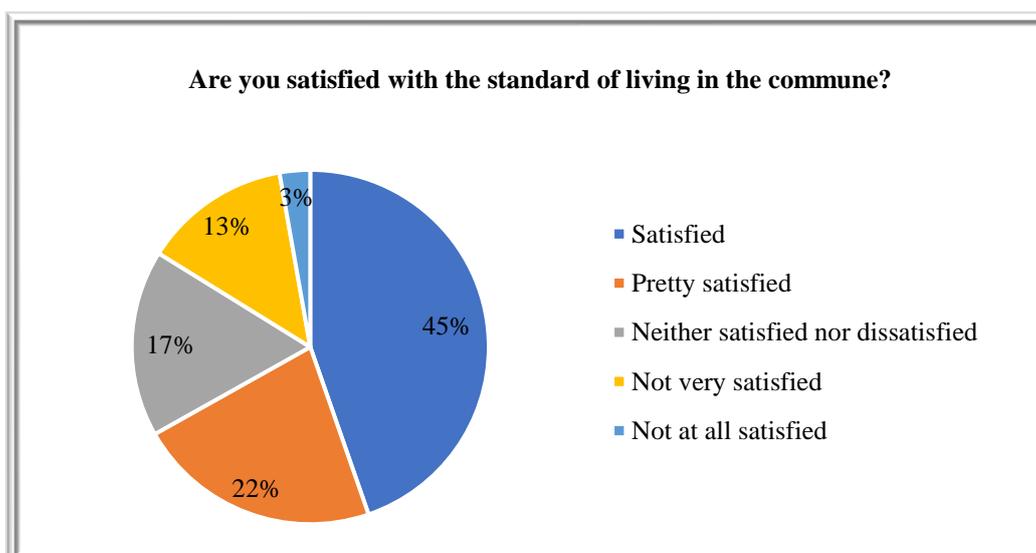


Figure no. 6. The satisfaction of the inhabitants regarding the living standard in the commune

## 5. CONCLUSIONS

On the basis of those presented in this paper, we can conclude that this micro-research has made it possible to study the views of local community members on real problems in Valea Moldovei, thus identifying variants and project ideas for local development and meeting the needs found.

In assessing *the level of the commune development*, most of the answers received from community members show that the locality under analysis has an average level of development, on the territory of the commune functioning a number of units that can be potential sources of development.

In order to identify basic orientations for local development, community members were asked about *the main problems existing at the commune level*, from their answers resulting that lack/insufficiency of jobs, lack/insufficiency of opportunities for cultural activities and leisure and the situation of the sewerage service are needs that need to be satisfied.

Also, from the same direction, regarding *the satisfaction with the existing utilities in the locality*, the respondents say they are dissatisfied with the unfinished sewerage network due to lack of financial resources, at the opposite being the electricity and water networks.

Regarding *the need to implement projects*, almost all respondents support this need for the development of the commune to which they belong. Based on these affirmative answers, we found that in order to estimate project ideas for the development of the commune, the locality needs for development mainly projects in areas such as education/ training, social infrastructure and certification of traditional products specific to the area.

In relation to *the satisfaction of the local community members regarding the standard of living in the commune*, although the opinions of the inhabitants are different, most of the respondents are satisfied and pretty satisfied in this respect.

Overall, the research carried out in the pages of this paper allows us to conclude that the public administration authorities in the commune in question must direct their activities towards supporting and financing projects for the development of the locality in the areas highlighted by the opinions expressed by the inhabitants.

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