„Rethinking Heritage: Strategic Social Planning“

The Case of Miners’ Houses in Idrija, Slovenia

CIPRA, Altdorf, 25.10.2019
1 // About Idrija

2 // About Idrija 2020 and PIRH:

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BEFORE 1490
Barrel-maker discovers something shiny and liquidy in the water.
Mercury (Hg) - a heavy, silvery white liquid metal, extremely poisonous.
IDRIJA TODAY

Heritage of Mercury (UNESCO World Heritage List)
Idrija Lace (UNESCO Intangible Cultural Heritage)
Local cuisine (žlikrofi, zeljševka, ...)
Craftsmanship from the past until today
EMPLOYMENT IN IDRIJA

- **1963**: Kolektor Simplex begins production
- **1977**: Decision to shut down the mine

**KOLEKTOR**
7th biggest employer in Slovenia

**MERCURY MINE**
10 people employed in 2013
„INDUSTRIAL ZONE“ IN PAST AND TODAY
RELATIVE POPULATION GROWTH AND DECLINE
BY AGE GROUPS 1999-2014
Many generations of miners are coping with mercury related diseases. In 1954, one of the largest psychiatric hospitals in Slovenia is established.
Idrija (Slovenia), a former world’s second largest mercury mine and a UNESCO World Heritage Site with a 34% decline of young people since 2000.
Miners‘ Houses : 
A Catalyst of Social Change?
THE PREDOMINANT HOUSING TYPE OF MINERS‘ FAMILIES SINCE 18TH CENTURY.
Roof windows – shed dormers

Combination of wood and stone in construction

Wooden battens used as support for plaster

Stairs and landing

Gardens
With the modernisation after WWII, traditional miners’ houses became obsolete...
... yet they are still here.
In 2018, **102 miners’ houses** were recorded in Idrija. Today, a half of them are empty.

As they have been **heavily modified**, only 18 have retained more than five traditional characteristics. Only 8 of those are still inhabited.
Sustainable renovation of residential housing heritage

Architecture: KD prostoRož
Visualisations: Andrej Blatnik, u.d.i.a.
Adapting the space for new needs - more light, bigger rooms and better energy efficiency!
Use of new materials (XLAM) and modern building technologies.
How ELSE can traditional residential architecture contribute to the sustainable development in the Alpine region?
100 BROWN DOTS OF IDRIJA ...

1. Could turn the town into a town of well being?
2. Could turn the town into a town of knowledge?
3. Could turn the town into a town of tourism?
4. Could turn the town into a town of craft?
Develope a strategy for sustainable development with the help of heritage in Alpine region!

1/ Form groups.
2/ Pick your role in a group.
3/ Cooperate with other players in order to achieve the most sustainable strategy.
4/ Answer questions!
5/ Ask questions!
6/ Present the outcome in 3 sentences.

IDRIJA - A TOWN OF WELL BEING?
IDRIJA - A TOWN OF KNOWLEDGE?
IDRIJA - A TOWN OF TOURISM?
IDRIJA - A TOWN OF CRAFT?