

IAP – Summary - IDRIJA

VISION STATEMENT

The centre of Idrija is protected by UNESCO and it is the location of the majority of monuments connected to the town's history of mercury mining. Idrija's city centre developed just above the mine, so the development of the mine influenced the development of the town and its urban structure. In the future Idrija has a new focus – before it diversified from mining town to industrial – and now stepping on the way of building a smart city.

Idrija has a tradition of building and retaining knowledge and innovation as evident in its mercury mining heritage, industrial heritage, historical buildings and its cultural practices and artefacts (nurturing its 'intangible' heritage). Idrija is located in an area of beautiful nature. All of these are the reasons for its transition. The vision for Idrija is to become a city that is socially-just, innovative, sustainable, heritage-inspired and specialised. To achieve those goals Idrija has embarked the mission of creating a smart community.

Everything is tightly connected to the city centre. In next months there will be new big shop in the city centre so IAP might be really helpful on the field of encouraging retailers and helping fill the empty spaces. It will definitely address the problem that can come out of that and take advantage of the pluses it will bring (more parking spaces and hopefully more people in the city centre).

IAP adresses poor social life in the city centre and empty public spaces, poor retail offer in the city centre and migration of young people of Idrija.

Since one of the specific objectives is community building there will be direct impact on the more vulnerable groups and also direct impact with some actions on all local people since it will bring new things in the city centre and will help people socialize more. The other plus size of that objective is direct to the city centre which will be fuller now.

We see the city centre in next few years as a place to go after work – for shopping, relaxing and socializing. It will (hopefully) be full of people on daily basis which will be helpful also to existing shops and fill in the empty spaces. All actions are going hand to hand but also standing on its own in case that some of them won't be successful. From the draft of IAP till now there were already some changes made – specially through meetings with important stakeholders. During the meetings they all got good insights where are the needs and what should be done. Before IAP was even finalised actions started soon after draft was presented. We believe IAP is already important from that perspective and it will be a really good reminder and help to keep the focus in the future.

PROCESS INTRODUCTION

Idrija is one of 10 partner cities participating in the City Centre Doctor Project. Idrija joined in the 2nd stage. Project aims (aimed) to develop an integrated action plan to revitalise our city centre.

At the start of the project Urban Local Group was established. The Municipality established a working group representing all stakeholders who will develop and implement actions to revitalise the city centre. ULG had also emphasis of including stakeholders who didn't join ULG and kept them connected with the process – especially when IAP was formed.

ULG had regular meetings where it planned activities as it was place analysis, generating ideas and developing action plans. It had more meetings at the end of the project where IAP was finalising and also planned local event where ULG tried to raise awareness on the IAP. Event was organised in a way where there was a short presentation of process of writing IAP and then people who attended had chances to directly impact and give opinions on the objectives and actions planned. Opinion of ULG is that IAP has to be written for achieving its goals with collaboration with the local community.



MAIN CHARACTERISTICS AND CHALLENGES

Idrija is located in the south-eastern foothills of the Alps in Slovenia and has almost 12,000 inhabitants. It spans an area of 293.7 km². It is known for its industrial heritage as one of the main mercury mining locations globally and for its cultural heritage, lace-making and as the home of žlikrofi (traditional Slovenian dumplings). It has a UNESCO heritage designation.

The town of Idrija has kept a lifeline to the mine, resulting in a number of buildings in its old town closely linked to mining being preserved to this very day. These include the Gewerkenegg Castle, the first Slovenian secondary school for natural sciences, miners' theatre, mine's wheat storage Magazin, a number of miners' houses, churches, squares and other buildings. The city centre is a historical centre built close to the river Nikova. The new business development phase was more removed from the centre.

Even though Idrija is small, with difficult road access, absence of trains and other connections, it has developed into an important global and regional node, with a growing economy. Idrija has a lower unemployment rate in 2017 than in the rest of Slovenia at 5.3% while the number on national level is 7.8%.

The Municipality of Idrija has a clear vision for the future and is constantly working in a way to achieve its goals namely: to be environmentally-friendly, socially just and high-tech developed. And all of this to be based on its rich industrial and cultural heritage. A strategy for building smart communities will result in a development of smart grids, smart mobility systems and smart governance. All the strategies are always based on the needs and demands of the environment and inhabitants.

Idrija has also entered the network of Alpine towns and communities where it is often recognized as a model town for smart community development, heritage reuse and youth engagement. The Municipality is in the process of adopting a sustainable urban mobility plan (SUMP), where electric mobility is recognized as one of the most important challenges for transition.

The strong reason that Idrija is successful is that it is home to headquarters of their two homegrown multi-national companies. The growth and innovations of these two companies also means a culture of growth and innovation in Idrija. The two companies are socially responsible and aware of the importance of their presence and impact on the city. Kolektor for example has a vision for the town to become a “municipality of knowledge” – both thus collaborate well with the Jurij Vega Grammar School in Idrija and regularly invest in local education provision.

Main challenges which Idrija has to (IS) addressing in connection with revitalising city centre are really poor social life in the city centre, limited use of public spaces, poor retail offer and out migration of young people.

SET OF OBJECTIVES AND ACTIONS

SPECIFIC OBJECTIVE: URBAN FURNITURE

Action Description	Delivery lead/team	Key partners involved	Time schedule	Resources / Assets	Output indicator
<p><u>Action 1:</u></p> <p>BENCHES ON THE OLD SQUARE</p> <p>(addressing the problem of lack of use of public spaces)</p>	Municipality of Idrija	Municipality of Idrija, Idrija-Cerkno development agency	September 2018	Funding from project on the field of mobility	Benches placed on the square: YES/NO
<p><u>Action 2:</u></p> <p>NEW 'IMAGE' OF IDRIJA – PROCESS ACTION</p> <p>(changing the fence near the river on the road leading to the city centre and finishing image with benches in the centre)</p>	<p>Municipality of Idrija</p> <p>(only municipality has the power to change the fence since there are big legal boundaries and Government will have to be involved)</p>	Municipality of Idrija	Next few years		<p>PROCESS ACTION – awareness of the actions – are they still aware of this action as a thing to do or not?</p>

<p>Action 3:</p> <p>BENCHES ON THE MAIN SQUARE</p> <p>(adressing the problem of lack of use of public spaces)</p>	<p>Municipality of Idrija</p> <p>ULG</p>	<p>Municipality of Idrija</p>	<p>2019</p>	<p>Municipality resources</p>	<p>Bencehs there or not</p>
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SPECIFIC OBJECTIVE: ENCOURAGING RETAILERS

Action Description	Delivery lead/team	Key partners involved	Time schedule	Resources / Assets	Output indicator
<p>Action 1:</p> <p>REDUCTION OF COSTS FOR RETAILERS</p> <p>(adressing problem of empty shops in city centre and high expences for renting the places)</p>	<p>Municipality of Idrija – department of economics</p>	<p>Municipality of Idrija</p>	<p>2019</p>	<p>It is necessary to change the rules as a whole and to adress this problem. The main resource is from Municipality since just Municipality can change the rules for these places.</p>	<p>PROCESS ACTION – is it still going in a way for action become a reality?</p>

<p>Action 2:</p> <p>RENT-A-SHOP</p> <p>(addressing the problem of lack of connection with public sector and old retail offer – action to bring something new to city centre)</p>	<p>ULG</p> <p>Private sector</p>	<p>Private sector</p> <p>ULG</p>	<p>2018</p>	<p>Not much resources needed. There is a shop like that already but almost nobody knows about it. Plan is to offer needed help to raise awareness of this possibility to small enterprenauers.</p>	<p>Number of days that rent-a-shop is open.</p>
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SPECIFIC OBJECTIVE: MOBILITY

Action Description	Delivery lead/team	Key partners involved	Time schedule	Resources / Assets	Output indicator
<p>Action 1:</p> <p>PUBLIC BYCICLE SHARING SYSTEM</p> <p>(adressing the problem of high car-dependancy)</p>	<p>Municipality of Idrija</p>		<p>2019</p>	<p>Project funds/municipal funds</p>	<p>System established or not?</p>

<p>Action 2:</p> <p>LOWERING NUMBER OF PARKING SPACES IN THE CITY CENTRE (addressing the problem of too much cars in the city centre)</p>	Municipality of Idrija	Municipality of Idrija	2021	Municipal funds	Number of parking spaces closed on the squares in the city centre
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SPECIFIC OBJECTIVE: COMMUNITY BUILDING

Action Description	Delivery lead/team	Key partners involved	Time schedule	Resources / Assets	Output indicator
<p>Action 1:</p> <p>COMUNITY CENTRE (addressing the problem of poor social life and higher and higer health problems as a result of lack of socialization)</p>	Municipality of Idrija – Maja Majnik	CSD Municipality ZD Idrija Kolektor PBI Lions club ZPM DU Idrija Knjižnica MC	2019	Trying to find a project to get at least some resources. Other way trying to get a funding directly from Municipality.	Did stakeholders commit to do it (and fund it eventually) or not?

<p><u>Action 2:</u></p> <p>PLAYGROUND ON THE CITY SQUARE</p> <p>(adressing the problem of poor social life)</p>	<p>MCI – Youth centre Idrija</p>	<p>MCI Municipality of Idrija</p>	<p>2018 (started in 2017 with beta action)</p>	<p>Municipality agreed to give some extra resources to repeat the succesfull beta action.</p>	<p>Number of events – more than 10 per year?</p>
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METHOD

Good example of URBACT methods used was successful beta action – Playground on the city square. It was really greatly accepted and there was a lot of people attending an event. When we made a draft of IAP and had meetings with stakeholders Municipality already agreed to fund more actions like that and even gave the money for additional events of “Playground on the city square”. Beta action resulted in actual action and direct impact on happening in the city centre – more people coming to use usually empty public spaces. Now they come to play even when there is no events on the city square.

Of course, all of it started with Idea café where we generated ideas. Some of that ideas are also included in IAP. We followed the path proposed from our lead expert – and it was successful. It was also really helpful to visit other partner cities and to see similar problems as an outsider or getting new ideas and learning from their successful actions.

ULG POST-PROJECT

Our ULG group already decided to stay as a group also after City Centre Doctor Project. They were invited to become also a group of Interreg Central Europe project BhENEFIT. Since main part of historical buildings are in the city centre there is an interesting connection between the projects. The BhENEFIT project focuses on improving the management of historic built areas, combining the daily maintenance of historic heritage with its preservation and valorisation in a sustainable way. We already started to work together and the result is that people are getting more and more interested in what is happening regarding City Centre Doctor project.

Members agreed that it will be also easier to keep group together and keep an eye to IAP implementation afterwards if they have another cause to meet and there will be invitation to official meeting sent.

FINAL ASPECTS

ULG expect that IAP will be fully implemented and is really optimistic. From the start when we started gathering ideas what we should include in IAP and what the main specific objectives should be. The specific objectives and actions were defined on the basis of Place Analysis report, ideas and wishes collected at Idea café and later when draft of IAP was made the opinions from different stakeholders were collected on separate meetings with all of them.

There was also a meeting with mayor of Municipality of Idrija and the whole process and all actions were presented to him. Since we worked together with important stakeholders we think that results can be better and more successful because they now know what IAP is and what we want to do. We also included their opinions which were really helpful to get an image what is possible to do and where the main problems may arise.

We will check if there is a progress in implementation of IAP by checking where we are with all the actions at the end of 2018 and repeat it in the middle of 2019 and 2020. We hope that all actions will be implemented by then.