

## **URBAN DEVELOPMENT IN SOUTHERN COUNTIES OF ROMANIA**

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**Abstract:** *Romania is divided in administrative terms in counties, cities (some cities have municipality status) and communes. In the southern part of Romania there are 7 counties (Mehedinti, Dolj, Olt, Teleorman, Giurgiu, Calarasi, Constanta) bounded by the Danube and the Black Sea (Constanta). These counties are very heterogeneous in terms of development, although natural conditions are very similar. There are 45 cities and municipalities, with a wide variety of numerical dispersion (-3 fewest in Giurgiu, most -12 - Constanta county). In the period September-November 2013 data from 45 cities we collected (a total of 265 indicators covering the entire socio-economic local lifetime) from official sources: the prefecture institutions, local government, the National Institute of Statistics, county employment agencies, the National Office for Trade Register). Through this paper we intend to analyze part of the data collected to identify and compare the action of local authorities and the degree of development of the seven counties in terms of urbanization and the development of local public services in the major urban settlements of each county - municipalities. Such analysis performed allows us to draw conclusions about the relationship between local public services, administration actions and urban development.*

**Keywords:** *urban development, public services, counties, municipalities, towns*

### **1. SUSTAINABLE URBAN DEVELOPMENT**

"The word sustainability (supporting) has its roots in Latin, *subtenir* meaning "to stem / retain" or "support from below". A community must be supported from the bottom-by the current and future inhabitants. People need to take care of their community"( Muscoe, M, 1995).

The first definition of sustainable development appeared in the report of the World Commission on Environment and Development entitled "Our Common Future" (Brundtland, 1987): "the development that seeks to meet the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs". Since the Commission was chaired by the Prime Minister of Norway, Dr. Gro Harlem Brundtland, it remained known as the Brundtland Report. This concept has crystallized over time, over many decades, in in-depth international scientific debates and it got political

meanings in the context of globalization. Sustainable development has become an objective of the European Union since 1997, when it was included in the Maastricht Treaty and the 2001 during the Summit of the Goetheborg the Sustainable Development Strategy of the European Union was adopted. The Report "Our Common Future" can be considered the starting point of a global partnership constituting a political turning point for the concept of sustainable development.

Sustainability refers to the ability of the society to operate continuously in the future, without leading to resource depletion, with three major key components: environment, society and economy. The concept of sustainable development is the result of an integrated approach of policy and decision makers' factors, in which the environment protection and long-term economic growth are seen as complementary and mutually dependent. Social factors determine certain attitudes towards the environment, with consequences on affecting pressures on ecological systems. But this is neither the starting point nor the end of the conceptual development process.

Urban sustainable development also involves choosing appropriate ways of organizing cities to meet the target needs interested in urban development. It is believed that sustainable urban development has reached its finality when the business community and the citizens are satisfied with the economic-urban social environment, when the expectations of visitors and investors are met (Kotler et al., 2002). Urban sustainable development is an indispensable element in strategies for economic development of cities, contributing to setting the overall vision of the strategy. It helps cities meet several objectives (attracting new national / international companies, strengthening industrial infrastructure, tourism development etc.) while the need to maintain or decrease public spending and to face competition for attracting new investors.

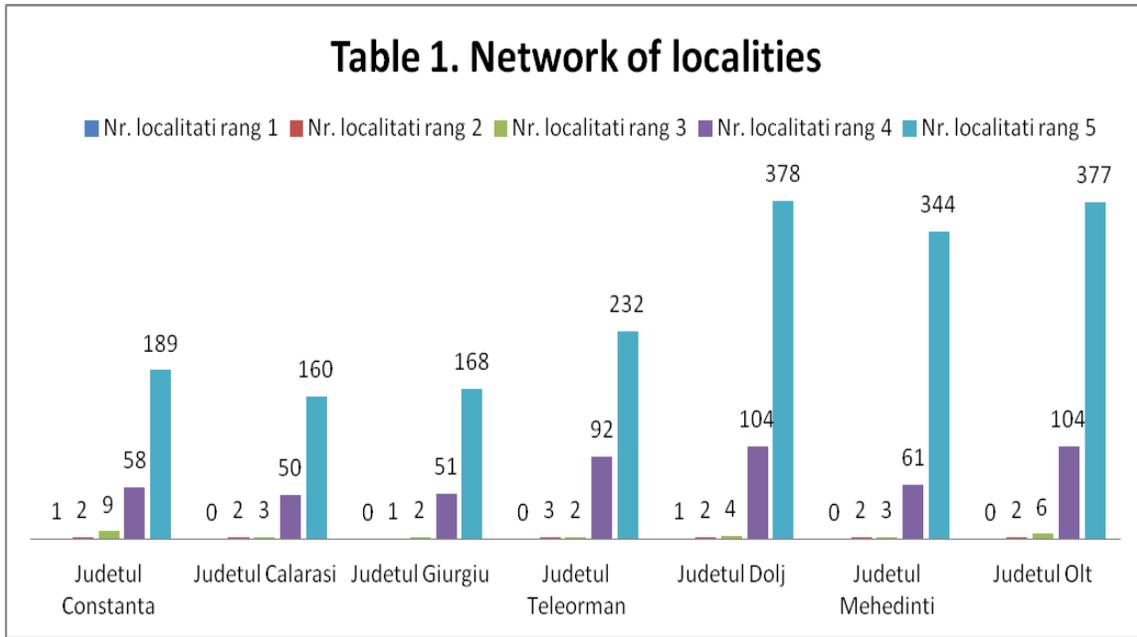
The main goal of urban sustainable development is the extraction of activities with potential beneficial effects for the community and maximizing the satisfaction of target market segments. The central thesis of urban sustainable development is that, despite internal and external forces with which they are struggling, communities have the ability to improve their relative competitive positions.

In conclusion, urban sustainable development is a process in which different purposes and strategies are interfered and reconciled of various actors and the interests are balanced.

## **2. ADMINISTRATIVE TERRITORIAL UNITS ANALYZED**

In the Southern part of Romania there are seven counties (Mehedinti, Dolj, Olt, Teleorman, Giurgiu, Calarasi, and Constanta) that have in common the delimitation of the Danube and proximity to Bulgaria.

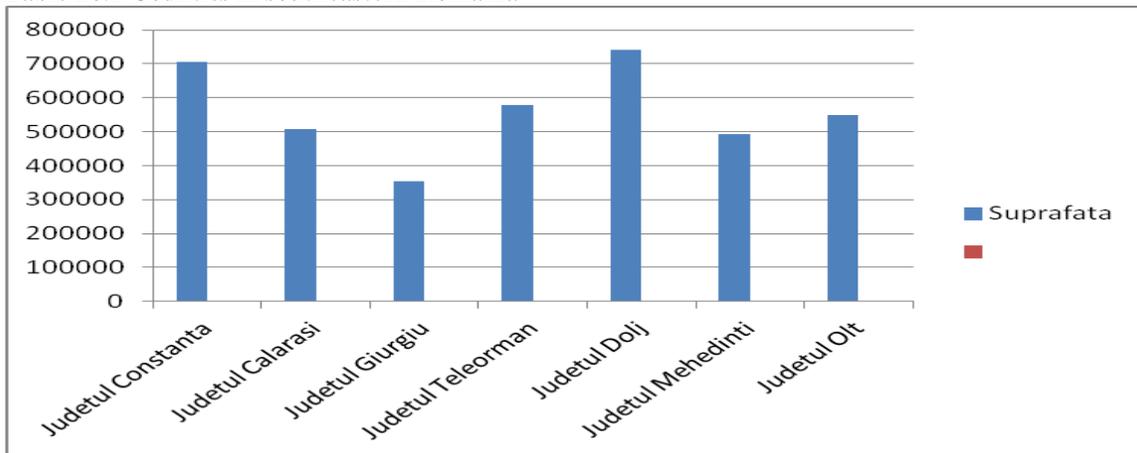
From the point of view of the network of localities, the situation is the following:



Authors: the authors

It is observed that counties in the South West have a greater number of localities, with no correlation between this indicator and the surface. Thus, Constanta County is the second in terms of area, but it has the lowest number of localities, but the largest number of cities and municipalities and the largest population.

Table no.2 Counties in southeastern Romania



Authors: the authors

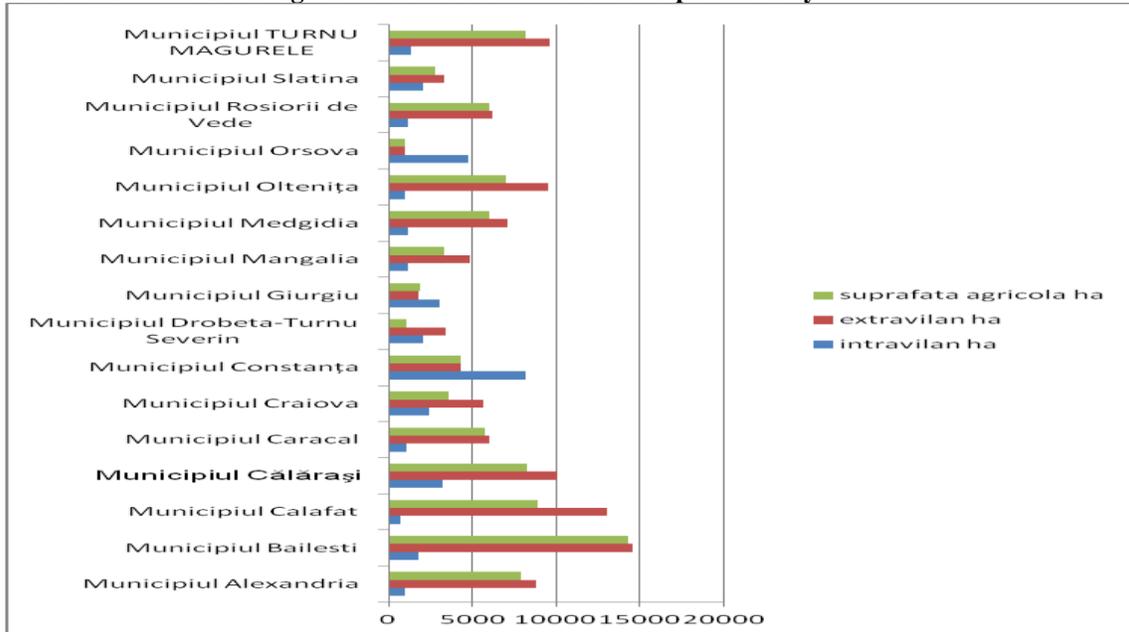
- Urban settlements of the 7 counties under review are:
- Mehedinti County
  - Drobeta-Turnu Severin
  - Orșova
- Dolj County

- Craiova
  - Băilești
  - Calafat
- Olt County
- Slatina
  - Caracal
- Teleorman County
- Alexandria
  - Roșiori de Vede
  - Turnu Măgurele
- Giurgiu County
- Giurgiu
- Calarasi County
- Călărași
  - Oltenița
- Constanta County
- Constanța
  - Medgidia
  - Mangalia

### **3. ANALYSIS OF THE AREA AND POPULATION OF THE 16 MUNICIPALITIES**

Surface observation of the 16 municipalities finds evidence of large discrepancies. Bailesti is the municipality with the largest area, but most of it is used for agricultural activity. In general it is found that cities in southern Romania have an important surface dedicated to agricultural activity and extended unincorporated areas. Only Orsova (due to geographical location), Giurgiu (due to neighboring localities) and Constanta have higher urban areas than unincorporated areas. This observation leads to the conclusion that agricultural activities have an important share in the economy of the analyzed municipalities.

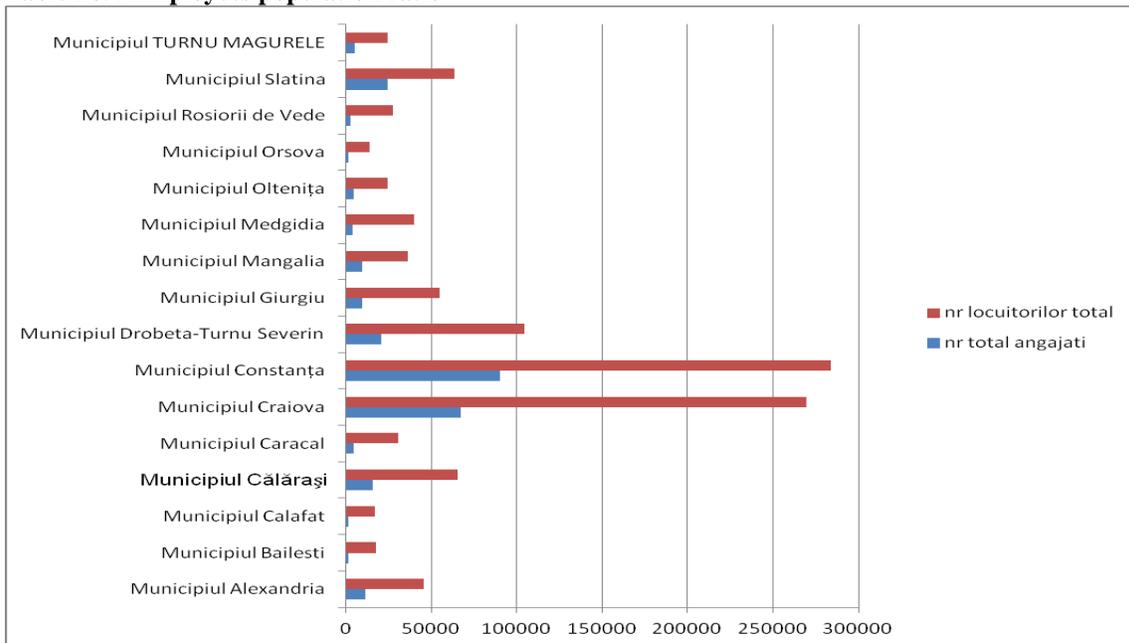
**Table no.3 The share of agricultural activities in the municipal economy**



Authors: the authors

In terms of population, there are two major urban centers - Constanta and Craiova. Orsova has only 14,000 inhabitants. The report however notes that the total population - number of employees ratio is significantly higher in Slatina (2.56) compared to Bailesti (11.86).

**Table no.4 Employees population ratio**

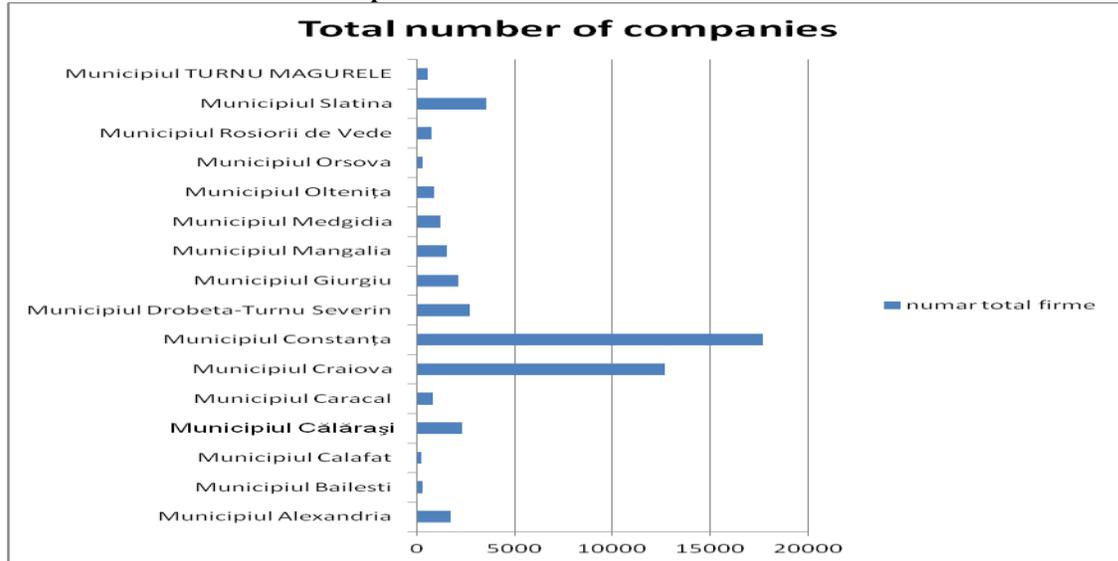


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#### 4. ECONOMIC ACTIVITY

Observing the indicator "Number of companies" leads to the conclusion that in Craiova and in Constanta there are more economic agents than in the other 14 cities combined. In Bailesti there is one company for 57 people and in Constanta there is one for 16 people.

Table no.5 Total number of companies



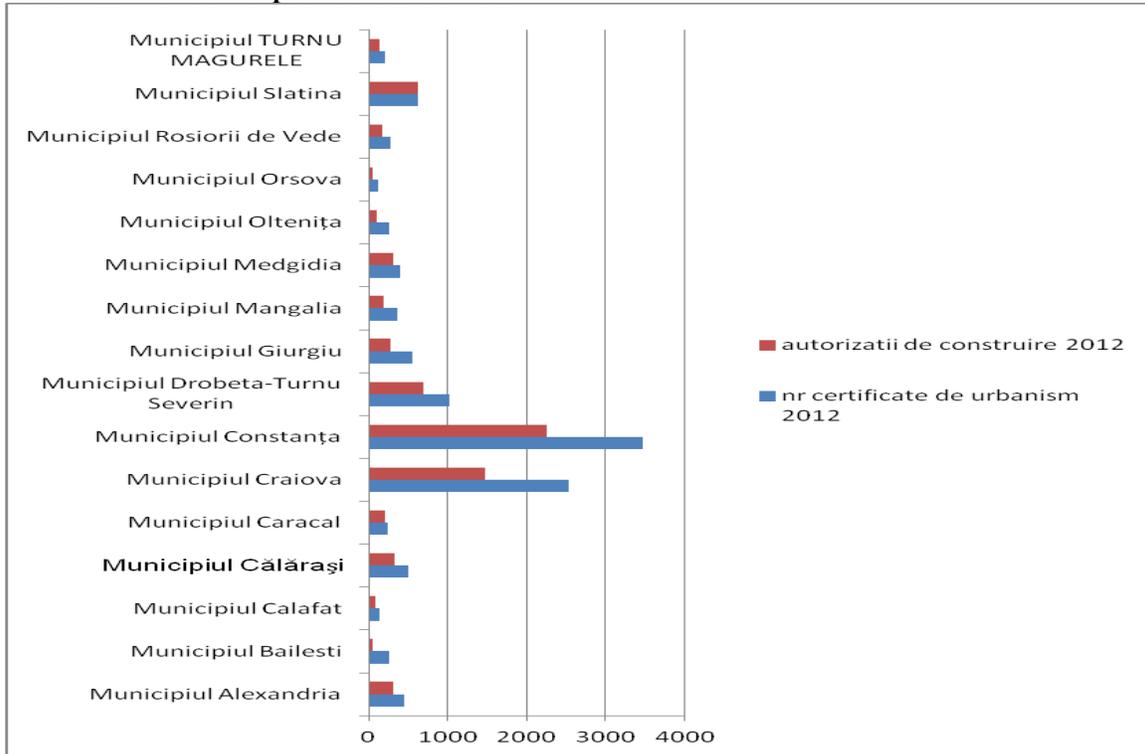
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#### 5. PUBLIC SERVICES IN THE ANALYZED MUNICIPALITIES

##### 5.1. Urban Planning Services

Dynamics of observable building activity in the analyzed municipalities by the number of building permits issued by local authorities is directly proportional to the intensity of economic activity. Large cities are expanding even more through building activities.

**Table no.6 Provision of public urban services**

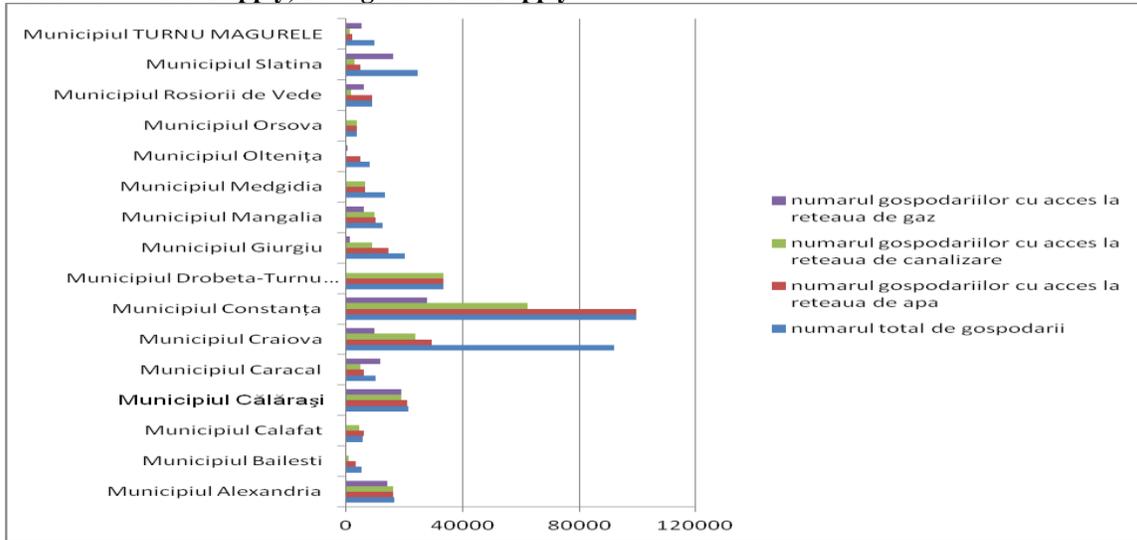


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## 5.2. Water Supply, Sewage and Gas Supply

In all analyzed municipalities, there are water supply and sewage treatment services, but they cover only partially the city area. In Calafat and Turnu Magurele there are no local strategies for the development of these services. In Orsova, Bailesti and Calafat there is no gas supply network.

**Table no.7 Water Supply, Sewage and Gas Supply**

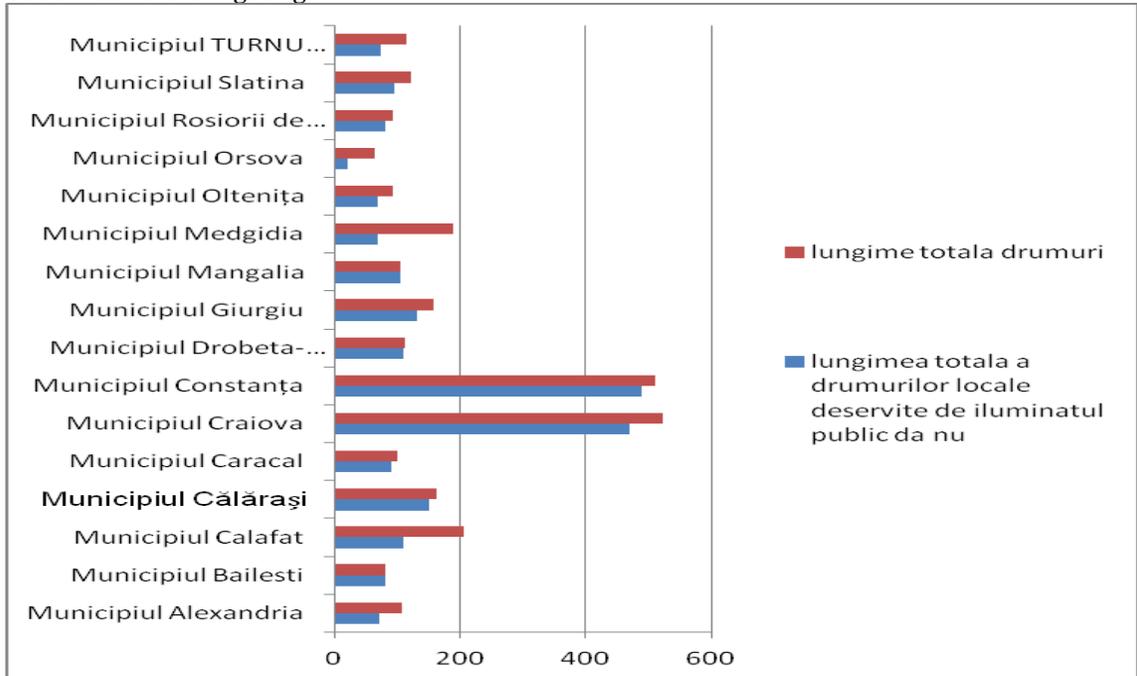


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### 5.3. Public Lighting

Public lighting is present in all analyzed municipalities, and the service covers only partially the cities territory. In Medgidia, Calafat and Orsova public lighting covers less than half of the total length of public roads.

**Table no.8 Public Lighting**

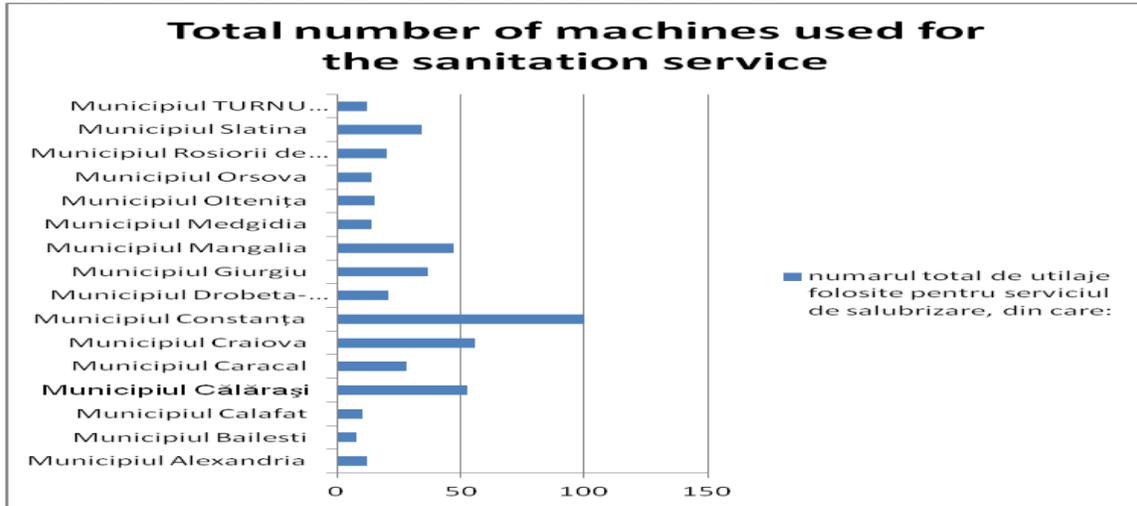


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### 5.4. Sanitation and Emergency Services

They are the largest of the services analyzed, with general access. And in terms of the equipment used there is a balance to the population, but not with municipalities' area.

**Table no.9 Total number of machines used for the sanitation services**



Authors: the authors

### 5.5. Analyzed Strategies for Developing Public Services

	There is a strategy for developing road infrastructure	There is a development strategy for sanitation service	Existence of a performance audit for electricity service	Existence of a strategy for the development of electricity services	Existence of a strategy for development of water supply services	Existence of a strategy for development of sewage service
Alexandria Municipality	No	No	No	No	Yes	Yes
Bailesti Municipality	Yes	Yes	No	No	Yes	Yes
Calafat Municipality	No	No	No	No	No	No
Călărași Municipality	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	Yes
Caracal Municipality	Yes	Yes	No	No	Yes	Yes
Craiova Municipality	No	No	No	No	Yes	Yes
Constanța Municipality	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Drobeta-Turnu Severin Municipality	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	Yes
Giurgiu Municipality	No	Yes	No	No	Yes	Yes

Mangalia Municipality	No	Yes	No	No	Yes	Yes
Medgidia Municipality	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Oltenița Municipality	Nu	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Orsova Municipality	No	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	Yes
Rosiorii de Vede Municipality	No	Yes	No	No	Yes	Yes
Slatina Municipality	No	No	No	No	Yes	Yes
Turnu Magurele Municipality	Yes	No	No	No	No	No

Authors: the authors

## CONCLUSIONS

The localities network in the 7 analyzed counties is disproportionate between counties in the West and the East. But it is noted that in the same development region the situation is balanced (similarities among Dolj, Mehedinti, Olt counties and among Teleorman, Giurgiu, Calarasi counties).

Large cities play the role of development centers, the the most developed counties being the ones in which localities rank 1 exist - Constanta and Dolj. Here there is the largest number of companies, employees, but also population. However there is a proportional ratio between population, number of firms and number of employees.

Municipalities in southern Romania and thus counties to which they belong have an economy based on agricultural activities but agriculture support services developed by local authorities are nonexistent. Although they have municipality status, these localities have a rather rural structure in majority.

Localities like Bailesti, Orsova, Rosiori de Vede don't have features, services and behavior of a municipality, the analyzed indicators suggesting rather a closeness to rural settlements. Implicitly, counties including them are predominantly rural, with an economy based on agricultural activities.

There is an uneven development between urban settlements analyzed, the trend of widening disparities between developed and poor cities/counties. The dynamics of the construction or expansion of public services suggest this issue. Urban services exist but they are unevenly distributed and accessible only to a part of the observed municipalities' population.

## **References**

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- [2] Law 544/2001 published in the official gazette nr. 663/23 October 2001;
- [3] Population census 2011;
- [4] General agricultural census 2012;
- [5] Statistical data provided by the NTC, INS, county councils, municipal authorities;