

# BUSINESS ECOSYSTEM FOR **TRADITION** AND **INNOVATION**

DEVELOPMENT CENTRE OF THE HEART  
OF SLOVENIA SLOVENIA



RAZVOJNI CENTER  
SRCA SLOVENIJE

DEVELOPMENT CENTRE  
OF THE HEART OF SLOVENIA

action plan

sharing solutions  
for better  
regional policies

## TRINNO

We started the TRINNO project in 2016, 5 European regions keen to work together towards a common aim: to promote regional competitiveness by improving policy instruments for business support systems that focus on applying digital innovation in the local economy.

3 years later, after numerous moments of exchange and learning, we are ready to share our regional Action Plans. Each region has a different plan, unique to their regional context and needs. But each Action Plan is the fruit of interregional policy learning in TRINNO and is a step towards better business support systems in our regions.

This Action Plan covers Slovenia at national level and the territorial area of the Heart of Slovenia. It has been prepared in collaboration between the TRINNO partner Development Centre Heart of Slovenia, in close cooperation with regional stakeholders and with the Managing Authorities of the selected Policy Instruments.



## TABLE OF CONTENTS

4	INTRODUCTION
7	LIST OF ACTIONS INCLUDED IN THE ACTION PLAN
8	GENERAL INFORMATION
11	ACTION 1: IMPROVED FINANCIAL INCENTIVES FOR SMES - VOUCHERS SCHEME
12	policy context
12	details of the action envisaged
12	need addressed
13	overview of the policy improvement that this action refers to
14	the background
16	specific activities and timeframe
17	players involved
18	costs and funding sources
18	monitoring
19	risk and contingency plans
19	official signature
21	ACTION 2: SUBSIDISED TRAININGS FOR CRAFTSMEN TO BOOST DIGITAL INNOVATIONS AND NEW INNOVATIVE PRODUCT / SERVICES DEVELOPMENT
22	policy context
23	details of the action envisaged
23	need addressed
23	overview of the policy improvement that this action refers to
24	the background
26	specific activities and timeframe
27	players involved
28	costs and funding sources
28	monitoring
29	risk and contingency plans
29	official signature

## INTRODUCTION

TRINNO project focusses in the competitiveness promotion in EU regions through improving policy instruments for business support ecosystems that focus on applying digital innovation and entrepreneurship as drivers to improve the local economy. During the project development, these two main concepts (business support ecosystems and digital innovation in traditional SMEs) have been discussed in relation to the partners' specific context, and have been used to frame the development of their Action Plans. For each region, the issue of digital innovation was approached in relation to the specific regional policy identified as target within the project. This introduction presents these two concepts, and how they have been applied to the TRINNO's context, followed by a brief overview of the inputs achieved during the project's phase 1.

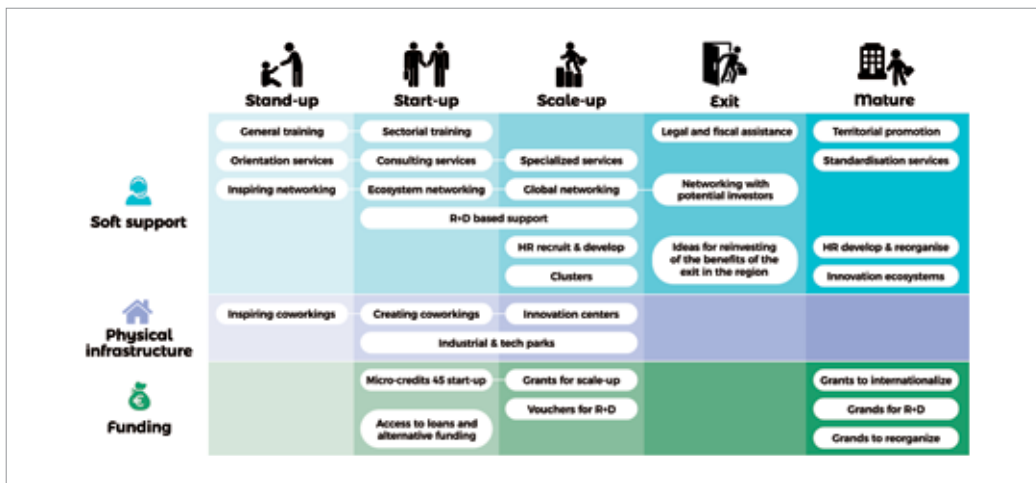
The last decades have witnessed the progressive generalization of innovation policies at the local level. The dissemination of concepts such as innovative ecosystems, territorial innovation systems or open innovation have led to a growing interest in the innovative capacity of the territories and their different components: companies, universities, technology centres, even population. The EU2020 strategy and its objectives sustainable growth, smart and inclusive, with the new funding period of ERDF 2014 2020, have only reinforced this trend, putting innovation at the centre of the European development model and the creation of wealth and employment.

It is common to hear among those dedicated to economic development policies mention the difficulty of bringing SMEs of mature and traditional sectors the need to innovate and the initiatives available to them from the public sector. Either they are not interested, or they do not know how to articulate their needs for the development of new products and services, making difficult their transition to innovation-based activities. TRINNO's partners are confronted with such challenges, in different activities linked to the traditional economy such as agri-food sector, crafts and jewellery sector and traditional SMEs in general, specifically linked to the need to promote business support systems that focus on applying digital innovation in the local economy.

TRINNO project, after review of main concepts linked to the business support ecosystem and a consultation to different stakeholders, developed a framework that addressed the different company needs, the stakeholders who should be engaged, the necessary elements to make the service a success and common challenges. Globally speaking, a complete and successful innovation ecosystem must include technology and knowledge transfer (TT / KT) from academia and industrial actors to other enterprises (particularly SMEs), no matter what is the phase in a company's life cycle. The support will adapt to the company's phase:

- | Stand-up phase when individuals or groups are equipped with the entrepreneurial attitudes and skills to attempt the creation of new company.
- | Start-up phase when resources are mobilised and regulatory requirements fulfilled to start a new company.
- | Scale-up phase when successful companies expand business to new markets or in innovative ways.
- | Exit phase when a business owner or an investor decides to cash out an investment made in the company.
- | Mature phase when a company is well established (founded for a number of years), but requires support to continue to adapt and grow particularly in times of transition and decline.

The figure below summarises TRINNO's list of business support services to link digital innovation with tradition.



Business Support Ecosystem

In each stage, the support system must include all the agents of the triple helix, in order to be able to successfully implement the different services offered. The public administration should be the one with the coordinating role, adapting the roles of each agent to fulfil the services requirements. The figure below shows what TRINNO partners have produced as the ideal framework for a successful deployment of the business support services, creating a perfect ecosystem where all agents interact to fulfil the goal of promoting innovation (digitalisation) of traditional companies.



TRINNO's Perfect Ecosystem

During the first phase of the project, partners have identified sectors and digital innovation objectives they had, selecting also a diversity of good practices related to the project's topic. The goal was to provide with examples which partners could apply to their own context, with the needed adaptations. These two processes have been the basis for the elaboration of the "dream action plan", in which partners described the ideal activities they would like to implement in their existing policy framework to address the challenge of digital transformation of traditional business.

Specifically, the identified, organised and listed services included in the business support ecosystem (see figure 1), were used to find concrete tools to support digital innovation within the policy instruments addressed by the project, according to the sectors chosen by each partner. The goal was to identify which and how these identified services should be used to boost (and put directionality to) the digital innovation in TRINNO regions (i.e. training on digital skills; digital innovation specialized incubators; specific funds for digital start-ups, etc.).

After this process, partners completed their dream action plan, which were discussed in the different ILE of the project. Each action plan is, therefore, the result of a thoughtful process of reflection and adaptation of the concepts used to the specific realities of each participating region and policy frameworks.



## LIST OF ACTIONS INCLUDED IN THE ACTION PLAN

### *action 1*

#### **Improved financial incentives for SMEs - vouchers scheme.**

This action is addressing policy: **operational programme for the implementation of the EU cohesion policy 2014 - 2020**; directive 2014 / 95 / EU. **Third priority axis:** dynamic and competitive entrepreneurship for green economic growth; **priority investment:** “encouraging entrepreneurship, in particular by simplifying the exploitation of new ideas in the economy and promoting the creation of new businesses, including through entrepreneurial incubators”; **specific objective:** increasing the added value of SMEs.

According to the first meeting we had with the Ministry of economic development and technology in April 2018 and implemented staff exchange in October 2018 in Ireland, the main focus was preparation of new vouchers scheme in Slovenia. The ministry published the call in the beginning of 2019. Vouchers scheme is about the allocation of simple incentives for smaller values / establish voucher system for allocating small values for SMEs that would help them acquire relevant knowledge and competencies for further growth and development.

### *action 2*

#### **Subsidised trainings for craftsmen to boost digital innovations and new innovative product / services development.**

Link traditional craftsmen sector with tourism sector and digital innovations (design thinking / management, 3D printing, digital marketing, web-based technologies, new business models). The focus is on training in digital innovation and design for craftsmen within LAG the Heart of Slovenia in cooperation with Craftsmen network of the Heart of Slovenia and Consortium of craftsmen centres of Slovenia (9 centres). Regulating the status of craftsmen at national level is a parallel activity and according to that craftsmen will be able to gain more funds in the future, when their status will be defined.

Policy instrument: **Local development strategy of LAG (local action group) the Heart of Slovenia** - the umbrella policy instrument is **rural development programme of the Republic of Slovenia 2014-2020**.

On the 13th of February 2015 the European commission officially approved Slovenia's rural development programme (RDP) for the period 2014-2020. This confirmation ensures 1.1 billion EUR for the development of slovenian agriculture and rural areas, with 838 million EUR coming from the EU budget. Measure 19 - support for LEADER local development (CLLD - community-led local development) is a tool for different local development projects that are implemented in the Heart of Slovenia area through LAG the Heart of Slovenia. Development Centre of the Heart of Slovenia is a coordinator of LAG and involves 6 municipalities of the Heart of Slovenia area. Through this action we will influence on goals of this instrument with new project proposal funded through the funds of LAG and activities of the Craftsmen network of the Heart of Slovenia. LAG has its own strategy and our action plan influence its goals.

## GENERAL INFORMATION

*project*

TRINNO

*partner organisation*

Development Centre of The Heart of Slovenia

*country*

Slovenia

*nuts2 region*

Western Slovenia

*contact person*

Anita Molka

*email address*

anita.molka@razvoj.si

*phone number*

00386 18962710







# ACTION 1: IMPROVED FINANCIAL INCENTIVES FOR SMES - VOUCHERS SCHEME

## POLICY CONTEXT

*name of the policy instrument addressed (action 1)*

**operational programme for the implementation of the EU cohesion policy 2014 - 2020**

*the policy instrument that the action plan aims to impact is*

- | investment for growth and jobs programme: YES
- | european territorial cooperation programme: NO
- | other regional development policy instrument: NO

## DETAILS OF THE ACTION ENVISAGED

### NEED ADDRESSED

On national level Slovenia is supporting developments in the field of digital innovation and internationalization through the smart specialization. Therefore it has launched several support programmes for the SMEs.

Several years ago Slovenia had national voucher scheme. However, it didn't bring satisfactory results. The main problems were two: too long application procedure and too long time from the application to the grant received. Companies found it not very helpful. Based on previous experiences and lessons learned the ministry decided in 2018 to prepare new vouchers scheme on national level with simple procedure to apply and to receive grant in short time.

TRINNO project is working on several key topics which are greatly matching also the activities that vouchers will support. The main focus is on digital innovation, internationalization, support in different enterprise life cycle stages, etc. In the project we recognised a good practice in Ireland named "Trading on-line vouchers scheme". After careful examination during staff exchange it was recognized as the best practice and great opportunity to transfer some important parts to Slovenia's new vouchers scheme.



## OVERVIEW OF THE POLICY IMPROVEMENT THAT THIS ACTION REFERS TO

In Slovenia new vouchers scheme is being prepared “establishing a comprehensive small-value voucher system for SMEs in the period 2019-2023” to enable SMEs to significantly simplify access to incentives of smaller values, which will help strengthen their competitiveness and competences without major administrative obstacles and without costs for preparing deposits and payments.

Some incentives for SMEs within the voucher system are already available (since January 2019 6 calls for vouchers were published) in the form of co-financing external expert services, which will strengthen their competences, innovation, technological and non-technological development and increase in their growth and development to have a wider positive impact on their competitiveness.

Companies are able to receive up to 10.000 EUR and there is 60 % of co-financing from ERDF funds. One of these incentives will be expected also for the voucher for digital marketing and e-commerce for companies that wish to increase the promotion, to make the company and its products / services (potential) customer available and to increase sales.

The improvement of policy instrument that were transferred from Irish GP are:

- | eligible cost will also be the cost of website establishment within voucher for digitalisation
- | implementation of simple on-line application
- | the ministry also adopted the way of selecting external experts - three different offers where SMEs can explain why they have selected this external expert (the price is not the only criterion for the selection / economic choice of an external expert; the company can also explain its choice according to other criteria)
- | in Irish vouchers scheme there are consultants at regional level and also in Slovenia they trained consultants at regional level to help SMEs with the application (national business SPOT points)



## THE BACKGROUND

Several years ago Slovenia had national voucher scheme that did not bring satisfactory results. Based on previous experience and lessons learned the ministry decided in 2018 to prepare totally new vouchers scheme which addresses the topic of the TRINNO project.

The process that enabled Development Centre of The Heart to Slovenia to have come to this final version of action plan started in October 2017, when we presented our dream action plan on TRINNO 4th Interregional learning event in Szeged. According to stakeholders meeting we had in the Heart of Slovenia area, we named this action “more efficient financial incentives for businesses in the scale-up and mature phase for digital transformation - grants for investments - new call for proposals for SMEs”. TRINNO partners pointed out that the action needed to be more concrete, and has to address the goal of TRINNO project - to influence the policy instrument. In order to do that we arranged the meeting with the Ministry for economic development and technology on 6th April 2018 which was before the 5th interregional learning event in Kamnik. The goal of the meeting was to create our 1st action in a way that will influence the OP - draft action plan, and to discuss the possibility of staff exchange. They pointed out their current main challenge - preparation of new vouchers scheme in Slovenia. There was a need for very simple voucher calls and they were interested in technical and content implementation support. After the meeting we contacted all TRINNO partners if there are any good practices among them on vouchers scheme. WestBic replied and presented their 3rd GP on that topic. Trading online vouchers were also a GP that was planned to be recognized as TRINNO GP. We presented the Irish GPs to the ministry and according to that we upgraded our 1st action into “Improved financial incentives for SMEs - vouchers scheme”.

On 5th Interregional learning event in Kamnik in April 2018, we presented upgraded action to TRINNO partners and stakeholders (short-term work-plan) during peer review section where we got to know Irish GP on vouchers in more details and discussed possibilities of transfer. The next step was to invite the ministry to staff exchange to Ireland. We had several phone calls with them and e-mails exchange before they confirmed their attendance on staff exchange in Roscommon in Ireland from 17-18 September 2018.

Participants on staff exchange from the ministry were Marlen Skarlovnik (secretary, head of the entrepreneurship sector within directorate for internationalization, entrepreneurship and technology under the Ministry of economic development and technology, coordinator of preparation of new vouchers scheme) and Miša Osterc (senior advisor within the same directorate). They are both deeply involved in preparation of new voucher's scheme in Slovenia. We were presented three vouchers schemes: pilot research voucher scheme, one of the first voucher schemes in EU; national innovation voucher scheme (enterprise Ireland and participating third level research centre) and trading on-line voucher Scheme (“TOV”) which was recognized as the most interesting and the best practice to transfer to Slovenia. Trading online voucher scheme is set up for small businesses - funding grant to develop a new e-commerce website or upgrade an existing one (trade on-line to sell products and services). A similar system of performance implementation (simplified application form), eligible costs and co-financing similar activities could also be summarized in Slovenia's new vouchers scheme. Staff exchange was perfectly organized. Representatives from the ministry were pleased with all the information received and all the documents they got to deeply analyse the GP. The best thing was the ability to discuss with companies on the spot that received online trading voucher and to discuss about their experiences with the application, implementation and results. Ministry was also in contact after that with Roscommon county and enterprise office for additional information and they also tested the online application of trading on-line vouchers.

Draft action plan was prepared according to the results of staff exchange and was presented on 6th Interregional learning event in Carrick on Shannon (Ireland) together with details what will be transferred to Slovenian voucher scheme from "TOV" GP: eligible cost will also be the cost of website establishment; implementation of simple on-line application; the way of selecting external experts - three different offers where SMEs can explain why they selected this external expert (the price doesn't need to be the reason for selection); trained consultants at regional level to help SMEs with the application (national business SPOT points in Slovenia).

Companies will be able to receive vouchers for various areas quickly and easily, while the additional advantage for companies is that there are no deadlines for submitting the application. Vouchers will be available the whole period from 2019 - 2023 and the evaluation procedure is very quick - there are no criteria within the application for vouchers (the company only provides the key information).

## SPECIFIC ACTIVITIES AND TIMEFRAME

- oct 2018* meeting with the ministry to check the progress, what will be adopted from TOV (Ireland) - it is achieved
- nov 2018* check with the ministry about their report of the entire project to the managing authority (government office for development and european cohesion policy) - it is achieved
- nov 2018* discussion with the ministry on the progress, approval from national authority - it is achieved
- jan 2019* meeting with the ministry to check the publication of the first voucher call and discussion on future calls in 2019 - it is achieved
- apr 2019* publication of the voucher calls in the field of "digitalization and enabling technologies" - in important parts this call is transferred from GP TOV from Ireland
- end of dec 2019  
and end of dec 2020* monitoring the number of issued vouchers via web page of Slovenian enterprise fund and yearly report of the Ministry of economic development and technology
- mar 2019 - mar 2021* communication with the ministry via e-mails, phone calls and meetings in person on monitoring the implementation of vouchers scheme in Slovenia



## PLAYERS INVOLVED

### MINISTRY FOR ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND TECHNOLOGY, DIRECTORATE FOR INTERNATIONALIZATION, ENTREPRENEURSHIP AND TECHNOLOGY; SECTOR FOR ENTREPRENEURSHIP

*Marlen Skarlovnik, Miša Osterc*

National authority, a competent ministry that is preparing voucher scheme in Slovenia and attended staff exchange in Ireland. They are policy makers that can influence OP. They work together with Slovenian enterprise fund and publish different calls for vouchers in 2019. They have trained consultants on SPOT points (Slovenian business point) to give free counselling to companies that wish to apply for vouchers. They will also prepare yearly report on the call (eg. number of vouchers issued).

### GOVERNMENT OFFICE FOR DEVELOPMENT AND EUROPEAN COHESION OFFICE

National authority responsible for operational programme that this action plan influences. The ministry presented them the entire project and they officially confirmed it.

### SLOVENIAN ENTERPRISE FUND

*Janja Selinšek and Simona Černel*

The public fund of Republic of Slovenia for entrepreneurship or shortly The Slovene enterprise fund is established with purpose of improving the access to financial resources for different development - business investments of micro, small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) including with financial resources for SMEs start-up and micro financing in the Republic of Slovenia.

They closely work with the ministry, since their institution publishes the calls for the vouchers.

They prepare feedbacks on voucher calls and statistic on applications for monitoring and evaluation.

## COSTS AND FUNDING SOURCES

### *costs*

23.7 mio EUR is available for the new voucher scheme in Slovenia - allocation of incentives of smaller values to micro, small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs).

- | 22.5 mio EUR is the amount awarded to vouchers in the period 2019 - 2023; 4.5 mio EUR is available each year
- | 1,2 mio EUR is the cost to run the operation

Till the end of March 2019 6 calls for vouchers have been published (available amount is 8.5 mio EUR till the end of 2023; till the end of 2019 they will publish the rest of the calls in the amount of 14 mio EUR).

### *funding sources*

ERDF (European regional development fund)

## MONITORING

We have decided to change the application performance indicator. The new performance indicator is measuring the success of our action very precisely and is easy to collect exact values over the time.

The self performance indicator is number of issued vouchers by Slovenian enterprise fund (800 vouchers issued from 2019-2020).

On a yearly basis we will collect data from the two sources to measure the success of our self defined performance indicator. Those two sources are:

- | web page of Slovenian enterprise fund
- | yearly report of the Ministry of economic development and technology

## RISK AND CONTINGENCY PLANS

*description of risk (level of probability: low)*

**interest for the vouchers will be low at the beginning since it is a new program and therefore not recognised between SMEs**

*contingency plan* find means of better communication and promotion of voucher program.

*description of risk (level of probability: low)*

**interest for the specific vouchers will be low, because SMEs will not see the benefits for the services vouchers are for**

*contingency plan* do a research between SMEs which external services they need most and propose them to the policy maker.

## OFFICIAL SIGNATURE

<b>Date:</b> 23.7.2019	
<b>Name</b>	Marlen Skarlovník, Ministry of Economic development and technology, Head of Sector for entrepreneurship
<b>Signature</b> 	<b>Stamp of the organisation (if available)</b> 



## ACTION 2: SUBSIDISED TRAININGS FOR CRAFTSMEN TO BOOST DIGITAL INNOVATIONS AND NEW INNOVATIVE PRODUCT / SERVICES DEVELOPMENT

## POLICY CONTEXT

*name of the policy instrument addressed (action 2)*

**local development strategy of LAG (local action group) the Heart of Slovenia**

6 Municipalities involved in the LAG programme

*the policy instrument that the action plan aims to impact is*

- | investment for growth and jobs programme: YES
- | european territorial cooperation programme: NO
- | other regional development policy instrument: NO

## DETAILS OF THE ACTION ENVISAGED

### NEED ADDRESSED

Development Centre of the Heart of Slovenia (DCHS) established Craftsmen network of the Heart of Slovenia (currently has 109 members), which combines traditional craft knowledge with modern business approaches and it promotes higher quality handicraft products and their wider promotion, transfer of knowledge to younger generations and more effective joint marketing at nationally and internationally. DCHS was also a coordinator of Consortium of craftsmen network on national level which connects more than 1000 craftsmen. This area is exactly what TRINNO project addresses. Such as other companies receive support in different enterprise life cycle stages, also craft workers need support. Taking into consideration that status of craftsmen in Slovenia is still not defined (no legislation on the content of the status of craftsmen), it is not easy for them to receive funds. The needs of craftsmen were assessed, especially the need for subsidized trainings to boost digital innovations and new innovative product / services development, within TRINNO stakeholders meetings. Linking traditional craftsmen sector with tourism sector and digital innovations is important when new tourism products are developing.

Since there are no funds in the moment in the area, this is a priority of the Municipalities (6 municipalities) involved in LAG (Local Action Group) the Heart of Slovenia, where funds are available. Craftsmen can't afford to pay in full such trainings by themselves. Identifying and developing the intangible heritage is one of the elements of the identity of the people living here. There is a great potential for development and craftsmen need an incentive to foster their competences to a higher level. Project TRINNO pointed out how incorporating digital tools and innovations can make a significant progress in development of the company / craftsmen. According to that, project proposal was prepared within LAG to gain funds for training in digital innovation and design (design thinking / management, 3D printing, digital marketing, web-based technologies, new business models) for craftsmen on the topic "from traditional skills to modern rural tourism products". This will influence the goals of the local development strategy of LAG (local action group) the Heart of Slovenia.

At the beginning the goal was that special voucher within digitalisation will be published for craftsmen (with special conditions, more co-financing), but this was not possible, since the status of craftsmen is not defined yet on national level and we needed to find another solution, which was within LAG the Heart of Slovenia, involving the municipalities to co-finance this.

## OVERVIEW OF THE POLICY IMPROVEMENT THAT THIS ACTION REFERS TO

We are going to influence the local development strategy of LAG (local action group) the Heart of Slovenia. It is going to be updated to better reflect the needs on the field. Strategy is the base for launching the remaining calls in the programme period 2014-2020.

We are going to propose new indicator: "number of services for increase of diversification to tourism sector".

Having this indicator in the strategy, projects focused on trainings, improving competences of the actors in the rural areas and diversification of the core business towards tourism will gain significant advantage in the selection process.

## THE BACKGROUND

TRINNO project emphasizes the link between craftsmen and digital innovations and since DCHS is actively working with craftsmen on local and national level it was our priority to involve them in our TRINNO action plan. On national level there is a lack of knowledge on linking traditional skills and digital innovation for improving their position on the market and reputation in society. Increased knowledge on design / design thinking, ICT and digital tools would significantly improve their position in the market. It is therefore very important to link the craftsmen sector to digital innovations in order to promote growth and competitiveness of small companies. Craftsmen should not be treated the same as other branches, companies. The problem is in the low profitability due to the specificity of the area.

Within TRINNO 3rd Interregional learning event in Arezzo we visited good practices Artex in Florence and Conventino (public funding) that promotes innovation and development of artistic and traditional craftsmen. Especially public funding is very interesting and the linking role between craftsmen and researchers, providing learning and consultancy services available to support digitalisation process. Here we decided about the focus of our action plan. Status of craftsmen in Slovenia is still not defined and that was the reason that in the beginning we named our action “encouraging legislative proposal on the preservation of craftsmen and new grants for craftsmen for investments in digital innovations and co-financing trainings and mentors to boost digital innovations” which was presented on TRINNO 4th Interregional learning event in Szeged in October 2017. We followed the advice of University of Barcelona and we extracted “legislative proposal on the preservation of craftsmen” from our action plan. We decided to address sub-regional programme of the development partnership of the Centre of Slovenia 2014 - 2020 “co-financing trainings and mentors to boost digital innovations among craftsmen - linking traditional craftsmen sector with tourism sector and digital innovations (new tourism providers). The action involved 5 municipalities in the Heart of Slovenia area (development partnership of the Centre of Slovenia) that would co-finance trainings for craftsmen within the programme. The suggestion was also to put a greater link between tourism sector and craftsmen which we have taken into account. In year 2018 we had several meetings with craftsmen and also 5th stakeholders meeting in May 2018 was about this action that we finally named “subsidized trainings for craftsmen to boost digital innovations and new innovative product / services development” and the status of craftsmen on national level (the relevant ministries were also present). Draft action plan was presented on TRINNO 5th interregional learning event in Carrick on Shannon, Ireland in October 2018. Irish partners (Leitrim county council and WestBic ) suggested that we better link craft trade with tourism activities and that DCHS could follow the Irish example - blueway trails developed under USEFE. Blueway project combines tourism and craft to multiply the impact of promotional activities across both. Initially the blueway concept was a tourism promotion for the inland rivers of Ireland - to promote and highlight local craft alongside tourism offering.

After the meeting we decided to prepare a project proposal within LAG the Heart of Slovenia that involves 6 municipalities (Litija, Šmartno pri Litiji, Kamnik, Lukovica, Moravče, Dol pri Ljubljani) as a result of all useful suggestions from the partners and study visits within TRINNO project. The project proposal “from traditional skills to modern rural tourism products” was just approved in March 2019 within LAG and this is why we changed the policy instrument in the last minute which is now local development strategy of LAG (local action group) the Heart of Slovenia. If this was not the case we would continue with the previous policy instrument sub-regional programme of the development partnership of the centre of Slovenia 2014 - 2020.





## SPECIFIC ACTIVITIES AND TIMEFRAME

- oct 2018 - nov 2018* formed the idea and content of the project proposal, selection of partners from foreign countries and then confirmed by the development council of LAG. When the tender was published, we applied with the project - already achieved
- feb 2019* project officially confirmed: "from traditional skills to modern rural tourism products"
- jan 2020* start of the project of LAG.
- 2019 - 2020* active participation within Consortium of craftsmen centres of Slovenia and in the network of craftsmen of the Heart of Slovenia; 4 meetings per year over a period of 2019-2020 and participation on round table (May 2019); 2 meetings have already been held (January and March 2019).
- dec 2018 - dec 2019* meetings with representatives of the municipalities - opportunities for cooperation and development of this area, inclusion of their craftsmen, promotion assistance; several meetings have already been held (with municipality of Kamnik in March 2019 and municipality of Lukovica in February 2019)
- sep 2019* organizing an annual meeting with craftsmen - entrepreneurs about training opportunities in 2020
- nov 2019* preparation and publication of a call for in-depth training and counselling in the field of product design
- dec 2019 - mar 2020* selection of 10 craftsmen, which we monitor through 3 month process of deepened counselling and training on the topic of product design - 6 trainings with 10 craftsmen will be implemented
- feb 2020* evaluation of the use of the collective trademark Srce Slovenije for craftsmen
- feb 2020* preparation and publication of a call for in-depth training and counselling in the field of sales, marketing and digital tools
- mar 2020 - jun 2020* selection of 10 craftsmen, which we monitor through 3 month process of deepened counselling and training on the topic of sales, marketing and digital tools - 6 trainings with 10 craftsmen will be implemented
- apr 2020* linking craftsmanship with tourism, entrepreneurship and education, overview of existing tourist programmes and a link to tourism agency that could promote the programs
- sep 2020* dissemination of results, meeting with craftsmen - entrepreneurs
- dec 2020* monitoring and evaluation of implementation of trainings for craftsmen: collect the copy of attendance sheets from the local action group (LAG) or from the organisation / institution that will lead the project / trainings; based on attendance sheets we will sum up the number of craftsmen attending at least one training; we will be in constant touch with the LAG to be informed on their activities and success on the project

## PLAYERS INVOLVED

### LAG THE HEART OF SLOVENIA

Coordinator and lead partner of LAG is Development Centre of the Heart of Slovenia. Organization and implementation of the meeting of partners in the LAG area, implementation of thematic education, organization of workshops and consultations and preparation of promotional material.

### MUNICIPALITIES OF LAG THE HEART OF SLOVENIA

*LITIJA: Lijana Lovše, deputy mayor*

*ŠMARTNO PRI LITJI: Karmen Sadar, director of the municipal administration*

*KAMNIK: Boris Ravbar, head of department for development and Investments*

*DOL PRI LJUBLJANI: Željko Savič, mayor and also the president of LAG*

*MORAVČE: Tatjana Čop, vice president of LAG*

*LUKOVICA: Katka Bohinc, senior adviser*

On behalf of the LAG, the development council is decision maker, and partly they are also the representatives of the municipalities. They decide on the allocation of funds for the implementation of the action plan / project.

### COOPARATIVE KIKSTARTER BUSINESS CENTRE KAMNIK

*president Matjaž Jug*

Development of project ideas, involvement of craftsmen in their activities, education and trainings.

### CONSORTIUM OF SLOVENIAN CRAFTSMEN CENTRES

*9 centres, the leaders of craftsmen centres*

Transfer of knowledge to learn from craftsmen centres which are more developed than ours; exchange of information on educational events; active involvement in solving the position of craftsmen on national level. Linking new integration projects and impact on new policies that can be a continuation of this action plan.

### CRAFTSMEN NETWORK OF THE HEART OF SLOVENIA

*trying to involve all of 109 craftsmen in the network*

Participants of the trainings (end-users) in the field of design of products, sales, marketing and digital tools (at least 20 trained craftsmen at the end of the project).

### LOCAL AND NATIONAL TOURISM ORGANISATIONS

*TIC - tourist information centres, tourist agencies, Slovenian tourism board, Tourism Ljubljana*

Discussions on concrete opportunities to include craftsmen in their tourism programs.

## COSTS AND FUNDING SOURCES

### *costs*

Whole project 39.721,93 EUR. 10,000 EUR in the year 2020 (for 12 trainings for craftsmen).

### *funding sources*

EAFRD - European agricultural fund for rural development (85%) and 15% partly financed from the municipalities involved in LAG the Heart of Slovenia.

## MONITORING

We have decided to change the application performance indicator. The new performance indicator is measuring the success of our action very precisely to easily collect exact values over the time.

The self-performance indicators are number of training sessions held (12), number of craft workers attending at least one training (20 craftsmen by the end of year 2020) and the result indicator would be the number of craftsmen with increased digital skills, according to the training sessions held (15).

On a yearly basis we will collect the copies of attendance sheets from the local action group (LAG) or from the organisation / institution that will lead the project / trainings. Based on attendance sheets we will sum up the number of craftsmen attended at least one training. We will prepare questionnaires for the participants to gather their opinions about the training.

We will be in constant touch with the LAG to be informed on their activities and success on the project.



## RISK AND CONTINGENCY PLANS

*description of risk (level of probability: medium)*

**the attendance to the given trainings will be low**

*contingency plan* analyse the cause of low attendance and solve issues; enhance promotion

*description of risk (level of probability: low)*

**topics of trainings will not correspond the need of the potential attendees**

*contingency plan* continuous monitoring of the most relevant topics for the target groups

*description of risk (level of probability: low)*

**funds will be available late in 2020**

*contingency plan* continuous contact with policy maker for monitoring the timetable of the implementation of the policy instrument; in case of a severe delay try to find an alternative plan with the policy maker

## OFFICIAL SIGNATURE

<b>Date:</b>	9.7.2019
<b>Name</b>	Željko Savič, President of LAG the Heart of Slovenia
<b>Signature</b>	Stamp of the organisation (if available) 



*author*

Development Centre of the Heart of Slovenia

*concept*

Development Centre of the Heart of Slovenia

*design*

zadruga.traparij z.o.o.

*photos*

All photos are provided by TRINNO partners (unless otherwise noted) and approved for reproduction in this action plan.

*responsibility*

The sole responsibility for the content of this action plan lies with the author. The European Commission is not responsible for any use that may be made of the information contained therein.



