



**The Unger Program** at the Maxine Goodman Levin College of Urban Affairs was originally founded in 2002 as the Unger International Program for Local Government Leadership with the mission to catalyze an educational bridge between the Levin College and the University of Rijeka. The program was a collaborative effort of the Levin College to respond to the consulting, training, research and educational needs of local government leaders in emerging democracies. The program worked with university faculties and local government leaders in emerging democracies to develop and implement academic and continuing education programs in public management for future and incumbent officials and managers in local governments and non-government organizations. Today, the program serves to support and foster economic and community development through collaborative research and educational exchanges. The program engages with the Center for Economic Development at Cleveland State University and the Center for Support to Smart and Sustainable Cities at the University of Rijeka.

**Project Summaries:**

**Energy, Oil and Gas Shale Development**

Dr. Lendel research on Energy Economics and Economic Development include research on electricity markets, impact of electricity pricing on manufacturing, industrial water use, and economics of the oil and gas industry. Dr. Lendel was a co-author of the first project assessing the economic impact of the Utica Shale development on the State of Ohio. Over the years, she conducted multiple studies and was invited as a featured speaker over her research in shale upstream, midstream and downstream development on Marcellus and Utica Shale in Ohio, Pennsylvania and West Virginia. She is a consulting expert on international shale development. She assisted in the establishment of the shale-related research center at the University of Oil and Gas in Ukraine. Dr. Lendel participated as an invited speaker on a number of conferences, workshops and parliamentary hearings and worked closely with Shell and Chevron companies pioneering shale gas development in Ukraine. She conducted a workshop and participated in the development of the legislature for shale development in Colombia. She developed a report on potential economic impact of non-traditional gas development by Shell in Kharkiv Region, Ukraine (with DIXI Group). She participated in US State Department-funded workshop on shale oil and gas development in Bogota, Columbia with the follow up work on adopting their National conventional oil and gas legislative acts to shale oil and gas development. She taught oil and gas economics as professional development courses through CSI Houston consulting firm to Nigerian National Oil and Gas company employees.

**Innovation and Entrepreneurship**

Besides conducting research on entrepreneurship and innovation, Dr. Lendel has been a consultant on these topics to the World Bank, Research Triangle Institute, and CRDF Global by providing research and service via teaching seminars, consulting and evaluating. She taught training seminars on technology transfer, product development, startup teams, and commercialization in Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, and Tajikistan. Dr. Lendel was a program manager for economic development in the largest technical assistance of CIDA in Ukraine Small Business and Economic Development of Ivano-Frankivsk, Ukraine (SBEDIF) (\$5.5 million project), and she consulted in follow-up project SBEDIF-Regional Network on behalf of University of Waterloo, Canada. She has an on-going project with Republic of Georgia assisting in creating entrepreneurship ecosystem in universities and regions.

**Iryna V. Lendel, Ph.D.**

Director, The Center for Economic Development  
Research Associate Professor, Graduate Faculty  
Maxine Goodman Levin College of Urban Affairs  
Cleveland State University  
216.875,9967 i.lendel@csuohio.edu

Dr. Lendel is an economist with vast experience in teaching and conducting academic and applied

research in the field of economic development. She has a Ph.D. in Urban Studies and Public Affairs with a concentration in Economic Development from CSU (2008). She also has a Ph.D. in Economics from the National Science Academy of Ukraine (1995). Her teaching experience comes from two systems of education and from various audiences. She was an associate professor in the department of economics and management in Ivano-Frankivsk National Technical University of Oil and Gas in Ukraine, where she taught core and specialty courses (Economics of Oil and Gas Production, Microeconomics, Mathematical Methods for Production Systems, Econometrics, Labor Economics, and Research Methods) and supervised graduate students. Besides conducting courses in academic environment, Dr. Lendel taught multiple short-term seminars and courses for businessmen, government representatives, non-profit sector and economic development specialists while serving as a manager of economic development program of the largest Canadian technical assistance project to Ukraine (SBEDIF-1996/2000, SBEDIF-RN-2000/2007), in multiple countries for CRDF Global (2001/2013), SCI (2015/2017), and currently in Republic of Georgia (2018/2020). Dr. Lendel's research portfolio includes projects on regional economic development, industrial analysis (the oil and gas industry, steel industry, high-tech industries, art industries and re-emerging optics industry), innovation economy, entrepreneurship ecosystem, and the energy policy and economics. She was a principal investigator on over 30 large projects, often including researchers from multiple universities.



### **Territorial-Administrative Reform of Local Government**

In 2010 and 2014 Dr. Drezgic was invited to consult on territorial and administrative organization under the United Nations Development Program (UNDP) for Support to the State Chancellery in Decentralization/local Public Policy Formulation and Implementation. This project focused on territorial-administrative reform and inter-municipal cooperation. Engaged as an International expert, he was responsible for providing high quality consultancy services on administrative-territorial aspects of decentralization reform in the country, and for the design of inputs for the country's Decentralization Reform Strategy in accordance with the official vision. He developed analytical products in the form of advisory notes, reviews, assessments leading to policy papers, as well as direct ad-hoc strategic advice as required by the target beneficiaries. In 2014, as an International Expert for the Joint International Local Development Program (JLDP), he was responsible for conducting an economic impact analysis on the territorial administrative reorganization in the Republic of Moldova.

### **Reform of the Tax System**

In 2006 Dr. Drezgic was a key expert on reforming the fiscal equalization system in Croatia under a project led by the Urban Institute Croatia and funded by USAID. The scope of his work included reviewing, collecting data, and analyzing the system of corporate income and personal income tax redistribution in Croatia. Based on this analysis, an optimal mechanism of vertical financial equalization was proposed. The proposed project was successfully implemented by the Government of Croatia in 2007. Based on simulations conducted, corporate income tax became revenue of the central government and part of the personal income tax became local government revenue.

#### **Sasa Drezgic, Ph.D.**

Director, The Center for Support to Smart and Sustainable Cities  
Associate Professor  
Faculty of Economics and Business  
University of Rijeka  
385 51 263 583 sasa.drezgic@efri.hr

**Dr. Drezgic** is an Associate Professor at the Faculty of Economics and Business at the University of Rijeka. Dr. Drezgic obtained his PhD in 2008 in the field of public finance at the Faculty of Economics, University of Ljubljana, Slovenia. From 2010 to 2015 he

was an assistant professor teaching Public finance, Fiscal policy, and Economics and policy of investments. He became an associate professor in 2015. In 2006, he was a research fellow at Maxine Levine Goodman College of Urban Affairs at Cleveland State University where he started his PhD program. During 2009 and 2010, he was a visiting fellow at the Global Governance Center at London School of Economics and Political Science. He became the Vice Editor-in-Chief of Proceedings of Faculty of Economics Journal of business and administration in 2010 and in 2017 became the Editor-in-Chief. From 2013 to 2016, he was the Director of Center of local economic development of Faculty of Economics University of Rijeka. Dr. Drezgic was a Deputy Minister of Finance of the Republic of Croatia from May 2016 until February 2017. In February 2018 he was appointed as head of the Center for the support to smart and sustainable cities at the University of Rijeka. During his academic career, he has been a consultant in a number of projects mainly in the field of local economic development, with funded by Croatian Ministry of Science, Education, and Sport, the USAID, UNDP, GIZ and other institutions and donors. He is also an author of more than 30 publications in the field of fiscal policy, local government finance, public investments and infrastructure finance and economic development issues.

### **Regulation on Private Public Partnerships (PPPs)**

In 2014-2015 the Agency for Investment and Competitiveness of Republic of Croatia engaged Dr. Drezgic for support in drafting the following acts: Public Private Partnership Act OG 78/2012 - Act on amendments to the Act on PPP, OG 152/2014 and regulations: Ordinance on small value PPP projects, OG 23/2015; Regulation on amendments to the regulation on the implementation of PPP projects, OG 15/2015; He also provided support in preparation of manuals: Manual 1: Discounting and discount rate in public-private partnership projects, Manual 5: Determining the affordability of the local and regional self-government (LRS) in public private partnership, Manual 9: Preparation and implementation of public investments (Public-Private Partnership Projects), Manual 8: Risks in projects of public-private partnership (identification, quantification, allocation), Manual 11: Combining the Public-Private Partnership model with EU funds. Regulation on PPPs in Croatia was declared by EBRD as one of the best in Europe. Since 2012 Dr. Drezgic has been active in practice as a consultant for the implementation of several projects related to street lighting. He was also a consultant for revision of statistical treatment of concessionary contracts under EUROSTAT rules.

### **Regional and Local Economic Development**

In 2017 Dr. Drezgic participated in several projects conducted for the Ministry of Regional Development and EU Funds of Republic of Croatia. The first project was devising statistical software necessary for generating economic development rankings of local governments in Croatia and involved creating a new methodology of ranking for regional and local governments based on the Mazziota-Pareto index. The results of several studies were used for generating various programs for these areas of Croatia. These activities were conducted by the Center for Local Economic Development, which was founded by Dr. Drezgic.

### **Developing Business Friendly Local Governments**

Since 2012 Dr. Drezgic has been implementing the Business Friendly Certification South East Europe (BFC SEE) project in Croatia. The project was originally initiated in Serbia in 2009 under USAID programming and funding. More than 20 local governments were enrolled, 9 of which received certification. The project is still active and very successful. Some of the local governments certified won prestigious ranking within Financial Times rankings of local governments.