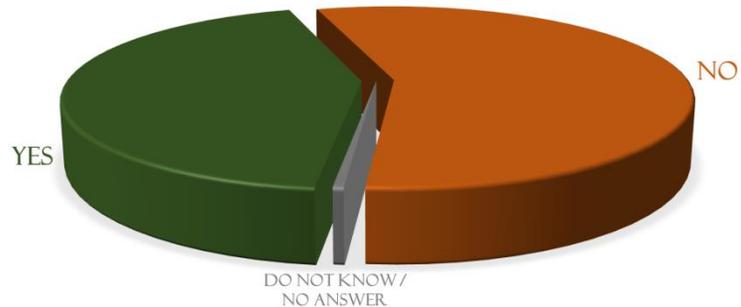


HUNGARIANS RESPECT THEIR NATURAL VALUES BUT NATURA 2000 ECOLOGICAL NETWORK IS UNFAMILIAR TO MOST OF THEM

“General knowledge of Hungarian citizens on Natura 2000 habitats and species” was extensively surveyed among the Hungarian adult population. A representative sample of 1002 randomly selected adult citizens were asked applying CATI-method in June 2019. The purpose of the survey was to assess the knowledge and attitude towards Natura 2000 natural values.

Results showed that the majority of the respondents (56.7%) did not even hear about the term “Natura 2000”. Among those who heard about the term internet and social media platforms (48.3%) and television programmes (24.0%) were named as most popular information

“DID YOU HEAR ABOUT THE TERM OF NATURA 2000 NETWORK?”



Source: Századvég Foundation, CATI, June 2019, n = 1002, among adult Hungarian citizens



sources. The term was virtually unknown among the cohort of 18-29 year olds, just 17.1% of the respondents heard about it.

However, the knowledge of the term itself was not in accordance with the knowledge of the purport of Natura 2000 ecological network. 12.7% of respondents have heard about plant species associated with Natura 2000 and 46% attempted to specify species. In case of animal species, the positive answers were 19.2% and 75,1% of those replying with “yes” attempted to specify a species. A relatively high proportion of wrong denomination was experienced among the repliers attempting to specify species (wrong

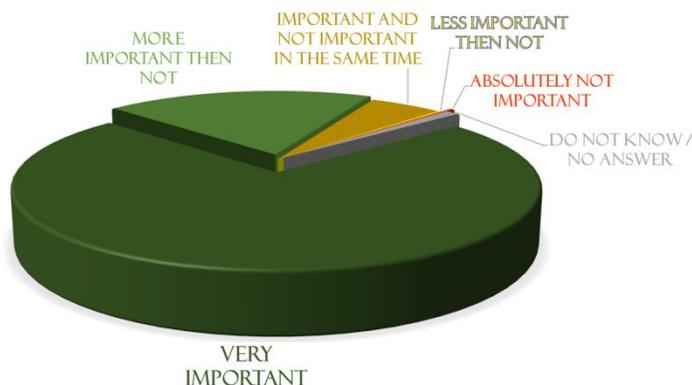
answers: “cereals”, “locust-tree”, “corn”, “grey cattle”, “poultry” etc.; wright or nearly wright answers: “snowdrop”, “native plants”, “swallow”, “stork”, “great bustard”).

Allowed management methods in Natura 2000 sites are unknown for the majority: 54.0% of respondents think that “no special rule” for activity exist in these sites and 19.8% think that “only mowing is legal” there.

So, it is evident from these results that original target of Natura 2000 ecological network to protect biodiversity and ecosystem services are completely obscured for the member of the adult Hungarian population.

In regard of appreciation of Natura 2000 values, a vast majority of Hungarians opine that nature conservation in the EU (including Hungary) is a momentous topic: 73.4% of the respondents considered it “very important” and other 19.9% as “even important”. 77.4% of the participants considered it “important” that 21% of the country’s area is designated as Natura 2000 sites.

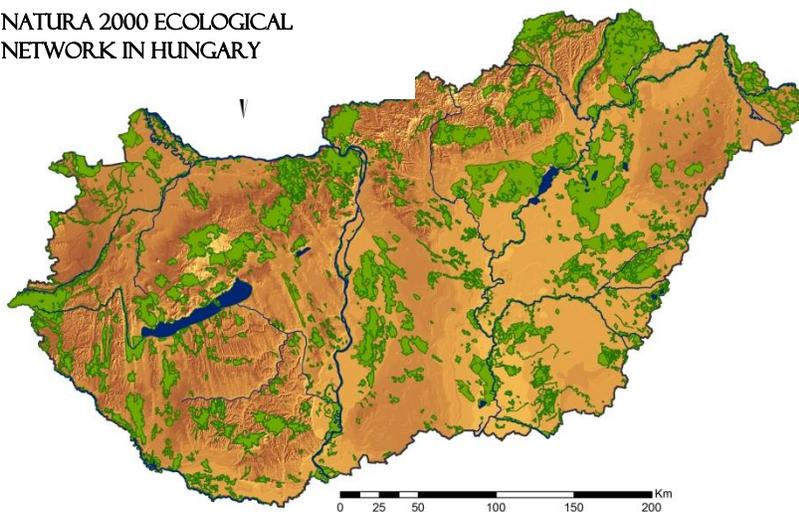
“WHAT IS YOUR OPINION ABOUT THE IMPORTANCE OF THE CONSERVATION OF NATURAL VALUES OF THE EUROPEAN UNION INCLUDING HUNGARIAN VALUES?”



Source: Századvég Foundation, CATI, June 2019, n = 1002, among adult Hungarian citizens

Most of the respondents (73.3%) are fully aware that the protection of natural values is also matter of personal responsibility besides governmental and community task. 54.8% of Hungarian citizens receptive for nature conservation topics showed willingness to participate in volunteer activities. Though most of the repliers showed interest in using a web page or smartphone application designed to collect data on the distribution of protected animal and plant species (i.e. to participate in citizen science activities), only a negligible proportion of them were familiar with such platforms (0.5%).

NATURA 2000 ECOLOGICAL NETWORK IN HUNGARY



Based on the above results, it is to be concluded that Hungarian citizens are receptive to nature conservation topics and showing considerable willingness to participate in volunteer activities and citizen science projects. However, a relatively low proportion of the adult population is aware of the concepts or significance of Natura 2000 assets and related management activities. It is obvious that specific

programmes involving volunteers to practical nature conservation activity should be highly profitable for the natural values and for the involved citizens at the same time.

Edited by Herman Otto Institute Nonprofit Ltd.

