

VÝROČNÁ SPRÁVA
ANNUAL REPORT

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2018...

When you write about 2018, you just can not avoid it. The murder of investigative journalist Ján Kuciak and his fiancée Martina Kušnírová split up the time into the past and now. In the past, we knew that Slovakia was rotten with the corruption. Now we know how strong these ties are and what a huge impact they have. Even before, we weren't naive to think that we don't have mafias in Slovakia. Now with the new horror we find out how high they reach. The ruthless crime was a breaking point from which the universal spell "the act did not happen" does not work any more. The changes that come do not happen by themselves. For every small and big change, there are the people behind them, willing to leave their shell of own comfort. Not because someone pays for it, but because they consider it necessary. Activists, journalists, all citizens who do not wish a political plot but a functioning democratic state. The event that profoundly affected our society so strongly, however, also revealed another thing - the ability of fake news makers and conspirators, but also



people who desire to keep their power, to twist the reality back and forth in the situation when elementary ethics and compassion say stop. Ability to produce and label fictional enemies where they simply do not exist.

In 2018 as ever before, we in Ekopolis wanted most of all to build on what we like the most - to support community projects for people and a better environment. We greatly value that we are well on this way, that our long-term partners are standing with us and that there are new partners joining us. But most of all we value those for whom we are primarily here - citizens who do little good deeds for others. These deeds are the footprints of hope that our country still has a chance to set out on a path where decency is not considered a weakness, where ethics will not give way to impudence and where doing politics will mean a service to citizens. We in Ekopolise do not admit any other way.

March 2019, Peter Medved'

Our profile

The Ekopolis Foundation has been managing grant programs specializing in civic society democracy and environmental sustainability since 1991.

We help and connect people and organizations active in the issues of sustainable development, protection of natural and cultural heritage and in the building of a civil society. Together with our partners, we solve problems, we bring new themes to the fore, bold ideas and we inspire positive changes in society.

Our vision is a country where people are aware of their responsibility for the condition and development of the environment in which they live and therefore act so that future generations will have a good life.

We support the activities of hundreds of NGOs all over Slovakia in accordance with their actual needs; flexibly and without any unnecessary bureaucracy.

Since 1991 we have supported 3,159 projects from NGOs, municipalities, civic associations and initiatives to the sum of 19,5 Mil. €. In addition we have also realized our own projects at both national and international level.

We are a member of the Environmental Partnership Association together with other foundations in Bulgaria, Czech republic, Hungary, Poland and Romania. We are also a member of the European Cyclists Federation, of the European Greenways Association which is oriented to the building, support and promotion of paths for non-motorised transport in Europe. Our foundation is also a member of Civilscape – an international network of NGOs from all over Europe in support of the European Landscape Convention. We are a Fair – Trade Partner that supports the ideas of fair business.

In 2018 we supported 51 projects with the sum of 121 560 €.

However, we realise that the true value and contribution of these projects to people and our environment is priceless.

ENVIRONMENT

GREEN BELT

- The grant programme Green Belt supports active citizens and sustainable care of ecologically valuable areas which are used by the public and it supports the concept of nature preservation and sustainability.
- Thanks to the support of SLOVNAFT, S.C., 31 projects in the amount of EUR 68,600 were supported in 2018.
- TOP Project 2018: "The Fruit Orchard Banisko project, through its interconnection of fruit-growing tradition and modern lifestyle, and cooperation between self-government and citizens, will be a sustainable and attractive place for active recreation of citizens of Brezno and we hope that it will inspire others."
Milan Hronec, Program Manager

TREE OF THE YEAR 2018

- The aim of the nationwide contest Tree of the year is to draw attention to the beauty and value of trees and awake people's interest in the environment.
- "Through the stories that connect trees and people the Tree of the Year competition helps to valuable trees for better care and to people

to do something good for the environment. We are particularly pleased that the interest in the survey is growing every year."

Peter Medved', Director of Nadácia Ekopolis.

- The winner of the 16th year of the competition is the Lime from Kopčany. The donor of the competition is Slovenská sporiteľňa Foundation. Peter Lipa, the well-known Slovak singer, was patron of the contest, making it his seventh time to be honoured.
- 20,704 people took part in the vote this year. Last year's winner - Jabloň z Bošáče ended in 6th place in the European Tree of the Year Competition.

FOR WATER COMPETITION

- The competition aims to contribute to responsible and efficient use of water through measures friendly to nature.
- Ekopolis Foundation, with financial support from NESTLÉ Slovakia, Ltd., launched the 3th year of the contest For Water. In total 9 proposals were submitted and 3 young experts and one school competition team were rewarded.
- "For Nestlé, responsible water management is a priority issue. We are not only satisfied with the water savings in the plants. We go further

and want to involve the wider public, and especially young people, in the protection of water, to whom we give our opportunity to gain valuable experience in project preparation and processing." Martina Šilhánová, manager of CSR Nestlé Czech Republic and Slovakia.

ENVIROeducation of young people

- The aim is not only to expanding the knowledge about climate change but has also to motivate young people to design their own creative and innovative solutions for improving the environment. The "Give a waste the second chance" competition as a part of the project, which Slovenská sporiteľňa Foundation supported.
- "We are very pleased that the ENVIRO pilot project has proven itself last year and addressed students across Slovakia. Thanks to this, we know that young people are creative, they are interested in environmental matters and it is worthwhile to support their work. We have seen their deployment as well as concrete results that improve the environment in the locations where they live." Lenka Križanová, Specialist from Slovenská sportielňa Foundation.
- 9 schools from all over Slovakia participated in the 2nd year, 4 of them were supported by a 3,000 euro for realization of their ideas.

PROTECTION OF BIODIVERSITY IN VEOLIA SLOVAKIA AREAS

- To the planted woods, bird and bat huts and insect houses, which we had in the area of the WWTP Rakytovce in the past, there was recently added a pond, which will be supplied with rainwater from the roof of a nearby building. The proposal for water retention and the creation of a new biotope was created by students from the M. Bel University in Banská Bystrica during the third year of For WATER competition in spring 2018.
- "The Rakytovce wastewater treatment plant site is specific in that we have been implementing the project "Protection and Promotion of Biodiversity in Technical Facilities" for the second year and pupils can see real measures that we can take to protect natural diversity. I am very pleased that schools are interested in such events." Ing. Peter Martinka, General Director of StVPS, S.C..

LIVING TRAILS

- The objectives of the programme are to support the sensitive renewal of marked hiking trails in Slovakia and enhancement of the recreational and educational functions of the Slovak countryside. Financial support has been directed towards restoration and improvement of hiking trails, educational paths and public areas used by tourists.
- Thanks to the support of Horalky - Sedita, in the year 2018 tourist and cycling trails were restored with the sum of 10 000 euros, the tourist sites became more attractive and the wells were restored in 6 places.
- "Somehow, we have become accustomed to the fact that there are hiking and biking trails in the country, that they are well marked and that there are places to relax. However, less is already known that it is almost exclusively the result of the work of volunteers who do it only from being enthusiastic about their free time."
Ján Roháč, Program Manager

TREES INSTEAD OF LEAFLETS

- The Trees instead of Leaflets program was financially supported by METRO in 2018 with a sum of 2,200 euros, thanks to which 3 projects could be realised.

- "In addition to promoting the good idea of saving paper leaflets, the program has been providing useful support for local projects to restore existing or planting new greenery. In addition, projects strengthen people's cooperation at the local level because they are always based on the volunteers' active work. The program gives them the opportunity to influence the quality of the environment in their immediate surroundings."
Milan Hronec, Program Manager

KELT HELPS NATURE

- Thanks to the Kelt helps nature program, volunteers from the Ekopolis Foundation, Banská Štiavnica Tourism Association and the local community managed to build a new altan and enhance the garden under the Old Castle in Banská Štiavnica.
- Kelt beer has always been associated with skilful and skilled men. We are very happy that a wide community met in Banská Štiavnica and thanks to our support it was able to prepare such a beautiful place for both citizens and visitors."
Andrea Malovcová, Brand Manager of Kelt

BIODIVERSITY TO SCHOOLS

- The project is implemented in cooperation with Veolia, Stredoslovenská vodárenská prevádzková spoločnosť, a.s. and Podtatranská vodárenská prevádzková spoločnosť, a.s., thanks to which we selected 14 motivated schools from all over Slovakia.
- The aim of the two-year project is to lead schools to increase their natural diversity in their school areas and thus to revive the everyday learning process.
- "The project is focused on education, in which the preparation and detailed processing of proposals from pupils and students themselves, under the guidance of experienced lecturers, will take place. In the following school year, schools and experts will implement their plans with a € 3000 grant for each school."

Lucia Rossová, Program Manager

The Good Neighbour

- The Good Neighbor Grant Program is aimed at supporting the cooperation of active citizens, maintaining and developing good neighborly relations in urban areas around the Slovnaft refinery and in neighboring municipalities.

Dare 2 Connect

- Promoting the ecological linking of the Danube region along the Green Belt through Natura 2000 sites.

LIFE BooGI BOP

- Design of corporate premises supporting biodiversity.

ECOLOGY OF MOUNTAIN COTTAGES

- Together with partners as a KOOR and DBU, the project focuses mainly on the production, storage and saving of energy, water management and fire protection in mountain cottages in national parks.

CIVIL SOCIETY

PROGRAMME OF DEVELOPMENT OF THE ROMA COMMUNITY

- The Ekopolis Foundation in partnership with the Carpathian Foundation implemented a 3th year of Programme of development of the Roma community. 5 projects in the Banská Bystrica region received financial support in total 40,000 €.

- “This year is focused on the healthy development of children from an early age with an emphasis on children growing up in a particularly unfavorable environment with an emphasis on their families and wider communities. The need to devote to pre-school education of children from marginalized Roma groups has emerged from the experience and practice of many NGOs working in this field.”
Milan Hronec, Program Manager

ACTIVE CITIZENS FUND - SLOVAKIA

- Active Citizens Fund – Slovakia (ACF) is a grant programme aiming at strengthening civil society, supporting active citizenship and empowering vulnerable groups in Slovakia.
- The ACF – Slovakia supports Slovak civic organizations in engaging citizens in decision-making and public policy making, in efforts to create better conditions for good governance, protect human rights and provide civic education and improve the position of vulnerable groups in society. Particular attention is paid to young people and their participation in public affairs.
- The ACF – Slovakia is part of Iceland,

Liechtenstein and Norway’s financial assistance to 15 Member States of the European Union. The programme is managed by the Ekopolis Foundation in partnership with the Open Society Foundation and the Carpathian Foundation.

- In the period 2018 – 2023, the ACF – Slovakia will allocate 7.7 million EUR in 17 open grant calls for projects of civic society organizations (CSO) and will provide other support activities, training in project management, organizational development and self-financing.

Europe for Citizens - Reclaim Our Civic Space!

- The Europe for Citizens and Reclaim Our Civic Space Initiative deals with the trend of limiting space for NGO activities in Central European countries. Through this initiative, together with partners from six countries (Poland, the Czech Republic, Slovakia, Hungary, Romania and Bulgaria), we want to help link the organizations that are interested in this phenomenon to provide them with more information from home and abroad, and more skills to work together how to deal with this problem.

SMART CITIES

Project MOVECIT

- The Ekopolis Foundation realise in cooperation with the city of Banská Bystrica and other European partners project MOVECIT, which is supported under the Interreg Central Europe. Aim of the project is to create mobility plans for institutions.

Project Sustainable Mobility

- The project is part of the national project of the Office of the Plenipotentiary of the Government of the Slovak Republic for the Development of Civil Society entitled Supporting Partnership and Dialogue in the Field
- of Participatory Creation of Public Policy which is financed by the operational programme Effective Public Administration.
- The specific output of the project is an audit in line with the ADVANCE methodology, including an action plan and recommendations for sustainable urban mobility planning for Banská Bystrica.

Revitalization of public spaces

in B. BRAUN area

- In 2018, Ekopolis Foundation continued in cooperation with B. Braun, which was involved in the revitalization of the site at the dialysis centre in Galanta. The aim of the project was to make the premises around the new facility more appealing for senior citizens and clients with minor mental disabilities; the new centre is operated by B. Braun following the building's modernization.

BY BICYCLE!

National platform for non-motorized transport support - Cycloplatform

- In the project, we focus on creating a platform for communication and collaboration, coordinating activities, exchanging experience and know-how within NGOs and between them and the public administration. The platform aims to create a mechanism for their cooperation.
- The Ekopolis Foundation co-organized the European Mobility Week.
- We organized the By Bicycle Competition as part of a national campaign - we rewarded the winner of the Instagram vote and the Ekopolis Foundation Award.

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