

# **GOOD PRACTICE**

## **LINKING ECONOMY AND HIGHER EDUCATION AT REGIONAL LEVEL**



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<b>Title</b>
Linking economy and higher education at the regional level.
<b>Location / geographic coverage</b>
Krapina, Krapina Zagorje County, Croatia.
<b>Summary</b>
<p>The development of the Croatian economy, especially the development of its north-western part where it belongs Krapina-Zagorje County, depends on the development of entrepreneurship, transport connections and informatics and computing as an integral part of both the economy and social services. Today there is a gap between the needs of SMEs and knowledge that provide study programs.</p> <p>Mission of College Hrvatsko zagorje Krapina, as an educational and professional institution, is that with the maximum and constant innovation of teaching content, applying modern methods and techniques of education and through researching process educates teens and quality professionals in the field of their study programs, able to be leaders in economic development Krapina-Zagorje County and beyond.</p> <p>A modern approach to the development of the economy is based on knowledge society and a highly efficient and purposeful business education and the Bologna Process seeks to connect higher education and the economy, particularly at the regional level. The economic system requires continuous improvement, rationalization, creativity and innovation in order to increase efficiency. The experiences of developed countries indicate the need for lifelong learning, and with opening of College quality programs were approached for such potential students as well.</p> <p>The main purpose of Vocational Studies Information Technology, Transport Logistics and Operational management is making the personnel necessary for the successful running of the core business of the business organizations that form the core of economic and social development of Krapina-Zagorje County.</p>
<b>Type of the good practice</b>
Instrument for improving existing and developing new curricula in accordance with the development priorities of Krapina-Zagorje County.
<b>Stakeholders and partners</b>
Target groups are all that can participate in linking the economy and higher education in the county. Users are students who have completed high school in the current year, people who have finished high school in previous years, employed persons with secondary school. The good practice includes Krapina-Zagorje County, Krapina City, surrounding municipalities, public enterprises and economic entities as founders of College, as well as service users.
<b>Issue / challenge and goals / assumptions</b>
Number of person with higher education in the time of the launch of College was far below the Croatian average. Krapina-Zagorje County used to educate people for other developed parts of the country, but also for the countries of Europe and world. It all boils down to finishing high school in Krapina-Zagorje County and Higher Education in Zagreb, Varaždin or elsewhere in Croatia, lately even in Slovenia, and after education only small number returns in Zagorje. Such depopulation and brain

<p>drain prevent development and contributes to the further impoverishment.</p> <p>The intention of College is to enable leaders who will lead the progress of the economy in the county and Croatia, young professionals able to engage in the European labor market.</p> <p>The role of the College Hrvatsko zagorje Krapina is to design, test, and develop innovations in the field of engineering sciences and economics, and through scientific and technical support to help develop county and beyond.</p>
<p><b>How does it work?</b></p>
<p>The Governing Board consists of representatives of the profession, local government officials and business representatives. The current dean of the entrepreneur and scientist and chairman of the council is a respected and successful businessman who runs the company with the largest number of employees in the county. Students are involved in professional council. When changing the curricula of existing programs or launching new programs of study, the fundamental base are county strategic plans and the opinions of prominent businessmen.</p> <p>Companies have a need for employment of students, who recognize the issue and immediately implement the knowledge gained in working processes, thereby contributing to the development of economic entities. Therefore, the required periodic modernization of all three study programs, as well as the launch of new study programs, is necessary.</p> <p>It is realized the realistic assumption that College, Krapina-Zagorje County and the city of Krapina are professional organizers of the annual scientific meetings of this kind of international cooperation, meetings of experts, businessmen, scientists and college students and collaborating institutions of higher education from Croatia and abroad.</p> <p>College has signed an agreement with the Alma Mater Europea (European Centre Maribor), an institution established by the European Academy of Sciences and Arts. The signing of this strategic document is the result of many years of efforts in finding a quality international partners in order to develop international institutional relations, scientific, educational, and other forms of cooperation, according to common interests and curricula and in accordance with international legal acts in the field of higher education, while respecting regional and national regulations.</p> <p>In addition, the College has recognized the need of improving the quality of higher education focused on connectivity of economy and higher education, and on several occasions has initiated the launch of the "entrepreneurial incubator", which at the end is running. Certainly it should be noted that the College offered all their resources as strong support from regional academic community, without which the incubator simply cannot be effective.</p>
<p><b>Results</b></p>
<p>About fifty students each year end college and succeed to secure or progress the job in the county with their knowledge.</p>
<p><b>Evaluation</b></p>
<p>The quality of academic programs has been verified in the process of re-accreditation conducted by the Agency for Higher Education, Croatia, where it confirmed the fulfillment of all the requirements in teaching, teaching staff, space, equipment and student standards.</p> <p>It is recommended to fulfill the conditions relating to professional and research activity and mobility and international cooperation.</p> <p>The fact that almost 90% of graduates is employed is the best indicator of the quality of this approach.</p>

### **Lessons learned**

Educational institutions must be sensitive to the economy and only those programs that ensure competitiveness in the labor market can survive in the long term. Programs in higher education institutions must be manufactured with the close cooperation with businesses from the region.

Just studying “at home” provides staying educated people in small communities. Higher education institutions must base their work on their own frame which must be continuously improved.

### **Sustainability and transferability**

College each year employs additional teachers to the statutory requirements in accordance with the requirements of improving the quality of studies and the needs of new study programs.

Only permanently employed scientific staff may be the core of knowledge and holder of a project that in long-term develops the economy. A large number of professionals who live in the county and work in Zagreb, have expressed their interest and willingness to engage in the work of College. This moment is an incentive to attend post-graduate and doctoral studies, to invest more in their personality, and the ultimate intended result is a growing number of professional educated people in the county.

According to the official perception of the structure of the economy Krapina-Zagorje County, College has initiated the formation of new programs of study in the scientific field of construction, rural and health tourism, and agriculture, as well as the launch of specialist graduate professional study which would enable for existing professional programs the realization of an additional 120 ECTS and degree of professional specialist.

### **Contact details**

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