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Central European University in part fulfilment of the
Degree of Master of Science**

***THE STORY OF A COMMUNITY BASED GREENWAY INITIATIVE: RURAL
LIVELIHOODS AND THE 'ON OUR HERITAGE TRAIL GREENWAY', HUNGARY.***

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July, 2007

Budapest

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List of Abbreviations

ATG	Amber Trail Greenway
CEE	Central and Eastern Europe
CEG	Central and Eastern European Greenways
DINP	Danube Ipoly National Park
DIZ	Danube Ipoly Greenway ('Duna Ipoly Zöldút')
EGWA	European Greenways Association
EPCE	Environmental Partnership for Central Europe
EPSD	Environmental Partnership for Sustainable Development
HEPF	Hungarian Environmental Partnership Foundation
OHTG	On Our Heritage Trail Greenway
RTC	Rails-to-Trails Conservancy
STA	Sugárkankalin Tourism Association
TCT	Trans Canada Trail

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Greenway developments are a global phenomenon and, apart from a number of common underlying principles such as the support of non-motorised transportation, they can take on numerous forms and have various multipurpose objectives depending on the local context. In Central and Eastern Europe, greenway programs aim to link local community initiatives through a shared vision that encourages people to find local solutions to problems. The aim of this thesis is to analyse the potential benefits and challenges of a young greenway initiative in Hungary - the 'On Our Heritage Trail Greenway' (OHTG) - to rural livelihoods. Interviews with core initiators, organisers and decision makers of the OHTG, and a questionnaire of 139 people from three selected villages involved in the initiative were conducted. While all three villages face rural deprivation, a lack of local employment opportunities, as well as vanishing local traditions and social ties, they are heterogeneous in terms of means, possibilities and endowments. This has to be borne in mind for the further development of the initiative in order not to endanger one of the actual benefits of the OHTG, i.e. strong cooperation which has developed between the villages. Other realised benefits of the initiative are: reduced geographic and social isolation between communities; development of local leadership and responsibility as well as new ideas and initiatives; mending of disrupted social ties and local traditions; and enhancement of a healthier lifestyle among young people. Most of the identified potential future benefits, which can enrich local people's lives and enhance a more stable demographic structure include development of small scale community based tourism, enhanced nature as well as local culture and heritage protection. The OHTG's potential to promote the production and sale of local heritage products is not yet fully understood by the local population. For this and other reasons, better information dissemination, involvement of a broader range of the local population and the continuity of external support and organisation of local events/initiatives is crucial for on-going success. It must be recognised that local community-based initiatives produce long-term benefits through small-step changes and developments. In this respect persistence and patience are two key factors. The thesis provides useful baseline information for monitoring temporal changes and achievements specifically for the OHTG, and generally for other greenway or rural revitalisation initiatives, that will help to understand outcomes and contribute to developing more flexible and adaptive management of such schemes.

Keywords: greenways, non-motorised transportation, community-based initiative, 'On Our Heritage Trail Greenway', rural livelihoods, rural revitalisation

1. Introduction

1.1. Background to the research

Although, greenways are variously defined they can be summarised as artificial or natural corridors and trails (or a combination of these) that link nature and culture across communities, regions and/or countries (EGWA 2000; HEPF 2005). However, greenway programs are much more complex than that and have a set of underlying principles and objectives. These underlying meanings can differ from location to location, from country to country and from region to region depending on the local culture, history, possibilities, aims and objectives (EGWA 2000). Nevertheless, there are common underlying principles about what can be designated as a greenway and can become part of the program, such as the support of non motorised means of transportation (cycling, walking, horseback riding etc) and a well established plan which includes the aims, functions and the way they should be ‘built’ and/or used.

The idea of the greenway program was first raised in the USA (1987) by the President’s Commission on Americans Outdoors. In North America the main aim of the greenway network is to bring urbanised people out into nature for recreation, to protect the ecological and cultural heritage sites and make them accessible to society. Nowadays several programs support the development of the greenway network in North America (e.g. Rails to Trails Conservancy (RTC), The Trans Canada Trail Foundation).

In Western Europe the European Greenway Association (EGWA) was established in 1998, based on the experience many European countries already had in establishing greenways. The increased problems of air pollution in densely populated Europe made the program increasingly popular (EGWA 2000). In Western Europe the main aim was to enhance non motorised ways of traffic and connected recreational activities such as walking, jogging, cycling and skating based on infrastructural possibilities that have to meet certain physical characteristics (e.g. modest gradients).

In Central and Eastern Europe (CEE) the idea of greenways arrived first to the Czech Republic (Prague-Vienna greenway) and then made its way through other countries of the region which led to the establishment of the Central European Greenways (CEG) program. In CEE, the concept of greenways goes beyond their function as pathways of non motorized traffic for recreation and tourism which take into consideration their ecological functions. In this region the historic changes of 1989 and the rush to integrate with Western market economies led to the impoverishment of rural society and economy as well as consumer values holding priority over environmental goals (EPCE 2001; Gratz 2001). Instead of large scale top down projects which are insensitive to the local context and do not present a realistic solution for many rural communities, greenway initiatives in CEE represent small scale, community-based projects. These networks should form a vital part of rural revitalisation, natural and cultural heritage protection (help preserving the natural and cultural heritage of the region), ameliorate livelihoods of local people and give a possibility for sustainable usage of natural resources (EPCE 2001; HEPF 2005). Thus, also strengthening local communities. Greenways in CEE are exclusively bottom up community based initiatives.. However, community based initiatives are not a guarantee for success and bring with them several challenges and problems of their own, especially with the variety of stakeholders involved (Cox and Mair 1991; Guaraldo 1996).

1.2. Motivation for the present study

Besides the growing debate as well as recognition of the importance of locally led and controlled projects for rural revitalisation, the motivation behind the choice to research the role a greenway initiative can play in this process in Hungary is grounded in several considerations.

Firstly, the author's own modest experience and passion for cycling and exploring recreational opportunities across Europe gave a strong motivation to undertake a research in a

topic dealing with trail and greenway development. Especially, that possibilities for the usage of non-motorised means of transportation in Hungary are still very scarce and unexplored, even though there is a growing demand for them.

Secondly, the greenway program in Hungary, led by the Hungarian Environmental Partnership Foundation (HEPF), is a very young one and the paucity of literature gave a strong motivation to research the topic and understand the potential of such initiatives. Moreover, reports and studies about various greenway developments around the world showed how local communities can benefit from such trails and corridors and what challenges and problems they might encounter. However, in many cases financial and other endowments, especially in the countries of the west, are far in excess of those in Hungary and Central and Eastern Europe in general. Therefore, using a case study approach that addresses the potential benefits and challenges and the way these programs and initiatives are being developed by local communities with the help of external agencies (in this case the HEPF), can have broader implications for greenway as well as other community development programs not only in Hungary and CEE, but also internationally.

Finally, as no such greenway study has been conducted in Hungary to date, the case study of the ‘On Our Heritage Trail Greenway’ (OHTG) will hopefully influence the development of the researched initiative in a positive way and motivate further research of the kind.

1.3. Aim and objectives

The aim of the present thesis is to analyse the potential benefits and challenges of the ‘On Our Heritage Trail Greenway’ community based initiative to local people from economic, social and environmental points of view, i.e. its prospect to improve rural livelihoods of local communities.

The objectives are to:

- investigate the origins and the evolution of the greenway concept.

- analyse and describe the Central and Eastern European greenway perspective and the related challenges of community based initiatives.
- review “success stories” and problems faced by local communities along greenways.
- identify and analyse the local context of the OHTG initiative such as socio-economic factors and local people’s needs.
- investigate the challenges and the potential of the initiative to provide responses to these needs and to promote local capabilities and opportunities.
- elaborate recommendations to influence future developments of the OHTG in a positive and constructive way.

In order to investigate the above stated objectives, relevant literature was reviewed, interviews with core initiators, organisers and decision makers of the OHTG. In addition, a questionnaire survey targeting local people was designed and administered.

1.4. The outline of the thesis

The second chapter provides the conceptual framework of the thesis. It outlines the evolution of the greenway concept from it’s origins in North America to the developments in Western Europe. Further, the Central and Eastern European greenway perspective is elaborated, especially regarding the problems of the region following 1989 and the influence of the concept of sustainability. In addition, the chapter examines the case of the first CEE greenway and then presents the selected case study, the ‘On Our Heritage Trail Greenway’, as well as the challenges regarding such community based initiatives. Finally, the chapter concludes with the identification of concrete examples of benefits to and problems faced by communities living along greenways and articulates the research question of the thesis.

The third chapter outlines the research design, discusses the methods used and explains the way they were carried out and the rationale for their selection. Finally, the

limitations of the research and the problems encountered during the survey and the interviews are identified.

The fourth chapter presents and discusses the research findings of the quantitative analyses concerning the survey of local residents of the three selected villages along the OHTG. Findings from the qualitative research will also be presented to support, contest or extend the findings of the quantitative analysis. The socio-economic background of local inhabitants, the current trends in respondents' land use, as well as present or potential production and sale of local products will be analysed and discussed. Following that, the perceived needs of local communities will be assessed and combined with the findings from questions about: local resident's relation to nature, nature protection and the environment surrounding them; tourism; local community relations and social networks; usage of transportation means and knowledge about local culture and heritage. Then it examines people's attitudes and opinion about the OHTG. Through this combined analysis implications for the OHTG project are discussed.

The final chapter presents the most important conclusions of the research. Based on these, recommendations for the future development of the OHTG are outlined.

The thesis is based on original findings and aims to contribute to the further development of the OHTG as well as other greenway and community based initiatives that are aimed at revitalisation of rural areas.

2. Literature Review

2.1. How everything started: The greenway movement

In the mid 1990s, though still in infancy, the idea of greenways captured the imagination of many and started to become a global movement (Fábos 1995). The greenway international movement is now spreading through North America, where its origins can be found, as well as Western, Central and Eastern Europe (Toccolini *et al.* 2006; Fábos and Ryan 2006). Because of the relative short history of greenways the literature is far from being rich.

Many authors (Little 1990; Fábos 1995; EGWA 2002; HEPF 2005; Toccolini *et al.* 2006; Turner 2006) consider the American landscape architect, Frederick Law Olmsted, from the late 19th century, as the first greenway planner and ‘founder’ of the greenways movement. Following the 19th century industrial revolution the life of society and the view of the landscape changed so dramatically and so rapidly that we feel its effects even today. The spread and growth of industrial cities and the mass migration from rural to urban areas caused major social problems including overcrowded houses and districts, epidemics, the loosening of personal relationships, growth of crime, etc. (HEPF 2005). Olmsted’s aim was to find a solution to these problems. Inspired by the European boulevards (EGWA 2000) his Boston Parkway system, also called the “Emerald Necklace”, and Prospect Park in Brooklyn are considered the first important greenways in the United States (Little 1990; Fábos and Ryan 2004). They were designed to provide means for travelling by foot, carriage or horseback in an aesthetically pleasing environment within one city, or between cities (Little 1990; Hoover and Shannon 1995). Significant contribution was also made by the creator of the greenbelt concept, the British social reformer Ebenezer Howard (Little 1990; EGWA 2000; Hoover and Shannon 1995; Toccolini *et al.* 2006). He proposed the development of “garden cities” and hoped to reunite country and city by a rural ‘greenbelt’ surrounding the cities. The ‘greenbelt’ concept was principally applied in London. In the USA these developments led to the

establishment of “parkways” which had the aim to transport citizens to parks and rural recreation areas outside the city (Little 1990; Hoover and Shannon 1995).

Later on, with the development and increasing use of the automobile more and more parkways were turned into large highways which, in the early 1960s, led to citizen’s opposition demanding trails and larger areas of green space instead of highways (Little 1990).

One of the main stepping stones that triggered the modern greenway movement in America was Charles Little’s book, *Greenways for America*, published in 1990 (Fábos 1995). His book describes 16 examples of greenways, of which 11 were initiated by individuals (Little 1990). One, the Hudson River Valley Greenway, is especially important for the Central and Eastern European Greenway history. It was in 1962, that a proposal to divert part of the Hudson River, ‘the American Rhine’, to build an electric power plant was brought up. The company who wanted to initiate the project was sued by environmental groups in order to protect the Hudson River valley’s amazing scenery, its historical values as well as local fishermen from the potential loss this project would mean for them. The ultimate result of the long lawsuit prevented the diversion of the river and gave the impetus for a powerful coalition of 150 local, regional and national organisations to pressure the government of New York to support the greenway idea for protecting the entire Hudson River valley. The government acted and created the Hudson River Greenway Council and enacted greenway legislation under *The Hudson River Greenway Act of 1991* (Little 1990; State of New York 1991). The established greenway has been the model for the Prague-Vienna Greenways, the first Central and Eastern European Greenway (FCG 2007). This is only one example of the many greenways that link urban environments and rural areas while enhancing protection of natural and cultural values. Many other greenways of this kind are being established or developed both in the United States and other parts of the world such as the Chrysler Canada Greenway (the most southern link of the Trans Canada Trail), the Adelaide’s River Torrens Linear Park

in Australia (Fábos and Ryan 2004), and the Flitch Way Country Park in the United Kingdom (CCG 2007; EGWA and Gonzales 2005).

In addition to urban-to-rural recreation linkages, several other types of greenways emerged such as rural greenways with the aim of protecting wildlife migration, or rural greenways for recreation. The development of conservation biology and landscape ecology in the 1970s, concerned about habitat fragmentation, helped to form the new concept of greenways for wildlife or “wildlife corridors” (Mader 1984; Hoover and Shannon 1995). Some definitions and functions of greenways will be looked at in more detail in the next section.

At this point it is important to understand the various elements that led to the emergence and large scale expansion of the modern greenway movement both in North America and in Europe. Among these elements have been:

- the rapid and radical changes in the world induced by events such as the 70’s and 80’s oil crisis (energy crisis);
- the emergence of environmental and anti-car movements at about the same time; and
- the increasing demand for open air recreational activities as well as rural, environmental friendly, and active tourism (also connected to the technological development of transportation means e.g. in-line roller skaters, mountain bikes).

In addition, there has been growing awareness about the importance of natural and cultural heritage protection, as well as increasing interest in the development of sustainable policies (EGWA 2000). Those organisations which found all these factors to be important started to form associations with the aim to establish greenways in their own country or even through larger, transboundary regions. Among these associations are the *Rails-to-Trails Conservancy* in the USA, the *Chemins du Rail* in Belgium, the *Italian Greenways Association*, the

Hungarian Environmental Partnership Foundation, and many more. These associations and processes involving participation and agreements between the public authorities and the general public established a favourable environment for greenway development (EGWA 2000).

2.2. The evolution of the greenway concept: North America and Europe

2.2.1. North America

The evolving greenway movement's first and clearest statement to establish a greenway network came from the President's Commission on American Outdoors in 1987. The Commission's vision was:

A living network of greenways...to provide people with access to open spaces close to where they live, and to link together the rural and urban spaces in the American landscape... threading through cities and countrysides like a giant circulation system (PCAO 1987, 102).

Regarding a 'giant circulation system', the Commission refers to a system provided by nature with the aim to regain public access to nature's greenway network which has been altered by urban uses and private ownership (Fábos 1995).

While the word 'greenways' is still not a commonly used term, it communicates an idea that has been understood by many. Fábos and Ryan (2004) consider one of the most important changes since Olmsted's Boston Park System, which was primarily aimed for recreational use, is the way how greenways are defined today. They assign three major functions and definitions to greenways:

1. Greenways that are ecologically significant corridors and natural systems;
2. Greenways with recreational purpose (e.g. network of trails, water based recreational sites)

3. Greenways with historical and cultural value.

Fábos at the same time explains that 'greenways planning is not a single purpose planning or design, but a comprehensive multipurpose, multi-objective effort' (Fábos 1995, 10). Thus greenways can concurrently become corridors that provide the functions and benefits of nature protection, those of healthy environments that maximise recreation and tourist opportunities while achieving the objective of restoring and protecting cultural and historical heritage (Fábos and Ryan 2004). Thus, these green corridors can be useful from ecological, recreational and economic perspectives at the same time.

Urbanisation in North America has led to the fragmentation and dramatic loss of nature, endangered biodiversity and freshwaters, reduced aesthetics and many other problems. At the same time, walking, running and biking became more and more popular. Even though the American states had funds available, for the concept of greenways to be successful open discussion between citizens, businesses and a broad cooperation of stakeholders was needed (Ryan *et al.* 2006). Nowadays several programs support the development of the greenway network in the USA (e.g. The Conservation Fund, Rails to Trails Conservancy). Since 1998 the RTC has also been organising the International Trails and Greenways Conference (Burwell 1998; Fábos and Ryan 2006). At the same time in Canada, the Trans Canada Trail (TCT) Foundation has been working since 1992 to accomplish the longest multi-use recreational trail in the world. So far, 10,000 kilometres of the trail have been registered. Upon completion it shall reach about 18,000 kilometres and link over 800 communities from the Atlantic to the Pacific and Arctic oceans (Henry 2007; TCT 2007).

2.2.2. *Western Europe*

Despite shared routes, discussed earlier, the greenway concept in Europe developed differently from its North American counterparts, due to the differing “geographic, urban,

economic and cultural peculiarities” of the regions and countries where they are being planned and implemented (EGWA 2000, 13).

The process in Europe was a rather discontinued and fragmented one where some countries and regions have been working on the greenway concept for a long time while others have just started their program (EGWA 2000; Toccolini *et al.* 2006). The explosion of the concept in Europe is a very recent phenomenon with the establishment of the European Greenways Association (EGWA) dating back only as far as 1998 which “...has set itself the tasks of recording, informing and promoting anything to do with the creation of greenways...” (EGWA 2000, 8). Before that, in European countries there was a lack of commonality and awareness of being part of a larger international movement.

However, the increased problems of air pollution in densely populated Europe made the program more popular. The main aim of greenways in this part of the world is to enhance non-motorised traffic and associated recreational activities (walking, jogging, biking, skating etc) based on available infrastructural possibilities, which can be:

Linear infrastructures partially or completely out of service, such as disused railway lines and canal-towpaths, linked by riverside paths, forest tracks, sections of quiet lanes and traffic calmed roads, and other routes like the great historic itineraries and pilgrims’ routes, the old drove ways, etc (EGWA 2000, 2).

Thus one key to success of greenways is that instead of building something new, they often involve salvaging existing structures (Toccolini *et al.* 2006).

It becomes clear that unlike the United States, in Europe the emphasis has been put on the individual infrastructure which in order to be defined as ‘greenway’ has to meet certain physical characteristics such as modest gradients (maximum 3%), physical separation from ordinary road network, limited number of crossing points etc., in order to allow easy access and use for the largest number of people; from young to old, from sportive bikers to disabled

wheelchair users (EGWA 2000). The EGWA's *Good Practice Guide* gives several definitions of the concept (EGWA 2002, 13):

1. transport routes dedicated to light non-motorized traffic
2. a communication route which has been developed for recreation purposes and/or for undertaking necessary daily trips (getting to work, place of study, shopping etc.) which we will call utility trips, using infrastructure closed to motorised traffic
3. former transport routes in a specific location, partly or completely decommissioned, and which are made available to users of non-motorized transport such as pedestrians, cyclists etc...

Thus, greenways are communication routes which shall improve “both the environment and quality of life of the surrounding area (EGWA, 2000)”. Nowadays, however, the greenway phenomenon is broadening its aims and exists under different guises. Beyond their aesthetic and leisure functions, the objectives are often not only related to environmental protection but also to education, public health, preservation of historical and cultural heritage (Toccolini *et al.* 2006). This is especially true for the Central and Eastern European greenway movement which has differing aims, compared to their western counterparts. Thus, differences remain not only between the American and Western European but also the Central and Eastern European definition and interpretation of the 'greenway' concept due to the differing geographical, social (cultural), historical and economic characteristics of the region (HEPF 2005).

2.3. The Central and Eastern European (CEE) greenway perspective

2.3.1. The problems of the region and the concept of sustainability

As stated in the European Greenways Good Practice Guide (EGWA 2000, 13):

Greenways can take on numerous different forms. There is therefore no one simple definition of the concept, since it is intimately related to the history and culture of the regions concerned.

Thus, to understand the CEE greenway concept it is important to be aware of some of the historical and cultural developments within, and influences from outside, the region (apart from the various elements leading to the large scale expansion of the modern greenway movement mentioned in part 1, p.3).

While in the first years following the historic changes of 1989¹, both environmentalists and public policy makers put emphasis on the importance of restoring a damaged ecology and an abused cultural heritage, the rush towards becoming a Western style society put consumer values in priority over environmental goals (Gratz 2001). Economic and environmental goals were seen as incompatible while market forces, short term profits and privatisation have been advancing with overwhelming speed. Investors coming in from the top suffocated the energies coming from the bottom (Gratz 2001). As a result of these (and many other) processes, it was the rural communities that suffered the biggest losses. The Environmental Partnership for Central Europe (EPCE)² in its 2001 report explains how the traditional basis of rural economies, namely agriculture, is still in crisis and with aging population, growing unemployment, out-migration and vanishing of traditional ways of life, all add up to an emerging economic and social crisis for rural areas. At the same time, the destruction of environmental values such as degrading unique landscapes, and loss of biodiversity are all closely linked to the impoverishment of rural society and economy (EPCE 2001; Hoff 1998). Thus, in CEE it has become a critical factor to which extent revitalisation of rural economy

¹ Change from a socialist centrally planned economy to a democratic market based economy in CEE.

² Now called Environmental Partnership for Sustainable Development (EPSD).

and society can generate livelihoods and enhance social networks, especially in areas with high natural values (Griffiths *et al.* 2004).

On the other hand, while the people of CEE lived in isolation behind the ‘iron curtain’, in the democratic West new ideas and concepts were born which by today have also reached these young democracies. One of the concepts which has become a focal point of public debate is that of sustainability. In his book *A Sand County Almanac*, Aldo Leopold (1949) first raised concerns about the environment’s ability to absorb human influence and still sustain all of its processes and life forms, in other words its carrying capacity. His were some of the first modern ideas connected to sustainable development. Later, Garret Hardin (1968) placed this concern into a community context with his article *The tragedy of the commons*. Although still no agreed definition of sustainability exists, it can generally be defined ‘as the effective use of natural, human and technological resources to equitably meet present and future generations’ needs’ (UNWCED 1987; UNGA 1992). Taking this concept further, sustainability on a community level means that “development programs must, to the extent possible, integrate the local people’s requirements, desires, motivations, and identity in relation to the surrounding landscape” (Maser 1997, 70) thus seeking to maintain a good quality of life from both economic, social and environmental perspectives so that “its residents can lead healthy, productive and enjoyable lives” (Shafer *et al.* 2000, 165) both now and in the future. A basic principle here is that programs must be founded on local requirements and cultural values in balance with those of the broader outside world (Maser 1997). In three words the focus of these community based developments can be summarized as ‘small, green and social’ (Joppe 1996, 476).

It became clear that the revitalisation of rural economies in CEE through large scale initiatives and luring corporations to offer new jobs which were insensitive to the local context, the individuals and places involved, such as construction of big factories, large malls, highways, amusement parks etc., are not realistic options for many communities (EPCE 2001,

Hoff 1998). Complaints are strong that these extensive, top down projects, often influenced by significant commercial interests which are planned and implemented unresponsive to the needs of the local population can overwhelm local communities by disrupting traditional economic and social relations, stifling initiatives as well as eroding traditions, cultural and natural values, in the rush to make up for past decades (EPCE 2001; Gratz 2001). Instead, small scale, community level, grass-root projects are needed which can step by step, as Roberta Brandes Gratz wrote (Gratz 2001, 1):

...rejuvenate their communities, upgrade the environment, stimulate small businesses, strengthen a local economy, preserve historic buildings and revive stifled traditions.

2.3.2 *The concept of greenways in CEE*

The problems of rural areas in the region and the ambitious ideas and principles of sustainability have been providing the basis for the CEE greenways initiatives. The Hungarian Environmental Partnership Foundation (HEPF) explains that the word 'greenway' is a grounded and timely notion because they usually run in the green, through nature and are connected to environmentalist ideas as well as the concepts of sustainability. They take this further by saying that there is much more behind a greenway than simply a physical route because it should represent an ideologically/essentially different way of living with the aim to preserve the uniqueness of our environment and culture instead of running after consumerist ideologies (HEPF 2005).

Nevertheless, there are common *underlying principles* about what can be designated as greenway and can become part of the program similar to those in Western Europe and North America. For example greenways can be artificial or natural corridors or a combination of the two; they support non-motorised means of transportation (biking, walking etc) and can be used for recreation (HEPF 2005).

However, there are other conditions and principles greenways in a larger CEE context must fulfil. Greenways must incorporate a framework where the initiative, establishment and

maintenance is a bottom up and not a top down process for which local communities are responsible. Thus, they are developed on the basis of local civic initiatives, through the cooperation of local community members, NGOs, municipalities; ideally joining forces and cooperating under a single organisation or association. Consequently, greenways should also have a well established plan, which includes the aims, functions and the way they should be ‘built’ and used. In every case, they should have a *positive effect on nature and ameliorate the quality of life (essentially livelihoods) of local people* and help in *preserving natural and cultural heritage* of the region. They have multiple functions (e.g. transportation, recreation, education, environmental protection) and are open to everybody. They should enhance sustainable tourism and help visitors know the communities of the region with all their values, problems and activities (HEPF 2005). In summary, *greenways can help to identify and strengthen local cultural and natural identity of communities and their inhabitants, to launch and aid local cross-sector cooperation and partnership as well as help building and strengthening development of independent citizen activities and regional cooperation* (EPCE 2001).

Thus, in CEE the goal is to apply greenway principles in conditions of post-communist countries as a framework for linking civic initiatives aimed at revitalisation of rural society and economy while preserving and restoring cultural as well as natural values and landscapes (EPCE 2001; EPSD 2004; HEPF 2005; Gratz 2001). The greenways concept in CEE is firstly concerned about the rural communities who develop them and only secondly about the people who would visit them.

2.3.3. *From the Czech pioneers to the ‘On Our Heritage Trail Greenway’ in Hungary*

The Greenways program in CEE is supported by the Environmental Partnership for Sustainable Development (EPSD)³. While at the time of its establishment in 1990 the EPCE⁴

³ Before 2004 Environmental Partnership for Central Europe (EPCE)

was a three-country network⁵, by today the EPSD association has six non-profit independent members from CEE countries⁶ (Gratz 2001; EPSD 2005a). The purpose of each partnership and the EPSD is to give financial and professional support for directed programs and community based initiatives with the mission:

To promote environmentally, socially and economically sustainable communities by empowering civic initiatives in the region (EPSD 2005a, 1).

The greenway program in CEE is a very young one. Consequently there is a paucity of literature on the subject.

The idea of greenways first arrived to the Czech Republic. The project *Prague-Vienna Greenways* was started in 1990 by a group of enthusiastic Czechs and Americans to save the architectural heritage and countryside of the region from ‘the careless economic development of the new free market economy’ (FCG 2007). The Prague-Vienna Greenways was established to foster environmental friendly tourism and grass-root economic growth along a route crossing towns, villages and landscapes with high cultural and natural value going generally from Prague to Vienna (Gratz 2001; EPSD 2005b). The model of the project was the Hudson River Valley Greenway which, similarly to its Czech counterpart, used cultural and environmental resource protection to support local and regional planning efforts. The Prague-Vienna Greenway project started with the cooperation of twelve mayors and their towns, non-profit organisations and businesses (bike rentals, etc.) (FCG 2007). The main goal of the program was to rebuild, mobilise and link local communities in common activities along the route to be more proactive regarding cultural and environmental preservation in their region while stimulating new local businesses. People of all generations have been participating in planting trees, in beautification of their villages, preserving traditional crafts

⁴ EPCE was established by the Rockefeller Brothers Fund, The Charles Stewart Mott Foundation and the German Marshall Fund

⁵ Original members were the former Czechoslovakia, Hungary and Poland

⁶ Bulgaria, Czech Republic, Hungary, Poland, Romania, Slovakia.

and organising events to revitalize local culture and attract sustainable tourism (EPSD 2005b). Even though the Prague-Vienna Greenway does not have a single geographic feature as its American model, the people from neighbouring communities have developed a shared vision, which allowed them to see solutions close to home and not from a national or even more distant place. The greenway became a project of the Czech Environmental Partnership in 1998 (Gratz 2001).

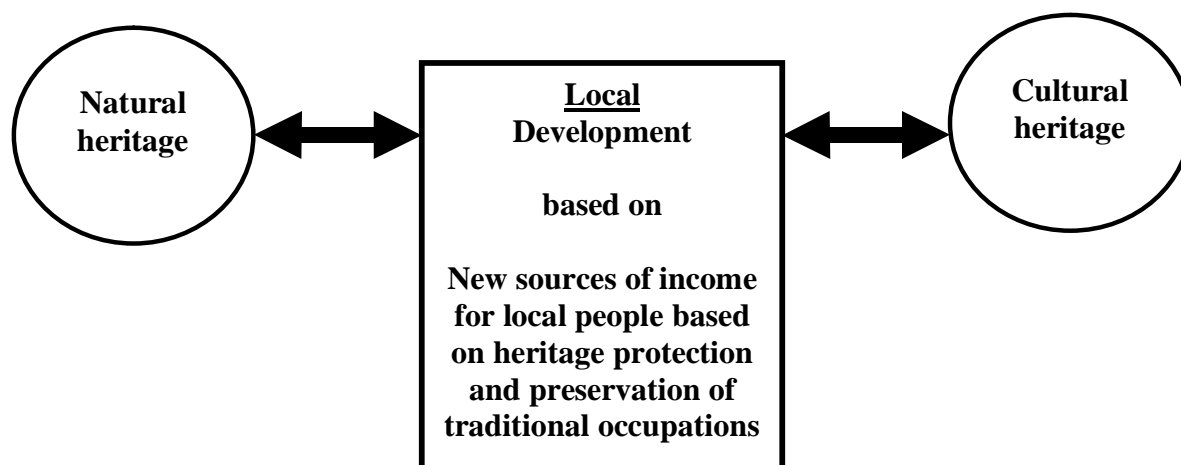
Inspired by the success of the Prague-Vienna Greenway, the idea made its way through other countries of the region, which led to the establishment of the Central European Greenways (CEG) initiative. By 2005 the greenways initiative became the leading program of the EPSD, which has been a member of the EGWA steering committee since 2002 (HEPF 2005; EPSD 2005a).

Drawing on the experience of the Prague-Vienna Greenway, the first Hungarian greenway program, the Amber Trail Greenway (ATG) was launched as part of a joint project of the Polish, Slovak and Hungarian members of the EPCE in 1997. The Amber Trail program's working area is along a route linking Krakow and Budapest. The ambitious program follows the idea of the ancient Amber Trail, where for centuries merchants travelled to exchange goods and ideas which linked together people from different nations and cultures (EPCE 2001; Gratz 2001; HEPF 2005). The new Amber Trail shall resonate the roles played by ancient trade routes where trade relations were accompanied by exchange of information and building cooperation between communities and is meant as a symbol and unifying principle with the potential to connect people and places between northern and southern Europe (EPCE 2001; Gratz 2001). The initiatives of the micro-regions along the ATG, similarly to the Prague-Vienna Greenway, seeks to revitalize:

local economic development rooted in local awareness and protection of the history, culture, tradition and nature of the place....where economic development means investing in protection of local production, traditional ways of life, and arts and

craft...thus local and cultural heritage comprise the assets and capital for local economic development (EPCE 2001,1).

Figure 2.1. shows how Amber Trail activities and projects can connect economic development with natural and cultural heritage protection in the context of greenway initiatives, such as the Amber Trail.



Source: adapted from EPCE 2001

Figure 2.1. Linking economic development with natural and cultural heritage protection

Similar to the Prague-Vienna Greenway, the Amber Trail is an important tool to stimulate localities to take advantage of their strengths, to motivate people of all age groups to engage in the future of their community, and to develop local pride (Gratz 2001). Common goals of CEG are the development of tourism and the nurturing of new local businesses with the objective of combining the ideas of sustainability with revitalisation of rural communities/economies. This includes programs based on a local vision, shaped by local bottom up initiatives (EPCE 2001; Gratz 2001; HEPF 2005).

At the heart of the Hungarian greenway program is the Hungarian Environmental Partnership Foundation ('Ökotárs Alapítvány') which has been working on the ATG project since 1997. The foundation helps, through both financial and professional support, to strengthen local communities and organisations interested in the greenway program and works together with them on the realisation of projects. Professional assistance is provided through consultations in areas of methodology, information, fundraising and promotion while

financial support is given through grants (HEPF 2005). The foundation also provides the definition for greenways in Hungarian which is similar to that provided by its Czech and Polish partners:

Greenways are natural corridors, trails or routes used in harmony/accordance with their ecological function for sports, tourism recreation, and every day commuting. They bring benefits in the areas of nature conservation, cultural heritage protection and encourage a healthier lifestyle as well as improve possibilities for local economic development by the sustainable use of local (natural) resources. An important contribution of greenways is the strengthening and improvement of local communities (HEPF 2005, 8).

The working area of the ATG in Hungary, named Danube Ipoly Greenway, begins at the Slovakian border (Parassapuszta) and includes the northern areas of Pest County and western areas of County Nógrád between the Danube and Ipoly rivers surrounded by the Börzsöny hills (Figure 2.2.). The backbone of trails are the bicycle routes along the Danube and Ipoly. Since the start of the program there have already been several achievements through local grassroot initiatives and coordination, such as the establishment of bicycle and tourist information boards along the way as well as a 'local products' program, an Internet homepage and bike rentals etc. (EPCE 2001; HEPF 2005). Products with minimum 51% of local added value and raw materials and sales coming from within 50km can receive the label of being 'local' (Magosfa 2006). By the end of 2006, locals from 24 communities along the greenway have been taking part in this program. Tourist information boards along the trail, brochures, and an Internet homepage list where and who produces what and where. The developments are ongoing with more communities joining the project, organising fairs and other events. This way local communities get to know each other, learn to collaborate and can sell their valuable products, which can often be marketed only with difficulty and below value or not at all, to locals and visitors along the way (Pantali 2006).



Figure 2.2. The 'Danube-Ipoly Greenway' and the 'On Our Heritage Trail Greenway'
 Source: DIZ 2007

At the same time another greenway initiative has been initiated in Hungary as a connective ring to the Danube Ipoly Greenway (Figure 2.2.). The second greenway project, named 'On Our Heritage Trail Greenway' (OHTG) ('Örökségeink Útján Zöldút') is the result of a collaborative effort of nine neighbouring villages of a north Hungarian micro-region situated in the Ipoly River valley at foot of the Börzsöny hills. Some of the 60km² micro-region is part of the Danube-Ipoly National Park's (DINP) protected areas (STA 2007; DINP 2007).

Locals, municipalities, non-profit organisations from nine villages established a tourism association ('Sugárkankalin') with the aim to join forces for the revitalisation of the

communities and promotion of the local natural, cultural and historic heritage in order to make the micro-region an attractive destination for visitors who like to discover the rich nature, culture and history of the region (SSTA 2005). Following its establishment the association started working together with the HEPF to integrate their aims into a greenway project. The ongoing greenway project had its opening ceremony on the 28th of April, 2007 (STA 2007).

2.3.4. Challenges of community based initiatives

As mentioned in the previous section, greenways in CEE are developed on the basis of local civic initiatives where the proposal, the establishment and maintenance is a bottom-up and not a top-down process for which local communities are responsible.

It is also in the view of Cox and Mair (1991) that local social and economic forces as well as resources endogenous to a unique locality and inherited patterns of skills can play a key role as development catalysts. Furthermore, through these initiatives local communities can develop creativity, self-expression and increased confidence (Barker 2005). However, at the same time appropriate local structures need to be developed and just because a project reflects community control it does not guarantee success (Cox and Mair 1991; Guaraldo 1996). Similar arguments are brought up by Stöhr (1990) who argues that focusing on local people and knowledge has clear advantages in the process of development while he also points out that bottom-up initiatives need to harmonise with top-down support and facilitation, which unfortunately is often not an option due to frequently impoverished governments, incapable of giving any real support. Nevertheless, even if government assistance is not available, outside support, assistance and guidance is often critical to the success of local community initiatives with external agencies like NGOs and private businesses playing a key role in the process (Guaraldo 1996; Hoff 1998; Nel and Binns 2000).

Hoff (2003) points out that there are three essential factors for small scale local development processes:

- determination and leadership of a core group of people with a vision of how things could work differently,
- availability of financial support,
- understanding that for economic successes to be sustainable plans for economic improvement need to be integrated with those of environmental protection and development of people.

Another important question Nel and Binns (2000) address is whether a project can sustain itself once key inputs are gradually eliminated. Similar problems may arise when community initiatives are supported by the local government but these come to a stop once a new mayor is elected, thus governmental willingness to support people may be of temporary nature (Getz and Jamal 1995; Guaraldo 1996). For that, “one-off development projects must evolve into on-going programs and long-term links/alliances must be established” that can sustain changing administration and adjust to other forces in order to achieve long-term results (Guaraldo 1996, 443).

In practice, community initiatives also bring with themselves that the ‘views’ concerning purposes, goals and criteria of success of these actions might substantially vary from one stakeholder to another (Edwards 1998; Bellamy *et al.* 2001) since communities are often heterogeneous and unequal (Li 2002). At the same time, communities are influenced by a range of social, economic, environmental and institutional factors making local realities more complex than often expected (Bellamy *et al.* 2001; Li 2002). Some people might even be unaware of or mistaken about their own interests or they might actually be unobservable and unarticulated (Joppe 1996). Depending on this situational context as well as a range of local conditions and dilemmas, the impact of initiatives on the community concerned can vary significantly (Bellamy *et al.* 2001; Li 2002). While, these differences may be problematic,

they can also be important for the healthy functioning of the overall system; thus they may present both an opportunity and a weakness (Prentice 1993; Bellamy *et al.* 2001).

It should be noted that on-ground implementation of community based approaches is often largely experimental and may fall short of community expectations (Edwards 1998; Bellamy *et al.* 2001). It is also difficult to promote projects which have only few immediate benefits but often immediate costs. Many community based planning processes often also have vague and even unrealistic aims and objectives, although impacts or results of such initiatives usually take a considerably long time to become visible, sometimes even beyond the lifetime of any evaluation (Bellamy *et al.* 2001).

Even though there are arguments that community based initiatives promote social justice and development efficiency, the results often show that differences exist between which members of the community participate in these ventures and benefit from these projects. While the engagement delivers for some people others may repeatedly find themselves in a position that corresponds poorly to what they have imagined for themselves and may even become re-assigned to a marginal economic niche which can lead to re-evaluation and contestation of engagement with the initiative (Edwards 1998; Li 2002). It is often the community elites that reap the fruits of economic development while most of the costs are borne by the rest of the population. Extrapolating this to community-driven tourism development it is obvious that the majority of costs associated with tourism will be borne by local residents while to what extent they will truly share in the benefits of increased visitation is questionable (Joppe 1996). In Cloke's (1990) words if such inputs 'operate within the established class structure' they 'become creature of the same class structure' (p. 27). Many times even when poor people stumble upon a lucrative opportunity they are quickly taken away from them (Dove 1993). As Bridger and Luloff (1999) notes many communities have several social deficiencies and without some kind of social restructuring they will be unlikely to achieve any kind of sustainability. Among their arguments is that local participation is

commonly associated with the economic or other kind of elites and that communities often have significant gaps in both local mobilisation and organisation. This way some groups whose participation might be crucial are likely to be excluded from the process. In the absence of viable communities, there is little prospect for successful locally controlled initiatives (Bridger and Luloff 1999). To tackle these they emphasise the need to reinforce cultural norms, values and linkages between actors in different social fields in order to develop community cohesion (Bridger and Luloff 1999). “In the absence of efforts to enhance these aspects of local life, narrow economic interests are likely to dominate the process and many measures justified under the rubric of sustainability will be little more than symbolic gestures...” (Bridger and Luloff 1999, 386).

2.4. Greenways and local communities

2.4.1. Benefits of greenways for local communities

The Rails to Trails Conservancy (RTC) explains that “greenways are community-based projects, because every project needs community support to be a success” (RTC 2007); this also means that communities have to see that the project is or will be beneficial to them or that its benefits will outweigh its costs. These benefits can range from positive economic impacts, environmental conservation, to public health benefits, just to name a few.

Some concrete examples of benefits from successful greenway initiatives have been reported from different parts of the world. In the USA a study of the Little Miami Scenic Trail in Ohio, between 1997 and 1998, found that about 150,000-175,000 people used the 72 mile trail annually. An average of \$13.54 per person, translating into a total of \$2-4 million, was spent on trip-related expenditures in this one year period. Restaurants, food & beverages and lodging average 46% of these expenditures (OKI RCG 1999). A 1992 study of three multipurpose trails in Iowa, California and Florida found a total annual economic impact of \$1.2-1.6 million in each case and visitors who stayed at least one night in the local area were

the biggest spenders. Most of the trip related expenses were restaurant and car related expenditures. Equipment such as bicycles formed the largest group of durable good expenditure. The study also found that, apart from the economic benefits (income, job creation etc.), local communities along the greenways consider health and recreation as well as aesthetic beauty, undeveloped open space and community pride among the benefits of the greenways (Gitelson *et al.* 1992). Also the small US towns Marthasville (Missouri) and Lanesboro (Minnesota) credit their rail-trails with providing economic stimulus which led to renewed development and community spirit (Doherty 1998). Other studies mention increased property values as benefits of greenways for communities (CF and CSPSTP 1995).

Trails and greenways also have the potential to bring together and build communities by working for a shared vision. The opening relay of the Trans Canada Trail in the year 2000, the longest of its kind in the world, is a prime example. The event brought about celebrations across Canadian communities. Moreover, waters from the Atlantic, Pacific and Arctic oceans were relayed across the country, through more than 800 communities, by around 5,000 official carriers who walked, rode horseback, cycled, cross-country skied, snowmobiled or wheeled along the route. In the end the waters of the three oceans were simultaneously poured together into a ceremonial vessel (Henry 2007; TT 2007). The initiative unified not only locals within one community but those of a whole country.

Greenways are also considered as “hands-on environmental classrooms” where people can enjoy and learn about the natural world (TGC 2007). According to a study by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service \$18.1 billion was spent on wildlife watching and photography in 1991 (NPS 1995).

Among the European greenway projects the “Via Verde de la Sierra” in Andalusia, Spain (opened in 2000) is aimed at the revitalisation of the rural region with an unemployment rate of 37%. By the end of 2005, several private initiatives have already been developed by local people and small companies to manage hotels and to take the

responsibility for maintaining and surveilling the route (EGWA and Gonzales 2005). Another example is the Klaralvsbanan Greenway in Sweden which is similarly helping a region suffering from industrial decline to provide an option for a transition to a new, tourism and service based economy and “has given the region real motivation for its future” (EGWA and Gonzales 2005, 4). The cities and villages of the region have created strong ties with each other while public health and safety for all type of commuters from school children to workers has been improved. At the same time, local groups and associations are organising events and activities along the route, not only attracting outsiders but also revitalising the life of local inhabitants (EGWA and Gonzales 2005). In the Czech Republic the Moravian Wine Trails in south Moravia (with a backbone of a 240 km cycling route), in a region with an unemployment rate of 16%, has not only created more than 1,000 new jobs by the end of 2005 but has also rebuilt the region’s image as that of a cycling paradise. According to estimations there are about 250,000 visitors and hundreds of events organised each year - ranging from environmental education events, to bike competitions and cultural events-, while new businesses are constantly being established along the route (EGWA and Gonzales 2005). Historic preservation and community identity are also benefits of many greenways: this is especially the case in Europe where a large majority of greenways have some historically significant location or cultural highlight along their route.

2.4.2. Problems faced by local communities along greenways

Greenway studies mention relatively few problems related to greenways with frequencies and types of problems varying from greenway to greenway. Problems reported by some US studies were: unleashed and roaming pets; illegal motor vehicle use and littering; noise from the trail and loss of privacy; property rights (Gitelson *et al.* 1992; Doherty 1998); farmers worried about liability issues with trail users crossing onto their property and getting into trouble with a bull, or trying to pet calves and otherwise harass livestock (Hugh 2000) and vandalism (Doherty 1998).

Doherty (1998) in her study, however, mentions that “opposition to these projects is usually fuelled by a lack of information and unanswered criticism of trail proposals”(Doherty 1998, 9) which in turn leads to misconceptions about trails including fear of increased crime such as littering, burglary, vandalism etc. In a study of 125 trail projects in the USA it was found that 85% of them met either no opposition or only routine landowner and citizen concerns were raised where trail proponents worked with locals to reach common ground (Doherty 1998).

2.5. Local communities and the ‘On Our Heritage Trail Greenway’ (OHTG)

Based on the case of the OHTG, introduced in Section 2.3.3, the present thesis is intended to evaluate how effective the greenway principles of rural revitalisation and sustainability are being implemented in the villages of this young greenway initiative. Thus, the question is how the project can benefit local communities from economic, social and environmental points of view, i.e. improve the quality of life in rural areas. Since success of a community project is not measured by the effectiveness with which an idea is sold but in it’s effect on peoples’ lives (Li 2002, 266) the research aims to identify the potential benefits and challenges of the OHTG project to local communities.

Given the fact that the greenway concept in Hungary is a pristine area and no significant literature exists in the field yet, hopefully, the outcome of this research can be of help and give recommendations for the current and also future greenway projects. According to Bellamy *et al.* (2001):

Evaluation needs to be directed toward influencing what emerges in a positive and constructive way, rather than focusing only on *post hoc* evaluation related to mere achievement of initially proposed means of reaching objectives (Bellamy *et al.* 2001, 414).

3. Research Methodology

Having defined the background of the topic area and the research gap in Chapter 2, this chapter describes the techniques used to answer the research question. Hereinafter, the research design and methods used for answering the central question *on the potential benefits and challenges of the OHTG project to local communities* will be outlined, including the rationale for their selection and the way they have been carried out. Furthermore, limitations of the methods as well as obstacles and difficulties while conducting this research will be indicated.

3.1. A case study design

Case studies as research strategies are an all encompassing method which have generally been done about programs, decisions, implementation processes and about organisational change (Yin 1994). The current thesis focuses on the implementation of a program and its achievements until now, trying to answer 'in what', 'how' and 'why' the program has worked (or not) (Yin 1994). A case study has the potential to give answers to all these questions being a research strategy that can encompass any combination of qualitative and quantitative methods (Yin 1994), since there is no single way to conduct a case study but a mix of research techniques can be used. Furthermore, a case study is a preferred method when the researcher has little control over events and the focus is on "a contemporary phenomenon within its real-life context, especially when the boundaries between phenomenon and context are not clearly evident" (Yin 1994, 13).

The potential benefits and challenges of the greenway project for local communities from economic, social and environmental points of view were analysed within its real life context with a combination of quantitative and qualitative research techniques. The nature of this study involved questionnaires (quantitative and qualitative) and semi-structured interviews (qualitative) as well as non-participant (or direct) observations (qualitative), which

fits well into the toolbox of a case study. Unlike Silverman (2000), who argues that multiple methods are often adopted in the mistaken hope that they will reveal ‘the whole picture’ this study was based on the view that a multi-method approach can help gain better understanding about complex social settings (Punch 1998). Using a combination of different data sources increased the validity of the research as strengths of one approach could compensate for the weaknesses of another (Marshall and Rossman 1989). Given the fact that the researched greenway program is a very young one where locals are involved in various ways as well as to various extents, they also needed to be approached in different ways. While interviews with the core organisers of the program were needed in order to understand “how” and “why” the program is being implemented, at the same time, in order to answer the “what” its effects were until now and what needs to be improved some general opinion of local inhabitants was essential (questionnaires).

It is the local community who can contribute with indispensable knowledge about the local economic, social and ecological context of the project (Brosius *et al.* 1998). With this knowledge about the project context, the initiative can be adapted so as to better fit local conditions and to help the outcomes be more innovative. As Murphy-Berman *et al.* (2000) stresses, programs are assumed to be effective and “contextually appropriate” in which there is a “relative match between how the community defines itself and sees problems” as well as opportunities and the way these problems and opportunities are addressed in the project (Murphy-Berman *et al.* 2000, 160). For that community wide surveys can be used to obtain project context information.

The OHTG was chosen because of its recent establishment, which gives the opportunity to understand social phenomena and to point out strengths and weaknesses of the project at an early stage when there is still room for improvement as well as to provide some guidance for future greenway projects. With a variety of baseline and contextual information provided by this research local communities can also use these as a framework for future

evaluation to assess project-wide impact over time (Murphy-Berman *et al.* 2000). Although the Hungarian part of the ATG project, the Danube Ipoly Greenway (DIZ), was the first of this kind in Hungary, both time and financial constraints as well as preliminary discussions with HEPPF, led to the OHTG being chosen as a central focus of this thesis. This research shall open up the field for greenway literature both in Hungary and throughout CEE.

3.2. Research techniques

3.2.1. A Preliminary study

The first steps of the overall research process were done after establishing contact with the HEPPF's national greenway program coordinator. Through her mediation I received an invitation for a greenway meeting in Zebegény (a village along the DIZ) on February 3, 2007 and established contacts with participants of the OHTG project. Non participant observation and informal discussions with various stakeholders during that meeting gave first insights into the nature of greenway projects in Hungary. During non participant observation the onlooker makes direct observations of program activities, participants etc., where the processes of observation are separate from the processes of data collection such as interviewing and informal discussions (Patton 1990).

At the same time, a literature review for the purpose of building a conceptual framework for the study was conducted. The worldwide greenway literature is far from being rich, let alone the Hungarian one which is almost inexistent. This posed a serious challenge for building a sound base for this research. Much of the international materials were in the form of periodicals, studies and a limited number of related books available in the CEU Library's databases, the Hungarian Szabó Ervin Library and online internet resources of organisations such as the RTC and the EGWA. As for the CEE literature some materials on relevant topics and greenway projects were found on the Internet provided by member organisations of the EPSD and various project participants which was complemented by the

internal reports and documents that were made available by the HEPF and organisers of the OHTG.

3.2.2. Field visits

Field visits were carried out during a three week period and some shorter 1-2 day visits. The first important field visit took place on April 28, 2007 with the participation in the OHTG opening (Figure 3.1.). This one day event, where about 150 participants under the leadership of the local project leaders (members of the Sugárkankalin Tourism Association's workgroup) did a bicycle tour along the OHTG, allowed for becoming familiar with the natural and cultural heritage of the micro-region, its nine villages as well as meeting local people. Informal personal communication with various stakeholders during this event made it possible to understand more about life of the communities, everyday problems and what this new initiative may represent to locals.

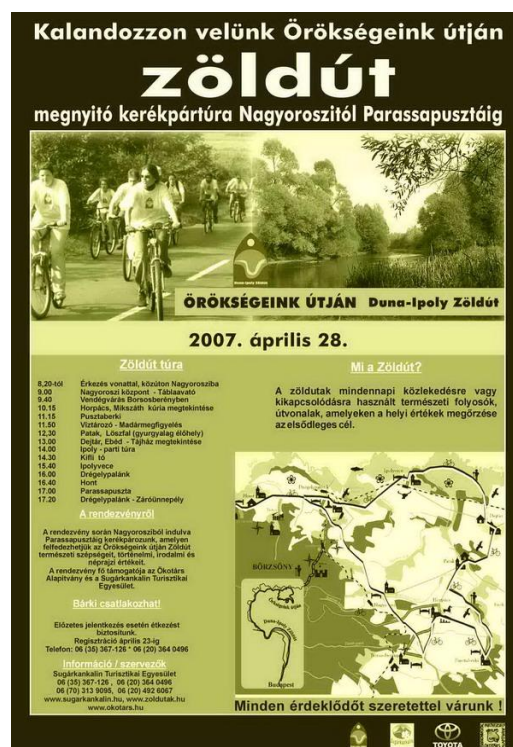


Figure 3.1. Poster for OHTG opening event
Source: STA 2007

During these informal conversations interview questions emerged from the immediate context without predetermination of question topics or wording and were asked in the natural course of things (Patton 1990). Mayors, members of the Sugárkankalin Tourism Association (STA), local village inhabitants (both participants and organisers) such as youth, parents, shop tenders and organisers were approached. During these conversations the aim was to encourage people to freely express their ideas and have a relaxed talk during a pleasant event, showing interest in whatever they have to say. At the same time, contacts for the upcoming interviews were established with stakeholders envisioned for further discourse, as well as potential issues to be included in the questionnaires were identified.

The next 1-2 field visits, during the first two weeks of May, were aimed at conducting interviews based partly on the contacts made during the opening of the OHTG. During these short field visits the questionnaires were pre-tested and subsequently modified based on newly raised issues or problems that emerged. Later on a longer period (last 3 weeks of May) was spent in the region to administer the questionnaires.

3.2.3. Interviews

Semi-structured interviews were conducted to investigate the motivations, perspectives and aims of some core initiators, organisers and decision makers of the OHTG project as well as to explore these stakeholders' opinion about the achievements or problems till date and "to dos" for the future. The list of interviewees and their positions are shown in Appendix A.

The interviewees were chosen deliberately according to their degree of activity in the OHTG project, their importance within the community of local villages and their expertise in local issues. The choice of "information rich" sources, as Patton (1990) puts it, is important because those are the cases from which it is possible to learn much about issues important to the study. For that very reason a purposeful sampling strategy, the so-called snowball or chain

sampling method, was applied. This method relies on people or initial interview subjects suggesting other people they find important to be interviewed. As new names are being identified the snowball gets bigger with a few key names being mentioned repeatedly from different people, indicating stakeholders of special importance (Taylor-Powell 1998; Bryman 2001).

Lengths of interviews varied from around half an hour up to two hours. The interviews had no formal protocol or structure, only some guiding topics and issues that were aimed to be covered. Wording and sequence of questions were decided on during the course of the interview (Patton 1990) also leaving freedom to move the conversation in different directions of interest that may arise.

3.2.4. *Questionnaire*

Questionnaire based surveys are a popular quantitative method of research which can help to measure, among others, the frequency of attitudes, opinions and the level of familiarity with a certain subject among members of a community within its socio-demographic context/setting (Weisberg *et al.* 1996; Nachmias and Nachmias 1996). This method permits to examine group differences regarding these variables both in time and space (Weisberg *et al.* 1996). In case of the OHTG the frequency of occurrence of these variables amongst community members was measured at a set time within the context of the potential benefits and challenges of the greenway project. Since the research period of this thesis was very limited the changes in variables over time should be the focus of future studies.

Household face-to-face questionnaires were employed in the selected villages where the success of the survey was in the hands of the interviewer. The most important issue for the researcher is that the respondent agrees to participate in the survey. Credibility and appearance in this case is very important (Weisberg *et al.* 1996). Therefore, to ensure the highest possible response rate, during interviews with the majors of the three villages each

was asked to provide a written permission (stamped and signed by the major) which stated that the researcher has their official permission to conduct a community survey in their village; asking for the populations cooperation. This permission was shown to the selected respondents when approached. Furthermore, notification of the local public about the upcoming survey was requested. In the villages of Drégelypalánk and Ipolyvece this was done by loudspeaker announcements with the following text:

“Attention! Attention! We would like to inform the local population that this weekend/today/this week a university student will conduct a survey connected to her university research. We would kindly ask the local inhabitants to be cooperative and to give her a warm welcome.”

Since in the village of Dejtár there were no loudspeakers, this option was not available. In those villages where the loudspeaker announcement was done the population was mostly very cooperative and friendly. The written permissions by the majors of the villages also helped to increase people’s willingness to cooperate. Without these two arrangements the research efforts could have potentially failed.

The questionnaires were conducted face-to-face and once the respondent agreed to participate they were filled in by the researcher. Only people over 18 (adults), if possible heads of the household, were targeted to answer the questionnaire. Efforts were made to keep, as far as possible, an equal male-female ratio. The surveys took place at different times of the day and during different days of the week. The anticipated time per questionnaire was around 20-25 minutes, which, however became often substantially longer due to respondents eagerness to elaborate further on various issues, many of which were not even connected to the topic itself.

The first section of the questionnaire contains factual questions about the socio-economic background of the respondent (e.g. gender, age, household well-being, level of

education). This part also includes questions related to current trends in resource use of surveyed households, as well as their present or potential production and sale of local products. The second section assesses local residents' attitudes towards, and current or potential benefits/costs of tourism. The intention of the third section was to identify the needs of local communities. The intention of the fourth part was to examine how local residents relate to nature, nature protection and the environment surrounding them. The subsequent section focuses on questions related to local community relations and social networks. The sixth and seventh part includes questions about usage of means of transport and knowledge about local culture heritage. All these sections gave the researcher a picture and helped to understand the context of the OHTG initiative and gave guidance as to where the program is or can potentially benefit or become problematic for local communities. The last two parts focus on the initiative itself. Thereunto, questions related to knowledge about and opinion on the OHTG initiative and the STA were raised.

All sections include both contingency questions which are those that apply only to a subgroup of respondents (e.g. questions after filtering those respondents who know about the greenway project) and ranking questions which are used when information regarding the importance or priorities of people concerning a set of attitudes or objects (e.g. community needs) is surveyed (Weisberg *et al.* 1996). Both closed- and open-ended questions are used in the questionnaire. The first type offered respondents a set of answers from which the one most closely representing their views should be chosen, which is easy and quick to administer. The latter does not provide any specified choice and instead the respondents' answers are recorded in full where answers were classified using a coding frame (Nachmias and Nachmias 1996).

3.2.5. *Sampling procedure*

When conducting a survey the population of respondents should be defined in a way that the results can be generalised to the larger population. Thus, the researcher needs to

choose a sample of respondents, representative of the whole population (Nachmias and Nachmias 1996; Weisberg *et al.* 1996). In case of the OHTG, first of all it had to be decided which villages to sample. Due to the extremely short time available for the research it was not possible to draw a sample from all the nine villages along the OHTG, instead multistage area sampling was undertaken. In this case a set of geographic regions and subsequently the population of these villages was sampled (Weisberg *et al.* 1996). To begin with three villages were randomly sampled from the total population of nine. As a result of this random selection the population of households of the villages Dejtár, Drégelypalánk and Ipolyvece constituted the sampling frame (see Figure 3.2.).

Finally, a simple random sample was drawn from the available household numbers of these three villages. Randomization is the textbook ideal because it gives everyone in the population an equal chance of being part of the sample which is essential to obtain representativeness (Weisberg *et al.* 1996). Table 3.1. shows the number of residents and households of the nine villages along the OHTG with the names of the selected three villages in *bold italics*.

Table 3.1. Settlements along the 'On Our Heritage Trail Greenway'

Settlement	Number of residents	Number of households
BORSOSBERÉNY	1043	395
DEJTÁR	1499	524
DRÉGELYPALÁNK	1658	652
HONT	595	276
HORPÁCS	191	72
IPOLYVECE	853	324
NAGYOROSZI	2512	850
PATAK	1019	392
PUSZTABERKI	121	51
Σ All villages along OHTG	9491	3536
Σ Selected villages	4010	1500

From the total of 1500 households of the selected population a sample size of 139 households was drawn which at a confidence interval of 95% ensures a maximum sampling error of

7.89%. These 139 households accounted for 9.3% of the total number of households found in the selected three and 4% of households in all nine villages. However, sampling fractions are typically less than 1% and only relatively large changes in the sample size could have an effect on the margin of error (Weisberg *et al.* 1996).

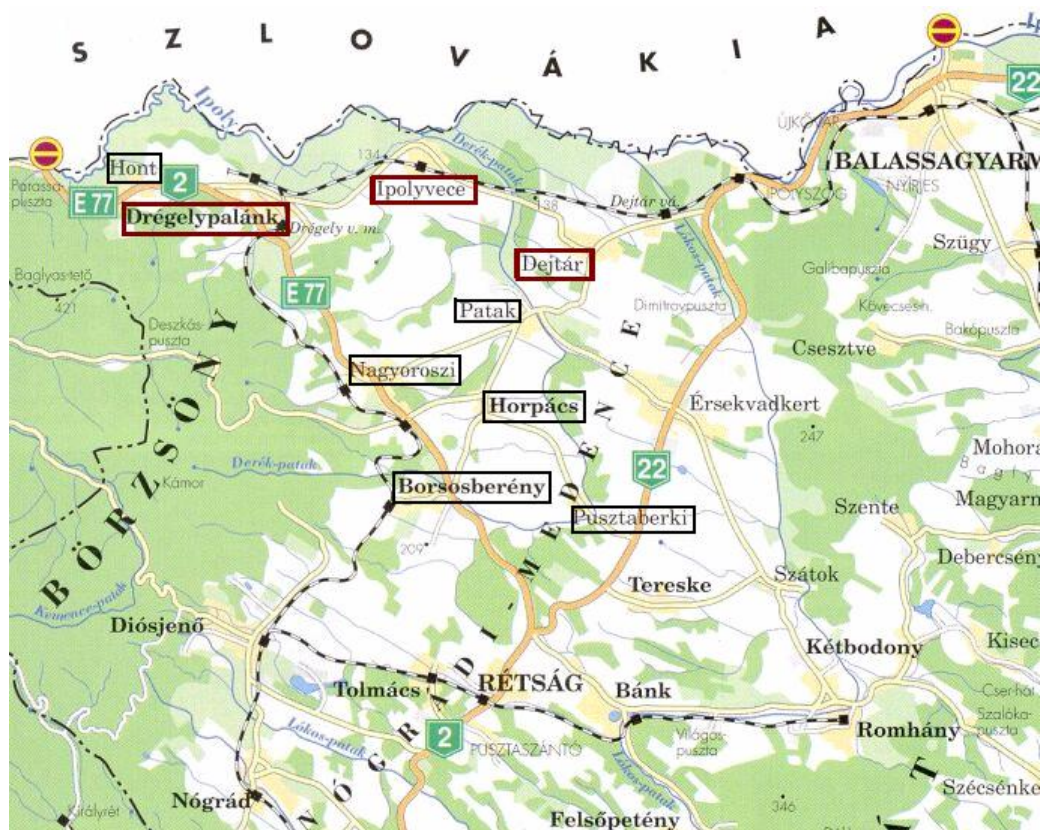


Figure 3.2. Map of villages along the ‘On Our Heritage Trail Greenway’

Source: NCDC 2004

The random selection was a favourable one from the point of view that the three villages are located in a way that access and connection between them was relatively simple. This was crucial for the present research since the public transportation between the nine villages is generally very poor and cumbersome while the time available for conducting the questionnaires was limited. As the greenway project is done in support of non-motorised ways of transportation the use of bicycle was given preference.

3.2.6. Data reduction and interpretation

Microsoft Excel and SPSS (ver. 12.0) was used for data analysis. Responses of the questionnaires were coded into numbers. Closed- and open-ended questions required different coding. While for closed-ended questions this is a rather simple task as the numbers in the questionnaire boxes are used for that purpose, in case of open-ended questions this is more difficult (Weisberg *et al.* 1996) as they require some kind of qualitative analysis such as content coding.

The statistical procedure of data analysis for closed-ended questions included both descriptive (mean, mode), association (e.g. Pearson's r ; Spearman's ρ ; Kendall's τ ; Phi; Cramer's V), and inferential statistics (chi-square). Furthermore, one-way ANOVA was used to identify the presence of a significant difference between means, while Tukey's HSD test was employed to calculate which means differed.

3.3. Problems and limitations

The timeframe and magnitude of the research did not allow for interviewing a wide number of stakeholders and to conduct a survey in all nine villages. Thus, there is a chance that there are opinions which unintendedly were not included in the study as well as results cannot be generalised beyond the three villages. Nevertheless, the villages of the micro-region are similar in many respects with matching problems of these rural areas. The non-participant observations and informal personal communication with local people during the first field visit also helped the researcher to get a broader picture of the local setting and helped to employ a more critical approach during interviews, data analysis and interpretation.

Problems arose in connection to the qualitative research where the flexibility of the interview lead to substantially different responses from different perspectives, sometimes also reducing the comparability of responses (Patton 1990). Furthermore, interviewees could only report their own perception on issues which can be subject to personal bias, lack of awareness,

politics, anger, etc. The interview data could also be affected by such mechanisms as the interviewees' self-serving purposes or emotional state at the time of the interview (Patton 1990). Also the reliability of the interpretation of transcripts might be weakened if during the course of taking notes some crucial details have failed to be jotted down. Validity of qualitative research methods is also often questioned because it always involves some kind of subjectivity of the researcher (Silverman 2000). This is also the case for open-ended qualitative survey questions which allow for great flexibility which at the same time can have the lowest reliability (Weisberg *et al.* 1996).

The questionnaire was pre-tested on 10 local inhabitants from the three villages. Out of these 10 respondents 40 % refused to answer the question asking them to indicate the monthly income of their household, even though the provided ranges were quite large. Similarly, 30% did not know the answer to this question. With this high ratio of missing values an alternative question was chosen to reflect the financial well-being of households. A method which is frequently used these days in Hungary, are the 'subjective well-being' questions (IPSHAS and Kovách 2005; KSH 2005b; Lengyel and Janky 2003). This set of questions was also used for this research in order to ensure the collection of data on household well-being. Although, these did not leave room for comparison with indicators expressed in monetary terms, they provided a good understanding about how people feel about their financial status. The subjective well-being can be considered a reliable indicator of respondent's life satisfaction (Lengyel and Janky 2003).

Questionnaire nonresponse was a problem in some cases. This happened due to targeted respondents' refusal or lack of cooperation in answering the questionnaires or because no one was at home when arriving to the household. Since respondents should not be forced to cooperate and the limited amount of time did not leave room for a follow up visit to households where previously no one was available, an alternative strategy allowed for random

selection of another household. In this case, further households were randomly selected from the sampling frame, omitting previously selected households.

Another limitation of the study is that the minority group of Romas was felt not to be adequately represented in the sample. Under many of the random addresses where Romas lived the circumstances and the reception of the researcher made it impossible to conduct the questionnaire. Nevertheless, they also need to be addressed and involved in local initiatives, as they also form a substantial part of the local population.

Efforts were made to increase the questionnaire's validity by consulting different stakeholders and pre-testing it prior to the actual study. Upcoming research in the greenway field will have the chance to further upgrade the questionnaire developed during the course of this study. It is important to note that this case study is not meant to be a basis of generalisation for other greenway projects but a piece of a large puzzle leaving great room for further research and examination.

4. Research findings and discussion

The aim of this chapter is to present and discuss the results of the quantitative analyses done with the local residents of the three villages: Dejtár, Drégelypalánk and Ipolyvece. As mentioned in Chapter 3, the quantitative local community analysis reflects findings that are not generalisable to all the nine participant villages of the OHTG. Findings from the qualitative research will also be presented to support, contest or extend the findings of the quantitative analysis.

The aim of this chapter is to gain insight into how local people see the natural, social, economic and built environment and what the potentials for the development and evolvement of these are. The first part of the analysis presents the findings concerning the local context of the project: the socio-economic background of local inhabitants as it is important that socio-economic problems are encountered by community based initiatives (Barker 2005). In the next section the current trends in respondents' land use, as well as present or potential production and sale of local (home-made) products will be analysed and discussed. Following that, the perceived needs of local communities will be assessed and combined with the findings from questions about: local resident's relation to nature, nature protection and the environment surrounding them; tourism; local community relations and social networks; usage of transportation means and knowledge about local culture and heritage. The last section examines people's attitudes and opinion about the OHTG. Through this combined analysis implications for the OHTG project are discussed.

4.1 Socio-economic variables

4.1.1. Gender

A total of 139 respondents were surveyed constituting 45.3% males and 54.7% females. This ratio corresponds well with the male-female ratio both in Hungary (47.5 % male, 52.5% female) and Nógrád County itself (47.75% male, 52.25% female) (KSH 2005a).

When both female and male members of the household were present usually the husbands felt that their wives were more talkative and informed to answer questions. Nevertheless, an effort was made to keep an equal male-female respondent ratio and therefore males on many occasions were directly asked to participate.

4.1.2. Age

The mean age of respondents from the three surveyed villages was 46.7 years. As shown in Figure 4.1., 23.7% of respondents were over 60 years old and above which is consistent with the 22.7% overall population ratio of Nógrád County (KSH 2005a). The age groups between 18-39 years old were fairly well represented (32.4%) in the sample. The official statistics of the region with age intervals of 5 years also show that the second largest age group is that between 20-24 years old which is close to the age group covered by the sample (KSH 2005a).

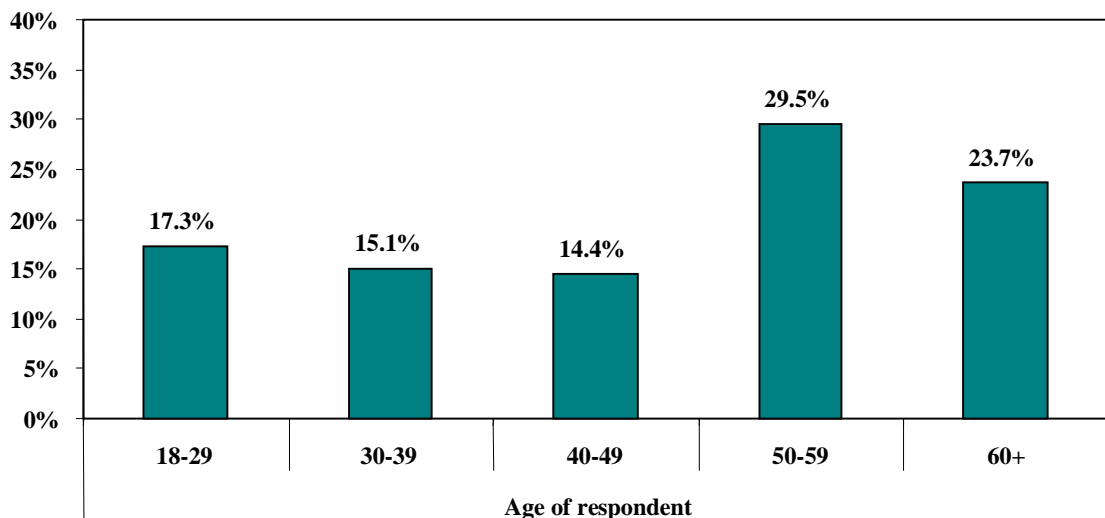


Figure 4.1. Age groups of respondents, n = 139.

This can be partly explained by the moderate relationship found ($\tau = 0.206$, $p < 0.01$) between the years the family has been living in the village and the age of the respondent. The mean number of years a family has been living in their respective village was 50.43 years. Almost half (43%) of the surveyed residents have been living in their village for 38 years or less. This was also perceived during the field work. Very often questionnaires were filled in in homes

which have just been freshly renovated and on many occasions people explained that they have moved to the village not so long ago for reasons such as: it was “cheaper to live and buy land or a house in this area” or they wanted to move away from the hectic polluted cities to a calm area with high natural beauty. In general many young people find the area of Western Nógrád County attractive and buy the houses where old owners were deceased (NCDC 2004). This can be considered as a positive trend balancing that of an ageing population.

The age groups between 40-59 years old were overrepresented in the sample compared to their ratio of 28% for Nógrád County in the national census in 2005 (KSH 2005a). However, since the research only targeted respondents over 18 years old and the census includes the age groups as 0-14 years old (15.9%) and 15-39 years old (33.2%), the ratios were expected to somewhat differ.

The overall sample shows an ageing population with the highest respondent group of 50-59 years old moving into the age group of 60 years and above within 10 years. These two groups together make up more than half the sampled population.

4.1.3. Size of household

Less than half of the surveyed households (36%) were small in size, having 1 or 2 members. The largest households have 6 members and comprise 4.3% of the sample. Not surprisingly the size of the household substantially relates to the age of the respondent ($r = 0.503$, $p < 0.01$). Small households with 1-2 members more often include elderly people since they have no children living with them anymore. From a different point of view it can be said that if the respondent was young the household usually also included the parents or the respondent was a parent him/herself.

Many of the younger respondents commute daily to universities and schools or to work in the surrounding towns or cities. In addition children were present in 36.7% of the households. The number of children in households is moderately related to the village the

family lives in ($r = 0.232$, $p < 0.05$). There is a significant difference ($p < 0.05$) between Ipolyvece and Dejtár in this respect. The fact that in Ipolyvece the elementary school goes only until the fourth grade, while in Dejtár there is a full eight year education might be a plausible explanation (Pásztor pers.comm.). The availability of eight year elementary education potentially influences newcomer families with children in their choice of village.

All this information is important while designing and embarking on initiatives in these villages. Villages where there are a lot of children have the potential to organise different clubs, educational events and games connected to the local greenway initiative (e.g. OHTG Club, knowledge contest about nature and heritage sites along the greenway). These would potentially not only enrich local children's lives, entertain and educate them but spread knowledge about the initiative as well. Those villages with less children can inform and send their own youngsters to events organised by other villages.

4.1.4. Education

The level of education in the three villages is rather high, especially considering rural areas (IPSHAS and Kovách 2005). Only 20.1% of the respondents have completed eight years of elementary school or less (Figure 4.2.) which corresponds well with the general Hungarian data (22%) (KSH 2005a). Almost the same percentage of respondents has completed tertiary education which is higher than the country average of 12%. The highest number of respondents finished a vocational school (33.8%), similar to Nógrád County data with 32% (KSH 2006; NCDC 2004). In Hungary vocational schools represent a type of education that follows elementary school but is not necessarily equivalent to a high school. It provides the student with technical rather than theoretical knowledge. The degree obtained after finishing this type of school is not always sufficient for entering tertiary education and on completion many graduates enter some kind of profession.

There is a moderate level of negative correlation between the level of education and the age of respondents ($\tau = -0.175$, $p < 0.05$) which also indicates that most of the people with 8 years of education or less are elderly residents. About one in two respondents (53.6 %) with this level of education were 60 years old and above. This relationship is not surprising since this age group mostly attended school during the 10-20 years before and after the second world war when different mobility and other factors were dominant in society than in the years to come (IPSHAS and Kovách 2005). At the same time 60% of the respondents who finished tertiary school were from the age group of 18-49 years old.

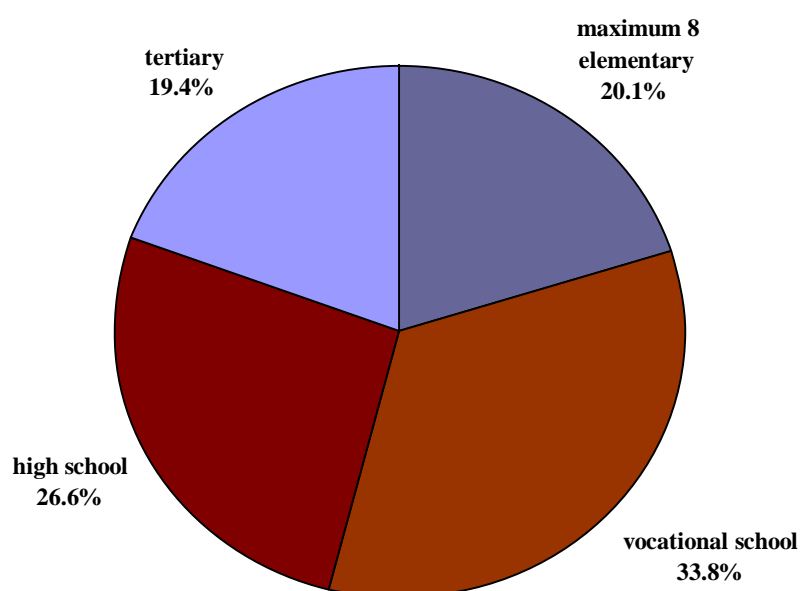


Figure 4.2. Highest level of education of respondents, n = 139

4.1.5. Current employment

Most of the respondents (44.6%) are working for an employer (Figure 4.3). As learned during conversations with local people and personal communication with the mayors of Ipolyvece and Dejtár, due to a lack of working possibilities in the villages many people commute to the larger towns of the region or even to Budapest each day for work (KSH

2006). The industrial parks of Rétság and Balassagyarmat are some of those employment opportunities that absorb the workforce (Balga pers.comm; KSH 2006).

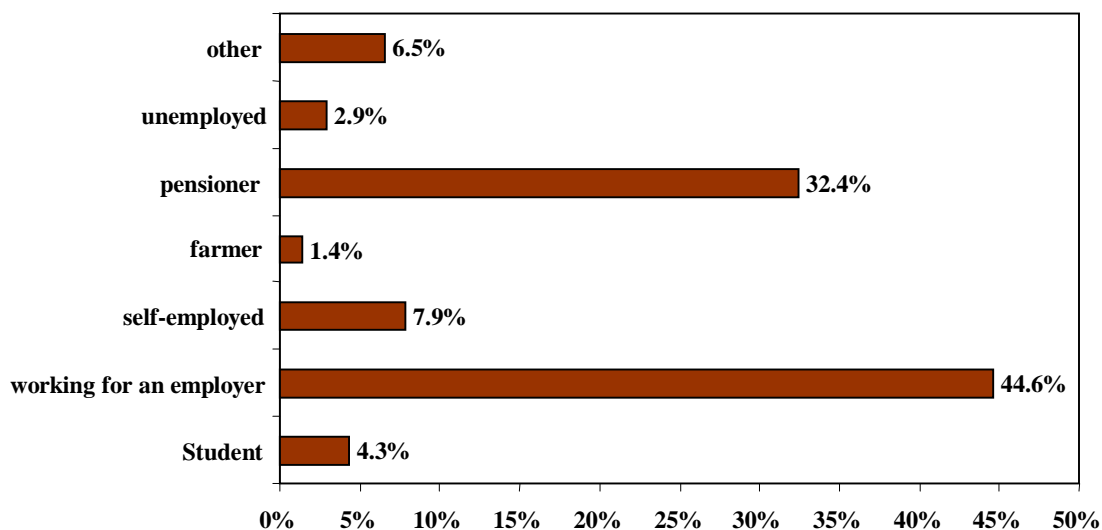


Figure 4.3. Current employment of the respondents, n = 139

From the respondents only 1.4% indicated that their main occupation was farming. Since the closing of the farmers' cooperatives, the so-called TSZs, following the socio-economic changes of 1990, the agriculture of the region has collapsed (Tóth pers.comm., Dobos pers.comm.). The farmers joined the TSZ and received all equipment and assistance for their farming activity (fertiliser, machines etc.) from the cooperative which also collected the produced goods and transported them to markets and shops of Budapest and other big towns. Once this system ceased to exist farmers suddenly found themselves alone and were not able to manage and achieve the same results as during the times of the TSZ (Tóth pers.comm.). As a result, nowadays many people have abandoned farming. "It is hard work which does not get adequately paid for" (Tóth pers.comm.). One third of the surveyed respondents (33.3%) who indicated "other" were mothers on childcare leave.

The ratio of unemployed people in the sample is 2.9% which is close to the average level of unemployment in the three villages (4%) (NCDC 2004). Some respondents (7.9%) indicated that they were self-employed and had some kind of small business but complained that there are not enough opportunities for such ventures. Or, as often experienced they are

not aware or don't have adequate information about the opportunities the area might provide. This is an opportunity for the OHTG initiative to involve as many of these people as possible and to obtain and provide such kind of information.

There is a substantially strong relationship between the current employment status and the age of the respondents ($r_s = 0.533$, $p < 0.01$). The survey found about two pensioners out of three (66.7%) to be in the age group 60 and above (Figure 4.4.). Another 26.7% are 50-59 years old and, as learnt during the field work, many from this age group went into early retirement due to health reasons. It is a general phenomena in Hungary that people go into early retirement and join health status related social assistance and leave the labour market due to scarce working opportunities (e.g. disability pension). Therefore, leading to both lower unemployment as well as activity rates (IPSHAS and Kovách 2005).

Most of the unemployed in the sample are 50-59 years old (75%) followed by the 18-29 years old (25%). Many of the young people after finishing school have difficulty to find work which also results in increased out-migration from these villages. Following the wave of migration in the 70s the generation of people who are now in their 40s-50s came back to the area to live. Nowadays, there is a new wave of locals leaving the area (Dobos pers.comm.; KSH 2006). On several occasions respondents made long complaints that there are no prospects for young people in these villages and that they urge their own children to leave and start a new life somewhere else.

Most of the self-employed can be found in the age group between 40-49 years old (45.5%) followed by the group of 18-29 years old (27.3%). As expected the majority of students from the sample are 18-29 years old (66.7%). Even if statistically only a weak relationship can be found between the current employment and the education level of respondents ($r_s = -0.18$, $p < 0.05$) it is worthwhile looking at this relationship since the level of education generally has an influence on the negotiating position on the job-market. As

expected the highest percentage (57%) of those who's highest level of education is elementary school or less are pensioners.

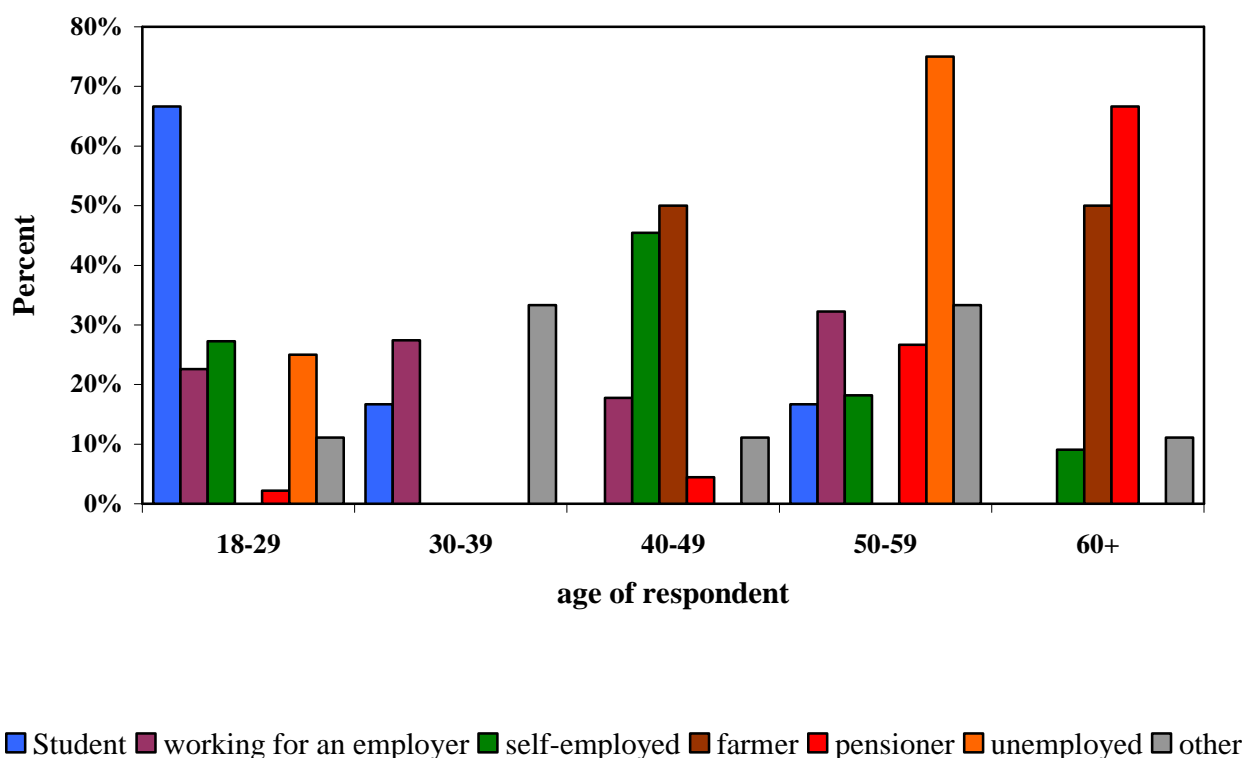


Figure 4.4. Division of current employment between age groups (%), n = 139

This is connected to the previous finding that most of the age group of 60 years and above have no more than elementary school education. Further, 51% of the respondents with a vocational school degree and 55.5 % of those with a finished tertiary education are working for an employer. It is of no surprise that those who finished a vocational school which provides technical knowledge for a profession or those who obtained a university or equivalent degree have better chances to get employed. Usually this employment is not in the villages themselves. These facts should be borne in mind while discussing the potential of the OHTG initiative. The high number of respondents who are either unemployed or went into early retirement can potentially become involved in the initiative. For example respondents from the age group of 18-29 and 50-59 who are unemployed (and/or went into early retirement) could engage in developing tourism related services or other activities connected

to the OHTG. This way the activity ratio within the villages could be raised and the potential for the OHTG development exploited. Furthermore, these people might have more free time at their disposal and could become involved on a volunteer basis in the work of the initiative.

4.1.6. Household financial well being

As explained in the methodology section (Section 3.3.) this study used ‘subjective well-being indicators’. The results (see Figure 4.5) show that 7.9% of the respondents said they ‘live without financial problems’ and only 0.7 % indicated they live under hardship and deprivation.

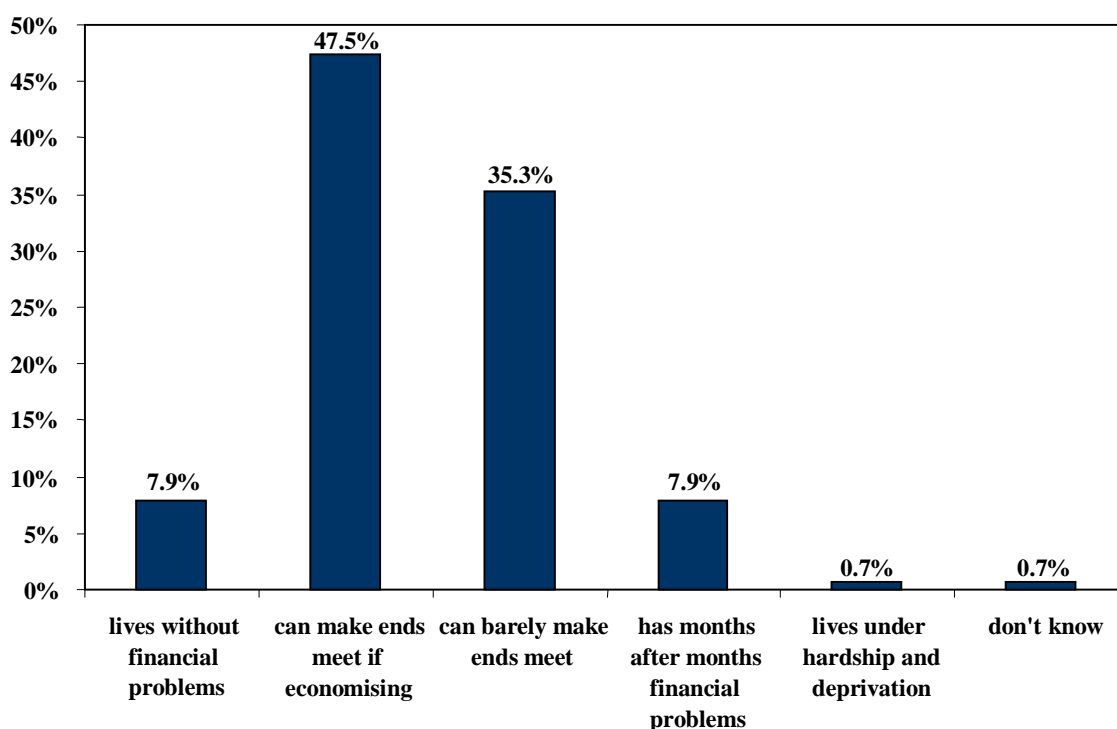


Figure 4.5. Financial well-being of respondent households, n = 139

A countrywide study using the same type of indicators, showed a ratio of 3% for both of these variables, reflecting a lower rate of satisfaction than this study’s results (IPSHAS and Kovách 2005). The overall picture from these responses shows that even if most of the respondents in general don’t feel they are in an extremely bad financial situation they are experiencing financial insecurity. Pensioners on several occasions indicated that their pension is fine to live

a decent life in their village as they are not spending on many things and they can cover their basic needs saying “what do we old people need more for life?”. A further explanation may be that they grew up before consumer society became widespread and rather reuse things than buy new ones.

As expected respondents with higher education tend to indicate a higher level of well being than those with lower levels of education ($r_s = -0.282$, $p < 0.01$). There is a significant difference ($p < 0.01$) between the subjective household well being of respondents with elementary education and those with tertiary or high school degree. While 50% of those who indicated to be in the lowest two categories in respect of household well being were pensioners, 63% of respondents who are ‘living without financial problems’ completed tertiary or high school education. Only 16% of the people feeling that they ‘have months after months financial problems’ had a high school degree. Neither respondents with tertiary nor with high school education ‘live under hardship and deprivation’. This is of no surprise considering the relationship between current employment and education.

Interestingly, a moderate relationship was found between the subjective well-being of respondents and the village they live in (Cramer’s $V = 0.267$, $p < 0.05$). The most significant difference exists ($p < 0.05$) between Dejtár and Ipolyvece in this respect. This is of no surprise since in Ipolyvece there are almost no local working opportunities while both in Dejtár and in Drégelypalánk there are local companies and businesses that absorb some portion of the labour force. While in Dejtár and Drégelypalánk the unemployment rate is 4% and 3% respectively, in Ipolyvece this ratio is 5% (NCDC 2004). This difference in financial well-being has to be taken into consideration by the OHTG initiative. Those villages where inhabitants are less well off than in other villages might not have the same opportunities to engage in activities of the initiative which require financial means (e.g. renovate rooms for renting) or to help the development of the OHTG with monetary contribution. Meaning at the same time that they might require increased assistance and help to become involved in some

activities as there is always a danger that local initiatives make the poor become poorer and the rich become richer.

Combining the findings from the results of the questionnaires and the independent studies, there are limited working opportunities in the three surveyed villages, which contributes to many people commuting to larger cities for work and young people emigrating from the region. Thus, most of the income people earn comes from outside the villages or the area and these factors enhance the trend of an ageing population. Nevertheless, this is not at a level that would paralyse the activity potential of the villages (NCDC 2004). Differences also exist between the working opportunities and financial well-being of the three villages. The OHTG initiative could be an opportunity to develop local services and products for small-scale tourism development which could provide more working opportunities within the participating villages. At the same time new people arrive from outside of the region to live in the pleasant and more affordable environment of the area.

4.2. Local land and local products

4.2.1. Ownership and utilisation of garden and land

Almost all (93.5%) respondents owned garden or land for cultivation. However, personal observations found that the majority owned a garden rather than a larger piece of land.

As shown in Figure 4.6 only 8.6% of respondents owns and uses its land for growing crops and 7.2% have their own silviculture. About 1/4 of the respondents (26.6%) said that they own a vineyard which are mainly located in their garden. Most of the respondents who owned a garden or land used it for growing fruits or/and vegetables. About one in seven (15%) respondents who indicated they use their land or garden for 'other' than the above leave the land uncultivated, while another 15% keep livestock but the majority (54%) has a simple flower garden. One of the respondents who owns livestock explained that they have an

eco-farm where people can come, see and pet traditional Hungarian animals. There is possibility for horse riding and they would even cook a meal if visitors asked for it. It is important that the OHTG program includes, finds and is aware of these kinds of ventures. The respondent actually knows and also participates in the development of the initiative with full enthusiasm. Most of the respondents grow fruits (71.9%) or vegetables (65.5%) on their land or garden and more than half (59%) of those who are growing vegetables are 50 years of age or above. On several occasions this age group indicated that they had the time to produce vegetables for themselves and could save some money on that. This is of no surprise since, as shown, this age group includes most of the pensioners and unemployed in the sample.

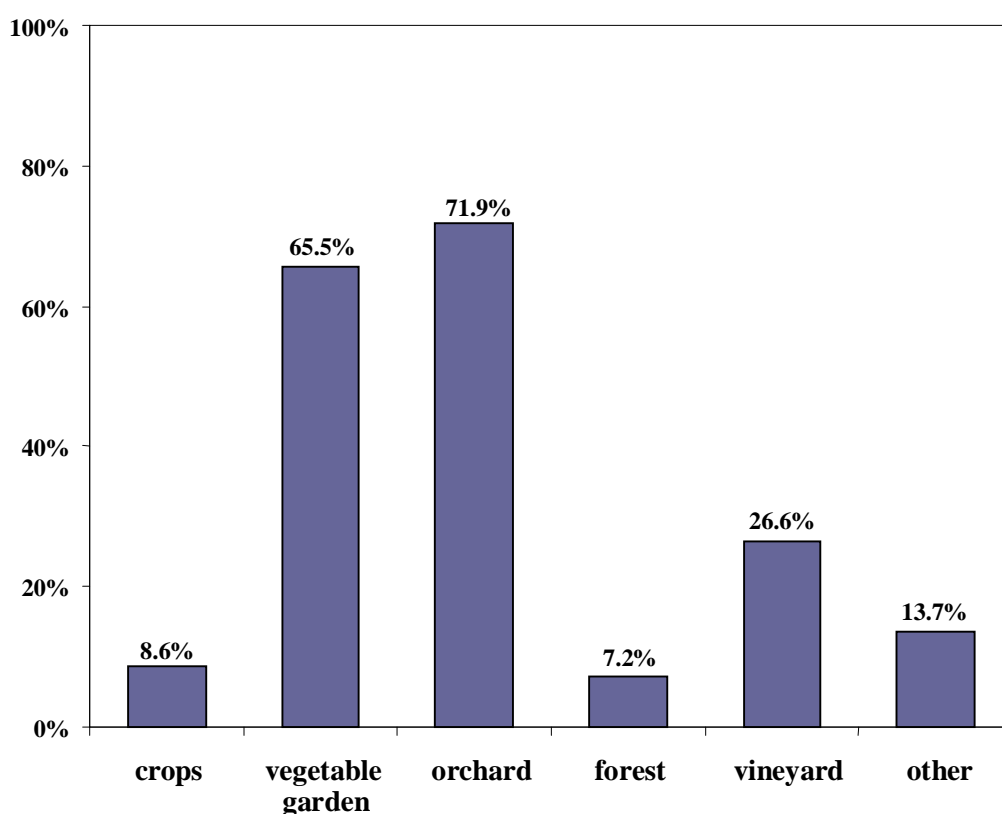


Figure 4.6. Garden or land utilization as per percent of owners, n = 130

In all three villages most of the respondents (over 90%) still grow some amount of fruits in their garden or on their land. This region of Hungary has the geographic, natural and climatic endowments, as well as a long lasting tradition of growing a variety of berries

(especially strawberries, red currant and raspberries), stone fruits and apples of very high quality (NCDC 2004). The village of Dejtár used to have a tradition in growing potatoes as well but it lost most of its importance by today, ‘it is simply not rentable’ (Balga pers.comm.).

As discussed earlier the traditional basis of rural economies, agriculture, is still in crises following the historic changes of 1989. As a consequence of the changing ownership structure the importance of private farms grew. Though, many farmers received back their lands after 1989, this happened only between 1997-98 in the studied villages. For most of the people this was too late. Due to the lack of equipment and capital these farms could not surpass, let alone reach the level of production of previous years. As a consequence, a major part of agricultural lands remain uncultivated (KSH 2006; Tóth pers.comm.). On the other hand these developments had a positive effect on nature. This part of the DINP has not been as undisturbed for the past 500 years as today: ‘nature is blooming’ (Géringer pers.comm.). Even if the once dominant agricultural production will not become a reality again, the traditional fruit production should not perish. As it will be shown in the following chapter, integrating this tradition into the program of the OHTG could bring benefits to both the local economy and traditions while preserving the revived nature as long as production is kept at a sustainable level.

4.2.2. Sale and production of local products

Only 21.6% of respondents do not produce any kind of home made product. As previously mentioned, most of the people use their land or garden for growing fruits which used to be one of the main sources of income in this region. However, only 10.1% of the respondents also sell the produced fruits (Figure 4.7.).

The families of more than half (57%) of the people who produce fruits, and also sell them, have been living in the villages for 100 years or more. It is understandable that those who have a long tradition and experience in this field have better chances to stay on the

market. However, there are only few of them left. The other 90% of respondents don't sell their fruits. Nevertheless, the potential of these villages both regarding quality of the product and available workforce is substantial. There were times when the yield of strawberries, red currant and raspberries was sufficient to feed a whole family for a whole year. For others it was a supplementary income which was sometimes even enough to buy a car (Tóth pers.comm.). By today, in Ipolyvece there are only 2-3 families left who produce berries for the market (Tóth pers.comm.). In the surveyed sample 4 people from Ipolyvece said that they sell some of the fruits they grow. However, most also mentioned that they sell it on occasional basis when someone, such as friends and visitors, ask for it. One of the respondent's family sells their strawberries at the roadside next to their house.

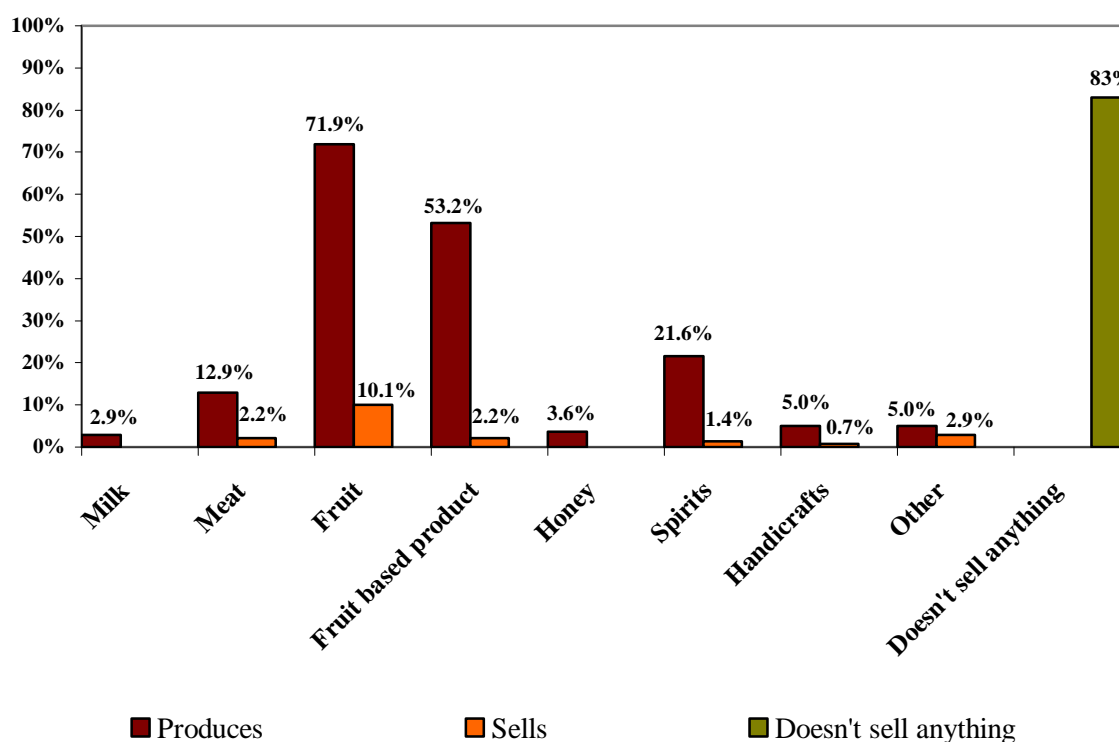


Figure 4.7. Relation between local production goods (%) and sale of the produced goods (%), n = 139.

While, approximately 55-60 ha of land was under cultivation for berry production in Ipolyvece between 1998-2002, by today, this accounts for less than 3-4 hectares. It is a time consuming and difficult work which can't be done with machines (Tóth pers.comm.). About one in three (30%) people who didn't sell their fruits said the reason was the lack of demand

and the ‘ridiculously’ small amount of money for which the wholesalers would buy it from them. In Drégelypalánk one of the respondents explained how their family used to deliver all the strawberries for the Hilton Hotel in Budapest but that today the cheap foreign imports took away all the orders. Another big loss for the local fruit producers was the ownership change at the local syrup factory in Drégelypalánk. The new owners of the factory stopped buying local fruits for syrup production and changed to cheap imports from China and other foreign countries. As a consequence, many local fruit producers went bankrupt due to the “environment of dependence” that was created by the syrup factory (Barker 2005, 12). In many poor communities, when their national economic system suddenly becomes linked to a larger international one, the result is the destruction of the local retail and production base with cheap imports (Nel and Binns 2000). As a consequence of all these problems people cut out many of their strawberry and raspberry bushes. Only 5-6% of the respondents mentioned the lack of time and the old age (lack of energy) as a reason for not producing fruits for sale. Over 90% of the people said that they decided to produce as much as their family and friends consume, thus only for self-sufficiency but many of them indicated that if it would be worth selling the fruits, they would start to produce more.

While many people used to produce a number of these goods for sale to increase their financial well-being, now those who are worse off try to save money through self-sufficiency. The production of milk and milk based products was only mentioned by two respondents each in Dejtár and Drégelypalánk, while meat, honey, spirits and handicrafts are made by respondents from all three villages. Lace, pearl strings, sewing of traditional dresses and embroidery are among the handicrafts that respondents are making on their own

More than half (53%) of the respondents that produce some kind of local product prepare fruit based products such as marmalade, but only 2.2% sell them. The production and sale of these products is very much dependent on the availability of raw material, the fruits themselves. Based on personal observations these local products are undoubtedly of very high

quality, as on many occasions different kinds of fruits, marmalades, home made bread and other local specialities were offered (Figure 4.8).

It should be an aim of the OHTG to foster the production and sale of these products above the self-sufficiency level. This could contribute both to the local economy, promote the region as well as develop a sense of regional identity similar to the region of the White Carpathians in the Czech Republic.



Figure 4.8. Locals of Ipolyvece serving fruit salad from local berries to participants of the OHTG opening bicycle tour

In the White Carpathians several environmental groups, local farmers and communities joined together to market and promote local products including handicrafts, organic apple juice and dried fruits. This way, they also helped to preserve the “rich genetic sources of native fruit varieties that have developed in the region” (Griffiths *et al.* 2004, 41).

With proper management and cooperation there could be a potential for collecting and jointly transporting the fruits of the OHTG region to different markets. With the high quality of local products there is a good potential to get a relatively high price in the expanding niche of markets and shops for specialty and/or organic products (Griffiths *et al.* 2004). Simultaneously, certificates of origin and a regional product brand could be developed. The potential of high quality heritage products can become one of the cornerstones of the OHTG

as it happened in the case of the Moravian Wine Trails (Czech Republic). In Moravia, of the 40,000 small wine growers only 5-6% used to make a living from their production. By now the local greenways program encouraged many of them to obtain licences for commercial production and they organised cooperatives to share costs of marketing and production as well as develop packages to keep tourists in the area for several days (Griffiths *et al.* 2004). However, a major obstacle in the surveyed Hungarian villages is the helplessness and impotence of people, also called the 'culture of powerlessness' (Barker 2005; Zrubka pers.comm.). At the same time local people often don't want solutions to be imposed on them either and would like to identify their needs themselves, however the possible pathways need to be found (Edwards 1998; Barker 2005).

Those people and agencies that have the skills and capacity to find these pathways and launch as well as lead these developments are indispensable in this region. Simply, a program under community control does not necessarily mean success, especially in this case a collaboration that merges within the community, with the backing of NGO and local government resources has a larger potential for success (Guaraldo 1996). The local greenway initiative with the aim to increase community relations and cohesion as well as to enhance different ways of production and sale of local products could help this process as well as present an alternative and new kind of opportunity for local people in the form of developing small scale local tourism. The HEPF, local activists and local governments need to make increased efforts for this new initiative work, with the long term aim to incorporate a broad range of local needs and local potential.

4.3 'Local people - local needs' and the greenway elements of economic, social and nature revitalisation

Local programs and initiatives need to find the match between how communities define themselves and their problems and the way solutions to these problems form part of the

program. In order to address this issue the questionnaire elicited respondents to indicate the importance of different elements and express their opinion about some which are also closely connected to the greenway initiative. Results of the ranking of community satisfaction in percentage of individual responses (Figure 4.9), overall rank of items (Table 4.1.), and perception on most important items to develop (Figure 4.10.) shed light on this component. Each item will be dealt with separately in the following sub-sections.

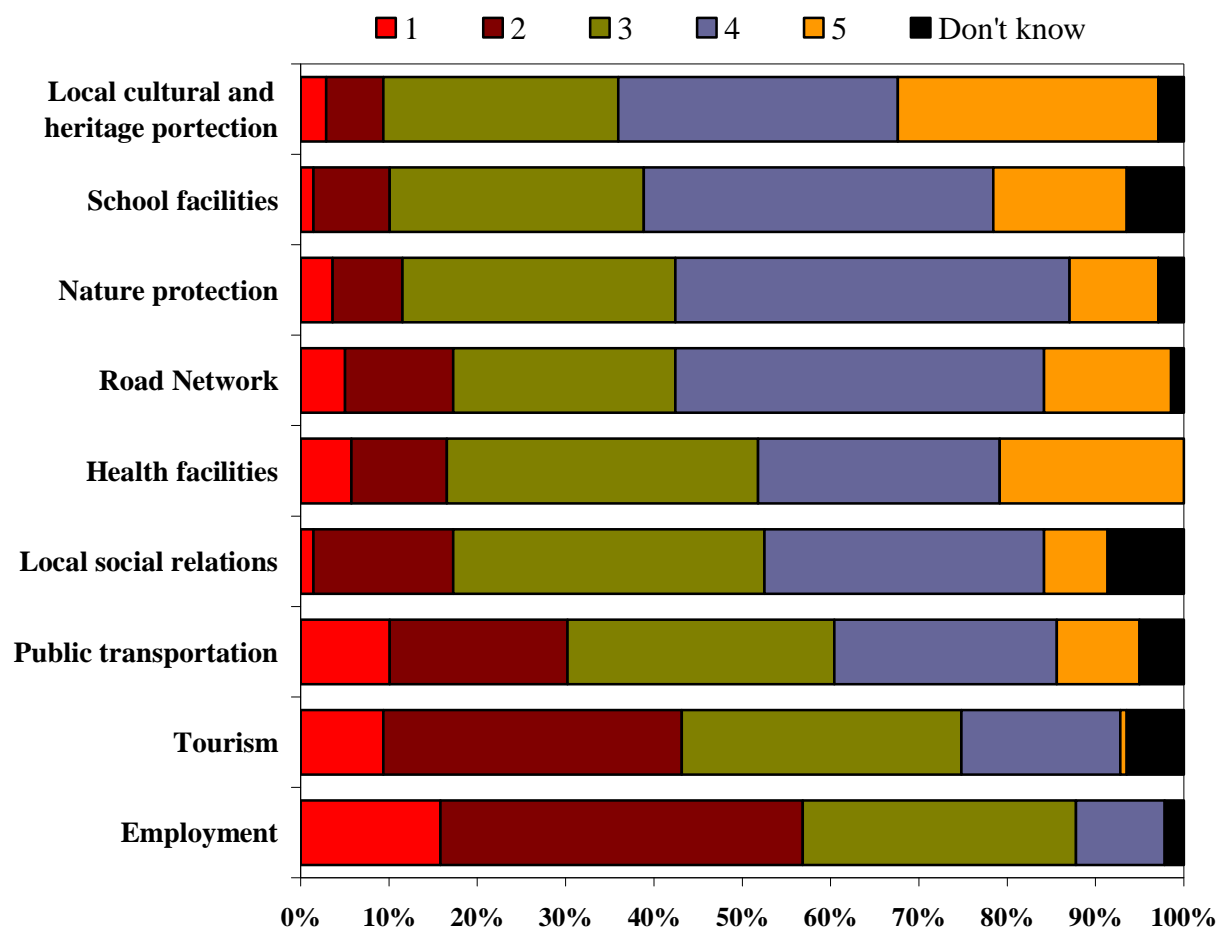


Figure 4.9. Ranking of community satisfaction (%), n = 139
 1 = Completely unsatisfied, 2 = Slightly unsatisfied, 3 = Neither satisfied nor unsatisfied,
 4 = Somewhat satisfied, 5 = Completely satisfied

Table 4.1. Average rate (mean) of community satisfaction and most often frequently occurring rate of satisfaction for the different items, n = 139

	Mean	Median	Mode
Local culture and heritage protection	3.81	4	4
School facilities	3.62	4	4
Nature protection	3.51	4	4
Road network	3.49	4	4
Health facilities	3.47	3	3
Local social relations	3.30	3	3
Public transportation	3.04	3	3
Tourism	2.65	3	2
Employment	2.36	2	2

1 = Completely unsatisfied, 2 = Slightly unsatisfied, 3 = Neither satisfied nor unsatisfied, 4 = Somewhat satisfied, 5 = Completely satisfied

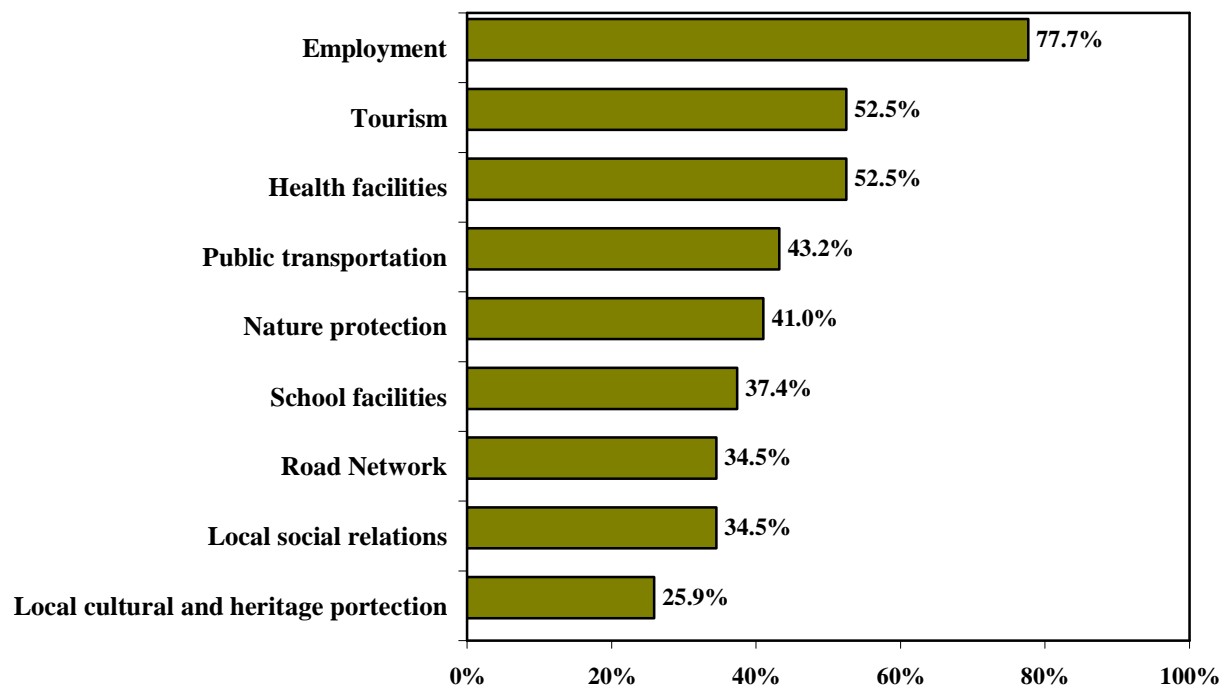


Figure 4.10. Perception of respondents on most important items to develop (%), n = 139

4.3.1. Local culture & heritage protection and local social relations

Local culture and heritage protection received the overall highest grade of satisfaction (Mean = 3.81) (see Table 4.1.) and was also considered from the lowest number of respondents (25.9%) as a priority for development. However, both the rate of satisfaction ($X^2 = 52.185$, $p < 0.01$, Cramer's $V = 0.440$) and the priority given to local culture and heritage

protection ($X^2 = 16.731$, $p < 0.01$, Cramer's $V = 0.347$) is substantially dependent on the village of the respondent. The rate of satisfaction is significantly lower ($p < 0.01$) and the importance to develop this item is significantly higher ($p < 0.01$) in Ipolyvece than in Dejtár and Drégelypalánk. This is of no surprise as one of the major attractions of the area, the castle of Drégely, is situated in Drégelypalánk and the village looks back onto a rich history which is also mentioned in the study books of Hungarian students. The village also puts emphasis on organising festivities in connection to its cultural heritage where all the village gathers. Apart from that the members of the local community house, of whom some are also active members of the Sugárkankalin Tourism Association (STA) and organisers of the OHTG initiative, are very active in organising local community events, gatherings and exhibitions in their community house. At the same time, in Dejtár the most active local member of the STA did major achievements in bringing back and reviving the local traditional clothing and dances of the village and managed to involve a number of women from all age groups who are sewing their dresses themselves as well. In 2003 they also established a local museum in an old village house typical of the region where local traditional clothes, utensils and furniture are exhibited and visitors also have the chance to try on the dresses (Figure 4.11).



Figure 4.11. Local women reviving the tradition of traditional dresses in the museum and village house in Dejtár.

The village also organises festivities and balls which bring together the local community.

People in these two villages started to develop a sense of pride towards their own culture and heritage which can potentially be strengthened and enhanced if the OHTG brings visitors to the area who show interest in what the villages have to offer. However, in Ipolyvece culture and heritage protection is not developed at all and the mayor of the village considers it a crucial factor for revitalising the village; “All of us, but especially young people need something to be involved in, to look forward to and to feel proud of” (Tóth pers.comm.). The lack of employment opportunities is one of the reasons for the out migration of young people from the area, another one is that they are bored. A more vital cultural life can enrich both the lives of local people as well as contribute to the attractiveness of the region for visitors which again can help to encourage more people to remain in the area.

The majority (69%) of respondents think that tourism will have a positive effect on local culture and traditions. Most said that with tourists coming to the area: people will care more about the local culture and heritage; it will make them proud because their village will be known in other places; local social life will become more vital with more local programs and festivities; and that through the income from tourism there will be more money left for to be spent on culture. Some people mentioned that tourists will bring a new way of thinking into the community and make them more open, others said that young people will benefit from it and that it will help the cooperation between villages. The other 30% of the respondents did not know what effects tourism could have on culture, explaining that they have not seen many tourists in the area and for that reason can't judge its effects. Thus, based on these responses local people may benefit if the OHTG brought more visitors to the area.

A benefit which can already be assigned to the OHTG is that people from different villages are getting to know their neighbours better, they make new friends and are becoming aware of attractions, heritage sites and programs of other villages (Pásztor pers.comm; Riskó pers. comm.). With the sixth lowest rate of satisfaction given by respondents to local social

relations (mean = 3.30) (see Table 4.1), though only 34.5% also consider it as priority for development, this is an important benefit. Members of the STA and organisers of the OHTG explained on many occasions how incredible it is that all their lives they have been living in neighbouring villages not knowing about one another and now they can call each other friends. Since the start of the OHTG initiative local people also participate more regularly in each others local events. During the OHTG opening tour one of the participants, a young student, explained that she always had prejudice towards the young people of one of the other villages but now that she got to know them better she might even find new friends among them. In small villages in areas remote from the big cultural centres such small scale initiatives can have a bigger impact than expected.

Moreover, the development of local social relations is another prerequisite for successful community based tourism development. Once again, a substantial relationship was found between village and the rate of satisfaction with local social relations ($X^2 = 16.395$, $p < 0.05$, $\Phi = 0.359$), with a significantly lower rate of satisfaction in Ipolyvece than in Dejtár ($p < 0.01$) and Drégelypalánk ($p < 0.05$). Thus, in this respect Ipolyvece has to make increased efforts compared to its neighbours. Cooperation between villages as well as between locals of one village is a basic requirement for both a more vibrant social and cultural life as well as community based tourism development in the area. Encouragingly, 90.7 % of respondents said that cooperation between villages is either very important or important and 76.3% indicated that with cooperation there are better opportunities for tourism development. One village alone cannot achieve any important results and each needs to recognise the high degree of interdependence between them (Getz and Jamal 1995). “It is very important that we don’t think that only our own village exists but that we talk to people also about what other villages have to offer. “Instead of we it is us” (Riskó pers.comm.). Similarly inhabitants of one village have to be able to recommend other people’s services within their own village. Until now the OHTG initiative achieved that villages started to strongly cooperate with each

other on the community and local government level, as well as within the framework of the Sugárkankalin Tourism Association and outside of it. Dejtár and Drégelypalánk even started to jointly operate the local school (Balga pers.comm.).

The role and support of local government is very important for these developments. It is a good sign that all three mayors have been keeping their position for the last 4-5 cycles of elections because if governmental willingness to support people is only of temporary nature the project might be jeopardized once key inputs are not received on a continuous basis anymore (Getz and Jamal 1995; Guaraldo 1996). For that it is even more important that community members develop long lasting relationships and cooperation so that the OHTG initiative can sustain changing administrations (see Figure 4.12). No wonder that 80% of respondents who benefit from tourism indicated that local social relations are among the priority elements for development. It is of great encouragement that 88.5% of respondents indicated they have friends and/or family in the surrounding villages which helps to establish and strengthen these ties. “The whole initiative builds on the local people, they are at the heart of the greenway, neither the infrastructure nor the grants” (Pásztor pers. Comm.).



Figure 4.12. The OHTG is based on the cooperation between villages: A participant signing a memory poster of the OHTG opening bicycle tour, indicating all the nine cooperating villages.

4.3.2. *School facilities*

The respondents gave the second highest average grade of satisfaction (mean = 3.62) for school facilities and the most common grade for this item was a 4. Only 37.4% of respondents listed school facilities among the five most important items for development, thus putting it among the 3 least pressing issues in the three villages. Locals on many occasions explained that the teachers are very good and take good care of the children. All three villages have elementary schools. As mentioned earlier, in Ipolyvece the school only goes until fourth grade but the schools of the other two villages take over these children for the last four years. Since the distance between the villages is only a few kilometres children can easily commute between them and in general use their bicycles for this purpose.

4.3.3. *Nature protection*

All three villages are situated along the borders of the DINP which is rich in landscapes, plants and animals of high natural value (see Figure 4.13). Out of the nine listed items the third highest rate of satisfaction (mean = 3.51) was given to nature protection, receiving most frequently the grade of four (see Table 4.1). Respondents on many occasions indicated that “the National Park is doing a great job”. Interestingly some of those who were less satisfied with nature protection said that the National Park does not keep the environment in order because plants just grow wildly and therefore many areas look messy. Here it has to be noted that the ‘messy looking’ and unordered nature is one that is truly untouched and less influenced by human intervention. These complaints, even if adding to the number of unsatisfied respondents in the survey, is considered to be a positive sign of nature protection.



Figure 4.13. The Crescent lake in the DINP. In close proximity to the three surveyed OHTG villages.

It is also questionable whether the high rate of satisfaction in some cases does not simply indicate that people do not care so much about nature and are satisfied with what they perceive or are just not aware of some of the real problems.

Although people are generally satisfied with nature protection in the region, 41% of respondents still consider it as one of the most important areas for development. “The nature around us is our biggest treasure” explained the mayor of Ipolyvece. Especially this village considers nature as its main value since, unlike Drégelypalánk and Dejtár, there is no castle or museum which can be considered as a local attraction (Tóth pers.comm.). However, all interviewees who are also actively involved in the OHTG initiative spoke about the beauty of their natural environment and the importance of valuing and protecting it. This is a very important factor in the development of the OHTG since locals need to protect and value their natural environment and not only exploit it for profit making purposes such as tourism. On the one hand if people are not protecting the nature around them tourism will not develop the way they want it to. On the other hand, if they will not pay attention to how tourists treat the environment and counteract ill practices, this source of income will soon cease to exist. Nevertheless, as Barker (2005) explained there is always a danger for commercial interests to outweigh the environmental protection message.

Almost 30% of the respondents said there are no endangered natural values in the area and 20.1% indicated that they didn't know if there were any. Every second (50.4%) respondent said that there were endangered natural values in the area which is somewhat higher than the 41% (see Figure 4.10.) for those who consider nature protection as a priority for development. This shows that almost one in ten of the respondents, even though they are aware of problems, don't give priority to these. Most of the respondents who think there are endangered natural values in the area perceive illegal dumping (71.4%) to be one of the reasons (see Figure 4.14.), closely followed by the 'other' category (52.8%, $n = 37$) which includes problems such as: regulation of the Ipoly river (10.8%), sewage water which is let out into the river (21.6%) and problems connected to motorized traffic (16.2%) such as pollution and the killing of migrating frogs along motorway No. 2.

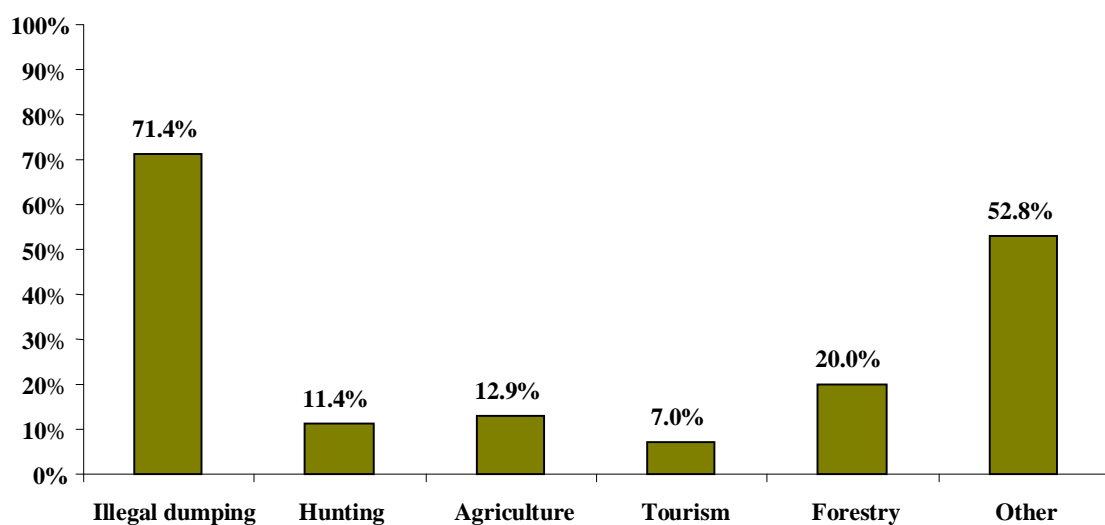


Figure 4.14. Respondent's view on reasons for endangered natural values in the area, $n = 70$

Concerning perception about illegal dumping a significant moderate to substantial relationship was found with the age of the respondent ($X^2 = 12.802$, $p < 0.05$, Cramer's $V = 0.428$). The age group of 60 years old and above perceived illegal dumping to be a problem to a significantly lower degree ($p < 0.05$) than the other age groups. Based on some of the qualitative responses elderly people less probably go to areas where illegal dumping takes

place. The least problematic was tourism with 7% but since there are not many tourists in the area it is questionable how this percentage might change in case the OHTG attracts more visitors to the area. The same question arises in connection to hunting. As explained by the NP conservancy, tourists who arrive to this area don't come with the approach to destroy but rather to enjoy and appreciate nature and the OHTG aims at attracting 'green tourists' of that kind (Géringer pers.comm.). Similarly, the NP conservancy participated in setting the route of the OHTG so that it stays within the buffer zone of the NP. Nevertheless, these are issues that require both the local community and the NP to be prepared to handle adverse affects from increased visitation (e.g. organised litter collections).

As mentioned earlier, 50.4% of the respondents said that there were endangered natural values in the area which is somewhat higher than the 41% for those who consider nature protection as a priority area for development. Many people in the area are simply not aware of the nature surrounding them and the value it has; they live their lives in a different way, have other more burning problems to solve. More educational programs and propaganda work is needed in this respect (Dobos pers.comm.; Géringer pers.comm.). If these villages would like to receive visitors it is a prerequisite that local people can explain what is worth seeing in the area and also to encourage visitors not to damage it. For that it is also important that locals themselves don't damage their natural environment and help to keep it intact. When respondents were asked how they think tourism effects nature, 47.5% said that the effects are positive. About 26% indicated that with increased tourism locals will pay more attention to nature, better protect and care about it. Another 24.2% said that those tourists who come to the area appreciate nature and will even help to protect it, while 25.8% indicated that increased tourism will teach people about the environment and increase their knowledge. Others also mentioned that with increased visitation there will be more programs and initiatives connected to nature protection. Nevertheless, 13.7% of respondents indicated that tourism effects nature in a negative way among others because of littering, vandalism, fire

setting and tearing of plants. Almost 40% of the respondents said that they don't know what effects tourism has on nature. All of these responses are valuable information for tourism development in the region. As there are not many tourists yet it is an important question what the real effects of increased visitation will be. It is a good sign for tourism development that 40% of respondents who already benefit from tourism and 36.4% of those who indicated to be interested in joining some tourism related activity participate in litter collection.

As discussed earlier, the OHTG, like all greenways, supports the use of non-motorised means of transportation for both locals and visitors. When respondents were asked whether they consider it important what means of transportation tourists use to commute in the area 41% indicated that for them it is important, 59% that it is not. Most of the respondents who indicated this issue to be important said that they prefer visitors to use non motorised means of transportation for environmental reasons such as: it doesn't pollute; wildlife will be less endangered and disturbed; it does not harm the peace and silence of the area which they consider to be a local value. Moreover, some respondents indicated that if tourists walk or use their bikes they can enjoy and see more of the local nature. Others said that cars are dangerous for children, pedestrians and cyclists alike while cycling is 'healthier' for everybody.

During the survey when respondents were asked to list the most important natural values in their region most (58.2%) mentioned the Ipoly river and its surrounding, 20% the name of the NP in general, 26.6% the forests of the area, 7.1% the clean fresh air or the peaceful surrounding. Only 11.5% of the people mentioned the concrete name of a plant or an animal. Moreover, when this question was asked respondents on several occasions listed some built monument such as the castle in Drégelypalánk. All of the local organisers of the OHTG try to work on raising the awareness of people about the environment surrounding them, the places that are worth visiting and the importance of protecting them. People this way can also develop a sense of local pride which might be further strengthened if outside visitors praise their surrounding.

One of the most important increments of the OHTG initiative should be to shape the approach and view of people towards their natural and built environment especially that of children and youngsters (Dobos pers.comm.; Risko pers.comm.). The older generation is also considered important, however the local organisers admit that it is very difficult to change them, while it is still possible to influence children and through them potentially also the parents. This was also among the aims of the OHTG opening bicycle tour where the participants visited several places in the NP and both organisers as well as a member of the NP conservancy explained to participants about the environment, the plants and animals of the area (Figure 4.15., Figure 4.16.). Most of the 150 participants at the opening bike tour were locals from the surrounding villages with a high ratio of children. Greenways are not only about attracting visitors but also about revitalising the life of local people (EGWA and Gonzales 2005).



Figure 4.15. A teacher from one of the villages explaining about local nature to participants of the OHTG opening bicycle tour.

Although ad hoc events of this kind might give some small impetus to a few participants it is by far not enough to achieve long lasting results. Out of the 139 surveyed respondents only 2.2% indicated that someone from their household participates in educational programs organised by the NP and 3.6% participate in some other program organised by the NP. About one in six (16.5%) respondents said that they participate in litter

collection and 14.4% engage in some kind of ‘other’ activity such as: collection and healing of sick endangered animals, birdwatching and bird counting, separate waste collection, membership in econet (a group whose members only use harmless biologically degradable products and consume food with natural ingredients), old paper collection and biological farming. Thus, 83.5% of the respondents generally don’t participate in any of the predetermined list of activities connected to nature protection given in the questionnaire. However, 38% of those respondents who don’t participate in programs connected to nature protection did not hear about any program of that kind but encouragingly 20% of these people noted that they would like to participate, especially in litter collection.



Figure 4.16. A group of children listening to a lecture about native animals and plants by the head of the regional NP conservancy.

This is valuable information for the OHTG organisers as it shows that there is unexploited potential within the community and that locals are not well informed about programs. In all three villages the main local OHTG activists and the municipalities are also organising litter collection with school and kindergarten children as well as other local community members. Since three of the main organisers are the head of the local kindergarten in Dejtár, the head and also teacher of the local school in Ipolyvece and head of the community house in Drégelypalánk, it is of no surprise that an association was found between

the age of respondents and the participation of household members in litter collection ($X^2 = 12.705$, $p < 0.05$, Cramer's $V = 0.302$). As seen earlier, young respondents were either living with their parents or they were parents themselves. Therefore, these households are more aware of and also participate in these programs since they have children or family members who go to school, kindergarten or community events. Similarly, a moderate to substantially strong relationship was found between the level of education and the rate of participation in litter collection ($X^2 = 12.962$, $p < 0.01$, Cramer's $V = 0.305$). Households of respondents with a higher level of education more often know about and participate in these programs since they are usually younger and also generally have a better financial status which allows them to deal with issues other than everyday subsistence. Thus, the people who are active in the OHTG initiative, including municipalities, should try to reach and inform all levels of the local community about nature protection programs and also organise them on a more frequent basis. Broader participation and an increased frequency of these programs can help local people to develop a new kind of approach towards their natural environment and its protection.

4.3.4. Road network

With an average of 3.49, the road network is on fourth place on the satisfaction list of respondents and the most often received grade for this item was 4. Only a few people expressed that they were completely unsatisfied with the network (see Table 4.1. and Figure 4.9.) and only 34.5% of respondents said that road network improvement should be among the prioritised items for development (see Figure 4.10.). Thus, less priority was given to the development of the road network compared to the rate of satisfaction with it. The low to moderate relationship that can be found between the rate of satisfaction with the road network and the years the respondents' family has been living in the villages ($\tau = 0.162$, $p < 0.05$) shows that those whose families have been living in these villages for a longer time and are

also generally older, tend to be more satisfied with the road network. This might be explained by a different benchmark these respondents have concerning how the roads used to be and how they are today and therefore, have a distinct understanding of the developments that took place in the area in this respect. Those who have family or friends in surrounding villages felt it to be more important to further develop the road network than those who didn't ($X^2 = 6.397$, $p < 0.05$). Furthermore, the significant relationship between the importance given to road development and the village of the respondent ($X^2 = 6.397$, $p < 0.05$) showed that the opinion of respondents from Dejtár distinguished themselves significantly from those of respondents from Drégelypalánk ($p < 0.01$) and Ipolyvece ($p < 0.05$). The reason for this can be assumed to be the fact that from the three villages Dejtár lies the farthest away from motorway No. 2., the main transportation artery of the area.

However, the survey generally showed that both quality and quantity of roads was generally felt to be rather satisfactory. The vicinity of the high quality motorway No. 2 is perceived as a great advantage by many people. The motorway passes by three of the villages of the OHTG, including Drégelypalánk. The roads between the villages which form part of the OHTG are of reasonable quality as well. They can be used also for biking since the traffic on these small roads is low (personal observation). Nevertheless, cycling on roads which are also used by motorized traffic (even if only low traffic) always poses a danger to cyclists. However, many children were seen to be biking on these small roads to school or to friends in neighbouring villages (Figure 4.17.).

These facts are of importance for the development of local non-motorised tourism as it is one of the aims of the OHTG initiative. On road No 2. tourists can easily reach the area with their bicycles on top of their cars and than use the small intra-village roads for commuting with their bikes in the area. Simultaneously, this can open a possibility for locals to open bike rentals as in case of many other greenway projects (Gitelson *et al.* 1992; FCG 2007), providing an opportunity for new income generation and employment. Moreover,

when tourists use their bicycles to commute in the area they potentially also stay longer. Since the start of the OHTG initiative the STA won a tender from the HEPF for 5 bicycles which they started renting out to visitors (Pásztor pers.comm.). Among the locals of Drégelypalánk one lady also bought a few bicycles with the aim to rent it to tourists who come to the area.



Figure 4.17. Cyclists on one of the low traffic roads of the OHTG.

The results also showed that 73.4% of the respondents indicated that someone in their household is regularly cycling which showed a moderate to substantial relationship ($R = 0.307$, $p < 0.01$) with the number of children in the household. Moreover, local children and young people explained during informal conversations at the OHTG opening that with this new initiative they learned about many of the possibilities for biking in the area which they were not aware of and started to use their bicycles more frequently than before. This can already be considered as an actual success and benefit of the OHTG by enhancing a healthier life of local children and young people as it is also one of the aims of the program (HEPF 2005).

4.3.5. *Health facilities*

As shown in Table 4.1. and Figure 4.9 most of the respondents rank health facilities as neither satisfactory nor unsatisfactory (mode), with a mean of 3.47. Nevertheless, 52.5% of the respondents put health facilities among the 5 most important items to be developed (see Figure 4.10.). Interestingly, this makes health facilities together with tourism development the second most important area for development after employment (77.7%). Respondents in general said many good things about the local doctor, his proficiency and personality. What made people give it a lower grade was the fact that instead of two local doctors there is only one left now who has all the burden.

4.3.6. *Public transportation*

Public transportation is definitely seen as a problematic issue since it had the third lowest rate of satisfaction with an average grade of 3.04 (see Table 4.1.). Almost every second respondent (43.2%) also thought that it was among the five most important items from the list to be developed (Figure 4.10.). Interestingly, this makes public transportation the fourth on the priority list for development just after health facilities and tourism compared to the third lowest grade of satisfaction. This indicates that even those who might have given a better grade for public transportation gave a high priority for its development. Public transportation in the area is not very frequent but the greater problem is the connection between villages. Sometimes it can take half a day to travel between villages in close proximity because buses need to be changed with subsequent long waiting times for connections. “Sometimes it is faster to walk” (Zrubka pers.comm.). Also several bus lines were stopped and many people complain that they became cut off from the outside world (Párisné pers.comm.).

As expected the more children there were in a household the less the respondents were satisfied with the local public transportation which is shown by the low to moderate relationship between these two variables ($\tau = 0.169$, $p < 0.01$). The more children need to

reach school in a family the more they feel the problems of the public transportation network. Three in five respondents (60.4 %) indicated that they usually use their car to commute between the villages which showed a moderate to substantial relationship with the household's financial well-being ($X^2 = 60.477$, $p < 0.01$, Cramer's $V = 0.311$). At the same time, 66.6% of those who usually use their cars live without financial problems or can make ends meet if economising, while 89% of those who use public transportation can make ends meet if economising or can barely make ends meet. At the same time, there is a low to moderate relationship ($r_s = 0.274$, $p < 0.01$) between the age of respondents, the years the respondent's family has been living in the village ($\tau = 0.169$, $p < 0.01$) and their rate of satisfaction with public transportation. Similar to results concerning the road network, the older generation compares the situation today in light of the past. Some elderly explained how wonderful it is that there are so many buses and a train in the area because when they were young they didn't have all these opportunities. The train runs through all three villages and has connections to larger towns and also to the capital. However, they are very slow and are often running empty which increases the likelihood to discontinue some of these low occupancy connections as well. It can become a problem for tourists, who would like to arrive to the area with their own bicycles, that the trains are very small and there is not much place to transport their bicycles. On the other hand this might increase the demand for on-site renting. Nevertheless, installing bicycle storage units on these trains would be an important requirement. Both issues should be considered by the OHTG initiative.

Moreover, there is a significant relationship between the importance given to the development of public transportation and locals' perception about tourists using public transportation means ($X^2 = 4.795$, $p < 0.05$, $Eta = 0.189$). The more people perceive that tourists who come to the area use public transportation the more they think that it should be given priority for development. People on many occasions mentioned that better public transportation could increase the number of tourists arriving to the area. To the question

whether respondents consider it important what means of transportation tourists use, only 4% of those who answered “yes” think that it is better if tourists use public transportation because it would increase the number of passengers on trains and busses and increase the income of the transportation company. This way bus and train lines would not be stopped and maybe even further developed.

If, as a consequence of the establishment of the OHTG, more people would arrive to the area by public transportation means and then use their own bicycles or rent them on the spot, locals could both profit from new sources of income and potentially improved local public transportation as well. It is also beneficial for the environment if visitors come with public means and not with separate vehicles.

4.3.7. Tourism and employment

The rate of satisfaction with employment and tourism received the lowest average grades of all items, 2.36 and 2.65 respectively (see Table 4.1) and the most frequent scale grade received in both cases was 2. Employment (77.7%) and tourism (52.5%) are also considered as a development priority by the highest number of respondents.

The rate of satisfaction with both employment ($X^2 = 26.445$, $p < 0.01$, Cramer's $V = 0.312$) and tourism ($X^2 = 34.580$, $p < 0.01$, Cramer's $V = 0.365$) proved to be village dependent. A significant difference was found between the rate of satisfaction with employment in the respected villages of respondents' from Dejtár and Ipolyvece ($p < 0.01$) as well as Drégelypalánk and Ipolyvece ($p < 0.01$). Almost all (90%) of the respondents from Ipolyvece gave a grade of two or one for employment. This is of no surprise as this village has the fewest local work opportunities. Nevertheless, there was no significant difference between the importance given to the development of employment between the villages. This shows that even the more satisfied respondents think that employment is still the most important element to be developed. Many of the people from Drégelypalánk and Dejtár also work

outside their towns and with the majority of children living in these two villages the development of employment opportunities is similarly important for them.

Regarding tourism significant differences exist between the rate of satisfaction of respondents between the three villages. The least satisfied are those from Ipolyvece, followed by Dejtár and Drégelypalánk. Drégelypalánk possesses one of the main cultural attractions of the region, the Castle of Drégely. Every year about 8-10,000 visitors (Dombai pers.comm.) come to visit these ruins. Apart from that there are 2 churches, museums and other monuments which are worthwhile visiting in Drégelypalánk and the near surrounding. In Dejtár there are much fewer attractions than in Drégelypalánk but the village house and museum is beginning to become a local attraction. However, in Ipolyvece the two churches and the old village house don't really attract visitors. As locals said "most of the people just ride or drive through our little village". The natural and landscape endowments present the highest touristic value of the region. This is what all three villages can build or further develop their tourism potential on. As the mayor of Ipolyvece and Drégelypalánk explained, they are planning to jointly build a look-out tower for birdwatching, since during migration time there are more than 10,000 birds passing through the area. In Ipolyvece it is also the aim to bring back the "culture of berries" into the village with plans to organise a yearly 'strawberry festival'. The village would also like to restore the bridge on the Ipoly and to rebuild the small wooden bathing facility at the river side (Tóth pers. comm.). All these ideas which developed with the impetus given by the OHTG initiative are remarkable. The question is whether they will become reality and what their effect will be.

At the moment only 3.6% of the respondents stated they benefit from tourism: one respondent has an eco-farm where visitors can pet animals, another one is selling souvenirs, one guides visitors, one provides accommodation and bicycles for renting and one both guides tourists and has a small buffet where people can buy food and drinks. This indicates the low number of people participating and the correspondingly low level of income derived from

tourism. However, 16% of the respondents who do not benefit from tourism would be interested in joining some kind of tourism related activity. Almost half (41%) would like to sell their own products such as handicrafts, honey, marmalade, fruits and other kinds of biological products. One person would be interested in guiding visitors in the region and two people said that they would engage in catering and cooking for tourists. The majority (86%) would like to provide some kind of accommodation such as: renting out rooms in the house, renting their garden for campers with tents, using their land to build a small wooden house for school groups or other visitors. However, some also indicated that they would need financial help. It is noteworthy that 5 of the respondents who are interested in providing accommodation are from Dejtár since the village does not have any local accommodation option for visitors yet and they are looking for locals who would be interested in providing this service (Riskó pers.comm.). Generally, there are already a number of people who are interested in joining some kind of tourism activity and their numbers might grow once the existence of the OHTG becomes popularised.

Nevertheless all three villages see tourism development as of similar importance. While, Drégelypalánk already has a reasonable amount of tourists each year the other two villages are limited in this respect. Nevertheless, as the major of Drégelypalánk explained they would like to achieve that tourists not only come for one day, visit the castle and leave immediately after it. They would like visitors to stay for a long weekend, or a few days, visit other attractions and sleep over in the area, eat the local food, buy the local products etc (Dombai pers.comm.). For that the local members of the STA need to develop program packages about different routes and possibilities for tourists how to spend their time along the OHTG including accommodation and meals. These have to be developed with great care and consensus since, as it is a cooperation between nine villages, none should feel underprivileged. If the participants with comparative advantage reap most of the fruits of this

initiative this can lead to the contestation of engagement by others and the break-up of the cooperation which can potentially doom the whole initiative (Edwards 1998; Li 2002).

It is often the case that rural communities have strong positive perceptions and high expectations concerning the effect of tourism development on the local economy. However, this initial enthusiasm can abruptly decrease if the envisioned effects are not felt early enough or as soon “as a threshold level of development was reached” (Getz and Jamal 1995, 194). It has to be born in mind that tourism is not a cure for all economic problems of these villages. The OHTG initiative, as one of its aims, should attract visitors to the area, but local people need to understand that such developments don’t happen one day after the other, maybe not even during the lifetime of a follow up evaluation (Bellamy *et al.* 2001). Some of the local organisers are well aware of this fact. Similarly they don’t expect crowds of tourists to arrive to the area either, but only those who would like to experience nature, clean air, the peacefulness of the area as well as the local culture and heritage (Géringer pers.comm.; Riskó pers.comm.). They don’t want tourism to develop at the expense of nature, cultural heritage and the local people’s peace (Riskó pers.comm). This is an important point since for tourism development to be sustainable it should not exceed the carrying capacity of the economic, natural and socio-cultural environment as that would negatively impact the whole community and the initiative itself since all elements within this system are closely interrelated (Getz and Jamal 1995).

Similar to Murphy’s (1988) ecosystem approach, also in this case the visitors of the community based tourism destination should interact with the living (e.g. hosts) and non-living (e.g. sunshine and landscape) components to experience a tourism product. However, to achieve this, a prerequisite is to provide not only the “attractions” themselves but also services such as accommodation, transportation etc. Some of the local organisers also know that this won’t happen overnight but only slowly and step-by-step (Riskó pers.comm.; Pásztor pers.comm.). Further, the local organisers are aware of the fact that none of them is an expert

in the tourism field (Riskó pers.comm.). It also has to be noted that even though the OHTG tourism development approach is an integrated one, encompassing social, environmental and economic goals alike, serving tourists is a for profit undertaking where the “product is not for community consumption but which will require the community to be part of what is consumed” (Joppe 1996, 476). Nevertheless, while moving towards this goal the other benefits of the initiative have to be kept in mind as well such as enhancing nature protection, local cultural and heritage protection (including the culture and sale of local products), local social relations and cooperation. All these potential benefits are at the same time assets as well as prerequisites of rural revitalisation and local community based tourism development.

4.4. The OHTG and attitudes of local communities

Up to now the general needs and potential of local communities has been discussed in light of the potential benefits or problems encountered by the OHTG initiative. In this section the knowledge and attitudes of the respondents towards the initiative will be discussed.

4.4.1. General acquaintance with the OHTG

Only 33.8% of respondents (47 people) did not know about the OHTG. However, of these 61.7% have seen the new information boards in the villages but either did not read them thoroughly or were not aware that they dealt with the OHTG. Similarly 53.2% of the people who didn't know about the OHTG heard about the opening bicycle tour.

Encouragingly, 66.2% of respondents knew about the local OHTG: 69.4% of respondents from Dejtár, 71.7% from Drégelypalánk and 50% from Ipolyvece. This is an important achievement taking into consideration that the initiative is a very young one. When respondents were asked earlier if they are aware of what is happening in the surrounding villages 66.9% indicated that they ‘usually’ know, 24.5% said ‘not really’ and only 8.6% said ‘no’. As shown in Figure 4.18, there is a strong relationship between the awareness of people

about what is happening in their area and their knowledge about the greenway initiative ($X^2 = 26.606$, $p < 0.01$, $\Phi = 0.429$). Interestingly, even those who indicated that they are generally less or not familiar with what is happening in the other villages knew about the initiative (see Figure 4.18). This shows that the local leaders and the members of the Sugárkankalin Tourism Association did a good work in communicating the project.

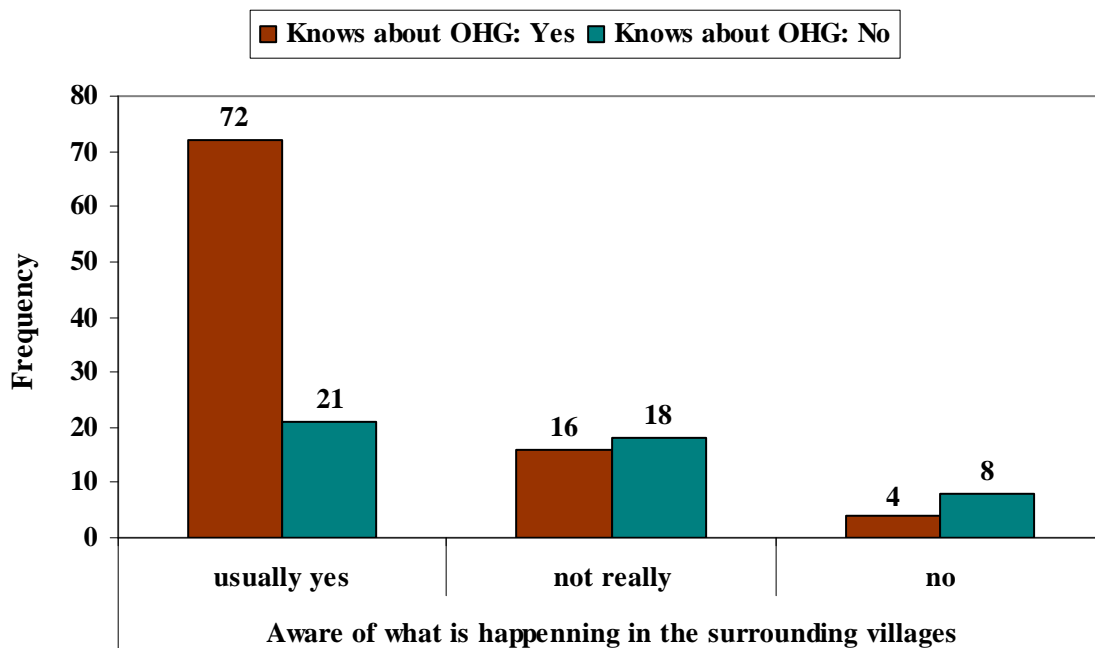


Figure 4.18. Relationship between respondents being aware of what is happening in the surrounding villages and their knowledge about the OHTG.

Similarly interesting were the responses to the knowledge question under the tourism section of the questionnaire where respondents were asked whether they know of any kind of cooperation between the surrounding villages related to tourism. Almost half (42.4%, $n = 59$) of the respondents said they did and among the answers were the following: ‘the greenway’ (20.3%); ‘the OHTG’ (5%); ‘the Sugárkankalin tourism association’ (15.3%); the name of different villages who cooperate (11.8%); ‘the annual village day’ (5%); ‘the choir’ (5%). Thus, of the total number of respondents who knew about the local greenway ($n = 92$) 33.7%⁷

⁷ ‘the greenway’ (20.3%) + ‘the OHTG’ (5%) + ‘the Sugárkankalin Tourism Association’ (15.3%) + the name of different villages who cooperate (11.8%) = 52.4 % ($n = 59$); $59 * 0.524 = 31$; $31/92 = 33.7\%$

have an active knowledge about the initiative since they mentioned it before the topic of the OHTG was brought up in the questionnaire.

Both respondents' knowledge about tourism related cooperation in the area ($X^2 = 15.721$, $p < 0.01$, $\Phi = 0.336$) and their awareness about what is happening in the surrounding villages ($\gamma = -0.278$, $p < 0.05$) was significantly related to their level of education. Thus, it is of no surprise that an association was found between respondents' level of education and their acquaintance with the OHTG initiative ($X^2 = 8.614$, $p < 0.05$, $\Phi = 0.249$). About every second (54.3%) respondent who knew about the greenway had a tertiary or high school degree, while only 15% had elementary education. Since most of the respondents who have only completed elementary education are elderly people the initiative should try and better inform these people. They could be informed at local elderly clubs and by posting notices at the local doctor's clinic, the post office and/or the church information board. The older generations have also much to offer and to contribute to initiatives of this kind. They have been living in the area for the longest time and have much to tell about old traditions and local heritage (Figure 4.19.).



Figure 4.19. An elderly inhabitant from one of the villages along the OHTG explaining about the old traditions of his village.

Figure 4.20. shows that many of the respondents (36%) indicated they have heard about the local greenway from the information boards placed in all villages of the OHTG. Most of them were put outside in the near past. This might also be an explanation for the passive knowledge of some people as they only saw or read something about the local greenway while passing the local information boards. A high number of respondents heard of the greenway from friends or family. Thus, much information spreads from mouth to mouth as is common in small rural villages.

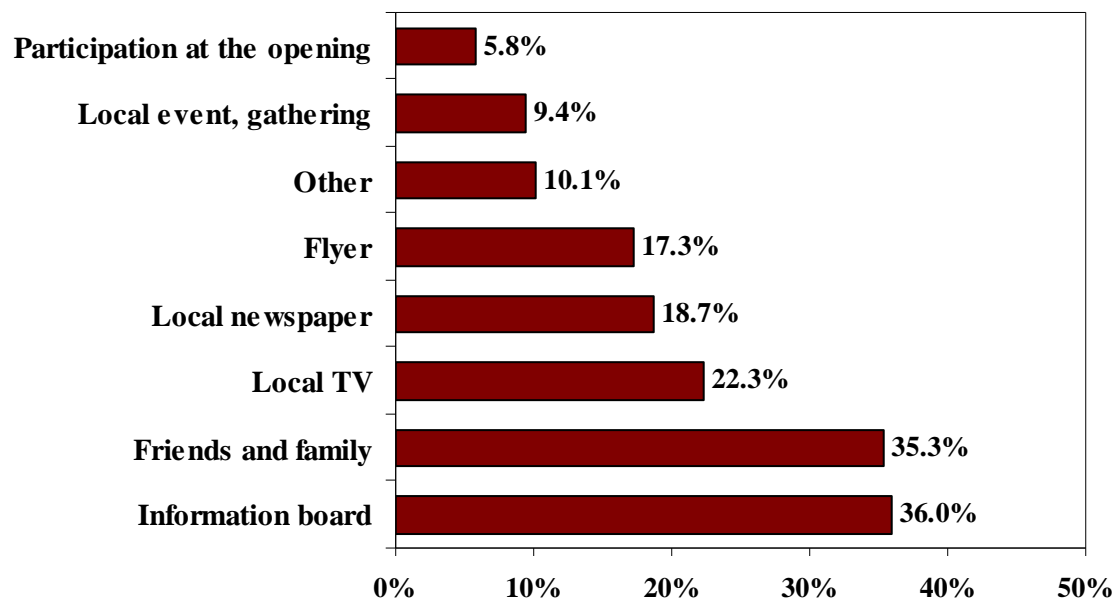


Figure 4.20. Sources for respondents' acquaintance with OHTG, n = 92

The indication of local TV ($X^2 = 6.227$, $p < 0.05$, Cramer's $V = 0.260$), local newspaper ($X^2 = 6.400$, $p < 0.05$, Cramer's $V = 0.264$), flyer ($X^2 = 11.463$, $p < 0.01$, Cramer's $V = 0.353$) and information board ($X^2 = 6.393$, $p < 0.05$, Cramer's $V = 0.264$) as sources of information was found to be village dependent⁸. While in Ipolyvece most of the people indicated to have heard about the OHTG from the local information board (80%) and flyer (40%), in Dejtár and Drégelypalánk it was rather the local TV, local newspaper and the information boards which dominated as a source of information (Figure 4.21.). Thus, potentially respondents from

⁸ More than one answer was possible for this question, thus some people indicated more than one source of information.

Ipolyvece have less detailed knowledge about the initiative since on several occasions respondents who indicated to have heard about the OHTG from the local information board did not read it thoroughly but rather just had a glance at it. As expected, a significant relationship exists between respondents who learned about the greenway at a local event or gathering and their membership in a community organisation ($X^2 = 10.379$, $p < 0.01$, Cramer's $V = 0.336$) since it is these people who primarily participate in local events. Only 8.7% of respondents who knew about the greenway participated in the opening bicycle tour without any significant difference between villages. From those who indicated an 'other' source of information, the majority said that they helped in organising the opening (28.6%), others heard about it through the village loudspeakers (21.4%), there were some who indicated to have seen the cyclists on the opening day, while some from the radio.



Figure 4.21. The OHTG information board in Ipolyvece.

Only 15.2% of respondents who knew about the OHTG said that they know it well and have a lot of information about the initiative. The level of knowledge about the initiative was strongly related to the source of knowledge. Not surprisingly those who participated in the opening ($X^2 = 24.272$, $p < 0.01$, $\Phi = 0.514$), or learned about the OHTG during some local event or gathering ($X^2 = 11.230$, $p < 0.01$, $\Phi = 0.349$) knew most about the initiative. Also

interesting is the association between respondents' level of knowledge and their membership in some community organisation ($X^2 = 8.412$, $p < 0.01$, $\Phi = 0.303$). It is understandable that those people who are active in the community know most about local initiatives. Since much information is spread interpersonally there is a potential that people also learn about the OHTG who are less active members of the community. In addition, leaders and active members of the initiative acting as village managers, following the example of a community based initiative in the Zselic region of Hungary, could undertake surveys and visit local families to map local potential and give them the chance to propose their own ideas and programs that could form part of the OHTG (Griffiths *et al.* 2004).

Encouragingly, also a significant relationship ($p < 0.01$) was found between the participation of respondents in different types of nature protection activities and their level of knowledge about the initiative. Most of those who participate in activities related to nature protection know the initiative well. On many occasions they also indicated how much they sympathise with it and most are also involved in the initiative in one way or another. Thus, there is a good chance that nature protection will stay an important element of the OHTG. As it was the case earlier, none of those respondents with elementary education or less (mostly pensioners, elderly people in the sample) know much about the OHTG. Thus, again, it has to be underlined that this generation of local inhabitants should not be forgotten either.

Interestingly, even though of the 92 respondents who knew about the OHTG initiative only 15.2% indicated that they knew the initiative well, 14.1% could list all 9 and 47.8% some of the villages participating in the program. As expected, the highest number of respondents mentioned the three surveyed villages Dejtár (57.9%), Drégelypalánk (56.1%) and Ipolyvece (59.6%), closely followed by Nagyoroszi (54.3%), Hont (43.8%) and Patak (35%) (see Section 3.: Figure 3.2.). Thus, the farther the village is from the respondent's own settlement the less they tend to know about it. Consequently, Borsosberény (19.3%), Horpács (17.5%) and Pusztaberki (3.5%) were mentioned by the lowest number of respondents.

Nevertheless, the numbers already show the developing regional knowledge of local people which also helps the development of social relations in the area. Nevertheless, if tourist packages are to be developed that include all 9 villages there should be further efforts to communicate the OHTG. As mentioned earlier, events such as the opening bicycle tour provide a great push, nevertheless, on-going programs and continuous informing and increased stakeholder involvement is very important so that long-term links between villages and people of the area can be established.

4.4.2. Potential or perceived advantages and disadvantages of the OHTG

Overall, 91.3% of respondents who know about the initiative said that they liked it and the remaining of respondents said that they either didn't know (4.3%) or that the initiative was neutral to them (4.3%).

Only 8.7% of the respondents who knew about the OHTG said they don't know what advantages the initiative could have. Interestingly, most of the respondents who knew about the OHTG said that the perceived or potential advantage of the OHTG was local community development (64.1%), closely followed by tourism development (63%) (Table 4.2.).

Table 4.2. Potential or perceived advantages of the OHTG, n = 92

Potential or perceived advantage of OHTG	Yes
Community development	64.1%
Tourism development	63.0%
Makes village known in far away places	56.5%
Culture and heritage protection	54.3%
Nature protection	47.8%
Strengthening local community pride	37.0%
Transportation development	21.7%
Support of local producers and products	19.6%
Employment opportunities	19.6%
Don't know	8.7%

As noted by Bridger and Luloff (1999), for successful locally controlled initiatives viable communities are a prerequisite. If local communities are developing, and will develop with the help of this initiative, also the development of tourism has real prospect. Thus, the order with which the potential or perceived advantages appear is promising. The fact that only 19.6% of respondents think the initiative has the potential to support local producers and products indicates that this is an area which still needs to be fostered but, as seen in Section 3.2, also has a lot of potential. The low rate of responses received for 'new employment opportunities' is positive in the sense that people don't have too high economic expectations and still like the initiative. Therefore, even if only social, environmental and cultural benefits can be derived from the OHTG locals will still potentially support the program. Since tourism development along greenways goes together with culture and heritage (54.3%) as well as nature protection (47.8%) both of these items received a high percentage of responses. Also the OHTG opening bicycle tour stressed the importance of culture and heritage as well as nature protection both of which are considered important by locals (see Section 4.3.1 and 4.3.3.). The OHTG gave a strong push to raise the awareness of people about their environment, their culture and heritage and the importance of protecting them (Riskó pers.comm.).

Apart from the listed items in Table 4.2., 39 respondents also mentioned other advantages the OHTG does or can potentially have. About one quarter (25.6%) said that it enhances community cohesion between and within villages, 10.3% that it gives additional sport opportunities for people, 10.3% that it enhances healthy lifestyle, 7.7% that it helps making new friends, 7.7% that it enhances the development of villages. A few people also mentioned that it is good for children and parents alike because young people will do something useful, others said it will lead to the beautification of the area and that applications for grants will be facilitated. All of these potential advantages are among the real aims of the

initiative. Moreover, 45.7% of respondents said that with the establishment of the local greenway more people from their household will cycle.

When these 92 respondents were asked about potential problems or costs of the OHTG, 87% said that they don't see any potential problem or cost the initiative could have. Some also added that 'something like this can only be good'. The remaining 13% mentioned the following potential disadvantages and problems of the initiative: littering and environmental damage caused by visitors; the disturbance caused by high numbers of tourists; the risk of the initiative getting into the wrong hands. Some of these respondents also said that they cannot really answer this question at such an early stage.

The majority (85.9%) of the 92 respondents who knew about the OHTG said that the initiative addresses local inhabitants, 68.5% thought it targets tourists, 46.7% that it addresses village leaders. As expected, an association was found between those respondents who said that the initiative addresses tourists and those who considered tourism development ($X^2 = 12.598$, $p < 0.01$, $\Phi = 0.378$) as well as their village becoming known in far away places ($X^2 = 8.775$, $p < 0.01$, $\Phi = 0.323$) among the advantages of the OHTG. Respondents could choose more than one answer and there was only one person who thought that the initiative would address village leaders only. In general every respondent indicated at least two answers and many three. Other groups the initiative addresses according to 14.1% of the respondents are young people, nature, the whole country, people living in the area or just simply everybody. Two people indicated that they had no idea who the initiative addresses. It is an important result that almost all of the respondents see the OHTG as an initiative that will benefit all members of the local community.

It is generally very important to make transparent and explicit the rationale of an initiative so that local communities will understand how and where they can potentially benefit and contribute. At the same time, it also helps researchers to monitor change and evaluate progress and impact of a program (Bellamy *et al.* 2001). As it seems the members of

the Sugárkankalin Tourism Association have been doing a positive and noticeable work in this respect.

4.4.3 Willingness to support the OHTG

From the 92 respondents who know about the OHTG, 82.6% indicated that they would support the initiative by advertising and popularising it, 70.7% would support it with their signature, 60.9% with their work and 8.8% with 'other' than those mentioned. As expected the lowest number of people (23.9%) would provide financial support, nevertheless, this percentage can still be considered encouraging. While no important association could be found between respondents' offer to support the initiative with their signature or by popularising it and any other related variable, the case was different with work- and financial support.

A significant moderate to substantial relationship was found between respondents' level of education and their willingness to financially support the initiative ($X^2 = 15.251$, $p < 0.01$, Cramer's $V = 0.407$). The higher the level of education the more people are willing to give financial support: 50% have tertiary education; 27.3% high school degree; 9% finished a vocational school and 13.6% finished elementary school or less. This is of no surprise since financial well being is closely related to education. Even if no significant statistical association could be found between household financial well being and the willingness to financially support the OHTG the numbers still indicate this relationship. From those who would financially support the OHTG 13.6% have no financial problems, 63.6% can make ends meet well if economising and 22.7% can barely make ends meet. Nevertheless, even among those respondents who are less well off, there are some who would offer their financial support showing that not only educated and financially better situated people see the benefits of the initiative but also the less privileged respondents. The willingness to provide financial support also proved to be closely related the level of knowledge respondents have about the

OHTG ($X^2 = 14.793$, $p < 0.01$, Cramer's $V = 0.401$). The more people knew about the initiative the more they tended to offer financial support for it. Therefore, with more awareness building work by the OHTG leaders, the initiative can potentially find more people who would financially support it.

As for support in the form of work, respondents who already participate in activities such as litter collection were found to offer this kind of help ($X^2 = 4.041$, $p < 0.05$, $\Phi = 0.210$). This is important information since this way environmentally conscious people would be involved in the program and the initiative's nature protection role could be enhanced. A significant relationship was found between respondents who are interested in joining a tourism related activity and their willingness to help the initiative with their work ($X^2 = 4.481$, $p < 0.05$, $\Phi = 0.227$). Moreover, as mentioned earlier, 36.4% of those respondents who are interested in joining tourism related activities also participate in litter collection programs. Association was found between perceived and potential advantages of the OHTG and the willingness to support the initiative with work. Those who think that the OHTG will make their village and the area reknown in far away places ($X^2 = 7.912$, $p < 0.01$, $\Phi = 0.307$) and those who see enhanced nature ($X^2 = 5.688$, $p < 0.05$, $\Phi = 0.260$) or local culture and heritage protection ($X^2 = 6.052$, $p < 0.05$, $\Phi = 0.268$) as an advantage of the initiative were generally found to offer this kind of help. Therefore, it can be said that most of the people who know about the initiative not only like or see the potential benefits of it but are also willing to support it in different ways.

4.4.4. Acquaintance with and opinion about the Sugárkankalin Tourism Association (STA)

The STA can be regarded as an umbrella organisation whose aim is the development and support of the OHTG and local communities. It is one of those collaborative and self-regulating bodies which form deliberately and have several functions such as: providing

leadership and directions, infrastructural support through jointly applying for grants and the appreciation of issues and trends throughout the region (Getz and Jamal 1995). Most of the other greenway initiatives in CEE established organisations of this kind such as *The Partnership for the Bochnia Region* (Polish part of the ATG) which was established by farmers, civic groups, agrotourism and environmental associations, local governments, schools etc (Griffiths *et al.* 2004). A similar organisation which developed from the grassroots level is the *Craigmillier Festival Society in Edinburgh* (UK) which arose spontaneously in a low income area of the city. The organisation not only tries to sustain various arts but also became an umbrella organisation dealing with community and tourism development in general (Triest 1979, 1983).

From the survey only 19.4% of all respondents knew about the STA and they make up 26.1% of those respondents who knew about the OHTG. Thus, almost all respondents who know about the STA also know about the OHTG. However, most of the respondents who know about the OHTG don't know about the association (74%). Yet, early involvement of relevant stakeholders is very important because without them the initiative might not go in the planned direction (Bellamy *et al.* 2001). Once again a significant relationship was found between the respondents' level of education and their awareness of the association ($X^2 = 34.494$, $p < 0.01$, Cramer's $V = 0.498$). Also in this case it is necessary to address other levels of the community and not only the intellectual elite. This is especially the case when the aim of rural revitalisation should involve uplifting the less privileged members of rural society who have the potential but are unable to stand up on their own. Potential is an important factor since stakeholders need to have a level of legitimacy in order to become involved in local initiatives (Bellamy *et al.* 2001). Three of the five respondents who benefit from tourism know about the STA, thus also in this case there are some people for whom it would be important to know and to contribute to activities of the association. Therefore, increased

information of local inhabitants about the STA should be sought. Even if many people won't join the organisation they should know where to turn to with new ideas or complaints.

There is also a significant relationship between respondents' acquaintance with the association and their membership in local community organisations ($X^2 = 8.848$, $p < 0.01$, $\Phi = 0.252$). About half (55.6%) of the respondents who know about the association are members in a local community organisation. It is important that the information also extends beyond the circle of members of local organisations. Nevertheless, it has to be underlined that both the association and the initiative are very young and all the results have to be evaluated in light of this. Therefore, the results till date are remarkable and these recommendations are aimed at helping the continuity of the initiative's success. Encouragingly, 55% of respondents who participate in some kind of activity connected to nature protection know about the association.

Most of the people who know about the STA are aware that it is a cooperation between villages in the area and also think that this kind of cooperation is important. This is shown by the significant relationship between those respondents who know about ($X^2 = 13.721$, $p < 0.01$, $\Phi = 0.314$) and find cooperation in the area important ($X^2 = 8.591$, $p < 0.05$, Cramer's $V = 0.249$) and their acquaintance with the association. Moreover, 48.1% of respondents who knew about the STA indicated that the association informs locals about their activities. About two in five (37%) said that locals only get informed sometimes and 14.8% indicated that the association does not inform locals about their activities.

The majority (70.4%) of the respondents who knew about the STA thought the organisation did represent community interests, 22.2% said it did partly and 7.4% thought it did not. This is an important positive result because leaders of the initiative and members of the association need to have empathy for a wide scope of local conditions and be able to identify obstacles and forces for development as well as have motivation and leadership ability (Barker 2005). The STA comprises local community members and the local

government. The local members are from many backgrounds and are, therefore, able to represent diverse and numerous viewpoints which, until now, proved to be a strength of the association and the OHTG initiative. However, anybody can join who is interested and would like to work on community development and the OHTG initiative.

5. Conclusions

In the previous chapter the potential of the OHTG initiative to provide responses to local needs, promote local capabilities/potential and opportunities in the three studied villages was assessed. For that people's perceived needs and their attitudes towards the initiative were examined as well. In the current chapter the most important conclusions of the analysis carried out in the scope of the thesis are drawn. The aim is to analyse the actual as well as the potential benefits and challenges of the 'On Our Heritage Trail Greenway' initiative to local communities in the three studied villages. Based on this recommendations for the future development of the OHTG are outlined.

5.1. The OHTG initiative and the revitalisation of three rural communities

5.1.1. The actual benefits of the OHTG to local communities

Even though community based initiatives usually don't show immediate benefits the research found that the OHTG already has produced some.

- The initiative brought together the mayors and locals of neighbouring communities who had no strong ties or scarcely knew one another. By now they closely cooperate in various fields even outside the OHTG (e.g. joint management of school by Drégelypalánk and Dejtár; planned lookout tower for birdwatching by Drégelypalánk and Ipolvece). The interdependence between local communities was recognised.
- The planning of the route of the OHTG, the location of signs and the organisation of the opening event suddenly made a number of different stakeholders work closely together: from environmentalists, to local government, local businesses and community members (reduced geographic & social isolation).
- Local leadership and responsibility was developed on a volunteer basis with activists from various backgrounds (school and kindergarten teachers, head of community house, housewives, mayors, local entrepreneurs etc.) ensuring/helping long term commitment and

representation of various community interests (as also expressed by respondents). The Sugárkankalin Tourism Association became the organisation promoting this partnership and the OHTG initiative.

- Within the framework of the OHTG and the support of the HEPPF local people got the chance and started to experiment with new ideas and initiatives.
- The initiative helped to start mending disrupted local traditions as well as social ties within and between communities. Hereby, helping to define cultural and natural values as well as promote a sense of belonging and local identity.
- Young people, as they learned more about the surrounding area and the possibilities for cycling, started using their bicycles more frequently. Hereby also re-awakening their interest in other villages and enhancing a healthier lifestyle.

5.1.2. Potential benefits of the OHTG initiative to local communities

The analysis found employment and tourism development to be the two most important perceived local needs. However, it has to be borne in mind that tourism is not necessarily a cure for all problems of employment. Nevertheless, the region has a high potential for small scale tourism development which is also a long term aim of the OHTG initiative. As the leaders of the initiative are working on linking people and places, to highlight local traditions and identity and make locals interested in their own natural and cultural heritage they are doing the first steps towards this development. Those who indicated to be interested in local self employment can get the chance to become involved in some tourism related activity. Since the OHTG supports the use of non motorized means of transportation the establishment of bike rentals and connected services are a potential option. Consequently, visitors may also stay longer and not simply drive through. Moreover, these visitors will need accommodation and food; another potential source for local people to engage in economic activity in their region. The analysis revealed that some locals already

started to engage in, while others potentially can and are also interested to embark on, tourism related activities (such as renting out rooms, guiding and cooking for visitors). However, for the time being tourism is still primarily restricted to one day visits. To diversify local economic activity through the development of small-scale community based tourism poses several challenges but also opportunities for the future.

Connected to tourism the OHTG initiative could also help local product development. With the collapse of local agricultural production and the dominance of cheap imports the long lasting tradition of growing berries and stone fruits lost importance. Nevertheless, the quality of these local fruits and fruit based products gives this region an important comparative advantage. Most of the people still grow fruits in their garden but mainly for self-sufficiency. Similar is the case of fruit based products. Many people indicated that they would increase their production if it would be worth it. However, the problem in general is also the lack of initiative. The OHTG could help and promote the production and sale of these high quality heritage products in two ways. Firstly, as the initiative enhances community relations and cohesion both within and between villages, local producers get to know one another better. With proper management and cooperation aided/supported by local leaders, the local government and the HEPF, these producers could jointly promote and market their products. Secondly, the development of local small scale tourism can become a vehicle for promoting not only local fruit and fruit-based but also other local products. The initiative can help people to help themselves. Integrating the tradition of high quality heritage products into the program of the OHTG could bring benefits to both the local economy and traditions while preserving the revived nature as long as production is kept at a sustainable level.

The OHTG also has the potential to address the needs of local communities concerning public transportation which was given a high importance by the great majority. On the one hand, children can avoid the cumbersome transfers by using their bicycles. On the

other hand, its development can be enhanced if an increased number of tourists arrive to the area by public means.

Although locals generally show a high rate of satisfaction with nature protection, there is still a number of people who think it is important to further develop it. Nature is the biggest value of the region. Local leaders from the OHTG initiative work on raising the awareness of people as well as deepening the knowledge about the environment surrounding them and the importance of protecting it. Programs such as the OHTG opening bicycle tour and the support of non motorized means of transportation aid this process, especially with its strong effect on children. Moreover, a number of people would be interested in joining local activities connected to nature protection, such as litter collection, if they would be informed about such programs. As nature protection is a vital part of any greenway initiative such programs could become an integrated part of the OHTG. At the same time the research also showed that local tourism development and nature protection can potentially reinforce one another.

Since the start of the OHTG initiative a major effort was put on local culture and heritage protection. Apart from the short term benefits to local communities (see Section 5.5.1) it was found to be both a prerequisite for community based tourism development but can also become reinforced by it.

The analysis showed that a surprisingly high number of people know about the local greenway initiative. Except for transportation development and the support of local products and producers, most perceived the OHTG to potentially yield the above mentioned benefits, in addition to a number of others.

In general all of the above mentioned elements have the potential to enrich local people's lives, especially that of the young, and to enhance a more stable demographic structure (e.g. counterbalancing the trend of out-migration).

5.1.3. Challenges and potential problems

There is no rose without a thorn and from this the OHTG initiative is not an exception either. The more educated members of the community and those who are members of some local organisation proved to be more acquainted and to have the highest level of knowledge about the OHTG initiative. If this will not change in the long run and the initiative will also not reach other members of the community rural revitalisation will be restricted to a small local elite. This way some groups whose participation might be crucial are likely to be excluded from the process (Bridger and Luloff 1999). For example, the potential of developing local heritage products might come from anywhere within the community – their promotion depends on the involvement of broader sphere of the local society. Moreover, since the analysis showed that locals with higher education also have a higher well-being there is a danger that instead of supporting the less privileged members of the local community the economic benefits will also stay among the local elites.

Although locals generally see tourism to be beneficial from both economic, social and environmental point of view (especially that the OHTG aims to attract soft ‘green’ tourism), there is always a danger of increased visitation producing adverse effects. Since the local population has not seen many tourists in the region up till now and are, therefore, not experienced in this field, increased visitation can still hold a number of unexpected challenges and problems (e.g. increased littering, vandalism, loss of privacy and tranquillity). These costs and problems will have to be supported by the whole community and not only those who will directly benefit from tourism. Similarly, there is always a danger that economic interests outweigh the environmental protection message (Barker 2005). If, as a consequence the environment loses its attractiveness, visitation will also slow down. A cycle of negative reinforcement develops and sustainability will be, as it happens so often, little more than a placate and a romantic longing.

External support (NGO, government), as shown in the studies of Guaraldo (1996) and Nel and Binns (2000), also proved to have a key role in the functioning and further development of the OHTG initiative. Both technical and financial (e.g. micro-grants) support are still necessary for the success of the OHTG. The study for example showed that locals' involvement in tourism related activities in most cases is also dependent on financial support (e.g. to renovate rooms, barn). At this stage, without continuous inputs the initiative might remain only a short-term upheaval and all the achievements until now will have no permanence.

The study showed that the three villages do not start off with the same means, possibilities and endowments. Especially, Ipolyvece is lagging behind the two other villages in various respects (e.g. perceived well-being of locals, employment, local social relations, local culture and heritage, knowledge about the OHTG initiative). While some communities need more support, other might need less. There is always a danger of envy if one village will feel unprivileged and left out or some villages will develop more than others which might as well result in the break-up of/endanger the cooperation. These factors have to be born in mind for the further development and long term success of the initiative.

5.2. Recommendations

Below are some recommendations for the future development of the OHTG:

- *Reach a broader range of the local population.* The information about the initiative should also reach the elderly population of the villages. With their knowledge about old times and traditions and their affection for their countryside they also have much to contribute to the initiative.
- *Make sure that the knowledge about local initiatives extends beyond the circles of local community organisations.* People who are members of local community organisations proved to have the highest level of knowledge about the OHTG and local events in

general. They should help to inform less active community members about the greenway initiative.

- *Provide more information and detailed knowledge about the initiative so that people will understand the complexity and real potential of the OHTG and the STA.* Even though the majority of respondents are aware of the OHTG initiative their level of knowledge is in many cases only passive or superficial. By devoting special attention to explain to locals the purpose and aims of the initiative and the STA they will understand whether they can and want to participate in the initiative. Moreover, locals of these small remote rural villages need more time to open up towards new ideas and developments.
- *Organise activities connected to nature protection (e.g. litter collection) on a frequent basis and devote special attention to inform locals about them.* Those who are interested to participate in events of this kind should not stay out/away due to insufficient dissemination of information.
- *Encourage people to express their ideas, needs and problems in connection to the OHTG.* Also encourage those showing interest to join the work of the STA.
- *Promote and encourage the development of local heritage products.* First of all, those people who would be interested in developing their own products need to be identified. The sale of these products in stores, the school and kindergarten canteens could present a starting point. Including the consumption of local gastronomic products in future tourist packages would be another step. Later on, initiating the establishment of a regional brand could also be a vehicle for the promotion of local heritage products. At the same time a distribution system could be built up with interested community members for market sale.
- *Develop tourist packages with great consensus* among local leaders of different villages. No village should feel unprivileged or left out in future developments. In case of villages such as Ipolyvece their lower comparative advantage should be handled as a starting point for development rather than a reason for less attention.

- *Be prepared for potential adverse affects of tourism development.* Local leaders and members of the STA association as well as the local community in general have to be prepared to avoid potential or counteract emerging problems (e.g. inform tourists about the importance of respecting the local living and non-living environment and local inhabitants, be ready to collect litter around villages)
- *Ensure continuity of inputs* both in form of external support and organisation of small events and initiatives (e.g. education programs for all age groups, fairs, bicycle tours) in order to ensure the slow but steady involvement of people and success of the initiative. If initiatives are isolated from each other no integrated vision, shared by the broader community, can develop.
- *It should become a general understanding that OHTG is part of larger greenway network.* All around Hungary new regions that start to show interest in and also develop their own greenway. Furthermore, many other CEE countries have and are developing their greenway system. This network opens opportunities for regional and crossborder cooperation, for exchanging experiences and sharing knowledge. The sense of being part of larger international network can also act as a strong motivating factor.
- *Devote special attention to a dynamic and active form of community participation* in order to be able to adjust to new developments within the community as well as changing social, economic and environmental perceptions (e.g. changing local government, new investments, changing regulations of the NP).

Since some issues were either beyond the scope of the study or could not be addressed in an adequate manner due to time constraints there is much room left for further studies. Below, some recommendations for follow up research:

- *Investigation is needed about the Roma population's potential role and relation to the initiative.* Not only in the three studied villages but also in the other six, the Roma form an

integral part of the local population. An additional study would be needed to evaluate the needs and views of this local minority and to see how they could be made interested and integrated into the initiative (potentially helping their integration into the local community as well).

- *Targeting young people* (also under 18) in further research is especially recommended as they present one of the most important target groups of the initiative and they have a crucial role in restoring a more stable demographic structure.
- *The same or a similar research should also be conducted in the other six villages of the OHTG.*
- *Going back to the communities three or five years later* and determining how much has changed and achieved since the completion of the current study would be beneficial not only to the communities involved in the OHTG but also those who consider undertaking a similar initiative (were the potential benefits realised, are there any new achievements, did any problems occur, did the communities attitude towards the initiative change etc.). The baseline information provided by the current analysis can be used as a framework to guide future evaluation and the achievements over time will provide a base to understand outcome change patterns.

The OHTG links together community based natural and cultural initiatives and connects them into a larger integrated whole. While top-down large scale projects often don't use local and external resources for rural development in an effective way these small scale initiatives can involve everyone and start dealing with the problems faced by the region. However, these developments can only be achieved in small steps and in response to local needs. Following Roseland's (2000) advice for a sustainable future it is important that local people become more perceptive and realise what they have, what they need and what the long term consequences of their short term choices are.

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APPENDICES

Appendix A.

List of interviewees

Name	Position	Village	Date
Gábor Dombai	Mayor and member of STA	Drégelypalánk	15 th May 2007
Péter Géringer	Danube-Ipoly National Park Directorate: Head of Börzsöny natural protected area	Drégelypalánk	15 th May 2007
Ildikó Pásztor	Head of community centre and member of STA working group	Drégelypalánk	May-July 2007
Ágnes Párisné dr Szabó	Notary	Drégelypalánk	15 th May 2007
Júlia Dobos	School director and member of STA working group	Ipolyvece	May-July 2007
József Tóth	Mayor and member of STA	Ipolyvece	15 th May 2007
József Balga	Mayor and member of STA	Dejtár	15 th May 2007
Magdolna Riskóné-Nagy	Kindergarden director, organiser of the local traditional costume and heritage group, member of STA working group	Dejtár	May-July 2007
Zrubka Beatrix	Guesthouse owner and member of STA working group	Horpács	14 th April 2007
Krisztina Budai	HEPF: national greenway program coordinator	Budapest	May-July 2007

Appendix B.: Questionnaire for local communities (English + Hungarian)

Code _____

Questionnaire

Hello, my name is _____! This questionnaire is part of an independent research that is being conducted for the purpose of a Master thesis at the Central European University. The aim of this survey is to gather your personal opinion about a local initiative that concerns your village and the surrounding villages as well as your opinion about related questions concerning local economy, nature, culture and society. Your household was selected randomly and all the enclosed information is kept strictly confidential. The questionnaire was developed solely for scientific and educational purposes and will take less than half an hour. I would very much appreciate your participation in this study. Thank you..... For any further information about the research please contact: Agnes Kirschenbaum, tel: _____

1. Village _____

2. Gender

- 1) M
- 2) F

3. Please indicate your age group:

- 1) 18-29
- 2) 30-39
- 3) 40-49
- 4) 50-59
- 5) 60 years or over

4. What is the total number of people currently living in your household?

- 1) Number of adults (≥ 18 years) _____
- 2) Number of children (< 18 years) _____

5. How long has your family been living in this village?

.....years

6. What is the highest level of education you have completed?

- 1) none
- 2) maximum 8 years of primary school
- 3) vocational school
- 4) high school
- 5) university/college

7. What is your current employment status?

- 1) student
- 2) working for an employer
- 3) self employed
- 4) farmer
- 5) pensioner
- 6) unemployed
- 7) other (specify) (e.g. housewife, inactive earner (living from renting out apartment or room, or from existing assets)

8. Do you generally feel that your (members of your) household:

- 1) lives without financial problems
- 2) can make ends meet quite well if economising
- 3) can barely make ends meet
- 4) has months after months financial problems
- 5) lives under hardship and deprivation
- 9) don't know
- 99) don't want to answer

9. Do u have a garden (or land under cultivation)?

- 1) Yes
- 2) No

IF YES:

10. What do you use your garden or land for?

	1) yes 2) no
1. growing crops	
2. vegetable garden	
3. orchard	
4. forest (silviculture)	
5. vineyard	
6. other (specify).....	
.....	
9. I own land but do not use it myself	

11. Does anyone from your household produce agricultural-, home products or handicrafts from local raw materials, as for example:

11a. Do you sell any of these products, as for example:

	11.	11.a
	1) yes 2) no 9) doesn't produce anything	1) yes, I sell 2) no, I don't sell 9) I don't sell anything
1. milk, milk products?		
2. meat, meat products?		
3. fruits?		
4. fruit based products (e.g. marmalade)?		
5. honey?		
6. spirits (e.g. pálinka, wine)?		
7. handicrafts (tablecloths, jewellery, sculptures etc)?		
8. other (specify):.....		

IF YOU PRODUCE ANY OF THESE PRODUCTS BUT YOU DON'T SELL IT:

12. Why not?

Tourism

13. Do you or anyone from your household benefit from tourism?

- 1) Yes
- 2) No

IF YES:

14. In what way do you benefit from tourism?

	17.
	1) yes 2) no
1. accommodation	
2. selling food	
3. sale of local products	
4. sale of souvenirs	
5. tourist guiding	
6. other (specify):.....	

IF NO:

15. Have you ever thought about joining some local tourism activity?

- 1) yes
- 2) no

IF YES:

16. What kind of tourism related activity would you embark on/join?

17. How do you think tourism affects local culture and traditions?

- 1) positive
- 2) negative
- 9) don't know

18. Why do you say so?

19. How do you think tourism affects local nature?

- 1) positive
- 2) negative
- 9) don't know

20. Why do you say so?

21. Do you think there are better opportunities for tourism development in cooperation with other villages?

- 1) yes
- 2) no
- 9) don't know

22. Have you heard of any such cooperation in your area?

- 1) yes (specify):.....
- 2) no

23. What means of transportation do tourists usually use to travel around the area?

	1) yes 2) no
1. car	
2. bicycle	
3. walking	
4. horseback	
5. public transportation	
6. other (specify):.....	
9. don't know	

24. Do you find it important what means of transportation tourists in your area use?

- 1) yes
2) no

IF YES:

25. Why do you say so?

Needs of local communities

26. How satisfied are you with the following items in your area? Next, please rank those listed on a scale from 1-5, depending on how satisfied you are, where 1 means you are not satisfied at all and 5 that you are completely satisfied with the listed item!

27. In your opinion which areas need development? Next, please choose six items which you find most important, which you would prioritise for development.

	26.	27.
	<i>Ranks from 1-5.</i>	<i>Maximum 5.</i>
1. Health facilities		
2. School facilities		
3. Road network		
4. Public transportation		
5. Nature protection		
6. Local cultural and heritage protection		
7. Employment		
8. Tourism		
9. Local social contacts, relations		
10. other (specify):.....		

Nature

28. Which do you consider to be the most important natural values of your area?

29. In your opinion are there degrading natural values in the area?

- 1) yes
2) no
9) don't know

IF YES:

30. What do you think are the main reasons for nature degradation?

	1) yes 2) no
1. Illegal dumping	
2. Hunting	
3. Agriculture	
4. Tourism	
5. Forestry	
6. other (specify):.....	

31. Does any member of your household participate in any program or activity connected to nature protection?

	1) yes 2) no
1. Educational programs organised by the National Park	
2. Other programs organised by the National Park	
3. Litter collection	
4. Others (specify):.....	

IF NO:

32. Why not?

33. In your opinion what are the advantages of living in an area with high natural value?

	1) yes 2) no 9) there is no advantage
1. preserved, beautiful nature	
2. clean air	
3. opportunities for ecotourism	
4. other (specify):.....	

Community and social relations

34. Are you or any member of your household a member of a local community organisation (gathering)?

- 1) yes
- 2) no

IF YES:

35. Which organisation(s)?

36. How important do you think is cooperation between the surrounding villages in general:

- 1) Very important
- 2) Important
- 3) Neutral
- 4) Not important
- 5) Not important at all

37..Do you or any member of your household have friends or family in the surrounding villages?

- 1) yes
- 2) no

38. Are you aware of what is happening in other villages of the area?

- 1) Usually yes
- 2) Not really
- 3) No

Transportation

39.How do you usually commute between villages (only 1 answer)?

- 1) car
- 2) bicycle
- 3) public transportation
- 4) walking
- 5) other (specify):.....
- 9) I don't commute between the villages

40. Is there anyone in your household who regularly goes cycling or horseback riding?

- 1) there is someone who regularly goes cycling
- 2) there is someone who regularly goes horseback riding
- 3) there is someone regularly goes, both, cycling and horseback riding
- 4) none of the two

Cultural heritage

41. Which do you consider the most important local cultural heritage sites (values)? Could you list 3?

The „On Our Heritage Trail Greenway” (OHTG)

42. Have you heard about the OHTG?

- 1) yes
- 2) no (*go to question 55, 56*)

IF YES:

43. How did you hear about it?

	1) yes 2) no
1. I was there at the opening event	
2. local TV	
3. local newspaper	
4. flyer	
5. information boards	
6. during a local program, gathering	
7. from family friends, acquaintances	
8.other (specify):.....	

44. How well are you acquainted with the OHTG initiative?

- 1) I know it very well, I have a lot of information about it
- 2) I know about it but not too much

45. Do you know how many local villages form the OHTG initiative?

1) if he/she knows it right: 9

2) if he/she lists some (which):.....

.....

3) if he/she doesn't know any

46. Do you like the initiative?

1) Yes

2) Neutral

3) No

9) I don't know

47. What do you think are the (potential or existing) *advantages* of the OHTG?

	1) yes 2) no
1. local tourism development	
2. local community development	
3. local cultural and heritage protection	
4. local transportation development	
5. it will make the village and the area renowned in far away places	
6. nature protection	
7. support for local producers and products	
8. new employment opportunities	
9. community pride	
10. don't know	

48. What other advantages do you think the initiative can have?

49. What disadvantages do you think this initiative does or could have?

50. Who do you think this initiative addresses at first place?

	1) yes 2) no
1. local inhabitants	
2. tourists	
3. leaders of the villages	
4. other (specify).....	
.....	

51. Would you support the further development of the OHTG with:

	1) yes 2) no
1. spreading the word and advertising it?	
2. your signature?	
3. your work?	
4. financial support?	
5. other, (specify):.....	
.....	

52. Do you know which organisation(s) is (are) dealing with the development of the OHTG?

- 1) Yes:.....
- 2) No

53. If you had guests would you recommend the OHTG to them?

- 1) Yes
- 2) No

54. Do you think people from your household will go biking more often with the establishment of the OHTG?

- 1) yes more people will go biking
- 2) that won't make people cycle more
- 9) I don't know

IF YOU HAVEN'T HEARD ABOUT IT:

55. Have you seen the new information boards in your village?

- 1) Yes
- 2) No

56. Have you heard about the opening bicycle tour a few weeks ago?

- 1) Yes
- 2) Yes and I also participated
- 3) Yes and I also helped
- 4) No

Sugárkankalin turisztikai egyesület

57. Have you heard about the Sugárkankalin tourism association?

- 1) Yes
- 2) No (End of questionnaire)

IF YES:

58. In your opinion do they represent the communities interests?

- 1) Yes
- 2) Partly
- 3) No

59. Do they inform local people about their activities?

- 1) Yes
- 2) Sometimes
- 3) No

Thank you very much for you participation!

Sorszám _____

Kérdőív

Jónapot kívánok, a nevem _____! Ez a kérdőív része egy független, egyetemi diplomához való kutatásnak a Közép-Európai Egyetem keretein belül. A kérdőív célja, hogy az Ön véleményét kikérjem az Ön faluját és a környező falvakat érintő helyi kezdeményezésről és ehhez kapcsolódóan a helyi sajátosságokról, úgy mint a helyi gazdaságot, természetet, kultúrát és közösséget érintő kérdésekről.

Az Ön háztartása véletlenszerűen került kiválasztásra és az Ön által közölt információk szigorúan bizalmasak. A kutatás kizárólagosan oktatási és tudományos céllal készül. A kérdőív nem lesz hosszabb 20-25 percnél. Nagyon hálás lennék, ha közreműködne a kutatásban. Köszönöm szépen..... Ha további információkra lenne szüksége vagy szeretne kapni a kutatással kapcsolatban kérem keresse meg: Kirschenbaum Ágnes-t, tel:_____.

1. A település neve _____

2. A kérdezett neme

1) F

2) N

3. Az Ön életkora:

1) 18-29

2) 30-39

3) 40-49

4) 50-59

5) 60 év feletti

4. Hányan élnek Önök közös háztartásban (közös kasszán) Önt is beleszámítva?

1) Felnőttek száma (≥ 18 év) _____

2) Gyermek száma (< 18 év) _____

5. Hány éve él az Ön családja a faluban?

.....éve

6. Mi az Ön legmagasabb iskolai végzettsége?

1) nem járt iskolába

2) maximum 8 általános

3) szakvégzettség

4) érettségi

5) felsőfokú végzettség

7. Mi az Ön jelenlegi foglalkozása?

1) tanuló

2) alkalmazott

3) vállalkozó

4) földműves

5) nyugdíjas

6) munkanélküli

7) egyéb, és pedig (pl. háztartásbeli, egyéb inaktív kereső (vagyonából, ingatlana, lakása bérbeadásából él).....

8. Összességében hogy érzi, Önök:

- 1) gondok nélkül élnek
- 2) beosztással jól kijönnek
- 3) éppen, hogy kijönnek havi jövedelmeikből
- 4) hónapról hónapra anyagi gondjaik vannak vagy
- 5) nélkülözések között élnek
- 9) nem tudja
- 99) nem akarok válaszolni

9. Van-e az Ön(ök) tulajdonában termesztésre használt/ható föld vagy kert?

- 1) van
- 2) nincs

HA VAN:

10. Mire használja/használják Önök a földet?

	1) igen 2) nem
1. gabonatermesztés	
2. növénytermesztés	
3. gyümölcsstermesztés	
4. erdőgazdálkodás	
5. szőlőtermesztés	
6. egyéb, és pedig.....	
.....	
9. van tulajdonában föld, de nem Ő használja	

11. Ön/Önök közül valaki) készít-e, állít-e elő helyben termelt alapanyagokból mezőgazdasági, háztartási, vagy kézműves termékeket, mint pl:

11a. És az előállított termékek közül valamelyikből értékesít-e, mint pl. :

	11.	11.a
	1) készít illet 2) nem készít illet 9) semmit nem készít	1) értékesít az adott termékből 2) nem értékesít az adott termékből 9) semmit nem értékesít
1. tejet, tejtermékeket?		
2. hús, húsalapú készítményeket?		
3. gyümölcsöt?		
4. gyümölcs alapú készítményeket (pl: lekvárt) ?		
5. mézet?		
6. szeszesített (pl: pálinka, bor)		
7. kézműves terméket (gyöngyékeszerek, fafaragás, szőnyeg, hímzés, csuhébaba stb)?		
8. egyéb, és pedig:.....		
.....		

HA KÉSZÍT BÁRMILYEN TERMÉKET, DE SEMMIT NEM ÉRTÉKESÍT:

12. Mi az oka annak, hogy nem értékesíti termékeit?**Turizmus****13. Önnek vagy bármely háztartásán belül élőknek származik hasznuk turizmusból?**

- 1) igen
- 2) nem

HA IGEN:

14. Honnan származik Ön/Önöknek haszna a helyi turizmusból?

	1) igen 2) nem
1. szálláskiadás	
2. turisták étkeztetése	
3. helyi termék értékesítése az idelátogatóknak	
4. ajándéktárgyak értékesítése az idelátogatóknak	
5. idegenvezetés, túravezetés	
6. egyéb, éspedig:.....	

HA NEM:

15. Ön/Önök gondolkodtak-e már azon, hogy bekapcsolódnának a helyi turizmusba?

1) igen

2) nem

HA IGEN:

16. Milyen formában tudnának bekapcsolódni?

17. Ön szerint milyen hatása lehet/van az idelátogató turistának a helyi kultúrára, hagyományokra?

1) pozitív hatása

2) negatív hatása

9) nem tudja

18. Miért gondolja Ön így?

19. Ön szerint milyen hatása lehet/van az idelátogató turistának a helyi természetre?

1) pozitív hatása

2) negatív hatása

9) nem tudja

20. Miért gondolja Ön így?

21. Ön szerint a környező falvakkal együttműködve több turista hozható a környékre?

1) igen

2) nem

9) nem tudom

22. Ön hallott valamifajta ilyen irányú együttműködésről a környéken?

1) igen, éspedig:

2) nem

23. Milyen közlekedési eszközzel közlekednek a környéken az ide látogató turisták általában:

	1) igen 2) nem
1. autóval	
2. biciklivel	
3. gyalogosan	
4. lóháton	
5. tömegközlekedéssel	
6. egyéb módon, és pedig:.....	
9. nem tudom	

24. Fontos-e Önnek az, hogy milyen közlekedési eszközt használnak a turisták a környéken?

- 1) Igen
2) Nem

HA IGEN, HA NEM

25. Miért gondolja Ön így?

A helyi közösség szükségletei

26. Mennyire elégedett Ön a következő területekkel itt a környéken? Kérem értékelje 1-5-ig tartó skálán, hogy mennyire elégedett, ahol az 1-es azt jelenti, hogy egyáltalán nem elégedett, az 5-ös pedig azt jelenti, hogy teljes mértékben elégedett az adott területtel!

27. Ön szerint mely területeket kellene fejleszteni? Kérem, válasszon ki öt területet, amit a legfontosabbnak tart, amit a leginkább kellene fejleszteni!

	26. <i>1-5-ig osztályzat</i>	27. <i>Maximum 5.</i>
1. Egészségügyi ellátás		
2. Oktatás		
3. Tömegközlekedés		
4. Úthálózat		
5. Természetvédelem		
6. Helyi kultúra és örökségvédelem		
7. Foglalkoztatás		
8. Turizmus		
9. Közösségi kapcsolatok (k.falvak is)		
10. egyéb, és pedig:.....		

Természet

28. Ön szerint melyek a legfontosabb természeti értékek az Ön vidékén?

29. Ön szerint vannak veszélyeztetett természeti értékek a környéken?

- 1) vannak
2) nincsenek
9) nem tudom

HA VANNAK:

30. Mi lehet ennek/ezeknek az oka?

	1) igen 2) nem
1. Illegális szemétkerakás	
2. vadászat	
3. mezőgazdaság	
4. turizmus	
5. erdőgazdálkodás	
6. egyéb, és pedig:.....	

31. Ön vagy a háztartásban élő más személy vesz-e/vesznek-e részt természetvédelemmel kapcsolatos programokban *(A válaszokat felolvasni):*

	1) igen 2) nem
1. Nemzeti Park által szervezett oktatási programokban	
2. Nemzeti Park által szervezett más programokban	
3. Szemétszedés	
4. Egyéb, programok, és pedig:.....	

HA NEM:

32. Ön miért nem vesz részt természetvédelmi programokban?

33. Ön szerint mi az előnye annak, ha valaki jelentős természeti értékekkel bíró vidéken él?

	1) igen 2) nem 9) nincs semmilyen előnye
1. védett (szép) természet	
2. tiszta levegő	
3. ökoturizmus lehetősége	
4. egyéb, és pedig:.....	

Szociális, közösséggel kapcsolatos kérdések

34. Ön vagy háztartásában élők közül valaki részt vesz vagy tagja valamilyen közösségi szervezetnek?

- 1) igen
- 2) nem

HA IGEN:

35. Melyik szervezetnek?

36. Ön szerint mennyire fontos a környező falvak közti együttműködés:

- 1) Nagyon fontos
- 2) Fontos
- 3) Semleges
- 4) Nem fontos
- 5) Egyáltalán nem fontos

37. Önnek vagy háztartásában élőknek van családtagja, barátja a környező falvakban?

- 1) Van
- 2) Nincs

38. Ön tisztában van azzal, hogy mi történik a környező falvakban?

- 1) Általában igen
- 2) Nem nagyon
- 3) Nem

Közlekedés

39. Ön a környező falvak között általában (1 választ jelöljön meg) hogyan közlekedik?

- 1) autóval
- 2) biciklivel
- 3) tömegközlekedéssel
- 4) gyalogosan
- 5) egyéb, módon:.....
- 9) nem közlekedek a falvak között

40. Az Ön háztartásában van, aki rendszeresen biciklizik vagy lovagol a környéken?

- 1) van olyan, aki rendszeresen biciklizik
- 2) van olyan, aki rendszeresen lovagol
- 3) van olyan, aki rendszeresen biciklizik és lovagol
- 4) egyik sem

Kulturális örökségvédelem

41. Ön szerint melyek a legfontosabb helyi vagy környékbeli kulturális értékek? Fel tudna sorolni 3-at?

'Örökségeink Útján Zöldút'

42. Ön hallott az 'Örökségeink Útján Zöldút' nevű helyi kezdeményezésről?

- 1) igen
- 2) nem (kérdés 55, 56)

HA HALLOTT RÓLA:

43. Honnan hallott Ön az 'Örökségeink Útján Zöldút' nevű helyi kezdeményezésről?

	1) igen 2) nem
1. ott volt a megnyitón	
2. helyi tévé	
3. helyi újság	
4. szórólap	
5. tájékoztató táblák	
6. helyi rendezvények	
7. családtagok, barátok, ismerősök	
8. máshonnan, éspedig:.....	

44. Mennyire ismeri jól Ön az 'Örökségeink Útján Zöldút' nevű helyi kezdeményezést?

- 1) nagyon jól ismeri, sok információval rendelkezik róla
- 2) ismeri, de nem elég jól

45. Hány helyi település (melyek) vesznek részt ebben a kezdeményezésben?

- 1) helyesen tudja mind a : 9
- 2) nem tudja helyesen, de fel tud sorolni egy párat:.....

- 3) egyet sem tud mondani

46. Önnek tetszik a kezdeményezés?

- 1) Igen
2) Semleges
3) Nem
9) Nem tudja

47. Ön szerint milyen előnyei lehetnek/vannak ennek a kezdeményezésnek?

	1) igen 2) nem
1. helyi turizmus fejlesztése	
2. a helyi közösség fejlesztése	
3. a hagyományok megőrzése, örökségvédelem	
4. a közlekedés fejlődése	
5. messzi viszi a falu és a környék hírét	
6. a természet védelme	
7. a helyi termelők, termékek támogatása	
8. új munkahelyek létesülnek	
9. helyi büszkeség, önérték erősödése	
99. nem tudom	

48. És még milyen előnyei lehetnek/vannak Ön szerint ennek a kezdeményezésnek?

49. Milyen hátrányai lehetnek ennek a kezdeményezésnek?

50. Ön szerint kinek szól a kezdeményezés?

	1) igen 2) nem
1. a helyi lakosoknak	
2. a turistáknak	
3. a falvak vezetőinek	
4. egyéb, éspedig:.....	

51. Támogatna-e Ön az 'Örökségeink Útján Zöldút' nevű helyi kezdeményezést:

	1) igen 2) nem
1. népszerűsítéssel?	
2. aláírással?	
3. munkájával?	
4. anyagi felajánlással, anyagiakkal?	
5. egyéb módon?	

52. Tudja-e Ön, hogy ki/melyik szervezet(ek) foglalkoznak az 'Örökségeink Útján Zöldút' fejlesztésével?

- 1) Igen:
.....
2) Nem

53. Ha vendégeket fogad ajánlaná-e nekik?

- 1) Igen
2) Nem

54. Mit gondol az Ön háztartásában élők közül többen fognak biciklizni az 'Örökségeink Útján Zöldút' létrejöttével?

- 1) többen fognak biciklizni
- 2) ettől nem fognak többen biciklizni
- 9) nem tudom

HA NEM HALLOTT RÓLA:

55. Látta az új tájékoztató táblákat a faluban?

- 1) Igen
- 2) Nem

56. Hallott a pár héttel ezelőtti biciklis megnyitó ünnepségről?

- 1) Igen
- 2) Igen, részt is vettem benne
- 3) Igen, segítettem is
- 4) Nem

Sugárkankalin turisztikai egyesület

57. Ön hallott a Sugárkankalin turisztikai egyesületről?

- 1) Igen
- 2) Nem (**Akkor itt a kérdőív vége**)

HA IGEN:

58. Ön szerint a falu érdekeit képviselik?

- 1) Igen
- 2) Részben
- 3) Nem

59. Tevékenységükről tájékoztatják az embereket?

- 1) Igen
- 2) Néha
- 3) Nem

KÖSZÖNÖM A VÁLASZAIT!