



**CENTRAL
EUROPE**
COOPERATING FOR SUCCESS.



EUROPEAN UNION
EUROPEAN REGIONAL
DEVELOPMENT FUND

Identification of pilot cultural areas and awareness raising towards local communities

GENERAL INFORMATION ON THE PARTNER AREA

- 1) **Name of the area** Municipality of Velenje (Savinjsko-Šaleška region)
- 2) **Contact organisation** Municipality of Velenje
 Municipality Province Region University
 Development Agency Other _____
- 3) **Country** Slovenia
- 4) **Resident population (year 2007)** 34.140 (Municipality of Velenje)
 - 4.1. **Resident population in Slovenia (year 2007)** 2.053.740
 - 4.2. **Population of the town of Velenje (Year 2007)** 26.742
- 5) **Surface (in square km)** 83,5 km²
- 6) **Eventual airport-port services nearby:** Yes No

If Yes, please indicate the distance in Km of each service: Airport Maribor, 75 km; Airport Ljubljana ,100 km; sport airport in Slovenj Gradec, 20 km
- 7) **Eventual tourist information offices in the territory (please indicate the number)** 10
In Velenje we have 1 so called TIC - tourist information centre and 9 tourist society role of which is to promote and prepare different tourist events. Within one year we will establish another TIC on prestigious location – in old city Vila, which is under reconstruction right now.
- 8) **Eventual significant cultural sites nearby (please indicate their number)** 15

If Yes, please provide a short description

CASTLES and ARCHITECTURAL monuments

The ruins of **Ekenštajn castle** stands on top of rock near the Šalek castle. The castle was first mentioned in 1329 and in the 17th century, after the mansion Gorica was built up, castle Ekenštajn start to decay.

The mansion Gorica is the legal heir of Ekenštajn castle. It was built in the 17th century as one floor building on a rectangular ground plane. Between the years 1853-1857 it has been thoroughly partitioned.

Velenje castle is one of the most preserved castles in Slovenia. It is first mentioned in 1270. First owners were Kunšper gentlemen followed by their relatives Ptuj gentlemen and the family Liechtenstein.

Afterwards the castle rapidly changed owners. Family Wagen von Wagensberg entirely renovated the construction in the 16th century: the fortress was transformed in a Renaissance residence. The most important owners in the 19th century were Karl and Bianca Adamovich. The last owner of the castle count Coroncini-Kromberg used the castle only as a summer residence until 1943 when Germans drove him out of Velenje after the Italian capitulation. After the Second World War the castle became part of general social property. Apartments were made, a lot of furniture was demolished and the building was falling into ruins. In 1957 Velenje coalmine founded a Museum of Slovene Coalmines in the castle. Gradually first collections were organized and at the same time an intensive renovation of the building was done.

Ruin of Šalek castle is situated on a steep, rock, partly precipitous hill, above the village Salek in Velenje. Castle was first mentioned in 1287 and around 1770 destroyed by fire. Its basic ingredient is preserved as multi-storey, triangular tower, while the peripheral components were pulled down. Ruin, which gave the name of the entire valley, is important because of its historical role, exposed positions and triangular tower core, which is the only of its kind in the Slovenian ground.

The Thurn castle lies on the slope above the village Hrastovec in Velenje. The castle was first mentioned (as far we know) in 1207, so that today's building may have some Romanesque elements. Castle in today's image shows many signs of modifications, a large extent even from the 19th century, but only detailed studies could give reliably and valuable information on the history of the building and the former image - this would greatly increase its historical and monumental value. The castle is important because of its medieval design and it is one among the few preserved medieval castles in the Slovenian, who, although with many changes maintained to this day.

Castle Limbar - Lilienberg (Limberg) was standing on the hill Gradišče above the village Pesje, near city of Velenje. Castle, of which there are no more trace on surface (we can look for them beneath the earth), is mentioned in the sources since the mid-13th century. We assumed that nearby preserved Romanesque church of St. Jacob in Zabrdu was/could serve as a chapel belonging to the castle. Due to the lack of data currently Limberg remains one of the major puzzles between Šaleška architectures. It can be resolved only through intensive and systematic cabinet and field studies.

Cultural Center Velenje is home of city culture, for the execution of cultural events, picture show, symposia, etc.. It is a work of architect Otona Gaspari and it was built in 1959. The facility is located in the northwest of Tito square in middle of Velenje. Cultural centre is a modern and striking geometric-based urban platform, which spatially defines copyright designed, modern buildings of public character. Cultural Center in Velenje is certainly one, among the best integrated facilities-based post-modern architecture in Slovenia. Outdoor and indoor architectural expression of building, as well as floor concept and all the details and the equipment is in strong connection with modern architecture of fifty years of the 20th century. Cultural Center Velenje was declared a cultural monument by the Decree on the designation of Cultural Velenje home for a cultural monument of local importance in the area of the Municipality of Velenje

Villa Herbstein, represents the excellent suburban villa from around 1900, with extremely well preserved surroundings and quality, intact interior, which is in our area extremely rare. Inside the villa is now a pension.

Villa Bianca, which was built around the year 1855 by Count Hubert d'Harnoncourt-Unverzagt, then the owner of Velenje castle, is characterized as suburban villas, built in the spirit of the old feudal castles. The

building was built-up in neogothic style and is important because of its role in space. Building is right now under reconstruction and it will be open to tourist in second half of the year 2010.

Kavčnik homestead is an exceptional museum of folk architecture. The main room of the house is more than 400 years old smokehouse with an open fireplace which was used for cooking and heating. Kavčnik homestead is open to visitors from the 1st May until the 30th of September, from Thursday to Sunday, between 10 a.m. and 5 p.m., for groups also according to previous agreement. Guided tour of a group lasts approximately an hour. Additional offer: According to previous agreement we can light fire in the fireplace and offer you some roasted apples.

MONUMENTAL AREA

In Velenje there are a large number of statues and one of most important is the **monument of Josip Broz Tito** which is becoming more and more recognized and visited among tourist. We have so many statues, that our local artist Stane Špegel decided to produce collection of Velenje statues on postcards in connection with world famous tourists places.

Memorial room in Topolšica (10 km from Velenje) is consecrated to the signing of one of four partial capitulations of German army. With this document the Second World War ended for Slovenians. A memorial room that represents partial German capitulation of the army troop E and German forces for southeast Europe is in the health resort in Topolšica. It was signed by General Aleksander Löhr. The memorial room is opened to visitors 24 hours a day. You can see a short film about the events occurring in these parts on May 1945. Behind the glass wall is a reconstruction of signing of capitulation that was one of the most important event on our territory during the Second World War. One of the main curiosities of the collection is also a gun of general Löhr that was confiscated only a few days after the signing of the capitulation by Ivan Dolničar. The gun is exhibited in the middle of the glass cube that symbolizes the captured weapon or the disinclination towards its uselessness.

There are many historically important churches. Among the most important are the church of Saint Andrew, the church of Saint Brikcija, the church of Saint Jošt, the church of Saint Mohorja in Fortunata, the church of Saint Ožbolta in Cirkovce, the church of Saint Tilena, the church of Saint Matere božje (Mother of Good) and the church of Saint Nikolaj in Bevče.

9) Eventual natural resources nearby of particular significance (parks, protected areas, natural reserves, wet zones, etc.) (please indicate their number) 8__

If Yes, please provide a short description

The lakes of Šalek are a consequence of lignite excavation, which is being exploited in Šalek valley for a hundred and thirty years. The first among the lakes of Šalek to take shape, was the Škalsko Lake, before the world war two, the second was the lake of Velenje and the third the Družmirsko Lake. Where are now the lakes, there were rural settlements, which have partially or totally disappeared (Škale, Družmirje, Prelog). The image of the valley is, because of the coal industry, still evolving, also are constantly changing the Šaleška lakes. Lakes, which are feeded by streams got the name after the settlements, which had to withdrawn to the lakes (Škalsko, Družmirsko) and after the city, which is due to the coal industry became lake village (Velenjsko). Velenjsko lake has been polluted due to coal ash, Škalsko Lake was organically polluted and the main environmental problem in Družmirskem lake was the lake high consumption of water for thermal plant Šoštanj.

The municipality of Velenje has in the year 1993 accepted the “rehabilitation/recovery environmental program” which has not yet been implemented in full but has already large achievements. The results are shown in the comprehensive improvement of the lakes, especially the significant progress is seen in the collection of waste water. The most important ecological problems have been solved. Now we are the European example of improvements of water quality (river and lakes). With the increasing of lakes and

stabilization of the banks of lake, which also allow the editing and production, have turned lakes into "Creating good«. Large water surfaces in Velenje are an opportunity for the development of Šaleška valley and its people.

Velunja stove near the road Slovenj Gradec – Velenj, right above of Vegrad quarry is hidden in the woods exceptionally beautiful natural bridge, around 10 m high. In its walls, the water formed 4 karst caves, deep from 11 to 30 m. Stream under the bridge has created a 5 – 7 foot waterfalls. Stori goes that the spring water is curative, and villas are taking bath in.

On the north western edge of Šaleška valley, where river Paka between steep hills of Tisnika and Pečovnika break limestone lumps, in the narrowest part of the gorge lies **Huda luknja**. Area of Huda luknja represents an isolated karst which combines alpine and karst features. Because of the diversification of flora and fauna in the area it falls within the Natura 2000 network between pSCI. The biggest attraction of Huda luknja is a karst cave with the same name Huda luknja, which is not the only; above it are also **Špehovka and Pilanca** and some other accessible karst caves.

- 10.) **Distance from the most important town/destination from the tourist point of view (please indicate distance in KM) 15 km**
Name of the famous tourism destination Dobrna spa

Distance from the most important town/destination from the tourist point of view (please indicate distance in KM) 45 km
Name of the famous tourism destination Logarska Valley

- 11.) **Limits and bonds for promoting tourism in that area: which are the reasons why people visiting the “famous destination” do not go to the nearest and less famous one(s)?**
Please detail

Dobrna spa:

The Dobrna spa is a contemporary health resort and tourist centre. The health resort merges gifts of nature with contemporary medical science, which places it at the exact top of Slovenian tourism. The famous tradition that goes back to the 15th century, climate and an amazing natural environment, relaxation, quality care and services, companionship and recreation. Main tourists comes from central Europe area, where the spas are famous as a health resort for woman's diseases.

From Dobrna to Velenje are relatively good traffic connections by road, but not with public transportation. Velenje as very young city with mining tradition since now didn't identify tourists in Dobra as their target public.

Logarska Valley

Logarska Valley is one of Europe's most beautiful glacial alpine valleys. A tranquil walk in the valley and the surrounding area reminds us of the centuries-old harmony here between men and nature. Logarska dolina is an excellent starting point for hiking to the peaks of the Kamniške-Savinjske Alps or in the interesting immediate area. The Valley is becoming quite famous mountain biking destination.

From Velenje to Logarska Valley is quite bad traffic connection by road. Until now, the tourism in Logarska was mainly identified with mountaineers. But with new forms of tourism (biking, trekking), artificial lakes in Velenje are becoming more and more attractive sites for tourists.

INITIATIVES IN THE FIELD OF SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

12.) **Adhesion to the “Aalborg Chart”:** Yes x No

If Yes, please indicate the year _____

13.) **Start up of Forum of Local Agenda 21:** x Yes No

If Yes, indicate the Forum thematic groups

Municipality of Velenje adopted LA 21 in April 2004. LA 21 presents a programme for sustainable urban development in Municipality of Velenje.

This program includes:

- General provisions,
- the status of the environmental, economic and social conditions in municipality of the individual regional sources, based on the landscape-ecological and functional-geographical analysis of trends and the creation or modification. advantages and disadvantages use (utilization) of the components of the landscape municipal territory (natural, eg. water quality, and social and resources, for example. the employment structure of population municipalities),
- targets: for sustainable development-oriented and sustainable individual regional sources (components) of the three fundamental areas (environmental, economic and social) are shown for representatives of NGOs, the public and the profession, resulting in workshops and working group meetings,
- action: relation to the (desired) goals are designed proposals for improving the quality of life (the status quo) MO Velenje in NGOs, public and stroke, resulting in the workshops and working group meetings,
- provisions for the implementation of (the further conduct and guidance) the process of local Agenda 21 oz. complementarity of the LA 21 MO Velenje.

14.) **Your territory is interested by environment sustainability policies:** x Yes No

If Yes, indicate if it concerns one of the following sectors:

x quality of water

x quality of air

x waste disposal

x eco-compatible mobility

Other _____

15.) **Eventual programmes and/or on-going projects in your territory, financed by national/local public bodies, by European Union, or by your organisation, in the field of sustainability:**

x Yes No

If Yes, provide a list

In Slovenia we can apply projects to calls tendered by Government Office for Local Self-Government and Regional Policy and following ministries: Ministry of Labour, Family and Social Affairs, Ministry of

Culture, Ministry of Transport, Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Food, Ministry of the Environment and Spatial Planning, the Ministry of Economy, Ministry of Education and Sport, Ministry of Health, Ministry of Higher Education, Science and Technology. In the service of Government Office for Local Self-Government and Regional Policy, we report a project business zone Rudarski dom - Technology Development Center Rondo (I and II. Faza) and Revitalization Project of Villa Bianca (I and II. Stage). Projects have been approved and successfully implemented.

In the financial perspective (period) 2004 - 2006 have been approved the following projects:

Revitamin / revitalization of degraded areas due to mining industry, INDU.PIK / models of revitalization of industrial heritage; Business Zone Gorenje; Village Marketplace; the URBACT: Culture and regeneration of cities, URBACT: Social inclusion and exclusion; KSSENA - Energy Agency of Savinjska, Šaleška and Koroška Region; Exhibition 360 degrees; EKOSAN; EURESUN; FuturePublicEnergy - energy efficiency in public buildings.

In the financial perspective 2007 - 2009 have been approved the following projects:

Business Zone Rudarski dom - Technology Development Center Rondo (I. and II. Phase) – ERDF funds, Revitalization of Villa Bianca (I and II. Phase) – ERDF funds; Central Europe Programme: FREE – project partner and CUSTODOS – project partner.

- 16.) **Other projects or initiatives in your territory to promote the sustainable tourism through the quality certification of the destinations (“Environmental Management System”: ISO and EMAS):** Yes x No

If Yes, provide a short description _____

THE TOURISM DEMAND

In the case you are not provided with the data related to the required years and typologies, you are invited to communicate the data at your disposal.

17.) Annual arrivals and presences (PRESENCES means the number of nights – ARRIVALS means the number of people – VISITORS means estimate number of people who stay only during the day)

	1998	2003	2008
N° annual PRESENCE	/	14.940	17.295
N° annual ARRIVALS	/	8.436	10.238
Estimate N° VISITORS	/	/	100.000

18.) Demand Composition

Indicate the number of national and international presences/arrivals:

	2008
N° national presences	4.093
N° foreign presences	13.202
N° national arrivals	/
N° foreign arrivals	/

19.) Monthly Distribution (2008)

	Number overall presences	Number overall arrivals
January	1.929	893
February	1.163	752
March	1.264	790
April	1.476	780
May	1.382	947
June	1.938	1.171
July	1.952	930
August	1.542	892
September	1.424	892
October	1.040	738
November	1.186	713
December	990	740
Total	17.295	10.238

THE TOURISM OFFER

In the case you are not provided with the data related to the required years and typologies, you are invited to communicate the data at your disposal.

20.) Accommodation capacities (2008):

Accommodation	Number of units	Number of beds
Hotels	2	145
Holiday Villages	/	/
Campings	1	400
Residence	1	14
Agritourism	1	15
Private houses	4	80
B&B	/	/
Hostels	1	170
Total	10	824

Source: TIC Velenje

21.) Services of amusement and relief (2008):

Type	Number of units
Restaurants	29
Bars	27
Discotheques	1
Sport clubs	22
Amusement parks	/
Relaxation and wellness	5
MC, Kunigunda-Youth Centres	1

Source: TIC Velenje

22.) Cultural offer (2008):

Type	Number of units
Museums	2
Archeological sites	2
Palaces & Castles	6
Monuments	24
Historical sites	16
Churches	9
Popular fairs	5
Festivals & Events	35
Food & wine factories	0
Tasting wine and salami in Vinska Gora	1

Source: TIC Velenje

23.) Natural offer (2008):

Type	Number of units
Bicycle paths	4
Golf courts	1
Spas & wellness centres	/
Trekking facilities	5
Walking paths	2
Activities in forests	1
Horse tracking	1
Fishing	1
Water sports	1

Source: TIC Velenje
