

## Chapter 8

### PP8 Skupnost občin Slovenije (SOS) / Association of Municipalities and Towns of Slovenia

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## Overview

Skupnost občin Slovenije (SOS) / Association of Municipalities and Towns of Slovenia has chosen sectors through the viewpoint of competences of municipalities. Since the competences of municipalities in Slovenia are very limited in the field of economic development, the sectors tourism, build environment, mobility and food / waste were chosen.

The chosen sectors are in line with priority axes of Slovenian investment priorities with the objective of realizing national EU 2020 targets. In regards of Circular economy, the priority axes 1,3 and 9 of Slovenia's Smart Specialisation Strategy are of great importance. They rely on eco innovation, resource efficiency and CE, prioritize entrepreneurship with greater resources and energy efficiency, but also sustainable food production and tourism as an investment priority, which is related to the CLLD strategies, such as reducing greenhouse gas emissions and support of low carbon and zero waste communities.

SOS team draw up a document which includes competences of municipalities, legal basis and on those basis opportunities for each chosen sector. The document was used as a basis for discussion with stakeholders of the project. Based on stakeholder meeting some opportunities were confirmed, prioritized and some rejected.

Slovenia has formally started process of transition to green circular economy with establishment of Partnership for transition to green economy<sup>1</sup> on 03.10.2015 in presence of representatives from prime minister's office, representatives from several ministries that are included in partnership, representatives of different chambers (commerce, municipalities), Universities, NGO, environmental organizations.

Two years later (September 2017) government (Ministry for spatial use and environment) started the process of roadmap for transition to circular economy<sup>2</sup> which will be concluded in May 2018. First draft that will be subject to stakeholder participation is already published.

Some of Slovenia's municipalities are already starting transition to circular economy, most advanced is at time Municipality of Maribor with its project WCYCLE that was already presented on several high-

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<sup>1</sup>

[http://www.vlada.si teme\\_in\\_projekti/prehod\\_v\\_zeleno\\_gospodarstvo/partnerstvo\\_za\\_zeleno\\_gospodarstvo/](http://www.vlada.si teme_in_projekti/prehod_v_zeleno_gospodarstvo/partnerstvo_za_zeleno_gospodarstvo/)

<sup>2</sup> [http://www.vlada.si teme\\_in\\_projekti/prehod\\_v\\_zeleno\\_gospodarstvo/](http://www.vlada.si teme_in_projekti/prehod_v_zeleno_gospodarstvo/)

level conferences in Europe and aims to put all utility companies in Maribor into new circular economy based business model<sup>3</sup>.

## Good practices

SOS team cooperates with other projects in Slovenia dealing with the topic of CE. That's why SOS is in contact with the project teams of Retrace, Symbi, Greencycle, Urban soil 4 food and ApPLAuSE as well as the state secretary Tadej Slapnik from Prime Minister's Office, in charge for CE. Good practices were identified based on Cross Cutting Projects findings.

### Tourism sector

#### ★ Green Scheme of Slovenian Tourism

The Green Scheme of Slovenian Tourism (GSST) is a tool developed at the national level and a certification programme that carries out the following tasks under the Slovenia Green umbrella brand. It brings together all efforts directed towards the sustainable development of tourism in Slovenia, offers tools to destinations and service providers that enable them to evaluate and improve their sustainability endeavors, promotes these green endeavors through the Slovenia Green brand. The scheme's key strategic objective is to introduce sustainable models to Slovenian tourism, to both tourism service providers and destinations. All the objectives of the strategic guidelines are in line with sustainable development and demonstrate concern for the economic, social, cultural and natural environment. The GSST is based on global criteria, is globally recognized, and enables international comparison. The Green Destinations Standard (GDS) is recognized by the Global Sustainable Tourism Council (GSTC), as is Slovenia Green. In accordance with the instructions on obtaining the Slovenia Green label, destinations are assessed according to GDS global criteria, while service providers who join the GSST must obtain or present one of the six internationally recognized labels that are also verified by Slovenia Green. Parks must obtain or present one of the two internationally recognized labels, also verified by SG.

To obtain the Slovenia Green Destination label, the destinations must follow eleven steps (appointment of a green coordinator, setting up a green team, increasing awareness, signing a

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<sup>3</sup> <http://www.wcycle-maribor.si/>

green policy, carrying out surveys, gathering information, submitting reports and the application for an assessment, drafting an action plan for measures, determining the local character and USP, submitting an application for a field visit, realizing measures and, after three years, re-assessment), which are evaluated using a point system from 1 to 10.

- Destination gets SGD gold label, if at least three of the five categories have 8 points or more and where at least one of those three categories is directly linked to tourism (Destination management or Socio - Economic situation) and it has at least one accommodation provider with the label, verified by Slovenia Green.
- Destination gets SGD silver label, if at least two of the five categories have 8 points or more and where at least one of those two categories is directly linked to tourism (Destination management or Socio – Economic situation).
- Destination gets SGD bronze label, if at least one of the five categories has 8 points or more.

To obtain the Slovenia Green Accommodation or Slovenia Green Travel Agency label, the service provider must submit proof of ownership of one of the six internationally recognized labels that are also recognized by the Green Scheme of Slovenian Tourism.

To obtain the Slovenia Green Park label, the provider must submit proof of ownership of one of the two labels, verified by the scheme.

Upon joining the GSST, service providers must complete an application form, sign a green policy and submit proof of the label's validity (each time expires).

★ **Hotel Park Ljubljana - *The first hotel in Slovenia to achieve the prestigious Travelife Gold certification***<sup>4</sup>

**Energy:** Hotel Park Ljubljana has reduced its energy use by installing low-energy lighting, ensuring that in-room air conditioning or heating is set to a minimum temperature, use of natural day-light and shading to achieve energy efficiency target.

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<sup>4</sup> [Travelife](#) is an international certification system, promoting sustainability within the tourism industry. It helps tour operators, hotels and accommodations to manage and monitor their social and environmental impacts, as well as communicate their achievements to customers.

**Mobility:** Hotel Park Ljubljana also use an electric car and have own charging station.

**Waste:** Hotel Park Ljubljana has reduced the amount of waste we produce by a waste minimization planning activities, including reducing the amount of resources used, reusing materials and recycling, using refillable containers, buying in bulk, using recycled toilet paper.

**Water:** The hotel uses various methods to save water, including technologies installed in guest rooms such as low-flow shower heads and taps.

As well as these day-to-day environmental measures, the hotel goes further to protect the environment and the bees. The hotel has 4 beehives on its rooftop, that produce urban honey, which is served at breakfast.

The hotel measures its performance regularly to monitor the impact of its sustainability efforts, report on results and plan improvements.

**People:** Travelife certification shows that the hotel is committed to treating people fairly and with respect. As well as providing good working conditions for staff and investing in its employees by providing regular training, Hotel Park Ljubljana aims to be an active member of the local community. We support local people by organizing open events, free yoga classes and library in the park, supporting local charities and consulting the local community on projects and issues affecting them.

**Local economy and businesses:** Hotel Park Ljubljana also tries to support the local community from an economic perspective by buying food and other services from local suppliers or encouraging its guests to visit local restaurants, markets and attractions so that they have an opportunity to spend money and support the local economy.

**Communication with guests:** Hotel Park Ljubljana also tries to involve guests in their sustainability activities, such as encouraging guests to recycle whilst they are staying in the hotel, running a towel service to help save water, informing them about protected areas such as Slovenian regional parks in each floor.

#### ★ Sutrio – diffused hotel – Borgo Soandri

The Albergo Diffuso represents a different kind of private accommodation which provides hospitality in independent apartments located in the same village (or nearby) managed by a single Reception; the Reception is the core of the Albergo Diffuso where all services (cleaning

service, booking service, information) are arranged. In 2000 the Albergo Diffuso “Borgo Soandri” was being opened in Sutrio, with the International Project DOCUP 5B and, subsequently with the OBIETTIVO 2 2000/2006 it was increased of further 50 beds.

In 2002, the government of FVG published a law which recognized the Albergo Diffuso as a new kind of accommodation system. The regulation 2/2002 art. N 64 defines as follow: “to become Albergo Diffuso it is necessary to have at least 3 apartments located in one or more blocks (able to accommodate up to 80 beds) connected to a central building with the function of reception and common area.”

The Project of AD was born in Sutrio with the aim to be an integrated system for the development of the whole Community. For the success of the system AD a strategic role needs to be entrusted by the Municipality. To respond to the first «Regional Call for Proposal», the Sutrio’s Town Council identified the uninhabited houses ready to be converted into touristic accommodation. In relation with this new vision of the village, the Town Council of Sutrio worked for the improvement of streets, services and for the promotion of wood workshops and agribusiness.

Borgo Soandri is a Cooperative Society set up by:

- The Municipality of Sutrio;
- Private owners of the apartments;
- Employees of Borgo Soandri (Front Office: 3 persons and Cleaning Service: 3 persons all with a part time contract);
- Almost all the business companies in Sutrio (e.g. restaurants, pharmacy, flower shop, laundry...).

There are forty accommodations with up to 150 beds (apartments from 2 to 8 people). All the apartments are equipped with one or more bedrooms, one or more bathrooms and kitchen/living room. Linen, towel, cleaning service and independent heating system are provided.

In the apartments it has been installed a New Interactive Television and Building Automation. With the first system, through the apps on the TV, the guest may have several information about reception schedules and numbers, restaurants, things to do, museums (...), web radio, internet WiFi connection, movies on demand. Through the same system, the Reception can send personal messages or banners to one or to all the apartments. Building Automation is a

simply installed, environment management system, which allows a complete control of the rooms and common areas from a single position: from air-conditioning to lighting, from technical systems to alarms, the management system maximizes energy saving.

Borgo Soandri's Reception provides:

- The same services of a traditional hotel (cleaning service, breakfast and half board, services booking, wi-fi connection).
- Half board is possible in all the nine Restaurants in Sutrio with a simple voucher provided by the Reception. Breakfast, instead, is delivered each morning to the apartment in a basket with all typical products.
- Check in /check out – reception with 24h availability (delivery call to mobile)
- Information Centre
- 2 Free station (pc and printer) with internet connection for visitors and guests
- Organization of day trip on demand
- Bicycles and E-Bikes rental (even with guide service)
- Several agreement with the local shops (restaurants, ski rentals, thermal services, ski pass) in Sutrio.

## Mobility

### ★ Werfenweng - Soft mobility - SAMO

Werfenweng lies 45 km south of Salzburg, in the mountains of Salzburger Land. Sustainability and environmental awareness have long been crucial elements of the Alpine lifestyle. In 80's major decrease of tourism development happened. In 1995 Werfenweng started to develop the new tourism positioning "Gentle mobility – a break from the car".

Werfenweng has been a leader in environmentally-friendly tourism since 1997, when the village introduced the concept of "SAMO", or Soft Mobility, for visitors and locals alike. Guests who choose to take part in the SAMO scheme can try out a range of green private transport options, including electric bikes and buggies, as well as gas-powered and electric cars, Segways and scooters.

Furthermore, the SAMO system offers a whole programme of extra activities, such as Nordic skiing, horse-drawn sledge-rides and winter sports in the cold months, and excursions, mountain walks and cultural activities in the summer.

Werfenweng took part actively in various model projects (Austrian „Modellvorhaben Sanfte Mobilität – Autofreier Tourismus“; EU-Project Alps Mobility; - EU-Project Alps Mobility II)

With those projects the tourism product „SAMO Card“ in cooperation with the SAMO-Hotels could be developed. The „SAMO-Card“ is key factor of Werfenweng’s success, it is a customer service card with many included services. SAMO Card mobility offer:

A) General mobility:

- Werfenweng Shuttle: a bus connecting Werfenweng directly to the train station Bischofshofen
- ELOIS – The private taxi service, Mercedes Vito E-CELL Electric night taxi
- Rental cars: E-cars “Werfenwenger smile-E’s”: 5 Peugeot iOn, 3 Mitsubishi iMiev, 2 Renault ZOE, 1 Renault Twizy; all charged by solar power. Biogas cars “Werfenwenger Grass hoppers”: biogas produced of grass

B) Fun Mobility - Rental of vehicles in the village center

- E-bikes, Pedelecs, E-Mountainbikes
- Electro scooter
- Segways, Twizy and many more e-vehicles
- Mountain bikes and bicycles
- scooter and vehicles for small children
- special bikes like tandems, etc.

C) Additional advantages included in summer

- day tours by bus to popular destinations (Salzburg, Ice caves, castle Hohenwerfen, ski jump Bischofshofen)
- guided hiking tours
- nature watch tours
- guided Nordic walking tours
- bicycle taxi
- entry to swimming lake

D) Additional advantages included in winter

- tour with horse coach/sledge



- ice skating including skates
- trekking with lamas
- guided snow-shoe walking tour
- cross country equipment
- trail fees for cross country
- tobogganing hire

Other measures:

Use of sun energy

- 54 solar street lamps
- Solar-fueling station for the e-vehicles
- Photovoltaic plant Werfenweng
- Small edutainment park „Solarpark“

Regional and local development:

- The farmer 's shop with delicious local products and souvenirs
- projects of cooperation of local farmers and producers with hotels and restaurants
- bio mass heating works

Soft-mobility service card for the inhabitants of Werfenweng:

- Service package for inhabitants reducing car use
- with various advantages and rebates
- Basis is a contract between the municipality and the individual person or household
- Important! Soft mobility is not only for tourists - Credibility only if measures also for inhabitants!

From 1995 to 2013 the share of non-car arrivals rose from 6% to 25%

Success factors include: free pick-up at railway station Bischofshofen, free transport during holidays, free mobility services. Communication measures for this offer.

The winners are:

- the environment: 25 % Arrival by train; minus 400 tons CO<sub>2</sub>/Year
- the enterprises: Positive development of overnight stays

- the guests: enjoying a well-priced mobility-inclusive package
- the inhabitants: using the Werfenweng Shuttle, night taxi and fun vehicles; Employment: several new jobs have been created. Trade and shops: Rising income by more tourism. Image: The inhabitants are proud to live in a role model village. Co-operation: The hotels co-operate very well for soft mobility.

## Food sector

### ★ Short supply chain (Ljubljana)

Ljubljana has launched a pilot project to implement green supply chain management, aiming to give its hotel and restaurant owners the possibility of easily buying locally produced food at low prices. A study conducted among Ljubljana hotels showed that there is great interest in locally produced goods, but the biggest problem occurs in its procurement process. A collaboration model between the Tourist Board, private providers, producers, and the Jarina Cooperative has been presented to several producers from the Ljubljana region, who were invited to contribute to the project with their produce. The project is a joint effort between the Rural Development Sector of the Municipality of Ljubljana, the Sustainable Tourism Institute GoodPlace, and the Jarina Cooperative.

## Waste sector

### ★ Zero waste initiative: Ljubljana, Vrhnika, Borovnica, Log-Dragomer, Bled, Gorje, Radovljica and Slovenske Konjice;

Zero Waste refers to waste management and planning approaches which emphasize waste prevention as opposed to end-of-pipe waste management. It is a whole systems approach that aims for a massive change in the way materials flow through society, resulting in no waste. Zero waste encompasses more than eliminating waste through recycling and reuse, it focuses on restructuring production and distribution systems to reduce waste. Zero waste is more of a goal or ideal rather than a hard target. Zero Waste provides guiding principles for continually working towards eliminating wastes. Advocates expect that government regulation is needed to influence industrial choices over product and packaging design, manufacturing processes, and material selection. Advocates say eliminating waste eliminates pollution, and can also reduce costs due to reduced need for raw materials.

Currently, Ljubljana is already the EU capital with best performance regarding waste separation and waste avoidance; it separately collects 60 % of municipal waste and generates

less than 150kg of residual waste –what is not recycled or composted- per person yearly. With adopting their Zero waste plan they commit to increase separate collection to 78 % and decrease the amount of residual waste to 60 kg per person per year until 2025. With this commitment for zero waste, Ljubljana officially rules out building any incinerator to have the flexibility to continue reducing the non-recyclable waste and push for prevention and recycling.

But also, other, smaller, Slovenian municipalities are committed to Zero waste plans; this are Vrhnika, Borovnica, Log-Dragomer, Bled, Gorje, Radovljica and Slovenske Konjice with good performance.

#### ★ **Re-use centers**

The Reuse Centre gives work to hard-to-employ people while also helping people's surplus items start a new life and delight their new owners for a small outlay. In addition, they also sell things that the skilled hands of craftsmen have changed. The things available at the Reuse Centre are brought by local people or redirected from collection centers. A visit to the Reuse Centre is a complement part of educational programme to give schools and kindergartens a relaxed and practical way to approach the subject of waste management. Among other things, young people get to know how important are things like creativity, innovation, social entrepreneurship, creating green jobs and the social inclusion of vulnerable groups.

#### ★ **Repair cafe**

In June 2016, within the activities of ECO TCE and Intergenerational Center of Vojnik, was opened the first "Repair Café" in Slovenia. The global repair-chain enables learning about the repair of a variety of products, enabling their continuous use and contributes to a circular economy. Experts of ECO-TCE and volunteers are available to assist with repairs and transformation of products. There are tools and materials so that visitors can learn the most basic skills to repair their products. People bring products such as smaller pieces of furniture, clothing, household goods, jewelry, toys, ..., whatever they would still like to use and can be repaired. As the owner of the product involved in the repair, they learn new skills, which are also important to reduce the consumption of raw materials, energy, water, chemicals, CO2 emissions. When visiting Repair Café event, the visitor meets with a neighbor or with someone from the same place, which makes an important contribution to solving current social problems, such as loneliness, depression, depression and feeling of insignificance in society.

### ★ Aquafil – Econyl production

The ECONYL® Regeneration System is an industrial system created by the Aquafil Group in 2011. This process turns waste into first-grade Nylon 6. The raw material used in this production system comes from two sources:

- Post-consumer waste: end-of-life products made from Polyamide 6 such as fishing nets, carpet fluff (the top of carpets and rugs) and rigid textiles
- Pre-consumer waste: oligomers, scraps and other plastic components generated from the production of Nylon 6.

ECONYL® yarn is made from 100% regenerated materials with a guaranteed minimum of 50% of post-consumer waste. A project of this magnitude required the development of new technologies, supply chains and partnerships. Four years of research and development and more than 20 million euro were invested by Aquafil in the construction of the ECONYL® plant in Ljubljana, Slovenia. Great effort was also dedicated to the development of a network for global waste collection and of partners for the collection of waste all around the world as well as an efficient logistical plan to enable the transportation of waste materials to the Slovenian plant. The ECONYL® Regeneration System is based on sustainable chemistry, which allows PA6 waste products (carpet fluff, fishing nets, etc.) to be endlessly regenerated without loss of quality. The regenerated Nylon 6 yarn is used in final products such as garments and synthetic carpet flooring.

#### Built environment

### ★ The Sauris diffused hotel (Friuli)

Sauris, province of Udine, is an ancient village in the heart of the Dolomites Friuli. Local traditions and the ancient heritage has been preserved only because of its characteristic protected and isolated location (first road linking the Carnia was built only 80 years ago).

**Built environment:** This was one of the first diffused hotels to take hold after the terrible earthquake of the 70s: the credit for the success of this innovative project goes to all its inhabitants, who with great strength and entrepreneurial skills have been able to rebuild the village. With the diffused hotel model, it was possible the recovery of stables, barns and homes, turned into accommodation units. In the eyes of those who visit opened up the perspective of a strong Alpine cordiality and hospitality: larch shingle roofs, wooden balconies, stone walls, the technique of "block bau".

**Energy:** Even the heating is ecological: wood stoves or fireplaces and natural fuel are the masters. **Food:** The real treat is the breakfast: served every morning in wicker baskets, left by the managers at the door of each house, consists mainly in typical products, strictly Km0.

**Natural & Cultural Heritage:** The structure becomes a real opportunity to catalyse social and cultural events: every year there are cooking classes with chef Elena Cossutta Treviso. In this way you create a hospitality context, sharing memories in a unique and timeless landscape.

Info: [Albergo Diffuso di Sauris](#) (Friuli Venezia Giulia)

### ★ Trnulja Estate

Country estate Trnulja is based in Črna vas at the Ljubljana Marshes, a protected geographical area with specific flora and fauna. The owners have taken this piece of land as their own by respecting and understanding its distinct natural features and making a conscious decision to develop the country estate Trnulja in a sustainable and ecological way.

Accommodation facilities and facilities aimed at day-trippers were built in accordance with the principles of green architecture, with special emphasis being paid to using natural building and insulation materials. The rustic furnishings in the interior of both facilities are made from eco-friendly materials, as well. Country estate Trnulja strives to continuously improve its traditional tourist offer by following and incorporating innovative modern catering trends.

Regionally speaking, country estate Trnulja aims to strengthen its position of a reputable organic farm, which provides their guests with carefully selected tourist services based on traditional, as well as modern and innovative catering trends. Traditional catering services include preparation of meals exclusively with organic produce cultivated at the country estate. When the recipes call for it, they also use produce and products from the neighboring farms and farms around Slovenia.

## Opportunities

### The role of Municipalities/Cities

Approximately 359 million people – 72% of the total EU population – live in cities, towns and suburbs. Urban areas face multiple and interconnected challenges related to employment, migration, demography, water and soil pollution, etc. However, they are also engines of new ideas and solutions, dynamic places where changes happen on a larger scale and at a fast pace. To answer the increasingly complex challenges they face, urban authorities need to go beyond

traditional policies and services - they need to be bold and innovative. In the coming decades, cities will be increasingly important as even greater rates of urbanization are expected, and significant infrastructure investments and developments will be made. Cities could be uniquely positioned to drive a global transition towards a circular economy, with their high concentration of resources, capital, data, and talent over a small geographic territory, and could greatly benefit from the outcomes of such a transition.

Cities are heavily dependent on external resources to meet the demands of their citizens for food and energy, for instance. It is also in cities where most goods are consumed generating large volumes of waste. Urban authorities therefore provide the ideal context for the development of the circular economy thanks to close proximity to their inhabitants, service providers, and businesses. Urban authorities have a solid experience in providing sustainable waste management as a service of general interest. Cities can also drive the change towards more sustainable modes of production and consumption, including the untapped potential of water reuse. Adapting to the circular economy will require a qualified workforce with specific and sometimes new skills (especially in design) creating new employment opportunities and social dialogue. It will stimulate the creation of new businesses (including social enterprises) and business models as well as encourage cooperation between manufacturers and retailers to produce more durable, repairable and recyclable products.

A circular city embeds the principles of a circular economy across all its functions, establishing an urban system that is regenerative, accessible and abundant by design. These cities aim to eliminate the concept of waste, keep assets at their highest value at all times, and are enabled by digital technology. A circular city seeks to generate prosperity, increase livability, and improve resilience for the city and its citizens, while aiming to decouple the creation of value from the consumption of finite resources. Cities will play a substantial role in a global transition to a circular economy. Many factors uniquely position cities to drive the global transition towards the circular economy and greatly benefit from the outcomes of such a transition. One of the main characteristics of cities is a high concentration of resources, capital, data, and talent over a small geographic territory. This proximity can enable the circular economy in many ways. New circular economy business models are more likely to emerge and succeed in the presence of both a large and varied supply of materials, and a high potential market demand for the goods and services derived from them.

**Local governments have a large and direct influence on urban planning, the design of mobility systems, urban infrastructure, local business development, food consumption, municipal taxation, and the local job market. Therefore, local governments can play an**

**active role in embedding the principles of the circular economy across all urban functions and policies.**

**Municipalities that can work together in destinations and develop models for destination that are done on principles of circular economy will have advantage on market and can present themselves as front runners in area of Green tourism.**

**In line with the mentioned above, we would like to point out that SOS perceives the tourism sector as an integrated focus area, which includes sectors food, waste, mobility and the built environment. Due to the comparability of the project activities of the various partners, we provide for the Opportunities report opportunities for the development of a circular economy by sector, as analyzed by the SOS project team and Slovenian Stakeholder group of project Circe.**

#### Tourism sector

Tourism is a major economic activity in the European Union with wide-ranging impact on economic growth, employment, and social development. It can be a powerful tool in fighting economic decline and unemployment. Tourism is the third largest socio-economic activity in the EU and thus it can be considered an engine for development, producing many positive impacts, from trade sector to employment. At the same time, it can produce many negative impacts because it is configured according to the model of linear economy.

Tourism as a service sector holds a unique position, in that tourists leave their homes, their possessions and amenities. The provision of basic livelihood amenities, (i.e. food and accommodation) are 'hosted' by the tourism sector, hence the term 'hospitality'. Thus, some of the primary barriers to a more circular economy, i.e. the distribution of many individualized household goods to each household are already overcome in tourism. In other words, some of the business models the circular economy promotes replacing ownership by access, sharing amenities between users – are already in place within the tourism and hospitality sector.

Tourism industry is competitive. Online ratings and reviews continue to be a crucial digital resource for consumers and the rise of the sharing economy has added a whole new element to the game. Hotel owners, executives and managers know how important it is to gain and keep a competitive advantage.

According to some recent surveys in USA, sustainability attributes and environmental impact considerations are rated an extremely or very important factor to a third (33 percent) of all

consumers in the USA, and 39 percent of American Millennials when they choose hotel accommodations.

Further, more than half of US consumers (56 percent) say they would entertain the idea of paying more for a hotel room that preferred sustainable paper products, such as tissue, and packaging for its guests. Among the Millennial generation, this number rises to 63 percent, with 19 percent saying that they would pay more.

The demand for environmentally friendly products expands even beyond the hospitality industry. As a result, businesses across the globe are shifting strategy and placing more emphasis on environmental transparency.

All companies need to look deep into their supply chains to evaluate how their current practices stack up to what consumers want. Aside from looking at specific products used, hotels must ensure that from a corporate level they are implementing sustainability throughout the supply chain. This involves monitoring the business on all levels, from suppliers to manufacturers, to ensure that sustainability is prioritized sufficiently. This will not only benefit the consumer and the business, but the health of the environment as well.

Once sustainability efforts have been matched with the particular hotel model, it's time to ensure that this value proposition is being communicated to customers. From digital channels to signage in the hotel lobby and individual rooms, there are many avenues to educate consumers on sustainability initiatives.

It is the re-generative economy of materials, but also of natural, cultural and social resources, energy, water, etc. In needs to consider not only different stakeholders individually, but all relationships among them, too.

It is important to note, that SOS didn't find experts or written expertise regarding circular economy and tourism, that would give a solid matrix to develop this document, only partial reports, initiatives, few projects, some good practices focusing on segments within tourism sector, on which SOS has based its viewpoints and analysis.

Nevertheless, SOS team identified the most potential for development of circular economy in the field of tourism. Along with the indirect effects the Tourism in Slovenia in 2014 contributed 13 percent to the total GDP. With 40% of exports tourism is the largest exporter of services and provides 13 percent of all jobs (103500) - directly and indirectly related to tourism. The new Strategy for sustainable growth of Slovenian tourism is a good opportunity for the placement



of circular economy development in tourism in the state plans. The Natura 2000 network in Slovenia covers 38% of the territory. It is a special potential and a challenge in terms of how to make these natural resources a part of social and economic development. Even in Natura 2000 areas, considering the objectives of individual sites, the development of various activities is not prohibited, it is often desirable or even necessary (appropriate practices in agriculture and forestry, green tourism). In Slovenia there is 1 national park, 3 regional parks and 44 landscape parks, 1 strict nature reserve, 59 nature reserves and 1159 natural monuments, which are protected by state or municipal acts. Protected areas overlap with protected areas of Natura 2000. They occupy a smaller area as Natura 2000 sites, but they have a higher degree of organization with elaborated management plans. A survey among foreign guests showed that preserved natural environment is biggest reason for travel is a key potential for tourism, but needs proper promotion and management of tourist visits, which is in accordance to Article 21 of the Law on Local Self-Government also a competence of municipalities. In these terms, the stakeholders identified opportunities for municipalities such as:

- local **targeted promotion of using re-usable/re-used furniture** (for example: from re-use centers) for restaurants and accommodation facilities
- **systematical promotion of links between providers of green services and green products**
- the **creation of short food chains** also for tourist facilities
- **publicly accessible digital platform for green public procurement** of food and other products
- a **larger number of well-marked bins for separate waste collection in public places**
- **informing and educating the local economy of measures and opportunities for the development of circular economy** and the implementation of particular measures
- **enhancing soft mobility** within the tourism destination through the establishment and implementation of a Mobility Plan in the municipality and the use of electrical buses, buses on methane or gas-powered buses, electrical cars and bikes for rent, setting up charging stations for electrical cars
- in accordance to this **the introduction of a smart card**, enabling cashless payment for transport with all local transport vehicles, tourist train, bikes, which offer discounts to tourists in museums, cultural and sports institutions

Most promising idea, recognized by the stakeholders:

**- use of existing spaces and buildings for tourism purposes, instead of building new buildings - establishment of Diffused Hotels**

This is the concept of connection of small tourism providers in a comprehensive range of tourist services, which offers the possibility of accommodation, a program with guided tours, sales of food local products, souvenirs, tours of local museums and collections, bike rental, etc... In this concept the municipality may be the initiator and networker; it can make available the municipalities' buildings at the location, as far as it is established as a social enterprise or tourist cooperative.

Waste sector

SOS team and the stakeholders of project CIRCE identified the following opportunities in the waste sector:

- **raising awareness for circular economy potential in citizens** by promotion of better separate waste collection in making clear the benefits and possibilities of re-use and recycling, promotion of changes in shopping habits of citizens in relation to the amount of packaging waste produced;
- **promotion of Zero waste initiative** for municipalities and its results
- **expansion of the network of centers for reuse** and their promotion
- the **use of secondary raw materials obtained from the processing of waste** within public companies
- **financial encouraging the creation of green jobs, eco-innovation and entrepreneurial initiatives** in terms of circular economy through incentives for fostering of local economy, as there is a good opportunity to regulate the incentives and give municipalities earmarked funds through Investment Promotion Act;

The stakeholders discussed also the possibility of **obtaining energy from waste and sludge from sewage treatment plants through biogas plants**. Through the discussion it was concluded that **the potential of biogas plants in Slovenia has been exploited** and that there is no actual need for new facilities, in addition, the use of digestate from biogas plants in agriculture is legally limited and heavily dependent on the input material.

## Food sector

In the food/agriculture sector SOS and the stakeholders identified the following opportunities:

- **the promotion of agricultural cooperatives** for increasing the participation of small surrounding farms and the attainment of sufficient quantities of food, offered for green public procurement

The competence of municipalities is by law in developing, planning and financing and implementing policies for development of social entrepreneurship in the municipality, in the municipal budget it provides funds for the implementation of agricultural policy measures and municipalities may introduce rural development measures and finance their implementation. In this relation, the opportunity for municipality is also:

- to **make available a digital tool or platform for (public) procurement** and communication of needs for food procurement to subscribers or reporting of farmers about available quantities of produced food

As most promising opportunity the stakeholders recognized:

- the **community revitalization of abandoned farms** as an opportunity for organic farming and green tourism, since according to law municipalities may give the management of an agricultural land to a co-operative or social enterprise for free and may introduce rural development measures and finance their implementation.