

# THE PITEȘTI MUNICIPALITY COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT IN THE POST- ADERATION STRATEGY

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*Romania’s existence as an European Union’s member country involves the citizens active participation in solving all the problems of the community they belong to. The fundamental objective of the European Union by 2010 is to become: the most competitive and dynamic economy in the world, based on knowledge, capable of a durable economic growth, with better and more numerous work places, and a stronger social cohesion. The values of the new Europe are also promoted in Romania through medium and long-term programs for the entire community of Pitești.*

*Keys words: Community development, strategic directions, operational programs*

The model of the European democracy is one of cooperation that is based on all the community actors’ participation. In practice, the principles of participatory democracy are promoted, implemented, developed and supported by public authorities, educational institutions, media and non-governmental institutions with the help of programs, projects or interventions on macro and micro-social level. The values of the new Europe (tolerance, value pluralism, equality, public participation, civism) are also promoted in Romania of the year 2008 through medium and long-term programs for the entire community.

**Community development** is defined as a process that creates the conditions for economic and social development for all the citizens of a community by their active participation and full trusts in the community’s initiative (in UNO’s acceptation). This process in being built around some leaders of the community and, possibly, around an initiative community group, involving an institutional consolidation on local level.

The main areas trough witch are planned the community development at Pitesti level are education, culture and art, youth and sport, health and medical support and social services.

## **1. Community politics in the Education of Pitești**

**Education** represents a national development priority, which is analysed by making reference to the specific needs of Argeș County and to the local community’s expectations, by observing the legal regulations in force.

The Romanian education, which undergoing a complex reconstruction process, and implicitly, the education in Pitești, establish their priorities and define their position in the contemporary society as an asset of the community, being part of its responsibility and getting involved in its activity. In the context of a society in transition, the Romanian education must take on a new perspective regarding its functioning and evolution, the educational partnership becoming thus a priority of the strategies aiming at the Romanian education’s development.

The strategies approached by the high school education and higher education fit into the performance criteria of the national education system with emphasis on the specific features of Argeș County and Pitești Municipality, but also according to the pupils’ expectations and options.

Analysing the results of the opinion poll conducted on the citizens of Pitești Municipality, one can notice some relevant observations regarding the present situation of education from this city:

- The number of pre-school education units in Pitești Municipality is appreciated by the respondent citizens as being enough by 60%, as well as that of special pre-school education units (64%), but the percents of discontented people show the fact that there is a need to set up other education units for the pre-school population in the municipality;
- The best known grammar or middle school institutions in Pitești are: Grammar school no. 5 (9,5%), Grammar school no. 4 (3,8%), Grammar school no. 19 (3,8%), Grammar school no. 1 (2,9%) and Grammar school no. 7 (2,9%);
- The best known high school institutions in Pitești are: Colegiul Național Zinca Golescu (25,7%), Colegiul Național I.C. Brătianu (15,2%), Colegiul Economic Maria Teuleanu (8,6%) and Colegiul Național Al. Odobescu (6,7%);
- The quality of higher education was appreciated by the respondents as being very good only by 2,7%, good (53,4%), average (32,4%) and very poor (5,5%).
- There is also a need for other specializations (76,2%), the most frequently named ones being medicine (30%), pharmacy (3,3%), stomatology (2,2%);
- Out of the total number of young people gone to study in other cities, less than half return to Pitești in the opinion of 55,9% of Pitești's citizens, a fact that indicates that there is a migration phenomenon of the young population to the capital city or to other big cities of the country;
- The main reasons why young people do not return to their home town after graduation are: better paid jobs (27%), lower salaries (23%), the lack of work places where they can practice their jobs (6,8%), the level of living (6,8%), work opportunities (5,4%), leisure time (5,4%), few employment offers (5,4%), marriage (4,1%).

Based on the identified strategic directions for the education field the following operational programs are being prepared:

- The modernization of the infrastructure of the high school education system
- The development of the nursery schools and kindergartens network by increasing the number of available places in the public/private institutions
- Supporting the education institutions and teaching staff involved or interested in carrying out some national and international projects (Comenius, Socrates, Leonardo da Vinci, Inclusion education, Second chance, etc.)
- Granting scholarships for pupils and students who obtain good results and for those coming from modest families
- The identification on city level of the development perspective so that a re-orientation of the educational offer can be achieved according to the future needs of local work market
- The rehabilitation and modernization of the existing sports rooms and of the schools' courtyards so that the children's safety can be ensured
- Setting up some production laboratories and workshops for the training of the pupils in the Arts and Trades Schools
- The identification of some spaces for the education institutions that function in retrocede buildings

## **2. Community politics in cultural and artistic life of Pitesti**

**Culture and art** together with education play a strategic role in the modernization process of every society; therefore the potential of these fields must be prized, both locally and nationally.

At national level, the City of Pitești is less known from a cultural and artistic point of view; therefore, it is necessary to elaborate a policy that deals with the intensification of cultural life and the assessment of local traditions by developing various cultural programs and promoting them at national and international level.

The Philharmonics of Pitești Municipality was set up a year ago, with the support of Pitești Cultural Centre. It is a professional institution of interpretative art, which promotes the values of Romanian and universal musical culture. The Philharmonic Chorus had its debut in November 2007, as a result of the preoccupations meant to develop the cultural zone.

Today, more than ever, the values of culture and art in Pitești got new valences since new large projects became the expression of some unanimously appreciated stage activities. Nevertheless, for a continuous development of these fields, we must consider the following **strategic directions**:

- Providing adequate spaces for the activities of cultural institutions;
- Increasing the quality of cultural activities in Pitești;
- Developing the partnership between cultural operators, local public administration institutions and local business environment;
- Elaborating coherent policies in the field of culture and art;
- Rehabilitating and modernizing the headquarters of Pitești Cultural Centre;
- Creating a Planetarium at the Argeș County Museum;
- Increasing interest for cultural publications edited under the aegis of local officials;
- Promoting traditional cultural manifestations.

In this field, operational programmes aim is:

- To perpetuate the tradition of some very important events for the community: Tulip Symphony, City Day, D.G. Chiriac – International Choral Festival, National Festival of Dance Society, International Festival of Studio Theatre, Gh. Iliescu Calinesti – International Sculpture Symposium Carpati, International Folk Festival, Youth Carnival, Zavaidoc National Old Fiddle Music Festival, The Potters' Fair
- To rehabilitate and to renew The Cultural Centre from Casa Cărții
- To set up Pitești Philharmonic orchestra
- To modernize Dinicu Golescu Arges Country Library (to endow lecture rooms with air-conditioning)
- To set up The Planetarium & The Astronomic Observer within Argeș County Museum

### **3. Community politics for young people**

The fundamental objective of these policies must regard the correlation of the officials' projects with the young generation's major needs and problems in order to accomplish a sustainable economic, social and cultural development.

Consequently, one must consider the following **strategic directions**:

- Providing conditions for an adequate development of the formal education process;
- Maintaining facilities for public transportation in order to stimulate the access to education;
- Improving young people's life conditions by constructing homes and student hostels, increasing the young people's accessibility to a home;
- Creating an appropriate environment of new jobs for students and pupils, with a part-time program;
- Supporting non-profit organizations in order to develop educational activities for young people (health, social protection, cultural, entertainment and recreational activities);
- Supporting young people in getting involved in the social and cultural life of local community;
- Professional formation of the young people starting from the institutions' needs (partnerships between Argeș Prefect's Office and institutions of higher education).

Operational programmes in the field aim is:

- To promote the activity of Local Youth Council

- To build social houses and lodgings for young people
- To organize some artistic and cultural events for young people: The Students' National Poems Festival (Juventus), The Student's Local Cultural Week (Argesis), Autumn's Colors students' Fashion Festival, Freshners' Autumn, Open Doors (2-9 May), The month of local student (student from Pitesti)
- To organize Youth & Education Week

#### **4. Community politics in sport**

The sports activity in Pitești is coordinated by the National Agency of Sport, which manages Argeș County Sport Direction, the Municipal Sport Club of Pitești, Bascov- Budeasa National Complex and Muscelul Câmpulung Sport Club, the 4 clubs having private legal personality and direct financing from NAS.

In Pitești one may notice a poor representation of mass sport, the sport and entertainment technical and material base (sport clubs, fields, equipments) is limited and insufficiently developed, competitive sport is rarely supported from a financial point of view and in little sports (judo, tennis, football etc.).

In order to provide a continuous development, a competitive organization and functioning for the local system of physical education and sport, we must impose the following **strategic directions**:

- Developing some national programs: Sport for everyone, Professional Sports, Maintenance, improvement and development of material base of sport for everyone;
- Developing sports activities in schools and universities;
- Developing the sports and entertainment material base (such as creating a skating rink);
- Reinforcing professional sports (athletics, boxing, volleyball, handball, canoeing and kayaking etc.), providing facilities for professional sports such as using the Municipal Stadium and the Olympic Swimming Pool;
- Getting resources to sustain professional sports;
- Increasing the attractivity of Trivale Natural Park;
- Rehabilitation of Ștrand Park;
- Restoration of the Zoological Garden.

For sport and entertainment, operational programmes aim to:

- To rehabilitate and modernise Nicolae Dobrin Stadium
- To modernise Sports' House
- To modernise Youth Sports' House and to rehabilitate Strand Park
- To modernise and to rehabilitate Trivale Natural Park
- To rehabilitate Expo-Park
- To modernise The Olympic Pool

#### **5. Community politics in the health and medical assistance**

Health and medical assistance represent a prior field of public policies on national level, which decisively influence social protection, work, economic development, etc. The elaboration of a local strategy completes the de-centralization tendency of the health policies towards the levels of local public administration.

The strategic directions for the development of the local medical assistance system aim at:

- The creation of a super-institutional structure on the municipality level that can include representatives of the local public authorities, governmental institutions qualified in the health and medical assistance field, representatives of the medical services suppliers, representatives of the population, non-governmental organizations active in the health field;
- Lobby activity regarding the development of an integrated informative system of all the above-mentioned structures that will be able to allow the development of the analysis and prognosis capacity in the health field;

- The accomplishment of an analysis of the population's state of health in Pitești and the establishing of the priorities and objectives in the health field;
- The development of projects or partnerships in the field of family planning and reproduction health;
- The development of projects and partnerships regarding the prophylaxis and increase of the population's awareness concerning the risk of developing infectious and chronic diseases;
- The rehabilitation, modernization and endowment of the hospitals' out-patients' departments;
- The modernization and endowment of the emergency departments within the regional hospitals (The County Hospital, The Paediatric Hospital).

## 6. Community politics in the Social Services

**Social services** are defined as representing the totality of measures and actions performed to respond to the individual social needs, family or group needs, in order to overcome some difficulty situations, to reserve the individual's autonomy and protection, to prevent social exclusion. These services are performed by the local public administration authorities or by the public/private natural/legal persons.

There are partnerships signed between Pitești's Municipality City Hall and non-governmental organizations in order to carry out some projects in the community's benefit, in the social, youth, natural environment's protection, animals' protection fields, such as: Save children Association, Compartir Foundation, Shuman solidarity Association, Equilibre Association, Ute Langenkampf-Love stray dogs Association, The association for Promoting youth's programs, The association for Helping physically disabled children from Romania, Argeș subsidiary branch (ASCHFR).

**Operational programs** in the social protection field:

- Marinating the functioning standards of the social center "Hope"- night emergency shelter
- Extending the Care and Assistance for elder people Center from Pitești
- Counselling center for the prevention and fighting against social exclusion in order to find solutions for the reintegration of elder people, of people with deficiencies, of families with many children, of single-parent families
- Setting up a shelter for young women coming from orphanages
- Forming home assistants
- The rehabilitation center for people with deficiencies "Chances for everybody"

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