

SHORT REPORT

1st Regional SPA conferance

09 2021





PRESENTATIONS AND PANEL DISCUSSION

“Green and sustainable SPAs“

SHORT REPORT OF THE CONFERENCE

Project partner City of Križevci has hosted 1st Regional ECO-SPA conference on September 8th, 2021. - as an whole-day event, at the conference hall in Terme Sveti Martin. This event aimed at encouraging brainstorming and discussion about the thermal waters, involving scientists, academics, professionals, policy makers and the business world of SPAs in NW Croatia.

Deputy mayor of the City of Križevci, Mr. Danijel Šaško started the event by welcoming everyone, while project leader Mrs. Petra Orehovečki presented the HealingPlaces project to attendees. The objective of the presentations and discussion was to build a better understanding of SPA's status and challenges and their role in developing local communities, in NW Croatia but also on a national level. During the panel discussion participants had equal time to say their opinion.

The presentations were as follows:

- **Introduction to Healing Places project** by Ms Petra Orehovački, City of Križevci
- **Terme Sveti Martin** by Ms Jelena Petrošanec, Terme Sveti Martin



- Application of thermomineral water through Ordinance on forms of health services in the field of health tourism by Ms Ankica Senta-Marić, School of Medicine, University of Zagreb
- Valorization of thermal water in NW Croatia's continental tourism by Ms Dragana Dogančić, Geotechnical Faculty in Varaždin
- Potential of geothermal energy in Križevci by Ms Nikolina Stipić, Utility Company Križevci
- Environmental study "SPA center impact on local environment" by Ms Petra Orehovački, City of Križevci
- Management plan of using mineral-thermal water resources in the City of Križevci in sustainable and ecological way by Mr Slodoban Kolbah, Geothermal energy ltd.
- Slanci - salt water sources near the village of Slanje near Varaždinske Toplice by Ms Spomenka Vlahović, Museum of Varaždinske Toplice
- Introduction to Entrain project and pilot area of the city of Karlovac: How to apply geothermal energy in District Heating Systems by Ms Martina Krizmanić Pečnik, North-West Regional Energy Agency.

The panel discussion was focused around the following topics:

- Property and legal relations
- Process of obtaining concessions
- Cooperation between local (regional, national) government and investors
- Environmental impacts
- Social and economic potential and tourism aspects
- Further development potential
- Post-covid

Participants of the panel discussion were:

1. Mr. Vedran Augustić, Terme Sveti Martin
2. Mrs. Bernarda Cecelja, Bernarda d.o.o.



3. Mrs. Sanja Živković, Energy Institute Hrvoje Požar
4. Mr. Martina Krizmanić Pećenik, The Regional Energy Agency North

Panel discussion moderator was journalist Mr. Aleksandar Grabarić.

Mr. Vedran Augustić said more about Terme Sveti Martin. Terme Sveti Martin has embraced a new vision of business a few years ago and the “First healthness resort in Europe” is not just about their guests and employees. It is also about the environment in which the company operates. “Green thermal spas” project consists of many different segments which implement various certificates and standards to ensure sustainable (green) business in the company. They apply the sustainable business to all departments of Terme Sveti Martin: reception, F&B, housekeeping, sports, technical support, wellness, sales and marketing, hr, employees included. Mr. Vedran Augustić also said how difficult was to work during COVID crisis and how hard still it is, but they have focused on various new projects to improve their business.

Mrs. Sanja Živković said that often big costs are problem in exploitation of geothermal water but it can be a good start for the development of rural places. She also said that geothermal potential in Croatia is not well used and mentioned new document “Integrated National Energy and Climate Plan for the Republic of Croatia 2021-2030.” Where thorough analysis of geothermal potential was describes. Also, she emphasised the Croatian Hydrocarbon Agency as a body which provides operational support to competent stakeholders in activities of geothermal waters for energy purposes.

Mrs. Bernarda Cecelja has fought a battle for five years to obtain every legal document to gain concession for exploitation of geothermal water and stated that the process is rather slow and the elections (every 4 years) kept slowing it more with the change of leadership within the public administrations.



Mrs. Martina Krizmanić Pećenik during panel discussion presented The City of Karlovac as an example of the city which uses geothermal water for heating. Like other participants, she also mentioned that Croatia is not using geothermal potential enough and that the local governments are more and more to renewable and sustainable development.

Several key elements and insights were being shared among the attendees. The most important are:

- local government should cooperate more efficiently. There is a lot of administration that is slowing down investors and prevents them to invest and develop all SPA potential in North West Croatia. The process of obtaining concessions and different permits also need to be shorter.
- Renewable energy is the best answer to climate change
- “Green Thermal Spas” (Terme Sveti Martin) is good example how all of SPA should work on sustainable development together with local community and local government

The event which was held at the Terme Sveti Martin was organised jointly by the project team of the City of Križevci.