

Additional Text Parts to the Report of July 17th, 2017:

Comments to open Questions and a Summary

Sustaining rural services and infrastructure

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Short Report

Comparable results of the Participation of Village Movement Brandenburg e.V. in the multinational Project “Sustaining rural services and infrastructure” in Preparation of the 3. European Rural Parliament

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I. Evaluation of Importance of Elements of Rural Services and Infrastructure in Addition to the Table “Importance” and Infrastructure and services perceived as a lack

Ia

At the first place are called trades, institutions of the local economy, among them bakers, butchers, carpenters, smithies, hairdressers and special handicraft production companies, construction companies, car-repair workshops etc.

Second ly called are restaurants, pubs, country hotels (2 restaurants stand before closure)

In addition to shops are mentioned. Shopping market, snack, farm shops, parcel acceptance

Several times called the church as element of services, but often without a own local priest;

graveyard.

Associations, including volunteer fire brigades, are called as necessary elements of the infrastructure as well as community houses, community centers, fire station equipment. Tourist information, tourist facilities, railway station, bath, forest stage.

An interesting example is a community of old people, which have founded a cooperative housing community.

Several examples are mentioned, according to which associations and other civil society forces with their own potentials create and maintain community houses, village houses and other institutions in a civic engagement, that is to say, village communities are enriched by their own responsibility.

I b Infrastructure and services perceived as a lack

In general, the decline and contra-productive "shrink-back" of infrastructure and services are critically assessed.

Similar to the assessment of the importance, the lack of village centers is the first (20 villages call it). Different terms are used: village center, community hall, community house, village communal house, meeting place, social center, pensioners meeting point.

In addition, a missing youth meeting point is criticized by 5 villages. As well as lack of day-care centers and primary schools. Above all, priority is given to the lack of facilities and services required for a living village and which would be necessary to face the demographic change, from jobs for young people and other youth organizations, to medical care, shopping for daily needs ("village shop"), multi-generational facilities and programs, adequate transport links, etc.

Of 19 villages the missing village shop is called, also here with different names like Aunt Emma - shop, village shop, food sale place, possible combination between restaurantvillage center and supply of every day products as good examples.

10 villages refer to the missing restaurant. Twice is referred to early closure. The problem is that in small villages there is often no livelihood catering and can find combinations with other pension facilities or with a village center, which can guarantee the existence of a restaurant through many events. In the absence of a village center, the role of the communication center can often be exercised by a restaurant.

As was to be expected, it was always pointed out that there was a lack of transport connections through public transport. In particular, the decline in connections, stops, etc. is criticized.

Critically, all tendencies are assessed to centralize services and infrastructure. Municipalities - especially if they are cities - would often be unilaterally, with regard to infrastructure, preferred to villages that are so-called districts (Ortsteile) of a bigger municipality.

Several examples were given, according to which facilities are available but can not be used all the time. Typical for this are forms of outpatient care instead of village shops; Restricted opening times of village centers, villages, youth facilities, sports grounds, library, etc .; Restrictions on traffic connections, use of stops, tourist information offices, etc.

II Complex Comments to some important Elements of Services in the Villages

in addition to Report of July 17th, 2017

Village center

Stands with 95% at the top of the elements considered very important because it is an important base for a lively village. Three quarters of the villages surveyed have a center of varying character, ranging from the club room or a restaurant to the village communal house. Accordingly, there are mainly municipally created and entertained centers, but also in more than a third of the villages operated by associations, churches or privately.

Typical comments:

Village Community Centre is the hub of all activities and indispensable. Village community venues are important but should not be developed in competition with the local economy. Special mention is made of the high level of self-responsibility and civic commitment at the level of the individual village to the creation, maintenance and use of such facilities: "Civil Centre is run by the village association"; "Received in self-responsibility"; "Privately organized by the local authorities!"; "Is very important. Helping self-help might be a possibility to create it. Critical notes: the creation and maintenance of village centers must be encouraged; better equipment; wider use for different purposes. More opportunities for young people. Cross-generational work. Where a village center is not yet available, this is considered an essential shortcoming.

Day-care for children (KITA)

95% of the interviewees believe that day care is very important. A positive assessment is that there are usually sufficient places available and the day care has good quality. Half (53%) of the villages surveyed have their own day care center. For 37% of the villages favorably in other place, 10% only unfavorably reachable. It is necessary that every village has a day care center to keep young families. Kita is a life-line for the village. Where local is not possible, "daily others" are to be promoted. Day care were mainly municipally; In addition, more private or parents' associations would be desirable.

Critical: partly unequal standards: support key and working conditions of the educators have to be improved. In contrast to the central cooking, more cooking in the day care center with more regional products is required.

Youth leisure facilities

87% of respondents rate these facilities as very important. In addition to access to training and jobs, they play a key role in the attachment of young people to village life. A key question to deal with demographic change is the creation of conditions so that many young people who want to stay in the village as an education-commuter or work-commuter can also do so.

However, only 40 per cent of the villages surveyed have such recreational facilities on site, and 27 per cent of the villages are incapable of such facilities. Three quarters of the villages state that the municipality is responsible for these facilities; 16 per cent of them are built in the village itself and mainly by clubs.

Comments from the positive assessment of sufficient conditions and activities up to a typical conclusion: "We are missing, failing that in a youth club always an 18-year-old to be monitored. Youth club is desired by the youth, has already existed, but there was no one who took over the care".

On the one hand, it is emphasized that it depends primarily on its own forces and initiatives,

such as, Of village associations and volunteer fire brigades to create and revitalize such facilities; On the other hand, it is rightly demanded that local and state responsibility and support are needed so that this is not treated as a "fifth wheel on the car". Good examples include a joint youth club with the neighbour village, because model for small villages with a small number of young people.

Medical care

It is, as is known, one of the most important services in the countryside, but it is growing in importance, especially with the aging of the society for the sedentary of old villagers in their village. Of the respondents, 89% are rated as very important, but only one in ten of the villages questioned have conditions on the ground and 40% of the villages are very unfavorable. It is therefore not surprising that this service was the most commented on by all the services requested (by two-thirds of respondents), and the comments mainly included requests and demands. These include, in particular, the establishment of more doctors in the country in order to achieve an adequate home-care system. The training and placement of more members of the family, who can perform certain medical care functions; The better accessibility of specialists and clinics by means of the corresponding public transport or a "sick shuttle". "Sister Agnes System" should become obligatory.

Primary and upper school

Of the villages surveyed, one in five has a primary school and one in ten has a secondary school. On the other hand, the importance of a primary school for its own village is rated as "very high" by 82% of respondents and a top school of 68%. On the other hand, a school in the village keeps the schoolchildren living there from becoming children as daily commuters with a corresponding temporal and physical strain; on the other hand, an educational institution in the village with its employees and buildings means a socio-cultural enrichment of the village. A scattering of schools according to economic efficiency criteria is therefore seen not only by many parents socially and culturally, not least also demographically, as counterproductive.

However, 70% of the villages surveyed are still reaching the next elementary school, but the comments focus on the qualitative improvement of the education system, the food supply, the shortening of the pendulum time and the improvement of traffic connections. It is pointed out separately that the village would have the conditions for a busy school, but still not approved. Parents with private schools are rather rare.

With regard to the upper secondary schools, the accessibility of almost 40% of the villages is unfavorable, which means much longer pendulum times.

Business

Village shops and other businesses play an important role in the provision of services. They are not only an invigorating element of the local economy, but also of the local infrastructure and also have a special function as a communication and meeting place in the village. "Our village shop is not just a business, it is a meeting point in the village and very important for the social village life".

85% of respondents rate their role for the village with very important to important.

However, only 20% of the villages surveyed have local shops, but 50% of these villages are accessible to shops outside.

The comments mainly highlight the local importance of villages and other businesses.

"Village and municipality must become active themselves to the

Economic development on the ground. A village only works, even if economic "bustle-up" works. "" The business offer suffers under the catalog and internet ordering system, so the shops must close. Customers also like to go to highly-advertised shopping centers, where prices are not the only criteria. "" Economic promotion has no innovative concepts; Administrative and licensing practices must be adapted to rural conditions. "

In particular, recent efforts are being made to highlight the "village shop" (the "village consum" or "Tante Emma shop"), which is often initiated and operated by civil society and civil engagement. On the one hand, it is understandable, if employment-securing jobs are striven for; On the other hand, in some villages such a shop can only function and survive by integration into or combination with other institutions and by volunteer forces. "Small shop possibly as part of the village center possible". Other comments point to such village specificities as mobile shops, shopping are particularly important for older people and "village trade like fruit in front of the door in self-service would revitalize village life".

Social care

85 percent of respondents rate the role of social care for the village with very high to high. Only 19% of the captured villages have such facilities on the spot, but the inhabitants of a further 50% of the villages can reach them outside, thus quite cheaply. These institutions are organized mainly by the municipal (37%) and by private (17%) and by the village community (8%).

Comments cited: Important on the spot! Is organized by us (called several times). Social care should also not be left to the free market. This is best organized by the villagers themselves. Talking hours in the village necessary. It is very important for a future retirement pension of 30%. Is becoming increasingly important in the country, as many old people live alone, but can not really do it anymore. Agnes as a model to be applied. Must be encouraged. More staff is needed.

III Summary:

Promoting and inhibiting factors in the development of village infrastructure and services

1. Promotional factors

The following three groups of factors can be derived from the comments and suggestions on the supporting factors.

(A) Among the factors identified in the survey, which promote the development of local infrastructure and services in the villages, the endogenous potentials of village civil society dominate.

First of all, the role of village communities and village associations is of prime importance here. This self-responsible role is seen not only as a promoting factor of infrastructure and services but as a general factor in village development. It seems that the villagers' opinion is that the liveliness and viability of the villages depend not only or primarily on the provision of financial subsidies, but primarily on the self-activity of village communities in shaping of village living conditions and village development.

This is why we refer to what we have defined elsewhere as the self-organization of village communities: self-organization with its three aspects of self-guidance, self-shaping and the pooling (bundling) of the local forces; With the terminology of the survey and the answers:

Guidance > local initiatives, project planning, village development concepts;

Shaping > civic engagement, common voluntary work

Bundling > village cohesion, interactions between associations, local authorities and creative personalities.

(B) State and municipal funding

This subsidy relates, on the one hand, to the financial support of projects of the village community, and, on the other hand, to the fulfillment of state and municipal obligations of public services.

On the latter concern specific proposals for the improvement of infrastructure and services, some of which have been repeated here in answering the question of their promoting factors.

Special emphasis was placed on these issues:

- Promoting investments in infrastructure that serve the development of the local economy, i.e. Broadband and telecommunications;
- Promotion of meeting points and village centres;
- Expansion instead of shrinking traffic connections and public transport;
- Promotion of structurally weak regions and tourism;
- Expansion of medical care.

(C) Interaction between state, municipality and civil society

As a particularly strong factor in the promotion of infrastructure and services, the interaction of state and community services with civil society initiatives / civic engagement can apply.

According to the results of the survey, this funding factor is mainly implemented in the complex shaping of processes of village development:

- Planning, shaping and organizing the active facing to the demographic change:—
- Measures to promote the immigration and permanent residence / especially sustaining residence of young families and migrant families
- Identification of construction areas for family houses and promotion of private and cooperative housing and housing projects
- Promoting and developing the peculiarities of the village as a rural settlement and village

community, including the strengthening of local self-determination as well as the recognition of the peculiarities of village life as “free electable” alternatives to the peculiarities of the urban way of life.

4.2 Which are inhibit factors of the village infrastructure and services?

The policy of "shrinking" the infrastructure is particularly often mentioned in the context of three different aspects:

- a close market economic view, according to which the only criterion of progress is economic efficiency;
- alleged necessity of shrinking infrastructure and services as a consequence of the population decline, in particular by emigration (while on the contrary such shrinking may prevent immigration, for example closing of a daycare facility for children will prevent settling of young families);
- shrinking as a consequence of a centralization policy, which seems to be more oriented to urban utilization norms and population size orders than on village specificities and instead of a bottom up planning, which starts from the individual conditions and needs of the single village settlement and local community. (One expression of such “urban view” in policy is the striving of governmental policy in Brandenburg to administratively “creating” rural municipalities with a size of 10.000 inhabitants whilst originally the average size was about 350 inhabitants).

Similarly often as criticism of politics was called as inhibit factor the loss of local self-determination, which most village communities suffered. These for example in repeated statements such as "urban paternalism" and "as village which is a small part of a municipality, which is a city, you always stand in the back", or: "everything is directed only to the city".

- Villagers also criticized the assessment of the readiness of village communities to compensate deficits of public services by different actions of civic engagement as well as the low appreciation of creative and innovative ideas by politics. In this context, the lack of financial resources of rural municipalities was criticized as well as the wrong promotion policy: "Why everything with funding applications and not by necessity?" (what often means that necessity is being replaced by accident).

At the other hand villagers also critically, but not so often mentioned opposite trends: a lack of willingness to settle problems by civic engagement or sometimes a shy of innovations as inhibit factors. Similar as inhibiting are called the demographic factor of aging and in some rural communities inadequate communication.

Obviously as a most burning and kind of key problems are always articulated shortcomings in the broadband supply and ongoing decrease of the traffic connections, in particular of the public transport and during school breaks of the school buses.

Like village center and day care center are called the most important elements of the social infrastructure as factors of living and viable villages, they there where being missing also are called as the most important deficit and inhibiting factor in the whole village development.

In general, the statements about inhibiting factors in the development of infrastructure and services are dominated by critical statements about politics, both on state, as well as on urban and municipality politics. For the most part, the interviewees did not specifically consider the infrastructure policy, but the defective village development policy as a whole. Obviously, not only current conditions and processes, but a long-lasting and perpetual preference for urban development as well as a questionable centralization policy, triggering fears and fears, are generally being reflected, whilst the mistakes made in former municipality reforms continue to have an effect.

This deserves special attention because there exists a relatively strong, locally and regionally differentiated trend of civic engagement for improving of the infrastructure; that means criticism of policy is does not suggest a responsibility of the state alone, but is carried out from a position of self-responsibility and willingness to take part in settling the problems at the own local ..

On the other hand, the description of the obstacles lists their effects, i.e. the actual deficiencies and shortcomings with regard to infrastructure and services very concrete. From this it can be concluded that the perpetual deterioration of equipment and supply itself is perceived as the greatest obstacle, as something which certainly challenges the future of the village in general, if there will not happen a general change.