

Kisalföldi Homokpuszta Project (LIFE08 NAT/H/000289)

Regional Survey: Civil perception on the participation of the military in nature conservation projects and on the results of Kisalföldi Homokpuszta Project

Questionnaire – Results 2015

Summary

This survey approaches the topic of the civil perception of the participation of the Military in a nature conservation project near Homokpuszta. Based on questionnaires, we examined the opinion of locals about the responsibilities of the related institutes and the Military in the Kisalföldi Homokpuszta Project that started in 2010.

The survey found that the vast majority of the population think that the environmental condition of this area is better than the medium level and one third (33.9%) of the participants believe that the Hungarian Military is also responsible for the reconstruction of the territory. According to the results of the questionnaire most respondents (56.5%) had heard about the environmental reconstruction of the shooting range, and of the project, therefore they think that communication about the project is average or more efficient than that.

These replies make clear that the communication activities as part of the project proved to be effective although the development and expanding of communication connected to these projects is an important task in the future as well. Related to the whole project, communication should aim at a better level, in a more easy to understand style in order to influence the judgement of the Hungarian Military in a more positive direction. It will also be important to convey the benefits of the reconstruction more, because this could also help the public accept the incidental nuisance effects of the process, and could also improve co-operation.

It is also important to make the roles of the Ministry of Defence, the National Parks, the Budapest Forestry Company and the local government clearer to the public.

1. Purposes of the survey

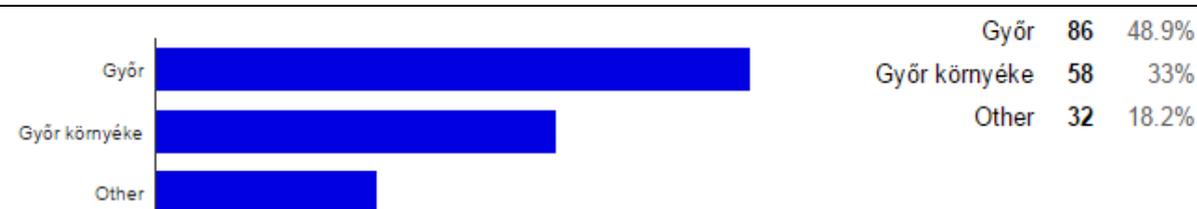
It is necessary to quantify changes in the public attitude towards nature conservation actions involving military activity, and to motivate this type of military involvement in other EU countries. This survey is unique both in Hungary and in Central Europe, and we are expecting a positive outcome from it. Having the evidence in hand, the consortium and - further on, after the dissemination of these results - international nature and environmental professionals, will have a tool available to convince military decision-makers to put a stronger emphasis on their participation in nature protection and environmental projects. This examination processes data that has been collected from 176 answers from local people around Kisalföldi Homokpuszta. Besides that we also have data from interviews. The survey is part of the project started in 2010 and ending at the end of this year that comprises an environmental reconstruction of a significant part of the territory called Kisalföldi Homokpuszta which is used for military purposes (serving as a shooting range).

2. Target audience of the questionnaire and methodology

We targeted people living in Győr or close to Győr, since they are the most affected in this case. Currently a significant part of the Kisalföldi Homokpuszta near Győr is used for military purposes (serving as a shooting range) and the environmental reconstruction has closed. The locals who took part in this survey are mostly open to environmental topics and are sensitive to this subject. The questionnaires were shared on the webpage of Kisalföldi Homokpuszta project and respondents received the questionnaires in an electronic form in Győrszentiván and around Győr. Altogether 176 people filled out the questionnaire: 81 of them live around Győr and 86 live in Győr. There were 9 people who live in other parts of the country. The first turn of the survey took place in 2013, now we put additional questions in it and repeated the ones that were asked two years ago so that we can measure the success of the communication process.

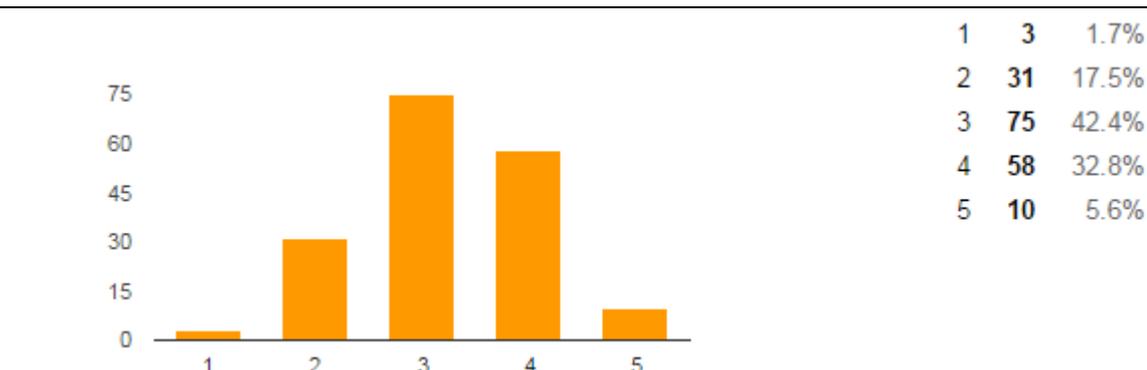
3. Statistics

1. Respondent's habitation statistics



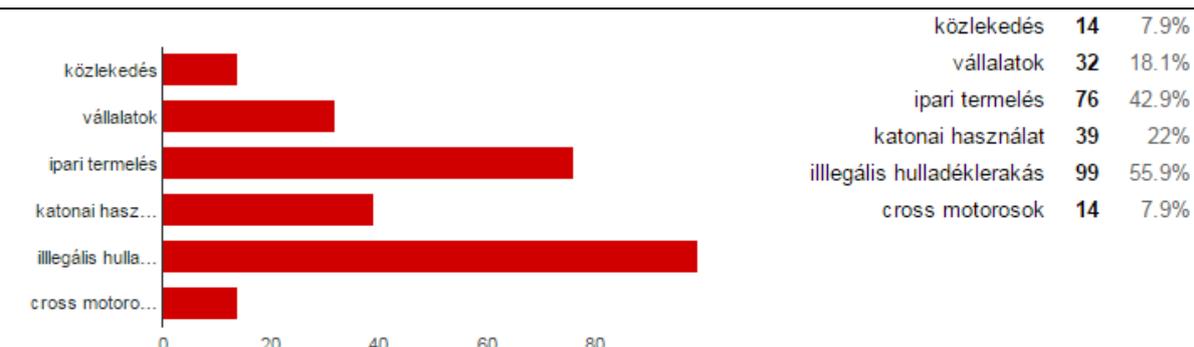
In all there were 176 participants in the survey. This group comprised 86 people who live in Győr, 81 who live near Győr and 9 from other parts of the country. In the 'Other' block of the diagram except for 9 persons, all respondents live in settlements near Győr (you can see the settlements in the excel file 'kérdőív_regionalis_valaszok_2015').

2. How would you rate the environmental condition of this territory?



Most of the participants (42.4%) rated the environmental condition of the area as average. 32.8% thought that it is better than the medium level while 17.5% said that it is in bad shape. 5.6% of them said it is definitely in a good condition and 1.7% of them share the opinion that it is especially bad.

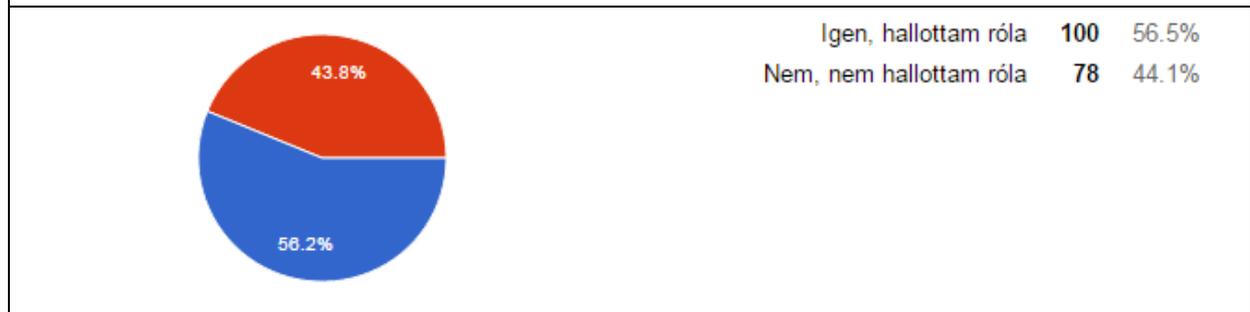
3. In your opinion, what causes the most of the environmental problems?



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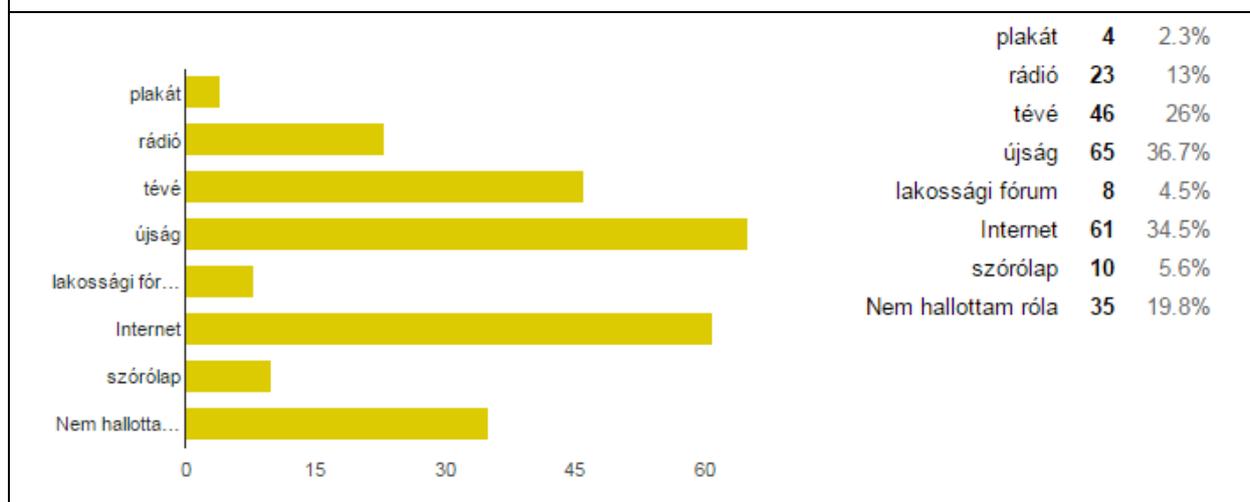
According to our findings, the most important environmental risk factors in the area are illegal waste deposition (55.9%) and industrial production (42.9%). Respondents also gave a high rating to usage by the Military (22%). Companies (18.1%), extreme sportsmen (7.9%) or public transport (7.9%) don't play an important role.

4. Have you ever heard about the Kisalföldi Homokpuszta Project?



Most respondents (56.9%) reported that they have heard about the project, while the number of the opposite group is also significant (44.1%).

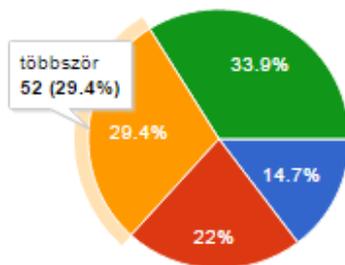
5. In case you heard about it from what sources?



The majority of respondents (36.7%) have heard about the project from the local printed media and from the Internet (34.5%). Local TV channel (26%) turned out to play a major role and radio (13%) has a smaller role. Only 5.6% of the population were informed about the project from leaflets and 4.5% from local forums. Only a marginal part of respondents (2.3%) was informed by posters.

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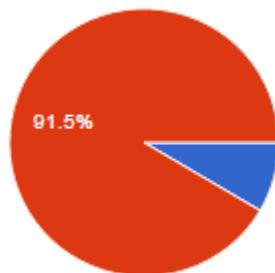
6. With what frequency have you heard about the project from any sources in the last 3 years?



egyszer	26	14.7%
kétszer	39	22%
többször	52	29.4%
nem hallottam róla	60	33.9%

More than one quarter of respondents who heard about the project did hear about it several times (29.4%) during the last 3 years while 22% of them heard twice and 14.7% met only once the initiative.

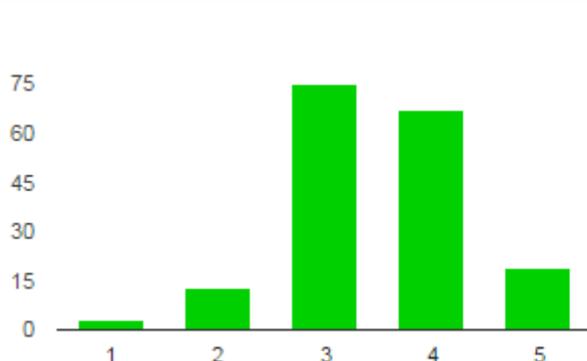
7. Have you participated in Kisalföldi LIFE local forums in the last 2 years?



Igen	15	8.5%
Nem	162	91.5%

Only 15 out of all respondents (8.5%) took part in local forums in the last 2 years, 91.5% of them did not.

8. How satisfied are you with the actions that have been taken in order to improve the environmental condition of this area?



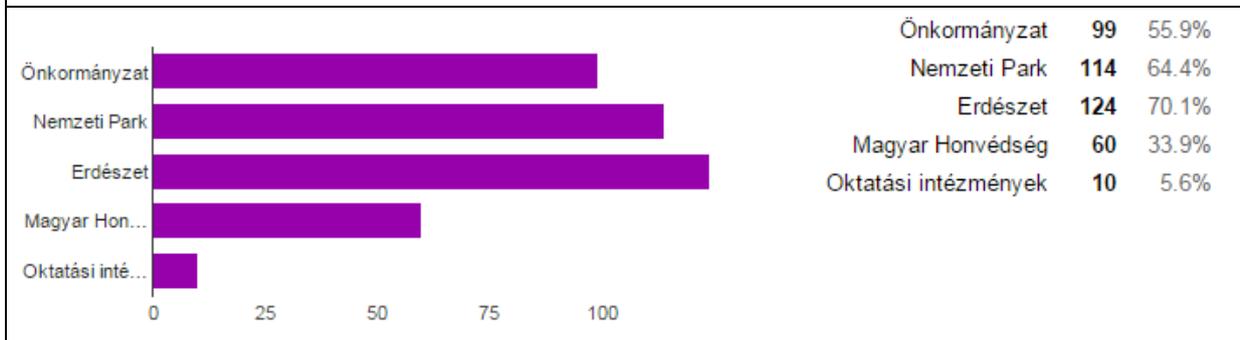
1	3	1.7%
2	13	7.3%
3	75	42.4%
4	67	37.9%
5	19	10.7%

According to 42.4% of participants the environmental actions carried out in this area were rated as average, 37.9% said that it is better than medium level, while 10.7% of participants were fully satisfied

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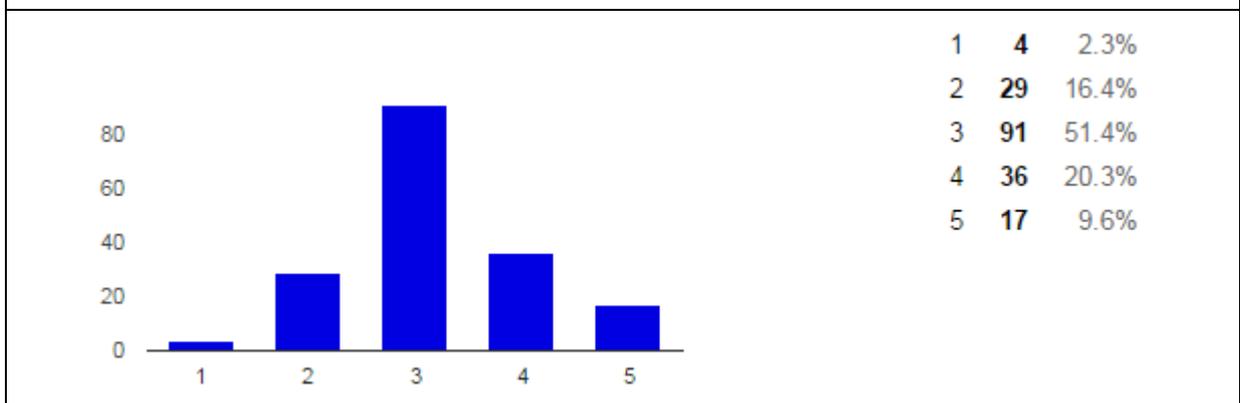
with the efforts. 7.3% of respondents thought that it is worse than medium level and only 1.7% were disappointed with them.

9. In your opinion, which one of the organizations below is/are responsible for the protection of this area?



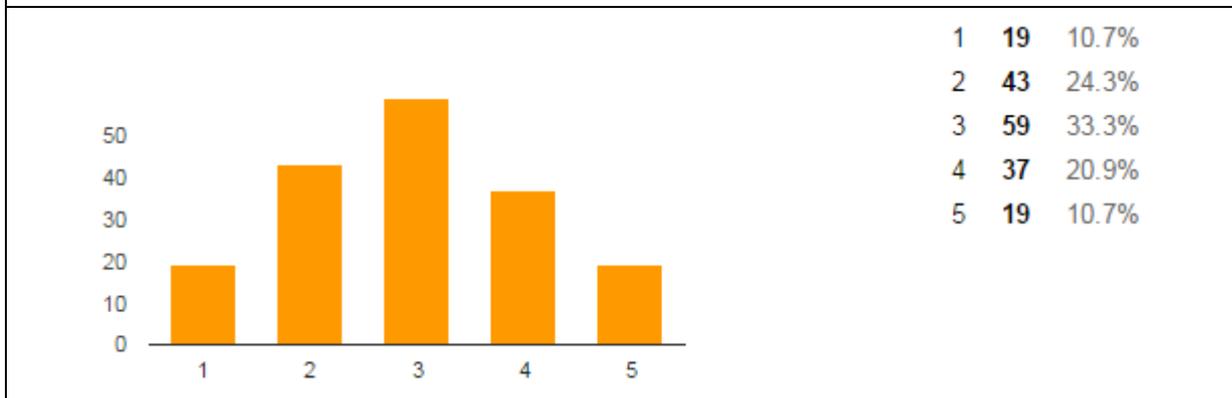
Concerning the question of responsibility four organizations were mentioned by citizens as playing a key role. Two of them, the Forestry (70.1%) and the National Park (64.4%) have the highest responsibility in this case but the rates of the local government (55.9%) and the Hungarian Military (33.9%) are also high, compared to educational institutes (5.6%).

10. In your opinion, what environmental condition is Kisalföldi Homokpuszta in compared to other areas that are handled by the civil sector?



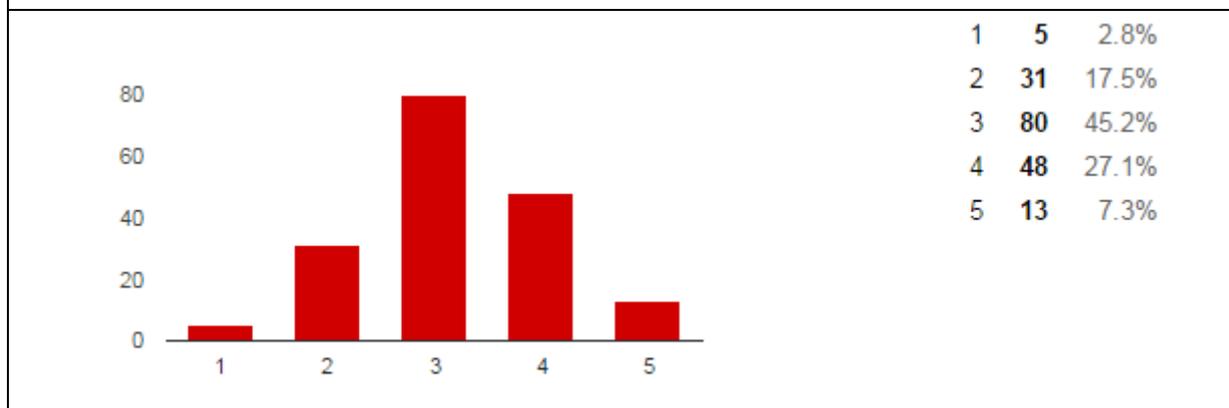
More than half of respondents (51.4%) thought that compared to territory handled by the civil sector, Kisalföldi Homokpuszta is in average condition. 20.3% of them said that it is better than average and 16.4% said that it is worse. 9.6% of respondents answered that it is in really good condition and 2.3% said the opposite.

11. How much attention do you think the Hungarian Military pay to preserve the affected areas in Kisalföldi Homokpuszta?



One third of respondents (33.3%) judged the actions carried out by the Military concerning the reconstruction of the environment of the area as acceptable. 24.3% stated that these actions were worse than average, and 10.7% thought that they were not good at all. 20.9% claimed that these actions were better than average while 10.7% said that these were perfect.

12. How satisfied are you with communication about the environmental condition of Kisalföldi Homokpuszta?



In connection with the coverage of this project, most participants claimed that communication was at an average level (45.2%) or it was rather good (27.1%). 17.5% of them thought that it was rather bad. 7.3% thought it was perfect, and 2.8% rated it as insufficient.

4. Conclusions - comparative analysis of the new and the survey of two years ago

4.1. Communication of the project

Data of the survey of 2013 reflect that only 41% of respondents heard about the project. Since the intensive communication of the project only started in May 2013, this result was not surprising. The results of this year indicate that due to the continuous communications activity public awareness of the project has rose sharply to 56.5%. The comparison is illustrated on the chart below:

Have you ever heard about the Kisalföldi Homokpuszta Project?			
2013		2015	
Igen, hallottam már róla	70 41%	Igen, hallottam róla	100 56.5%
Nem hallottam még róla	101 59%	Nem, nem hallottam róla	78 44.1%

The study of this year also revealed that among reading newspapers and watching TV Internet has become the part of respondents' everyday life. Almost one third of them (34.5%) said that he read about the project on newsportals on the Internet. The success of the intensive and comprehensive communication is confirmed by the fact that more than half (51.4%) of those respondents who heard about the efforts did it more than once. Local forums appear to be less visited: only 8.5% of the citizens took part in one of these events.

The survey brought an interesting outcome related to the effect that the Military has in this area. In the first survey people rated illegal waste dumping approximately as big as problem that the usage by the Hungarian Military (the difference was slight, only 2%). In the survey of this year people rated illegal waste dumping and industrial production as the highest environmental risk factors in this territory and considered military usage less harmful than two years ago. The comparison is illustrated on the chart below:

In your opinion, what causes the most environmental problems?

2013			2015		
közlekedés	9	5%	közlekedés	14	7.9%
vállalatok	8	5%	vállalatok	32	18.1%
ipari termelés	31	18%	ipari termelés	76	42.9%
katonai használat	58	34%	katonai használat	39	22%
illegális hulladéklerakás	62	36%	illegális hulladéklerakás	99	55.9%
cross motorosok	3	2%	cross motorosok	14	7.9%

4.2. Environmental condition

According to the results of 2013 survey almost one third of respondents (30%) answered that the environmental condition of the area is below average, most of them rated it as average. Since then the public opinion has shifted to a better direction. The comparison is illustrated on the chart below:

Hogyan értékeli Győr környékének, a gönyúi területnek környezeti állapotát?

2013			2015		
1	9	5%	1	3	1.7%
2	51	30%	2	31	17.5%
3	74	43%	3	75	42.4%
4	30	18%	4	58	32.8%
5	7	4%	5	10	5.6%

4.3. Role of the Military

Success of the project is marked by the fact that while at the beginning of the project inhabitants said that actions taken to improve the environmental condition of this area was at medium level or worse, only one quarter of them (26%) had a positive opinion about it. This ratio has developed positively as almost half of respondents (48.6%) were satisfied with these actions. According to the population Hungarian Military pay attention to preserve the affected areas on a medium level now and the results were the same two years ago. In the light of the results we can say that Hungarian Military should give greater visibility to its successful initiatives and significant activity in environmental protection via broad communication. The comparison is illustrated on the chart below:

How satisfied are you with the actions that have been taken in order to improve the environmental condition of this area?

2013			2015		
1	5	3%	1	3	1.7%
2	55	32%	2	13	7.3%
3	67	39%	3	75	42.4%
4	32	19%	4	67	37.9%
5	12	7%	5	19	10.7%

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4.4. Communication of the project

With regards of the effectiveness of communication it is clear that while in the first round of the survey one quarter (26%) of respondents thought that the quality of communication reached a medium level on a 1-5 scale but the majority thought (53%) that it was not sufficient, two years later we got a much more positive picture. 73.3% of respondents was satisfied with the communication saying that it was at medium level or better than that. The comparison is illustrated on the chart below:

How satisfied are you with communication about the environmental condition of Kisalföldi Homokpuszta?

	2013		2015	
1	35	20%	5	2.8%
2	56	33%	31	17.5%
3	44	26%	80	45.2%
4	29	17%	48	27.1%
5	7	4%	13	7.3%