



LOCAL REPORT CONCERNING THE MARKETABILITY AND SUSTAINABILITY OF ICH

DELIVERABLE D.T1.2.1

(WP T1, ACTIVITY A.T1.2)

Project partner (Jarina z.o.o., PP4)
Aleksandra Gradišek, artistic@jarina.si

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1. Overview and description of the local activities (interviews and questionnaires)

General conditions of the interviews and questionnaires, including challenges and problems

The research data for the Activities A.T1.2 (Marketability and Sustainability of ICH) of the CE project ARTISTIC was collected by Jarina Staff from November to December 2017. Some of the first informal interviews and meetings with different people involved in the regional and national ICH were made also in previous months.

The data, collected by performing interviews and questionnaires with people involved in cultural projects in Slovenia in the region of the Heart of Slovenia, provides the first information about local characteristics in our region. We used guidelines and prepared templates as a useful assistance for the research activities with local cultural operators and local private and public investors.

We spend quite some time to understand ourselves the meaning and the manifested forms of the regional ICH. Based on the previous work of the regional development centre of the Heart of Slovenia we could understand the regional ICH much better and with help of them, we have introduced ourselves much quicker with the regional cultural operators and investors. The majority of the interviewees did not have any special problems with answering to the questions. We had no special problems finding the interviewees, which knew quite a lot about the ICH.

On the other hand, we had much more problems finding the representatives of the investors. We got in touch with some authorities but soon we found out they are not the right interlocutors for our topics. They did not know what ICH is and are not at all investing in the cultural projects. Some of the people were not willing to cooperate in the interviews. They thought they could not give as any answers. We then found some people that are indirectly involved in the investments.

Summary description of interviews and questionnaires

Jarina staff has collected 10 interviews with local cultural operators and 10 questionnaires with public and private investors. Based on our previous research and connections we have selected for the interviews 10 people that are of different age, gender, working in various fields of the ICH and living in different parts of the region. We have chosen 7 craftsmen, 2 farmers, that produce local food, and 1 entrepreneur that sells local food and crafts products. All of them were in some way already included in the regional ICH projects in the past. Some of the interviewees needed a little more sub-questions and explanations depending on how familiar they are with the ICH topics.



The majority of the data was collected in November and December 2017, in some cases we did it in pairs. Usually we would meet with the cultural operator, sometimes even twice. First informally and the second time for the formal interview. With location of the interview we totally adjusted to the interviewees; sometimes it took place at cultural operators' homes or in office, sometimes in a café. All the interviews were recorded and transcribed into English. Some of the interviews had a bit tremor because of the recorder. Sometimes it was difficult to translate all the feeling and thoughts.

For the questionnaires, we did not meet with people in person, only in a few cases, when they wanted to know more detailed information of the topics. Most of the questionnaires were answered in writing via e-mail or with our additional help in cases when English was a problem.



2. Summary of the interviews with local cultural operators (at least 10)

Acquisition process of the interviewees

In the past years Jarina z.o.o. has worked very closely with the regional centre of The Heart of Slovenia that was a partner in the previous CCC project. Both organisations were very much involved in the regional development and the ICH was in the last years a very important topics. Jarina z.o.o. works all the years of its existence very closely to farmers, craftsmen and other cultural operators in the area. Based on the existing networks the first implementation steps of the project were not hard to make.

The first step was to think about all the people in the region that would know the majority of the answers and are talkative enough to be the interviewees. The next step was to get in touch with people and set up a date for the meeting. As already mentioned, we took into consideration different age, gender, various fields of interest and living/working place of the interviewees. Sometimes we would send the questions to the interviewee in advance, meet, or talk over the phone with so the interview would flow more fluently. We had no special problems to get to in touch with the cultural operators, as many people are involved in the ICH of the region.

Experiences made during the interviews: summary of the reflection notes

All the persons for the interviews were selected by the good past experiences with them, since there is a huge range of people involved in the ICH in the region. The interviewers and interviewees knew each other and have cooperated in the past. We felt in general very comfortable during the interviews; the cultural operators have spoken with enthusiasm and self-confident for the future. They have expressed decisiveness in the topics also with non-verbal communication. All of them understand the ICH and different appearances of it in our everyday lives. They are open-minded, widely viewed and very positive oriented persons. They are similar but very different at the same time; as the culture and ICH itself. Their view on the capitalisation of the cultural project is different but they all know you have to put a lot of efforts to become successful.

They all sincerely love their job; you could feel that in interaction with them. Some are also very much emotionally attached to the ICH as we could see through their non-verbal communication. They are very much connected not only with culture but with nature as well. A good attitude to the culture, nature and society is very important to them. The integration with culture and nature is their way of life.

We have observed that all selected people have great ability to connect people and most are well integrated into the local life, projects and associations. They are very



social people; they enjoy others peoples' company, are open for new knowledges and like to share their skills with others. All of them are unique, just like ttheir cultural projects and products. They are very inspiring.

They repeatedly exposed moral (and sometimes financial) support for their ICH projects and activities in their families and friends. Their interest for ICH is usually based on the family tradition so this aspect is very important. Some of the interviewees said they were included into the ICH from their childhood.

We could feel and see that they are very enthusiastic with their ICH projects. At the same time, they talk about their business very seriously and rationally. The capitalization of their projects is of great importance. Some are very successful, the other are still seeking for the right way to succeed. The ICH products are not massive products and we should take into the consideration that it is harder to find the right market trails.

The knowledge in finances and marketing is not on a highest level but people are aware of that and they would like to make a step forward in the future. They would like to expand their business but are at the same time very careful with decisions because of the lack of finances, knowledge or capabilities. They are all aware that Slovenian market is small and it is almost necessary to search for new opportunities at the foreign markets.

The younger interviewees are very positive and enthusiastic of their ICH projects, the older seems a bit tired but at the same time optimistic about the new generation. All have many ideas for the future that include ICH as part of their lives.

In general it seems it is much safer in Slovenia to be somewhere else employed and have only additional business, especially if you live near capital where finding a job is not so difficult. We could hear often that it is not worth trying to succeed in the cultural projects. As one of the interviewees said, everything is in our minds. With small, but right steps, you can succeed, but it is not easy as in any business.

We feel that ICH is very important for the region but the majority of people do not know that yet. With consistent work in this field, the major changes can be made. We could see the effect that were implemented in the region through different projects of Development centre of the Heart of Slovenia in the past years. We believe that with help of people, like Barbara, Tone, Tatjana and others the knowledge of the ICH will not disappear and will be even upgraded on a higher level.



Description of the main objectives of the interview: summary of the content of the interviews and the key passages

GENERAL INFORMATION

Personal information about the interviewees

Interviewed cultural operators are from 25 to 70 years old, the average age is 45 years. All of them come from the region The Heart of Slovenia. 7 of them are craftsmen (ceramic, pottery, willow baskets, wood products, candles, instruments), 2 farmers (food production, tourism on farm) and 1 entrepreneur with a shop with local products. All of them are well educated. 7 of them depend live from the ICH outcomes, 3 are dealing with cultural project additionally to their job in services (accounting, teaching, journalism). The last 3 do the cultural project when they have time. For all of them ICH is also their hobby and they cooperate with different non-profit associations, schools etc. 5 of them are very active in tourism, other occasionally. All of the interviewees live very dynamic lives, always in search for some higher meaning of life.

Regional cultural involvement and engagement

8 of the interviewed cultural actors are involved in the Network of craftsmen of the Heart of Slovenia. Most of them know LAG The Heart of Slovenia, one of them is also a member of LAG's assembly. One of the interviewees is not active in the region at all.

In general, they are involved in local associations in the fields of culture, tourism, their specific profession and development in general. They are all very active in their home villages and municipalities. Some of them participate on local and regional fairs and tourist points, where their products are sold. Some implement educational workshops for the specific target groups (schools, adults, tourists).

Existing networks and cooperation with other cultural operators

Interviewees get contacts of other craftsmen, farmers and cultural operators through the Network of Craftsmen of the Heart of Slovenia and through different activities of the development organizations, such as Development centre of the Heart of Slovenia, cooperate Jarina, Slovenian Agricultural Institute and Slovenian Forestry Institute. Very useful are also organised workshops, e-newsletters etc. Some search also for other connections with young farmers (Youth Rural Association) or similar people from other Slovenian regions (Eco farmers, Houses with tradition. Together with other similar people they exchange ideas, knowledge etc.

Networks and cooperation with projects based in other - national or international - regions

Cultural operators cooperate on the national level occasionally in projects on locally produced food, crafts, tourism etc. Some of these projects are implemented through LEADER. Sometimes they take part in this kind of projects as a good practice shown to the foreign partners. Most of them are interested in cooperating in European projects.



MARKETABILITY

Personal view on marketing for cultural projects and activities

Interviewees understand marketing as set of activities for a better recognition. Is it a basis for selling knowledge, product and services. Marketing is not so important for those, who are not fully involved in the ICH projects and take it as an additional activity (more as a hobby). They all agree that marketing is very important and useful tool to get in touch with the costumers, to spread the knowledge and interest for your projects and sell more. They share opinion that marketing is important, especially when you are building a business. When you expand your business to its extreme capabilities, the efforts should be intended to the existing old costumers, especially if you want to keep them.

Experiences, expertise and know-how about marketing processes

Only 2 of the interviewed cultural operators think to have enough knowledge in marketing; they actually have more than 10 years of experiences of working in the marketing. Interviewees get knowledge from articles and posts on the internet.

They are aware that marketing channel should be very specifically chosen. If they are not you can lose a lot of money for almost no effects.

In general, they use web pages and Facebook profiles, where they share posts and photos about their projects with public. The problem is when you are not consistent with post. Besides the lack of time sometimes the problem is also in the lack of knowledge in marketing and the a low budget for marketing projects. The ICH projects are often not sustainable enough; some people would take no risk and are not innovative enough to be different from the others. The solution could be common marketing tools and a common person that would help in the field of the ICH marketing.

Marketing of the projects / activities involved

Cultural operators market their products and services through their web side, permanent clients (B2B business), events, sometimes also through e-marketing and different projects. Only 3 of the interviewed cultural operators cooperate with external marketing experts. They think it is necessary to involve into business an external help, when needed. For the efficient marketing, all kinds of knowledges are useful, so they read articles and e-posts, learn from good practices, go on trainings etc.

FINANCING

Financing models known

Interviewed cultural operators know credit funds from banks, their own resources and European grants. Some of them actually received non-refundable development funds for start of the business. Some seek for the project for their own, some would need a professional help to apply for a tender and to help them with reporting. The problem is usually the lack of time. That is the reason why they prefer their own resources. They



gain the knowledge about financing through the newsletter of the Network of craftsmen of the Heart of Slovenia, on the radio, internet articles etc.

Financing of the projects and activities involved

Most of the cultural projects are financed from savings of the operators or from non-refundable funds (LEADER, fund for young acquirers on farms). Only one of the interviewees occasionally gets the private investors for a small projects but this is not a common case. If they wanted quicker to expand their business they would definitely need more assets. In general, they would plan the activities yearly or more often, when it is needed (when they apply for the project). Their goal is to achieve a normal monthly salary. They are not familiar with crowdfunding. A solution might be capital funds for the young farmers.

ICH

Personal view on ICH, understanding

Cultural operators understand ICH as displaying and transferring different knowledge from generation to generation. It is the wealth of the places and people. ICH represents the preservation of the tradition, customs. For the interviewees a traditional customs are important. Very important aspect is to pass the ICH from older to younger generations.

Awareness of ICH in the region

The awareness of ICH between Slovenian people is very different from person to person, but in general it is somewhere in the middle. The first changes we should make by ourselves by cherishing and buying local products in our everyday lives. The history and the politics after WW2 was not inclined to the Christian customs, which are the basics of the Slovenian culture. Nowadays children and young people are not aware enough of importance of the ICH. Promotion could be done through social networks and educational system. In seek for their roots people get more and more aware of their past, tradition and immaterial heritage. That is was ICH will never be forgotten.

Importance of the ICH in the region

ICH is of great importance for all the interviewees, because it is very closely connected to the culture, which connects people and raises national awareness. Culture (ICH) is a basis for the local, regional and national identity. If we lose our tradition, we lose our culture. There is a lot of immaterial knowledge between people (herbalism, food production, beekeeping, all sorts of crafts ...) that could be transformed from additional to serious business and to revitalisation of the old towns. However, unfortunately the Slovenian municipalities and other politician decisions are not aware of that.



3. Summary of the questionnaires to local public and private financial operators (at least 10)

Acquisition process of the surveyed operators

Jarina z.o.o. has regular connections with regional development centre, municipalities, LAGs, entrepreneurs, national decision makers and handicrafts and local food production networks. We knew in advance, that situation in the field of public and private investing for the ICH in Slovenia is not very encouraging. In general, an awareness of the ICH is increasing but no special support in the financial field is being observed.

When we thought of the possible investors that would be suitable for the questionnaires, we selected people and organisation of different fields. Some of them are from public and the other from private scene. We selected some representatives of the municipalities that have financial funds for the local cultural projects. We selected also two representatives of the tourist organisations. Tourism is becoming one of the top entrepreneurial activities in Slovenia and in search for good stories, that tourist like and buy, a lot investment in the ICH is being made. We selected also some private investors, companies that support common good of the society. We could make even more research among the private investors, but in Slovenia, they invest mostly into the sports and humanitarian activities. We could find some answers about financing also from the interviews with local actors.

In the next phase, we got in touch with people and introduced them with the project and questionnaire. Sometimes we would send them a questionnaire via e-mail or we would meet with them in person. As we can see now the second method is much more efficient because people are not so familiar with the terminology of the ICH and project. In addition, their response is much quicker.

Summary of the main results and conclusions received from the submitted questionnaires

All the interviewees share opinion, that culture and ICH are very important for development of local environments, regions and nations. They support culture in different ways. They try to invest as much as they can but the resources are limited and they always make some choices.

The interviewed representatives of municipalities (Kamnik, Šmartno pri Litiji, Bohinj) finance the maintenance of the local cultural monuments, green public areas, public infrastructure, rest areas and other areas for relaxation, designed urban equipment etc. They also co-finance cultural, tourist, humanitarian, patriotic, sports and agricultural



associations through regular public tenders. They support small entrepreneurs and individuals as well. Their motivations is to encourage local non-governmental organizations and support small projects that have only little chance to be financed from national and international tenders. They support cultural projects through associations and societies. They are aware that all these activities are the basis for development of the municipality and raising of the life quality. In this way, they preserve and discover heritage and a way of life of local people. They are aware that indirectly they influence also on young people, which will have a big role in the preservation of the tradition in the future. Expected output is a higher quality of live, happier people, greater visibility, heritage-based development. They feel that ICH is of great importance for the local community, it presents knowledge and a way of life of the ancestors.

Chamber of Commerce and Industry of Slovenia cooperates with partners in different sectors, cultural as well. One of the projects is to support grain networks of the local food production and festivals. They are aware that one can do just a little alone, but together we can make huge projects. They support cultural projects to preserve Slovenian potica (traditional dessert) and Slovenian bread. Their donations are not financial; they donate in promotion or their work. The outputs are better satisfaction and greater visibility of members, involvement in politics and a common good for the society. They expect that this kind of activities will increase in the future. They invest in people and cultural project because this way they are preserving the identity of space, country and people. They work a lot with Slovenian ICH coordinator (SEM).

We took into the research process also two big Slovenian companies. Slovenian beer company UNION invest mostly in their own museum and in some events in capital. They are socially responsible company and operate mainly on Slovenian market. This is the reason why they support and finance local projects. Through that, they also strengthen their marketing activities. They know that with the help of the ICH they could even better promote their story and sell more. Mainly they support festivals, anniversaries of cultural associations, theatre plays. They would support a barrel craftsmen but they do not have one yet. They invest in financial or product donations. They feel this is also their contribution to the better preserving of tradition of the Slovenian nation. With their projects, they educate Slovenian people of the importance of the ICH. For them ICH is everything that cannot be touched. In the second Slovenian firm RIKO they also donate for the cultural projects. Besides the promotional effects, which are for all companies very important, is also important socially responsible behaviour of a modern entrepreneurial paradigm, through that they raise their own product value and generate multiple effect.

In the most touristic developed Slovenian towns (Kamnik, Bohinj) are very much aware of the importance of developing projects and activities that include local people and societies and finance the implementation of the activities. For both destinations,



preserving of the local culture and tradition has a great importance for sustainable tourism development. At the same time, they educate and raise the awareness between local inhabitants about importance of preserving the natural environment, traditional farming and traditional way of life. They encourage and promote local development through local collective brand. They support local food producers and craftsmen through funding, promotion and organisation of the events. This way they strengthen local economy and sustainable development, they also preserve nature and culture.

In Slovenia are very important also different networks and public cooperatives (Slovenian network for interpretation of cultural heritage, Craft centre Slovenska Bistrica), that invest in cultural projects and people through their active support with knowledge. With such support members grow faster and can benefit better and become more active members of the communities. Sometimes they would support local projects also with voluntary work. They are involved in different EU projects and through them they help locals to develop their local cultural projects.

4. Conclusion

Description of the most relevant actors for marketability and sustainability in the region, outlook and recommendations

The most relevant actors for marketability and sustainability in the region of the Heart of Slovenia are cultural operators or ICH bearers that have traditional knowledge of making different products that are being used in everyday life.

The first group are the craftsmen (wood producers, potters, dressmakers, charcoal maker, knitters, blacksmiths ...). There already exists Network of craftsmen of the Heart of Slovenia, that was created through former activities of the regional development centre of the Heart of Slovenia. This is the basics of cooperation between local craftsmen from the region. They are being informed mainly through this network.

The other group of the most relevant actors are farmers and producers of food (herbalists, cheese growers, bakers, butchers, fruit processors, beekeepers etc.). Cooperative Jarina has been working in recent years closely to this people. Some of them are very successful and have great ideas for future development.

There are also people that have knowledge of traditional songs, theatre, the ones involved into traditional events and festivals. In the recent years, the very important group in Slovenia are also the people active in tourism (tourist farms, tour organisers, museums, horse-riding providers ...).

On the other hand there are public in private investors. As we could see from the research, the private sector is investing mainly in the cultural projects where they see a direct effect for their marketing. They invest also in their own projects as they find out



that stories from the tradition are very well accepted and help them to sell more. Cultural operators, such as craftsmen and local food producers depend mainly on their own funds. Municipalities would support associations and their cultural projects rather than individual entrepreneur projects.

One of the important investment tool for the ICH entrepreneurs are LEADER funds. As we can see from the Strategy of the LAG The Heart of Slovenia, ICH is for them of great importance. For other funds, our cultural operators seems to be too small, except when they are only one of the partners in bigger projects.

On the national level, Slovenia does not support cultural operators as much as this theme is important for its development. We think that major changes should be made if we want to preserve our cultural wealth since the general support from the private investors of the public good is and will not be never again so huge as in the past in socialism.

Even the status of craftsmen in Slovenia is not solved; they do not have any special status, they have to fight for their rights all the time. The willingness to support different projects is always a decision of the leader of investor. It seems like in Slovenia we would need a systematic approach to the financing of the cultural projects since they are the basic for our development.

A good thing is that general awareness of the ICH between interviewed people seems to be on quite a high level. A systematic approach to development and financing of cultural projects, networking and greater awareness of the ICH in general should be encouraged. Local operators are aware, that they should take business seriously, that marketing, a constant development are important. It seems that cultural operators are sometimes not innovative enough, afraid of the serious business and in general, not enough educated about entrepreneur topics. At the same time they have very specific needs and requirements, so everyone should be treated individually. It is definitely appropriate to think about a common point and a person, where cultural operators would get all kinds of help at the beginning and further development of their business. It would be of great importance also to include educational institutions in the cultural development activities. In Slovenia, there is a lot of enthusiasm about ICH but not so many successful stories shown. It is always good for the cultural actors to see this kind of good practises so that they could get inspired also for their own business.

Very inspiring is the sentence of one of the biggest Slovenian firms: “Our past is our future. Without knowing our own heritage, we will get lost in the global world. Investing in an intangible heritage enables us to preserve and show our uniqueness, which is the key in an increasingly uniform world.”



Aleksandra Gradišek

Jarina z.o.o.
Kidričeva cesta 1, 1270 Litija, Slovenija



artistic@jarina.si



00386 31 300 068