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Factors of rural development in the context of decentralisation: empirical research

Abstract. The purpose of this research is to analyse the impact of demographic and socio-economic factors on the assessment of the directions of rural area development in the context of the administrative and territorial reform in Ukraine. This article is based on the analysis of the results obtained in the course of a sociological survey conducted by the authors in 2018 concerning residents of the Znob-Novgorod United Territorial Community (UTC) of Sumy region in order to identify problems and development priorities when elaborating the Development Strategy for the period 2019-2025. Three age groups were identified: up to 35 years old (29.7%), 35 years old to 60 years old (52.4%), and over 60 years old (17.9%), which reflects all major age groups of UTC residents. Young people and seniors are more positive about life in the community, as the main responsibility for solving economic and domestic problems lies with middle-aged people. The share of positively adjusted respondents is growing, with the increase in the level of income received from the minimum to the average in the region. A number of problems, such as environmental, infrastructural and educational issues, are of greater concern to middle-aged people than to young people and older generations. Persons with a higher level of education, in comparison with other major problems, consider insufficient social initiative and activity

of inhabitants, low income of the population, a lack of investments, an unsatisfactory condition of roads, a poor quality of medical services to be major problems. For people with a low level of education believe the problems of alcoholism and drug abuse are much more urgent. On the whole, the population is more focused on finding an external resource – most of the answers received regarded available natural resources (more than 40%), while problems related to progressive and efficient local authorities were reported by 16.6%. Only one out of nine respondents realised that the main resource for development is the inhabitants themselves, their activity and entrepreneurship. This is least understood by middle-aged people with incomplete higher education, those who are either self-employed or unemployed, and those with low income. The residents of the community give more priority to the economic directions regarding the development of social, cultural and environmental projects. The results of the analysis of the sociological survey showed the existence of the demographic and socio-economic factors impacting the determination of priority directions aimed at social development and the willingness to take an active part in their implementation. The results of the analysis are logical, however some of them, due to their ambiguity, require further research in territorial communities that have similar conditions of their development and problems.

Keywords: Community Development; Administrative and Territorial Reform; Socio-economic Development; Rural Areas; Rural Communities

JEL Classification: R11

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Чинники розвитку сільських територій в умовах децентралізації:

результати емпіричних досліджень

Анотація. У статті представлено аналіз результатів соціологічного опитування мешканців Зноб-Новгородської ОТГ з метою оцінки поточної ситуації та напрямів розвитку громади. Виявлено існування впливу демографічних та соціально-економічних факторів на розвиток сільських територій у контексті адміністративно-територіальної реформи в Україні. Встановлено відмінності в оцінці головних проблем та основних напрямків розвитку сільських громад залежно від віку, рівня освіти, рівня доходів та соціального статусу респондентів. Результати аналізу є характерними для невеликих сільських громад в Україні. Деякі з них, в силу їх неоднозначності, потребують подальших досліджень в інших територіальних громадах, які мають подібні умови та проблеми існування.

Ключові слова: сільські громади; розвиток громади; адміністративна та територіальна реформа; соціально-економічний розвиток; сільські райони.

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Факторы развития сельских территорий в условиях децентрализации: результаты эмпирических исследований

Аннотация. В статье представлен анализ результатов социологического опроса жителей Зноб-Новгородской ОТГ для оценки текущей ситуации и определения направлений развития общества. Обнаружено существование влияния демографических и социально-экономических факторов на развитие сельских территорий в контексте административно-территориальной реформы в Украине. Установлены различия в оценке главных проблем и основных направлений развития сельских общин в зависимости от возраста, уровня образования, уровня доходов и социального статуса респондентов. Результаты анализа характерны для небольших сельских общин в Украине, но некоторые из них, в силу их неоднозначности, требуют дальнейших исследований в других территориальных общинах, которые имеют подобные условия и проблемы существования.

Ключевые слова: сельские общины; развитие общин; административно-территориальная реформа; социально-экономическое развитие; сельские районы.

1. Introduction

Modern problems of socio-economic development of rural territories are conditioned by the existing factors of involvement and usage of individual elements of productive forces, mono-functionality and focus on agriculture. Population density in rural areas has a negative trend primarily due to a lack of support for entrepreneurial initiatives and sources of investment support, an unsatisfactory level of social infrastructure and social services and a lack of opportunities for self-realisation.

In the conditions of the appearance of new forms of power for territorial organisations, as well as transformation of relations between central and local authorities, significant opportunities arise for rural territorial communities. Reforms and resources give more opportunities for communities in terms of their development and provide incentives for the creation of modern educational, medical, transportation, housing and communal infrastructure in the area. Effective organisation of local self-government is the basis for the establishment of democratic institutions, creation and maintenance of a full-fledged living environment for citizens in individual territories, restoration of social infrastructure, and an increase in added value. The process of decentralisation in Ukraine started in 2014 with the adoption of the Concept of Local Government Reform and Territorial Organisation of Government (Concept, 2014) and a number of normative legal acts, namely the Law on Cooperation of Territorial Communities (On Cooperation, 2014), the Law on Voluntary Association of Territorial Communities (Voluntary Association, 2015), etc., as well as with amendments to the Budget and Tax Codes on financial decentralisation.

Today, the Government pays considerable attention to the promotion and support of the development of rural and urban territorial communities which are paramount in the total number of united communities. For example, this year's distribution of infrastructure subsidies was carried out according to the formula based on the area of community and the number of rural population (On Approval of the Distribution, 2019).

Considering the effectiveness of reform, the main focus is on the study of quantitative indicators (dynamics of the number of created communities, coverage of areas and population, and research of financial issues relevant to the functioning of territorial entities). At the same time, ensuring sustainable socio-economic development of rural territories and maximal realisation of potential is impossible without a thorough research of the problems and directions of new territorial entities' priorities in socio-economic development, taking into account the impact of aggregate (quantitative, qualitative, external, internal, and systemic) factors of development.

Territorial and spatial decentralisation refers to the tools of regional (territorial) planning, the effectiveness of which contributes to the creation of regional and local poles of development. Production processes and the territorial organisation of rural communities' productive forces are based on the usage of appropriate local resources. The usage of local resources depends, to some extent, on factors or prerequisites which affect the social production and social environment of the rural area. In the process of local development planning, it is necessary to take into account

the combination of different economic, social, cultural, spiritual, environmental, spatial and other factors. The knowledge about the main factors, manifestations of their forms and interconnections allow providing progressive development of rural areas.

The presented scientific research was carried out in accordance with the plans of research works of Sumy National Agrarian University (Sumy, Ukraine): «Formation of the implementation mechanism of integrated territorial management in conditions of transition to sustainable development» (SR No. 0117U006534) and «Theoretical, methodological and practical aspects of regional economic system's functioning diagnostics» (SR No. 0117U000911).

2. Brief Literature Review

Today, the reform of local power forms a new paradigm for rural development, and opens new theoretical and methodological approaches to rural development. Thus, the peculiarities of the decentralisation in terms of socio-economic development of rural areas have been reflected in the works by many scholars: (Shubravska, 2005); Paskhaver & Moldavan (2012); Stegney (2016). They focus primarily on stimulating the agrarian sector of the economy in identifying the problems of rural development as a guarantee of balanced economic growth of the territory, improving socio-economic living conditions and stimulating reproductive processes. Without denying the importance and significance of agricultural production, it should be emphasised that one of the main problems for rural development today is a lack of motivation for work, incentives for self-improvement, poverty, unemployment, deepening of the demographic crisis, labour migration, decline, deprivation and, in some cases, a lack of social infrastructure, as well as public disappointment in the future.

Dyachenko and Movchanyuk (2018) have attempted to develop a new ideology of rural development that will help improve the psychological climate in the countryside and overcome the uncertainty of the rural population in their future. Gogol also focuses on the study of labour market problems, employment in rural areas and the formation of promising new directions for multifunctional rural development in his scientific work (Gogol, 2011). However, this approach does not take into account other factors - the decline of social infrastructure, poor employment opportunities, population aging, and a lack of motivation for able-bodied people to start their own business in rural areas, which creates additional pressure on the cities of the region and accelerates the decline of traditional village.

The importance and priority of the development of integrated projects that are capable to produce a systemic effect on rural development is substantiated in the work by O. Gutorova (2016). She emphasises that rural development should take place in a certain triad of stimulating directions: support for agricultural production, environmental protection and support for integrated rural infrastructure development projects. Such local socio-economic development projects should become one of the effective measures to reduce the demographic deprivation of rural areas and increase the standard of living for population. Emphasising the priority of the development and implementation of integrated (system) projects, the author does not take into account the individual characteristics of the territories; she does not mention the importance of involving the public to increase its entrepreneurship, activity, creating ability for public to participate directly in solving community problems, which is the main mission of reform.

World scientific schools have made a substantial methodological basis in the formation of effective regional development policy, the creation of institutional conditions for the organisation of local self-government bodies and the formation of priority policies for rural development. In particular, problems of formation of regional landscape and implementation of «priority» development strategies for individual small territorial communities have been explored in many scientific papers (Dissart, 2007; Isaksen, 2001; Stimson, 2006; Kakumba, 2010) and others. In general, it should be noted that in many countries, rural development is allocated in a separate direction of socio-economic policy and aimed at ensuring the sustainable development of the rural community (not territories or localities). At the same time, the main principles of rural development policy are multifunctionality and eco-innovation (Torre & Wallet, 2013), sustainability, subsidiarity, strategic vision and general citizens' participation in shaping local initiatives.

Special attention is paid to the work of foreign experts in determining the impact of socio-economic factors on the development of rural areas, trying to identify patterns between progress in social development of rural areas and increasing incomes, reducing the range of economic inequality (Janvry & Sadoulet, 2007).

In the last twenty years, decentralisation in the countries of the European Union has been at a rapid pace. The origins of decentralisation policy date back to the 1970-90s. During this period the tendency towards decentralisation of power began to increase in almost all countries: regardless of the main form of government - federal or unitary. This process becomes dominant in shaping power relations, the transition of power from the central level to the local level, which is expected to bring many benefits, from increased political responsibility and local civic engagement to greater implementation of own development projects, efficient allocation of resources and improvement of the administrative services quality (Oates, 1972; Breton, 1998; Burke, 1999) and others. In post-conflict societies, decentralisation was even supposed to help reduce inter-ethnic tensions (Moysovska, 2011). In the middle of 2000, the emphasis was placed on ensuring competitiveness, economic development of the territories and the creation of added value.

Important for Ukraine is the experience of neighbouring Poland, where decentralisation reforms began in 1989. Their consequences were one of the main prerequisites for the country's accession to the European Union's structures. An extensive and functional network of local self-government bodies was established and now covers all levels of the administrative-territorial division of Poland. As a result, effective involvement and management of EU structural funds has been made possible by the aim of developing the Polish economy and the country as a whole. On the other hand, establishing a sustaining self-government through the decentralisation of the country's administrative apparatus was one of the EU's main requirements before Poland admission to the community. The effectiveness and significance of this step is clearly demonstrated by the statistics. Thus, in the 2007-2013 budgetary period, Poland received about EUR 67 billion as financial assistance from the EU. About 25% of this amount went directly to local governments. They made their own decisions about how to use these tools and distributed them locally. Local governments are one of the largest beneficiaries of EU financial assistance. By the end of May 2014, they had received PLN 83.7 billion from the EU budget. Only Polish enterprises received more than them (PLN 87.2 billion) (Osiecki, 2014). The 2014-2020 budget period is currently ongoing. According to the agreements concluded and adopted, Poland will receive over EUR 106 billion as financial assistance from the EU during this period. Local governments have an important role in the management and usage of these funds. They will manage funds of the so-called regional operational programs (16 programs - one per each Polish region) - that is, over EUR 31 billion (European Funds Portal, 2019). These amounts indicate the significant role which local authorities play in the functioning of the Polish economy.

However, the significantly regulated benefits of multi-level governance have only yielded the expected results in those regions that already had the institutional capacity to take responsibility for local economic development. The experience of European countries shows that those communities that successfully develop their own internal socio-economic environment become successful. That is, for the development of rural territories, both in Ukraine and in the EU member-states, significant socio-demographic and socio-economic constraints and risks due to the previous development trends and the reform of the management system remain.

Today, the main task in organising the development and support of rural areas should be active work with individual elements of socio-economic relations. The gradual development of rural territories needs to minimise the risks of restraining their socio-economic development, which should be carried out in close cooperation between central, regional and local authorities with the prerogatives of securing the interests of local territorial communities, active support of self-organizing foundations, institutes of local democracy (Zajac, 2017) and maximum involvement of citizens in solving community problems and implementing solutions. In particular, forms of civic participation in practice may include: public hearings, meetings, conferences of territorial communities, correspondence, questionnaires, telephone calls, personal meetings. That is, there is a need for dialogue between the parties involved in dealing with important issues in organising their activities. Conceptually, such interaction can be seen as a socio-economic mechanism for stimulating rural development (Zajac, 2017).

Thus, conducting a sociological survey, determining the opinion of community residents on the problems and prospects of sustainable rural development, taking into account the influence of demographic, gender and socio-economic factors, is a modern method of maximal involvement of the public in strategic planning of the territory development, increasing initiative and improving dialogue between the authorities and the community.

3. The purpose

The purpose of this research is to analyse the impact of aggregate factors on the identification of problems and assessment of priority areas for rural development in the context of power relations reforms and the transfer of powers to local governments in Ukraine.

4. Methodology

In accordance with the provisions of the European Charter of Local Self-Government (Council of Europe, 1985) and after the adoption of the relevant Concept, the process of creating capable local self-government institutions at the basic level - United Territorial Communities (UTCs) - is quite active. For almost 5 years of the reform, 924 UTCs have been established, bringing together 4,277 settlements (39% of the total number of local councils as of 01.01.2015), which is 28.3% of the population and 39.7% of the territory of Ukraine (Monitoring, 2019).

The process of community reunification within the districts is not very active. Today, there are only 20 districts where 100% of the UTCs are covered and 91 districts where no UTCs are formed. Also, it is worth noting the unevenness between the regions in the process of integration of territorial communities, which is due, first of all, to the different attitude of local state administrations and local governments in the regions towards the introduction of decentralisation reform.

The results of financial decentralisation show a 1.7% increase in the share of local budgets in GDP in 2019 compared to 2014. Community pooling has allowed a 26% increase in per capita income. State financial support for local and regional development increased by 41.5 times (State Regional Development Fund, UTC's subvention, rural medicine subvention).

The main driving force of continuing the decentralisation reform and ensuring sustainable local economic development should be a strategic planned process. Local economic development planning should be based on an understanding of local political, environmental, demographic, socio-economic factors, taking into account the competitive advantages of the area, maximizing the involvement of all stakeholders (taking into account the diversity of interests and views of the entire population of the territory). It should be noted that research of public opinion in local economic development is a kind of barometer from which the authorities, the international donor community, professionals, experts and all stakeholders can obtain valuable and information for further consideration in the process of improving the local democracy system (Table 1).

Thus, researches on the results obtained during the local sociological survey of the residents of Znob-Novgorod United Territorial Community (UTC) of Sumy Oblast in 2018 to identify priority problems and areas of development, when creating the Development Strategy for the period 2025, emphasise that the obtained results are unique, but typical for most rural communities. The total population of the community was 4,630 people in 2018, bringing together 27 settlements (8 village councils). According to the population criterion, the community refers to a small territorial community.

It is necessary to identify specific features and constraints of small communities' development when generalising the problems and contradictions of their development: small number of enterprises and entrepreneurs (in this community there are 14 enterprises - producers of agricultural products, 1 cooperative and 3 farms), low population density (9.87 people/km²), the predominant orientation of people to employment in agricultural production, and sometimes only in the private subsidiary economy (10% of the population), which is in fact evidence of the existence of hidden unemployment on a threatening scale, insufficient mobility of rural population, a low level of medical, social and public services, extended communications, a low level of innovation and scientific activity, etc.

Table 1:
Dynamics of united territorial communities' formation in Ukraine (as of 10 July 2019)

Year / Indicator	Number of UTCs	Number of settlements that were part of the UTCs	Population of UTCs, million people	Area of UTCs, thousand km ²
2015	159	814	1.4	36.8
2016	207	968	1.7	52.8
2017	299	1,396	2.5	77.9
2018	141	562	2.7	25.9
2019	118	537	1.7	28.4
Total	924	4,277	10.0	221.8

Source: Compiled by the authors based on Monitoring, 2019

A sociological survey was conducted in all the 8 village councils, which ensured that the sample was representative. 307 people (6.6% of the total population) were included in the sample.

The primary information was collected through questionnaires. A combined sample was used to select respondents. The share of respondents in the total population varies significantly in different village councils. The reason is the diverse involvement of the residents in discussing the community's pressing issues.

The main task of the survey was to identify priority problems and directions of community development, taking into account the impact of the set of constraints. To this end, the study focused on key issues related to the assessment of the current state, identification of key issues, key areas for their solution and willingness to participate actively in the implementation of community development projects.

5. Results

5.1. The main socio-economic and demographic characteristics of respondents

Three age groups were identified: up to 35 years old (29.7%), 35 years old to 60 years old (52.4%), over 60 years old (17.9%), that reflects all major age groups of UTC residents.

The structure of respondents in terms of employment is shown in Figure 1.

The social status of respondents to some extent affected the distribution of respondents in terms of received income (Figure 2).

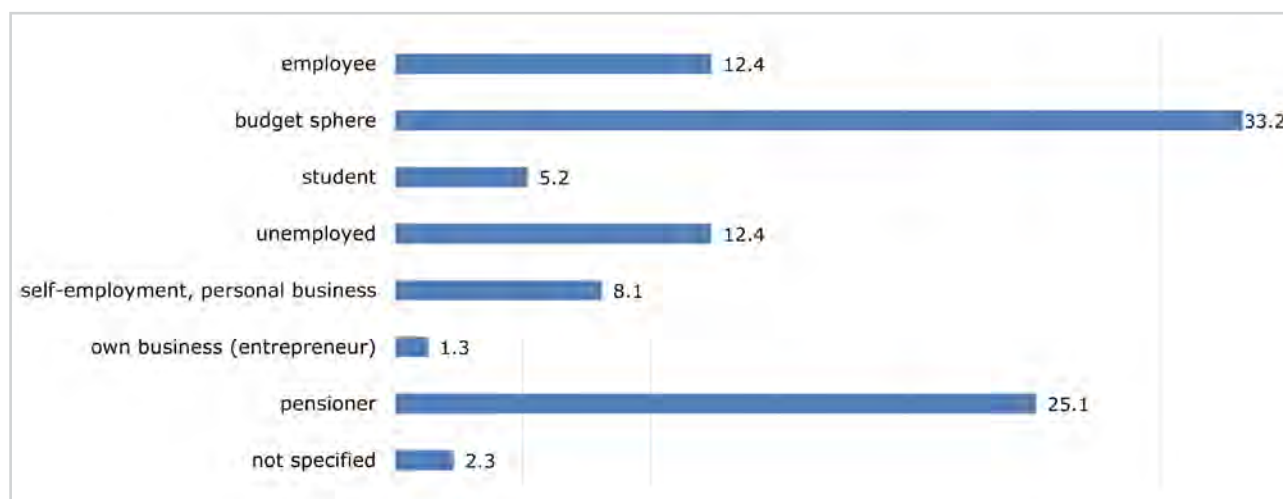


Figure 1:
Social status of the respondents, %
 Source: Compiled by the authors

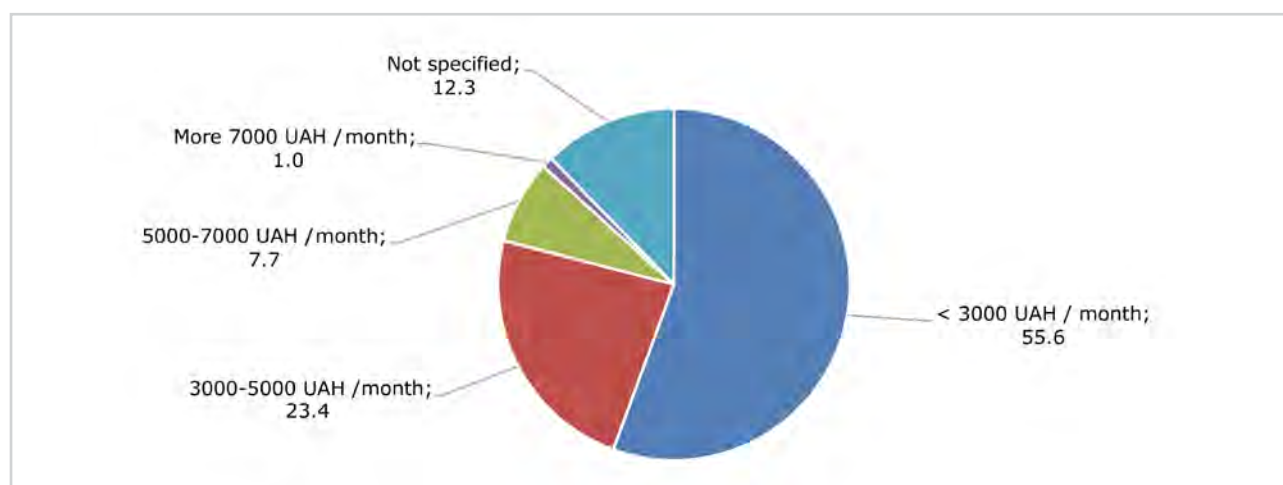


Figure 2:
Distribution of the respondents by income level, %
 Source: Compiled by the authors

The structural distribution of respondents by level of education is presented in Figure 3.

Describing the level of the respondents' education, it should be noted that two thirds have secondary and vocational education and only one third - complete and incomplete higher education.

5.2. Analysis of survey results

For a comprehensive assessment of the situation in the community, the respondents were asked the following question: «Which of the following statements would you choose to characterise Znob-Novgorod UTC?».

The analysis showed that, in general, negative evaluations prevail (72% of the respondents), however they fluctuate depending on the demographic and socio-economic characteristics of the respondents (Table 2).

Young people and seniors are more positive about life in the community, as the main responsibility for solving economic and domestic problems lies with middle-aged people. The impact of the level of education is rather ambiguous - more positive are those respondents who have

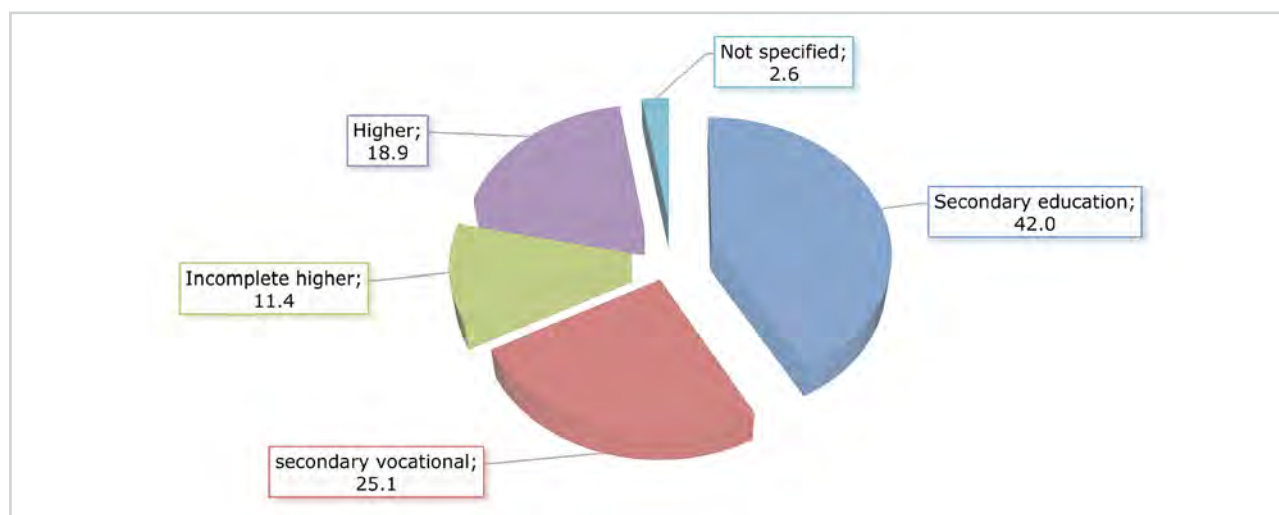


Figure 3:
The structure of the respondents by level of education, %
Source: compiled by the authors

Table 2:
Demographic and socio-economic differences in the assessment of UTC

Characteristics of respondents	Positive assessments	Total number of respondents, %	Negative assessments	Total number of respondents, %
Age of respondents, years				
<35	28	30.4	64	69.6
35-60	36	22.4	125	77.6
over 60	22	40.7	32	59.3
Level of education				
secondary education	32	24.6	98	75.4
secondary vocational	28	36.4	49	63.6
incomplete higher	11	31.4	24	68.6
higher	13	22.4	45	77.6
not specified	2	28.6	5	71.4
Employment (kind of activity)				
employee	11	28.9	27	71.1
budget sphere	28	27.5	74	72.5
student	4	25.0	12	75.0
unemployed	6	15.4	33	84.6
self-employment, personal business	4	16.7	20	83.3
own business (entrepreneur)	4	100.0	0	0.0
pensioner	25	32.5	52	67.5
not specified	4	57.1	3	42.9
Income level, UAH / month				
< 3000	47	27.3	125	72.7
3000-5000	22	31.0	49	69.0
5000-7000	10	41.7	14	58.3
over 7000	0	0.0	3	100.0
not specified	7	18.9	30	81.1
Total	86	28.0	221	72.0

Source: Compiled by the authors

education above the average and below full higher education, while the respondents with secondary and full higher education have more negative assessments. Obviously, this is due to the fact that both groups have fewer perspectives for development. Yet, the reasons are different: the respondents with the worst education level perceive the lack of career growth, and the respondents with higher education level do not see the opportunities for development in the community in general. It is quite logical to have a smaller share of positive responses among those respondents who have problems with employment - those who are unemployed and engaged in the private sector - as this affects their development opportunities. The share of positively adjusted respondents is growing, with the increase in the level of income received from the minimum to the average in the region, which is generally logical. The total absence of positive answers among the most highly paid respondents may be explained by a small number of respondents (3 persons) and by the fact that they have practically exhausted the potential for growth of incomes in the existing conditions.

The age differences in the assessment of the society main problems are significant enough (Table 3).

Thus, only 23.6% of the interviewed pensioners consider insufficient activity of residents as an important problem against 36.2% among the middle-aged people. Significant differences were observed in the assessment of the impact of the low unemployment rate - almost one and a half times the proportion of pensioners than among the young people and the middle-aged people. There is a tendency to increase the requirements for the possibility of self-realisation with a decrease in the age of the respondents, which is a completely natural phenomenon. A number of problems, such as environmental, infrastructural, and educational issues, are of greater concern to the middle-aged people than to the young people and the older generation. This can be explained in different ways. Young people do not always feel the severity of these problems, since they are under the protection of their parents, and older people are already accustomed to these problems and react not so sharply to them. At the same time there are problems that do not depend on the age. They include unemployment, unfavourable conditions and insufficient level of entrepreneurship among the inhabitants, which are the problems of economic character.

An ambiguous picture is shown by the analysis of the responses in terms of the respondents' educational level (Table 4).

A significant part of the problems with a slight increase in the level of education (secondary vocational and incomplete higher education) becomes less significant for respondents. However for those with complete higher education, the urgency of these problems is rising again. This also applies to economic problems, both environmental and infrastructural. The persons with a higher level of education, along with other major problems, consider insufficient social initiative and activity of inhabitants, low income of the population, a lack of investments, unsatisfactory condition of roads, and poor quality of medical services. For people with a low level of education, the problems of alcoholism and drug abuse are much more urgent.

Table 3:
Age differences in the assessment of existing community problems

Factors	Respondents' answers, %			
	Average	Age of respondents		
		< 35	35-60	over 60
Insufficient public initiative and activity of residents	32.6	31.9	36.0	23.6
Unemployment	57.7	56.0	59.0	56.4
Low income	59.3	62.6	63.4	41.8
Lack of opportunities for self-realisation, providing meaningful leisure	37.5	41.8	36.6	32.7
Unfavourable conditions for the development of entrepreneurship	26.1	25.3	27.3	23.6
Lack of awareness about the community outside	21.2	14.3	24.2	23.6
Ecological condition, environmental contamination	20.8	17.6	23.0	20.0
The spread of crime, alcoholism, drug abuse	38.4	36.3	41.0	34.5
Lack of community entrepreneurship	26.4	25.3	27.3	25.5
Lack of investment	45.0	39.6	47.8	45.5
Low quality (lack of) road pavement between settlements	54.1	51.6	57.1	49.1
Depreciation of engineering networks (water supply, water disposal)	41.0	34.1	47.2	34.5
A significant part of the population of older working age	30.3	20.9	34.2	34.5
Poor quality of preschool education	12.1	9.9	14.9	7.3
Low quality of secondary education	10.7	7.7	13.0	9.1
Lack of a developed network of a trade network's development	13.4	9.9	16.8	9.1
Lack of development of public service institutions	20.2	11.0	24.2	23.6
Inadequate quality of care	34.5	30.8	38.5	29.1

Source: Compiled by the authors

The impact of the level of income of the respondents on the assessment of the relevant problems is described in Table 5.

A tendency is observed regarding an increase in the growth of the respondents' level of income, with the quality of education and medical services, infrastructure problems, poor investment, as well as insufficient entrepreneurship and social activity of residents among the most problematic issues. At the same time, a reduction in the number of those respondents who considered a decrease in the level of their income to be the priority was unexpected. Most likely, this is due to the fact that a group of low-income respondents includes retired people who have less material needs, compared with the economically active population (Table 6).

The persons, who study in colleges and universities, by reason of their age are less likely than others to respond to problems with preschool education, the quality of medical care and the demographic situation. The persons occupied in the private sector take into account the inadequate activity of residents, the level of entrepreneurship and insufficient opportunities for self-realisation less than the others. Obviously, this is due to the fact that they independently provide their existence. It is typical that this category of respondents points to the problem of alcoholism and drug abuse almost twice as often. It is quite clear that the unemployed point to the problems of unemployment, low income, spread of alcoholism and drug abuse more often than the others. The remaining characteristics of the assessments of different groups of

Table 4:
Impact of education on the assessment of existing community problems

Factors	Respondents' answers, %			
	Level of education			
	secondary education	secondary vocational	incomplete higher	higher
Insufficient public initiative and activity of residents	33.8	32.6	22.9	39.7
Unemployment	62.3	58.9	45.7	56.9
Low income	61.0	56.6	51.4	69.0
Lack of opportunities for self-realisation, providing meaningful leisure	36.4	39.5	34.3	36.2
Unfavourable conditions for the development of entrepreneurship	28.6	27.1	22.9	24.1
Lack of awareness about the community outside	27.3	19.4	14.3	24.1
Ecological condition, environmental contamination	20.8	25.6	5.7	20.7
Spread of crime, alcoholism, drug abuse	44.2	44.2	25.7	31.0
Lack of community entrepreneurship	23.4	28.7	25.7	27.6
Lack of investment	40.3	46.5	40.0	53.4
Low quality (lack of) road pavement between settlements	50.6	49.6	62.9	65.5
Depreciation of engineering networks (water supply, water disposal)	42.9	42.6	45.7	34.5
A significant part of the population of older working age	33.8	29.5	25.7	34.5
Poor quality of preschool education	13.0	14.7	5.7	10.3
Low quality of secondary education	14.3	11.6	2.9	10.3
Lack of developed trade networks	16.9	13.2	5.7	13.8
Lack of public service institutions	23.4	18.6	14.3	22.4
Inadequate quality of health care	27.3	34.9	34.3	43.1

Source: Compiled by the authors

Table 5:
Impact of the level of income on the assessment of existing community problems

Factors	Respondents' answers, %				
	Income level, UAH / month				
	< 3000	3000-5000	5000-7000	More 7000	not specified
Insufficient public initiative and activity of residents	25.7	40.3	54.2	33.3	35.1
Unemployment	56.1	58.3	45.8	66.7	70.3
Low income	52.6	66.7	79.2	66.7	62.2
Lack of opportunities for self-realisation and meaningful leisure	35.1	48.6	29.2	33.3	32.4
Unfavourable conditions for the development of entrepreneurship	26.3	27.8	25.0	33.3	21.6
Lack of awareness about the community outside	19.9	20.8	29.2	0.0	24.3
Ecological condition, environmental contamination	21.6	19.4	33.3	0.0	13.5
The spread of crime, alcoholism, drug abuse	37.4	34.7	50.0	33.3	43.2
Lack of community entrepreneurship	22.2	33.3	45.8	33.3	18.9
Lack of investment	39.2	56.9	66.7	33.3	35.1
Low quality (lack of) road pavement between settlements	45.6	69.4	75.0	100.0	45.9
Depreciation of engineering networks (water supply, water disposal)	37.4	43.1	66.7	66.7	35.1
Significant part of the population of older working age	32.7	30.6	29.2	66.7	16.2
Poor quality of preschool education	10.5	13.9	25.0	33.3	5.4
Low quality of secondary education	10.5	8.3	20.8	33.3	8.1
Lack of developed trade networks	13.5	15.3	12.5	33.3	8.1
Lack of public service institutions	21.1	20.8	29.2	33.3	8.1
Inadequate quality of care	27.5	43.1	75.0	33.3	24.3

Source: Compiled by the authors

respondents (on the basis of the activity type) are quite varied and do not show clearly defined tendencies.

The analysis of answers to the question about the main resource of community development is given in Table 7.

Table 6:
The impact of the activity to assess existing community problems

Factors	Respondents' answers, %							
	Employees	Budget sphere	Students	Unemployed	Self-employment, personal business	Own business (entrepreneur)	Pensioners	Not specified
Insufficient public initiative and activity of residents	36.8	35.3	31.3	34.2	24.0	75.0	27.3	25.0
Unemployment	57.9	52.9	62.5	71.1	64.0	75.0	54.5	37.5
Low income	65.8	61.8	56.3	73.7	56.0	50.0	48.1	50.0
Lack of opportunities for self-realisation and meaningful leisure	47.4	43.1	37.5	36.8	24.0	25.0	31.2	25.0
Unfavourable conditions for the development of entrepreneurship	39.5	27.5	31.3	23.7	16.0	25.0	23.4	0.0
Lack of awareness about the community outside	15.8	22.5	31.3	21.1	16.0	0.0	23.4	12.5
Ecological condition, environmental contamination	21.1	21.6	12.5	21.1	20.0	25.0	22.1	12.5
Spread of crime, alcoholism and drug abuse	42.1	36.3	43.8	47.4	24.0	25.0	36.4	62.5
Lack of community entrepreneurship	34.2	34.3	12.5	18.4	16.0	50.0	22.1	12.5
Lack of investment	44.7	55.9	6.3	44.7	40.0	50.0	41.6	25.0
Low quality (lack of) road pavement between settlements	65.8	62.7	43.8	50.0	32.0	50.0	51.9	12.5
Depreciation of engineering networks (water supply, water disposal)	47.4	48.0	37.5	36.8	32.0	75.0	32.5	37.5
Significant part of the population of older working age	26.3	30.4	12.5	34.2	32.0	50.0	35.1	37.5
Poor quality of preschool education	7.9	14.7	6.3	10.5	16.0	50.0	10.4	0.0
Low quality of secondary education	10.5	13.7	12.5	7.9	12.0	50.0	6.5	0.0
Lack of developed trade networks	10.5	18.6	12.5	10.5	12.0	0.0	11.7	0.0
Lack of public service institutions	13.2	27.5	6.3	10.5	20.0	0.0	24.7	0.0
Inadequate quality of care	42.1	46.1	6.3	28.9	32.0	50.0	26.0	12.5

Source: Compiled by the authors

Table 7:
Demographic and socio-economic differences in estimation of the primary community development resource

Characteristics of respondents	Respondents' answers, %								
	Minerals in the community	Free land in the community	Advantageous geographical position	Attractive nature	Free business premises	Interesting tourist sites	Entrepreneurial activity	Local businesses and entrepreneurs	Progressive and effective local government
Age of respondents									
<35	3.1	24.5	5.1	24.5	2.0	6.1	14.3	8.2	12.2
35-60	5.1	22.3	1.9	15.9	4.5	7.6	8.9	10.8	22.9
over 60	3.9	11.8	3.9	25.5	5.9	7.8	13.7	21.6	5.9
Level of education									
secondary education	3.8	23.7	3.1	16.8	3.8	5.3	12.2	14.5	16.8
secondary vocational	2.6	22.1	2.6	22.1	2.6	10.4	13.0	11.7	13.0
incomplete higher	6.3	9.4	6.3	21.9	9.4	0.0	3.1	15.6	28.1
higher	6.6	19.7	3.3	23.0	3.3	11.5	11.5	6.6	14.8
not specified	0.0	33.3	0.0	33.3	0.0	0.0	16.7	0.0	16.7
Employment (activity)									
employees	5.3	18.4	5.3	13.2	0.0	2.6	15.8	13.2	26.3
budget sphere	4.2	26.0	2.1	15.6	3.1	7.3	13.5	9.4	18.8
students	4.0	8.0	8.0	40.0	4.0	8.0	12.0	8.0	8.0
unemployed	4.8	31.0	2.4	19.0	9.5	9.5	7.1	9.5	7.1
self-employed, personal business	4.0	36.0	0.0	24.0	0.0	8.0	0.0	8.0	20.0
own business (entrepreneurs)	0.0	66.7	0.0	0.0	33.3	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
pensioners	4.2	8.3	4.2	25.0	4.2	5.6	12.5	18.1	18.1
not specified	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	40.0	20.0	40.0	0.0
Income level, UAH / month									
< 3,000	4.8	17.9	3.6	25.0	2.4	7.1	8.3	14.3	16.7
3,000-5,000	4.4	26.5	4.4	13.2	4.4	8.8	16.2	5.9	17.6
5,000-7,000	8.7	17.4	0.0	13.0	4.3	0.0	13.0	4.3	39.1
over 7,000	0.0	0.0	0.0	33.3	0.0	0.0	0.0	33.3	33.3
not specified	0.0	29.5	2.3	15.9	9.1	9.1	15.9	13.6	2.3
Average	4.2	21.2	3.3	20.2	3.9	7.2	11.4	12.1	16.6

Source: Compiled by the authors

On the whole, the population is more focused on finding an external resource - most of the answers were received with regard to available natural resources (over 40%), and progressive and efficient local authorities (16.6%). Only one out of nine respondents realised that the main resource of development is the inhabitants themselves, their activity and their entrepreneurial skills. This is least understood by the middle-aged people, with incomplete higher education, the self-employed, the unemployed and those with low income.

The priority of individual areas of community development is given in Table 8.

On the whole, the population of the community gives more priority to the economic vectors of development before social, cultural and environmental projects. The level of education had little effect on the respondents' assessments. At the same time, the social status of respondents has a significant influence on the obtained results. More than half of the interviewed hired workers, students and self-employed evaluated the most important projects of the socio-cultural and ecological direction (against less than 40% of employees in the fiscal sector and the unemployed). The assessment of pensioners is generally on average.

The faith of the population in the realisation of community development projects is presented in Table 9.

In general, only 40.9% believe in the possibility of implementing the tasks of community development. The pattern of optimism growing with the age of the respondents is traced. Oddly enough, the most optimistic were pensioners - 51.0%. The level of education, on the contrary, showed a reverse trend: the growth of education leads to a decrease in optimistic moods. The sharp decrease in optimists among respondents with higher education may be due to a clearer awareness of the difficulties in implementing community development objectives. In the context of the social status of the respondents, the public sector workers and the self-employed in the private sector were most pessimistic. The level of optimism decreases with the growth of the

Table 8:
Demographic and socioeconomic differences in the assessment of the main source of the UTC's development

Characteristics of respondents	Respondents' answers, %							
	Social, cultural and environmental directions				Economic direction			
	Development of a park zone, playgrounds	Restoration of historical and cultural heritage	Creating a zone of «green tourism» and eco-settlements	Average	Creating a multi-utility company	Creation of a dairy cooperative	Creation of processing enterprises	Average
Age of respondents, years								
<35	63.2	24.2	42.5	43.5	55.4	79.7	80.0	72.6
35-60	47.5	23.4	54.1	42.5	48.6	76.9	76.6	67.9
over 60	50.0	37.0	53.8	46.9	67.9	72.4	86.7	75.9
Level of education								
secondary education	55.1	23.6	47.2	42.7	49.4	78.7	78.0	69.3
secondary vocational	42.6	28.9	54.0	42.3	53.2	76.4	85.5	72.6
incomplete higher	58.3	23.8	56.5	47.1	60.0	79.2	75.0	71.2
higher	55.8	25.6	48.8	43.4	57.1	74.5	78.3	70.5
not specified	75.0	50.0	40.0	53.8	66.7	80.0	60.0	69.2
Employment (activity)								
employees	51.7	34.5	66.7	51.1	60.0	76.5	75.0	70.8
budget sphere	58.5	22.1	32.9	38.2	51.3	76.5	78.8	69.3
students	66.7	28.6	61.5	55.2	42.9	75.0	69.2	65.6
unemployed	31.8	23.8	56.0	38.2	50.0	82.8	79.2	72.0
self-employed, personal business	63.6	10.0	70.6	52.6	36.4	76.5	73.3	65.1
own business (entrepreneurs)	33.3	33.3	33.3	33.3	33.3	100.0	100.0	77.8
pensioners	45.9	32.4	57.5	45.6	54.8	76.1	85.7	72.3
not specified	100.0	0.0	33.3	57.1	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Income level, UAH / month								
< 3,000	51.6	28.7	50.5	44.2	56.9	77.2	79.3	71.6
3,000-5,000	55.2	25.9	35.0	38.6	50.9	74.6	80.4	68.8
5,000-7,000	52.4	22.7	45.0	39.7	45.0	81.0	77.3	68.3
over 7,000	66.7	0.0	100.0	55.6	33.3	66.7	66.7	55.6
not specified	50.0	33.3	80.8	59.3	56.3	82.1	80.0	75.0
Average	53.1	25.9	48.8	43.1	56.5	76.4	79.2	71.0

Source: Compiled by the authors

level of income. This is due to a certain correlation between the level of education and the level of income.

At the same time, the low optimism of the population is combined with a rather high willingness to take an active part in the implementation of community development tasks (Table 10).

Table 9:

Demographic and socioeconomic differences in the assessment of the most important projects of UTC's development (Question: «What projects relating to social and economic development of the territory should be prioritised?»)

Characteristics of respondents	Positive estimates of the total number of respondents,%			Negative estimates,% of the total number of respondent		
	«Yes»	«Rather yes»	Total	«No»	«Rather no»	Total
Age of respondents						
<35	21.7	15.7	37.3	44.6	18.1	62.7
35-60	24.6	14.8	39.4	45.1	15.5	60.6
over 60	22.4	28.6	51.0	38.8	10.2	49.0
Level of education						
secondary education	26.3	19.3	45.6	45.6	8.8	54.4
secondary vocational	27.5	15.9	43.5	33.3	23.2	56.5
incomplete higher	24.1	17.2	41.4	48.3	10.3	58.6
higher	10.9	14.5	25.5	52.7	21.8	74.5
not specified	28.6	28.6	57.1	28.6	14.3	42.9
Employment (activity)						
employees	32.4	20.6	52.9	32.4	14.7	47.1
budget sphere	14.9	12.8	27.7	55.3	17.0	72.3
students	53.3	6.7	60.0	13.3	26.7	40.0
unemployed	30.3	15.2	45.5	36.4	18.2	54.5
self-employed, personal business	9.1	13.6	22.7	63.6	13.6	77.3
own business (entrepreneurs)	0.0	50.0	50.0	0.0	50.0	50.0
pensioners	21.7	26.1	47.8	42.0	10.1	52.2
not specified	80.0	20.0	100.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Income level, UAH / month						
< 3,000	23.9	17.4	41.3	45.8	12.9	58.7
3,000-5,000	20.0	13.8	33.8	49.2	16.9	66.2
5,000-7,000	13.6	22.7	36.4	59.1	4.5	63.6
over 7,000	0.0	0.0	0.0	50.0	50.0	100.0
not specified	36.7	23.3	60.0	10.0	30.0	40.0
Average	23.4	17.5	40.9	43.8	15.3	59.1

Source: Compiled by the authors

Table 10:

Demographic and socioeconomic differences in readiness to take an active part in the implementation of the UTC's development (Question: «Are you ready to take an active part in the implementation of socio-economic community development projects»)

Characteristics of respondents	Positive estimates of the total number of respondents,%			Negative estimates of the total number of respondents,%		
	«Yes»	«Rather yes»	Total	«No»	«Rather no»	Total
Age of respondents						
<35	52.3	36.0	88.4	5.8	5.8	11.6
35-60	41.6	37.0	78.6	14.9	6.5	21.4
over 60	40.8	34.7	75.5	20.4	4.1	24.5
Level of education						
secondary education	47.2	34.1	81.3	15.4	3.3	18.7
secondary vocational	44.4	29.2	73.6	13.9	12.5	26.4
incomplete higher	35.5	35.5	71.0	19.4	9.7	29.0
higher	42.9	53.6	96.4	1.8	1.8	3.6
not specified	57.1	14.3	71.4	28.6	0.0	28.6
Employment (activity)						
employee	39.5	44.7	84.2	13.2	2.6	15.8
budget sphere	46.4	40.2	86.6	9.3	4.1	13.4
student	46.7	20.0	66.7	13.3	20.0	33.3
unemployed	44.4	36.1	80.6	8.3	11.1	19.4
self-employment, personal business	45.5	36.4	81.8	9.1	9.1	18.2
own business (entrepreneur)	33.3	33.3	66.7	33.3	0.0	33.3
pensioner	41.1	32.9	74.0	21.9	4.1	26.0
not specified	100.0	0.0	100.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Income level, UAH / month						
< 3,000	45.3	32.3	77.6	16.8	5.6	22.4
3,000-5,000	44.9	39.1	84.1	11.6	4.3	15.9
5,000-7,000	37.5	62.5	100.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
over 7,000	66.7	33.3	100.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
not specified	43.8	31.3	75.0	9.4	15.6	25.0
Average	44.6	36.3	81.0	13.1	5.9	19.0

Source: Compiled by the authors

More than 80% are ready to actively participate in the implementation of the objectives of the UTC's development, and the youth are more willing to do so. With age, readiness to participate actively decreases. An ambiguous trend is the influence of the respondents' level of education. An increase in the level of education shows a decrease in the number of those willing to participate in the transformations. However, those who have complete higher education, almost all (96.4%) demonstrate readiness to do so. The effect of the level of received income, growth of which correlates with increasing readiness to work actively for the benefit of society, demonstrates a clear tendency. The analysis of the impact of social status showed rather unexpected results. The most dynamic social groups (students and businessmen) appeared to be the most passive, one third of whom turned out to be unprepared to do anything to implement community development projects.

6. Conclusions

The results of the conducted analysis the sociological survey showed the influence of demographic and socio-economic factors on determining priority directions of community development and willingness to actively participate in their realisation.

The variation in the responses of the community residents was directly impacted by national (general situation in the country, political and economic situation, mentality of residents) and local (gender, age, education, social status, income level, type of activity) factors. For example, life in the community was assessed more positively by the youth and the retirees, the residents with secondary vocational education and the middle-income population. There is a decrease in the number of positive responses among those respondents who have problems with employment, are engaged in private households and have the highest incomes. Respondents from the middle and upper world are also more pessimistic. There is a tendency to increase the requirements for the possibility of self-fulfilment with decreasing age of the respondents, which is quite a natural phenomenon. Also, the respondents with secondary and higher education are more pessimistic in their assessment. There is a tendency to increase the requirements for the possibility of self-realisation with decreasing age of the respondents, which is quite natural phenomenon.

The analysis of the results shows a close correlation between the assessment of the existing state of the community, the factors that hinder its development and the priority tasks that need to be carried out for the development of communities. In general, the community's population gives greater priority to economic development. The level of education had little impact on the respondents' assessments. At the same time, the social status of the respondents has a significant impact on the obtained results. More than one half of the surveyed employees, students and self-employed rated the «most important» projects of socio-cultural and environmental focus (against less than 40% of the employees in the budget sphere and the unemployed).

The results of the analysis are sufficiently logical, and to some extent, typical of many Ukrainian UTCs. However, some of them, due to their ambiguity, require further research in other territorial communities that have similar conditions and problems of existence.

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