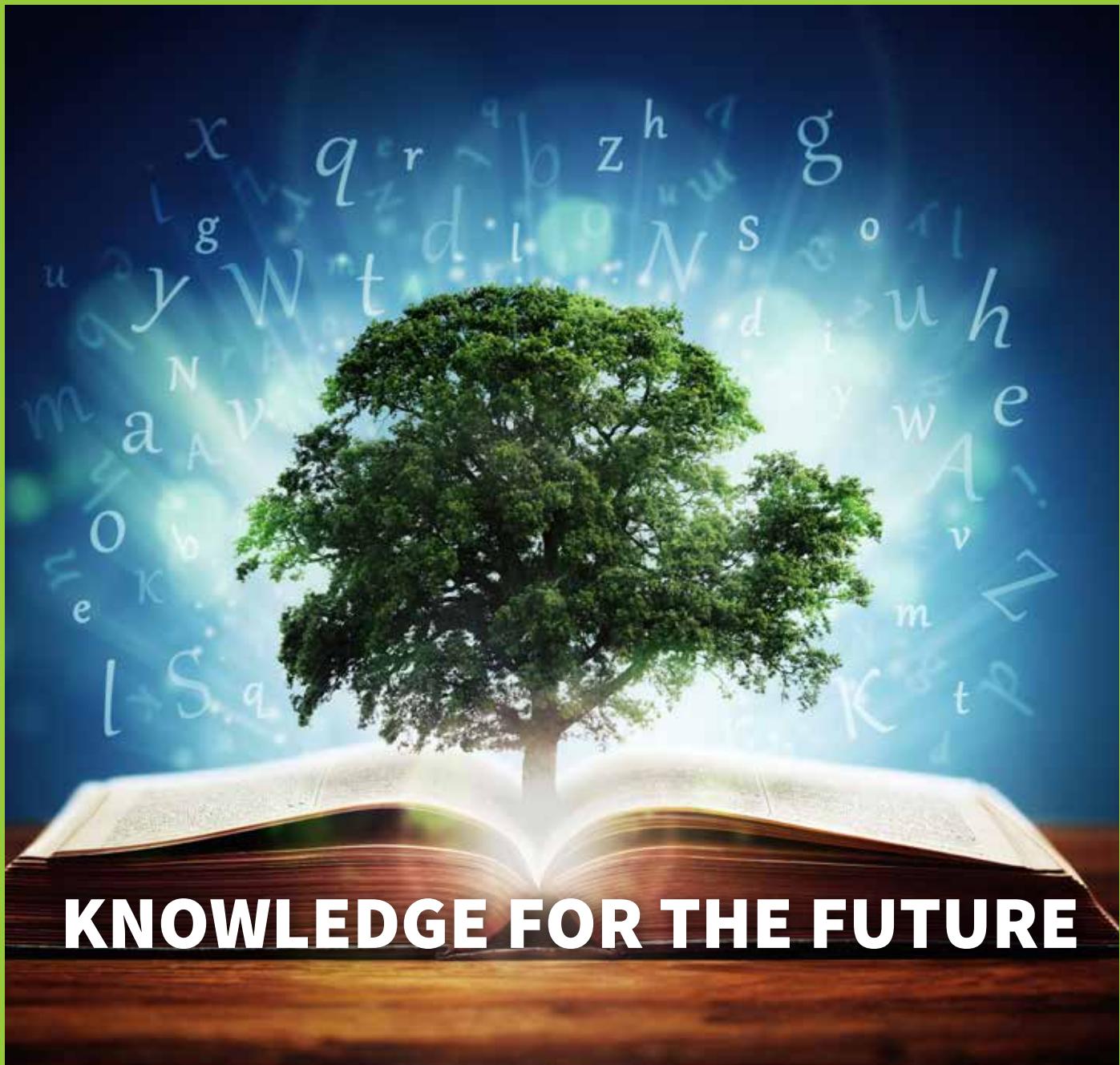


# Discover Slovenia

## International Edition



### KNOWLEDGE FOR THE FUTURE

November 2021

Slovenian Economy  
**Growth Outlook Improved**

Interview  
**The Term “Climate Crisis”  
Is Spot On**

Success  
**Connecting Slovenia  
and the World**

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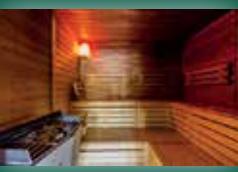
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## **“We Can Think Outside the Box”**

Success

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Expo 2020

**51**



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Interview

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November 2021

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A close-up photograph of two Akrapovič exhaust system components against a bright yellow background. On the left, a large cylindrical canister with a textured surface and a black mesh diffuser at the bottom. On the right, a smaller, more compact canister with a similar design. The lighting highlights the metallic textures and the 'AKRAPOVIĆ' branding.

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**Editorial**

# Into a Green and Smart Future Together!

The world has found itself at an interesting stage in time. We are in the grip of the COVID-19 pandemic, which has forced us to take a different approach to many things than we have in the past. At the same time, we are already getting back on our feet and dealing with the consequences of the pandemic. We have thus found ourselves at a point in time when it is important to be persistent, open minded, receptive to new approaches and recognize that in the period that lies ahead we all need to operate as a well-coordinated team. This is the right time to strengthen the bonds we have created and seize the new opportunities that come our way.

The Slovenian private sector is good at taking on challenges and overcoming obstacles, which it has already proved many times. Ever since the COVID-19 pandemic started to cause problems, companies have managed to prevent the virus from disrupting their operations by introducing appropriate measures and adjustments. Ultimately, this is also confirmed by economic growth projections. CCIS Analytics and the International Monetary Fund predict a 6.3% economic growth for 2021, which is slightly higher than the Slovenian Institute of Macroeconomic Analysis and Development's projection of 6.1%. The forecast for 2022 is also optimistic. According to Consensus Economics's forecast of September 2021, the predicted economic growth in 2022 is going to be 4.2%, whereas CCIS Analytics forecasts it at 4.4%. Even more optimistic is the forecast by the International Monetary Fund (as of October 2021), which anticipates a 4.6% economic growth, and by the Slovenian Institute of Macroeconomic Analysis and Development (as of September 2021), which predicts an economic growth of 4.7%.

However, it is not only numbers that make up a country's economy. There are people behind these numbers, along with their labour, ideas and enthusiasm. There is certainly no lack of ideas and visions

among Slovenian companies. They prove this every year through innovations, which are the fruit of their hard work. New innovations pave the way into a new reality. Every year, the Slovenian Chamber of Commerce awards the best innovators and in this way acknowledges their achievements. This time around, nine national innovation awards, thirty-one silver awards and one special innovation challenge recognition have been presented. The array of innovations competing for the national awards shows there is hardly an area where Slovenian companies do not provide new or breakthrough solutions. Slovenia has a wide and varied range of companies that can produce successful innovations covering an extremely broad area of expertise.

This breadth is one of the qualities that make them so successful. Slovenian businesses can respond and adapt quickly to the requirements of customers and the market. In addition to this flexibility, they are good at searching for solutions outside the box, which allows them to find optimal solutions more quickly. Because of the specific features of the domestic market and their international market orientation, Slovenian companies are accustomed to operating under demanding conditions, which makes them tough and resilient. They are looking ahead into the future, which is why they can address all the important issues introduced by the present, in which the world is trying to find solutions to overcome the climate crisis. According to Slovenian climatologist Lučka Kajfež Bogataj, co-recipient of the 2007 Nobel Peace Prize, the only way out of this crisis is to forge connections and cooperate globally.

We must step into a green and smart future together. With their experience and excellent geostrategic location, Slovenian companies can offer a lot. A fragment of this is presented on the following pages, but there is plenty more we can show you. Come and get to know us. I am sure you will enjoy it! ■



Photo: Arnež Petkovšek

**We have found ourselves at a point in time when it is important to be persistent, open minded, receptive to new approaches and recognize that in the period that lies ahead we all need to operate as a well-coordinated team.**

Barbara Perko  
Acting editor-in-chief



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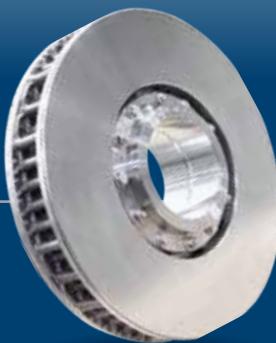


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## Slovenian Economy

# Growth Outlook Improved Due to Rising Domestic Household Consumption, Coupled with Pro-cyclical Fiscal Policy

**By July 2021, Slovenia's GDP exceeded the pre-pandemic level. In 2021, GDP should increase by 6.3%, followed by a 4.4% increase in 2022, according to our central estimate.**

*Bojan Ivanc, CFA, CAIA, Chief Economist at the Chamber of Commerce and Industry's Analytics Department*

### Strong Manufacturing Base Cushioned the Decline in 2020 and Improved Medium-term Outlook

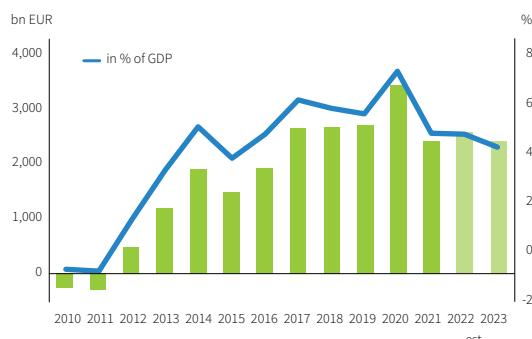
The Slovenian economy grew 3.4% annually over the period 2014-2019, although this was interrupted by the sudden outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic, which has caused a recession in all the major world economies, with the exception of China. Slovenia took containment measures similar to other EU countries, with similar economic effects. Slovenia's GDP dropped by 4.2% in 2020, which is lower than the -6.1% at the EU-27 level (-4.8% change for an average country), mostly due to a 6% fall in household consumption. The drop was lower compared to initial estimates (-5.5%) and that was due to revision of household consumption, which fell less than expected.

A major turnaround quarter was Q2 2021, when GDP increased by 8.5% quarter on quarter (+16.3% year on year), which pushed GDP to a level (may be

subject to revision) where it would be reasonable to estimate 6-7% growth in 2021. This has led to several months of upgrades in growth outlook, despite headwinds as news of chips (some automotive manufacturers stopped producing), high energy prices (gasoline, electricity and gas), and delays in value

**Between 2021-2023, an average annual 4.7% GDP growth rate is expected.**

### Current Account Balance

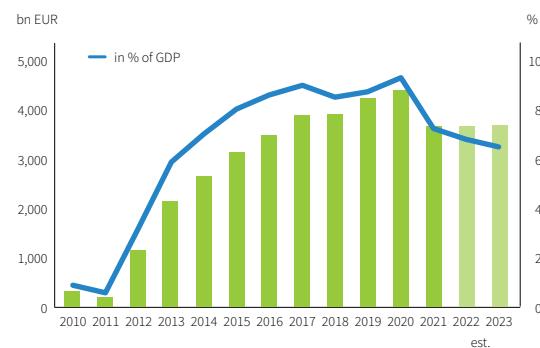


chains, all of which hurt the manufacturing sector. Despite that, manufacturing output should increase by 9% in 2021, followed by 4% growth in 2022.

The **mean consensus estimate** for 2021 GDP growth stands currently (Sept. 2021) at 5.5%, with a lower bound at 4.3% and an upper bound at 7.1%. In addition, growth in 2022 should come strong, namely at 4.2% (our estimates are stronger for both years).

Containment measures were largely removed in spring 2021 and in autumn 2021, as PCT criterion was put in place (only persons that were vaccinated against, recovered from, or tested for COVID-19 are allowed to enter some facilities or consume some services). Nevertheless this had a fairly limited negative impact on the economy.

### Trade Balance, Goods and Services



### Fiscal and Monetary Stimulus

To alleviate the negative consequences of the pandemic, comprehensive packages of measures have been adopted at state levels and by the ECB and European Commission to help businesses and citizens bridge liquidity problems due to loss of income and support a rebound in economic activity. In 2021, pension payments were adjusted upwards, which together with one-off discretionary spending for public workers helped to fuel the rise in household consumption. Average gross wage increased by 5.7% in 2021 (by 5.5% in private sector and by 6.3% in public sector), but the growth should recede in 2022, mainly due to a lack of effect of one-off discretionary spending for public workers.

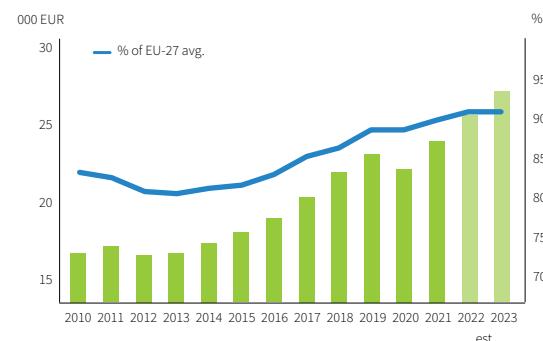
Tourism vouchers that were not consumed by households in 2020 (half of total) as well as service vouchers (lower nominal value) helped to counter the effect of weak foreign tourism spending in 2021 as well and added to the demand for services that suffered the most from the pandemic (leisure, sports, culture, restaurants, etc.).

In addition, a very important aspect of the economic recovery has been the job market, which supported consumer sentiment. The average number of registered active persons (employees and self-employed) is expected to increase by 0.9% to 897 thousand in 2021, followed by a 1.1% increase in 2022, which is explained by high demand for workers in almost all sectors, most notably in services, manufacturing and construction. In addition, the public sector is expected to add to these job numbers, as

**Private companies should increase their EBITDA by 6% in 2021 and by 7.5% in 2022.**

**Average CPI (growth in average prices of consumer goods and services) in 2021 at 1.6% and 2.1% in 2022.**

### GDP per Capita



Slovenia will conduct 3 important elections in 2022: for President, General Assembly and local municipalities. The ILO unemployment rate should fall to 4.6% in 2021 and to 4.3% in 2022, and we forecast the job market prospering until 2023. 2023 and later years will bring some headwinds, mostly due to the necessity to follow a more prudent fiscal policy.

What the monetary policy concerns the membership in the euro area brings large benefits for Slovenia in terms of low costs of government funding and cheap refinancing as average interest rate on a sovereign 10-year bond came at about 0% in 2021 and credit spread vs. Bunds dropped to about 30 to 35 basis points, which can be defined as low sovereign risk. Low interest rate environment also helped to lengthen the average maturity of sovereign debt to about 10 years. This is a very important element that provides some stability vis-à-vis current market terms, which may change for a variety of reasons.

According to preliminary data from the Fiscal Council (October 2021), 28,000 employees (4% of total) took part in job retention measures in June 2021. At the end of June, the measure of subsidising temporary lay-offs came to an end, while in July and August there was a significant drop in the number of claims for compensation due to reduced working time and quarantine. The transition from the support measure of subsidising temporary lay-offs proved to be successful. Until Q3 2021, a reduced working time mechanism will remain in place, largely to protect employment in the automotive sector, where monthly fluctuations in production are high.

### Fiscal Supporting Measures to Fight COVID Touched a 10% Milestone in September 2021

The Fiscal Council estimates that, between March 2020 and September 2021, total COVID measures amounted to about 10% of GDP (EUR 4.7 bn). About half was implemented in 2020 and the second half in 2021. Around 40% of all measures were those that helped to preserve jobs (EUR 1.9 bn). Measures that helped to smooth the operations of public services amounted to EUR 1.5 billion (32%) and the most important item was employee bonuses (EUR 900 m), followed by control of the pandemic (protective equipment, etc.) at EUR 375 m. Measures to boost demand amounted to EUR 450 million and mostly comprised 2 vouchers. In addition, EUR 700 m was

the amount of measures to protect the liquidity of businesses, which comprised reimbursement of fixed costs, deferred payment of taxes (these are not an expenditure item), and uncalculated advance payment of corporate income tax liabilities (not an expenditure as well).

It is very important to stress that the national fiscal rule will not be applied in 2021 and 2022 (use of general escape clause), as confirmed by messages from the European Commission (June 2021) and the Fiscal Council. Fitch Ratings affirmed Slovenia's long-term foreign-currency Issuer Default Rating (IDR) at 'A', with a stable outlook.

#### GDP Expected to Increase by One Sixth by 2023

Our base case scenario for 2021 is a growth in GDP of about 6.3%, which is a significant upgrade vs. the spring estimate (4.7%) and is mainly attributable to higher estimates of growth in household spending (+5.8%, followed by +4.8% in 2022), whereas we retained optimism with regards to gross investments, which should pick-up by 10% in 2021 and another 7.5% in 2022. We also upgraded our estimates of exports of goods and services (+10% in 2021 and +5.6% in 2022), which was largely driven by a more optimistic view of manufacturing, trading exports as well as exports of services, particularly foreign tourism spending. A more optimistic view of house-

#### Ranking



hold consumption, exports and investments is also driving up our estimates of imports. Real imports should increase by 11.5% in 2021 and 5.9% in 2022, whereas nominal growth should be higher (+16.5% in 2021 and +8.5% in 2022), accounting for the fact of higher growth in imported prices. Within imports, goods are expected to post higher growth in 2022 and 2023, mainly due to the uptick in foreign tourism, but as well as from transport services and intellectual services.

**Value of construction works likely to be higher by 2% in 2021 and by 10% in 2022.**

#### Labour Market and Productivity Outlook for 2021

Improved demand in manufacturing, the construction sector and other services is expected to increase the number of foreigners working on Slovenian job market by about 21,000 in 2021 and additional 8,500

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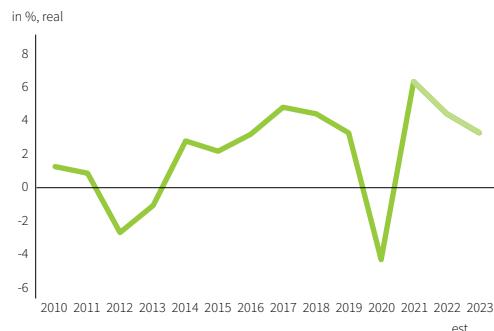
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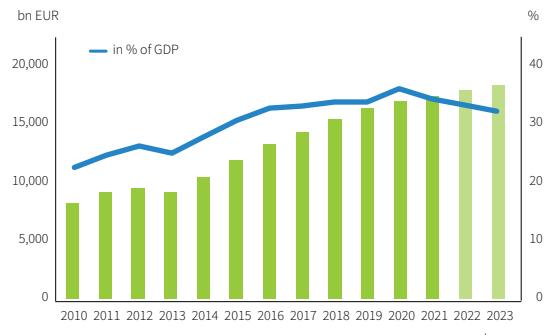
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**GDP Growth**

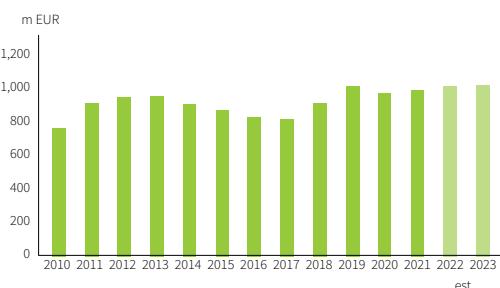
**Industrial production in manufacturing likely up by 9% in 2021 and by 4% in 2022.**

in 2022. Slovenian private companies managed to achieve EUR 93.5 bn of revenues and EUR 24 bn of gross value added (59% of national economy) in 2020. They employed 510 thousand employees (measured by working hours), 10,000 less than in 2019 and exported EUR 40 bn of goods and services. The pandemic greatly affected the top-line (sales), a consequence of weak domestic and foreign demand, which was itself a consequence of lockdown measures and other uncertainties, especially during Q2 2020. Government fiscal support measures cushioned largely the effect on gross value added, which shrank only by 1%. Taking advantage of support measures did influence the EBITDA, which shrank by 6.3% because of higher labour costs and other business costs. Labour productivity increased in 2020 by 0.9%, which was a consequence of furlough schemes and a reasonably limited drop in gross value added. In 2021, productivity should increase by 5% and in the year after by 4%. A very important thing to note is that the net deleveraging of corporate sector also occurred in 2020, as net debt-to-EBITDA dropped from 2.3 to 2.2, mainly due to an increase in cash reserves and a small drop in financial debt. The current ratio improved at the same time to 1.5, an all-time-high, which also reflects the extensive support measures. Companies have not shrunk their investment budgets much in 2020, as they invested EUR 5 bn (5.4% of annual sales), which was at the same level as the 10-year average.

In 2021, private sector sales should increase by 8.5%, EBITDA by 6% and investments by 8%. Three main challenges of the private sector remain the threat of another wave of COVID-19 infections, limited availability (for 1/3 of companies) of commodities as

**Inward FDI Stock**

well as their high prices. Slovenian manufacturing sector largely imports commodities (higher prices affect the gross margin negatively) and delays in shipping of vital inputs from Asia and Europe also brought additional headwinds to some companies although overall growth in output nevertheless remained strong. We believe that manufacturing (electronics, machinery, pharmaceutical, insulation building materials), online retail, truck haulage, IT and construction are remained to be resilient and high growth sectors, despite a possible next wave of lock-down measures in autumn 2021 or later.

**R&D Expenditure****Effects of the Pandemic on Regional Value Chains**

The coronavirus crisis has also brought some new opportunities to Slovenia and the CEE region. The shortening and shifting of global value chains, i.e. a shift to suppliers in closer geographical proximity, which in fact already started before the pandemic, presents an opportunity for higher economic growth by attracting FDI in the medium term, as the country could attract investment from companies from Western Europe and Asia, given its well-developed infrastructure, high-quality workforce and EU/OECD/NATO membership. The extraordinary financial package (the Next Generation EU) agreed in July 2020 and, over the medium term, the new multi-annual financial framework also provide an opportunity to address development challenges. These include, in particular, strengthening support for research and development, innovation and the digital transformation to enhance productivity; the green transformation with the transition to more sustainable economic development; and systemic adjustments to social protection systems, which are for the most part dictated by demographic trends. Investment will remain an important driver of growth over the medium term, supported by various EU programmes. Slovenia is entitled to receive EUR 2.4 billion (5.1% of 2020 GDP) in grants from Next Generation EU (NGEU) and has requested EUR 700 million in loans from the Recovery and Resilience Facility (RRF). Fitch estimates that the grant component could add up to 0.5pp per year to headline growth in 2022-2025 (assuming a multiplier close to one). ■

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#### Economic Co-operation

# The Performance of Slovenian Firms Strongly Dependent on European Customers

**Goods flows have already surpassed pre-crisis level, service flows to follow in 2022. A sharp decline in the volume of exports and imports was felt in 2020 due to negative impacts from the international environment and from foreign and domestic containment measures. The gradual rise of vaccination rates and the subsequent revival of the economy following the lifting of containment measures resulted, in 2021, in a greater boost to trade in goods as well as the majority of trade in services.**

*Darja Močnik, Analytical Department, Chamber of Commerce and Industry of Slovenia*

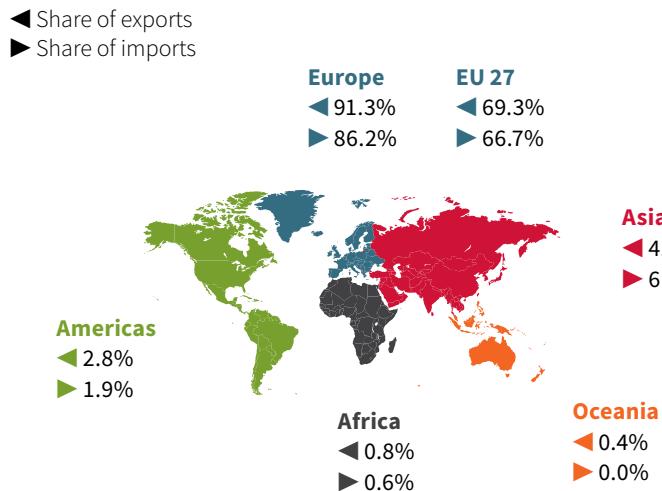
The COVID-19 pandemic has revealed how interconnected and interdependent Slovenia is not only in relation to the EU states, where our country conducts over two-thirds of its trade, but also in relation to other continents that supply Slovenia with raw materials and parts (e.g. semi-conductors) that are vital for all-round product development. Increasingly, companies are striving to establish shorter value chains and are seeking suppliers in Europe, as 2021 has been characterised by major issues with product and raw material deliverability in the wake of supply chains being cut off and prices of raw materials going up. By diversifying their markets, forging links and engaging in other forms of cooperation, firms could reduce their risks and their dependence.

The value of Slovenia's import and export of goods and services decreased in 2020 compared to 2019, mainly due to weakened demand following the emergence of the coronavirus. Realistically, the export of

goods and services went down 8.7% (10.1% nominally), while the import of goods and services went down 9.6% (11.6% nominally). In 2020, the total value of goods and services export in Slovenia accounted for 77.9%, while the value of goods and services import made up 68.7% of the GDP. In 2019, Slovenia's foreign trade was at its highest since the gaining of independence, which was followed by a decline in 2020 due to the COVID-19 pandemic, especially in terms of services, but also in goods trade. In 2021, the goods trade already recovered to the pre-pandemic level. Export of goods and services amounted to EUR 36.5 billion in 2020, while import generated EUR 32.2 billion. According to CCIS Analytics, goods and services exports will rise, realistically, by 10.2% in 2021, while imports will be up by 11.5%. In 2022, trade should be lower but still historically above-average. Exports of goods and services should go up 5.6%, while imports should increase by 5.9%.

**Slovenia does 89% of its trade with Europe.**

### Breakdown of Slovenia's Trade by Continent, 2020



Source: Statistical Office of the Republic of Slovenia, ITGS methodology

### The COVID-19 Epidemic Caused a Temporary Decline in Goods Flows in 2020, While 2021 Sees the Pre-crisis Level Surpassed

Restrictions in international trade and the partial shutdown in many economic sectors had a major impact on trade in 2020. According to the Statistical Office of the Republic of Slovenia, Slovenia's 2020 goods exports were down EUR 32.9 billion or 1.9% on 2019, while imports were down EUR 32.1 billion or 5.8% compared to 2019. In terms of value, the greatest increase was recorded in the export of medical and pharmaceutical products, especially with Switzerland (a non-EU country), which also contributed the most to the total value of exports analysed by the Statistical Office, although a large part is attributable to re-exports<sup>1</sup>. Goods trade in 2020 was characterised by exports declining less than imports on 2019. In 2020, Slovenia generated a total goods trade surplus of EUR 813.8 million, which

**Over the first eight months of 2021, the export of goods was up 19%, while the export of services was up 12%.**

is the second largest amount of the past decade. A trade surplus was generated in trading with both EU Member States and non-EU countries. Amongst Slovenia's main trading partners, exports to Germany and Switzerland recorded the highest growth, while exports to Italy and France were down compared to 2019. Imports from Switzerland and China grew the most, while imports from Austria, Italy and Croatia fell relative to 2019.

Large exporting and importing companies (0.9% of exporters and 0.5% of importers), though relatively modest in number, contributed a substantial share of the value of total export and import. Exports by large companies made up 50.2% of the total export value, while these companies' imports comprised 42.9% of total import. Together, small and micro companies have contributed over a fifth of the total export value and nearly a third of the total import value. Companies that both export and import goods generated 94.9% of Slovenia's total exports and 92.4% of imports in 2020.

In terms of total goods export, the most important products in 2020 were medical and pharmaceutical products (ranking second in previous years), followed by road vehicles, and electrical machinery and devices. Likewise, in total goods import, the most important products were medical and pharmaceutical products (ranking second in previous years), followed by road vehicles, and oil and refined petroleum products.

### Gradual Lifting of Containment Measures Due to Vaccination Strengthened Services Export

The lifting of containment measures, greater vaccination rates, as well as growth in export orders and demand all affected the strong reboot of trade in goods. In the first eight months of 2021, exports were up 19.5%, while imports were up 26.9% compared to the same period in 2020. Slovenia has already surpassed the level of pre-pandemic goods trade in both exports and imports. In the first eight months of 2021, the goods trade deficit stood at EUR 0.3 billion, while the coverage of imports by exports was 98.6%. Export of goods with the EU-27 went up in the first eight months of 2021 by 18.7%, and by 21% with non-EU states compared to the same period the year before.

### Slovenia's Global Goods Trade, 2020

Continent/group of countries	Export of goods (in EUR million)	Share of export (%)	Import of goods (in EUR million)	Share of import (%)	Difference between export and import of goods (in EUR million)
<b>Total</b>	<b>32,925</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>32,111</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>187</b>
Europe	29,944	90.9	27,434	85.4	2,511
of which: EU-27	21,995	66.8	21,606	67.3	389
Asia	1,664	5.1	3,620	11.3	-1.957
Africa	285	0.9	218	0.7	67
Americas	856	2.6	573	1.8	283
Oceania	123	0.4	8	0	116

Source: Statistical Office of the Republic of Slovenia, including re-export

### Slovenia's Global Services Trade, 2020 (EUR mil)

	Services surplus/deficit (in EUR million)	Services export (EUR mil)	Services import (EUR mil)	Share of total services export (%)	Share of total services import (%)
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,995.6</b>	<b>6,899.9</b>	<b>4,904.4</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>
Europe	1,907.0	6,365.5	4,458.5	92.3	90.9
EU-27	1,775.1	5,328.9	3,553.8	77.2	72.5
EFTA	239.3	478.6	239.3	6.9	4.9
Other European countries	-107.3	558.1	665.4	8.1	13.6
Asia	21.9	255.5	233.6	3.7	4.8
Africa	4.3	21.1	16.9	0.3	0.3
Americas	121.9	227.2	105.2	3.3	2.1
Oceania	11.9	18.6	6.8	0.3	0.1

Source: Bank of Slovenia

The goods trade is also growing in imports, as private consumption and investments are on the rise as well. Goods imports from the EU-27 were up 23.8%, while imports from non-EU countries were up 33.6%.

#### Trade in Services Declined in 2020, Especially Travelling

As the pandemic broke out, services trade experienced a major relative downturn, especially due to the decline in incoming tourism. In 2020, Slovenia exported services in the amount of EUR 6.9 billion, and imported services worth EUR 4.9 billion. The export of services was down 20.3% in 2020, while the import of services rose by 14.7%. In 2020, the greatest share of services exports comprised transport services (33.8%), followed by other business services, which mainly include technical, commerce-related and other business services, such as professional and business consultancy (20.9%). This was followed by tourist travel (17.4%), which comprises spending by foreign tourists in Slovenia, telecommunications and computer services (9.6%), and civil engineering services (9.4%).

As the services sector was operational and crossing the national borders was possible over the first eight months of 2021, both under certain conditions, the value of services exports was up 11.9%, whereby the structure of export services did not change significantly compared to 2020 despite certain export services experiencing growth. Over the first eight months of 2021, the export of transport services rose by 14.3%, of personal business services by 23.8%, civil engineering services by 17.7%, and the export of ICT services by 6.9% over the same period in 2020, while the export of travel declined by 5.6%, as the first quarter of 2020 (before the pandemic) was characterised by above-average success for tourism. In 2021, passenger air transport still lags behind the 2020 levels. Compared to 2019, the export of transport services grew (by 5 pp), as did civil engineering services (2.9 pp), other business services (3.7 pp), and ICT services (1.7 pp); as a contrast, export of travel declined significantly (15.3 pp).

In 2020, the largest share in services import is accounted for by the import of transport services

(23%), where the share grew a bit further still in 2021 (reaching 25.9%). Before the pandemic, it accounted for 20.6%. The import of other business services, primarily technical services, services relating to commerce, professional and business consultancy, advertising services, and market research made up for a 31.2% share of services import. The share in tourist travel (spending of Slovenian tourists abroad) accounted for 14.6% in 2020, rising to 16.4% in 2021, whereas the pre-pandemic share was 26.1%. Also significant was the share of import of telecommunications and computer services (12.4%), and of civil engineering services (4.5%). Over the first eight months of this year, the import of transport services rose by 32.6%, of personal business services by 10.3%, of civil engineering services by 33.8%, and of ICT services by 4.5% on the same period in 2020, while the import of travel declined by 3%.

#### Breakdown of Slovenia's Trade by Continent

Slovenia has a markedly export-oriented economy, which means that it is highly exposed to the situation in the international environment. Europe, comprising the EU-27, EFTA and other European countries, is Slovenia's most important economic partner, accounting for 89% of its trade in goods and services. The EU-27 account for 68% of the total. Next comes Asia, which accounts for 5.3% of Slovenia's trade. This is followed by the Americas with 2.4%, Africa with 0.7%, and Oceania with 0.2%.

**Over the first eight months of 2021, the import of goods was up 27%, while the import of services was up 13%.**

#### Europe is Slovenia's Most Important Trading Partner

Due to proximity and connectedness, Slovenia is most involved in international trade flows with Europe. In 2020, Slovenia exported goods worth EUR 30 billion (or 91% of its total goods export) to Europe, and imported goods worth EUR 27 billion (85% of its total goods import) from its home continent. In 2020, Slovenia generated a surplus of EUR 2.5 billion in its total goods trade with Europe<sup>2</sup>. Its goods exports to Europe were down 1.8% in 2020, while its imports

2. Includes trade in goods comprising medical and pharmaceutical products with Switzerland (re-export).

### Changes in Slovenia's Global Trade in Goods and Services

	Change in % (2020/2019)				Change in % (I–VIII 2021/I–VIII 2020)			
	Export of goods	Import of goods	Export of services	Import of services	Export of goods	Import of goods	Export of services	Import of services
Europe	-1.8	-7.6	-19.9	-15.7	19.0	20.9	11.9	13
EU-27	-8.8	-11.6	-20.5	-17.2	18.7	23.8	10.7	11.7
Asia	-0.5	12.9	-22.5	19.4	12.1	63.0	15.5	28.5
Africa	-14.7	-1.7	-22.5	-18.6	25.3	68.9	85.2	68.2
Americas	-4.3	-15.0	-14	-20.9	22.0	12.8	38.2	40
Oceania	13.1	70.2	-33.6	37.5	4.1	-17.7	15.7	53.8

Source: Statistical Office of the Republic of Slovenia, Bank of Slovenia

declined by 7.6%. Compared to the same period in 2020, Slovenia increased goods exports to European countries by 19% and its import of goods by 21% over the first eight months of 2021, as export demand intensified more. In 2020, the export of services to Europe declined by 20% (making up for EUR 6.4 billion), while the import of services declined by 16% (EUR 4.5 billion). Over the first eight months of 2021, Slovenia increased services exports to European countries by 11% and goods imports by 12%, whereby tourist travel has yet to reach the level of the first eight months of 2020.

### Germany, Italy, Austria and Croatia Are the Most Important EU-27 Trading Partners

The EU-27 accounted for 67% of both Slovenia's total goods exports and imports in 2020. Slovenia's goods trade with the EU-27 recorded an 8.8% drop on the export side, reaching the value of EUR 22 billion, and an 11.6% drop on the import side, reaching EUR 21.6 million, in 2020. In its trade with the EU-27, Slovenia recorded a trade surplus of EUR 390 million in 2020. Over the first eight months of 2021, the export of goods to the EU-27 was up 19%, while the import of goods was up 24%.

The export of services to the EU-27 declined by 21% in 2020, mainly due to fewer foreign guests visiting Slovenia, while the import of services declined by 17%. The export of services was revived as the containment measures were lifted. Over the first eight months of 2021, the export of services with the EU-27 was up 10%, while the import of services was up 12%.

The performance of Slovenian businesses depends above all on the four EU-27 countries to which they export close to 45% of all the goods that they sell abroad: Germany (which accounts for 18% of total goods export), Italy (9.3%), Croatia (8%) and Austria (6.4%). Slovenia's largest imports were from Germany (15.7% of total goods import), followed by Italy (11.9%), Austria (9.5%) and Croatia (5%).

### Asia Is Slovenia's Second Most Important Trading Partner

Asia is Slovenia's second-most important continent in terms of goods trade, accounting for 5.1% of its total goods exports and 12.9% of its total goods imports in 2020. Slovenia recorded a deficit of EUR 2 billion in its trade with Asia in 2020. Its goods exports to Asia

were down 0.5% in 2020, but imports were up 12.9%, due to the increased import of textile products (face masks), electrical machinery and chemical products. In the first eight months of 2021, the export of goods was up 4.6%, while imports were up 14.4% compared with the same period of last year. In 2020, the export of services to Asia (accounting for 3.7% of total services) was down 23%, but grew by 16% over the first eight months of 2021. In 2020, the import of services from Asia (accounting for 3.7% of total services) was up 19.4%, and grew by 29% over the first eight months of 2021 compared to the same period of the previous year.

### The Americas Are Slovenia's Third Most Important Trading Partner

The Americas represent the third most important market for Slovenia in terms of goods trade, accounting for 2.6% of Slovenia's total goods export and 1.8% of its total goods import in 2020. In fact, it has been estimated that the final share of exports is double the above value, as part of Slovenia's goods export to the EU is integrated in complex products exported by multinationals from developed countries. In its 2020 trade with the Americas, Slovenia generated a surplus of EUR 283 million (a surplus of EUR 452 million with North and Central America, and a deficit of EUR 169 million with South America). The Americas are important for Slovenia because of the region's cultural links with Europe, and their increasing global political importance. In 2020, goods exports to North and Central America declined by 1.3%, and goods exports to South America by 24%. Import from North and Central America was down 28%, while import from South America was up 7.7%. The first eight months of 2021 saw a major rise in goods imports from the Americas by 13%, while exports to the Americas were up 22%. A 2020 decline in services trade with the Americas (-14% in export of services, -21% in import of services) was followed by a boost in 2021. Over the first eight months of 2021, the import/export of services to/from the Americas was up around 40% compared to the same period of the previous year. ■

**The performance of Slovenian businesses depends above all on the four EU-27 countries to which they export close to 45% of all the goods that they sell abroad: Germany, Italy, Croatia and Austria.**



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#### Demographics and Qualifications in Slovenia

## Increased Participation in Tertiary Education

**The structure of students enrolled in tertiary education is changing in the direction of increased enrolment in science, technology, medicine and social security programmes, with the overall number of students enrolled in a given year decreasing persistently.**

*Darja Močnik, Analytical Department, Chamber of Commerce and Industry of Slovenia*

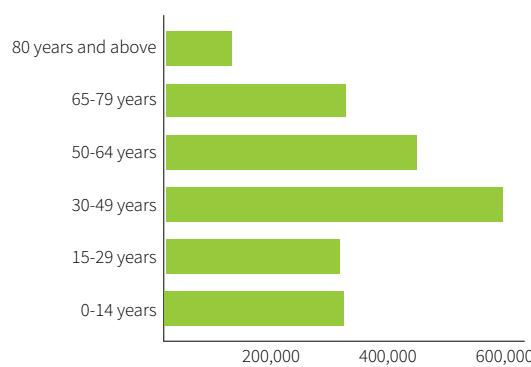
#### Young Slovenians' Digital Skills Better than EU Average

Slovenia's population is relatively well educated and the education level among young people is high. Against the backdrop of demographic change and a desired transition to a highly competitive, digital and green economy, developing adequate employee expertise and skills is posing an ever-greater challenge. The education level of the Slovenian population older than fifteen is good and continues to improve. In 2020, 24.5% of people over fifteen had a tertiary degree (compared to 23.7% in 2018) and 52.8% had a secondary or vocational degree (52.4% in 2018). It is mainly people in the 25 to 49 age group that have tertiary qualifications (61% of everyone in this population group).

In 2020, 45.4% of Slovenians 25–34 years old had a tertiary degree, which was close to the OECD average (45.5%). The share of those with a secondary degree in this age group was 50.2% (compared to the OECD average of 40.2%). Among the OECD countries, Slovenia has the highest share of people with a PhD in

the 25–64 age group (3.8%); the OECD average is 1.1%. Among the 16 to 19-year-olds, 8% had a low level of general digital literacy skills, 21% demonstrated a basic level and 72% a high level, which is better than the respective EU averages (15, 25 and 57%). A very

#### Age Structure of Inhabitants



**Among the OECD countries, Slovenia has the highest share of people with a PhD in the 25–64 age group (3.8%); the OECD average is 1.1%.**

Data as of 1H 2021

Source: Statistical Office of Republic of Slovenia

**Inhabitants**Citizens of Slovenia **1,940,326** Foreign citizens **168,653**

Data as of 1Q 2021

Source: Statistical Office of Republic of Slovenia

favourable position compared to other countries is also indicated by the Cedefop 2020 skills development index, which ranked Slovenia fourth among EU states.

**High Participation of Young People in Secondary and Tertiary Education**

**A total of 14.3% of Slovenians 15 years old or more participated in formal and/or informal education in 2020, among whom young people accounted for the largest share (76.6%).**

In 2020, 15,494 Slovenian students completed their tertiary programmes. Their percentage was 3.8% lower than in 2019 and the lowest in the past sixteen years, which was partly the result of the COVID-19 pandemic. The average age of a tertiary graduate in 2020 was 27.2 years. In 2020, the share of tertiary graduates younger than 25 was 43.1% or 1.3 percentage points higher than in 2019. The highest share of graduates in 2020 received their degrees in business and administration, and law (19.1%), followed by engineering, manufacturing technologies and construction (17.6%), and the lowest in agriculture, forestry, fisheries and veterinary medicine (2.3%), and ICT (4.1%). A total of 14.3% of Slovenians 15 years old or more participated in formal and/or informal education in 2020, among whom young people accounted for the largest share (76.6%). The share of 65–74-year-olds participating in lifelong learning programmes was 1.9%, which decreased significantly in 2020, most

likely because of the COVID-19 pandemic. A record share of 5.5% was recorded in 2013.

In light of unfavourable demographic trends, a great challenge continues to be the development of suitable expertise and skills among young people and adults to meet the current and especially future needs of society and the economy (due to population ageing, the necessity of a green and digital transformation, etc.). There are approximately 317,000 people younger than 14 in Slovenia, or 15.1% of the population, and there are 436,000 older than 65 (20.2% of the population). The majority of the population (28.5%) is 30 to 49 years old. Slovenia's total population is just over 2.1 million Slovenians, of whom 92% are Slovenian citizens and 8% (up from 6.9% in 2018) are foreign nationals (as of 1 April 2021). With economic activity restarting in 2021, the number of employees exceeding the level before the COVID-19 pandemic and the unemployment rate remaining low, companies are facing increasing challenges in how to find suitable staff. A shortage of qualified staff was among the main limiting factors reported by companies in July 2021 (this was reported by 31% of manufacturing companies, 44% of construction companies and 25% of companies operating in the service sector).

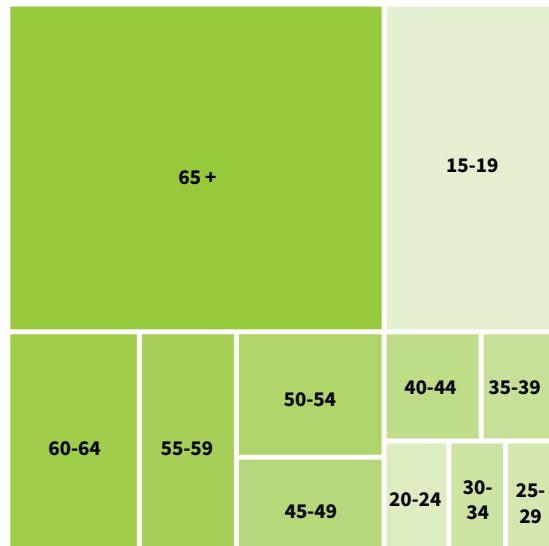
**A Rise in Student Numbers from the Previous Academic Year for the Second Time in Ten Years**

A total of 82,694 students were enrolled in tertiary education in the 2020/2021 academic year, up 8% on the previous year. Looking at the past twenty years, the number of enrolled students grew until the 2006/2007 academic year, after which it began to fall (the only exception being the 2009/2010 year), picking up again over the past two years. Doctoral students accounted for just over 3,500 or 4% of the total student body. ■

**Education by Age Groups (population aged 15 years or more)**

Age as of total	Total	Basic or less	Upper secondary	Tertiary
	1,780,059	403,570	940,600	435,889
	100	22.7	52.8	24.5
15-19 years	93,729	75,672	18,057	0
20-24 years	103,089	10,740	77,974	14,375
25-29 years	113,876	8,677	61,041	44,158
30-34 years	136,265	9,241	71,358	55,666
35-39 years	152,537	10,824	80,290	61,423
40-44 years	159,721	14,051	87,592	58,078
45-49 years	148,966	19,164	83,413	46,389
50-54 years	152,755	24,987	89,900	37,868
55-59 years	150,370	27,434	90,167	32,769
60-64 years	144,747	37,776	80,840	26,131
65 + years	424,004	165,004	199,968	59,032

Data as at 2020, Source: Statistical Office of the Republic of Slovenia



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## Foreign Direct Investment

# Two-Thirds of Inward FDI to Slovenia from EU Companies

**Slovenia's biggest foreign investors are from Germany, Austria, the USA, Italy and Switzerland. Together these countries account for 55% of all inward FDI.**

Bojan Ivanc, CFA, CAIA, Chief Economist at Analytical Department, Chamber of Commerce and Industry of Slovenia

In the last few years, the importance of foreign investment in the Slovenian economy has grown considerably, but at a third of GDP it is still lower than in comparable Visegrad countries (median: 55% of GDP), although higher than in more developed Germany (23%). Owing to its small size and integration into value chains, along with the absence of a functioning domestic capital market, the importance of foreign investment can only be expected to grow in Slovenia. On the other hand, the importance of Slovenian FDI abroad increased in 2020 (by EUR 200 m) to EUR 7 billion, standing at 15% of GDP. This was mainly due to banking takeovers in the SEE region, most notably in Serbia.

The stock of inward FDI in Slovenia stood at EUR 16.6 billion at the end of 2020 (35% of GDP), up by EUR 400 million compared to the end of 2019. No major takeovers took place in 2020 and the stock increased mainly due to increased profits (EUR 1.2 billion), which were offset by paid out dividends (EUR 0.7 billion).

Since 2016, inward FDI increased by EUR 3.3 billion, which was largely driven by takeovers (brownfield investments) of various manufacturing companies and financial companies (banks and insurance), in the wholesale and retail trade and repair of motor vehicles and motorcycles, as well as in higher retained profits. Owing in part to the relatively high valuation of companies, quite a few Slovenian firms opted to be sold to foreign owners, who were the highest bidders. Greenfield investment was limited to a handful of investments in manufacturing, most notably in the automotive value chain.

## Germanophone Countries the Biggest Foreign Investors

The complex structures of multinational firms, which are a response to several factors (financing of global production networks, optimisation of the tax burden and other regulatory burdens, etc.), can conceal the ultimate source of FDI, so we analysed inward FDI in terms of the ultimate country of ownership. This kind of analysis reveals the actual control of investments. While there should be awareness about the limitations in determining ultimate investing countries, as certain domestic entities do not have the detailed

ownership schemes of their owners available, the best possible assessment is used here.

Under this methodology the biggest foreign investors in Slovenia are from Germany, Austria, the USA, Italy and Switzerland. Together these countries account for 55% of all foreign investments. German ultimate investors hold the majority of their indirect investments in Slovenia via Austria in the form of affiliates and branches. Investors from the USA have conducted a large portion of their investments in Slovenia via companies in Luxembourg and Austria. UK investors' largest holdings of FDI in Slovenia were also via affiliates in Luxembourg. Russia as the ultimate investing country was responsible for EUR 415 million in FDI in 2019, with Russian investors holding the majority of their indirect investments in Slovenia via affiliates in Austria and the Netherlands. In terms of the relative importance of the ultimate investing country compared with the immediate partner country, there are also significant advances made by China, mostly via branches in Luxembourg, and Japan, mostly via Austrian branches. Production, trade and financial business are the most popular sectors for foreign investors, since in tandem with their parent companies they can most often offer an appropriate level of economy of scale. German, Austrian, Italian, Swiss and Croatian companies are the most prominent in manufacturing. In finance the most powerful investors are from the USA, Italy and Austria. Croatian, Austrian and German companies occupy an important position in tourism, while in retail trade the big investors are from Germany, Austria, Croatia and Italy.

At the end of 2019 (data for 2020 is not available yet) firms with FDI accounted for 1.8% for the entirety of Slovenian firms (excluding financial intermediaries). ROE for firms with FDI stood at 9.6% in 2019, 1.1 percentage points more than for firms without FDI. The most important activity was manufacturing, which in 2019 accounted for 24.3% of all firms with FDI and employed just over half of all employees at firms with foreign capital. The wages per employee paid by firms with FDI were also 9.5% higher than the average wages per employee in Slovenia overall, while their value-added per employee was 7.6% higher. The

**In the last few years, the importance of foreign investment in the Slovenian economy has grown considerably, mainly due to takeovers in the manufacturing and financial sectors.**

**Investors from the USA have conducted a large portion of their investments in Slovenia via companies in Luxembourg and Austria.**

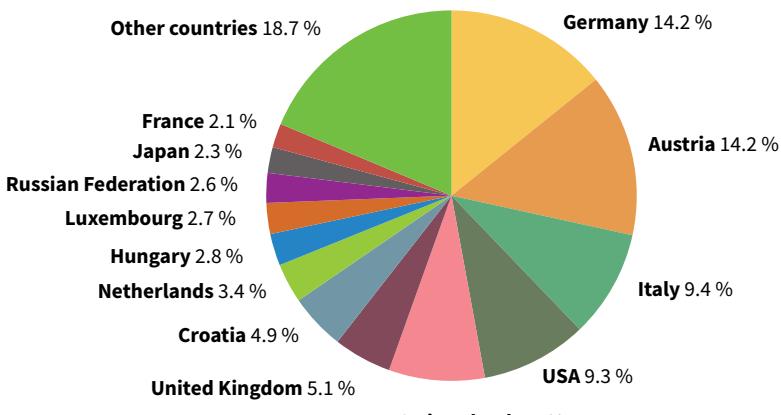
**Production, trade and financial business are the most popular sectors for foreign investors.**

**Firms with foreign owners generated their largest profits to date in 2019 (EUR 1.4 billion), and consequently made their largest profit distributions to date (EUR 0.9 billion).**

total exports of goods and services at firms with FDI amounted to EUR 16.2 billion in 2019, up 6.6% on the previous year.

Firms with foreign owners generated their largest profits to date in 2019 (EUR 1.4 billion), and consequently made their largest profit distributions to date (EUR 0.9 billion). Retained (reinvested) earnings amounted to EUR 0.5 billion in 2019, similar to that in 2018. A key reason for this was the higher planned investments in the 2020-2021 period. The average return on the average stock of total inward FDI stood at 6% in 2018, up slightly on the average between 2010 and 2018 (5.5%). FDI statistics lend an above average-weighting to capital-intensive activities, and less to services, which also create a lot of jobs in Slovenia with lower capex needs.

#### Stock of Inward FDI by End 2019



Source: Foreign Direct Investment 2019, Bank of Slovenia, by ultimate investing country

#### Most Important Ultimate Investing Country for Inward FDI as at 31 December 2019

in EUR, millions	
Germany	2,276
Austria	2,275
Italy	1,505
USA	1,484
Switzerland	1,340
UK	811
Croatia	784
Netherlands	552
Hungary	445
Luxembourg	433
Russian Federation	415
Japan	361
France	336

**The stock of Slovenian outward FDI amounted to EUR 6.6 billion at the end of 2019, up 8.7% on the previous year.**

**Almost half of Slovenian outward FDI was accounted for by EU countries at the end of 2019 (EUR 3.3 billion).**

#### Major Importance of Former Yugoslav Republics for Outward FDI

The stock of Slovenian outward FDI amounted to EUR 7.0 billion at the end of 2020, equivalent to 15% of GDP. This was an increase of EUR 200 m, mainly due to M&A activity of one Slovenian bank in Serbia.

The stock of equity had reached EUR 5.9 billion by the end of 2020, up 44% since end 2016. Slovenian investors contributed net inflows of equity in the amount of EUR 300 million in 2020, largely as a result of the EUR 200 million takeover and EUR 100 million in profits.

#### Most Important Slovenian Outward FDI Destination Countries as at 31 December 2019

in EUR, millions	
Croatia	2,291
Serbia	928
Bosnia & Herzegovina	538
Russian Federation	453
North Macedonia	414
Netherlands	189
Kosovo	177
Germany	167
Montenegro	157

Almost half of Slovenian outward FDI was accounted for by EU countries at the end of 2019 (EUR 3.3 billion), with Croatia standing out (EUR 2.2 billion), followed by the Netherlands (EUR 189 million). Important among the other big investment countries are Serbia (EUR 928 million), Bosnia & Herzegovina (EUR 538 million), and North Macedonia (EUR 414 million). Just how important the regional economies of the former Yugoslavia are for Slovenian companies is demonstrated by the fact that the stock of Slovenian outward FDI in Germany (EUR 167 million) was even lower than in Kosovo (EUR 177 million).

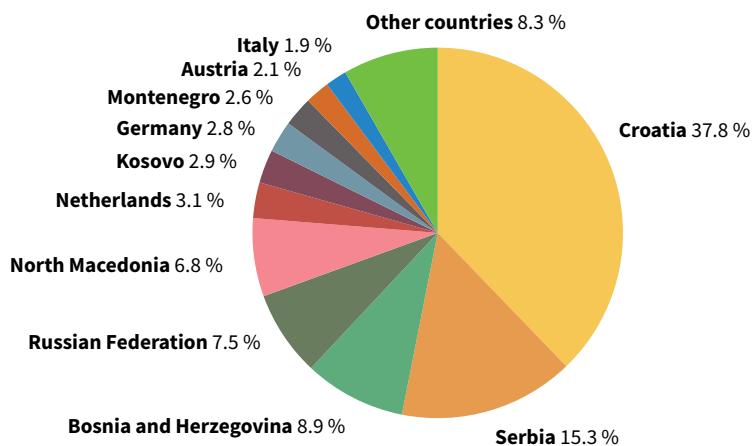
In the division of Slovenian outward investors into those that are ultimately domestically owned and those that belong to foreign owners, 27% of outward investment was under indirect foreign ownership at the end of 2019 (a typical company would be Mercator, with retail outlets across SEE), where the domestic investor has a foreign owner. This is most pronounced in the manufacturing sector, which accounts for 50% of Slovenian outward FDI under foreign control. The largest outward investments by Slovenian firms under domestic control at the end of 2019 were in manufacturing (EUR 1.2 billion or 25% of the total), financial and insurance activities (EUR 873 million or 18%), and wholesale and retail trade and repair of motor vehicles and motorcycles (EUR 588 million or 12.1%).

Slovenian investors held their largest stock of outward FDI in Croatia at the end of 2019, in the amount of EUR 2.3 billion or 34.5% of total outward FDI, up EUR 340 million on the previous year. The largest stock of FDI in Croatia was held by Slovenian households in the form of real estate owned by individual households (estimated at EUR 1,053 million), while the Slovenian private sector was strong in wholesale and retail trade (28% of Slovenian FDI in Croatia), real estate activities (11%), and manufacturing (11%).

The second-largest recipient of Slovenian outward FDI at the end of 2019 was Serbia, its total stock of EUR 928 million accounting for 13.9% of total outward FDI. Slovenian firms held their largest investments in Serbian firms in manufacturing (40%), wholesale and retail trade (32%), financial and insurance activities (14%), and real estate activities (7%). In 2020, the takeover of one of the largest banks in Serbia increased Slovenia's FDI in this particular country. Excluding the real estate investments of Slovenian households in Croatia, Serbia is the number one recipient of Slovenian outward FDI in business.

A total of 444 Slovenian firms held a controlling interest in a total of 1,120 foreign firms in 2019, which together generated sales revenues of EUR 10.8 billion and employed 63,341 people. Of these 444 Slovenian firms, 342 (77% of them) were under ultimate Slovenian ownership, while 102 (23%) were themselves under foreign ownership. The latter firms generated a significant proportion of their revenues via exports, mostly to affiliates, while to an even greater extent their imports of merchandise and materials were mostly from affiliates. ■

### Stock of Outward FDI by End 2019



Source: Foreign Direct Investment 2019, Bank of Slovenia

- Krka's factory is the largest Slovenian FDI in the Russian Federation.
- A diverse set of foreign investors hold inward FDI.
- Former Yugoslav republics, especially Serbia and Croatia, are extremely important for the outward stock of FDI. These are important manufacturing bases for Slovenian exporting value chains and sometimes important final markets for domestic financial sector.

**Household real estate on the Croatian coast was the biggest Slovenian foreign investment (1/6 of total).**

**Banking acquisition in Serbia increased importance of Serbia for Slovenia's FDI.**

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Overview

# Slovenia



**Official name:** Republic of Slovenia

**Capital city:** Ljubljana

**Government:** Parliamentary Republic

**State President:** Borut Pahor

**Prime Minister:** Janez Janša

**Local government:** 212 municipalities, of which 11 have urban status; 12 statistical regions, which are grouped into two cohesion regions – Western and Eastern Slovenia

**Area:** 20,273 km<sup>2</sup>

**Population:** 2,107,126 (1 April 2021)

**Location:** bordered by Austria, Italy, Hungary and Croatia; excellent connections with all European markets

**Currency:** Euro

**GDP per capita:** EUR 22,312 (2020)

**Growth in 2020:** -4.2 %

**Projected growth for 2022:** 4.2 %

(Consensus Economics, September 2021)

**Time zone:** CET (GMT+1), and CEST (GMT+2) in summer

**Official languages:** Slovene, together with Italian and Hungarian, respectively in the areas with Italian and Hungarian minorities. ■

Source: Statistical Office of the Republic of Slovenia (SURS)



Official gateway to information on Slovenia



Lek d.d.



Recipient of Novartis' Distinguished Scientist Award: Matej Horvat, PhD,  
Director Statistic and Modeling at Biologics Technical Development Mengeš

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**Top Business Data**

# Top Business Linked Data

**Macroeconomic stability, openness to trade, education and innovations remain the strongest pillars of success.**

*Bojan Ivanc, CFA, CAIA, Chief Economist at Chamber of Commerce and Industry of Slovenia*

**1<sup>st</sup>**

(out of 190)

Trading Across Borders (DB)

**1<sup>st</sup>**

(out of 141)

Macroeconomic stability (WEF)

**5<sup>th</sup>**

(out of 163)

Global Peace Index (IEP)

**8<sup>th</sup>**

(out of 190)

Resolving insolvency (DB)

**11<sup>th</sup>**

(out of 64)

Prices (IMD)

**15<sup>th</sup>**

(out of 27)

Innovation Union Scoreboard (EC)

**16<sup>th</sup>**

(out of 27 EU countries)

The Digital Economy and Society Index – DESI (EC)

**22<sup>nd</sup>**

(out of 64)

Education (IMD)

**23<sup>rd</sup>**

(out of 190)

Getting electricity (DB)

**28<sup>th</sup>**

(out of 141)

Innovation capability (WEF)

**31<sup>st</sup>**

(out of 64)

Economic Performance (IMD)

**33<sup>rd</sup>**

(out of 64)

Infrastructure (IMD)

**35<sup>th</sup>**

(out of 160)

Logistics Performance Index (WB)

**35<sup>th</sup>**

(out of 64)

World Digital Competitiveness Ranking (IMD)

**40<sup>th</sup>**

(out of 64)

World Competitiveness Ranking (IMD)

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# Switch to liquid cooling

## Four EK Product Stacks

- At EKWB, d. o. o., they have four main product stacks that cater to different customer demographics and needs.
  - **Custom Loop.** It is focused on Enthusiasts and the art of modding Custom loop products, like the EK-Quantum line, strive to deliver highest premium quality and visual appeal to the market. Enthusiast segment is the reason EKWB started and came to the level it is today.
  - **Easy cooling.** It is focused on ease of use and a more approachable price range. The products that they have are their All In One (AIO) closed loop liquid coolers and also their Classic line which is DIY but still quite beginner and budget friendly.
  - **Mainstream.** It is focused on bringing liquid cooling to masses. Here they have their Fluid Gaming systems (fully liquid cooled gaming computer).
  - **Enterprise.** It is taking care of all bigger customers that mean something in the semiconductor industry (Nvidia, AMD, Intel, ASUS, MSI...) and the autonomous vehicle and data center segment. It was established as they are aware that these customers need a different approach. These products are purposely developed and manufactured to fit specific customer needs. And last, but not least, one of the main focuses is also their prebuilt Workstations ([www.ekfluidworks.com](http://www.ekfluidworks.com)) that they launched in 2021 and are state of the art fully liquid cooled desktop giants.
- Find out more about EKWB at [www.ekwb.com](http://www.ekwb.com).**



**If you want to enable maximum performance of hardware in which you invested your money, liquid cooling is the way to go.**

“With liquid cooling being much more efficient than conventional cooling methods like air, you can really push the limits of your computer’s hardware. Modern computer hardware (Graphics Processor Units – GPU’s and Central Processor Units – CPU’s) will increase (and decrease) its computing power based on how effective the cooling is. With liquid cooling you will get maximum performance of your hardware each and every time you use it no matter the workload” says Sandi Logar, Head of Enterprise Unit at EKWB, d. o. o. Is liquid cooling in computers safe? “Certainly! The technology is proven, reliable and the products have an excellent track record”, answers Logar.

## Advantages of liquid cooling

Talking about the differences between liquid and conventional (air) cooling, Logar mentions considerably lower operating temperatures as one of the key benefits of liquid cooling. Same hardware at full load, when liquid cooled, will run as much as 30°C cooler compared to an air-cooled system. With liquid cooling, the system

will not encounter sudden jumps (spikes) in temperature like it does with air-cooling solutions, reducing the thermal stress on the sensitive electronic components. All of this leads to an improvement in computational performance and a longer life span of the hardware. “One other important benefit, that cannot be understated, is the lower noise emission. Air cooled systems, under heavy load, can get rather loud, like if you are sitting next to a running jet engine. While liquid cooled systems can operate at peak performance levels and not be any louder than a home refrigerator, allowing you to remain focused on your work,” stressed the interlocutor.

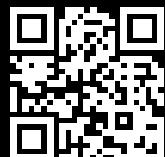
## Ambitious plans for the future

At EKWB, d.o.o., they are planning to be more heavily involved in the server and data center segment. They will not only work to implement more energy efficient liquid cooling solutions but also develop heat reusage technology, allowing the waste heat to be reused for district heating and hot water applications. This is a great opportunity to make the datacenters greener and reduce their overall carbon footprint. In 2022 they plan to start series production with one of our Autonomous cars manufacturers.



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Interview

# The Term “Climate Crisis” Is Spot On

Darja Kocbek, Photo: Barbara Reya

**Although we don't know exactly where the limit of our actions that should not be crossed is, it is close. That's why panic is growing among scientists, but is sadly not reflected in political and other decision-making spheres.**

Human interference in the environment grows by the day, and so do the resulting consequences. Climate-wise, humans have thoroughly changed the composition of the atmosphere. Not only have we altered the land by cutting down forests, building and creating agricultural surfaces, we have also seriously affected marine ecosystems. As a result, climate has been changing gradually ever since the industrial revolution, and the changes are gathering pace. This involves not only the rising of the Earth's surface temperature, but also changes in precipitation patterns, the melting of ice that has been around for millennia, altered monsoon patterns, and more frequent extreme weather events. But these relatively gradual changes can accelerate unimaginably and decimate life on our planet within decades, wreaking havoc on our civilisation. This has been scientifically confirmed, as attested by climatologist Prof. Dr Lučka Kajfež Bogataj, co-recipient of the 2007 Nobel Peace Prize.

*Upon the publication of the latest report by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), you said that your greatest concern from the scientific point of view is that we could reach certain breaking points, from which we would not only be unable to turn back, but from where changes will be swift and irreversible. Are the people who should be taking steps and moving from words to actions now more aware of this serious warning than before this report was published?*

Although we don't know exactly where the limit of our actions that should not be crossed is, it is certainly close. That's why panic is growing among scientists, but is sadly not reflected in political and other decision-making spheres. Everyone either still wants to pass on any drastic economy- and energy-related changes to the next term or the next government, or the decision-makers are simply so rich, old, and focused egotistically on themselves and their power that they don't believe this problem will affect them. More and more, I realise that those who should take action have no intergenerational solidarity, no sincere concern for the future of young people.

*But these rich and old decision-makers have children, grandchildren and even great-grandchildren. One would expect them to at least be concerned for their sake, or that these young descendants would tell them that they're worried about their life since disasters are getting closer and closer to the areas where they live.*

That's true, but I'm afraid that many have lost touch with the real world of ordinary people. I knew a president, for example, who hadn't set foot in a shop for 8 years, not even to buy bread. And even besides

that, it seems that one of the main problems of a market-driven, globalised world is that people love themselves the most. After all, it was already the Sun King Louis XIV who said, in true Epicurean manner: "Apres moi le déluge!" ("After me, the deluge!")

*In light of this, do the key messages of the IPCC sound like the final appeal?*

In fact, they really are the final appeal. We could still just about reach a relatively safe rise in temperature between 1.5 and 2° Celsius. If we wait until the next IPCC report, if we fail to do enough in the next few years, we will have wasted this opportunity. When the global temperatures rise by 3° Celsius, there will be consequences for our health, water sources, the agriculture and safety. Anything that exceeds the temperature rise by 4° Celsius probably leads to an apocalyptic situation. Let me put it clearly once again – if the currently still rising global greenhouse gas emissions are not cut tangibly by 2030, it will be too late. Deforestation needs to stop by that time as well. Developed countries must adhere to this absolutely, as well as genuinely help developing countries achieve climate goals. The increasingly used term "climate crisis" is therefore more than appropriate.

*For the EU, the European Commission has put together the Fit for 55 package. How would you rate it?*

"Fit for 55" is a highly complex legislative package of 13 interconnected legislative proposals. It seems that, at the moment, the EU is willing to reduce green-

**Let me put it clearly once again - if the currently still rising global greenhouse emissions are not cut tangibly by 2030, it will be too late. Deforestation needs to stop by that time as well.**





**The EU's goal by 2030 should be to increase the share of renewable energy sources to at least 50%. Perhaps we will also see the introduction of a carbon tax on goods!**

house gas emissions by 55% by 2030, and achieve climate neutrality by 2050. Unfortunately, this is not enough and does not lead to the temperature rise of a maximum of 1.5° Celsius. Our objective should be a reduction of greenhouse gas emissions by 65%. What's good in the European Commission's proposal is that it keeps the national emission-cutting objectives as determined in the Effort Sharing Regulation, which covers transport, buildings, agriculture and waste. It's a great shame that the European Commission does not also propose national objectives with regard to energy efficiency and renewable energy sources. It is also difficult to assess whether the proposal will enable socially and environmentally just changes. It's clear that some in the EU will experience negative consequences, especially if market logic prevails. This would happen, for example, were the industry to keep receiving free emission allowances for pollution, while the most vulnerable social groups that are the least responsible for the crisis bore the payment of additional costs.

I am also uncomfortable with the proposal for amending the Directive on the promotion of the use of energy from renewable sources, even though it raises the objective concerning the share of renewable energy sources from the current 32% to 40% by 2030. But this is simply not enough to achieve the objective of keeping the global temperature rise below 1.5° Celsius! The EU's goal by 2030 should be to increase the share of renewable energy sources to at least 50%. Perhaps we will also see the introduction of a carbon tax on goods! The European Commission proposes a mechanism introducing a carbon levy at borders that would, following the example of the EU's

emissions trading system (ETS), price carbon upon importing certain goods. Although this will not completely prevent the movement of industry from the EU to third countries, it will prompt manufacturers from these countries to cut emissions.

Mandatory allocation of all revenue of member states from the sale of emission allowances to climate action is a great idea, as is the prohibition of support for fossil fuels within the EU Emissions Trading System Modernisation Fund. Fossil fuel subsidies must become a thing of the past!

In short, Fit for 55 is a complex package that doesn't harm the environment, but its feasibility will probably be challenging given how heterogeneous the EU is. Furthermore, the package relies on four leading principles, namely that all sectors and all member states must contribute to the green transition, that the package must promote growth, must be just, and must encourage international cooperation. I doubt that the principle of promoting growth is in line with the reduction of emissions or sustainable future.

*In view of the member states' actions thus far, what are the key factors that will facilitate implementing and realising the Fit for 55 package, and, above all, what could prevent the member states from diluting the package during negotiations?*

Most of the states will undoubtedly try to shift their share of the burden on other states! This will not be the first such instance, nor the last. Poland, for example, has resisted all climate action over the past 20 years, as its energy sector is based on coal. The very position of Slovenian Presidency of the EU Council is emblematic of this, as it believes that "flexibility is needed for each EU member state to achieve the set targets effectively. EU member states are at different starting positions and in different circumstances, so there are no universal solutions. However, we must achieve the common goal – to fulfil our climate commitments." Enabling flexibility usually means looking for exceptions and excuses, and delaying the right solutions, which are, naturally, unpopular from a political aspect. The Fit for 55 package will probably be disliked among people as well, as it involves thorough changes that will transform the ways people drive, keep themselves warm, manufacture, as well as manage forests and land. That is why it will be essential to maintain excellent communication between experts and politicians, experts and the people, and politics and citizens. If things go wrong at this level, we will face chaos similar to the kind we experienced with Covid, and we can simply forget about mitigating climate change.

*What kind of communication should be established to prevent this from happening?*

From a political perspective, parties should adopt a unanimous position as to the urgency of taking action, and give a clear signal of unity instead of taking advantage of this topic to expound conflicting views. Strong organisations active in civil society

should get involved in the campaign on time and without ulterior motives, including the Church, unions and associations. In addition, the media coverage should be positive, highlighting that the measures are, in fact, beneficial in the long run.

***Where is Slovenia in terms of drafting its own national climate action strategy?***

In July 2021, the National Assembly confirmed the Resolution on Slovenia's Long-Term Climate Strategy. The action plan on how to implement the strategy during the most critical period, which we said was until 2030, comes in the form of the Integrated National Energy and Climate Plan (NEPN). And this is where we already encounter a problem, as the above document sets the key decarbonisation measures well in the future, post-2030. The way traffic emissions are being handled best illustrates how very contrary this is to the Fit for 55 package. In this most pressing sector, for instance, it is actually expected that emissions are going to grow by as late as 2030! And by as much as 12%! After this period and until 2050, a sudden reduction of these emissions by 99% is envisaged. I don't think any further comments are necessary. Essentially, the document does not contain what is most important and what should be done immediately.

Many also regard the stand in favour of nuclear energy as contentious, not to mention taking such a stand without a public debate. This is an extremely important decision not only in terms of development, but also in relation to the environment and finances. It should therefore be seriously considered through a broad, inclusive and expert discussion. The construction of the second block of the nuclear power plant could easily cost over EUR 10 billion. This amount could be used to drastically improve Slovenia's energy efficiency and increase its share of renewable energy sources.

***What are the key areas where Slovenia has the most work to do with regard to climate action?***

As regards mitigating climate change, the key issues are how we are going to obtain electrical energy and how to quickly decarbonise traffic. Another key area we need to tackle is how to adjust to the new climate. Here, a whole series of coordinated activities will be necessary, as we will need to adapt agriculture, tourism, spatial planning, healthcare, etc. We need an agreement about what we will change so that we will be less affected by draughts, what to do when there is no longer any snow to ski on, how we will respond to the emergence of new diseases, how we will deal with heat waves in cities, etc. The list goes on. This is being completely neglected, even though it is equally, if not even more, important for the quality of our lives.

Much work still awaits us in reinforcing our climate policy, which is, to put it mildly, weak. We are understaffed and lack climate politicians; institutionally speaking, we are disorganised and fragmented. Ever since the gaining of independence, Slovenian

governments have not acknowledged environmental issues as factors that heavily influence our economy, healthcare, agriculture, and even national security. That's why we went ahead and built Block 6 of the Šoštanj Thermal Power Plant (TEŠ6) and encouraged car and road freight transport at every step. Today, these are major problems, which we will have to resolve quickly.

*In early 2021, the United States rejoined the Paris Agreement; in April, the country issued a joint statement with China, agreeing to collaborate on tackling climate change. How important is this step in light of the IPCC report?*

Europe's efforts, no matter how ambitious, have no real impact without the cooperation of the United States and China, as our emissions comprise only a tenth of global emissions. Together, the United States and China make up for as much as 45%! That is why climatologists drew a collective sigh of relief as cooperation between the EU, the United States and China succeeded over the approach taken by former U.S. President Donald Trump. Let's hope Russia and particularly India step onto the right path as well. The United States is well-aware of the consequences of climate change: the country invests a lot in state-of-the-art technologies and science, even if their intentions are primarily economic and pragmatic. Forging connections and global cooperation are the only way out of the climate crisis. Let's hope this path will be clearly outlined at the UN Climate Change Conference of the Parties in Glasgow. ■

**The United States and China make up for as much as 45% of global emissions!**  
That is why climatologists drew a collective sigh of relief as cooperation between the EU, the United States and China succeeded over the approach taken by former U.S. President Donald Trump.



# Top solutions for HVAC, cleanroom technology and operating rooms

**The main activities of the family company OPIKAR are divided into three different divisions - Heating, ventilation and air-conditioning (HVAC), Cleanrooms and Operating rooms.**

OPIKAR is mainly focused on pharmaceutical, biotechnology, semiconductor, automotive, food-beverage and health-care industry. Located in headquarter in Logatec, Slovenia, it has been founded in year 1997 and has around 70 employees. Since 2020 also company OPIKAR GmbH was founded in Munich, Germany.

## Present in the most of the European countries

They are present in the most of the European countries, with focus on DACH, Benelux and Nordic region, and the quality of the delivered projects are well recognized and respected in every field.

"Well-known advantages from our company are reliability, discipline, quality, independence, professionalism and result-driven philosophy. We possess own state-of-the-art working tools, vehicles, which enables us best possible starting point. Our biggest advantage is flexibility and ability of offering »turn-key« solutions for operating rooms, from engineering of architecture and HVAC components to manufacturing and completely mounted, validated and »ready to use« operating room," they say at OPIKAR company.

All working processes within company OPIKAR are made in compliance with **EN ISO 9001:2015** - Quality standard, **EN ISO 14001:2015** - Environment protection and **ISO 45001:2018** - Health and safety at work. Our leading installers have also obtained **SCC** certificates. They possess AAA++ financial creditworthiness rating.

## Division nr. 1: HVAC

OPIKAR is capable of offering design & build projects of all mechanical installations, f.e. heating, ventilation and



**air-conditioning** in high-tech facilities, such as life-sciences and advanced technology sector.

"Our scope is design, engineering, delivery, assembly and commissioning of HVAC and Black utilities. With in-house engineering, we prepare all technical workshop drawings for execution, and prepare as-built documentation for hand-over," they say.

They are striving for world-known suppliers and best quality standards. After the project is well finished and handed-over to user/end client, they have capacities to offer complete maintenance of facility with their high qualified and trained resources/manpower.

## Division nr. 2: Cleanroom technology

Their services are engineering, (possible delivery) and installation of whole cleanroom equipment, such as walls, ceiling, doors, windows, air locks, filters etc. They are mostly present in pharmaceutical industry and manufacturing plants with specific requirements for absolutely pure/sterile air. "We can develop very deep engineering approach in early stage of the project, which results in shortened time of construction period in later stage, due to clarified situations in advance," they stress at OPIKAR.

## Division nr. 3: Operating rooms

OPIKAR has developed modular glass operating rooms which do not need sub-structure and wall support. Their modular glass operating rooms are self-standing system which allows them very fast mounting in different situations on site. All the wall panels are already produced in their production facility and they are ready to mount. The result of this kind of solution is fast assembly at lower costs. Walls are made from extruded aluminium profile of high strength, insulation, sheet metal on the back side (technical area) and safety glass from inside. They offer a ceramic ink printed colours and motives on client's demand.

All cut-outs for the equipment and accessories are pre-made in their production facility. Integrated equipment such as Control panel or monitors are ready to mount. Beside glass, they are also able to use HPL, sheet metals, so they can combine different materials.

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**Success**

# The Bridge Connecting Slovenia and the Rest of the World Is Maintained by the Most Successful Young Hopes

**Innovation, ambition, forging connections among themselves and communities in Slovenia and worldwide, accompanied by a great desire to share and exchange knowledge – these are the key common points of Slovenians educated abroad and connected under the VTIS Association.**

Nina Šprohar

**Pursuing its mission to bring the world and Slovenia closer together, the Association holds a range of events and joint projects that expand the horizons of all its members. Here are some of the most promising members of the Association.**

## **Jure Vrhunc, MBA BEng MSc MIET**

Comparing Slovenia with large countries around the world, I wouldn't say it is a supermarket; rather, Slovenia is a remarkable boutique. It offers a bit of everything. The country truly shines when it comes to its beautiful natural features and the quality of life. Globally speaking, I believe the Slovenian school and healthcare systems are at an enviable level. It's not surprising that Slovenia has always been a land of great talents, thinkers, athletes and business people, as the environment is highly conducive to freedom of thought.

I am currently working as Lead Development Engineer at Jaguar Land Rover. My department, which operates under the auspices of UK's National Automotive Innovation Centre, is devising disruptive concepts of mobility of the future. We are researching a whole range of technologies, from new drives to alternative materials. As for myself, I'm focused on advanced steering systems of autonomous vehicles. Concept vehicles, for which I filed some patent claims of my own, are envisaged to go in regular production from 2030 on.

Each step on the career path is important for one to move forward towards

their goal. Nevertheless, If I were to choose two of my greatest achievements, I would highlight my current position as Lead Development Engineer at a world-renowned automotive brand, and graduating at the top of my class from one of the world's most prestigious business schools, the London Business School. After finishing the MBA programme, I have recently been offered a new, considerably more strategic function at the company, as Head of Business Transformation. I gladly accepted the offer and I believe that a great many wonderful achievements are still in store. It is true, however, that the entire automotive industry is currently undergoing quite painful but much needed business transformation processes, as financial, organisational and technological adjustments are necessary. While technical capabilities used to be a top priority for car owners, more and more attention is now paid to the customers' wishes and lifestyle, as well as to the environmental footprint of both cars and companies in general. We will be witnessing a rapid increase in the market shares of electric and hybrid personal vehicles, which will soon be followed by the market shares of hydrogen fuel cell-powered freight vehicles.



Photo: London Business School

**Globally speaking, I believe the Slovenian school and healthcare systems are at an enviable level. It's not surprising that Slovenia has always been a land of great talents, thinkers, athletes and business people, as the environment is highly conducive to freedom of thought.**

**Kristi Hodak, Associate Design Director at McKinsey&Co, President of the VTIS Association**

Slovenia is an ideal country for talented people from all over the world who would like to combine innovation with a high quality of life. In addition to offices in close proximity to the great outdoors, Slovenia is noted for its clean air and water, breath-taking nature, delicious food and much more. It has the potential to become a global model country on how to set up 100% green development.

As an adviser to managements of global companies and governments on user experience and digitisation, I usually establish start-ups within large corporations. We are generally approached by companies in need of radical changes to their business model because their current one is no longer relevant, with the result that users are buying less and less of their products and services.

In other cases, a new, innovative and competitive company emerges, changing the dynamic and expectations within that sector. Digital transformation is impossible in such cases because it is too time-consuming. In such instances, we establish a new company and launch a new digital product within six months, one with a scalable business model and ensuring a good user experience. Based on in-depth user research, I then define the new company's vision and value proposition for the user. I manage product development and testing, making sure that the digital product (e.g. platform or mobile application) is well-connected with other non-digital processes, e.g. logistics, customer service, experience at a branch, etc.

I enjoy working in various sectors, from civil engineering, mobility, and healthcare to banking, because I can bring



Photo: Iztok Dimc

**Slovenia is an ideal country for talented people from all over the world who would like to combine innovation with a high quality of life. In addition to offices in close proximity to the great outdoors, Slovenia is noted for its clean air and water, breath-taking nature, delicious food and much more. It has the potential to become a global model country on how to set up 100% green development.**

**Boštjan Somen, VP of Finance at Duolingo**

In my role, I'm most pleased to observe the professional growth of the members of our finance team that we recruited over the past year. Together, we succeeded in bringing Duolingo to the public markets through an initial public offer (IPO) this summer. Now that we are a listed public company, our team is faced with the intriguing and exciting task of raising the quality and scalability of our financial processes to an even higher level. Duolingo is a rewarding place to work because it is being shaped by the favorable trends such as the industry-changing mobile-first behaviors, the shift towards online learning, and adoption of subscription models.

In addition to having a great potential to foster well-educated domestic talent, Slovenia has an opportunity to attract motivated professionals from



Photo: personal archive

inspiration from one context into another. For me, the greatest successes are projects where the company management first assures me something is impossible, for example that civil engineering workers will never use digital tools, and I am able to prove to them by the end that this is not true. I know how to listen to users and their needs, and how to transfer what I learn from listening into an excellent customer experience. In the future, I would like to include the ESG (Environmental, Social, and Governance) criterion in each project to effect a positive impact on the environment and the society.

All service design trends are focused on combining the traditional design thinking approach with data analytics, which facilitates better decision-making, prioritising (e.g. behavioural segments), and creating a good user experience, while also providing the option to constantly improve existing services and digital products; it allows for combining the user-/human-centricity approach with a focus on society and the natural ecosystem, and the formation of digital services and products for the ever-growing B2B sector. In management consulting, all focus is on sustainable development and searching for new business models that don't harm our planet, advising company managements on how to steer the ship into the right direction, and to the new measure of success that is not based only on profit and loss, but also on the satisfaction and health of the user, society and

the environment, as well as more diverse recruitment in terms of gender, race and background. A lot of energy goes into training the management and employees to shed their unconscious biases and teach them to successfully manage diverse teams.

abroad who would love to do work from a beautiful country such as Slovenia. Covid has taught us that employees can be productive working remotely and Slovenia is one of the world's rare countries that enables people to have a wonderful work-life balance with quick access to both the Alps and the Mediterranean Sea..

**Covid has taught us that employees can be productive working remotely and Slovenia is one of the world's rare countries that enables people to have a wonderful work-life balance with quick access to both the Alps and the Mediterranean Sea.**

**Aleks Jakulin, Founder at 1o Inc.**

Internet advertising is extremely inefficient; over 50% of the money raised by tech companies from their investors goes towards Facebook and Google ads. Only a fraction of that money goes into the hands of digital content creators. By doing things this way, we are all paying enormous taxes to internet giants. 1o Inc, the company I co-founded, offers an alternative to such advertising. I also co-authored two of the most widely used standards for digital image transfer and storage. PNG is a graphics format supported by the largest number of devices on the internet, while JPEG-LS algorithms are used by nearly all Mars rovers. I'm also proud of the role the COVID-19 Tracker Slovenia played during the pandemic.

Currently, I am dedicating all of my energy into making sure 1o becomes an outstanding international company. The ecosystem formed by a company's clients is also a community: the larger it is, the better it is for everyone in it. Unlike, say, social media, where growth creates



Photo: Alenka Slavinec

bottlenecks, 1o will not experience saturation of this type. More and more people will become aware of the problems that come with reliance on internet giants. These platforms are the main reason for problems with the pandemic, for political polarisation, for psychological issues, for the rise of precariat and limited opportunities for young people, and for culture's dependence on state support. That's why we need to return to the open internet with a business model that's better than advertising with the help of internet giants.

What are Slovenia's strengths? It's precisely because there are so few of us that every one of us needs to know a lot of things. Rather than specialists, we are generalists, which is extremely important for innovation and creation. A small country can react a lot faster than a large one. And even great nations were once small; when the United States' Constitution was written, the number of Americans was roughly the same as the number of Slovenians today.

**Globally speaking, I believe the Slovenian school and healthcare systems are at an enviable level. It's not surprising that Slovenia has always been a land of great talents, thinkers, athletes and business people, as the environment is highly conducive to freedom of thought.**

**Bojana Selinšek, Product Manager, Health-tech Startup Kheiron Medical Technologies, London**

Improvement in medicine and healthcare is the common thread of my career path. Since I finished university I have been looking to build a career that I feel passionate about. It means a lot to me to be able to do something that has great meaning and a positive social impact. I started out by project managing Clinical Trials at the University of Oxford and later on at University College London. Development and testing of new medicines and treatments is an extremely important area. I've been wondering, however, if constant development of new medicines really was the most effective solution. As computer capabilities and data digitisation developed, and artificial intelligence (AI) with them, I observed an inevitable trend: the application of AI will mark a significant portion of the future in medicine. AI will make it possible to design a more personalised medical care. It will also enable us to navigate the myriad medicines intended for the same disease and find the most appropriate one for an individual given their genetic and other foundations. The field of AI has always intrigued me and led me to start working for an innovative London start-up, Kheiron Medical Technologies, three years ago. We develop AI for early and accurate cancer detection through deep machine learning. Initially, I managed

clinical trials and was responsible for securing new grant funding that unlocked our research and development work with partners and product development.

I currently work as Product Manager for the development of a new product in CT (computerised tomography). CT is a procedure where a large number of x-rays taken from different angles are processed with a computer. This is how we can get precise images of the body's interior, which help doctors diagnose and treat numerous diseases, especially cancer. Due to the large number of x-rays and volume of images to be read by the radiologists, the area is extremely interesting in terms of AI-assisted automation. I am in charge of understanding the competition, market trends, of gaining insight into what radiologists really need for their work, of putting together and maintaining product roadmap, as well as of product development and launch thereof. The first version is called the minimum viable product (MVP), which is a variant of the product with just enough features to be usable by early adopters, who then provide us with feedback for further product improvements. Since the application of AI is also changing the way doctors work, which to a certain extent reshapes the necessary knowledge, my work often involves change management. This is the approach where, due to major changes, especially mindset changes, we implement



Photo: Kristian Knobloch

**I believe Slovenia has an excellent opportunity to modernise and apply AI, primarily due to its small size and great talent. Slovenia's healthcare system is quite centralised, which makes implementation of the AI easier; as opposed to countries such as the United Kingdom, which is highly dispersed, with nearly every hospital having its own system and different devices.**

strategies that help lead to the acceptance of innovations and modifications in the healthcare system. In the UK, for example, we are developing this strategy together with the government and the Ministry of Health.

Among my greatest achievements is certainly the successful management and winning of the multi-million national UK project, involving the implementation of our product in the national breast cancer screening programme. In the coming years, I would like to develop my leadership skills further still, and consolidate my position as Product Manager. The role suits me very well and leverages my natural strengths. It is quite centralised and requires managing a multidisciplinary team involved in the product lifecycle to achieve the company's goals.

I believe Slovenia has an excellent opportunity to modernise and apply AI, primarily due to its small size and great talent. Slovenia's healthcare system is quite centralised, which makes implementation of the AI easier; as opposed to countries such as the United Kingdom, which is highly dispersed, with nearly every hospital having its own system and different devices. Ljubljana is also home to the UNESCO International Research Centre on Artificial Intelligence, which will undoubtedly put us on the global map in the field of AI development.

Nowadays, we don't even realize that we are using AI nearly every day, for example, when searching for the best route on an online map or when browsing the social media, where suggested content is adapted to us. In addition to bringing many possible advancements in numerous healthcare fields, AI comes with challenges that will need to be resolved. The use of AI extends to areas we thought could only be managed by humans, e.g. cancer detection. Here, we will need to change our mindsets and, instead of immediately taking a sceptical approach, try to understand how algorithms work and change, how they are tested and evaluated to ensure safe, reliable and trustworthy AI and consequently its uptake in healthcare. The trend of AI will continue to grow. In addition to technical innovation, I expect major progress in areas such as new methodologies, how to test and regulate such innovations. Most products I am involved with are currently diagnostic by nature, but there are more and more prognostic products that try to estimate, for example, an individual's risk of developing a certain disease. Such products require the development of new product regulatory classes, their own methodology and metrics, by which we assess them as suit-

able for use in healthcare. What's also problematic is that many manufacturers of AI products use too small and unrepresentative datasets (both for development and clinical trials). Additionally, data diversity is very important so that AI does not discriminate or drop the performance for certain groups of people or imaging vendors. The rapidly developing AI represents the possibility of tapping into the potential of enormous quantities of health-related data, especially in terms of support for evidence-based clinical decision-making. It's about improving and expanding human capabilities (not replacing), which contributes to timely and more progressive clinical decision-making. Using AI in healthcare allows healthcare professionals to focus on areas where human presence and involvement are needed and valued most, for example in the form of having more time to talk to patients. The aim is to empower doctors with the support of AI, to help reduce costs due to earlier and accurate cancer detection and accurate treatment planning, to optimise processes and with reduced waiting times and more precise diagnostics also ensure better patient outcomes.

Besides my professional interest, I am also a keen dancer, traveller and volunteer at VTIS Association that connects Slovenians educated abroad. I formed a group Slovenke@VTIS, which as a platform unites Slovenian women around the globe with the mission to connect with one another, encourage each other, address gender inequality challenges, and improve the visibility of successful Slovenian women abroad as well as in Slovenia. ■



## Intelligent plastic products for all the World

ROTO is European leading manufacturer of rotational moulding plastic products, a great example of a family business from Slovenia that has thrived in the global economy.

ROTO manufactures more than 4,000 different products. The company's main production segments are products for agriculture, ecology and gardening like water tanks, sewage-treatment equipment, oil and grease separators, wine barrels, wheelbarrows, silos etc. Using plastics composites and the latest production technologies, ROTO also manufactures moto boats, kayaks, canoes and high-performance sailing boats.



# Outstanding Service in Mechanical Assembly, Electrical Installations, and Production

**In its 15 years of operation, MOS Servis, d.o.o. has developed into a top-level service provider for mechanical assembly, electrical installations, and manufacturer of various types of conveyor systems, and industrial machinery. The company has established itself in Europe and is expanding to other parts of the world.**

"MOS Servis, d.o.o. was founded in 2006 by three like-minded partners. We offer our clients and partners high-quality machine assembly and electrical installation services for various types of industrial machinery in different branches of industry, and we specialise in transport machinery. We can manufacture various elements for machining and mechanical treatment, welded parts of various dimensions and sizes, and complete transport and other similar systems," says Managing Director Peter Volovšek.

## Expanding their Presence from Europe to the Entire World

Their customers are mainly large European suppliers of integrated technological solutions for logistics and warehousing, airports, post offices, the car industry, and so on.

MOS Servis, d.o.o. is present practically throughout Europe, including Switzerland, Norway and the UK, and also in the USA and Canada. "We have also gained experience working on projects in Qatar, Indonesia, Panama, Vietnam, Guatemala, Saudi Arabia and South Africa," says Volovšek.

## Full Range, High Quality and On Time Services

Volovšek sees his company's competitive advantage primarily in the provision of as wide a range as possible of high-quality services in a timely manner. He emphasises the advantages of in-house production for mechanical assembly and



electrical installations. "We try as much as possible to develop a professional and partnership-oriented relationship with our clients, based on open and honest communication with mutual respect and the awareness that we are stronger and better together," says Volovšek.

In the future, MOS Servis, d.o.o. is planning to continue with its current plans, and to monitor and follow market trends. They hope to further improve the level of their services, and in particular will be expanding production and introducing a new product, Lift & Park – a technological solution for parking vehicles in areas where there is a lack of space.

## One-Stop Shop

In the long term, MOS Servis, d.o.o. hopes to become successful in the area of installation of industrial systems using its own manufacturing capacities, and to offer turnkey services through its network of partners, all so that the client can get everything they need in one place.

The company also aims to expand its operations into other areas, such as continuous maintenance services for corporate clients, environmental protection, alternative energy sources, etc.

## The Foundations on which MOS Servis Builds Its Success

- They know how to listen and adapt their operations to customer needs. They cultivate and maintain a close relationship with each customer and supplier.
- Their customers know them for their full range of high-quality services, their honest and reliable attitude, and friendly employees.
- They continuously monitor new technological solutions and introduce them into their services.
- They know that stability and growth can only come from having well-qualified personnel. Therefore their employees are provided with continuous education and training opportunities, and a pleasant work environment.

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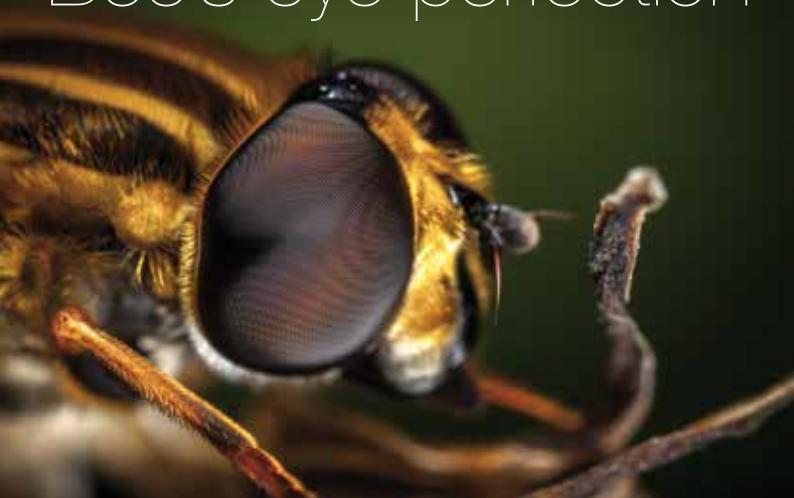
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Success

# “We Can Think Outside the Box”

**Have you ever wondered what makes Slovenian companies so successful? Representatives explain Slovenian companies' main advantages.**

Darja Kocbek, Nina Šprohar and Barbara Perko

**Tibor Šimonka, Senior Vice President of the SIJ Group and President of the Chamber of Commerce and Industry of Slovenia**

Slovenian companies are successful because they offer products and services with high value added. They are aware of the importance of strengthening their position in international supply chains, in addition to entering new markets. The greater the importance of development and supply chain links with European customers, the greater the need for research and development, new investments, and adjustments to work processes. Since companies in Slovenia are mostly medium-sized, they are more agile and flexible, while also enjoying a reputation for innovation. They are thus able to meet demand for specific or innovative products and services in a short period of time and on a smaller scale. Slovenian companies are undoubtedly strong global niche players in several demanding industries. We are also flexible in taking into account other cultures and business customs and consistent in providing after-sales services, which are key to forming long-lasting business partnerships.



Photo: Barbara Reya

**Slovenian companies are more agile and flexible, while also enjoying a reputation for innovation.**

**Marko Lukic, Director of Lumar**

Not all Slovenian companies are successful, but on average they are doing quite well. This is mainly due to the fact they are very responsive and capable of flexible thinking due to their smaller size. We also have a high-quality workforce that is able to think outside the box and adapt quickly, when compared to some other European countries. We pursue perfection and quality that is – at least in our industry – significantly higher than for example in Austria, Germany and Switzerland.



**We also have a high-quality workforce that is able to think outside the box and adapt quickly.**

Photo: Barbara Reya

### **Jernej Zupančič, Director of Cleangrad**

The most successful Slovenian companies are primarily oriented toward foreign markets. Another factor that contributes to their success is their size. The majority of the most successful companies are medium sized; they are large enough to take on more complex projects, yet still agile enough to be able to constantly adapt to the changing market situation and customer needs. Indeed, their size allows them to be flexible in organisation and to quickly find new customers and markets, or to adapt their solutions to the needs of the existing ones, avoiding any unnecessary administrative procedures. Employees in medium-sized companies thus better understand their customers' wishes and needs than those in large enterprises, where sales are often handled only by the sales team. Focusing on objectives, customer satisfaction and on cultivating a personal relationship with their customers is what motivates employees to come up with new ideas and improve their work performance and teamwork. The third factor that significantly contributes to Slovenian companies' success is their integration in the supply chain. This means connecting both backwards – with suppliers – and forwards – with customers. However, everything starts and ends with customer satisfaction and needs. The innovation and development of new products are mainly driven by the wishes and needs of customers. In order to meet these needs, the companies' in-house knowledge is not always sufficient and suppliers must also be involved in this process.



Photo: Barbara Reya

**The third factor that significantly contributes to Slovenian companies' success is their integration in the supply chain.**

### **Tone Stanovnik, Director of Špica International**

Slovenia has three key advantages that provide a platform for the success of its companies. Slovenia is a country of exporters, as it takes merely an hour to cross its border in just about any direction. Any company that wants to prosper in the long run will sooner or later start exporting its products abroad, thus honing its competitive edge in the international marketplace. Slovenia lies in the heart of Europe, where West and East meet and where something is always going on. Our branches are growing towards the more efficient and rational core of Europe, and our roots stretch into the temperamental Balkan. Psychologists find that emotions vitally affect a person's decisions, while reason provides a rational explanation to justify these decisions. Constant changes in the past and the history of the former Yugoslavia have strengthened us and made us resilient. This resilience is the key advantage that enables us to build bridges to a brighter future for new generations in times when we're dealing with crisis after crisis.



Photo: Špica International

**This resilience is the key advantage that enables us to build bridges to a brighter future for new generations.**



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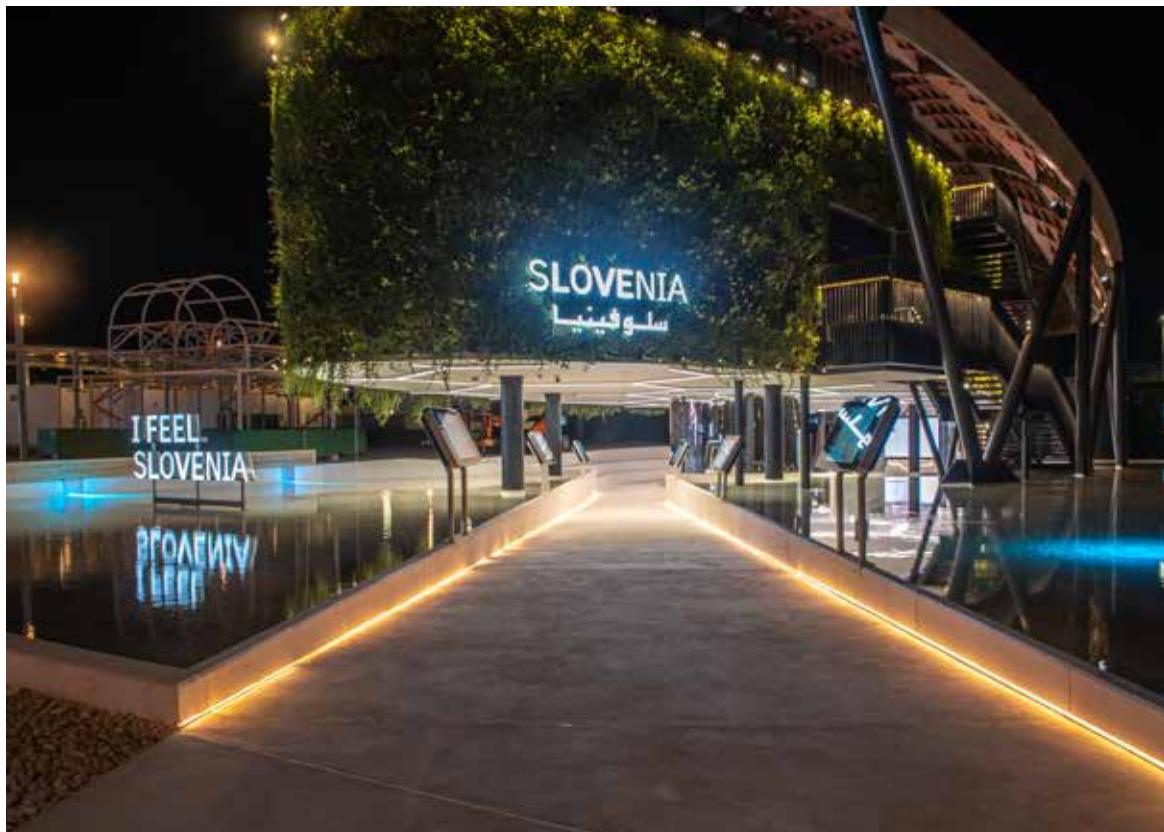


Photo: Spirit Slovenija

Expo 2020

# Slovenia. Green and Smart Experience

**The story of a green and smart country at the heart of Europe is being presented by the Slovenian pavilion at Expo 2020.**

Barbara Perko

Slovenia is presenting itself at the Expo with the slogan "Slovenia. Green and Smart Experience", which emphasises the importance of pristine nature, knowledge, innovation and a breakthrough economy. All of this is illustrated as a comprehensive story at the Slovenian pavilion, which extends over a 1,550 m<sup>2</sup> display area in the Sustainability District. Slovenia is presenting itself in the United Arab Emirates as a green oasis in the centre of Europe with an excellent geostrategic position.

#### Architectural Award for the Pavilion

The pavilion was designed by the Magnet Design studio and is an original work by architects Robert Klun, Sandi Pirš and associates. It has attracted the attention of both visitors and the professional community. In October 2019 it was awarded an honourable mention in the interior design and exhibition category at the international Architecture Masterprize competition. The pavilion was built by the Slovenian

company Riko in cooperation with many subcontractors from Slovenia and elsewhere.

It represents a green oasis floating on water, focusing on three elements: water, nature and creativity. The structure is surrounded by a pool, which symbolises Slovenia's lakes, rivers and the sea. The pavilion's construction is made of metal, glass, wood and stone, and its exterior symbolises the Slovenian forests. The wooden construction is covered with 45,000 live plants, which are being constantly monitored using innovative technology that is the result of Slovenian know-how and that ensures the plants are suitably cooled and watered at all times. The roof, made of Slovenian wood and designed in the shape of a sieve, symbolises the creativity of Slovenian economy.

#### Pavilion Offers a Holistic Experience of Slovenia

During their visit to the pavilion, visitors can get to know Slovenian stories and outstanding achievements, which are presented to them using advanced

**The wooden construction is covered with 45,000 live plants, which are being constantly monitored using innovative technology that is the result of Slovenian know-how.**

digital solutions. The pavilion's interior is furnished with advanced LCD surfaces on the walls, ceiling and floor.

The central part of the ground floor represents Europe Square, which serves as the main reception area for visitors and a venue for events, socialising and relaxation. The ground floor also features the 'Green. Creative. Smart' Showroom, which promotes the Slovenian economy and tourism, and the 'I Feel Slovenia' interactive room, in which Slovenia's natural and cultural heritage, and tourism and sports achievements are displayed in an innovative and interactive way.

The first floor provides visitors with a holistic experience of Slovenia. In the Green Room they can watch a unique 360-degree video projection of Slovenia's authentic nature, culture and sustainable tourism, and in the Smart Room they can check out a 360-degree video projection of the breakthrough solutions from the Slovenian private sector. The pavilion's second floor houses the Slovenian business centre, which is used for high-level meetings and visits from business delegations.

Slovenia's presentation is divided into eleven thematic segments, which excellently illustrate all the potential the country has in individual areas, while showcasing the Slovenian know-how, progressiveness and innovation. ■

**The central part of the ground floor represents Europe Square, which serves as the main reception area for visitors and a venue for events, socialising and relaxation.**

### Explore Slovenian Achievements

The 'We're Going to Be Engineers!' initiative has developed a new tool to promote Slovenian engineers, innovators and pioneers. Do you know who invented the perfume atomiser or the pocket calculator and who is developing storage warehouses that will enable life on Mars? Slovenians! The Slovenski KVIZUM (Slovenian QuizzINVENTION) board game allows players to learn about Slovenian inventions and inventors in a fun and informative way. For example, on one of the 110 cards they can check where a team of Slovenian engineers installed a 3D-printed spare part in 2017 as the first in the world (answer: the Siemens Slovenia team installed the part into the Krško Nuclear Power plant). The game is also showcased at EXPO 2020 in Dubai.



Photo: Inženirke in inženirji bomo

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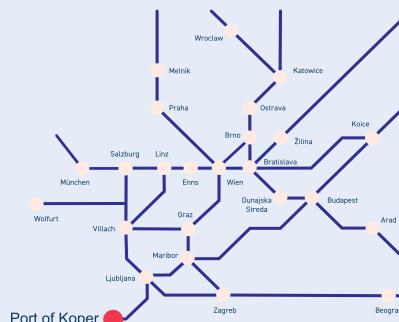


**Luka Koper, the operator of the multi-purpose port of Koper, has been, despite the covid situation, going through two intensive investment years. In 2020 Luka Koper invested almost 68 million Euros in new infrastructure and equipment, while for the 2021 a total of 75 million are planned. A great portion of these investments are focused at the container and automotive segment.**

## Among top automotive ports in the Mediterranean

In 2020 the company completed two major investments focused at the automotive segment. A new dedicated RO-RO berth was opened, and a new railway access was built in the north-east side of the port. The 2021 saw the conclusion of other two projects. A new, third truck gate was opened and a new garage for cars with 6,000 parking lots capacity was completed in May. With a throughput of over 600.000 cars annually the Koper car terminal ranks among the top automotive ports in the Mediterranean.

**Koper has daily intermodal services with logistic hubs in Central & Eastern Europe. A total of 19.900 trains were handled in Port of Koper in 2020.**



## Longer pier to boost container capacity

In June the company inaugurated the 100 meters extension of the container terminal quay. The works, however, are not over yet, as the construction of new stacking areas should be completed in 2022 when the annual capacity will be increased to 1.5 million TEU. In late 2022 also two additional super post-panamax STS cranes will be installed at the new container. With almost one million of TEUs handled Koper is the first container terminal in Adriatic.



Foto: Kristjan Stojaković

The extension of the container terminal will enable an annual capacity of 1.5 million TEUs.



Foto: Kristjan Stojaković

With the additional garage the Car terminal can now store 10,000 vehicles under covered parking areas.

## The new railway line, a new chapter in the port development

In May 2021 the main construction works on the new rail route between Port of Koper and the hinterland finally began. According to the timetable of the project, which is managed by the Slovenian state-owned company 2TDK, the works on the 27 km section must be completed in 2025, and the track is expected to be operational in 2026. With this modern and reliable railway connection, a new chapter of business opportunities and development is opening up for the Slovenian logistics and the countries who rely their supply chain on the Port of Koper.

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We are logistics company that provides sea, road, rail and air transport. We understand the need for perfection and we always try to deliver it to our customers. Our goal is to deepen the network of direct connections, because it is the only way to provide excellent service and lower costs of transport.

In unity, we link the globe!

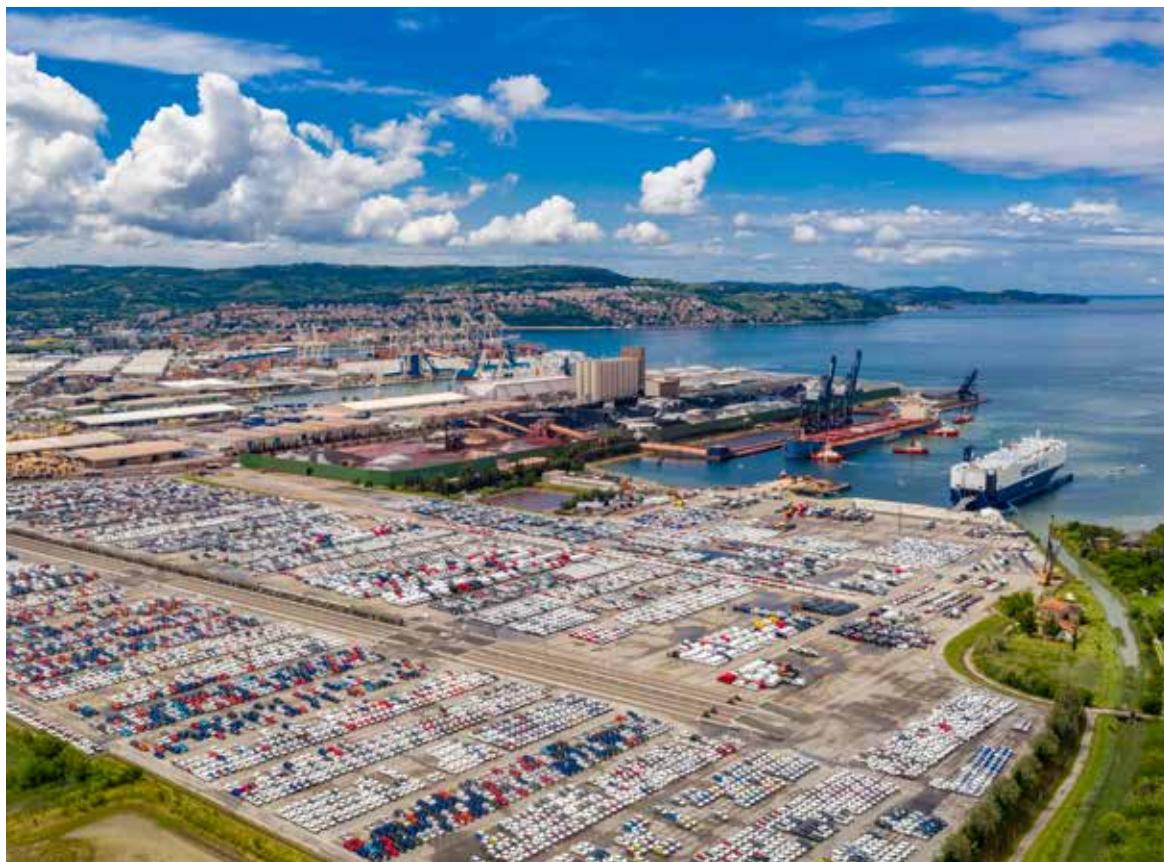


Photo: Peter Kleva

**Strategic Logistics**

# Reliability, Experience and Successful Adapting to Circumstances

**A favourable geostrategic position combined with responsible and highly qualified staff that provides the highest standards of quality contribute to the success of Slovenian businesses in tackling logistics and transport challenges.**

*Barbara Perko*

Although the pandemic has left a mark on logistics and transport, it was not the only factor that caused changes. Altered user behaviour, environmental issues and global trade tensions must be considered as well. "We had to adjust business processes, commercial activities, transport planning, as well as price and development policies," the Fining company explained. Unpredictability is what causes the most problems in logistics, to senders, recipients and transport organisers alike. Every operator strives to minimise potential damage and ensure their customers receive the most proper services possible.

Undoubtedly, the pandemic has led to progress in using digital communication to collaborate and support remote work. Postal operators are opting for further diversification in the direction of parcel,

logistics, financial and IT services, and more intensive automation and digitalisation of operations. Parcel sorting and contactless delivery ("paketomat" parcel locker) capacities are also being increased. According to Pošta Slovenije, the need has increased for greater operational performance, better management of the ever-increasing quantities of e-commerce parcels, and better data management.

Pošta Slovenije optimises delivery with an app for addressees called Moja dostava – moja izbira (My Delivery – My Choice); in addition, the company upgraded its SMS/e-mail notification system for addresses and provides users with several options of parcel preparation and e-submission of parcel-related data, as well as the preparation of parcels by means of the PS Pošlji paket (Send a Parcel) app. The Ljubljana

**Pošta Slovenije is expanding its network of access points and enables its customers to try out alternative forms of parcel delivery/receipt, such as parcel lockers, parcel delivery boxes and options of delivery to an agreed-upon location, alternative contact points and automated units for 24/7 PS parcel dispatch and collection.**

**By 2025, the Pošta Slovenije Group will have allocated over EUR 40 million in investment funds for automation and digitisation of operations, as well as comprehensive updating of IT systems.**

Postal Logistics Centre (PLC Ljubljana) has set up an automated parcel receipt system (DWS), which enables automated processing of parcels; in the segment of parcel delivery, the Centre is in the finishing stages of implementing "signature tablets" used to record parcel deliveries/receipt.

### **Modern Logistics Equipment and New Delivery Methods**

Technological advancement enables great visibility and automation of the postal and logistics business, as well as new methods of delivery (e.g. freight drones). In the coming years, new technologies will be focused on modern parcel sorting equipment, including shipment transporting robots, shipment tracking sensors and technology, modern warehouse equipment, the parcel locker and parcel delivery box network, continued computerisation of logistics processes, digital interaction with customers, and e-mobility.

When developing digital strategies, logistics companies will have to consider additional technologies, such as next-generation robotics, artificial intelligence, autonomous vehicles, blockchain, big data/predictive analytics, IoT, and sensors. Sustainability will be crucial for logistics. "Sustainable logistics, i.e. optimisation of processes, materials, new drive technologies and smart devices (smart containerisation in transport will also be relevant in developing environmentally friendly formats of delivery in overburdened cities), provides major potential for the logistics sector to become environmentally friendlier. Customer focus, however, remains the key element of our competitive advantage."

### **Completion of One of the Largest Investment Cycles**

In recent years, the Port of Koper has put particular effort into reducing its impact on the surrounding area by implementing a sustainable development



### **The Human Factor Is Still Important**

According to Tilen Pahor, Commercial Manager of TPG Logistika, logistics cannot be digitised completely. "Undoubtedly, present-day technology makes it possible to digitise certain steps and processes, as well as minimise the paper side of the work. However, the human factor is still important. Logistics involves an enormous amount of daily challenges; it is a living organism, and certain problems must be solved by people, as computers are unable to do so." Pahor explained that certain shipping companies are trying to digitise 100% of the process, which can present a problem. "All of a sudden, you have no one to talk to, which makes it more difficult to resolve issues and obtain information," Pahor said.

TPG Logistika offers a customised logistics solution – an app that clients can access using a password to track their shipments, what is happening to them, what their status is, the situation at the warehouse, etc. Naturally, the company adapts to the customer, as some prefer digitised procedures, while others still like to use standardised methods, seeking information via email or phone.

strategy. Sustainability in the maritime sector means providing a safe, effective and reliable transport of goods, while also reducing environmental impacts and increasing resource efficiency.

"By extending Pier 1, the port's operational waterfront area, by 100 metres, we completed one of the largest investment cycles in recent decades. We are currently continuing to extend Pier 1, i.e. warehouse facilities behind the operational waterfront area of the container terminal. The work is expected to finish in 2022, as two new quayside Super Post-Panamax container cranes are to be set up," the company elaborated on its major investments. Also planned is north-side extension of Pier 1, along with construction of new ship moorings, additional storage space, and a new truck terminal.

### **The First Port in the Adriatic**

"In addition to still being No. 1 port in the Adriatic for containers, we are leading in the automotive sector, where we are No. 1 in the Mediterranean in terms of the number of units transshipped. Naturally, we are vigilant in monitoring the development of the neighbouring competitors, which invest heavily in port and railway capacities. At the moment, we are at least comparable or even ahead in terms of infrastructure when comparing individual segments, but we must take care not to be overtaken by neighbouring ports. Otherwise, our value added, which even our clients are happy to acknowledge, includes our level of organisation, adaptability and quality of services, as also attested by our partnership with many global entities in logistics and production," Port of Koper was rightfully proud to add.

In developing information systems, companies want to enable their customers maximum digitisation in operations and system integration by connecting various links within the logistics chain. Great emphasis is given on ensuring cybersecurity and prevention of attacks that have the potential to paralyse company operations.

For Port of Koper, direct ship connections are the most important. "At the moment, we have two direct ship connections on the Far East route; we expect that increased trading of goods between our key inland market, Central Europe, and Asia will encourage other shipping companies as well. The Port's railway connections with the hinterland are important as well. In this regard, we take great pride in already having a well-developed network of connections with the largest logistics centres from Central European countries," Port of Koper revealed. The Port's traditional and best developed inland markets include Austria, Hungary, Slovakia and the Czech Republic. The Port also operates in the south of Poland as well as in the south of Germany, and, to a lesser extent, in the Balkans; outside Europe, the Port is active in North Africa, i.e. the Mediterranean, and in the Middle and Far East.



Photo: Kristjan Stojaković

## freight forwarders and customers brokers



**fining**  
SUPER TIM • SUPER STORITEV

### Customs brokerage:

- Import customs clearance
- Export customs clearance
- Transit customs clearance
- Simplified procedures (pre-clearance, 24/7 service on demand)
- Reporting cargo customs status, clearance procedures, assistance during inspections
- Fiscal clearance
- Intrastat reporting

### Fiscal representation:

- VAT reporting

### Port handling:

- Providing for in- & outbound port documentation for: cnts, trucks, trains, vessels
- Providing for cargo superintendence (QC, lashing certificate, laboratory analysis...)
- Organizing stripping/stuffing, lashing, weighing, counting, sealing, labeling...
- Assisting with pre- and on-carriage
- Stock reporting, feedback, advising
- Containers port handling
- Stripping/stuffing assistance
- Special cargo handling
- Project cargo handling
- Ship supply handling

MEMBER OF:





Photo: Fraport Slovenija

### Innovations in Storing Pharmaceutical Shipments

This year saw an increase in the need for air cargo transport of goods. Fraport Slovenija acts as the handling agent. "The purpose of our warehouse is to prepare and ship goods for air transport. In air transport, the key factor is transport time, which is why

shipments arrive to our warehouse just hours before being shipped on. The average warehousing time is less than two days. Most cargo is shipped on the same day," Tomaž Prezelj, Head of Cargo Supply Service at Fraport Slovenija, explained.

Fraport Slovenija presented an innovation in storing pharmaceutical shipments. "Pharmaceutical shipments require special storage and handling care. These are time- and temperature-sensitive shipments. All shipments are equipped with a temperature recorder, which shows to the recipient after the transport is completed what temperatures the shipment was exposed to. If the required temperature is not upheld, the shipment can become spoilt. Maintaining appropriate temperatures can be especially challenging in the summer. Imagine a shipment of vaccines that need to be stored at a temperature between 2 and 8 °C, when the airport tarmac heats up to over 40 °C in the summer. We tackle this problem by packaging medicines in additional, innovative thermal packaging that makes sure the shipment remains stored in appropriate conditions even when being handled at inappropriate temperatures. This year, the warehouse was upgraded with additional capacities, enabling us to maintain a temperature between 2 and 8 °C, as well as additional floor space

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[www.transport-kolenc.si](http://www.transport-kolenc.si)



**35 YEARS**  
**LOGISTICS AND TRANSPORT ACTIVITIES**

The logistics and transport firm BRANKO KOLENC S.P. is a family operation established in 1986. The company offers the following services:

- logistics, storage, transhipment and transport of goods by lorry and refrigerated lorry, serving mainly the following countries: Austria, Germany, Italy, Belgium, Netherlands, France, Greece, Croatia and Slovenia
- logistics services, transport, transhipment and storage of goods, EXCLUSIVE for Greece
- catering and trade
- building construction

Responsiveness, flexibility, reliability and accuracy are the bridge that connects us with our partners. Thank you for your trust.

where a temperature from 15 to 25 °C can be maintained,” Prezelj described the solution.

Fraport Slovenija’s main partners include forwarding agents and air carriers. In goods export, the company offers these partners the option of preparing the good for transport, which comprises inspection of the goods, measuring, weighing, security screening, additional packaging and preparation for shipment in air transport. When it comes to importing goods, the procedure is reversed. The company receives shipments from the air carrier, handles them appropriately and issues them to the recipient after completing all customs procedures.

### Rapid Transition to the 4PL Models

Transport routes are changing and businesses are paying increasing attention to their stability and to the provision of necessary capacities. “Longer-term contract logistics with carriers and logistics providers will become more prominent as opposed to the ‘spot market’. Companies will transition more rapidly to the 4PL models in logistics. Demand for warehousing will continue to grow, as companies will increase safety stocks of both materials and finished products,” Intereuropa predicts. The greatest challenge comes in the form of timely delivery route coordination, as customers have dispersed supply systems featuring



Photo: Intereuropa

various modes of transport, whereby timely communication with the transport organiser is essential.

When it comes to predictions for next year, Intereuropa is cautiously optimistic. Demand for air freight services remains at a high level and continues to rise. The company expects capacities to increase next year by adding additional passenger flights, which could result in stabilised transport prices on

## T.P.G. = Trust, Personal care and Global presence

TPG Logistics was established and operates under principles which are evident from the very name of the company:

- Trusted by both its partners and customers
- Professional attitude in the quality provision of a personalised service, and
- Global, providing comprehensive world-wide coverage in relation to every requirement, including door-to-door.

TPG Logistics is a dynamic rapidly growing company with proficient staff who have the knowledge and make every effort to provide the best & fastest transport solution. Based on professional experience acquired over a number of years, TPG Logistics offers optimal solutions and competitive rates.

### Primary Services

- Organisation of sea freight, air freight, groupage and truck transport
- Storage and distribution of goods
- Import and export with in-house customs clearance by a fully accredited customs agent, turning complicated customs documentation into a hassle-free process
- Provision of consultancy to clients in the attainment of optimal logistics solutions

TPG's subsidiary TPG Agent, offers a vessel chartering facility as well as the possibility to book project and bulk cargo capacities.

TPG also specialises in perishable cargos as well as other temperature-sensitive freight, in which the company also represents one of the largest partners of Luka Koper at the Port of Koper.

### Advantages of TPG Logistics

- Offers maximum flexibility, providing customers with quick decisions and rapid responses
- A successful company with a steady annual growth rate, trusted by an increasing number of customers
- In relation to container throughput, one of the Slovenia's leading logistics enterprises
- Global presence through its partnerships with logistics service providers world-wide
- Providing excellence, guaranteed through certification:  
- Authorised Economic Operator (AEO Certificate SIAECSI01000201131967)

**www.tpg.si**



the ‘import from China–export from the USA’ route. Things are different for the shipping services market, where the situation remains difficult due to closures of ports and terminals, and shipping capacities are still diminished.

In road transport, increased demand continues to be recorded, but forecasts are uncertain due to the high prices of energy. Companies are providing for sufficient transport capacities through their own increased output and a broad base of local and foreign carriers.

Intereuropa’s aim is to provide a stable service that enables their customers’ supply chains to work like a well-oiled machine regardless of the market situation. ■

**In road transport, increased demand continues to be recorded, but forecasts are uncertain due to the high prices of energy.**

### Location and Highly Qualified Staff as the Main Advantage

According to Fining, Slovenia’s key advantage in global logistics flows is its geostrategic position. The country’s optimal location in the north of the Adriatic Sea provides the shortest route from Central Europe for the Mediterranean as well as the Middle and Far East. In addition to the geostrategic position, responsible and highly qualified staff is a crucial factor, as it provides the highest service quality standards in logistics. Also noteworthy is the solid transport infrastructure, along with great road and railway connections.

In terms of markets the company works with, Fining highlights Hungary, Austria, Slovakia, as well as Croatia, Serbia, and Bosnia and Herzegovina. The company is also turning towards more remote markets (e.g. Japan, Korea, Vietnam, etc.) and the Mediterranean (Turkey, Egypt, the Maghreb). Fining’s customers can avail themselves of a diverse range of services, from organising transport, port logistics and customs clearance to consultancy in foreign trade procedures. The company’s competitive advantages include adaptability and reliability of services, as well as tradition, which, combined with experienced staff, translates to value added for any customer.

# BTC Logistics Centre

Your partner in providing excellence in FMCG logistics services

[www.btc.si/en/btc-logistics](http://www.btc.si/en/btc-logistics)



**BTC**  
Logistics centre



# europacific

Logistics simplified

**is a modern international logistics company with a tradition of organizing land, sea and air transport with highly qualified staff. Our competitive advantages are a recognized cooperation with the Port of Koper and its authorization.**



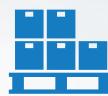
We organize the transportation of general, project, bulk, liquid and other cargoes for import, export and transit, supported by maritime, land and railway traffic all over the world.



We organize the transport of goods by rail in all European countries, CIS countries - Association of Independent States, parts of Asia and the Middle East, by renting wagons and containers.



We strive to become one of the leading players in the aviation logistics with the use of many internationally renowned airlines. Any deficiencies in the aviation logistics are resolved with road transport or shipping.



The speed and reliability of road transport are our priority principles in organizing entire or partial international loads, and we pay special attention to transportation safety and ecological integrity. We are also member of TAPA EMEA network.

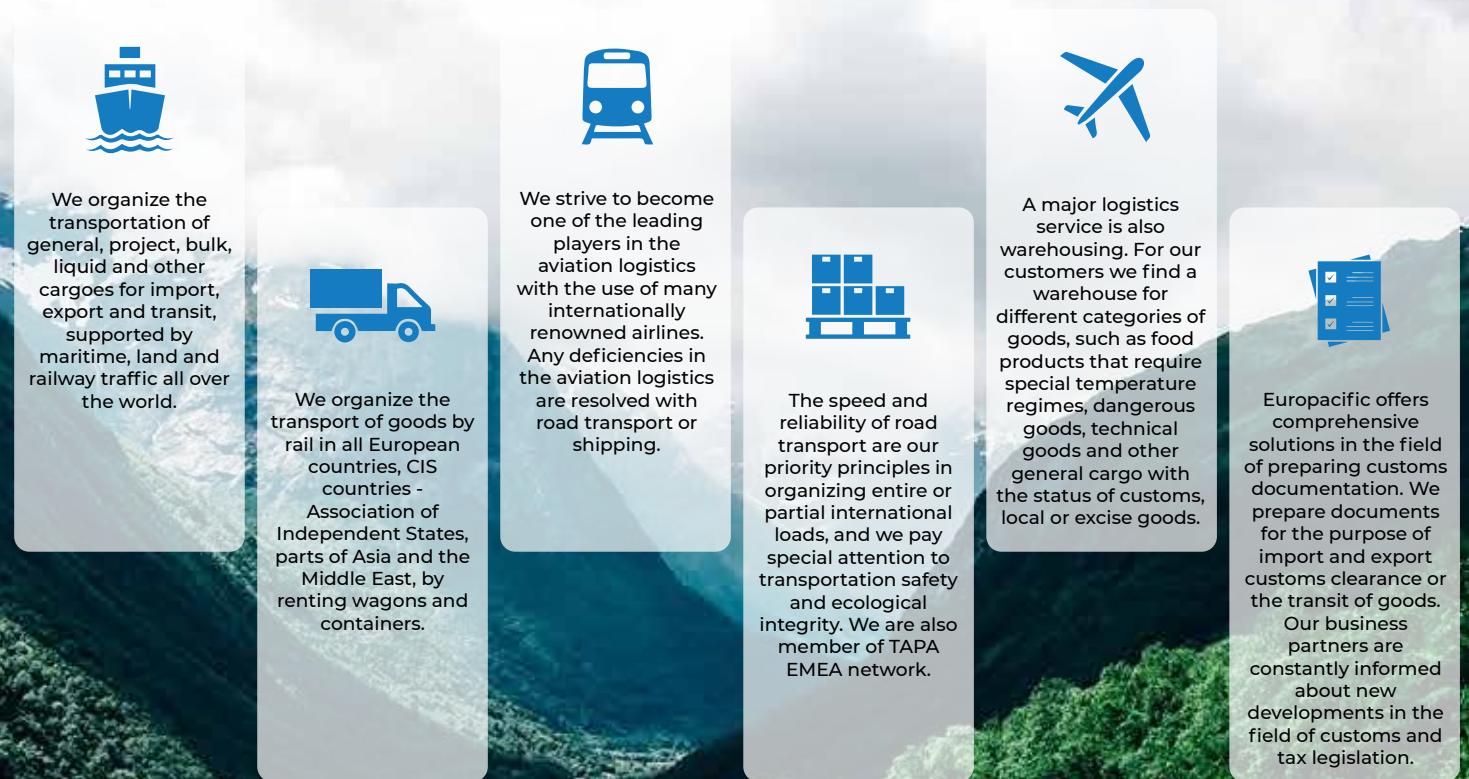


A major logistics service is also warehousing. For our customers we find a warehouse for different categories of goods, such as food products that require special temperature regimes, dangerous goods, technical goods and other general cargo with the status of customs, local or excise goods.



Europacific offers comprehensive solutions in the field of preparing customs documentation. We prepare documents for the purpose of import and export customs clearance or the transit of goods.

Our business partners are constantly informed about new developments in the field of customs and tax legislation.



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EUROPACIFIC REPRESENTATION  
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#### SERBIA

EUROPACIFIC LOGISTICS DOO  
T: +381 69 22 04 035

# Company that started its mission under the most challenging design and transport service conditions

**Our development is based on the rich experience of a team of professionals with expertise in various fields of logistics, commerce and finance who today wish to share that expertise with their current and future customers.**

Our made-to-measure logistics solutions and constant search for optimal conditions for our customers are based on traditional transport services that we contract from reliable operators throughout Slovenia, while at the same time we aim to take the fullest possible advantage of Slovenia's favourable geostrategic position with a hub in the Port of Koper, thus offering our customers an economical, rapid and, above all, reliable logistics experience that will always put them a step ahead of the competition.

Our location in Koper allows us to supervise logistics operations directly, including port services. We also aim to exploit hinterland transport infrastructure to the fullest extent, optimising the logistics process and providing customers with a reliable service at the highest level, without "hidden costs". Our proximity to the border, our team's language skills and our extensive business network also allow us to offer cross-border services in Trieste (Italy) and Rijeka (Croatia), since we also have reliable business partners in these ports. We collaborate directly and regularly with the port community, the customs administration, inland terminals and transport operators, since we believe that this is the key to smooth operations and the rapid provision of logistics support to our customers, strengthening their confidence in what we do for them and on their behalf every day, to our mutual advantage.

Alongside an excellent location, our main strength lies in the fact that we are a close-knit team of colleagues and external partners with the ability to communicate openly among ourselves and with our customers and be always available when

moment. Send us an enquiry and we will be happy to make you an offer. We provide services in such a way as to liberate the customer as far as possible from the need to think about logistics operations and communication within the supply chain,



needed. We and our partners would be very happy to have the opportunity to work with you.

Because the challenges and opportunities of the industry we operate in are constantly bringing new demands for innovative approaches, we have taken the decision with our partners from Egypt to develop, in the form of an autonomous business called MA – Europe (also based in Koper), a logistics platform for both our customers from the wider area of the Port of Koper and those operating in the Middle East, which will free them from the constant search for a "better option" (in terms of both costs and time), because in return for a fair price we provide a fair service that provides the optimal solution in a given

allowing them to focus fully on their core activity. So if you are looking to establish long-term business partnerships, the SLD team will be more than happy to come to your aid in aspects such as long-term planning, costs projection and the preparation of a range of marketing scenarios for your products – or "simply" to provide logistics support.

*The SLD team*



## CARS MOVE THE WORLD. WE MOVE THE CARS.

Complete worldwide logistics for ready-made vehicles from the manufacturer to the dealer.

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# Reliable and competitive transport services in the heart of Europe

**SŽ-Tovorni promet is the leading cargo railway carrier in Slovenia. It is one of the major Slovenian logistics companies and one of the largest exporters of services. In recent years, the company has established itself as one of the leading regional carriers with a strong presence on key international markets.**

SŽ-Tovorni promet provides users with comprehensive transport and logistics services, both in conventional transport and in combined transport, which also includes road transport. They offer fast, reliable, safe and quality transport, storage of goods and door-to-door delivery of goods, with all logistics services included. Their highly skilled employees are able to adapt the wide range of services to the expectations of their customers at any time, and advise the customers on the optimal logistics solutions.

SŽ-Tovorni promet is part of the Slovenian Railways Group. This enables the company to provide their customers with comprehensive logistics solutions to their transport challenges. Together with the freight forwarding company Fersped, they cover all forms of transport and are able to offer oversea transports. The sister company SŽ-ŽIP takes care of the protection of valuable goods, and the company SŽ-VIT offers the maintenance of locomotives and wagons.

They can provide customers with high-quality and competitively-priced services both at home and anywhere abroad. They offer the transports on their own in Slovenia, Austria and Croatia, in other markets they cooperate with their long-standing partners. Slovenia's position at the crossroads of European corridors and its close

all the services necessary for modern railway transport.

In the coming years, the company will continue developing new products for both complete trains and for the transport of single wagons. SŽ-Tovorni promet will seek its opportunities by further internationalizing its operations, developing an international network and entering the markets of other



connection with the Port of Koper enable them to offer fast and reliable connections in the wider area of Central Europe. Ljubljana is an important transport hub and an excellent logistics platform for Eastern Europe. At the Ljubljana Zalog marshalling yard and at the intermodal terminal, they offer

countries. They will support these activities by further modernising their wagons and locomotives, according to the needs of their customers. All those who need quality and comprehensive services are invited to contact SŽ-Tovorni promet, where they will prove that they are a reliable, efficient and loyal business partner.

## Connecting europe



Tovorni promet

**Competitive  
Flexible  
Customer-oriented  
Environmentally friendly**

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[www.slo-zeleznice.si](http://www.slo-zeleznice.si)



# Leading provider of logistics services in South-Eastern Europe



## LAND TRANSPORT

- Groupage transport
- Domestic transport
- Road transport
- Railway transport
- Customs services



## INTERCONTINENTAL TRANSPORT

- Sea freight
- Air freight
- Automotive Logistics
- Shipping agency
- Project logistics



## LOGISTICS SOLUTIONS

- Warehousing
- Distribution
- Logistics solutions



T-type Hinge

**Titus**  
+

# Tera Black

TITUS ENHANCED RESISTANCE APPLICATION



## Engineered for Purpose

Titus TeraBlack is Titus' response to the trend of black colour hinge finish. Our TeraBlack products have a **light absorbing microstructure** which provides a unique black, non-reflective, matte finish and a smooth uniform surface with a velvet feel. The new finish provides **exceptional corrosion resistance** and **consistency throughout the lifespan** of the product. TeraBlack is more than just a colour option. Like all solutions from Titus, it has been engineered for purpose!

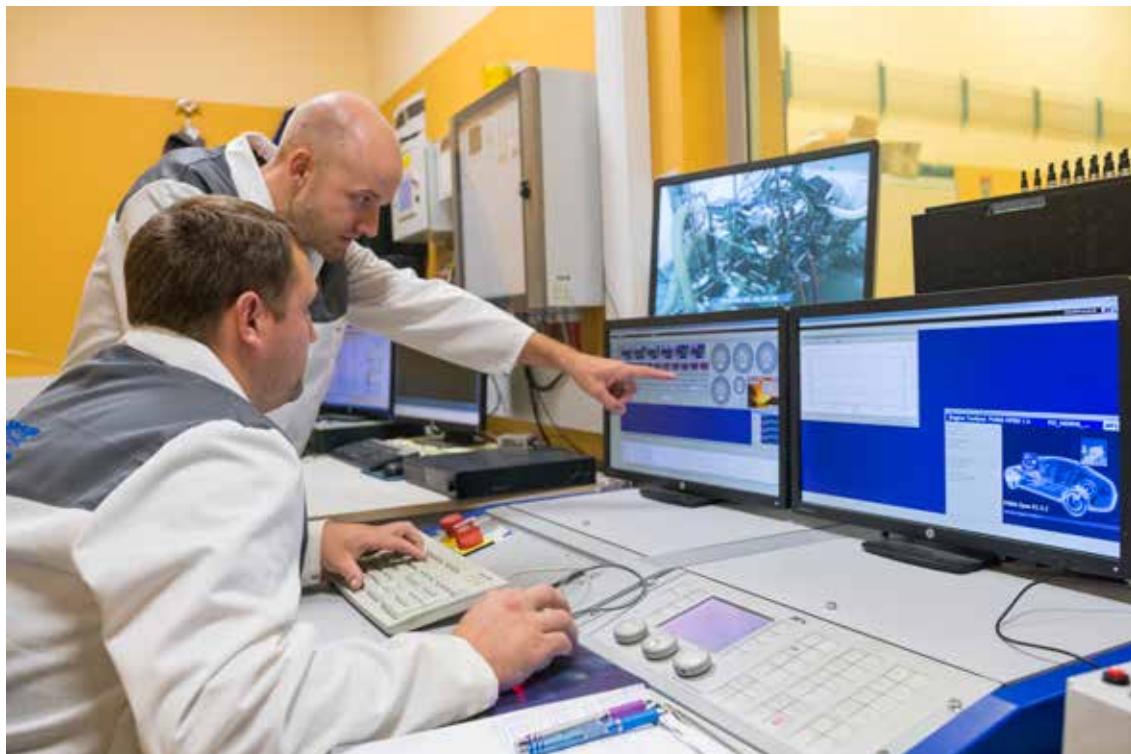


Photo: Hidria

**Advanced Mobility**

# Slovenian-made Components in Cars Made by the Largest Car Manufacturers

**Slovenian companies are a reliable partner of the automotive industry. They are developing new products that help create the most advanced vehicles of the future.**

Barbara Perko

## Continuous Investment in New Product Development

In accordance with its vision and strategy, Hidria is continuously investing in the development of new products, new competitive technologies and materials, and new high-tech capacities, thus helping shape the latest trends in automotive industry and industrial technology.

Every year, the company invests around EUR 15 million in development and EUR 25 million in new capacities. "We prioritise product development and breakthrough innovations in hybridisation and electromobility, further improving the efficiency and cleanliness of both internal combustion engines and electric motor drives. Hidria has many opportunities in the further development of electronically commutated axial and centrifugal fans for ventilation, heating and cooling equipment in buildings, where we are assuming a leading role in the segment of high-efficiency heat pumps. We are accelerating development

in process automation, robotisation and digitalisation in line with the so-called Industry 4.0 principles, thus ensuring the high quality and traceability of our products and solutions," the company says.

## The Company Will Manufacture Key Components for BMW and Mercedes

This year, the company laid the foundations for a new, EUR 40 million, high-tech digitalised centre for the development and production of stator and rotor packages for the most advanced e-vehicles of the future. In the project's second phase, the centre will also house a tool construction and manufacturing facility.

Covering an area of almost two football pitches (15,000 m<sup>2</sup>), the state-of-the-art centre will feature automated and robotic digitally supported technology based on Industry 4.0 principles. The centre will gradually create 100 new jobs for highly qualified experts. They will create products with projected sales of EUR 100 million, significantly exceeding EUR

**This year, Hidria laid the foundations for a new, EUR 40 million, high-tech digitalised centre for the development and production of stator and rotor packages for the most advanced e-vehicles of the future.**

100,000 of value added per employee. From 2023, the factory will produce key components for electric hybrid drives for BMW and Mercedes vehicles.

Production at the new site will start in mid-2023. This investment is the first of a series of Slovenian automotive supplier industry projects aimed at establishing the green mobility innovation platform GREMO (GReen MObility) within the Slovenian Automotive Cluster (ACS). "With this project, in planned partnership with the Slovenian government within the Recovery and Resilience Plan (RRP), and with investments totalling over EUR 3 billion in the next 5 years, Slovenia's most important automotive companies are ensuring the transformation and further growth of the Slovenian automotive supplier industry, which already accounts for over 10 percent of GDP and as much as 20 percent of Slovenian exports. We aim for breakthrough innovations in electric motor drives, power buffers/batteries, and ultra light materials."

### **Many of the Best Known Car Brands Use Hidria's Components**

The hybridisation and electrification of vehicles have experienced a significant boost in recent years. With its 50 years of experience and the expertise of its employees, Hidria plays an important part in shaping the future of e-mobility. "Our original, ground-breaking, and internationally awarded innovations in key components of drives and other electric motors for hybrid and electric vehicles are used by many of the best known car manufacturers such as BMW, Mercedes, VW, Seat, Škoda, Audi, Porsche, Maserati and others," the company says.

### **The Shift Will Be Gradual**

The shift in car drive technologies will be gradual, the company predicts. "First by hybridisation, from mild to full hybrids and later to plug-in hybrids and electric cars, accompanied by the necessary infrastructure and the provision of green electricity. Plug-in hybrids are transitional, with those using Hidria's solutions only having an electric range of around 150 kilometres in 2023, and around 2030 this technology will start

to be phased out, as it will no longer make sense to develop, manufacture and install two parallel drives, a classic and an electric one. This process will also be accelerated by reductions in battery prices and consequently electric cars. The share of green diesel will be stable until 2025, significant until 2030 and still present in 2035. It currently remains the best choice for longer journeys."

In 2022, Hidria aims to achieve a similar volume of production as this year, while the hybrids and electromobility segment will undoubtedly continue to grow. The company's projected sales for 2022 are EUR 330 million.

Hidria's main markets are Germany, France and Italy, where the largest European and global manufacturers of vehicles and industrial equipment are located. Due to lower production costs, the automotive industry is increasingly moving to Central and South-Eastern European countries, including Hungary, where Hidria has a production plant in Gyöngyös. The company also exports to the USA and Asia, especially to China, where it has a plant in Suzhou.

### **The Company Is Launching New Lines for Electric and Hybrid Vehicle Components**

LTH Castings manufactures lightweight aluminium alloy components for the automotive industry. "It is important for us to be the development partner for our most important customers in all areas, including key electromobility components (e-motor components, inverter housings, DC-to-DC converter housings, battery housings)," the company points out. "We work together with our customers already in the early phase of developing new components and we introduce new materials and new technologies. In the last two years, LTH Castings has acquired a number of projects for the manufacture of electromobility components, which also involve investments in infrastructure and automation of operations. We expect to launch new production lines for electric and hybrid vehicle components at the end of this year and the beginning of next year."

"LTH Castings has adapted to the situation during the pandemic, and we are a reliable development partner for our customers in the transformation to e-mobility. Most of our new projects are dedicated to this effort and we are also adjusting our production processes accordingly. Our e-projects involve establishing new high-tech processes for the manufacture of aluminium alloy components, which are supported by a high level of digitalisation," the company says.

### **A Reliable and High Quality Partner**

Being recognised by customers as a reliable partner and earning a reputation for high quality is key to the company's long-term success. All this is confirmed by "this year's award by one of our most important business partners, with whom we have cooperated for almost three decades. The 2021 Bosch Global Supplier Award ranks us among Bosch's best global

**Hidria's investment is the first of a series of Slovenian automotive supplier industry projects aimed at establishing the green mobility innovation platform GREMO (GReen MObility) within the Slovenian Automotive Cluster (ACS).**



Photo: LTH Castings

partners. Furthermore, we are the only Slovenian company and the only supplier of light metal casting components to receive this prestigious award."

The company is expanding its production capacities at practically all locations and is preparing for further growth as a result of launching key new e-mobility projects. "Recently we have further consolidated our status as a development supplier, and from 2019 to now we have acquired new projects at a value of around EUR 200 million in annual sales, which will be realised in the coming years," they say.

The sector is seeing the fastest development in the electrification of the drivetrain, and advancements are also being made in assistance systems and autonomous driving. A drivetrain for e-vehicles is still in intensive development. At the same time, individual components are being merged and new lightweight materials are being introduced, which requires rapid changes and the production of larger and more complex components. LTH Castings is involved in the early development of components in virtually all its upcoming projects. The company also places great emphasis on sustainable operation.

LTH Castings's operations are tied primarily to the European automotive market. One of the key countries in this market is Germany, where many of the company's customers are based – major international companies such as Mercedes-Benz, BMW and others who sell their vehicles globally. In addition, LTH Castings supplies renowned Tier 1 and Tier 2 automotive component manufacturers such as Bosch, Continental, JTEKT, Vitesco Technologies, ZF and others.

### Innovations in the Wind Power Industry, Caravans, and Aviation

The Elan Composites division develops new technologies and products for customers active in the wind power industry, caravans, and aviation. "We are currently in the finishing stages of developing a new technology for the production of epoxy resin root segments by means of RTM (resin transfer moulding) for our largest customer from the wind power industry, which will be the dominant technology in



Photo:LTH Castings

serial production as well. In the aviation programme, we are developing the technology needed to produce composite structures for an eVTOL aircraft for Pipistrel. We will also be producing all of the tools and prototype composite components for this aircraft. We are also developing a carbon fibre roof for campervan market, which will be significantly lighter than the traditional composite roof, as the roof weight is crucial for the total vehicle mass. All these new technologies and innovative products will increase the competitive edge and visibility of both our customers and our division," the company explained.

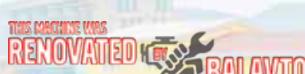
This year marked the beginning of the serial production of nacelles for the largest, 11 MW and 14 MW wind turbines, which will be installed on wind farms on the high seas. "For this project, we also produced all the tools or moulds needed to make composite components of the nacelle, prototypes and pre-series components for our customer Siemens Gamesa Renewable Energy. We also made the tools and prototype components of root segments, which will be installed as load-bearing structural components in 11.5-metre blades and the 115-metre long mandrel box, which our buyer uses in the blade production process."

**The Elan Composites division is developing a carbon fibre roof for the campervan market, which will be significantly lighter than the traditional composite roof, as the roof weight is crucial for the total vehicle mass.**

# BALAVTO

Specialist in reconstruction of construction and tunnel machinery

Before
After



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Photo: Elan

Earlier this year saw the beginning of serial production of pop-top roofs for campervans, which are currently the biggest hit on the caravan market. Extremely useful and aesthetically designed, the pop-top roof was developed for the Slovenian partner Adria Mobil.

### **Up to 100% Recycling Thanks to Innovative Solutions**

**Designed for the perfect blend of aesthetics and functionality by Pininfarina, the enticing and practical interior invites perfect living at sea.**

In the wind power industry, the emphasis is on new innovative solutions, materials and technologies that result in better prices for turbine components, ensure long-term availability of raw and installation materials, and ultimately enable 100% recycling of all turbine components at the end of their service life. In the caravanning industry, the focus is on elements that should be as light as possible, as well as on finding the best possible compromise between usability and design excellence, all of which ensures price competitiveness. The monolithic technology of producing composite components is the most important development direction in the aviation programme.

The wind power industry remains Elan Composites' greatest market, followed by caravanning and aviation. The division supplies composite



products and tools to make wind turbines to all production sites of their buyers, from the United States to the EU and China. Buyers from the caravanning and aviation market are primarily Slovenian companies, as collaboration in the local market is strongly encouraged and built on.

Elan's innovative and creative team of developers was declared the Engineering & Development Team of 2021.

### **Joining Forces with the Legendary Italian Design Studio**

The new 47 ft sailing yacht Elan E6's debut is due in January at the BOOT water sports trade fair and boat show in Düsseldorf, Germany. This was another project to involve collaboration with naval architects from Humphreys Yacht Design, as well as joining forces with the legendary Italian design studio Pininfarina, and composite industry-leaders, Gurit.

Elan E6 is the largest sailing yacht from Elan's E line. This twin rudder and helm yacht utilizes 3D VAIL technology for ultimate lightness and stiffness, and a dedicated hull with a T-shaped keel. A brand new hull was developed to fit the needs of the E6. New-generation hulls are also expected to be quick in light airs, while the hull's versatility covers a range of displacements to also cater to people requiring greater load carrying capabilities. While the yacht was designed to be easily sailed by an experienced couple, the E6 truly shines with a good crew. Three pairs of Harken winches, ideally positioned for precision trimming and fast unobstructed movements, are the result of 1:1 scale model in-house testing with an Olympic sailing team.

Designed for the perfect blend of aesthetics and functionality by Pininfarina, the enticing and practical interior invites perfect living at sea. The creative form is brought alive by the natural oak veneered interior and enriched with solid wood finish. The E6 also comes with a fully equipped galley with a front-opening fridge and optional microwave or coffee machine that will provide the comfort of home.

Last year's notable achievements include winning the Red Dot Award for the Elan GT6 sailing yacht, which was also nominated for the European Yacht of the Year Award.

Development is headed towards increasingly large vessels featuring more complex construction as well as an increasing amount of equipment. There is major emphasis on equipment connectivity and green solutions. "In terms of green solutions, we are once again among the pioneering companies, as we built our first electric vessel back in 2017; as of 2021, this solution is available for all of our vessels," the company pointed out.

Elan Yachts' key markets are Croatia, Italy, Germany, the United Kingdom, Australia, and the Scandinavian countries. ■

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# Marmor Sežana d. d. -global natural stone player

**Marmor Sežana, d. d., with a high quality and innovative treatment of the Karst stone that is one of the hardest types of limestone in the world also raised interest of customers in areas with extreme climatic conditions, such as Russia or the Arabian Peninsula.**

Marmor Sežana, d. d., boasts a 75-year-long tradition in stone masonry. In Slovenia, it is still the leading company for the extraction and treatment of natural stone and one of rare companies introducing the underground limestone mining technology.

## Four native types of natural stone

The company owns four active quarries with long-term concessions obtained for the exploitation of the Karst limestone. Using cutting-edge technology, the company extracts four native types of natural stone, i.e. Lipica Unito, Lipica Fiorito, Repen and Kopriva, which are used by their customers as linings on building surfaces, pavements and façades all over the world. After all, the Slovenian Parliament building also features the Karst limestone, as do many Plečnik's masterpieces, such as the Ljubljana Market Place with the Ljubljanica riverbank and the Arcades in Slovenska cesta.

The products made of domestic raw material by way of own technological treatment can also be found on house façades, streets and squares across Slovenia, in the neighbouring Italy, Austria, Hungary and other European cities. Lately, the products are mostly sold in the Middle and Far East, the Arabian Peninsula and in Russia.

## With quality and innovation active also abroad

Marmor Sežana, d. d., has searched for business opportunities abroad for several years, where the awareness of the use of natural materials with a low carbon

footprint is much greater than at home. To that end, it is marketed under its own brand and sees to project development from the quotation stage to the final installation.

Its products are produced in an innovative manner, without using reinforcing binders and epoxy surface coatings, at the state-of-the-art technology line in Lipica. Karst stone is one of the hardest types of limestone in the world and as such interesting for use in areas with extreme climatic conditions, such as Russia or the Arabian Peninsula.

## Successful at stone masonry exhibition in Verona

After a year of slowdown, Marmor Sežana, d. d., again successfully presented its activity at the international exhibition in Verona and as the only Slovenian representative drew a great deal of attention for the execution of projects abroad with products from own production.

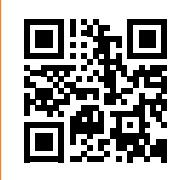
## The most important references of Marmor Sežana, d. d., in the recent period

- The Gazprom administration building (LAKHTA CENTER) in St. Petersburg, Russia
- The "TRE TORRI" square in Milan, Italy
- The Al Mas Tower in Dubai, United Arab Emirates
- BUSINESS CENTRE XIAMEN, China
- The "Portopicollo" resort in Sistiana, Italy
- Renovation of the ancient town of KASTRA in Ajdovščina, Slovenia
- The promenade of the POSTOJNA CAVE, Slovenia
- The references listed above represent not only technologically demanding structures, but also logically complex procedures that are largely placed on the global market via the Port of Koper.





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### Slovenian Logistics and Woodworking Companies

# Offering the Fastest Maritime Route and Innovation

**Slovenian logistics providers offer the shortest route by sea and land, and the woodworking and furniture industry can offer products that stand out in terms of innovation, technical perfection and design.**

*Darja Kocbek*

“Slovenian logistics companies operating in the Middle East have been providing the fastest maritime route to the markets in Central and Southeast Europe and the Western Balkans,” explains Robert Sever, director of the Transport Association at the Chamber of Commerce and Industry of Slovenia (CCIS). In turn, “woodworking and furniture companies can offer interior furniture for hotels and vessels, wooden constructions and sawn wood on the markets of the Middle East,” says Bernard Likar of the Wood-Processing and Furniture Industry Association at CCIS.

**Maritime Route up to Seven Days Shorter**  
 Robert Sever explains that by using the Adriatic ports and especially the Port of Koper, the maritime route from the Middle East to the markets in Central and Southeast Europe and the Western Balkans is up to seven days shorter than through northern European ports. In addition, the land connection to the inland markets in Central and Southeast Europe is shorter than the distance from the northern ports. The frequency of freight trains from the Port of Koper to all major centres in Bavaria, Hungary, Austria, and other nearby countries is adapted to this.

“Slovenian logistics companies are already providing over 60% of their services to international clients, but there is of course still much room for improvement, including increasing the promotion of their advantages especially in supplying the inland markets and entering the not yet covered markets of the Middle East,” says Sever. Pošta Slovenije, Luka Koper, Slovenske Železnice, Intereuropa, Glovis Europe, BTC, and Cargo-Partner are Slovenia's largest transport and logistics providers.

At the Expo in Dubai, Slovenian transport and logistics companies will be showcased at the Slovenian pavilion at the end of the Travel, Connectivity & Mobility unit or just before the beginning of the Sustainable Development, Green Technologies & Wood unit – that is, from 9 to 15 January 2022. Three events connected with ports, railway and transport are planned to take place during the visit of the Slovenian logistics delegation.

The presentation's main goals include promoting the Slovenian logistics industry and transport routes, promoting sustainable solutions that Slovenian logistics companies can contribute in this field and networking with business partners.

#### **Offering Innovation, Perfection and Design**

According to Bernard Likar, the Slovenian woodworking and furniture industry can offer products that stand out in terms of innovation, technical perfection and design. Also added here should be reliability and flexibility. “Slovenian woodworking companies export over a half of what they produce, largely to the competitive markets of the EU, United Kingdom and the US. They seek new business opportunities on the EU markets (Scandinavia, France etc.), the Middle East and Southeast Europe,” Likar explains.

The top Slovenian furniture manufacturers include Stilles, Alples, HIT Preless, Bobic Yacht Interior, Gonzaga Pro, Klun Ambienti, Donar, and Murales. Standing out among the woodworking companies are Marles Hiše, Jelovica, LIP Bled, Lumar IG, Riko Hiše, Rihter, M Sora, and Inles.

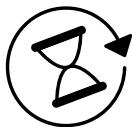
The Slovenian woodworking delegation will be at the Expo in Dubai from 16 to 20 January 2022. Some companies will also join other economic delegations. According to the Slovenian Ministry of Economic Development and Technology, the new Slovenian Industrial Strategy ranks the woodworking industry among green industries and the government supports domestic and international investment in the woodworking industry. The goal is to increase the annual processing of timber to three million cubic metres and the sales revenue to EUR 2.5 million by 2030. ■

**For more information on how to work with Slovenian transport and logistics companies, please contact Robert Sever at CCIS's Transport Association (phone: +386 1 5898 232, +386 1 5898 000; e-mail: [zpz@gzs.si](mailto:zpz@gzs.si)).**

**For more information on how to work with Slovenian woodworking and furniture companies, please contact the Wood-Processing and Furniture Association at CCIS (phone: +386 1 58 98 284, e-mail: [lesarstvo@gzs.si](mailto:lesarstvo@gzs.si)).**

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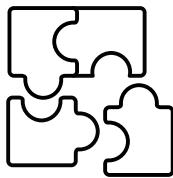
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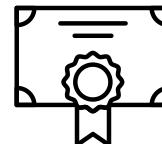
- transport programme
- energy programme
- ecological programme
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Photo: Kronoterm

#### Green Technologies

# Energy-efficient and Environmentally Friendly

**Taking innovative approaches to create energy-efficient and environmentally friendly products. Demand for products used in environmental protection is on the rise.**

Barbara Perko

Kronoterm has just launched a completely new and innovative line of VERSI air/water heat pumps, which are compact, highly efficient and as much as 40 times quieter than the requirements outlined in the European directive for heat pumps. VERSI's main advantage is flexibility of use and installation, as it can be installed in or outside a building. The VERSI heat pump is intended for buildings that are either tight on space or have only minor heating requirements. By developing this product, Kronoterm believes to have set new trends in the area of heat pumps.

Kronoterm is a development-oriented company. It has recently updated hydraulic indoor units and extended its range of additional equipment. As for the future, Kronoterm is eager to announce development of a new geothermal heat pump.

#### Among the Leading European Producers of Heating Systems

Despite the unusual market situation, Kronoterm's business results were excellent. "Together with our business partners, we increased orders by as much as 157% over our forecasts in the first five months of this year, and we expect to exceed last year's turnover by around 30%. At the same time, we are truly pleased that our successes and achievements are recognised both by industry experts and the general public alike. As a result, we received several awards in the past year, including a state recognition for the best innovation. We also became ambassadors of the campaign under the slogan I feel Slovenia. Green. Creative. Smart., and received the Made in Slovenia badge of excellence. In Austria, our ADAPT heat pump was included among the top 10 of the most energy-e-

**In Austria, Kronoterm's ADAPT heat pump was included among the top 10 of the most energy-efficient products.**

ficient products, while the European Environmental Bureau ranked us among the leading European producers of heating systems that are combating climate change.”

### **The ADAPT Pump – the Quietest Heat Pump in Europe**

Heat pumps are developing towards using natural, environmentally friendly refrigerants. As early as two years ago, Kronoterm already began using the new RR452b refrigerant that does not harm the ozone and has as much as 67% lower carbon footprint than other refrigerants in use. “The future of heat pumps also dictates greater integration of systems and the lowering of the heat pumps’ noise levels. Kronoterm began mitigating its devices’ noise output several years ago, our efforts culminating in the ADAPT heat pump being awarded the title of the quietest heat pump in Europe. Another great milestone that will change the field of heat pump production is industrialisation. The development is thus geared towards greater, mass production, as well as elevating the currently still relatively niche products,” the company explained.

In the coming year, Kronoterm will focus on intensively selling the new VERSI heat pumps, as well as on preserving and furthering its leading position in high-tech and environmentally friendly heating devices, especially in the domestic market. The company is present in many European markets, particularly Austria and Switzerland, and above all Italy, which is its most important market. “Italy is also the market that is experiencing the best and fastest development. With our new products, we are striving and planning to increase our activities in the northern part of Europe, especially the Netherlands,” Kronoterm added.

**The future of heat pumps dictates greater integration of systems and the lowering of the heat pumps’ noise levels.**

**The ROTO Group has developed new, remarkably flexible composites that can be used to produce industrial components, such as tanks for the automotive industry, civil engineering and agricultural machinery, and air filtration.**



### **Secondary Raw Materials and Recycled Plastics Used for Many Products**

This year, the ROTO Group is primarily developing products for rainwater harvesting and waste water treatment. At autumn trade fairs, the company presented the RoBox 5000 L rainwater tank, which is prime for installation in waterlogged land areas. “In 2022, a new waste water treatment plant EcoFloat is coming to the market, which is intended for cleaning industrial water generated in the food processing industry and for companies that recycle waste, for example plastic packaging. Because new electricity-powered boats and catamarans are in the pipeline, the company is also expanding its production of products for the nautical industry,” the ROTO Group presented its future products.

In 2021, the company began using secondary raw materials and recycled plastics for many new products. Following the principle of ecodesign, the ROTO Group develops new products for which plastic packaging can be used, for example, to make new kayaks and canoes, flower pots, etc. The ROTO Group has heavily integrated circular economy in their everyday business operations.

“What is more, we have integrated telemetry in many of our water segment products to facilitate the monitoring of their functioning. We export treatment plants, pumping stations, oil separators and other products into 63 countries around the world, which we can maintain and service remotely,” the company explains.

The ROTO Group has also developed new, remarkably flexible composites that can be used to produce industrial components, such as tanks for the automotive industry, civil engineering and agricultural machinery, and air filtration.

### **Demand for Products Used in Environmental Protection on the Rise**

The plastics industry is observing a growing trend of using secondary raw materials and biopolymers, especially to produce packaging and products that are not technically challenging. “There is a growing demand for products for environmental protection, such as water treatment plants and tanks, which this year led us to build a new production hall for polyethylene tanks in Macedonia. In our new factory near Zagreb, Croatia, we will be producing sewage and rain water shafts,” ROTO elaborated on current industry trends. “In the plastics industry, we are noticing a trend of complete automation of production processes and replacing original raw materials with substitutes, which results from extreme rising of prices of refined petroleum products as well as environmental movements. This year, the ROTO Group made significant updates to its business processes by robotising and automating production. Our lab is researching new materials and the company is integrating into the circular economy both in relation to suppliers and buyers.”



Photo: ROTO Group

### Growing Investments in the Energy Sector

For the first six months of 2022, the ROTO Group's production capacities are already filled, primarily with products pertaining to civil engineering, ecology, and the automotive and nautical industry. "To be able to ensure sufficient amounts of products in view of

the growing demand, we have acquired additional mechanical equipment and optimised production processes. We are noticing growing investments in the energy sector, which is why, in 2022, we will be building a new hall to produce containerised energy storage systems for wind power stations, which we are developing for our Canadian-Austrian buyer," the company revealed its plans. Observing optimism in all European markets, the company is hopeful that positive trends will continue.

The ROTO Group exports as much as 95% of its products. "Even though we are a family-owned company from Pomurje, we currently export into 63 countries from all continents, where we have our loyal representatives and distribution centres. We appear on global markets under our own ROTO brand, adapting products to the needs and technical standards that are in place in individual markets. This led us to develop special Vodalys treatment plants for our key market in France, which we also sell to the former French colonies, such as French Guiana, Rwanda, Senegal, Morocco, Mali, Réunion and the Caribbean islands," ROTO said. The company's other key markets include Germany, Austria, Italy, Croatia, Serbia and North Macedonia, as well as the United Kingdom and Scandinavian countries. ■

**The ROTO Group developed special Vodalys treatment plants for their key market in France, which they also sell to the former French colonies.**

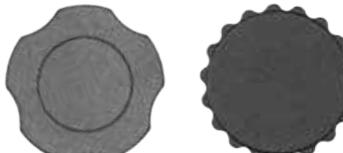
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Photo: Adria Dom

**Green Buildings**

# Sustainable Products that Make Life Easier and Better

**During the COVID-19 pandemic, as we are spending more time at home than ever before, comfort is even more appreciated and desirable. This is why Slovenian companies are developing many solutions and sustainable products that make life easier and better in these difficult times.**

Nina Šprohar

## Lumar: Houses that Cover All Their Energy Needs

Home is no longer just a house where we spend time with family and friends, but increasingly the intersection of various sustainable living technologies, sources at Lumar say. Lumar is therefore intensely focused on the development and application of energy solutions and zero-emission houses. The company has defined a set of comprehensive solutions in sustainable construction and zero-emission living, which include sound, air, temperature, daylight, the cost of using a building throughout its lifecycle, the use of renewable energy sources, and similar. “The development of our houses has reached a point where we are able to offer base-level, affordable houses, whose buyers never have to pay electricity bills, as the houses cover all their energy needs, and energy sur-

pluses can be used for sustainable mobility. By adding an energy storage unit, the building can be made completely energy self-sufficient,” the company says.

The company’s smart homes are also designed to cater to a family lifestyle. Why is this important? “If the family is away from home a lot, it is crucial that they return to a house that is in good condition, rather than flooded due to a fault in the plumbing, and it is also most welcome to give the appearance that someone is at home to deter potential burglars.” Smart homes also increase the comfort of living and working, and energy consumption is reduced due to easier management of the installed systems. For example, automated blinds ensure that the house does not overheat in the summer, while making the most of solar energy in the winter.

**“The development of our houses has reached a point where we are able to offer base-level, affordable houses, whose buyers never have to pay electricity bills,” states Lumar.**

### Houses Function at Their Best if They Use Interconnected Technologies

Lumar's next challenge is to connect houses with other industries – particularly the energy and information industries. "Houses or buildings are hubs of various technologies and can function at their best only if they are interconnected," the company says. Through their development projects, Lumar is thus looking for models and solutions for individual challenges. To date they have launched many pioneering and pilot projects. The company's first passive house was built in 2007, its first passive nursery school building in 2008, its first plus-energy house in 2009, and its first trial active house in 2013, while from 2017 onward they only build zero-energy houses with built-in ventilation systems. "In 2019, we reached another milestone: the first Slovenian house that obtained the Active House certificate," the company adds.

### Focus on Slovenian and Austrian Markets

Despite the potential risks, the company decided to focus on the Slovenian and Austrian markets, thus following their orientation towards sustainable operations. "It is difficult to claim that you are sustainable if you deliver houses with trucks and drive installers in vans to buyers who are 1,000 to 1,500 kilometres away," the company says.

The sales of residential houses in Slovenia exploded in the last quarter of 2020 and in 2021. Last year, Lumar achieved the best sales in their history, and this year they are recording more than 100 percent growth in sales. However, the company is also facing a very steep rise in the prices of materials, especially wood, insulation materials, and steel – ranging from 10 to 50 percent, while prices of wood have risen by more than 250 percent.

**"The FLOWCore systems enables us to manufacture wooden elements over a height of 5 metres and more thanks to built-in steel reinforcement," says Aleš Dolenc, M Sora CEO.**



Photo: Lumar

### M Sora: Overcoming the Shortages of Raw Materials and Rising Prices with Innovation and Development

M Sora, which manufactures windows, panoramic windows and doors, faces similar concerns. "We all have enough orders and work, but the problem is the supply of raw materials. Prices are going up by leaps and bounds, the delivery times are getting longer, and some materials are in short supply," the company says. Fortunately, development and innovation are a constant in the operation of the company with more than 70 years of tradition. "We are digitising pre- and after-sales processes and production processes. We are aware of the importance of single data entry and the availability of the right data in the right place, both for employees and customers. We also demonstrated the power of data collected over several years with the WOOLF project, where we developed algorithms for predicting the lifespan of wood based on big data analysis," the company explains.

The company has received a number of awards for its products. The Chamber of Commerce and Industry of Slovenia (CCIS) awarded the company the special award for development and innovation collaboration of business sector and institutions of knowledge for its FLOWCore system, for which they also filed a patent application. "This innovation enables us to manufacture wooden window elements over a height of 5 metres and more thanks to built-in steel reinforcement," the company says. FLOWCore was developed in cooperation with the Biotechnical Faculty and the Faculty of Civil and Geodetic Engineering of the University of Ljubljana.

### Main Challenges: Greater Use of Deciduous Trees and Reduced Consumption and Waste of Other Materials

However, the company is not resting on its laurels and is already developing a new type of window called Natura Optimo XLS. This is a wooden, aligned, 92 mm-thick window, boasting a number of features both visible and hidden: clean lines, excellent thermal insulation, etc. As the company also points out, increasing the use of deciduous trees poses a





significant challenge for window manufacturers, as they currently mostly use pine wood. The company will conduct research on the possibilities of using chestnut, robinia, poplar, and thermally modified poplar wood in glued timber components for the manufacture of window profiles. The Biotechnical Faculty's Department of Wood Science and Technology in Ljubljana will assist in the study. The

company will also attempt to minimise the consumption and waste of other materials such as silicone and sealants. As the company says, the Natura Optimo XLS will be easily disassembled due to the new dry glazing process, which allows for faster maintenance and replacement of damaged parts, and the window can also be disassembled into individual components and recycled or reused more easily after its service life has ended.

The company is a leader in the domestic market and is looking for growth opportunities abroad. Currently, the majority of their exports go to Austria, Italy, France, the Benelux countries, and Switzerland, and they are aiming to further strengthen their presence in Germany. They are intensively looking for partners abroad, mainly in customer service, help with orders, and the installation of windows.

#### **JUB: Wall Paint that Reduces the Concentration of Microorganisms by up to 99.9 Percent in 24 Hours**

In the awareness that we spend as much as 90 percent of our time indoors, JUB is focusing on the development of Wellbeing paints, which improve the quality of life and provide a high level of comfort. Building on many years of research in coating chemistry and microbiology, the company has developed a new formulation for the antimicrobial wall paint JUPOL Antimicrob. As the company claims, the new coating

**JUB is focusing on the development of Wellbeing paints, which improve the quality of life and provide a high level of comfort.**

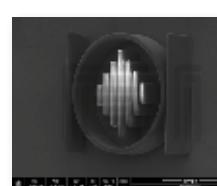
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### Maskless Photolithography, a patterning process on micro / nano scale



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 **MIDALIX**  
Maskless Lithography systems





Photo: Skaza

is a unique solution for achieving an antimicrobial effect, as it reduces the concentration of microorganisms by up to 99.9 percent in 24 hours, and is also effective against enveloped viruses such as coronavirus. "The formulation concept is unique, not only in the Slovenian market, but in the wider region," the company says. The company responds to the needs and expectations of consumers with new and increasingly advanced products and services that are also sustainably oriented. Sustainable development is indeed high on the list of the company's priorities, and they achieve it with energy-efficient products and solutions, and by adopting environmental protection and circular economy measures.

And what are the challenges that the company will face in the coming years? "At least half of all energy will have to be produced from renewable sources. Standards regarding primary energy use and indoor air quality are both rising and we are paying a great deal of attention to this when developing new products. We place a special emphasis on the sustainability of construction materials, from raw materials to products." The company is present in more than 30 European and other markets, the key among which are Croatia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Serbia, Hungary, the Czech Republic, Austria, Slovakia, and Germany.

**Skaza is developing a chair made of recycled plastic, and is launching, together with partners, a 120-litre composter for hotels, caterers, nurseries, schools, and other institutions.**

#### **Skaza: Waste Can Be Turned into Raw Material or Plant Fertiliser**

Skaza is developing innovative plastic products for their B2B partners in the electrical, furniture, and medical industries, while also developing, manufacturing, and marketing products under its own brand. More than 85 percent of these products are made from sustainable materials. This year, the company is focusing on developing a day container for storing organic waste, thus expanding its range of innovative Bokashi Organko kitchen composters. It is also developing a chair made of recycled plastic, and is launching, together with partners, a 120-litre composter for hotels, caterers, nurseries, schools, and other institutions.

The main goal of the company's multi-circular strategy is to make waste a raw material for producing commonly-used materials or turn it into fertiliser for growing crops. "We are therefore focusing on developing sustainable solutions and using recycled materials, so that innovative products and services can lead to growth and solutions that will be even more environmentally friendly. By continuing the development of our Bokashi Organko composters, whose function is to accelerate the decomposition of organic waste, we support the responsible management of natural resources. We see this as a great opportunity to return to the earth the nutrients we use in food preparation and provide a better solution for the treatment of organic waste," Skaza explains. Although the injection moulding industry has been affected by the pandemic-related supply problems and large increases in the costs of materials and transport, as well as a shortage of components, the company's products continue to be sold across the globe, with the highest sales recorded in Central and Northern Europe. "We have achieved a global breakthrough over recent years, entering markets in North and South America, Japan, New Zealand, Australia, Asian countries, Israel, the United Arab Emirates, and other countries," the company says.

#### **REM: Focus on Fire Safety and Earthquake-resistant Modular Construction**

The key markets of REM, which manufactures high-end modular prefabricated buildings, are also Central European countries, in particular Germany, Austria, and Hungary, and they are also expanding sales to Scandinavia, Benelux, and the UK. They too are facing increased demand from customers and a shortage of raw materials and supplies. "Of course, this has a strong impact on the rising prices, costs of transport, etc. Nevertheless, we believe that the situation will slowly calm down," the company remains optimistic.



Photo: REM

The company's development efforts are focused on fire safety solutions for multi-storey modular buildings and earthquake-resistant modular construction. At the same time, they are also introducing a number of new technologies into the production process. "In this way we will be able to better optimise and digitise our production," the company says. They expect that the conditions in the raw materials market and the supply of production materials will calm down and stabilise in the coming year, and they are also prepared for the contraction in the construction market and infrastructure investments, which will indirectly affect the demand for their products. "Nevertheless, we will continue to invest in new solutions, as we believe this is the way forward for our company."

#### **Adria Dom: The Garden Office as a Response to Pandemic Challenges**

Adria Dom, which manufactures and sells mobile homes and high-quality glamping tents, presents two important innovations in the new season: the year-round Aurora Twin mobile home, comprising one or two units, and the Open Air glamping tent, "which takes the best features of our previous glamping products and combines them into a new story." In addition to products suited to a continental climate, last year the company also developed a product in response

to challenges arising from the pandemic. The "Home Garden Office – HGO", as the product is called, is a garden office that does not occupy the company's production capacity – the components are manufactured by suppliers according to plan, delivered to the customer, and assembled by the company's partner in a few hours. "They have been very well received by the market," Adria Dom say.

The company also developed modular units adapted for transport by trucks without needing special permits or by standard shipping containers. "These are units that can be combined in any number into a larger unit. Due to the large volume of products, transport costs have become an important factor in achieving competitiveness, so new solutions, also intended for distant markets, are key to our expansion," the company explains. They expect that the next season will largely depend on whether the summer season in camps is successful, as well as on the purchase market, where the company is seeing high increases in the prices of input materials and transport, uncertainty of deliveries, and extended delivery times. The company estimates that the next season's demand will reach last year's levels, adding that they have already prepared for it by developing new solutions and products, especially for mainland markets.

**The Open Air glamping tent takes the best features of Adria Dom's previous glamping products and combines them into a new story.**



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**MEBOR** has been designing, developing and producing sawmilling machinery since 1982. The company supplies **complete solutions for sawmills**, therefore all machines needed for the primary sawing of wood, joined into **complete sawing lines**. Moreover, these are completely adjusted to the needs of each customer.

Mebor is one of the fastest growing companies in Slovenia. It has been among companies worldwide with the most **intense innovation** and presents **new products** in the sawmilling field.





Photo: Adria Dom

**Adria Dom's work has been recognised in the United Arab Emirates and China, where several tourist resorts are now equipped with their products, especially tents, which are more suitable in terms of transport.**

### Camps Are Now the Main Investors

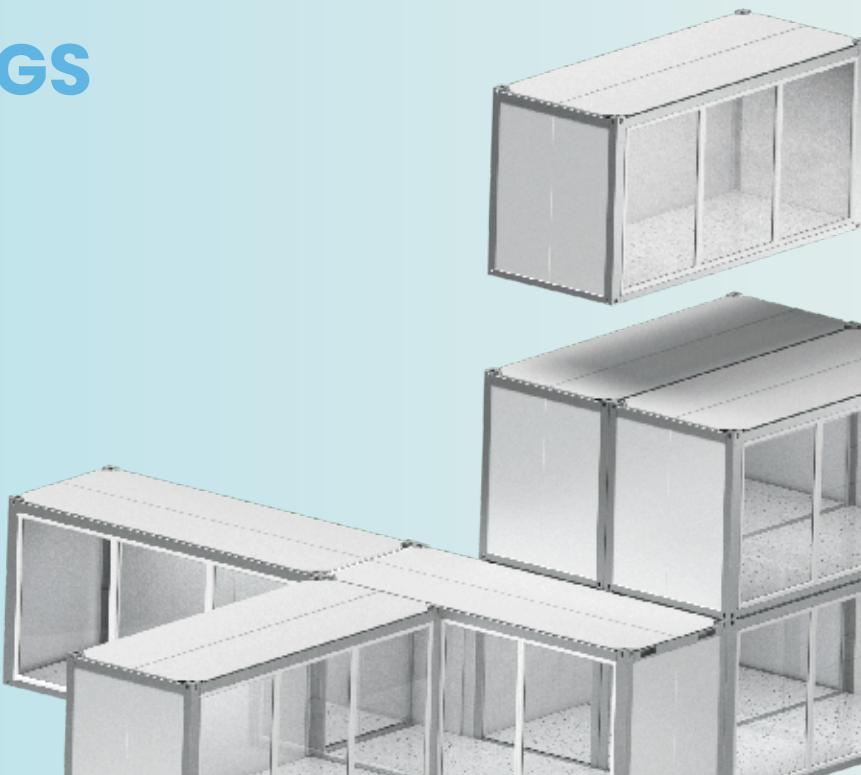
While the company is extremely successful in the Southeast Europe market, their objectives are more ambitious, as they want to expand globally. To an extent they have already achieved this breakthrough, Adria Dom says. "Our work has been recognised in the United Arab Emirates and China, where several tourist resorts are now equipped with our products, especially tents, which are more suitable in terms of transport. The pandemic has changed the world and

will continue to do so, and it has also changed the market overnight. Croatian and Italian buyers, who were until recently our largest customers, greatly reduced their investments due to the poor season. That meant our sales were reduced by almost half. But we have compensated for this shortfall with new development and new markets. We looked for opportunities in the mainland and northern European markets (Netherlands, Belgium, Germany, Austria), as tourists stayed at home and the demand in these markets increased, as did the requirements relating to new standards of construction, different layouts, design, materials, insulation, etc.," the company explains.

The customer structure has also changed radically. Hotel chains have postponed investments due to uncertainty, while tour operators have almost disappeared from the market. "The main investors are now camps that are increasingly environmentally oriented and are aiming for uniqueness in terms of accommodation – that is, the design of our product and terrace – as well as service, story, and placement in space. Here, our integrated one-stop shop concept enables us to advise customers by using our experience and working with architects and designers," the company says. ■

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SLOVENIAN PAVILION AT EXPO 2020 IN DUBAI  
Photo: Courtesy of ©Desert Dream Garden

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COMMERCIAL BUILDING IN RETAIL PARK 2, FRANCE  
Photos: Pikt'Air

- VIPAVA VALLEY, SLOVENIA -

# The Paradise Valley is Real

## Fascinating landscape

Diverse terrain and Mediterranean flora, charming stone houses and bell towers paint a dream rustic imagery. Reminiscent of Tuscany perhaps, though the steep slopes and many clear water springs give it a special vibe. The climate, too is distinctive and gentle. All year round.

## Wine and cuisine for the gods

The wine region impresses with its indigenous old varieties and award-winning natural wines. The tables of its restaurants and agritourism farms are filled with seasonal dishes based on home produce. Likewise, local haute cuisine with its modern interpretations of tradition has been winning over some of the world's most prestigious publications. A heaven for foodies and wine lovers!

## Thrilling outdoor adventures

There's plenty of hiking and cycling trails, great conditions for hang gliding and paragliding, climbing, paddling the river, horse riding, fishing and more, countless activities to please the hearts and minds of nature lovers. True adventures are provided by the local guides, spicing up your perfect day outdoors with hidden treats and surprises.



Photo: Terme Kika

**Tourism**

# A Safe and Green Destination for Boutique Experiences

**In recent years, Slovenia has increased its profile and reputation as a green and authentic destination of 5-star experiences. Visitors are thrilled by the excellent quality of services, genuine hospitality, and high standards of hygiene in place to protect their health.**

*Barbara Perko*

“Slovenia is a safe, green destination for boutique experiences, with sustainability at the very core of all its development activities, which is why it attracts particularly discerning guests who come in search of diverse and active experiences, peace and personal well-being,” the Slovenian Tourist Board pointed out. Demand has grown for smaller accommodation in pristine natural settings, such as glamping, farm stays, boutique hotels, campsites and apartments that pursue a sustainable philosophy. Regarded as one of the safest European countries, Slovenia was ranked fifth at the global, and fourth at the European level according to this year’s Global Peace Index. Slovenia further secured its excellent position as a safe destination by forming Responsible

Travel Standards of Slovenian Tourism under the GREEN&SAFE label. The label, which communicates to guests that a tourism provider operates in a responsible, safe and sustainable manner, has already accumulated one thousand users.

## Slovenia – An Example of Best Practice

The Green Scheme of Slovenian Tourism (ZSST), a national tool and certification system that unites all efforts for the sustainable development of Slovenian tourism, along with its products and services, at several levels under the umbrella brand Slovenia Green, has contributed crucially to Slovenia’s global positioning as a leading tourist destination in terms of promoting sustainable and responsible tourism.

**Slovenia further secured its excellent position as a safe destination by forming Responsible Travel Standards of Slovenian Tourism under the GREEN&SAFE label.**



Photo: Terme Kika

**Slovenia's excellent geographical position is a major factor in addressing tourists and inviting them to visit Slovenia.**

The scheme has become an internationally renowned example of good practice, and foreign countries and tourist boards often turn to the Slovenian Tourist Board with questions about comprehensive management of sustainable tourism at a national level. The European Travel Commission (ETC) has decided to lay the foundations for the establishment of European national models of promoting sustainable tourism development based on the Green Scheme of Slovenian Tourism. This year, the scheme was expanded to include a new category, Slovenia Green Cuisine, which can be obtained by food service providers that are the most committed to sustainability.

#### **From Active Holidays to Cultural Experiences**

Slovenia's excellent geographical position is a major factor in addressing tourists and inviting them to visit Slovenia. Its remarkable natural features and a rich cultural tradition are intertwined in a diverse range of products and services that speak to modern guests, including young people, families, and senior citizens.

Slovenia provides a wealth of products to its visitors, from active holidays and sports tourism, to products relating to health and well-being, top



Photo: Sava Hotels &amp; Resorts Group

culinary and cultural experiences, as well as urban and rural tourism.

#### **Prestigious Title of European Region of Gastronomy 2021**

Slovenia proudly holds the official title of European Region of Gastronomy 2021 (ERG). To promote gastronomy, the Slovenian Tourist Board launched a special website entitled Taste Slovenia, for which it received a gold Golden City Gate Award at this year's ITB Berlin NOW international tourism exchange. In addition, Slovenia now boasts as many as eight Michelin stars. The Michelin reviewers awarded two stars to Hiša Franko, home to chef Ana Roš, and one star each to Atelje, Dam Restaurant, Gostilna pri Lojetu, Hiša Denk, Vila Podvin, and Gostišče Grič. Seven restaurants were included in the Bib Gourmand category, while 39 of them now have the Michelin Plate.

#### **Top Athletes – Ambassadors of Slovenia**

The Slovenian Tourist Board highlights Slovenia and the I feel Slovenia brand at high-profile sports events attended by Slovenian athletes. Through ambassadorship work at sporting events with outstanding Slovenian athletes such as Luka Dončić, Tadej Pogačar, and Primož Roglič, the STB positions Slovenia as an attractive green destination that is ideal for active breaks. Sports tourism is one of the most intensively growing tourism segments. The Slovenian Tourist Board defined active breaks and sports tourism in general as its central promotional topics of the next two years, as they are among the tourism products that have been experiencing the fastest mid- and post-pandemic recovery.

#### **Delightfully Renovated Capacities**

The Sava Hotels & Resorts Group focuses on products and services that are authentic, respectful of tradition and history of the local environment, sustainable, in line with global trends, as well as adapted to guests' behaviour and the company's strategic guidelines. The Group's range of products and services is constantly being supplemented with new attractive additions, especially in cuisine, healthcare and wellness.

During the COVID-19 pandemic, the safety of guests and employees is the Group's top priority. To this end, above-standard hygienic measures for maximum safety have been implemented, namely the Sava Hotels & Resorts Hygiene Standard Plus.

In recent years, the Group has carried out a number of product renovations. Terme 3000 in Moravske Toplice saw the renovation of Ajda Prekmurje Village, a complex of individual houses in the midst of nature, yet close to the spa and offering all spa comforts. The houses are built in the style of traditional Prekmurje houses called cimpräche, which feature a thatched roof and a large terrace that is just perfect for relaxing and lounging in the warm sun in the company of family and friends.

Renovation on Bled's largest hotel, Hotel Park, was inspired by the beautiful setting surrounding the town. The rooms recount stories of water and forests. The hotel lobby welcomes guests with a stunning view of Lake Bled and the spring, from which they can pour themselves a glass of drinking water, while the hotel restaurant features a wine fountain, from which guests can help themselves to superb Slovenian wines.

The renovation of Rikli Balance Hotel in Bled was inspired by Bled and its surrounding area, as well as Arnold Rikli, who is known as the founder of natural healing in Slovenia. Guests have a choice of four room types: Room of the Carniolan Honey Bee, Room of the Honey Dough Heart, Room of the Traditional Gorenjska Embroideries, and Arnold Rikli Regeneration Rooms. In the Rikli Relaxation Park located in front of the hotel, guests can stroll along the Rikli Barefoot Trail, practice yoga, hug trees or simply relax on the bench of love.

Hotel Histrion, St. Bernardin Resort Portorož, tells the story of Istria, as the rooms spanning over the three floors portray the sea, Piran's sea salt, and groves of olive trees. The hotel's cuisine offers a true Istrian experience, while the renovated sea water park offers the best views of the open sea, as does the wellness centre where one can relax in genuine Istrian fashion. After the renovation of Hotel Vila Park, St. Bernardin Resort Portorož, the hotels will form the Istriana Family Resort.

Hotel Haliaetum, San Simon Resort Izola, was renovated to become a true family hotel on the Slovenian coast. Renovation work was also done on individual mobile houses at Terme Ptuj, and plans for renovating the Grand Hotel Toplice are under way.

The Sava Hotels & Resorts Group aims to impress tourists with excellent products and services, the kind guests wish for and expect.

### **Attractive Programmes Offering Relaxation and Medical Wellness Options**

Terme Krka unites Terme Dolenjske Toplice and Terme Šmarješke Toplice, the seaside thalasso therapy and holiday resort Talaso Strunjan, as well as Otočec Hotels, which comprise Hotel Šport, Hotel Grad Otočec and Golf Grad Otočec. Terme Krka is developing in the direction of boutique and green tourism, focusing on health and wellness services.

### **Keeping in Touch with Tourists and Business Partners**

To be able to conduct intensive and modern communication with the business public, the Slovenian Tourist Board has developed new virtual business events called *Feel Sloveni@ Business Date* and *Feel Sloveni@ Webinar*; this year, it launched a new educational platform *Feel Sloveni@ Online Training* for foreign tourist agents and travel organisers, who can now obtain the title *I feel Slovenia Specialist*.



Photo: Terme Krka

Guests are offered accommodation that enables an active break through a variety of experiences, relaxation centres and medico wellness, bathing facilities, first-rate restaurants and healthcare services, including medical rehabilitation, preventative health programmes, and diagnostic centres. "We put a lot of care in designing new programmes that are in line with our mission, namely Living a Healthy Life. Guests from abroad are especially interested in and attracted by programmes featuring options for various types of breaks and medical wellness, i.e. programmes to improve one's health and well-being, regain strength and raise one's awareness about active self-care – in short, programmes that help improve the quality of everyday life," Terme Krka said.

Terme Šmarješke Toplice offers the SlimFit healthy slimming programmes and the VitaDetox programme of detoxifying the body through fasting, the ImmunoBalance programme for strengthening immune systems, as well as the PostCovid programme for better regeneration after recovering from long Covid.

**Terme Šmarješke Toplice offers the PostCovid programme for better regeneration after recovering from long Covid.**



Photo: Terme Krka



Photo: Terme Krka

At Terme Dolenjske Toplice, guests like to unwind at the Balnea Superior art hotel, which is furnished with natural materials and nestled in beautiful green surroundings with thermal spas and a superb range of wellness services to provide perfect relaxation and indulgence. During their break, guests can partake in exercise and treatments that help enhance mindfulness, bring relaxation, and contribute to a deeper experiencing of nature and of the present. Guests can also try out the Zen and Antistress Energy programmes.

At Talaso Strunjan, guests can enjoy themselves by the sea and restore their strength at the hotel beach, in pools with heated sea water or at the thalasso therapy wellness centre. Guests can choose from a range of sumptuous programmes intended for relaxation, strengthening one's vitality, and rejuvenating care with natural ingredients. Recently, the beach and villas underwent renovation, which will be followed by renovation of Hotel Laguna and apartments along the new garden pool, which have yet to be included in the already initiated renovation efforts.

At Otočec, all products and services are being developed in the direction of active breaks, particularly Hotel Šport, whose interior has taken on

**Otočec is a very attractive destination for golfers and groups of both recreational and professional athletes from abroad, who come here to attend sports trainings or competitions.**

a new trendy look. The rooms' furnishings include sports equipment, while the hotel also houses a thermal pool complete with saunas. The hotel and its surrounding area feature an adventure park, various sports courts and a multi-purpose hall, a golf course and a network of cycling and hiking trails. Otočec is a very attractive destination for golfers and groups of both recreational and professional athletes from abroad, who come here to attend sports trainings or competitions. The nearby Castle Otočec, situated on a little island in the middle of the Krka River, has been transformed into a boutique five-star Relais & Châteaux Hotel Grad Otočec. The hotel's restaurant is proud to have been awarded a Michelin Plate.

In addition to Slovenia, Terme Krka's key markets include nearby countries, i.e. Italy, Austria, Croatia, Serbia, Germany, and the Netherlands. When the pre-pandemic situation is restored, Terme Krka will focus more actively on markets of the Russian Federation, France, the United Kingdom, Israel, and Scandinavian countries.

#### **One of the Oldest Stud Farms in the World, with More than 441 Years of Tradition**

White Lipizzan mares and their dark foals, a presentation of the Lipica Classical Riding School and a pleasant walk to the historic heart of the stud farm are the highlights that attract thousands of visitors to Lipica every year. Lipica is the original stud farm of the Lipizzan horse breed, one of the oldest cultural horse breeds in the world, with more than 441 years of tradition. It is home to more than 300 Lipizzaner horses and is one of the most beautiful cultural and historical monuments in Slovenia. Its tradition of Lipizzan Horse Breeding is exceptional piece of

#### **Seven Slovenian Destinations on the Top 100 Destination Sustainability Stories List**

The Top 100 Destination Sustainability Stories list ranks destinations with good practices in responsible tourism development, highlighting the most sustainable destinations around the world. This time, the following seven Slovenian destinations made the list:

- Bohinj due to its efforts to promote sustainable mobility
- The Logar Valley–Solčava Region due to its efforts for shorter supply chains and promotion of local food
- Rogla–Pohorje due to strategic management of a united destination featuring four municipalities
- Ljubljana due to its KulKul Moment project that combines culinary and cultural delights
- Miren Kras due to its project of promoting the culinary heritage of asparagus
- Soča Valley for its successful strategy of tourism recovery following the Covid-19 epidemic
- Ajdovščina with its online market for local products called Tržnica na borjaču

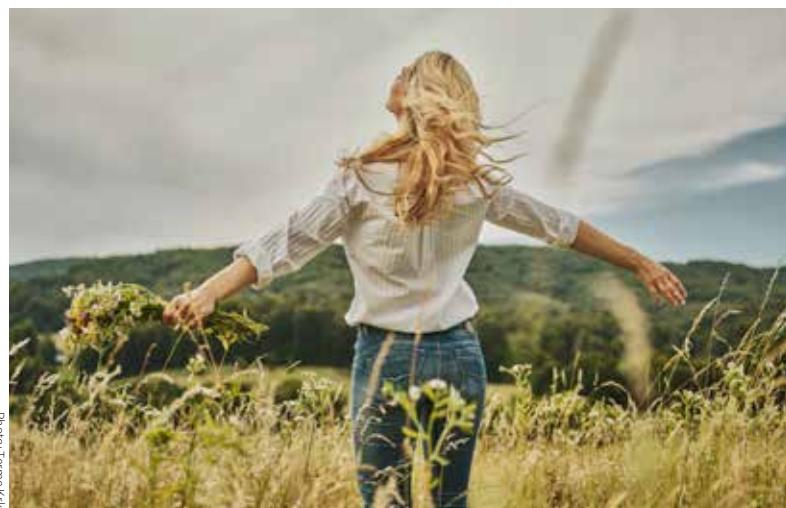


Photo: Terme Krka

cultural heritage, which Slovenia, together with seven European countries, is striving to inscribe on the UNESCO Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity.

One of the most beautiful scenes in Lipica, which can be observed every day at 9.30, is the morning run of Lipizzan mares and foals to pasture. The experience of Lipica and getting to know the Lipizzan horses continues during a guided tour of the stud farm. Many visitors use the Lipica Journey mobile application to take an independent walk around the estate, which covers more than 300 hectares of green nature. When visiting Lipica, don't miss also the presentation of a classic riding school or an official training with the Lipizzaners.

Visitors can also attend the guided experience "Contact with a Lipizzan horse" and a workshop with ponies for children. For those who would like to experience the beauty of centuries-old tree-lined avenues after visiting the oldest stable "Velbanca" with Lipizzan stallions and the historic core, a carriage ride is the right choice.

The renovated Hotel Maestoso 4 \* superior opened its doors in the summer of 2021. It attracts guests with its unique interior, which is in harmony with the green estate of Lipica. The renovated hotel pampers guests with 139 rooms, the à la carte restaurant



Photo: Jost Gantar

Gratia and the Conversano Congress Center. The new hotel offers guests the opportunity for a relaxing holiday in a natural setting, while inviting them into the equestrian world.

Visitors can enjoy a wide range of activities, from contact with the Lipizzaners to visiting the stud farm and observing the classical riding school, riding courses, golf, and disc golf. Lipica is also an excellent starting point for walks, cycling and exploring the

**Visitors can enjoy a wide range of activities in Lipica, from contact with the Lipizzaners to visiting the stud farm and observing the classical riding school, riding courses, golf, and disc golf.**

**BIOTERME**  
HEALTH FROM PURE NATURE



## »The greatest luxury is nature itself«

Leave cities and stress behind, as unspoilt nature and all the privacy you could want are what awaits you in the Bioterme tourist complex in Mala Nedelja, the ideal place for spending leisure time with your family, a romantic break for two, an adventure holiday with friends and pampering for the body and soul, far away from busy streets, in the embrace of nature so beautiful that in 1976 it was proclaimed a regional park.

The Sun Valley glamping site has 22 villas that are open throughout the year, and 11 tents open in the summer season that can comfortably accommodate 26 guests. They offer beautiful views of the forest and open fields, and you can enjoy listening to the birds singing and leaves rustling while drinking your morning coffee on the terrace, and in summer you can also bathe in the biological pool. Nearby there is a natural habitat, brimming with aquatic life. Hotel Bioterme\*\*\*\* offers comfortable accommodation in single and double rooms, family suites and two apartments

with their own whirlpool on the terrace. All the rooms are furnished with natural materials which offer healthy living and complete comfort. It is a proud recipient of the EU Ecolabel and the title of Slovenia Green Accommodation. Directly from the hotel you enter the Thermal Water Park, where there are altogether 600 m<sup>2</sup> of covered pool surfaces available throughout the year, and an additional 1400 m<sup>2</sup> in the summer months. Thanks to its balneological characteristics, the thermal-mineral water is well-suited to recreation, sports and especially health care, as it has beneficial effects on the function of the motor system and spine. It offers relaxing swimming, sunbathing on the terrace, the pleasant shade of trees, and for the most demanding a nudist corner, where you can enjoy a completely free break surrounded by nature. Next to the hotel there is also an area for motorhomes with 50 parking spaces, equipped with electrical sockets. There is also a sanitary block and drinking water, Wi-fi access and TV programmes from the cable network.



**When visiting Lipica, don't miss also the presentation of a classic riding school or an official training with the Lipizzaners.**

wider region, from the Slovenian coast to Venice. In winter, golf is definitely one of the most popular experiences in Lipica, as the Lipica Golf Course, with its Mediterranean climate, invites players to its greens all year round.

Further plans of the Lipica Stud Farm include the renovation of the swimming pool and wellness complex of the Hotel Maestoso, the renovation of the Hotel Klub and new acquisitions in cuisine and golf, as well as enriching guests' experiences with horses – for nature and wellness lovers, as well as for equestrian guests.

The Italian and German-speaking guests are in the first place among foreign visitors to the Lipica Stud Farm and the guests of the Hotel Maestoso. Recently,

they have seen an increase in the number of guests from Eastern Europe, which fills them with optimism about growth in these markets.

Although families with children are among the most frequent and happy visitors to the Lipica Stud Farm, Hotel Maestoso 4 \* superior with its Conversano Congress Center also hosts many MICE events – from business meetings to protocol events related to Slovenia's presidency of the European Union. ■

### Plentiful Possibilities of Enjoyable Moments Spent Outdoors

Velika Planina is a wondrously attractive place to visit all year round. After having reached it by cable car or on foot, visitors can learn about the herding tradition, tuck into an authentic herders' lunch, view the herders' settlement, step into the Chapel of Our Lady of the Snows, tour the Preskar Museum, and explore the Vaternica cave. In the summertime, Velika Planina offers many options for walks, hikes, and mountain biking. During winter, a real winter fairy tale can unfold while night sledding over a 2.4-kilometre route. Visitors can also test their skiing and snowshoeing skills. "Next year, guest will be able to purchase cable car tickets online; in addition to expanding our market with local products, a plethora of new activities will be available at Velika Planina," the destination's plans were revealed. Continuous efforts are put into raising Velika Planina's profile abroad and having tourist agencies include it more often in their programmes.





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**Interview**

# Great Potential for Premium Food Products

**Slovenian food companies seeking to enter Gulf State markets enjoy the advantage of their products' geographical origin, as Arabic consumers highly value the quality of European products.**

Darja Kocbek

Export-oriented Slovenian food companies that are prepared to invest in new markets have great sales potential in the Gulf States, says Borut Šegula, who has been working on the rapidly growing markets of the Middle East for seven years now.

**What are the main reasons for that?**

The Gulf States have very favourable demographics. I'm talking about a market with a population of 60 million. The predominant portion, or 67%, is covered by the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, but together with the United Arab Emirates the percentage grows to over 80%. The population of the Gulf States is growing rapidly. It's very interesting that in 1960 Riyadh had the same population as Ljubljana, but today it's a city of seven million. Its population is very young, with 70% of its residents younger than 35, which means they're extremely open to innovative food products. Thanks to citizen's extremely high and still growing purchasing power and increasing urbanisation, food consumption in the Gulf States continues to grow.

**What are the general trends on the Gulf State markets concerning food selection and eating habits, and where do you see opportunities for the Slovenian food industry in this respect?**

There's an increasing trend of awareness about health and a healthy and balanced diet, which is why I see great potential for premium food products, such as organic and diet food, healthy breakfasts, and low-sugar or light products. Of course, there's also potential for other food products because the Gulf States have a very low level of self-sufficiency. They depend on food imports, with some exceptions, such as the dairy and drink industry and poultry farming. There's also exceptional potential in the Horeca segment because the number of hotels and restaurants continues to grow, along with food delivery services. There's also an opportunity for companies that seek strategic partnerships. The Gulf States are looking for strategic partners for localising food production, which is also supported by government subsidies and favourable financial incentives.

***Is the Slovenian food industry active on Gulf State markets at all?***

I would say that the Slovenian food industry is absent from these markets. You can only find a handful of Slovenian products on the shelves, for example dietary supplements, which are only sold at pharmacies, which actually function as supermarkets, with most space taken up by beauty products, medical supplies, baby food and dietary supplements. If you take a look at the shelves of grocery stores in the entire region, you can only find a few packaged deli products from Slovenia in Dubai.

**I see great potential for premium food products, such as organic and diet food, healthy breakfasts and low-sugar or light products.**



Photo: personal archive

**For a food company to enter the Gulf State markets, it is crucial to be export-oriented and have a long-term internationalisation strategy.**

***What advantages could Slovenian food companies take to Gulf State markets?***

The advantage of Slovenian food companies is their products' geographical origin. Arabic consumers exceptionally value the quality of European products and are prepared to pay more for products made by European manufacturers. It pays to highlight this on the packaging itself, by adding labels such as "European quality" or "Made in the EU".

***What is key for food companies to enter the markets of the United Arab Emirates and Saudi Arabia?***

For a food company to enter the Gulf State markets, it is crucial to be export-oriented and have a long-term internationalisation strategy. The initial investment of entering these markets comprises the costs of product registration and shelf placement, which is why only a long-term approach is feasible. It's important to invest in packaging localisation (in Arabic

and English). What's important for a successful entry and further cooperation is personal contact with the distributors and retailers, as well as regular visits by a representative of the export company at the business partner's premises, which means at least every other week. In my experience, it's almost impossible to establish and maintain contact through phone calls or email. The same applies to staying in contact and ensuring the continuity of partnerships. Constantly maintaining contact with business partners is vital for long-term cooperation.

***How can Slovenian food companies use the Expo in Dubai to establish contact?***

I think Slovenia's exhibition at the Expo in Dubai will primarily help raise its profile as an EU country among Gulf State businesses and consumers. ■



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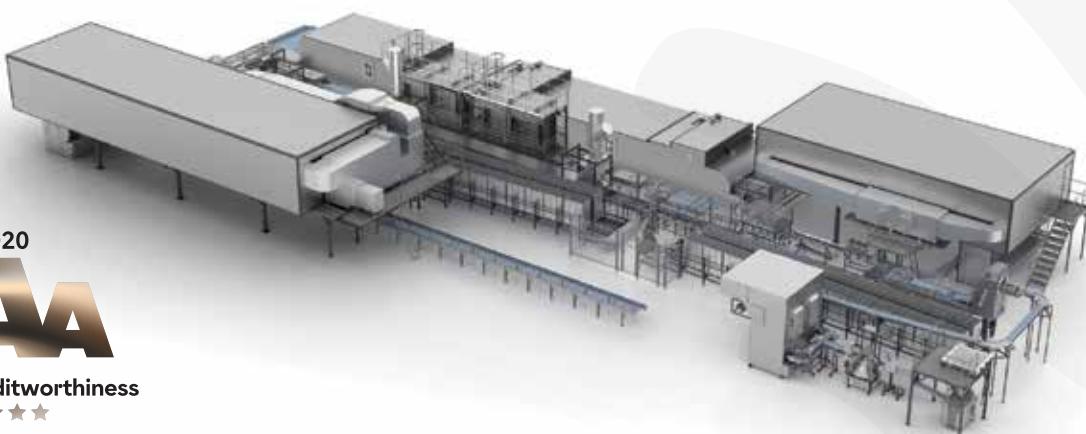
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**medex**  
since 1954



## “We are a trendsetter in apitherapy”

**Medex is one of the leading European producers of food supplements based on bee products like propolis, royal gelee, honey and pollen. Ms. Aleša Mižigoj, Director, Medex revealed to us Slovenia's cultural heritage of beekeeping and their tradition in apitherapy and bee-based products.**

### What brought Medex to life? Tell us more about your company.

Medex is a pioneer in apitherapy, passionate to improve people's lives with innovative and natural food supplements based on bee products, with a long and inspiring tradition since 1954. In its almost seven decades of existence, we always operated not only as a honey processor and manufacturer of bee products, but rather as the driving force behind the development and knowledge spreading in the field of beekeeping. Establishing one of the first laboratories in Europe that has been the foundation for the development of apitherapy, Medex begun processing other bee products. Alongside honey, which is certainly the most widespread bee product, we started with use of royal jelly, propolis, pollen, wax, and bee venom. We collaborate with many experts and institutions around the world, share our knowledge, experience, and constantly strive for education.

Today, Medex is one of the leading European producers of food supplements based on bee products like propolis, royal gelee, honey and pollen. Business process excellence, continual improvement of existing and new products, care for health and well-being of people, and adherence to current global guidelines place us among reliable producers of natural products, focused on the needs of everyone.

### How is Medex contributing in sharing knowledge of beekeeping?

While Slovenia has a lot of cultural heritage of beekeeping other countries are in developmental stage. We recently partnered in the sustainable project “Development of beekeeping in Ghana”. The main project initiator is the EXIM Bank, the largest development and export bank in Ghana. The objective of this two-year project, which the bank intends to expand in the future to the entire West Africa, is to create new jobs, reduce poverty and strengthen rural development. With this project Medex is fulfilling its mission of sustainability, which also means a better and friendlier world for everyone.

### Could you describe Medex's mission and goals?

We are on a clear mission to upgrade the traditional use of bee products with clinically supported innovations to solve medical challenges of our times. We are pushing the frontier of apitherapy by conducting first double blinded clinical study showing positive effects

of Royal Jelly on humans. Royal Jelly, with clinically proven study is now at the forefront of research in apitherapy and is brought closer to medical use.

### How do you differentiate your organization, and how would you rate the intensity of your competition?

We boast a continued quality of our products, and this is probably also why users trust us, they know that by using our products they will get guaranteed quality, and that is exactly why certain products remain in our permanent portfolio – because they are good, tasty, efficient and with impeccable quality. We are a trend setter in apitherapy and always on the hunt for new trends on the market. Our own research and development enable us to quickly react to the needs of the market and we constantly evolve our assortment of products to fit the lifestyle of our consumers.

### What are your future plans?

We are globally oriented company with sustainable values, present in more than 30 markets all over the world. Besides our domestic market we are rapidly expanding to the Middle East, where consumers have recognized the unique quality of our products. We are entering also in Western Europe, America, and China. Our products are perfect fit for pharmacy and drugstore chains and since everything have been just moving on web, we see a huge potential in e-commerce as well. We passionately live by our moto: Powered by bees, proven by science.



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## TRADITION AND DEVELOPMENT

Mercator-Emba, d.d. is a company with over 60 years of tradition in the production of cocoa instant products (standard and fine granulation), dessert toppings, syrups and fruit preparations. By continually investing in knowledge, development and modernization of the production plant Mercator-Emba, d.d. has become one of the leading manufacturers of confectionary products in the region as well as an established and important supplier to some of the world's biggest companies.



### COCOA INSTANT PRODUCTS

#### BENQUICK BRAND

BenQuick brand includes a wide range of instant cocoa products and hot chocolates. In the light of modern development and world trends we are the first to bring an instant cocoa product with 30% less sugar to the market.



### DESSERT TOPPINGS

#### SLADKI GREH BRAND

Sladki greh dessert topping offers a wide selection of flavours, which can be used to sweeten all kinds of desserts and ice creams.



#### PRIVATE LABEL

Instant cocoa products are manufactured also for private labels. For many years we have been providing European retailers with top-quality products, best suited for the consumer needs. We offer tailor-made products that come in various packaging possibilities.



#### PRIVATE LABEL

In addition to our own brand Sladki greh, dessert topping are also manufactured and sold under a private label. They come in a variety of flavours that are produced according to our buyers' wishes/expectations.



**B2B**

### TOPPINGS, FRUIT PREPARATIONS, SYRUPS

An important part of our production represent toppings, syrups and fillings, which are manufactured for dairy, ice cream and bakery industry and known for their high-quality ingredients. On top of that, our great asset is our own development department, which enables us to fully adapt the final product to customers' needs.



#### A WIDE VARIETY OF FLAVOURS

In addition to a wide variety of flavours our selection of toppings, syrups, fillings and fruit preparations boasts itself with numerous other possibilities, such as: vegan, reduced sugar, without sugar, high protein, dairy free, gluten free, free of artificial flavours and colours, lactose free, preservative free and so on.



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Photo: Incom

**Good Food**

# The Primary Focus Is Always on the Consumer

Prominent Slovenian food companies are presenting innovative projects and revamped public images. Despite challenges brought by consumers and the competition, they are looking to future achievements with enthusiasm.

*Jerneja Srebot*

## Additive-free Products in the Pipeline

Delamaris is a globally active provider of fish products with its own in-house development and production. The company has built long-term relationships with existing distributors on foreign markets that have been in place for over 30 years and is also expanding to new markets, where it is in charge of quickly growing sales to end customers.

"Our daily mission is to bring culinary enjoyment to the active consumer while also helping them save time every day, which is why we are always mindful of the modern consumer's needs and expectations; we research the cultures, habits, and trends of partnering markets," the company explains.

In addition, significant emphasis is placed on in-house development and quality control. New flavours of fish with vegetables and no additives (only fish and vegetables or oil) are in development.

Delamaris has sold products in 25 different regions and countries, including the U.S., Russia, and Australia. The company's primary markets are Austria and Germany, followed by Croatia. Their main issue involves facing vast competition in the form of low-quality canned fish coming to Europe from North Africa and Asia.

"We believe the demand for practical and ready-made products will continue to grow. Delamaris products feature high vegetable content and can be served as a meal in their own right or used in cooking, which is why we expect sales to grow in the future," the company adds.

**Delamaris is developing new flavours of fish with vegetables and no additives (only fish and vegetables or oil).**

## The No. 1 Fish Pâté in Europe

Argeta is an Atlantic Grupa brand that does very well in exports. It is committed to sustainable operations and taking care of its products, the environment



Photo: Argeta

and society. Argeta constantly strives to improve its products and offer its consumers a small meal of the highest possible quality, which is why their pâtés are free from preservatives, artificial colours, artificial flavour enhancers, and gluten. "Because we endeavour to make our products sustainable and nutritiously balanced, this year saw us improving the nutrition profile of our Argeta Junior products, which are primarily intended for children; this meant decreasing the formula's content of fats and salt, and increasing the protein content," they revealed.

This year's major project involved redesigning the company's packaging. The new image is the company's attempt at distancing itself from the industrial image that prevails among their competitors within the category, introducing more colour and playfulness into the design.

In addition to the title of Number One Meat Pâté in Europe, which Argeta has proudly held since 2018, it now also boasts the Number One Fish Pâté in Europe. Despite improvements introduced in recent years, their greatest challenge remains consumers' attitudes towards the pâté category in general; however, Argeta is noticing the entire category shifting towards increasingly higher-quality products, which would suggest progress.

Argeta is available in over 30 countries worldwide, especially in the countries of South-East Europe, i.e. Austria, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Kosovo, North Macedonia, Slovenia and Switzerland.

"In recent years, we have been focusing on the internationalisation and development of markets where our presence is not strong yet, as well as the markets where the category of pâtés itself is not as developed/known as it is in ours. In 2020, our sales in international markets grew by as much as 31.4%," Argeta says.

**Argeta improved the nutrition profile of their Argeta Junior products; this meant decreasing the formula's content of fats and salt, and increasing the protein content.**

### Dry Ageing of Meat Products Perfected

First and foremost, Celjske Mesnine aims to delight its customers, offer them something new, and gain their loyalty. To this end, their product development process is slow and meticulous, paying attention to the best possible quality. Recently, the company has launched products in skin packaging and perfected dry-aged products, extending the range with a pepper steak, which was awarded the 2021 Gold AGRA medal.

Furthermore, the company invests in digitisation, state-of-the-art technologies and training, especially as concerns introducing new technologies, hygiene, process optimisation, and technological equipment. "With new technologies, we would like to make our processes more productive and ensure employee-friendlier work conditions. Improvements are also being made in terms of green technology," the company says.

This year, they will invest in new technological procedures and increase of capacities at Pršutarna Lokev s'krasa, Slovenia's oldest prosciutteria.

### No Compromises When It Comes to Flavour

Recently, Incom Leone has been intensely focused on developing chocolate as a new category. In addition to the Leone Home Baking line of chocolate, other innovations are about to enter the market in the AL!VE brand's chocolate segment, which the company expects to do very well.

"There are a lot of interesting developments in terms of ice cream as well, where the focus is on new textures. That is why we are intensely working on new mixtures in line with new nutritional directions, all the while accepting no compromises in the flavours of our



Photo: Delamaris

ice creams," the company explains. Great attention is also paid to the development of environmentally friendlier packaging.

As the markets of ice cream and chocolate are highly innovative, the company concentrates heavily on development, as this is the only way for it to be able to dictate the trends for certain product segments. The company is unafraid of challenges and has a bright outlook for the future. "We are certain that 2022 will be a year of success, featuring prominent growth in the chocolate segment," the company is confident.

While the markets of the United Kingdom, Germany, Scandinavia, and the United States are regarded as the most important, the marketing focus for the Leone brand is placed especially on the markets of Slovenia, Austria, Germany, Italy, and Croatia.

#### **100% Own Raw Material of Domestic Origin**

Perutnina Ptuj is a producer of chicken meat and meat products with a tradition that spans over more than 115 years. The company sells its products in over 20 countries worldwide, with more than 2 million people consuming them on a daily basis. At least 80% of the meat and meat products are sold under proprietary brands. Their key markets include South-East and Western Europe. The company also has its own com-



Photo: Incom

mercial establishments in the neighbouring Austria, as well as in North Macedonia and Romania.

Following nutritional guidelines, trends and the specifics of present-day lifestyle, the company has numerous innovations in the segment of meat preparations in the pipeline. The company's brand Poli has expanded to include canned chicken pâté, Poli Pâté, which will be launched in several markets in the region and wider next year. "The product's competi-

# SORA

QUALITY  
PAPER  
by GORIČANE

**Perutnina Ptuj's brand Poli has expanded to include canned chicken pâté, Poli Pâté, which will be launched in several markets in the region and wider next year.**

tive advantages include high "pure meat" content, i.e. high-quality, whole-muscle meat. Furthermore, we are the only producer that can 100% provide its own raw materials of domestic origin," the company says.

Upon entry of the new strategic owner in 2019, the Perutnina Ptuj Group launched an extensive investment cycle to increase production capacities, improve efficiency, and modernise production processes, raising the Group to the level of market leader in this

respect as well. In all countries where its own vertical integrated production is in place (Slovenia, Croatia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, and Serbia), its set strategy of intensive investments is paying dividends. In addition to the expansion, modernisation and automation of production processes, the company is working on environmental projects aimed at increasing efficiency and decreasing environmental impacts. ■

### "Powered by Bees, Proven by Science"

Medex, with a long and inspiring tradition since 1954, is a pioneer in apitherapy, passionate about improving people's lives with innovative and natural food supplements based on natural bee products. With a long and inspiring tradition since 1954. In their almost seven decades of existence, they have always operated not only as a honey processor and manufacturer, but rather as the driving force behind the development and knowledge spreading in the field of beekeeping all around the world.

"We upgraded our standard propolis line with the special standardized Propolis Defense line, which includes completely alcohol-free propolis solutions that retain all the key advantages of the traditional alcohol extract: i.e., high content and concentration of flavonoids. These are the strongest water-based propolis products on the market with strong antiviral, antifungal, anti-inflammatory, and antibacterial properties," the company emphasises. "We are also proud ambassadors of the Slovenian economy abroad 'I feel Slovenia. Green. Creative. Smart.' Our own breakthrough solution for the Gelée Royale brand, which boasts the first, double blind clinical study in the world, that has confirmed royal jelly's immensely positive effects on people's health."

Today's consumers are actively taking control of their health by seeking out food supplements to improve their well-being. With the increased demand for self-improvement, new products continue to flood the market, leaving the consumer confused and overwhelmed about what to pick from the countless options. "The global food supplement market is growing rapidly but, unfortunately, consumers are often misled, as no clinical studies have been conducted for the active ingredients and with small doses that aren't efficient and thus cast a bad light on the entire food supplement category. Most of them promise immediate results, which is not true in most cases. Even in bee-based products, you can find a meagre amount of honey in honey-based syrups, for example, some contain only 1.2 mg of honey, while our honey-based syrups contain more than 140 g. We have been building a bond of respect and trust for over 65 years with innovation, tradition, quality, and safety. We produce only the highest-quality products with clinically active ingredients that work," they explain.

Medex is a globally oriented company with sustainable values, active in more than 30 markets all over the world. Besides their domestic market, they are rapidly expanding to the Middle East, where consumers have recognized the unique quality of their products. They are also entering Western Europe, America, and China. "We passionately live by our motto: Powered by bees, proven by science."



Photo: Medex



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- Pierre-Yves Bournerias, *Institute Oenologique de Champagne*.

## AWARDS

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# The best canned fish in oil and with vegetables



**Delamaris has always been and remains a synonym for top quality fish products produced under the highest standards to inspire its customers all over the world.**

Delamaris is a provider of its own developed and produced fish products, and is present on markets worldwide. For several generations, their practical products have been renowned for their great taste and constant quality and are, as they've always been, free of additives, preservatives, flavour enhancers and dyes.

It all began in 1879 in a small fish processing and canning factory on the Adriatic coast. But today, Delamaris is part of the Jata Emona Group, employing over 900 employees and with an annual turnover of over EUR 150 million.

PROMO

Delamaris is proud to be present in over 25 countries and regions all over the world, a trusted and strong partner that takes responsibility for the rapid growth of sales to end customer in all markets. The company has built long-term relationships with its existing distributors in foreign markets that have lasted for more than 30 or 40 years, and is now looking for new markets and new long-term business partners.

The company's passion is quality and sustainable development for today and future generations, and it is always seeking new solutions for all the challenges of the day.

The overall mission is to provide modern, active consumers with culinary

pleasure while saving time on a daily basis. That is why Delamaris always keeps up with the needs and expectations of modern consumers, exploring cultures, habits and trends in partner markets.

Delamaris products are excellent and always available. They are unique and delicious, made of high quality ingredients that enrich the lives of every individual and family. Delamaris is a mackerel specialist, but it also offers anchovies, sardines, tuna and other delicacies, such as mussels, with something for everyone. You can choose to enjoy fish with or without added vegetables and tomato sauce.

Have you tasted them yet?

[www.delamaris.eu](http://www.delamaris.eu)

## FISH EXPERTS: PRODUCTION & DEVELOPMENT

Delamaris is a provider of canned fish products, producing traditional recipes while developing the new, and they're all additive free. Delamaris has always been and remains a synonym for top quality fish products produced under the highest standards to inspire its customers all over the world.

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SmartIS is a growing, innovative IT company. We are present in Slovenia and Croatia with affiliated and partner companies. We provide our clients with solutions and services in the field of system integration, information security, digitalisation and business process optimisation. Through our own development, we provide customers with customised solutions. The company systematically follows technological development, which is confirmed by participation in several research and development projects.

More information on [www.smartis.si](http://www.smartis.si) or by email [smartdpo@smartis.si](mailto:smartdpo@smartis.si)

# NEW MARITIME SINGLE WINDOW

## WITH HYBRID ICT INFRASTRUCTURE FOR BUSINESS CONTINUITY

**Actual Group - Port, Logistics, Energy & Mobility solution provider and ICT infrastructure system integrator developed a brand new solution called Maritime Single Window (MSW), processing maritime operations conducted in port environments. The solution speeds up and simplifies transport processes and enables digitalization of documentation in several related official procedures, making all the information promptly available to multiple authorities in one place.**

### Digitalization at Transport Malta with the new Maritime Single Window solution

Transport Malta has developed a National Transport Strategy covering all relevant transport modes (land, public transport, sea and air) to deliver exceptionally high-quality services to their customers. They are using Maritime Single Window solution to achieve a higher digitalisation degree of the information procedures behind the various obligations imposed by national, EU and international law and to accelerate, facilitate and simplify data entry and processing for all stakeholders and users of the system. We accomplished this by using a single point of data entry, which is basically a unified ICT system.

"Securing international operations to port authorities and terminal operators are of paramount importance to Actual Group and its business strategy. By developing a state-of-the-art MSW system, combined with the infrastructure and cyber security part, we reinforced Transport Malta as a secure and reliable node in the regional and global maritime operations. We are proud to be part of its growth," said **Gregor Veselko, President of Actual Group management board.**

Transport Malta entrusted Actual Group also with raising business resilience in all port activities. To minimize cyber security threats, outages and assure business continuity of port management system we have installed a hybrid hosting business solution. The production environment consists of the infrastructure at the location of Transport Malta and in the data centre of the Actual Group in the active – passive configuration. On premise configuration extends to offsite for disaster recovery and business continuity.

Actual Group also provides management and maintenance of the solution.

### Actual Group – Stronger than ever with the new Hybrid Port Management System

"The Port Management System provided by Actual and the information infrastructure systems provided by Unistar are synergies of Actual Group, envisioned to guarantee customers in critical infrastructure to maintain business continuity. International state and para state customers benefit from local experiences and expertise of Actual Group. The Hybrid Port Management System gives us great opportunity for expansion also to other customers," said **Pavle Jazbec, Actual CEO.**



ICT System - Single point of data entry

**MSW** is similarly defined as a Maritime Single Window: a place, where all information is entered only once and becomes available to various stakeholders, but related to the maritime environment. Its focus lies on the data associated with vessels. MSW, as an authority operated software solution for clearance of ships covers handling of IMO FAL data related to the vessels, where general safety and security information regarding the transported cargo is included. Furthermore, MSW is developed to deal with reporting formalities, as the result of international laws that the individual country has acceded at regional and international levels. Additionally, MSW also covers the information related to the ship clearance, which is required by the national legislation. MSW systems are designed to provide information about the operations of seaport authorities and thus have B2G (business to government) features. They are furthermore connected with SafeSeaNet – European Maritime Information Network – and managed by the European Maritime Safety Agency (EMSA).

#### About Actual Group

Actual Group consists of five business units specialized in ICT segment: **Actual** as Port & Logistics and Energy & Mobility solution provider, **Unistar PRO** as ICT infrastructure system integrator, **Itelis** as SAP solutions implementer and **Astec** as information security and compliance provider.



Interview

# Slovenian ICT Companies Have a Lot to Offer

Darja Kocbek, Photo: Barbara Reya

**“We can only achieve an international breakthrough with a great idea or with a great deal of innovation on our part,” says Igor Zorko, President of the Information Technology and Telecommunications Association at the Chamber of Commerce and Industry of Slovenia.**

Most Slovenian ICT companies are specialists in specific areas or niches. According to Igor Zorko, President of the Information Technology and Telecommunications Association at the Slovenian Chamber of Commerce and Industry, and director of ZZI, this applies to Slovenian companies in general.

**As such, what can ICT companies offer their international partners?**

We can always offer our labour – that is, we perform some kind of work for them or develop something that they order from us. We can also offer them certain services or solutions that are specific and can solve specific problems, such as cybersecurity protocols or artificial intelligence technology solutions. We can be excellent subcontractors or component suppliers in this case. Engineering is the third thing

we are good at. This has to do with planning and preparing major projects and implementing them abroad. Smart houses are a good example. We have worked on many projects like these for companies in the Middle East.

**To what extent are Slovenian ICT companies already selling their products and services abroad and where do they see opportunities for new business deals?** It is difficult for Slovenian companies to only operate in Slovenia because the market is too small, even though they largely comprise small enterprises, including start-ups, which are founded in various parts of Slovenia. What these companies are now primarily offering abroad are new stories, such as e-mobility, mobility in general, drones, signalling solutions and vehicle tracking systems. They also

**Slovenian ICT companies are primarily offering abroad new stories, such as e-mobility, mobility in general, drones, signalling solutions and vehicle tracking systems.**

offer technological solutions connected with health-care, people and biology of materials, and services related to smart factories, automation, corporate e-commerce, marketing and similar services for business customers.

**Slovenians are also crafty in the digital realm, which means we have small enterprises specialising in a specific area, first finding a niche and then going abroad.**

**How innovative are Slovenian ICT companies?** Companies that want to succeed abroad must be innovative. Slovenians are also crafty in the digital realm, which means we have small enterprises specialising in a specific area, first finding a niche and then going abroad. Slovenia is too small for Slovenian companies to be able to employ large numbers of people that could do the programming or R&D. We have to work with a small staff and achieve a breakthrough abroad with a great idea or a great deal of innovation. That is the only way we can succeed there and that is why the Slovenian companies that operate abroad are innovative. They have to be.



***How much and how do Slovenian ICT companies present themselves abroad and how do they expand into international markets?***

We are primarily looking for success stories that we can offer globally. We achieve this in two ways. First, we use the traditional industrial supply chains. If an industrial company is a supplier in the global industrial supply chain, it also offers a digital component. This is how we join these chains. Another way is through start-ups looking for global players that would be prepared to invest in their ideas. This is how a type of partnership is formed, in which someone invests in a Slovenian company and introduces it to international markets. Partners that invest in the ideas developed by Slovenian start-ups may also be global players, such as IBM and Microsoft.

***A great opportunity for Slovenian companies to showcase their know-how and ideas is the Expo 2020, currently being held in Dubai. How are Slovenian ICT companies presented there?***

There is a plan in December to highlight the companies that have demonstrated the greatest degree of innovation as part of the Slovenian Digital Innovation Hub. At this Ljubljana-based hub, the most innovative Slovenian companies have been displaying their services and products since July 2021, when Slovenia took over the presidency of the Council of the European Union. Other companies that are not solely digital, but also deal with content or specialise in individual content-related areas will be presented by category. Thus, a presentation of companies in the mobility and healthcare categories is planned for January and February 2022. In the food industry, too, there are companies that can showcase specific solutions related to digitalisation. In general, we should know that even companies that do not engage in digitalisation may offer digitalised products.

***Which are these companies?***

These are, for instance, companies that offer blinds, digital management solutions or IT tools for preventing thermal bridges as part of smart houses. Banks also belong to the group of companies that are not digital, but provide digital solutions. In addition to financial services, they also offer e-banking and various smart services to their customers. The same applies to insurance companies, which offer their customers virtual drivers, safe driving simulators and accident prevention tutorials. The traditional service activities or industries are increasingly digitising operations. These industries are accordingly becoming digital providers. ■



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Photo: Depositphotos

## Contemporary IT

# ICT Companies See Many Opportunities for Growth

**IRM offers advanced software solutions for marinas, XLAB markets IT services that meet future trends, and the NiceLabel group has introduced an innovative cloud-based labelling solution.**

Darja Kocbek

The situation in Slovenia's IT industry is stable and presents companies with challenges and opportunities for growth in home and especially foreign markets, says Irena Čadež, Director of IRM. The need for accelerated digitalisation, further strengthened by the pandemic, is driving companies to comprehensively modernise their development and business processes, explains XLAB's Lucija Korbar. The market situation is favourable for the product labelling industry, Branka Jerše, Financial Director at NiceLabel, points out.

### **IRM's Innovations for Marinas, Yacht Clubs and Harbours**

The family-run IRM has over 30 years' global experience in development, implementation and support for the management of software solutions for marinas

(Marina Master©) and in managing software solutions for investment banking (IBI Master©). According to Čadež, in 2021 the company's Marina Master© product was upgraded with new advanced software innovations for marina owners, managers, employees and customers, yacht clubs and harbours.

"Modules facilitate digital communication, service management, data overviews, and much more, all of it remotely," Čadež explains. Marina Master© offers advanced all-in-one solutions allowing for complete control over the activities in a marina, increasing the productivity of marina employees in improving the customer experience.

Marina Master Cloud solutions are based on the individual requirements of marinas, their owners, managers, employees and customers. "We are aware that we must continue to develop new solutions in

**"Every experience with our customers is a goldmine for our strategy," is IRM's motto**

order to respond to the constant changes in the global nautical and marina industry, as well as the pandemic," Čadež says.

The key markets for the Marina Master products are Australia, USA, Europe, Asia and other parts of the world, as IRM currently operates on all continents. The company has recently also entered new markets in Qatar, Cyprus, Malta, and Cape Verde. IRM's current customers for the IBI Master are in the local market in Slovenia, but there are also opportunities for expansion to foreign markets.

The IRM team, which includes economists, mathematicians, and IT experts, provides customers with advice and knowledge based on best practices and experience in supporting marina management globally, as can be seen in their Marina Master Academy. "Every experience with our customers is a goldmine for our strategy," is IRM's motto.

### **XLAB Accelerates the Automation of Business Process**

XLAB markets IT services that meet future trends – digitalisation in companies and the increase in work from home. In 2021, the company therefore focused on the further development of two of their main services – IT automation and the ISL Online remote access tool. These solutions are essential for modernising development and business processes, as well as the very nature of work. "Our XLAB Steampunk brand makes us one of the leading companies in IT automation with Ansible software, and we help organisations achieve effective digital transformation," Lucija Korbar explains.

By combining automation and data analytics, XLAB accelerates the optimisation of business processes, thus increasing companies' competitive edge. The company gains expertise through collaboration with leading companies such as Red Hat and Microsoft.

"In response to the increased need for comprehen-

sive modernisation and taking into account the complexity of such services, XLAB has introduced new cloud services, migrating existing solutions to the cloud and establishing advanced development processes," Korbar explains.

For XLAB, the biggest challenge of the coming period is to make organisations understand that digital transformation is no longer a matter of choice. Their aim is to raise awareness about the necessity of automation and encourage organisations to bring their operations up to date before they fall behind the competition in the misguided belief that changes are unnecessary. "Our commitment to adapting to change and introducing new technologies, and the integration of artificial intelligence into our services and products further strengthen our position as a designer of future technologies," Korbar explains.

In 2021, the company launched the automation tool Quality Scanner for Ansible Playbooks which helps users of Ansible produce high-quality scripts. "Our scanner allows users to check the quality of their scripts with one click and provides them with tips on improving scripts," Korbar says.

"The ISL Online tool has gained in importance during the pandemic," Korbar adds, providing instant access to a remote computer or mobile device and thus enabling effective technical support and remote system management. In 2020, XLAB saw record demand and posted a significant increase in revenue relative to 2019.

XLAB sells its services in more than 100 countries around the world. The company generates almost 90 percent of its sales revenue abroad, half of it in Europe and half in other markets, such as Japan, the United States, and South America. "In the coming years, we intend to further strengthen our global presence as an expert in IT automation," Lucija Korbar says.

### **Labels Can Be Printed Anywhere with the Label Cloud Solution**

NiceLabel's main innovation is the cloud-based labelling solution Label Cloud, which is constantly being upgraded and improved. Label Cloud allows companies that use cloud business systems (such as enterprise resource planning (ERP) systems and warehouse management systems (WMS)) to print labels on any label printer. "End users can design labels, review them remotely, coordinate and approve changes. The process allows for employee participation – quality control engineers can approve labels online with an electronic signature, and operators can print labels on a printer and the labelling system in their warehouse or production site regardless of their location," Branka Jerše explains.

The Loftware group, which acquired NiceLabel (and its parent company Euro Plus) at the end of 2020, also offers advanced labelling software solutions for large enterprises (Loftware Spectrum) and for package design management (Loftware Smartflow). "Our solutions are used by companies in logistics, retail, distribution, as well as various manufacturing



Photo: MIR

industries, ranging from the pharmaceutical, medical equipment, textile, electronic and other industries to the automotive, food and chemical industries practically all over the world," Jerše says.

In 2021 NiceLabel is focused on integrating key business areas, functions, and processes into the larger Loftware group, including the updating and digitalisation of key processes and tools that will provide the company with a foundation for rapid growth and optimal future operations within the new framework.

The market situation is favourable for the product labelling industry. In these critical times, companies are increasingly focused on accelerating the digitalisation of their operations, basing their critical processes on cloud services, and searching for ways to optimise processes. "This is a market that is rapidly adapting and introducing ground-breaking technologies that streamline and improve supply chain processes. That is why our software platforms place us in an ideal position to offer our customers cutting-edge technology solutions," Jerše says.

The strongest sales regions for NiceLabel's products are the EMEA markets (Europe, the Middle East and Africa), where the EU's largest countries lead in sales, followed by America and Asia. Loftware aims to continue strengthening sales in both key regions of Europe and America, while increasing its presence in Asia.

"We are especially inspired by the innovative approaches of Slovenian manufacturing and distribution companies in the adoption of mobile technologies and Label Cloud solutions. We have established excellent cooperation with local partners, who integrate our solutions into their products, thus enabling customers to make technological leaps. At the same time, we are inspired by Slovenian technology companies that break new grounds in their niches and markets and operate globally, as well as start-ups that are reinventing the supply chain and implementing sustainable technologies and circular economy business models," Jerše says.

At the outbreak of the pandemic, NiceLabel smoothly switched to remote operations while maintaining the regular supply of products and services to customers. Since their solutions are part of their customers' critical infrastructure, the company did not see a decline in orders in either 2020 or 2021, regardless of initial uncertainty. ■

**At the outbreak of the pandemic, NiceLabel smoothly switched to remote operations.**

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**Slovenian Digital Centre**

# The Centre of Knowledge, Economic Progress and Advanced Technologies

**Slovenian Digital Centre – Technology for the People is the central economic event of the 6-month Slovenian Presidency of the Council of the EU 2021. The project serves as a hub of Slovenian innovation, knowledge and economic advancement that is integrating itself into the local and international environment.**

*Katja Mohar*

This project is among the major priorities during the Slovenian Presidency of the Council of the EU 2021, its aim being to build resilience to crises, strategic autonomy and economic recovery through a digital and green transition. Content-wise, the project events, set to take place between 1 July and 31 December 2021, are divided into six monthly topics: smart cities and communities, sustainable society and the economy, artificial intelligence, 5G and cyber security, digital transformation, and Industry 4.0 and robotics. The ample space, which serves as a junction of Slovenian development and economic progress during the Slovenian Presidency, enables companies to present innovative and technologically advanced solutions, products and/or services.

In addition to the exhibition area, visitors to the Slovenian Digital Centre can attend lectures, trainings, conferences, workshops, hackathons, business meetings, as well as networking and hosting events. The Centre's content-related and organisational aspects are managed by partners, i.e. the Slovenian Ministry of Economic Development and Technology, SPIRIT Slovenia, the Digital Innovation Hub Slovenia and BTC d.d., which is providing a unique location for the Centre.

The Slovenian Digital Centre's home is in BTC City Ljubljana, which is considered to be the largest shopping, business, sports and recreational, innovation and cultural centre in South-East Europe, boasting over 21 million visitors a year. It is a unique space that functions as a city within a city and is located in Slovenia's capital, Ljubljana, uniting a business, social and innovation ecosystem in a single place; as such, it provides a uniform platform to foster synergies among highly diverse business and social stakeholders.

A home to over 450 shops, 70 food and drink vendors, the tallest building in Slovenia – the Crystal Palace, Atlantis Water Park, an open market featuring local vendors, Millenium Sports Centre, Kolosej Multiplex, Woop Trampoline Park, Indoor Carting Centre, and much more, BTC City Ljubljana, surrounded by greenery, offers its visitors numerous

cultural and artistic experiences in addition to a lively social scene. BTC City Art Tour takes visitors along the streets of BTC City Ljubljana, where many artworks from renowned Slovenian sculptors, painters and other creators are displayed for public viewing. What is more, BTC City Ljubljana is a unique business space, from which several international companies chose to operate.

The many business forums held by the public agency SPIRIT Slovenia contribute to the substantive integration of the Slovenian Digital Centre in the immediate and broader international environment. Through business forums, foreign companies can get in touch with Slovenian companies presenting their solutions in digital and sustainable transformation, cyber security, 5.0 society and numerous other areas. In the coming months, it will be possible to learn about Slovenian business ideas and solutions through visits by the Austrian, Polish, Slovakian and Japanese delegations. International business forums are inviting visitors to get to know the Slovenian business environment, the most innovative Slovenian entrepreneurial ideas pertaining to the key strategically important EU priority areas, and to a number of B2B meetings and gatherings. Through various economic delegations, the Slovenian Digital Centre is successfully connecting with the Dubai Expo 2020, where it will also be possible to see the technologically advanced and sustainably transformed Slovenian companies brought by the Centre as a reward. ■

**Visitors can attend lectures, trainings, conferences, workshops, hackathons, business meetings, as well as networking and hosting events.**



Photo: Primož Predalič



# Let Nopromat help you transition from Industry 4.0 to Industry 5.0

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Industry 5.0 is a new era in which a robotic cell safely helps people perform various tasks. While robots and people working together in a joint work post makes work easier and better for people, people's intelligence, knowledge and resourcefulness enable technology to continuously grow in terms of development.

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Nopromat was established in 2008. The company's core activity is automation of working processes, robotisation and maintenance of machinery. "Large or small, we approach each project with the same passion and level of attention. We like to take the time and listen to your wishes, as your knowledge and experience combined with our own is the perfect recipe for outstanding results. In our projects, we use collaborative and industrial robots," Project Manager Jože Babič explained.

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Coupled with their engineering skills and state-of-the-art robots, the range of services Nopromat offers to companies includes grinding and polishing on products where greater tolerance discrepancies are allowed, as the ACF ensures the same pressure on the workpiece throughout the entire area of operation. This technology is also great for smaller batches and enables quick changing and/or adding of new parameters or workpieces. "In our workshop, we can show you how the system functions on your products," Babič pointed out.



## Industrial services provided to companies by Nopromat

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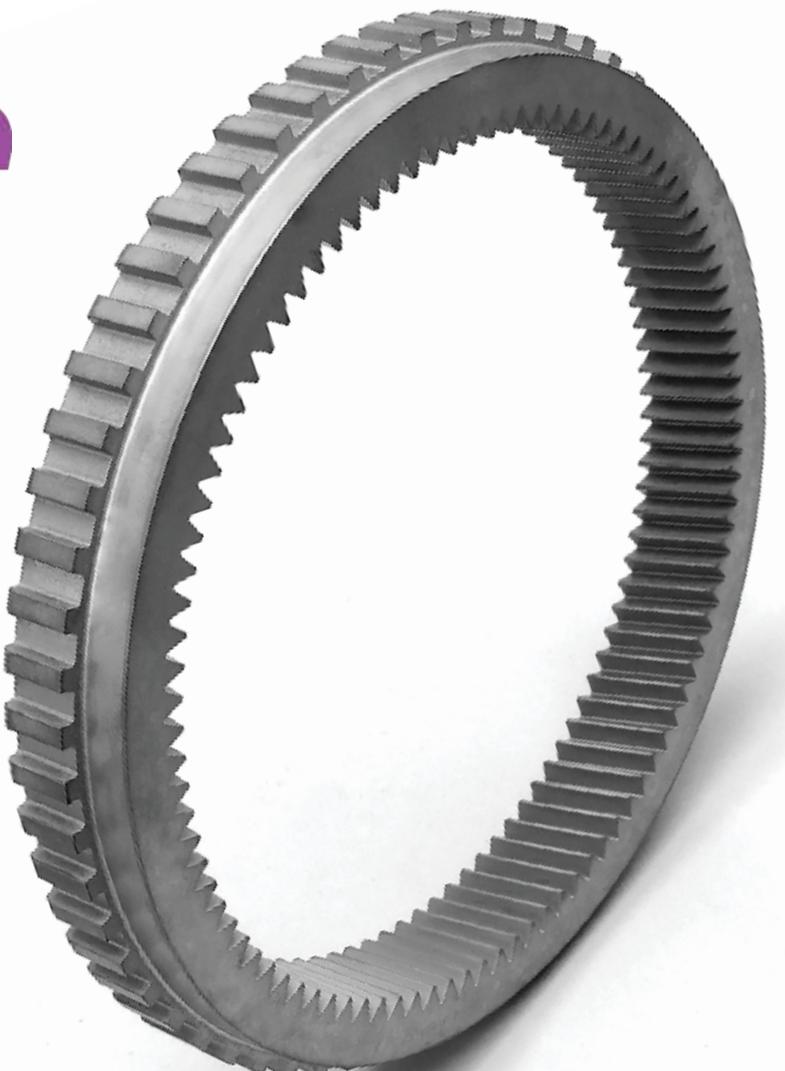
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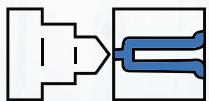
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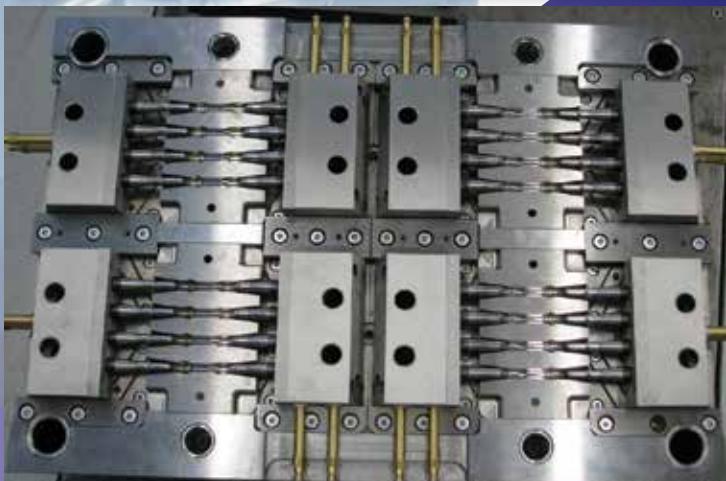
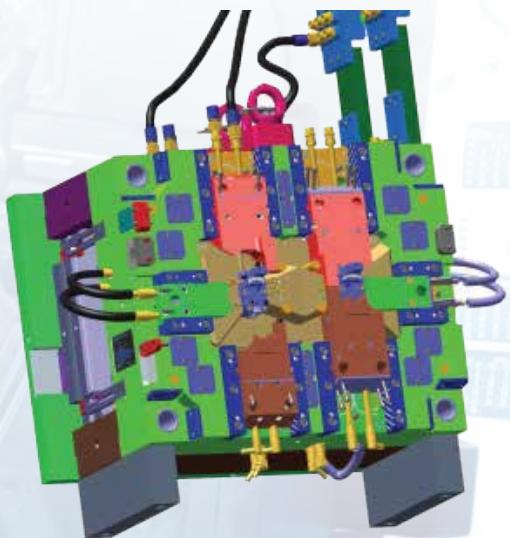
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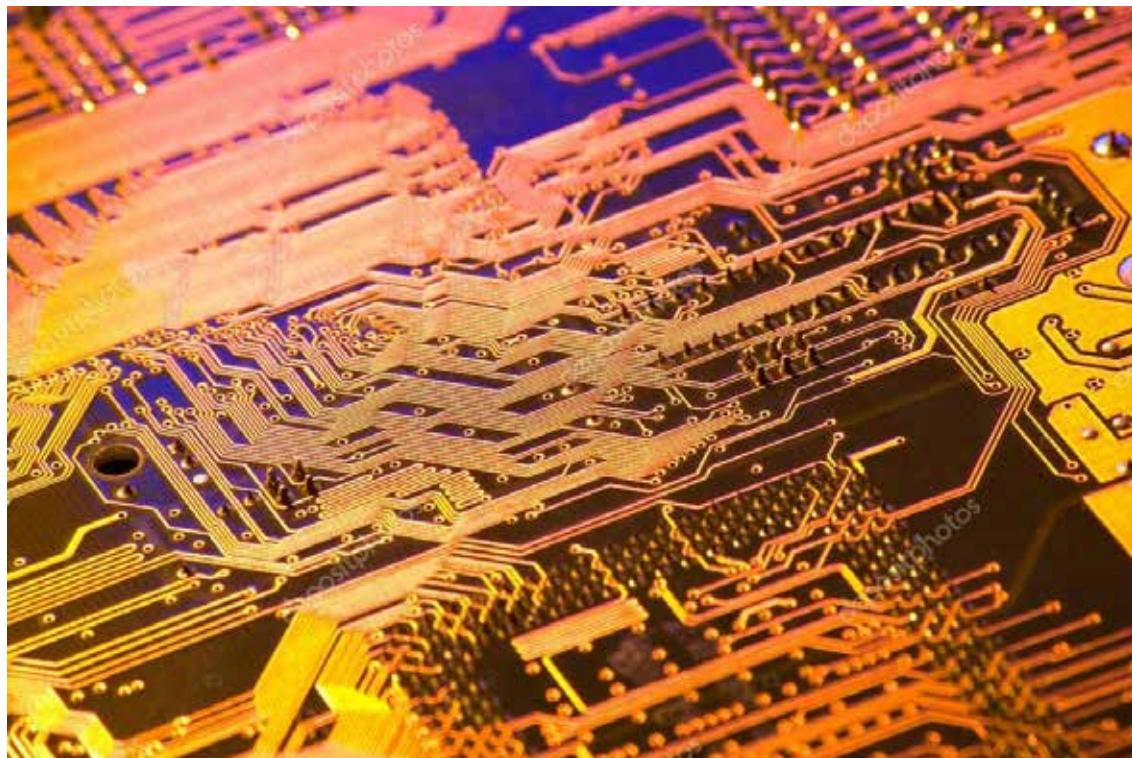


Photo: Depositphotos

#### Slovenian Electrical Industry

# The Electronics and Electrical Industry Proves Its Resilience to COVID Crisis

**The positive trend that began as early as the summer of 2020 has resulted mostly from the industry's successful crisis management.**

Andreja Hlišč, *Electronics and Electrical Industry Association, Chamber of Commerce and Industry of Slovenia*

2020 was a peculiar year for all industries and the Slovenian electrical industry was far from alone in facing disrupted supply chains, partial suspension of production and sweeping state measures. Despite the consequences of measures introduced due to the COVID-19 epidemic, 2020 can be assessed as a successful business year for the Slovenian electrical industry. Most of the indicators managed to remain at the 2019 level; in fact, a lot of companies reported increased numbers of orders and a great deal of work.

#### Export to Foreign Markets on a Constant Rise

The Slovenian electrical industry is firmly focused on foreign markets, where export has been on a constant rise in recent years. In 2020, the electrical industry recorded a 1.4% growth (compared to 2019), with EUR 4.6 billion in net sales revenue in foreign markets. Revenue generated in foreign markets constitutes 82.9% (60.5% in the EU and 22.4% outside the EU) of all net sales revenue. In the last 10 years, sales in foreign markets grew by 5.3% per year on average.

#### Overview of the Slovenian electrical industry in 2020:



**1,118**  
companies



**34,288**  
employees



**EUR 43,120**  
of value added per  
employee



**EUR 5.54 billion**  
of net sales revenue



**EUR 4.6 billion**  
of net sales revenue in  
foreign markets (1.4%  
more than in 2019)

#### Greatest export markets:



**GERMANY**  
**25.5%**

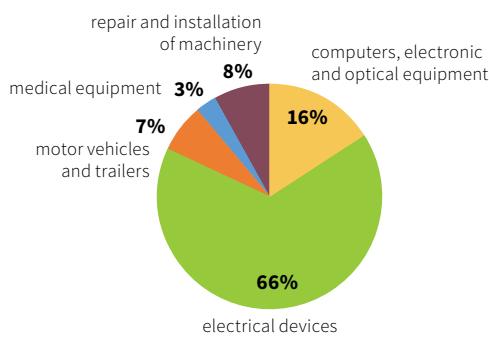


**ITALY**  
**7.6%**



**CROATIA**  
**5.4%**

### Slovenian Electrical Industry in Terms of Its Sub-industries in 2020:



**Globally, demand for industrial products increased more than expected, which indicates that the 2020 decline was not as severe as initially thought.**

The electrical industry imports a lot of raw materials for the production of electrical and electronic devices and equipment, which it then re-exports, mostly for the needs of the automotive industry.

In terms of exporting goods, European markets are the most important, as the industry makes most of its exports there. In terms of the activities using the electrical industry's products, most products are exported to Germany (a quarter!), Italy and Croatia.

by country	Exports in EUR million	Proportion of exports in %
GERMANY	1,231.6	25.5
ITALY	366.8	7.6
CROATIA	258.0	5.4
SERBIA	197.7	4.1
POLAND	194.9	4.0
FRANCE	192.7	4.0
AUSTRIA	171.2	3.6
HUNGARY	159.1	3.3
UNITED STATES OF AMERICA	149.5	3.1
THE NETHERLANDS	139.2	2.9

### Demand Exceeding Expectations

Globally, demand for industrial products increased more than expected, which indicates that the 2020 decline was not as severe as initially thought. The positive trend that began as early as the summer of 2020 is largely a result of the industry's successful crisis management. Unlike the service sector, industry in Europe was mostly able to continue keeping factories open, provided strict conditions were adhered to. This contributed to better maintenance of supply chains and a rapid increase of production even after demand increased once again.

Upon the onset of the COVID-19 crisis, it quickly became evident that the electronics and electrical industry would be able to survive the crisis much better than other technological industries. The increased need for digital solutions in the workplace and in consumer behaviour led to a major revival as early as in the autumn of 2020. After the initial shock, the second half of 2020 even saw the industry increasing by 0.7% compared to 2019, while the entire year of 2020 concluded at -2.9%. Increased investments are expected, along with a 5.8% increase in sales this year (possibly even more, depending on the demand). ■

#### Sources:

- Report on electrical industry in 2020 (Electronics and Electrical Industry Association)
- Performance indicators: Chamber of Commerce and Industry's Analytics Department, based on data from AJPES (Agency of the Republic of Slovenia for Public Legal Records and Related Services) and SURS (Statistical Office of the Republic of Slovenia)
- Orgalim Annual Report

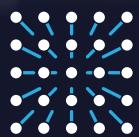
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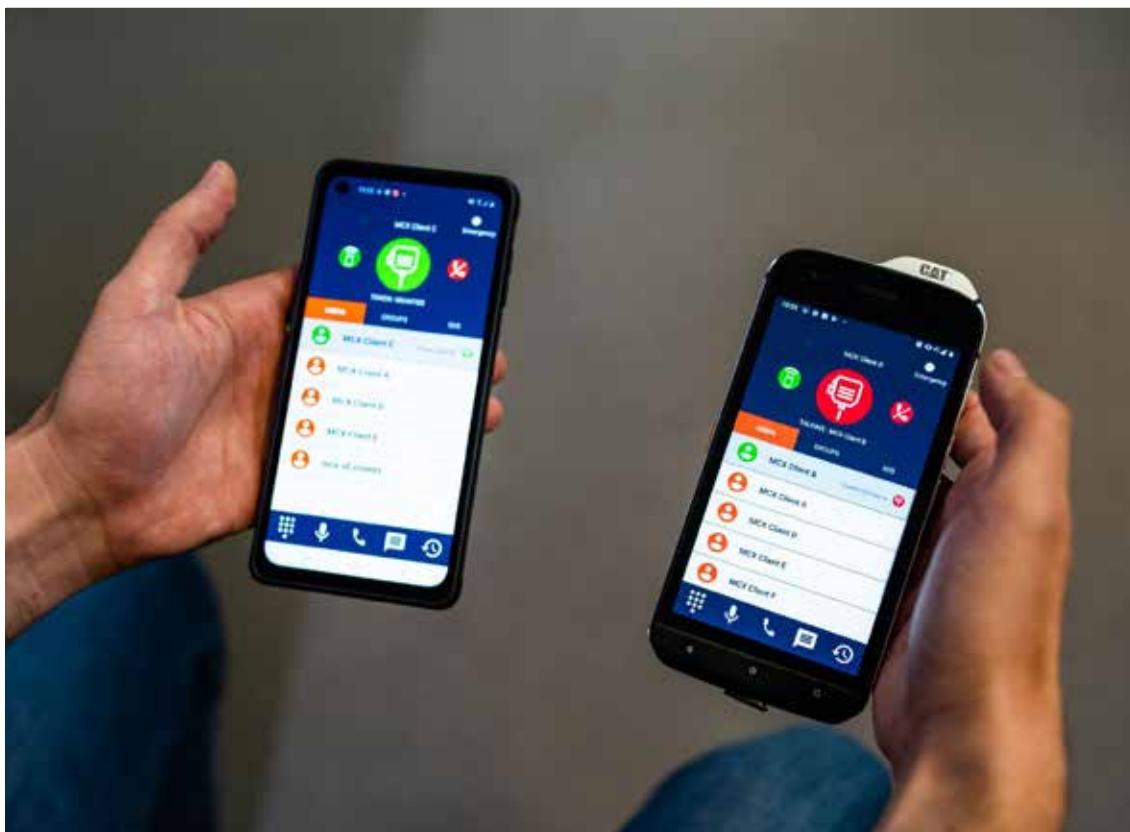


Photo: Iskatel

**Smart Electronics**

## New Breakthrough Products and Solutions

**ETI Elektroelement's new fuse proves that a fuse can be "smart", too. Iskatel will be introducing many new solutions in private networks for industry verticals.**

Barbara Perko

For ETI Elektroelement 2021 has been an important year. "We've been named the 2021 Factory of the Year, which is definitely an important achievement. This is an additional confirmation that we've made the right decisions over the past years (extensive investment in technology upgrade, automation and digitalisation). At the same time we can be proud that, despite the crisis situation in the past year, we've continued to operate normally and regularly supply our customers, which has primarily been the result of the high degree of our self-sufficiency. We produce most components for our products in-house. This makes us one of the rare companies in Europe specialising in various materials for producing technical ceramic products and one of the leading providers of technical ceramic products on these markets. We produce ceramic bodies and bases for our fuse links, plastic housings and metal components and subassemblies for our

switches, such as a special FI relay, and we have our own tool workshop, where we produce our own tools, devices, and assembly lines," says General Manager Tomaž Berginc.

### A Fuse Can Be Smart Too

The company's product development focuses on two main areas, which are often interconnected. The first one is green energy and renewable sources. "On the one hand, we develop fuses and switches that protect green energy electrical installations — we are pioneers in photovoltaic and battery storage system protection, and our switches and fuses protect both charging stations for electric cars and batteries in more complex electric vehicles (electric buses, etc.). On the other hand, when developing or revamping our products we always try to make sure they reduce power dissipation. All our new products are con-

**ETI Elektroelement produces most components for their products in-house. This makes it one of the rare companies in Europe specialising in various materials for producing technical ceramic products on these markets.**

structed to reduce the consumption of both space and energy as much as possible," Berginc explains.

"The second area we focus on is smart installations. This primarily means that we add metering and control functions to our products (which can ultimately lead to reduced energy consumption in the final application). Among switches, one such solution is the KZS 1M EM residual current circuit breaker with overcurrent protection (RCBO), with an embedded electricity metre that can transmit data to an IT environment. In the fuse segment, we'll be launching a special NV MET-COM fuse link next year. This fuse link will be able to transfer data to the cloud, where users can check the energy consumption and the current network load, and, by using analytics, it will help predict the future demands of smart city networks," says Berginc. "This new product's main advantage is that it's a 'plug-and-play' design, where no additional wiring and so on is needed (we only add a concentrator to the electrical cabinet and it then receives data from all the fuse links within a 10 m range), that the fuse link has standard dimensions, which is why it can be installed in all types of holders, fuse rails and disconnectors, and that it achieves the same technical parameters as the traditional fuse link it replaces. This product is a big breakthrough for ETI, demonstrating that even a fuse can be smart. This is especially important in areas where protective switches simply don't meet the requirements and installations can still only be protected with fuses."

### **Products Are Becoming Increasingly Advanced**

Traditional protection products for electrical installations are becoming increasingly complemented and upgraded with electronic features (protection devices are becoming more and more complex, offering many additional functions). Additional functions may include options for measuring electricity and energy consumption in individual branches of electrical installations and connecting protection devices with those of the user. Cloud services are also an impor-



Photo: Iskratel

tant element. Through them, consumption data can be transmitted to the user (IoT etc.).

Next year, ETI Elektroelement anticipates a moderate market growth, which will be lower than this year. The greatest challenges will lie in the supply chain, in terms of both the availability and high prices of key materials (non-ferrous metals), components, and energy products.

### **Accelerated Development of Products for 5G Networks**

Iskratel develops products and solutions for next-generation broadband access. "We are focused on upgrading the portfolio for fibre-optic access with technology that provides our customers with speeds of up to 10 GB. In home devices for broadband access, we are developing a new generation of products that will also support Wi-Fi 6 technology, which enables better coverage and greater speed in connecting devices. We are developing a 5G network product generation at an accelerated pace, focusing primarily on solutions for private networks for industrial verticals. Many innovations can be expected in this area in the future," Iskratel revealed.

"We are working on large projects in our existing markets; one such project involves upgrading the fibre-optic broadband infrastructure in Ukraine and Uzbekistan. We increased our market share in our traditional Eastern markets, and we are focusing even more intensively on Western markets, which involved establishing a sales representative office in Germany. In addition, we are about to successfully complete the 5G Safety research project. The project's strategic goal is to conduct research and innovation work that paves the way for a new generation of 5G-ready products and services adapted to the needs of the public protection and disaster relief (PPDR) sector,



Photo: ETI

as well as of other sectors that require operational communication for business-critical processes," Iskratel explained.

5G technology is the foundation of modernising networks and services, and facilitates dedicated networks for individual business verticals, including factories. According to Iskratel, the new ecosystem for solutions and services development also includes technologies pertaining to the Internet of Things (IoT), cloud technology, big data collection and processing, and artificial intelligence. Cybersecurity is becoming an increasingly relevant and crucial aspect.

In view of all the measures aimed at containing the coronavirus epidemic, the company expects 2022 to be a year of recovery, new investments and positive economic growth. Traditionally, Iskratel has been active in the Central and Eastern European markets; the company is now investing strategically in market diversification on Western European markets. In addition to Germany, where Iskratel established a sales representative office this year, the company will reinforce its local endeavours in the French and UK markets in 2022 by opening up new representative offices. Through partners, Iskratel also has reach in other Western European markets (e.g. Spain, Belgium). ■



Photo: Iskratel

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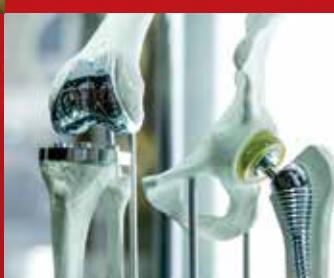


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**Materials**

# Advanced Materials Research for a Green Future

**More efficient use of energy and materials combined with technology optimization and innovation could play a key role in achieving multiple environmental and economic benefits.**

*Bojan Podgornik, Institute of Metals and Technology, Slovenia*

**Additive manufacturing, lean production, circular design, and more robust material recycling practices can reduce waste and emissions, at the same time provide low-weight minimum-energy demanding designs.**

**For each renewable technology to progress, materials development and improvement is needed to help us build a greener future. All renewable technologies face material challenges.**

Environmental concerns, such as pollution, greenhouse gas emissions, sustainability, global warming, and climate change as one of the biggest challenges of our times, have triggered a variety of societal responses. Solutions to problems related to energy transformation, storage, supply and efficiency, heat exchange, hydrogen storage, carbon capture and storage, etc. largely depend on materials and their properties.

More efficient use of energy and materials, combined with technology optimization and innovation, could play a key role in achieving multiple environmental and economic benefits. Although many opportunities exist, material efficiency is still not realized in practice to its full potential. In the future, steel, aluminium, cement, and other hard-to-abate heavy industries will see much wider use of green hydrogen and electrification, with on-site carbon-capture technology playing an important role. Furthermore, manufacturing should continue to make gains in efficiency, reducing emissions intensity, sensors deployment and analytics, digital transformation, etc. Additive manufacturing, lean production, circular design, and more robust material recycling practices can reduce waste and emissions, at the same time provide low-weight minimum-energy demanding designs. Increased recycling leads to reductions in waste volume and generally leads to reduced GHG emissions. Nevertheless, some advanced materials have limited recycling potential, although they may still be used in downgraded end-of-life applications.

Materials are central to most environmental protection strategies. To increase cost-effectiveness, efficiency, safety, performance, and to address environmental concerns there is an urgent need to develop advanced materials and manufacturing technologies that allow novel light-weight, energy-efficient designs. For each renewable technology to progress, materials development and improvement is needed to help us build a greener future. All renewable technologies face material challenges. Materials must be lighter, stronger, and more durable to resist corrosion from inclement atmospheres and high temperatures.



Photo: SRIP/MATPRO

## A Complete Understanding and Information on Mechanical Properties

In order to properly use materials in design, a complete understanding and information about their mechanical properties must be obtained. It is also vital to know how these properties are affected by the conditions of a specific material application. Factors such as the size of the part, surface condition, loading direction, and loading rate may result in changes to these properties that must be considered in design. Furthermore, as the design especially of automotive components is constantly being pushed toward the limits of the materials used, unsuitable and outdated measuring methods as well as deviations from the defined material properties and excessive measuring uncertainty can lead to unexpected premature failure of the component itself, as well as to environmental problems. Therefore, sophisticated and reliable determination of material properties with low uncertainty is crucial in modern design aimed for a green future. Small deviations in a testing specimen's diameter or improper surface preparation may result in large increase in measurement uncertainty and failure probability.

## Surface Engineering Can Have a Huge Impact on Sustainability

For the green future, it is extremely important to develop new, advanced materials. However, making surface changes to extant materials can often result in the greatest benefits in performance as well as the envi-

## Materials

ronment. Surface engineering is about modifying the surface of what lies beneath, to make it perform better, last longer, or even achieve a different function entirely. So, surfaces can prevent or control the product's main life cycle, indeed completely determining their operational characteristics (such as wear, corrosion, and fatigue). But they can also have a huge impact on sustainability, by ensuring the optimized use of scarce materials, reducing energy losses due to friction, increasing wettability, providing tissue-compatibility, etc.

### Slovenian Cooperative Research Results

In addition to advanced research and high-tech research facilities, close cooperation between universities, research institutions, and the private sector is needed to develop functional materials and solutions that can effectively support society's journey into the green future. A great example of such collaboration was Slovenian program MARTINA (Materials and Technologies for New Applications; [www.martina-eu.net/en/](http://www.martina-eu.net/en/)), involving 16 partners (3 universities/faculties, 6 research institutes and centres, 7 companies), where through the joint research and development the following materials with superior properties were developed and introduced:

- Three ultra-high-strength steels for the automotive and transportation industry, providing 10-20% higher strength at up to 5-times better fatigue resistance, reduced need for heat treatment, and diminished heat affected zone influence. Two steels are aimed at forged load-bearing components and one for safety construction elements in lightweight designs.
- Two tool steels with reduced non-metallic inclusions, better fatigue and heat checking resistance, improved machinability, and 60% higher thermal conductivity, thus focusing on reduced energy consumption and material use.
- New high-strength Al alloy (registered as 6086 type) produced with a high share of scrap. This addresses requirements on lightweight design, reduced material CO<sub>2</sub>- footprint, reduced energy use, and raw material input.
- A completely new magnetic material and production process based on anisotropic magnetic particles in a thermoplastic matrix, allowing production and magnetization in a single stage and magnets with up to 40% better magnetic field effectiveness.
- Application of metallic nanoparticles in different polymeric materials, providing completely new structural properties such as antibacterial effects and wear resistance, electrical conductivity, magnetic properties, etc. ■



Photo: SRIP/MATPRO

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Photo: Livar

**Special Materials**

# Their Products Satisfy the Most Demanding Customers

**Companies are developing products that meet the highest technological requirements, while working on new solutions to reduce their carbon footprint.**

*Barbara Perko*

Major shifts in mobility are afoot in improving the weight-to-mechanical properties balance. “Our castings customers are developing new generations of products that will be launched after 2023. Talam supports these efforts with its technological expertise, ensuring its continuing status as a development supplier by developing new solutions that upgrade existing ones.”

The company has further strengthened its market share for aluminium billets for extrusion (machinery, transport and construction industries), specifically in the market of non-standard, special billets with a higher proportion of recycled aluminium used. They are intensely focused on acquiring new business in carbon materials for new carbon baking services and the production of special carbon materials.

In 2021, Talam developed several alloys to produce slugs for tubes and containers, where the raw input material is secondary aluminium (recycled aluminium

at the end of the aluminium product lifecycle) at either 50 or 100%. The production of slugs made from PCR (post-consumer recycled) materials will increase in the coming years. The company adapted the casting and rolling process for new alloys in order to be able to supply potential customers with test discs for fire extinguishers and Teflon-coated pans.

The company’s production subsidiary Talam Izparilniki, which currently generates the largest share of its revenues in the appliances segment, is lately focusing on solar and on the auto industry, specifically in electric vehicles. “We see an opportunity here, since our products generally increase the efficiency of any device they are built into, and allow the use of more environmentally friendly gases in cooling systems. We see growth potential in the area of cooling fins for electric vehicle and vessel batteries,” the company adds.

**Talam adapted the casting and rolling process for new alloys in order to be able to supply potential customers with test discs for fire extinguishers and Teflon-coated pans.**

### **Focus on Electrified Mobility Products**

Aluminium casting development is tending toward technological transformation (new casting and processing technologies), automation and process robotisation, and towards digital and green transformations. In the future, much attention will be paid to developing new solutions to reduce carbon footprints. The focus of product development is currently on new electrified mobility products.

The circular economy and lowering products' carbon footprint are also at the forefront in the aluminium billets segment. Talum has the necessary competences and a relatively favourable geographical location, allowing it to sell aluminium billets to a large number of buyers.

In the pharmaceutical, food and cosmetics industries, reducing the weight of aerosol cans (saving on the weight of the final products) is still a high priority.

**In the pharmaceutical, food and cosmetics industries, reducing the weight of aerosol cans (saving on the weight of final products) is still a high priority.**

### **Meeting Customer Expectations**

Despite the unpredictable and dynamic situation – especially in the automotive industry – Talum maintained its revenues at the forecast level and even slightly increased them relative to 2019. The company began regular production of non-standard billets for a number of new customers and today this product already makes up a significant share of the company's total output. The company has entered an agreement to produce billets with a new diameter. "The order for the necessary technological equipment has been placed and we plan to start production in the first half of the next year," the company says. They increased the production and sales of alloyed slugs, and compared with the previous year there has also been a considerable increase in sales of slugs made from PCR materials.

Talum is carrying out a number of development and sales activities that will enable it to increase production and sell products with higher value added.

### **Demand for Slugs Is Expected to Approach Pre-pandemic Levels**

"The second half of 2021 is marked by a sharp rise in the price of aluminium on the London Metal Exchange and sales premiums for billets. If demand remains strong, we expect similar levels in the first half of 2022, but what happens after that is anyone's guess," the company says about the unpredictable situation in the aluminium market. Aluminium prices on the LME are the highest since 2008, but this rise in prices was also followed by a steep increase in the costs of raw materials, natural gas and especially electricity. Alloy premiums have also increased, partly as a result of rising prices of alloying elements. Despite the high market value of aluminium and higher sales premiums, the demand for slugs is expected to approach pre-pandemic levels.

### **Sales in New Markets Are Growing**

In the castings segment, Talum's key markets are heat technology, general machine engineering, and transport industry (commercial vehicles, cars, motorcycles). The company supplies billets to customers in the machine, transport and construction industries, while the strongest market for evaporator plates is the domestic appliance industry. They are also increasingly focused on the solar and automotive industries. The key markets for slugs and discs are the cosmetics, pharmaceutical, and food industries. Most of the company's products are sold in the EU markets and partly in the Balkans, while sales of slugs and discs are increasing in new markets such as Latin America and the Middle East.

### **SIJ Is Planning to Break into the Aircraft Industry**

"By the end of this year, the SIJ Group is planning to launch the SINOXX 4501 superduplex stainless steel, as well as new top-quality SIWATT EV28 and SIWATT EV30 electrical sheets with extremely low watt losses, which are intended for the most efficient electric drive engines. We are also planning to enter another high-quality and technologically advanced product market, the aircraft industry, for which we obtained the ISO 9100 certificate last year," says Aleš Falatov, Marketing and Business Development Director, SIJ Group. In the next year, the company expects to see the biggest growth in its SIWATT electric sheets.

Reflecting on the last year's achievements, Falatov highlights a new production line for heat treatment in forges and the new EPŽ4 electro-slag remelting plant. "With this investment, we are pursuing the SIJ Group's 2020–2025 strategy and our objective of remaining at the lead of the tool steel industry. The EPŽ4 plant will enable increased production of steels with superior purity and improved malleability, thus further expanding the company's market reach and consolidating its position in the demanding niche market of tool steels. Their end users are the customers from some of the most competitive industries such as the energy sector, mechanical engineering, oil and natural gas industries and others."



### **One of the Steelmakers with the Lowest CO<sub>2</sub> Emissions**

Industry development is moving towards replacing common steels with more specialised ones. "The driving force behind this development is the so-called lightweighting trend, that is, reducing the weight of construction, vehicles and equipment. While carbon footprints are an increasingly important factor, the SIJ Group is already among the quarter of steel-makers with the lowest CO<sub>2</sub> emissions, as it produces steel following the principles of the circular economy using secondary raw materials (scrap steel)," says Aleš Falatov. "We are also making progress here by constantly investing in the best available technology, and we are aiming to replace part of the natural gas used in heating furnaces with green hydrogen. All these measures lead to decreased fossil fuel consumption and lower CO<sub>2</sub> emissions."

The SIJ Group, one of the largest Slovenian exporters, is active in more than 70 countries and sells more than 85% of its products in foreign markets, with nearly half of its sales generated in EU countries, primarily Germany and Italy. The SIJ Group ranks among the top three producers of stainless steel sheets in the EU, where it maintains a high, 29.4% share, among the top three tool steel producers in the



Photo: Livar

EU, and among the top ten industrial knife producers in the world.

### **Their Customers Are Some of the World's Leading Manufacturers**

Livar supplies the world's leading manufacturers of agricultural components and machinery, of heavy industrial machinery with a focus on drivelines, of railway brake systems, and manufacturers of equipment for energy systems. Despite the situation

**SIJ Group is already among the quarter of steel-makers with the lowest CO<sub>2</sub> emissions, as it produces steel following the principles of the circular economy using secondary raw materials (scrap steel).**

## **METAL FABRICATION**

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Time is money. The more time spent fabricating a product, the more it costs. And every step adds time. Grinding. Cutting. Cleaning. Finishing. Before, during and after the weld, Weiler Abrasives products are designed to provide superior performance through maximum aggression and long life. That means you get your work done faster and more efficiently. You want solutions to get the job done. Done right — but done fast.

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Photo: Acroni

**The common denominator in recent development has been the reduction of product weight, and the share of nodular cast iron products is increasing.**

due to the pandemic and rising demand, the company has managed to satisfy its customers, staying ahead of the competition and allowing customers to operate without interruptions. "When developing new products, we adapt to the needs of customers from various industries," they point out. The common denominator in recent development has been the reduction of product weight, and the share of nodular cast iron products is increasing.

The company has orders for the entire first half of 2022 and expects new orders to outstrip capacity. "Given the growth so far, we still expect it to settle down at the current levels, as there are no resources left, neither material nor human. The increase in the prices of input materials will also act as a brake," they predict. As the trend of sourcing products from the Far East has stopped due to higher transport costs and less flexible and reliable deliveries, the focus of supply is again on European foundries.

Over the past year, the company has managed to improve the economics of its operations by adjusting sales prices to reflect the growing cost of labour and the exceptional increase in the costs of input material. "The existing mechanisms for offsetting the growth of material costs in the sales price are not suitable for rapid changes of this kind. In agreement with our customers, we switched to a monthly offsetting dynamic, while raising the sales prices in line with the indices for other materials that were not taken into account in the previous mechanisms," they explain.

Their key market remains Italy, which accounts for a 43% share, although this is declining. "We are focusing our sales efforts on Central European markets (Hungary, Slovakia), where our customers are companies indirectly linked to the DACH region. We also export directly to Germany and Austria. We

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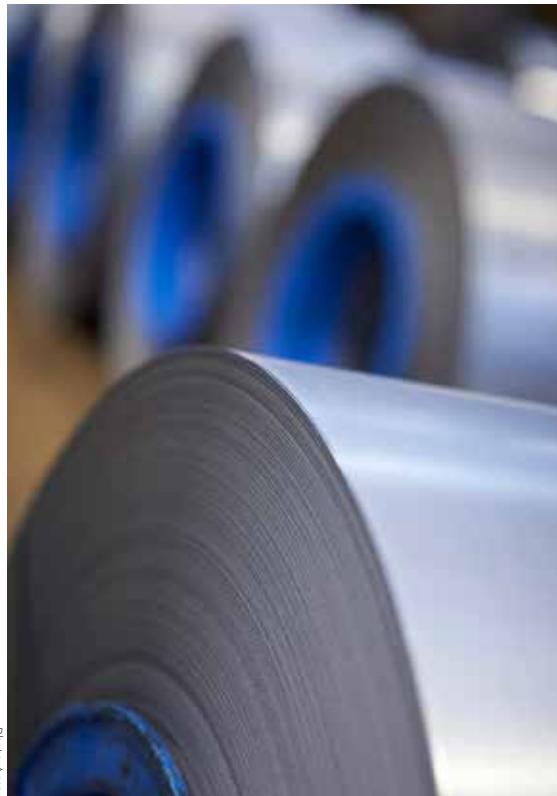


Photo: Acroni

are also strengthening our exports to Scandinavia,” the company says. “With the exception of our public utilities programme, our sales in the Slovenian market are indirectly targeted at the DACH market and Scandinavia.”

#### New Breakthrough Solutions for Most Demanding Industries

FerroČrtalič develops and manufactures machines for cutting-edge surface treatment technologies, which are marketed under their proprietary FerroECOBlast® Europe brand. Their solutions in the technologies of manual, automatic and robotic air blasting, shot peening, dry removal of ice and snow, ultra-high-pressure water jetting, as well as fully automated enamelling solutions, are being used in the most technology-intensive industries. From aviation, automotive, metalworking, foundry and casting, energy and 3D printing to medical implants and pharmaceutical industries. “Business performance allows us a high level of resistance to external shocks and investments in new areas/technologies, such as additive technology, medicines, laser cleaning and texturing, etc. These will gradually become the driving force behind the future growth of our successful business,” the company states.

**FerroČrtalič develops and manufactures machines for cutting-edge surface treatment technologies, which are marketed under their proprietary FerroECOBlast® Europe brand.**



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**FerroČrtalič entered the demanding field of medicine by acquiring a European R&D project, which resulted in a new line of machines for post-processing medical implants under the MiBlast™ brand, intended for the orthopaedic and dental industry.**

"At the end of 2020, we launched Addiblast™ by FerroECOBlast®Europe, a new line of machines for post-processing 3D-printed parts. We also managed to support our determination to enter the demanding field of medicine by acquiring a European R&D project, which resulted in a new line of machines for post-processing medical implants under the MiBlast™ brand, intended for the orthopaedic and dental industries."

Their vision is to develop new breakthrough solutions based on already acquired standard surface treatment technologies, intended for most demanding industries, such as additive industry (3D printing), solutions in medicine, laser cleaning and surface structuring, solutions in the vehicle electrification industry.

The company is globally present in all markets and industries, either directly or through a partner network. "We adapt our solutions to the requirements and needs of key customers from various demanding industries, such as aerospace, automotive, medical, and additive. Currently the most important markets for us are USA, Europe, Russia, Middle East, and South-East Asia." ■



Photo: FerroČrtalič

## "For aluminium with glance!"



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Aluminium Kety Emmi d.o.o. supplies many companies, including industry leaders, with visible aluminium components and assemblies, with sophisticated surface treatments and in combination with other materials. They offer customers a wide range of support and expertise, from the development phase of their end product to reliable, punctual and high-quality supply of series production. Market proximity and electronic data exchange contribute to the prompt clarification of the challenges and supply according to their production.

Production of numerous and diverse semi-finished products, assemblies elements and products manufactured through

- mechanical and surface treatment (own anodising plant) of extruded aluminium profiles,
- assembly of aluminium components with other materials (metal, plastic, wooden elements, glass) and
- cold forming - profiling of thin-walled aluminium, steel and copper belts.

### Supply of companies of diverse industrial branches:

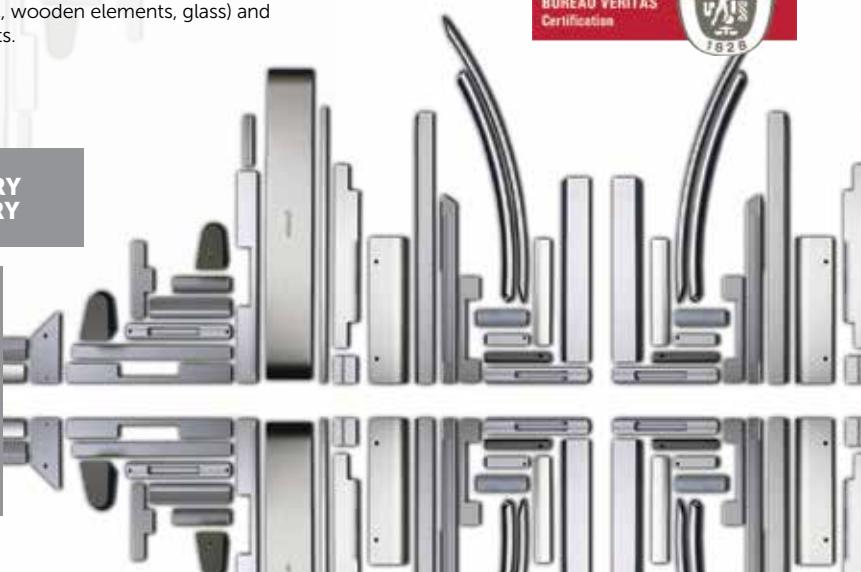
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**MADE IN SLOVENIA**



# We have been caring for the environment and households for more than 30 years

## Piskar d.o.o. offers high quality bags and other household products made from substances that are friendly to both the environment and users.

Piskar d.o.o. is a family company founded in 1986 by Anton and Romana Piskar, who began producing bags for household use. "We've been caring for the environment and households for more than 30 years, and provide the market with different bags and numerous other household products from our own sales programme or the programmes of other brands, such as Melitta from Germany, for which we are a representative. During all the years of development and activity we have sworn by quality and that, alongside caring for the

### Caring for the health of users and the environment

#### **At Piskar they ensure that:**

- their products are friendly to the environment and to the health of users, and have practical value
- products are made of recycled materials
- all shades of colour used are made from harmless substances
- products are packaged in practical and ecologically degradable packaging

### Quality assurance and competitiveness

#### **At Piskar they ensure that:**

- products have excellent properties and comply with the highest standards
- products are constantly traced and their quality checked
- prices are competitive

environment, remains our main priority. We want to operate as a modern, stable and secure company with tradition and recognisability, which looks after its employees and meets the needs of its clients," says the founders' son Uroš Piskar, who takes care of sales and marketing.

### Top quality and innovation

In addition to the undisputed quality of their products, Piskar can also be proud of its innovativeness. The company was the first Slovenian manufacturer of refuse bags, which were wound on a roll. It was also the first to make refuse bags in nice, attractive colours. When it comes to biodegradable refuse bags, Piskar also played a pioneering role in Slovenia. "Nowadays we offer a wide range of biodegradable refuse bags, and our clients can even order biodegradable carrier bags with personalised colour printing and in any dimensions," explains Uroš Piskar.

All products can be recycled after use or reused. The bags for household use are made of the purest materials and are wholly suitable for contact with foodstuffs. The company has acquired the appropriate certificates for this, and constantly keep a close watch on quality.

### Smaller quantities according to the client's wishes

Uroš Piskar sees the company's main competitive advantage in its capability of producing small quantities of products according to the client's wishes. Every year Piskar exhibits at the Private Label show in Amsterdam (PLMA), the largest trade show in the world in which diverse manufacturers from all over the globe present their products. This is also the place where deals are concluded with



large manufacturers, for which they manufacture products under the client's brand name. "They choose us because we can adapt to the client's wishes with smaller quantities. Our larger competitors cannot do this, as they work on the basis of mass production," emphasises Uroš Piskar.

### The use of recyclable materials and biodegradable products

According to Uroš Piskar, the company is investing in increasing the amount of recyclable materials in its products. It is developing biodegradable products and clean manufacturing, which is always being updated in order to improve productivity and increase energy efficiency. Its products are to a large extent oriented towards industrial users and the food industry.

### Present on almost all continents

Above all the company aims to sell its products on European markets, but is also present on other continents. Nowadays, the company is present in the USA, Australia, Dubai, the UK, France, Sweden, Lithuania, Latvia, Estonia, Greece, Austria, Croatia and Tanzania. Piskar is also planning to enter the German market and northwest Europe.

[www.piskar.si](http://www.piskar.si)

**Chemical industry**

# Green Transition Starts with Chemical Industry – Key Role of Chemical Industry in Realization of Green Deal

**Chemical industry has a key role in green and circular transition.**

CCIS - Association of Chemical Industries of Slovenia (ACIS)

The chemical industry is one of the key and most important drivers, enablers and accelerators of the green and circular transformation of the European industry, economies and societies in general. Without it, the vision of a climate-neutral and secure future cannot be pursued both from the perspective of Slovenia and the European area as a whole.

Why? The answer is simple:

- because it is part of a huge number of value chains with materials, products and solutions it offers;
- because it develops, produces and also uses basic and new materials, products and solutions to meet modern needs. These for example include lighter materials (important for transport), better building insulation (lower energy consumption), coatings (longer product life), sustainably designed products that are easier to recycle (e.g. plastic packaging). The recycling of many materials is also primarily in the domain of the chemical industry (mechanical or chemical);
- because it provides vital products that are also important for ensuring national and European strategic autonomy: among others the significance of certain chemical products (medicines, disinfectants, soaps, etc.) has also been demonstrated during the COVID-19 pandemic.

The society's expectations and demands on the chemical industry are enormous. In order to provide benefits for the society, it must therefore produce and continue to develop the necessary products and solu-

Chemical industry consists of:

- “classical” chemical industry in all its varieties (incl. man-made fibres, cosmetics etc.),
- pharmaceutical industry,
- plastic industry,
- rubber industry.

tions. At the same time, it also needs to undertake its own quadruple transformation (green, digital, circular and sustainable). A special challenge is to adapt to the growing number of recent and forthcoming legislative and other requirements, which are particularly extensive and complex for the chemical industry (arising for example from the European Chemicals Strategy for Sustainability, the Plastics Strategy, etc.). Despite the enormous efforts invested in the above, it must remain competitive, both from the point of view of the Slovenian and European chemical industry, to ensure its future operation.

The before-mentioned challenge is multiplied in countries which are not among the biggest. Slovenia is one of such examples: relatively small industry with large proportion of SMEs and relatively small administration with limited resources seem very vulnerable in such circumstances. Thus, Slovenia's chemical industry invites European and Slovenian legislators to consider the fact that these different circumstances and capabilities need to be taken into account by European and national legislators. Complex and intensive legislative changes with numerous new requirements might introduce further difficulties to the industry and EU Member States that have been already battered by the corona crisis, and uncertainties on the market (e.g. availability and price of (green) energy and raw materials). Will the countries and the Union ensure that the declared principle “no one shall be left behind” is taken into account when implementing the sustainable development agenda?

The European chemical industry has already made big changes. For example, its greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions have fallen by nearly 50% since 1990 even as production increased by 95%. Not only due to the legislative requirements but also because of

**The chemical industry is one of the key and most important drivers, enablers and accelerators of the green and circular transformation of the European industry, economies and societies in general.**

## Chemical industry in Slovenia:



800  
companies



32,000  
employees



EUR 6.4 billion  
turnover



81%  
export sales



its own voluntary initiatives going beyond standard levels and legislative requirements (e.g. international Responsible Care® programme, in Slovenia led by the Association of Chemical Industries of Slovenia (ACIS) on behalf of the International Council of Chemical Associations (ICCA) and European Chemical Industry Council (CEFIC).

### **Chemical Industry Needs Suitable Support for Realization of Its Crucial Role (Key Messages to Policymakers)**

For the realization of the goals and for playing the expected role in this transformation, the chemical industry needs suitable support measures:

In order to ensure the fast transformation of the chemical industry itself and its best possible contribution to the implementation of the ambitious Green Deal goals with innovative products and solutions:

1. The Green Deal must be accompanied with an enabling and holistic industrial strategy in the form of a »Future Chemicals Deal« with an adapted realistic timetable.
2. The sectoral roadmaps included in the Climate Law are very important for achieving the climate neutrality by 2050 to stimulate transformation, competitiveness and adequate protection against carbon leakage of the European chemical industry. Access to low carbon power at competitive prices is crucial, as well as a much stronger link between state aid and technologies which reduce the overall CO2-footprint and/or support the circularity of materials (introduction of additional ETS free

**In order to ensure its fast transformation the chemical industry calls among others for: securing access to abundant and reliable renewable energy at affordable cost; sensible overhaul and simplification of chemical and environmental legislation; adequate national infrastructure and legislative framework for broader introduction of hydrogen technologies, carbon capture/storage and recycling; supporting funds to facilitate transformation.**

**The Slovenian chemical industry in total contributes as much as 25% of the value added of the entire Slovenian manufacturing sector in Slovenia. It is a reliable partner known for its expertise and flexibility.**

### **The Association of Chemical Industries of Slovenia (ACIS)**

is an autonomous branch association within the Chamber of Commerce and Industry of Slovenia (CCIS) – it represents and advocates the interests of the Slovenian chemical industry on behalf of its members. It actively and intensely cooperates with competent national authorities and other stakeholders in Slovenia and Europe as well as beyond. In the European context, it liaises in particular with the European Chemical Industry Council CEFIC and other European industry associations like AISE, Plastics Europe, Cosmetics Europe and Feica, of which it is a member.

ACIS is dedicated to the following priority areas: energy, waste, chemical legislation, environmental and related permits, human resources, process safety, plastics and project funds for the chemical industry. European Fit for 55 and Chemical Strategy for Sustainability are present top priority focus areas. They also represent areas that ACIS pays special attention to during the Slovenian presidency of the Council of the EU. ACIS also attaches special importance to a well-founded presentation of the importance of the chemical industry as well as its products and solutions.

Contact: CCIS-Association of Chemical Industries of Slovenia, Dimičeva 13, 1000 Ljubljana, Slovenia, zki@gzs.si, tel.: +386-1-5898257

allowances for development/implementation of circular technologies until they become profitable).

3. Not only revision and upgrading, but also a sensible overhaul and simplification of chemical and environmental legislation are expected as a matter of urgency, taking into account the sector-specific roadmap – agreement with industry on the realistic intensity of introducing changes.

4. To ensure fast and effective use of the available EU project funds (like Recovery and Resilience, Cohesion, ...), a one stop shop with a fast track (green lane) and simplified procedures for green/circular industrial investment projects shall be enabled in the process of environmental and other relevant permitting.

5. Substantial project funds at the EU level shall be reserved and made available exclusively to the chemical industry and its value chain/ecosystem (incl. pharma, plastics and rubber) to facilitate its transformation and using its whole potential to be the real driver of the mentioned economic/societal change.

In line with the declaration that “nobody shall be left behind” in this overall green transformation of Europe, it is extremely important that differences in capacities and capabilities of administration and economic sector of different Member States are taken into account

when setting strategic goals and deadlines.

In addition, it has to be pointed out that adequate national infrastructure and legislative framework are needed for a broad introduction of hydrogen technologies, carbon capture/storage and for recycling. Except in the biggest countries, the national resources are too scarce to cover such extremely big investments, and unfortunately, also the funds like RRF do not seem enough. Last but not least, the chemical industry calls for continued and improved support for innovation and introduction of new green materials and processes on the market, as well as for upgrading the skills and competencies of employees on all levels in the chemical industry: this envisaged tectonic change in our society requires completely new complex knowledge. We believe that everything starts with people and good chemistry therefore this has for many years already been the slogan of the Association of Chemical Industries of Slovenia.

### **Chemical Industry - Leading Slovenian Manufacturing Sector**

The Slovenian chemical industry is part of the large European chemical industry and has a paramount role for the Slovenian economy and country.

"The sectoral roadmaps included in the Climate Law are very important for achieving the climate neutrality by 2050 to stimulate transformation, competitiveness and adequate protection against carbon leakage of the European chemical industry. Access to low carbon power at competitive prices is crucial, as well as a much stronger link between state aid and technologies, which reduce the overall CO<sub>2</sub>-footprint and/or support the circularity of materials (introduction of additional ETS free allowances for development/implementation of circular technologies until they become profitable)."



Denis Jahić, President, CCIS –  
Association of Chemical Industries of  
Slovenia

Photo: Zarehotic

The European chemical industry is one of the leading manufacturing sectors in the European Union, generating 16% of total value added of all manufacturing industries. European strategic documents mention its key role in enabling European society to be transformed, especially in the implementation of

the European Green Deal. It is a front-runner and central actor in the development of green technologies.

The Slovenian chemical industry in total contributes as much as 25% of the value added of the entire Slovenian manufacturing industry – in this respect it is the leading manufacturing sector in Slovenia. It is the leading Slovenian manufacturing industry in terms of productivity as well: its employees (representing 17% of employees in all manufacturing industries in Slovenia) create the highest value added per employee.

The Slovenian chemical industry is highly export oriented: 81% of its sales are generated abroad, mostly in Europe. This shows international competitiveness of the Slovenian industry. It is a reliable partner, known for its expertise and flexibility. It also significantly contributes to keeping the country in the main global economic trends and networks. ■

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of Chemical  
Industries of  
Slovenia



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Photo: Krka

**Pharmaceuticals**

# Pharmacists in Slovenia Are Banking on Innovation

**Annual R&D investments of pharmaceutical companies in Slovenia amount to EUR 180 million, with the biggest players being Krka and Novartis – Lek.**

Darja Kocbek

With annual investments of EUR 180 million, pharmaceutical companies rank among the largest R&D investors in Slovenia, whereby the largest pharmaceutical companies in Slovenia are Krka and Novartis – Lek. Krka focuses on developing innovative generic pharmaceutical forms with value added. Thanks to efficient implementation of transformation projects, Novartis – Lek is becoming an increasingly relevant figure in the global market of innovative (biological and generic) medicines with high value added. Tosama remains focused on two key areas, intimate care and medical devices, while Medis is the leading independent company that markets pharmaceuticals in Central Europe and the Balkans.

## Development of Krka's Products Is Based on Innovative Solutions

Krka analyses developments in its industry, innovations in individual therapeutic groups and changes in the treatment doctrines. The company focuses on developing innovative generic pharmaceutical forms with added value. "We stand out with achievements in combination and prolonged-release medicines, which enable better treatment control, as they reduce the number of doses required, while some of them even make it possible to treat two diseases simultaneously. On account of these significant advantages, these medicines have a secure future in the industry," Krka explains.

**Krka stands out with achievements in combination and prolonged-release medicines, which enable better treatment control, as they reduce the number of doses required, while some of them even make it possible to treat two diseases simultaneously.**

**Krka plans to expand its range of over-the-counter and veterinary products, with the latter being aimed at pets in particular.**

Recently, considerable strides have been taken at Krka to digitise development and production processes, as well as to robotise individual analytical and implementation processes. The above progress notwithstanding, the company will continue to headline medicines used to treat contemporary chronic diseases. In key therapeutic areas, Krka will introduce innovative generic products. The company also plans to expand its range of over-the-counter and veterinary products, with the latter being aimed at pets in particular.

Krka strives to be present in as many markets and with as extensive a range of medicines as possible. Today, exports comprise just over 94% of the entire sales of the Krka Group. The Krka Group sells products on more than 70 markets, which are divided into 6 sales regions. In addition to a strong network of companies and representative offices abroad, it is expanding its production capacities outside Slovenia. Besides factories in the Russian Federation, Poland, Croatia, Germany, and China, Krka has as many as 45 companies and representative offices abroad.

As well as having a strong presence on the generic pharmaceuticals market in Eastern, Central and South-Eastern Europe, the company has been operating on Western European markets for 20+ years. In the latter region, where it acts as the 100% owner of several companies through which it markets its products, Krka expects to even strengthen its presence in the coming years. As this is a large generic market, Krka sees it as teeming with opportunities.

The company is increasing its presence on overseas markets, particularly in the Middle and Far East. The strategic goals to be realised by 2024 include making one of such overseas markets a key market for Krka. In early December of last year, Krka registered its first medicine in China, intended for that particular market. "Our aim is to register as many products from Krka's range in China as possible," Krka reveals.

**Novartis in Slovenia aims to transition from being a generic into becoming a more innovative pharmaceutical company, whereby generic medicines will still feature prominently.**



Photo: Tolomeo



Photo: Krka

**Novartis – Lek Becoming an Increasingly Relevant Figure in the Global Market of Innovative Medicines**

According to Novartis – Lek, the global transformation of Novartis is bringing changes to Slovenia as well, especially in terms of transforming manufacturing sites and increasing integration with Novartis's innovation segment. To continue along this path, the company must invest in new technologies that will support the continuous development of Novartis' portfolio and the anticipated future demand. It must ensure the right ratio between its production network capacity and utilisation.

"The many investments in the strengthening of development and production capacities aimed towards greater digitisation and automation will support successful expansion of Novartis in Slovenia, transitioning from being a generic into becoming a more innovative pharmaceutical company, whereby generic medicines will still feature prominently," Novartis – Lek explained to us.

More than 90% of the medicines it develops or manufactures in Slovenia are exported. Lek operates in over 150 countries around the globe indirectly through the well-developed sales network of Sandoz and Novartis.

## Tosama Directs Its Efforts into Sustainable Solutions

According to Tosama, the structure of sales has changed over the past two years, not so much in the general consumption segment, but in the segment of healthcare, with protective equipment being at the very forefront. As a result, the company has revived the production of certain personal protection products.

"Tosama is directing its efforts into sustainable solutions. By the jubilee year of 2023, when the company is set to celebrate its 100th anniversary, it is our aim to reduce the use of plastics by as much as two thirds," Maša Lukan, Head of Tosama Brand Division, reveals.

In the intimate care category, the company launched a prestigious line of Natura Femina Organic sanitary pads and tampons made from certified 100% organic cotton. In line with its focus on organic materials, the company also improved its Jasmin Organic line of pads, which have been awarded the Product of the Year 2021 certificate.

In the wound care category, Tosama launched a new wound dressing called Vivamel Protect. "The combination of medical chestnut honey and the Vivamel PROTECT PU foam produces exceptional effects that support healing in a damp environment,"

Urška Vitali from Tosama's product design team explains.

As regards the market situation, Maša Lukan believes that the epidemic waves will continue to direct the consumption of medical devices in particular. Production and supply will undoubtedly be affected by the situation on the purchasing market of raw materials, i.e. sharp rises in the prices of raw materials and transport services.

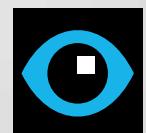
Tosama remains focused on two key areas, intimate care and medical devices. The company takes great pride in having been chosen as a partner in the project focusing on the accessibility of safe sanitary products for young girls that is running in three countries – Australia, New Zealand and the United Kingdom. Tosama is participating in the project as a supplier of sanitary pads made from natural (plastic-free) materials.

With its Vivamel wound dressings that contain medical chestnut honey, Tosama has successfully ranked on the European positive list.

## Medis Develops Two Natural Medicines

Medis' mission is to enable access to new, modern therapies to all patients that need them. "In our desire to provide new therapeutic options, we provided patients with epilepsy access to the new supplemen-

**Tosama takes great pride in having been chosen as a partner in the project focusing on the accessibility of safe sanitary products for young girls that is running in three countries – Australia, New Zealand and the United Kingdom.**



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tary treatment of partial epileptic seizures this year,” Martina Perharič, the CEO of Medis, explained.

As children are the most vulnerable group, especially children with an autism spectrum disorder, the introduction of a new therapy enabled them and their parents a better quality of sleep. In ophthalmology, the company introduced an improved form of medicines used to treat glaucoma, which are significantly easier to use for the older patients. Because the uninterrupted supply of medicines is vital for the long-term success of treatment, the company stepped up in light of the lack of medicines by other producers and ensured continuous supply with certain oncological medicines.

The company also developed two natural Medis medicines called Rosacta and Ladiva. The first product is a cream intended to alleviate pain in muscles and joints, while the other is available as capsules used to ease menstrual cramps. Both medicines are of plant origin and have been registered in 24 European states. “These are original medicines, which no one in the world has managed to produce in such a form and of such quality,” Martina Perharič points out. According to Medis’s CEO, the company expects to launch new products to treat psoriasis and Parkinson’s disease in 2021.

### **Development Projects that Keep Cleangrad a Step Ahead of the Competition**

“The Cleangrad development centre is constantly developing new products and modifying the existing ones to match our customers’ needs,” says Jernej Zupančič, the company’s Director. In 2021, the Slovenian National Building and Civil Engineering Institute (ZAG), the leading institute in the field of civil engineering in Slovenia, tested aluminium honeycomb panels, as demand is growing for walls and ceilings featuring this type of filling. “Nearly every project involves modification of existing products, which we adapt to the customers’ wishes and needs,” Zupančič explains. In 2020, Cleangrad launched a new light that is completely integrated into the ceiling.

**In 2020, Cleangrad launched a new light that is completely integrated into the ceiling.**



»Due to its advantages over the competition, its sales are growing swiftly and many buyers have already come to regard it as their new standard. Doors with inflatable seals, also launched in 2020, are still being supplemented and tested to suit a particular situation on the facility in question and the intended use,« Zupančič says. The company has new development projects in the pipeline that will keep it a step ahead of the competition. According to Zupančič, these projects involve products that will be a great addition to Cleangrad’s range.

Reflecting on the market situation, Zupančič says that despite the crisis that engulfed nearly the entire economy due to the COVID-19-related measures, Cleangrad has always had plenty of work and that the company’s main issue was meeting all of the delivery deadlines on time. What is more, the company is constantly looking for new hires. Since finding competent staff can be a challenge, Cleangrad is not hesitant about recruiting people from beyond Slovenian borders.

“Especially in 2021, issues arose with supply chains and constant price increases, as the raw materials market was unable to avoid difficulties resulting from the global struggle with the coronavirus. Prices of materials on global markets fluctuate, with recent trends being mostly upwards,” Zupančič reveals.

With most suppliers, delivery times for materials and products that Cleangrad installs in clean rooms have been extended. As a result, the company must put in additional efforts to plan efficiently, which is something that starts already at the stage of bidding for the project. Although the company acquires materials and products in Slovenia and abroad, it has endeavoured to procure as much material as possible from Slovenian companies since the very beginning of operations.

“We are in a position to successfully promote various excellent Slovenian providers of products that are used in our industry to large international pharmaceutical companies because we have well-established contacts with them. As a result, we are currently working on several EU projects with other companies from Slovenia. This type of networking is still lacking in Slovenia,” Zupančič points out. Zupančič also believes it would be unrealistic to expect the market situation to calm down overnight, which is why Cleangrad will be looking for internal reserves and putting even more effort into efficient planning.

In 2021, the company plans to increase the scope of sales compared to 2020, provided the situation in the materials market and HR potential make this possible. While most of the turnover will be generated in Belgium, Austria and the Netherlands, some of it will also be made in Slovenia and Croatia. New opportunities are opening up in Switzerland as well, where there was a slight lull last year. Undoubtedly, the Middle East is a highly appealing market. The same goes for Germany, where initial projects are already under way. ■

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Ladiva® capsules are a traditional herbal medicinal product for the symptomatic relief of minor spasm associated with menstrual periods. Ladiva® is a traditional herbal medicinal product for use in the specified indication exclusively based upon long-standing use. Ladiva® capsule contain extract from raspberry leaves and is to be administered up to 3 to 4 times daily. Carefully read the instructions before use! Consult with your doctor or pharmacist about the risks and side effects.

Rosacta® cream is a traditional herbal medicinal product to be used in adults in the relief of minor muscular and articular pain and in minor peripheral circulatory disorders. Rosacta® is a traditional herbal medicinal product for use in the specified indication exclusively based upon long-standing use. Rosacta® cream contains rosemary essential oil. Apply 2 to 3 times daily to the affected area. Carefully read the instructions before use! Consult with your doctor or pharmacist about the risks and side effects.

# GUARDIARIS SETTING NEW MILESTONES IN THE FIELD OF SIMULATION SOLUTIONS

## EXPECTATIONS FOR 2021

In our sales model the business activities and sales processes from introduction, contact, tender to contract are concluded within a timeframe of at least five years.

However, 2021 was a good year, in particular for the consolidation of existing business processes and for the strengthening of our human resources. In fact, over the next 10 years, the trends for investment in the defence industry point to a significant increase in investment in security and defence systems around the world.



## MAIN MARKETS

Our market has been the whole world for several years now, as we already have our systems installed in 14 countries around the world, from South America to the Far East. The new big destination is Australia, for which we have developed a tailor-made product which we will launch in the near future.

We feel that the post-pandemic establishment of new strategic alliances, suppliers and prices is coming, which can really shuffle the cards on the world table, because we are all facing problems linked to deliveries and prices of semi-finished goods, which have really gone through the roof.

## INVESTMENT IN STRONG INTERNATIONAL NETWORK

A few years ago, we made a conscious decision to build our own strong international sales network and rely on our own sales processes.

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This decision led us down a difficult and steep path of independence, which we certainly do not regret today.

In 2021, we participated as the lead company of an international consortium in a call for new technologies of the international European EDIDP fund and won in easily. Without excessive bureaucracy, without lobbying, because abroad it's the idea and the result that counts.

Let us also mention that the Slovenian Ministry of Defence, as our line ministry, is an extremely good partner and supporter of the Slovenian defence industry in international projects.

## OUR MAIN SUCCESSES

For every entrepreneur, the greatest successes are those that keep the customer coming back for more. This is a confirmation that the job was well prepared and excellently done.

As a Slovenian company in the high-tech defence field, we really did not have megalomaniac plans until we won a major contract with the Swiss army after a few years of struggle. This propelled us into the big league, opening the door to new customers such as the Austrian army. We were also able to sell our technology to Israel's largest and most advanced technology corporation.

## TRAIN THE BRAIN

Although we are still a little red-capped dwarf on a global scale, the interest in our products is growing day by day. And of course, all these results would not have been possible without vision and daily dedication. We are most proud of our team of young scientists who are working on impossible tasks and new areas, finding new and even more innovative solutions every day to set new milestones in the field of simulation.

Our slogan consists of three key words: "**Train the Brain**", and we have been recognised and accepted as such by the market.

## ABOUT GUARDIARIS

Guardiaris provides the defence industry, law enforcement and civil sectors with innovative and custom-built training and simulation products. The company's innovative approach ensures boosting of cognitive abilities, proficiency-based learning, and individual evaluation.

# The continuation of unmanned evolution



**C-ASTRAL Aerospace was founded in 2007 as a result of a multi-year research and development effort centered on autonomous and remote sensing systems and their analysis and reflection. In 2004 the first prototype, SYSTEM-77CCR was unveiled and in 2005 the first Slovenian unmanned system, Spectral System performed its maiden flight. In 2021, more than 420 C-ASTRAL built systems are flying in 72 countries operated by scientific, commercial, governmental and non-governmental entities.**

The company based in Ajdovščina, Slovenia, is a global leader in Small Unmanned Aircraft System (sUAS) production and integration. Besides unmanned systems, the company manufactures communications and command and control hardware and software as well as data processing systems and subsystems. C-ASTRAL systems achieved many firsts in the sUAS world, such as the first successful mapping flights above high altitude mines in Chile in 2012 (4500m ASL) as well as the first official fixed wing BVLOS flight in the Canadian airspace in 2017. C-ASTRAL systems are flying over all continents in the most demanding conditions, and in 2021 have been delivered to Africa as well as the Arctic. After completing the Expeditionary Organic Tactical Airborne Intelligence, Surveillance and Reconnaissance (AISR) Capability Set (EOTACS) evaluations in February 2020, the company has made new inroads in the demanding

US governmental market, with multiple sales currently in negotiation.

In the context of unmanned operations in controlled airspace, C-ASTRAL is active in the Unmanned Traffic Management research and development initiatives (it was partner in 3 Single European Sky Air Traffic Management Research i.e. SESAR projects) and is supporting the fielding of beyond visual line of sight operations with small UAS in Europe, Asia, Africa, Oceania the Americas and Antarctica.

In the first quarter of 2022, C-ASTRAL will launch a new hybrid Multirole Multiengine Multisensor VTOL (vertical take-off and landing) battery powered fixed wing blended wing body system currently in development under the internal M3 program.

One of the distinctive advantages of C-ASTRAL systems is a unified command and control software suite called C3P which is designed around an open architecture for maximum interoperability and integration in larger networked systems. The open architecture approach is visible also in the large amount of different sensor payloads that the company has integrated in its systems.

Up to now, C-ASTRAL has sold systems to 6 NATO and large number of allied countries and small unmanned systems are widely used as imagery intelligence assets by the NATO Enhanced Forward Presence Battle Group in Latvia. In 2021, C-ASTRAL has also supported the NATO Mountain Warfare Center of Excellence exercise Triglav Star 2021 with unmanned systems support.

The research and development activities of C-ASTRAL are supported by the European Defense Agency, European Commission as well as local and international research partnerships and the company is open for strategic alliances in Europe and beyond.



**C - A S T R A L**  
AEROSPACE Ltd.



Photo: Guardiaris

**Defence**

# Developing Equipment for Defence and Civil Purposes

**Guardiaris has also sold its technology to the largest Israeli technology corporation, while a multidisciplinary laboratory functions at C-Astral and Arex exports 95% of its production.**

Darja Kocbek

Those companies, which are members of the Slovenian Defence Industry Cluster (GOIS) economic interest grouping, manufacture equipment that is largely the result of joint development, investments, and good cooperation between the defence ministry and the scientific research community and industry. These companies' advantage is that they manufacture equipment for both defence and civil purposes.

## Development of a Product Perfect for the Australian Market

One of the most successful Slovenian companies in the defence industry is Guardiaris, for which 2021 was essentially completed during the first half of the year in terms of business. "In our sales model, which is dependent on tenders from across the world, business activities and sales processes, from pres-

entation, contact and tender to contract, are carried out over a timeframe of at least five years," explained the head of marketing, Tamara Buh. In terms of consolidating existing business processes, 2021 was a good year that was characterised among other things by the strengthening of human resources. "The next 10 years of defence investment trends indicate a significant increase in investments in security and defence systems around the world," explained Buh.

Guardiaris's market is essentially the entire world, as its systems are used in 14 countries, from South America to the Far East. A new market that the company aims to enter is Australia, for which it has developed the perfect product, intended for launch in the near future. "There are at least 100 countries where our products have never been seen before," said Buh.

**Interest in Guardiaris products is growing by the day.**

**The users of C-Astral's systems are commercial UAS operators, major institutional networks, scientific users and governments.**

Travelling, which serves as the basis for making decisions to establish partnerships, has been hindered by the pandemic. This had made the process of selecting partners difficult, although the situation is gradually easing. Also positive is the fact that companies can begin making presentations at trade fairs again. "We sense the coming of the post-pandemic establishment of new strategic links, prices and suppliers who really know how to mix things up globally, as we are all facing problems in connection with supply and the prices of semi-finished products, which have skyrocketed," explained Buh.

#### **Smart and Flexible**

Here it should be mentioned that Slovenia is a small country. Guardiaris has taken this as an opportunity to learn "how to be smart and remain flexible". The company has established its own strong international sales network and relies on internal sales processes. "In 2021, we served as the lead company of an international consortium in a public tender issued by the European Defence Industrial Development Programme (EDIDP) and secured the associated contract with ease," boasted Buh. She thanked the Ministry of Defence which, as the competent ministry, is an extremely good advocate and supporter of the Slovenian defence industry in international projects.

#### **Guardiaris's Slogan Is 'Train the Brain'**

In terms of Guardiaris's main successes, she says that for any entrepreneur, the best moments and the greatest successes occur when the customer comes back and wants to continue collaborating. This is confirmation that the work was well-prepared and excellently performed. "As a Slovenian company in the high-tech defence field, we really didn't have grandiose plans until we won a major contract with the Swiss Army after struggling for several years. This rocketed us into the major leagues, opening up the door to new clients such as the Austrian army. We have sold our technology to the largest and most



Photo: Guardiaris

advanced Israeli technology corporation," Buh said while listing Guardiaris's successes.

Interest in Guardiaris products is growing by the day. Of course, none of these results would have been possible without the right vision and committed work each and every day. The company is proudest of its team of young scientists, who are working on near-impossible tasks and new areas, and searching for new and even more innovative solutions every day to set the latest benchmarks in the field of simulation. Guardiaris's slogan is comprised of three key words – 'Train the Brain' – and has been recognised and accepted by the market, concluded Buh.

#### **C-Astral Is an Established Player on the Global Market**

C-Astral is an established player on the global market in the manufacture of fixed-wing, unmanned aerial systems (UAS), with a special emphasis on high productivity, resilience, aerial land surveying and other forms of remote detection. Users of C-Astral's systems include commercial UAS operators, major institutional networks, scientific users and governments.

C-Astral can equip small unmanned aircraft with sensors, cameras, and other devices for land surveying and mapping, for monitoring fires and for calculating the amount of excavated material at open digs. The same aircraft are equipped for monitoring, protection and rescue for military purposes. "C-Astral has a multidisciplinary laboratory for software and hardware for aerodynamic work and systems integration, as well as a prototype CAD/CAM workshop for the manufacture and modelling of composite materials," explains the company.

**Arex introduced new handgun models to the market in 2021.**



Photo: G. Čadež

### **Arex to Build a Handgun Factory in Brazil**

Arex manufactures defence vests, rucksacks, manoeuvre and training ammunition, protective masks and other defence equipment for the military, police and security services. Amongst light weapons, the company manufactures handguns and rifles. A total of 95% of the company's products are exported to markets around the world. At this moment, the company is preparing for the construction of a new handgun factory in Brazil, primarily for sales in South America. In 2021, Arex introduced to the market three new handgun models, and a new generation of the delta handgun model in three sizes. ■

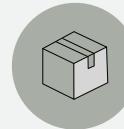
The GOIS is the main organisational and communication link between companies, research institutions and the state. It is also a member of various international networks, through which it helps its members make business contacts, network and organise trade fairs. Slovenian defence industry companies generate annual revenues of around EUR 400 million.



### **OUR SERVICES**



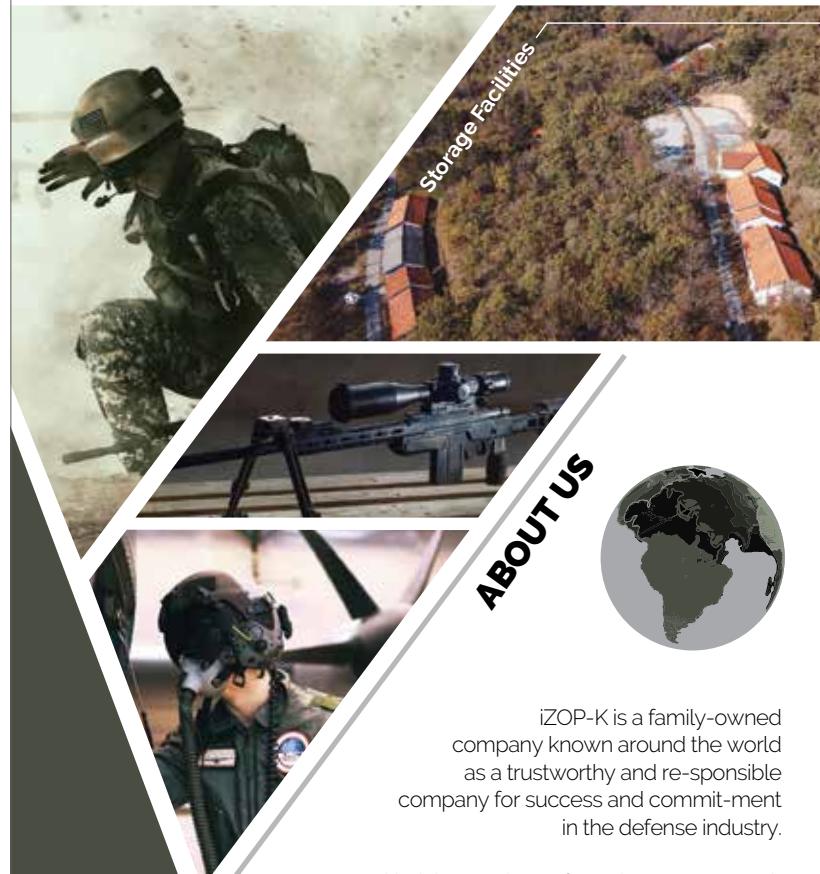
TRADING



LOGISTICS & STORAGE



SNIPER MANUFACTURING



iZOP-K is a family-owned company known around the world as a trustworthy and responsible company for success and commitment in the defense industry.

With rich experience from the past, we work for the future. The specialty of iZOP-K is our warehouse, featuring the following services:

storage and handling of explosives;  
ammunition, weapons of all kinds;  
production of defense industry components;  
demilitarization and recycling of ammunition  
and airbags.

#### **Our values and advantages:**

personal contact

trustworthy partnerships

committed to the best quality

worldwide cooperation

own secure warehouses

family tradition

### **CONTACT**

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### **Our partners**





# SeanTech

process engineering

## SeanTech process engineering, solving modern technological challenges



SeanTech process engineering Ltd. is a Slovenian company with the Gostol process equipment brand present on international markets and focuses on the development and implementation of comprehensive process equipment solutions tailored to customer technology in accordance with the ATEX directive for the implementation of equipment in potentially explosive atmospheres, GAMP, 21 CFR Part 11 and EU standards.

Through the development and manufacturing of customised process equipment, its implementation in the customer's production, start-up and training of the personnel, as well as after-sales activities including maintenance and provision of spare parts, SeanTech Ltd. provides solutions to technological and technical challenges the customers face in their industry.

SeanTech Ltd. sales programme offers specially devised solutions for single machines and automated industrial, pilot or laboratory lines in Ex-environments and other industrial applications. It consists of various types of mixers, mixer kneaders, hydraulic presses, two roll mills, extruders, cutting machines, mills, shredder-mills, mixer granulators, winding machines for GRP pipes and other solutions for the rubber, foundry, pharmaceutical, food, chemical and dedicated industries, production of GRP composite pipes, technical ceramics and other products. The goal is providing customers with efficient, automated and controlled processes of mixing, kneading, homogenizing, pressing, rolling, extruding, cutting, milling-crushing, shredding, drying, granulating, sieving, coating, winding and others.

### SeanTech, process engineering Ltd.

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Office: Kidričeva ulica 9a, SI-5000 Nova Gorica, Slovenia, EU

process equipment  
  
YEARS OF TRADITION



Photo: Elan

**Champions of Niche**

## Solutions for All Problems

**Advanced seating solutions, world's first folding all-mountain ski, the first industrial fabric structure with a flat roof, sustainable packaging for e-commerce. These are just some of the products that are also being developed in Slovenia.**

Barbara Perko

### The World's First Folding All-mountain Ski

Elan Skis is proud to present two key innovations. The main and most prominent innovation is the world's first folding all-mountain ski, the Elan Voyager, for which the company received a Red Dot 'Best of the Best' Award for product design, as well as the Ispo Gold Winner Award, and the most prestigious SOF Award at the Slovenian Advertising Festival.

Elan Voyager skis will make travelling lighter and more comfortable, regardless of the mode of transport you choose. As the skis are extremely compact, they can be stored anywhere. In the snow is where it really comes to shine thanks to its excellent edge grip and easy comfort. The secret of the Voyager is Elan's revolutionary Connect Technology®, which uses a highly advanced four-axis mechanism that bonds and seals the ski together at the folding joint. This combines with a carbon-reinforced fusion plate that serves as a load-bearing platform for support. The

two components work together to provide rigidity to the ski for superior performance, but also allow it to fold into a compact, easy-to-transport package. The Voyager boasts Elan's unique Amphibio technology – a revolutionary ski design that integrates both rocker and camber profiles into dedicated left and right skis. The cambered inside edge assures precision, edge grip and stability – while a rockered outside edge is forgiving and makes for buttery smooth transitions. Finally, the laminated woodcore, Titanium reinforcement, Carbon box and RST guarantee maximum hold from tip to tail.

The second innovation comes in the form of a completely new line of backcountry skis, the Ripstick Tour. They are built to blend high performance at a low weight, for the perfect mix of freeride downhill performance and efficient ascending capability. The new Ripstick Tour 94 is designed on a wider platform, enabling the skier to float better, ski faster, and turn

**The secret of the Voyager is Elan's revolutionary Connect Technology®, which uses a highly advanced four-axis mechanism that bonds and seals the ski together at the folding joint.**

**Elan Adapt and Elan Evolution are mobile seating systems for indoor multi-purpose halls, intended to achieve maximum capacity utilisation through automated hall reconfiguration to meet the specific needs of particular events.**

more easily in backcountry conditions. The Riptick Tour 88, on the other hand, is lightweight, floaty, fast, stable, strong, and versatile – all at the same time. The ski was designed and developed in cooperation with Elan's freeride athletes and guides to ensure it meets all the requirements no matter where they use it.

"In the winter sports equipment market, development is headed towards discovering new segments and ways of skiing so as to make skiing easier for as many users as possible. Lately, the main focus has been on backcountry skiing products and greater product versatility. Innovations are an important factor both for existing users and those just taking up the sport. There is also an increasing emphasis on sustainable development, from environmentally friendlier materials, searching for suppliers closer to production sites, to exploring new production technologies leaning towards greater sustainability," the company explained.

Elan Skis is recording sales growth in the North America market, which is one of the company's key markets. In addition to the United States and Canada, its key markets include France, the Czech Republic and Germany.

### **Over 80 Challenging Projects Implemented in More than 20 Countries**

Elan Inventia is intensifying its development efforts in the segment of advanced seating solutions, an area where the company ranks among the leading European providers. This segment includes a development project entitled TransFest, an innovation in mobile seating systems for outdoor events, and two new products, Elan Adapt and Elan Evolution as mobile seating systems for indoor multi-purpose halls, intended to achieve maximum capacity utilisation through automated hall reconfiguration to meet the specific needs of particular events.

All development projects include concepts of sustainable construction, integration of smart and



Photo: Elan

intelligent features, active and passive approaches to design and construction (industrial design, including ecodesign), process innovation, organisational and marketing innovation, including smart systems concepts, energy efficiency and care for the environment.

In addition to environmentally friendly, sustainable solutions, materials and services, the industry is directed towards adaptability, smart facilities, product digitisation and automation, simplicity and speed of use, and increasing full capacity utilisation of events and sports facilities.

The company expects needs to grow especially with regard to outdoor events, greater flexibility, and capacity utilisation in the existing facilities through solution automation. In the medium term, the company is optimistic and expects an increase in investments in the basic school and events infrastructure.

Last year, Elan Inventia implemented over 80 complex projects in sports and events infrastructure in more than 20 countries, including initial projects in France and Georgia. While its key market remains continental Europe, the company is focused on complex events and sports facilities that are currently in preparation stages. Its key markets for telescopic wind turbines are Scandinavia, Germany, Austria, Benelux, as well as Russia and the Middle East.

### **The First Industrial Fabric Structure with a Flat Roof**

"We are developing new models and technical solutions for industrial fabric structures and panel-clad buildings with a steel structure. We recently introduced a new product, Schwarzmann X®, the first industrial fabric structure with a flat roof. After the



Photo: Schwarzmann

launch and successful sales on the Slovenian market, we are planning an expansion to the Austrian and Swiss markets,” said Jožef Schwarzmann, co-founder and owner of Schwarzmann. The company’s more prominent achievements include the sale of its largest aircraft hangar to date with a floor space of 10,000 m<sup>2</sup>.

The development focuses on finding custom solutions for fabric structures and panel-clad buildings for each customer individually. “Because we are optimistic by nature, we predict that prices and intermediate goods supply chains will stabilise in 2022,” said Jožef Schwarzmann.

In addition to their domestic Slovenian market, their key foreign markets are Austria, Switzerland, Finland, Belgium, and France.

#### Sustainable Packaging for E-commerce

To design innovative, sustainable packaging solutions, it is a must to be familiar with the customers’ supply chains, market needs, and to work closely with customers. “When creating custom packaging solutions, it is vital for our packaging specialists and designers to learn about the customers’ processes, i.e. their packaging lines, logistics, retail shelf positioning, and vice-versa. DS Smith sustainable solutions are the result of advanced packaging material knowledge, procedures, possibilities, consumer



Photo: Schwarzmann

and packaging trends, and much more,” explained Alenka Knez, Design & Innovation Manager at DS Smith Slovenija.

DS Smith has developed Circular Design Principles to help support companies design reuse and recyclability into their packaging. “We design packaging using only the absolutely necessary amounts of



TECHNOLOGY  
AHEAD



[www.sevenrefractories.com](http://www.sevenrefractories.com)



Photo: DS Smith

**User-friendly packaging makes it possible to easily pack a product that can be opened effortlessly and that, if it needs to be returned, the product can be repackaged in the existing packaging, without using any tools.**

materials. In addition, we produce packaging from recycled materials and make sure it is recyclable or reusable, while also optimising packaging for specific customers' supply chains," Alenka Knez comments. At the design stage, the company's new Circular Design Metrics come to the fore. It is a breakthrough tool, an industry first, used to define the circularity of packaging designs across eight different indicators, which give a clear identification of a packaging design's circularity performance, and where improvements could be made.

Never has sustainability in packaging been so important to consumers. "As a result of the COVID-19 pandemic and new sustainability policies, DS Smith has noticed growing demand for eco-friendly e-commerce packaging. Not only are online retailers looking for better solutions, but major brands are opting for sustainable omnichannel packaging that is adapted to e-commerce channel and is consumer-friendly," Alenka Knez reveals. Increased demand led DS Smith

Slovenia to invest in an additional adhesive tape gluing machine for e-commerce packaging, with the option of applying two silicone tapes and one tear tape. The PackRight Centre design team, located in Breštanica, responded to market needs by developing a range of innovative, environmentally friendly e-commerce solutions that bring the perfect sustainable experience to consumers.

It is important for e-packaging to be eco- and user-friendly. Alenka Knez describes it as packaging that is the right size without additional single use void fill, makes it possible for e-commerce businesses to pack items more efficiently, provides unique unboxing experience and is reusable – consumers can reuse it for return if needed, without using any additional tapes or tools. Such packaging helps companies reduce risks (preventing waste and loss of sales), reduce costs (avoiding shipping damages, increased packing process productivity), meet their ambitious sustainability targets, and get them ready for the circular economy. ■

### Expanding the Scope of Services Where Slovenian Companies Are the Strongest

Slovenian Institute of Quality and Metrology develops services that companies need to be able to sell their products internationally. "Our main purpose is to support Slovenian businesses. If a new product is being developed in Slovenia, we strive to adapt as quickly as possible so that we can cover that particular product through testing and certification. The manufacturer can then easily sell it all over the world. We expand our scope of services the fastest in areas where Slovenian companies are the strongest and where added value is the highest, i.e. the automotive industry, medicine, information technologies, household appliances, etc.," SIQ's Managing Director Gregor Schoss explained. Besides Slovenia, the Institute's main markets include Germany, Austria, Italy, and the Balkans.

"If all goes well, we will be designated as a Notified Body under the new Regulation (EU) 2017/745 on medical devices (MDR) this year. As there are but few notified bodies in this area, manufacturers are sometimes left neglected in countries as small as Slovenia. This means that even if they come up with innovations, it may take a long time before manufacturers obtain all the necessary certificates to be able to sell their products, during which time the competition catches up with them," Schoss added.



Photo: DS Smith



# They provide the most amazing adrenaline experiences



**The Ski&Sea company sells recreational vehicles for all seasons of the year, offering unforgettable experiences both on land and sea.**

The Ski&Sea company is the general importer, vendor and repairs and maintenance service provider for recreational vehicles manufactured by BRP (Bombardier Recreational Products) for Slovenia, Croatia, Serbia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro, Macedonia and Albania and Kosovo. This successful and growing company has been managed for over 20 years by Ksenija and Tomaž Sorčan. Last year they generated an income of €15 million and employed 18 people.

## A wide selection of products.

Their sales range includes Ski-Doo and Lynx snowmobiles, Can-Am ATVs and Can-Am Side-By-Sides, Sea-Doo jet-skis and Spyder and Ryker trikes. In addition to these, our sales programme also includes Seabob, Seascooter, different tubes, skis and wakeboards. Every year we try to add something new to our range, for example last year we included the Lampuga electric surfboards in our sales programme. "What we're preparing for next year is a secret for now," they say.

## Densely woven sales network

Their network includes showrooms, sales dealers, repairs, maintenance and rental services. In Slovenia, Croatia and Serbia they have a Ski&Sea showroom, and are set to open one in Macedonia very soon. In Croatia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro, Macedonia, Albania and Kosovo they have

sales dealers, repairs, maintenance and rental services. As they emphasize: "We also receive inquiries for our products from other countries, as our warehouse is always full of products and spare parts."

## They enjoy the work they do...

"The secret of our success is definitely the fact that we love what we do. We're aware that every company is worth as much as the quality of its employees, so it's in our best interest to have staff who find pleasure in their work and our products, as only in this way can we spread joy and positivity to our clients," they tell us.

## ... in selling outdoor experiences to clients

They see their competitive advantage in their own story. "It's not so easy selling a product that's not a vital necessity, if you don't have a good story. This is why at Ski&Sea we don't simply present the products but show how it's possible to spend free time using them in an active, fun, adrenaline-filled and exciting way. It's increasingly common that people head to nature to unwind and relax, and this is why demand for our products is increasing. The price of the product includes a priceless experience," they explain.

## Platinum year 2021

The year 2021 was exceptionally successful for Ski&Sea. For the third year running they received the BRP PLATINUM CERTIFIED DISTRIBUTOR award, putting them on the top amongst all BRP dealers



globally. They also won the highest possible prize for business excellence awarded by Dun & Bradstreet on a European level – the AAA Platinum Creditworthiness Certificate of Excellence in Creditworthiness. In the rankings of the best Slovenian medium-sized companies they came an excellent 16th.

## An adrenaline rush next year too

"In 2022 we wish to continue this adrenaline rush, which is bringing us excellent results. We'd like to expand our sales range with products that are considered the best in their sector, and are also contemplating opening larger showrooms in Zagreb and Belgrade.

We are certain that next year the company will succeed in carrying out even more events. "We believe it is important to keep in touch with our clients and exchange opinions about our products and the experience of using them, as we can only continue to improve if we know what clients want and need," they conclude.

**Innovations**

# Slovenian Companies' Most Innovative Achievements Awarded

**Slovenia is abounding with businesses that are capable of developing innovations that cover a vast range of areas. Below, we are presenting the best of the best.**

*Barbara Perko*



Slovenian companies are adept at recognising an opportunity, responding to it, seizing it and developing it into something new. After all, this is attested by the wealth of innovations submitted each year in response to the call for the national Innovation Awards that are bestowed by the Chamber of Commerce and Industry of Slovenia. In the 19 years of conferring this award, over 11,000 innovators and nearly 3,200 innovations were honoured with it.

This year, 207 innovations were submitted in the regional calls, of which 41 qualified for the national level. At the national competition, 9 gold and 31 silver awards were given, along with 1 special award for the innovation challenge – innovations that tackle the challenges brought by Covid-19. The latter was also declared the best innovation of the year as chosen by the public.

Here are this year's top innovations and the brains behind them.



Photo: Castoola

## **Castoola d. o. o. Addressable TV Advertising Platform**

*Innovation team: Development team Castoola*

*Innovators: Uroš Žižek, David Vrbančič, David Koznicov, Rok Končan, Simon Žekš, Matej Puhan, Anja Celar, Robert Mikola, Filip Remškar, Luka Lieber*

The Castoola Addressable TV platform is Castoola's own development, enabling advertisers, TV operators and broadcasters targeted TV advertising as we know it in the digital world. From the first TV ad aired in 1942 to the present day, the way of advertising has not changed and now the Castoola platform provides interactive, targeted and measurable ads tailored to the viewer in TV environment.

We bring TV ads closer to the viewer and provide them with the highest possible UX, and at the same time we help advertisers with 49% stronger ad recall, 13% higher emotional response to the ad and 35% higher viewer engagement.

## **Danfoss Trata d.o.o.**

### **AB-QM 4.0 - High Reliable Pressure Independent Control Valve for Operation in a Demanding Medium**

*Innovation team: AB-QM 4.0 Team*

We have developed the AB-QM 4.0 pressure independent control valve with highly reliable operation in a demanding medium used to regulate hydraulic heating and cooling systems in buildings. The solution is unique and is patent protected. The main positive effects are:

- up to 40% lower energy consumption for heating or cooling of buildings, which is one of the most effective methods for reducing global energy consumption and CO<sub>2</sub> emissions.
- an even more profitable business, that will boost the development of new technologies and products with even higher value added for further company growth.



Photo: Danfoss Trata

**Domel d.o.o.****Development and Industrialization of the Motor 721**

Innovators: Martin Tolar, Aljoša Močnik, Tomaž Stanonik, Andraž Rant, Tadeja Bergant, Gašper Zdravje, Cene Rant, Gregor Bernik, Simon Gaber, Kristjan Kostelec, Peter Kovač, Žiga Ravnhar, Izidor Tušek, Matevž Mali, Matija Šturm, Jure Pfajfar (NELA razvojni center d.o.o., Branch Otoki)

MP150 electrical motor pump is designed for glycol-water medium. The application is cooling of main battery pack and electrical traction motors in new generation of electrical cars. The completely new concept and innovativeness involved was confirmed by our customers. Characteristics not only meet the requirements, set up by vehicle manufactures, but also exceed them. We are glad that OEMs found our product extremely innovative, commercially interesting as planned production capacities are already sold-out. With this product we actively participate in the development of the new generation of electrical vehicles.



Photo: Domel



Photo: Elan

**Elan, d.o.o.****Fully Functional, Folding, All-mountain Ski VOYAGER**

Innovators: Vinko Avguštin, Andrej Hrovat, Bogdan Rozman, Marko Kozjek, Melanja Korošec, Luka Bassanese

In our new world, one thing remains crystal clear - devoted skiers still want to spend their precious spare time in the mountains. And in the face of rapidly changing travel habits, anything that can make that goal easier to achieve is invaluable. The new Elan Voyager: The World's First Fully Functional, Folding, All-Mountain Ski.



**Equipment for  
Rolling Mills**



Rollers



Spindle

*Rollers for cold-rolling  
Cast iron rollers  
Coated rollers  
Components manufactured  
in line with client  
specifications and our  
specifications  
Special hydro-cylinders  
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**Hidria d.o.o.****Electronically Commutated Fans EC R18**

Innovators: Igor Jurman, MSc, Matej Milavec, PhD, Stane Pivk, Daniel Vidal, Bojan Lapanja, Jure Novak

The EC R18 electronically commutated (EC) fan is Hidria's contribution to reducing global warming. Compared to competing fans, the EC R18 achieves up to 20% better energy efficiency and contributes up to 5000 kg less CO<sub>2</sub> emissions over its lifetime. The EC R18 fan promotes innovative modular inverter design, a programmable user interface and patented thermal barrier that allows the fan to operate up to extreme temperatures. Firmware MOTION with built-in vibration and temperature sensors, enables fan diagnostics and preventive maintenance. With MODBUS RTU and wireless NFC communication, full connectivity of the fan with modern and Industry 4.0 compliant KGH devices is ensured.



Photo: Hidria



Photo: Iskra PIO

**Iskra PIO d.o.o.****PIO Flash® dekontaminacijski sistem**

Innovators: Darko Blažič, Marjan Hosta, Jaka Kužnik, Luka Bevc, Boštjan Hudoklin, Benjamin Frančič

The PIO Flash® system is a special, innovative and technologically advanced way of distributing the decontaminant into the room. The system ensures the generation of very small droplets, which are homogeneously distributed throughout the room due to their small size and very intense distribution. The system works on the combination principle of the evaporating phase and very fine drops of dry hydrogen peroxide mist. The innovation is distinguished by a very wide usability range. The PIO Flash® system can be used for decontamination in complex pharmaceutical processes. It also can be used in various versions of healthcare, education systems, industry, hotels and tourism, public institutions and it is also intended for household use. Usefulness and flexibility are outstanding features during the COVID-19 epidemic, as we are successfully and extremely effectively fighting the new virus with new PIO Flash® devices.



Photo: Radgonske gorice

**Radgonske gorice d.o.o.****Untouched by Light – the World's First Sparkling Wine Made and Tasted in Complete Darkness**

Inovatorji: Sandi Brumen, Andreja Novak, Klavdija Toplovec Špur

In October 2020, Radgonske gorice launched a new sparkling wine - Untouched by Light (brut). As the exposure of wine to daylight or artificial light has been shown to cause changes in aroma, the entire production process from harvest to takes place in the dark. When the sparkling wine leaves the cellar, it is protected by a black glass bottle, which is sealed into black foil for additional protection from light and UV rays. It is made by using the classical method, from the best chardonnay. The chosen terroir is expressed in its characteristics. This sparkling wine is available in limited quantities and promises a really unique experience.



Photo: Red Pitaya

**Red Pitaya d.d.****Data Acquisition Instrument SIGNALlab 250-12**

Innovation team: Development team Red Pitaya and Instrumentation Technologies

Red Pitaya's disruptive innovation offers an alternative to expensive lab equipment and democratizes high technology. SIGNALlab 250-12 offers enhanced HW performance and complete SW control for more demanding users in industry, research, and test & measurement. It enables greater real-time processing capabilities plus faster analogue front and back-end performance. Small and portable offers remote access, with a web app user interface accessible through Ethernet or WiFi. It can be used as an oscilloscope, spectrum analyzer and logic analyzer with more applications to be available soon.

**SIJ Metal Ravne d.o.o.****Hot Work Tool Steel with Improved Thermal Conductivity SITHERM S140R**

Innovators: Peter Kirbiš, Borut Urnaut, Tatjana Večko Pirtovšek, PhD, Andrej Vrečič, Darja Oblak MSc, Miran Kadiš, MSc, Sašo Mačič, Simon Leskovec, Domen Kosi, Henrik Kaker, PhD, Gregor Novak (Talum)

In SIJ Metal Ravne we strive towards continuous improvement of tool steels and brand name recognition. We developed steel SITHERM S140R which achieves a 50% higher thermal conductivity compared to standardized hot work tool steels. Testing at Talum Kidričovo has shown that high pressure aluminum die casting tools made from SITHERM S140R, achieve the work temperature sooner and cool more efficiently, thereby enabling increased productivity, reduced lubrication or micro-lubrication and less scrap. For the novel steel a PCT patent has also been filed.



Photo: SIJ Metal Ravne



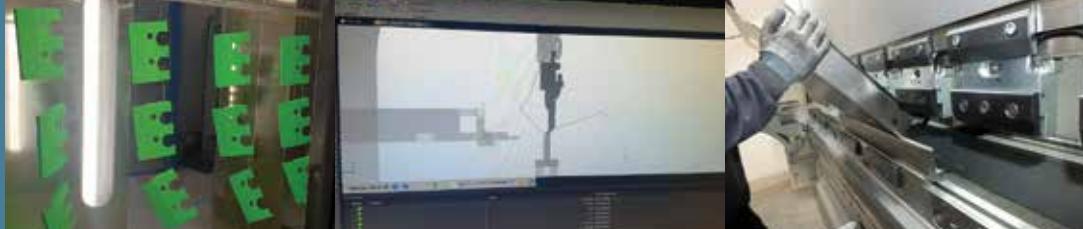
Photo: VDC Zasavje

**VDC (Varstveno delovni center) Zasavje****Building Inclusive, Innovative and Connected Zasavje**

Special award for the innovation challenge

Innovators: Špela Režun, PhD (VDC Zasavje), Heda Kovač (VDC Zasavje), Domen Pociecha (VDC Zasavje), Nastja Mulej, MA (Umna s.p.), Jelka Verk (More than beauty, Katapult)

VIP - inclusive, innovative and connected Zasavje is an innovative concept of integrating people with mental and physical disabilities into society (VDC users). Unlike similar projects, we work comprehensively, focusing on two aspects at the same time. The first is the confidence of the VDC users. The second is the creative cross-sectoral networking and cooperation of leaders, employees, teachers and children with the aim of removing structural barriers hindering people with disabilities as well as overcoming preconceived notions about being different. The goal is to become an inclusive society for EVERYONE, in thoughts, words and actions. All challenges can be solved with VIP cooperation, including Covid-19. ■



LASER CUTTING

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WELDING

POWDER COATING

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# Elit'Avia – Experience the Finest in Private Aviation



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Elit'Avia is a private aviation company that provides a full range of services, including: charter, aircraft management, sales, leasing, flight operations management, staff provision, personalized travel services and continuing airworthiness management organization (CAMO) services. The company was founded in Ljubljana, Slovenia in 2006 and earned a Transport Malta air operator's certificate (AOC) in 2014.

Today, Elit'Avia operates a mixed fleet of 25 aircraft. The company specializes in long range business jets. These aircraft are large, luxuriously comfortable and able to transport up to 19 passengers more than 6,000 nautical miles (11,000 km) – easily crossing the Atlantic or Pacific oceans non-stop.

"Elit'Avia has one of the largest fleets of long-range business aircraft in Europe, including Bombardiers, Gulfstreams, Embraers and Dassault Falcons. These are fabulous aircraft – able to take our clients virtually anywhere in the world. Whether serving private or charter clients, we offer levels of safety, convenience, luxury and discretion that commercial airlines simply cannot match." CEO & Accountable Manager - Michel Coulomb

Elit'avia have recently made an entrance into supporting the cargo operations business with their aircraft management and flight operations expertise. Elit'Avia and Quick Link Aviation Service are proud to introduce the B747-400BDSF joining the AOC of Elit'Avia Malta and offering a cargo capacity up to 111 tons and 720 cubic meters. With this addition Elit'avia is confidently making their entrance into the cargo operations business which is experiencing steady growth worldwide.



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ELIT'AVIA. EXPECT EXTRAORDINARY.

**Innovative**

# Innovation Must Be Part of the Corporate Culture

**Focusing on development is key for a company to succeed and beat the competition. This approach to creativity and innovation is Slovenian companies' hallmark.**

Nina Šprohar, Jerneja Srebot, and Barbara Perko

## Aleš Dolenc, CEO of M Sora

Development and innovation at M Sora are driven by the Research and Development Group, which was the first to be established in our sector. Through our projects, we built a network of contacts with research institutes at home and around the world, and established cooperation with many companies. Our industry is not highly profitable and our development activities cannot be financed from revenues alone, so it is vital to obtain funding through tenders. Development would still continue even without such funding, although at a much slower pace. We are constantly encouraging a culture of innovation among our employees. We reward every idea, even the smallest one, on how to improve operation, reduce costs, simplify processes, and create better products. On several occasions we have invited experts from various fields to speak about their path to success. We are also very pleased with the results of recent internal contests on how to solve specific problems. Furthermore, we are constantly improving our operation through our strategic activities, of which there are currently twelve. Each activity has its own objectives and a leader who is in charge of managing and organising their team. All team members and management have access to records and specific assignments, so that everyone can monitor the process and, if necessary, react. Of course, not everything is going to go smoothly, so interventions and motivation are sometimes required. What is essential, however, is that the entire management stands behind it. I believe that our focus on development is the key factor that enabled our success and growth, and made us stand out from the competition.



Photo: Barbara Reya



## Mateja Tišler, HR Director at Ljubljanske mlekarne

Innovation is not only important for launching new products onto the market, but should be a part of a company's culture. It is good when every employee thinks about how to approach a problem in a different, unconventional way. In September, we held a two-day innovation workshop for our employees together with the School of Economics and Business, which among other things resulted in a concrete action plan for the next few years.

Photo: Aleš Benož

**Gregor Smolej, Iskratel Innovation Manager**

During a disruption in supply chains and a great shortage of semiconductors it's normal for companies to dedicate greater attention to key operational tasks so that their planned business results are achieved or affected as little as possible. It's very common for companies to set priorities as a way of responding to a crisis and to focus only on the tasks that are urgent and important. This is exactly what Iskratel has done. But it's in crisis situations that new problems with the world economy come to the surface and great challenges present themselves; that's what provides the opportunity for making a breakthrough. We need to envisage a different future and try to fill the gaps through innovation.

Innovation is and has to be one of the company's most important priorities, regardless of the times it operates in. A crisis is simply a time in which innovation successes are in fact more frequent and easier to achieve. But it's wrong to presume that innovation is only possible in well-established companies that have a surplus of funds. Innovation is successful in companies that, in addition to highly productive and predictable processes, manage to set up an effective innovation management system or "machine". I'm not talking about a special in-house innovation lab or hub. An innovation machine is an alternative way in which motivated teams and individuals operate, using experiments to tackle uncertainties and learning from unfavourable results how to systematically reduce risk in developing new ideas and searching for an effective business model.

It's important for them to take enough time from their regular work so that progress and results can follow. The innovation team's willingness to deal with failure gives it the strength to succeed.



Photo: Kraftart

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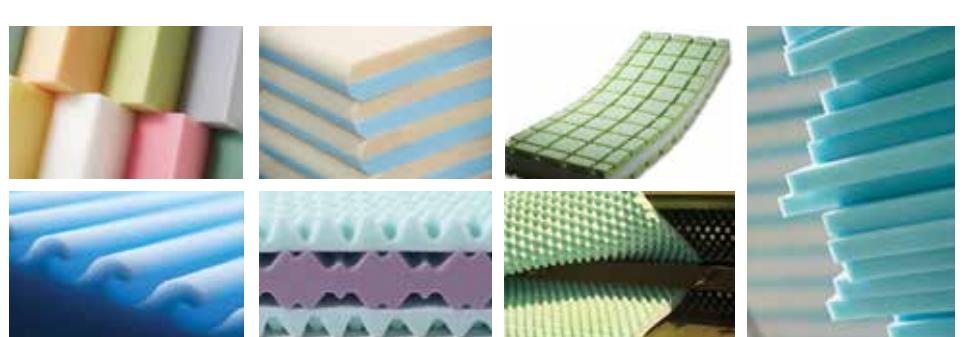
*MBS Timber offers a range of products for house building and further processing of wood products.*

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# KO-SI

## CASE STUDY

# Improving development of world's largest welding guns with solidworks

**KOČEVAR, d. o. o., develops and manufactures some of the largest custom-designed welding guns in the world. Established in 1969 to produce industrial spot, projection, and seam welding machines, the Slovenian company has expanded its offering to include single-phase AC linear action, DC three-phase linear action, and MFDC medium-frequency linear action welding machines, as well as robotic spot and seam welding guns, rocker-arm pedestal spot welders, multi-spot projection welding machines, resistance welding automation systems, resistance welding consumables (electrode caps, shanks, laminated shunts, etc.), and measuring equipment.**

To address the challenges associated with developing and producing custom-made welding equipment, KOČEVAR needs to maintain a competitive edge, which is why the company was an early adopter of 3D CAD technology when it replaced its Caddie® 2D software with the SOLIDWORKS® 3D mechanical design system in 1998. The company standardized on SOLIDWORKS software because it's easy to use, provides access to simulation tools, and supports KOČEVAR's efforts to shorten delivery times.

## Slashing custom welding gun development by a factor of 10

Since implementing SOLIDWORKS, KOČEVAR has continuously reduced its development cycles and shortened its delivery times, resulting in a factor of 10 improvement over its development/delivery times using 2D design tools. "To develop the welding guns that we produce now would have taken years working in 2D," Managing Director Jožef Kočevar Jr. stresses.

"Using SOLIDWORKS, we have been able to reduce what would take years to months," Kočevar continues. "The main reason for these productivity gains is that it's so much easier to visualize the design

and make changes in SOLIDWORKS. Whenever we need to make a design change in SOLIDWORKS, all of the related drawings and technical documentation update automatically. A similar change in 2D would require a month or more of rework. Custom-designed machines are our core business, which is why we use SOLIDWORKS for every project—it allows us to make changes quickly and easily."

## Reducing weight, optimizing performance

The greatest challenge to designing and building the largest welding guns in the world is reducing the weight of the guns and optimizing load capacity. To overcome this challenge, KOČEVAR leverages SOLIDWORKS SimulationXpress™ finite element analysis (FEA) tools to calculate the weight and simulate the performance of every component, resulting in a 60-percent reduction in weight while improving durability and performance.

## Saving customers money while increasing profits

By using SOLIDWORKS design and SOLIDWORKS SimulationXpress analysis tools to reduce the weight of its large welding guns, Kočevar is helping to save its customers money while simultaneously improving profit margins on each project.



KOČEVAR relies on SOLIDWORKS design tools to produce the largest custom-made welding guns in the world, which are designed for joining together large components of passenger train cars.



### Challenge:

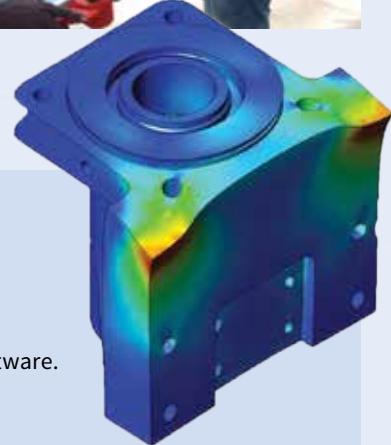
Achieve a competitive edge by reducing weight and optimizing performance of the the world's largest customer-developed welding guns.

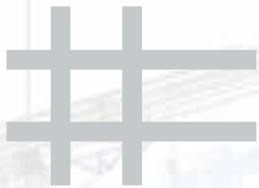
### Solution:

Implement SOLIDWORKS 3D mechanical design software.

### Results:

- Cut development/delivery time by a factor of 10
- Reduced weight of largest welding gun by 60 percent
- Eliminated cost of repetitive prototyping
- Improved product performance and profit margins





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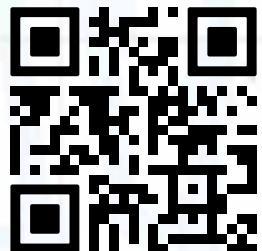
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Photo: Depositphotos

**Sports**

## Small Nation, Enormous Sports Successes

**Why are Slovenians so successful in sports? According to Dr Milan Hosta, sports philosopher, we are supported by our diverse natural environment, favourable geographical position and a strong tradition of physical culture, whose legacy can be seen in the fact that there is a sports hall next to every school.**

*Nina Šprohar*

**The 54-member group of competitors can boast the greatest collection of gold medals won in the 30 years of the independent country's existence.**

Although a relatively small country with a population of just over 2 million, Slovenia is a true superpower in the world of sports. Slovenian athletes achieve top results in practically all sports they compete in, as proven once again this year at the 32nd Summer Olympics in Tokyo. The 54-member group of competitors can boast the greatest collection of gold medals won in the 30 years of the independent country's existence, as they brought home 3 gold medals along with 1 silver and 1 bronze medal. From the first Summer Olympics following the country's independence to the present day, Slovenia has won 8 gold, 9 silver and 11 bronze medals.

### Not One, but Two Medals Won in Cycling

Once again, the extraordinary cyclists Primož Roglič and Tadej Pogačar came home with their laurels. After an unfortunate season filled with miserable falls and disappointments, which also cost him the Tour de France race, Roglič defeated his competition on the route by more than a minute and won a gold medal. His triumph was preceded by the two-time champion of Tour de France Pogačar, winning bronze in the road race.

## Excellent Performances by Savšek, Garnbret and Trstenjak

Benjamin Savšek performed brilliantly in the white-water canoe slalom finals and won gold with his near-flawless performance, while judoka Tina Trstenjak had to concede defeat to Clarisse Agbegnenou in her 63 kg category and took home silver. The young hope of Slovenian sport, 22-year-old Janja Garnbret, justified her position as a favourite and became the world's first winner of the gold Olympic medal in sport climbing. Greatly surpassing her competitors, she has rightfully won the title Greatest of All Time.

## Basketball Players Headed by Dončić within a Hair's Width of Victory

Things were also looking great for the Slovenian basketball team, headed by the brilliant Luka Dončić. In the group phase of the competition, they prevailed over many a favoured adversary, including the former Olympic champions, the Argentinians, and the former world champions, the Spaniards. After outplaying the German national team and qualifying for the semi-finals, they ran into the uncompromising French. In the very last minute, as the Slovenians held the basketball that would bring them victory, the French crushed their dreams of gold with an excellent block. Later

on, the Slovenian basketball players yielded to the Australian team as well.

## Nine More Slovenians among the Top 10

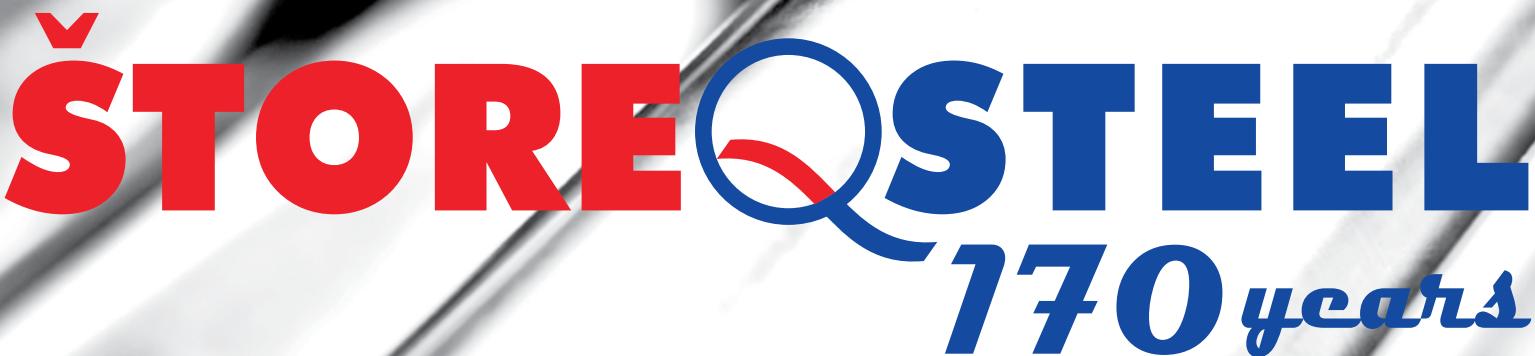
Great results were also achieved by discus thrower Kristjan Čeh, taekwondo athlete Ivan Trajković, sailing team of Tina Mrak and Veronika Macarol, and pole vaulter Tina Šutej. All of them qualified among the top five competitors in their respective disciplines.

Top-10 rankings in their respective disciplines were also achieved by Darko Jorgić (table tennis), Živa Dvoršak (three-position air rifle shooting), and Adrian Gomboc (judo in the 66 kg category).

## Carriers of the “Risk Gene”

What do these success stories written by Slovenia's top athletes attest to? “Following the risk gene idea, we can conclude that, as a nation, we have been lucky and have simply been preordained to reach for the very top. We take risks. We try things out. We play. Here, mass participation plays no part, nor does our small size. What definitely is in our favour is the natural diversity, geographical position and a strong tradition of physical culture, whose legacy is a sports hall next to every school,” sports philosopher Milan Hosta explains.

“What definitely is in our favour is the natural diversity, geographical position, and a strong tradition of physical culture, whose legacy is a sports hall next to every school,” sports philosopher Milan Hosta explains.



### **Giving It One's All Is Key**

The accomplishments of Roglič, Pogačar, Garnbret, Savšek and Trstenjak are merely a handful of the select few from a truly diverse range of Slovenians' top sports achievements. "All of them talk about how much they love their sport because they can engage in it fully and truly invest their whole selves into it. They really invest a lot. And they get a lot in return. They wear their dreams on their sleeves, putting their bodies and their hearts on the line. In doing this, they accept that we can also see their bleeding wounds, broken bones, tear-stained faces and dashed dreams. And so? There cannot be one without the other," says

Milan Hosta and continues that the charm of the game is mainly in not looking for the point of the game outside of it, but to simply "play with all one's might and accept the challenges that speak to you: shoot a three-point shot or two, drive among the greats, climb an overhang and spin your pedals at lightning speed. And to do the same at school, at work or at home. Once you accept the game, you surrender fully and boldly to its dynamics and wisely observe how a joy-filled life is unfolding before your very eyes. Win or lose, what counts is the lesson learned. And the smiling heart keeps on ticking," concludes Hosta. ■

### **Two Medals and Valuable Experience for Paralympic Athletes**

Slovenian athletes delivered an excellent performance at the Paralympic Games in Tokyo. A team of seven athletes, nearly half of whom were new to the Paralympics, brought home two medals. Shooter Franc Pinter ranked tenth and forty-second, the cyclist Anej Dopljhar clinched ninth and thirteenth place, the athlete Henrik Planka came in seventh, the swimmer Tim Žnidaršič Svenšek secured two sixteenth-place finishes and the archer Dejan Fabčič made it to the eighth-finals. The table tennis player Luka Trtnik unfortunately did not make it past the preliminary round. A silver and bronze medal went to the shooter Franček Gorazd Tiršek, while others won valuable experience, which can help them greatly in their future competitions. Franček Gorazd Tiršek: "I think sports are a very important element of a country's international profile. Any athlete that plays clean and fair, and competes for his country is an excellent ambassador, who, through hard work and commitment, can achieve outstanding and high-profile results. Sports demand hard work, persistence and commitment. These are the factors leading to success. In the long run, there are no shortcuts in sports, so it's vital to remain honest to yourself and respectful towards all other athletes. It's the same in the business world if you want to become a successful and distinguished businessperson. With their achievements and successes stories, athletes can achieve great international visibility. That's why companies and businesspeople that believe in sports invest in and support their work. In turn, athletes pay their sponsors back by increasing their brand visibility. This makes these companies more visible than their competitors and, as a result, they have a higher market value and profile, including as socially responsible companies."



Photo: Vid Ponikvar/Sportida

## With Their Achievements Athletes Increase Slovenia's International Profile

It's common knowledge that athletes rank among Slovenia's best ambassadors. Thanks to their outstanding achievements at the European and global levels, interest in Slovenia is growing.

Luka Dončić, one of the best-known NBA players and greatest basketball talents in recent years, has been a Slovenian tourism ambassador since early 2020. This year he received the Crystal Triglav Award for the 2021 Personality of the Year, the main award conferred by the Days of Slovenian Tourism's organisers. As they explained, Luka Dončić always mentions he comes from Slovenia, even though he has been living abroad ever since he was a child. His outstanding performances have won him many fans, who follow his career closely. This helps Luka increase global interest in a country that has generated many other top athletes.

Slovenian tourism ambassadors thus also include the exceptional cyclists Tadej Pogačar and Primož Roglič, and the world-class alpine skier Ilka Štuhec. In cooperation with top Slovenian athletes, the Slovenian Tourist Board helps promote Slovenia as a perfect destination for active breaks.



Photo: mediaspeed.net

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- Fireproof tool storage
- Injection molding of more than 500 different products
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# Excellent partner at printing business

**Company Florjančič tisk, d. o. o., is a family business with a 30-year tradition in the printing industry. It was established in 1992 and ever since it has become a successful printing house. They are specialised for HARDCOVER BINDING, PERFECT SOFTCOVER-BINDING, as well as SADDLE STITCHED and WIREO BINDING.**

## Important player in broader region

"As we have always followed needs of Slovenian and European market, we developed into a highly organized, technologically advanced company with choosing latest date selling channels. With 90 employees and yearly production over 10 million different products we are one of leading printing service providers in broader region. Our product lines of creating books, catalogues, magazines and everything else that belongs to the printed paper industry," they say at Florjančič tisk, d. o. o.

Their annual incomes are 13 million euros. For this year they expect growth of 10-12 %. The same growth is expected for the year 2022 as well.

## Quality products and services for their clients

In accordance with the requirements of the European market, they have developed a high level of organisation, the latest technology and the most modern machine park in the company.

"Mission of Florjančič tisk, d. o. o., is to produce quality products and services which are highly valued among our clients. As the most important part of production process is continuously providing quality control in each and every production step and to ensure all deadlines are met on time. For this reason we are focused on having a high level of self-inspection in



production processes. We are aware that using only quality materials, latest technologies along with having a perfected technological and production process is a must for creating great products and providing best service," they stress.

With their new printing facility and new investments into technology and development, we continuously thrive to meet high demands of today's market. In addition to creating great products they also pride themselves with professionalism and kindness of our employees.

## Future: growing as family business

"Hopefully this brief presentation of Tiskarna Florjančič d.o.o. created an impression we have a lot to look forward to in terms of our development and production. We believe real recognition comes through job well done in form of new orders from our clients. This way Florjančič tisk, d. o. o., will continue to grow and develop together with you, as a family business in the best possible way," they say at Florjančič tisk, d. o. o.



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The Koroška region prides itself with high-quality workforce, rich experience in the processing industry, expertise in ICT technologies, good knowledge of foreign languages, and employee loyalty.

The Koroška region is focused on seeking opportunities to develop existing and new environmentally

friendly activities with higher added value. The major industries in the Koroška region are the following: wood industry, metallurgical industry and tourism.

We have already collected and presented over 30 current investment proposals, including vacant land, office buildings, new real estate projects and innovative products.

### Top investment proposals



**Mountain & Ski Resort  
Ribnisko Pohorje**



**Jenina - Natural  
Adventure Park**



**Eco Resort  
Radlje Riverfront**



**The Hotel  
Črna na Koroškem**

The Mountain-Ski Resort Ribnisko Pohorje is located in the idyllic landscape of the western Pohorje Hills. The new tourist infrastructure is positioned in accordance with the development of winter and summer tourism, including wellness, spa, congress, biking, golf, adventure, and agri-tourism. Throughout the seasons, the diverse and varied mountainous landscape offers a rich array of options for active holidays and relaxation in an idyllic mountainous landscape for all generations and types of guests. ■

The Jenina Natural Adventure Park is a perfect setting for the construction of a thermal water park, sport and leisure park, wellness, a health centre, a glamping resort, and an eco-hotel. The air, rich with oxygen due to forests' proximity, positively affects the human organism and health. A sufficient distance from the town bustle offers peacefulness, extremely important in compensating for daily stress. ■

Radlje ob Dravi is one of the first destinations in Slovenia to have been awarded the Slovenia Green Silver label as a symbol of sustainable and green development. Unspoiled nature, numerous cycling and hiking paths, as well as the hospitality of the locals, are just some of the reasons to visit the destination. The investment proposal includes the expansion of the Eco Resort, the construction of additional accommodation units as well as the diversification of tourist offer. ■

The Črna Hotel is located in Črna na Koroškem, a small town, special for numerous reasons. Nestled among the surrounding hills and mountains, the town is dreamy in its isolation from larger towns, yet open to the world and prosperous future. While focused primarily on green and sustainable tourism principles, Črna has a great tourism potential in general. ■

**RRA KOROŠKA d.o.o., Meža 10, 2370 Dravograd, Slovenia**

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**UNICHEM – from beautiful country SLO-VENIA** - is the renowned **European** manufacturer of high quality products for plant protection and nutrition, organic gardening and pest control. It has a long gardening tradition, a widespread rodent control program and its own research, development and manufacturing facilities.

The company was established in 1989 and is constantly growing and developing and has its subsidiaries in Croatia, Czech Republic, Slovakia, Hungary, Poland, Romania and in

the United States of America. Export is an important part of the company's business. The company exports to most European countries and also to other continents.

Today, Unichem is a contemporary equipped company both technologically and in terms of IT with its products registered and sold in over 60 countries worldwide and it is the leading Slovenian manufacturer. In its 31 years of growth, Unichem has significantly increased its revenues and the share of export sales, which now make up 70% of all sales.

All employees, of which there are currently 150 participating in the quality of operations and development with enthusiasm. The company is distinguished by its team of young and educated professionals (agronomists, chemists, engineers, psychologists, lawyers, economists, etc.).

The company has significantly increased its range of products, which now comprise over 250, supplemented by the highly recognizable brands **Plantella**, **Bio Plantella**, **Urban Jungle**, **Effect** and **Ratimor**.

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Rodents react negatively to the taste of food that has previously made them ill. But they do not recognize Ratimor baits as their threat since Ratimor baits have delayed action and the final effect is shown after 4 to 10 days. To increase the safety of children and domestic animals all baits with an active substance contain bitter aversive agent.

### Problems when »hosting« rodents:

- It is estimated that rodents contaminate more than 1/5th of the world's total food output each year.
- Besides food, they can damage electrical wiring and cause even fire hazards or structural damage.
- They spread serious diseases, like salmonellosis, Lymphocytic choriomeningitis, Murine typhus, Leptospirosis and others.
- They can carry fleas and ticks.
- They pose a serious threat and risks for food facilities. Someone's business could gain a bad reputation or even go out-of-business if there are rodents present.



Photo: Kraftart

#### Women Entrepreneurship

# Intuition and Greater Willingness to Collaborate

**Women's motivation and reasons for entering the world of entrepreneurship are different from those of men.**

Vida Petrovič

As part of the WEGATE Summit 2021: We are the Next Generation event, Women's Entrepreneurship Day took place, organised by the Chamber of Small Business and Trade of the Chamber of Commerce and Industry of Slovenia. The Director of the Chamber of Small Business and Trade, Vida Kožar, is a member of the advisory body of WEGATE Brussels, which operates under the auspices of the European Small Business Alliance (ESBA).

According to Brane Lotrič, President of the Management Board of CSBT-CCIS, the Chamber of Small Business and Trade, is proud of all the women who have the courage, the knowledge and the will to engage in the world of entrepreneurship, which they have been demonstrating for decades by successfully running their businesses. The GEM 2019 analysis presents Slovenia as a country with the widest gap

in terms of women's companies, as these make up a mere third of all businesses. In Slovenia, women aged 35 to 45 are least likely to decide to set up a business. In addition, women's motivation and reasons for becoming an entrepreneur are different from those of men. For women, the most common reasons are flexible working time, as well as a desire to make a difference and bring added value to society.

Aleš Cantarutti, General Manager of the Chamber of Commerce and Industry, added that Slovenia has great potential in female entrepreneurship, which is something worth building on.

**Female Business Owners Play an Important Part**  
David Caro, President of the European Small Business Alliance (ESBA), pointed out that the European Commission is committed to promoting the estab-

**Women's motivation and reasons for becoming an entrepreneur are different from those of men. For women, the most common reasons are flexible working time, as well as desire to make a difference and bring value added to society.**

lishment and growth of small and medium-sized enterprises, including women's businesses, as this is the only way to achieve green and digital transformation of the business sector. Women entrepreneurs play an important part in these efforts.

Dr Jerneja Jug Jerše, Head of European Commission Representation in Slovenia, stressed that small and medium-sized enterprises are the backbone of European economy. At the same time, OECD studies find that only a third of women feel sufficiently capable of founding a company, while as many as half of the men feel competent enough.

**Women's strengths in entrepreneurship include intuition and greater willingness to collaborate.**

### Women's Strengths in Entrepreneurship

What makes companies founded and run by women special was the topic of a special round table discussion featuring the following successful women entrepreneurs: Tanja Skaza, Director of Inštitut Skaza, Katja Krašković, Director of GEA College d.d., Katja Temnik, Director of the Zeliščni Vrt Majnika herb garden, and Lea Marolt Sonnenschein, representative of the international VTIS Association. The round table participants stressed that women's companies have many specific characteristics, even though there is no uniform definition of what a women's company

even is. And since there is no definition, measures to promote them are less effective than they could be.

Women's strengths in entrepreneurship include intuition and greater willingness to collaborate. "Yes, we are perfect, but we don't need to give 120% of ourselves to get the job done," said Tanja Skaza (Inštitut SKAZA). "We shouldn't be competing against each other, we should help one another. We have a strong and definite intuition, and if we listened to it, we would outnumber men. Women are more in tune with their missions, but they don't allow themselves to realise it," Skaza is certain, but hopes, as others do, that this will change in the future.

Women make up 52% of the total European population but only 34.4% of the European Union (EU) self-employed and 30% of start-up entrepreneurs. ■



## Professional Metal Products Since 1988

MALI-E-TIKO provides a wide range of products and services in the manufacture of elements and components from sheet metal for the needs of the electronics and automotive sectors, including parts for heavy machinery and equipment, which requires expert knowledge of metal processing and machining.

Holding ISO 9001-2015 certification, the Tržič-based MALI-E-TIKO manufactures components for, amongst others, the electronics and car industries, as well as elements for commercial vehicles and construction equipment.

### Electronics

In addition to a range of component elements for the automotive industry, the company makes casings and housings for electronics, a variety of custom-made aluminium and alloy heat sinks, together with cases for electronic equipment and amplifiers.

MALI-E-TIKO engineers elements of the most complex design, manufactured using multi-axis CNC milling machines.

### Heavy-duty Equipment

MALI-E-TIKO manufactures elements and parts for road vehicles and construction equipment, heavy-duty machines, components for professional ironing systems and heating solutions, inox steel road and other signs, as well as a range of metal cabinets and storage systems.

MALI-E-TIKO's metal processing services include milling and turning, as well as the welding of all types of materials (TIG, MIG and MAG welding). The company employs certified European welding engineers and holds EN ISO 3834-2 and EN 1090-2 certificates. In addition to sandblasting, MALI-E-TIKO's contractors also provide surface protection (galvanised coating), anodising, chromate coating, as well as powder and wet coating. Additional services encompass engraving, including laser engraving, and screen printing.

### Product Development

The company collaborates with its clients in product development, employing 3D technology (PTC Creo, AutoCAD) for design, as well as the latest software for CNC programming. Among other services, MALI-E-TIKO provides laser cutting of steel, stainless steel and aluminium, as well as CNC punching and bending of materials using modern CNC machinery (Trumpf, Gasparini and LVD).

### Partners in Germany, Austria and Italy

MALI-E-TIKO products supply its partners in Germany, Austria and Italy. Germany is the company's main market, where clients include ANNAX GmbH, BOMAG GmbH and Veit GmbH; in Austria – Swarco Futurit GmbH and Palfinger AG; and CAEN S.p.A. in Italy. Through a number of its Slovenian partners MALI-E-TIKO manufactures can be found in many parts of the world, including the Middle and Far East, South America, the UK, Hong Kong and Japan.

The companies MALI-E-TIKO works with are leaders in their respective fields. Moreover, their partners include them in current and future projects, thereby transferring know-how and engineering expertise.

## NEW HEALTHY, DURABLE, MINERAL CONSTRUCTION TECHNOLOGY FOR 100 YEARS

MATERIALS BASED  
ON MINERAL RAW  
MATERIALS FROM  
MOTHER EARTH:  
**LIMESTONE,  
QUARTZ, MARL,  
TUFF, CLAY,  
WATER, IRON ORE**

FOR USE IN  
NEW BUILDING  
CONSTRUCTION,  
RECONSTRUCTION,  
AND BUILDING  
MAINTENANCE:  
**RESIDENTIAL  
BUILDINGS,  
INDUSTRIAL  
BUILDINGS,  
INFRASTRUCTURE  
BUILDINGS, SPORTS  
AND RECREATIONAL  
BUILDINGS.**



I. RESEARCH, INVENTIONS,  
INNOVATIONS, NEW PRODUCTS  
AND KNOW-HOW:  
**500 building  
renovations in  
36 years.**

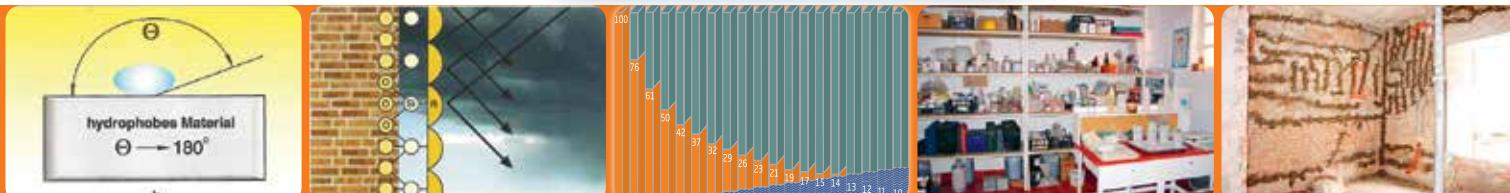
1.  
**LAB RESEARCH**  
ING.KLAN d.o.o.,  
INVENTOR:  
**Ivan S. Klaneček,**  
BACHELOR OF ARTS IN  
CONSTRUCTION TECHNOLOGY

2.  
**INTERNATIONAL CONTESTS**  
(IN SLOVENIA, EUROPE,  
SCANDINAVIA, ASIA, USA):

**44 gold and  
27 silver prizes**  
awarded for  
**17 patents +  
13 models +  
48 brands =  
78 registered  
inventions and  
24 non-registered  
inventions**

= **A TOTAL OF  
102 inventions in  
35 years.**

3.  
**APPLICATION**  
**IMPLEMENTATION** in part or  
in full (reconstruction  
and renovation  
of buildings and  
engineering structures)



**INVENTOR**  
**Ivan S. Klaneček,**  
B.S. construction  
engineering,  
**offers a license  
transfer of  
the patented  
NEW, HEALTHY,  
SUSTAINABLE,  
MINERAL  
TECHNOLOGY,  
demonstrations  
included.**

INFO  
M +386 41 655417  
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**ING i! KLAN**



# The Door of Our Chamber Is Open to You

**The Chamber of Commerce and Industry of Slovenia (CCIS) is the largest independent, voluntary, non-profit association of companies in Slovenia. It was founded in 1851 and today boasts more than 5,200 member companies of all shapes, sizes, branches, and regional backgrounds. Our member companies contribute about 50% of gross value added of the Slovenian economy and generate 2/3 of sales in foreign markets.**  
**Business in Slovenia starts here!**

## What Can We Do for You?

The CCIS is the ideal **local partner** for foreign investors and business professionals. It can support and facilitate your entrance into the Slovenian market. It can help you search for **new contacts** and provide you with a wide range of useful business information.

If you are interested in doing business in Slovenia, the CCIS offers you **services** developed especially for your needs.

## Market Intelligence

The CCIS provides a wide range of insightfully discerning information on the economic situation in Slovenia. This includes everything from economic indicators and trend forecasts to information on companies' credit ratings. You also get access to contacts for potential business partners.

The International Relations Department of the CCIS presents its activities and services for foreign companies on its website ([businessslovenia.gzs.si](http://businessslovenia.gzs.si)) and publishes a newsletter highlighting interesting sectors and groundbreaking business solutions in the Slovenian economy,

and offering the possibility of advertising for foreign and domestic companies.

Take advantage of the best business opportunities in Slovenia – make an offer or find a supplier. Foreign companies can register and search for trade inquiries through our special inquiry database BORZA ([www.borza.org](http://www.borza.org)), where you can find both Slovenian and international business partners.

## Go International

The CCIS is the primary meeting hub for Slovenian development and export-oriented enterprises, which are the very engine driving the core of development and innovation in the Slovenian economy. Our continuous interaction with foreign enterprises, institutions, and experts is converted into engaging activities like business delegations, educational and other major events, and B2Bs. It is our mission to provide you with our assembled information about inquiries on international markets, assistance in connecting Slovenian and foreign enterprises, and making your business experience here as productive and lucrative as possible.

## Looking for Partners in Slovenia?

The International Relations Department is the perfect contact point for anyone interested in working with Slovenian companies. Along with providing information on the Slovenian market, it also provides support to foreign enterprises and institutions in finding new partners. It is responsive, creative, and tirelessly modern. At the same time it makes sure that all its partners are treated as individuals, on a case by case basis.



Photo: CCIS

## Legal Framework

The CCIS can provide you with information about Slovenian legislation or offer you legal consulting on Commercial, Corporate, Property, Enforcement, and Labour Law, as well as information on public procurement and insolvency procedures.

## SloExport: All Major Slovenian Companies in One Place

SloExport is a database catalogue containing information on more than 6,500 Slovenian exporters. It is a tool that will be of great assistance in seeking information on individual Slovenian companies.

## Excellent SME Certification

In conjunction with the renowned global credit insurer COFACE, the Chamber of Commerce and Industry of Slovenia is issuing Excellent SME certificates to Slovenia's most successful small and medium-sized enterprises.

This certificate enables potential investors or business partners to verify a company's existence, its actual web address, and, most importantly, its creditworthiness.

## Ljubljana Arbitration Centre

The Ljubljana Arbitration Centre is an autonomous and independent arbitration centre providing administrative services for the resolution of disputes between parties through arbitration, mediation, conciliation, and alternative forms of dispute resolution.

## Promotion and Advertising

The CCIS offers several packages of promotional opportunities and advertising also to foreign partners to increase their visibility on the Slovenian market.

## Environmental Protection

The CCIS can provide information on new and existing environmental legislation, and other environmental aspects, including exchanges of best practice and benchmarking through conferences, training activities, and individual consultations.

## Business - Conference Centre

Our premises feature multipurpose halls, classrooms, and council rooms of all sizes and purpose, as well as an event hall with a view to Ljubljana Castle. All of them are equipped with state-of-the-art and user-friendly equipment, and can be rented by the hour, day, week, or even month. The same goes for offices with all necessary infrastructure. ■

## Chamber of Commerce and Industry of Slovenia

[www.gzs.si](http://www.gzs.si)  
[info@gzs.si](mailto:info@gzs.si)  
+386 1 5898 000



Chamber of Commerce  
and Industry of Slovenia

## What do you gain by knocking on the door of Slovenia's Chamber of Commerce and Industry?

1.

The most powerful representative of the Slovenian private sector

2.

A partner who stands by your side as you enter the Slovenian market

3.

A networking megahub, where best practices are freely exchanged

4.

An ecosystem of talented and capable professionals in Slovenia and abroad

5.

World-class consultants with vast knowledge and experience

6.

Priceless opportunities for data mining with access to countless databases

7.

Relevant, high-quality business information on markets, sectors and key players





# The right partner when it comes to blanking, fineblanking and coldformed parts

**The company TKG in proizvodnja Vijakov, d.o.o., has more than 80 years' experience of manufacturing blanking and fineblanking, deepdrawing and coldformed parts, and is present in almost all economic sectors.**

TKG in proizvodnja vijakov, d.o.o., is a medium-sized family company, currently employing 78 people. It specialises in the production of 1) cold formed parts (rivets, screws, bolts, eccentric, etc.; 2) stamped-and fine stamped parts (tooth segments, adapters, etc.; and 3) deep drawing parts (hollow rivets). Its products are used in construction, the electrical industry and in the sports, textile, furniture and automobile industries. In the Covid year 2020, a total of just over 1 Billion parts were produced.



## Over 80 years of tradition

The roots of TKG in proizvodnja vijakov, d.o.o., go back to the 1930s. It was created out of two state companies: the screw factory Tovil, founded in 1936, and the stamping factory TKG, founded in 1938. Both were bought in 1999 and

2000 by the Trebušak-Burja family, which then united them into the company TKG in proizvodnja vijakov, d.o.o., which also joined the production facilities of both companies.

## Custom-made products

The company makes products according to customer demands. For this it has at its disposal more than 65 cold stamping machines for products made of steel, non-ferrous metals and special alloys. From cutting the wire to the final stamping machine, the company makes the most complex geometrical shapes according to the client's specifications in up to six design phases. With the help of further treatments, it turns screws or shaped parts into suitable products. Depending on a client's needs, the raw metal for cold turning can be turned, rolled, spun, routed or ground. The company has set up a quality control system which complies with standards ISO 9001:2008 and ISO/TS16949:2009.

## Fast and flexible

The company's competitive advantages are based on flexibility, thanks to having its own workshops for hardening and tool-making. In the hardening workshop the company carries out carbonitration or classic hardening in boxes, and these processes incur no additional transport costs. If needed, partner companies providing galvanisation/coating and plastic encapsulation are located within a radius of 40 km, so it's possible to respond to customers' needs very rapidly. Tools are made using CAD and CNC machine technology.



## Innovative and export-oriented

TKG in proizvodnja vijakov, d.o.o., is an innovative and export-oriented company. More than 90% of its products are exported to the markets of Western Europe. The company is also present in America and Asia. As a spokesperson explains, "All our clients are European companies, some of which have factories in America and Asia, where we also ship our products."

## Investments in development

The company is making large investments in future developments. This year's investments in Industry 4.0 modifications and new machines for pressing, thread-cutting and separating are worth EUR 1.2 million. Next year roughly EUR 1.1 million is earmarked for such investments.



**MONTER**  
Dravograd d.o.o.



The company MONTER DRAVOGRAD d.o.o. was established in the year 1947 and works more than 75 years in the field of manufacturing of steel products. Today the company is active in a field of building and constructing special purpose machinery and devices according to customer documentation and plans. Production program includes manufacturing of welded components, mechanical processing and final assembling (mechanical, electrical assembling, hydraulic assembling and pneumatics) and as well the final paintwork of products.

### Working field:

- Machine building
- Mining
- Shipbuilding
- Building industry
- Automotive industry
- Wood processing industry
- Electro industry
- Forklift renovation

TYPE CNC TOS	TOS 1	TOS 2	TOS 3	TOS 4	TOS 5	TOS 6	TOS 7	TOS 8	TOS 9	TOS 10	ŠKODA
Table:	1800 x 2200	1800 x 2000	1800 x 2500	1800 x 2500	1400 x 1600	1800 x 2500	1800 x 2500	1400 x 1600	1800 x 2500	2000 x 2500	2000 x 2000
x:	3500	3500	4000	4000	2000	5000	5000	2500	4000	11000	8000
y:	2000	2000	3000	3000	1600	3000	3000	1600	3000	4500	3000
z:	1250	1250	1600	1600	1250	1600	1600	1250	1600	1200	1600
Maximum load	12.000 kg	12.000 kg	20.000 kg	20.000 kg	8000 kg	25.000 kg	25.000 kg	8000 kg	25.000 kg	100.000 kg	65.000 kg

### OUR REFERENCES:



### Company in numbers:

- 240 employees
- Producing products up to a total weight of 80 tons
- 12.000 m<sup>2</sup> modern equipped halls

In year 2018 we also setup new welding robot FD-V20S-7th axis.

- Tandem welding
- 7 axis



### MONTER DRAVOGRAD d.o.o.

Otiški vrh 177  
2373 Šentjanž pri Dravogradu  
Tel: +386 (0)2 8787 730  
Fax: +386 (0)2 8785 002  
E-mail: [tine.kadis@monter-dravograd.si](mailto:tine.kadis@monter-dravograd.si)  
[www.monter-dravograd.si](http://www.monter-dravograd.si)



**MONTER sign of quality!**

**Top Exporters**

# 150 Largest Companies Generating Nearly 80% of Total Manufacturing Exports

**On average, the fastest-growing exporting companies have increased their exports by 63% over the past five years.**

*Bojan Ivanc, Chief Economist at the Chamber of Commerce and Industry of Slovenia*

**117,000 employees at 150 largest exporters.**

**EUR 58,000 in value added per employee among the largest exporters.**

**Fastest-growing exporters generating EUR 28,000 in exports on average.**

In addition to EUR 2.7 billion in domestic sales, the 150 largest exporting companies generated EUR 16.3 billion in exports in 2020, which accounted for 45% of Slovenia's total exports or 79% of its manufacturing exports. Trade and energy are also important export sectors, as are logistics and tourism (exporting transport services and travel packages), but they are not included in the analysis because the focus is primarily on industries that produce and export goods. Three companies or groups (a group referring to an ownership link between two or more companies) generated over EUR 1 billion in exports. The top two companies produce generic drugs and the third one is a car manufacturer. A further 33 companies generate over EUR 100 million in exports.

The average export orientation of the largest exporters is high: they generate an average of 85% of their sales on international markets. Over a third of exporters generate most of their sales (over 95%) on the international market, with only a quarter of companies among the 150 largest exporters generating less than 80% abroad.

In 2020, the 150 largest exporters employed 117,000 people (measured per hours worked) or

14% of Slovenia's total workforce in employment. Only one company had over 10,000 employees and one had over 5,000, whereas the average number of employees working for the 150 largest exporters was 780. Labour productivity varies greatly between the manufacturing exporters, depending largely on the gross margin, the company's vertical or horizontal integration, and the specific industry's labour intensity. The average labour productivity among Slovenia's 150 largest exporters amounted to EUR 58,000. Both pharmaceutical companies stood out among the larger companies, with EUR 101,000 and EUR 83,000 in value added per employee. Low productivity was typical of companies that have a portion of their production and employees in the former Yugoslav countries, where the generated value added per employee was generally lower (as were the production costs). Over EUR 100,000 in value added per employee was recorded by 15 or 10% of all exporting companies. Productivity of less than EUR 30,000 was recorded by 17 companies or 11%. Twenty-eight companies or 19% recorded EUR 30,000–40,000 in labour productivity.

The 80 fastest-growing exporters were defined based on absolute criteria (over EUR 5 million in exports in 2015) and relative criteria (fastest growth in exports between 2015 and 2020). Twenty-two companies at least doubled their export earnings and the remaining 58 increased their exports by 35% to 96%. Median export growth stood at 63%. In absolute values, only one company recorded over EUR 1.5 billion in exports, with the median amounting to EUR 28 million. The median export orientation of companies in this group amounted to 87%; in three companies it even reached 100%. Labour productivity varied greatly among companies, amounting to over EUR 100,000 in nine companies and below EUR 30,000 in six. The median number of employees in the group of the fastest-growing exporters was 233, with the smallest company employing 41 people and the largest employing 5,129. ■



# THE ONLY WAY IS UP



Adria Tehnika as one of Europe's leading MRO companies with over 60 years of experience is an expert specialised in base and line aircraft maintenance, in compliance with the requirements of EASA Part-145. Adria Tehnika also holds the Part-147 Approval - Training certificate.

Within 4 heavy maintenance hangars, fully fitted with the necessary tools and equipment, Adria Tehnika maintains the most popular narrow-body jets produced by the biggest companies, such as: Airbus, MHIRJ and Bombardier CRJ – for which Adria Tehnika is the Authorised Service Facility. Supported by 7 workshops Adria Tehnika provides all levels of maintenance services from inspections up to and including D checks, as well as the most demanding heavy structural modifications, to mention but a few.

The Slovenian company Adria Tehnika has built its good reputation among airline companies with highly motivated and qualified staff, competitive ground time, its commitment to quality, flexibility and competitive prices. Thanks to decades of airline experience with more than 70 customers on three continents and a convenient geographical location in the heart of Europe, Adria Tehnika has a very strong position in the European market.



## FACILITIES

- 4 heavy maintenance hangars
- 10,000 m<sup>2</sup> of hangars and supporting workshops



## MANPOWER

- up to 350 qualified employees
- 400,000 working hours annually



## CUSTOMERS

- 70 + customers on 3 continents



## PARKING

- up to 30 aircraft parking bays



**ADRIATEHNika**  
AN AVIAPRIME COMPANY

Zgornji Brnik 130 D, 4210 Brnik-Aerodrom, Slovenia  
T: +386 4 2590 4250, E: office@aateh.si; www.aviaprime.eu



[www.aplast.si](http://www.aplast.si)

We are one of the leading companies providing a wide variety of different types of rotational moulding (processing of plastic masses) in Slovenia and its immediate vicinity.



### RAINWATER TREATMENT PLANTS

Production of high quality tanks for rain-, waste- and drinking water.



### WASTEWATER TREATMENT PLANTS

Production of biological wastewater treatment plants.



### SEWAGE SYSTEMS

Production of sewage inspection chambers, cable chambers for power and telecommunication networks and water meter chambers.



### WASTE COLLECTION MANAGEMENT

Development of ECOdip containers for deep collection of waste.



### CARAVAN

Tanks for waste and clean water supplied to all the leading manufacturers in the caravan industry.



### DREDGING FLOATERS

Production of floats for dredging.



TOP  
QUALITY



SAFETY



EFFICIENCY

Our partners are European companies searching for complete service from R&D (turning an idea into a product), tool development and production, using latest technology and innovative techniques.

**Top Exporters**

# 150 Largest Exporters in Manufacturing Sector, 2020

Ranking	Company/Group	Net sales revenue on foreign markets, in million EUR	% of sales on foreign markets	Value added per employee, in EUR	Number of employees
1	LEK GROUP	1.500.1	97.2	101,248	5,129
2	KRKA GROUP	1.449.8	94.5	82,595	11,631
3	REVOZ d.d.	1.368.0	98.3	60,169	2,276
4	SIJ GROUP	594.9	84.6	40,321	3,843
5	IMPOL 2000 GROUP	545.3	93.4	44,291	2,429
6	KOLEKTOR HOLDING GROUP	453.4	56.2	44,056	5,712
7	ADRIA MOBIL GROUP	450.6	96.1	74,343	1,629
8	BSH HIŠNI APARATI d.o.o. Nazarje	342.8	90.8	48,814	1,169
9	TAB GROUP	289.4	96.8	53,975	1,436
10	HELIOS GROUP	276.1	89.2	55,893	1,759
11	LTH CASTINGS GROUP	242.7	99.7	42,380	2,897
12	MAHLE Electric Drives Slovenija d.o.o.	231.4	96.3	26,970	1,748
13	TALUM GROUP	229.1	87.6	37,745	1,462
14	CARTHAGO d.o.o.	217.2	100.0	35,653	826
15	HIDRIA HOLDING GROUP	213.1	93.1	53,471	1,870
16	PERUTNINA PTUJ GROUP	199.7	68.0	31,658	3,745
17	UNIOR GROUP	180.8	86.0	32,472	2,808
18	odelo Slovenija d.o.o.	179.2	100.0	38,878	1,356
19	GOODYEAR SLOVENIJA, d.o.o.	162.8	83.5	46,804	1,469
20	CABLEX GROUP	162.1	95.2	18,625	3,050
21	AquafilSLO d.o.o.	161.0	99.7	43,139	776
22	CINKARNA Celje, d.d.	157.8	91.5	75,150	838
23	KOLIČEVO KARTON, d.o.o.	156.7	91.8	135,431	400
24	ETI GROUP	129.4	92.2	33,176	1,624
25	DOMEL GROUP	129.1	89.5	43,075	1,268
26	AKRAPOVIČ GROUP	125.7	98.8	55,907	1,236
27	CIMOS GROUP	124.7	93.2	16,935	2,585
28	KNAUF INSULATION, d.o.o., Škofja Loka	119.7	84.4	105,469	458

Ranking	Company/Group	Net sales revenue on foreign markets, in million EUR	% of sales on foreign markets	Value added per employee, in EUR	Number of employees
29	CALCIT GROUP	119.1	92.2	103,769	302
30	ISKRAEMECO GROUP	118.4	92.5	47,313	691
31	ADK d.o.o.	117.5	98.7	47,344	636
32	CONTITECH SLOVENIJA GROUP	113.8	99.6	55,072	592
33	PALFINGER d.o.o.	110.7	95.7	40,655	666
34	DANFOSS TRATA, d.o.o.	108.3	92.5	86,488	493
35	PLASTA GROUP	108.2	66.2	51,997	975
36	Atlantic Droga Kolinska d.o.o.	103.0	62.1	87,008	498
37	PAPIRNICA VEVČE d.o.o.	97.4	96.5	72,381	33
38	ELRAD ELECTRONICS d.o.o.	95.2	90.4	56,765	492
39	BOXMARK LEATHER d.o.o.	91.2	99.5	25,331	976
40	TASTEPOINT GROUP	89.0	90.6	106,541	335
41	TRIMO GROUP	87.4	88.1	55,192	449
42	NOVEM CAR INTERIOR DESIGN d.o.o.	84.6	99.9	38,019	702
43	GKN Driveline Slovenija, d.o.o.	82.1	96.7	49,319	370
44	Trelleborg Slovenija, d.o.o.	81.5	87.4	60,780	655
45	FILC d.o.o.	81.3	91.4	108,755	354
46	TPV GROUP	80.7	60.1	35,944	989
47	JUB GROUP	79.2	68.7	52,710	761
48	DON DON GROUP	77.2	69.3	19,210	1,901
49	ARCONT d.d.	75.3	98.9	37,371	637
50	ebm-papst Slovenija d.o.o.	74.7	98.8	32,685	415
51	ISKRA MEHANIZMI, d.o.o.	74.6	91.6	41,504	527
52	LJUBLJANSKE MLEKARNE d.o.o.	69.0	39.2	61,062	593
53	SKUPINA ISKRATEL	67.4	72.3	38,299	853
54	SKUPINA WEILER ABRASIVES	67.0	93.7	35,978	809
55	INCOM d.o.o.	66.9	90.8	52,648	481
56	Adient Slovenj Gradec d.o.o. - v likvidaciji	65.6	98.1	27,702	562
57	STARKOM d.o.o.	64.9	99.0	63,554	268
58	SKUPINA ELAN	63.6	91.7	36,044	703
59	GORIČANE, d.d. Medvode	62.6	90.2	62,687	223
60	SKUPINA PALOMA	60.5	82.4	43,552	507
61	INOTHERM d.o.o.	60.0	93.5	111,297	249

Ranking	Company/Group	Net sales revenue on foreign markets, in million EUR	% of sales on foreign markets	Value added per employee, in EUR	Number of employees
62	G4 GROUP	59.2	47.2	46,413	828
63	TKK d.o.o.	59.1	88.2	69,750	248
64	LEDINEK ENGINEERING d.o.o.	57.9	99.0	119,378	196
65	ŠTORE STEEL d.o.o.	57.8	67.4	38,291	501
66	SILIKO d.o.o.	57.7	84.9	59,976	411
67	STEKLARNA HRASTNIK GROUP	54.5	97.0	57,352	520
68	ITW Appliance Components d.o.o.	52.9	81.6	27,209	247
69	MSIN GROUP	51.9	54.1	47,654	909
70	FOTONA GROUP	51.9	98.3	93,271	291
71	DANI AFC d.o.o.	51.6	100.0	21,285	365
72	TBP GROUP	50.1	93.4	20,669	1,086
73	SEVEN REFRactories d.o.o.	49.3	98.4	100,055	96
74	SOGEFI FILTRATION d.o.o.	49.1	100.0	46,111	324



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- + Plasma Nitriding

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- + Tooling
- + Recycling
- + Agricultural & forestry
- + Wind power
- + Steel manufacturing



Ranking	Company/Group	Net sales revenue on foreign markets, in million EUR	% of sales on foreign markets	Value added per employee, in EUR	Number of employees
75	INTERBLOCK GROUP	48.0	94.0	97,731	387
76	SILKEM PLUS GROUP	47.9	89.0	56,954	228
77	KOVIS d.o.o.	46.8	96.9	88,190	141
78	Pivovarna Laško Union d.o.o.	46.1	31.6	100,004	574
79	ETA d.o.o. Cerkno	42.9	98.4	30,282	753
80	FINIKS GROUP	42.6	99.7	23,277	483
81	GEBERIT proizvodnja d.o.o.	42.2	99.1	76,315	268
82	FARMTECH d.o.o.	41.9	90.9	39,936	319
83	JUTEKS d.o.o.	41.8	96.4	97,701	144
84	LESONIT d.o.o.	41.7	95.0	91,812	139
85	MELAMIN d.d. Kočevje	41.4	87.0	81,389	182
86	LITOSTROJ POWER GROUP	40.0	57.7	40,323	391
87	SALONIT ANHOVO GROUP	40.0	45.2	102,900	364



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Ranking	Company/Group	Net sales revenue on foreign markets, in million EUR	% of sales on foreign markets	Value added per employee, in EUR	Number of employees
88	KLS LJUBNO d.o.o.	39.7	95.8	112,055	241
89	Walstead Leykam tiskarna d.o.o.	39.6	88.3	67,416	105
90	ALPOS METALURGIJA d.o.o.	38.3	88.5	108,860	61
91	GRAMMER AUTOMOTIVE SLOVENIJA d.o.o.	37.9	99.9	34,211	235
92	BISOL GROUP	37.9	84.9	63,944	192
93	HENKEL MARIBOR d.o.o.	37.7	98.5	45,034	492
94	STEKLARNA ROGAŠKA d.o.o.	36.9	96.7	36,152	647
95	SENSILAB d.o.o.	36.9	83.5	48,530	248
96	TAJFUN GROUP	36.5	95.6	40,336	325
97	BELIMED d.o.o.	36.4	91.5	45,781	234
98	SIBO G. d.o.o.	36.3	89.8	67,044	233
99	EKWB d.o.o.	35.5	99.3	89,296	122
100	VIP VIRANT, d.o.o.	35.0	98.9	48,482	161



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- **Detergent Industry**
- **Fibreglass Industry**
- **Food Industry / others**



Ranking	Company/Group	Net sales revenue on foreign markets, in million EUR	% of sales on foreign markets	Value added per employee, in EUR	Number of employees
101	KOVINOPLASTIKA LOŽ GROUP	34.6	57.6	28,339	751
102	INTERSOCKS d.o.o., Kočevje	34.4	93.8	53,261	143
103	UNITIMBER d.o.o.	34.0	95.8	105,174	5
104	MELTAL GROUP	32.9	59.2	49,022	101
105	PLANIKA TURNIŠČE d.o.o.	32.3	97.6	30,799	226
106	PERSPEKTIVA GROUP	32.2	14.9	42,749	1,557
107	LIVAR, d.d.	32.2	76.0	29,321	501
108	BOSCH REXROTH d.o.o.	31.5	99.4	54,881	212
109	PREDILNICA LITIJA HOLDING D.D. GROUP	30.7	98.1	35,203	316
110	KOLPA HOLDING GROUP	30.6	67.4	31,988	511
111	Poclain Hydraulics d.o.o.	30.5	93.0	37,495	268
112	MAKSIM GROUP	30.3	71.0	53,239	344
113	GOSTOL-GOPAN d.o.o. Nova Gorica	29.5	97.6	54,641	199

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Ranking	Company/Group	Net sales revenue on foreign markets, in million EUR	% of sales on foreign markets	Value added per employee, in EUR	Number of employees
114	MLM d.d.	29.3	96.0	29,875	403
115	PLASTIKA SKAZA d.o.o.	29.1	94.0	38,013	244
116	POLYCOM Škofja Loka d.o.o.	28.8	86.3	46,311	265
117	SUMIDA SLOVENIJA, d.o.o.	28.7	99.9	27,494	371
118	NIKO, d.o.o., Železniki	28.4	92.2	48,038	266
119	ADRIA TEHNIKA, d.o.o.	28.3	99.4	50,964	231
120	PIŠEK - VITLI KRPAN, d.o.o.	28.0	83.3	72,064	222
121	Raycap d.o.o.	28.0	78.0	86,997	133
122	URSA SLOVENIJA, d.o.o.	27.8	83.6	76,994	136
123	WILLY STADLER d.o.o.	27.6	98.1	78,071	153
124	ALPINA GROUP	27.6	71.1	12,766	1,298
125	TOMPLAST, d.o.o.	27.5	61.8	43,325	318
126	MDM GROUP	27.5	46.6	75,826	114



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Ranking	Company/Group	Net sales revenue on foreign markets, in million EUR	% of sales on foreign markets	Value added per employee, in EUR	Number of employees
127	METREL DUS GROUP	27.5	73.1	50,000	478
128	ŽITO d.o.o.	27.3	28.3	36,258	751
129	RLS d.o.o.	27.0	95.1	82,713	210
130	SIP, d.d. Šempeter v Savinjski dolini	26.3	80.9	52,190	234
131	FLUIDMASTER d.o.o.	26.2	92.0	49,443	175
132	TOSAMA d.o.o.	25.8	63.1	34,823	434
133	INTRA LIGHTING d.o.o.	25.8	86.8	74,876	136
134	ADLES d.o.o.	25.6	95.8	466,257	11
135	ATHOS Elektrosistemi d.o.o.	25.6	61.4	41,059	162
136	ATOTECH SLOVENIJA d.d.	25.6	91.2	66,252	74
137	FENOLIT d.d.	25.3	75.1	84,049	96
138	JATA EMONA GROUP	25.3	17.5	38,679	930
139	SAFILO d.o.o. Ormož - v likvidaciji	24.6	91.6	28,807	579
140	SKUPINA RADEČE PAPIR	24.4	67.8	28,447	296
141	VALJI d.o.o.	24.2	92.1	49,229	216
142	ECOLAB d.o.o.	24.1	68.2	68,945	105
143	ISKRA ISD GROUP	23.9	62.9	41,503	478
144	ROSENBAUER, d.o.o.	23.5	66.7	62,743	154
145	IMERYS FUSED MINERALS RUŠE d.o.o.	23.4	96.4	68,053	68
146	BAUMULLER DRAVINJA, d.o.o.	23.1	99.2	34,429	248
147	PREIS SEVNICA d.o.o.	23.0	98.8	34,328	281
148	OMEGA AIR d.o.o. Ljubljana	22.6	76.5	42,414	296
149	MAROVIT d.o.o.	22.6	97.0	56,622	208
150	TRANSPAK d.o.o.	22.4	98.7	62,746	124

Data source: audited and consolidated annual companies' and groups' reports for 2020, AJPES, database

Ranking methodology: by sales revenues generated on foreign market in 2020. Companies and groups that are parts of larger groups were excluded. We also excluded certain holding companies that do not represent the real economy. Retail, energy, telecommunications and transport sector's companies/groups were also excluded.



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# 80 Fastest Growing Exporters in Manufacturing Sector (2020/2015)

Ranking	Company/Group	Growth index of net sales revenue on foreign markets (2020/2015), in %	Net sales revenue on foreign market, in million EUR, (2020)	% of sales on foreign markets, (2020)	Value added per employee, in EUR, (2020)	Number of employees, (2020)
1	PERUTNINA PTUJ GROUP	415.6	199.7	68.0	31,658	3,745
2	ROSENBAUER, d.o.o.	194.1	23.5	66.7	62,743	154
3	TEGOMETALL OPREMA TRGOVIN, d.o.o.	193.3	14.8	85.4	32,380	118
4	Varis Lendava d.o.o.	186.7	23.4	80.5	57,693	248
5	Pivovarna Laško Union d.o.o.	164.9	46.1	31.6	100,004	574
6	LEDINEK ENGINEERING d.o.o.	162.2	57.9	99.0	119,378	196
7	OMEGA AIR d.o.o. Ljubljana	151.2	22.6	76.5	42,414	296
8	BELIMED d.o.o.	148.9	36.4	91.5	45,781	234
9	PLASTA GROUP	147.3	108.2	66.2	51,997	975
10	PIRNAR d.o.o.	135.4	34.6	88.4	72,655	103
11	G4 GROUP	130.0	59.2	47.2	46,413	828
12	FARMTECH d.o.o.	120.4	41.9	90.9	39,936	319
13	INCOM d.o.o.	119.8	66.9	90.8	52,648	481
14	ATHOS Elektrosistemi d.o.o.	119.3	25.6	61.4	41,059	162
15	KOVIS-LIVARNA d.o.o.	115.3	19.0	64.6	39,814	255
16	SYSTEMAIR d.o.o.	112.5	14.0	62.0	59,439	141
17	EUREL d.o.o.	111.6	13.3	51.3	27,982	296
18	RLS d.o.o.	111.2	27.0	95.1	82,713	210
19	TEHNOS d.o.o. Žalec	110.2	15.8	84.8	67,613	113
20	SIP, d.d. Šempeter v Savinjski dolini	107.3	26.3	80.9	52,190	234
21	TOMPLAST, d.o.o.	102.8	27.5	61.8	43,325	318
22	LITOSTROJ POWER GROUP	101.3	40.0	57.7	40,323	391
23	Raycap d.o.o.	95.6	28.0	78.0	86,997	133
24	CARTHAGO d.o.o.	94.6	217.2	100.0	35,653	826
25	TRANSPAK d.o.o.	91.2	22.4	98.7	62,746	124
26	SILIKO d.o.o.	90.7	57.7	84.9	59,976	411
27	UNICHEM d.o.o.	89.4	13.5	76.3	63,086	107
28	INTRA LIGHTING d.o.o.	88.2	25.8	86.8	74,876	136
29	PIŠEK - VITLI KRPAN, d.o.o.	82.5	28.0	83.3	72,064	222

Ranking	Company/Group	Growth index of net sales revenue on foreign markets (2020/2015), in %	Net sales revenue on foreign market, in million EUR, (2020)	% of sales on foreign markets, (2020)	Value added per employee, in EUR, (2020)	Number of employees, (2020)
30	FENIKS GROUP	81.5	42.6	99.7	23,277	483
31	ISKRAEMECO GROUP	80.0	118.4	92.5	47,313	691
32	MARMOR HOTAVLJE, d.o.o.	76.8	14.0	89.5	58,292	122
33	LJUBLJANSKE MLEKARNE d.o.o.	76.5	69.0	39.2	61,062	593
34	JATA EMONA GROUP	75.1	25.3	17.5	38,679	930
35	PIPISTREL d.o.o.	74.4	20.7	96.3	92,260	88
36	TEM Čatež, d.o.o.	73.6	11.0	63.4	71,420	146
37	MAROVТ d.o.o.	70.9	22.6	97.0	56,622	208
38	GOSTOL-GOPAN d.o.o. Nova Gorica	70.2	29.5	97.6	54,641	199
39	POLYCOM Škofja Loka d.o.o.	69.8	28.8	86.3	46,311	265
40	CELJSKE MESNINE D.D. GROUP	65.1	17.4	18.8	41,507	585
41	TAJFUN PLANINA GROUP	61.5	36.5	95.6	40,336	325
42	ADRIA TEHNIKA, d.o.o.	59.8	28.3	99.4	50,964	231
43	KOVIS d.o.o.	59.0	46.8	96.9	88,190	141

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Ranking	Company/Group	Growth index of net sales revenue on foreign markets (2020/2015), in %	Net sales revenue on foreign market, in million EUR, (2020)	% of sales on foreign markets, (2020)	Value added per employee, in EUR, (2020)	Number of employees, (2020)
44	WILLY STADLER d.o.o.	58.9	27.6	98.1	78,071	153
45	SEVEN REFRactories d.o.o.	58.7	49.3	98.4	100,055	96
46	MARLES HIŠE MARIBOR d.o.o.	58.5	13.4	61.4	45,905	119
47	ILMEST d.o.o. Nova Gorica	55.0	21.3	98.8	25,758	159
48	I.H.S. d.o.o.	54.9	19.8	99.7	50,291	148
49	AKRAPOVIČ SKUPINA	54.6	125.7	98.8	55,907	1236
50	TRO, d.o.o.	53.1	12.6	91.3	40,401	138
51	Olma d.o.o.	51.0	8.0	41.9	85,517	41
52	PREIS SEVNICA d.o.o.	49.1	23.0	98.8	34,328	281
53	DON DON GROUP	49.1	77.2	69.3	19,210	1901
54	KOPUR d.o.o.	48.9	8.5	83.3	41,551	108
55	CABLEX GROUP	48.3	162.1	95.2	18,625	3050
56	ŽITO d.o.o.	48.0	27.3	28.3	36,258	751
57	FIBRAN d.o.o.	47.9	18.6	79.4	110,151	68



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Ranking	Company/Group	Growth index of net sales revenue on foreign markets (2020/2015), in %	Net sales revenue on foreign market, in million EUR, (2020)	% of sales on foreign markets, (2020)	Value added per employee, in EUR, (2020)	Number of employees, (2020)
58	LEK GROUP	46.8	1500.1	97.2	101,248	5129
59	SALONIT ANHOVO GROUP	45.6	40.0	45.2	102,900	364
60	SAXONIA - FRANKE, d.o.o.	45.5	15.7	99.2	100,714	79
61	TASTEPOINT GROUP	45.1	89.0	90.6	106,541	335
62	KNAUF INSULATION, d.o.o., Škofja Loka	45.0	119.7	84.4	105,469	458
63	ARMATURE d.o.o.	42.3	18.8	96.7	42,936	153
64	SOGEFI FILTRATION d.o.o.	42.3	49.1	100.0	46,111	324
65	ISKRA ISD GROUP	41.3	23.9	62.9	41,503	478
66	SUMIDA SLOVENIJA, d.o.o.	41.2	28.7	99.9	27,494	371
67	SIBO G. d.o.o.	41.1	36.3	89.8	67,044	233
68	PALFINGER d.o.o.	40.8	110.7	95.7	40,655	666
69	ETI GROUP	40.1	129.4	92.2	33,176	1624
70	VALJI d.o.o.	39.4	24.2	92.1	49,229	216
71	ERSPEKTIVA FT GROUP	39.2	32.2	14.9	42,749	1557



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Ranking	Company/Group	Growth index of net sales revenue on foreign markets (2020/2015), in %	Net sales revenue on foreign market, in million EUR, (2020)	% of sales on foreign markets, (2020)	Value added per employee, in EUR, (2020)	Number of employees, (2020)
72	URSA SLOVENIJA, d.o.o.	38.9	27.8	83.6	76,994	136
73	odelo Slovenija d.o.o.	38.0	179.2	100.0	38,878	1356
74	IMP ARMATURE d.o.o.	37.0	7.1	77.4	39,435	82
75	GEA VIPOLL d.o.o.	36.8	17.6	97.8	46,559	144
76	Strip's d.o.o.	36.8	8.8	71.7	44,246	105
77	OPLAST, d.o.o.	36.4	15.7	76.4	58,473	199
78	VAR d.o.o.	35.1	8.3	91.7	36,156	86
79	LIVARNA TITAN, d.o.o.	34.9	7.8	80.0	31,614	134
80	BSH HIŠNI APARATI d.o.o. Nazarje	34.8	342.8	90.8	48,814	1169

Data source: audited and consolidated annual companies' and groups' reports for 2020 and 2015, AJPES, database

Ranking methodology: by relative growth of sales on foreign markets in 2020 compared to 2015. Initial minimum of sales on foreign markets at EUR 5 m in 2015.

Companies and groups that are parts of larger groups were excluded as well as certain holding companies that do not represent the real economy. Retail, energy, telecommunications and transport sector's companies/groups were also excluded.

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