



EARNING THEIR DAILY BREAD

BESNIK BOLETINI, LEONIDA MOLLIQAJ



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Individual collectors of scrap who mainly come from Roma, Ashkali, and Egyptian (RAE) communities have a hard time surviving solely from this activity, although this kind of business is quite profitable for collection companies. Most of these companies are not licensed by the Ministry of Environment. Members of these RAE communities collect waste night and day, and they receive roughly five Euros a day for the work. Almost all residents of the two neighborhoods where RAE communities live collect waste, and this is their everyday activity. Unlike the residents of these two neighborhoods who collect waste from containers, hundreds of people collect waste at a landfill in Gjilan, with tents on site where they spend a lot of time. Among everyday collectors there are children as well, and many of them had to either drop out, or not enroll in primary school because of their work

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Most people from RAE communities earn their living by collecting scrap (recyclable waste) in containers. Harsh economic and social conditions make them work night and day in dangerous places, in unsuitable temperatures, and with no proper equipment in order to earn enough money to survive. These collectors gather raw products, which are then exported. The collection of waste has become a typical and everyday activity for them, despite the consequences. The adults say this is what they have been doing since childhood, due to the lack of opportunities in education or employment. Their children share the same fate. Taking these circumstances into account, they have no opportunity to make alternative choices in order to survive.

Individual or informal waste collectors are not organized around a formal structure. They have no official agreements with private companies that collect scrap.

High volume of waste produced the need for a more efficient system of management. But neither the Ministry of Environment and Spatial Planning, nor companies that provide public services in waste management managed to establish such a system. As a consequence, in Kosovo a recently emerged informal sector of waste management has taken shape.

Scrap business is very prof-

itable, though disproportional for those involved in this activity. Companies that collect and export waste gain millions of Euros, while Kosovo citizens who collect this waste hardly manage to earn their living.

In all municipalities around Kosovo there are people of all age groups who collect waste from containers and send them to collection points. Preportr team followed the work of individual collectors for a number of days, with the focus on the regions of Prishtina, Fushë Kosova, and the landfill in Gjilan, having in mind that there is a higher concentration of collectors in these areas.

In Fushë Kosova, the situation is different because all residents of two big neighborhoods collect waste and earn for their living doing this everyday activity.

Around 12% of residents of this municipality are members of RAE communities. They live in very difficult social conditions and many of them live in old and demolished houses.

The spokesperson of Fushë Kosova municipality, Ali Topalli, said for Preportr that only a portion of the families of these communities receive social assistance. Only 278 out of 500 families of the Ashkali community receive social assistance, 32 out of 50 families of the Roma community, and 30 out of 40 families of the Egyptian communities receive social assistance.

In the narrow streets of these

two neighborhoods, at all times you can see children, women and men carrying the collected waste, some with carts and hand tractors, others with bags in their bare hands. They first take the waste to their backyards in order to classify it and then send it to collection points. Anyone who visits these neighborhoods for the first time might be perplexed by the way people collect waste the entire day, but for people living there, this is the reality.

The activity from the collection of scrap to its preparation is comprised of various chain cycles. The first link of this chain is comprised of individual collectors who take these materials to the collection points close to their places of residence. These collection points take the waste to large companies, which export the scrap after pressing it.

The export is usually carried out in the countries in the region and beyond. From this entire chain, collection points gain approximately 3 to 5 cents per kilo of scrap. However, the price for export varies depending on the destination country. For instance, a kilo of plastics in Albania is approximately exported for 13 cents whereas in Switzerland it is exported with a price of around 6 Euros.

Recyclable materials like iron, copper, plastics, paper etc. are on top of the lists of exported goods. Only during the period from 2010–2015, 520,581,960

Amount between 2010 and 2015 (in kg)		Value between 2010 and 2015 (In Euros)	
105,020,106.26		520,581,960.00	
2010	2011	2012	2013
Amount : 83,696,260.00	Amount : 106,576,445.00	Amount : 92,942,588.00	Amount : 105,783,286.00
Value : 15,369,130.00	Value : 22,305,151.00	Value : 19,247,789.78	Value : 20,084,113.00
2014	2015		
Amount : 102,897,181.00	Amount : 28,686,200.00		
Value : 21,735,979.23	Value : 6,277,941.79		

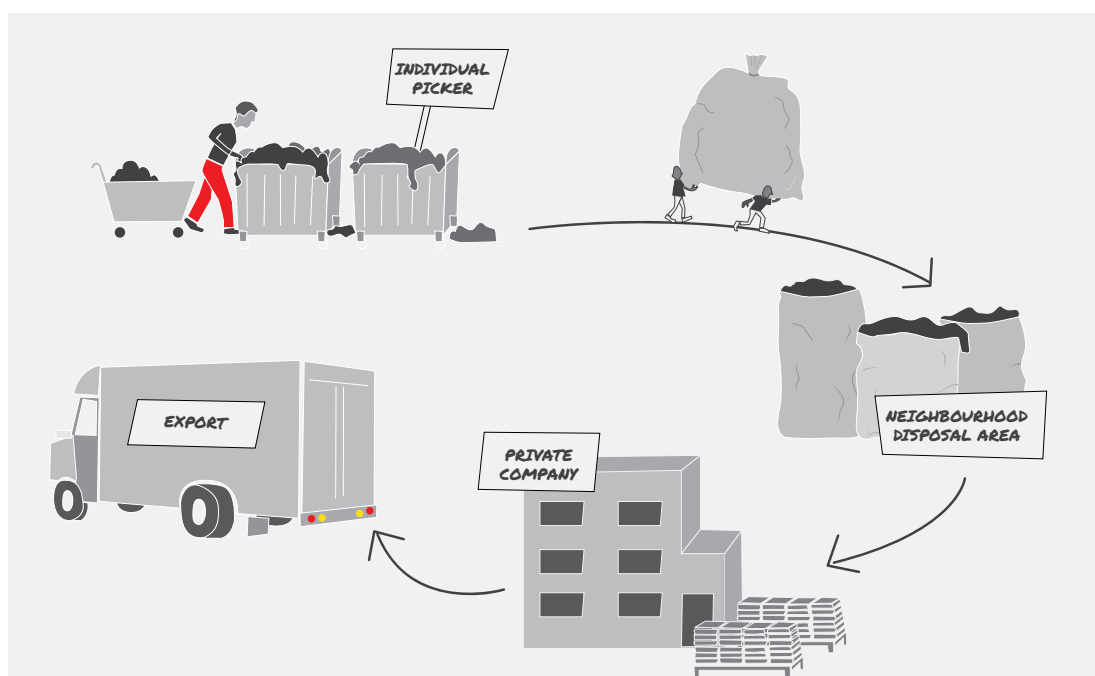
kilos of scrap had been exported, totaling the amount of 105,020,106 Euros.

MUCH WORK, LITTLE MONEY

Although Nesife has five children, she and her husband go to Prishtina everyday in order to collect waste. She says they have to do this for their survival, since they have small children and she

takes along the youngest one who is less than one year old. The conditions in which they live, which may not even be called a house, are very difficult. It is very difficult to live there during summer, let alone during the winter.

“Kids do not go to school. We go around containers looking for waste in Prishtina. No set hour to go out – depends when we have to. We collect a bag, a bag and a half



per day, and we get 5-6 Euros. Sometimes we manage to buy elementary things with this money, other times we don't", she says.

Zymer is another everyday collector of waste. He is around his fifties and says he does this work since childhood. He collects waste mainly in Prishtina, together with his children, who are minors.

"I do this job since childhood and I will be doing it until I die, for there is unemployment everywhere. I go out everyday, but now my hand tractor is broken and I can't go out there. I mostly go in Prishtina in 'Bregu i Diellit' and around 'Dardania' neighborhoods, he says.

Zymer says that he mostly collects nylon, cans and plastic bottles. He says he earns from 5 to 8 Euros a day for a two-day work.

"We live with this, and sometimes we find food that we give to

our children because sometimes we find ourselves in these kinds of situations, that's life. We are not satisfied with the prices because they dropped a lot. One kilo of bottles has gone from 19 to 13 cents", says Zymer.

Zymer says that this is very difficult and dangerous job, since it is very dangerous to be in continuous contact with different types of waste. Zymer takes the waste to his backyard until a considerable amount is collected. But the collection of waste in the backyard is dangerous for his small children, who play with this waste since they don't have toys.

"Due to this work I also have health problems, respiratory problems. My daughter is paralyzed because of the circumstances, she was infected for she was not born like this", explains Zymer.

Preportr team followed the

everyday work of Zymer. In two days, he managed to collect one bag and a half of plastic bottles, and he was taking them to sell them.

He takes the collected waste to "Rrezi Com", a company that collects recyclable waste. Although the bag seemed big and full, it did not weigh more than 31 kilos minus the weight of the empty bag, which in this case was 1 kilo. So, from this gigantic bag filled with a lot of hard work Zymer did not get more than 4 Euros and 20 cents, and he went back to make use of the rest of the day to collect more waste.

"Rrezi Com" is one of the biggest companies in plastic waste collection. Since it collects waste from individual collectors, a group of employees presses the waste and prepares it for export.

The owner of this company did not want to give a statement,

but Rrahman Beqiri, a worker in this company talked about the work being done and the way of export.

"We press (using machines) the materials we receive and then other companies take it for export", says Beqiri.

According to data provided by Kosovo Customs about this company, from 2010 to September 2015 they exported 428,295 (net) kilos of scrap and the value of this export is 76,681 Euros.

Smailj, another 56 year-old collector, goes out twice a day to collect waste. Unlike other collectors, he had the fortune to be assisted by "The Ideas Partnership" organization, which bought him a cart to help him collect the waste easier. He says this cart is helping him a lot in his everyday work, but complains that - given his age - pushing the cart is very tiresome.

His family consists of eight members, and all live from waste collection, including the rent they pay for the house.

He says he wakes up at five in the morning to go to Prishtina and finishes his work around 9 in the evening. Going around the neighborhoods in Prishtina and the trip to and back is very tiresome, since he says he makes around 60 kilometers a day.

"I collect mostly from the containers in 'Dardania' and 'Lagjia e Spitalit' neighborhoods. I have been doing this job for four years now. I collect iron, plastics, etc. Earlier, I used to collect card boxes, but now I can't do it since there is no place to put them, because the place I live is not mine, while I have no problems with plastic bottles since those are clean", he

says.

Unlike other collectors, he does not sell the waste every day, but he does this after collecting a bigger amount, which he separates in advance.

"I collect a couple of bags a day, I separate bottles from nylon. A big bag weighs 30 to 40 kilos. I usually make 6 to 7 bags and then I sell them. I earn 6 to 7 Euros a day. But I would earn more if I had a tractor", said Smailj.

Preportr followed Smailj during a part of his daily work. He was preparing the cart and the big bags to collect waste during afternoon hours. In the backyard of the house he lives, he already collected four bags of plastic bottles and classified some of them - made them ready for sale. He told us he also collects waste like cans and other metals.

On that day, Smailj felt tired and decided to go no further than Fushë Kosova. As soon as he arrives in Fushë Kosovë, he heads towards first containers. He immediately starts collecting waste that he needs for sale. Unhappy with what he found in some containers, he goes on looking in other containers of the town, just like every other day.

Taking into consideration the difficult situation of the residents of these neighborhoods "The Ideas Partnership" is trying to help them in education, health, and in different forms. The head of this organization, Elizabeth Gowing, says that she has been involved for five years now to help the residents of these neighborhoods. The office of this organization is in these very neighborhoods.

Elizabeth is well aware of the



hardships of these people, she works among them and she also shares her experience of collecting waste together with a family from this community.

"I went out one day to see closely how this work is done, because it is the main activity of the community in which we work for five years now. One day I joined Agron and his daughter, Gjejlane, who was 11 at that time," says Elizabeth.

She says that during three tiresome hours they managed to collect a cart full of bags that she thought would make a lot of money, but when they sold them she was disappointed with what they earned.

"I thought we would get a lot of money, and when we got to the stockroom and weighed it, we got 2 Euros and 18 cents. When I returned to Prishtina, I went in a café and ordered an orange juice, which cost 2 Euros. My work was for nothing, I thought", she said.

THE LANDFILL IN GJILAN, A WASTE COLLECTION "INDUSTRY"

Unlike city collectors who collect waste in containers, tens of people collect waste dispersing it in the landfill of Gjilan, which is situated between the villages of Velekincë and Uglarë. They wait for trucks which unload waste and then start collecting the materials they need (cans, plastic bottles, metals like aluminum, copper, steel etc.). They take these materials to collection points, most of which are situated in that region.

These people spend the en-

tire day there collecting waste. Their number reaches 100 and, unlike other towns where collectors are mainly people from RAE communities, there you can find many Albanians as well.

When you first look at it this landfill, it looks like a waste collection industry. There are huge bags filled with different types of waste that has been separated beforehand. Inside the landfill there are improvised tents for people who collect waste. They wait for every truck that unloads waste and they are not even afraid to collect waste that is dispersed and pressed by excavators.

They have also damaged the high fences of the landfill in order to access it as easily as possible and leave with collected materials.

Preportr tried to talk to one of these collectors, but to no avail due to their refusal and threats if we recorded them with our cameras.

Of a big concern is also the fact that there are lots of children in this landfill. They are exposed to continuous danger by collecting waste close to trucks and excavators, but also by spending entire days in a contaminated environment. Due to their everyday work in this landfill, these children have also left their schools.

The authorities of the landfill say that these collectors hinder the work of people employed at the landfill, since they always stay close to the trucks and excavators when they are unloaded, respectively when the waste is pressed. They have tried to talk to them, but never managed to make them

leave the landfill. There were cases of clashes between collectors regarding the territory where they collect waste, and there was also a case of a criminal prosecution.

Neither did the police manage to make these people leave the landfill, despite the fact that their stay there is illegal. They leave as soon as they see a police patrol approaching, and they return as soon as the patrol leaves.

Kosovo police spokesperson for Gjilan region, Ismet Hashani, said for Preportr that the security guards of this landfill have the responsibility to take these people out of the landfill and if the incidents escalate the police should be informed.

"Kosovo Police was informed by the staff of the landfill that some irresponsible people damaged the fences in certain segments of the axis along the landfill. The police identified some suspected individuals and initiated several criminal charges for 'property damage,' said Hashani.

The spokesperson of Gjilan municipality, Muhamet Pajaziti, said for Preportr that in cooperation with the Kosovo Police they intervened several times in order to remove these people from the landfill, since it was considered that their presence at the landfill represents a high risk to their health.

According to him, most of these heads of family are part of the social scheme of Gjilan municipality, and most of them receive additional food packages from the municipality.

"In cooperation with German GIZ, we are drafting a strategy

for waste recycling. That would include the construction of a factory close to this landfill where people from that area would be hired, and in this way we try to stop illegal collection of waste," he added.

On the other hand, according to data provided by the Ministry of Work and Social Welfare, 41 families of the RAE community currently receive social assistance in Gjilan municipality.

FAR FROM SCHOOL, CLOSE TO CONTAINERS

Among everyday waste collectors are children too, and because of this work many of them had to quit school or not start at all.

Elvis and Albert collect waste in Prishtina. Everyday, they come from Plemetin village, Obiliq municipality. Elvis had a schoolbag on his back, but it was not filled with books since he replaced those with waste. He said he used to go to school up to fifth grade, and together with his eleven-years-old friend, Albert, quit school in order to help their families survive. Although they would like to go back to school, they say it is impossible since they have to work.

The same goes for Ibrahim, another child from the RAE communities, who collects waste on an everyday basis. He is not among his friends in the classroom. He works with his brother to earn for food for their eight-member family. He travels everyday from Fushë Kosova to Prishtina in order to collect waste, which he sells at the end of the day. He says he spends hours at "Bregu i

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SMAJLI

Diellit" and as close to containers as possible, since there are also other collectors who come to collect waste in this neighborhood.

"Every morning at six o'clock I head to Prishtina. Everything we collect, in Prishtina, we take to the storehouse and we sell it. We earn 3 to 5 Euros a day from everything we collect. This is what I do for ten years now. I started collecting waste since I was very little. The money we earn, we give to our family to buy food."

In the streets of RAE community neighborhoods in Fushë Kosova during the day you can often see kids with carts or bags in their hands taking the waste to a collection point situated inside the neighborhood.

Three small kids go down the street. One is pushing a cart full of waste. He is lost behind the



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IBRAHIMI

HOW MUCH DO INDIVIDUAL COLLECTORS EARN FROM SCRAP COLLECTION?

Plastic bottles
0.13 euro



Iron
0.14 euro



Nylon
0.15 euro



Cans
0.35 euro



everyday basis, and from the money earned they buy groceries and help their mother, since she is sick, he says.

"I go out to collect waste before noon, and then, at 12 o'clock, I go to school. In the evening I collect waste again. My brothers and I collect waste together, and everything we collect we bring here to sell, with a cart," he says.

The guy who opened the collection point in the neighborhood says to have done it for children who are under risk when crossing the main street in order to take the waste to the landfill.

"Here, we collect all kinds of waste: plastics, bottles, metals, nylon, cans, everything. Children are those who collect the most, and I started collecting waste so that children don't have to go to the landfill of Fushë Kosova, since they undergo the risk of being attacked by mutts or hit by cars. There are cases when kids go there for 20 cents only. The children alone collect around 200 kilos a day", he says, adding that he takes the collected waste to the collection point in Fushë Kosova every 2 to 3 months, and he says he earns around 3 cents per kilo.

When looking for scrap and plastics these children also happen to find food and clothes. Two kids in the middle of a Fushë Kosova neighborhood who were looking for waste found something that brought back the smile on their faces. The girl found a pillow while the boy found a pair of shoes for his father. The place where they were looking for stuff was filled with dangerous things like thorns, steel, diapers, etc. In

compliance with the Convention Nr. 138 of the International Labor Organization (ILO) for Minimum Employment Age, the Law on Labor in Kosovo prohibits the work of children under 15 years old in order to enable them attend obligatory education.

After spending most of their time doing hard work, these children have little energy left to commit to education.

A 2009 study by the Kosovo Foundation for Open Society (KFOS), found that 96% of the RAE population in Kosovo did not finish obligatory education. Left close to the threshold of poverty, they see education as invaluable, since in a state where survival is at stake they cannot see a long-term engagement.

On the other hand, according to a research conducted by "Balkan Sunflowers Kosova", which interviewed 2346 families of RAE communities, the reasons for not attending school were as follows: 18,6% of the respondents declared the reason to be the lack of proper clothes for school, 16,3% declared they had no money to buy books and other educational materials for school, 13,7% of respondents considered that the lack of warm clothes for winter is the reason why children cannot attend school, 10,8% of the respondents consider that the lack of money to buy food at school is the reason why children cannot attend school, and 8% of the respondents said that children had to work, and therefore could not attend school.

THEY RISK THEIR LIFE FOR SURVIVAL

The collectors do the entire process of waste collection with bare hands. They use no special clothes for protection, gloves, masks, or other tools that would not only make their job easier but would also protect their health. Most of them have no information when it comes to the risk coming from this activity, but even when they are aware about the importance of these tools, they cannot afford them.

First, the collectors unload recyclable waste in their backyards and usually, after collecting a considerable amount, they take it to collection points. In this way, they and their families are constantly exposed to waste. They transport the waste to their houses or collection points using bags, carts, bicycles, and very few of them use small vehicles. They say the heavy loads often caused them back pain.

Doctors who receive these patients from the two neighborhoods of Fushë Kosova where RAE communities live also confirm this fact. According to a Family Medicine doctor in Fushë Kosova, Remzi Shala, people who collect waste tend to be affected by infective diseases.

"The population that lives in an environment filled with waste, medically speaking, can be affected by infective skin diseases or gastritis, but also by other infective diseases that can be transmitted through waste," he said.

However, knowing the difficult situation of these communities, very few of them visit doc-

tors or health institutions.

"We have few patients injured by hard materials. We receive patients affected by diseases related to their living conditions, such as parasitic diseases, scabies, and body lice," added Dr. Shala.

The health situation of RAE communities is closely linked to economic, social and educational situation. The level of diseases and early mortality rate is higher than among the majority community in Kosovo. Shala says that many members of these communities have never been vaccinated or medically checked.

MILLIONS OF EUROS FROM SCRAP EXPORT

Not being formally part of an organizational structure of scrap collection, individual collectors not always get fair and reasonable prices for materials they offer.

Preportr conducted a research on prices in the market and found that individual collectors sell their materials to collection points getting minimal prices. They sell a kilo of plastics for 0,13 Euros, steel for 0,14 Euros, nylon for 0,15 Euros and cans for 0,35 Euros. Waste collection points did not disclose what they get for a kilo of a recyclable material when they sell it to bigger companies that export it, except for the collection point of Fushë Kosova neighborhood that collects waste brought by children, which, according to the owner, earns around 0,03 Euros per kilo.







Preportr asked for export prices of each of the recyclable materials from Kosovo Customs in order to disclose the profit of

huge pile, and its weight makes him lean to one side from time to time.

They took this waste to a collection point, which is situated inside the neighborhood. The bag filled with plastic bottles weighed 20 kilos, but they did not calculate it as a whole, since the bag was to be weighed too. The empty bag weighted 3 kilos and 300 grams. So, they got only 1 Euro and 95 cents out of this.

The biggest of the three kids says that he collects waste on ev-

THE AMOUNT OF SCRAP EXPORTED BY COMPANIES BETWEEN 2010 AND 2015

 COMPANY	 NET KG	 VALUE	 COMPANY	 NET KG	 VALUE
Imk Pipe Factory L.L.C	276,580.00	49,078.00	N.P.T. A.N, Xh. Sekunda	971,360.00	187,017.00
Metal - Mix Sh.P.K.	77,536,870.00	14,980,286.00	N.P.T. Muli	15,820.00	2,847.60
Albanian Mining Company Sh.P.K.	233,120.00	46,144.40	N.P.T. Aurum	550,175.00	116,183.00
Ar - Metal Sh.P.K.	570,602.00	139,817.00	Ndërmarrja e Re-Fabrika e Pasurimit të Kromit Devë Sh.P.K.	17,310.00	3,115.80
BDN SH.P.K.	1,847,293.00	430,088.12			
Bechtel Enka - Gp	969,265.00	197,203.00			
Beta Sh.P.K.	42,220.00	7,518.60	N.Sh. Metalurgu	843,190.00	185,759.00
Biopak Sh.P.K	44,000.00	7,920.00	N.T. Graniti Comerc	20,000.00	3,600.00
C.M.C. Ekocon Sh.P.K	60,150.00	10,097.00	N.T. Marigona	1,637,035.00	276,270.00
Ci - Kos - Cro Gmbh L.L.C.	19,026,955.00	5,679,580.00	N.T.P. Kaçaku	8,500.00	18,950.00
Euro - Steel Sh.P.K.	75,428,253.00	17,433,311.00	N.T.P. Rrezi Com	428,295.00	76,681.00
Euro Abi Sh.P.K.	81,678,294.00	14,549,781.00	N.T.P. Trimi Metal	199,890.00	37,979.10
Euro Lumi & Surovina Sh.P.K.	21,992,725.00	3,591,352.00	N.T.P. Metal - Trade	21,978,521.00	4,009,523.00
Exim Metal Sh.P.K.	355,260.00	63,675.00	N.T.P. Metali	20,410.00	3,979.95
F & Z Sh.P.K.	225,870.00	40,656.60	N.T.P. Paja	4,609,990.00	1,175,056.00
Fan Sh.P.K.	93,020.00	20,464.40	N.T.P. Vatani - F.Sh.	473,750.00	89,992.00
Floral Sh.P.K.	205,700.00	37,026.00	N.T.P. Hekurishta Te Baloshi	793,165.00	149,144.00
Gratis Commerce Sh.P.K.	14,368,360.00	3,213,758.00	N.T.Sh Stina	1,812,190.00	382,874.00
Inter Steel Sh.P.K.	1,522,526.00	209,095.00	N.T.Sh. Egzoni	44,660.00	9,628.86
Intertrans-Coop Sh.P.K.	5,327,190.00	971,739.00	N.T.Sh. Ilirida	18,095.00	3,619.00
Kosova - Stell Sh.P.K.	9,150,565.00	9,285,165.00	N.T.Sh. Leotrimi - Trans	2,769,890.00	534,507.00
Kosova Metal Sh.P.K.	15,160.00	2,728.80	N.T.Sh. Profl Metali	233,040.00	44,580.00
Kras Sh.P.K.	212,680.00	42,767.40	N.T.Sh.P. Metal Elektro	63,600.00	11,012.00
L & L Sh.P.K.	23,555.00	1,648.85	Nderimi Sh.P.K.	116,196,917.00	21,821,528.00
Laberia Company	21,504,370.00	4,612,633.00	Ndërmarrja Tregtare Private Tiki	924,030.00	189,345.00
Limak Insaat Sanayi ve Ticaret A.S.-Kosovo Branch Office	67,825.00	17,154.75	Newco Ifs Progres Sh.P.K.	112,325.00	176,056.05
			Newco Imk Pipe Factory L.L.C	394,473.00	58,473.00
Max Internacional Sh.P.K.	204,250.00	35,505.00	Ntp Loresa	136,560.00	21,023.95
Metal - Mix Sh.P.K.	3,128,217.00	563,080.06	Pastrimi Sh.P.K.	1,175,483.00	211,586.94
Metal Company Sh.P.K.	20,880.00	3,758.40	Rafaelo 2002 Sh.A. - Dega Në Kosovë	954,205.00	263,213.00
N.P.P. An - Di	23,000.00	4,140.00			
N.P.Sh.T.P. Metaltehnika Asllani	97,802.00	21,516.00	Rec Kos Sh.P.K.	16,094,489.00	3,847,025.00
			Tims Trader	10,697,435.00	1,858,179.00

THE AMOUNT AND VALUE OF SCRAP EXPORT IN SOME OF THE COUNTRIES IN THE REGION AND THE EUROPEAN UNION (2010-2015)

WASTE AND SCRAP OF CAST IRON; WASTE AND SCRAP OF ALLOY STEEL			FERRO-ALLOYS 2012-2015			WASTE, PARINGS, AND SCRAP OF PLASTICS		
STATE	NET KG	VALUE	STATE	NET KG	VALUE	STATE	NET KG	VALUE
Macedonia	160,902,834.06	37,759,930.01	Macedonia	86,790.00	23,301.48	Macedonia	6,234,414.00	1,813,283.66
Germany	1,381,501.00	1,604,456.75	Italy	25,654,939.00	65,830,088.92	Serbia	701,719.00	194,497.07
Albania	380,447,827.00	70,665,197.92	Slovenia	187,926.00	405,424.28	Albania	145,065.00	18,334.20
Montenegro	4,606,433.00	2,459,670.71	Belgium	3,673,629.00	8,391,502.13	Montenegro	7,760.25	2,587.75
Poland	1,381,625.00	96,713.75	India	23,878,752.00	60,966,723.41	Austria	28,734.00	11,897.40
Belgium	71,200.00	4,984.00	China	4,368,822.00	12,828,162.81	Germany	229,906.00	172,921.23
Bosnia and Herzegovina	1,159.00	1,356.03	South Africa	1,550,778.00	3,937,935.73	Sweden	281.00	927.50



"THE POPULATION THAT LIVES IN AN ENVIRONMENT FILLED WITH WASTE, MEDICALLY SPEAKING, CAN BE AFFECTED BY INFECTIVE SKIN DISEASES OR GASTRITIS, BUT ALSO BY OTHER INFECTIVE DISEASES THAT CAN BE TRANSMITTED THROUGH WASTE."

REMZI SHALA

companies that export the work of individual collectors. But the Customs sent the data according to its tariff code, which classifies scrap in three categories: "Waste, parings, and scrap, of plastics", "Waste and scrap of cast iron; waste and scrap of alloy steel" and "Ferro-alloys". Also, these data are related to the places, amounts and their value in the destination countries, but they are not related to the companies because, according to the Customs, these data cannot be made public.

It was not possible for Preportr to find, for instance, the profit of a company when it exports a kilo of plastics according to these data, and the interviewed owners of these companies did not say what they approximately earn from products they export, collected by individual collectors.

However, Preportr found which companies export scrap the most. The company with the highest export was "Nderimi sh.p.k", which, from 2010 until now exported 116,196,917 kilos of scrap with the value of 21,821,528 Euros. "Metal-Mix", "Euro-Steel", "Euro Abi", and so on, also export considerable amounts.

Preportr also found the prices from the export of scrap.

Referring to the data provided by Kosovo Customs between 2010 and 2015, within one year Kosovo approximately exported scrap with the value of around 20,000,000 euros. The volume and the amount of export increased yearly. While in 2010, Kosovo exported 83,696,260 kilos of scrap reaching the value of 15,369,130 Euros, in 2014 the volume of export was 102,897,181 kilos of scrap with the value of 21,735,979.23 Euros.

Recyclable materials in the

countries in the region in general are sold with similar prices. For instance, a kilo of plastics in Macedonia during 2010-2015 was exported with an average price of 0,29 Euros, in Serbia with 0,28 Euros and in Montenegro with 0,33 Euros. The plastic is exported in Albania with a lower price of an average of 0,13 Euros per kilo.

However, in other countries plastics are exported with a considerably higher price. In Switzerland, a kilo of plastics was exported for 6 Euros and in Sweden for 3,3 Euros.

According to the Customs, recycling materials, which, according to tariff code, are classified as "Waste, parings, and scrap, of plastics," are exported in higher volume in Macedonia, Turkey, Serbia, and Germany.

Another category of recyclable materials, "Waste and scrap of cast iron; waste and scrap of alloy steel," is exported mostly in Albania, Macedonia, and Turkey, with average prices from 0,19 to 0,31 Euros per kilo. A Turkish company called "Kurum International", located in the metallurgic area of Elbasan, carries out the export in Albania.

These materials are exported to Poland, Holland, Belgium,

and Czech Republic for a very low price, and that with only 0,07 Euros per kilo. A higher export price is for Israel, with 2,23 Euros per kilo and Slovenia with 1,67 Euros per kilo.

Recyclable materials classified as "Ferro-alloys" are exported mainly in Italy, Slovenia, China, India, Spain, etc. These materials are exported with different prices depending on their destination countries. In Czech Republic a kilo of this material is exported for only 0,10 Euros, while in France it is sold for 2,99 Euros.

This Ministry admits that there are such unlicensed landfills and that so far the inspectorate of this Ministry during inspections managed to witness 65 unlicensed landfills that collect waste

The majority of landfills that collect waste are not licensed

The companies that collect waste should be licensed by the Ministry of Environment and Spatial Planning (MMPH). During its research, Preportr found that some landfills have no licenses at all, since they are not amongst the 64 landfills licensed by MMPH.

This Ministry admits that there are such unlicensed landfills and that so far the inspectorate of this Ministry during inspections managed to witness 65 unlicensed landfills that collect waste. So, these companies were identified only during inspections carried out by the said Ministry, which means that there might be similar cases yet to be identified.

"All companies that lack license, with the Ministry aware of this, are sent to courts, and a number of those is undergoing the procedure of getting necessary documentation for a license. All penalties for all operators violating the law are imposed by courts and those measures are in line with legal provisions," says Fadil Maxhuni from MMPH information office.

On the other hand, landfills or collection points that are licensed complain because they have to



deal with unfair competition, because being licensed means paying many taxes, which is not the case with unlicensed landfills.

Preportr visited some companies that collect scrap in order to see the work cycle that is carried out from collection to the preparation for export.

“S.R.I – Kosova” which operates in Fushë Kosova is one of the biggest collectors of recyclable paper and cardboard, plastics, nylon, etc.

The administrator of this company, Valdet Azemi, said for Preportr that last year they exported around 7000 tons of recyclable materials. He says that 30% of the market of this company is covered by individual collectors, who, after collecting waste,

bring it to the company where it is weighed and paid for depending on the volume and quality of materials.

“A kilo of paper is 3 to 4 cents, bottles are 14 to 16 cents, while polyethylene is from 10 to 17 cents. Prices vary depending on the price of the material or the final product,” said Azemi.

He said that the company itself collects the rest of the waste and this collection is usually carried out in nearby towns.

“Because transport considerably increases the costs, it is not worth going further than 20-30 kilometers from the collection point. Thus, the main municipalities in which we operate are Prishtina, Fushë Kosova, Obiliq, and Lipjan. We also have

one point in Peja, and we operate there since last year,” he added.

Unlike the collection points inside the neighborhoods, this company is licensed and seemingly fulfills the basic operational conditions. According to Azemi there are many other companies that collect waste but most of them are unlicensed, and they create difficulties in the market.

“In order to get a license we have to fulfill many conditions... we pay a high rent here, we have premises as required – with closed and opened parts, trucks and so on. On the other hand they can start a business in an open field and not be bothered by anyone. When we compare the costs, we see they damage our business,” said Azemi.

“Rec Kos,” on the other hand, is the biggest metal collection company in Kosovo. Many companies that operate in Kosovo take their materials to this company. The owner of “Rec Kos” did not want to give a statement regarding the activity of his company, but he said that the metallic materials, after being collected, are pressed and prepared for export. According to Kosovo Customs data provided for Preportr, this company mostly exported in Albania, Macedonia, Montenegro, Italy and so on, and the price of scrap varies depending on the country of destination.

According to Kosovo Customs, from 2010 to 2015 this company exported 16.094.489 kilos of metals, while the value of

export is 3,847,025 Euros.

“Metal Mix” is one of the companies collecting different metals, which it exports in Albania and at the same time imports iron rods from there.

The director of this company, Alban Zeqiri, says that in most cases they get scrap from companies that collect this type of material, but also from individual collectors.

“During one month we export between 2000 and 2500 tons of iron in Albania, respectively in ‘Kurum International’ in Elbasan. They take it and melt it, and we import it as iron rods. They pay 15 to 17 cents per kilo, then we sell it for 20 to 21 cents”, says Zeqiri.

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