



Anticipate Future Jobs on Alpine Remote Areas



Work package 4.2

Report on local backcasting exercise

LAG TOTI LAS

Municipalities: 2000 Maribor; 2201 Zg. Kungota

Authors: Stanka Klemenčič-Kosi, Mojca Hribernik

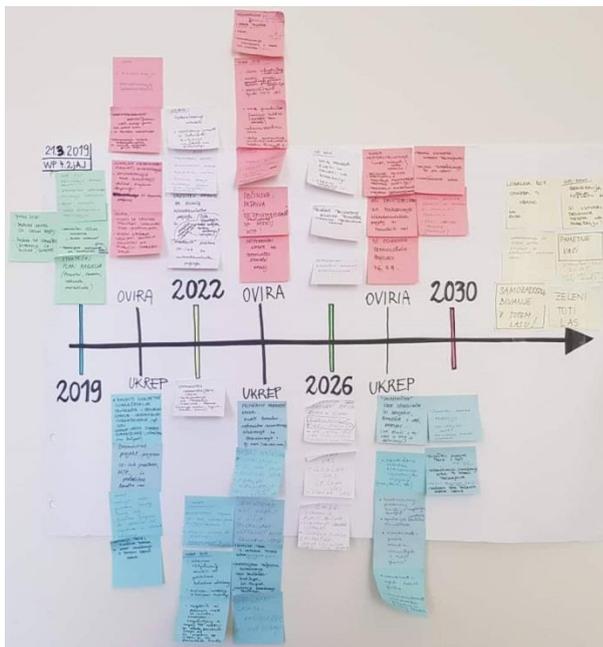


This project is co-financed (ARPAF funds) by the European Union

Summary

1. The workshop: participants and related sub-systems.....	3
2. The desirable future: “2030, everything is going well, I can see... “	4
3. Promising conditions in 2026 for the desired 2030 and related strategic issues	4
3.1. Promising conditions	4
3.2. Possible obstacles in between.....	4
3.3. Possible actions mitigating or preventing the obstacles.....	5
4. Promising conditions in 2022 for the desirable 2026 and related strategic issues.....	5
4.1. Promising conditions	5
4.2. Possible obstacles in between.....	5
4.3. Possible actions mitigating or preventing the obstacles.....	5
5. Learnings.....	6

1. The workshop: participants and related sub-systems



We organised the workshop on March 21 at 9 a.m. There were nine participants in the group. Six females and three males. The age group was between twenty-eight and sixty.

1. Female, 56, Head of the project office of Agriculture Institute Maribor;
2. Female, 35, Specialist for fruit growing;
3. Female, 50, Specialist for viticulture;
4. Female, 32, Trainee for Healthy food production in Agriculture Institute Maribor;
5. Female, 29, Assistant the project office of Agriculture Institute Maribor;
6. Female, 43, Head of Public farm advisory service in Agriculture Institute Maribor;
7. Male, 60, Specialist for viticulture;
8. Male, 34, Assistant at the project office of Agriculture Institute Maribor;
9. Male, 60, Director of Agriculture Institute Maribor.

All participants have university, master and PhD degree. All participants live in TOTI LAS area, therefore they are especially familiar with the area and the problem of emigration of young people from this region to the cities. We split into the group of two.

2. The desirable future: “2030, everything is going well, I can see... “

We got four desired futures for 2030:

- I can see established energy self-sufficient, technologically advanced, ecologically oriented so-called Smart villages; “Zeleni Toti Las” – meaning Green Toti Las (make the brand of this green self-sufficiency area);
- 80% local food supply;
- Infrastructure for a healthy lifestyle and job preservation (sports centre); and a job climate of self-employment;
- We all planned the future about the healthy lifestyle that includes sustainable agriculture (local food chains), agri tourism, sports or mitigation/adaption on climate change (RES, EE). We believe this kind of resolutions are the future for sustainable growth of the area and opportunities for new (green) jobs for youths.

3. Promising conditions in 2026 for the desired 2030 and related strategic issues

3.1. Promising conditions

- Our goal in 2026 is to raise the reputation of living and working on the countryside.
- Strengthen the local and healthy food and to raise the awareness raising of local self-sufficiency.
- To achieve this, we would need to create the website, advertisements and employ other PR strategies in order to raise the awareness for the desirability of the “Toti Las” whose target group are young families.
- Increase production quantity of locally organic or environmental kind food production.
- Establish a modern, technologically advanced infrastructure – connection (HSI, ICT).
- Create technological micro enterprises.
- Enable the subsidies for young families.
- Construction plans and construction of additional energy infrastructure.

3.2. Possible obstacles in between

- Possible obstacles between 2026 and 2030 are poorly built or non-existent
- Infrastructure;
- public transport;
- HSI;
- production of agricultural products is too small and developing slowly;
- construction time might be delayed;
- there are no subsidy or interest in setting up and connecting micro technology enterprises (SMEs) and smart villages;
- local authorities interest is not consistent with local residents;
- there are still no basic technological conditions;
- no subventions for flats.

3.3. Possible actions mitigating or preventing the obstacles

- Obstacles could be prevented by co-ownership of all participating and active residents in the targeted areas – for example “Smart village” (all participants are shareholders of profits, property);
- activation plan, activating the younger generation and the transferal of practical knowledge to them;
- raising awareness of the consumer;
- in cooperation with nutritionists and ecologist to raise the value of healthy local food for people and nature;
- short-term investment plans.

4. Promising conditions in 2022 for the desirable 2026 and related strategic issues

4.1. Promising conditions

- In 2022 we operate with project plan, economic analysis, structural plan;
- we built infrastructure for future micro-tech enterprises;
- subsidized education for technologically advanced and organic food production;
- establishment of local cooperatives, local shops, eco shop app;
- education plans about energy efficiency, energy self – sufficiency, technological progress for a healthy nature, ecological and healthy diet.

4.2. Possible obstacles in between

- For the construction of sports centre, between 2022 and 2026 there could be a problem to find appropriate location;
- the investor`s interest might not be compatible with ours;
- administrative obstacles;
- no interest from municipality for development of this area and development of micro technological enterprises;
- uneducated employees for technological development;
- the lack of awareness of people about Toti Las;
- there are not enough energy efficient buildings for business development and also for living.

4.3. Possible actions mitigating or preventing the obstacles

- It is necessary to properly educate people for certain jobs and provide them with formal and informal education and subsidies for education in the direction of energy efficiency and organic food production;
- active involvement of young people in political local decision-making;
- raising the interest of investors with a good business plan.

5. Learnings

Was the approach new to them?

This kind of approach for developing future goals was new to them. Nobody until now had had the opportunity to be included in a back-casting exercise. They liked this kind of approach. Director of KGZS-MB, who was involved in the workshop, would like to include such an approach in other workshops to achieve goals on our agriculture institute – KGZS MB.

What were the main difficulties in doing it?

The main, not exactly a problem, but a challenge was constantly reminding the participants that on the way to the main goal, we stopped on smaller goals to achieve a bigger, main goal. They were always focused on the final goal, which, of course is right, but they needed to be constantly reminded that the semi-goals and obstacles are also important for the realization of the final goal. All groups were focused on a healthy lifestyle, so the results are somehow related. The workshop could be a bit longer, since the brainstorming part engaged the participants in such a way that it was a tough challenge to make the necessary time-related compromises in order to follow thought with the whole workshop.

What were the main interesting results/insights?

We are satisfied with the results. We believe that with such strategic plans we can also realize our strategic goals. We have come to the realization that the most important is the involvement of the municipality and that the mayor wants the development of the municipality.

Would you be willing to use this approach in their activities or to further develop the exercise done?

Participants found “Backcasting” strategy also suitable for the development of our institution.

Final notes:

We see the biggest problem in the fact that people are not connected, political decision makers do not take them into account, so young people do not want to live in a place where their voice is ignored, even if this is for the development of this area. Older opinion prevails because they live longer in this area, so things do not evolve. Unfortunately, it will be necessary to listen to young people and to adapt.

Political

Political decision makers will have to start including young and young families living in this area and those good practices that have been successful in areas with a similar scenario. Urgent awareness by politicians, mayors and influential people, as they can change the opinions of the majority on sustainable agriculture, renewable energy sources, ecological processing, the development of the technology of a technologically advanced village. The political decision makers should raise the reputation of living and working on the countryside, strengthen the local

and healthy food and to raise the awareness raising of local self-sufficiency, BUT we also think that this approach should also include financial support for young families and young people to buy real estate (apartment or old house that should be renovated- and thus also preserves the cultural heritage).

Education

Everything starts with education, so it is necessary to raise the awareness on healthy lifestyles, healthy nutrition, sustainable agriculture, pollution, renewable energy sources. We think that it is necessary to transform the outdated school system (non-formal and formal education) and to turn the curriculum also in favor to nature and health.

The study fields (agriculture, tourism, computing, mechanical engineering, economics, pedagogy ...) in Maribor should connect and contribute to the development of the TOTI LAG LAS area as well as wider.

Job market

By increasing tourism and connecting tourism with farmers, food producers, craftsmen, good marketing and, consequently, immigration, the possibility of employment in the area will increase. We want to develop a sports center for a healthy lifestyle. Young families should also be provided with kindergarten and elementary school which offers additional opportunities for new jobs.

Technological

The TOTI LAG LAS area must be covered with high speed internet as soon as possible. Without this, young people will not immigrate to TOTI LAG LAS. Tourism itself cannot develop without the Internet. The Internet has become a human necessity and we could also say a human right. Work from distance is now not possible, but this has to change fast. Infrastructure must also be urgently developed. The roads are very poor, some are almost non-transitory. Neither the young families who will ride on these roads every day, nor casual tourists will want to drive on such roads.