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HUNTERS IN EUROPE WHAT DOES IT MEAN „THE HUNTERS POPULATION“ IN EUROPE?

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Abstract: *According to FACE (The European Federation of Associations for Hunting) approximately 7 million hunters are registered in Europe. Throughout the year they work in nature, in the hunting ground, or organize work of supporting teams and individuals on development of habitats with different kinds of animals, of which only some are hunted or listed as game. By using methods of positive selection and care in order to increase quality and quantity of the habitat itself, is maintained and permanently increased biological diversity of plant populations and whole ecosystem same as animal populations, including game. Disappearance of certain animal species in certain parts of Europe surely is not caused by game management, but is a result of rapid urbanization and development of urban and rural areas with all the supporting infrastructure. Human overpopulation parallel brought to reduction of habitat areas for numerous animal and game species. It's therefore required to establish balance between humans and other beings on a certain space, which therefore requires good management. The most competent members of human community which can manage wild animals and game in the most competent way are certainly hunters. In every community mutual understanding and cooperation of all other stakeholders and ecosystem beneficiaries is key. We should not forget that a human is part of natural ecosystem and a hunter is the most competent person who understands habits and life of game animals and therefore can manage it in the best way. Due to this reason game, hunter and hunters population take care of the game animals survival, their overall food chain their development*

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and relative relationship in order to avoid deterioration and favoring of certain species over the other, increasing biological diversity of game animals and habitat which they inhabit; of overall and particular individual health state, of active and passive protection defining and implementing regulations important for behavior and management, on the basis of good management and good will in this way actively and significantly contributing to development of environmental protection.

Key words: game animal's protection, biodiversity, rural development, game tourism, weapon, game management

1. INTRODUCTION

One of the oldest human activities or work is certainly hunting. Through hundreds and thousands of years, animal hunting has gone through considerable transformation. Transformation in sense of a need for hunting, ways of hunting, game breeds, hunting weapons and tools, areas on Earth where people hunt, number of hunted game, number of hunters. The most considerable changes in game hunting happened when hunting, from ultimate need for surviving and ensuring of meat food for survival of tribe, family and human race, grew into a kind of fun and hobby (More, 1973; Potter et al., 1973; Stankey et al. 1973; Hende, 1974; Kellert, 1978; Hautaluoma and Brown, 1979). But the secondary reason was still considerable and important need for ensuring food (Robinson and Redford, 1991; Muchaal and Ngandjui 1999) and regulating the wildlife population (Brown et al., 2000; Di Minin et al., 2016). Another considerable change appeared with inventing of firearms and guns that made hunting much easier and considerably changed the way and methods of game hunting. With time, number of hunters in population grew smaller in relation to other activities. Also, involvement of hunters because of dire need for surviving became ever smaller in relation to hunting for pleasure, fun, hobby or trophy selling (Lewis and Alpert 1997). But still, even today, in some parts of the world, hunting game for food and survival of communities where hunters live is very much present.

Looking from today's aspect and time where developed population in Europe lives, a question that arises is this: is hunting only fun, which is how many hunting circles are trying to present it and all that at the expense and harm of animals.

Also, another question is: in society, what is the significance of hunter population, if that is how we can call all those who practice hunting, in wider or narrower area.

According to data of FACE (The European Federation of Associations for Hunting) there are about 7 million hunters registered in Europe. That is a very respectable number which, by its scope, excels entire population of some countries in Europe. Especially because it is a known fact that, in spite of all cultural, historical, linguistic and economic differences between countries and hunters themselves, all those hunters work, speak and think in their unique "hunting way". Through the whole year, all those hunters work in nature, hunting grounds, or they organize work of service teams and individuals on development of habitats, where all kinds of different animals, of which only a part is intended for hunting or declared as game, habit, live and move about. With methods of positive selection and care for

increasing of quality and quantity of habitats, biological diversity of plants groups of the whole ecosystem, as well as animal population, is being preserved and continually increased. Disappearance of particular animal breeds in particular parts of Europe surely isn't prompted because of hunting and hunters, but it is a result of implacable urbanization and development of both urban and rural areas, with all their infrastructural facilities (network of roads, railways, canals, industrial objects...). Nowhere in Europe have the hunters been a cause for decreasing or disappearing of animals that are intended for hunting or not. They could only be their caretakers and protectors. If we can recall, about ten years ago there was a story about a popular bear they named Bruno, who was trying to run away between Germany, France and Switzerland, desperately looking for his habitat. With human overpopulation, the areas for animal living have been decreased. That is why it is necessary to find balance between people and other living beings in particular narrow or wide areas and it is necessary to run it well.

The most competent members of humane society, who will manage to take care of wild animals and game in the best possible way with the best quality, are certainly hunters. All that in mutual understanding, together with all the other participants and users of ecosystem. Hunter is the most competent and skilled person that understands behavior and life of game and that is why he takes the best care of it.

For that reason, hunters and hunter population manage game survival, their whole food chain (of plant and animal sources), their development and mutual influences, so that there wouldn't be any violation/endangering at one side, or leniency of one species above the other. Also, they are involved in increasing of biological diversity of game and their habitat, about altogether and individual health condition, about active and passive protection by creating and implementing regulations and rules of behavior and managing, and all that based on good mastering and good faith, so that they actively and considerably influence survival and development of environmental protection.

Indirectly, although often directly, they influence development of rural areas, considerably contribute to growth of hunting tourism, which becomes more and more the unavoidable part of general progress of tourist offering. As a by product of hunting activities it certainly needs to be mentioned that all amount of game meat is being secured in different forms of high quality, naturally grown food, which daily enhances the need of gastronomic culture in particular areas.

Finally, we should mention that 7 million hunters skillfully manage firearms and cold weapons (rifles, guns, pistols, knives, bows and arrows), and that way they also contribute to development of particular sporting, recreational, military, competitive, safety skills, which greatly enrich society development, and also, technological development of particular tools and equipment. If we also add factors of relaxation, vacation and rest, enjoyment of nature and company, especially today when there is so much stress in everything, which causes a greater risk of illnesses, we have to ask ourselves seriously about the nature and importance of hunter's population and their influence on our community and the whole society?

Research goal here is to collect and investigate data about a total number of hunters in Europe, with a special emphasis on Southeast Europe (SEE) countries.

Assigned data should be mutually compared, and the relations between hunters in Eastern Europe and other parts of Europe should be particularly researched.

Naturally occurring entomopathogens are important regulatory factors in insect population. Entomopathogenic organisms, various types of viruses, microsporidia, bacteria, protozoa, fungi, nematodes, which can under favourable conditions cause massive insect mortality and are of great breeding capacity, normally live in nature. Epizootics caused by naturally occurring viral and fungal pathogens are often responsible for spectacular crashes of insect pest populations.

Entomopathogenic fungus *Entomophaga aulicae* (Reichardt and Bail) Humber (Zygomycotina: Entomophthorales, Entomophthoraceae) is widespread Holarctic species, with many host insects from order Lepidoptera, where are some of the most economically harmful, outbreaking species of forest defoliators [*Lambdina fiscellaria* Guenée, 1857; *Choristoneura fumiferana* (Clemens, 1865); *Euproctis chrysorrhoea* Linnaeus, 1758; *Estigmene acrea* (Drury, 1773)].

2. MATERIAL AND METHODES

Research has been conducted by collecting data published in all relevant professional literature and official reports of hunters associations, international associations or statistical institutes of particular European countries. Collected in one place and elaborated in specific way, it gives us plenty of information that offer answers to relevant and everyday questions of the entire population that lives in Europe.

Part of the research has been conducted for the area of SEE, of which some countries are already members of the European Union, some are still in a waiting process or in the process of adjustment, and some are still in negotiations about becoming members of the EU. All those countries are in one of the phases of transitional changes, considering that for several decades they had lived in a socialist regime. For that reason, this research has an additional character of comparing condition and possible changes in society, observed through the aspect of researching and investigating hunter's population and its social importance. From the basic scientific methods, a comparative method was used, which subject is "... identity, similarity and diversity of the same phenomenon at different times and in different spaces determined by adequate measures, identical or diverse phenomena in a defined space and time" (Miljević, 2007). To study the content of documents, content analysis was applied as a kind of partial analysis (Milosavljević and Radosavljević, 2008). Some authors (Bulmer, 1977; Neuman, 2014) classify content analysis into a group of nonreactive methods since it does not involve direct elicitation of data from the research subjects. The respondents are not aware of the research, unlike questionnaires, interviews, and experiments, which are reactive methods (Neuman, 2014).

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

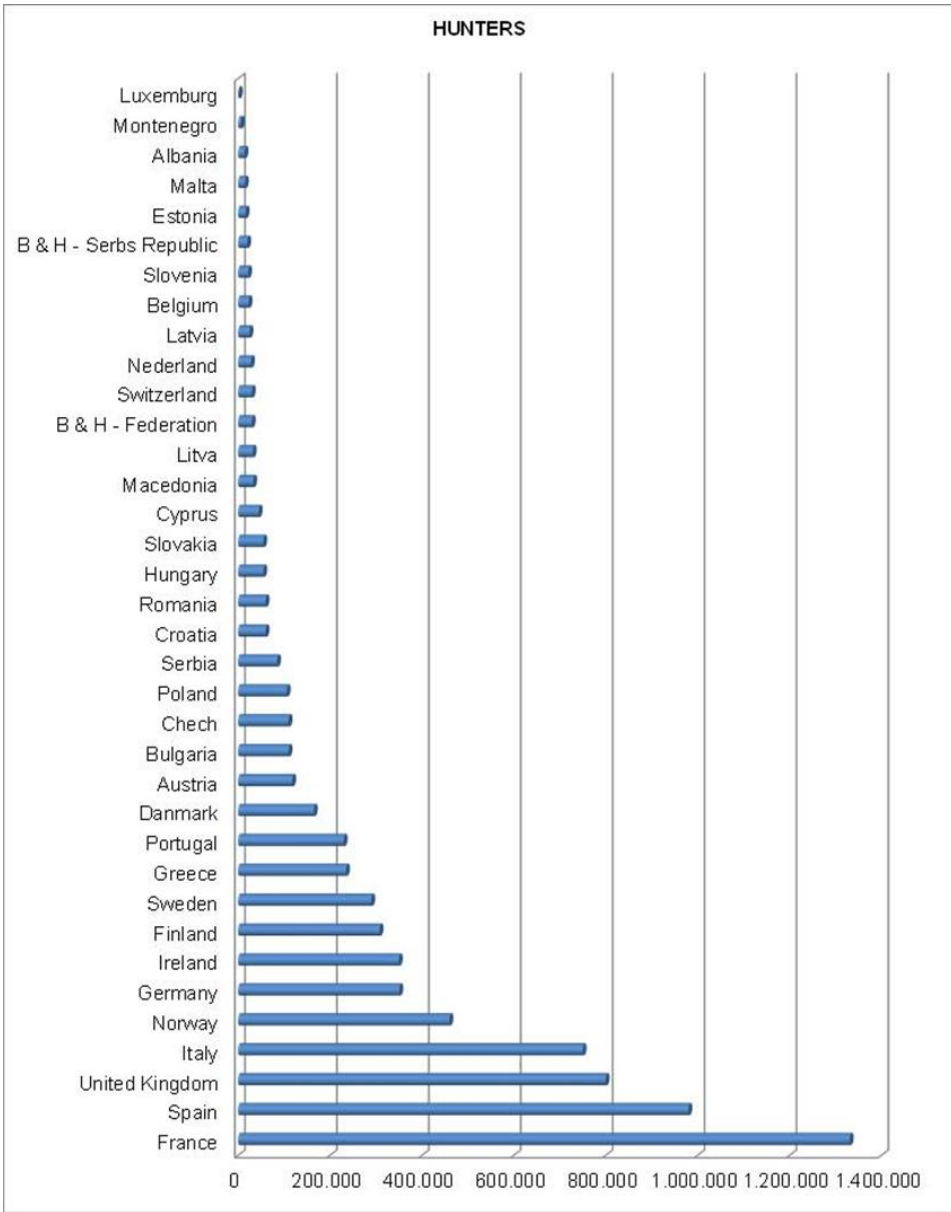
Europe

Table 1. *Data about hunters in Europe*

HUNTERS IN EUROPE						
	COUNTRY	HUNTERS	%	RELATIO		INHABITANTS
1.	Albania	14.000	0,2	226	0,39	3.600.000
2.	Austria	118.000	1,6	70	1,43	8.260.000
3.	Belgium	23.000	0,3	452	0,22	10.396.000
4.	B & H - Federation	30.000	0,4	90	1,11	2.700.000
5.	B & H - Serbs Republic	20.000	0,3	65	1,54	1.300.000
6.	Bulgaria	110.000	1,5	70	1,43	7.700.000
7.	Czech	110.000	1,5	93	1,08	10.230.000
8.	Croatia	60.000	0,8	73	1,33	4.500.000
9.	Cyprus	45.000	0,6	17	5,88	765.000
10.	Danmark	165.000	2,2	33	3,03	5.445.000
11.	Estonia	16.600	0,2	78	1,28	1.294.800
12.	Finland	308.000	4,2	17	5,88	5.236.000
13.	France	1.331.000	18,1	48	2,08	63.888.000
14.	Germany	351.000	4,8	233	0,43	81.783.000
15.	Greece	235.000	3,2	45	2,22	10.575.000
16.	Hungary	55.000	0,7	190	0,53	10.450.000
17.	Ireland	350.000	4,8	12	8,33	4.200.000
18.	Italy	750.000	10,2	77	1,30	57.750.000
19.	Latvia	25.000	0,3	92	1,09	2.300.000
20.	Litva	32.000	0,4	112	0,89	3.584.000
21.	Luxemburg	2.000	0,0	250	0,40	500.000
22.	Macedonia	33.000	0,4	64	1,57	2.100.000
23.	Malta	15.000	0,2	27	3,70	405.000
24.	Montenegro	6.000	0,1	103	0,97	620.000
25.	Nederland	28.170	0,4	618	0,16	17.409.060
26.	Norway	460.000	6,3	11	9,16	5.020.000
27.	Poland	106.000	1,4	363	0,28	38.478.000
28.	Portugal	230.000	3,1	46	2,17	10.580.000
29.	Romania	60.000	0,8	361	0,28	21.700.000
30.	Serbia	85.000	1,2	85	1,18	7.200.000
31.	Slovakia	55.000	0,7	98	1,02	5.390.000
32.	Slovenia	22.000	0,3	91	1,10	2.000.000
33.	Spain	980.000	13,3	41	2,44	40.180.000
34.	Sweden	290.000	3,9	31	3,23	8.990.000
35.	Switzerland	30.000	0,4	267	0,38	8.000.000
36.	United Kingdom	800.000	10,9	76	1,32	60.800.000
37.	TOTAL	7.350.770	100,0	71	1,40	525.328.860

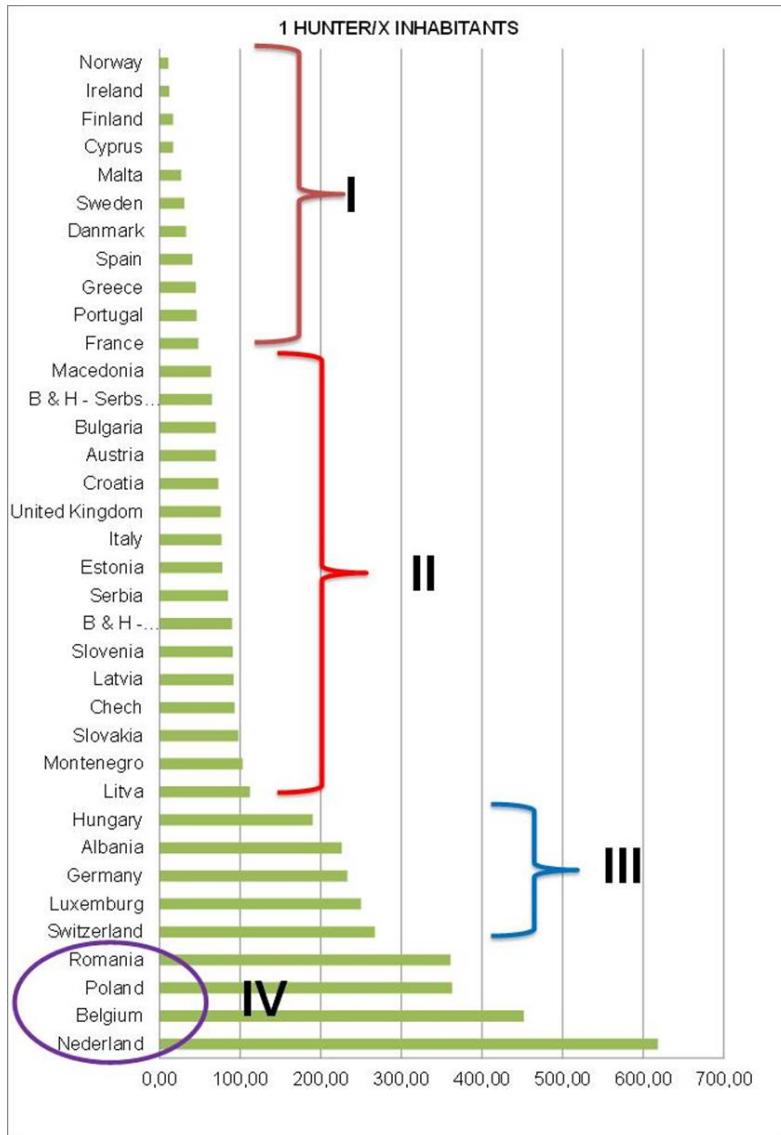
Hunters population in Europe is 1.4 % of total number of citizens. It is organized in associations (FACE) and it is the biggest NGO in Europe. Also, it is bigger than 19 countries and the number of their citizens. More than 7 million people take care about preservation of nature and wildlife, health and well-being of wild animals, biodiversity, firearms and about their own and total safety. More than 7

million people enjoy nature, recreation and sport activities, in different landscapes, from cold Nordic to warm, southern Mediterranean, from 0 to 5.000 meters altitude.



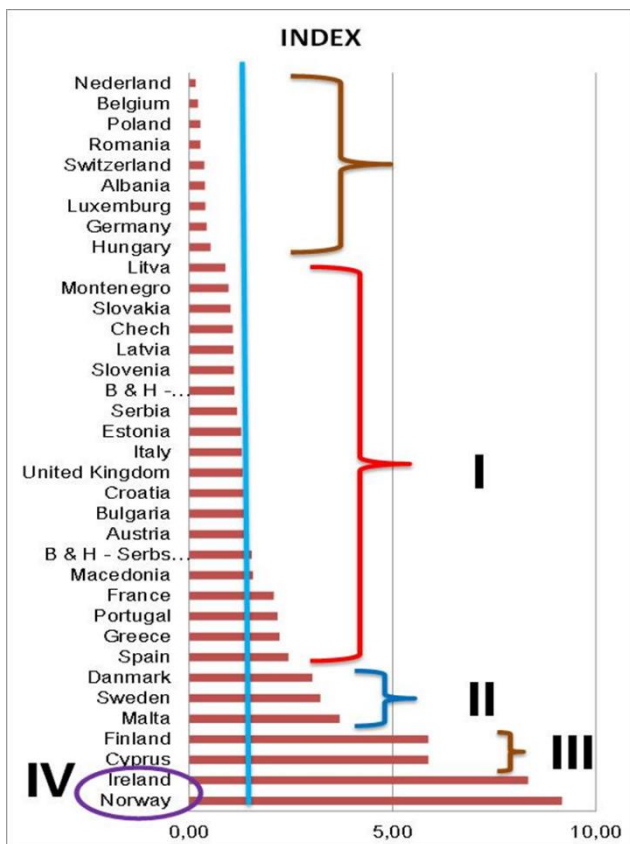
Picture 1. *Number of hunters in Europe*

Number of hunters in each country is considerable, but it is not in correlation with the area, nor with the number of citizens. Most hunters live in France (1.3 mil).



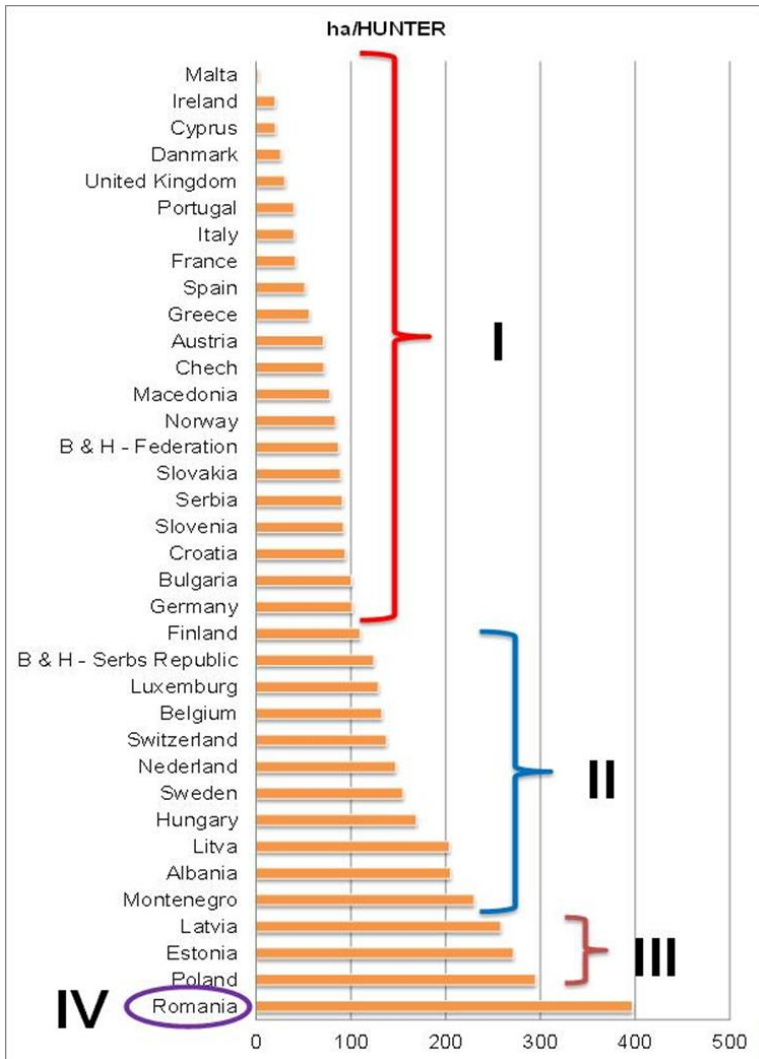
Picture 2. Relation: 1 hunter to X citizens of Europe

In picture 2 it can be seen per how many citizens there is one hunter. There are four groups. In the first group there are 11 countries, where one hunter comes to 50 citizens. In second group there are 16 countries, where one hunter comes to approximately 100 citizens. In third group there are 5 countries, where one hunter comes to approximately 200 citizens. In the fourth group there are 4 countries, where one hunter comes to more than 350 citizens. In Netherlands even more than 600. Average value (71) of this relation is not an adequate indicator in our case.



Picture 3. Relation (index) in Europe

In picture 3 it can be seen how many hunters come to 100 citizens in each country. Differences are large; from 0.16 to 9.16. In only 11 countries index is bigger than 2.0 and in only 4 countries it is between 6 and 9.



Picture 4. Relation of surface area in hectares per 1 hunter in Europe

In picture 4 it can be seen how many hectares of total area is covered by one hunter. There are four groups. In first group there are 21 countries, where one hunter covers approximately 100 hectares. In second group there are 11 countries, where one hunter covers approximately between 100 and 200 hectares. In third group there are 3 countries, where one hunter covers approximately between 250 and 300 hectares. In Romania one hunter covers approximately 400 hectares of the total area (fourth group).

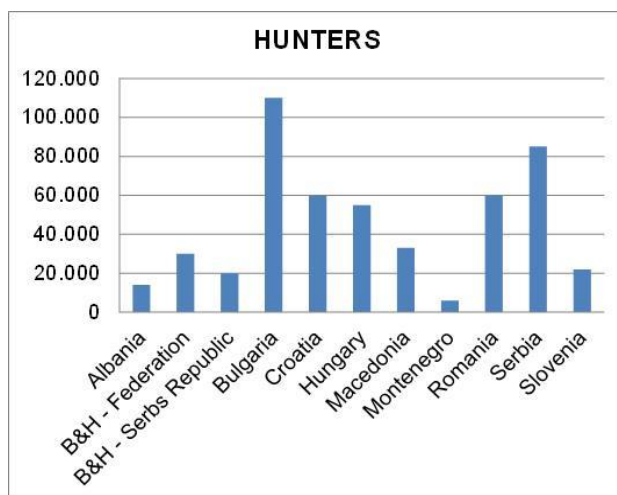
Table 2. Data about hunters in SEE

HUNTERS IN SEE						
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1.	Bulgaria	110.000	22	70	1,43	7.700.000
2.	Serbia	85.000	17	85	1,18	7.200.000
3.	Croatia	60.000	12	73	1,33	4.500.000
4.	Romania	60.000	12	361	0,28	21.700.000
5.	Hungary	55.000	11	190	0,53	10.450.000
6.	Macedonia	33.000	7	64	1,57	2.100.000
7.	B&H - Federation	30.000	6	90	1,11	2.700.000
8.	Slovenia	22.000	4	91	1,10	2.000.000
9.	B&H - Serbs Republic	20.000	4	65	1,54	1.300.000
10.	Albania	14.000	3	226	0,39	3.600.000
11.	Montenegro	6.000	1	103	0,97	620.000
12.	TOTAL	495.000	100	129	0,78	63.870.000

In SEE lives 12.2 % of all Europe's population and 7.7 % are hunters from European hunters population. It means that a part of hunter's population of this region is lower than the European average. The reason lies in the fact that all those countries used to have a socialist regime and today they are all in a transitional period. In general, economic standard in all those countries is lower than in other parts of developing Europe. In the past, in some of those countries it was not possible to possess firearms due to high prices and special state regulations.

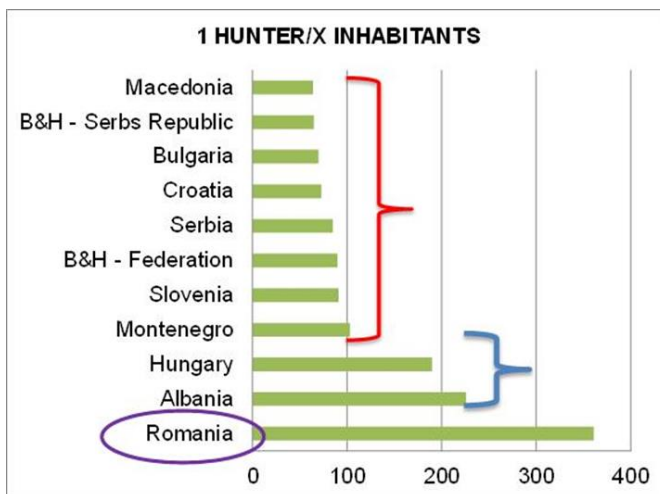
Hunters population in SEE is 7.7 %, which is less than hunter population in Europe 14.0 %. That means this region has large possibilities for development of national and international hunting. Particularly if we know how attractive and appropriate wildlife is in this area. It is also important for hunting tourism, as well as other ways of earning money.

Largest hunters population (110 000) is in Bulgaria (Table 2, Picture 5), which is, for example, twice as much as in Romania (60 000), that has three times more inhabitants (21.7 compared to 7.7 mil). Political and economic statuses are equal in both countries.



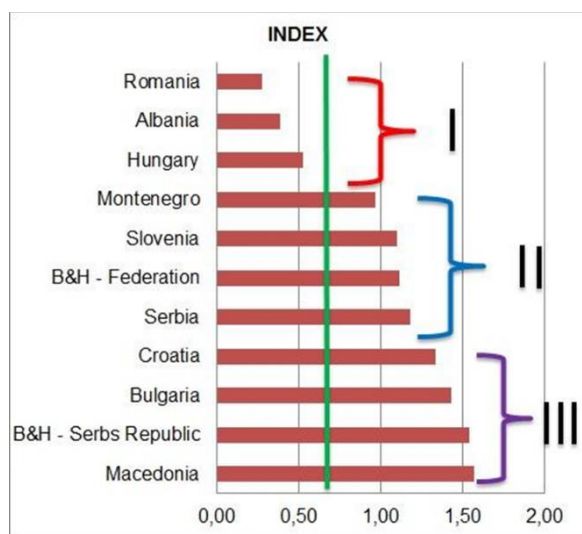
Picture 5. Number of hunters in SEE

Number of hunters in SEE varies considerably from one country to another, but it is not closely related to the area or population. As it was mentioned most hunters live in Bulgaria (110 000), even though the country doesn't have the largest surface area or the number of citizens.



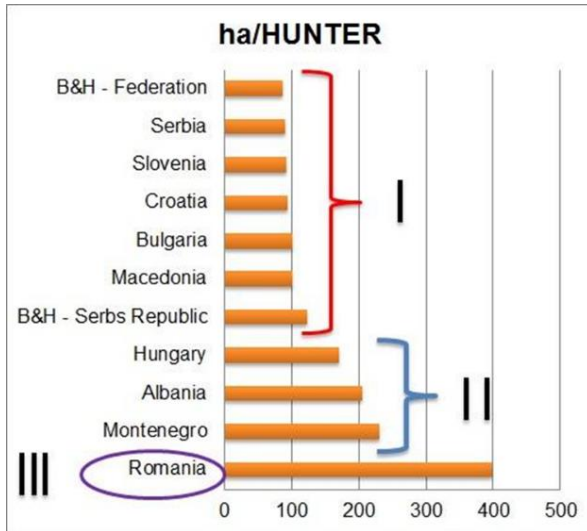
Picture 6. Relation: 1 hunter to X citizens in SEE

In picture 6 it can be seen per how many citizens there is one hunter. There are three groups. In first group there are 8 countries, where one hunter comes to 60 to 100 citizens. In second group there are only two countries (Albania and Hungary), where one hunter comes to approximately 200 citizens. In Romania, one hunter comes to approximately more than 300 citizens (third group). That means 4 to 5 times more than in countries of the first group. Average value (129) of this relation is not an adequate indicator in our case.



Picture 7. Relation (index) in SEE

In picture 7 it can be seen how many hunters comes to 100 citizens in each country. In Albania, Hungary and Romania (~ 0.4) three times less than in Bosnia and Herzegovina, Serbia, Bulgaria, Croatia and Macedonia (~ 1.5).



Picture 8. Relation of surface area in hectares per 1 hunter in Europe

In picture 8 it can be seen how many hectares of the total area one hunter covers. There are three groups. In first group there are 7 countries, where one hunter covers approximately 100 hectares. In second group there are only three countries (Albania, Hungary and Montenegro), where one hunter covers approximately 200 hectares. In Romania one hunter covers approximately 400 hectares of the total area (third group). That is four times more than in countries of the first group.

4. DISCUSSION

Hunter's population is one of the largest international NGO s in Europe. With its important and unselfish activity, it is a considerable factor in preservation and protection of environment, micro and macro spaces at all altitudes of our continent (FACE, 2013). Also, with assurance of respectable 10 billion euros and engaging approximately 100.000 workplaces, they are a considerable factor in social community at all levels of social activities. With positive selection and with strictly controlled rules of game managing, they considerably contribute to increasing of quality and preservation of biodiversity (FACE, 2006).

This research observed 35 European countries, from the north in Scandinavia to the south in the Mediterranean, from 0 to 5.000 meters altitude (FACE, 2013). Individually, 19 countries have fewer inhabitants than the altogether hunter's population of 7 million. Particular relations have been divided into logical groups, so that it would be easier to present interrelations, by using different indicators (indexes). Grouping of countries is not in correlation with their size, number of citizens, hunters, cultural or political commitment, nor with their standard (GDP). That means there are other factors to be considered. Bearing in mind that

there are considerable differences between countries, but observing the number of hunters and their relations, we obtain a picture about a large mixture of results, which doesn't influence common divisions: west east; EU non-EU; developed less developed.

For that reason, the whole hunter's population is like a large compliant family and because of that, hunters throughout the continent understand each other very well and they successfully communicate. At the same time, that leads to quality exchange of experiences and knowledge and also to development of mutual hunting tourism at the highest quality and quantity level. Their positive attitude has a good influence on the field of game breeding, game protection and protection of their habitat, protection of the entire ecosystem, preservation and development of biodiversity, safety, ballistics, optical industry, cynology, quality nourishment of humans and animals, tourism, industry and other service and supporting industry.

The ten observed countries of SEE, don't derogate from European criteria. Even though they are on the considerably lower level of GDP and in the long-term transitional process, with their culture and professionalism they don't lag behind other parts of Europe. There are even some advances that are noted because of the quantity and quality of game and because of the attractive and intact nature. All these are good preconditions for development of an even better mutual collaboration in that part of Europe, as well as with the whole continent. At the same time, that creates new space for total traffic of goods and services in hunting (over 10 billion Euros), and potential job openings on both sides. That is why the role of FACE is becoming more important and it is an unavoidable factor in creating hunting policy and the future of a new hunting wave in the areas of SEE, particularly today, in times of a hard financial crisis.

5. CONCLUSION

In the SEE, in ten observed countries, presented data and obtained mutual relations don't differ considerably from European data. Although the GDP in those countries is considerably lower, hunting activities are very much present, and with the game resources are very attractive for an even larger development of hunting tourism.

Hunters in Europe have never been a cause of disappearance of any game species in a particular area. Moreover, their care about professional breeding and sometimes even re-introduction of already disappeared species, whilst investing a huge amount of their own assets and their maximum engagement, has prompted the increasing of the species number and rising of health and condition altogether. Indirectly, hunters have influenced preservation and improvement of biodiversity of the entire ecosystem.

They manage firearms and cold weapons professionally and adeptly, which has an indirect influence on the culture of recreational and sportive shooting development. With that, hunters are qualified for using of firearms for the purposes of defense, protection and safety of citizens, individuals and community. Handling, using and behavior with firearms are at the highest professional and ethic level. All 7 million hunters use highly sophisticated, maintained and registered firearms with their maximum care, so that health and lives of hunters are not endangered, as well

as their community and lives of others around them. Criminal and deviant behavior of individuals and groups in society doesn't have any base or contacts with hunters.

With their activities, they contribute considerably to the development of hunting tourism, gastronomic offer, and enrichment of human nourishment with highly nutritional values. Also, through their active participating and professional breeding of dogs, they contribute considerably to the development of cynology altogether, particularly hunting cynology. Hounds are used more and more for non-hunting purposes, because of their refined values and skills.

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Summary

The most competent members of the human community who can manage wild animals and wildlife in a sustainable way are certainly hunters. Mutual understanding and cooperation of all stakeholders and ecosystem users is crucial for the implementation of hunting activities. Hunters care about the survival of wildlife, their overall food chain, their development and relative relationship to avoid deterioration and favoring of certain species over others, increasing the biodiversity of wildlife and the habitats they inhabit. The most significant changes in game hunting occurred when hunting, from the extreme need to survive and provide food for the survival of tribes, families and the human race, grew into a kind of entertainment and hobby. Looking from today's aspect and time where developed population in Europe lives, a question that arises is this: is hunting only fun, which is how many hunting circles are trying to present it and all that at the expense and harm of animals. This research includes the application of basic methods of document analysis and existing reports related to the number of hunters in Europe. In Southeast Europe, the presented data and the obtained mutual relations in the ten observed countries do not differ significantly from the European data. Although the gross domestic product in these countries is much lower, hunting activities are very present, and game resources are very attractive for even greater development of hunting tourism.

LOVCI U EUROPI ŠTO ZNAČI „LOVAČKA POPULACIJA” U EUROPI?

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Rezime

Najkompetentniji članovi ljudske zajednice koji mogu na održiv način da upravljaju divljim životinjama i divljači su svakako lovci. Za sprovođenje aktivnosti u lovu ključno je međusobno razumevanje i saradnja svih zainteresovanih strana i korisnika ekosistema. Lovci brinu o preživljavanju divljači, njihovom ukupnom lancu ishrane, njihovom razvoju i relativnom odnosu kako bi se izbeglo pogoršanje i favorizovanje određenih vrsta u odnosu na druge, povećavajući biološku raznolikost divljači i staništa koja naseljavaju. Najznačajnije promene u lovu na divljač dogodile su se kada je lov, od krajnje potrebe za preživljavanjem i osiguranja hrane za opstanak plemena, porodice i ljudske rase, prerastao u neku vrstu zabave i hobija. Gledajući sa današnjeg aspekta i vremena u kojem živi razvijena populacija u Evropi, postavlja se sledeće pitanje: da li je lov samo zabava, to jest koliko lovačkih krugova pokušava da ga predstavi i sve to na štetu životinja. Ovo istraživanje uključuje primenu osnovnih metoda analize dokumenata i postojećih izveštaja vezanih za brojnost lovaca u Evropi. U jugoistočnoj Evropi, predstavljeni podaci i dobijeni međusobni odnosi u deset posmatranih zemalja ne razlikuju se znatno od evropskih podataka. Iako je bruto domaći proizvod u tim zemljama znatno niži, lovne aktivnosti su itekako prisutne, a resursi divljači veoma su atraktivni za još veći razvoj lovnog turizma.