



MUNICIPAL CAPACITY GAPS AND NEEDS ON INTEGRATING CLIMATE CHANGE ASPECTS INTO SPATIAL PLANNING IN KOSOVO

UN**HABITAT**
FOR A BETTER URBAN FUTURE
KOSOVO PROGRAMME

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INTRODUCTION

Climate change has become one of the biggest global threats and its impacts are already being faced by many cities and human settlements around the world, including those in Kosovo. Rising temperatures and magnitude of extreme weather events (such as droughts and floods) in Kosovo have costly impacts on its ecosystems and biodiversity, infrastructure, housing, basic services, livelihoods and people's health. According to the latest **Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC)** assessment report, the Western Balkans region is considered one of the warming hotspots, and related climate change impacts will further exacerbate. While cities in the developed countries are increasing awareness, action and response to climate change and resilience building, those with less human and financial resources are lagging behind.

At the same time, cities and other human settlements are major contributors to global warming due to major greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions. Globally, cities are accountable for about 75% of the world's energy consumption and over 70% of GHG emissions, with transport, buildings, energy and waste management being among the largest contributors. According to Kosovo's 2019 GHG inventory, majority of emissions (86%) derive from the energy sector, followed by agriculture, forestry and other land uses (8%) and waste (5%).

The way cities are planned, built and managed (along with the respective energy generation, transportation, buildings, food and waste management systems) is key to reducing emissions, cutting pollution and economic costs, and achieving the **Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)**. Many cities are already taking actions towards low carbon development by limiting urban sprawl and promoting compact development (linking land use and transportation planning), supporting active mobility (walking and cycling), increasing energy efficiency in buildings and energy generation from renewable sources, as well as limiting pollution through technological advancements and circular economy.

Worldwide advances in tackling climate change are leading to cleaner air and restored nature and at the same time have supported economic growth and new jobs. Green development, safeguarding the environment for future generations, is a must while recovering from the COVID-19 pandemic and building resilience.

However, current climate action is not enough to keep global warming within the 1.5 °C limit set by the **Paris Agreement** (2015). Rapid emissions cuts are needed worldwide, and those can only be achieved through coordinated action at all levels (global, regional, national and local). While collaborative climate action is a must, local governments are key actors in fighting climate change.

UN-Habitat Kosovo has joined the UN-Habitat's **#ClimateAction4Cities** campaign to inspire action in urban areas to prevent climate change and adjust to its ongoing or anticipated impacts. Among the efforts, UN-Habitat Kosovo has conducted the Kosovo-wide **“Capacity gaps and needs assessment of the planning and urbanism municipal departments on integrating climate change aspects into spatial planning”** survey throughout the period of August to September 2021.

The survey aimed at assessing the human capacities (knowledge and needs) of the municipal Directorates of Planning and Urbanism (or equivalent) in terms of integrating climate change aspects into spatial planning, as well as gathering and showcasing current local best practices for climate mitigation and adaptation. It targeted the Heads of Planning divisions (or equivalent key municipal staff for developing spatial planning documents) of all 38 municipalities:

Deçan/Dečani, Dragash/Dragaš, Ferizaj/Uroševac, Fushë Kosovë/Kosovo Polje, Gjakova/Đakovica, Gjilan/Gnjilane, Drenas/Glogovac, Graçanicë/Gračanica, Hani i Elezit/Elez Han, Istog/Istok, Junik, Kaçanik/Kaçanik, Dardana/Kamenica, Klinë/Klina, Klllokot/Klokot, Leposaviq/Leposavić, Lipjan/Lipljan, Malishevë/Mališevo, Mamusha/Mamuša, Mitrovica South, Mitrovica North, Artana/Novo Brdo, Obiliq/Obilić, Partesh/Parteš, Peja/Peć, Podujeva/Podujevo, Pristina, Prizren, Rahovec/Orahovac, Ranillug/Ranilug, Skenderaj/Srbica, Theranda/Suva Reka, Shtërpca/Štrpce, Shtime/Štimlje, Vitia/Vitina, Vushtrri/Vučitrn, Zubin Potok, Zveçan/Zvečan.

The survey was organized in three parts, gathering information on:

- Demographic data (of the respondent),
- Knowledge and expertise (of both the respondent and the directorate),
- Best practices (on both local climate adaptation and mitigation).

This report presents the findings of this survey, which will serve as a baseline for local capacity building, knowledge exchange and measure planning on climate change and spatial planning. They will also feed into the UN-Habitat Kosovo's commemorations of **Urban October** (including World Habitat Day and World Cities Day), United Nation Kosovo Team's **#KosovoClimateAction** campaign leading up to the **26th United Nations Climate Change Conference of Parties (COP26)** (October-November 2021) and the **11th Session of the World Urban Forum** (June 2022).

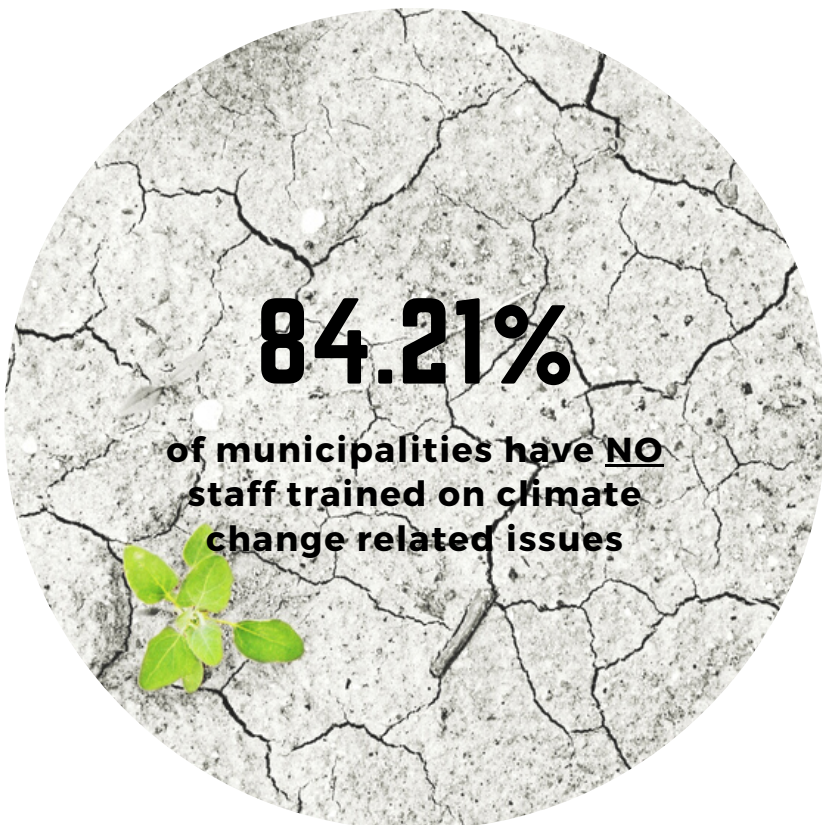
KNOWLEDGE

Majority of respondents (65.79%), heads of planning or urbanism, or other equivalent staff in charge of leading spatial planning documents, are **middle-aged** (40-61 years), followed by young adults (less than 39 years) with 31.58%. **Men** comprise more than half (57.58%) of the municipal staff in key spatial planning positions.



86.84%

of respondents have **NEVER** taken climate change related academic courses nor professional training.



84.21%

of municipalities have **NO** staff trained on climate change related issues



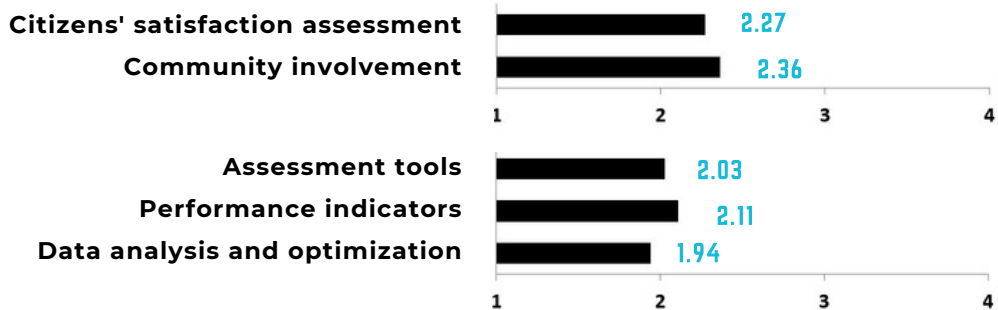
Around two-thirds of the respondents have a **master's degree** (or equivalent, integrated studies). Almost half of them (47.36%) have a background in **architecture and spatial planning**. Majority of planning and urbanism directorates (84.21%) have **NO staff trained on climate change related issues**, besides the municipalities of Kačanik/Kaçanik, Peja/Peć, Rahovec/Orahovac and Zvečan/Zvečan, which claim to have one or two municipal staff trained in climate change related fields.



Scale: 1 – no knowledge, 2 – little knowledge, 3 – medium knowledge, 4 – a lot of knowledge

REGULATORY TOOLS

Majority of respondents have medium knowledge on zoning rules (weighted average 2.95), building codes and standards (2.92), and the Spatial Planning Strategy (Spatial Plan of Kosovo) (2.92), with little knowledge on Kosovo's Development Strategy (National Development Strategy) (2.05) and Climate Change Strategy and Action Plan (1.86).



Scale: 1 – no knowledge, 2 – little knowledge, 3 – medium knowledge, 4 – a lot of knowledge

GOVERNANCE, MANAGEMENT AND MONITORING TOOLS

Majority of respondents have little knowledge on community involvement (weighted average 2.36) and citizens' perception/satisfaction assessment (2.27) as tools for measuring good governance. There is lower knowledge on monitoring/assessment tools (2.03), performance indicators (2.11) and data analysis and optimization (1.94).

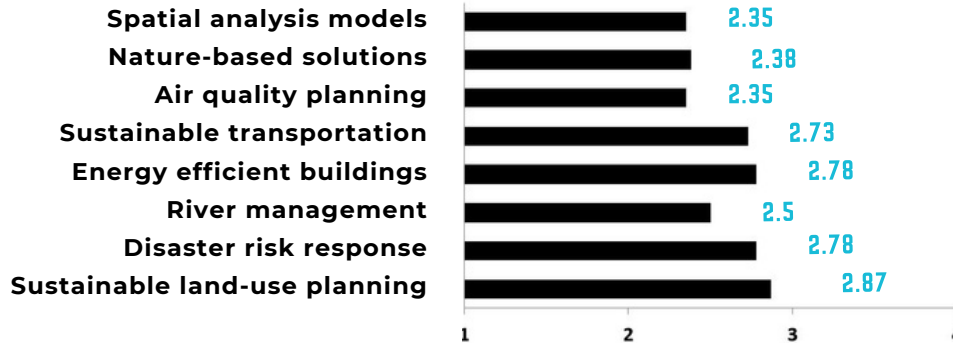


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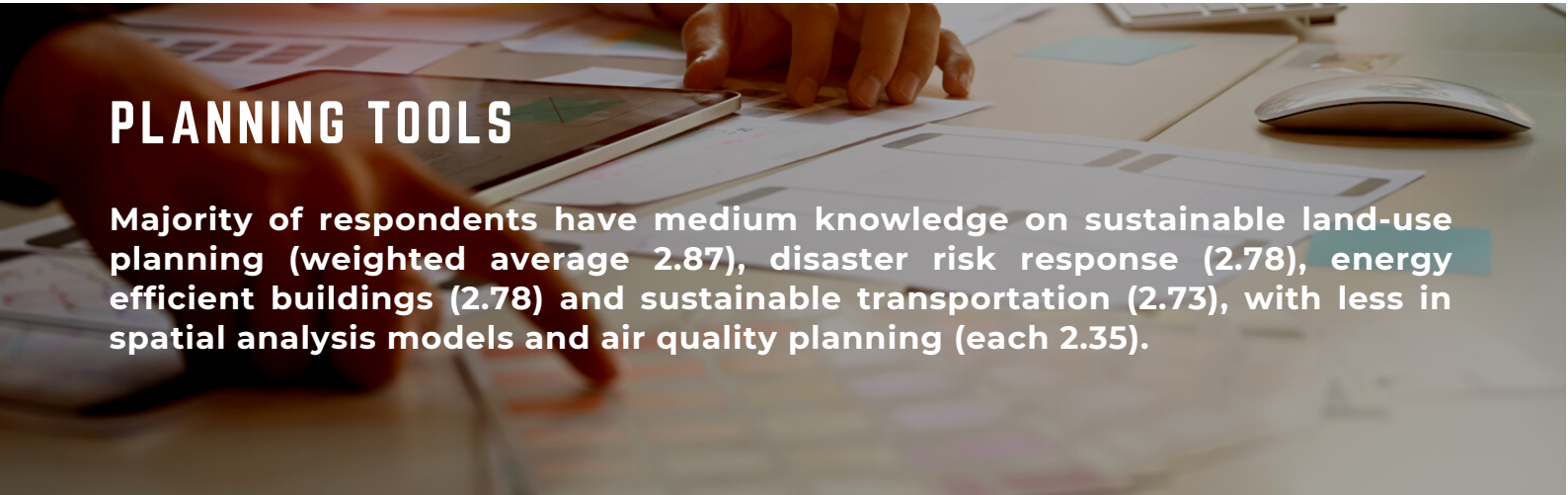


SPATIAL PLANNING CONCEPTS

Most of respondents have medium knowledge about sustainable (weighted average 2.84) and green (2.73) cities, and less on smart and healthy (2.46 each), resilient (2.24) and low-carbon (2.16) cities.



Scale: 1 – no knowledge, 2 – little knowledge, 3 – medium knowledge, 4 – a lot of knowledge



PLANNING TOOLS

Majority of respondents have medium knowledge on sustainable land-use planning (weighted average 2.87), disaster risk response (2.78), energy efficient buildings (2.78) and sustainable transportation (2.73), with less in spatial analysis models and air quality planning (each 2.35).



57.89%

of respondents have **NEVER** worked on climate change related issues.

EXPERTISE

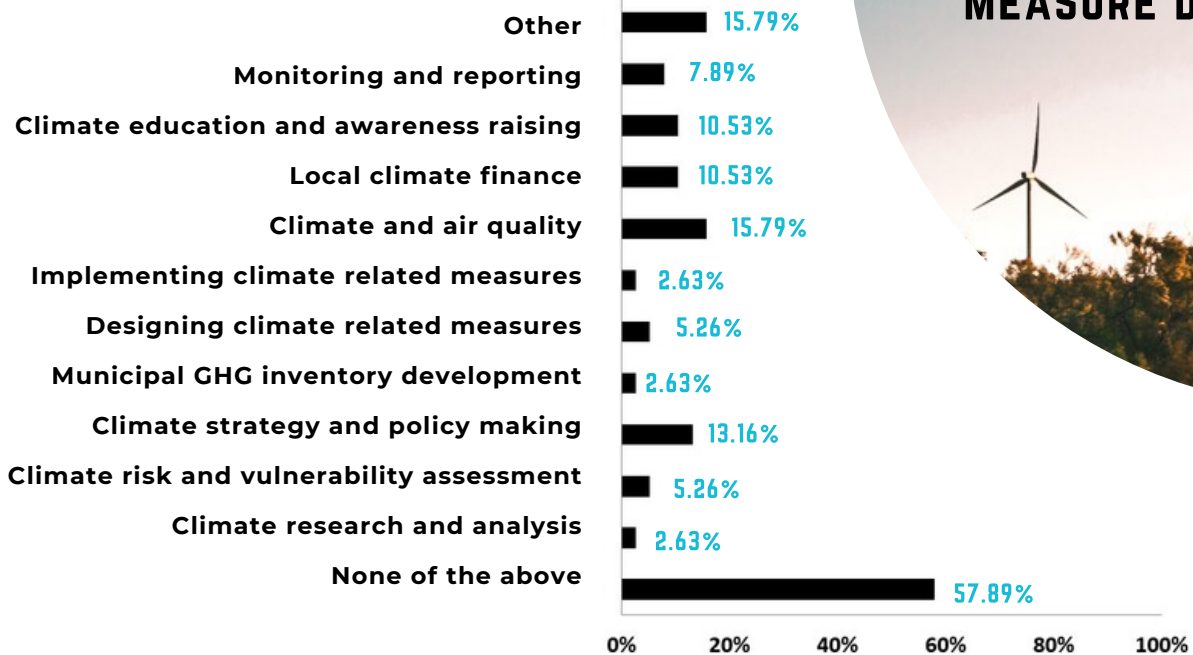
Most of respondents (44.74%) have a general working experience of **11-20 years**, followed by around a quarter with more than 21 years, and another quarter with less than 10 years. More than half of them (52.63%) have worked within the municipality for 11-20 years.



Climate change related expertise by sector:
**LAND USE (57.14%),
 BUILDINGS (57.14%),
 WASTE (38.10%) AND
 WATER (28.5%)**



Lack of experience on:
**CLIMATE RESEARCH &
 ANALYSIS,
 GHG INVENTORY,
 MEASURE DESIGNING**



Only few respondents have previously worked on **climate and air quality related issues** (15.79%), climate strategy/action plan development and **policy making** (13.16%), education and **awareness raising** (10.53%) and **finance** (10.53%).

CLIMATE MITIGATION

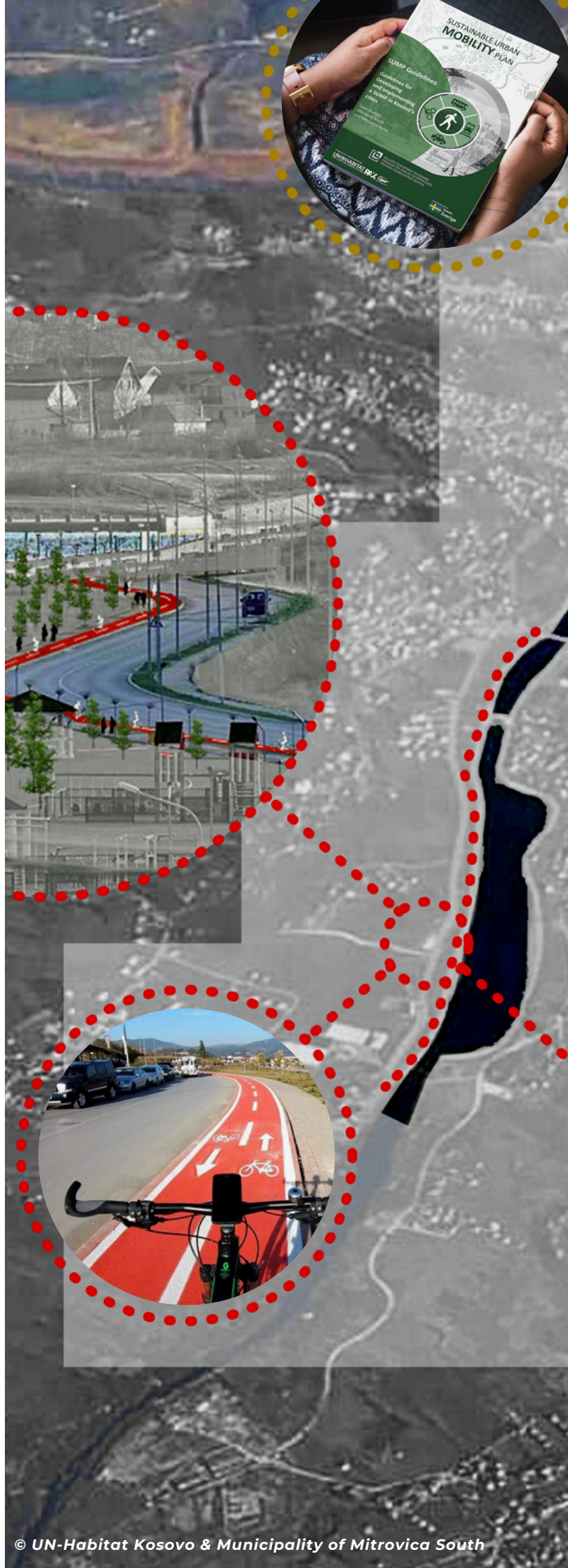
Municipality of Mitrovica South has adopted its **Sustainable Urban Mobility Plan** (following European Union's and UN-Habitat's guidelines), which supports transportation related emission reductions and air quality improvements by encouraging walking, cycling and usage of public transport on its functional urban area. Similar measures have been taken by municipalities of Pristina and Mitrovica North.

Municipalities of Artana/Novo Brdo, Rahovec/Orahovac, Theranda/Suva Reka, Zvečan/Zvečan, Mitrovica North and Mitrovica South have worked on **increasing green areas or regulating parks.**

Zubin Potok has also taken actions to **prevent illegal forest logging.**

Waste management (through illegal landfills closing) has started being addressed in municipalities of Theranda/Suva Reka, Gjilan/Gnjilane, Hani i Elezit/Elez Han, Deçan/ Deçani, Shtërpca/Štrpce and Zvečan/Zvečan.

Air quality monitors have also been installed in Mitrovica South, Zvečan/Zvečan, Leposaviq/Leposavić and Pristina.





Energy efficiency measures on public and residential buildings

have also been undertaken by the municipalities of Dardana/Kamenica, Ferizaj/Uroševac, Gjilan/Gnjilane, Theranda/Suva Reka, Hani i Elezit/Elez Han, Artana/Novo Brdo, Junik, Partesh/Parteš, Shtërpca/Štrpce, Prizren, Vushtrri/Vucitrn, Mitrovica South and Zvečan/Zvečan.

Street lighting has also been switched to LED in municipalities of Theranda/Suva Reka, Ranillug/Ranilug, Klina, Skenderaj/Srbica, Mitrovica South and Hani i Elezit/Elez Han.

Renewable energy projects based on wind have also been installed in Mitrovica South and Vushtrri/Vucitrn, and solar photovoltaic (PV) panels have been installed on municipality buildings in Prizren, Artana/Novo Brdo and Fushë Kosova/Kosovo Polje.



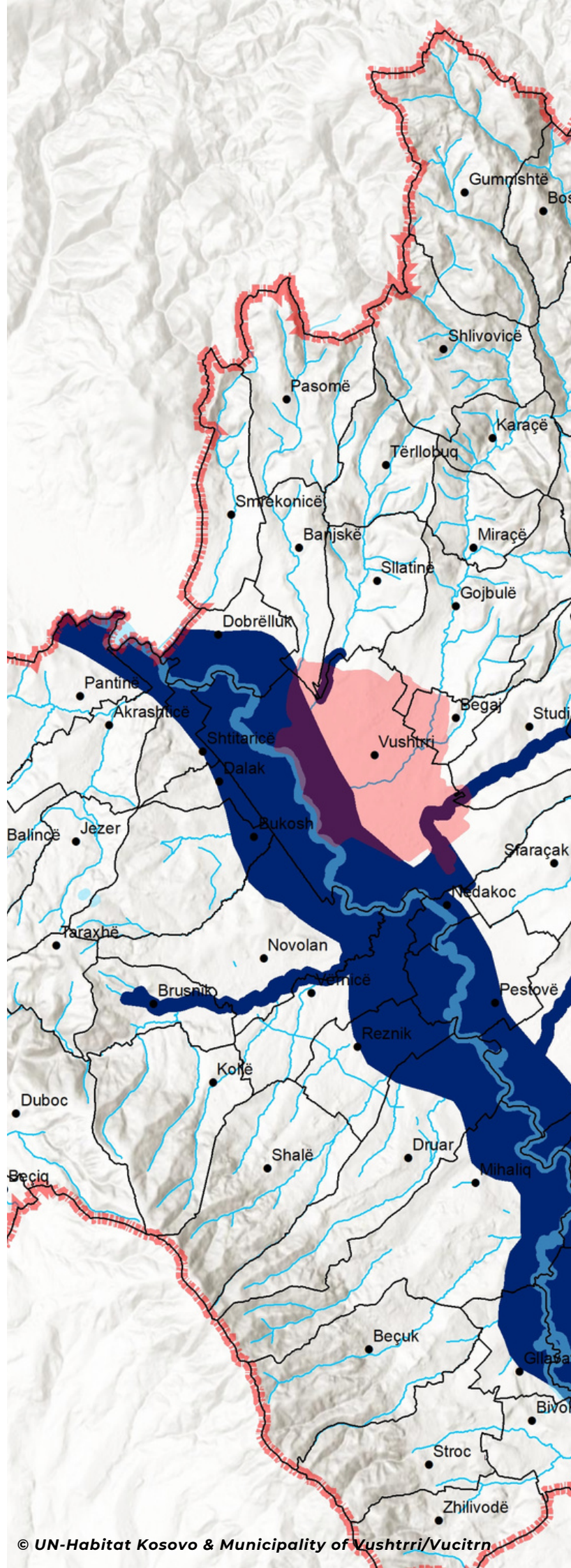
CLIMATE ADAPTATION

Municipalities of Vushtrri/Vucitrn and Theranda/Suva Reka have **mapped flood-prone areas** within its draft Municipal Zoning Map, helping make informed decisions about settlements' development, including agricultural land, infrastructure and community protection and risk reduction.

Municipalities of Lipjan/Lipljan, Gjilan/Gnjilane, Dardana/Kamenica, Ferizaj/Uroševac, Vitia/Vitina, Hani i Elezit/Elez Han, Ranillug/Ranilug, Theranda/Suva Reka, Peja/Peć, Deçan/Deçani, Klina, Shtërpca/Strpce, Mitrovica South and Zubin Potok have **limited settlements uncontrolled expansion** and have **restricted building on risk prone areas** through their Municipal Development Plans.

Flood protection measures, such as **restoring of riverbeds** have also been taken by municipalities of Peja/Peć, Mitrovica South, Mitrovica North, Gjakova/Āakovica, Rahovec/Orahovac, Dragash/Dragas, Shtërpca/Strpce, Ranillug/Ranilug and Hani i Elezit/Elez Han, whereas **drainage systems have been improved** in Graçanica/Gračanica, Dardana/Kamenica, Artana/Novo Brdo, Klina and Vushtrri/Vucitrn.

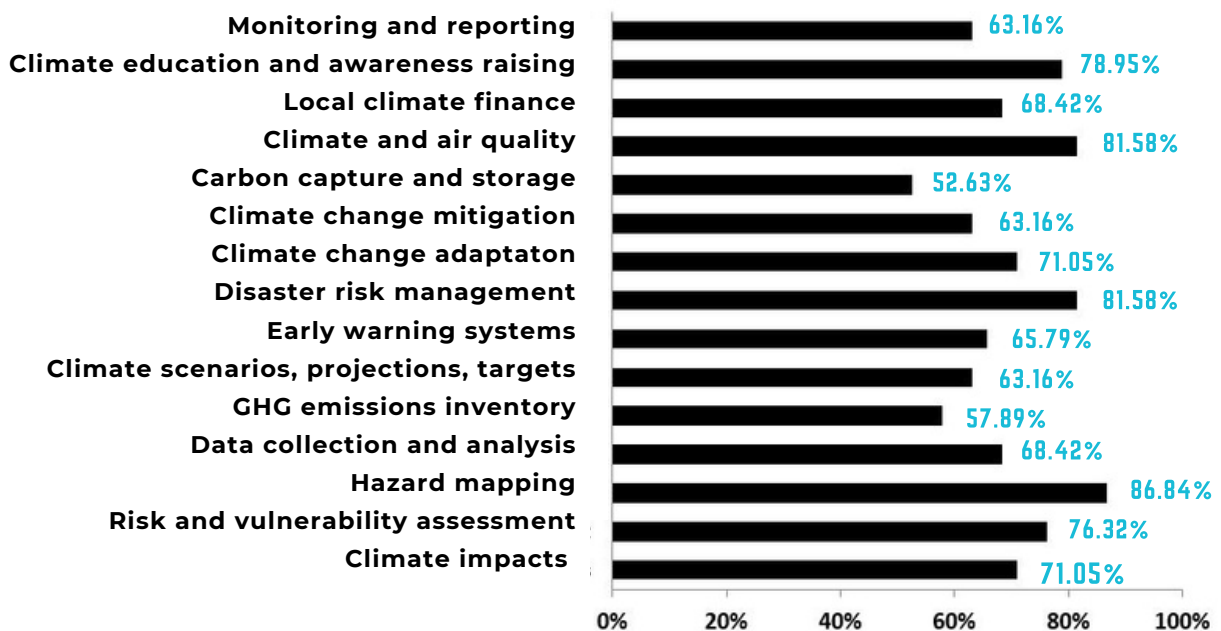
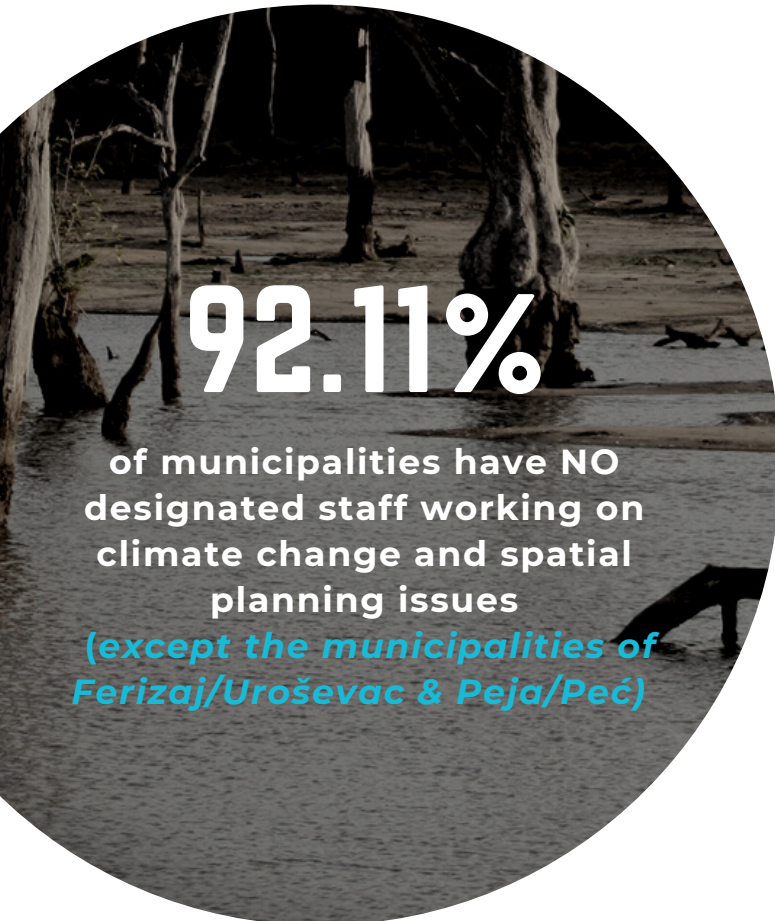
Municipalities of Shtërpca/Strpce, Ranillug/Ranilug, Viti/Vitina and Zubin Potok have **restored damaged ecosystems** from fires.

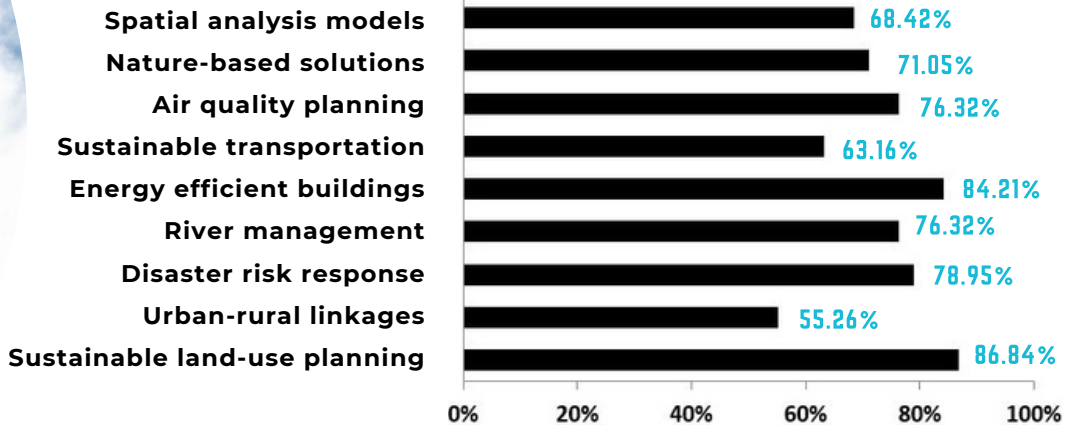




NEEDS

All municipalities claim the need for increasing municipal capacities in climate change management, specifically with regards to hazard mapping (86.84%), disaster risk management (81.58%), climate and air quality (81.58%), education and awareness raising (78.95%), and risk and vulnerability assessment (76.32%).



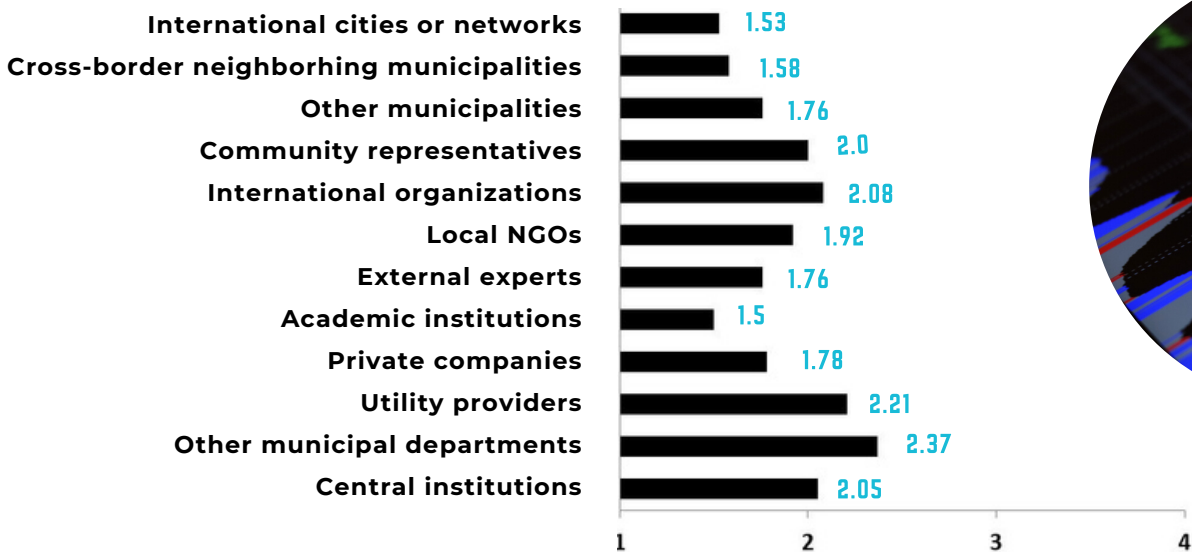


ALL MUNICIPALITIES (100%)

claim the need for increasing **municipal capacities in sustainable and climate-smart spatial planning**, especially in the fields of sustainable land-use planning (86.84%), energy efficient buildings (84.21%), disaster risk response (78.95%), river management (76.32%), air quality planning (76.32%) and nature-based solutions (71.05%).



THERE IS INSUFFICIENT MULTI-STAKEHOLDER COOPERATION WHEN DEVELOPING LOCAL SPATIAL PLANNING STRATEGIES AND DOCUMENTS



Scale: 1 – not at all, 2 – sometimes, 3 – often, 4 – regularly



KEY FINDINGS

There is lack of sufficient knowledge and expertise on climate change.

Majority of heads of planning or urbanism, or other equivalent staff in charge of leading spatial planning documents, have never taken academic or professional training on climate change. More than half of them have never worked on climate change related issues.

Municipalities lack insitutional capacities.

Almost none of them have designated staff dealing with climate change issues.

Most local **climate mitigation** measures have been undertaken on improving energy efficiency in the building sector, increasing energy generation from renewable sources, sustainable transportation planning, reforestation, air pollution and waste management.

Most local **adaptation measures** have been taken on mapping risk-prone areas and restricting growth on them, restoring riverbeds and damaged ecosystems, as well as drainage systems improvements.

There is a strong need for increased capacities in climate change management and sustainable and climate-smart spatial planning.

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