

Prologue

Invitation to Participation: An Integral Green Slovenian Economy and Society in and for Europe

Alexander Schieffer, Ronnie Lessem and Darja Piciga

SUMMARY

This book tells the unique story of a society pursuing a newly holistic and green approach to economics. The story is framed by—and at the same time demonstrated through—stories of integral communities and organisations on a path of social innovation for sustainability.

The story takes us to Slovenia: a country located at the historic crossroads of European civilisation; a country dedicated to the European Union, which it joined only in 2004; a country which has a unique human and natural potential, but which faces enormous economic and political difficulties; a country searching for a new, sustainable economic model that is authentic to its own social and cultural context, that can serve to address its difficulties and release its full potential, and that can, simultaneously, make a contribution to the sustainable development of the European Union.

This is the story of Slovenia moving towards an Integral Green Economy and Society.

This is the story of the Citizens' Initiative for an Integral Green Slovenia.

This opening prologue guides you into this story through four steps. The first step is an “invitation”, in which the backdrop to this remarkable journey is revealed and in which you are invited to actively join in. The second step is “explanation”; here the key terms “integral”, “green” and “economy” are explained, in light of the unique approach the Slovenian Citizens' Initiative, founded in 2012 by Darja Piciga and a number of other

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Slovenian pioneers, has taken. In the third step, “elaboration”, you are introduced to the actual *Integral Economic and Developmental* approach, developed by Ronnie Lessem and Alexander Schieffer of the Trans4m Center for Integral Development, which serves as the underlying conceptual framework and process. Finally, in the fourth step, “participation”, the storyline of this book is shared—illustrating, through all chapters, what the interconnected members of the Citizens’ Initiative for an Integral Green Slovenia and other socially responsible Slovenians have achieved over the past few years—in theory and in practice—to foster the integral green economic and societal agenda. Being exposed, in introductory form, to all the book’s chapters, you receive an initial understanding of how a remarkable variety of institutions and individuals from all sectors—from private enterprises to educational institutions, from educators to researchers, from grassroots initiatives to social enterprises, from government officials to artists—are working together to make Integral Green Slovenia a reality.

The journey to Integral Green Slovenia, although rich in wisdom to be shared, is still a young one. This is the time to join it.

P.1. Invitation: Slovenia’s Integral Green Economy Movement in Europe

In the first few years after joining the European Union in 2004, Slovenia was one of its economic “shooting stars”. Since then, times have changed dramatically. Financial crises, economic recessions and political turbulence have put enormous pressure on the Slovenian society and economy, and the latter has only recently started to recover.

There seemed to be little room for manoeuvre for this small Central European country. While Slovenia was (and still is) struggling through rough economic and political waters, a group of engaged individuals and institutions across all public, private, civic and

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environmental sectors in the country began, from 2011 onwards, set within the existing context of a strategic framework being drafted to address the challenges of climate change, to work together to co-evolve an economic and sustainable alternative for Slovenia: an Integral Green Economy and Society. They were further driven by their conviction that Slovenia and Slovenians already possess incredible, yet not fully conscious and poorly integrated, potentials for such a developmental path, including a number of communities, organisations and individuals from all spheres of Slovenian society working in this direction.

A Citizens' Initiative for an Integral Green Slovenia was then officially formed in April 2013 as a collaborative vehicle for its members to co-evolve and express this new economic and sustainable development alternative. From the beginning, the search was for an economic and social innovation model that could authentically serve, build on and integrate all core dimensions of Slovenian society: from its particular nature to its century old culture, from its existing social systems to its unique resultant economic advantages. Incorporating all aspects of life, and activating the rich diversity of Slovenia's society, the vision was to come up with an economic perspective that would strengthen the overall sustainable development of the country as a whole.

At the same time, the emergent Citizens' Initiative was seeking to make a contribution to Europe as a whole. Located at the very heart of geographic Europe, and situated at the crossroads of civilizations since ancient times, the participants believed in Slovenia's need and potential capacity to contribute to the larger social entity to which it belonged, the European Union. In other words: the creation of an alternative for Slovenia could potentially also serve as an inspiring social and economic role model for Europe.

Looking for a new way beyond the polarity of growth and austerity—a rather limiting “either-or dualism” that still dominates much of the official discourse—Integral Green

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Slovenia was determined to pursue a more integrated path to economic, societal and environmental development.

Informed by *Integral Economics* (Lessem and Schieffer, 2010) as well as thereafter by *Integral Development* (Schieffer and Lessem, 2014 a), a foundational framework was found, which served to help the initiative to articulate a uniquely holistic Slovenian perspective. Together with the authors and their Geneva-based institute Trans4m Center for Integral Development (www.trans-4-m.com), and also drawing on a number of internationally renowned role models, in theory and practice, a new Integral Green Slovenian economic perspective gradually evolved over the next four years. Two international conferences, held in Slovenia, together with several national events involving participants discussing, comparing and evolving new integral economic and social innovation theory and practice, further fuelled the process (e.g. Piciga and Kranjc, 2015).

Now, four years into the journey, the movement not only is gathering further momentum but is also ready to present itself to Slovenia, to Europe and to the world as an initial blueprint for a new integral economic and sustainable development model.

This blueprint, both in theory and in practice, is by no means complete. A design for the next steps to complement it is outlined in the concluding chapters and the Epilogue. The process of bringing about an Integral Economy and Society will take years, if not decades.

However, already at this early stage it seems crucial to widen the conversation, and to invite a larger audience to actively participate in the re-making of Slovenia's economy and in the creation of a societal role model involving a culturally authentic approach to sustainable economic and societal development.

In that sense, this book is an invitation to participate, within Slovenia, within Europe or in the wider world, as co-creators with Slovenia's Citizens' Initiative.

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At the same time, the book is also an invitation to critically assess and evolve, share and apply the accumulated knowledge about integrally enriched social and societal innovation (in all its meanings) for sustainable development on local and organisational, national and regional, European Union and global levels.

In what follows, then, we seek to express and explain this orientation, and thereby lay a foundation for what is to follow in the subsequent chapters. We begin by explaining what we mean by an Integral Green Economy. We shall then move on to elaborate, in a distilled form, the guiding theoretical framework of Integral Economics, before we conclude this Prologue by sharing the story of the journey so far, as it is mirrored in the chapters of this book. We invite you to read that storyline as a call for participation.

P.2. Explanation: Integral? Green? Economy?

As a starting point, we define the three key terms of an Integral Green Economy. In turn, they are:

- ① *Integral*: By “integral” we mean the dynamic, integrated inclusion of all dimensions (including natural ones) of a human system, be it on an individual (species), organisational, communal or societal level. In the integral approach to development (Schieffer and Lessem, 2014 a) that informs the Slovenian movement, there are four core dimensions that all such systems share and that need to be considered equally if the entire integrated system is to flourish. Mapping these four dimensions in a circular way (see Figure P.1) we distinguish between the “southern” realm of nature and community; the “eastern” realm of culture and spirituality; the “northern” realm of science, systems and technology; and the “western” realm of finance and enterprise,

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all related to Slovenia as a particular society. All of these realms are held together by what we termed a “moral core”, a unique expression of the innermost value base that a society considers as essential to its being, ideally to be embodied in its overall polity. We shall see in the next subchapter how the integral philosophy is applied to the Slovenian economy and society.

- ② *Green:* Slovenia is a “green” country. Over 60 percent of its surface is covered by forests. Slovenia has one of the highest per capita numbers of inhabitants that are active as gardeners, vegetable growers and forest owners. In short, the average Slovenian has a profound relationship to nature. A caring attitude towards the environment is deeply engrained in the psyche of many Slovenians. For the Citizens’ Initiative for an Integral Green Slovenia, an authentic economic approach for the country needs to “be green”; it has to be grounded in nature. Integral Green Slovenia recognises the primary importance of nature—be it as the specific natural environment we are living in, be it as the entire web of life. Humanity, being a part of, not separate from, nature, is dependent for its very survival on healthy natural ecosystems. Building on Slovenia’s most famous marketing slogan “I FEEL SLOVENIA” (recognising that Slovenia is the only country in the world whose name includes the word “love”), “green” is also an expression of the country’s profound love for nature and its primary principle of “organic interdependence”.
- ③ *Economy:* The Citizens’ Initiative regards the economy as just one of the integral parts of society—one that needs to be fully “re-embedded” into society. Thereby, the initiative seeks to counteract what we often witness economically around the world—a global economy that acts as an almost independent, and hence often unrelated, and even destructive force on a social and environmental level.

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With its orientation to “integral” and “green”, Slovenia’s Integral Green Economy initiative aligns itself also with other key movements of our time, namely the “green” movement, aiming for sustainable development of people and planet, and the “integral” movement, aspiring to bring about more integrated, interconnected natural and social systems that see themselves as contributing to the development of society and world.

What is unique, though, in this Slovenian case is the combination of both “integral” and “green”, and the explicit “rootedness” in the cultural gifts, strengths and uniqueness of its Slovenian society, with its exposure to German, Roman, Slavic and Finno-Ugric cultural influences.

In European tradition, philosophy, social structures, educational systems, politics and policies, we can identify significant foundations that inform today’s longing for more sustainable, collaborative and holistic approaches to life and to human systems, including the economy.

Furthermore, in recent decades, we have witnessed an increased global interest in and drive towards higher levels of consciousness and integration, resulting in an understanding that we are witnessing an emergent “Integral Age”. “Integral” voices calling for whole-systems perspectives are on the rise—across disciplines and fields. Terms like “holistic”, “integrated”, “wholesome” and “integral” have almost become commonplace. While we regard this urge for integration as important, we see it as equally crucial to overcome an oversimplistic, generalising tenor that all too often dominates. Moreover, for us, such integrity is always specific to a particular place, like Slovenia in this case, rather than universally applied.

There are a number of integral approaches that have helped shift our global perspective towards a more integral viewpoint over the past 200 years. Thinkers like Vladimir Solovyov, Henri Bergson, Alfred North Whitehead, Sri Aurobindo, Teilhard de Chardin, Jean Gebser, Jürgen Habermas and, more recently, Ken Wilber and Don Beck, along with many

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others, have had a significant impact on shaping such a new viewpoint. They are not to be seen in isolation, but in their specific historical context and in the interconnected light of a slow process that gradually led to the rise of the Integral Age. None of them though, have been particularly concerned with the economic aspects of society, as we are here, and all adopt a universalist integral approach, whereby what they propose supposedly applies to all societies.

What most of these integral thinkers have in common is an attempt to combine into an integral perspective diverse value orientations that emerged over time and space. The key feature across most approaches is the propagation of a new evolutionary level of human consciousness, enabling humanity to transcend fragmented, isolated perspectives into an integrative one, including all those levels that came before. It is also in this spirit that *Integral Economics* has been developed by Trans4m, as part of its Integral Worlds approach.

At the same time, the awareness that humankind urgently needs more integrated and holistic approaches for coping with increasingly complex global and local challenges, that conventional “silo” thinking and doing has to be overcome, is growing in the context of sustainable development discussions and policy planning. We are concluding the writing of this book just before the United Nations summit for the adoption of the post-2015 development agenda (September 2015 in New York) when world leaders are expected to adopt the new agenda, with a set of Sustainable Development Goals at its core (<https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/>). The Sustainable Development Goals are probably the most ambitious goals in the history of humankind and will have to be strongly supported by equally ambitious and integrally framed, holistic, transsectoral policies for sustainable development.

In our approach to Integral Green Slovenia we are constructively building on these local, national, European and global foundations. From the very beginning, we do not take an

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insular perspective, merely focusing on Slovenia. On the contrary, part of the initiative's approach to "integral" is its reaching out to Europe as a whole, aspiring to contribute to the larger economic and societal entity in which it is embedded. Furthermore, it seeks to actualise the full "integral green" potential that is already inherent in existing policies of the European Union, thereby achieving what it calls a "smart integration". As we will show in this book, in particular in its penultimate part, research and education, alongside activism and catalysation, as altogether reflected in our own approach, play a key role in leveraging the integral green potential of Slovenia and Europe. Building on existing Slovenian educational pioneers in kindergarten, primary, secondary and tertiary education (\Rightarrow 11, 12), we advocate a further evolution of cutting-edge research and Education for Sustainable Development (ESD) towards an integral approach to research, learning and development (\Rightarrow 13). Such an integral, catalytic, educational and developmental approach could then serve to bring about an Integral Green Economy, on a much larger scale.

Based on these three key pillars of "integral", "green" and "economy" in Slovenia, we now turn to a brief outline of Integral Economics, as the guiding economic framework of this initiative.

In this Prologue we concentrate on the economic dimension of sustainability, in relation to the paradigm of sustainable development—enriched by the entire Trans4m integral framework.

P.3. Elaboration: Integral Economics

Important Backdrop: The Search for a Sustainable Approach to Economics

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The development of a new, more sustainable approach to economics, in theory and in practice, is currently one of the most crucial tasks of humanity. With *Integral Economics* (Lessem and Schieffer, 2010)—which builds on Trans4m’s Integral Worlds model—we have made an attempt to contribute to this challenge.

Our search for an economic system that works for all had, however, been a difficult one. For long, our painful observation had been that, after the demise of communism, humanity seemed to be caught up in one economic world (capitalism)—and with it in one particular western, or rather Anglo-Saxon, frame of mind. Muhammad Yunus, the notable founder of the Grameen Bank in Bangladesh, once commented that mainstream free market theory suffers from a conceptualisation failure, a failure to capture the essence of what it is to be human. And indeed this was what some of Britain’s leading economists—among them Geoffrey Hodgson, Paul Ormerod and Bridget Rosewell—admitted in an open letter to the Queen of England in August 2009, after the Queen had publicly posed the question why economists had not foreseen the financial and economic crisis the world was facing. The following excerpt from their letter is most illuminating.

We believe that the narrow training of economists—which concentrates on mathematical techniques and the building of empirically uncontrolled formal models—has been a major reason for this failure in our profession. This defect is enhanced by the pursuit of mathematical technique for its own sake in many leading academic journals and departments of economics. There is a species of judgment, attainable through immersion in a literature or a history that cannot be adequately expressed in formal mathematical models. It’s an essential part of a serious education in economics, but has been stripped out of most leading graduate programs in economics in the world, including in the leading economics departments in the United Kingdom. Models and techniques are important. But given the complexity of the global economy, what is needed is a broader range of models and techniques governed by a far greater respect for substance, and much more attention to historical, institutional, psychological

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and other highly relevant factors . . . As trained economists and United Kingdom citizens we have warned of these problems that beset our profession. Unfortunately, at present, we find ourselves in a minority.

(Hodgson et al., 2009)

We fully agreed with this statement and asked ourselves whether the human mind is indeed not more creative than to need to limit its definition of economics to an either-or between capitalism and communism. Is the world—in the past and the present, and across one culture or another—not more inventive than that? So we decided to do a thorough analysis and to use our integral approach to analyse the diverse economic and social perspectives of many worlds—in theory and in practice. This was the starting point for our work on *Integral Economics*, a book that we subtitled *Releasing the Economic Genius of Your Society*. For, indeed, the wealth of economic diversity that we encountered made us hopeful that we collectively have the ability to reinvent economics—again, however, not in a homogenising way, but rather by co-creating unity-in-variety.

Brief Overview of Integral Economics

In the process of conceiving of Integral Economics we uncovered a surprisingly wide-ranging array of newly emerging theories and practices—other than the capitalist and socialist mainstream—in all the four corners of the world as well as in its centre, altogether reflecting humanity’s creative search for alternative economic models. By surfacing the rich economic diversity and potential that represents humanity as a whole, we sought not only to counterbalance the monocultural “western” economic perspective but also to illustrate the variegated impulses for economic renewal that are already active within the West itself. In Figure P.1 we introduce a first overview of an Integral Economy.

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Figure P.1: The Integral Green Economy: An overview

The Integral Economics model has its starting point in its centre, in the moral core of a society. In our own research we uncovered how vital it is that the outer economic system of a society is in resonance with its inner moral core, or indeed moral cores. We argue that a society needs to begin its process of integral economic development by securing “southern” nature-based economic self-sufficiency, before it focuses on the other, “eastern”, “northern” and “western”, economic functions. Thereafter it needs to respectively include the building up of a culture-based developmental economy (ensuring that the economy is aligned with the

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cultural evolution the society), a knowledge-based social economy (aligning its socio-economic structures with technology-driven knowledge systems) and a life-based living economy (reconnecting finance and economic performance measurement to natural and human well-being).

Building an Integral Economy

The integral approach enabled us to provide sufficient space for the rich diversity of innovative economic theory and practice so as to help us to gradually rebuild our particular economies and societies, like that of Slovenia, as well as a global economic system, as a unity-in-variety. This space is not a closed one, as the body of the theory and practice is continuously evolving. We certainly were also not able to put every approach and their multiple variations on the integral map. Also, we are certainly aware that any model has inbuilt structuring principles around which its components are ordered. We thus emphasise that the map is not the territory. But for the first time, to our mind, a map had been developed that surfaced a huge quantity of the economic variety that the world as a whole had to offer. This new economic map allows economic students, practitioners and social innovators to engage with a rich picture of the economic landscape—a landscape that is designed to stimulate comparison, critique, evolution and innovation as well as to encourage a purposeful, participatory rebuilding of our economies and societies. In Figure P.2 we provide a detailed overview of the integral economic map.

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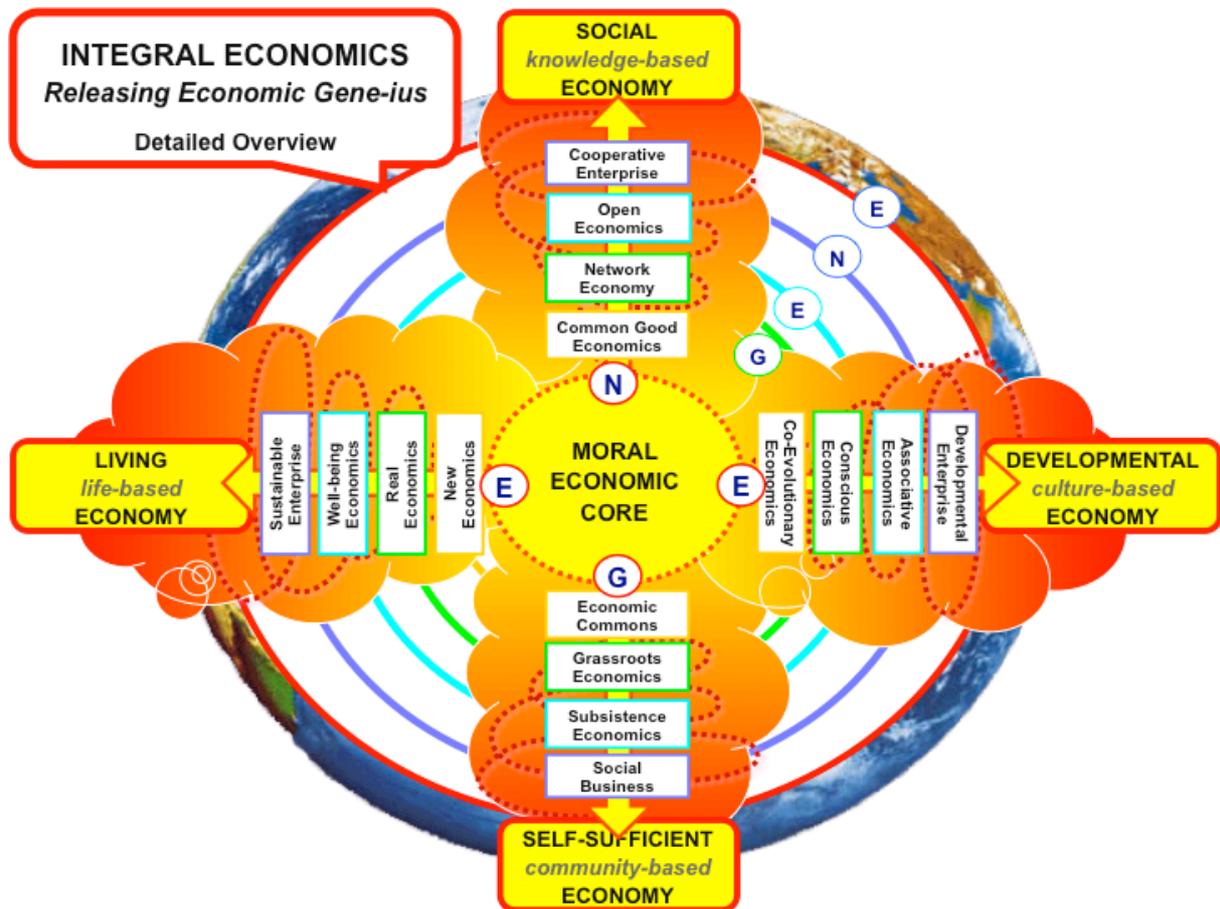


Figure P.2: Integral Economics: A detailed overview

In Integral Economics we illustrate that if we work purposefully through each of the four economic realms and gradually through all of them in a south–east–north–west fashion (starting with nature and ending with enterprise)—informed by the wealth of the moral economic core—we arrive in each realm at practical applications that help us to translate new economic thinking into transformative practice. Here is an illustration of what we mean:

- *South:* Working through the “southern” realm of a community-based self-sufficient economy we evolve “from profits to profiting society”, and we actively revisit the

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extent to which our own community or enterprise is participating in building a self-sufficient economy and thereby contributing locally to alleviate poverty. The role model we surfaced in the “southern” realm is the “social business” and self-sufficiency movement, embodied by Grameen in Bangladesh.

- *East:* Working through the “eastern” realm of a culture-based developmental economy we evolve “from survival to co-evolution”, and we actively revisit the extent to which our community or enterprise is co-evolving with its multiple stakeholders, thereby becoming an agent for a developmental economy. The role model we surfaced in the “eastern” realm is the developmental enterprise, embodied by Canon in Japan, pursuing its Japanese path of “kyosei”, or co-evolution, as well as Sarvodaya (“The Awakening of All”) in Sri Lanka, one of the world’s largest development initiatives.
- *North:* Working through the “northern” realm of a knowledge-based social economy, we evolve “from hierarchy to democracy”, and we actively revisit the extent to which our community or enterprise responds to continuous technological change and social challenges in a cooperative and democratic manner. The role model we surfaced in the “northern” realm is the cooperative enterprise, pre-eminently embodied in the Mondragon Cooperatives in Spain, the world’s largest workers’ cooperative and a leader in the social-economic cooperative movement.
- *West:* Working through the “western” realm of a life-based living economy we evolve “from growth to sustainability”, and we actively revisit the extent to which our community or enterprise is modelled on nature, and thereby sustainable and restorative, building up human, natural and financial capital in parallel. The role model we surfaced in the “western” realm is the “sustainable enterprise”, embodied in Interface in the USA, a corporate leader within the sustainability movement. In our

case the “west” builds on the rest—south, east and north—rather than standing in splendid isolation.

Activating an Integral Economy: The Release of the Economic Gene-ius of a Society

The Integral Economics framework incorporates an inbuilt transformational rhythm, which not only makes the entire approach dynamic but also serves as a rhythm to enable you to actively engage in building an integral economy. We call this rhythm the GENE (an acronym for Grounding, Emerging, Navigating, Effecting), representing a fourfold spiralling force, activating the entire model. The fourfold GENE rhythm functions within the four levels of each realm (e.g. the four levels of the southern realm of economic self-sufficiency), as well as in between the four realms (Figure P.2).

While we see the GENE as an iterative, ever-unfolding rhythmical force, we nevertheless start the transformational process in the south, thereby beginning with a conscious grounding in a given context and issue, before we then engage in its transformation. The transformative GENE process for an Integral Economy begins with Grounding (G) in a particular nature and community, to surface key economic developmental needs and potentials. We then progress towards Emergence (E), tapping into the cultural creativity of a particular economy and society, inviting and generating insights to respond to economic challenges and aspirations, by also tapping into the cultural potential for the economic renewal of a society. In activating its own cultural capacities, a society does, on the one hand, affirm its own cultural uniqueness but also, on the other, invites other cultural perspectives from outside, to broaden its own co-evolution. The insights gained from the cultural space are then further expressed and developed in a process of Navigating (N) new economic

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knowledge and concepts, in the “northern” realm of science, systems and technology, that is particular to that society, Slovenia in our case here. It is here that a society shapes, in explicit terms, its own socio-economic perspective, in touch with its natural and communal grounds, and resourced by its cultural capacities. Such new economic theory is then ultimately Effected (E) and practically realised via a new form of enterprise and/or economic policy. The entire GENE process is connected to an inspirational and integrating (I) moral core, helping a particular society (U) to make, together with others, a collective (US) contribution to new economic thought and practice.

Having completed the GENE cycle, the process does not stop. Rather, it continuously moves on. Any transformative effect has to be continuously revisited, exploring whether the economy remains resonant with the societal grounds it seeks to serve. Any solution is considered a temporary one. In that sense, economic and societal development is an ongoing process, and integral education, research and development have a vital part to play in its furtherance.

Building on Practice: The Future Has Already Begun

Each of the four integral economic realms—as well as GENE as the transformative rhythm—is informed by relevant social and economic practices around the world. In *Integral Economics* we present case studies of organisations that integrally embody each particular realm. In our research into relevant practice, we found another astonishing fact. All of the organisations that embodied such integral economic practice engaged simultaneously in developing new theory. We called them “mesa-organisations” as we saw them, like Mondragon in Spain or Grameen in Bangladesh, occupying a space somewhere in between

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the micro and the macro economy. They provide powerful orientation for the design of whole new macro-economic systems. It is for that reason that we believe that the future is already in the making, and it is crucial that we simultaneously consult innovative theory and practice in that particular country. All of the cases can be seen as developmental agents for that society.

In Slovenia, as we shall see, we witnessed the same. A large number of institutions, across all sectors, are already actively engaging with alternative economic practices. A key role for the Citizens' Initiative for an Integral Green Slovenia was to help its member organisations to make the underlying alternative economic practices explicit and to further co-evolve them. In that way, a continuous learning process was initiated in between all of those organisations—a process in which Darja Piciga, a co-editor for this book, turned out to be the main driving force.

Such an Integral Economy purposefully integrates the three levels of self, organisation and community as well as society: on the level of the self, it invites individual transformation agents to concretely engage in the rebuilding of local economies; on the level of the organisation, it acknowledges the existence of so-called mesa-organisations (the cases mentioned above), which serve as living intimations of future economic models; and on the level of community and society, it seeks to initiate and articulate new economic frameworks.

Outlook on the Integral Economy

Ultimately, we are required to renew our prevailing macro-economic system. Integral Economics can be regarded as a blueprint for such an endeavour. What makes it “practical” is that the work of rebuilding the economy starts in our own particular individual, organisational and societal contexts. From there we begin our engagement, from there we seek to transform locally and to contribute globally. With the practical cases we introduce in the *Integral*

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Economics book we illustrate that we need not start from scratch. In fact, almost all societies hold locally relevant impulses for economic renewal on which they can build. Integral Economics is designed in such a way that it interconnects innovative theory and practice in a manner that enables us to locally revisit our own theoretical and practical economic foundations, and to engage in a process of gradually releasing the economic genius of our own community and society. Thereby it brings the task of rebuilding our global economy to each of our doorsteps. The Integral Green Slovenia initiative powerfully illustrates how it responded to this task, duly combining Integral Economics and education, as two sides of the same interdependent coin.

P.4. Participation: The Integral Green Economic Journey in Slovenia

Collaborative Vehicle: The Citizens' Initiative for an Integral Green Economy and Society

The Slovenian Integral Green Citizens' Initiative is constituted of a courageous group of individual experts, social and economic enterprises, innovative rural communities and regional development initiatives, inspiring educational institutions (from preschool to tertiary education), a good number of impactful non-governmental organisations and other agents of social innovation, jointly committed to developing a new "integral" perspective for Slovenia.

The driving force behind the initiative is a small group of dedicated individuals and organisations from all sectors of society, catalysed by Slovenian specialists in sustainable development and by those purposefully building up a knowledge-based society, such as lead editor Piciga herself, currently working in Slovenia's Ministry for the Environment and

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Spatial Planning. Indeed, it was Piciga who started the initiative—together with Schieffer and Lessem as external researchers, educators and catalysts—driven by her passionate quest for alternative models of development that can serve the collective well-being of Slovenians, and building on the riches of the country's unique nature, culture, knowledge base and economic potential.

We are now ready to share the Slovenian journey to date towards an Integral Green Economy and Society, with a view to its further co-evolution. Given the limitations of a single book, we were not able to share the full unfolding journey, nor could we include all members to the extent that we would have liked. We apologise for that. We were aiming, though, to provide a first overview of the initiative's early achievements and to convey a sense of the significance of this project for Slovenia, Europe and beyond. Here is the journey.

Collaborative Impact: Jointly Weaving an Integral Green Economy in Slovenia

In the following we guide you through the key parts of *Integral Green Slovenia*. As you read through the book, you are *not* confronted with an eclectic set of chapters but invited into an interdependent storyline of (individual and organisational) integral Slovenian theorists and practitioners, the great majority of them forming a key part of the Citizens' Initiative. They build and draw on each other with the intention of enhancing their shared development potential.

The book follows the key elements of the Integral Economic model and is composed of seven parts and 14 chapters. The seven parts are:

- Part I: Towards a Slovenian Integral Green Society and Economy
- Part II: A Nature- and Community-Based Economics of Self-Sufficiency

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- Part III: A Culture-Based Developmental Economy
- Part IV: A Knowledge-Based Social Economy
- Part V: A Finance- and Enterprise-Based Living Economy
- Part VI: Education and Innovation for an Integral Green Slovenia
- Part VII: Slovenia in Europe: Smart Integration with a Sustainable Vision

Part I: Towards a Slovenian Integral Green Society and Economy

Chapter 1: Integral Green Slovenia: A Multitude of Stories, a Multidimensional and Multi-Layered Process

In the opening chapter of this book, following this Prologue, our co-editor Darja Piciga, together with social scientist and adult educator Nevenka Bogataj, introduces the Slovenian historical journey towards an Integral Green Economy and Society. Slovenia's nature is highlighted as the key for a sustainable national economic development path. Similarly, conceptual artist Marko Pogačnik starts featuring the identity of Slovenia with nature and culture, and continues with other aspects of a country's identity—altogether representing an important foundation from which the moral and ethical core of a project like Integral Green Slovenia can receive a strong momentum. Later in the chapter Piciga reveals the beginnings of the Integral Green Slovenia movement, strongly connected with the national fight against climate change. It is not surprising, then, that Andrej Kranjc, the Slovenian representative in the global climate change negotiations, is also one of the most faithful supporters and advisors of this movement. The presentation of his perspective is followed by the description of the

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Integral Green Slovenia process—from the establishment of the Citizens' Initiative to three big conferences in the period from autumn 2014 to summer 2015.

In the conclusion of the chapter, the key principles, concepts and proposals, as developed by the initiative, are outlined. From the outset, the initiative actively informed Slovenia policy processes, with the long-term aspiration of positioning Slovenia as a role model for sustainable development in Europe.

Part II: A Nature- and Community-Based Economics of Self-Sufficiency

Chapter 2: Food and Energy Self-Sufficiency and Organic Farming: Preserving Nature and Communities and Coping with Global Challenges

In chapter 2, agricultural experts Jože Osterc and Martina Bavec emphasise and illustrate the key role of agriculture in Slovenia's transition to a green economy, and the need to integrate nature and community in the process of facing local and global challenges with regard to food self-sufficiency and food production in general. The particular contribution of organic agriculture, with emphasis on small organic farms, to an integral green development is highlighted. Grassroots developments in organic food self-sufficiency such as Ekoci, InTerCeR, Cooperative Dobrina, Urban Furrows and the Centre for Alternative and Autonomous Production provide practical illustration of new ways of reactivating nature and community in sustainable forms.

The self-sufficiency focus shifts from food to energy, and here in particular to wood-based energy self-sufficiency. The topic is opened by Jernej Stritih's insights on wood as one of Slovenia's most important strategic resources and Slovenia's unique and historical

approach to close-to-nature forestry. The story of Šentrupert Community, led by its mayor, Rupert Gole, is a fascinating case of a municipality that fully draws on wood as its primary local resource and strategic raw material, working towards a full-fledged self-sufficient community economy. The municipality's vision to become energy self-sufficient (energy-independent) by 2020 is upgraded with a large integral array of natural, cultural, educational and economic community initiatives and projects.

Part III: A Culture-Based Developmental Economy

Chapter 3: Revitalising Culture and Spirit through Integrated Regional Development: The Case of the Heart of Slovenia

The Heart of Slovenia is a case of culture-based regional development in the rural hinterland of Slovenia's capital, Ljubljana, that explicitly demonstrates the activation of a development economy through the revitalising of culture and spirit. In innovative ways, the region seeks to respond to the actual needs of the local population by actively intertwining the main areas of life and work. Development projects are not created only within the borders of local communities or with regard to the supra-regional projects which enable funding to be obtained, but are based on the effective identification of common challenges. A Development Centre acts as the main facilitator within the Heart of Slovenia, interconnecting social and economic entrepreneurship, culture-based tourism and self-sufficiency—within an overall cultural framework. The founder and head of the centre, Aleksandra Gradišek, together with local entrepreneur Jože Kos, Mayor Rupert Gole and other local innovators, brings the “beat” of the Heart of Slovenia to life through an inspiring model for regional renewal, aligned with the key success factors for bringing forth an integral economy.

Chapter 4: Rediscovering the Consciousness of Nature and Landscape: From Geomancy to Geoculture and Integrated Development

From the Heart to Slovenia we move on to Marko Pogačnik, a globally recognised conceptual artist and UNESCO Artist for Peace. Pogačnik seeks to promote a heart-centred approach to the Earth, nature and the human essence, based on personal experience and transpersonal insights. Instead of the head-oriented view of modern science, his work is consciously based on art as complementary to science. The knowledge called “geomancy” functions as the base for his explorations and for practical work. Pogačnik’s former students and collaborators, Robi and Karin Lavin, illustrate via their Anima Mundi Center for Integrated Development how to work with the vital energy elements of landscape. The Lavins also link their work with education (for example with Slovenska Bistrica Kindergarten, ⇨ 11), seeking to increase the ability to relate to body and landscape, and to enable children and students to embrace a more integrated perspective on self and society within the environment.

Chapter 5: Nature- and Heritage-Based Tourism: Solčavsko as a Case of Resource Management by the Local Community

Actively linking nature and heritage is a particular Slovenian expression to illustrate the widened consciousness for the culture, spirit and space in relation to development. In this chapter, community developer Marko Slapnik and adult educationalist Nevenka Bogataj argue for sustainability management in protected areas, in line with the principles of sustainable development—and demonstrate the potential of study circles as a development tool. That is taken further into actual practice by introducing the case of the mountainous village Solčavsko, which developed a new approach to tourism based on nature and heritage,

facilitated by Center Rinka, the village innovation centre. All three chapters in part III illustrate also the enormous importance of knowledge-creating processes and catalytic agencies (such as Center Rinka in Solčavsko or the Development Centre of the Heart of Slovenia). This link between cultural revitalisation and knowledge creation then builds the bridge towards a knowledge-based social economy, as the “northern” expression of an Integral Economy.

Part IV: A Knowledge-Based Social Economy

Chapter 6: Traditional Resource Management Knowledge: The Case of the Commons

The combination of study circles, educationally, with natural ecosystems, ecologically, has resulted in a newly combined co-evolution of the natural and social “commons”. Slovenian commons are largely in the Alpine mountains (88%), but this is also widely practiced in Dinaric and Pannonian area. The practice of common land management has survived until today despite half a century of abolition and land nationalisation. The commons historically played a crucial role in the maintenance of a socio-demographic equilibrium, community cohesion and the sustainable management of natural resources. In this chapter, Nevenka Bogataj argues that this model is to be justified as typical for the area observed and provides valuable insights also for the design of a knowledge-based social economy.

Chapter 7: Knowledge- and Value-Based Cooperative Management: The Case of Domel

Building on Slovenia’s traditions of community management of natural resources, in this chapter social scientist Gorazd Pavlek draws a link from there to cooperative enterprises as

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foundations of the national economy. Pavlek's reflective analysis of the historical evolution of cooperatives in Slovenia is followed by that of senior executives of Domel, one of the country's most prominent high-tech manufacturers working within a semi-cooperative enterprise model. Jointly, Domel's CEO Jožica Rejec and Štefan Bertonec, Tanja Kramar and Janez Rihtaršič illustrate how Domel has built its vision on the values of socially responsible and innovative entrepreneurship. Such values are expressed in a strong connection and integration with the surrounding community, caring for its weakest members, and respect for the natural heritage. Domel's employees are aware of the cultural and cooperative heritage that has shaped them and have developed an awareness of the necessity for continuing development. This awareness is reflected in the development of new knowledge, particularly in the field of technology and education and in conjunction with academic institutions. Innovations also contribute to greater energy efficiency of its products, which is characteristic of a green and circular economy. Co-ownership and co-management by employees are seen as key elements of the Slovenian social economy and demonstrated with one further case from the wood industry—M SORA.

Chapter 8: A Social Knowledge-Based Society in Slovenia: From Cooperatives and Social Enterprises to Network Society

Inspired by Mondragon, one of the world's most renowned cases of corporate cooperativism, and building on the eminent Spanish-US social philosopher Manuel Castells, who makes a claim for the advent of a network society, in this chapter a number of lead thinkers of Slovenian cooperativism raise their voices, shedding light on Slovenia's existing capacity and future potential for a social economy. The State Secretary and founder of the Slovenian Forum for Social Entrepreneurship, Tadej Slapnik, presents his plea for economic democracy and a growing "cooperative society" in Slovenia, and the ways diverse models of cooperative

enterprise can foster such. Sebastjan Pikel and Urša Zgojznik introduce with Tekstilnica—focussing on collection, sorting, re-use and recycling of old clothes and texts—a case of Green Social Entrepreneurship. In the final outlook of this chapter we turn to the rising phenomenon of a new type of social knowledge-based entrepreneurship “kickstarted” by young, innovative, entrepreneurial Slovenians.

Part V: A Finance- and Enterprise-Based Living Economy

Chapter 9: Sustainable Mobility “Made in Slovenia”: The Case of Metron

In this next part we now turn to a number of pioneering Slovenian enterprises, who all combine a strong sense for environmental and social responsibility with green technology and sustainable production processes. They thereby build creatively on the social knowledge economy that we have just been introduced to in the previous part. With Andrej Pečjak and Metron, we meet in this chapter one of the country’s leading institutions in electric vehicle development. Holding a number of world records, the electric cars designed by Institute Metron have presented tested solutions towards sustainable mobility with low, if not zero, emissions. Pečjak and Metron are also role models for new enterprises that hold a vision not just for their own organisation but for society at large, and are frontrunners in building a “living economy”.

Chapter 10: Combining High-Tech Green Solutions with Social Responsibility: Enterprising Ways of Pioneering Global Markets

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From sustainable mobility on the ground, via electric cars, we move to sustainable mobility in the air, being introduced to the remarkable case of Pipistrel, a world leader in ultra-light aircraft design and construction. Pipistrel, founded by Ivo Boscarol, is a prime showcase for the technological potential of Slovenia and a demonstration of how to combine highest technological standards with an uncompromising commitment to the environment. A core driver for the innovative power of both enterprises is their commitment to research and development—and hence their ability to connect vital elements of a social knowledge-based economy with a living economy.

Moreover, the issue of corporate social responsibility, which in various shapes or forms pervades our entire book, as an overall “umbrella”, is further emphasised in this concluding outlook. In the above context, the renowned Slovenian academic and promoter of social responsibility as well as systems thinking, Matjaž Mulej, also introduces the principles behind the international advisory standard ISO 26000 as an integrated model for the way out of the current global socio-economic crisis. And in bringing the principles of social responsibility to life on a societal level, educational institutions, such as the Biotechnical Centre Naklo, have the key role.

Part VI: Education and Innovation for an Integral Green Slovenia

Chapter 11: Preschool Education for All the Senses: The Case of Slovenska Bistrica Kindergarten and Its Integral CARE Centre

This penultimate part of the book deals with the educational systems and frameworks that are required to foster and strengthen an Integral Green Slovenian economy and society.

Education, for us, thereby spans all levels, from kindergarten to primary, secondary and

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tertiary education—and ultimately to a life-long approach to education. The Citizens' Initiative is enormously enriched by having several exceptional educational providers in its midst that truly embrace an integral educational perspective. The first one, and the focus of this chapter, is Slovenska Bistrica Kindergarten, spearheaded by educational innovator Ivana Leskovar and her committed team. The kindergarten is widely recognised for its holistic approach to children's education and community engagement and sees itself as an active stakeholder in the local community. It has developed its own application to integral development and, building on it, an integral CARE (Catalyse, Activate, Research, Educate) approach enabling it to continuously increase its holistic impact on the large number of communities in which its almost 30 affiliated kindergartens are participating.

Chapter 12: Secondary and Tertiary Education for Sustainable Development: Biotechnical Centre Naklo as a CARE-ing Institution

From kindergarten and primary education, we now move to secondary and tertiary education. In this chapter we meet the Biotechnical Centre Naklo, arguably one of the country's most respected educational institutions. It is uniquely positioned as a catalytic agency, because it is simultaneously a school (secondary and higher vocational college), a technology transfer and applied research institute, an adult education centre and an educational commercial organic farm, well connected with the local community. Moreover, its research activities involve a large network of international collaborations, whereby nature and culture are again linked with science and enterprise. The Biotechnical Centre Naklo, led by its visionary director, Marijan Pogačnik, is one of the lead protagonists for an Integral Green Slovenian perspective. Like the Slovenska Bistrica Kindergarten, it has embraced an integral CARE perspective, fostering personal, institutional and socio-cultural development of community and society at

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the same time. These two integral educational showcases then enabled us, on the one hand, to continue to co-evolve the Citizens' Initiative, from a research and educational perspective, and, on the other hand, to develop an authentic theoretical and practical bridge between cutting-edge Slovenian educational practice and the latest thinking in the field of ESD, as promoted by major global educational institutions.

Chapter 13: Holistic Education for Sustainable Development: Education as a Key Catalyst for an Integral Green Slovenia

In the opening of the chapter, Darja Piciga informs us that the United Nations Decade of Education for Sustainable Development has laid a strong foundation for the advance of sustainable development through education and learning. Subsequent strategies on ESD, by UNECE, UNESCO and others, strongly promote interdisciplinary and holistic approaches to such education as keys to the advancement of sustainable development theory and practice on the planet. This chapter points to complementarity between the integral approach underlying Integral Green Slovenia and these forward-looking ESD strategies. It shows how the integral approach has the potential to enrich and enhance those strategies. An overview of the potential for ESD in Slovenia, provided jointly by Barica Marentič-Požarnik, who has for decades been a leading Slovenian expert on ESD and environmental education, and Darja Piciga, is followed up with two Slovenian cases illustrating new forms of ESD. The first case focuses on “biodynamic school gardens” on a communal and municipal level. The second case shows the establishment of an entire “learning region” as a new approach to involving a larger population in ESD. Altogether, this chapter is focused on further strengthening national Slovenian and European efforts to promote sustainable development by using the integral green model not only to enhance economic sustainability but also to bring forth an integral educational perspective.

Part VII: Slovenia in Europe: Smart Integration with a Sustainable Vision

Chapter 14: Actualising Europe's Integral Green Potential: The Slovenian Way of Smart Integration of European Union Policies for Sustainable Development

In this chapter we start with the vision for an Integral Green Slovenian Economy, including some necessary measures reflecting this, as initially designed in 2013. To thereby elaborate on the framework for policy planning and implementation of this alternative vision, a new concept of “smart integration of European Union policies for sustainable development” is introduced and explained: the concept of sustainable development is enriched with the fourth dimension (i.e. culture, in addition to the traditional ones: environment, economy and society), and values of social responsibility and sustainability are added. This concept already works in practice as it is demonstrated in the good practices presented throughout the book.

In accordance with the concept of smart integration the argument is made that the green sectoral programming through instruments developed in the European Union constitutes the basis for sustainability and social responsibility in Slovenia and has become its important underpinning. Under certain conditions, these instruments (such as strategic environmental assessment) can also become efficient tools for supporting the “Integral Green Economy” goals. It is stressed that new tools for measuring development and social development are required, as well as systematic analytical work for the further development of the Integral Green Slovenia programme.

Epilogue: Integrating Potentials for a Sustainable Future: Sustaining Integral Green Slovenia

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In this concluding and culminating Epilogue to *Integral Green Slovenia*, the three editors of this volume—Piciga, Schieffer and Lessem—focus on the key principles and concepts of Integral Green Slovenia reinforced by inspiring practical examples and insights throughout the book. In light of forthcoming global summits that need to bring about the urgent transformation of current, unsustainable economic and social models and practices, they once again stress the significance of this integral approach to economics and development as a viable alternative. Such an alternative involves all of the four interconnected realms of the integral model, including the spiritual realm. Piciga, Schieffer and Lessem point to the potentials Slovenia possesses to serve the whole of Europe, if not the world at large, as a pilot country where an Integral Green Economy and Society is co-created and monitored. Slovenia, they argue, could indeed become a place where other countries would come to learn locally about sustainable development, in integral guise, to then globally co-create “a world that works for all”. Research and education for sustainable development, underpinned by Trans4m’s integral approach, are key to this process. Such is the vision that will guide the further endeavours of Slovenia’s Citizens’ Initiative for an Integral Green Economy and Society.

P.5. Building the Future: Joining the Movement

Despite early successes, the journey towards an Integral Green Slovenia is still at a relatively early stage of development. Understandably, it is a fragile journey—given the ongoing all-pervasiveness of the existing economic mainstream model. However, all around the world, people are rising to engage in the development of alternative economic theory and practice—jointly believing that the current economic model has dramatic limitations, in relation to its

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negative impact on the environment, community, social cohesion, cultural diversity and financial equity, to name but a few areas.

The Citizens' Initiative for an Integral Green Slovenia is committed to contributing constructively to the necessary revisiting and rebuilding of our economic foundations. It thereby seeks to develop an economic alternative not only for Slovenia but also for Europe.

Europe, in its turbulent history, has, time and again, found ways to renew itself and to build solid cultural foundations. What is required is nothing less than a new European Renaissance, one that serves to renew Europe's cultural heritage in a way that allows for a quantum shift towards economic and social systems that support the sustainable development of people and planet. The European Union is gradually rising to this challenge, and the Citizens' Initiative is dedicated to supporting this shift of consciousness—resulting in new economic thinking and practice.

An Integral Green Slovenian Economy and Society is what we offer with this book— together with an invitation to join us on this journey!

Evoking, in conclusion, the words of the world-renowned anthropologist Margaret Mead, we believe that, together, we can indeed change our world:

Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world; indeed, it's the only thing that ever has.

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