



Severnoprimska mrežna regionalna razvojna agencija

Sodelujoče razvojne agencije:

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Regional development / Social Determinants / Health

When formulating regional development policy we proceeded from the fact that a healthy, active, positive and future oriented man is a basis for quality development and search for consensual solutions of society problems. Social determinants, amongst them health, are therefore considered in the regional development program (RDP), as a basic element that defines developmental potentials of a region. Healthy and satisfied people are more positive and encourage development. When the deterioration of economic and social circumstances causes more social and economic hardships for individuals and society as a whole, the care for health diminishes as well. Social problems intensify, health problems culminate all having negative effects on development. A healthy person is more committed to benefits of society as a whole, has more desire to influence decision-making and consciously contributes to the creation of a more sustainable and innovative society.

In the preparation of the RDP for Northern Primorska - Goriška statistical region for the 2007 - 2013 period we wanted to achieve as much of a consensus as possible, so we formed 5 regional working groups (RWG) for the preparation of the program, which were tasked with the preparation of different development fields, and which then discussed differences and adjusted their aims at plenary workshops. Social development was, and still is, a task of the RWG for human resources which includes all relevant institutions, that in the region or subregions deal with issues related to health, education, social matters, culture, sports, and NGOs in the region and the subregions. The group includes approximately 25 members. Before RWG workshops meetings and discussions of specific thematic groups are organized in all subregions. Their ideas and considerations are then discussed at the regional meetings.

The RWG for social development guarantees the connection between development and expert institutions, local communities and NGOs in the process of regional project preparation and implementation. It also assures that they are in accordance with state policies.

The RWG is led by a president which is active in one of the regionally important institutions while the technical expertise and coordination of activities is provided by the regional coordinator. Coordinator is a project manager employed in one of the

development agencies and he is familiar with the local situation and national policies that the workgroup deals with. The RWG meets according to the needs, but it meets always when a new development program is being prepared, and later on when implementation projects are being prepared and when their co-financing is being discussed.

The RWG for social development meets with the other groups in the framework of the Regional development council, which, as the highest body in the region accepts the strategy of regional development and decides the priority regional projects for a certain time period. The members of the council are representatives of the economical, spatial and the social sector, and of public, private and non-governmental organizations. The president of regional working group for the social area guarantees, that the regional council deals with matters connected with the social and health situation of the population, and he highlights those problems of the society, which, along with economic, infrastructural and spatial conditions importantly influence the developmental capabilities of a region.

At the final coordination of priority projects for certain year the Regional development council and the Council of the mayors (municipalities) most often support projects related to infrastructure and economic development. Projects related to sport, recreation, leisure activities, life-long learning, culture, health-care, care for the elderly, and with marginal societal groups, stay within the care of individual local communities, expert institutions, and responsible ministries. In this regard local communities have great importance as they are in charge of investments in this area (recreational, tourist infrastructure, multifunctional buildings, educational centers...), and they also financially support activities of various non-governmental organizations and societies, which deal with these matters. NGOs, humanitarian and volunteer societies are becoming more and more important in this regard.

Long-term and systematic measures to improve the health care throughout the region are not easily implemented, as the region for this purpose does not have appropriate financial resources and status.

The influence on public health is not limited only with social factors, but it is also influenced with the economical, environmental and wider conditions in the region, and vice versa.

Analyzing the development program for Severna Primoska – Goriška statistical region, we see that public health is being influenced by measures and projects from all development areas that are included in the program:

- already mentioned social development – development priority »Knowledge for development and enterprise« (this area includes public health and health care), as well as
- economic development – development priority »Innovation in economy«,
- tourism – development priority »Excellence in tourism«,

- rural development – development priority »sustainable rural development«, and
- environment and spatial planning – development priority »sustainable environmental and spatial development of a region and balanced and quality regional infrastructure«

Severna Primorska includes social determinants into development policies through the above mentioned priorities by:

- economic development policy, based upon innovation growth, new activities, different forms of employment in order to ensure successful economic condition of the region – ensure well-being of people
- improved accessibility of jobs, education, day-care, health-care, etc., for the population as a whole including marginalized groups – influencing general quality of life
- provision of quality employment – influence of work on health
- development policy for agriculture and countryside – development of environmentally friendly farming, quality agricultural products, diversification
- transport development policy, which adequately position public transport and the development of a cycling network
- inclusion of sustainable development principles, which as horizontal priority guarantee a healthier environment in all chosen areas.

A strategic environmental impact assessment was made for the current regional development program. It would be sensible that during the process of preparation of policies and development programs an assessment of the impacts on health is also carried out, as a separate study or included into the environmental impact assessment.

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