

The attitudes of citizens from **Bihor county** (Romania) towards environment

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This survey was requested by Eduard Hellvig, MEP and coordinated by Conf. Dr. Ioan Gh. Pop

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Partidul Conservator

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Oradea, Bihor County, Romania
November 29th, 2007

On January 1st, 2007 Romania was the 26th state to join the European Union. This has been the fulfillment of a long awaited dream that many people from both Romania and the European Union worked hard for many years. The County of Bihor rejoiced along with the rest of the nation when it was admitted into the European Union. Like the rest of Romania, Bihor was also committed to ensuring a smooth and fruitful integration into the community of European nations.

One of the issues identified even before the formal admittance into the European Union was the environment. Unfortunately, Romania along with other nations from the former soviet bloc had a very high level of pollution coupled with a low view of the population regarding environmental issues. Simply stated the people in Romania did not concern themselves with the environment and specifically with their own actions and how they may positively or negatively affect the environment.

We set out to survey the population of Bihor County - 594,615 European citizens - regarding their general attitudes towards the environment starting with general knowledge and ending up with specific and concrete solutions the people are willing to work with toward improving the general condition of the environment. This survey was administered in a typical random and objective manner with the outmost professionalism. We trust that the findings of our study will shed a little more light on what we know about the good people of Bihor County, their hopes, dreams and fears as well as what can be done to improve the integration process and ensure a smooth and enjoyable transition.

Sincerely,

Conf. Dr. Ioan Gh. Pop

Chancellor of Emanuel University of Oradea

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Methodology of the study

The following is a research study undertaken by *Dacian Palladi - Consultanta in Afaceri Ltd.* in collaboration with a team led by conf. dr. Ioan Gh. Pop of *Emanuel University of Oradea*. This research proposes to study the attitudes the citizens of Bihor County have towards the environment and the factor which have shaped them.

This study does not propose itself to be a special Eurobarometer as have been done in the past, but rather a focused complementary study on the attitudes that people in Bihor County have towards the environment. We shall closely analyze the people of Bihor's perception of the environment, their level of knowledge regarding general environmental issues, the importance the environment plays in the decision making process, what are some solutions people are considering to solve the environmental issues, individual efforts in protecting the environment and specific environmental issues facing Bihor County.

1. Geographic location

Bihor County is one of 42 counties that exist in the country of Romania. It is ranked at number twelve, holding 2,8% of the country's population. It's surface is 7.544 sq.km. and it holds a population of 594.615 inhabitants among who 48.6% are male and 51.4% are female. As for residency, 299.988 live in towns and 294.627 live in rural areas. The structure of the population is as follows: the population between 0-14 is 16.1% , the age group between 15-64 represents 69,5% and the elders over 65 represent 14,4%.

Oradea is the Capital of Bihor, and the connecting city to Romania's western neighbor Hungary. Oradea is 250 Km from Budapest and 10 Km from the Hungarian border, making it a transit point between EU and the Romanian markets situated in the major cities like Cluj-Napoca, Satu Mare, Deva, Bucharest and others.

Oradea has a population of 202,000 inhabitants and beside it there are eight other major towns: Alesd, Beius, Marghita, Nucet, Salonta, Stei, Vascau and Valea lui Mihai. The population of Oradea is divided in: 70% Romanians, 26% Hungarians,, and a little over 2.1% other minorities including Germans 0.19%, Jews 0.03%, Slovaks 0.22% Rromi, etc.

Infrastructure in Oradea links the city to other important centers within the country and outside. A popular transportation mode is the railway that has various connections in the country and outside. Access by plane is available and Oradea has a local airport with links to Bucharest and other cities. International airports located in Budapest, Timisoara and Arad are about three hours drive away.

Oradea is the holder of more than ten thousand private companies that specialize in a large economic variety: industry, transportation, manufacturing, services and agriculture. Oradea represents 63% of industrial production of the county.

The Apuseni Mountains cover the east side of the county, and they reach 1.800 m in height. The other side of the county is covered by the Romanian Western Plain. The hydrographic basin is provided by Crisul Repede, Crisul Negru and Barcau. Because of it's varied relief, natural resources can be found in Bihor County; among them are: lignite, bauxite, petrol, fire clay and also mineral waters. The climate is moderate, the average temperature varying between 6 and 10 degrees Celsius.

Agriculture in Bihor is intense and important for the Romanian agriculture. Bihor is ranked number one in the production of cereals, mainly wheat and corn. Also, the county is known for producing sunflower seeds, potatoes and red beet. Farming also has an important role in the raising of cattle, sheep and pigs in mostly rural areas.

Infrastructure in Bihor County consists of: 474 km of railways and 2.664 km of local, national and European roads; access to European Road E60; access to future highway Bucharest- Ploiesti- Brasov- Tg. Mures- Cluj- Oradea- Bors-Hungary, is under construction and is estimated to be commissioned in 2012. Education is an important part in preparing for the future of the county, and so Bihor has 7 universities, 45 colleges and high-schools and 523 elementary schools.

The economy of the county is in a development process in all areas. The industrial production, developed mostly in Oradea consists of light industries such as: confections, footwear and furrier's trade, food industry, energetic industry, and also the construction industry. The Labor Force in Bihor County is distributed among industry and construction(28%), agriculture (42%) and services (30%). The unemployment rate is 2.1% and the gross average salary in 2005 was 213.80 EUR and the net average salary was 166.20 EUR. The GDP per capita is well above the national average and is currently one of the wealthiest counties in Romania.

The religious heritage of Romania is echoed in Bihor county. The Romanian Orthodox Church is the dominant religious body numbering 18,817, 975 of the population (86,7%). The rate of church attendance is much lower (26%). Other religions are Roman Catholics (4,7%), Protestantism (3,7%), Pentecostal (1,5%) and the Romanian Greek-Catholic Church (0.9%)

From a political standpoint, Romania is a semi-presidential democratic Republic. The executive functions are shared by the president that is elected by popular vote every five years and the prime-minister. The legislative part of the government is made up of two chambers: The Senate and Chamber of Deputies. The justice system is independent of other branches of government and it culminates with the Supreme Court which is called The Supreme Court of Cassation and Justice. The country's entry into the European Union has had a big impact on Romania's domestic policy. Romania has instituted various reforms among which: the judicial reform, measures to combat corruption and others. The political changes in Romania have determined important developments, the main goal being the reform and restructuring of the Romanian economy.

Oradea has been governed by the Democratic Party for the past 7 years.

All the political, economical, social, ethnic and religious upheavals in Romania have affected Bihor County, but its inhabitants have proved that its main goal is to increase the progress and results that have already begun.

2. Sample size

The questionnaire was applied to 910 citizens of Bihor County, which represents a random sample of the total 594,615 registered citizens of Bihor. The sample size was determined in accordance with a confidence level of 95% and a confidence interval of 3.5%. The questionnaire was equally and randomly applied to one person, every fifth household in both rural and urban settings in the County of Bihor. Below you will find the exact breakdown of the population by age, location and gender.

Age	Oradea - capital		Other cities		Rural	
	F	M	F	M	F	M
18 - 29	42	39	19	18	49	48
30 - 44	49	44	22	20	57	56
over 45	77	71	35	32	116	114

3. The method of research and the questionnaire

The questionnaire was applied in an individual interview format. There were scaled questions, multiple choice and open ended questions. Many of the questions were fashioned after the Eurobarometer format having the stated purpose to complement and focus the special Eurobarometer study to Bihor County. At the end of this report we have included a sample copy.

4. Interpretation

The balance of this report will include the interpretation of our study and we shall look at individual questions and how the response of the citizens of Bihor County affect their attitudes towards the environment.

5. Researchers

The team of researchers was supervised by lect. drd. Ioan S. Fotea and was comprised of students from Emanuel University of Oradea. They individually applied the questionnaire in an interview format with the average interview taking approximately 25 minutes. Approximately 12% of the subjects approached, refused to answer the questionnaire.

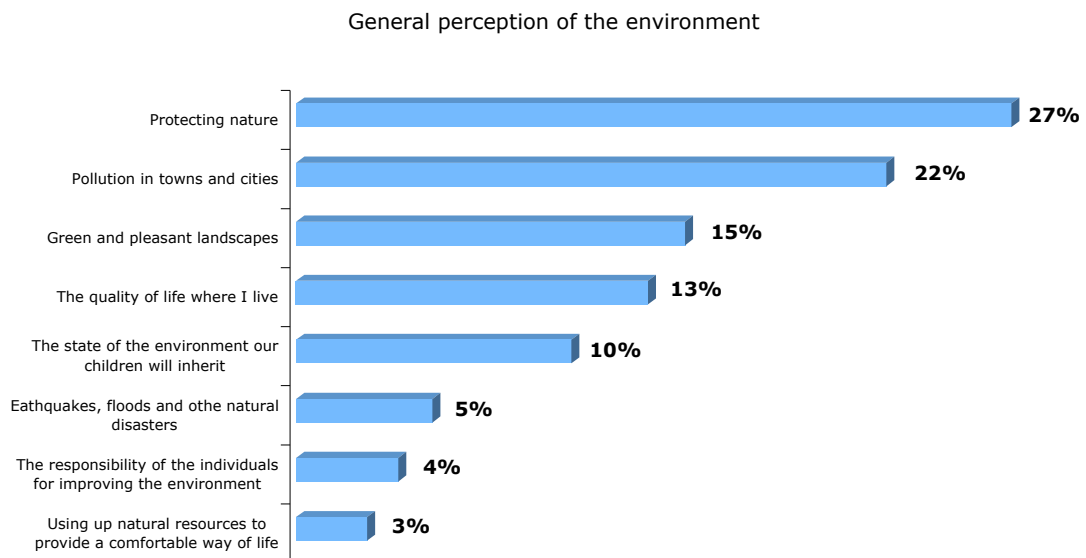
Part I. Perception of the environment

General perception

most of the people in Bihor County perceive the environment as either protecting nature or the pollution present in towns and cities

The first question we posed to the people of Bihor County is "What do you think of when you hear people talking about the environment?". The purpose of this question was to test the general perceptions people had about the environment. The responses were as following:

- ✓ 27% thought of protecting the nature
- ✓ 22% thought of pollution in cities and towns
- ✓ 15% thought of green and pleasant landscapes
- ✓ 13% thought of the quality of life where I live
- ✓ 10% thought of the state of the environment our children will inherit
- ✓ 5% thought of earthquakes, floods and other natural disasters
- ✓ 4% thought of the responsibility of individuals for improving the environment and
- ✓ 3% thought of using up natural resources to provide a comfortable way of life



Question: When people talk about "Environment", which of the following do you think of first?

How to read the graph: when talking about the environment 27% of the citizens from Bihor County think of protecting nature

Concerns about the environment

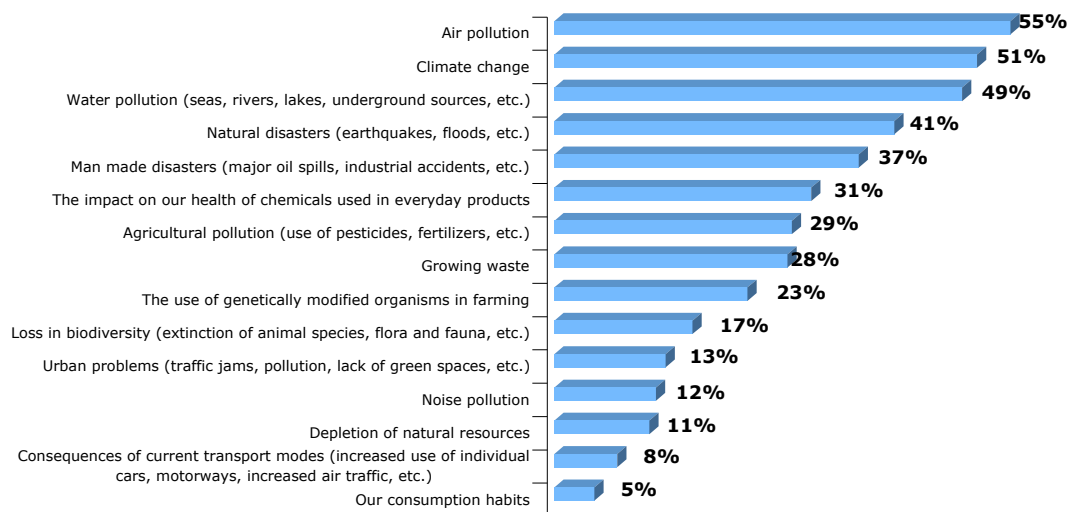
most people in Bihor County perceive "air pollution" and "climate change" as the main issues to be worried about

In the next question we asked the people of Bihor County to list the top 5 major environmental issues they are worried about from the list we provided them (see the graph below). The top five choices were as following:

- ✓ air pollution - 55%
- ✓ climate change - 51%
- ✓ water pollution - 49%
- ✓ natural disasters - 41%
- ✓ man made disasters - 37%

Noticeably the top three general concerns the citizens of Bihor County have are issues they are faced with on a daily basis.

Main environmental issues citizens are worried about



Question: From the following list, please list the five main environmental issues that you are worried about?

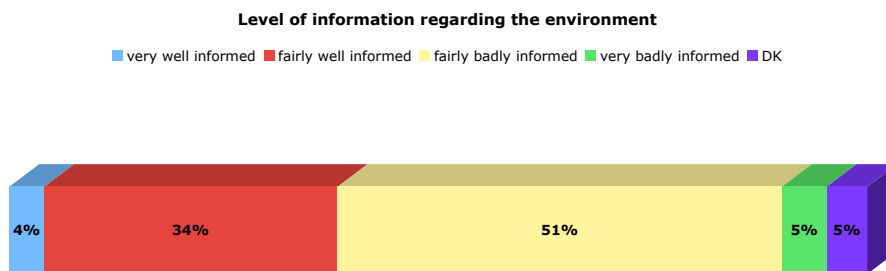
How to read the graph: the biggest concern in regards to pollution is of the air pollution, which accounts for 55% of the citizens from Bihor County

Part II. Information on the environment

How informed are the people of Bihor

over 50% of the people in Bihor County perceive themselves as fairly badly informed regarding environmental issues

In this section we focused on the way people of Bihor perceive themselves and their own level of knowledge regarding basic environmental issues. 51% perceive themselves as fairly badly informed followed by 34% who view themselves as fairly well informed. 4% of the population views themselves as very well informed with 5% as very badly informed and 5% who do not know.

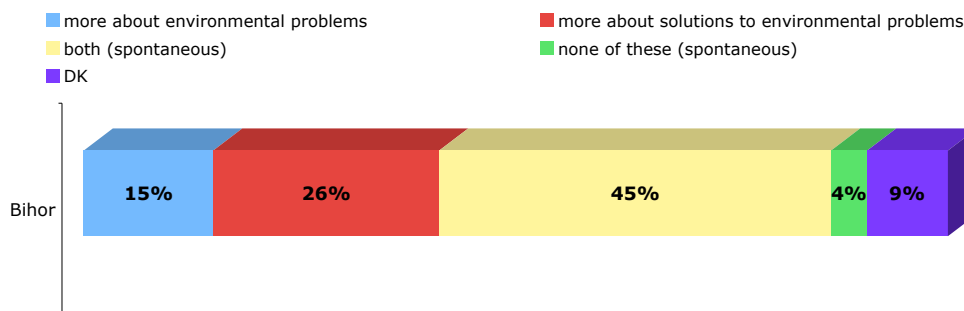


Question: In general, how informed do you feel about environmental issues?

How to read the graph: 34% of the citizens from Bihor County view themselves as fairly well informed regarding the environmental issues

When asked what area they would like to receive more information about, the environment, its problems or solutions to those problems, the overwhelming majority (71%) stated that they would like more information about solutions to the environmental problems. 4% of the population of Bihor stated that they don't care.

More about environment and its problems



Question: Would you like to know more about environmental problems or more about solutions to environmental problems?

How to read the graph: 15% of the citizens from Bihor County would like to know more about environmental problems

What information do citizens of Bihor lack?

the top two environmental issues that the citizens of Bihor lack information about are the use of genetically modified organisms in farming and loss in biodiversity

The next question we asked the people of Bihor County was from the same list as above to list the top 5 major environmental issues they lack information about. Based on our research we shall mention the top four issues the people of Bihor County state they lack information and the bottom four issues. Their responses were as following:

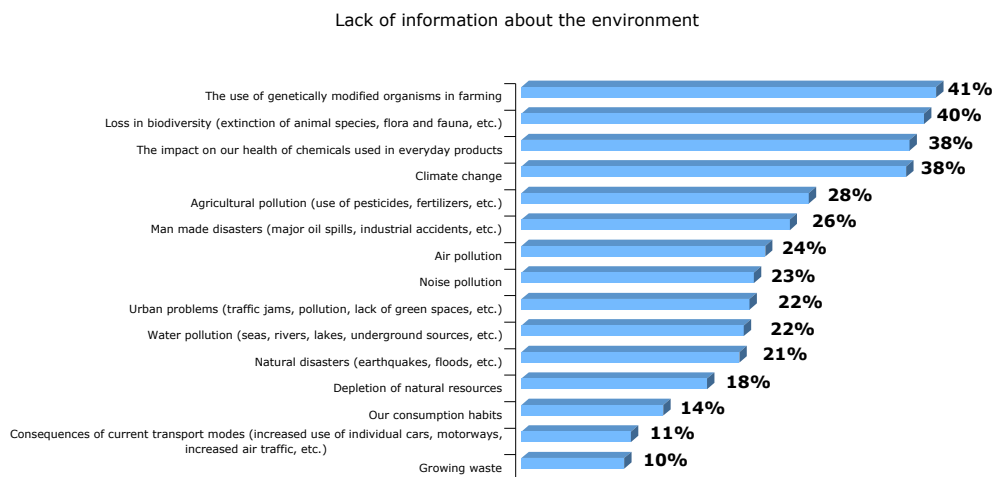
Top four

- ✓ the use of genetically modified organisms in farming - 41%
- ✓ loss in biodiversity - 40%
- ✓ the impact on our health of chemicals used in every day products - 38%
- ✓ climate change - 38%

Bottom four

- ✓ depletion of natural resources - 18 %
- ✓ our consumption habits - 14%
- ✓ consequences of current transport modes - 11%
- ✓ growing waste - 10%

Before focusing on the question “what environmental issues worries you?”, we looked at what environmental issues were the people of Bihor County least informed about. Perhaps we shall next correlate the responses from these two questions to establish if there is any plausible connection between the environmental issues people of Bihor County are least informed about and the ones they worry about most.



Question: From the following list, please tell me the five main environmental issues about which you feel you lack information in particular?

How to read the graph: 41% of the citizens from Bihor County admit they lack information on the use of genetically modified organism in farming

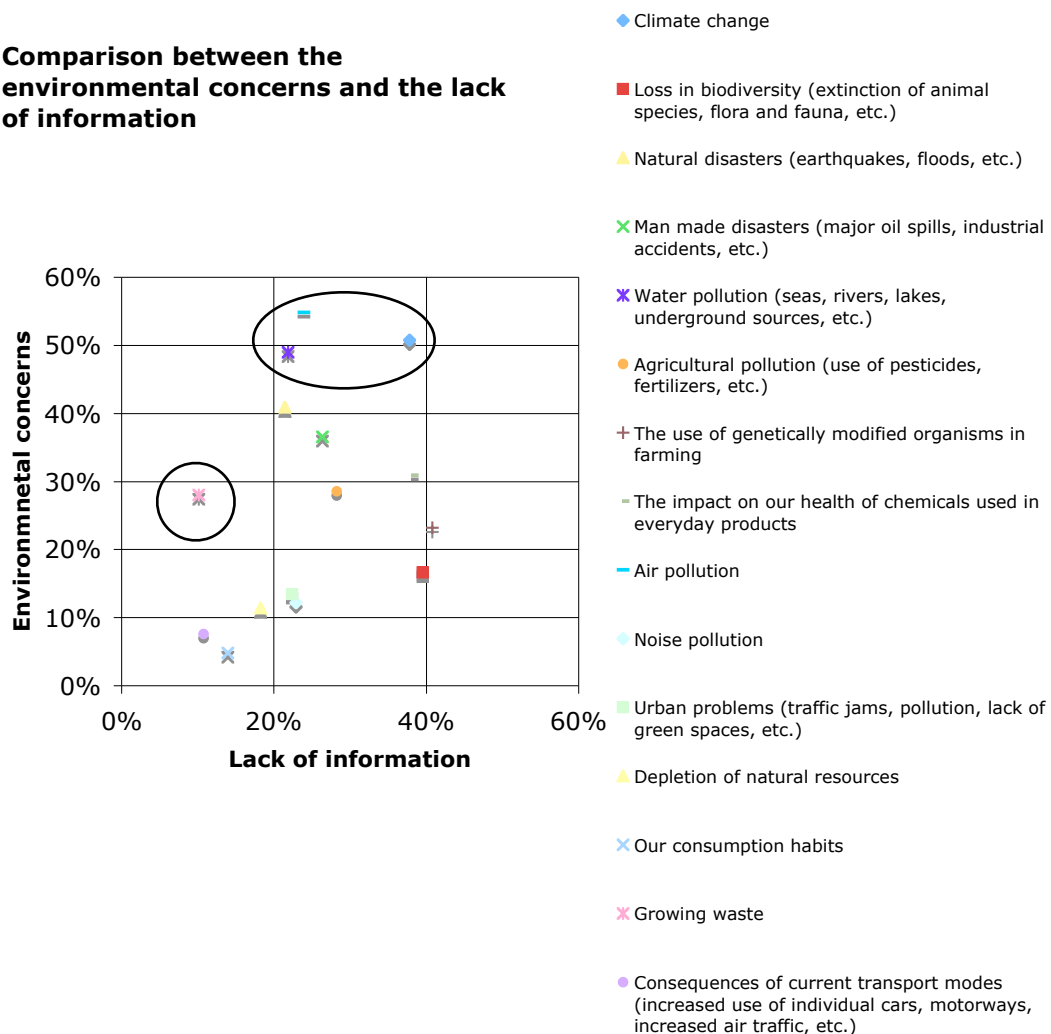
Comparison between the environmental concerns and the lack of information

water pollution, air pollution and the change in the climate are the main issues that people of Bihor County are concerned and lack information about

In cross-referencing the two above mentioned questions (what environmental issues worries you and you lack information about) the top three were air pollution, water pollution and climate change, which make for rather interesting findings. In other words, people are extremely worried about the issues that they lack information about; one may call this ignorant fear.

Another issue that draws ones attention is growing waste, which is something that people of Bihor County claim they don't lack information but are worried about. Since this has been identified by major environmental organizations as an overall problem in Romania, in our questionnaire we will further focus on the various facets of this environmental issue along with a few potential solutions.

Comparison between the environmental concerns and the lack of information



How to read the graph: air pollution is high in concern (approximately 55%) and not so high in regards to lack of information on this issue (less then 25%)

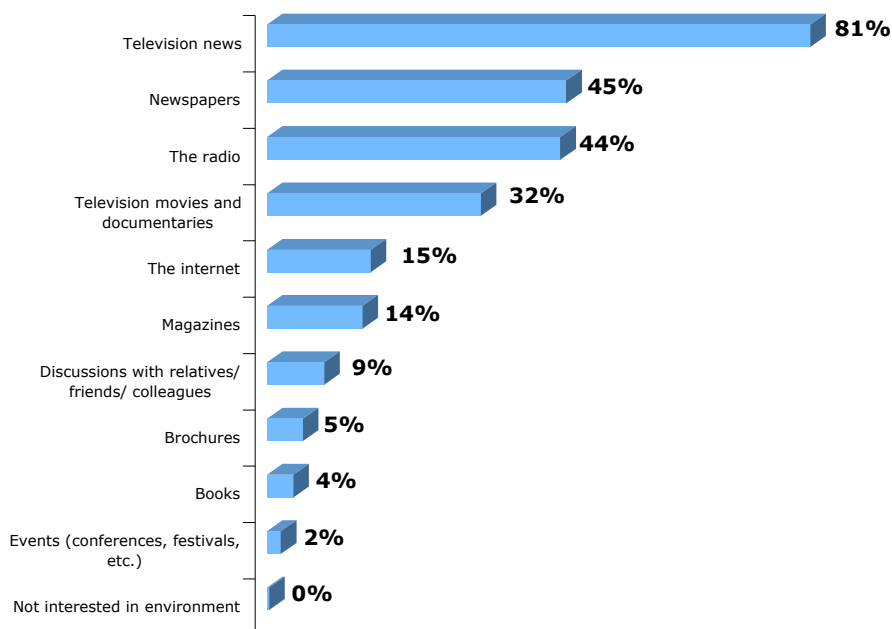
Main sources of information

the majority of the people of Bihor County receive their information regarding the environment from Television

We focused our research in this next question to identify the major sources of information utilized by the people of Bihor County to access and receive their information regarding the environment. The first and paramount source of information was the television with 81% of the people citing it as their major source for receiving information followed by newspapers and radio at 45% and 44% respectively. 32% cited television movies and documentaries as their source of information followed by the internet and magazine at 15%, respectively 14% each. Lastly 9% receive their information about the environment from discussion with relatives, friends or colleagues, 5% from brochures, 4% from book and 2% from various events, conferences and festivals.

Noteworthy here is that 0% of the population of Bihor County said they have no interest in the environment. However, the overwhelming majority receive their information via one way medium of communications such as TV, newspapers and radio. One can reservedly conclude that even if the population of Bihor County is interested in environmental issues they will not actively seek information regarding the environment on their own.

Most used sources of information regarding the environment



Question: From the following, which are the main three sources of information in regards to environment?

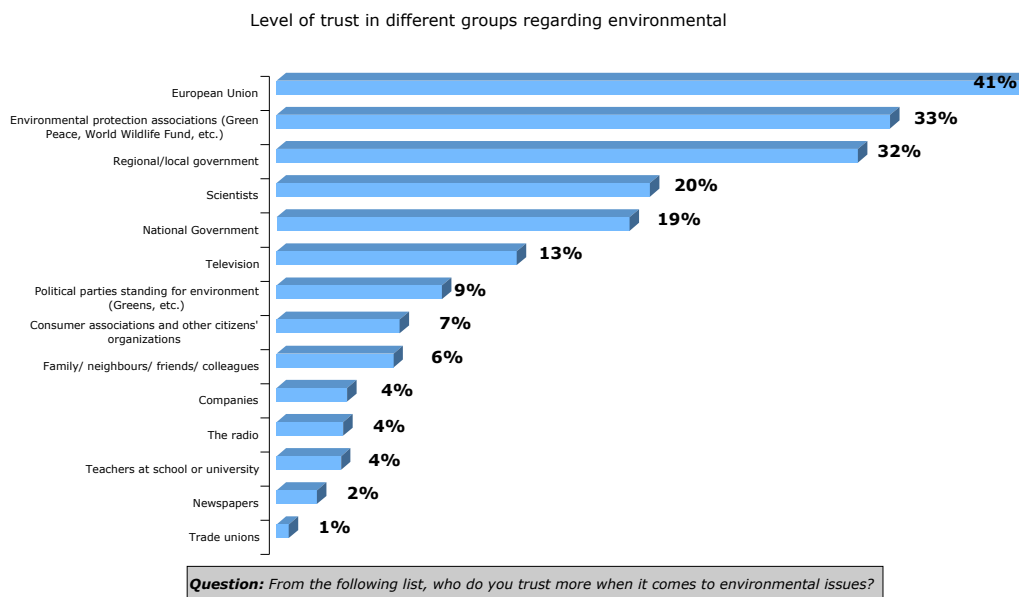
How to read the graph: 81% of the citizens from Bihor County use Television news to get information regarding the environment

Level of trust

most people in Bihor County trust the European Union more than scientists, national government and television on issues regarding the environment

The next question we posed to the citizens of Bihor County was regarding the level of trust they have in different groups regarding environmental issues. Surprisingly, the majority of the people (41%) cited the European Union - an entity not traditionally known for the dissemination of environmental issues - as the most trustworthy group regarding the environmental. The European Union was followed by the various environmental protection associations, such as Green Peace, World Wildlife Fund at 33%; regional or local government at 32%; scientists at 20% and national government at 19%. Another up set was the television who received a 13% confidence vote, political parties - notably the Green party - that received 9%, consumer associations at 7%, family and friends at 6%, companies, radio and universities at 4% with newspapers and trade unions at 2%, respectively 1%.

Taking into account that the majority of the people told us that they receive their information via television, radio and newspapers it is remarkable the low level of trust these institutions receive from the population on issues regarding the environment.



How to read the graph: 41% of the citizens from Bihor County trust the European Union in terms of environmental issues

Part III. Importance of the environment in the political decision-making process

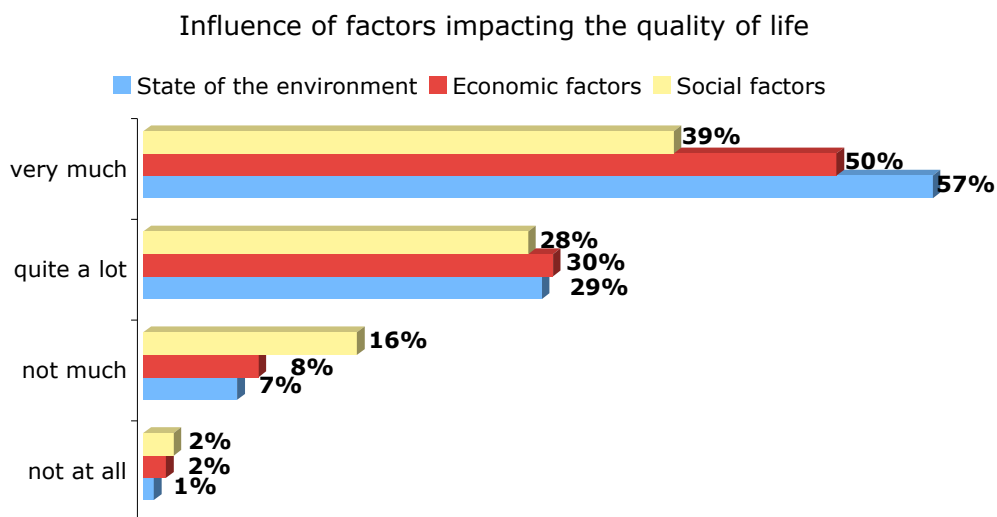
The state of the environment influences quality of life

most people in Bihor County cited environmental factors as the major influencer on the quality of their lives

In this next section we will turn our attention to the importance of the environment as it impacts the political decision making process and policies governing the people. Our first question was "what were the factors that influence your quality of life". The choices given were "the state of the environment", "economical factors" and "social factors". Most people said that all three of these factors impact the quality of their lives very much, with the state of the environment at 57%, economical factors at 50% and social factors at 39%.

On the other extreme a very small percentage of the population of Bihor County (less than 5%) claim that these three factors do not affect them at all.

Noteworthy here is the response of the citizens of Bihor County who in previous questions indicated that they are concerned about things they are not very clear about, but who now claim that the state of the environment is a major factor impacting the quality of their life.



Question: In your opinion, to what extent do the following factors influence the quality of life?

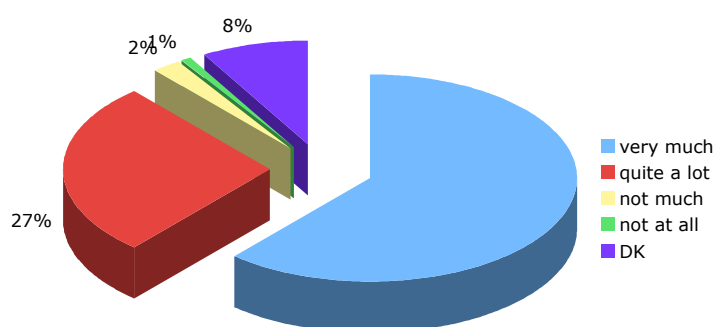
How to read the graph: 16% of the citizens from Bihor County consider that the social factors' impact on the quality of life is "not much"

The importance of environment on human resource policies

62% of the population of Bihor County think the environment should play a major role in human resource and economic policy formulation

When asked if the environment has any importance on the formulation of economic policies in general and human resource management policies in particular, the people of Bihor County said "yes" to the tune of 62%. Further more an additional 27% said that the environment should have "quite a lot" of influence in human resource policy formulation.

Importance of environment when considering economic and human resource policies

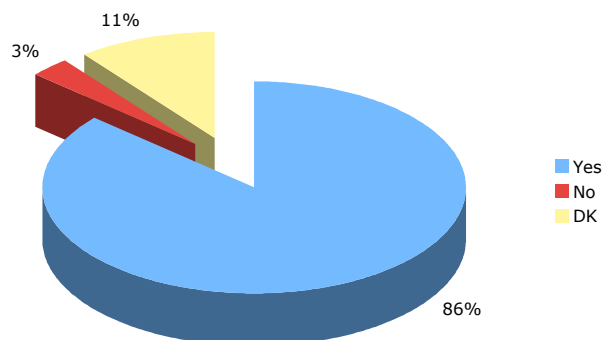


Question: In your opinion, when the policies regarding economic and human resource are made, to what extent should the environment be taken into account?

How to read the graph: 27% of the citizens from Bihor County consider that the environment should be taken into account "quite a lot" when the policies regarding economic and human resource are made

In Bihor only 3% of the population think that policy setters ought to consider social and economic policies divorced from environmental issues. The overwhelming majority of 86% think that the three issues - economical, social and environmental - are on equal footage and the environment ought to be considered by policy setters.

Importance of environmental policies compared to social and economical policies



Question: In your opinion, do you consider necessary that those who create policies to consider the environmental policies as important as social and economic ones?

How to read the graph: 86% of the citizens from Bihor County consider that policies regarding the environment are as important as social and economic policies

Part IV. Solutions to environmental problems

Most effective answer for solving environmental problems

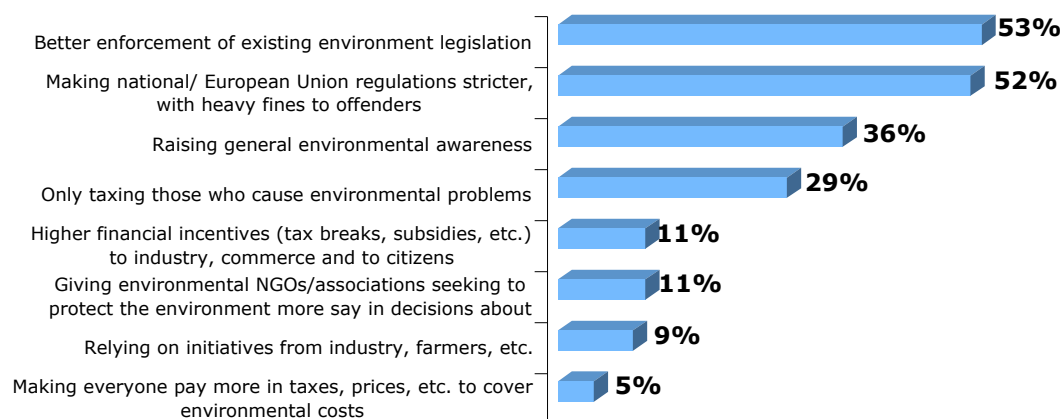
a better enforcement of the existing environmental legislation is what most people in Bihor think is the solution to solving the environmental problem

We began the “solution section” by surveying the people of Bihor County regarding their opinion as to what would most effectively solve the environmental problems. 53% of them stated that a better enforcement of the already existing legislation would positively impact the environment with 52% stating that heavier fines and stricter rules would do the job. We can safely conclude that the people in Bihor County think that the legislation is already in existence but is not properly and consistently enforced.

36% stated that a softer approach such as raising the general environmental awareness would solve the problem, with 29% leaning towards a “tax the offenders approach”. 11% leaned towards financial incentives and/or more NGO involvement with only 9% relying on initiatives from industry and farmers.

A flat tax approach that would make everyone pay equally to cover environmental costs was the option that was least favorable with the people of Bihor coming in at only 5% of the survey.

Most effective solutions to the environmental problems



Question: *In your opinion, which of the following would make it possible to most effectively solve environmental problems?*

How to read the graph: 36% of the citizens from Bihor County consider that the most effective solution to environmental problems is “raising general environmental awareness”

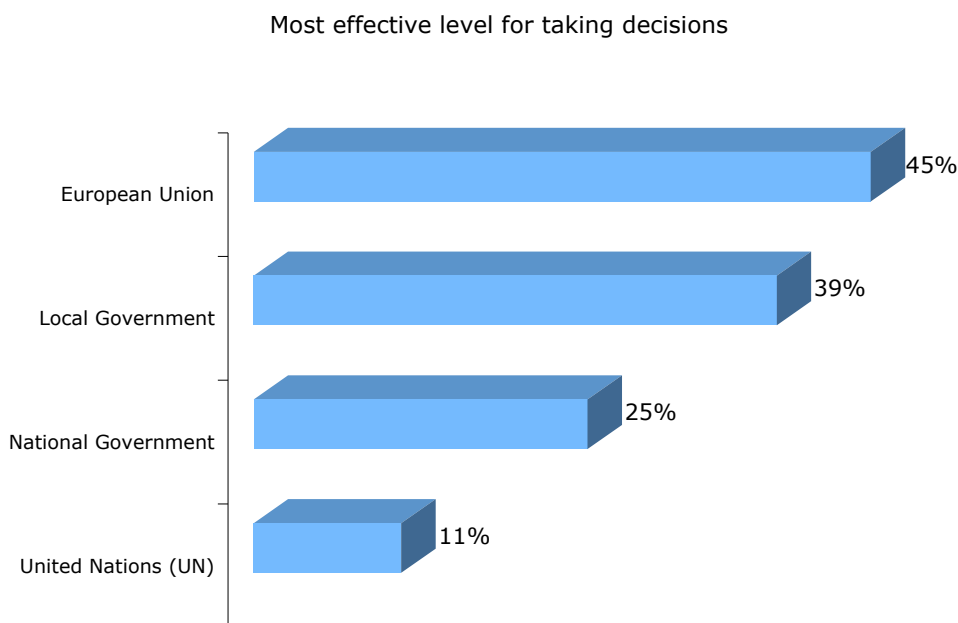
Most effective level for taking decisions

the European Union is looked upon most favorably as the best entity to effectively protect the environment

Our second question in the "solution section" surveyed the people regarding which governing level was best equipped and most effective in making decisions and adequately protecting the environment. We offered the people of Bihor two out of the four options and the results came in as following:

- ✓ European Union - 45%
- ✓ local government - 39%
- ✓ national government - 25%
- ✓ United Nations - 11%

Even the European Union was ranked as the highest and most effective in taking decisions in protecting the environment local government was ranked higher than the national government in its ability to make the best decisions.



Question: Which level do you think is the most effective for taking decisions about protecting the environment?

How to read the graph: 39% of the citizens from Bihor County think that the most effective decisions about protecting the environment are taken by local government

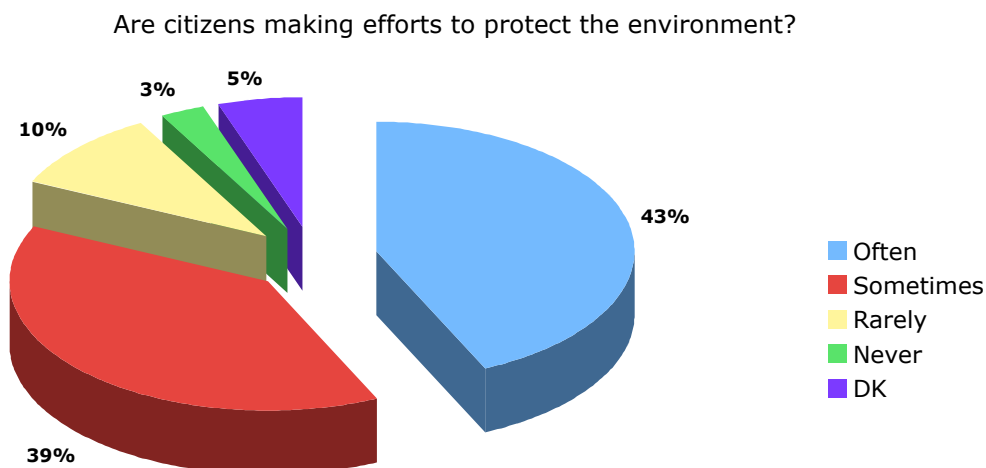
Part V. Individual efforts to protect the environment

Are citizens of Bihor making efforts to protect the environment?

43% of the citizens of Bihor stated that they often make efforts to protect the environment

In surveying the individual efforts undertaken by the people of Bihor County we asked if in their own view, are they making any efforts in protecting the environment. 82% responded that they either often (43%) or sometimes (39%) make an effort to protect the environment. 10% responded that rarely make an effort to protect the environment with only 3% admitting that they never do so.

Later on in our survey we will focus in the two major category who told us that they in their own view either often or sometimes make an effort to protect the environment.



Question: *Would you say that, you personally make an effort to protect the environment?*

How to read the graph: 39% of the population of Bihor County say they are sometimes making efforts to protect the environment

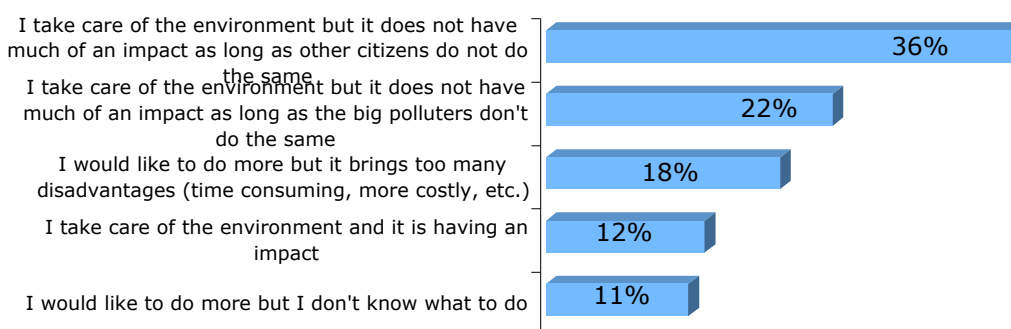
The impact of individual efforts in the state of the environment

most people in Bihor County feel that their own conscientious efforts in protecting the environment are being neutralized by somebody else who is not doing their part

We asked the people who previously told us that they either sometimes or often make an effort to protect the environment if they feel that their own efforts are yielding the desired results. Out of them only 12% feel that their efforts have an impact, the rest of them feel that their efforts are in vain due to the following external factors:

- ✓ 36% point to the fact that other citizens do not have the same level of commitment as themselves
- ✓ 22% point to the fact that big polluters are not positively contributing to the environmental protection
- ✓ 18% point to the fact that they themselves are sometimes discouraged by the high cost and inconvenience it brings
- ✓ 11% would like to do more than they are doing but they do not know what to do.

The perceived impact of individual efforts in the protection of the environment (filter: to those who answered "often" or "sometimes" in QC9)



Question: Which of these statements best reflects your own situation in relation to your efforts to take care of the environment?

How to read the graph: out of those who said they are often or sometimes making efforts to protect the environment, 11% would like to do more but do not know what to do

Barriers in protecting the environment

most people in Bihor County who told us that they are not doing anything to protect the environment either don't believe the environment is in danger or do not care about the environment

We asked the people who previously told us that they either rarely or never make an effort to protect the environment what motivates their inactivity and they told us the following:

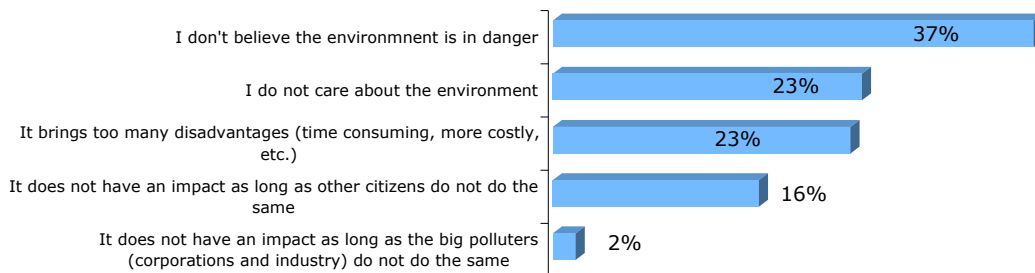
✓ 37% out of the total 13% of the population in Bihor County told us that they do not believe the environment is in danger

✓ 23% out of the total 13% of the population in Bihor County told us they do not care about the environment

✓ 23% out of the total 13% of the population in Bihor County told us that taking care of the environment would bring them too many disadvantages and inconveniences

✓ 2% out of the total 13% of the population in Bihor County told us that their efforts would be neutralized by the big polluters

The perceived impact of individual efforts in the protection of the environment (filter: to those who answered "rarely" or "never" in QC9)



Question: *Why don't you do more efforts to take care of the environment?*

How to read the graph: 37% out of those who answered that rarely or never make efforts to protect the environment believe that the environment is not in danger

Which individual actions are citizens of Bihor ready to do first?

the overwhelming majority of the people in Bihor stated that the major contribution they are willing to do in protecting the environment is sorting out waste so it can be recycled

When asked which three initiatives the people of Bihor County would be willing to do first in order to protect the environment, the response came in as follows:

Top three

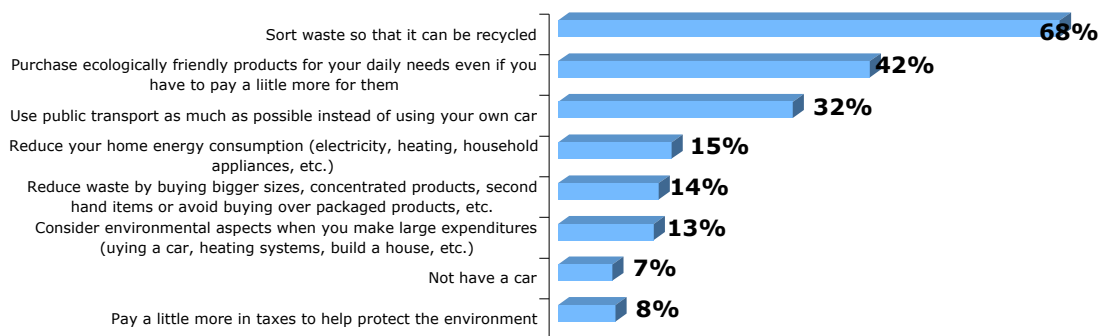
- ✓ sort out waste so it can be recycled - 68%
- ✓ purchase ecologically friendly products for daily needs - 42%
- ✓ use public transportation instead of using own car - 32%

Bottom three

- ✓ consider environmental aspects when making a large expenditure - 13%
- ✓ not have a car - 7%
- ✓ pay more in taxes to protect the environment - 8%

Seemingly the two environmental issues the people in Bihor feel strongest about are having a car and being willing to recycle their waste.

Actions to protect the environment



Question: In order to contribute protecting the environment, which three would you be ready to do first?

How to read the graph: 68% of the citizens from Bihor County are ready to sort waste so it can be recycled in order to contribute at protecting the environment

Part VI. Issues specific to Bihor County

In the closing section of our survey on the attitudes of citizens of Bihor County towards the environment we asked a few specific environment questions that pertain to Bihor more so than other parts of the European Union. Many environmental issues considered common knowledge in other parts of the Union are still only emerging in Bihor as concepts. Therefore the survey results from this section ought to be viewed with that context in mind.

Perception of different types of energy

almost 30% of the population in Bihor County are not at all familiar with the various categories of energy sources, and nuclear energy has the least approval rating

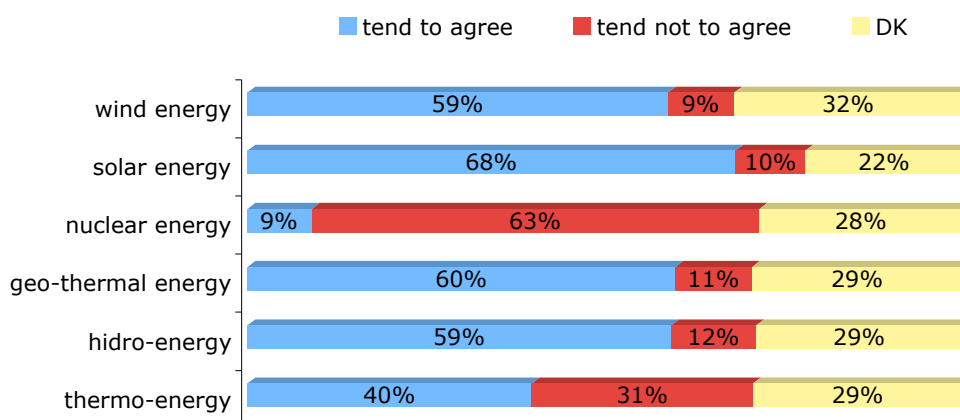
The type of energy the population of a region utilizes tends to affect the environment to a large degree. We surveyed the people's attitudes regarding the following energies: wind energy, solar energy, nuclear energy, geo-thermal energy, hidro-energy and thermo-energy and asked them if they thought that they were friendly towards the environment.

The first conclusion we can safely draw from this question is that approximately 30% of the population do not know the difference between these types of energy. The ones who knew tended to agree that the energies were environmentally friendly in the following fashion:

- ✓ wind energy - 59%
- ✓ solar energy - 68%
- ✓ nuclear energy - 9%
- ✓ geo-thermal energy - 60%
- ✓ hidro-energy - 59%
- ✓ thermo-energy - 40%.

Based on our findings people in Bihor have a favorable attitude toward alternative energy sources such as wind, solar and geo-thermal.

How different types of energy are perceived



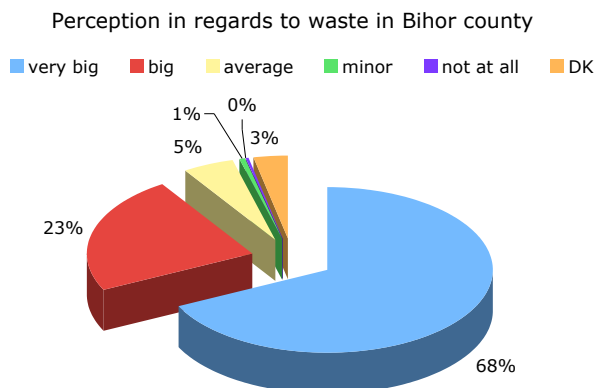
Question: Do you tend to agree that the following types of energy are environmentally-friendly?

How to read the graph: 63% of the citizens from Bihor County tend to agree that the wind energy is environmentally friendly

The problem of waste and possible solution

the overwhelming majority in Bihor identify waste as a major County problem

When asked if waste is a problem in Bihor County, 68% consider it "very big" and 23% "big".

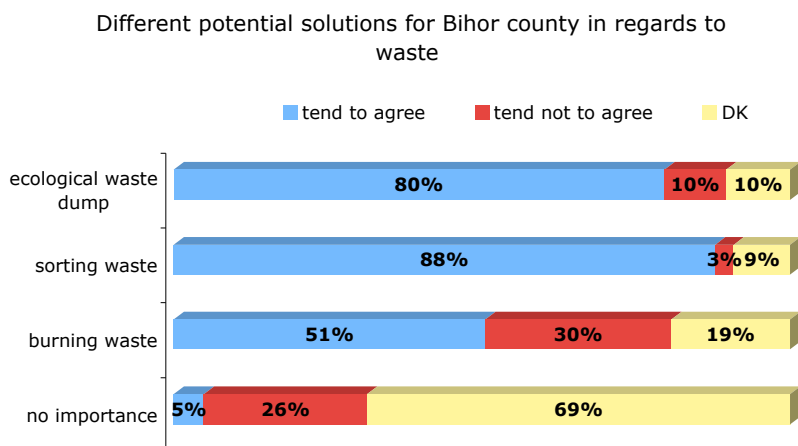


Question: Do you consider that waste is a problem in Bihor county?

How to read the graph: 68% of the population of Bihor County consider waste as a major problem

When asked what solutions they would have for the solving of the waste problem, 88% of the population of Bihor chose "sorting waste" and 80% opted for "ecological waste dump".

One may recall that earlier in our survey we found out that people were favorable towards waste sorting, therefore it is safely to assume that it would be the best solution.



Question: Do you tend to agree that the following solution to solve the waste problem is appropriate for Bihor county?

How to read the graph: 88% of the citizens of Bihor County tend to agree that sorting waste is a potential solution to the problem of waste in the County

Pollution from transportation sector

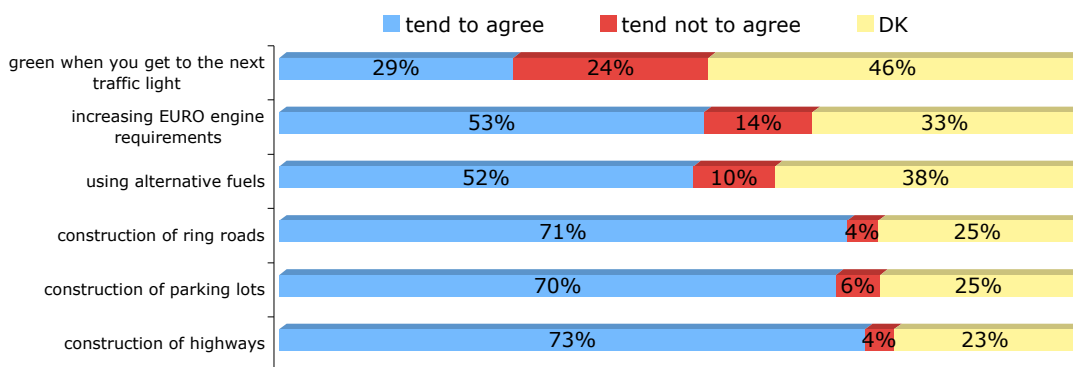
the citizens of Bihor consider the construction of new roads as the major contributor to the reducing of pollution generated by the transportation sector

In the conclusion of our survey we asked the citizens of Bihor County about pollution generated by the transportation sector. The answers given by them were as follows:

Top three solutions

- ✓ 73% cited the construction of highways as a major pollution reducer
- ✓ 70% cited the construction of parking lots as a major pollution reducer
- ✓ 71% cited the construction of ring roads as a major pollution reducer

Opinion on solution to decrease pollution from transport



Question: Do you tend to agree that the following solutions would decrease pollution from transportation sector?

How to read the graph: 73% of the citizens of Bihor County tend to agree that construction of highways would decrease pollution from the transportation sector

Conclusions

In concluding our research, we are keenly aware of the potential shortcomings of such an undertaking. The subject we researched - the attitudes of the citizens of Bihor County towards the environment - is still a new concept that the population of Romania in general and people of Bihor County in particular are only coming to terms with. There are still a lot of misconceptions regarding the environment and all that it pertains. People in Bihor do not truly know what are the major issues facing the environment and what can be done about them.

The context of this study, and specifically the timeline that it has taken place may have affected its outcome. Romania is a newly integrated European Union state, a reality that the citizens of Bihor County do not fully understand yet. The level of expectations, and fortunately the level of trust in the European Union ranks very high among the people in Bihor reason for the expectations that the European Union be a frontrunner in solving environmental issues.

Nevertheless with the risk of sounding presumptuous and even simplistic we draw the following conclusions.

1. In general the people of Bihor County are uninformed about environmental issues and many of them cannot truly articulate all the nuances of the environmental debate. Based upon our study we can safely conclude that there is an overall high level of interest and even concern regarding the environment and that people are willingly to go as far as to commit themselves to certain low involvement solutions. However many do not know if the information they possess regarding the environment can even be trusted and that their own efforts merit any kind of worthwhile results.
2. Perhaps one of the reasons for this low level of knowledge, distrust and confusion in the mind of the people of Bihor County is the fact that the majority of them rely upon their television, newspapers and radio to inform them and even educate them regarding the environment and its various issues. Interestingly enough - perhaps even comical - these are some of the mediums that are least trusted by the population of Bihor when it comes to accurately diagnosing the environmental problems and proposing viable solutions in combating them.
3. The third and perhaps the most positive conclusion is the fact that the citizens of Bihor county are not passive regarding the environment; quite the contrary they are willing to do something about it. Indeed they are not very sure what to do, nor if their efforts will make any difference but they are willing to make moderate sacrifices in solving this problem.
4. The final conclusion specific to the county of Bihor is that waste management is the paramount problem perceived by its population which coincides with the area where people are most willing to do something to improve it.

Annex - sample questionnaire

Filter question

Filter	Where was your residence in the past year?	
please indicate the name of your home town		
1	Location	
2	Oradea, please indicate the street	

If the potential respondent is not a resident of Bihor County, the interview ends here.

Attitudes towards the environment

QC. 1	When people talk about "environment", which of the following do you think	
please select only one answer		
	Pollution in towns and cities	1
	Green and pleasant landscapes	2
	Earthquakes, floods and other natural disasters	3
	Protecting nature	4
	The state of the environment our children will inherit	5
	The quality of life where I live	6
	The responsibility of the individuals for improving the environment	7
	Using up natural resources to provide a comfortable way of life	8
	None of these	9

QC. 2	From the following list, please list the five main environmental issues that you are worried about?	
please indicate up to 5 possible answers		
	Climate change	1
	Loss in biodiversity (extinction of animal species, flora and fauna,	2
	Natural disasters (earthquakes, floods, etc.)	3
	Man made disasters (major oil spills, industrial accidents, etc.)	4
	Water pollution (seas, rivers, lakes, underground sources, etc.)	5
	Agricultural pollution (use of pesticides, fertilizers, etc.)	6
	The use of genetically modified organisms in farming	7
	The impact on our health of chemicals used in everyday products	8
	Air pollution	9
	Noise pollution	10
	Urban problems (traffic jams, pollution, lack of green spaces, etc.)	11

	Depletion of natural resources	12
	Our consumption habits	13
	Growing waste	14
	Consequences of current transport modes (increased use of individual cars, motor ways, increased air traffic, etc.)	15
	None of these	16
	DK	17

QC. In general, how informed do you feel about environmental issues?

please select only one answer

	very well informed	1
	fairly well informed	2
	fairly badly informed	3
	very badly informed	4
	DK	5

QC. 4 From the following list, please list the five main environmental issues about which you feel you lack information in particular?

please indicate up to 5 possible answers

	Climate change	1
	Loss in biodiversity (extinction of animal species, flora and fauna,	2
	Natural disasters (earthquakes, floods, etc.)	3
	Man made disasters (major oil spills, industrial accidents, etc.)	4
	Water pollution (seas, rivers, lakes, underground sources, etc.)	5
	Agricultural pollution (use of pesticides, fertilizers, etc.)	6
	The use of genetically modified organisms in farming	7
	The impact on our health of chemicals used in everyday products	8
	Air pollution	9
	Noise pollution	10
	Urban problems (traffic jams, pollution, lack of green spaces, etc.)	11
	Depletion of natural resources	12
	Our consumption habits	13
	Growing waste	14
	Consequences of current transport modes (increased use of	15
	None of these	16
	DK	17

QC. 5 Would you like to know more about environmental problems or more about solutions to environmental solutions?

please select only one answer

	more about environmental problems	1
	more about solutions to environmental problems	2
	both	3
	none of these	4
	DK	5

QC. 6	In your opinion, to what extent do the following factors influence the quality of life?					
please select only one answer per row						
		very much	much	not	not at	DK
1	State of the environment	1	2	3	4	5
2	Economic factors	1	2	3	4	5
3	Social factors	1	2	3	4	5

QC. 7	In your opinion, when the policies regarding economic and human resource are made, to what extent should the environment be taken into account?				
please select only one answer					
YES	1	NO	2	DK	3

QC. 8	In your opinion, when the policies regarding economic and human resource are made, to what extent should the environment be taken into account?	
please select only one answer		
	very much	1
	quite a lot	2
	not much	3
	not at all	4
	DK	5

QC. 9	Would you say that, you personally make an effort to protect the	
please select only one answer		
	often	1
	sometimes	2
	rarely	3
	never	4
	DK	5

QC. 10	Which of these statements best reflects your own situation in relation to your efforts to take care of the environment?	
please select only one answer		
	I take care of the environment and it is having an impact	1
	I would like to do more but it brings too many disadvantages (time	2
	I take care of the environment but it does not have much of an	3
	I take care of the environment but it does not have much of an impact as long as the big polluters don't do the same	4
	I would like to do more but I don't know what to do	5
	DK	6

QC.	Why don't you do more efforts to take care of the environment?	
	please select only one answer	
	I do not care about the environment	1
	It brings too many disadvantages (time consuming, more costly,	2
	It does not have an impact as long as other citizens do not do the	3
	It does not have an impact as long as the big polluters (corporations	4
	I don't believe the environment is in danger	5
	DK	6
QC. 12	From the following, which are the main three sources of information in regards to environment?	
up to 3 possible answers	Newspapers	1
	Magazines	2
	Television news	3
	The radio	4
	Television movies and documentaries	5
	Discussions with relatives/ friends/ colleagues	6
	Books	7
	The internet	8
	Brochures	9
	Events (conferences, festivals, etc.)	10
	Not interested in environment	11
	Other (spontaneous)	12
	DK	13
QC. 13	In your opinion, which of the following would make it possible to most effectively solve environmental problems?	
up to 3 possible answers	Making national/ European Union regulations stricter, with heavy	1
	Better enforcement of existing environment legislation	2
	Making everyone pay more in taxes, prices, etc. to cover	3
	Only taxing those who cause environmental problems	4
	Relying on initiatives from industry, farmers, etc.	5
	Giving environmental NGOs/associations seeking to protect the	6
	Higher financial incentives (tax breaks, subsidies, etc.) to industry,	7
	Raising general environmental awareness	8
	None of these	9
	Other	10
	DK	11

QC. 14	From the following list, who do you trust more when it comes to environmental issues?			
up to 3 possible answers	National Government			1
	Regional/local government			2
	European Union			3
	Companies			4
	Trade unions			5
	Political parties standing for environment (Greens, etc.)			6
	Environmental protection associations (Green Peace, World			7
	Consumer associations and other citizens' organizations			8
	Scientists			9
	Teachers at school or university			10
	Family/ neighbors/ friends/ colleagues			11
	Television			12
	The radio			13
	Newspapers			14
	None of these			15
	Other			16
	DK			17
QC. 15	Which level do you think is the most effective for taking decisions about protecting the environment?			
up to 2 possible answers	Local Government			1
	National Government			2
	European Union			3
	United Nations (UN)			4
	Other			5
	DK			6
QC. 16	Do you tend to agree that the following types of energy are environmentally-friendly?			
please select only one answer per row				
		tend to agree	tend not to agree	DK
1	thermo-energy	1	2	3
2	hidro-energy	1	2	3
3	geo-thermal energy	1	2	3
4	nuclear energy	1	2	3
5	solar energy	1	2	3
6	wind energy	1	2	3
	Other	1	2	3

QC. 17	In order to contribute protecting the environment, which three would you be ready to do first?	
up to 3 possible answers		
	Use public transport as much as possible instead of using your	1
	Not have a car	2
	Purchase ecologically friendly products for your daily needs even if you have to pay a little more for them	3
	Sort waste so that it can be recycled	4
	Reduce waste by buying bigger sizes, concentrated products, second hand items or avoid buying over packaged products, etc.	5
	Reduce your home energy consumption (electricity, heating,	6
	Consider environmental aspects when you make large expenditures (buying a car, heating systems, build a house, etc.)	7
	Pay a little more in taxes to help protect the environment	8
	None of these	9
	DK	10

QC. 18	Do you tend to agree that the following solution to solve the waste problem is appropriate for Bihor County?			
please select only one answer per row				
		tend to agree	tend not to agree	DK
1	ecological waste dump	1	2	3
2	sorting waste	1	2	3
3	burning waste	1	2	3
4	no importance	1	2	3

QC.	Do you consider that waste is a problem in Bihor County?	
please select only one answer		
	very big	1
	big	2
	average	3
	minor	4
	not at all	5
	DK	6

QC. 21		For each of the following statements regarding the first registration tax for vehicles please indicate if you tend to agree or not? Outlawing the first registration tax...			
please select only one answer per row		tend to agree	tend not to agree	DK	
1	would be a mistake	1	2	3	
2	would increase pollution	1	2	3	
3	would increase traffic	1	2	3	
4	would increase the number of questionable	1	2	3	
5	would have an effect on future vehicles recycling	1	2	3	

QC. 22		Do you tend to agree that the following solutions would decrease pollution from transportation sector?			
please select only one answer per row		tend to agree	tend not to agree	DK	
1	green when you get to the next traffic light	1	2	3	
2	increasing EURO engine requirements	1	2	3	
3	using alternative fuels	1	2	3	
4	construction of ring roads	1	2	3	
5	construction of parking lots	1	2	3	
6	construction of highways	1	2	3	

Demographic data

D. 1	People's opinion regarding politics are placed in an interval from left to right. If left is 1 and right is 10, where would you consider yourself to be?									
please select one answer										
LEFT				CENTER		RIGHT				
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	
I refuse										11
Don't know										12

D. 2	What is your marital status?							
please select one answer								
	Married							1
	Remarried							2
	Not married							3
	Divorced							4
	Separate from spouse							5
	Widowed							6
	Other (spontaneous)							7
	I refuse (spontaneous)							8

D. 3	The gender of the respondent	
please select one answer		
	Male	1
	Female	2

D. 4	How old are you?
please write down the age of the respondent	
_____ years old	

D.	What was the last school you graduated?	
please select one answer		
	General School	1
	High-school	2
	University	3
	Masters/ PhD.	4
	Other	5

D. 6		What is your current activity?		
D. 7		What was your last activity?		
please select one answer on each column				
		D. 6 current	D. 7 last	
	NOT WORKING			
1	House-wife/ house-husband/ Caring for the household	1	1	
2	Student	2	2	
3	Unemployed	3	3	
4	Retired of age or medical problems	4	4	
	SELF EMPLOYED			
5	Farmer	5	5	
6	Fisherman	6	6	
7	Liberal professions (lawyer, medical doctor...)	7	7	
8	Shop owner, handicraftsman, other self employed situations	8	8	
9	Small business owner	9	9	
	EMPLOYED			
10	Specialist with graduating diploma, employed (lawyer, economist, medical doctor, accountant, architect ...)	10	10	
11	General Manager, Director or top management	11	11	
12	Middle or lower management position (supervisor, professor, technician)	12	12	
13	Employed, working in an office	13	13	
14	Employed, field-work (driver, sales agent)	14	14	
15	Employed, working in public services but not in the office (hospital, food sector, police, firemen, etc.)	15	15	
16	Foremen, team leader	16	16	
17	Qualified worker	17	17	
18	Not qualified worker, day-laborer	18	18	
19	Never worked	19	19	
D.8		Please indicate what type of dwelling do you live in? Do you own a car?		
please select one answer on each row				
1	dwelling	1. house	2. apartment	surface_____sqm
2	dwelling		2. private	3. from work
3	auto	1. no auto	2. private	3. from work