

FOST INNO



Action plan

for fostering innovation in sustainable tourism – Lead destination Nova Gorica and Vipava valley

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Introduction

The purpose of this Action Plan for Lead destination Nova Gorica and Vipava valley is to connect key stakeholders that operate in tourism field. The main purpose of the Action Plan is to inform them about the importance of innovation in sustainable tourism, to provide an encouraging environment for fostering tourism innovations, which will lead to reduction of tourism seasonality and boost the added value to tourism products and services. The main objectives of Action Plan for Lead destination Nova Gorica and Vipava valley are the objectives described in the Action Plan table, i.e.:

- Development of innovation taxonomy, its popularization, and advocacy,
- Lobbying for the simplification and improvement of legislative acts dealing with innovations,
- Education of stakeholders about innovations, sustainable tourism and about the importance of monitoring of innovations,
- Lobbying nationally (promoting) for the necessity of introducing obligatory reporting on innovations,
- Creating a database of best practices,
- Promoting changes of HEI curricula,
- Development and support of cooperation and networking between crucial stakeholders,
- Development of research activities related to innovations and tourism,
- Linking and networking projects at the level of the selected area.

The descriptive part of the Action plan is covering the entire Goriška region, since the Selected Area – Lead destination Nova Gorica and Vipava valley - belongs to the Goriška region and has no individually selected statistical data.

The geographical/administrative area covered by this document - Goriška statistical region

Goriška region has a strategic position in Slovenian and European space. It lies at the intersection of traffic routes on the border with Italy on the West. It is characterized by exceptional landscape diversity since the parts of the region reach the highlands of the Julian Alps in the North, the high Dinaric Karst plains of Banjščice and forest on Trnovo plateau, to the Vipava valley in the South. The Soča River with its river affluents connects the entire region. Goriška region is divided into four functionally rounded areas: Nova Gorica subregion with the center in Nova Gorica, the Upper Soča Valley with the center in Tolmin, the Idrijsko-Cerkljanska subregion with the center in Idrija and the Upper Vipava valley with the center in Ajdovščina. The center of the region is represented by Nova Gorica, which is defined as the center of national importance in the Spatial Development Strategy of Slovenia and is also becoming a center of international importance in terms of its location and cross-border integration. Border areas along the former border with Italy are, with regard to the exceptional natural and cultural potentials, with the right measures the exceptional development potential of the region and the state (Regionalni razvojni program Severne Primorske (Goriške razvojne regije) 2014–2020, 2014).

Tourism represents a promising economic activity for the Goriška Development Region, which indirectly and directly involves a number of other activities. The region has a very diverse structure of accommodation capacities, the number of which is increasing. The structure of visitors is also varied, both in terms of nationality and the motives of arrival. The number of domestic and foreign tourists and their number of overnight stays is increasing. The length of tourist stay is short, on average just over two days. Natural and cultural-historical are conditioning the type of tourism. In the future Goriška region is expecting the growth of tourism products, offered by culinary-wine, sports-recreational, religious, vital, gambling tourism and tourism that is based on rich cultural, historical and

technical heritage and culinary arts. In the region, there are also opportunities for the development of spa tourism and climate health resorts (Regionalni razvojni program Severne Primorske (Goriške razvojne regije) 2014–2020, 2014).

Within the framework of the Action Plan for the implementation of the Strategy for fostering innovation in sustainable tourism in the Adriatic-Ionian region, the partners will prepare an action plan for The lead destination Nova Gorica and the Vipava Valley. The destination includes the following municipalities: Municipality of Ajdovščina, Municipality of Nova Gorica, Renče-Vogrsko Municipality, Municipality of Vipava, Municipality of Šempeter-Vrtojba, Municipality of Kanal ob Sočin (Regionalni razvojni program Severne Primorske (Goriške razvojne regije) 2014–2020, 2014).

Tourism in Goriška Region

Goriška region is one of the three most developed regions in Slovenia, with high level of prosperity and low unemployment. It is characterized by the natural and cultural heritage of the Alps, the Soča River, Goriška Brda and the Vipava valley. This enables it to develop sustainable ecosystems of sports and recreational services, tourism and viticulture that encourage sustainable and socially-oriented activities. (Krožno gospodarstvo v regijah Slovenije – Goriška regija, 2016).

Goriška statistical region represents 6% of the Slovenian population. It is the only region in which the number of men was approximately equal to the number of women (women were 9 less than men). Goriška has the biggest proportion of 80 or older population (6%), which also results in the highest average age (11.1 years). Natural and migratory growth are negative. There are 41 students per 1,000 inhabitants, which is the highest amount among all regions (Wikipedia, 2018). The unemployment rate in this region is lower than the Slovenian average and the second lowest. In 2018, it has decreased to 6,1 % (ZRSZ). The number of cars per 1,000 inhabitants (589) sets it to the first place in Slovenia (Wikipedia, 2018).

Note: *The descriptive part of the Action plan is covering the entire Goriška region, since the Selected Area – Lead destination Nova Gorica and Vipava valley - belongs to the Goriška region and has no individually selected statistical data.*

The economy in the Goriška region

Data valid for 2015:

- Gross domestic product per capita: EUR 17,135; 91% of average GDP in Slovenia;
- Average monthly net salary: EUR 984.59;
- Gross value added per employee: EUR 34,500;
- Main sectors: Important industries in the region are tourism, export oriented manufacturing industry, which sells products mainly to Italy, Austria and Germany, and agriculture, where viticulture and fruit growing are the most important sectors. Industry is concentrated close to the centre of the region – Nova Gorica. Agriculture is limited due to regions unfavorable climatic conditions. Forestry is developed on the High Karst.
- Tourism: 683,000 overnight stays, 77% were generated by foreign tourists;
- Energy sources: Hydroelectric power plants on the Soča river.

Source: Krožno gospodarstvo v regijah Slovenije – Goriška regija, 2016.

Tourist arrivals (Data for 2015/2016 for the Goriška region)

The number of tourist arrivals has increased from 2012 to 2016, so we had 255.177 tourists in the Goriška region in 2012 and 340.846 in 2016. On the other hand, overnight stays of tourists in 2013 (609,209) and 2014 (577.747) are lower than in 2012 (611.635), as they grow slowly from 2015 (683.289). Thus, in 2016 we recorded 733.246 recorded overnight stays (SURS, n. d.).

Table 1: Overnight accommodation in the Goriška region

	Number of rooms									
	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017
Groups of accommodation facilities - TOTAL	3.386	34.660	4.036	4.023	4.292	4.342	4.134	4.246	4.334	4.486
Hotels and similar accommodation facilities	1.417	1.428	1.467	1.505	1.537	1.606	1.420	1.397	1.429	1.464
Camps	1.021	1.021	1.251	1.251	1.388	1.392	1.374	1.373	1.384	1.431
Other accommodation facilities	948	1.017	1.318	1.267	1.367	1.344	1.340	1.476	1.521	1.591

(SURS, n. d.)

Table 2: Tourist arrivals and overnight stays by statistical region, groups of tourist accommodation establishments, countries, year and measures 2008 – 2017

		2008		2010		2015		2017	
		Tourist arrivals - TOTAL	Overnight stays - TOTAL	Tourist arrivals - TOTAL	Overnight stays - TOTAL	Tourist arrivals - TOTAL	Overnight stays - TOTAL	Tourist arrivals - TOTAL	Overnight stays - TOTAL
Groups of tourist accommodation establishments - TOTAL	DOMESTIC	66.865	170.282	64.415	158.350	71.075	154.878	86.407	195.683
	FOREIGN	170.598	406.399	168.712	383.682	237.107	528.411	313.944	729.000
Hotels and similar accommodation establishments	DOMESTIC	33.536	83.322	27.131	62.707	24.839	49.518	29.595	60.199
	FOREIGN	112.779	240.023	111.155	213.348	136.367	249.887	156.989	303.800
Camping sites	DOMESTIC	10.924	30.804	12.827	33.355	13.984	35.020	16.222	42.679
	FOREIGN	39.519	124.313	37.377	118.665	51.766	150.697	81.116	233.094
Other accommodation establishments	DOMESTIC	22.405	56.156	24.457	62.288	32.252	70.340	40.590	92.805
	FOREIGN	18.300	42.063	20.180	51.669	48.974	127.827	75.839	192.106

(SURS, n. d.)

Table 3: Structure of average daily expenditures by type of expenditure and type of accommodation - 2015

	Type of accommodation - TOTAL	Hotels	Campsites
Average daily expenditure per tourist (EUR)	98,73	116,16	49,6
Share of expenditures for accommodation (%)	51	53,9	31,7
Share of expenditures for food and drinks in restaurants and cafes (%)	15,5	15	18,5
Share of expenditures for food and drinks in shops (%)	4,6	3,2	13,6
Share of expenditures for other shopping (excluding food and drink) (%)	9,1	9,2	8,7
Share of expenditures for fuel (%)	4,7	3,8	10,7
Share of expenditures for parking (%)	0,5	0,5	0,6
Share of expenditures for tickets (%)	0,9	0,9	0,9
Share of expenditures for vehicle hire (%)	1,9	2,1	0,7
Share of expenditures for cultural and entertainment activities (%)	2,6	2,3	4,4
Share of expenditures for sport and recreational activities (%)	1,8	1,1	6
Share of expenditures for organised excursions (%)	2,1	2	2,5
Share of expenditures for gambling (%)	3,2	3,6	0,4
Share of expenditures for medical services (%)	0,5	0,5	0,5
Share of expenditures for personal and other services (%)	1,7	1,9	0,8

(SURS, n. d.)

Activities in the function of fostering innovation in tourism

Strategy for fostering innovation in sustainable tourism for Adriatic – Ionian region set following specific objectives that should be achieved across the region:

1. Development of innovation taxonomy, its popularization, and advocacy
 2. Lobbying (nationally) for the simplification and improvement of legislative acts dealing with innovations
 3. Education of stakeholders about innovations, sustainable tourism and about the importance of monitoring of innovations (innovations indicators)
 4. Lobbying nationally (promoting) for the necessity of introducing obligatory reporting on innovations
 5. Creating a database of best practices
 6. Promoting changes of HEI curricula – introducing courses dealing with innovations and innovations in tourism
 7. Development and support of cooperation and networking between crucial stakeholders, especially:
 - Enabling the transfer of knowledge and innovations from other sectors into tourism
 - Cooperation between SMEs and large enterprises (win-win)
 - Cooperation between HEIs and enterprises
 8. Development of research activities related to innovations and tourism.
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1. To achieve the first objective of the Action plan for Lead destination Nova Gorica and Vipava valley – Development of innovation taxonomy, its popularization and advocacy, we propose the following activities for Slovenian contact point of Adriatic-Ionian tourism innovation center: »Participation in the development of the innovation taxonomy for the data collection« which will indicate in »Innovation database« by December 2019, »Promotion of the necessity to implement the

innovation process« which will indicate »5 promotional newsletters« by December 2019, »Stakeholders database« which will indicate »Completed stakeholders database« by March 2019 and »Carrying out campaigns to promote the innovation process« which will indicate »2 campaigns« by December 2019.

2. To achieve the second objective of the Action plan for Lead destination Nova Gorica and Vipava valley - Lobbying for the simplification and improvement of legislative acts dealing with innovations, we propose the following activities for the Public Institute for Tourism Nova Gorica and Vipava valley. By December 2019 »Two letters of proposal« should be prepared: »Material to be used in the proposal for the amendment of legislation (Act on promotion of Tourism Development, Employment Related Industrial Property Rights Act)« and »Proposal to create a stimulating environment for local providers to be able to compete in public tenders«.
3. To achieve the third objective of the Action plan for Lead destination Nova Gorica and Vipava valley – Education of stakeholders about innovations, sustainable tourism and about the importance of monitoring of innovations, Slovenian contact point of Adratic-Ioninan tourism innovation center should implement the following activities: Execution of one (1) webinar by October 2019 and Conducting of one (1) conference by December 2019.
4. To achieve the fourth objective of the Action plan for Lead destination Nova Gorica and Vipava valley – Lobbying nationally (promoting) for the necessity of introducing obligatory reporting on innovations, we propose the Public Institute for Tourism Nova Gorica and Vipava valley to implement the following activities: »Preparing a request for a change of legislation« which will indicate a » Prepared argumentation to be sent to the competent authorities« by December 2020, »Preparation of a proposal to change the reporting system on innovation« which will result in a »Submitted proposal for decision to Directorate for Tourism, Directorate for Internationalisation Entrepreneurship and Technologies« by December 2019. Slovenian contact point of Adratic-Ioninan tourism innovation center will

implement »Creating a proposal on the content of reporting on innovation« which will result in a »Letter of the proposal« by September 2019.

5. To achieve the fifth objective of the Action plan for Lead destination Nova Gorica and Vipava valley - Creating the database of best practices, the following activities will be implemented: Slovenian contact point of Adriatic-Ionian tourism innovation center will »Create a database of innovation« by December 2019, RDA of Northern Primorska will »Create a system for a set of good practices« which will result in »Database of best practices« by March 2019. Public Institute for Tourism Nova Gorica and Vipava valley will by April 2020 »Create the Annual Evaluation System of collected best practice proposals« and »Establish of a funding for the annual rewarding of the selected best practice proposal« which will result in »Criteria of choice« and »Guaranteed financing«.
6. To achieve the sixth objective of the Action plan for Lead destination Nova Gorica and Vipava valley - Promoting changes of HEI curricula, Slovenian contact point of Adriatic-Ionian tourism innovation center will »Inform Ministry of education, science and sport and other relevant institutions about the findings of the FOST INNO project« by »Making a letter of the proposal« until March 2019 and »Include Ministry of Education, Science and Sports and other relevant educational institutions for the conference« in December 2019. SASS will propose to include »A new optional subject of innovation in services/tourism in its curriculum« by January 2020.
7. To achieve the seventh objective of the Action plan for Lead destination Nova Gorica and Vipava valley - Development and support of cooperation and networking between crucial stakeholders, Slovenian contact point of Adriatic-Ionian tourism innovation center will include 60 stakeholders in the Adriatic-Ionian Tourism Innovation center by December 2019 to »Foster cooperation and promotion of local providers«. Public Institute for Tourism Nova Gorica and Vipava valley will organize »Two events for networking of local providers« by December 2019.

8. To achieve the eighth objective of the Action plan for Lead destination Nova Gorica and Vipava valley – Development of research activities related to innovations and tourism SASS will prepare »A set of topics that students could explore« which will result in »A sets of 10 themes promoted among students« by August 2020 and »Establish cooperation between educational institutions and stakeholders from the economy« which will indicate »3 research papers« by April 2020.

9. To achieve the ninth objective of the Action plan for Lead destination Nova Gorica and Vipava valley – Linking and networking projects at the level of the selected area, RDA NP and Public Institute for Tourism Nova Gorica and Vipava valley will »Prepare a collection of all open projects at the level of the selected area«, »Select strategic projects for the selected area«, »Create a rough timetable for the implementation and continuation of selected projects« and »Apply for calls to the Transnational Innovation Network for sustainable tourism« with date of finalisation in December 2021. Public Institute for Tourism Nova Gorica and Vipava valley will establish »Monitoring statistical data for Lead destination Nova Gorica and Vipava valley in the field of tourism« which will result in »Database of statistical data for Lead destination Nova Gorica and Vipava valley » by March 2020.

Table 4: The summarised action plan for fostering innovation in sustainable tourism for Lead destination Nova Gorica and Vipava valley, Slovenia

Objectives	Activities	Responsible actor/s	Indicator/s	Timeframe
Development of innovation taxonomy, its popularization and advocacy	Participation in the development of the innovation taxonomy for the data collection”.	Slovenian contact point of Adratic-Ioninan tourism innovation center	Innovation database	December 2019
	Promotion of the necessity to implement the innovation process	Slovenian contact point of Adratic-Ioninan tourism innovation center	5 promotional Newsletter	December 2019
	Stakeholders database	Slovenian contact point of Adratic-Ioninan tourism innovation center	Stakeholders database competed	March 2019
	Carrying out campaigns to promote the innovation process	Slovenian contact point of Adratic-Ioninan tourism innovation center	2 campaigns	December 2019
Lobbying for the simplification and improvement of legislative acts dealing with innovations	Preparation of the material to be used in the proposal for the amendment of legislation (Act on promotion of Tourism Development, Employment Related Industrial Property Rights Act,)	The public Institute for Tourism Nova Gorica and Vipava valley	Letter of proposal	December 2020
	Preparation of a proposal to create a stimulating environment for local providers to be able to compete in public tenders	The public Institute for Tourism Nova Gorica and Vipava valley	Letter of proposal	December 2020
Education of stakeholders about innovations, sustainable tourism and about the importance of monitoring of innovations	Execution of the webinar	Slovenian contact point of Adratic-Ioninan tourism innovation center	Derived webmasters (No. 1)	October 2019
	Conducting a conference	Slovenian contact point of Adratic-Ioninan tourism innovation center	Conducted conference (No. 1)	December 2019
Lobbying nationally (promoting) for the necessity of introducing obligatory reporting on innovations	Preparing a request for a change of legislation	The public Institute for Tourism Nova Gorica and Vipava valley	Prepared argumentation to be sent to the competent authorities	December 2020
	Creating a proposal on the content of reporting on innovation	Slovenian contact point of Adratic-Ioninan tourism innovation center	Letter of proposal	September 2019

	Preparing a proposal to change the reporting system	The public Institute for Tourism Nova Gorica and Vipava valley	Submitted the proposal for decision to Directorate for Tourism, Directorate for Internationalisation Entrepreneurship and Technologies	December 2019
Creating the database of best practices	Creating a database of innovation	Slovenian contact point of Adratic-Ionian tourism innovation center	Innovation database	December 2019
	Creating a system for a set of good practices	RDA NP ¹	Database of best practices	March 2019
	Creating of the Annual Evaluation System of collected best practice proposals	The public Institute for Tourism Nova Gorica and Vipava valley	Criteria of choice	April 2020
	Providing funding for the annual rewarding of the selected best practice proposal	The public Institute for Tourism Nova Gorica and Vipava valley	Guaranteed financing	April 2020
Promoting changes of HEI curricula	Informing all institutions and ministries of the Ministry of education, science and sport about the findings of the FOST INNO project	Slovenian contact point of Adratic-Ionian tourism innovation center	Making a letter	March 2019
	The inclusion of Ministry of Education Science and Sports end educational institutions for the conference	Slovenian contact point of Adratic-Ionian tourism innovation center	Inclusion at the conference	December 2019
	A new optional subject of innovation in services/tourism within SASS	SASS ²	Optional subject	January 2020
Development and support of cooperation and networking between crucial stakeholders	Fostering cooperation and promotion of local providers	Slovenian contact point of Adratic-Ionian tourism innovation center	60 stakeholders include in the Adriatic-Ionian Tourism innovation center	December 2019
	Organization of events for networking of local providers	The public Institute for Tourism Nova Gorica and Vipava valley	Two events	December 2019
Development of research activities related to	A set of topics that students could explore	SASS	A set of 10 themes promoted among students	August 2020

¹ Regional Development Agency of Northern Primorska Ltd Nova Gorica

² School of advanced social studies

innovations and tourism	Establishing cooperation between educational institutions and stakeholders from the economy	Slovenian contact point of Adriatic-Ionian tourism innovation center	3 research papers	April 2020
Linking and networking projects at the level of the selected area	List of all open projects at the level of the selected area	The public Institute for Tourism Nova Gorica and Vipava valley /RDA NP	Collection of projects	September 2020
	Selection of strategic projects for the selected area	The public Institute for Tourism Nova Gorica and Vipava valley /RDANP	Selection of strategic projects	December 2020
	Creating a rough timetable for the implementation and continuation of selected projects	The public Institute for Tourism Nova Gorica and Vipava valley /RDA NP	A timetable	December 2020
	Applying for calls to the Transnational Innovation Network for the sustainable tours	The public Institute for Tourism Nova Gorica and Vipava valley /SASS	Submitted registration	December 2021
	Monitoring statistical data for Lead destination Nova Gorica and Vipava valley in the field of tourism	The public Institute for Tourism Nova Gorica and Vipava valley	Database of statistical data for Lead destination Nova Gorica and Vipava valley	March 2020

Concluding remarks

Action Plan for fostering innovation in sustainable tourism for Lead destination Nova Gorica and the Vipava Valley is composed of nine main objectives. To achieve these objectives, School of Advanced Social Studies in Nova Gorica, Regional development agency of Northern Primorska Ltd. Nova Gorica sought support at public institutions and finally connected with the newly established Public Institute for tourism Nova Gorica and Vipava Valley. The importance of cooperation is in short duration of the project and providing a long-term supporting environment for tourism innovations.

In preparing the Action plan we have faced issues in gathering specific data for Lead destination Nova Gorica and Vipava Valley which is one of the proposed activities of the Action plan. Since Public Institute for tourism Nova Gorica and Vipava Valley is not the only relevant stakeholder in the field of tourism and innovation, we organized a focus group with the following institutions: Municipality Nova Gorica, Regional Development Agency of Northern Primorska Ltd Nova Gorica, School of Advanced Social Studies in Nova Gorica, ROD Development Agency, Tourist Board Nova Gorica, Tourist information center Kanal, Tourist information center Ajdovščina, Primorska technology park, Regional Chamber of Crafts Ajdovščina and Nova Gorica and Municipality of Ajdovščina. Their positive response to the draft of the Action plan gives us a huge hope for it to succeed in its implementation and to establish a great supportive environment for tourism innovation development.

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