



**EUROPEAN REGIONAL ECONOMIC FORUM
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**PRESENTATION OF BEST PRACTICE CASES
IN HUMAN CAPITAL DEVELOPMENT AND MIGRATION MANAGEMENT**

**“InLoComm” –
From the concept of the Innovative Local Community to the Heart of Slovenia
regional trade mark**

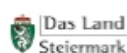
By: RCL d.o.o. (Litija Development Centre) in cooperation with Vibacom d.o.o.

It was identified that in all areas of activities of local community in the central region in Slovenia (*Heart of Slovenia*) there is a lack of advanced knowledge in the field of entrepreneurship, innovation, innovation management processes, lack of exchange of existing knowledge and good practices, and above all a low level of horizontal and vertical interconnection among stakeholders for a common, integrated and sustainable development and for the improved competitive position of the sub region. There is also a low level of motivation of individual stakeholders for work on joint projects and activities aimed at building up the tourism and business potential, developing the social capital of the subregion and implementing projects involving residents and aimed at providing a better living environment. The degree of creativity and knowledge regarding innovation in schools to encourage young people and teachers to think and act more ambitiously, boldly and innovatively is also low.

Objectives and Vision

The vision is to develop an effective business model for successful, innovative development of local communities (pilot area: Heart of Slovenia).

The main objective is to identify obstacles and opportunities for successful cooperation between residents, media and other stakeholders, to integrate relevant local/regional stakeholders in the Heart of Slovenia region (and brand) and thus contribute to development and joint promotion of local communities and set up a supporting environment and education programmes for innovative thinking as well as raise the awareness about the importance and the role of creativity and innovation in local communities at all levels in the central Slovenian region.



Specifically, this means developing knowledge infrastructure for innovative breakthroughs in the region Heart of Slovenia, improving the social capital in the area covered by the Heart of Slovenia brand name, develop the local environment into an established tourist destination. Specific objectives are also the introduction of innovative and business oriented thinking in the educational system and encouraging and supporting new entrepreneurs testing Innovation Journalism (InJo¹) and innovation communication (InCo²) as important tools for the development of the “Heart of Slovenia” region.

Quantitative targets and Available Resources

There are 8 local communities involved so far, 250 young people, 16 teachers, 120 companies and entrepreneurs and 64 non-governmental organisation as well as 12 different media.

The scheme employs 2 full time personnel 3 part time external experts and operates with a budget of €20,000 in 2006, €30,000 in 2007 and €40,000 in 2008. Funding capital is €30,000.

Main obstacles and problems:

- lack of entrepreneurial knowledge, communication skills and networking experience on the local level
- slow and unstructured development of the local community
- difficulties in obtaining funding
- scheduling coordination with schools (to conduct programmes on innovation) – individual arrangements with teachers and headmasters in each school to include the InJo/InCo programme in the curriculum
- lack of knowledge/acceptance of the Heart of Slovenia brand and related activities/events on the local level in spite of high levels of promotion, preparation of promotional materials and personal approach

Why it is a success story?

All people involved in workshops and brainstorming were enthusiastic, highly motivated and eager to contribute. Therefore, based on these responses, there is considerable interest among entrepreneurs, citizens, NGOs and interest groups to continue the processes of co-operation, exchange of ideas and search for innovative breakthroughs enabling entire local communities to make a step forward in economic growth and prosperity. The significant potential of the social capital is being utilised increasingly. People in the area involved now understand that together they can achieve more and get better results with a bigger impact.

Young generations are hungry for new approaches and concepts. They responded with enthusiasm and energetic involvement. They also became an important local voice in raising awareness about innovation to a higher level. Therefore, the decision has been made to continue the InLoCom programme in 2009 by involving schools (primary and secondary) in a series of special workshops on innovative approaches and innovative writing, encouraging participants to promote innovative perception among fellow students and in the community as well.

