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## THE STUDY ON OPPORTUNITIES FOR YOUNG PEOPLE TO GET INVOLVED IN THE LABOUR MARKET IN UAT ROVINARI

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**Abstract:** *THE PURPOSE OF THIS STUDY IS TO DETERMINE THE OPPORTUNITIES FOR THE YOUNG POPULATION (MINIMUM AGE 16) ATTENDING EDUCATIONAL ESTABLISHMENTS IN THE UAT ROVINARI AREA, TAKING INTO ACCOUNT THE DEGREE OF SATISFACTION WITH THE ADMINISTRATIVE ACT EXERCISED IN THE LOCALITY OF RESIDENCE; THE PROSPECT OF INVOLVEMENT IN GAINFUL EMPLOYMENT IN THE ADMINISTRATIVE-TERRITORIAL AREA UPON COMPLETION OF STUDIES AND THE READINESS FOR RETRAINING, IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE EVOLUTION OF THE BUSINESS ENVIRONMENT AND THE SPECIFIC ACTIVITIES CARRIED OUT BY COMPANIES. THE STUDY WAS BASED ON THE QUESTIONNAIRE APPLIED TO 221 STUDENTS AGED 16 YEARS OR OLDER FROM EDUCATIONAL ESTABLISHMENTS IN THE UAT ROVINARI. METHOD AND RESEARCH TECHNIQUE USED: OPINION SURVEY BASED ON THE QUESTIONNAIRE, WITH A MARGIN OF ERROR OF +/- 5% AND 95% PROBABILITY. DATA WERE COLLECTED BETWEEN 15 JUNE 2022 AND 15 SEPTEMBER 2022. THE STUDY SHOWS THAT 54.30% OF THE RESPONDENTS ARE SATISFIED WITH THE WORK CARRIED OUT BY THE LOCAL AUTHORITIES, WHICH MAY ALSO EXPLAIN THE FACT THAT 39.37% OF THE RESPONDENTS EXPRESSED A DESIRE TO WORK IN THE BUDGETARY SYSTEM AFTER COMPLETING THEIR STUDIES. 66.97% OF THE RESPONDENTS WANTED TO CONTINUE THEIR STUDIES, THE REMAINDER INTENDING TO TAKE UP A JOB OR DID NOT YET HAVE A CLEAR CHOICE. IT CAN BE CONCLUDED THAT ONLY ONE THIRD OF HIGH SCHOOL AND VOCATIONAL SCHOOL STUDENTS IN THE UAT AREA WANT TO GET A JOB IMMEDIATELY.*

**Keywords:** *SATISFACTION, TRUST, LOCAL AUTHORITY, JOB, RETRAINING*

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## INTRODUCTION

Human capital is the value-adding asset of any organization. (Borcoși, 2017, pp. 105-110) It is very important to give young people the chance to develop to their full potential to help shape the future of the country. Young people, due to their lack of work experience, need support, guidance, career guidance, sometimes retraining. They need to stay close to educational institutions in order to accumulate knowledge, knowledge that will help them along the long road of life, so that they can build a successful career. Today's society is a knowledge-based society, a society of lifelong learning (Borcoși, 2018, pp. 56-60).

The demographic crisis we are facing, due to international migration, mortality and falling birth rate, has also generated a decrease in the active population, able to work. (Borcoși and Cumpănașu, 2017, pp. 138-145) Therefore, it is necessary to attract the young workforce that we motivate, to stimulate them to stay and work in the country, locally, thus contributing to the development of the national economic environment, the Romanian society in general.

In order to differentiate themselves from competitors, to gain competitive advantages, organizations must attract and retain a competent, dedicated workforce that can meet the challenges of today's increasingly digitalized world. (Borcoși, 2016, pp. 163-166)

The city of Rovinari, the place where we conducted the study on which this paper is based, was established on 9 December 1981, by Presidential Decree no. 367/9 Dec. 1981, the motivation being the significant expansion of economic activities in this geographical area as a result of the large reserves of energy coal existing in the Roșia-Jiu perimeter and their intensive industrial exploitation through the construction and commissioning of the Rogojelu power plant. (Council of State, 1981) The need for a highly qualified labor force to meet the requirements of the economic environment was a constant concern of the authorities, and the issue of youth became a priority. Thus, the population dynamics has been constantly positive; at present, according to the estimates of the Rovinari Town Hall (Primăria Rovinari. Short history), there are about 13,500 inhabitants (50.50% men and 49.50% women), with an average age of 36 years.

In order to ensure optimal parameters of the societal life, important institutions in the field of education have been built (Rovinari Industrial School Group, Primary School no. 1, Primary School no. 3, Vârț Primary School, Kindergartens no. 1 and 4, the extended day care home, the Rovinari Pupils' Club), culture (Rovinari Cultural Centre and Library), sport (Jiul Rovinari Sports Club) and health (St. Stephen's Hospital).

The particularities of today's society, significantly influenced by the phenomenon of globalization (Peptan, 2020, pp. 315-337) has determined, at national level (including Rovinari), the migration to urban areas of a significant sample of the population for better living conditions. (Sîrcă, 2018, pp.90-130) In this context, the shortage of highly qualified labor, especially young people, is accentuated, posing serious problems for the local business environment.

The present study aims to determine the degree of willingness of young people attending educational institutions in the Rovinari local authority area to get involved in the work activities in the administrative-territorial area, upon completion of their studies and their readiness for professional retraining, in accordance with the evolution of the business environment and the specific activities carried out by commercial companies operating locally.

A strong society is based on a developed business environment and competitive enterprises. All this can be achieved if we have a skilled, career-oriented, knowledge-based workforce that uses its knowledge to give quality to our lives.



## RESEARCH METHODS

### PARTICIPANTS

The study was carried out between 15 July 2022 and 15 September 2022 and consisted of applying an online questionnaire to 221 people aged 16 years or older from educational establishments of UAT Rovinari. Any person who met the conditions mentioned could participate in filling in the questionnaire. The participation of respondents was voluntary, anonymous and unpaid. No data were collected on respondents' identifiers; respondents were informed about the authors of the study, their affiliation, the purpose of the study and the source of funding for the research.

### PROCEDURE

Participants in the study were administered a questionnaire constructed on the Google Forms platform and distributed via a dedicated web link. Completion of the questionnaire was conditional on the affirmative answer "Yes" to the question concerning the minimum age of 16 years and attendance at an educational establishment in the UAT Rovinari area.

### MEASUREMENTS

The questionnaire contained a number of questions and was structured in two parts:

1. Obtaining socio-demographic data (age and gender) of the respondents;
2. Obtaining data that accurately reveal the degree of satisfaction of the young population attending educational establishments in the UAT Rovinari area with regard to: the administrative act exercised at the level of the locality of residence; the degree of their willingness to engage in gainful employment, in the administrative-territorial area, upon completion of their studies; the degree of willingness to retrain, in accordance with future developments in the local business environment.

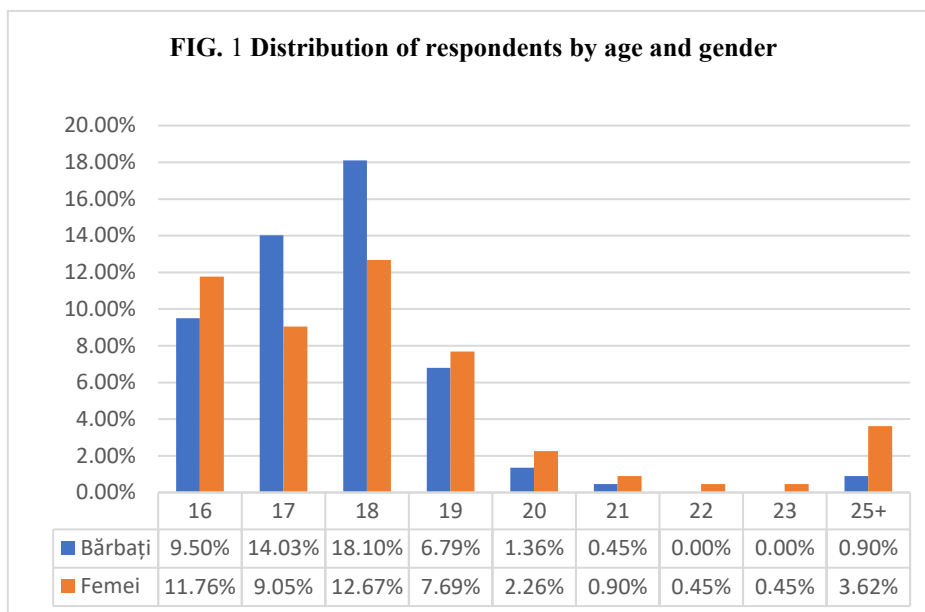
### STATISTICAL ANALYSIS OF THE DATA

The processing of the data obtained from the questionnaire was carried out using Excel, part of Microsoft Office Professional Plus 2021, and IBM SPSS Statistics 26, installed on computers running Windows 11 Professional. The data collected were visualized, extracted and statistically analyzed in order to extract the quantitative elements that allow the interpretation and drawing of conclusions of interest with regard to the purpose of the research.

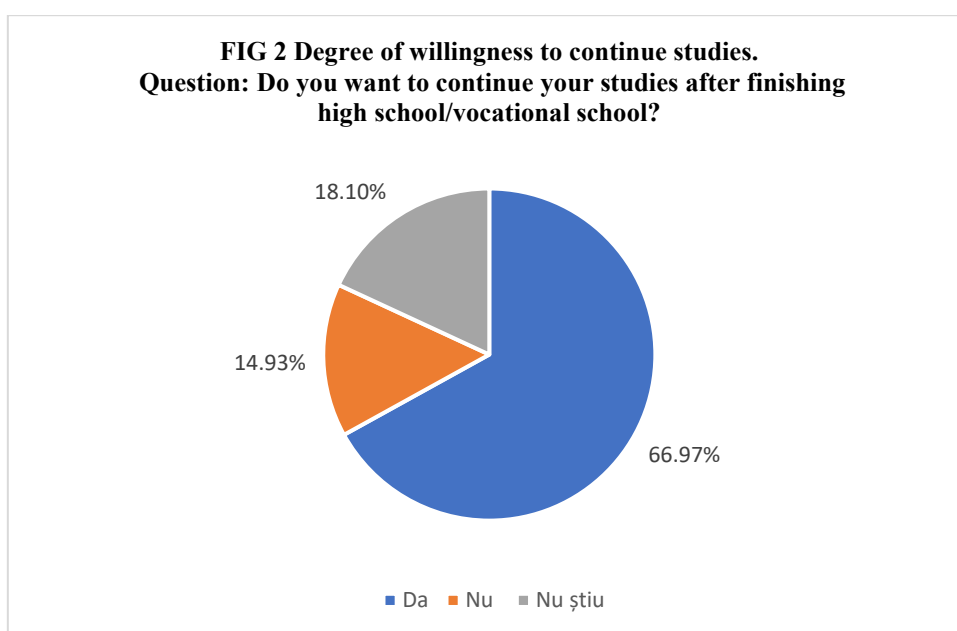
### RESULTS

The statistical processing of the collected data led to the following results. As shown in Fig.1, the maximum percentage of respondents is found in the age group of 18 years, both men (18.10%) and women (12.67%), who are presumed to be in their last year of studies, with a quick horizon of employment.

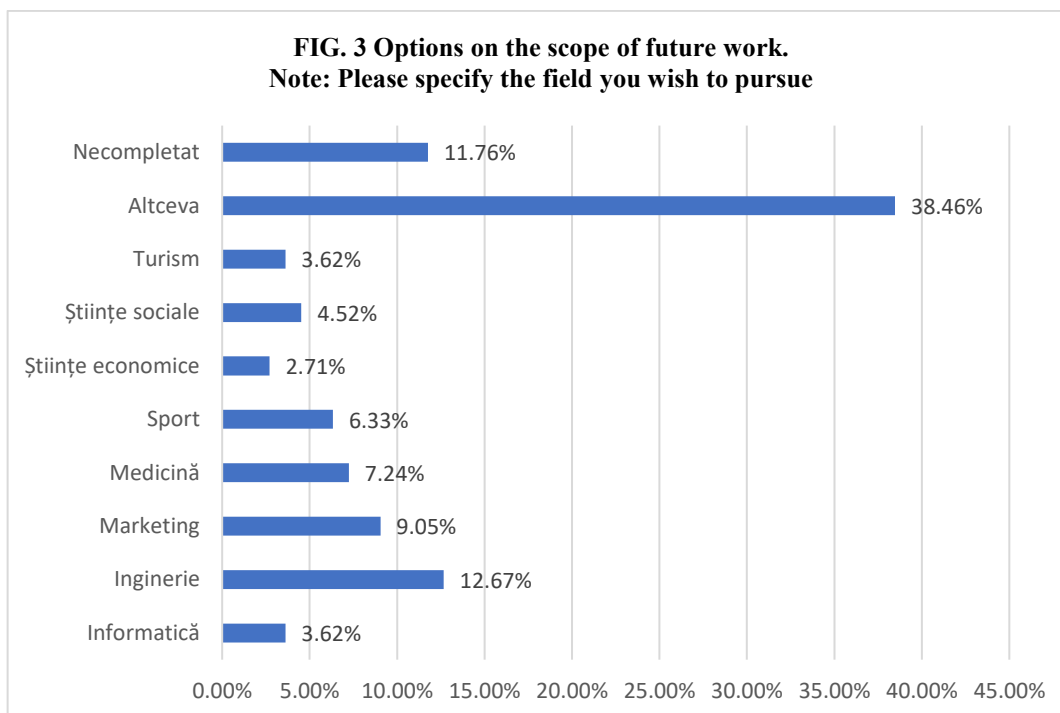
The percentage of respondents aged 16-18 is 41.63% (men) and 33.48% (women). These categories of respondents represent the employment pool in a short time horizon, i.e. two years, after completion of secondary education.



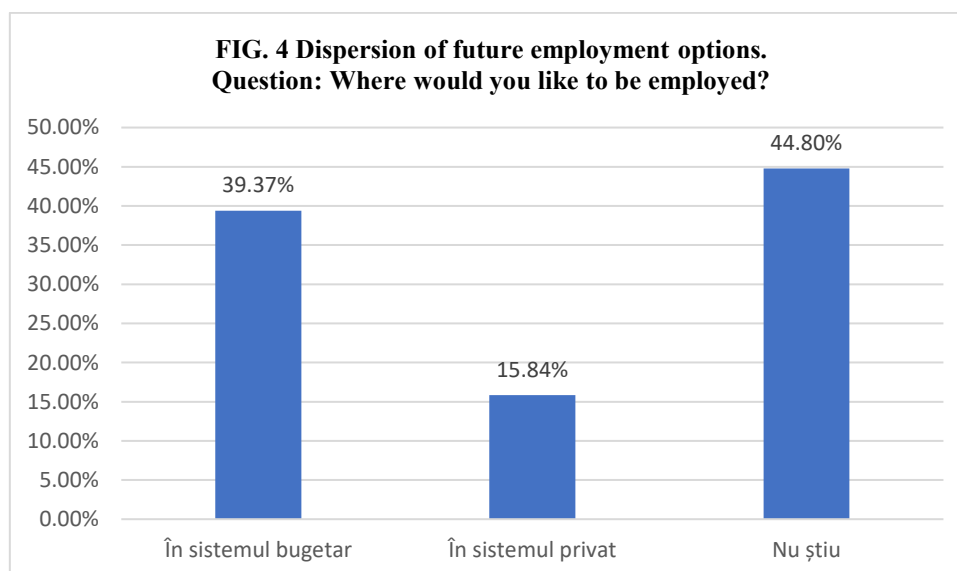
Concerning the future intentions of the respondents to continue their studies after finishing high school or vocational school (Fig. 2), it should be noted that 66.97% of the respondents want to continue their studies, 14.93% do not want to continue their studies, and 18.10% have not yet decided on an option.



Regarding the field that respondents would like to pursue after completing high school or vocational school (Fig. 3), it is worth noting that 12.67% would choose engineering, 9.05% marketing, 7.24% medical, 6.33% sports, 4.52% social sciences and 3.62% tourism. It is worth mentioning that a very high percentage of 38.46% of respondents have other options and 11.76% did not complete the questionnaire on this question.

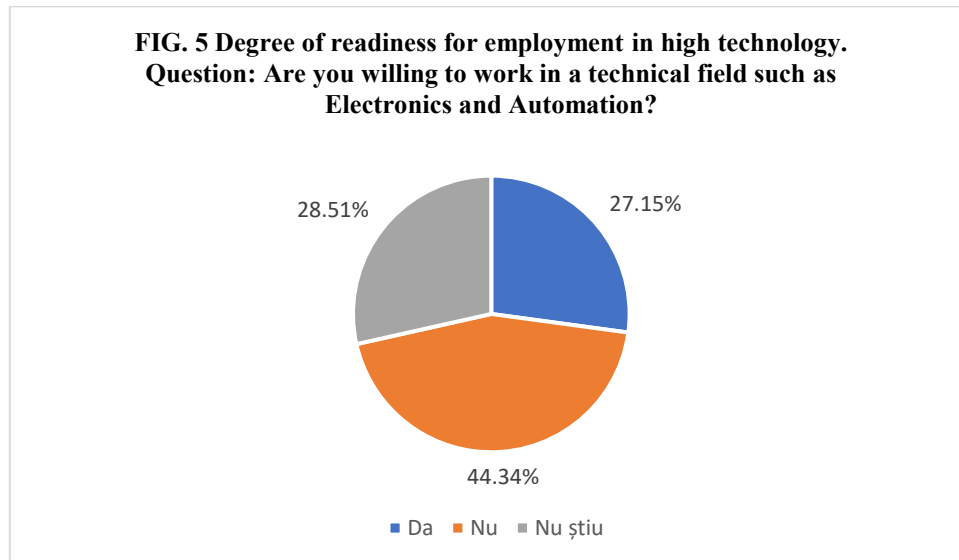


As regards the respondents' choices regarding the environment in which they would prefer to be employed in the future after completing their studies (Fig. 4), it is worth noting that 39.37% would opt for the budgetary system, while only 15.84% would opt for the private system. It is worth noting that 44.80% of the respondents have not yet defined the environment in which they would like to work once they have completed their studies.



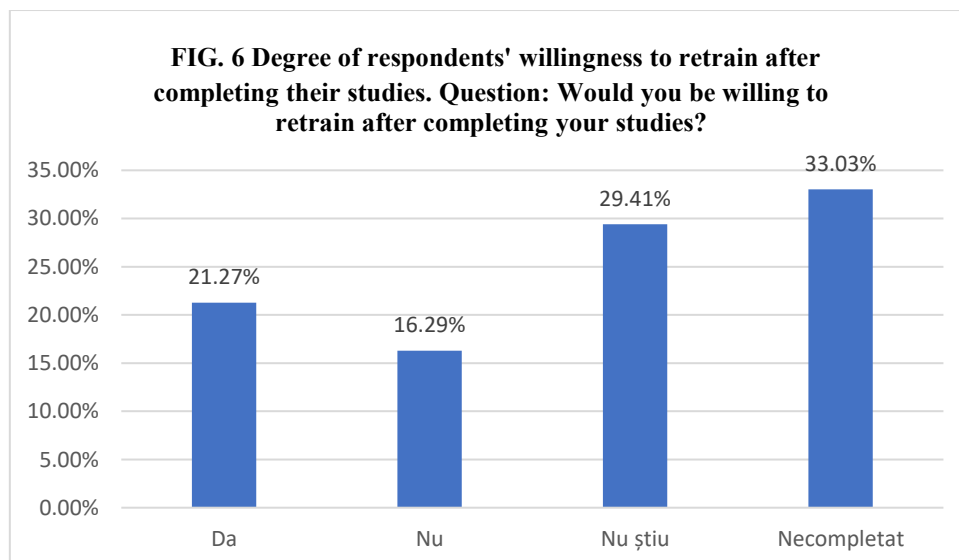
Given the specificities of certain economic agents in the field of high technologies, which expressed their willingness to relocate certain economic capabilities within the UAT Rovinari, the study aimed to identify the degree of willingness of respondents to engage in these areas (Fig. 5). Thus,

only 27.15% of respondents are interested in a future career in high technology (electronics, automation), 44.34% are not willing to work in this field and 28.51% answered "don't know".

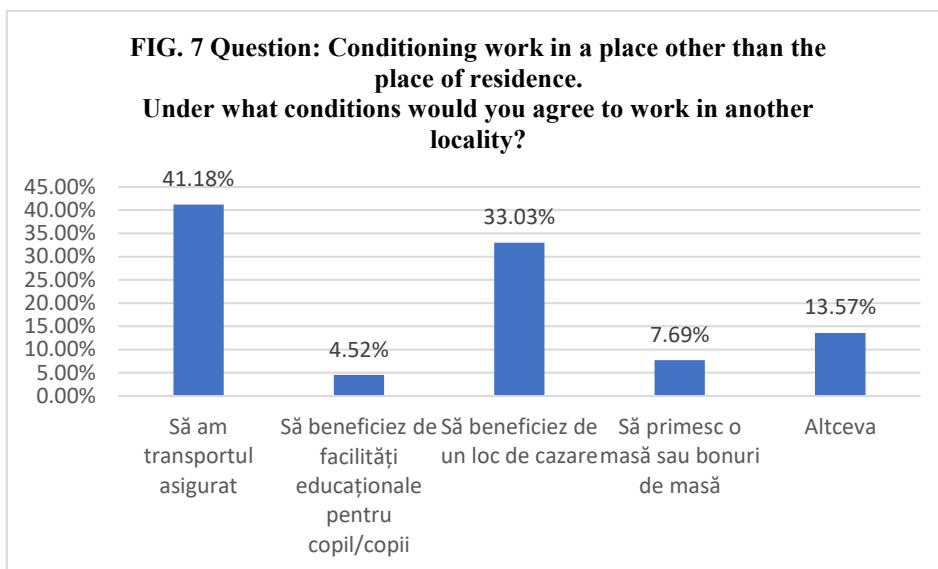


Given the dynamics of societal change and the flexibility that needs to be shown in the labor market (Fig. 6), the study sought to establish the willingness of respondents to retrain after completing their studies, which offer future graduates a particular specialization.

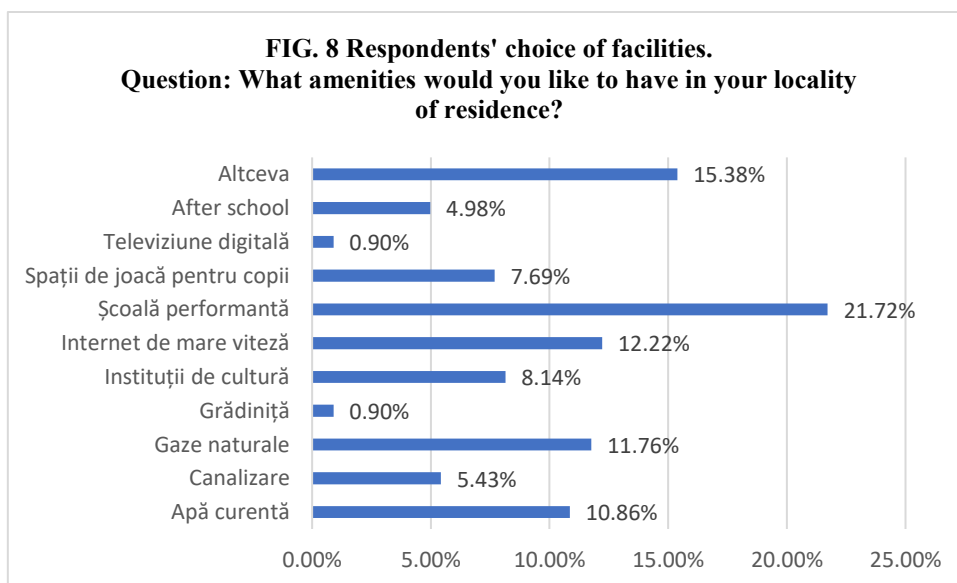
Note that: only 21.27% of respondents expressed their willingness to take such a step, 16.29% did not agree with retraining, while a very high percentage of respondents, 62.44%, did not define an option, answering "don't know" or not completing the questionnaire in this field.



Regarding the conditions under which respondents would like to work in a location other than their place of residence (Fig. 7), the survey shows that 41.18% would like to have transportation provided, 33.03% would like to have accommodation, 7.69% would like to receive a meal or meal vouchers, while 4.52% of respondents would like to have educational facilities for their children.



Regarding the facilities the respondents would like in their locality of residence (Fig. 8), 21.72% and 4.98% would like to have an efficient school and after school, 12.22% would like high speed internet, 11.76% and 5.43% would like natural gas and sewerage, 10.86% would like running water, 7.69% would like playgrounds for children and 8.14% would like cultural institutions.



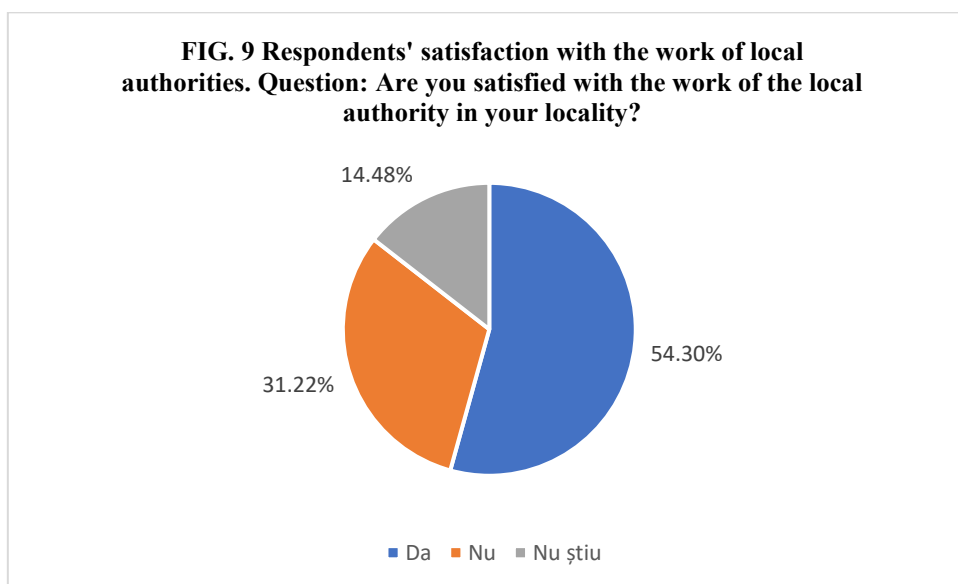
Respondents' choices for the level of remuneration at employment after completing their studies are shown in Tab. 1

Amount	Total answers
1000-1500 ron	4.7
1501-2000 ron	10.8
2001-2500 ron	16.7
2501-3000 ron	19.6
3001-3500 ron	18.4

3501-4000 ron	12.2
4001-4500 ron	6.9
4501-5000 ron	4.1
5001-5500 ron	2.1
5501-6000 ron	1.9
6001+ ron	1.5
Other	0.5

TAB. 1

Regarding the degree of satisfaction of respondents with the work of local authorities (Fig. 9), 54.30% of respondents were satisfied, 31.22% were dissatisfied and 14.48% answered "don't know".



## DISCUSSIONS

The degree of satisfaction of the population with the exercise of administrative action at the level of the locality of residence, generically referred to as trust in the authorities (Hosu Ioan et al, 2012, pp. 73-83), is an important indicator for assessing the quality of life of citizens and, implicitly, a motivating factor for their involvement in community life.

Among the students of the educational units (high schools and vocational schools) located in the UAT Rovinari, the shaping of ideas related to the investigated issues is achieved both through the direct perception of the interviewees (involvement of local authorities in the realization of educational and/or leisure facilities, provision of jobs for family members, utilities necessary for a high standard of living, etc.) and through the reception of messages from the outside (media, entourage, family, etc.) regarding the managerial performance of local authorities.

The statistical processing of the data obtained from the questionnaire on the basis of which the present study was carried out reveals that 54.30% of the respondents are satisfied with the work of local authorities, 31.22% of the respondents are dissatisfied with the work of local authorities, and 14.48% of the respondents have not yet formed an overall picture that would allow them to formulate an answer, completing the questionnaire with "don't know".





Overall, it can be concluded that this category of respondents has confidence in the local authorities regarding the exercise of administrative act, which may also explain the fact that 39.37% of them expressed their desire to work in the budgetary system after completing their studies.

With regard to the level of respondents' intention to get involved in local employment after graduation, the processing of the statistical data obtained from the questionnaire shows the following:

firstly, the maximum percentage of respondents is found in the age group of 18 years, both men (18.10%) and women (12.67%), assuming that they are in the last year of their secondary school studies, with a quick horizon of employment, if they do not attend university.

The categories of respondents aged 16-18 years, 41.63% (men) and 33.48% (women), are presumed to represent the pool of employment in a short time horizon, i.e. two years, once they have completed their secondary education, if they do not attend university.

Regarding the respondents' future intentions to continue their studies after completing secondary school or vocational school, 66.97% of them want to continue their studies, 14.93% do not want to continue their studies and 18.10% do not have a well-defined option yet. It can be concluded that only one third of high school or vocational school respondents in the UAT Rovinari area represent the immediate pool of employment (without taking into account the possibility of involvement in gainful employment and the category of those who will attend higher education institutions).

Regarding the field that respondents would like to pursue after completing high school or vocational school, respondents' choices are: 12.67% would choose engineering; 9.05% marketing; 7.24% medical; 6.33% sports; 4.52% social sciences; 3.62% tourism. It is worth mentioning that a very high percentage of 38.46% of respondents have other options and 11.76% did not complete the questionnaire for this question.

The respondents' options regarding the environment in which they would prefer to work in the future show that 39.37% would opt for the budgetary system, while only 15.84% would opt for the private system. It is worth noting that 44.80% of respondents have not yet decided on the environment in which they would like to work once they have completed their studies. The low percentage of respondents who would opt for employment in the private system highlights the still low degree of attractiveness/ confidence in the private system.

Considering the facilities offered by the central and local authorities to some economic agents operating in the field of high technologies, who expressed their willingness to relocate or develop in the future certain economic capabilities in the UAT Rovinari, the study aimed to identify the degree of willingness of respondents to engage in these areas. It should be noted that only 27.15% of the respondents are interested in a future career in high technologies (electronics, automation), 44.34% are not willing to work in this field and 28.51% answered "don't know".

In the context of the major national labor shortage and the trend of migration of the young population abroad for various reasons (Peptan, C. and Peptan, A., 2018, pp.124-129), the present study aimed to identify the facilities that the respondents would like and that would motivate them to look for a job in their locality of residence. Thus, 21.72% of the respondents want high performing school, 4.98% want educational facilities in the after-school category, 7.69% would like playgrounds for children, 8.14% opt for cultural institutions, 12.22% want high speed internet, 11.76% and 5.43% respectively want natural gas and sewerage, 10.86% want running water.

The conclusion is that more than 50% of the facilities to which the respondents aspire fall into the category of educational and cultural facilities, which are in close correlation with the concerns of the local authorities (Guide of the municipalities. Rovinari) to invest heavily in recent years in the modernization of educational, health and cultural institutions in the UAT Rovinari area.



The respondents' requirements for the salary level at employment, after completion of studies, are as follows: 19.6% of respondents opting for a salary of 2500-3000 RON, 18.4% of respondents wanting a salary between 3001-3500 RON.

Regarding the readiness for professional retraining (Professional retraining in 2022), in line with the specific activities carried out by local companies, the study shows that only 21.27% of them expressed their readiness to initiate such a professional retraining/requalification after completing their studies, while 16.29% did not agree with this. It should be noted that a very high percentage of respondents, i.e. 62.44%, did not indicate an option, answering "don't know" or not completing the questionnaire in this field.

### LIMITATIONS OF THE SURVEY

A first limitation of the research is the online administration of the questionnaire, which makes it impossible for people who do not have access to the Internet to access it. In another order of ideas, the study does not highlight the influence of exogenous factors on the respondents' choices, such as the pandemic crisis that will manifest itself from 2020 onwards (Peptan and Mărcău, 2021, pp. 103-115), the economic crisis that is being felt at European level and has direct effects also at national level (Bolos, 2022), or the security crisis in the vicinity of Romania that negatively influences the quality of life of citizens (Mărcău et al, 2022).

### CONCLUSIONS

The transition of young people from school to the labor market is difficult for many of them. Either they have trained for professions where the labor market supply is low, or they have not developed skills that meet employers' requirements, or they have not followed other study programs for retraining. There is still a gap between supply and demand on the labor market. The increasingly digitalized context of today's society makes the labor market situation even more complex, requiring more and more complex training for young people. Society's mission for the years to come is to help young people to integrate into the labor market, to find a job that suits their training, their desires and their expectations, and to be part of a local community that shows young people that it cares about them, that it responds to their needs and that it integrates them into everyday life.

Our study shows that the young population attending educational establishments in the Rovinari local authority area has a high degree of trust in the local authorities, which can be considered as a motivating factor for their future involvement in local economic activities.

The majority of the respondents' wishes for facilities fall into the category of educational and cultural facilities, which are in close correlation with the local authorities' concern to invest heavily in recent years in the modernization of educational, health and cultural institutions in the UAT Rovinari area.

The prospect of employment of graduates of local educational institutions in the short term (maximum two years) is relatively low, with only a third of final-year students interested in employment after graduation from high school or vocational school, which may exacerbate the local labor shortage.

In this context, the local authorities need to identify additional motivational levers to encourage young people in the Rovinari area to support the local business environment.

Motivating young people to stay and work for the development of local communities is the key to the development of tomorrow's Romanian society.



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