

RAMNICU VALCEA

RAMNICU VALCEA CITY HALL

LOCAL AGENDA 21 –
Local Plan for Sustainable Development of
Ramnicu Valcea Municipality

RAMNICU VALCEA

2002

UNDP Project ROM 98/012

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R A M N I C U V A L C E A

Foreword

by UNDP Resident Representative in Romania

Local Agenda 21 (LA21) was developed and adopted at the Earth Summit held in Rio de Janeiro in 1992, as a vehicle for promoting sustainable development. LA 21 promotes and seeks to strike a delicate balance between economic growth, social equity and environmental protection.

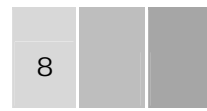
The concept of sustainable development calls for a constant re-evaluation of the relationship between man and nature, and solidarity between generations, as the only viable option for long-term development.

The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) Office in Romania actively promotes sustainable development through its support of the project "Building Local Capacity to Implement the Local Agenda 21 in Romania". The project is currently being implemented in nine pilot cities under the coordination of the National Centre for Sustainable Development.

This has been a unique participatory process, galvanizing the energy of citizens, businesses, academics, NGOs, and local authorities. They all rose to the challenge and their collective efforts have produced this document. This report grew from local needs and ideas, and the product is a testament to their efforts, their energy and their enthusiasm. Whether it was by giving information, offering technical assistance or through their participation, the whole community has made an enormous contribution to its success.

The result has been a coherent strategy with a concrete action and implementation plan. Both offer a practical guarantee that the project can meet the needs of the community and represents an important contribution to sustainable development in Romania. I congratulate and thank all those who have contributed to its success.

Soknan Han Jung
UNDP Resident Representative
UN Resident Coordinator



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Foreword

by the Mayor of Ramnicu Valcea Municipality

The City of Ramnicu Valcea, and eight other Romanian cities, started in March 2000, to participate in a project, launched by the United Nations Development Programme, called "Building Local Capacities to Implement Local Agenda 21 in Romania".

One of the main objectives of this Programme was to build and to set a framework for cooperation between the Local Administration and Civil Society. In other words to involve Civil Society in the decision making process. It is known that the highest expression of democracy is the full involvement of citizens in the decision making process, and not to only accept decisions formulated by the Local Administration.

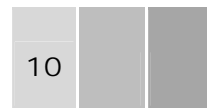
The phases related to the formulation of the Agenda 21, have followed this principle through the public consultation process of the Strategy for Sustainable Development and Local Action Plan. We consider that Local Agenda 21, as an expression of the partnership between Local Administration and Civil Society, represents the starting point of a complex system, based on cooperation, which will be reliable in the future. In addition, this system will fulfil our expectations of an appropriate legislative framework;

transparency in state institutions, and consolidation of democracy through the freedom of action and expression.

We are now facing the most important phase of the Local Agenda 21 process. We must, implement the Sustainable Development programme in a comprehensive and coordinated manner. I therefore count on the talents and abilities of all the citizens of Ramnicu Valcea, intellectuals, businessmen, artists, young and elderly, and hope that they will contribute towards achieving our main goal - that our city will become a European city. Within each of us is the ability to fulfil this expectation.

I wish, in conclusion, to thank all those that supported this ambitious project, which we hope will emphasize the future of our city.

TRAIAN SABĂU
Mayor of Ramnicu Valcea



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I. LOCAL STRATEGY FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

I.1 ASSESSMENT OF THE EXISTING SOCIO - ECONOMIC SYSTEM

I.1.1 – The Natural Capital

I.1.1.1 Location

The city of Râmnicu Vâlcea, capital of Vâlcea county, is located in northern Oltenia, at the foot of the Southern Carpathians, along the Olt riverside, which is one of the main water streams in Romania, and near a major national road. Situated in the centre of a famous region of resorts and health spas – Călimănești, Băile Olănești, Băile Govora – Râmnicu Vâlcea has about 120,000 inhabitants, mostly of Romanian nationality.

The first industries, set up after World War II, were based on the salt deposits at Oțele Mari and the wood from the mountain forests (the Soda Factory and the Wood Processing Plant), which also set the basis for the city's economy.

Industrial development triggered significant changes in the structure of the population as well as in traditional work and living habits, resulting in today's city.

BASIC DATA ON RÂMNICU VÂLCEA - 2002	
Total area	8952 ha
Number of component localities	14
Population	119,601
Density of the population	1,343.8 inhabitants/sq km
Northern latitude	45 07' 15"
Eastern longitude	24 22' 21"

I.1.1.2 Relief

Râmnicu Vâlcea is located in the Getic Sub-Carpathians, 18 km from where the Oltului narrows to the river meadow and forms a hook like area, situated NS at the confluence with the Olănești river. The maximum width of the meadow is 2.5 km to the north, 1.9 km in the middle and 2 km to the south.

The hilly area is covered with deciduous trees, mainly oaks. The city is located on the terraces of the main riverbed of the River Olt. The terraces are more obvious to the west, in the east the hills go down close to the water stream. There are two terraces on the west. In the past, the urban agglomeration lay on the superior terrace, because of the frequent floods caused by the River Olt. After hydro-electrical work had been finished on the river, the residential area was expanded to the lower terrace as well, now that no flooding loomed. The western part of the city stretches along the River Olănești, most buildings being constructed on the left bank of this river.

I.1.1.3 Climate

The climate is typically temperate-continental; annual average temperatures reach 10°C to 10.6 °C, with the normal average rainfall between 500 to 900 mm (specific to Sub-Carpathian depressions) and mild, low-speed winds. These features, and the relative air humidity, which varies between 71 and 78%, as well as the many days with maximum hot sunlight, favours the growth of vines, nut and fruit trees. The autumns are long and there are about 52 foggy days/year on average.

I.1.1.4 Primary and Secondary Resources

The municipal resources that are necessary to ensure basic living and working conditions, are provided by both the natural and the human capital in the area. The city's water and soil, used in the appropriate quality and quantity, are essential for the present and future sustainable development of the city.

Water Resources

Râmnicu Vâlcea is located at the confluence of two major water streams: the Olt river, one of the most important in the country, crossing the county from north to south, and the Olănești river, western tributary flowing into the Olt river on the territory of this city. Due to this location, Râmnicu Vâlcea has never had water supply problems, as the existing resources are sufficient to meet both industrial and household requirements.

Resource category	Theoretical resource million m ³	Technical usable resource million m ³
Inland rivers	31.5	25.5
Lakes (Olt+Lotru)	87.1	47.6
Underground waters	1.8	0.6
TOTAL	120.4	73.7

The Olt River and its artificial lakes Râmnicu Vâlcea, Răureni and Govora are the main water resources of the city; there is also the Olănești River, whose lower stream ends on the territory of the city. The drinking water supply from the shallow aquifer has been limited in the past 50 years, due to its deterioration as a result of various human activities. The existing surface water supplies in the area, although sufficient, have necessitated treatments, due to impurities.

Soil

The soil has long been treated as an inexhaustible resource, at everyone's disposal, but the eco-systemic approach urges the reconsideration of the soil and subsoil as a natural resource that needs to be durably managed. The city of Râmnicu Vâlcea stretches over an area of 8952 ha; the land occupation ration is 21%.

In addition to the huge damages caused by the urbanisation process, the soil of the city has undergone an overall land and habitat degradation, due to both man made and natural causes, which has resulted in the land being unusable for its initial function.

Land use	Area (ha)
Construction / infrastructure	1955
Arable land	1831
Viticulture / fruit growing	740
Grasslands	1104
Forests	2741
Wetlands	581
Total municipality	8952

Mineral resources

In Râmnicu Vâlcea the other mineral resources i.e. fuel oil, coal and natural gas (necessary for the electricity industry) are brought from the far reaches of the county. Lignite and natural gas comes from Berbești-Alunu, through a transport and distribution network, or its imported. The area has no other mineral resources.

Forest and Forestry

The hills surrounding the city are covered with evergreen oak and beech forests. There are also hornbeams, lime trees, ash trees, common maples, elm trees and locust trees. The small tree layer is made up of hazelnut trees, privets, corn trees, common elder and ivy. The ornamental vegetation in parks and hilly areas includes: the silver fir tree, the spruce fir, the pine tree, the larch-tree, the alder tree, the poplar and the willow tree.

Energy Resources

Electricity necessary for all human activities in the city is provided by two companies (with mainly public ownership):

CHP Govora S.A – provides heating to industries and households as well as electricity (generated through

RAMNICU VALCEA

combustion of conventional fuels); it is the first independent energy provider in the country.

S.C Electrocentrale Râmnicu Vâlcea S.A – provides electricity through the hydroelectric plants Râmnicu Vâlcea, Râureni and Govora, into the national network. The national electricity dispatcher secures, upon request, the electricity necessary to the city.

Hydroelectric plant	Rated Power (MW)	Dam surface (ha)
Râmnicu Vâlcea	46	319
Râureni	48	174
Govora	45	477

Food Supply

Local food industries supply the city with meat, milk and eggs; most meat processing enterprises have their slaughtering houses and processing divisions in the city, and the purchasing units in the vicinity, no more than 20-30 km away. There are also local companies producing flour and bread; the amounts of wheat needed are produced in the neighbouring areas. The fruits and vegetables provided in the area are not enough for the population of the city. Therefore the markets receive supplies from other sources as well.

I.1.1.5 Quality of the Environmental Components

The major industrial pollutants in Râmnicu Vâlcea are:

- *Chemical industry* - Oltchim S.A and Uzinele Sodice S.A;
- *Mechanical engineering* – S.C. Vilmar S.A and S.C. Hervil S.A;
- *Electricity industry* – S.C. CET S.A and Electrocentrale S.A;
- *Wood exploitation and processing industry* – S.C. Cozia Forest S.A and S.C. Elvila S.A – Carpatina branch;
- *Light industry* – S.C. Favil S.A, S.C. Minet S.A, and S.C. Vâlceana S.A;

- *Food industry* – S.C. Bere Alutus S.A, S.C. Mopariv S.A, S.C. Boromir SRL, S.C. Supca SRL, and S.C. Diana SRL;
- *Industrial and civil engineering industry* – S.C. Socom S.A, S.C. Casarom S.A, S.C. Conexvil S.A, S.C. Govora S.A, S.C. As SRL, S.C. Erhan S.A, and S.C. Imsat S.A.

Industrial pollution (mainly caused by chemical plants, and heat and power plants), as well as urban pollution, (due to centralised heating equipment and transportation) have grown evident by the increase of air quality indicators in the protected areas, by the discomfort reported by the inhabitants of the city, by the deterioration of buildings and by the increased sensitivity to various respiratory diseases by the inhabitants of the city. The economic problems experienced in the past decade have resulted in diminished human impact on the environment. Consequently, the emissions have decreased quantitatively and the air quality has improved in the protected areas.

Nevertheless, due to the expansion of the car fleet with vehicles that do not comply with the European quality directives (EURO 2), significant quantities of nitrogen oxides, carbon monoxide, lead and asbestos fibres, harmful to the health of the population, are exhausted into the air. Car exhaust pollution by individual pollutants is the following:

- 70% by CO,
- 50% by hydrocarbons,
- 60% by emissions.

The maximum daily averages, as indicated by measurements and analyses carried out in 1996, show that the maximum admissible values are exceeded, as shown in the table.

Locality and area	U/M	Daily averages – maximum admissible values			
		Ozone	NO ₂	CO	Partides
Râmnicu Vâlcea – central area	µg/cm	78.2	135.7	2.9	470.9
Râmnicu Vâlcea – toward Sibiu	µg/cm	38.0	49.3	1.3	91.3
C.M.Acf. STAS 12574/87	µg/cm	30.0	100.0	2.0	150.0

There are multiple and various pollutants of danger to the surface and underground water streams in Râmnicu Vâlcea. The Olt river is the most affected water stream because it enters the county already polluted from upstream impurities.

The chemical platform generates the most important and diverse pollutants. Plants OLTCHIM S.A and Uzinele Sodice Govora S.A, pollute both surface waters and soils through solid and liquid waste. The sludge dump of USG and the organic-chlorinated deposits of OLTCHIM, have contaminated the water layer in the area, making it improper for drinking.

Industrial and household waste waters are collected by the sewerage system of Râmnicu Vâlcea (exploited and managed by ACVARIM S.A). But not all industrial and household waste waters are disposed into the sewerage system, because it does not cover the entire area of the city. Some waste waters eventually reach a natural source, mainly the Olănești river. The quality of the waters disposed in the natural water stream is not adequately monitored. Many chemical quality indicators (which would accurately indicate the saprophytic level, i.e. pesticides, PAHs, PCBs, heavy metals, etc.) are not analysed (mainly due to the lack of necessary equipment).

Soil and vegetation pollution due to the local population is less obvious, except for the areas where the municipal and industrial landfills are located (USG sludge landfill and the organic waste dump of Oltchim S.A). These landfills (built without the compliance of ecological criteria) need major ecological reconstruction before returning to the natural circuit.

1.1.2. Human Capital

1.1.2.1 Economic Activities and the Business Environment

Economic Activities

From an economic viewpoint, Râmnicu Vâlcea is experiencing the same situation the Romanian economy has been facing for the past 13 years, i.e.

the transition to a market economy, a far longer and more complicated process than expected. But its inheritance, on the one hand, and a lack of coherence and speed in carrying out economic reforms on the other hand, has delayed Romania from rapidly integrating into the European.

An analysis of the economic conditions in Râmnicu Vâlcea points out that its growth is far from being sustainable. The prolonged decline of the national economy and, implicitly, of the local one, has produced major tensions and imbalances as far as the social and economic sectors of society are concerned, as well as between these two sectors and the environment.

A decision about the development trend of the local economy is a major and complex challenge for the local administration. Urban life is affected by various factors (economic, technological, social, cultural, environmental and legal) that need a global approach. Thus, the economic development of the city shall draw on analyses, studies and responsibilities comprised within the sustainable development concept, which Agenda 21 consistently promotes. The strategy has to consider a dynamic development of mixed structures made up of small, medium and large enterprises, either local or foreign. Their collaboration should be with other units in and outside the county, with enterprises that ensure a superior capitalisation of natural resources and create new jobs, in a clean and healthy environment.

Agriculture

The development and modernisation of agriculture in order to ensure food security for the citizens of any locality is a major task. The land administered by the municipality secures local supply for a number of food products, as well as certain amounts for export. It is important that the agricultural production be structured so that it supplies the population of the city with the necessary amounts of fresh/preserved fruits and vegetables and allows the development of a strong livestock sector which, in turn, meets the local needs for meat, milk and eggs. The development of the private sector has not triggered a production growth as it might have been expected, mainly due to financial and land related issues.

RAMNICU VALCEA

Total arable land	By use:				
	Arable	Orchards and fruit tree nurseries	Grasslands	Hay fields	Vineyards
3556	1727	664	910	245	10
Agricultural production	1995	1996	1998	2000	
1. Vegetal (tons)					
- Wheat-rye	1,780	348	733	595	
- Corn	3,101	3,379	2,151	2,170	
- Potato	601	612	643	513	
- Vegetables	7,611	9,804	7,029	5,575	
2. Animal					
- Meat total (tons)	1,953	1,790	2,055	1,055	
- Milk (hectolitres)	15,121	16,459	15,404	5,808	
- Eggs (thousand pcs)	1,184	1,410	1,659	1,268	
Livestock (pcs)	1996	1998	1999	2000	
Horned cattle	1,637	1,898	806	843	
Pigs	5,750	4,022	1,988	1,634	
Sheep	2,50	3,641	959	246	
Poultry	21,992	13,148	10,460	10,712	

In view of the plan to re-launch the animal farming sector in Râmnicu Vâlcea, an objective analysis of the causes that determined the severe reduction of the livestock in the last period as well as local and government supported measures are needed.

Industry

The industry of the city has been restructured and privatised in the few last years. New economic units

with private ownership have been established, which have made up for the general negative consequences of the legislative incoherence specific to this transition period to a market economy.

Following the analysis of the balance sheets for 2000 submitted by the 4,526 companies in the city (93% of the total companies functioning in the county) here are several considerations regarding their structure and economic situation.

Field of activity Average rate USD – year 2000: 21,693 lei / USD	Companies		Employees		Turnover		Gross profit	
	Average number	% of total	Number	% of total	Value (USD)	% of total	Value (USD)	% of total
Total Râmnicu Vâlcea, of which:	4526	100	40,353	100	705,996,870	100	24,786,800	100
1. Extractive industry	4	0.09	369	0.91	5,805,100	0.82	577,610	2.33
2. Manufacturing industry	479	10.58	20,569	50.97	367,234,130	52.02	8,431,290	34.02
3. Electricity, heat, gas and water industry	6	0.13	2,036	5.05	59,242,610	8.39	731,570	2.95

Thus, despite the development of the private sector, its weight in industry is still unsatisfactory. The chemical industry with 68.89% of the overall turnover monopolises the manufacturing industry. Followed by

the food and beverages industry with 10.25%, and the mechanical engineering and metal processing industry with 8.78%. These industries are responsible for 88% of the total turnover of the manufacturing industry in

Râmnicu Vâlcea. This illustrates the need to broaden the production units with less polluting industrial activities, if we are going to reach the goal of sustainable development.

At the same time, the managerial methods meant to secure financial recovery need improvement. The industries previously referred to, which achieved over 61% of the turnover for 2000, had a gross profit of only 9,758,000 USD, i.e. 39.37% of the overall city gross profit.

Economic units in construction		Employees		Turnover		Gross profit	
Number	% of total	Average number	% of total	Value (USD)	% of total	Value (USD)	% of total
155	3.42	4,344	10.76	55,444,610	7.85	6,963,080	28.09

In 2000 as well as in other years, refurbishment and modernisation works were carried out at the units on the Southern Industrial Complex; most of the work was concerned with environmental protection and the removal of polluting sources. There was also various work done at newly established companies.

An important and relatively stable supply of construction work has been financed by the Râmnicu Vâlcea City Hall, primarily aimed at meeting local priorities, such as: social housing, a home for senior citizens, modernisation work, the northern leisure area, municipal infrastructure (expansion of water supply and sewerage networks, rehabilitation of the heat distribution network, expansion of the natural gas network, etc). From 2000 to the present, 50 apartments were finished in S10 and S11 blocks, located in the northern area, and 22 Decembrie and 41 biler houses have been modernised.

Most problems in construction are financial. The funds allocated to investments are generally delayed by the financing institution from the beneficiary. The local or central public funds reach the construction companies, which have won the auctions, quite late (terms 3 and 4). This has a negative impact on deadlines, on the quality of the work and especially on their costs (which increases due to the price increase of construction materials). This accounts for the fact that 77 construction companies (44.7% of the total) recorded about 41,580,230 USD losses in 2000, i.e. 28% of the overall loss of economic activity in the city. As a result of the decentralisation process, construction

Construction

The structural change of financing sources and the severely reduced investing potential, together with the incoherent and unstable legislative framework, which has not encouraged foreign and domestic investments, have determined a prolonged and constant decline of construction activities. According to the data provided in the balance sheets for 2000, the construction activity is the following:

investments should be a main concern of the local administration in the future.

Tourism

Located at the intersection of parallel 45°07' northern latitude with meridian 24°22'21" eastern longitude, halfway between the Equator and the North Pole, at the heart of the temperate area, most favourable to living, Râmnicu Vâlcea is crossed by a major international route connecting Eastern Europe and the Balkan Peninsula (E 81; DN 7).

Only 180 km away from the capital of Romania, Bucharest, 105 km away from Sibiu and 40 km from Curtea de Argeş, cities with rich historical past, Râmnicu Vâlcea has a remarkable historical heritage, which is generally undercapitalised.

The natural environment, the new hydroelectric works carried out on the river Olt, which gave the city two big artificial lakes, as well as the health spas situated only 18-20 km away - Olăneşti, Govora, Călimăneşti – Căculata - Cozia, and the easy access to the Voineasa and Vidra (two developing mountain resorts) significantly favour tourism, which could become the main economic activity of the city. But, material conditions must be developed, complex and attractive services provided, and foreign investors attracted.

Accommodation and public dining capacity (restaurants, bars, etc.) remain under-exploited and are listed below:

Name	1996		1999		2000	
	Number	Places	Number	Places	Number	Places
Accommodation units:	6	769	7	771	8	777
- Hotels	4	572	4	564	4	513
- Camping places	1	187	1	179	2	236
- Others	1	10	2	28	2	28

Following the evaluation of the present state, and assuming that tourism is one of the most favourable choices for the sustainable development of the city, it is recommended that the local authority act more firmly to lead the development process and organise public, private and community efforts. Drawing on the subsequent strategy and policies, and then capitalise on different existing resources.

Trade

Trade and services have grown at both national and local levels in recent years. They have absorbed most of the former employees of the restructured industrial sectors, and they have provided the population with more variety, mainly due to imports.

Structural reforms as to the management of economic units and the implementation of market economy

mechanisms have triggered important changes including private capital becoming generalised. Nevertheless, trade, although represented by 2,962 economic units (over 65% of all economic units in the city), employs only 16.4% of the local labour force and holds about a ¼ of the overall turnover and gross profit of the city. Wholesale companies (709, i.e. 23.9%), although employing 33.4% of the local labour force, achieve only 60.6% of the turnover and 55.8% of the gross profit in this field, while the 2,253 retail trade companies (76.1% of the total), with 66.6% of the labour force, achieve only 39.4% of the turnover and 44.2% of the gross profit. No doubt the market will exclusively regulate this growth, but as far as sustainable development is concerned, Local Administration is the one that should act, through its own means, on the structuring, location and dynamics of this sector according to the current and future needs of the community.

Explanations Average rate USD – year 2000: 21,693 lei/ USD	Economic units		Employees		Turnover		Gross profit	
	Number	% of total	Average number	% of total	Values (USD)	% of total	Values (USD)	% of total
Total trade, of which:	2,962	65.4	6,614	16.4	181,070,852	25.65	5,764,532	23.26
- Wholesale trade	709	23.9	2,213	33.4	109,754,299	60.6	3,219,011	55.8
- Retail trade	2,253	76.1	4,406	66.6	71,316,554	39.4	2,545,522	44.2
Of total:								
- Food trade	629	21.2	2,297	34.7	78,170,839	43.2	1,057,483	18.3
- Non-food trade	2,333	78.8	4,322	65.3	102,900,014	56.8	4,707,048	81.7

The internal market has to become a major component in the process of economic growth, but only in close connection with environmental protection, in a context regulated by norms concerning packing, labelling, preservation of goods and storage, as well as waste generation. This is because the volume of municipal waste has lately increased due to increased imports of products (usually inferior, from the quality viewpoint, of the domestic ones). Taking note of such

situations and preventing them, together with market development and local resource preservation, make a complete economic policy by the Local Administration, indispensable to the sustainable development of the city.

I.1.2.2. The Private Sector

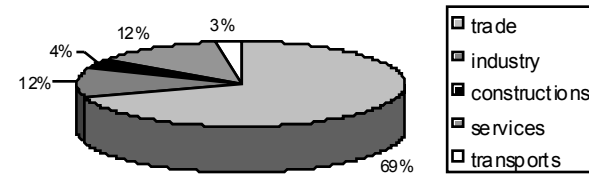
Under the conditions of the market, the private sector has developed the ability to react promptly to change. The establishment and development of the private sector in Râmnicu Vâlcea takes place against the national trend of development in this sector.

At the beginning of 2002 there were 6,336 economic units in the city as follows:

- 1,471 family associations, including legal practices
- 23 cooperative societies
- 3 national state owned enterprises
- 4,839 commercial enterprises (SME and Ltd)

Reference indicators Average rate USD – year 2000: 21,693 lei/ USD	Level year 2000	% of the economy of Vâlcea county
Number of economic units	4,526	60.83
Share capital (USD)	70,772,739	65.99
Average no. of employees	40,353	76.15
Turnover (USD)	705,988,107	83.07
Export revenue (USD)	152,076,707	94.39
Gross profit (USD)	24,786,798	84.43
Total debts (USD)	239,119,993	81.34

STRUCTURE OF ECONOMICS ACTIVITES
IN RÂMNICU VÂLCEA



The data in the balance sheets submitted at the end of 2000 by 4,526 commercial enterprises (93.53% of the total) place the city of Râmnicu Vâlcea as the most important economically in Vâlcea county. The economic units by activity are: trade (including public food services) 69.4%, service providers 13%, industries 10.8%, construction 3.4%, transport 2.8% and 0.6% agriculture and forestry.

SMEs Dynamics

In the 11 years of transition, the private sector has passed through extremely difficult periods, caused by the lack of experience, the frailty of legislation, bureaucracy and corruption, as well as to the scepticism of the population towards private initiative. The fluctuating growth of the private sector, especially of small and medium enterprises is illustrated by the fact that during the entire transition period, 1,175 commercial enterprises have been removed from the local Trade Register, i.e. almost a quarter of the companies functioning at the end of 2001. Nevertheless, analysis of the growth of SMEs demonstrate that they have strengthened their activities, improved their management and play a more significant part in the development of the city.

Field of activity Average rate USD – year 2000: 21,693 lei/ USD	Number of companies	Turnover (USD)	Average no. of employees	Gross profit (USD)	Export revenues (USD)
Agriculture and forestry	28	940,395,519	170	17,517	13,368
Extractive industry	3	15,212	1	-	-
Manufacturing industry	470	76,356,889	6139	4,128,982	9,233,854
Electricity, natural gas, water	3	1,082,838	103	155,350	-
Construction	149	12,476,375	1990	844,051	-
Trade	2961	178,268,566	6357	5,559,858	1,837,459
Hotels and restaurants	179	3,414,927	798	112,479	-

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Field of activity Average rate USD – year 2000: 21,693 lei/ USD	Number of companies	Turnover (USD)	Average no. of employees	Gross profit (USD)	Export revenues (USD)
Transport and storage	132	12,769,096	1285	399,668	5,079,980
Post and telecommunications	5	1,860,969	170	220,348	-
Finance, banking and insurance	23	759,231	84	189,923	-
Real estate transactions	264	8,613,376	1110	1,022,911	140,598
Public administration, education, health and social assistance	61	176,094	32	20,744	-
Other services	223	3,075,186	545	213,894	83,898
Total SMEs	4502	299,809,155	18784	12,885,724	16,389,158
% of total commercial enterprises	99.5	42.47	46.55	51.99	10.78

12 years ago the economic activity of Râmnicu Vâlcea was almost exclusively economic units employing over 1,000 employees each. At the beginning of 2001, 99% of the companies are small and medium enterprises, achieving 42.47% of the turnover and almost 52% of the gross profit. Therefore, SMEs hold an increasing weight among economic units. This is due, on the one hand, to their capacity to absorb the labour force left over from the restructuring process, and on the other hand, to their products and services. It is hoped that SMEs will contribute to the recovery and re-launch of the local economy, and at the same time strengthen the middle class of the society.

Fluctuations must be evaluated not only from an economic point of view, but also their consequences upon the natural and human environment. That is why the private business community has to become an essential partner in ensuring the success of any sustainable development programme. Hence, the Local Administration must reduce and eliminate the obstacles that stand in the way of economic development and the promotion of economic vitality.

Business Services

In Râmnicu Vâlcea there are branches of the most important commercial banks in Romania: the Romanian Bank for Development (Societe Generale), the Romanian Commercial Bank, Reiffeissen Bank, BANPOST, CEC, and Transylvania Bank, providing all financial and banking services required by the business environment and economic units.

Of all SMEs, about 400 (at the local level) provide services in such fields as computer science, design, assistance and consultancy, radio, television, and communications, which illustrates a growing interest in these kind of services. Many companies provide Internet services, to both corporations and to private people, at relatively low prices. As far as scientific research is concerned, there are only a few research institutions in the city, the most important being the Institute for Cryogenics and Isotopic Separations (the only one in the country) and the Fruit Growing Research Complex.

I.1.2.3 Urban Landscape

Landscape Description

The economic and functional zoning of Râmnicu Vâlcea maintains the features of the *complex economic area of the Olt and Râmnicu Vâlcea-Horezu corridors*, an area that comprises of 2/3 of the overall population of the county and has a high degree of urbanisation and technical infrastructure. Due to its location in a region of hills and plateaus, the network of localities that make up this urban centre are known for their linear formations, whose zoning and infrastructure equipment is quite problematic. The high degree of dispersion, also indicated by the local demographic density values, is typical for a city like Râmnicu Vâlcea, made up of small and very small localities with a semi-urban and even rural structure, situated several kilometres away from the city centre.

Today's city centre, stretching over 36.72 ha, mainly superposes on the old borough, dating from before the 1950s, which has been modernised according to the economic and social development of the locality.

Due to its topography, Râmnicu Vâlcea could not and cannot expand alongside the Olt and Olanesti river valleys, the two water streams that cross the city. The maximum width of the Olt river meadow varies between 2.5 km to the north and 2 km to the south, which makes any construction impossible along this "belt" bordered by the Malul Alb hill to the east and the Capela hill to the west. Given this constraint, the city has expanded along the north-south axis, with significant impact on communication to the other suburban or exterior localities.

Street Network, Transport

Râmnicu Vâlcea is crossed from north to south by "Calea lui Traian" avenue, a 2nd category road with four traffic ways (14 m width) between the upper passageway of the national and European road DN 7 (E 81): Bucharest – Pitești – Râmnicu Vâlcea – Sibiu and the exit from the southern industrial area. The road coexists for a while on the national road DN 67 – Caracal – Drăgășani – Râmnicu Vâlcea – Olănești. Along this segment, the road has asphalt surfacing.

In the central area, where most public and administrative buildings are located, as well as major banks and shops, and in the residential areas or in the industrial zones, the street network has been designed and built so as to meet the current requirements, with category II and III roads. Over the past few years they have been modernised (widened and the asphalt surface upgraded). Nevertheless, the lack of parking places and local space have had a negative impact on traffic flow, and consequently, on air protection at the ground level.

In Râmnicu Vâlcea transportation ensures goods and passenger traffic to various intra-urban or peri-urban destinations. Authorised transport companies carry out public transportation for medium and long distances. There are secure public transportation connections with localities located within 20 km of Râmnicu Vâlcea, and to the health spas Băile Olănești, Băile Govora, Călimănești-Căciulata and Băbeni. Inside the city, buses, maxi-taxis, and private taxis carry out the public transportation. These are sufficient to secure local transportation needs.

The **malfunctions** of the street network are the following:

- The urban area is split by the railway, which crosses the city north to south. The Ostroveni district, which houses half the population, is functionally semi-isolated, both from the city centre and from the main workplace of its inhabitants, the chemical platform. Although the street network inside the district allows for a decent flow of traffic, the entrances and exits to and from this district are still quite difficult;
- The four barriers controlling access to the railway station makes the traffic flow towards the Carpatina industrial area and the Ostroveni district difficult;
- At the entrance points of the city there is excessive traffic flow, especially during peak hours;
- Many bus stops for urban and inter-urban traffic, as well as a taxi station are placed in the railway station area. This area is not only difficult to reach, but there are no traffic islands to isolate these vehicles from the regular flow of traffic;
- The lack of necessary parking places in the downtown area, as well as the lack of observance to traffic rules causes perpetual problems. After 1989, the building of garages and covers (partly or easily accessed) on public domain, also limits public use in the area;
- The lack of traffic lights at major junctions impedes the traffic flow;
- The access to 1 Mai and Petrișor residential areas is unsatisfactory - it is simply one 3rd category road (1 Mai St.);
- The trucks transporting logs from Băile Olănești take only one route (Știrbey Vodă St.) and cross the south of the centre both ways, thus provoking difficulties to the traffic flow;
- The intensification of traffic on the southern and northern entries to the city during daytime peak hours creates an accumulation of car exhaust and low dispersion on Calea lui Traian avenue, the segment crossing the 1 Mai residential district, by way of the 'canyon' phenomenon;
- The growing number of private vehicles (cars and utility vehicles) used for passenger and goods transportation rather than using public transport, adds to air pollution;

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- The use of cars that do not comply with EURO 2 and 3 norms (mostly imported or old), and which cannot use ecological fuels (non ethylated petrol, diesel fuel with additives), are the cause for high levels of lead and CO pollution.

Functional Zoning

Various human needs are met through functionalities of urban areas:

- Residential areas;
- Industrial areas;
- Service areas (education, health, culture, trade, administration, municipal);
- Recreational areas;
- Peri-urban areas, connected by communication means (internal and external traffic).

Industrial Areas

This zoning has generated a specific urban texture reflecting the degree of human intervention to the city territory, with a major impact on the habitat (human and non-human).

About 60% of the overall industrial production of the county is achieved in Râmnicu Vâlcea. The development of powerful chemical companies in this area is due to the rich mineral resources (limestone and rock salt) existing in the close vicinity. Nevertheless, Râmnicu Vâlcea is considered a diversified industrial centre, with 459 commercial enterprises functioning in different fields. These companies are located in four distinct industrial areas:

- **Northern industrial area** – mostly food industries – 22 ha, stretches over a delimited perimeter west to Calea lui Traian avenue, east to the artificial lake of Râmnicu Vâlcea Hydroelectric Plant, south to the residential area and north to Cetățuia river valley;
- **North-Western industrial area (Carpatina)** – wood processing industry, wholesale commercial warehouses, mechanical processing industry and small industry – 30 ha, bordered by G-ral Antonescu St. and the dyke of the Râureni Hydroelectric Plant;
- **Râureni storage and industry area** – with warehouses, transportation, light industries and

small industries – 75 ha, situated in the south of the city, at the crossroads between Copacelu and Râureni streets;

- **South industrial area** – chemical industry, electricity and heat industry, applied research and mechanical processing industry – 354 ha, is located on the territory of Stolniceni and Râureni localities and is the main industrial platform of the city, of both production and labour force.

Apart from these areas, there are other economic areas in the city, with a total surface area of about 11.5 ha.

Service Areas

The most important social, cultural, health and educational institutions as well as the local public administration and banks, are located in the central area of the city. However, each residential district has minimal access to health or educational institutions (i.e. schools or medical clinics), except for some peri-urban localities (Bujoreni, Copacelu, Stolniceni, Râureni and Aranghel-Buda), where the dispersion of inhabitants over large distances makes it difficult for them to access the above-mentioned services.

Commercial services have seen the most significant growth and diversification over the past 10 years, as the volume of food and non-food supplies has increased greatly. This development has known various forms, starting from street commerce (unorganised or simply stands) to organised commerce in stores or wholesale commercial complexes. Imposing a discipline in this activity and attaining a minimum level of decent trade has required a substantial effort from the Local Public Administration. They have faced multiple problems from finding and organising appropriate locations for these activities, to having to deal with social problems.

Compact commercial areas have been established, either on the periphery of the residential districts (DOVALI area), in the peri-urban areas near the city centre (weekly market – Râureni area, Bujoreni area), or downtown (Muntenia and Big Boss commercial complexes), which provide both wholesale and retail supplies, sometimes with difficulty due to infrastructure deficiencies (access ways, parking places, a fixed supply schedule).

Market places are owned and managed by the General Department of Market Administration, City Hall: North Market, North Bazaar, Central Market, Ostroveni Market, Ostroveni Bazaar, Poiana Bazaar, Râureni Weekly Fair (27,904 m²), and private economic units – Jerasa Market (290 m²).

The modernisation of these markets (appropriate equipment for selling meat and dairy products, refurbishing of toilets, rehabilitation of the water supply and sewerage networks) does not fully guarantee a decent commercial activity; there are problems such as the lack of space for display and storage of bulk goods during the summer-autumn season and on busy market days.

Peri-urban areas

Given that, through its very structure and infrastructure, an urban centre has a strong impact on the soil and subsoil it is built on, as well as through major pollutants (e.g. industry, car exhaust, municipal services), it can be said that the entire area of Râmnicu Vâlcea has been affected, undergoing more or less obvious degradations over time. The southern peri-urban area, where the chemical platform is located, is most affected; the various chemical pollutants (some very persistent in space and time, such as HCH or organic-chlorinate products) reach several meter depths in the soil. Consequently, chlorides, organic materials and mercury, which make water improper to use for anything, pollute the aquifer layer in the area. The wells have been abandoned, and the population living near the chemical platform is supplied through the central water supply network, from a source located 8 km away.

Housing

Most inhabitants live in compact residential districts, located all around the city; the largest is the Ostroveni district, followed by Nord, Traian and 1 Mai districts and the Petrisor and Libertatii micro-districts. The central area, located in the perimeter bordered by the Olanesti river, the railway, Nicolae Bălcescu Blvd and Regele Carol Street, has multiple functions, e.g. for living, and services. There are blocks of flats (5 or 11 storeys high) or individual houses, connected to the municipal infrastructure. In 1992, the total number of dwellings in Râmnicu Vâlcea was 37,430, of which:

- 34,308 were connected to the water supply network

- 32,881 had hot water
- 34,254 were connected to the sewerage network
- 37,226 had electricity
- 35,068 were connected to the natural gas supply network

Compared to 1992, the housing fund in 1999 rose to 38,135, of which most were private property: 38,041. Most collective dwellings (blocks of flats) were built in the 70s and the 80s, and were the dominant housing pattern of the city. However, they did not fully comply with the minimal standards concerning living area, cubing, annexes and construction materials necessary to secure adequate living conditions. During the 1980s, dwellings were inadequately used (i.e. rationalisation of the heat supply) and, therefore, prematurely wore out. At the same time, the rifts among the different urban structures of the city generate and maintain social-economic integration difficulties for the inhabitants of Ostroveni and Petrisor districts. These are the barriers created by Sibiu-Piatra Olt railway and the Olt and Olanesti rivers, whose flow crosses the city, segregating urban texture.

Green Areas

Located in an exceptional natural environment, the city has both natural recreational areas (the forests covering the surrounding hills) and parks built in the residential districts.

Zăvoi Park, created in the last century, has concrete alleys, playgrounds for children, and refreshment areas, as well as a 100 year old forest. The park is located in close proximity to the city stadium.

Mirocea Cel Batrân Park, located in the central area, is also arranged with concrete alleys, leisure areas, etc. It is surrounded by the old wall of the historical centre and completes the civic centre of the city.

In the southern area, using an old branch of the Olt river and recovering the land of the former meadow, the Ostroveni "Leisure Area" has been organised, with swimming pools (salt and fresh water), a refreshment area, a camping area, a zoological garden, fishing and nautical sports facilities, etc. This area has the best recreational facilities for the summer season. Tourists from different regions also come here.

Besides the parks, there are also green squares and green street arrangements with ornamental plants

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(bushes and flowers), completing the overall image of the city.

Municipal Infrastructure

Water Supply and Sewerage

Râmnicu Vâlcea is supplied with water from its own sources (underground water stream: Vladesti and surface water stream: Cheia) and with drinking water bought from other companies (RADRA Vâlcea –

surface water stream: Brădişor and S.C. OLTCHIM S.A. – underground water stream: Bistriţa).

The water supply network has a length of 177.4 km, with diameters between 50 and 600 mm; it functions based on a ring-shaped system and is 93% made of steel, 5% iron steel and 2% asbestos-cement. The number of apartments connected to the water supply network is 26,700, and of individual households, 2,855. 95% of the cold water supplied to the population is monitored through a metering system, and 82% of the economic units. Old pipes and the lack of a drinking water supply network in the newly built areas are the biggest water supply problems.

DRINKING WATER SUPPLY – 2000		
Total volume of annual water consumption	thousand m ³	25,962
Total volume of annual invoiced water	thousand m ³	18,692
From internal sources	thousand m ³	214
From external sources	thousand m ³	25,748
Specific water consumption/inhabitant	l/inhabitant/day	326
No. of days of water interruption	no. days/year	0
Days with low pressure	no. areas	0
Inhabitants not connected to the water supply network	number	25,253
Capacity of drinking water storage	m ³	22,250
Length of water supply network	km	177.4
Losses in the network	% of total	28
Metering devices	% of total	90
SEWERAGE AND TREATED WASTE WATER IN 2000		
Total volume of waste water	thousand m ³	25,223
Total volume disposed waste water	thousand m ³	25,223
Treatment plant capacity	l/sec.	1020
Average flow of treated water	l/sec.	620
No. of days of interruption at the treatment plant	no. days/year	0
Inhabitants not connected to the sewerage system	number	37,412
Length of sewerage network	km	143.7
Operating time >20years	% of total	84%
Treatment efficiency	%	79.5

The sewerage network in Râmnicu Vâlcea is made up of about 30% on the dividing system and 60% on the unitary system. The company administering this service is called ACVARIM (they also administer the water supply network); the Local City Council is its sole shareholder.

The sewerage system collects household waste water, rainwater and industrial water and has a total length of

143.7 km, counting both main and connecting piping. The amounts of household, rain and industrial waste waters are measured according to the current legislation.

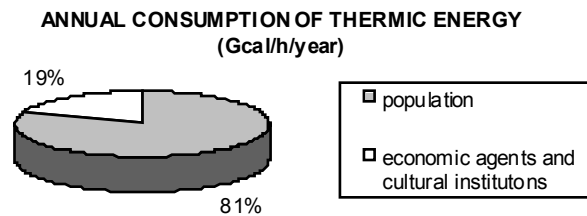
The treatment plant has two treatment steps: mechanical and biological. It was built in two stages:

- First, a technological line with a capacity of 510 l/sec., in 1979;
- Second, an extension stage, a second technological line, similar to the first, with a capacity of 510 l/sec., in 1991.

This is the pattern for all water treatment plants in our country; practically no advance treatment is undertaken at present. The functioning of the plant is considered satisfactory for the mechanical step (efficiency 90%), and less satisfactory for the biological step (efficiency about 60%); the modernisations and upgrading planned for the next three years are designed to increase water treatment efficiency to European standards.

Heat and Electricity System

Râmnicu Vâlcea has a centralised supply of heat and hot water for about 104,000 persons, most of whom live in blocks of flats. Heat is provided through the heating network to the entire city from Govora S.A. Combined Heat and Power.



The necessary heating is ensured through:

- The heating network - 315 Gcal./year; the 24 group heat exchangers that replaced the old boiler houses have a total power of 210 Gcal/h;
- The 10 group heat exchangers replacing the 10 boiler houses: 105 Gcal/h;

The existing heating system ensures the city is fully supplied with heat.

Natural and Anthropic Hazards

Râmnicu Vâlcea is prone to both natural disasters (i.e. earthquakes, landslides, drought) and man made disasters (the most important being a chemical

disaster). PRODOMUS S.A., a company from Bucharest, carried out research in 1996 and identified the areas prone to earthquakes and landslides. It also produced a "Protection-Action Plan against Earthquakes, Landslides and Complementary Accidents". According to this study, the city has a seismic degree of 7 (earthquakes that cause cracks at the corners of openings or to buildings).

Built-in Area Management

The growing need for space and natural resources, following the current development plans, has often led to various conflicts about urban area management, especially when it comes to changing land functions. Meeting the living and environmental needs, as well as the rational use of natural resources, have to be considered when settling these conflicts.

With an urban agglomeration level of 21%, Râmnicu Vâlcea is not very different from other cities in the country. Civil and municipal construction built in recent years has been carried out according to the provisions of P.U.G., attempting to keep the balance between built-in areas and the creation of new built-in areas by changing the function of the land. Taking into account the number of inhabitants, the urban agglomeration and the municipal infrastructure, Râmnicu Vâlcea is the most developed among the surrounding localities. It also provides most of the jobs in industry, trade and services. The other localities of the municipality are differentiated according to their location: semi-rural settlements stretching along main roads (to the south) or simple hamlets hidden in the hills, forming independent bodies.

The present built-in area, based on the old built-in, unnaturally fragmented perimeter, does not ensure the framework necessary to the development of the city. Under the present circumstances, the estates obtained on the basis of Law no.18/1991 cannot be used for construction, despite the expressed desire of their owners. Due to the acute lack of financial investment, an eco-area with great recreational potential – Capela Hill – originally integrated within the city, has been practically abandoned. The few works performed up to this point in time have not succeeded in bringing this perimeter to adequate standards. No protection tree barriers have been planted between the residential districts and the industrial areas.

Waste Management

In Râmnicu Vâlcea waste collection and transport services are carried out by:

- **S.C. URBAN S.A. Râmnicu Vâlcea** and **S.C. GENERAL BIM S.R.L.** – they collect and transport waste from households and economic units;
- **RM. VÂLCEA City Hall** - through the Public Domain Administration department - ensures street cleaning and the maintenance of green areas.

Both types of **waste transportation** are carried out with special vehicles – 10 compacting trucks, 2 container trucks, and 5 tractors. About 95% of the public sanitation vehicle fleet is obsolete. They are more than 8 years old. 80 City Hall employees with an insufficient car fleet (comprising of one good street cleaner (Mercedes-Faun brand) and four tractors) collect the street waste is collected by 80 city hall employees with a small car fleet of one street cleaner and four tractors.

The analyses performed point out the need to upgrade the car fleet, and purchase street cleaning devices in order to secure the adequate disposal of municipal and street waste.

The waste volume collected and transported by the public sanitation companies varies depending on the season, population size (which varies especially during holiday seasons), collection frequency and the fluctuation of beneficiaries from one service provider to another. The largest quantity comes from individual households, almost twice as much as that from blocks of flats. This is mainly due to space constraints. From the analysis of data provided by the sanitation service providers, it can be noted that the volume of waste collected from private houses has increased over the past few years, due, on the one hand, to the extension of sanitation services to the peripheries of the city (Goranu, Râureni, Căzănești areas) and on the other hand to the new buildings. The number of private houses benefiting from sanitation services at the end of 1999 was about 4,802, compared to 4,154 in 1996.

Composition of municipal waste (%)	
Metals	1,9
Paper	5,35
Glass	4,4

Composition of municipal waste (%)	
Plastics	6,84
Mixed materials	0,33
Organic materials	59,56
Wood	1,32
Textiles	4,18
Minerals	13,9
Toxics	0,4
Hygienic products	1,23
Unidentified products	0,5
Total	100

Waste Disposal

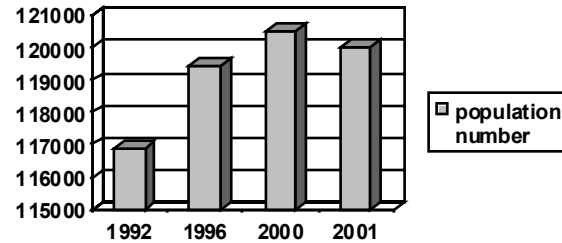
In Râmnicu Vâlcea waste disposal is carried out without prior sorting; there are no treatment and neutralisation procedures performed, the only disposal method is **depositing**. Municipal waste is deposited at the Râureni landfill, located 12 km away from the city centre and less than 300 m away from the Olt River. The Râureni landfill has functioned since 1978 and has a **surface area of 115,000 m²**. The depositing reserve is estimated to be about 1 year, when the maximum capacity of the landfill will be reached. The landfill is equipped with a weighing machine so as to control daily waste quantity. The landfill is not built according to ecological norms. The minimal distance to both the residential districts and the water streams is not respected. As a consequence it has been suggested that the current landfill should be closed immediately, and the respective area be ecologically reconditioned and a new landfill built in compliance with the European Union standards.

Recycling of Waste

Some of the **recyclable materials** (paper, cardboard, glass, iron) are collected from waste producers or indirectly, by a private company, REMATS. This company has 9 pre-collection points in the city where the population and economic units may dispose of reusable waste and get paid in exchange. In 1999, the volume of waste collected by REMAT Vâlcea was 3,356 tons, of which 2,600 tons was steel. Given that in 1999 a volume of 114,850 tons of waste was deposited, the percentage for solid waste recycling was only 3%, and below the national average.

I.1.3. Social Capital

I.1.3.1 Population Structure and Dynamics



On 1 July 2001 the population of Râmnicu Vâlcea was **120,020 inhabitants**, of which 58,373 were males - 48.64% - and 64,647 were females - 51.36%, with a yearly **growth**; unlike the rest of the county (negative: -1.6%), **the natural growth rate** of the population is **positive** (+3.24%); at the same time, the **infant mortality rate** has a **favourable falling trend** (8.02% -1999; 2.4% -2000).

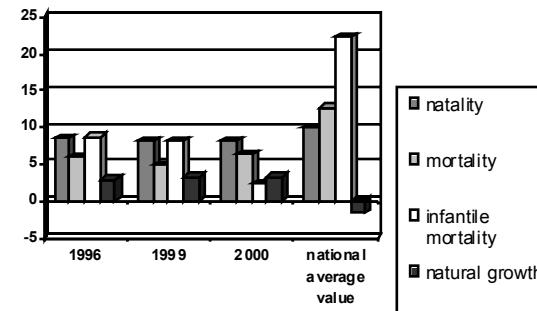
Analysing the dynamics of the population (by age groups) for the last 25 years, as well as the demographic forecasts until 2020, one notices the **ageing of the population**, a national phenomenon as well, pointed out by the evolution of demographic indicators:

- The birth rate has had a **continuous falling trend** – 8.5% -1996; 8.16% - 1999; 8.1% – 2000;
- Overall mortality has **slightly increased** compared to 2000, it is still below the national average, but it ranks high on the European level – 6.04% - 1996; 4.92% - 1999; 6.36% - 2000.

Age group	Males	Females	Total
0-9 years	10,156	9,646	19,802
10-19 years	11,844	11,144	22,988
20-29 years	8,173	10,440	18,613
30-39 years	11,312	11,935	23,247
40-49 years	7,954	7,033	11,987
50-59 years	4,614	4,272	8,886

60-69 years	2,448	2,812	5,260
70-79 years	862	1,343	2,205
over 80 years	348	579	927

The dynamics of the population have a **relatively positive** evolution, compared to the national situation. The positive natural growth rate compensates for the ageing population. But the consequences of the demographic ageing process will impact the economic and social sectors as well as future demographic developments, especially after 2005, when the smaller generations born after 1990, enter the working population (15-49 years). Hence, the need to take active measures to promote the birth of children and the social protection of senior citizens.



I.1.3.2 Ethnic Minorities

The homogenous ethnic structure of the population in Râmnicu Vâlcea, (over 98% of the inhabitants have Romanian nationality), has led to a peaceful and stable living environment. As a result there is an absence of inter-ethnic or religious tensions. The Orthodox majority views freedom of religion and individual or group traditions as an inalienable right of any ethnic group; and the open membership of other groups and identification with other traditions or religions is respected.

I.1.3.3 Human Resources

In any society, the structure of needs and the level of aspirations depend on the range of possibilities to fulfil them; it goes without saying that the *"social optimum"* remains a remote ideal, which we aim to attain. The

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prolonged period of “expectancy” that Romania has experienced, is far from getting the country any closer to the social optimum; rather it amplifies the degradation of the living environment and the poverty of the population. Râmnicu Vâlcea is no exception; the state of the city’s economy impacts on growing unemployment and, implicitly, affects the inactive segment of the population.

Active and inactive population, by sex, as of 1977 and 1992 censuses:

- Number of inhabitants -

Reference year	Population – total		Active population	Inactive population
5.I. 1977	Both sexes	70,134	35,768	34,366
	Males	36,022	20,670	15,352
	Females	34,112	15,098	19,014
7.I. 1992	Both sexes	116,914	58,785	58,129
	Males	57,710	30,443	27,267
	Females	59,204	28,342	30,862

The most drastic cutbacks in the labour force were recorded for the employees in industry and transportation, due to the structural transformations of these sectors. The number of employees in industry fell by 11%, and in industry and communications by more than 40%. The labour force has passed from the productive sectors (i.e. industries) to the commercial sector, the number of employees increasing six times in this sector, which is normal considering that the weight of the commercial companies is about 75% of all city companies at present; although services and trade prevail in the city’s economy, they are paradoxically confronted with a lack of skilled labour.

The delays in implementing real reforms in the labour market, in line with national economic restructuring, have caused major imbalances in the labour market. The unemployment rate in Ramnicu.Vâlcea reached 10.9% at the end of January 2002. This shows the mutations of the local economy and its incapacity to absorb and use the available human resources. At the same time, the unemployment rate places Ramnicu.Vâlcea under the county average (13.9%), but above the national medium.

The number of unemployed in the city at the end of January 2002 was 9,055, of which 3,711 were receiving unemployment benefits and 5,344 were

without unemployment benefits. The reasons for this unemployment by age groups, sexes and professions are:

- Collective lay-offs;
- The lack of jobs for graduates of the vocational, high school and higher education systems;
- Inconsistency between labour demand and job offers. Highlighted by professional immobility, especially for the unemployed in the 30-39 and 40 age groups;
- Most of the unemployed are women. In 1997 the percentage of the unemployed, who were women was 33.3%, in 1998, 37.8%, reaching 48.1% in 1999. At the end of January 2002, of the total number of unemployed, 51%, were women (4,618 of 9,055);
- The unfavourable growth of the social and economic situation, and the additional work put upon the younger generations and some middle-aged people.

Given that unemployment is a multi-dimensional phenomenon (economic, psycho-social, cultural, political), which covers a wide range of concrete situations, the boundary between employment, unemployment and inactivity is rather blurred. While, on the one hand, atypical forms of labour have gained ground (part-time work, temporary work, limited duration work contracts, etc.), on the other hand, other types of activities are being undertaken by the unemployed, such as training. Finally, it is estimated that about 10% of the active population works in the underground economy, which blurs the boundary between employment and unemployment.

The employment strategies and policies resulting from a project by the Ministry of Work and Social Solidarity and the World Bank lead to the establishment on 1 January 1999, of the National Employment Agency, based on Law no.145/1998. As an active factor in the labour market, the National Employment Agency promotes partnerships in order to ensure employment, by virtue of the decentralisation principle. The management of resources allocated to active measures for fighting unemployment is thus an issue of general concern involving the government, the trade unions, economic units, as well as associations, foundations and local consortiums - forms of organisation in the civil society and local communities.

Since 2001, the National Employment Agency through its local agencies (one in Ramnicu.Vâlcea) and the

Vocational Training Centres, have promoted a new strategy in the labour market. It focuses on the support of economic agents, and the encouragement of active behaviour by people looking for a job. Law 76/2002 on the unemployment insurance system and employment encouragement supports the development of small and medium enterprises by facilitating beneficial credits for production activities, service providing, and investments in construction activities.

1.1.3.4 Health Status

The present state of health of the population is the result of difficult life conditions during the years preceding the transition (i.e. before 1989), as well as of the social and economic problems of the transition; it may be said to be **critical compared to the European level**.

- Following the analysis of global and specific health indicators, it may be noted:
- There is an ageing tendency, with a medically insignificant distribution of the sexes;
- The demographic behaviour in recent years is characterised by a drop in the number of children in a family, the **synthetic fertility indicator** is 25.19%, and under the national average;
- **The life expectancy at birth** - 79 years in 1999, according to the synthetic indicator based on the population's health, is relatively good compared to the national rate, but is way below the European level;
- The **general mortality** indicator is well below the national and county averages. Most deaths occur after the age of 64 years, in line with the national trend and the population ageing phenomenon;
- The **specific causes of mortality** are, cardiovascular diseases (1999 - 412 deaths, in 2000 - 493 deaths), followed by diseases of the digestive system, tumours, accidents, etc. The number of cardiovascular diseases has continuously increased in the last 10 years: 67% - 1996; 67% - 1997; 67.5% -1998 and 68.8% in 1999, alongside the national trend. This is mainly due to major lifestyle factors, the inefficiency of the preventive health care, as well as to the shortages of modern diagnosis and treatment technologies;

- The number of diseases caused by cancer has been constant in past years;
- **Infant mortality rate** is favourable, but difficult living conditions seem to account for small weights at birth 8.4% of all births, twice as much as in other European countries; diseases of the respiratory system are the most frequent cause of death - 40%;
- **General morbidity** indicators show an increased number of incidents of degenerative diseases cause by a variety of factors from lifestyle to living conditions. Respiratory diseases are most common and may be due to chronic subliminal exposure to air pollutants from the South Industrial Platform;
- There has been an increase of infectious diseases (mumps, rubella, chicken pox) transmitted by the air in children's communities; an A-type of viral hepatitis (a disease caused by dirty hands); cases of tuberculosis show that decent living conditions are still lacking (in the areas of food, housing, and urban facilities - water, sewerage), and that the level of sanitary education is mediocre;
- There are only 43 people registered with AIDS, which places Râmnicu Vâlcea below the incident level of other localities in the county and in the country; the main way it has been contracted is from mother to child infection.

Medical assistance is fairly good in Râmnicu Vâlcea. Unlike the rest of the county, the population of the city benefits from a network of cure and prevention medical units covering most medical areas of expertise - **343 physicians** in all specialities with an accessible working schedule.

- Primary medical assistance is ensured by 71 general medicine units (public and private surgeries)
- 63 physicians of various specialties provide outpatient medical assistance in 51 public and private units.
- Two county hospitals: Valcea County Hospital - 1461 beds, 142 physicians, 561 auxiliary medical and outpatient staff with 75 physicians and 302 auxiliary medical staff; Obstetrics and Valcea Gynaecology Hospital - 282 beds, 29 physicians, 114 auxiliary medical staff;

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- Accident and emergency medical assistance is ensured by the county **Ambulance Service Department**, Ramnicu. Valcea headquarters.
- Recuperative medical assistance is ensured by the Medical Recuperation and balneology Department of the County Hospital - 52 beds;
- Preventive medicine and public health services are provided by the Valcea Public Health Department.

There are new clinical departments: dialysis department, refurbished oncology department, refurbished and upgraded emergency and surgery department at the county hospital.

Even though, theoretically speaking, medical insurance allows for unrestricted access to medical services, there is some discrimination as to the degree of free access to these services:

- Family physicians do not secure permanent care;
- Certain speciality services are insufficient or nonexistent;
- Inadequate staffing and facilities;
- Prohibitive prices for certain medicines, even if it is partly covered by insurance.

There are other factors that may impact the state of the population's health: poverty, unhealthy behaviours, pollution, and stress.

The decline of health and medical assistance began before 1989, due to the specific living conditions of that period. A sum of factors negatively impacted the state of health: economy, lifestyle and substandard care. We can witness the negative consequences of decisions made in the 70s and the 80s, which became visible in the 90s, when economic and social transformations generated additional tensions.

The sanitary system has followed a similar pattern as the social and economic system. After 1989, the following factors also contributed to the decline of the population's state of health:

- The reduction of actual family income; more and more families living below the poverty threshold;
- Imbalanced family budgets – food costs more leaving less money for services and household appliances;
- Psychological discomfort generated by unemployment, social insecurity, low living

standards, harmful lifestyles (drug abuse, smoking, alcoholism), as well as decreased life expectancy by age groups and sexes due to these lifestyles;

- Slow reform of the health services (even though Râmnicu Vâlcea has been one of the pilot cities for health reform) and inadequate, permissive, insufficient legislation;
- Reduction in real terms of money for health, allocated from the State or family budget.

Hence, a poor level of health which will be difficult to improve over the next 5 - 10 years.

1.1.3.5 Education

The economic and social transformation of society, vital considering the transition period, also requires a profound change in the collective mentality with respect to living and working conditions. This is not conceivable without the modernisation of the mass education system, starting from primary education. Pre-school and general school education systems have been quite sensitive to the idea of privatisation. At least three private kindergartens and one private high school were established in the city. The individual effort has to underline this change, without which access to a new world, of information and rapid communications, will be denied.

	1999	2000	2001
Total:	31,831	29,721	31,934
- Pre-school	3,179	3,100	3,243
- Primary and secondary	15,145	14,131	13,364
- High school	9,305	7,989	9,243
- Vocational and apprenticeship	2,139	2,392	2,601
- Higher education	2,063	2,109	3,483

	1999	2000	2001
Total educational institutions:	75	76	78
- Kindergartens	29	29	29
- Primary and secondary schools	16	17	17
- Children's clubs	2	2	2
- High schools	16	16	16

	1999	2000	2001
- Vocational/ apprenticeship schools	10	10	12
- Higher education institutions	2	2	2

The school age population represents about 28% of the overall population of Râmnicu Vâlcea; most of it is enrolled in primary, secondary and high school education institutions. Vocational and apprenticeship education, specialised in traditional trades has drastically decreased according to the industrial profile of the city. This shows either young people oriented towards new areas of interest, or a reduction in the flexibility of the school curriculum to raise interest in lucrative trades. The decline of vocational and apprenticeship education is counterbalanced by the development of new forms of vocational education (artistic, formative, foreign languages) in such institutions as:

- Music and Arts High School
- Pedagogical High School
- Theological Seminary
- Economic High School
- High schools with intensive programmes for foreign language study or bilingual programmes.

The city needs new educational reforms that answer the new social demands, and comply with the needs of local employers.

Higher education has also experienced a noteworthy development. There are two private universities in the city, Constantin Brâncoveanu University, with an economic profile, accredited by the National Commission for Accreditation, with 1,983 students and Spiru Haret University, which is to be accredited, with 1,500 students.

Despite the adequate facilities and staffing of the education system in the city (enough educational institutions and teachers covering all the fields in the curriculum), environmental education is precarious: there are neither qualified teachers nor adequate institutional frameworks.

Due to the low budget allocated to the maintenance and exploitation of educational institutions over the past years the following problems areas exist:

- The buildings (plaster, paint, façades, and hydro-insulation work necessary);
- The utilities (toilets, locker rooms, heating, lighting require modernisation);
- Inadequate furniture (some desks are not appropriate for various age groups);
- Inadequate teaching materials (few computers, overhead projectors, video-projectors, maps, and lab equipment),

This degradation has caused disruptions in teaching and school activities. It has also contributed to the number of incidents of collective (epidemics: acute viral type A hepatitis, epidemic parotids, measles) and individual (myopia, position distortion, colds) diseases with children. School surgeries are inadequately equipped with medical equipment, sanitary materials and medicines. In some schools they have been eliminated altogether, while the existing ones provide low quality services.

Special education had great financial difficulties in 2001, as a consequence of delays in enforcing the Emergency Government Ordinance no. 29 and the Government Decision no. 192 (on the social protection of institutionalised children in the special education institution by local services), which impacted the living conditions of institutionalised children.

1.1.3.6 Culture

Râmnicu Vâlcea has an animated cultural life; there are many opportunities to attend occasional or current artistic events.

Since 1989 local artists and arts institutions have become visible, with great honours at the local, national and international level. Noteworthy are the following institutions:

- **Anton Pann State Theatre**
- **Ariel" Municipal Theatre**
- **Ion Dumitrescu Philharmonic**
- **UAP Arts Galleries - Râmnicu Vâlcea branch**

Institutions	1996	1997	1998
Cinemas	4	3	2
Theatres	1	2	2
Music institutions	-	1	1
Libraries-total:	31	34	38
Public libraries**	1	1	1

There are other culture institutions in Râmnicu Vâlcea that have functioned for more than half a century and that can offer citizens cultural services according to individual interest, for instance:

- **Antim Ivireanu County Library**, founded in 1950, has branches in Ostroveni, Traian and Goranu residential districts. It has a foreign languages department, children's department, loans department and an audiovisual department;
- The **History Museum** and **Arts Museum**, are departments of the **County History Museum**;
- The **Arts School**, which provides children and young people varied and interesting activities.

The budgetary funds allocated to cultural activities are totally insufficient for the development of a cultural life adequate for the existing aspirations and traditions of the city's population:

Year	Sum* - USD -
1996	15,537
1997	24,971
1998	7,754

*Note: the average exchange rates for 1996, 1997, 1998 were used, respectively 3,083 lei/ USD for 1996, 7,168 lei/USD for 1997 and 8,876 lei/ USD for 1998.

Despite the municipality and artists' desire to broaden cultural offerings, there are still deficiencies in this field. Slow and faulty reform in the field of culture causes problems at the institutional level and impedes the development of culture. Due to the lack of favourable laws (Patronage Law, Profit Tax Law, etc) and State financial support, some institutions (i.e. Culture House) lose their cultural function, whilst others are needed. Thus, Râmnicu Vâlcea needs a Cultural Animation and Continuous Education Centre.

Patrimony:

- Religious establishments: Râmnic Bishopry, Sfânta Paraschiva Church, Maica Domnului Church
- Monuments: Statue of Independence, Heroes' Monuments
- Memorial Houses: Anton Pann House

I.1.3.7 Sport and Leisure

Râmnicu Vâlcea has several attractive leisure areas located within a relatively small walking distance from the city centre and residential areas:

- Zăvoi Park, municipality owned;
- Capela Hill, part of the public domain, municipality owned;
- Mircea cel Bătrân Park, municipality owned;
- The Zoological Garden, municipality owned;
- Recreational Complex to the south of the Ostroveni residential districts;
- Recreational Complex at the dam located in the north of the city, contracted to several private companies;
- Traian Sports Complex (comprising of the Sports Arena, open tennis courts, volleyball and basketball fields);
- 1 Mai Municipal Stadium with the afferent facilities;
- Private leisure and sports complexes (owned by private companies, such as Oltchim S.A. – Ia Fedeleşoiu and Hidroconstrucția S.A. – to the north of the city);
- Ostroveni Youth House leisure complex.

Although there are many recreational and sport possibilities, there are also many problems:

- Insufficient funding for the maintenance and modernisation of the existing facilities as well as for the salaries of the staff in charge of their cleaning and preservation;
- No regular transport to the leisure areas and swimming pools, especially in the summer, which makes access difficult;
- Limited public access to the leisure and sports complexes designed for employees of certain companies;
- The use of natural areas – the major riverbeds of the Olt and Olănești rivers – for leisure and bathing, may have health consequences from either accidents or being exposed to infectious diseases. There may also be an adverse affect on the environment (soil, water streams).

I.1.3.8 Civil Society

The active participation of civil society in public issues is a major concern in the city. So, the local administration has involved the civil society in the decision-making process with respect to defining policies on many issues (environment, public debate of the local budget, etc.).

The **Trade Unions** in the county in 2000 were: Cartel ALFA, Frăția, BNS and CSDR.

(In 1995 ALFA Cartel had 32,000 members. Due to layoffs, in 2001 there were only 13,500.)

Name of nongovernmental organisation	Growth of the number of organisations				
	1993	1994	1995	1996	1999
Total number of NGOs	11	26	53	236	463
Associations	3	9	12	30	30
Foundations	4	8	30	188	412
Clubs	1	2	4	10	10
Leagues	-	2	2	1	2
Trade unions	-	-	-	1	1
Societies	3	5	5	6	7
Unions	-	-	-	-	1

Nongovernmental organisations in Râmnicu Vâlcea as well as at the national level, function inadequately due to their lack of association with one another and the delay in legislation issuance. In addition, citizens and local authorities distrust the character and efficiency of these civil society organisations. They are seen as having multiple conflicts of interest and as having problems in finding common ways for each community member to voice their ideas and aspirations. There are about 460 nongovernmental organisations registered in the city, but only 3% have proved their utility and efficiency.

Media

Since 1989, and the freedom of the press, 4 daily newspapers, 3 radio stations and 2 TV stations have been established in Râmnicu Vâlcea. It can be said that, for a city with about 120,000 inhabitants, local mass media is extremely well represented and has a broad audience within the local community.

I.1.3.9 Public Order

The public order officers as well as staff of the public gendarmerie secure the safety and trust citizens need to live in any community. Following specific interventions undertaken in 2001, 1,345 infringements were recorded by the city police, 927 less than in 2000. 45% of them were economic and financial felonies, an increase from the previous period. More preventive actions have been undertaken following the analysis of 2,638 citizen complaints; hence, actual knowledge of crimes and crime prevention. Policemen who secure public order together with teams of gendarmes and public guardians, accomplished the following: 385 actions and controls, 13 raids, and 102 order measures, all aimed at preventing street offences, and violent crimes as well as actions to protect public and private property.

Growing delinquency, evidenced by thefts from private and public property, day and nighttime street violence, robberies, juvenile delinquency and public order troubles, has occurred against the background of constant cutbacks of equipment and human resources allocated to the police. This has triggered and amplified citizen insecurity. An active erosion process of people's trust in the police is currently developing, either due to corruption and abuses by some policemen (published in the local press), or to conservative attitudes with respect to the police's role in protecting citizen freedoms and liberties. In any free society, this phenomenon has an impact on the way the police function as an institution. The growing mistrust and disrespect of the police may also be the result of different expectations of citizens in contrast to the needs and goals of the police; policeman on duty attempt to quell some crimes so that the entire community observes the law. For their part citizens want to express their rights and liberties freely, without experiencing any abuse.

The concept of community police is based on the idea that a policeman spends a great deal of his working time informing citizens about the provisions of various normative acts concerning new forms of delinquency (i.e. drug trafficking and drug use). Thus, building a bridge between the police and citizens by actively involving them in solving community problems.

1.2 GENERAL OBJECTIVES OF THE SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY

The evaluation of Ramnicu Valcea's social-economic system highlight vulnerabilities that exist at the natural, economic and social level. These vulnerabilities create

multiple problems and tensions for the individual and the community's quality of life. Urban regeneration based on encouraging non-polluting economic activities and the development of a basic infrastructure (to increase the living standard and improve individual health conditions), are the general objectives determined to be the essential benchmarks in drawing up the Action Plan.

Strong Points	Weak Points
Complex resources with a low level of pollution Diverse industry Geographical location appropriate for tourism activities Skilled labour force Well organised Public Services High level education system	Relief conditions Low quality tourism services Low level of domestic and foreign investments Inefficient and pollutant public transport Diminishing green space High number of retired persons Increasing unemployment
Opportunities	Obstacles
Exports focused on EU countries Opportunities for concession of public services Special programmes for building social residences ISO 14001 certification adopted Improved medical assistance Local mass media is well represented	Inappropriate economic conditions Lack of fiscal support Increasing poverty level Unsustainable economic development Fragmentation of agricultural lands Difficulties in the collection of local budget revenues Increasing delinquency

Forecasting development versions for the city, starting from a diagnosis of the present, identified 3 possible scenarios for the next 10 years:

- **The “pessimistic” or risky scenario**, where all the components of the social – economic system are situated in a descendant trend, characterised by the deterioration of natural capital (poor exploitation and environmental pollution), increasing differences between the poor and the rich (lack of resources to finance the educational and health system), irregular and inefficient economic development.
- **“Moderate” or stable scenario**, where the growth of the economy, adjusted by the amelioration of the current structural contradictions, is generally constant with an insignificant increase of turnover, but it does not provide efficient financing to the social sector or an amelioration of quality to the environment or health.

- **“Optimistic” or sustainable development scenario**, where the new configuration of territorial organisation, the sustainable exploitation of local resources, and the encouragement of profitable service provider activities (but less polluting ones) will turn this people-centric system into a natural system, where the development is realised by a long-term, cyclic regeneration.

To establish the benchmarks for the 3 scenarios, the growth of the natural and human capital was imagined in a predictive projection (with all its social, economic and environmental components) by using a grade-marking system. The results of the evaluation confirm the experts' opinions about the quick change of the natural capital elements and a slower growth of the social capital (whose behaviour and mental characteristics are more conservative).

Domains	EXPERTS EVALUATIONS		
	Pessimistic Scenario Risky situation	Moderate Scenario Stable situation	Optimistic Scenario Sustainable development
Natural capital	2.44	3.78	4.51
Economic activities and business environment	2.56	3.4	4.19
Territory organisation	2.69	3.23	4.11
Social capital	1.92	2.47	3.38

Grade:

- 1.0 - 2.5: bad situation
- 2.5 - 3.5: changing situation
- 3.5 - 4.5: satisfactory situation
- 4.5 – 5.0: good situation

■

II. LOCAL ACTION PLAN

The sustainable development of Ramnicu Vâlcea is closely related to the promotion of principles and mechanisms, which can generate deep changes of mentality and behaviour at the community level. Analysing the problems and evaluating priorities are the first steps to realising and implementing the Action Plan – the key element within the plan of sustainable development.

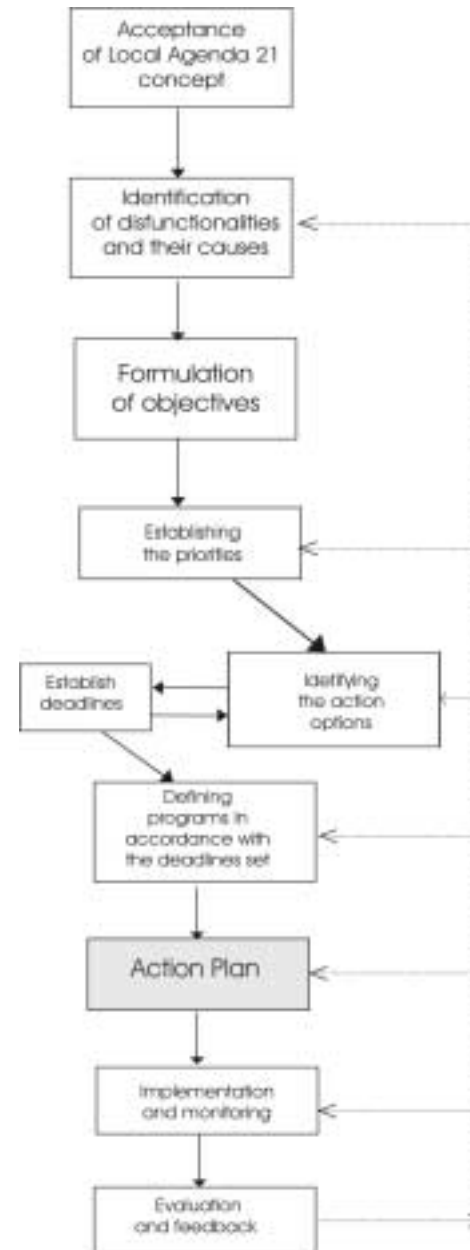
The Action Plan is very important for the development strategy by its nature, structure and temporal dimension, dealing with the problems and needs of the whole community at a systematic level and for a long period of time. In this respect, all the local resources should be gathered to reach the final goal: a long-term, harmonious development meeting the needs and desires of the society.

In drawing up the Action Plan, as part of the Local Agenda 21, the municipality of Râmnicu Vâlcea focused its interests and actions in obtaining complete integration, both horizontally by mixing the economic, social and environmental components, and vertically among all the levels of power: community, national, regional and local levels, action that can ensure the coherence of the political and decision-making process.

The method of organisation and the decision-making system within the local public authority should adapt to the principles of urban management and ecosystem thinking, in accordance with the Local Agenda 21 style, established and imposed by the concept of sustainable development. An Action Plan, drafted upon such coordinates, takes into account both the general development plans, budgetary and operational (the municipality evaluates them according to the resources available on a short period of time) and the suggestions of the community members, legally expressed within a partnership.

Involving all the partners, either from the civil society, public administration or interest groups, is the key that gives access to the quick implementation of the Action Plan and the realisation of the sustainability objective within the structures of our social development.

Everyone agrees that we need to address societies problems through an unitary strategic vision, with specific objectives directed toward certain domains of interest with clearly defined responsibilities, and the necessary working partnerships functioning to achieve them.



II.1 STEPS AIMED AT STRENGTHENING THE INSTITUTIONAL CAPACITY

The achievement of the objectives stated in the Local Action Plan requires that Râmnicu Vâlcea Town Hall – as the local authority – strengthens its institutional capacity at all decision-making and operational levels, and this activity involves not only providing sufficient financial resources, but also the involvement of human resources, the identification of the most efficient communication methods, and last, but not least, re-analysing the administrative framework of assigning responsibilities.

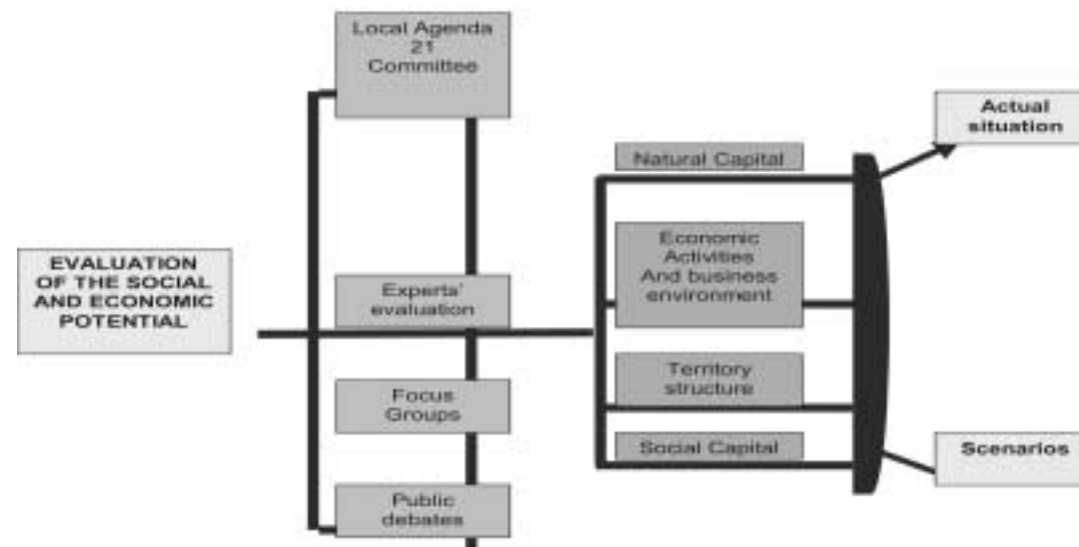
The harmonisation of the local administrative procedures in accordance with the European Union, to which Romania wants to accede by 2007, is one of the main objectives of the local authority, which has initiated, in this respect, a number of projects that are now in full progress.

However, strengthening the institutional capacity is a long-term process, where the local authority should

identify and adjust all the situations, which do not meet specific EU requirements, and especially to change the attitude of public officers' towards citizen access to the activities carried out by the municipality.

The existing contradictory situations require the participatory approach of all stakeholders involved in this process, that assumes the utilisation of efficient communication skills, adapted to each target group and capable of expressing, directly and clearly, what everyone truly desires. Training and qualifying the local authority staff, who are interested in adapting the style and work methods to the EU acquis standards, is the touchstone of every institutional structure of Romania, including the Ramnicu Valcea Municipality. In addition, the adoption of values and basic political – administrative principles – such as transparency, predictability, responsibility, and viability - represent an essential condition for the integration and sustainable development process.

Ramnicu Valcea Town Hall should modernise its management in order to reach the operational level of “European Administrative Territory”, taking up a double challenge: to act as a promoter of the sustainable development principles and also as a representative of a “City towards EU Compliance”.



The access to non-reimbursing funds, provided to Romania by the European Union in the pre-accession period, is crucial for the implementation of many

projects included in the Strategy for Sustainable Development and in the Local Action Plan. The public institutions should be able to conceive, develop and

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finalise these projects, and should be able to prepare appropriate financing plans by identifying real and potential financing sources. Attracting foreign or local investors depends not only on the propensity to draw up realistic plans, but also on the infrastructure provided by the municipality, thus becoming attractive to investors. Also, the reconstruction of the public institution has major consequences for the budget. The budgetary expenses must be thought through so as to keep up with the economic changes, social and environmental realities, and to provide new, more feasible ways for the taxation basis.

Finally, it must be stressed that strengthening management capacity, based on the institutional systems, requires not only appropriate resources, but also public support and adequate commitment of the responsible local political bodies. Once these conditions become accessible, they might ensure the success of any activity, including the accomplishment of the Local Action Plan.

II.2 FINANCIAL PROJECTION

By its nature, local budgets reflect, both in expenditures and revenues, the evolution of Ramnicu Valcea's social-economic activity, corresponding to

the general development coordinates of Romanian society.

Each year, the budget pointed out a "compromise" between the community's needs and the opportunities to meet them and this situation led to a complex distribution of the limited financial resources and to an efficient utilisation of the amounts obtained from own or external sources.

The revenues obtained and the operational costs to the Local Authority, as well as the expenses for the community service providers, including the development programmes have had the following evolution:

There are 3 central ways in which the revenues increased:

- Tax revenues, especially from the social-economic development, concomitantly with the reduction of taxation;
- State budget drawings correlated to the general development of the Romanian economy, in accordance with the Governing Programme;
- Special destination revenues from PHARE, ISPA, etc., programmes carried out since 2000.

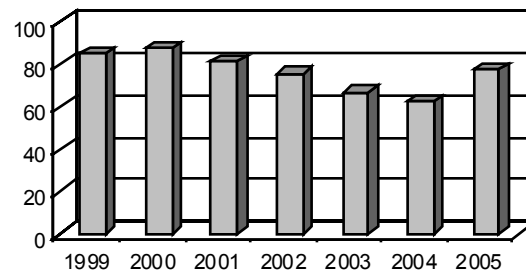
		1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005
1	OPERATIONAL INCOMES	6,335	8,272	16,280	16,581	20,544	24,376	28,154
a.	The Local Public Authority's own fiscal incomes	3,066	3,614	3,642	3,843	4,762	5,650	6,526
b.	Cota defalcată din IVG	3,116	4,189	5,098	3,977	4,927	5,846	6,752
c.	Other operational transfers from central budgets	153	468	7,539	8,761	10,855	12,880	14,876
2	OPERATIONAL EXPENDITURES	4,823	6,567	14,644	14,922	18,488	21,936	25,336
3	Gross operational expenditures	1,512	1,705	1,636	1,660	2,056	2,440	2,818
4	Annual debt	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
5	Net operational expenditures	1,512	1,705	1,636	1,660	2,056	2,440	2,818
6	Incomes for investments	1,053	925	2,829	4,164	8,796	11,743	5,010
a.	Own incomes for investments	52	26	10	16	1,241	660	19
b.	Transfers from central budgets, designated for investments	851	650	2,240	3,418	5,330	4,784	1,927
c.	Studies financed from external sources	0	250	304	0			
d.	Equipment and work financed from external sources	150		274	730	2,225	6,300	3,063
7	Expenditures for investments	2,322	2,034	4,068	5,824	9,700	15,210	9,828
a.	Donations	150	250	578	730	2,225	6,300	3,063

8	Primary budgetary expenditures	243	596	397	0	1,153	-1,027	-2,000
9	Loans granted during the current year	0	0	0	0	0	1,670	2,000
10	Financial expenditures of the previous year	37	279	875	1,272	1,272	1,272	1,272
11	Reserves	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
12	Final budgetary expenditures	279	875	1,272	1,272	2,425	1,915	1,272

Based on the previous information and data, the following indicators have been determined, they reflect the efficiency of the financial management: indicators of possible revenues, indicators of expenses and indicators of possible investments:

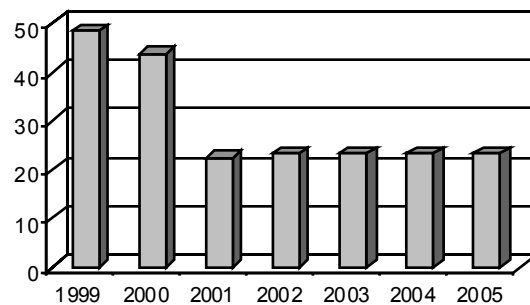
- *The ratio of operational revenues from total revenues is decreasing with the attraction of new financing sources to cover operational expenses and capital expenditure.*

Ratio of the operational revenues from total revenues



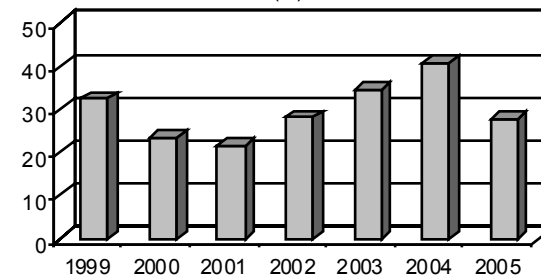
- *The ratio of fiscal revenues from total revenues highlights the decline of fiscal pressure upon the population's revenues.*

Ratio of fiscal revenues from total revenues



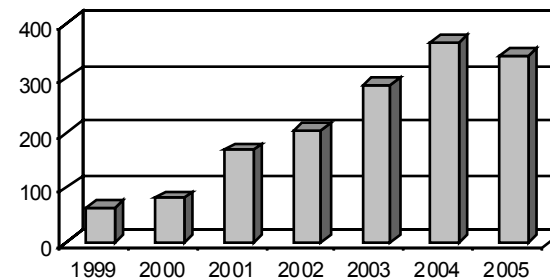
- *Total revenues per capita increase during the period 1999-2005.*

Investments as a percentage of total expenditures (%)



- *Investments per capita increase which underlines the interest of Local Authorities in attracting funds for the development of the local economy.*

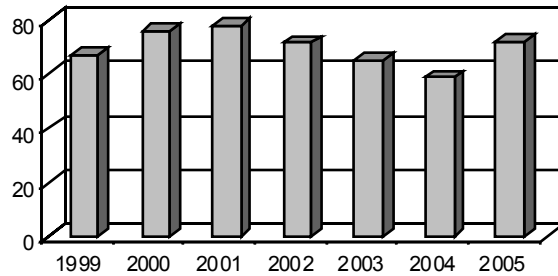
Revenue per capita (Euro)



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- *The ratio of operational expenditures from total expenditures has a decreasing trend, which illustrates the availability of sufficient budgetary resources, both to cover needs and to perform investments in the future.*

Ratio of operational expenditures from the total expenditures (%)



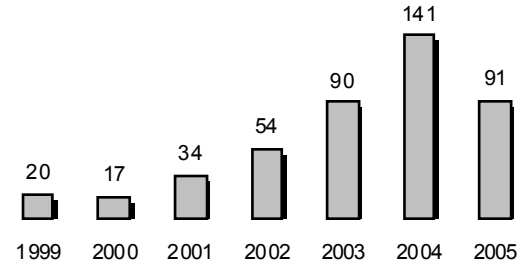
- *The ratio of investments from total expenditures started to increase in 2001, even the decentralisation process has been followed up by the transfer of the expenditures corresponding to the public needs (social security, education, subsidies), and from the national budget to the local budget.*

The special attention paid by the Local Authority to the expenditures of capital, through the attraction of funds for financing the investments, is noteworthy. For example, during the period 2001-2002, the Ramnicu Valcea City Hall, attracted the following funds:

- 4,800,000 Euro from the state budget, designated for the construction of houses;
- 11,600,000 Euro from the European Union, through PHARE, ISPA and RICOP Programmes, for financing the Project "Integrated Municipal Waste Management and Public Works";
- Over 580,000 Euro from foreign investors (Danish Environmental Protection Agency) for the water supply system.

- *Investments per capita increase which underlines the interest of the Local Authorities to attract funds for the development of the local economy.*

Investments per capita (Euro)



In order to underline the main trends for local development, a list of priority projects has been formulated. This supports the enlargement of the investments market as well as the increase of investment opportunities for domestic and foreign investors. In addition, the process will continue to attract funds from the European Union through its specific instruments like PHARE, ISPA, and RICOP.

II.3 SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES AND IDENTIFIED PROJECTS

The main objectives of city development take into account the financial resources, the opportunity cost of the capital in setting an investment, as well as the necessity to keep a balance between public and private sector investments, so that the latter is not affected by high taxation at the local level.

Starting with the general objectives identified after the evaluation of the current situation, the following priority actions were established:

A. Develop the basic infrastructure and ensure the free access of the population and industrial consumers to this infrastructure (water, electricity, gas supply, means of transport)

1. Establish the sanitary protection perimeters for the drinking water supply system
2. Rehabilitate the drinking water supply system
3. Rehabilitate the public sewerage system and the waste water treatment plant
4. Draw up Ramnicu Valcea's Energy Efficiency Master Plan
5. Rehabilitate and control the thermal agent production and supply system
6. Extend the natural gas supply system to the households
7. Upgrade the street network in the high traffic areas
8. Build an underground passage in the Ostroveni area
9. Build a bridge over the Olanesti river to ensure the traffic flow

B. Environmental protection

10. Modernise the urban transport parking lots
11. Integrate Waste Management in Ramnicu Valcea
12. Selective collection and recycling of urban waste
13. Monitor environmental quality and its impact on the population's health
14. Retrieve, rehabilitate and protect green spaces in Ostroveni, Nord, Traian and Libertatii areas
15. Reduce polluting emissions at their source
16. Create natural bathing areas on the lower course of the Olanesti River and the Olt River in the North Dam area

C. Public health

17. Medical assistance programmes for pregnant women and small children
18. Educational programmes for family planning
19. Educational programmes for alimentation hygiene and domestic services

D. Urban regeneration

20. "A home for everybody" – house building programme
21. Draw up a new City Master Plan and the City Master Plan Policies according to the criteria of sustainable development
22. Protect the environment and the habitat according to the communitarian acquiescence
23. Implement the GIS information system
24. Evaluate the agricultural potential and the opportunities to re-launch agricultural production
25. Evaluate the re-launch of traditional industries which are compatible to the geographic and geological profile of the area
26. Business Centre – a source for developing the capacities of the local economy
27. Draw up a Master Plan to identify possible sites for business development
28. A Tourist Information Centre
29. Create spaces to display and sell the agricultural and fruit products
30. Preserve the architectural and historical patrimony
31. Develop the cultural market
32. "Ramnic in the summer – Cultural Holidays in Valcea"
33. Modernise and expand the Ostroveni leisure area
34. A Leisure Centre
35. Create a tourist route on Capela Hill and the archaeological site "Boul de Piatra"
36. Rehabilitate sports playgrounds

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- 37. "Sports for everyone" – build a roller skating rink, a small basketball court and a swimming-pool in Zavoi – Stadium area
- 38. Implement the quality assurance system for local administration services according to ISO 9000

E. Improving the quality of life and social protection

- 39. "InfoCareer" – an information centre on the opportunities of social-professional integration
- 40. "Attitudes" – educational programmes to create and develop civil behaviour
- 41. "With Us, Closer to You" – neighbourhood social-cultural centres
- 42. "Dialogue Between the Generations" – integration project for retired people along with children and teenagers

- 43. "Cozia – Day Care Centre for the assistance of handicapped people
- 44. Elderly Home
- 45. Facilitate the access of handicapped people in public institutions and on public transportation
- 46. Programmes to enable the civil society to work in cooperation with the local administration
- 47. Assistance programmes for the integration of young persons over 18 years old from the orphanages into public life

Defining the specific objectives and identifying the projects to put into practice, required an evaluation and priority selection procedure which the experts involved wanted to be as logical and objective as possible. Among the multiple projects proposed (over 75 projects) 48 were chosen in the first stage, and for their classification according to their importance and utility a set of 10 priority criteria was established.

CRITERIA	Points
Public health and protection	
1. The project prevents a serious risk to health and security	0 – 5 points
2. The project reduces the number of cases of death, harm or illness	0 – 5 points
Environmental quality	
3. The project reduces pollution (air, soil, water)	0 – 10 points
The quality of life	
4. The project improves the quality of life for a large number of community inhabitants; the image of the neighbouring district is improved.	0 – 10 points
Economic development	
5. The project will encourage investments in the town and will increase the general activities for the community's economic development	0 – 5 points
6. During the process of the project, new jobs for residents will be created	0 – 5 points
Financial	
7. After its implementation, the project will create a small profit and long-term affordable fixed costs	0 – 5 points
8. The income resulting from the project is equal to the costs of the implemented project	0 – 5 points
Documentation	
9. The technical and financial documentation is well drawn up, completed and approved	0 – 10 points
Stages	
10. The project will be implemented according to the stages established; the most organised project will be put into practice first	0 – 5 points
Inter-jurisdictional effects	
11. The project will improve existing relations between local jurisdictions and neighbouring ones.	0 – 5 points

Classifying projects according to these criteria allowed for the development of the hierarchy and together with other quality or quantity information they all led to the final list of priority projects drawn up by the experts. The 20 projects, which received enough points to enter this list, aim at the rehabilitation of the existing social-economic system, a major approach of the objectives proposed being forecast in this respect.

The result after the priority process (see the results annexes) is more encouraging as it was obtained after the 6 experts independently expressed their opinions. It represents a good starting point to debate the objectives and the priority projects with all the stakeholders involved in the sustainable development of Râmnicu Vâlcea: businessmen, public services, members of the civil society and especially with the leaders of this community. This debate will be organised in the next 2 months.

Once finalised, the list of priority projects will represent the main benchmark by which the municipality will measure its financial, human and material efforts during European integration process. Naturally, the results will be carefully monitored according to sustainable development indicators, which are being used at present by all the communities who chose sustainable development as the only way forward.

Integrated waste management in Râmnicu Vâlcea

Secure investments for integrated waste management within the scope of environmental protection to ensure health conditions for the population by:

- Introducing an urban waste selective collection system by 2005;
- Shutting down the current waste landfill and reusing it as an agricultural site by 2005;
- Building an ecological landfill to dispose of urban waste by 2005;
- Building a composting plant by 2005;
- Campaigning to inform and raise population awareness

“A home for everybody” – homes building programme

Build homes for persons with small incomes by:

- Attracting funds in order to build 80 apartments/year
- Identifying available sites and providing the necessary infrastructure (service driveways, playgrounds, parking lots, public utilities networks, waste pre-collection places)

Rehabilitation and control of the thermal energy supply system

Carry out an investment programme to produce and supply thermal energy and prevent losses of the thermal agent in the supply networks by:

- Modernising thermal points;
- Installing metering devices in the staircase of each block for full occupancy by 2006;
- Replacing the thermal agent supply networks for every home by 2010;
- Installing thermal isolations in all apartments by 2010;

Environmental and habitat protection according to the Acquis Communautaire

Initiate a by-stages programme to protect the natural environment by:

- Retrieving, rehabilitating and protecting the green spaces in the residential areas;
- Re-cultivating traditional flower species.

Drawing up a new City Master Plan and City Planning Policy Framework according to the sustainable development criteria

Restore and rehabilitate the physical environment and the feasible management of the city territory taking into account the limits of the natural capital (water, soil, green spaces, habitats), the preservation of the cultural-historical heritage and the expectations of the community's members by:

- Reconsidering the current City Master Plan according to the sustainable development criteria;
- Drawing up a new City Planning Policy Framework;

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- Harmonising the existing policies to the community norms.

Rehabilitation of the drinking water supply system

Carry out an investment programme to rehabilitate the drinking water supply system in order to ensure the quality and quantity of European Union standards by:

- Replacing 70% of the deteriorated networks by 2008;
- Expanding the drinking water supply network in the defective areas – Goranu, Ostoveni Sud, Căzănești, Copăcelu by 2005;
- Technical inspection and extension of the current storage capacities by 2005;
- Installing metering devices at the consumers' households by 2003;
- Implementing a new technology for water catchments and treatment system.

Urban waste selective collections and recycling

Extend the plan for the selective collection of waste to the whole city to reduce the quantity of waste disposed and to protect the environment by:

- Locating selective collection containers for: paper, glass, plastics, textile, organic waste;
- Recycling and/or reusing the selected waste for this purpose;
- Organising informational and educational campaigns for the city population;
- Providing facilities to the regular or legal persons involved in waste collection activities;
- Identifying the developing markets for recycling the waste selected.

Creating natural bathing areas on the lower course of the Olanesti river and on the Olt river in the North Dam area

Prevent environmental pollution and protect the population's health by:

- Creating safe bathing in the traditional bathing areas using floating swimming-pools;
- Creating a beach with all the sanitary utilities;

- Creating conditions for service providers in the leisure area (on the Olt river).

Elderly Home

Finalise the elderly home in order to prevent the isolation of the elderly people and to improve their quality of life by:

- Recuperative and reintegration medical services, social and psychological assistance;
- Involving them in an active social life;
- Encouraging and facilitating human and family relationships.

Business Centre – source for developing the local economy

Organise Business Centre's activities to support the private sector by:

- Providing the necessary office spaces for new companies to carry out specific activities;
- Providing consulting in the following fields: business, and IT utilisation in SMEs;
- Facilitating the access to information regarding domestic and foreign financing sources;
- Mediating business opportunities with domestic and foreign partners.

Modernising and extending the Ostroveni leisure area

Diversify and improve the public's opportunities for spending their spare time and improving their health by:

- Increasing the capacity of salt water pools;
- Creating parking lots;
- Increasing accommodation capacities;
- Providing public services and utilities;
- Diversifying entertainment programmes.

Setting up sanitary protection perimeters for the drinking water supply system

Initiate a programme for setting up the sanitary protection areas to prevent the pollution of drinking water sources and to reduce drinking water costs by:

- Identifying, delimiting, marking and exploiting the areas, according to the Government Resolution 101/1997, in stages by 2004.

Creating special places for displaying and selling agricultural and fruit products

Encourage the local industrial and agricultural production by:

- Prospecting the agricultural potential and the opportunities to re-launch it;
- Arranging commercial display places.

"Cozia" – Daily Care Centre for handicapped people

Build a Daily Care Centre for handicapped children to prevent their abandonment and to give them a social life by:

- Offering sanitary education and counselling;
- Developing self-service abilities and increasing their independence level;
- Organising entertainment activities for community integration;
- Involving the local community (Local Authority, NGO) in solving specific problems;
- Attracting volunteers to assist the handicapped people.

Leisure Centre

Build a leisure centre for all age categories (children, teenagers, young people and retired adults) to improve their spare time options by:

- Organising extra-curricular entertainment activities where children, teenagers and young people can socialise;
- Making young people responsible, by being both "actors" and beneficiaries of the educational activity;

- Encouraging creativity and team-spirit;
- Involving retired people in volunteering opportunities that could benefit from their experience and offer the possibility of close connections between generations;
- Creating interest points.

Rehabilitation of the public sewerage system and of the waste water treatment plant

Carry out an investment programme to rehabilitate the public sewerage system and the waste water treatment plant in order to prevent environmental pollution by:

- Replacing 80% of the deteriorated, under-dimensioned networks by 2008;
- Extending the public sewerage system to Goranu, Ostroveni Sud, Căzănești, Copăcelu, Știrbei Vodă – by 2005;
- Providing new technology and expanding the waste water treatment plant by 2010.

Extending the natural gas supply network to all households

Carry out an investment programme to extend the natural gas supply network to the whole city by:

- Attracting funds from the budget or from other sources to realise 7 km/year.

Modernising urban transport parking

Initiate an investment programme to increase people's comfort and safety and to reduce air pollution in the city by:

- Renewing the transportation parking lot according to Euro 4 and 5 Norms by 2010.

"Sports for Everybody" – building a roller skating rink, a mini basketball court and a swimming-pool in the Zavoi – Stadium area

Create special places for different sports in order to improve health conditions, prevent stress and inactivity by:

- Identifying and building at an available site a mini basketball court, mini football fields, a roller skating rink, etc.);
- Organising entertainment sports activities;
- Involving a large number of participants.

Educational programmes regarding alimention hygiene and domestic services

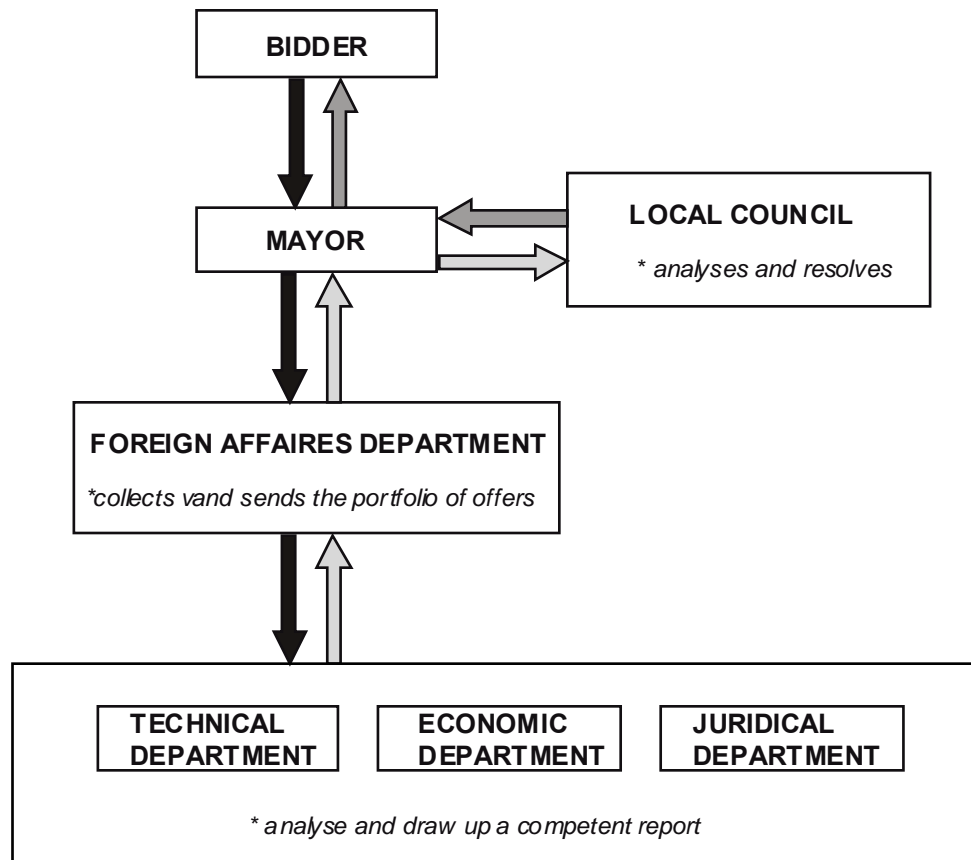
Draw up an educational programme in cooperation with the civil society and the local administration about the health risks generated by hazardous domestic services:

- Conferences, symposiums, advertising materials;
- Initiating interactive actions for the educational institutions and the citizens.

II.4 INSTITUTIONAL STRUCTURES FOR MONITORING AND EVALUATION

From the point of view of administration, the functional structures of Ramnicu Valcea Town Hall are suitable for the adoption of any resolution or decision regarding public-private partnerships or the setting up of different public service utilities.

No matter what the initiatives presented to the municipality may be, the specialised departments evaluate and register them (both horizontally and vertically) and once approved, they are submitted for the local council's approval, according to the diagram below:



This circuit guarantees not only the professional and competent selection of the offers, but also transparency, which is absolutely necessary for any approach in the whole administrative flow. Being part and parcel of the administrative activity, the evaluation and decision making mechanism can ensure an operational legal basis for all the partners and the projects initiated.

In order to monitor the progress resulting from the implementation of these projects, the municipality must establish a coherent and concrete system for supervising their accomplishment and effects on the community welfare at the economic and social level. This approach involves the participation of other institutions too (either governmental or non-governmental), because the monitoring system would not be complete without their support.

Starting from the premise that **sustainable development** is a process of changing the vision of the urban environment, favourable to economic development, preserving resources and protecting the integrity of people, communities and ecosystems, specific relevant and efficient indicators have been established in order to record the performance of the administration on its way towards achieving real sustainable development.

By their nature, the indicators selected can reflect the municipality's progress, they can contribute to the improvement of the standard of life in Ramnicu Valcea and to the promotion of sustainable development, in economic, ecological, social, cultural and institutional terms (preservation of the natural resources, air quality, reducing noise, health and security, waste management, economic competition, employment, infrastructure quality, urban viability, environmental

pressures from the building activities, social and cultural aspects etc.). The selection of the indicators of sustainability was a long-term process, because the main concern of experts was to find a set of indicators which transcend classical sectarian approaches, having a separate perception of different fields (economic, social or environmental) and of the relations between them. In this respect, the experts took into account those indicators, which enhanced the direct connection, naturally resulted from the interaction of the 3 fields.

This approach, integrating physical indicators to those regarding the sustainability of life styles, allows a correct and concrete monitoring procedure of the way in which the economic development, the preservation of natural capital and social welfare go together, by the common actions of the administration, private sector and civil society.

The selection criteria for these indicators are the following:

- Connection-making
- Political relevance
- Transparency and interpretation
- Credibility and acceptability
- Data correctness
- Access and availability
- Change responsiveness

After the selection procedure, based on these criteria, the following sustainable development indicators proposed in the Local Agenda 21 are:

CATEGORY: ECONOMIC

SUBCATEGORY	INDICATORS	RESPONSIBLES
ENERGY	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Amount of energy produced locally (hydro, thermo) • Energy consumption 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ELECTOCENTRALE • CET GOVORA
SHARE OF ECONOMIC ACTIVITY	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of companies with private and state capital • Gross Domestic Product per capita • Revenues from tourism versus total revenues • Number of tourists per year • Economic structure 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chamber of Commerce • Statistic Division
EMPLOYMENT	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Employment to population ratio • Active and passive employment • Level of employment training • Unemployment rate • Earnings by branch of activity 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Statistic Division • Statistic Division • AJOFM • AJFOM • Statistic Division
CONSUMPTION	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Commerce (total sales) • Urban waste produced • Waste recycled and reused • Household income structure 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Statistic Division • E. P. I. • E. P. I. • Statistic Division
HOUSING AFFORDABILITY	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of houses built • Number of requests for housing • Number of recently married families 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Town Hall
INCOME EQUITY (DIFFERENCE BETWEEN RICH AND POOR)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of families with incomes over the average income corresponding to a decent life • Number of families with incomes below the average income corresponding to a decent life • Structure of income in % - see aggregate income 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Statistic Division
INVESTMENTS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Volume of investments by type of activity • Volume of foreign investments • Volume of investments in the fields of IT and communications 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Statistic Division

CATEGORY: ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION

SUBCATEGORY	INDICATORS	RESPONSIBLES
AIR	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Urban air quality (NO₂, SO₂, ozone) • CO₂ emissions • Energy consumption by type of fuel • Energy consumption by sector • Relation between energy consumption and CO₂, NO₂ 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Environmental Protection Agency
WATER	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Drinking water quality • Drinking and industrial water consumption • Surface and underground water quality • Water price 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Public Health Authority • Public Health Authority • E. P. I. • Public Health Authority
FORESTS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Forest type and age class • Number of cut versus growth • Forested area versus new forested areas • Surface and volume of woods lost in fires 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Forest Local Authority
SOIL	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Soil quality • Risk of wind and water erosion on cultivated land 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • OSPA
AQUATIC FAUNA (FISH)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fish species, diversity and population • Commercial fish harvest • Sport fishing catch rate 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Statistic Division • Statistic Division • County Fishermen Association
WILDLIFE (FLORA AND FAUNA)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Species at risk 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • E. P. I. • Forest Local Authority
BIODIVERSITY AND HABITAT CONSERVATION	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Total designated land • Total protected land 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • E. P. I.
WASTE MANAGEMENT	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Amount of waste produced • Active depositing surface • Waste treatment installation • Sewage plants • Sludge treatment system • Volume of waste water per capita 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • EPI • EPI • EPI • EPI + Public Health Authority • EPI • Public Health Authority
HAZARDOUS WASTE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Active depositing areas PCB • Treated transformer oils • Transformer oils deposited • Number of petroleum deposits • Contaminated places • Installations for waste treatment • Evidence of hazardous waste producers • Amount of waste produced and transported • Accidental pollutions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • EPI • EPI • EPI • EPI + Public Health Authority • EPI + Public Health Authority • EPI • EPI • EPI • EPI + Public Health Authority

SUBCATEGORY	INDICATORS	RESPONSIBLES
LOCAL ALIMENTARY RESOURCES	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cultivated land • Number of persons involved in agriculture • Number of markets and farms • Quantity of milk products, meat and vegetal products per capita 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Town Hall • Statistic Division • Public Health Authority. + Veterinary Division

CATEGORY: SOCIAL

SUBCATEGORY	INDICATORS
JUSTICE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Crime rate • Number of victims • Number of delinquents reintegrated into the society • Number of reported child abuse cases • Number of accidents
PERCEIVED QUALITY OF LIFE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Level of satisfaction with employment • Level of satisfaction regarding safety reported compared to the number of crimes • Level of satisfaction with the justice system • Level of satisfaction with the health system • Level of satisfaction with the public education system • Number of suicides
COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Voting rates • Rate of local taxes paid • Number of round tables/debates organised on various issues • Number of hours worked in the interest of the community • Number of non governmental organisations (youth and women)
EDUCATION	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Literacy rate • Access to general education units and libraries • Number of high schools and post secondary schools • Number of higher education establishments • Local investments/governmental investments in training programmes • Rate of school enrolment
INFRASTRUCTURE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of persons without access to public services (water, sewage, telephone, access routes) • Expenditures on infrastructure maintenance • Investments in public services
EQUITY AND RIGHTS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Income distribution • Number of people on social assistance • Quality of housing (number of houses, housing surface per person, construction quality) • Number of human right complaints • Number of resolutions • Number of unemployed women

SUBCATEGORY	INDICATORS
CULTURE AND RECREATION NUMBER OF HISTORIC SITES	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Number of sites• Historic monuments preservation expenditures• Number of persons involved in volunteer activities• Recreation facilities per capita (number of parks, green spaces, leisure sites, festivals)
HEALTH	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Use of health services relative to need (no. of doctors, nurses, medical offices)• Life expectancy• Infant mortality rate• Childhood asthma hospitalisation rate• Healthy birth weight babies• Health condition• Support for most vulnerable• Rate of diseases transmitted sexually (AIDS, syphilis)• Mortality indicators• Fight against drug traffic and consumption

■

III. PRIORITY PROJECTS

III.1 PROGRAMMES WITH FOREIGN FINANCING

Over the past years, the Local Administration of the Ramnicu Valcea Municipality has made significant progress in various fields of sustainable development. Important changes have taken place in the city's sanitation system, and in waste management, in accordance with European norms. Similarly the level of transparency of Local Administration institutions has increased, with the establishment of an Information Centre for Citizens, an Information Centre on Waste Management and by holding meetings and public consultations with the inhabitants of the municipality on distinct problems e.g. urban development, and on social and budgetary problems.

Consequently, the credibility of the municipality has increased both at domestic and at international level. Due to these improvements, the municipality of Ramnicu Valcea was given the "**City on the Road to European Integration**" award (for three consecutive years) on behalf of the European Union, for significant progress made in the field of water and air quality, waste management, and access to information. In 2001, Râmnicu Vâlcea had the best application of all candidates, and was awarded a full diploma "**3 I – Information, Integration, Implementation and Ecological Education**".

In 2001, the Râmnicu Vâlcea Municipality City Hall took part in the International Conference in Bremen with the environment project ECOPROFIT - "Local Authority and Private Initiative: New Partnerships for the 21st Century for Setting Up More Prosperous Cities, Together." It was a finalist in the section "Effective Utilisation of the Local Natural Resources."

ACCOMPLISHED PROGRAMME 1

ECOPROFIT

The *ECOPROFIT Râmnicu Vâlcea* programme is an important step toward the implementation of sustainable ecological development steps in the city. *ECOPROFIT* – is a programme financed by the Austrian Government, which started with 10 companies in 2000. Through *ECOPROFIT* the participating companies were granted consultancy for a 10-month interval by the Austrian Company, DENKSTATT Environmental Consulting & Management, to enable them to identify and implement the environmental protection and profit earning steps.

During 8 seminars and 4 days of individual consultancy, granted to each company, the following type of knowledge was transferred: How it is possible to utilise resources and raw materials in a more effective manner, how one can optimise the production process, how one can prevent waste production, etc. *ECOPROFIT* insisted on addressing the problems related to water, waste, dangerous waste, emissions of solvents, electricity, natural gas used for heating or for production processes. Methods were implemented step by step at all the companies in the *ECOPROFIT* seminars. The environment-related data was collected and processed; the possible variants to be used for the enhancement of the production process were analysed and compared. The best environment-related steps were implemented.

ACCOMPLISHED PROGRAMME 2

Raising People's Awareness of Environment Related Problems

To continue the implementation of environment-related legislation in the Ramnicu Valcea Municipality, promoted by the European Union, in how to dispose of waste, and how to decrease the quantity of waste, the Ramnicu Valcea Municipality City Hall has initiated

and coordinated two projects dealing with ecological education - "**Raising People's Awareness of Environment Related Problems in the Râmnicu Vâlcea Municipality**" and "**Raising People's Awareness of Waste Management in Râmnicu Vâlcea Municipality**". These projects were directed toward the **public**, and **educational institutions**.

The financing came from PHARE sources; the allotted budget amounted to 30,000 Euro. **The final goal** of these programmes was the enhancement of sanitary and esthetic conditions in the city, protection of the population's health and the environment and, implicitly, **making the Local Administration fall in line with European norms**.

The programme initiated the following actions:

- Information campaigns for the citizens
- Promotion of ecological education in schools and kindergartens with the help of the Education Inspectorate

To support the actions mentioned in the project posters, folders, and brochures with ecological topics were published.

ACCOMPLISHED PROGRAMME 3

Information Centre for Citizens

The Râmnicu Vâlcea Municipality City Hall has brought additional effectiveness in communications with citizens. Besides the "Mayor's Mail" and its own information bulletin "Râmnicul", starting in October 1999, within a programme financed by the Foundation for an Open Society, a modern Information Centre for the Citizens was opened. By setting up this centre, and through its activity, the City Hall falls in line with European Union's standards, which demands a greater access to information for citizens. The way, in which the information is transmitted, from a technical standpoint, is achieved by means of a completely new approach, taking the following actions into account:

- The modern manner used to file citizens' requests;
- Speed in guiding citizens toward various departments within and outside the City Hall;
- Curbing bureaucracy;

- Expanding City Hall employees working hours, by cutting out the interruptions caused by answering citizen requests;
- The citizens are offered information materials, such as brochures and leaflets, in order to benefit from correct and complete information.

ACCOMPLISHED PROGRAMME 4

Social Assistance Programme

In October 1999, Râmnicu Vâlcea Municipality City Hall initiated a programme in partnership with the Foundation for Youth Vâlcea, Charity Association and the Pensioners' General Union - Valcea Branch, called "Save the Elderly and the Aged". In the beginning, the programme was financed by the Foundation for an Open Society; since June 2000, the Local Administration has taken it over.

The programme "Office for Services and Social Assistance at Home for Disadvantaged Senior Citizens" has the goal of identifying the problems which the elderly face. These often depend on social conditions (low pensions, their families have abandoned them, they have no direct assistance). It also aims at offering them transitory assistance to enable them to overcome social risk situations that Senior Citizens can face. This programme helped create a network of social assistance services. At the moment, 35 people benefit from it, whose ages range between 60 and 80 years old. They are socially isolated and do not have any material means. The home assistance consists of paying them weekly visits, offering them medical consultation, and helping them develop relationships with the institutions in the municipality. They are also given help with minor housework. A physician and 6 social assistants, whose wages are paid by the Râmnicu Vâlcea City Hall, take part in this assistance programme.

ACCOMPLISHED PROGRAMME 4

Conservation of Thermal Energy

Râmnicu Vâlcea City Hall grants special attention to environmental protection. It takes measures aimed at curbing pollution factors in all fields of municipality

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services. Consequently, in the field of thermal energy distribution, over the past 2 years, all 10 thermal energy-manufacturing units have been turned into 10 modern thermal energy distribution units. By the end of 2002, all thermal energy distribution units will be fully upgraded.

In 2001, City Hall benefited from non-reimbursable financing, offered by EBRD through PHARE, through the programme "Conservation of Thermal Energy."

The main goals of the programmes consisted of:

- Identifying the investment needs of the system that manufactures and distributes thermal energy, and drafting an investment programme to satisfy all those needs.
- Evaluating the current impact of the system used to manufacture and distribute thermal energy the environment; checking the way in which norms for labour protection, health care, and environment protection are observed (these are set at local, national and EU level).
- Supporting the introduction of market economy principles in the thermal energy manufacturing and distribution sector.

ON-GOING PROGRAMME 1

Water Supply in Goranu Area

The Râmnicu Vâlcea Municipality City Hall, together with the Danish Agency for Environment Protection, has started a programme to introduce a water supply system to the Goranu residential area. One of the reasons why the Goranu district was chosen was the fact that both the citizens and also the companies in the area use fountains for their water supply. These fountains do not have enough water and are unfit for drinking. The programme has the following goals:

- Raise the living standard for approximately 3,500 inhabitants and stimulate the economic development in the area;
- Implement a modern system for water management and a programme to monitor water quality.

The work will be 41% financed from local budgetary funds (900,000 USD) and 59% from a non-reimbursable credit (1,270,000 USD) on behalf of the Danish Agency for Environment Protection.

ON-GOING PROGRAMME 2

Building Social Residences

Due to the great deficit of social residences, the Râmnicu Vâlcea City Hall, has started to develop a programme aimed at building social residences, beginning in 2000 through the Ministry of Public Works, Transport, and Housing.

The programme addresses disadvantaged persons from a social standpoint, i.e. institutionalised children who have turned 18, persons with very low income who do not have any residence, to persons whose living conditions do not meet the minimum health and hygiene standards.

Seven blocks of flats with 20 two and three-room flats each, will be achieved through this programme. This means a total number of 140 flats. The construction work will take approximately one year; the executing company is the British consortium Mivan – Kier.

The general utilisation works (access alleys, playgrounds, parking lots, public utility networks, and locations for waste processing) will be built with sources from the local budget.

ON-GOING PROGRAMME 3

Integrated Waste Management

On the basis of the Accord for Technical Cooperation concluded between the Romanian and the German governments, the German Agency for Technical Collaboration (GTZ), has been developing, since 1997 a programme of non-reimbursable assistance in the field of urban waste management in the Râmnicu Vâlcea Municipality.

The goal of this project is to promote a national strategy for the urban waste management and the implementation of a system to manage waste according to the provisions of European norms in the Râmnicu Vâlcea Municipality. The first stage of the project consists of **Enhancing the waste collection and transport system**. For this purpose, the German government has donated 5,000 Euro garbage bins and 3 vehicles to collect rubbish and litter. City Hall set

up meetings with the owners' associations, to explain the conditions to be met for the location of the garbage bins and their importance. This made it possible to re-design and clean all the collection sites in the city.

The action to **determine the waste content** was developed within the project with support granted by German consultants and 10 students from the Ecological University in Bucharest. Vegetables account for 55% of the total quantity of domestic waste. In October 2001 City Hall started the process of selectively collecting organic waste in a pilot area with 1,260 families. By processing it in a pilot composition station, natural fertilizer can be made. The programme aims to implementing a new system for waste management. Its financial support is granted by non-reimbursable funds allotted by the European Union (ISPA) amounting to 11 million Euro and credit granted by the European Bank for investment amounting to 3.5 million Euro, which will be covered from the local budget. The project requires the following investments:

- Enlargement of the collection system
- Closing down the existing waste collection site
- Building a station for compost
- Building an ecological waste collection site

ON-GOING PROGRAMME 4

Business Centre

To initiate and facilitate adequate dissemination of the domestic and international information related to waste management, a pilot centre on a national level started functioning in 1999, The Information Centre in the field of Waste Management. At the Belgium Government's initiative, several rounds of talks were held with the Romanian Ministry of Industry and Commerce, aimed at building a Business Centre in the city of Râmnicu Vâlcea, in partnership with the Râmnicu Vâlcea Municipality City Hall, County Council, and the Vâlcea Chamber of Commerce and Industry.

The Business Centre will have a framework necessary for companies with no more than 9 employees, to carry out their business. Through this business incubator, a company will benefit from business consultancy, with HQs equipped with office equipment, and a location to develop their specific

activities (storage facilities, sale spaces, etc.). They will also benefit from the possibility to collaborate with Belgium companies.

Starting in November 2002, the Business Centre will function as a commercial company, whose founders are: Râmnicu Vâlcea City Hall, Vâlcea County Council, Vâlcea Chamber of Commerce and Industry; under the Belgium Government's aegis they will take part in setting up two institutions (companies).

ON-GOING PROGRAMME 5

EU Financed Programmes – RICOP Component

The Râmnicu Vâlcea Municipality City Hall is the beneficiary of three projects with EU financing on the “**RICOP - Public Works**” component, respectively:

- **“Drinking water supply for the inhabitants on Bâlcuului Street –Râureni Area – Râmnicu Vâlcea”;**
- **Repairs and revamping of the social canteen”;**
- **Building a branch of the Business School.**

The total sum allotted to these projects amounts to 622,679 Euro, from which 90% are non-reimbursable funds, granted by the European Union.

The water supply project has the following general goals:

- Create decent living conditions and provide health standards in accordance with EU criteria for the inhabitants close to the chemical platform of the city;
- Develop and maintain municipal networks in the urban area.

The second project aims at ensuring social protection for the disadvantaged persons who face social risk situations (families with many children, the unemployed, elderly, persons who receive home assistance, etc.) by creating decent conditions within the canteen and provide the possibility of offering temporary shelter to homeless, street children, and helpless old people.

The third project aims at enlarging the range of possibilities for initial vocational training to enable someone to start building a career, by approaching a broader range of trades at the local level, increasing

training opportunities in professions that answer the current social-economic demands, increasing future perspective opportunities, and creating job

opportunities for those laid off at the local level, despite the construction interval.

III.2 BALANCE SHEET

ACCOUNTANCY BALANCE SHEET

– thousands USD –

ASSETS	1999	2000	2001	2002	LIABILITIES	1999	2000	2001	2002
A. FIXED ASSETS, LAND PLOTS AND OBJECTS OF INVENTORY ¹	4.082	3937	4148.9	3867.1	A. FUNDS	4337.9	3621.7	41489.2	3867.1
B. FINANCIAL MEANS, SETTLEMENT OF ACCOUNTS, AND MATERIAL EXPENDITURES	4.954	5.893	5021.6	13556.0	B. INCOME, BUDGET FINANCING, SETTLEMENT OF ACCOUNTS AND OTHER SOURCES	5264.5	5420.8	5021.6	13556.0
1. Means of the local budget	124	448	148.9	4519.0	1. Local budget sources	131.9	411.9	148.9	4519.0
1.1 Local budget availability	124	448	148.9	441.6	2. Institutions' budgets	5132.6	5008.9	4872.7	9037.0
1.2 Local budget expenditures ²	0.0	0	0.0	4077.4	2.1 Financing institutions	2955.7	2945.8	2303.8	6219.7
2. Institutions' budgets	4.891	5.445	4872.7	9037.0	2.2 Extra-budgetary income	26.1	11.9	88.4	503.8
2.1 Disposable funds	37	37	117.3	170.2	2.3 Settlement of accounts, creditors and other sources	2141.9	2074.7	2477.6	2307.7
2.2 Financial means and other values	9	9	13.3	10.5	2.4 Means for special destinations and bank loans	8.8	0.2	3.0	5.9
2.3 Settlement of accounts and debtors	1.818	1.945	1336.7	1314.9	2.4.1 Means for special destinations	8.8	0.2	3.0	5.9
2.4 Expenditures	2.797	3.287	3153.7	7296.6	2.4.2 Bank loans	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
2.5 Materials	169	167	251.7	244.9					
TOTAL ASSETS	9035	9.830	9170.6	17423.1	TOTAL LIABILITIES	9602.5	9042.5	9170.6	17423.1

¹ Fixed assets, land plots and the inventory objects are registered at their inventory value, without taking into consideration the evaluation differences.

² The expenditures account will be balanced with the income account at the end of the year of reference, when the budgetary excess/deficit is set.

III.3 LIST OF INVESTMENT OBJECTIVES IN 2002

(According to the methodological norms regarding investment financing by State Treasury approved by OMF 1169/12.06.97)

Nr. crt.	OBJECTIVE TITLE	Total expenses 2002	Financed		
			From the local budget	From internal sources ¹	From non-reimbursable external sources ²
1	Gas network extension	64	40	24	0
	Works in progress	49	40	9	0
	New works	15	0	15	0
2	Water supply	1142	350	12	780
	Works in progress	875	335	0	540
	New works	267	15	12	240
3	Housing	1223	881	342	0
	Works in progress	881	881	342	0
	New works	0	0	0	0
4	Street upgrading, infrastructure	553	250	303	0
	Works in progress	550	250	300	0
	New works	3	0	3	0
5	Integrated waste management	1500	0	0	1500
	Works in progress	0	0	0	0
	New works	1500	0	0	1500
6	Social assistance-total	141	27	6	108
	Works in progress	33	27	6	0
	New works	108	0	0	108
	Elderly home	23	18	5	0
	Works in progress	23	18	5	0
	New works	0	0	0	0
	Modernisation of the social canteen	116	9	2	105
	Works in progress	11	9	2	0
	New works	105	0	0	105
	Romanian Business School	3	0	0	3
	Works in progress	0	0	0	0
	New works	141	27	6	108
7	Projects and studies	119	110	9	0
8	Other objectives	198	187	9	2
	TOTAL	4939	1844	704	2390
	<i>Works in progress</i>	2729	1532	657	540
	<i>New works</i>	1893	15	30	1848
	<i>Other investments</i>	316	297	18	2

¹ State budget drawings, funds from the citizen donations.² Non-reimbursable external funds contracted by Ramnicu Valcea Town Hall.

ANNEXES

THE RESOLUTIONS OF THE LOCAL COUNCIL REGARDING THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE PROGRAMMES, SUB-PROGRAMMES AND PROJECTS BETWEEN 2000-2002

Number	Title of the Local Council's Resolutions
Home building	
7/2000	Transferring the land to the free use of ANL (National Housing Association) and ratifying the transfer agreement
99/46/2000	Approving the Detailed City Planning Morilor – Argintari to build houses through ANL (National Housing Association)
100/47/2000	Providing utilities for the houses built through ANL – Morilor, Izvorului, Argintari
111/58/2000	Approving the feasibility studies for "Upgrading Morilor Street"
113/60/2000	Ratifying the Convention concluded with the County Council for building social housing in "Ostroveni V" area, Râmnicu Vâlcea
39/2001	Approving the Detailed City Planning Morilor – Argintari, modified – home building
74/2001	Modifying and completing HCL 7/2000 and approving the Convention to transfer a site to the National Housing Association – home building
75/2001	Ratifying "Protocol for transferring the land to the free use of construction through the ANL Morilor – Argintari area"
118/2001	Approving the feasibility studies for "Gas supply Râmnicu Vâlcea, Căzănești", "Social housing Ostroveni V", "Housing ANL (Morilor)"
34/2002	Approving the feasibility study for the investment "Social housing - Ostroveni 6"
35/2002	Transferring the free use of the land for the investment "Social Housing Ostroveni 6"
Domestic and foreign cooperations	
42/2000	Assigning a representative in the Local Coordination Committee for "Local Agenda 21"
54/2001	Participating in the "Green Week" Conference, organised by the EU in Brussels
103/2001	Contribution of Râmnicu Valcea town in 2001 in financing the Regional Development Agency SV Oltenia
180/2001	Association of Râmnicu Valcea town to the International Council for Local Environmental Initiatives (ICLEI)
Thermal energy	
48/2000	Approving the project for technical assistance in the field of thermal energy production and supply financed by BERD
91/38/2000	Modernising and leasing the thermal stations and points
101/48/2000	Approving "The opportunity study", "Task Notebook" and "Instructions for bidders" necessary for leasing the public utility "Thermal energy and hot water production and supply in Râmnicu Vâlcea"
10/2001	Commission for evaluating the offers for leasing the public utility "Energy and hot water supply for consumption"
45/2001	Beginning the negotiating procedures for leasing the public utility "Energy and hot water supply for consumption"
36/2002	Leasing the public utility "Energy and hot water production, transport and supply in Râmnicu Vâlcea" and reorganising SC Termorim SA

Number	Title of the Local Council's Resolutions
Drinking water	
112/59/2000	Approving the financial cooperation between Ramnicu Valcea Town and the Agency for Environmental Protection of Denmark for the investment "Water supply network from Râmnicu Vâlcea to Goranu, including the supply network in Goranu"
21/2001	Approving the feasibility study for the investment "Water supply in Goranu District, Râmnicu Vâlcea Town"
111/2001	Including the investment list and the necessary funds for the water supply of Cîmpului street
55/2002	Approving the feasibility and pre-feasibility studies for the investments promoted through RICOP Programme, Public Works – "Feasibility study for investment in the drinking water supply for Bâlciiului, Copăcelu – Râureni streets"
Business environment	
22/2000	Association of Ramnicu Valcea Town for setting up a company (Flemish Government)
36/2001	Approving PUD "Business Centre Flanders – Vâlcea"
55/2002	Approving the feasibility and pre-feasibility studies for the investments promoted through RICOP Programme, Public works – "Feasibility study for the investment to build the Romanian Business School, Valcea branch"
Waste management	
37/2001	Receiving donations from the German Agency for Technical Cooperation (GTZ) – outfits and equipment for the waste landfill
48/2001	Taking over Râureni waste landfill
155/2001	Receiving donations from the German Agency for Technical Cooperation (GTZ) – equipment for the waste composting plant
172/2001	Receiving donations of mini-bins for domestic waste collection
26/2002	Setting up the Project Implementation Unit "Integrated Waste Management in Râmnicu Vâlcea"
54/2002	Approving the feasibility studies for the project "Integrated Waste Management in Râmnicu Vâlcea"
Investment programmes with budgetary sources	
9/2000	Approving the pre-feasibility studies for investments
28/2000	Approving the general estimates updated for investments
188/2001	Approving the budget and the investment list for 2002
189/2001	Approving the budget and the investment list for the self-financing activity in 2002
57/2002	Approving the co-financing from the local budget to implement the projects approved by the EU through RICOP Programme, Public Works component