

## Axis 4 Factsheet: SLOVENIA

### Geographical map: Slovenia



### 1. Context in which Axis 4 is being developed and main challenges faced

Slovenia has a coastline of just 46 km along the northern Adriatic, between Italy and Croatia. This short stretch of coastline is subject to severe erosion, with about 40% of the coast still vulnerable, despite a series of preventative measures.<sup>1</sup>

Over 20% of the Slovenian coast is protected and includes two fishing reserves in the regions of Portorož and Strunjan. The latter includes salt marshes and both have zones where extraction is prohibited. In addition to problems of erosion, proposals for new gas terminals in the Bay of Trieste (Italy) have caused much debate in Slovenia. Public authorities and environmental NGOs are concerned about the risks to the marine environment and biodiversity in the North Adriatic Sea, which would also have consequences for the Slovenian fisheries and tourism sectors.<sup>2</sup>

Slovenia is one of the smallest fisheries producers in the EU (0.04% of total EU production). The total production in 2008 came to around 2 200 tonnes, with a monetary value of less than €5 million. Activities

cover freshwater as well as marine fisheries and aquaculture. Marine landings in 2008 accounted for 686 tonnes and approximately €2 million, with more than 70% of the catches being sardines and anchovy. Aquaculture represented 1 320 tonnes and approximately €3 million (66% of the total production and 60% of total value), with 80% coming from inland aquaculture. Freshwater landings represented less than 200 tonnes<sup>3,4</sup>.

In 2008, the Slovenian marine fishing fleet was composed of 185 vessels, approximately 90% of which were under 12 metres<sup>5</sup>. In the same year, marine fisheries and aquaculture provided employment for 115 people (81 full-time equivalents and 34 part-time equivalents), 71 of which were self-employed<sup>6</sup>. A further 166 people worked in inland fish farming, about 59% of which were self-employed. Only 30% of those employed in inland fish farming were in full-time employment. Women represented 21% of all employment in the fisheries sector. In terms of employment trends, the number of jobs in freshwater fish farming has been falling in recent years, while the numbers employed in marine aquaculture continues to increase.

It is estimated that fisheries, including all subsectors (production, processing and aquaculture) represent less than 0.1% of total employment in Slovenia. In comparison, tourism accounts for 0.87% of total employment (about 7 400 jobs) and over 9% of Slovenian GDP. Furthermore, coastal areas in Slovenia are estimated to account for around 26% of all tourism in the country, despite the very short coastline. This represents an enormous challenge for the sustainability of local fisheries communities.

A weakness in the fisheries sector is the absence of any form of organisation. There are, for example, no producer organisations or auction system in Slovenia. Organisation and cooperation in the fisheries sector could help to improve communication within the sector, as well as with the wider community and the state.

<sup>1</sup> [http://ec.europa.eu/maritimeaffairs/pdf/country\\_factsheets/slovenia\\_en.pdf](http://ec.europa.eu/maritimeaffairs/pdf/country_factsheets/slovenia_en.pdf)

<sup>2</sup> Slovenian Agriculture, Forestry and Food Processing Industry • Basic Characteristics and Numbers • ISBN 978-961-6299-86-2

<sup>3</sup> [http://www.stat.si/novica\\_prikazi.aspx?id=2475](http://www.stat.si/novica_prikazi.aspx?id=2475)

<sup>4</sup> Eurostat 2008

<sup>5</sup> Source: Slovenian fishing fleet on 1 January 2010, Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Food, FVR, InfoRib

<sup>6</sup> [http://www.stat.si/novica\\_prikazi.aspx?id=2475](http://www.stat.si/novica_prikazi.aspx?id=2475)

Other issues for the fisheries sector in Slovenia include an aging fishing fleet and associated bad working conditions, environmental accidents (e.g. risks of environmental accidents in busy shipping lanes) and a continuing decline of fish stocks.

## 2. The National Response in terms of Axis 4

The Slovenian government sees Axis 4 as an opportunity to establish a single development plan for the coastal area that unites fishermen and actors from other sectors. Activities within Axis 4 are divided into 3 stages: 1) selecting the coastal area in which Axis 4 activities will take place; 2) selecting a fisheries local action group (FLAG) with a local development strategy; and 3) implementing the local development strategy and fostering new skills in the fisheries area.

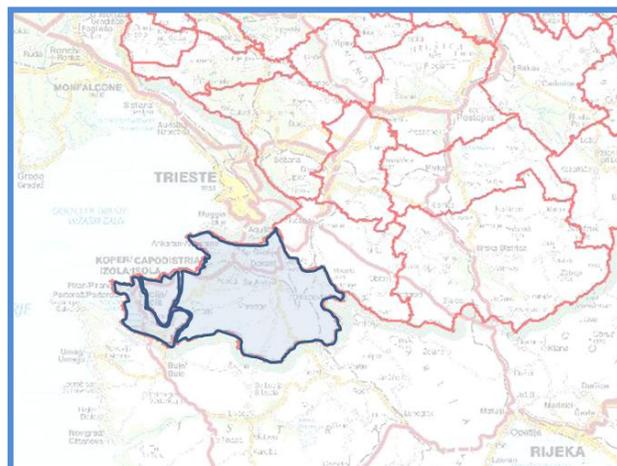
In 2010, the Managing Authority began awareness raising and cooperation activities with the relevant stakeholders. In general, the initial response to Axis 4 has been very positive. The main issue for the local stakeholders is to decide on the legal form of the FLAG.

## 3. The areas and their key characteristics

The Slovenian coast is only 46 km long and has just three municipalities (Piran, Koper, and Izola), with a total population of 82 000 people. It is made up of small fishing communities, which are dotted along the coast and which share a common history, tradition and customs. The entire coastal strip is, therefore, dealt with as a single area, which covers about 0.3% of the entire Slovenian territory.

## 4. The selection process

Ministry for Agriculture, Forestry and Food has prepared the national legal basis (national regulation) and a public tender for the selection of a single FLAG and strategy for the implementation of Axis 4. It is planned that the procedures will be approved by the government during the first half of 2010. The public tender will be awarded to the FLAG from the selected area that puts forward the most appropriate local development strategy. The FLAG will be a public-private partnership and will act as the main agent of development in the selected area. It will be required to have a manager capable of leading and managing the group, and coordinating the partners involved. Selection should occur by November 2010 at the latest. The inclusion of women and young people in the group will be a priority.



## 5. The group

Axis 4 is open to all interested actors who want to put together and participate in a local initiative to develop the coastal area. This could be representatives of public institutions at the national, regional or local level, representatives of the fisheries sector, or other relevant local socio-economic sectors. Public funding can range from 60% to 100% and running costs of the group are eligible for co-financing. The measures will be implemented as one-year or multi-annual commitments, in accordance with the criteria set out in the tender.

The establishment of a group requires the equal involvement of partners from different socio-economic sectors and, as requested by the regulation, the majority of the operations selected by the group on the basis of the strategy shall be led by the private sector. Before implementation, the selected projects will be reviewed by the Managing Authority to ensure their coherence with the local development strategy and the eligibility criteria set out in Article 44 of the EFF Basic Regulation.

## 6. The strategies

Axis 4 in Slovenia will focus primarily on adding value to fisheries products, diversification, tourism, and increasing local consumption of fish. The local development strategy will be based on local development potential, expressed needs and the problems defined in the area. The strategy will set out development guidelines for the selected area. Detailed criteria for the preparation of a local development strategy will be outlined in a public tender. Local development strategies proposed in response to this will be evaluated according to their innovative aspects, feasibility, sustainability and consistency with other development programmes. The contribution of the strategy to

employment creation and the inclusion of marginalised groups (women, young people) will be important criteria for evaluation.

## 7. Key features of administrative and financial systems

### EFF Budget 2007-2013 and funding from National level

% of EFF Budget on Axis 4	EFF Budget on Axis 4 / €	National Funding /€	Total Budget / €	Average Budget per group / €	Number of groups
10%	2 164 029	721 343	2 885 372	2 885 372	1

1. Beneficiaries send their project proposal to the FLAG.
2. The FLAG establishes whether the project is in accordance with the strategy criteria and eligible for co-financing.
3. The FLAG sends the selected project proposal, together with project papers and documents, to the managing authority for payment.
4. The managing authority carries out an administrative control and transfers the funds to the FLAG.
5. The FLAG transfers the money to the beneficiary within two working days and informs the Managing Authority of the transfer.
6. The Managing Authority sends the application for reimbursement to the Paying Authority.
7. A Managing Authority audit of the FLAG administration is undertaken before the project is formally certified. If necessary, on-site checks are carried out.

## 8. Networking and capacity building

The Managing Authority has based much of the legal framework and organisation on Slovenia's Leader experience. In the selected area, one Leader local action group (LAG) covers the same area. It is based on a partnership led by a regional development agency.

All three municipalities in the coastal area have agreed that the selected FLAG will be a self-standing organisation, rather than being built on the existing LAG. However, discussions are ongoing between the municipalities, representatives of prospective groups and the management of the existing LAG to determine how best to capitalise on the existing knowledge and experience.

## 9. Resources or ideas that may be of interest to other countries

In Slovenia there has been a suggestion that banks could form part of the partnership. This has been identified as a potential consideration for groups in other Member States.

## 10. Contacts and links

### Managing Authority

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Last update: 05-26- 2010