



*Empowered lives.
Resilient nations.*



IN THIS ISSUE

A woman entrepreneur
turns her dreams into reality!

A view from the
Ministry of Labour and Social Policy

Local elections: Where are the women?

Reducing transport emissions: Time to be pragmatic

DEVELOPMENT STORIES

UNDP's activities in the country are within the framework of the UN Development Assistance Framework 2010-2015, agreed between the Government and the UN Agencies in 2009.

Published by the Office of the United Nations Development Programme in Skopje

Design: Artistika

In this issue

Designing her way to the top

7

Interview with the Minister of Labour and
Social Policy, Spiro Ristovski:
My mission is to help all citizens!

12

Investing in nature, investing in community

17

Local elections: Where are the women?

25

People living with HIV speak out in hope of
a better future

26

Roma and Employment
– a new study reveals the vicious circle of
employment discrimination and low education

30

Apples all round for teachers and
students in Resen

32

Stepping up support for EU accession

35

“Rise of South” transforming global
power balance, says 2013 Human
Development Report

38

Reducing transport emissions:
Time to be pragmatic!

43



Dear Readers,



Welcome to the third issue of Development Stories, a magazine highlighting the work of UNDP and our partners in promoting sustainable development.

Each edition of Development Stories showcases activities and explores aspects of the many areas in which UNDP is involved. In this issue we present one of the numerous success stories from the programme for promoting self-employment — a major Government and UNDP initiative to tackle long-term unemployment — as well as an interview with the Minister of Labour and Social Policy.

UNDP's efforts to promote sustainable environmental management are highlighted, meanwhile, by a photo-story on the benefits of the Ezerani Nature Reserve and a feature on the introduction of a new model orchard in Resen high-school. And UN's work for the greater social inclusion of vulnerable groups is covered in an article about giving a voice to people in this country living with HIV and a review of a new study on Roma and employment.

This issue also includes a look at the fascinating findings of the 2013 Human Development Report. These findings reveal a major shift in development trends, with developing countries in the south emerging as the main drivers for human development worldwide. On a positive note, it is gratifying to see that this country is also following the trends identified in the 2013 Report, with people living longer and spending longer in education as well as enjoying more purchasing power – key factors contributing to maintaining the country's place in the high human development group.

I very much hope you will enjoy catching up on our latest news

Deirdre Boyd

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'D. Boyd'.

UNDP Resident Representative



© UNDP/Ljubomir Stefanov

DESIGNING HER WAY TO THE TOP

Jelena Kostovska demonstrated a talent for designing clothes at an early age. After attending textile vocational school, she got to work with two leading designers and sold her products in boutique shops.

But then she ran into obstacles that face many entrepreneurs in the country. A lack of capital, equipment, and the inability to write a business plan prevented her from expanding.

Now that has all changed. Kostovska, 38, is one of more than 5,000 people who took part in a nationwide training scheme, part of a national Government programme implemented with the support of UNDP, that helps put small business on a path to success.

“Now I can grow my company into a bigger fashion house, one that can compete in quality and price with the other more established fashion houses,” said Kostovska.

TURNING DREAMS INTO REALITY

In addition to helping her create a business plan, the programme provided Kostovska with grant money for two sewing machines, a computer and a camera. She also bought business cards, flyers, fashion posters, a company logo and an attractive shop sign to attract business.

Kostovska applied for the programme after seeing an advertisement for a two-day workshop that taught business planning and administration and provided grants for equipment.

"I asked around and it turned out that some friends of mine had already taken part in the scheme and were really impressed," she said. "So I applied and was selected for the course."

The nationwide training scheme is open to anyone who can present a viable business idea, and who is legally out of work. Like many entrepreneurs in her country, Kostovska had been officially unemployed since she didn't have the funds to register her business.

Successful applicants attend an intensive two-day workshop to help them develop their business idea and provide support in marketing and accounting.

"Now I can grow my company into a bigger fashion house, one that can compete in quality and price with the other more established fashion houses," said Kostovska

"I think anyone who has a good idea, the determination to see it through, and the willingness to complete this project will be able to realize their ideas and achieve success in a short period of time." says Kostovska

BUILDING CONFIDENCE

"The workshop was a real confidence-booster," says Kostovska. "I think anyone who has a good idea, the determination to see it through, and the willingness to complete this project will be able to realize their ideas and achieve success in a short period of time."

At the end of the workshop, the training team assesses each candidate's business plan to identify those with the biggest potential to grow into successful companies. They can obtain a grant of as much as 3,000 euros.

"It is a great feeling when I see a company established with the support of this programme growing and prospering," says Menka Gugulevska, Advisor in the Employment Centre in Skopje, the capital.

"With the help of the grant money I was able to get going almost straight away," Kostovska said.



© UNDP/Ljubomir Stefanov

STIMULATING EMPLOYMENT

A key goal of the Government's national self-employment programme has been to reduce joblessness by encouraging the creation of small businesses that will not only provide a living for successful entrepreneurs but also employ workers. Kostovska has already been able to recruit one employee.

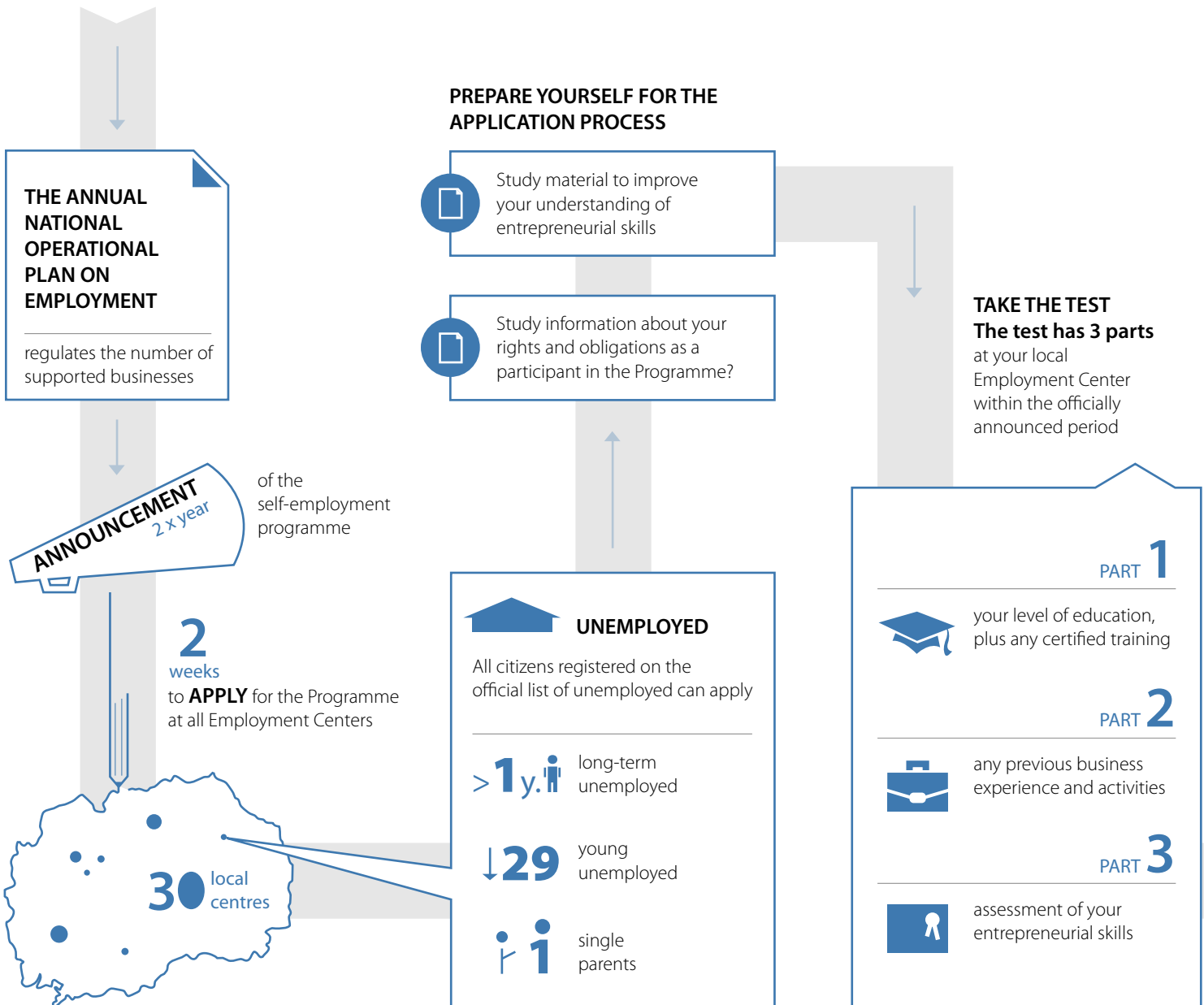
Seventy percent of entrepreneurs who have received training and equipment through the course over the past five years have remained in business – well above the roughly 50 percent global success rates for new companies.

More than \$22 million has been invested in job creation initiatives tailored to the labour market through the programme, which has been supported by UNDP since 2007.

"I think this programme offers a great starting chance to succeed in business for anyone with an entrepreneurial spirit," said Kostovska.

SELF - EMPLOYMENT PROGRAMME

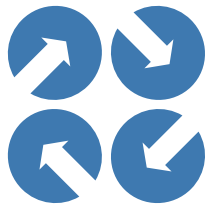
HOW DOES IT WORK?





best business IDEAS

SELECTION PROCESS



With close guidance from trainers, all participants must **DEVELOP A BUSINESS IDEA**



TRAINING... provides basic skills for establishing a small/family business

P
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S

Candidates with the highest test results are selected for training in basic business planning and management



Working with **PROFESSIONAL CONSULTANTS**


The selected candidates must develop **BUSINESS PLANS**

The **930** best **BUSINESS PLANS** receive grants




SELECTION is performed by experts from: the banking sector, employment centers and the Agency for Promotion of Entrepreneurship

Candidates receive consultation on **REGISTERING**



their legal entity and on employment

Successful candidates **SIGN A CONTRACT** in which their rights and obligations are defined



WWW...

samovrabortuvanje.mk

FUTURE SUPPORT is provided for the new businesses through the website

INFORMATION & KNOWLEDGE SHARING amongst the beneficiaries of the programme



ONLINE LEARNING COURSES on different aspects of business management



GRANT

For procuring equipment and raw materials, as specified in the business plan, in the amount of

185.000

MKD

MY MISSION IS
TO HELP ALL
CITIZENS!

*Interview with the Minister of Labour
and Social Policy, Spiro Ristovski*

Q

Minister, you seem determined to tackle the problem of domestic violence and the country has clearly done a great deal to strengthen national capacities for preventing such violence. Do you think public awareness of domestic violence has been raised? What will the Ministry's priorities be in tackling this problem in the near future?

The Government is committed to the protection of human rights, always bearing in mind the fact that the family is the nucleus of society as a whole, but also a nucleus where human rights are most often breached via use of violence.

The issue of domestic violence in the country has already ceased to be a family matter of private nature and it has ceased to be a taboo topic. The major contribution in this respect has been made by the amendments and the implementation of the National Strategy, the array of strategic documents, the active fieldwork, and the continuous education of experts in identification, work with and protection of domestic violence victims.

The implementation of the National Strategy for Protection from Domestic Violence 2008-2011, which received support from the UN agencies, established a comprehensive and efficient system of protection from and prevention of domestic violence in the country. The results achieved in the field show that its implementation has been a success. The increase in the number of domestic violence cases reported to the Social Work Centres demonstrates that the awareness as to reporting of domestic violence has been raised. This also indicates that domestic violence victims trust the institutions and request assistance and support from experts in domestic violence protection. For the

institutions, and first and foremost for us as a ministry in charge, this is motivation to persist in our activities and constantly upgrade them.

The Ministry of Labour and Social Policy, through Social Work Centres, offers a plethora of social services via open shelters for domestic violence victims, counselling service for domestic violence victims, and counselling service for perpetrators of domestic violence.

As logical continuity of the progress and goals accomplished with the previous strategy, in July 2012 the Government adopted the National Strategy for Protection from Domestic Violence 2012-2015. The Strategy is to be enforced through the five strategic areas as follows: prevention, protection, assistance and support to domestic violence victims, persecution of perpetrators, multi-sector cooperation and building of the institutional capacities, monitoring and evaluation.

To achieve a higher level of efficiency and joint operation in the prevention of and protection from domestic violence, a National Coordination Body for prevention of and protection from domestic violence has been established by the Government. It consists of representatives of the competent ministries, members of the Parliament, and representatives of the National Network for Domestic Violence constituted by nongovernmental organisations dealing with this area. I am personally content with the work of this body to date.

“The Government have set one and only goal before themselves: social inclusion of vulnerable groups by raising the level of education and employment.”



Q

Your ministry has worked to ensure the implementation of the national Employment Programmes in recent years. In what ways does the Ministry plan to develop and expand the current types of measures?

Unemployment is a burning issue, too, which is the reason why this matter has been made one of the top priorities in the Work Programme of the Government. A number of strategic documents have been compiled, such as the National Employment Strategy 2015, which outlines the strategic priorities and anticipated goals to be fulfilled. The specific activities are determined in the National Employment Action Plan, covering the 2011-2013 period, and it is compliant with the development framework, the institutional capacities, and the public funding opportunities. These plans are in harmony with the European Strategy for Smart, Sustainable and Inclusive Growth – Europe 2020.

On an annual basis, the Government enacts operation plans related to active employment programmes and measures, which overall, create jobs. Various training courses ensure skills improvement of the unemployed, thereby assisting them to find jobs more easily. Other measures provide immediate support for stimulation of employment or increasing the employability of the unemployed. From 2007 up till the present, more than 50,000 unemployed people have been involved in these programmes. Some of the programmes have been implemented since 2007, and those are the ones yielding the best results, i.e. they are sustainable in the long term. For instance, the Self-Employment Programme and the Formalisation Programme.

Within the framework of these two programmes, from 2007 until 2012, approximately 5,000 registered unemployed people became self-employed. Among

this number, where 1,100 people who formalised their business activities. The data indicate that these programmes are still sustainable, which means they have been established and focused in a good manner.

In order to make the programmes more efficient, more sustainable and more inclusive of all unemployed people, each year the Self-Employment Programme reviews the criteria for participation in the programmes. Thus, the Self-Employment Programme for 2013 has been upgraded by increasing the number of business management training course days from 1 to 5 days. During this course the candidates receive training on business idea development, business planning and management. They receive support for development of their business idea and gain knowledge of the basic entrepreneurial skills, modes of doing small businesses, legal conditions and requirements seminal for launching and doing business, counselling on selection of a registration form etc. These improvements are expected to provide a better offer with better quality of the business ideas, which will ensure greater success in the future.

All active programmes are monitored during their implementation process, and based on the experience, whether negative or positive, they are reinforced in order to provide increased efficiency and sustainability.

“The Government is committed to the protection of human rights, always bearing in mind the fact that the family is the nucleus of society as a whole, but also a nucleus where human rights are most often breached via use of violence.”

Q

Minister, you recently stated that “Politics should be left aside, vulnerable groups are the priority”. Can you give us an example of the successful integration of vulnerable groups in social development?

The Government have set one and only goal before themselves: social inclusion of vulnerable groups by raising the level of education and employment.

People from vulnerable groups are primarily interested in being trained in occupations that are deficient on the labour market, attending training courses organised by the the Employment Agency, learning foreign languages, and gaining computer skills; all of which encourages and motivates them to become engaged on the labour market. The number of recruitments of these people keeps rising; some are encouraged to become involved in the measure for starting their own business, and their number is on the rise, so that nowadays they even become involved in measures for additional recruitment of new personnel, they become employers themselves.

For victims of domestic violence, the Ministry of Labour and Social Policy implements a Programme on Economic Empowerment of Domestic Violence Victims. Rest assured that there are scores of success stories of women who have broken the circle of violence, and, aided by the state, they have launched their own businesses and today they operate well and profitably. This is only a small example that the inclusive labour market is operational for all vulnerable groups.



Q

What is your personal mission in the forthcoming period, both from the position of a minister and the position of an ordinary citizen?

The government members always act based on citizens' best interests. We have worked and we will continue to work to improve their conditions and status in every segment of the society.

My mission is to help all categories of citizens, wherever necessary, pursuant to the competencies lying within the scope of work of the Ministry of Labour and Social Policy. I am not saying that during my tenure, I will make the state of affairs perfect. But I endeavour to make things as good as possible. Trust me, it is not easy to head a sector concerned with the most vulnerable and most sensitive groups of citizens. In fact, all the vital needs of citizens are dealt with here; we care for them since birth (child protection), then their life needs such as existence, employment (social care, labour market, employees' rights etc), all the way to retirement and old age (pension and disability insurance). Nonetheless, our employees and I focus our efforts on reforming the sphere we are in charge of, and I am confident the state of affairs has improved considerably, different from certain periods of time in the past. However, I reiterate, it is the citizens that make the final assessment: they personally live through the activity or passivity of functionaries, and whether and who has contributed for improvement of the situation.

PHOTO STORY:

Investing in Nature, Investing in Community

A study funded by UNDP estimates the tangible benefits of the Ezerani Nature Park recently established on the shores of Lake Prespa to be approximately 225,000 euros per year.

© UNDP/Ljubomir Stefanov



The country's first ever study into the economic benefits of investing in conservation areas, brings stakeholder participation to a new level by directly addressing some of the key concerns people have about the costs of conservation. In doing so, the study showcases a model approach to sustainable environmental development—an integrated economic and ecological approach that fully takes into account the diverse interests of all the people most affected by the establishment of nature reserves.

© UNDP/Ljubomir Stefanov



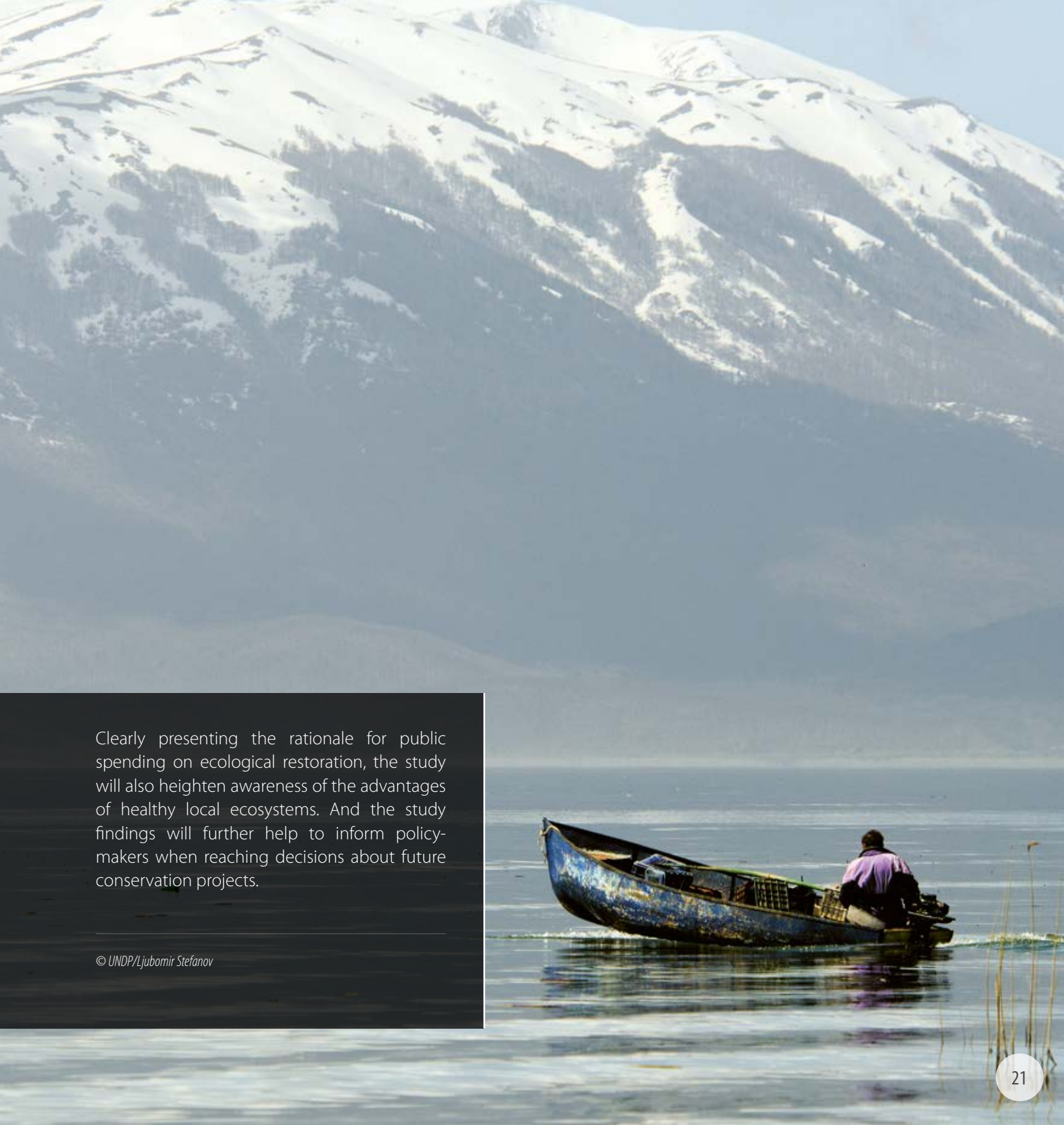
Failing to take account of all the benefits of responsible environmental management is a typical cause of unsustainable land management. Individual farmers, for example, often make choices about land use without being fully aware of the advantages to be gained from alternative strategies. Take the case of a farmer in a mountainous region who must choose between clearing a patch of native forest for crops or maintaining the forest. In making this decision, the farmer will naturally consider the obvious costs of either strategy—the costs of clearing the land, the profits from selling the timber, etc. But it is not likely the farmer will consider the less direct benefits of preserving biodiversity in the region or the wider social costs of more frequent flooding and increased erosion from deforestation.

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The central premise behind the economic valuation approach is that stakeholder participation and support is crucial to the sustainability of nature conservation projects. Important decisions about the use of natural resources should always be based on a consideration of many factors because such decisions affect the wellbeing of entire communities and have different consequences for different stakeholders. Economic valuation takes both economic and ecological factors into consideration and applies full cost and full benefit accounting to ensure all stakeholders can make more informed and sustainable decisions on land use.

© UNDP/Ljubomir Stefanov

A photograph of a person in a blue boat on a calm lake. The person is wearing a purple jacket and is seen from behind. The boat is small and has some gear inside. The water is still, reflecting the sky and the boat. In the background, there are large, rugged mountains covered in snow under a clear blue sky. The overall scene is peaceful and scenic.

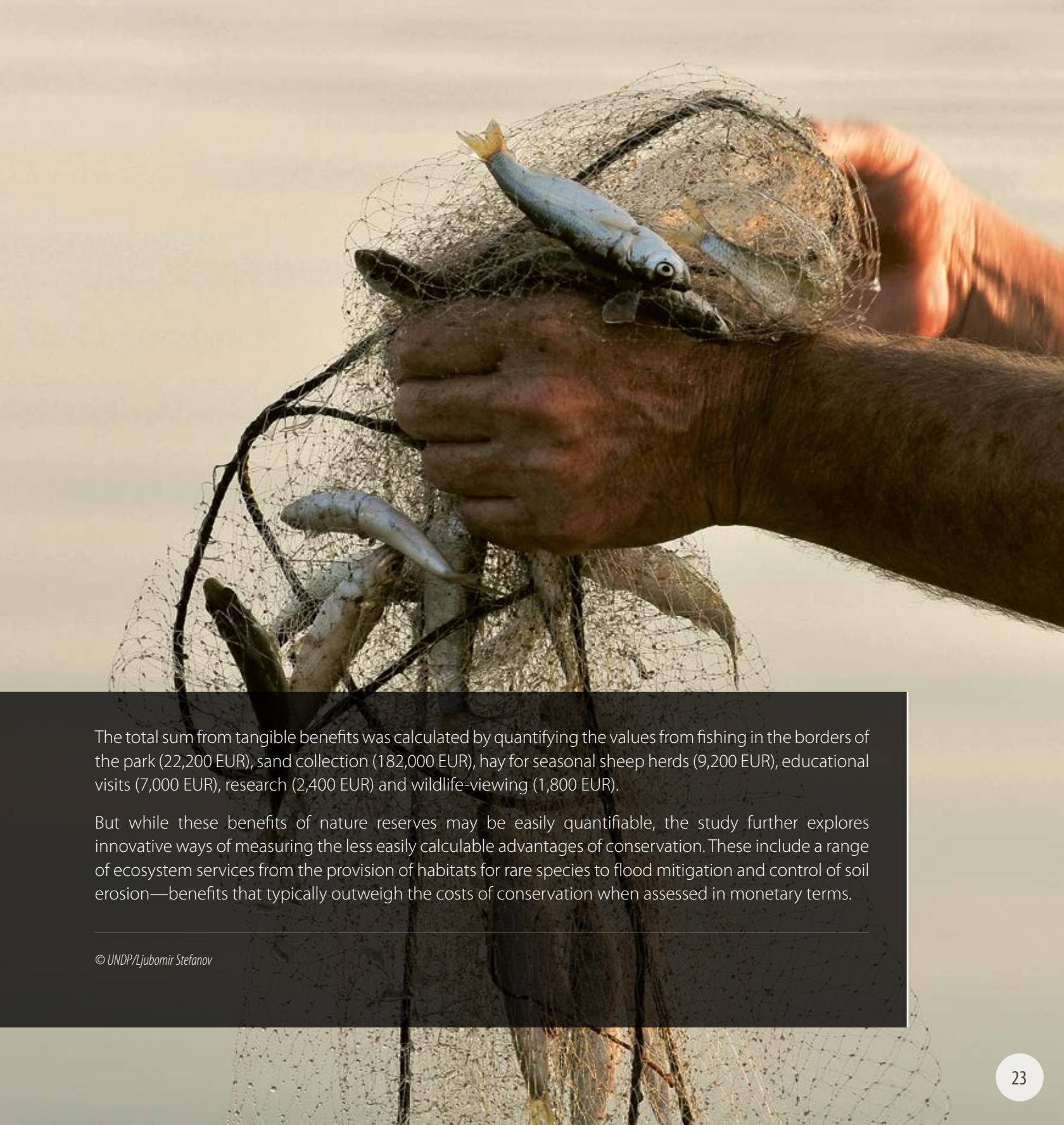
Clearly presenting the rationale for public spending on ecological restoration, the study will also heighten awareness of the advantages of healthy local ecosystems. And the study findings will further help to inform policy-makers when reaching decisions about future conservation projects.

© UNDP/Ljubomir Stefanov



Without a thorough knowledge of all the consequences, and in the absence of clear incentives to adopt more sustainable practices, farmers will continue to make choices on the basis of limited factors and a perception that the costs of environmentally responsible land use—for example, the profits lost from not clearing a patch of forest for crops—must be borne by farmers themselves. And of course the need for decisions on land use to be fully informed is even greater at the level of regional and national policy-making. The new study on Ezerani Nature Park directly addresses this need, providing policy-makers with valuable information on the tangible benefits of public investment in the Reserve.

© UNDP/Ljubomir Stefanov



The total sum from tangible benefits was calculated by quantifying the values from fishing in the borders of the park (22,200 EUR), sand collection (182,000 EUR), hay for seasonal sheep herds (9,200 EUR), educational visits (7,000 EUR), research (2,400 EUR) and wildlife-viewing (1,800 EUR).

But while these benefits of nature reserves may be easily quantifiable, the study further explores innovative ways of measuring the less easily calculable advantages of conservation. These include a range of ecosystem services from the provision of habitats for rare species to flood mitigation and control of soil erosion—benefits that typically outweigh the costs of conservation when assessed in monetary terms.

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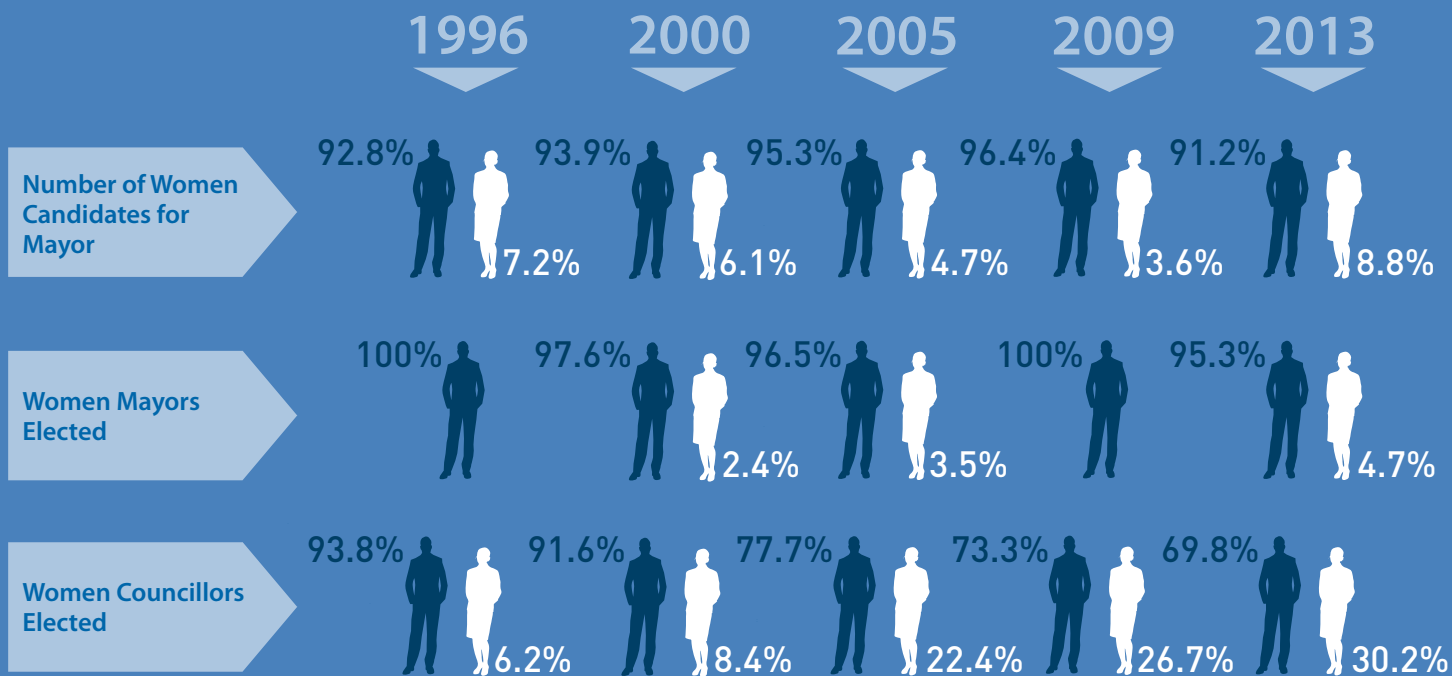


Weighing up all these factors, the study's overall assessment is that conservation and restoration investments have significant payoffs for local communities, regional and national users and foreign investors—payoffs which need to be communicated effectively to ensure they are taken into account in future policy-making.

Having a clear and accurate picture of the costs and benefits of conservation projects can provide the basis for a fairer distribution of these costs and benefits to stakeholders in future—especially to local people and particularly for local farmers. In this way the study is pioneering a new approach to stakeholder involvement in conservation—part of UNDP's wider aim of promoting an optimum balance of nature and community in Prespa.

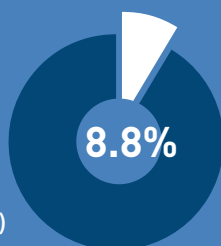
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Local elections: Where are the women?

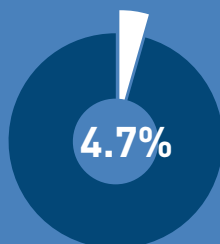


Women Mayors April 2013

% of women candidates for mayor (elections 2013)



% of women elected for mayor (elections 2013)



PEOPLE LIVING WITH HIV SPEAK OUT IN HOPE OF A BETTER FUTURE

(To preserve privacy, we have changed the names of people living with HIV interviewed for this article.)

“When the doctor first told me I was HIV positive,” says 47-year old Tamara, “I felt the world had come to an end.”

It is over ten years now since Tamara, then 36, was first diagnosed in 2001. It was a day she will never forget. For at the same time she learnt of her own illness she also learnt that her husband was HIV positive and that it was from him she had contracted the virus.

“I didn’t hold a grudge against him,” she says, “I didn’t even blame him for transmitting the virus. I was ready to do everything I could to prolong his life.”

Nothing could be done, however, to save Tamara’s husband. He died of AIDS-related illnesses only three months after being diagnosed.

Tamara has survived. Despite receiving no treatment for the virus for the first four years, she was given a new lease on life in 2005 when a life-saving HIV treatment first became available in the country. The treatment, called antiretroviral therapy, involves taking a combination of medications once or twice a day.

“Thanks to this therapy,” says Andrej Senih, “HIV is no longer a death sentence. A person living with HIV can function normally, be a productive member of society, create a family and have healthy children.” Andrej Senih is the Coordinator of Stronger Together, a Working Group for Support and Self-Help of People Living with HIV.)

Stronger Together has brought together 15 people living with HIV. First formed as an informal group in 2010, it was consolidated in 2011 as a result of a capacity-building initiative supported by the United Nations. Thanks to this initiative, the group adopted

a rulebook, devised a strategy and action plan and conducted training for its members in advocacy. The group has already published two booklets in local languages for people living with HIV, one of which is specifically aimed at helping and advising people who have recently been diagnosed.

To ensure greater longevity and a better quality of life for people living with HIV, it is absolutely crucial to ensure an uninterrupted supply of these antiretroviral medications. Delays in medical supplies occur chiefly as a result of legal and administrative barriers that impede the regular procurement of antiretroviral medications and distort the prices at which they can be purchased.

To tackle this problem and to ensure all people living with HIV in the country have uninterrupted access to medication, Stronger Together—the group led by Andrej Senih—has recently worked with experts on HIV treatment, pharmacology and health economy to compile a study with recommendations for policy-makers.

Amongst its major recommendations is a call for the Ministry of Health to provide an estimated 31 million MKD to purchase antiretroviral medications and monitoring tests at regional market prices. While this is the most reliable long-term solution, however, Andrej Senih says that removing legal and administrative barriers would also serve to reduce costs and increase access to treatment.

Lobbying for increased access to treatment is only part of the group's broad range of activities. Stronger Together also provides peer support and counselling for people living with HIV and the members of their families and close friends. Such peer support is essential, especially for newly-diagnosed people who need help coming to terms with their HIV positive diagnosis.

Tomi, 32, is one of the members of Stronger Together who has benefited from the support provided by the group. "When I was diagnosed nine months ago," he says, "one of my very first thoughts was whether to tell anyone. But I knew I couldn't keep it to myself. And I was lucky enough to be sure I would get unquestioning support from the members of my family. Even then, though, I was afraid I just wouldn't be able to cope with the challenge of living with HIV. The future seemed unbearable."

Joining Stronger Together brought invaluable comfort and relief for Tomi: "My group peers made me realize it was possible to go on living a decent life. I'm not sure I could have coped otherwise."

© UNDP/Ljubomir Stefanov



But while Stronger Together offers a lifeline for many people struggling to come to terms with a positive diagnosis and has raised the hopes of a better future for all people in this country who are living with HIV, the members of the group recognize that it will take time to change social attitudes. And that is why, despite all the support he receives from his family, from his closest friend, from the team of doctors and social workers at the Skopje University Clinic for Infectious Diseases and Febrile Conditions and from the members of Stronger Together, Tomi and Tamara have chosen not to disclose their status publicly.

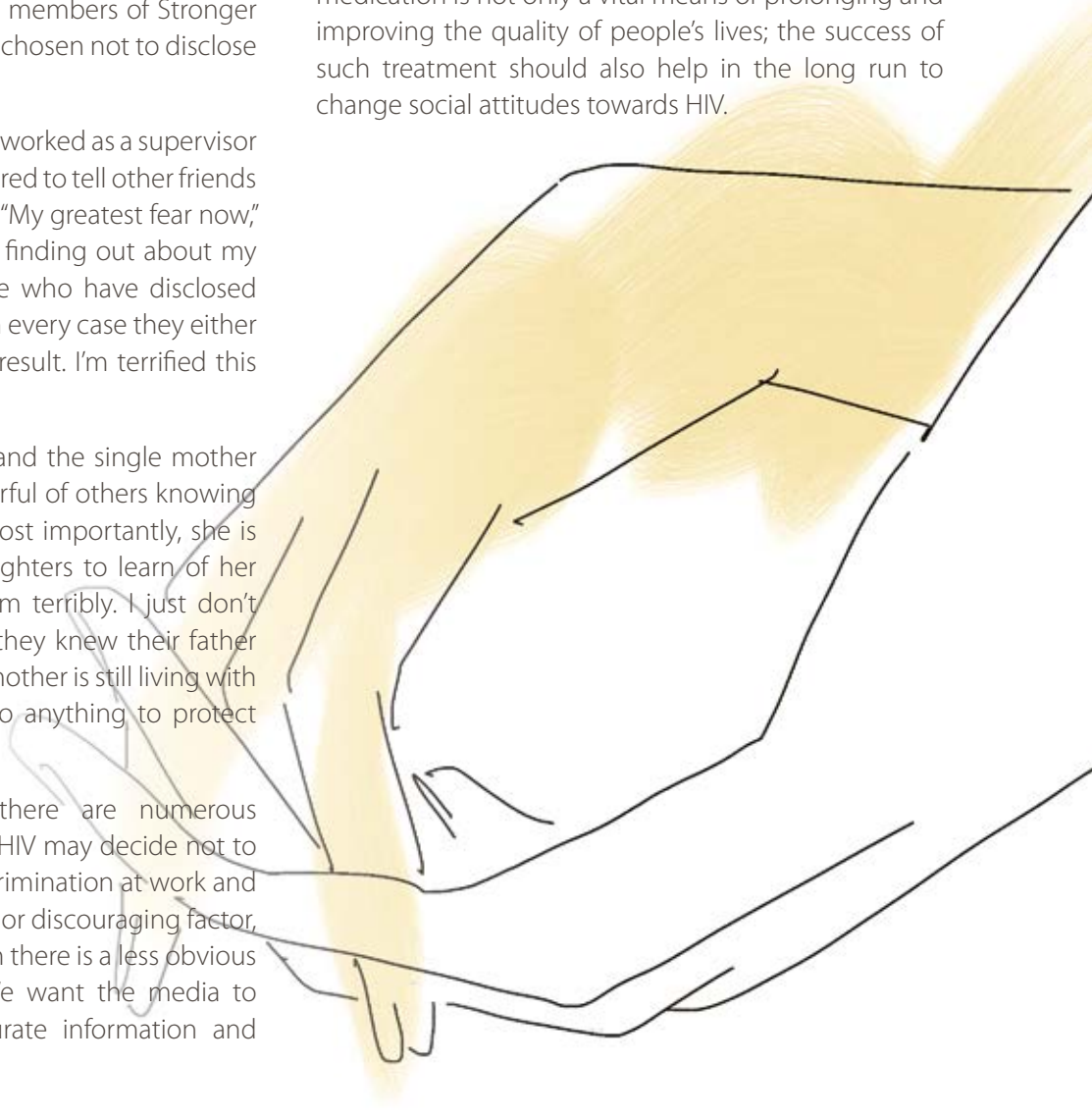
For the past three years Tomi has worked as a supervisor of 12 staff. But he still is not prepared to tell other friends and colleagues about his illness. "My greatest fear now," he admits, "is of people at work finding out about my status. I've known a few people who have disclosed their status to their employers. In every case they either ended up isolated or fired as a result. I'm terrified this could happen to me."

Tamara, currently unemployed and the single mother of two daughters, is similarly fearful of others knowing of her HIV positive diagnosis. Most importantly, she is extremely reluctant for her daughters to learn of her status. "I fear it would hurt them terribly. I just don't know how they would react if they knew their father had died of AIDS and that their mother is still living with the virus. Right now I would do anything to protect them from this shock."

Andrej Senih explains that there are numerous reasons why people living with HIV may decide not to disclose their illness. Fear of discrimination at work and stigmatization in general is a major discouraging factor, of course. But according to Senih there is a less obvious reason for remaining silent: "We want the media to be communicating more accurate information and

positive messages about HIV," he says, "And so a lot of people living with the disease avoid publicity out of a fear that doing so will encourage sensationalist media coverage of our problems. What is needed is a change in attitudes so that people living with HIV are seen no differently than people coping with other non-fatal diseases."

Ensuring a continuous supply of antiretroviral medication is not only a vital means of prolonging and improving the quality of people's lives; the success of such treatment should also help in the long run to change social attitudes towards HIV.



HIV+ RIGHTS

Without prejudice

“I hope I live to see the day when we don’t need to conceal our status or have to struggle to get life-saving medication,” says Tomi, “And I long for the time when we can freely speak up for our rights without people responding so negatively.”

This is a longing shared by Tamara, too. “I wish the few people I’ve told about my health would realize they don’t need to think about it every time they see me,” she says, “I wish they would see it like any other disease. The reality is that since I’ve been taking the medicine I often forget I even have the disease myself—and that’s the way it should be for everyone involved.”



Roma and Employment

- a new study reveals the vicious circle of employment discrimination and low education

The first-ever study of the employment situation of Roma in the country, commissioned by UNDP and ILO, offers fresh insights into the causes of the disparities between Roma and non-Roma in education and employment.

THE VICIOUS CIRCLE OF EMPLOYMENT DISCRIMINATION AND LOW EDUCATIONAL LEVELS

While the country is found to have somewhat lower levels of discrimination than other countries in the region, the study shows how the low educational levels

and employment disadvantages suffered by the Roma population can also be perpetuated by discriminatory attitudes on the part of potential employers.

These closely interlinked problems create a vicious circle in which Roma face discrimination in employment due to their lower educational levels, and therefore are deterred from investing more in education because such discrimination - including major inequalities in the salaries of Roma and non-Roma employees - lowers their expectations of gaining better employment through increased education.

Breaking this vicious circle is imperative, the study concludes, in order to achieve the key long-term aims of raising educational standards amongst the Roma and overcoming disparities in employment. However, the study also acknowledges the difficulty of breaking this circle given the primary role of informal networks and personal contacts in the recruitment practices of many employers.

While commending the country's efforts to help Roma through labour market programmes and other measures, the study calls for new initiatives to change employers' attitudes, for example in terms of the promotion of positive role models from the Roma community. Adopting this approach would not only help the Roma community but will bring benefits for the country's economy, encouraging employers to tap into the skills of the Roma workforce.

KEY FINDINGS

Roma—and especially Roma women—are employed less, paid less for similar jobs, and more likely to be working in low-skilled and informal employment than their non-Roma counterparts. Rates of unemployment and joblessness, for example, are at least twice as high

amongst the Roma population as among the non-Roma population.

In education, meanwhile, young non-Roma adults aged from 20-24 are more than ten times as likely to be in education as their Roma counterparts, reflecting the very low participation in tertiary education.

These disadvantages, the study concludes, cannot be attributed solely to differences in the educational attainments of Roma and non-Roma but must also arise in part from various forms of discrimination.

And while the study concludes that the impact of discriminatory attitudes on Roma employment may have lessened between 2004 and 2011, it also finds that the overall employment situation for Roma did not improve significantly in these years. Indeed, the gap between the wages of Roma and non-Roma has even widened for women. Overall, the impression is that between 2004 and 2011 things improved slightly for Roma men and worsened significantly for Roma women.

HOPEFUL SIGNS

There are however also some signs of improvement in the situation for Roma in the country between 2004 and 2011.

Employment rates have risen for Roma men under 45 and for Roma women above this age. Education participation rates have risen for Roma boys aged between 10 and 14 and for Roma women across the board.

Moreover, the study confirms the findings from other research suggesting that Roma in this country suffer relatively less disadvantages in education than in other countries throughout the region.



Apples All Round for Teachers and Students in Resen

High-school students in the town of Resen are taking part in a groundbreaking initiative to help promote environmentally responsible farming and preserve the region's valuable biodiversity.

The school has just entered into close cooperation with an interesting new UNDP-backed project to develop a model apple orchard on land owned by the school. And the students in the school's agricultural department will be getting plenty of hands-on experience and practical training as future agronomists once the orchard is up and running—for the school has agreed to provide the personnel and equipment needed for the maintenance of the demonstration orchard.

The project has been designed as part of UNDP's broader commitment to supporting the vulnerable environment of the Prespa region. This commitment has resulted in numerous initiatives, including a comprehensive set of measures to improve the health of the waters of the Prespa Lake Basin through the recently launched Restoration of the Prespa Lake Ecosystem project.

This major undertaking aims at reducing the pressures on the Basin from agricultural practices, forestry, polluted rivers, wastewaters and solid waste. One of the key priorities of the project is thus to provide training and awareness-raising for farmers in environmentally sustainable agriculture and the model orchard being developed in Resen is one of the measures designed to meet this training need.

“By developing this orchard as a pilot project we are first and foremost supporting the spread of Good Agricultural Practices in the region,” says Dimitrija Sekovski, UNDP's project manager, “More environmentally-friendly farming will mean less pesticides in agricultural runoff, less dumping of biodegradable waste, less erosion and more responsible use of water and other local resources. The orchard will not only demonstrate the advantages of good farming practices, it will also be supported further down the line with a small-grants programme to help farmers make the shift from unsustainable traditional farming practices.”

Naume Toskovski, the Director of the Resen high school, believes the model orchard will have a major impact on local awareness of farming methods. “One of the most important things we're going to do here is to showcase better farming practices. And the way we're going to do that is highly relevant to our local farmers because we won't just be telling but showing. By applying traditional methods alongside new methods, farmers will be able to come and see for themselves the benefits of adopting more ecologically sound practices. I'm very excited to be involved in this project and I think it's a fantastic learning opportunity for our students.”

An important additional aim of the orchard project is to help preserve the agrobiodiversity of Prespa by re-introducing many varieties of fruit traditionally grown in the region but no longer in commercial production.

One of the key priorities of the project is thus to provide training and awareness-raising for farmers in environmentally sustainable agriculture...

“People have been growing fruit in this region for over a century,” says high-school agronomy Sime Kukulovski, “In the past there were more than a 100 different varieties of apples and about 60 varieties of pears grown here. But now there are just ten commercial varieties produced. We need to make sure these old varieties of fruit are still in production or we might never be able to bring them back.”

An important additional aim of the orchard project is to help preserve the agro-biodiversity of Prespa by re-introducing many varieties of fruit traditionally grown in the region but no longer in commercial production.

“Reviving traditional fruits is crucial,” Marjan Kiprijanovski, a professor at the Faculty of Agriculture in Skopje “Without this intervention there is a risk of irreversibly losing the autochthonous varieties as genetic resources. And with this measure we will also be tackling the over-use of agrochemicals in the farming of certain new varieties of fruit introduced in recent decades.”

The students of the school fully share their Director’s enthusiasm for the project. “Having a model orchard here is going to be great for the school,” says 17-year-old Akan Feim “It will be a chance for us to see all the things we study being put into practice and making a real difference to the area.”

The Restoration of the Prespa Lake Ecosystem project, which started in 2012, is implemented by UNDP, in partnership with the Municipality of Resen and the Ministry of Environment and Physical Planning, with funding from the Swiss Development Cooperation.

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Stepping up support for **EU ACCESSION**

As the country enters into each new phase in the process of EU accession, national and local institutions will need support for reforms, to meet the requirements of the EU acquis.

With the launch of the High Level Accession Dialogue, in order to speed up the pace of reforms, the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister approached UNDP to provide all possible assistance to the Secretariat for European Affairs. In response, UNDP at once set about working with EU integration experts in the region to identify the most effective ways of moving the process forward.

The UNDP office in Skopje began working closely the UNDP regional team of experts on EU accession to organize an intensified exchange of knowledge and practical experience.

“Croatia’s experience is especially pertinent for this country,” explains Filip Dragovic, UNDP Regional Advisor on Rule of Law and former chief of Croatia’s negotiations working group on Chapter 24, “not only because of the similarities and the shared history between the two countries, but because it’s Croatia that has recently completed accession negotiations with the EU under the new format with thirty-five chapters and opening and closing benchmarks, which now apply to all other candidate countries. No other country possesses that experience”.

UNDP’s Zagreb office working with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Croatia and its EU negotiation team welcomed the chance to work more closely on the accession process and readily came forward with leading experts with fresh experience of the negotiations.

“We’ve had excellent cooperation with Croatia throughout this process,” says Alessandro Fracassetti, UNDP Deputy Resident Representative in Skopje “And we’ve been especially fortunate in having access to some of their top experts who’ve actually worked through every stage of the negotiation process with the EU.”

UNDP was also fortunate to be able to tap into the experience of Slovenia, country that not only has experience of its own successful pre-accession process but also nearly a decade's experience of EU membership.

"Once we'd gathered this international expertise together in a framework for regional cooperation," explains Fracassetti, "we started a scoping missions on priority chapters of the acquis."

The focus of the scoping missions, composed of top-level negotiators and former members of working groups on accession, was on Chapters 23 and 24 of the acquis—covering the judiciary and fundamental rights and justice, freedom and security—as top priorities in the High Level Accession Dialogue, and on Chapters 11 and 22—covering agriculture and rural development and regional policy and the coordination of structural instruments—as prioritized by the Secretariat for European Affairs.

The scoping missions have not only facilitated a greater exchange of invaluable experience and information sharing on pre-accession know-how, they have also resulted in two important seminars held in Skopje for some two hundred of the country's policy-makers from national ministries and other relevant institutions.

The latest mission in December 2012 composed of 9 high-level experts specifically focussed on practical ways to help the country comply with Chapter 24 of the acquis, which deals with very important issues, such as asylum and migration, external borders, terrorism and fight against organized crime and fundamental rights. It is one of the most difficult chapters of the acquis which requires full dedication and institutional capacities to implement all the reforms.

At the Conference 'Towards 2020, Sustainable Reforms', organized by the Government with UNDP's support last year, Deputy Prime Minister for EU integrations Teuta Arifi stated: "UNDP's support has been very valuable in tapping into the very relevant experience of Croatia in the EU negotiations process. This will significantly contribute to the further strengthening of our institutional and human capacities to effectively implement the EU accession agenda."

"These efforts are part of our long-term commitment to the country's goal of joining the EU," said Fracassetti. "The prospect of EU membership is a powerful incentive for reform that matches people's needs for socio-economic and political improvements, and UNDP fully shares the government's belief that integration with the EU is the surest way to achieve rapid progress in development."

“Rise of South” transforming global power balance,

says 2013 Human
Development Report

The rise of the South is radically reshaping the world of the 21st century, with developing nations driving economic growth, lifting hundreds of millions of people from poverty, and propelling billions more into a new global middle class, says the latest United Nations Development Programme’s 2013 Human Development Report.

“The rise of the South is unprecedented in its speed and scale. Never in history have the living conditions and prospects of so many people changed so dramatically and so fast,” says the report. “The South as a whole is driving global economic growth and societal change for the first time in centuries.”

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Nations in Eastern Europe and Central Asia are on the frontier of that change: “Connecting the North and the rising South is the transforming East,” the Report says, referring to the region.

Dozens of developing countries worldwide have achieved impressive growth and dramatically improved peoples’ lives with pragmatic policies that typically combine strong government leadership, open markets and imaginative social programs, the Report says.

On a global scale, the Report reveals that some of the largest countries have made rapid advances, notably Brazil, China, India, Indonesia, South Africa and Turkey. But there has also been substantial progress in smaller economies, such as Bangladesh, Chile, Ghana, Mauritius, Rwanda, Thailand and Tunisia.

The experience of many states in Eastern Europe and Central Asia in managing a rapid transition from centrally planned to market economies holds useful lessons for developing countries elsewhere.

A major lesson from two decades of transition is that the state has a critical role in creating an environment for inclusive growth and societies. “Abruptly abandoning areas of responsibility by the state or insisting on rapid privatization of all state-owned companies may prove very costly for societies in the long run,” the Report says. But reforms to strengthen national institutions’ transparency and accountability and to limit corruption are necessary to improve governance, the Report stresses.

Throughout Eastern Europe and Central Asia, people’s human development continues to rise with greater equality than other areas of the developing world, but income and opportunity gaps are also widening.

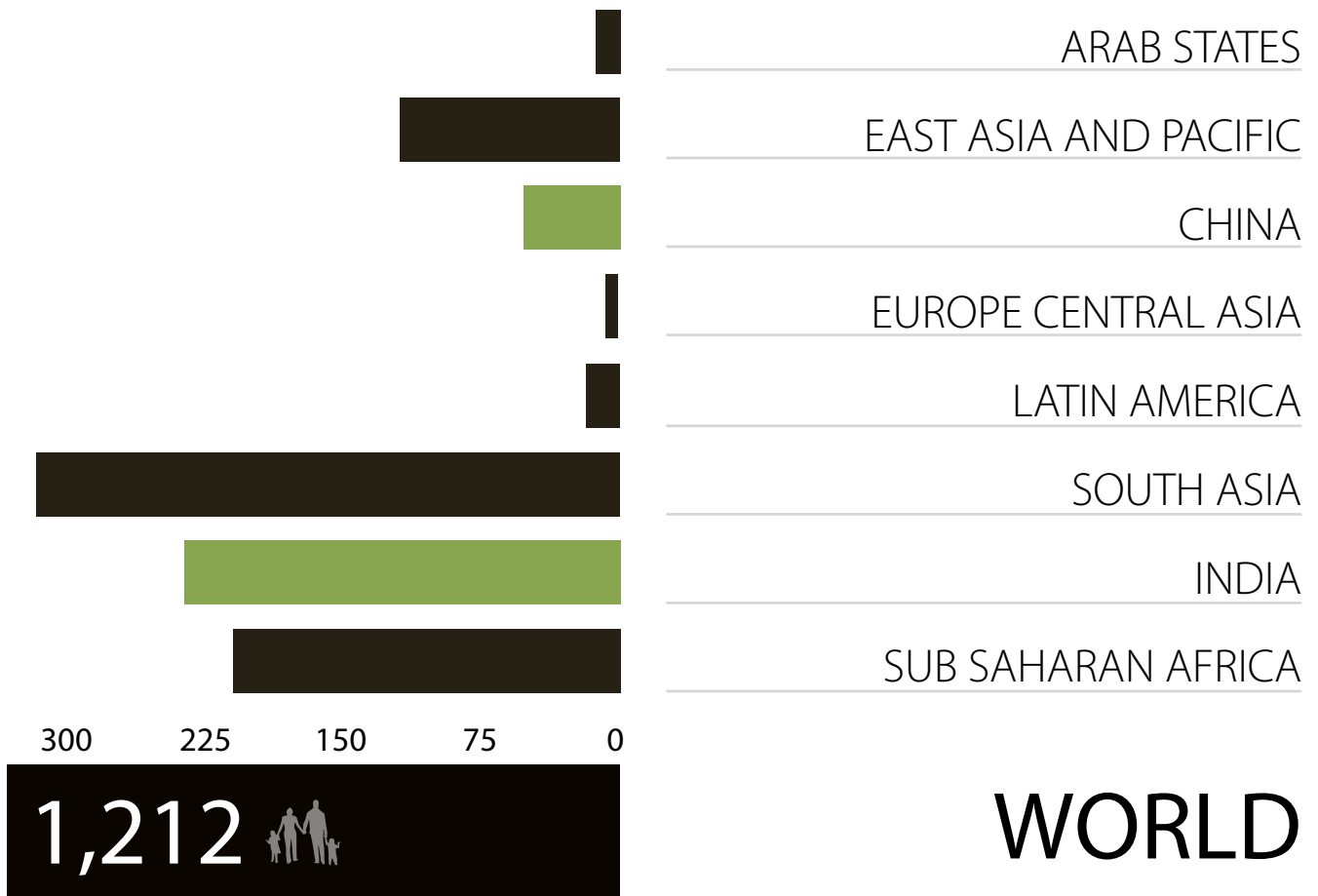
The rise of the South should be seen as beneficial for all countries and regions, the Report concludes: Human Development is not a zero-sum game. “The South needs the North, and increasingly the North needs the South,” the Report says. “The world is getting more connected, not less.”





2010

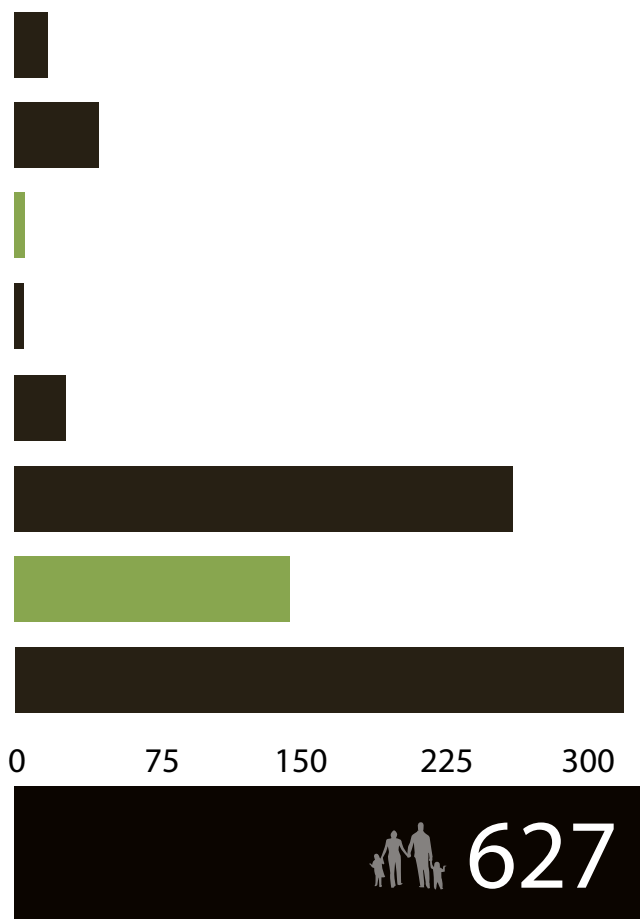
PEOPLE IN EXTREME
POVERTY (MILLIONS)





2030

PEOPLE IN EXTREME POVERTY (MILLIONS)



People here are following this trend. They can expect to live 5.2 years longer than in 1980 and spend 2.5 more years at school than in 1990. Also, the per capita GNI in Purchasing Power Parity has increased for almost 40 per cent in comparison with 1995, which means that today citizens can buy more than they used to in the past.

These figures land the country in the high human development category.

In 2013, the country is ranked 78 out of 187 countries.

Many countries of the region - such as Croatia, Kazakhstan, the Russian Federation and Turkey - have become increasingly important aid donors, with disbursements exceeding \$4 billion in 2011. These emerging donors are also active in bilateral or trilateral exchange of knowledge with countries with common heritage or beyond. For example, in recent years Romania has shared its experience conducting elections with Egypt and Tunisia, Poland has helped Iraq with small and medium-size enterprise development, the Czech Republic has cooperated with Azerbaijan on environmental impact assessments and Slovakia has assisted Moldova and Montenegro in public finance management.

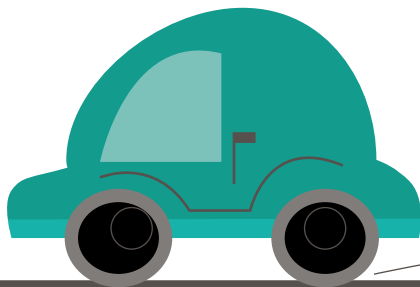
Overall, the Report argues that the emergence of a new South is shaking up existing global institutions, creating new ones, and showing new ways that countries and regions can work together.

The rise of the South should be seen as beneficial for all countries and regions, the Report concludes: Human Development is not a zero-sum game. "The South needs the North, and increasingly the North needs the South," the Report says. "The world is getting more connected, not less."



ONE HECTARE
of forest absorbs about
1.8 TONNES
of carbon a year

That is equivalent to the area
1.1 MILLION
football stadiums



equivalent to a car journey of
42,706 KM

REDUCING TRANSPORT EMISSIONS: TIME TO BE PRAGMATIC!

UNDP has recently supported the Ministry of Environment and Physical Planning with preparing a case study to analyze the financial implications of reducing emissions of greenhouse gases based on the realities of the country.

As part of this study, the national Academy of Sciences and Arts analysed a number of policy measures to prevent the doubling of carbon dioxide emissions by 2020.

The findings will help to set priorities for a national transport policy that includes measures for mitigating climate change and improving air quality.

As the study points out, using low viscosity lubricant can reduce fuel consumption by **4.6 percent**. Public awareness campaigns for improving travel behaviour, meanwhile, can reduce fuel consumption by **one percent** by 2020. Such campaigns can inform people, for example, that using public transport instead of private cars to get to work can save them up to **\$327 per year!**

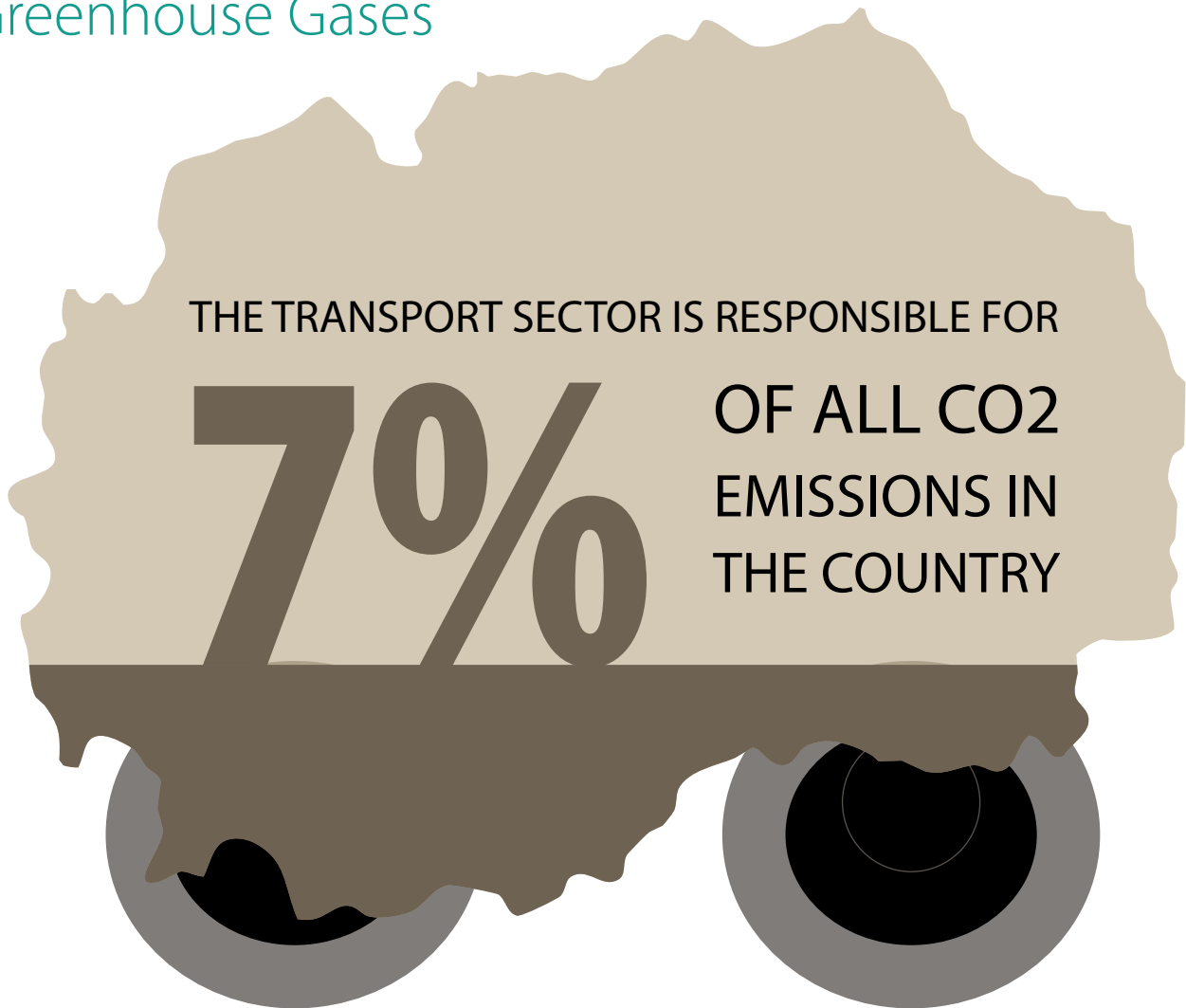
Forests and their impact on climate

1.77 MILLION
tonnes of carbon are absorbed by forests in the country annually

The volume of annual new forest growth exceeds the volume harvested:
EU 45%, MK 48%



Transport vs. reduction of Greenhouse Gases

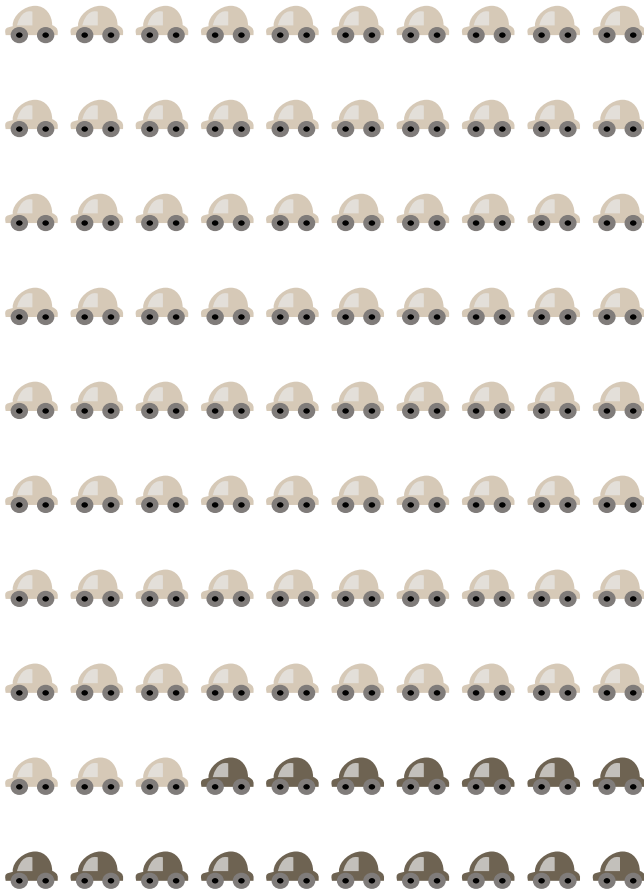


Over **72%** of vehicles are over 12 years old.

Old cars use **20%** more fuel in then with newer models.

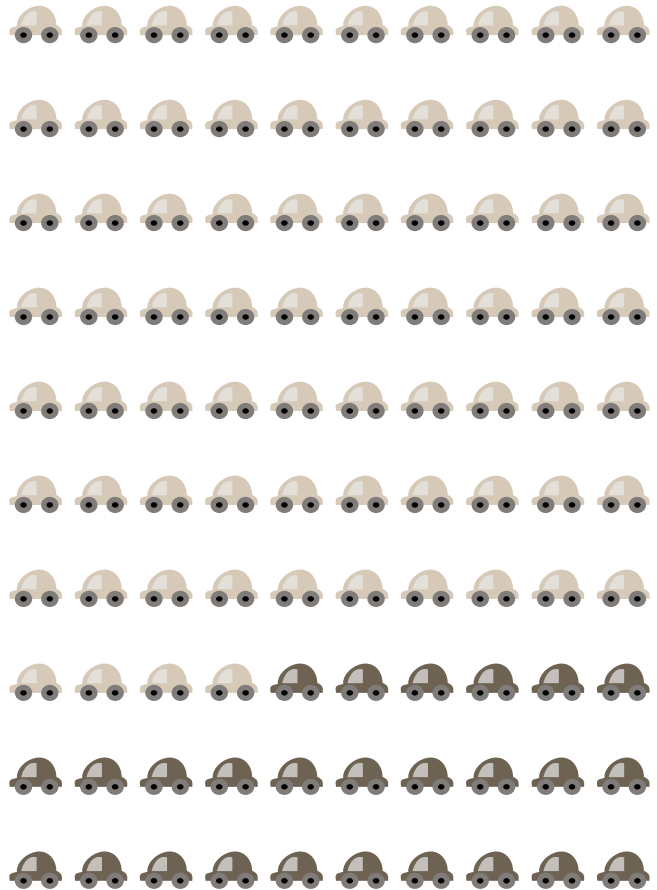
2010

In 2010 there were **170 cars per 1,000 inhabitants** and emissions from the transport sector totaled **1.2 million tons of CO2**

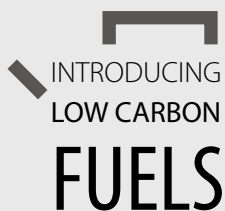


2020

It is estimated that in 2020 there will be **260 cars per 1,000 inhabitants** and that emissions from the transport sector will be **2 million tons of CO2**



Reducing GHG emissions by 22% by 2020 will require a comprehensive mitigation strategy. **Priorities:**



1



2



3



4



5

Development is about people and Development Stories brings people and their stories to the forefront—the people we work for and the people we work with.

Through interviews and feature stories, news and reviews of all our latest projects, and interesting facts from UNDP-backed research, this magazine brings our development work to life.

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Spring 2013