
THE EU ACCESSIONS AND CIVIL SOCIETY INVOLVEMENT: SLOVENIAN EXPERIENCE

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**TECHNICAL ASPECTS OF THE EU ACCESSION PROCES: IMPROVING THE
KNOWLEDGE BASE SCOPE AND OPPORTUNITIES FOR CIVIL SOCIETY
INVOLVEMENT**

Podgorica, 20-21.11.2014

MAIN TOPICS

- + Slovenian way toward EU**
- + CSO and accession negotiations**
- + From a bad feeling and some disappointment
towards a government / CSO dialog**
- + Active citizens made the picture of the desired
future**

Slovenian way toward EU



KEY DATES

- ✗ 1993 - Cooperation Agreement
- ✗ June 1996 – signing of Europe Agreement
- ✗ 1997 – Interim Agreement
- ✗ April 1998 – start of negotiations
- ✗ February 1999 – entry in to force of Europe Agreement
- ✗ 1.5. 2004 EU membership

WHAT WE DO IS IN OUR OWN INTEREST

- ✘ Process of accession means acceleration of the fulfilment of our own goals – to develop into democratic, safe and economically successful country**

ROLE OF EU ACCESSION

- ✗ Improving and in some cases even establishing order and stability in the economy and society as a whole.
- ✗ Overcoming the existing and potential barriers to the necessary changes (monopolies).
- ✗ Additional pressure for the needed improvement in competitiveness of all economic actors.
- ✗ Considering costs and benefits: overall effect is without any doubt a positive one, but on the individual level (also sectoral) there will be (are) losers and winners.

TRANSITION – ACCESSION PROBLEMS

× **Transition issues:**

- + Remaining privatisation
- + Liberalisation of financial sector, public utilities, some markets
- + State aid alignment

× **Accession issues:**

- + Agriculture – synchronisation with the CAP
- + Environment – adaptation to high EU standards
- + Regional development – institutional changes

IT IS NOT EASY WITH THE EU, BUT

- ✗ The most difficult and important negotiations are at home
- ✗ Political support is precondition for successful accomplishment of the overall process
- ✗ **Process should be transparent – the right to be informed and also to participate in decision making**

CSO and accession negotiations

- ✖ Accession negotiations
 - ✖ To become a developed market-economy founded on private property.....
 - ✖and after the membership to be able to maximize all the benefits in a new community

EU MEMBERSHIP

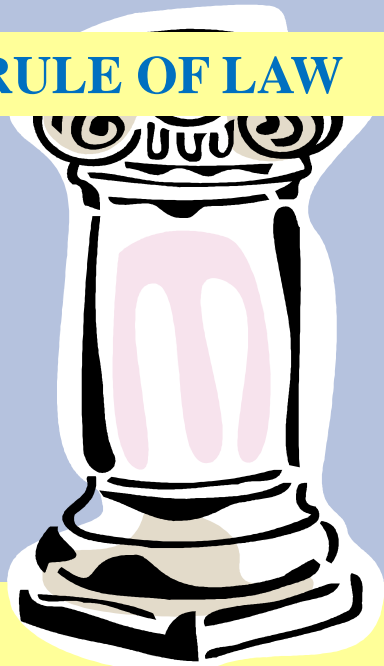


BENEFITS FROM MEMBERSHIP

EU FUTURE BASED ON THREE PILLARS

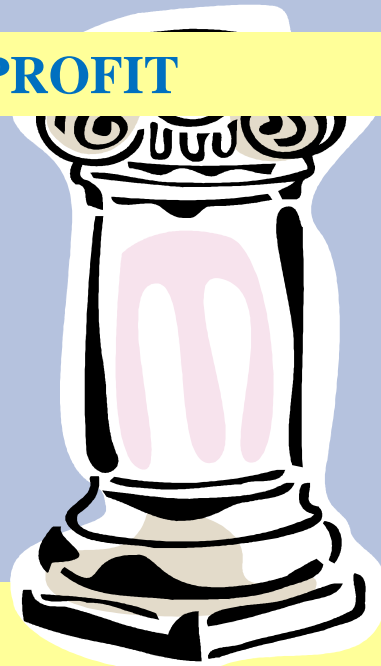
STATE

RULE OF LAW



ECONOMY

PROFIT



THIRD SECTOR

CITIZENS VOICE

**SOCIAL
ACTIVITIES**

**DIFFERENT PUBLIC
SERVICIES**



CSO and accession negotiations

✕ Accession negotiations

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ACCESSION PROCESS TO EU



Principles

- ✗ It is the State of Slovenia that will join EU not the Government nor the Parliament
- ✗ Transparency of procedures
- ✗ Public invitation for cooperation
- ✗ Interest for cooperation was expressed by 164 CSOs

BUT...

Criticism towards insufficient involvement into decision making process !!!

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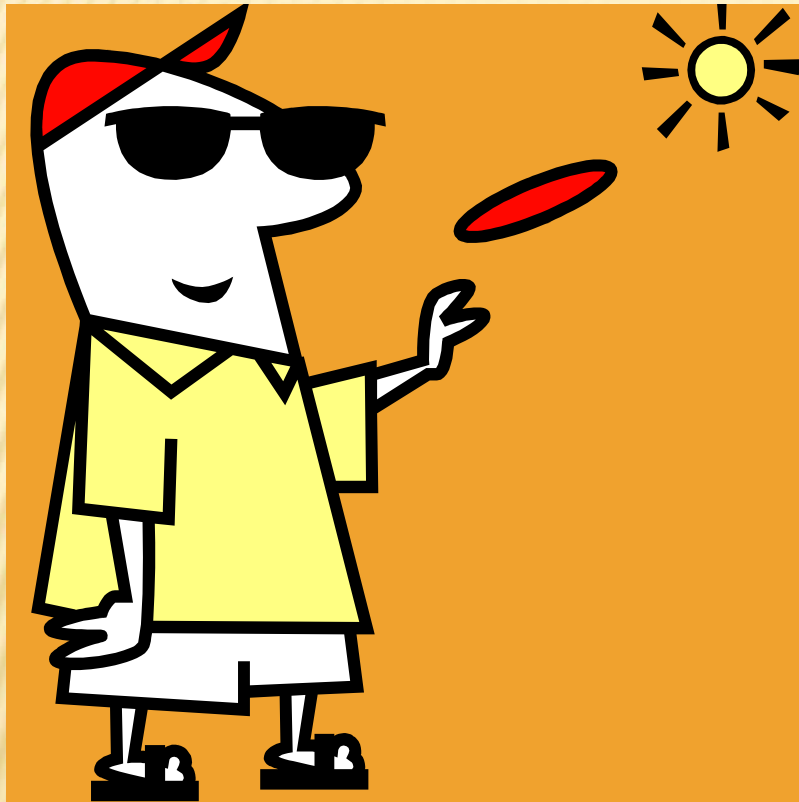
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From a bad feeling and some disappointment towards a government / CSO dialog

- ✗ Accession negotiations
- ✗ To become a developed market-economy founded on private property.....
- ✗and after the membership to be able to maximize all the benefits in a new community

THAT IS HOW IT STARTED . . .



WE ARE RIGHT!



WHERE IS A PROBLEM?

REDEFINING THE PROBLEMS AND THE OBJECTIVES

- ✘ A long and demanding dialog GOV / CSO has been initiated
- ✘ Agreement on a problem (GOV / CSO dialogue) and on common objectives (improve the dialogue, define the agreement of cooperation)
- ✘ Strengthening the role of CSO is an integral part of the accession

REALITY FAR FROM IDEAL PICTURE

- Each ministry pursues its own policy towards NGOs
- Financial system does not stimulate strengthening of NGOs
- Why cooperate? We don't need them. Who they are?

GOVERNMENT

- NGOs are atomised – “the kitchen table NGOs”
- Networks are exceptional
- Day to day survival struggle

NGO

PERIOD 1980 – 1990

- ✘ Expansion and strengthening of CSO**
- ✘ Important role in the democratisation and independence process**
- ✘ After independence, the vital part of CSO moved to state institutions, CS became weak**

FIRST STEPS . . .

- ✗ Situation analysis (www.gov.si/svez)
- ✗ Project NGOs Center (March 2000)
- ✗ Letter of Intent GOEA / initiative group of NGOs (September 2000)

Key word: CONFIDENCE BUILDING

THE ROLE OF CNVOS

- ✖ **Providing information for NGOs**
- ✖ **Cooperation and networking**
- ✖ **Training of NGOs**
- ✖ **Support to interested civil society organizations**
- ✖ **Promotion**

....SOME RESULTS



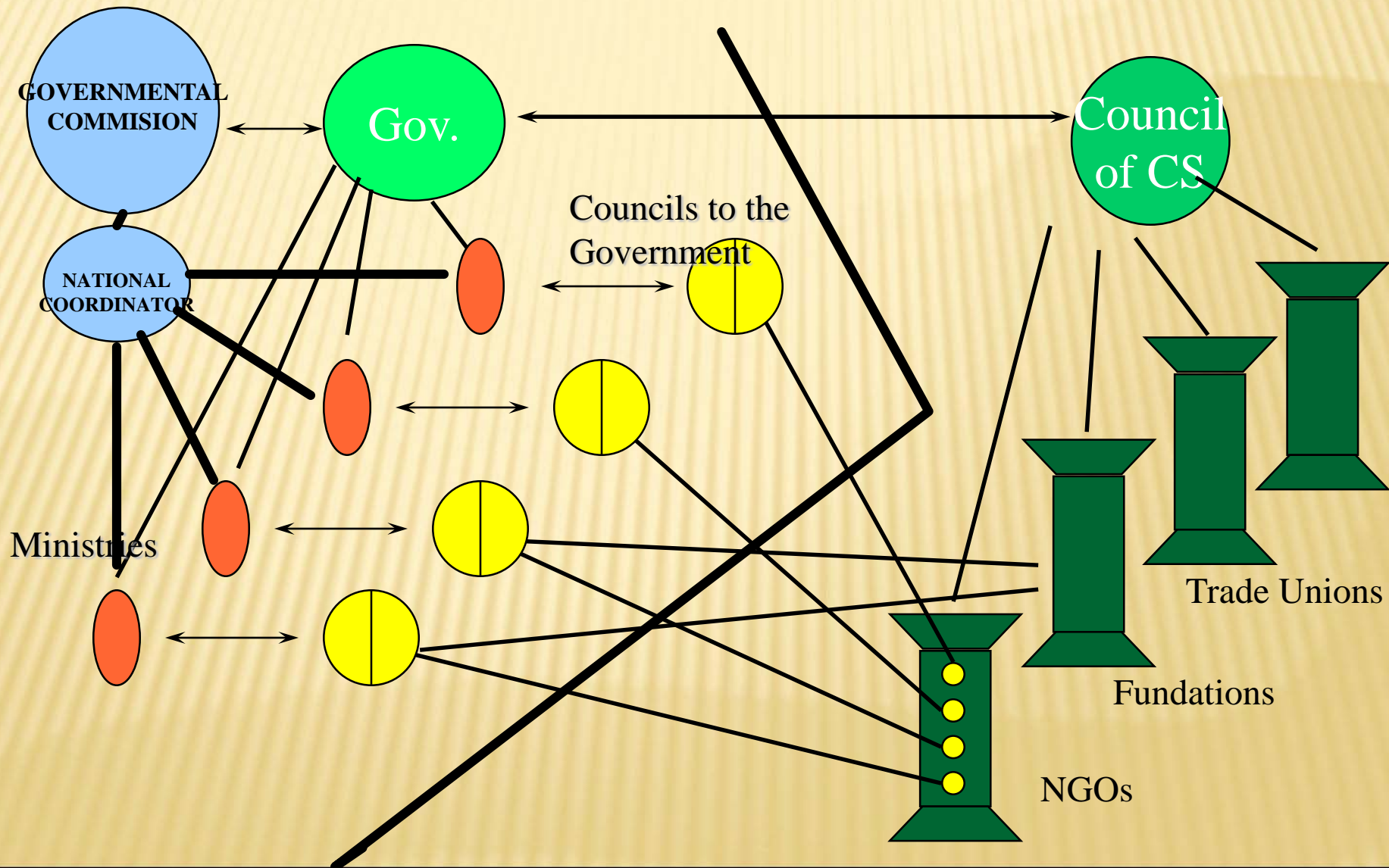
CENTER

- ✗ October 2001 – formal establishment of the Centre
- ✗ December 2001 – working plan for 2002
- ✗ More than 70 members
- ✗ Council adopts a decision that networks are eligible for membership as well

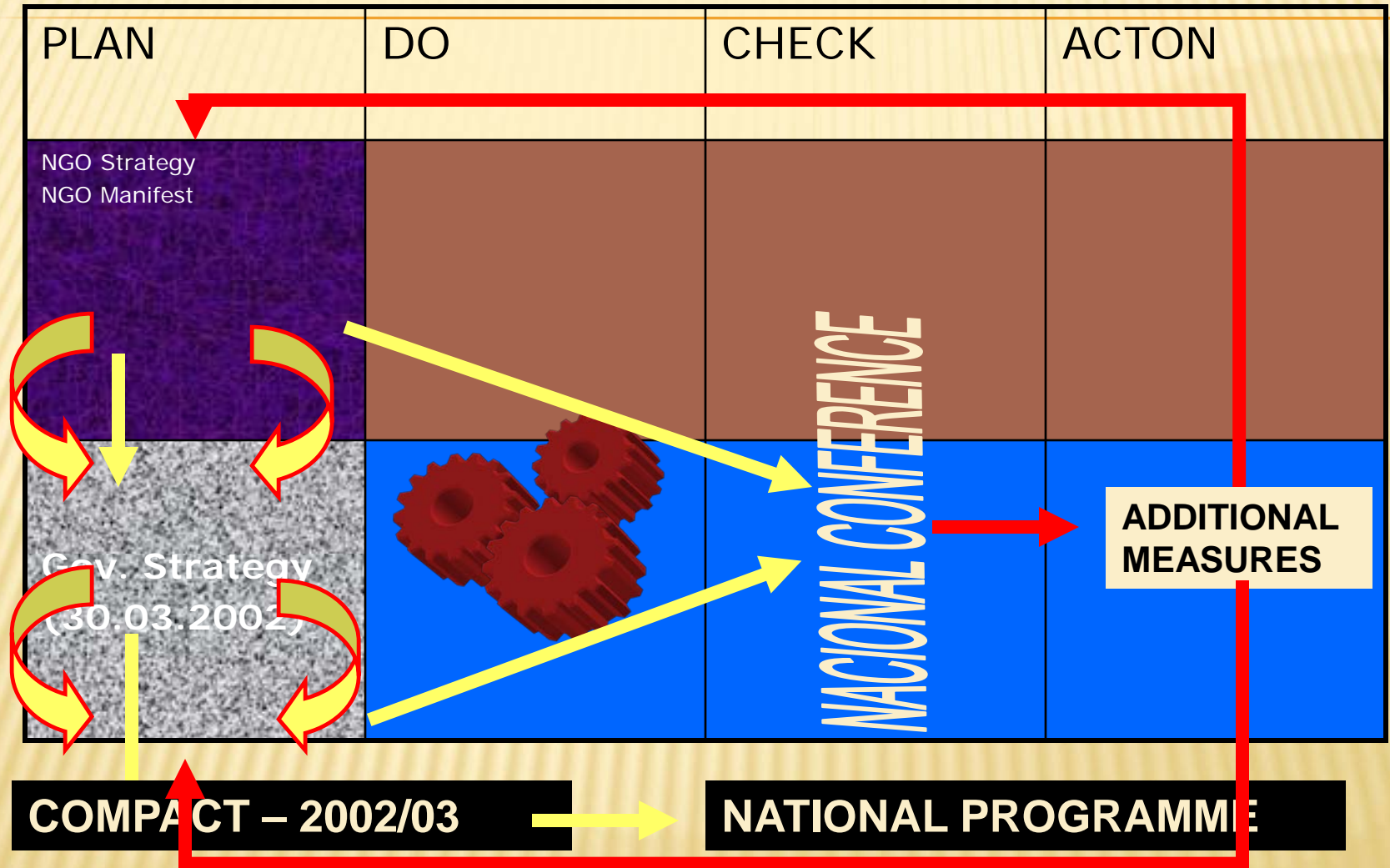
GOEA

- ✗ July 2001 – Governmental decision on financing the Centre
- ✗ November 2001 – the first inter-ministerial meeting regarding the topic of NGOs
- ✗ Acquiring of foreign expert and technical assistance

IDEAL CONCEPTION OF INSTITUTIONAL FRAMEWORK FOR STRUCTURAL DIALOG



THE VIEW ON THE PROCESS



WHAT ABOUT RESOURCES?

The Government acquires required expert and technical assistance

- + N M C P / CS / Government
- M A T R A / CS / Government
- + U N D P / strengthening of NGOs
- E U A C C E S S / CS

750.000 EUR / 2002

SOME QUESTIONS FROM THAT TIME



- ✗ Is a structured dialogue reasonable and possible?
- ✗ Key problems of networking: mistrust, fear of losing independence, privileges....
- ✗ Ministries: why to change anything?
- ✗ Is the idea of the Civil society council reasonable and acceptable?

**ACTIVE CITIZENS MADE THE PICTURE OF
THE DESIRED FUTURE**

A TRIGGER

- ✗ OECD round table on open governance (Ljubljana, May 2002)
- ✗ A transition from “how to become a member” to “how to make EU membership a success”

BACKGROUND FROM EU MEMBERSHIP PERSPECTIVE (2002)

- ✗ Positive advancement of the negotiations with the EU; high and constant support to EU membership

....BUT

- ✗ Slovenian society has not yet become fully aware of the dimension of the change to come; has not started to prepare for the future within the EU
- ✗ Without society and its players becoming active, the outcome for Slovenia in the EU is not going to match the possibilities EU membership offers to the development of the country.

BACKGROUND FROM SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT PERSPECTIVE

- ✗ End of negotiations (March 2001)
- ✗ Key question
 - + does approximation automatically lead towards higher level of sustainability?

THEORETICALLY YES, BUT



- ✗ TRANSPOSITION AND IMPLEMENTATION OF THE ACQUIS LIMITS THE AVAILABLE (SCARCE) RESOURCES FOR ALL OTHER ACTIVITIES
- ✗ INCREASED INSTITUTIONAL DEFICIT!!

CHALLENGES AHEAD

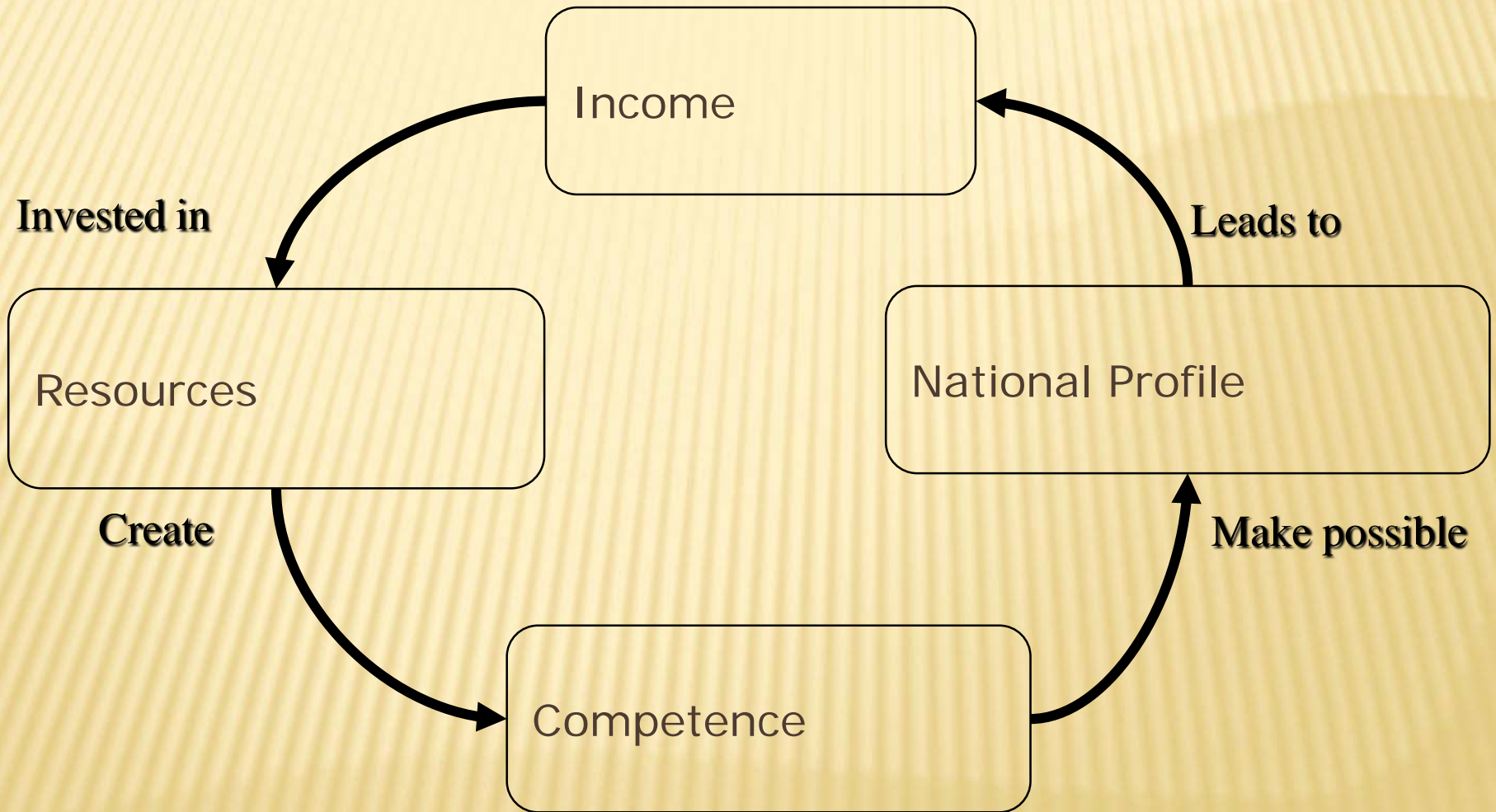


- ❖ HOW TO STIMULATE THE SUSTAINABLE PATH OF DEVELOPMENT?
- HOW TO ACTIVATE ALL POTENTIALS *BEYOND FORMAL REQUESTS* (BUT STILL IN THE SPIRIT OF THE ACQUIS)

PROJECT OBJECTIVES

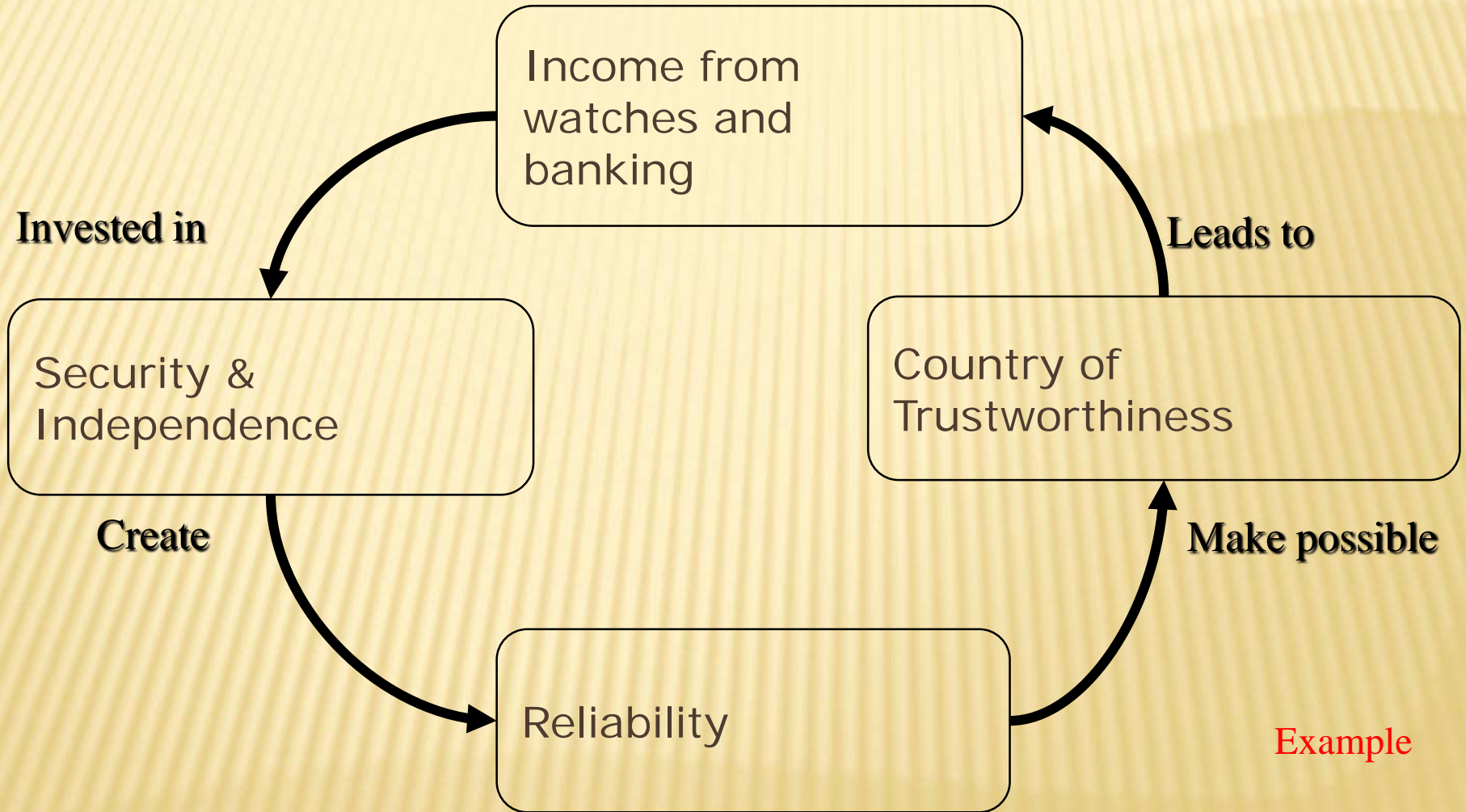
- ✗ Raise awareness of the coming EU membership within Slovenian society
- ✗ Clarify and make explicit the implications for Slovenian society and its members
- ✗ Clarify and make explicit what the actors within society need to do to turn Slovenia's EU membership into a success
- ✗ Create incentives and support for implementation
- ✗ Most importantly: involve society and its actors as much as possible
- ✗ We have to be honest: sustainable development was not emphasised at the beginning of the project

NATIONAL DYNAMICS VISION





DYNAMIC VISION OF SWITZERLAND



VISION SLOVENIA



THE VISION SLOVENIA

BRDO, 6 December 2003

Slovenia is not a government or a parliament, but two million of its citizens. They have already gathered enough courage and vision to attain their independence once. And no doubt they will manage to gather it again to position their country successfully in the European environment and the world.

A vision can only be successful if it is designed by the citizens, if they can see in it the fulfilment of their wishes and expectations. To realise the vision, one needs courage and self-confidence. And no doubt Slovenia has them both. It has immensely rich nature and culture, and what is more, competent and resilient people who already underwent some serious trials.

This vision incorporates our competitive advantages and new challenges. We live at the crossroads of different cultures and traffic routes. Richness and beauty of a diverse nature and rich cultural heritage mean more than a solid basis for a successful integration into the European family of nations.

Slovenia should become an area where the world comes together. Where the most successful global enterprises aspire to operate, where the toughest peace agreements are concluded. An area from where ideas of peace and cooperation propagate and where people could still enjoy in unspoiled nature and hospitality.

To achieve this, we have to preserve the magnificence and diversity of our nature and culture. With a feeling and sense for the environment, we have to develop the necessary infrastructure and build our future assisted by science and research closely related with practice.

Of course it is the people who should be in the focus of attention. Investing in their knowledge, allowing them a lifelong learning, personal development, building of self-confidence is an imperative. Only in this manner, they may be active citizens able to efficiently manage themselves, Slovenia and Europe.

This will allow us to build an open and creative society where people from all over the world would meet and enjoy sincere hospitality.

The vision is here. And we have all the means to fulfil it. What we need is a desire and determination. We must not wait for the authorities to do it for us. The vision can only become a reality if it is realised by the people.

VISION SLOVENIA AND SD

- ✗ The day after

- + Fear from devaluation

- ✗ EU elections

- ✗ Parliamentary elections

- + Permanent promotion and implementation, no formal decisions so far

POWER FOR IMPLEMENTATION (CASE: NATURA 2000)

- ✗ Vision Slovenia is more than just an intellectual game
- ✗ Background
 - + 35% of the country designated as NATURA 2000
 - + Obstacle or a chance?
 - + Different meanings of development

VOLOVJA REBER CASE



What are the needs of future generations?

To achieve this, we have to preserve the magnificence and diversity of our nature and culture. With a feeling and sense for the environment, we have to develop the necessary infrastructure and build our future assisted by science and research closely related with practice.



THE POWER OF ACTIVE CITIZENS



- ✗ It is easy to get a consensus on words like sustainable development, social rights, environmental protection etc.
- ✗ In reality, support dropped immediately after objectives have been transferred into measures
- ✗ Strengthening the bottom-up approach can be a tool towards consensus building (making changes happen)

IT WAS THE PRESENTATION.....

- ✗ABOUT FACTS
- ✗ HUGE POTENTIALS IN IDEAS GENERATED WITHIN UNIQUE PERIOD
- ✗ MANY OF THOSE IDEAS ARE GONE, DISPERSED WHEN FACING THE REALITY
- ✗ MANY ACTORS DIDNT UNDERSTAND THAT THE WINDOW OF OPPORTUNITIES IS OPEN ONLY FOR A SHOR PERIOD OF TIME
- ✗ I HAVE NO INSIGHT INTO THE GOV / CSO DIALOG
- ✗ MORE OPTIMISTIC ON THE VISION

I didnt want to be pessimistic - opposite



**“Historia magistra
vitae est”**

Marcus Tullius Cicero



THANK YOU FOR LISTENING