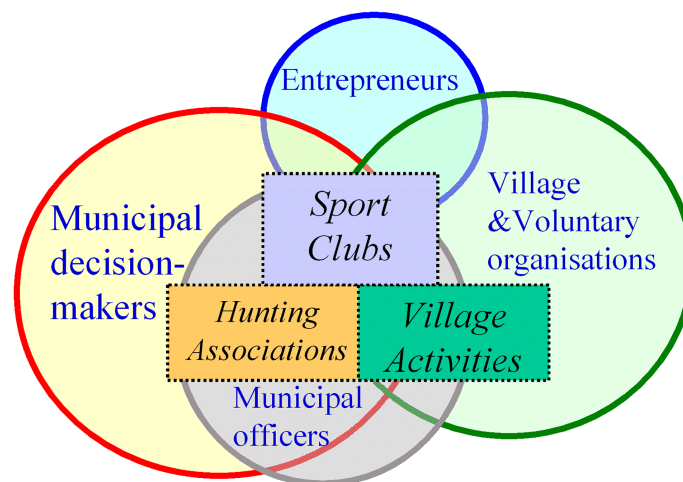


# RESTRIM Questionnaire Study of Sotkamo, Finland

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## SEPARATE APPENDIX: QUESTIONNAIRE FORM IN FINNISH

## **Summary**

### **RESTRIM Questionnaire Study of Sotkamo, Finland.**

Esko Lehto and Jukka Oksa.

University of Oulu, University of Joensuu. October 2002

The RESTRIM questionnaire study in Sotkamo was focused on four groups: local decision-makers, municipal officers (specialists working in the administration), entrepreneurs, and active persons in voluntary organisations. Altogether 106 questionnaire forms were distributed mainly in meetings of the groups and 70 respondents returned the form.

It is a shared opinion of all groups that the most valuable and the best quality of Sotkamo is its nature and the landscape of Vuokatti Hills. Many people see the local atmosphere and the cultural heritage as a valuable resource, but many respondents also disliked some features of the local mentality.

In general, the contribution of the local institutions to the development of Sotkamo was regarded much more significant than the contribution of the regional and national agents. The lowest grade was given to Finnish government and the highest to the local sport event enterprise SuperJymy Ltd.

The central local actor in Sotkamo development is the municipality. Other prominent actors are in the field of tourism (for example Katinkulta Spa Hotel and Vuokatti Sport College). However, the opinions regarding the local decision-making seem to be divided. Political activists say that local style of decision-making is quick, daring, and flexible. When respondents were asked to name the things they don't like in Sotkamo, all the groups disliked local decision-making, except the decision-makers themselves.

Sport has a special place, as an arena that is connecting different social groups. Vuokatti Hills and Vuokatti Sport College have a long-standing image as a national and international centre of winter sports. During the recent years its significance has increased because of various innovations (ski tunnel, large events etc.) The success of the Sotkamo baseball team in the Finnish super league has brought the championship winning sport club Sotkamon Jymy into the core of new local identity. The Vuokatti Hill image have been defined as a joint marketing brand of winter sports, baseball team and Sotkamo tourism. One might say that there is the local power elite is a coalition of tourism and sports.

Underneath the success one can naturally find contradictions and critical voices and interests. There is criticism that the public development efforts have been focused too much in tourism. The critical voices can be heard from two directions. One is villages that feel that the two centres of the municipality, Sotkamo Centre and Vuokatti are getting too much attention. Village activists are worried about the decline of the traditional key sectors like food production, cattle raising and forestry. The other source of critical discourse is persons connected with culture and cultural services. They feel that the municipality is not recognising properly the need for cultural services and the significance of culture for the future development of Sotkamo.

# 1 Introduction

The objectives of the questionnaire were (i) to gather information on the development priorities of people in the area; (ii) to identify key development actors and events; (iii) to conduct an initial exploration of the role of networks in development, and (iv) to provide a basis for the next stage of field work (the interviews of key persons).

The questionnaire aimed to catch the variety of experiences of local development. Therefore the selected target groups range from official bodies to voluntary organisations and clubs. The municipal officers and the important municipal boards of Sotkamo represent public and official development groups. The entrepreneurs and village organisations have their own interests in relation to local development. Sport Clubs are important both for local identity and local development, and local Art Society and the Association of the Unemployed may have alternative views about the objectives and results of local development.

The questionnaire started with a statement that municipality of Sotkamo was selected the Finnish case of the international comparison, because it is an example of a successful rural municipality. The researchers are interested in “what is, in your opinion, the secret of Sotkamo’s development or the “model of Sotkamo”. The answers were confidential, but people were asked if they are willing to participate in further interviews, in which case their name and address was asked. Anyhow, it was possible to return the questionnaire anonymously.

The questionnaire consisted of 35 questions, using both structured and open answers. There were many questions where respondents had the opportunity to state their view of general issues and priorities of development and to define their own role in development activities. Some respondents gave very brief answers (e.g. yes or no) but the majority of answers make up a very rich and interesting data, that is worth analysing carefully and will be of great benefit for the interviews at the next stage of the research.

## *1.1 Sampling Frame and Respondents*

The questionnaire was distributed to selected 13 local groups, that included altogether 106 individuals, of whom 70 returned the questionnaire (see table 1). The main method of distributing the questionnaire was to contact the leader of the group and to ask a permission to come to the group meeting to tell about the research and to distribute the forms. Two of the groups filled the forms at once directly and returned them straight away and 43 forms were returned by mail. The key persons of the two groups of entrepreneurs were contacted first by telephone, and the questionnaire forms were sent to them by mail. The data was collected during two months, between 25 March and 17 May 2002.

In the beginning of the process it was discussed how to approach local people and ask them about local development. The research team thought that a postal survey would get a very low response rate and quality of answers would be low. Participation of the

researchers in the local meetings would also add to the visibility of the research, which would make the interviews that will be conducted later, easier.

**Table 1: Target groups of the questionnaire**

<b>Groups</b>	<b>Distrib- uted forms</b>	<b>Number of responses</b>
<b>Political decision-makers</b> - Municipality Educational board, 25 March 02 - Municipality Governing board, 27 March 02 - Municipality Board of Social and Health Care, 27 March 02	33	15
<b>Municipal officers</b> - Officers participating board meetings, see above - Personal meetings with three officers, 27 March 02	8	8
<b>Entrepreneurs</b> - phone contact with key-actors and postal questionnaires (April-May)	10	6
<b>Village organisations</b> - Village association of Tipasoja, 2 April 02 - Village association of Pohjavaara, 23 April 02 - Co-ordinating body of Sotkamo's village associations, 4 April 02	28	20
<b>Other voluntary organisations</b> - Association of the Unemployed Persons, 27 March 02 - Art Society "Kuvittelijat", 30 March 02 - Women's Sport Club "Jymyttäret", 8 April 02 - Board of Sotkamon Jymy Sport club, 17 May 02	27	21
<b>Total</b>	<b>106</b>	<b>70</b>

The municipal governing board is responsible for strategic planning and practical decisions about the role of municipality in different development ventures. This board makes proposals to the elected municipal council that is the highest decision-making body of the municipality. Of the several other municipal boards the ones deciding on education and social and health care run the most important public services and use most of the local budget. The municipal officers are key-persons in preparing these decisions. Because of their position and expertise they have important role also outside their official duties.

Because of the importance of tourism and its key-enterprises, two groups of entrepreneurs were reached: one is a group of tourist enterprises and another is a general association of local entrepreneurs.

In rural areas village action is seen often as some kind of counter force to general centralisation in society. Threats to village located services, in recent years especially village schools, have mobilised villages to defend their institutions. Selected Tipasoja village association is at the moment very active and the village association in Pohjavaara has already earlier history of activity. Third village related group is recently established co-operative body of all village associations in Sotkamo area.

Sport organisations are believed to have an important role in local development, because they mobilise a lot of voluntary work in competitions and events, which attract tourism and have local economic impacts. The most significant sport club is Sotkamon Jymy, which organises activities in cross-country skiing, Nordic combine,

Ski-jumping, biathlon, volleyball, orienteering and ski orienteering, and in athletics. The most visible sport, the Finnish baseball, has been separated about half a decade ago into a special sport club "Sotkamon Jymy-Pesis ry" and the super league baseball games are run by a separate enterprise "SuperJymy Ltd". The women's sport club "Sotkamon Jymyttäret" was selected, because it is very active and it brings in the gender aspects of voluntary networks.

In Finland there is a nation-wide network of associations of the unemployed, which grew in importance during the economic depression in the early 1990's. Sotkamo's association of the unemployed may represent an alternative and critical counterpoint to local elite. It is like many other similar ones that get public project funding for its action from different sources. Association of local visual art is also presenting some kind of alternative development viewpoint.

The group of people who responded was more or less expected. There were altogether 70 respondents, of them 41 females and 29 males, which is quite typical in Finland where women participate more actively in various networks and voluntary work. They are also more likely to answer questionnaires.

**Table 2: Number of Respondents by Gender (Q22 Fi, question 22 in Finnish form)**

<b>Group</b>	<b>Female</b>	<b>Male</b>	<b>Total</b>
Political decision-makers	8	7	15
Municipal officers	4	4	8
Entrepreneurs	1	5	6
Village organisations	14	6	20
Other voluntary organisations	14	7	21
<i>Total</i>	<i>41</i>	<i>29</i>	<i>70</i>

The gender distribution of the groups varies a lot. The group of entrepreneurs has a clear male majority and the groups of village and other voluntary organisations have a female majority. The average age of all respondents is about 45 years, of women slightly less than of men, because all the respondents under 25 years of age were women.

Because respondents were contacted through active groups, most of the respondents are active in many networks. Almost two thirds of them are working full time in jobs or as entrepreneurs. If we include part-time workers, the share of economically active rises to three fourths. The respondents however include also following social categories: student, trainee, unemployed, on sick leave, part time pension, waiting for retirement, retired, on part-time pension, farmer's wife, and housewife.

The educational level of respondents was rather high. Sixty percent of respondents have a vocational college training or upper degree. Altogether 25 % had a university degree. The educational level of women is generally higher than that of men.

In generally the quality of answers was good. There were only few missing answers and as a rule open answers were more than only yes or no. There were also some

feedback about the questionnaire (in the end there was a possibility to any kind of comments). Six respondents wrote critical comments: Some questions were too complicated and difficult to understand for example the one about the meaning of list of factors for good living. Questions about social life and general enjoyment were missing, as well as questions relating to one's own village. There were also positive comments: "necessary research – hopefully it helps the home municipality to develop", "the theme of questionnaire is interesting" and "I'm waiting for your response".

## ***1.2 Method of Data Analysis***

All information was first coded and transferred into excel files. In addition to calculations in excel spreadsheets the data was analysed with SPSS statistical programme (calculating usual sums, frequencies, percentages and cross-tabulations). Because the data has been collected from selected groups, it cannot be analysed as one statistical sample of Sotkamo population. The objectives of this questionnaire are served best with concrete straightforward style of analysis that is avoiding statistical abstractions.



## 2 Analysis of the Data

### 2.1 Good and bad about Sotkamo

#### 2.1.1 List three things you like about Sotkamo

People were asked to mention three things they like most in Sotkamo. If we analyse only the thing mentioned in the first place, the category of natural environment (landscape, nature) dominates the answers. A more interesting picture comes out, when we include all the three things mentioned. Altogether 207 things listed by 68 persons were classified into eight separate categories (see next table and its explanations).

**Table 3: What are the three things you like in Sotkamo? (Q1 Fi)**

(Q 1 Fi = Question 1 in Finnish form)

Group	Category and number of respondents mentioning it			
<b>Political Decision-makers</b> (45 answers from 15 persons)	Environment 10	Hobbies 9	Services 8	People 6
<b>Municipal Officers</b> (26 answers from 8 persons)	Environment 7	Services 5	Hobbies 4	...
<b>Entrepreneurs</b> (15 answers from 6 persons)	Environment 3	Services 3	Mentality 3	...
<b>Village Organisations</b> (59 answers from 19 persons)	Environment 18	Living environment 11	Services 9	People 7
<b>Voluntary Organisations</b> (62 answers from 20 persons)	Environment 19	People 13	Living environment 9	Hobbies 8

Note: ... = several things with equal number of votes.

*Explanation of categories:*

**Environment:** beauty of scenery, unspoilt nature, clear seasons etc.

**People:** features like helpfulness, kindness, activity, honesty and openness.

**Services:** quality and accessibility, both public and private ones; also some references to health care services.

**Living environment:** features like peacefulness, central position, security, spaciousness and unhurried pace of life.

**Mentality:** mental atmosphere, resoluteness, result orientation, entrepreneurship, well-developed municipality, optimism of people, internationalism, energetic actions, versatile enterprises and active development of industries.

**Hobbies:** good sport facilities and possibilities to go to dances.

*In addition, the following two categories did not reach top three places in any of groups*

**Home & family:** importance of family roots and neighbours

**Others:** single references to various things, such as a living countryside, living possibilities, permanent working place, economy of municipality, Vuokatti, Katinkulta, marketing.

As generally everywhere in the countryside, natural environment is the first thing that people say to like in their home place. In this connection category environment includes nature in a wide sense of the world: from the natural beauty to the clean natural environment and strong sense of nature's seasons. Another thing that was generally felt to be important was services, meaning their quality and accessibility. This refers to both private and public services.

One could find some slight differences between groups. Compared to others, entrepreneurs and municipal officers emphasised more services (ranking them second after environment). The group of village activists put living conditions in the second place, and the group of voluntary organisations (the unemployed and the fine art's club) put people on the second place. This result may be related to gender, because most of the members of these groups are women. The municipal officers (who are mostly educated men) put hobbies in the third place. The entrepreneurs emphasised the local mentality as the third important factor.

If one compares the answers of men and women (which is with this type data a very doubtful thing to do), one gets out that women tend to put people before hobbies and mentality, and men put hobbies before people and home (see also next table).

**Table 4: Best things in Sotkamo by gender (Q1 Fi)**

	<b>Women</b>	%	<b>Men</b>	%
1.	Environment	29	Environment	27
2.	People	20	Hobbies	19
3.	Services	14	Services	16
4.	Living environment	12	Mentality	13
5.	Hobbies	9	Living environment	12
6.	Home & family	8	People	6
7.	Mentality	4	Home & family	2
	Other	2	Other	6
	N=126 answers		N=84 answers	

For explanation of categories see the previous table.

One could also make tentative comparisons in terms of the age of respondents. Mentality is emphasised more by the people with more age (or experience). The young do not mention so often services but they list more often living environment and home.

### 2.1.2 Things that one does not like about Sotkamo

This question should bring into light the other end of the scale. Altogether 65 persons listed 185 things, which were classified in ten categories (see next table).

**Table 5: What are the three things you do not like in Sotkamo? (Q 2 Fi)**

Group	Number of persons listing	
	The three most disliked things	The one most disliked thing
<b>Political Decision-makers</b> (34 answers from 13 persons)	Mentality 6 Outmigration 5 Unemployment 5	Mentality 3 Unemployment 3 Decision making 2
<b>Municipal Officers</b> (20 answers from 8 persons)	Mentality 6 Decision making 3 Hobbies 3 Living environment 3	Decision making 2 Connections 2 Hobbies 2
<b>Entrepreneurs</b> (9 answers from 5 persons)	Mentality 4 Decision making 2 Living environment 2	Mentality 3 Decision making 2 Living environment 2
<b>Village Organisations</b> (45 answers from 19 persons)	Services 8 Decision making 7 Mentality 6 Connection 6	Tourism 5 Decision making 3 Hobbies 3
<b>Other Voluntary organisations</b> (48 answers from 20 persons)	Mentality 12 Decision making 7 Hobbies 7	Mentality 5 Decision making 4 Unemployment 3

*Explanation of categories:*

**Unemployment:** lack of working possibilities and critique of employment policies.

**Tourism:** too much investment to tourism, tourists coming from Russia etc.

**Decision making:** critique of local governance, too much political play in municipality management, one-party system, power of money, connections to power, favouritism, focusing only on strengths, inflexibility of local government.

**Mentality:** jealousy, cliques, arrogance, racism, intolerance, increasing restlessness of the young, no privacy, resistance to innovations, too much modesty, negative attitude to entrepreneurship.

**Hobbies:** shortages in cultural services, missing cultural house, cinema, economical cuts in culture, exaltation of sports and Sotkamon Jymy baseball team, secret deals in baseball games.

**Connections:** long distances, far from big cities, poor traffic connections, low quality road network, expensive petrol, poor data communication network in sparsely populated areas, poor access to leisure activities.

**Services:** both public and private ones: cuts in social and health services, expensive flats, closing of village schools, lack institutions of higher education, price level of shops, and small supply of services.

**Migration:** outmigration in general, outmigration of young people, depopulation of remote areas.

**Living environment:** slowness in land use planning, ugly constructions, low level of investments in environmental management.

**Others:** problems with co-operation, excluded groups, closing the dairy, low participation of men, lack of money, neighbouring municipality, too narrowly focused industrial policy, lack of development projects, generally low level of development.

The lists of disliked things are revealing and one has to pay more attention to them in future research work. All the groups have rather high on their list of disliked things *local mentality* and all except the decision-makers themselves dislike very much the *local decision-making*. The decision-makers mention often the unemployment (which is naturally mentioned also by the unemployed). In the group of village organisations the issue of services rises to the top of the list. The municipal officers and enterprises focus also on living environment. One may find sharp critique against the main strategy of the municipality development amongst the voluntary organisations and village activists. They are resenting the meagre supply of cultural services and too much of sports, even too much baseball.

Many of the disliked things listed are exactly those that we researchers have expected to be in somewhat good order, when we talk about Sotkamo's success and Sotkamo's model of development. One may have several interpretations and explanation for this uneasy relationship with the local mentality and decision-making culture.

In terms of age, the young seem to be more critical towards municipal decision-making and poor connections. Worrying over living environment seems to be more general among the older generations.

In terms of gender, women are more worried about the unemployment, access to services and hobbies. They also are more critical towards tourism.

## **2.2 Significant factors of good life and livelihood in Sotkamo**

What are the significant factors of good life and livelihood? Thirteen factors were listed and respondents were asked to rate them on a scale of 1-5, from very low to very high.

The rate of responses was high. Generally speaking, environment, landscape and public services are considered the most significant factors. Respondents mentioned also additional factors, such as nearness of Kajaani (capital of the Kainuu Region) and peacefulness of locality.

Women tended to emphasise more culture, perhaps also landscape slightly more than men do. Women mentioned such factors that are missing from the list of men: housing, labour market, and others. The old put more priority on public services. The young did not care so much about sport club activities; the elderly did not care about other leisure activities.

When respondents were asked, if the significant factors taken into account in the development of Sotkamo, the clear majority of the respondents in all groups answered "no". Those significant factors, that they had mentioned, have *not* been sufficiently taken into account in the development of the Sotkamo.

**Table 6: The factors of good life and earning livelihood in Sotkamo (Q 3 Fi)**

	<b>The one most significant factor (number of votes)</b>	<b>The factors with the highest average rating</b>	<b>The factors with the lowest average rating</b>
<b>Political Decision-makers</b> (15 persons)	<i>Jobs</i> 6 Public services 3 Business 2	Public services 4,6 Housing 4,53 Business 4,3	Culture 2,8
<b>Municipal Officers</b> (8 persons)	<i>Jobs</i> 3 Public services 2 Business 1 Landscape 1	Public services 4,4 Housing 4.25 Business 4.1	Sport club 3,13
<b>Entrepreneurs</b> (6 persons)	Business 1 Jobs 1 Housing 1 Leisure activities 1	Business 4,7 Jobs 4,7 Housing 4,5 Labour market 4,5	Culture 3,67 Sport Club 3,67
<b>Village Organisations</b> (20 persons)	<i>Public services</i> 5 Business 3 Jobs 2	Environment 4,7 Public services 4,65 Landscape 4,6	Culture 3.05 Sport club 3,45
<b>Other Voluntary organisations</b> (21 persons)	<i>Landscape</i> 4 Jobs 3 Public services 2 Labour market 2 Culture 2 Sport facilities 2 Environment 2	Environment 4,75 Landscape 4,65 Sport facilities 4,35	Business 3,19 Culture 3.24

List of factors given in the question: Public services, Connections, Housing, Labour market, Jobs, Business, Culture, Sports facilities, Sport club activities, Other leisure activities, Landscape, Environment and Other factors.

**Table 7: Have important factors taken into account? If not, what? (Q 4 Fi)**

	<b>"No" Nr %</b>	<b>Things not taken into account (more than one mention)</b>
<b>Political Decision-makers</b> (15 answers from 15 persons)	8 53%	Land use planning 3 Environment 3 Industrial policy 2 Entrepreneurs 2
<b>Municipal Officers</b> (8 answers from 8 persons)	5 63%	Industrial policy 2 Entrepreneurs 2
<b>Entrepreneurs</b> (6 answers from 6 persons)	3 50%	Land use planning 3 Environment 3
<b>Village Organisations</b> (19 answers from 20 persons)	12 63%	Village Development 4 Public services 3 Industrial policy 2 Entrepreneurs 2
<b>Other Voluntary organisations</b> (19 answers from 21 persons)	10 53%	Employment 4 Public services 2 Culture 2

The most commonly mentioned disregarded factors were connected with land-use planning, environment and industrial policies. In addition to these each group mentioned some factors reflecting their own interests: village activists underline public services and support to village development efforts. The other voluntary organisations mention also employment and culture. Specific forsaken groups that are mentioned are the youth (mentioned by municipal officers and civic organisations) and the elderly (which mentioned by civic organisations). Village organisations are worried about school services.

### 2.2.1 Why someone should come to live in Sotkamo?

People were asked to mention arguments, why somebody should live in Sotkamo, and 196 answers from 69 persons were received. The answers were classified to eight categories.

**Table 8: Recommendations, why to live in Sotkamo (Q 5 Fi)**

	<b>Top three reasons to live in Sotkamo</b> (numbers of mentions)		
<b>Political Decision-makers</b> (43 answers from 15 persons)	Free time activities 10	Nature 9	Services Living environment 7
<b>Municipal Officers</b> (23 answers from 8 persons)	Nature 7	Free time activities 5	Services 4
<b>Entrepreneurs</b> (16 answers from 6 persons)	Mentality 4	Nature 3	Services 2 Living environment 2 Free time activities 2 Connections 2
<b>Village Organisations</b> (56 answers from 19 persons)	Nature 17	Free time activities 11	Living environment 10
<b>Other Voluntary organisations</b> (58 answers from 21 persons)	Nature 18	Free time activities 13	Living environment 9

*Explanation of categories:*

**Nature:** natural peace, beauty and wealth of waterways, nature, beauty of scenery and place, clean water, white snow, clearly separate seasons, closeness to nature, lakes, unspoilt nature

**People:** people in general, nice people, social environment, friendliness, and familiarity.

**Services:** good quality and variety of services, good basic education system, services to children, young and families, day nurseries, health care.

**Living environment:** peacefulness, secure and cosy place to grow up children, spaciousness, construction sites with good view, many forms of housing, active village communities, easy to feel at home.

**Mentality:** animation brought by tourism, vivid place, lively rural municipality, the most creative municipality, enterprise-friendliness, tourists, feeling secure, positive atmosphere, Vuokatti spirit, orientation to development, active and fair feelings, dynamic development

**Free time activities:** many-sided possibilities for hobbies (e.g. sports, hunting and fishing), sport facilities, Katinkulta, Vuokatti slopes and skiing routes, Swimming Pool.

**Connections:** only one hour flight to Helsinki, well functioning transport connections, near the airport, location in the middle of country, close to the towns (e.g. Kajaani and Kuhmo).

**Others:** good working environment, innovative labour force, good municipal image, employment, culture

All groups put nature and leisure activities on the top of reasons to live in Sotkamo. Only entrepreneurs put first something else, mentality. Decision-makers and municipal officers include also services. Many groups emphasise also living environment (housing etc).

### 2.2.2 Two things one would change in Sotkamo

If you could change two things in Sotkamo, what would they be? Altogether 64 respondents gave 111 answers. In table 9 there are top ranks of two lists, one of those mentioned first, and the second of all things mentioned. The numbers describe how many persons in the group named that thing.

**Table 9: The things to change in Sotkamo (Q 6 Fi)**

	<b>1. The first thing to change in Sotkamo</b>	<b>2. Two things to change in Sotkamo</b>
<b>Political Decision-makers</b> 15 answers from 15 persons 24 answers from 15 persons	Employment 4 Land use planning 4 Decision making 3	Employment 5 Decision making 4 Land use planning 4 Public services 4
<b>Municipal Officers</b> 8 answers from 8 persons 15 answers from 8 persons	Employment 3 Rural development 1 Mentality 1 Free time activities 1 Public services 1	Employment 4 Free time activities 3 Mentality 2 Public services 2 Land use planning 2 Public services 2
<b>Entrepreneurs</b> 4 answers from 4 persons 7 answers from 4 persons	Land use planning 2 Decision making 1 Others 1	Land use planning 3 Decision making 2 Others 2
<b>Village Organisations</b> 18 answers from 18 persons 36 answers from 18 persons	Employment 5 Rural development 5 Decision making 3	Rural development 8 Employment 7 Decision making 5 Free time activities 5 Public services 5
<b>Other Voluntary organisations</b> 19 answers from 19 persons 28 answers from 19 persons	Employment 6 Decision making 5 Mentality 3 Free time activities 3	Employment 8 Decision making 5 Mentality 5

*Explanation of categories:*

**Employment:** more active employment and industrial policies, more employees in the municipality, jobs for all, more enterprises and empty industrial space into productive use, saving the dairy, jobs in dairy and furniture manufacturing, more money to employ long-term unemployed persons, support to enterprises for employing more workforce.

**Rural development:** more active rural policy, more funds, presentation of possibilities in rural areas, transport subsidies, village schools in every part of the municipality, improved image through maintenance of remote villages, keeping the countryside inhabited.

**Decision making:** local decision making traditions, better co-operation in the preparation, values and attitudes of decision-makers, election of board members, more expertise less politics, improvement of municipal finances, more active participation of members of the municipality, less influence by the political parties, more speed in decisions and also commitment to them, less project bureaucracy, ending of budgetary cuts, selective cuts, co-operation between villages and decision-makers, municipal borders, some officers are behind their times, more young decision-makers, political decision-making nearer to ordinary citizens.

**Mentality:** to improve of mental atmosphere, shake away prejudices, less envy, abolish racism and segregation, away with cliques, money has power, put life of citizens first, stop Russification - marketing to west also, less focus on sports, more tolerance

**Free time activities:** hobbies, less sports more culture, spirit and culture alongside physical exercise, more culture supply, cut the fees of adult education institute into half, build a house of culture, more facilities for children and the young

**Public services:** more money for training, better personnel policies in the municipality, more workers in the care of the elderly and in all the social and health sector, put services for the elderly first, more adult training, improve public sector salaries, hire more nurses

**Land use planning:** included also environmental issues, improve condition of buildings, away with part of them, lower housing prices, traffic arrangements, more rational road maintenance, improve the appearance of the centre, its ugly construction, attention to nature protection, Vuokatti land-use plan into good order, make it the most attractive land-use plan in Finland, more leisure time housing plots, allow construction, a hotel

**Others:** more co-operation between municipalities, stop the decline of population numbers (longer summer season), more attention to small projects, Kainuu people (however, the smartest ones have already left)

There is no big difference between the list of top one and the list of top two things to change. The decision-makers, municipal officers, village activists and voluntary organisations would improve employment and industrial development activities. The need to change decision-making is important for every group, except the municipal officers. The entrepreneurs would like to improve land-use planning and the village activists would start better rural development.

### ***2.3 Events and main actors in Sotkamo's development***

Has there happened something that has contributed positively to Sotkamo's development during last five years? Please name events and projects. To this question 57 persons listed altogether 139 events, actions or projects that has contributed positively to Sotkamo's development.

All the respondents in the groups of municipal officers and entrepreneurs thought that positive events have taken place in Sotkamo. The most critical groups were respondents in village and voluntary organisations.

All the groups agree on the significance of developments in tourism, Vuokatti sport centre and its winter sport facilities (skiing and ski boarding), Katinkulta Spa Hotel,



and big sport events. This set of events may be in slightly different order in different groups but they all agree on their importance.

**Table 10: Positive events in Sotkamo during last five years (Q 7 Fi)**

	<b>1. Yes Nr %</b>	<b>2. Positive events in last 5 years (event mentioned at least twice)</b>
<b>Political Decision-makers</b> 1. 15 answers from 15 persons 2. 37 answers from 13 persons	13 87%	Winter Sport facilities (10) Tourism enterprise Katinkulta (8) Tourism & Vuokatti Hill area (6)
<b>Municipal Officers</b> 1. 8 answers from 8 persons 2. 19 answers from 8 persons	8 100%	Tourism & Vuokatti Hill area (5) Big Sport events (3) Winter Sport facilities (2) Tourism enterprise Katinkulta (2) International co-operation (2)
<b>Entrepreneurs</b> 1. 6 answers from 6 persons 2. 18 answers from 6 persons	6 100%	Tourism & Vuokatti Hill area (3) Tourism enterprise Katinkulta (3) Winter Sport facilities (2) Projects of co-operation (2) Entrepreneurship (2) IT enterprise Incap (2)
<b>Village Organisations</b> 1: 19 answers from 19 persons 2: 38 answers from 15 persons	15 79%	Tourism & Vuokatti Hill area (8) Winter Sport facilities (5) Tourism enterprise Katinkulta (4)
<b>Other Voluntary organisations</b> 1. 21 answers from 21 persons 2. 27 answers from 15 persons	15 71%	Tourism & Vuokatti Hill area (8) Winter Sport facilities (5) Tourism enterprise Katinkulta (2) Entrepreneurship (2) Civil Society Actions (2)

There are also other events outside the list of top three. One may find some kind of cross-group coalitions of mentioning them. All the groups except the decision-makers mentioned projects of co-operation and enterprise life. The improved image of the municipality was mentioned by municipal officers and village and voluntary organisations, as well as the issue of Matkakoti Tikkanen (preservation of the hostel Tikkanen). Information technology plant Incap is mentioned by some persons in several groups (decision-makers, entrepreneurs and both village actives and voluntary organisations) and so does the Snowpolis idea, too.

### 2.3.1 Who has contributed to the development of Sotkamo?

People were asked to evaluate the contribution of different organisations to the development of the area on a scale from 1 (totally insufficient contribution) to 5 (fully sufficient contribution). Their answers reflect the trust attached to different agents involved in the local development (see diagram 1 and table 11).

In general, the contribution of the local institutions was regarded better than the contribution of the regional level or higher. The lowest grade was given to Finnish

government and the highest to the local sport event enterprise SuperJymy that runs the national league baseball team and has taken the responsibility of the image marketing of the Sotkamo tourism.

All the groups agreed that SuperJymy Ltd gets the best grades. Another jointly (except the entrepreneurs) highly estimated actor is the Vuokatti Sport College. In addition, the Sotkamo Biotech Laboratory, a part of the Oulu University Development Centre in Kajaani, got high grades from three groups (municipal officers and both groups of voluntary organisations).

**Table 11: The top and bottom contributors to local development by different focus groups (Q8 Fi)**

(Scale: 1= totally insufficient, 5= fully sufficient contribution to Sotkamo's development)

	<b>Actors with the best contribution</b> (top four averages)	<b>Actors with the lowest contribution</b> (bottom four averages)
<b>Political Decision-makers</b>	Vuokatti Sport College 3,79 Municipal Executive Board 3,67 Municipal Council 3,53 SuperJymy Ltd 3,53	Finnish Government 2,36 Regional Council 2,50 Provincial Government 2,54 Kainuun Etu Ltd 2,54
<b>Municipal Officers</b>	SuperJymy Ltd 3,75 Municipal Officers 3,63 Bio-tech Laboratory 3,63 Vuokatti Sport College 3,50	Finnish Government 2,00 Provincial Government 2,25 Regional Council 2,50 European Union 2,63
<b>Entrepreneurs</b>	SuperJymy Ltd 4,33 Municipal Executive Board 3,83 Municipal Officers 3,83 Local Sport Clubs 3,67	Kainuun Etu Ltd 2,00 Kainuu Rural Advisory Centre 2,17 Kainuu TE-Centre 2,33 Kajaani Development Centre of Oulu University 2,33
<b>Village Organisations</b>	Vuokatti Sport College 4,00 SuperJymy Ltd 4,00 Local Sport Clubs 3,89 Kainuu Environ. Centre 3,50 Sotkamo Assoc. of Entrepreneurs 3,50 Bio-tech Laboratory 3,50	Finnish Government 2,21 Provincial Government 2,53 European Union 2,69 Kainuun Etu Ltd 2,69
<b>Other voluntary organisations</b>	Vuokatti Sport College 3,90 SuperJymy Ltd 3,81 Bio-tech Laboratory 3,75 Kajaani Polytechnic 3,44	Finnish Government 2,00 Kainuun Etu Ltd 2,67 Municipal Executive Board 2,70 Municipal Officers 2,74

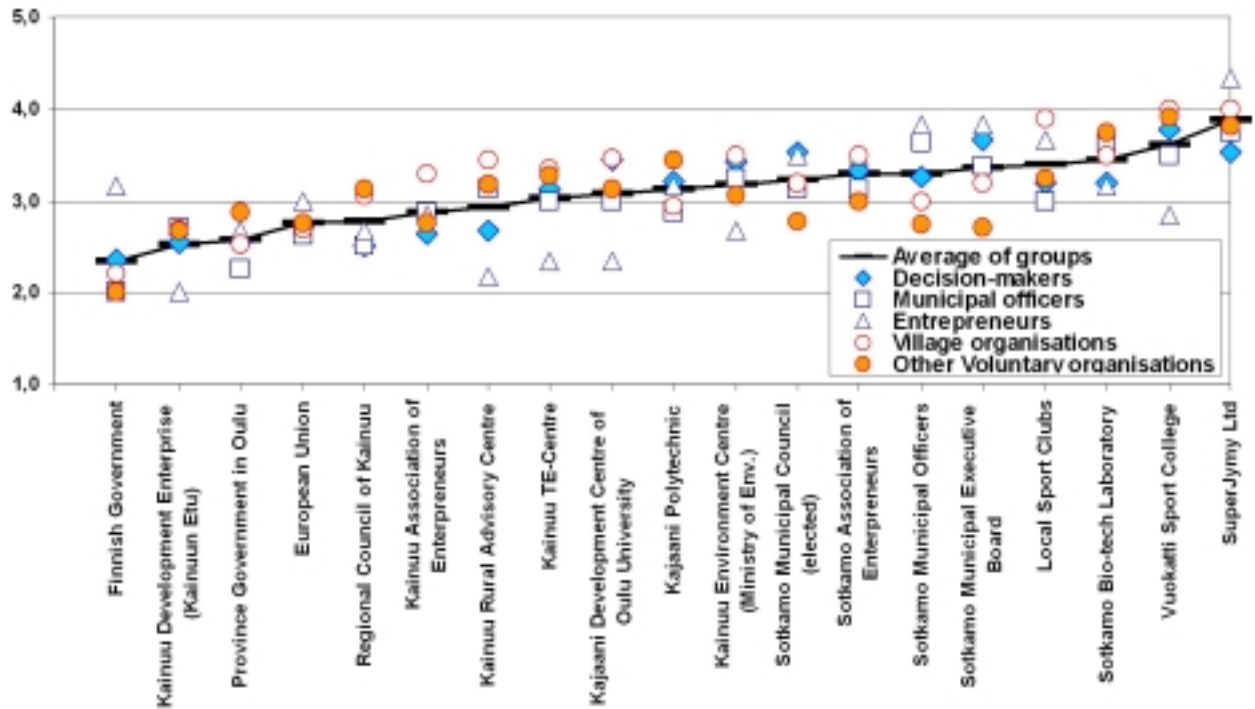
The three *acting bodies of the municipality* got different evaluations from different groups. Entrepreneurs, decision-makers and municipal officers gave high value to the municipal executive board, but it did get low grade from voluntary organisations. None of these municipal actors were included among the top four grades of the village organisations, neither of the other voluntary organisations.

The local sport clubs have gained the shared high regard of both entrepreneurs and village organisations. Village organisations are rather alone in giving high grades to such organisations as Kainuu Environmental Centre (of the Ministry of Environment)

and Sotkamo Association of Entrepreneurs. Other voluntary organisations give high grade also to Kajaani Polytechnic.

**Diagram 1: Contribution of various organisations in Sotkamo development (Q 8 Fi)**

(Scale: 1= totally insufficient, 5= fully sufficient contribution)



All other groups except the entrepreneurs give low grades to the Finnish Government. Also the Regional Development enterprise Kainuun Etu Ltd got low grades from all the other groups except the municipal officers. In addition, the Provincial Government located in Oulu City got low grades. In general the regional level organisations seem to get average or low grades (especially from entrepreneurs).

**Critical voices**

If people gave low grades to some organisations, they were asked to tell why they are not satisfied with organisation (Q 8b Fi). We have collected the critical points by groups of respondents.

*Decision-makers:* The Finnish government is responsible for the distress of the peripheral municipalities, because the government is defending the interests of the big centres. The state has given the municipalities more tasks and turned down the financial support. The regional policy decisions of the state are insufficient: the migration out is increasing, the development efforts do not bring results, and the number of development projects is low. The Regional Council is functioning "for itself" and its role in the development is small. The Provincial government in Oulu is

stiff and old-fashioned, and its channels of influence are not convincing. Some persons criticised also the activities of Sotkamo Entrepreneurs and SuperJymy Ltd. The business-like ways of SuperJymy would be more suitable inside the ring road 3 by Helsinki City, while voluntary sport club activity is more suitable for Kainuu. The critique of the EU was targeted at its regional and agricultural policies.

*Municipal officers:* Also the municipal officers criticise the Finnish Government, and partly EU, for forsaking the periphery. The tasks of municipalities grow and resources are diminishing, the policy actions do not bring results nor are they visible. The provincial government is an extension of administration without resources. It concentrates its effort on the development of Oulu region. The Kainuu Association of Entrepreneurs is defending entrepreneurs, only. The relatively sharp critique of the EU is unfocused, referring to the lack of attention and lack of results.

*Entrepreneurs:* The critique by the entrepreneurs is targeted mainly on regional organisations. Their role in development is regarded as small. In addition, mutual envy and "moping" ("kyräily" in Finnish) are said to be typical for Kainuu mentality, and these features of behaviour narrow down the possibilities for development. Problems are seen in the ways of the regional decision-making: "every municipality must be treated similarly", "good projects do not get financing from the TE-Centre".

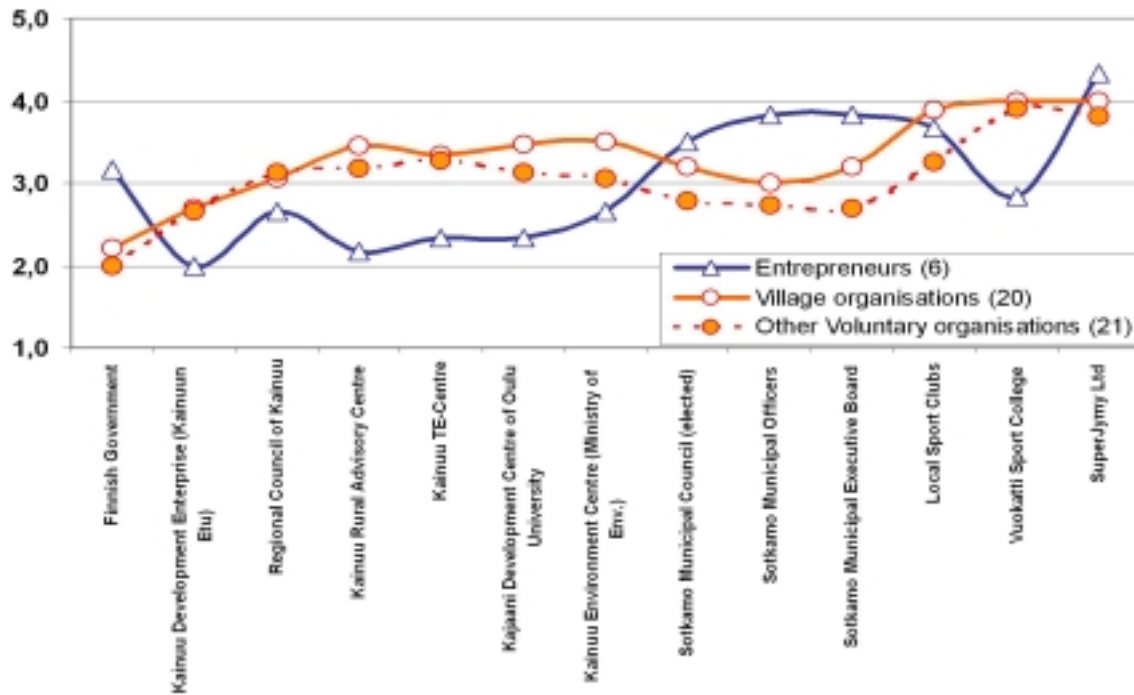
*Village activists:* Finnish Government and EU are distant, and their contribution to peripheries and rural activities are insufficient. However, village activists criticise also the local and some regional actors. The activities of Sotkamo municipality (the council, the executive board and the officers) are regarded as shortsighted, self-centred and too much supporting only the central areas of Sotkamo. The regional actors are criticised of "poor visibility" (Oulu University Development Centre in Kajaani, The Polytechnic), "wrongly focused training activities" (The Polytechnic), "putting barriers to construction" (Environment Centre) and "defending the borders of one's own sphere" (Kainuu Entrepreneurs).

*Other voluntary organisations:* The Finnish Government is criticised for poor regional policies and for putting more obligations on the municipalities: "the youth is forced to migrate to the South, and the Government only gives speeches." The Association of Entrepreneurs is criticised for non-collaboration "because of the fear of new enterprises". The third target for sharp critique is the municipality and its decision-makers. They are regarded as a closed circle of insiders, practising oligarchy and not recognising what is really important for Sotkamo inhabitants. The land-use planning was seen as one example of the problems of local power. In addition, SuperJymy Ltd and Local Sport Societies are regarded as clubs of insiders. Regional actors are not significant and they are invisible. Also EU got its share of critique: "it has brought only paper work and problems to agriculture". However, the possibilities brought about by EU are not utilised efficiently enough.

We can draw and compare the *grading profiles* of different focus groups. The opposite teams of the field seem to be the entrepreneurs, on one hand, and the voluntary organisations, on the other hand (diagram 2). The profiles of the municipal officers and decision-makers are in the middle ground between these two (diagram 3).

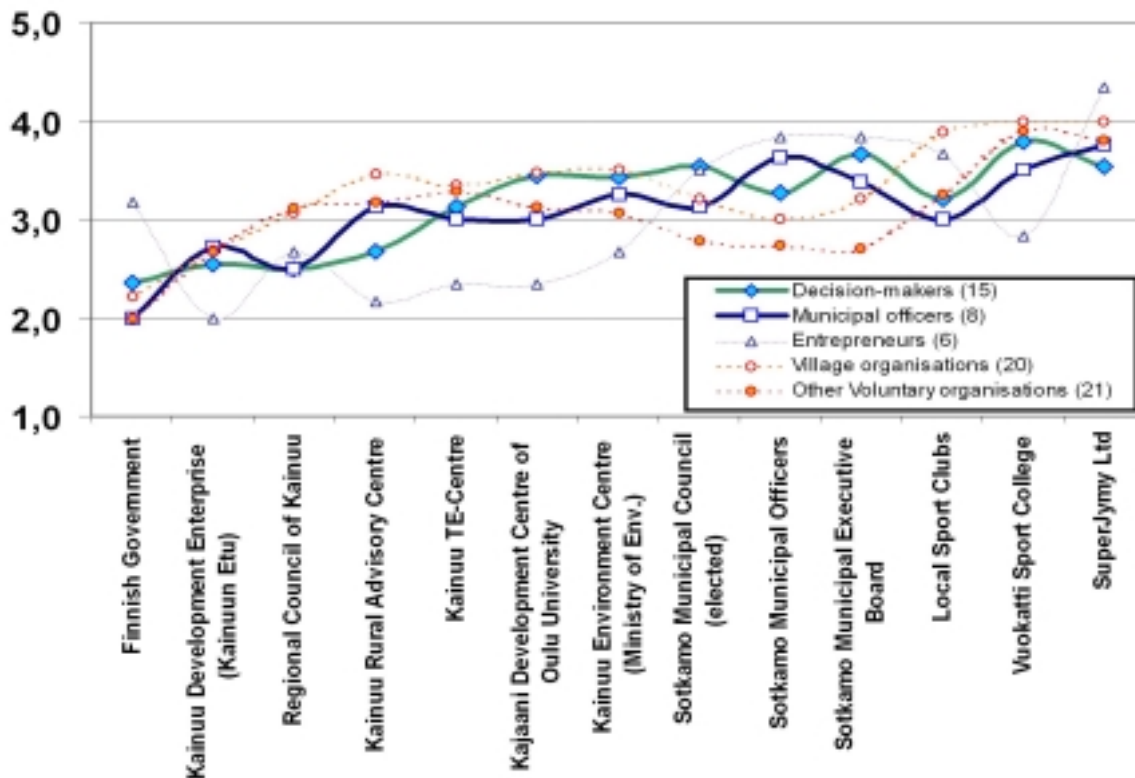
**Diagram 2: Grading profiles of entrepreneurs and voluntary organisations (Q8 Fi)**

(Scale: 1= totally insufficient, 5= fully sufficient contribution Sotkamo development)



**Diagram 3: The grading profiles of different groups (Q8 Fi)**

(Scale: 1= totally insufficient, 5= fully sufficient contribution to Sotkamo development)



In diagrams 2 & 3 we have picked up only those organisations that had some variation of grades given of different focus groups. The entrepreneurs tended to value low the contribution of the regional level organisations and Sport College, while the voluntary activists valued them higher. In turn, entrepreneurs trusted the local administration and decision-making more than voluntary organisations did, and the same applies to the Finnish Government.

The municipal officers and decision-makers agreed with voluntary activists in positive evaluations of Regional Council, TE-Centre and other regional level expert organisations. They have similar positive evaluations of sport organisations, as well, and similar negative evaluations about Finnish Government. However, municipal decision-makers and officers did agree with the entrepreneurs about the positive evaluation of the Sotkamo municipality itself.

### 2.3.2 Who is benefiting?

When persons were asked to assess who is benefiting of the development, there are not big differences between the focus groups. All of them see that the benefits go mainly to tourism and sports, and somewhat also to enterprises in other sectors (see table 12). The answers from voluntary sector point out that benefits concentrate into the Vuokatti area, and single organisations and project workers; the rich land-owners and tax collector were mentioned, as well. The political decision-makers mention often that all the inhabitants of Sotkamo get some benefits.

**Table 12: Who gets the benefits from the development? (Q 9 Fi)**

	Tourism enterprises	Other enterprises	Sports	Vuokatti area	All inhabitants	Others
<b>Political Dec.-makers</b> (31 answers from 14 pers.)	9	8	6	0	5	3
<b>Municipal Officers</b> (19 answers from 7 pers.)	7	7	3	0	0	2
<b>Entrepreneurs</b> (6 answers from 6 pers.)	2	1	0	0	3	0
<b>Village Organisations</b> (36 answers from 19 pers.)	12	7	5	5	2	5
<b>Other Voluntary organisations</b> (28 answers from 18 pers.)	8	4	9	3	1	3

*Explanation of categories:* The categories here are not exactly the same as in other questions, as the sport actors and tourism actors are separated. However some of them could be classified in both.

**Tourism enterprises:** Spa and Hotel Katinkulta, the whole tourism sector etc.

**Other enterprises:** Groceries and other shops, Electronics company Incap, dairy, business life in general.

**Sport actors:** Vuokatti Sport College, Ski Slope enterprise Vuokatinrinteet, SuperJymy Ltd., Ski Tunnel and Half Pipe Tunnel, sport clubs, competitive sports.

**Vuokatti area:** Vuokatti area, sometimes Sotkamo-Vuokatti area.

**All inhabitants:** inhabitants of Sotkamo, the whole municipality.

**Others:** project workers, land owners, 'rich people', tourists, employees, tax authorities, co-operatives of the unemployed, Rural Advisory Centre Maaseutukeskus, Oulu University Research and Development Centre in Kajaani.

### 2.3.3 Who are the most important actors in the economic development of Sotkamo?

In this question 59 persons listed altogether 168 actors. One respondent may have listed up to eight actors. These were classified into four categories (see table 13). The economic development in Sotkamo was as a rule connected with the activities of the municipality, with the exception of the group of entrepreneurs who put tourist enterprises in the first place. Members of the voluntary and village organisations mention, in addition to the municipality, also enterprises outside tourism. The role of state organisations seems to be rather invisible, only some persons in voluntary organisations and some municipal officers did bring them up.

**Table 13: Important economic actors in Sotkamo (Q 10 Fi)**

	<b>Important economic actors in Sotkamo</b> (in four main categories)			
	<b>Municipality</b>	<b>Tourism enterprises</b>	<b>Other Enterprises</b>	<b>State Organisations</b>
<b>Political Decision-makers</b> (48 answers from 14 persons)	30	8	6	0
<b>Municipal Officers</b> (22 answers from 6 persons)	12	6	1	2
<b>Entrepreneurs</b> (10 answers from 4 persons)	1	7	1	0
<b>Village Organisations</b> (47 answers from 17 persons)	17	13	9	2
<b>Other Voluntary organisations</b> (41 answers from 18 persons)	13	11	10	2

*Categories:*

**Municipality:** Municipality in general, Municipality council, government and boards, political decision-makers, leading political decision-makers and officers, major, Land use planning office.

**Tourism enterprises:** Spa and Hotel Katinkulta, Vuokatti Sport College, Super Jymy Ltd., Vuokatti Centre, Slope company Vuokatinrinteet, SMEs, Managers of tourism enterprises, Marketing team, Ski Tunnel, Tourists.

**Other Enterprises:** IT enterprise Incap, Talk company, Grocery shops, Local bank, Association of Enterprises, Managers of leading companies.

**State Organisations:** Employment and Economic Centre, Research and Development Centre of Kajaani (Oulu University).

**Other actors:** representatives in the Finnish Parliament, voluntary organisations, taxpayers, constructors and owners of summer cottages, farmers, well-targeted development projects.

### 2.3.4 Whom to trust for business advise?

The respondents were asked to name organisations that they would think were good in advising someone who wants to set up a business in the area. All the groups except the entrepreneurs answered in similar way: they would go to the regional TE-Centre (in Kajaani) or to the municipal secretary for industries (table 14). The entrepreneurs did not mention the TE-Centre at all, but they also would go to the municipal administration.

From the municipal secretary one gets good advice about land-use plans and available construction lots, and one gets encouragement and support for one's own idea. After that you may go to TE-centre to get more detailed advice about sector related matters, like financing. In almost every group of respondents some people did not know where to go for advice. Often people did not know who is responsible for industrial development matters in the municipal administration. Some also did remember that the post of industrial secretary had been abolished some years ago. Some answers included information about the division of labour between different organisations: TE-Centre knows about financing, Entrepreneur Association about social networks.

**Table 14: If setting up business, where to go for advice? (Q 11 Fi)**

	<b>TE-Centre, Kajaani</b>	<b>Other state organisation</b>	<b>Municipality</b>	<b>Bank</b>	<b>Other</b>	<b>Cannot say</b>
<b>Political Dec.-makers</b> (17 answers from 14 pers.)	7		6	1	2	1
<b>Municipal Officers</b> (14 answers from 7 pers.)	5		6	1	2	
<b>Entrepreneurs</b> (5 answers from 4 pers.)			3		1	1
<b>Village Organisations</b> (16 answers from 16 pers.)	7		6		2	1
<b>Other Voluntary organisations</b> (23 answers from 20 pers.)	7	2	7	2	3	2

*Explanation of categories:*

**TE-Centre:** State Employment and Economic Centre in Kajaani, especially its department of the industry is mentioned often, as well as some of its officers.

**Other state organs:** for example local tax office and labour office.

**Municipality:** municipality in general, some specified officers or decision-makers.

**Bank:** Local bank office or its officers.

**Others:** LEADER groups, Sotkamo Association of Entrepreneurs, Oulu University Research and Development Centre in Kajaani, Regional Council of Kainuu, managers of successful enterprises and some other persons mentioned by name.

### 2.3.5 Whom would you vote to be the Sotkamo Developer of the Year?

The respondents were asked to name a person, an organisation or an enterprise that they would nominate to be elected the Sotkamo Developer of the Year. There were 54 answers from 46 respondents (table 15). The answers were classified by sectors of activities. However, this classification is not unambiguous. The Sport College and SuperJymy Ltd could be as well among the tourism actors as among the sport actors. In addition, the Snowpolis project could be part of municipal actors, because it has been identified with both the municipal director and with the sport circles.



**Table 15: "The Developer of Sotkamo" in 2001 (Q 12 Fi)**

	Municipal actors	Tourism enterprises	Other enterprises	Sports actors	Cultural actors	Others	Cannot say
<b>Political Decision-makers</b> (10 answers from 8 pers.)	2	1	2		2	1	2
<b>Municipal Officers</b> (5 answers from 5 pers.)	2		1	1	1		
<b>Entrepreneurs</b> (4 answers from 4 pers.)		2		1		1	
<b>Village Organisations</b> (14 answers from 13 pers.)	2	1		6	1	3	1
<b>Other Voluntary organisations</b> (21 answers from 16 pers.)	3	1	1	6	3	4	3

*Categories:*

**Municipal actors:** Municipal mayor (5), Municipality (2), municipal officers and decision-makers.

**Tourism enterprises:** Spa and Hotel Katinkulta (4), the person who originally founded the Katinkulta Spa Hotel, Ski Slope Enterprise Vuokatinrinteet and its manager (2), accommodation enterprises.

**Other Enterprises:** Entrepreneurs, Arffman Consulting, Valio Oy (an ironic and negative nomination of the national dairy co-op that is closing the local dairy mill).

**Sport actors:** Vuokatti Sport College, SuperJymy Ltd (4) and its manager (2), the rector of local gymnasium (special sport gymnasium), local sport clubs "Jymy", "Sotkamon Jymy" (2), sport club "Visa", sport events in 2001, those who created the sport facilities, one named person in the history of Sport College, Snowpolis project (4).

**Cultural actors:** the founder and the first chairperson of the Sotkamo Art Society "Kuvittelijat" (5), Naapurinvaara Village Entertainment centre, local cantor.

**Others:** Local newspaper, creative "crazy" inhabitants, "Neste parliament" (group of regulars at Neste gas station cafe), local representative to Finnish Parliament, the landowners of the lakeside, everyone together, no one individual, one specified progressive farmer.

The votes seem to be scattered to different sectors of development. However the highest number of votes (altogether 14) were given to the actors in sports, although there exists also contradictory evaluations: the political decision-makers did not vote at all any sport actors. The municipality and its leaders and officers gathered the second largest number of votes (altogether 9 votes). The third largest category was cultural actors (7 votes).

#### **2.4 Participation in politics and civil society**

There were several questions about person's participation in public bodies and voluntary groups. The respondents were asked to check their level of activity in a list of twelve types of organisations for example a) political party, b) trade union, and so on (Q12 Fi, tables 16 & 17). In the next question respondents were asked to mention any other groups or networks or unofficial "bunches" that they belong to (Q 14 Fi, table 18). In addition, people were asked to name the leading or governing bodies that they are members of (Q 15 Fi, table 19). In the following the results of these three questions are first presented in separate tables and then commented together.

### 2.4.1 Membership and participation

*Political decision-makers* are active in public bodies of various levels and they participate in voluntary organisations. *Municipal officers* are the least active group. However, they are all members of their professional union, although they do not belong to its group of activists. One fourth of them works in municipal boards. Some of them are active in village groups or sport clubs. The *entrepreneurs* are not very active either. They are members of entrepreneurs association and sport clubs, where some of them have taken also an active role.

**Table 16: Memberships of all respondents together (Q13 Fi)**

Professional unions 35	Farmers union 20
Village groups 30	Hunting association 19
Municipal bodies 29	Entrepreneurs' association 10
Other public posts 25	Regional boards 7
Political parties 23	Other 44
Sport Clubs 23	<i>Total 265</i>

The group of respondents representing the *villages* is, naturally active in village groups. They are also members of farmers union and the hunting association, and in many other activities. Quite many of them belong to the trade unions. The respondents in the category of *other voluntary organisations* do represent sport clubs, art society and the association of the unemployed persons. Because of this they are naturally members of sport clubs and trade unions. (Finnish trade unions run many of unemployment insurance funds that pay unemployment benefits. This is one explanation for the fact that the rate of membership in trade unions has remained relatively high.) Many respondents of these groups are also members of village groups and are active in many other organisations.

**Table 17: Are you a member or an active in the following associations and groups? (Q 13 Fi)**

	<b>Active in following organisations (altogether 128 posts)</b>	<b>Memberships in following organisations (altogether 265 memberships)</b>
<b>Political Decision-makers</b> Answers from 15 persons. Together: 50 active posts, 82 memberships.	Municipal bodies 20 Political parties 8 Regional boards 6 Other public posts 6 Trade unions 4 Village groups 3 Hunting associations 3	Political parties 23 Municipal bodies 22 Other public posts 7 Regional boards 6 Trade unions 6 Farmers union 6 Hunting association 6 Village groups 4 Sport Clubs 2 Entrepreneurs' association 2 Others 9
<b>Municipal Officers</b> Answers from 8 persons. Together: 8 active posts, 22 memberships.	Municipal bodies 2 Other public posts 2 Sport clubs 1 Hunting association 1	Trade unions 7 Municipal bodies 2 Village groups 2 Sport clubs 2 Other public posts 2 Political party Hunting association Others 5
<b>Entrepreneurs</b> Answers from 6 persons. Together: 6 active posts, 12 memberships.	Entrepreneurs' association 2 Other public posts 2 Sport clubs 2	Entrepreneurs' association 4 Sport Clubs 3 Other public posts 2 Political party Others 2
<b>Village Organisations</b> Answers from 20 persons. Together: 37 active posts, 87 memberships.	Village groups 16 Other public posts 5 Farmers union 4 Political parties 3 Sport clubs 3 Hunting associations 3 Municipal bodies 3	Village groups 18 Farmers union 11 Trade unions 9 Hunting associations 8 Political parties 7 Other public posts 7 Sport clubs 6 Entrepreneurs' association 4 Municipal bodies 4
<b>Other voluntary organisations</b> Answers from 21 persons. Together: 27 active posts, 62 memberships.	Sport clubs 8 Other public posts 7 Trade unions 4 Village groups 4 Hunting associations 3 Political parties 1	Trade unions 13 Sport clubs 10 Other public posts 7 Village groups 6 Farmers union 3 Hunting associations 4 Political parties 2 Municipal bodies 1

*Explanation of categories:*

**Political parties:** Local political associations, which are usually members of regional and national political organisations. To formulate municipal policies, parties have also organisation of the municipal level.

**Municipal bodies:** Sotkamo Municipal Council (elected), Municipal Executive Board, and Special Boards (appointed by the Municipal Council) leading the work of different sectors, namely Agriculture Board, Culture Board (includes schools, sports, youth work), Social & Health Board, Technical Board

(includes land use planning, roads, utilities), and Environment Board (environmental protection, permissions for construction and soil exploitation).

**Regional Boards:** Regional public organisations that are usually associations or companies managed jointly by municipalities: Waste Disposal Combinat, Kainuu Industrial Development Company ETU, Municipal Consortium, Joint Committee for Regional Funding MYR (EU Fund co-ordinating body), Municipal Consortium for Special Health Care & Hospitals.

**Other public posts:** Respondents have listed various posts that are partly overlapping with other categories. The list includes Co-operative Organisations, organisations for handicapped persons (2), 4H- District Board, various steering committees of development projects, Regional level bodies of Centre Party, purchasing coops "Hansu" and "7-sinistä" (seven blue hills), Church Council, Art club "Kuvittelijat" (Picture Makers), regional co-ordinating group of village associations "kylätiimi", insurance company "Lähivakuutus", Finnish Red Cross, Governing Board of Regional Bank, Rural Co-operative Bank, Lions Club, Association of the Unemployed persons, taxation board, national defence organisation, governing bodies of schools.

**Village groups:** Vuokatti Village Committee, Associations in the Villages of Naapurinvaara, Tipasoja, Nimisenkangas, Kaitaansalmi, Sumsa and Pohjavaara, Pohjavaara District, Juhola Village, Kontinjoki District, The Women's Advisory Organisation for Development of Rural Areas "maa- ja kotitalousnaiset", Martat, rural youth association, Sotkamo Society, Sotkamo Art Society "Kuvittelijat".

**Sport clubs:** Pohjavaaran Sisu, Kalajoen Junkkarit, Sotkamon Jymy, Vuokatin Veto, KaSu, Jymyttäret, Tahiti (names of local clubs).

**Hunting associations:** Kiimasjärven Metsästäjät, Naapurinvaara-Torinkylän erä, Pohjavaaran Metsästysseura, Purnun Erä, Laakajärven Riistamiehet, Sotkamon metsästysseura (names of local associations) and one unofficial hunting group.

In addition to what has been said earlier some groups of respondents report additional fields of their activities (table 18). Political decision-makers participate in the networks of social and health policies, home district activities and charity. Municipal officers participate also in home district activities, discussions about municipal development, in national defence reserve activities, sports and professional unions. Entrepreneurs also take part in charity activities (Lions and Rotary Clubs). The village activists are interested in networks of home district, Employment coops, culture and women. The networking of the other voluntary organisations includes culture, sport, charity and social and health issues.

The answers about participation in the management bodies of associations (table 19) bring out new features in the profiles of our respondents. The *political decision-makers* are very involved in many activities, and the two most active ones had together almost twenty posts in leading bodies of various organisations. The three most frequently mentioned were hunting associations, village groups and professional unions. They had leading posts also in charity organisations, which was not common in other groups. About half of the *municipal officers* had leading posts in organisations, one of them in seventeen organisations. The top of their list is made of village groups and hunting associations. Among the six *entrepreneurs*, three had such leading posts, and one of them about 20 posts. The *village activists* were, naturally, often in the leadership of village groups, but also in employment co-operatives and sport clubs. At maximum one person in this group had five leading posts. The respondents of *other voluntary groups* reflect the nature of the selected respondents: they have leading posts in sports, employment co-operatives and in cultural organisations.

**Table 18: To what other groups or networks do you belong? (Q 14 Fi)**

	<b>I also belong to the following groups (top five in each category of respondents)</b>
<b>Political Decision-makers</b> (20 answers from 10 persons)	Social and health 4 Charity 2 Work place groups 2 Home district groups 2
<b>Municipal Officers</b> (16 answers from 7 persons)	Home district groups 2 Municipal development 2 National defence reserve 2 Sports 2 Hunting 2 Professional unions 2
<b>Entrepreneurs</b> (5 answers from 4 persons)	Charity 3 Municipal development Professional union
<b>Village Organisations</b> (23 answers from 13 persons)	Home district groups 5 Employment coops 4 Cultural groups 3 Women's groups 3
<b>Other voluntary organisations</b> (28 answers from 17 persons)	Cultural groups 5 Sports 4 Working place groups 3 Charity 3 Social and health 3

*Explanation of categories:*

**Cultural groups:** groups of amateurs, literary club, Art Society "Kuvittelijat" (Picture makers), village theatre, and support of Kuhmo Chamber music activities.

**Home district groups:** Sotkamo Society, village associations and groups.

**Women's groups:** both unofficial and official networks, including young women's: team, sauna-group, Kainuu women's network, Zonta organisation.

**Municipal development:** both official and unofficial groups, including the municipality leaders' team, Vuokatti Core, Jymy Club, the unofficial hunting society discussing the development of Sotkamo.

**National defence reserve:** including activities of reserve officers and war veterans.

**Sports:** sport activities, including dance competitions, shooting, riding, golf, volley ball, activities in Vuokatti skiing event, Vuokatti Foundation and the Finnish Sport Society SUL.

**Work place groups:** includes joint activities of teachers and retired teachers, work place committee organising events.

**Hunting:** deer hunting party, dog breeding

**Charity:** Rotary, Lions Clubs, Lions Ladies, the Mannerheim League for Child Welfare, Save the Children Society, collecting money for Church charity campaign.

**Social and health:** Red Cross, Associations of patients (lung disease, heart disease, asthma, allergy), councils of mental illness, of the handicapped, brain damage club, participation in projects of social and health care.

**Employment coops:** purchasing co-operatives (7-sinistä, Hansu), work co-operative Kainuun Kanerva, activities in Sotkamon Society of the Unemployed.

**Professional unions:** activity in national of regional unions: tree manufacturing workers, kindergarten teachers, metal workers' union, hotel and restaurant workers, agrologists, veterinarian societies.

**Table 19: Are you currently a member of a management committee of any association? (Q 15 Fi)**

	<b>Membership of management committee of the following organisations</b>
<b>Political Decision-makers</b> (31 answers from 11 persons)	Hunting 8 Village action 6 Professional union 5 Charity 2 Political party 2 Enterprises 2 Others 3
<b>Municipal Officers</b> (14 answers from 4 persons)	Village action 4 Hunting 3 Enterprises 2 Sports 1 Professional unions 1 Others 3
<b>Entrepreneurs</b> (4 answers from 3 persons)	Enterprises 2 Professional union 1 Other 1
<b>Village Organisations</b> (37 answers from 19 persons)	Village action 21 Employment coops 3 Sports 3 Hunting 1 Social & health 1 Political party 1 Enterprise 1 Others 6
<b>Other voluntary organisations</b> (22 answers from 17 persons)	Sports 7 Employment coops 6 Culture 5 Social & health 1 Village action 1 Professional union 1 Political party 1

*Explanation of categories: (Respondents reported altogether 140 membership of leading bodies of organisations, of which 106 could be classified in the following categories.)*

**Cultural groups:** Art Society "Kuvittelijat" (Picture makers), summer university.

**Employment coops:** purchasing co-operatives (7-sinistä, Hansu), work co-operative Kainuun Kanerva, activities in Sotkamon Society of the Unemployed.

**Sports:** sport activities, including dancing, motorcycles, women's gym groups, and activities on sport clubs and regional sport organisations.

**Hunting:** hunting, dog activities

**Charity:** traditional charity like Rotary and Lions Clubs.

**Social and health:** regional psoriasis society and support for mental illnesses.

**Village action:** Village committees and associations, Sotkamo Society, village co-ordinating team, other rural associations.

**Professional unions:** activity in regional trade unions.

Political party: mostly activities in local organisations of political parties (Centre Party and the Coalition Party)

**Enterprise:** participation in networks of local banks, insurance company and entrepreneurs' association.

**Others:** interest lobbying in regional organisations and development bodies, activities in national defence reserve, church

#### 2.4.2 *Comment: accumulation of activity*

In sociology one of the early observations has been the "law" of the accumulation of activities into certain persons and groups. Those who are active in one field, tend to active also in another field. When we look at the quantities of respondents' memberships and activist roles, we may classify our 70 respondents in five categories of activity.

- 1) The category of *super-actives* consists of 17 respondents, mainly municipal decision-makers (9). The group also includes several activists in villages (4), and single persons in other voluntary organisations, sport clubs and municipal administration. This group is called super-active because they have active role in at least in four different organisations, in some cases even in seven or eight. This group of persons holds also the important posts in the regional public bodies, and they are prominent in voluntary organisations, like sport clubs, hunting associations and village committees.
- 2) The next category may be called the one of *tri-actives*, as they are active in three different organisations. These 15 respondents are voluntary activists in villages and other organisations and some of them are members of some municipal bodies. Most of them are members of interest organisations (trade union, farmers union, and entrepreneur's association).
- 3) The largest number of respondents (20) is active in two different organisations. Amongst our respondents this type of *dual activists* is typically come from a village organisation (8), other voluntary organisation (4), sport clubs (4). In addition, there are also single municipal officers and decision-makers. People of this category are often also members of political parties and interest organisations.
- 4) There is also a group of (12) respondents with *single activity*. These people come mainly from voluntary organisations and municipal officers. In addition to being active in one organisation they are members in others.
- 5) The last group of (6) respondents may be called *members only*. This group consists of single persons in various groups of respondents. These people are usually members in two or three different organisations or groups.

#### 2.4.3 *Is something missing?*

Respondents were asked to name such missing groups or organisations that they would like to see in Sotkamo. Majority of the respondents did not think that something important is missing (table 20). Some respondents did mention some activities that would be welcome, but they are mostly single votes. Decision-makers and municipal officers mention the need for more cultural activities, and the need for green party. In addition, the need for party independent political activists in municipal politics is noted.

**Table 20: Is there a group or activity, which is missing in Sotkamo? (Q16 Fi)**

	1. Some activity missing?		2. What is missing?
	Yes	No	
<b>Political Decision-makers</b> 1. N=14 2. 11 answers from 10 pers.	1	12	Cultural Activity Think tank of rural development Green party
<b>Municipal Officers</b> 1. N=8 2. 5 answers from 5 pers.	2	6	Cultural Activity Green party
<b>Entrepreneurs</b> 1. N=4	0	4	
<b>Village Organisations</b> 1. N=18 2. 16 answers from 16 pers.	4	12	Local food co-operative Women's' employment group Voluntary national defence organisation
<b>Other Voluntary organisations</b> 1. N=17 2. 18 answers from 16 pers.	4	13	Recycling activity Sales point for handicrafts Activity for the young More tourism enterprises and collaboration Non-party political group in municipal politics

#### 2.4.4 One's own role in development

Respondents were asked about their own involvement in the development of their own community. They were asked if they have participated in any development work during the last five years, and if yes, how they participated (table 21).

In some groups of respondents almost everyone answered that "yes" they have taken part in development, while other group about half says "no" they have not participated in development activities. About half of respondents that are municipal decision-makers or belong to the group voluntary organisations answered "no". It seems that question has been mainly understood asking about participation in definite *development projects*. The decision-makers, who are otherwise very active, do not have time to concentrate on specific projects and people in the voluntary organisations may be left out of them.



**Table 21: Participation in development work (Q17 & Q18 Fi)**

	1.		2.	
	Yes Nr (%)	No	2a) Field of activity (mentioned more than once)	2b) Way of participation
<b>Political Decision-makers</b> 1. N=15 2a. 20 answers from 7 pers. 2b. 29 answers from 7 pers	8 (53%)	7	Employment coops 7 Agriculture & forestry 4 Sports 2 Village development 2 Other 2	Steering committee 7 Planning 6 Ordinary activist 2 Project leader 2 Part financier 1 Other 11
<b>Municipal Officers</b> 1. N=7 2a. 20 answers from 6 pers. 2b. 20 answers from 6 pers	6 (86%)	1	Agriculture & forestry 6 Land use planning 3 Social & health 3 Municipal administration 3 Tourism 2 Village development 2	Project leader 9 Planning 6 Steering committee 4 Ordinary activist 1
<b>Entrepreneurs</b> 1. N=6 2a. 11 answers from 5 pers. 2b. 20 answers from 5 pers	6 (100%)		Tourism 8 Sports 2	Project leader 8 Planning 4 Steering committee 4 Part financier 3 Other 1
<b>Village Organisations</b> 1. N=17 2a.31 answers from 13 pers 2b.53 answers from 12 pers	11 (65%)	5	Village development 14 Agriculture & forestry 5 Sports 3 Other 7	Planning 14 Ordinary activist 11 Project leader 9 Steering committee 8 Part financier 5 Other 6
<b>Other Voluntary organisations</b> 1. N=18 2a. 25 answers from 9 pers. 2b. 37 answers from 9 pers	9 (50%)	9	Social & health 5 Culture 4 Sports 3 Employment coops 3 Land use planning 2 Tourism 2 Village development 2 Other 2	Steering committee 13 Planning 11 Project leader 6 Ordinary activist 4 Part financier 3

*Explanations of categories*

**Sports:** Vuokatti Skiing event, ski tube, skiing routes, SuperJymy Ltd, developing skiing infrastructure, big skiing events like Youth Winter Olympics

**Land use planning:** includes also environmental projects, inspection of construction work, healthy environment programme, maintenance of landscape heritage, landscaping of Hiukka beach area.

**Culture:** Protection of the Hostel Tikkanen, Sotkamo Art Society, development of elementary and pre-school education, training

**Social & health:** Family support project "Omaisest tukena", prevention of the exclusion of the elderly, enterprises in social care, the structure and quality development of social and health services, council for mental health, advisory body for the care of the handicapped, project of the organisations of the disabled.

**Tourism:** project for conference tourism, tourism marketing, tourism and local creativity project, meeting and congress, Vuokatti collaboration, joint marketing and joint events, Katinkulta Spa Hotel.

**Municipal administration:** meeting of the core group, municipal council, municipal strategy planning, organisation changes, team organisation, planning of municipal economy.

**Village development:** voluntary work, mutual help, village publications, publicising village events, organising co-operation, maintaining local spirit, defending the schools in the villages, restoring small boat harbour and swimming beaches, construction village walk and bikeways and jogging routes,

restoring club houses, putting up water system, village development association joining several villages.

**Agriculture & forestry:** co-operation in developing the food and biotech laboratory, agricultural producers' association, development of rural economy, small scale slaughterhouse, help in filling applications, purchasing co-operatives, forest work enterprise, organic farming, 4H activities, direct sales, veterinarian co-operation.

**Employment coops** include also various employment projects, such as Afleck trading house co-operative, youth workshop, from homework to earnings, two generation women, and new choice.

**Others:** various statements of general nature, everything during the last 30 years, participating in regional decision-making about funding, organising co-operation, founding an enterprise, Women's' forum, various events, Snowpolis, entrepreneurs' association, department house company, community services, creating positive spirit in rural areas.

Answers about the field and way of participation tell also about the understandings of development in different groups. Some of the *decision-makers* have participated in various employment projects (Employment coops) and some of them in development of agriculture and forestry. The most common way for them is to participate in the planning of the project and to be a member of the project's steering committee. *Municipal officers* have also participated mainly in the development of agriculture and forestry (which may be explained by their political background) but they are involved also in land use planning, social and health care, and naturally in development of municipal administration. Their typical way of participation has been planning of the project, serving in the steering committee and leading the project implementation. The *entrepreneurs* have participated in development of tourism and sports. They have been project leaders, financiers (partly) and participated in planning and steering committees. The respondents in the *village organisations* have, not surprisingly, mainly participated in village development projects. In addition they have influenced development efforts in agriculture and sports. They have participated often in planning of projects and act as grass roots level ordinary activists in the implementation of the projects. However, many of them have experience of leading the projects and working in the steering committee, as well. Respondents in *other voluntary organisations* have participated in projects of social and health care, culture, sport and employment efforts in Employment coops. Typically they have taken part in project planning and steering committees.

#### 2.4.5 How one may influence?

Respondents were asked if they feel that they have a role in the development of Sotkamo and through which channels do they influence the development. Of those who did answer the question, almost all did answer "yes", however ten persons told that they cannot answer the question (table 22).

The *decision-makers* trust firmly in the political system and they mention the importance of own expertise and connections to various associations. All the respondents in the group of the *municipal officers* believe that they have influenced the development. They influence mainly through their own official positions. Two of them did mention also development projects. The *entrepreneurs* influence through their enterprises and their leading position in them, but they mention also unofficial networks. *Village activists* emphasise the importance of voluntary activities. They also emphasise that one has to defend also the underprivileged groups. Some of them

recognised the role of their own expertise and enterprise. Respondents in *other voluntary organisations* emphasise the opportunities to collaborate created by voluntary activities. They mention also other forms of activity different from village activities, such as cultural activities. Two persons in this group mention development projects, as well.

**Table 22: How can one play a role in the development? (Q19 Fi)**

	1. Can you play a role?		2. Why and how you can? (If answered yes)
	Yes (%)	No	
<b>Political Decision-makers</b> 1. 15 answers from 15 pers. 2. 13 answers from 13 pers.	13 (87%)		By political system 5 By own official position or expertise 3 By associations and by political system 3 By participating in projects 1
<b>Municipal Officers</b> 1. 8 answers from 8 pers. 2. 8 answers from 8 pers.	8 (100%)		By own official position or expertise 5 By participating in projects 2 By political system 1
<b>Entrepreneurs</b> 1. 6 answers from 6 pers. 2. 5 answers from 5 pers.	5 (83%)	1	By own enterprise 2 By other ways 1
<b>Village Organisations</b> 1. 18 answers from 18 pers. 2. 16 answers from 16 pers.	16 (89%)		By associations 11 By own official positions or expertise 3 By own enterprise 1 By association and own enterprise 1 By other ways 2
<b>Other Voluntary organisations</b> 1. 21 answers from 21 pers. 2. 12 answers from 14 pers.	14 (67%)	1	By associations 7 By participating in projects 2 By political system 1 By own enterprise 1 By own official position or expertise 1

#### 2.4.6 Why one does not have influence?

Some of those who did not answer "yes" did also explicate why they feel that they do not have influence in the development. Some mentioned old age as a limitation. Some felt that it is difficult to get into the inner circle of influence. One village activist mentioned that village associations do not have credibility in the eyes of the decision-makers. One feels that his influence is limited because his permanent place of residence is outside the municipality, although he works there. Some of the decision-makers felt that small-scale politicking and cuts in public budgets limit their possibilities to influence.

## 2.5 Satisfaction with the results and social impacts of the development

Respondents were asked to tell if they were satisfied with the results of development activities. They were also asked to specify why they were satisfied or dissatisfied (see table 23). Political decision-makers, municipal officers and the entrepreneurs have the most positive opinion about the results of development activities, about half of them say that they are satisfied. The share of those satisfied is much smaller among the respondents of village organisations (25%) and voluntary organisations (29%). One can see here a divide between the supporters of the official development policy of the municipality and its discontents in villages and voluntary groups.

**Table 23: How many is satisfied with the results of development and why? (Q20 Fi)**

	Number of satisfied	Arguments for being satisfied	Arguments for being dissatisfied
<b>Political Decision-makers</b> N=14 person	8 (57%)	Results in tourism 2 Employment Need to improve preparation of decisions	Too much focus in tourism Too much focus in sports Inputs are not efficient Need for specific projects
<b>Municipal Officers</b> N=8 persons	4 (50%)	Results in tourism 2 Reasonable inputs and results 2 Brave experiments & good publicity	Too much focus in tourism Inputs are not efficient Too many financiers
<b>Entrepreneurs</b> N=6 persons	3 (50%)	Brave experiments & good publicity Economic welfare	Too much focus in agriculture Need to improve land-use planning
<b>Village Organisations</b> N= 16 persons	4 (25%)	Reasonable inputs and results 2 Brave experiments & good publicity Support Start enterprise	Development focus too concentrated 2 Too much focus in tourism Too much focus in sports Too much focus in municipal centre and Vuokatti Structural problems Need for more support to agriculture
<b>Other Voluntary Organisations</b> N= 21 persons	6 (29%)	Results in tourism Reasonable inputs and results Brave experiments & good publicity	Too much focus in sports Forgotten voluntary organisations Structural problems Always learning by making mistakes

Although only few of the respondents wrote down the reasons for their opinion, these help to draw an outline of the contradiction underneath the Sotkamo success story. Those who are satisfied with the results mention the good results in tourism, brave and risk taking experiments, and good publicity. In addition, they emphasise often that the inputs have been reasonable in relation to the results. Those who are dissatisfied,

especially the village activists and respondents from voluntary organisations, turn the table around and claim that development efforts have been too much focused on tourism and sports, and they have not been very efficient. There are single contradictory arguments about agriculture: one entrepreneur thinks that agriculture has received too much development inputs and one village activist calls for more support to agriculture. There is also one comment referring to concentrating too many efforts to the two service centres of the municipality, namely the municipal centre and the Vuokatti settlement, which implies exclusion of other villages.

A similar divide seems to emerge in another question (Q21 Fi, table 24) that looks at the inclusion in and exclusion from development on a more general level. It was asking if everyone has equal chance to participate in the development and if there is any particular group that is being left out of the development process. About half of the decision-makers, the municipal officers and the entrepreneurs answered "yes", everybody has an equal chance to participate in development. The majority of those in the village organisations and voluntary organisations answer "no"; the chances are not equal. However also the majority of decision-makers and officers answered that that there are such groups that are left out.

Altogether 40 respondents did answer this question. All the groups of respondents agree that marginalised groups are left out. The old and the unemployed are mentioned by all the other categories of respondents, except the entrepreneurs. The decision-makers, municipal officers and village activist agreed on children and the young being almost as forgotten a group as the old. The respondents in village and voluntary organisations emphasised that the needs of rural areas have been forgotten.

Respondents gave following explanations for the groups being left out. *The old, the children and the young* do not have skills and means to participate and to defend their interests. The young are forgotten because they are not active, which is partly due to the cutting of the public funds in youth work. In addition, the increased demands in work-life and market economy were mentioned as producing exclusion. Among the old, especially elderly women were mentioned. On the other hand, possibilities have improved because of the special "council for the old" and the emerging co-operation between the municipality, entrepreneurs and the third sector. It was mentioned that one way to improve the position of the old and the unemployed could a questionnaire study of the opinions of these groups.

The *ordinary citizens* are not able to influence, because the elite and its supporters use the power. It is claimed that the members of municipal executive board favour their own relatives. The development activities do not take into account the opinions of the grass roots. If one is not a member of political party, the possibilities to influence are small. The *unemployed* are left out, because they have not candidates in the municipal election.

The *rural areas* are forgotten although the majority of the municipal council should be supporting them (referring to the simple majority of the Centre Party, 20 out of 35 seats). The chances to influence decline as one goes further away from the Sotkamo centre or from Vuokatti. The poor telecommunications make telework difficult. In agriculture the nation-wide Valio Company (big coop) has too much power. The general esteem of agriculture is going down.

Five respondents pointed to the recent general way of thinking that overestimates the possibilities of individual. According to this way of thinking some of the young and marginalised people are passive by their nature. They do not want to participate and they are just waiting for everything to become to them ready-made.

**Table 24: Has everyone equal chance? Who is left out? (Q21 Fi)**

Question: Do you feel that everyone has an equal chance to participate in the development of Sotkamo? Is there any particular group being left out? What group has left out and why?

	1. Does everyone have an equal chance to participate?			2. Is there any group being left out?			3. What group has been left out? (top four)
	Yes (%)	Can't say	No	Yes (%)	Can't say	No	
<b>Political Decision-makers</b> 1. 15 answers from 15 pers. 2. 14 answers from 14 pers. 3. 15 answers from 8 pers.	7 (47%)	1	7	9 (64%)	1	4	Old 4 Children and the young 3 Marginalised 3 Unemployed 2
<b>Municipal Officers</b> 1. 8 answers from 8 pers. 2. 7 answers from 7 pers. 3. 7 answers from 6 pers.	4 (50%)		4	4 (57%)	1	2	Children and the young 2 Old, Unemployed Marginalised Those outside politics Agriculture
<b>Entrepreneurs</b> 1. 6 answers from 6 pers. 2. 6 answers from 6 pers. 3. 2 answers from 2 pers.	3 (50%)	2	1	2 (33%)	2	2	Marginalised Those outside politics
<b>Village Organisations</b> 1. 19 answers from 19 pers. 2. 18 answers from 18 pers. 3. 18 answers from 11 pers.	5 (26%)	3	11	9 (50%)	7	2	Rural areas 5 Old 4 Children and the young 3 Unemployed 2 Marginalised 2
<b>Other Voluntary Organisations</b> 1. 21 answers from 21 pers. 2. 21 answers from 21 pers. 3. 16 answers from 13 pers.	7 (33%)	2	12	12 (57%)	8	1	Unemployed 4 Old 3 Ordinary citizens 2 Marginalised 2 Rural areas 2

*Explanations, question 3:*

**The old**, includes also pensioners.

**Ordinary citizens**, include grass roots activists, those outside the power circle, those not related to decision-makers.

**Marginalised**, includes disabled, new helpless, poor.

**Rural areas**, includes people in remote villages, those outside centres, the care for the old in remote places, teleworkers.

**Agriculture**, includes food production

### **3 Interpretations of the results of the questionnaire**

#### **3.1 *Emerging themes***

##### *3.1.1 Development priorities*

The development of tourism is the main positive stream of Sotkamo economy. Inside this positive general development, there are some underlying conflicts between different actors. For the future development of this sector, however, it is vital that the actors are able to overcome contradictions and solve the conflicts, and to maintain the mutually beneficial co-operation of operators and enterprises of different size.

Sports are an important central field of social networks in Sotkamo. In general, projects and events in sports are regarded as positive and highly significant source of local self-esteem. National championships in Finnish baseball and major skiing events in Vuokatti create positive publicity and attract tourists and visitors. Somewhat sore point, however, is the connection of traditional sport club activities and voluntary work to the business-like activities of the top sports.

One senses also the typical contradiction in rural municipalities, that is the competition of locations for development resources. Vuokatti settlement and the municipality centre are seen as getting more development resources than the surrounding rural areas and remote villages.

The issue of fate of Hostel Tikkanen brings into daylight the local tension between the official development line and that one of the cultural activists. Cultural activists in the Art Society "Kuvittelijat" regard this old wooden house in the municipal centre as a monument with cultural and historical values. They fear that the municipality leadership is ready to tear the building down. This same divide between culture and municipal leadership was intensified in autumn 2002 by the struggle against the closure of the public library in Vuokatti settlement.

##### *3.1.2 Key development actors*

The role of the municipality is central, although for the Finnish people it seems to be self-evident. The municipality has the mandate of land-use planning, it has tax incomes of its own (although pressures to cut down public expenses are severe), and it is the organiser and provider of the welfare state services. In addition it offers the local forum for participation and political struggles, as its decision-making body is elected by general vote. The municipality is one main actor in organising various development projects. It is often the most important source of local funding (for example matching funding in EU projects). This is a reason why local decisions and struggles about development strategies take place in the arena of municipal politics. Sport and tourist interests have found each other in the official development coalition of Sotkamo, and its choices have been criticised by activists in villages and voluntary organisations involved in other activities than sports.

The local politicians tend to think that the local style of decision-making is specifically quick, daring and flexible. The reality of these claims needs to be further analysed. The Centre Party has a simple majority (but not a qualified majority which is needed in some decisions) which enables rapid decisions but it brings many contradictory issues inside the group of the Centre Party council members. The second largest group has been for a long time the Left Wing Alliance, which has been losing its support base. The opinions regarding the local decision-making seem to be paradoxically divided. When respondents were asked to name the things they don't like in Sotkamo, all the groups disliked, in addition to local mentality, the local decision-making (except the decision-makers themselves).

The role of the Spa Hotel Katinkulta is the most prominent single actor in the field of tourism. Its connections to the Holiday Club chain connect to other similar enterprises. It is a vital link in the implementation of the unique Sotkamo concept of tourism: "you have summer around the year (in Spa Hotel) and you have winter around the year (Vuokatti and Ski Tunnel)." Katinkulta hotel has been one of the key drivers of the practical co-operation of tourism service producers in the area and one of the key actors in joint marketing efforts of the Vuokatti and Sotkamo area.

The role of Vuokatti Sport College is important in both sports and in tourism. It has a 50-year-old history of activities in Sotkamo. In earlier years it has been a branch of the Finnish national skiing association, but during the latest two decades it has become involved with the local development efforts. The Vuokatti Sport College sees itself as a promoter of winter sports, especially its Nordic forms. From this point of view the Finnish baseball is a regional and national game, while skiing represents international connections and far better economic potential. In winter sports Vuokatti has a role as an international training centre of top teams.

The sport club Sotkamo Jymy has reached national publicity especially because of its national baseball championships in the 1990s. The sport club is a significant actor in mobilising voluntary activities. Baseball games and recently other big sporting events are organised with the help of tens and hundreds of voluntary workers. Because of the new baseball successes, the baseball was separated into a sport society of its own and a little later, an enterprise SuperJymy (Ltd) was founded to run the super league baseball games. This enterprise has recently extended its activities to organising big events in Vuokatti and to the image marketing of the Sotkamo area. The municipality itself has earlier been a shareholder of a tourist marketing enterprise, but nowadays it is buying the image marketing services from Super Jymy Ltd. At the same time the attractive image of "Vuokatti Hills" has been reconstructed into a joint brand for the marketing of the super league baseball team, Sotkamo tourism, winter sports and various large events in Sotkamo. Some of the more traditional voluntary sport activists are not very enthusiastic about the business-like ways of running sports.

### *3.1.3 Networks and fields of activity*

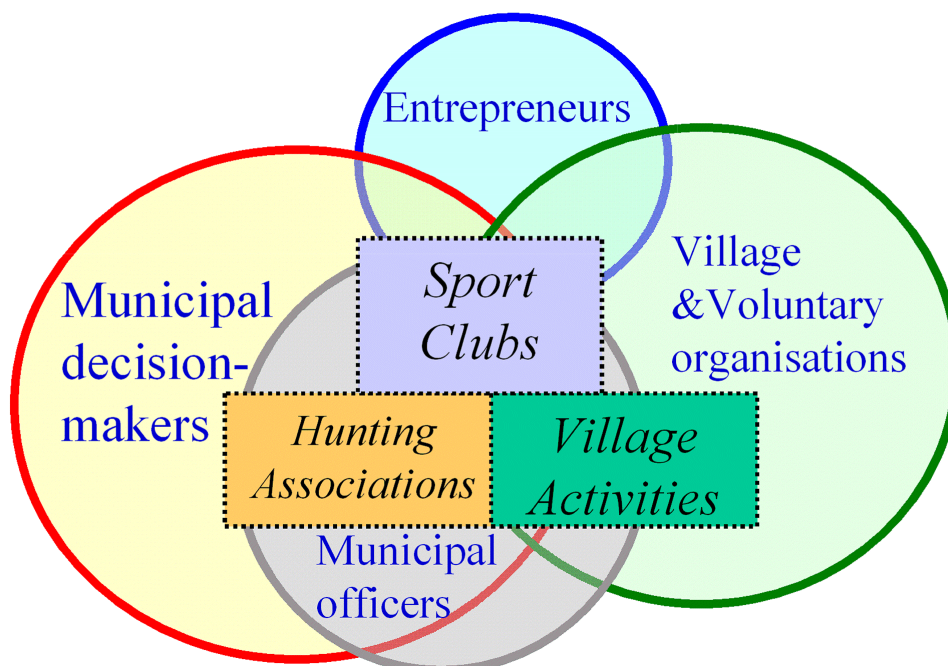
Using the membership data provided by the respondents one may construct a picture of the main fields of societal activities in Sotkamo (see diagram 4).



- 1) The field of *politics* that is taking place in municipal decision-making and public bodies of the municipality and regional level (such as the Regional Council and regional service associations of several municipalities).
- 2) In the field of *interest organisations* people are organised by similar social positions (trade unions, agricultural producers' association, entrepreneurs' association). These explicate needs and create support for some priorities or initiatives in the political field.
- 3) There are also fields of activity that connect persons of different professional and social positions. In our data some associations include persons practically *from all our categories of respondents*. These are *sport clubs, hunting associations and village organisations*.

Diagram 4 illustrates the *overlapping spheres of activity*, which are bridged by the intertwined memberships of our respondents. Through the overlapping memberships of active people personal bridges are formed between municipal decision-making, political parties, voluntary groups and interest organisations (like trade unions, farmers union and entrepreneurs associations). One must remember, however, that these bridges between different social groups are not harmonious by nature. Often they are channels where conflicting conceptions meet and social battles are fought.

**Diagram 4: Spheres of activity and overlapping of memberships of respondents**



### *3.1.4 People's role in development*

The Sotkamo success story has the support of the many active groups in Sotkamo. Those who are satisfied with the results, mention the good results in tourism, brave experiments and good publicity. However, there seems to be simultaneously awareness that success is not shared by all. Although about half of the decision-makers, municipal officers and entrepreneurs said everybody has an equal chance to participate in development, they also said that there are some groups that are left out.

Those who are contesting the results of the success story, especially the village activists and those from voluntary organisations, turn the table around and claim that development efforts have been too much focused on tourism and sports, too much concentrated to the municipal centre and the Vuokatti settlement, and they have not been very efficient. They would like to have more resources for rural development and for public services, and especially for culture. There seem to be a growing number of activists in voluntary organisations and citizens groups which feel that the significance of culture for good life is not recognised by the decision-makers, and neither is its long-term significance for the development of tourism and general attractiveness of the area.

## *3.2 Overview of the results of the questionnaire study*

The general objectives of the questionnaire were reached. Collected information is a good bases for outlining the local development priorities, it helps to identify the key development actors and events, and it gives an overview of the various networks in the area.

The method of focusing the questionnaire on selected focus groups was functioning well. The groups were motivated to fill the forms in group meetings of their own. This brought about reasonably good rate of return (66%) and surprisingly rich quality of data (also in open questions). The main limitation of the data is that it covers the active persons in active groups only. The information about popular resistance and about the opinions of the marginalised groups came out only as far as the activists in politics or voluntary associations give them voice.

### *3.2.1 Practical challenges and the relevance for the next stage of research*

The main challenge was how to reach the key groups and networks and how to motivate them to participate in the study. This was overcome with the help of a good assistant with good local knowledge and social skills. The most difficult focus group to reach was the entrepreneurs. Neither was the number of young respondents very high.

The questionnaire has been used to identify and to recruit the key person to be interviewed. The overview of the social networks helps to locate the persons on the social map of Sotkamo. The answers have also helped to define the topics and themes of the interviews: which events, groups and issues are relevant for more detailed discussions.