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**Edition Visegrad Four**

# Discover Slovenia

September 2019



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# Discover Slovenia

## Edition Visegrad Four

September 2019

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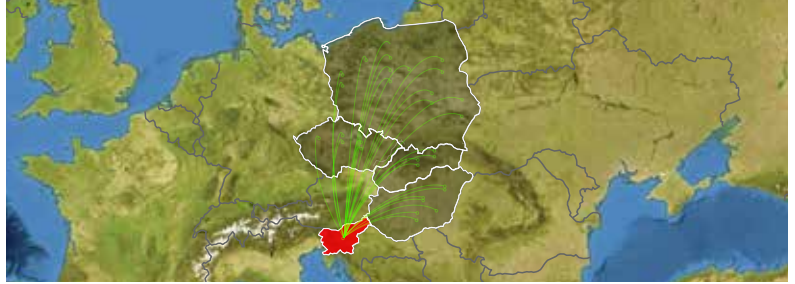
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## *In the Search for New Areas of Common Interest*

I am delighted that you have taken the time to open and read this issue of Discover Slovenia. I am sure you will find plenty of information, presentations and contacts to interest you and make you consider engaging actively with Slovenia and Slovenian enterprises. Perhaps some of the photographs will encourage you to take your next holiday on the Slovenian coast, or in the mountains, on the farms or at the thermal resorts of our wonderful country.

Slovenia is today facing major challenges in its attempts to enter global markets. The small size of the domestic market means that Slovenian companies are very active abroad in searching for new export opportunities. I am pleased to see that we are addressing these challenges appropriately and well by using our reputation for quality and other comparative advantages. Our main export markets remain those of the European Union, followed by those with which we have historically well-established political and economic ties.

The perception of the majority of Slovenes is that the countries of the Visegrad Group are very similar to us in terms of size, economic outlook and history. Because we are geographically fairly close to each other, it does not take long for us to reach our desired destination – so it is only natural for us to look for common areas of interest. As a result, merchandise trade between the markets is relatively high and trending upwards. The formerly tentative investment activities are now fairly well-established and visible on all the markets concerned.

The experiences of other, more developed markets teach us that stability in the business environment is one of the key advantages of a small economy. We believe that we have this stability. Public debt is falling rapidly and, with the reduction in interest rates, so is interest expenditure. Company indebtedness is at its lowest in the history of the Slovenian economy, and the banking system is well-capitalised and considerably more resistant

to shocks. We can be satisfied with what we have achieved as a society since 2013. However, the task ahead of us is to increase productivity and, with it, national prosperity. We must encourage Slovenian exporters to seek out new market niches, perhaps by changing their business models or opening up opportunities on new markets, as well as by taking steps that stimulate investment in innovation and encourage the retention of older employees.

All the above is, in one way or another, reflected in the activities of the Chamber of Commerce and Industry of Slovenia (GZS) in relation to the markets of Visegrad Four, which GZS members and Slovenian businesspeople spend a great deal of time in. Not a month goes by without some sort of visit to Slovenia or without us heading a business delegation to the V4. That does not even take into account activities at an individual level, with supply and demand being matched on a daily basis or the interests of both sides being connected in some other way.

I am delighted to see economic cooperation progressing so satisfactorily and look forward to all the opportunities that will arise in the future. Feel free to share your views and thoughts on [ante.milevoj@gzs.si](mailto:ante.milevoj@gzs.si). I hope you enjoy reading this issue of the magazine and wish you a warm welcome to Slovenia.



Foto: GZS archive

Ante Milevoj, Director, International Relations Department



Photo: www.slovenia.info / Jost Gantner

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Photo: Depositphotos

# Slovenia

**Official name:** Republic of Slovenia

**Capital city:** Ljubljana

**Government:** Parliamentary republic

**State President:** Borut Pahor

**Prime Minister:** Marjan Šarec

**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:** 2,080,908 (1 January 2019)

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

**Currency:** Euro

**GDP per capita:** EUR 21,182

**Growth in 2018:** 4.5%

**Projected growth for 2019:** 3.3%

(Consensus Economics, June 2019)

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

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

Official gateway to information on Slovenia



Source: Statistical Office of the Republic of Slovenia



# Top Slovenian Business Data

**Ease of doing business, openness to trade, education and innovations remain the strongest pillars of success.**

*Bojan Ivanc, Analytical Department, Chamber of Commerce and Industry of Slovenia*

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

(out of 140) Macro-economic stability  
(WEF)

**10<sup>th</sup>**

(out of 190)  
Resolving insolvency (DB)

**12<sup>th</sup>**

(out of 63)  
Prices (IMD)

**12<sup>th</sup>**

(out of 28) Innovation  
Union Scoreboard

**19<sup>th</sup>**

(out of 190)  
Getting electricity (DB)

**24<sup>th</sup>**

(out of 137)  
Higher Education (WEF)

**34<sup>th</sup>**

(out of 63) IMD World Digital  
Competitiveness Ranking

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

(out of 137)  
Innovations (WEF)

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

(out of 137) Technological  
Readiness (WEF)

**39<sup>th</sup>**

(out of 137)  
Infrastructure (WEF)

**50<sup>th</sup>**

(out of 160) Logistics  
Performance Index

Sources: Doing Business (DB), IMD - World Competitiveness Rankings, IMD - World Digital Competitiveness Rankings, WEF - The Global World Competitiveness Report, Logistics Performance Index, Innovation Union Scoreboard





Photo: Depositphotos

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# Slovenia, the European Union's Current Star Performer

**Domestic demand is becoming increasingly important for future economic trends**

*Bojan Ivanc, Analytical Department, Chamber of Commerce and Industry of Slovenia*

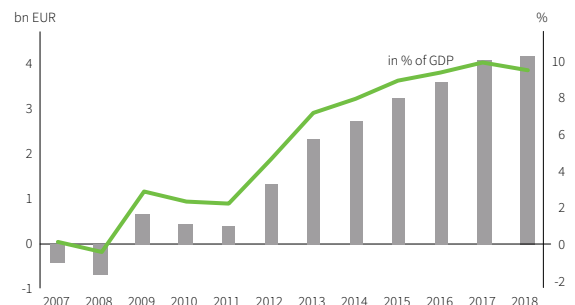
Growth in 2018 equalled **4.5%** of GDP, and is forecast to reach **3%** in 2019.

## Slovenia's Growth Continues to Exceed the EU28 Average

The Slovenian economy has been growing over the last six years. In the first quarter of 2019, Slovenia recorded a relatively high economic growth of 3.2% and an even higher seasonally adjusted growth, standing at 3.7% (mainly due to the difference in the number of working days). Real economic growth stood at 4.5% in 2018 (seasonally and calendar adjusted), which is double the long-term growth assessment. This growth is more than double the average for the EU-28 (2%) and among the six highest in the EU-28. In the second half of 2017, Slovenia exceeded the development level of 2008. Following the growth in consumption, only investments in fixed assets remain below the pre-crisis level, which are 29% lower in real terms than ten years ago, when Slovenia was in the midst of a residential construction boom. According to the

most recent current forecasts by Eastern European Consensus, economic growth is expected to reach 3.3% in 2019 and 2.8% in 2020. The estimates for 2019 are in the 2.5–3.7% range. The cooling of the euro

## Trade balance (goods & services)





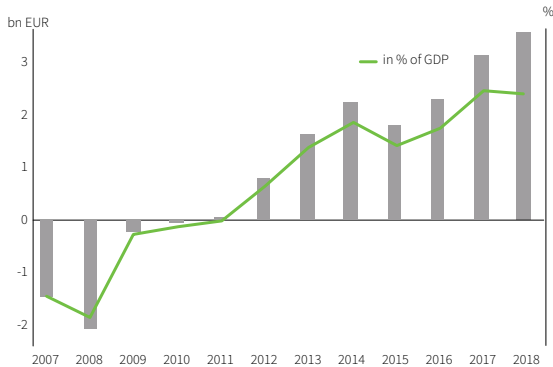
area's economy has thus had a moderate impact on this estimate.

The forecasted economic growth rate of 3% in 2019 is based on the creation of jobs and growth of wages, and also on consumer optimism and investments. Lower interest rates stimulate domestic sales, particularly of durables (vehicles) and real estate, as well as construction. The financing conditions remain favourable, and alongside firms' significant internal resources from retained earnings are continuing to provide for solid growth in investment by the corporate sector in Slovenia. Trade will slow somewhat due to slightly worsened conditions for exports to the main European markets, but growth in exports in 2019 will remain at 5%. The wage growth and increase in employment are expected to additionally boost the growth of private consumption. Slovenian consumers are otherwise a bit less optimistic this year, but the optimism level remains above the average for the last few years.

**Export Growth Double That of the EU Overall**

The Slovenian economy is primarily focused on EU markets on the export side, as they account for more than three-quarters of its exports, which represent more than 85% of GDP. Export growth was up 8.7% in the first quarter of 2019 and import growth was up 8.5% on the same period last year. The high growth in merchandise trade is driven by growth in industrial production, which was 4.3% higher in the first quarter. Growth in goods exports stood at 9.4% in 2018, more than double that recorded overall by the euro area and the EU-28, and 4.5 percentage points lower than in 2017. Industrial production rose by 6.4%, which is 2 percentage points lower than in 2017. Growth in exports of services stood at 10.2 percent,

**Current account balance**



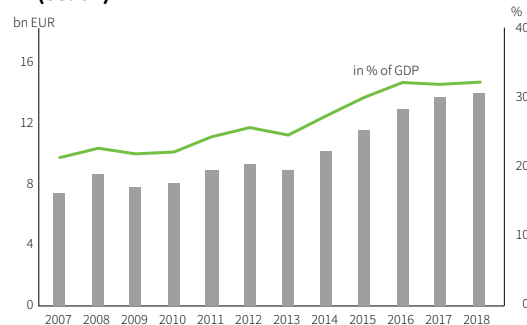
primarily as a result of a successful tourism season, good performance by the transport sector and new business abroad for construction firms.

**Slovenia's Economy Is Solvent, with Low Levels of Debt**

Slovenian firms have tightened up their balance sheets and improved their organizational structures over the last decade. The net debt to EBITDA ratio declined from 6 to less than 2.3, while cash now

accounts for 6.4% of assets. Value-added and the number of employees were up 7.6% and 4.6%, respectively. Value-added per employee exceeded EUR 44,000 despite the higher growth (+7.4%) in the prices of the input commodities that Slovenia's export economy needs for production. ROE was over 9.1%, while companies earmarked 5.3% of sales revenues for investment in 2017. Further increases can be expected in investment activity, after a long period of being more than one percentage point down on

**FDI (stock)**



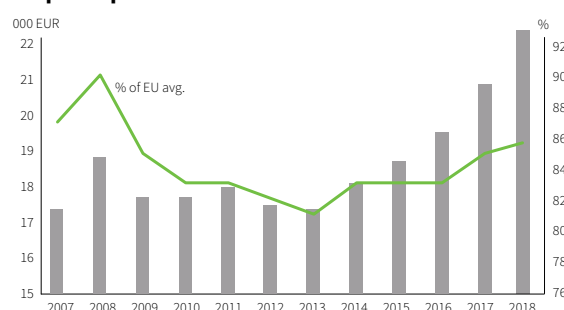
its long-term average. In addition to investments in machinery and transport equipment, investments in commercial real estate will also increase considerably.

**Consumers Have Woken Up**

After a two-year lag relative to the EU overall, domestic consumption in Slovenia is again increasing, which is primarily attributable to more favourable dynamics on the labour market. According to register figures, the workforce in employment was up 3.2% both in 2018 and in the first quarter of 2019. The employment of foreign nationals is increasing, which coincides with rapid growth in construction, manufacturing and other services. In the first quarter of this year, half of all newly employed persons were employed in construction and manufacturing.

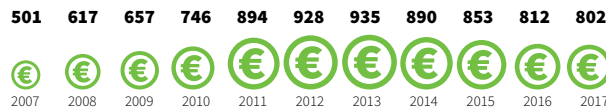
An increasing number of companies (40% of all enterprises) are citing problems with hiring qualified workers and are planning to increase recruitment levels in the coming months. The surveyed unemployment rate (ILO methodology) fell to 5.1% in 2018, 3.1 percentage points lower than the figure

**GDP per capita**



Labour productivity rose from EUR 34,000 to over EUR 44,000 over ten years.

**R&D expenditure (mio EUR)**



for the euro area and the lowest rate since 2009. The unemployment rate stood at 4% before the crisis, and rose to 11% at the peak of the crisis. Slovenia's unemployment rate remained low in the first quarter of 2019, falling to 4.4% (euro area 7.8%).

**Wage Growth Increasing, Real Estate Prices Rising**

The average wage was up 4.6% in the first quarter of 2019 in both the private and public sectors. In the private sector, wage growth (+4.3%) was driven by good corporate performance, gradual growth in productivity, labour shortages and the associated upward pressure on wages, and an increase in the minimum wage. The highest wage rises were recorded in trade, accommodation and food services, and support service activities, i.e. in sectors with the largest labour shortages and the highest percentage of minimum wage workers. Wage growth in the public sector (+5.6%; general government sector +6.4) was higher owing to the agreed wage increases at the end of last year, and to a minor extent due to the minimum wage increase. Average gross wages in 2018 were 3.4% higher, and net wages were 2.9% higher. The growth in the private sector was partially on account of higher additional payments (performance bonuses) due to good overall corporate performance in the last year, and the further disencumbering of certain bonuses (the '14th month') from income tax (up to the level of the average salary).

The increase in household consumption is mainly attributable to increased employment and higher levels of remuneration, while household deposits are also increasing (+6.8% in 2018). Lending growth remains moderate (2.2% for corporate borrowing and 7% for household borrowing, which is less than the nominal GDP growth). Year-on-year growth in housing loans stood at 4.7% in December 2018, while growth in consumer loans stood at 11.8%. Both loans to households and corporate loans have been growing in 2019. Growth in corporate loans has been improving

**GDP growth**



The ILO surveyed unemployment rate fell to below 5%

since December 2018, and reached 3.5% in March 2019. Year-on-year growth in housing loans increased to 5.2% in the first quarter of 2019, while year-on-year growth in consumer loans remained high at 12.8%.

After four years of growth in residential real estate prices, particularly in the last two years (average rate 12%), we can once again speak of record prices on the residential real estate market, which have reached the level of prices achieved in 2008 (although still 10% lower in real terms). Over the full year 2018, real estate prices grew by 15%. The EU average for the year was 4.4%. Household debt is also still below average, as the average household is able to repay its mortgage debt from its half-year earnings, while households across the euro area require their full annual earnings.

**Budget Surplus Achieved**

The Slovenian national budget surplus is growing faster than forecast due to fast growth of nominal GDP. The budget surplus for 2018 stood at EUR 337 million, or 0.7% of GDP. The government's consolidated gross debt decreased to EUR 32.2 billion, or to 70.1% of GDP from 74.1% in 2017. This decrease was mainly a consequence of expected growth in nominal GDP in 2018. Slovenia has reported a primary surplus (surplus revenues to expenditure before payment of interest) since 2015, and a secondary surplus since 2017. Nevertheless, according to estimates by the European Commission and the Slovenian Fiscal Advisory Council, the structural deficit is expected to increase further, as the current high level of economic growth masks a lack of serious long-term reforms in pensions and healthcare.

Inflation remained low in 2018, despite the positive domestic economic climate. Prices (HICP) increased by 1.9% in 2018, which equals the EU-28 figure and is higher than the euro area (1.8%), primarily due to higher energy prices, which are weighted higher in Slovenia's market basket. Inflation (HICP) remains relatively low in 2019 (April SLO 1.7% and EU-28 1.7%), and is forecast to stay below 2% for the entire year in both the EU and Slovenia. High demand for workers in the private sector could lead to higher growth in wages and prices (i.e. service price inflation) in the coming months. Growth in wages continues to lag behind the Visegrad countries, due to which our export competitiveness vis-à-vis those countries remains positive.

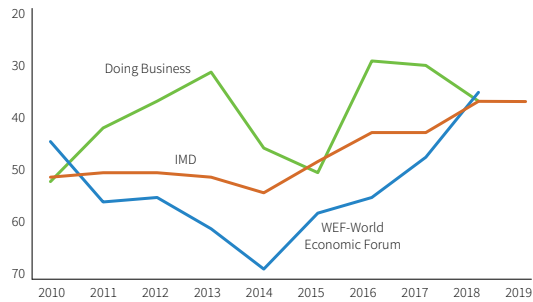


**Trade War an Indirect Threat**

The main risks to the Slovenian economy are associated with the sustainability of the favourable trends in exports, and particularly to the threat of trade wars. The risk of import tariffs on European cars and car parts being introduced by the US is increasing, which would hit the European economy hard. There are considerable unknowns with regard to the speed of the transition from diesel-powered vehicles to electromobility, as well as other political uncertainties connected with the EU single market, and particularly to the free flow of goods over the EU's internal borders. This is of very great importance to Slovenia's transport sector (port, railroads, freight transport). The return of faster growth of labour costs due to growth in domestic demand (construction and real estate) could gradually weaken the export competitiveness of the Slovenian economy, which is currently high, as the current account surplus is still over 6% of GDP.

As a small, open economy, the EU single market, the euro and the four freedoms (free movement of goods, services, labour and capital) are the key performance determinants for Slovenian exporters. Owing to its integration into global value chains via Germany, it

**Ranking**



Sources: Bank of Slovenia, Statistical Office of the Republic of Slovenia, Doing Business, IMD - World Competitiveness Rankings, WEF - The Global World Competitiveness Report

is important for the global flow of goods to remain as free as possible. Due to the Slovenian economy's integration into global value chains, every Slovenian citizen has EUR 25,000 more than they had when Slovenia gained independence (source: Bertelsmann). Slovenia has therefore exploited the growth in global trade well, although lower growth or negative growth could lead to a decline in living standards.

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

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- Global presence through its partnerships with logistics service providers world-wide
- Providing excellence, guaranteed through certification:
  - ISO 9001-2008 (Certificate QS-5478)
  - Authorised Economic Operator (AEO Certificate SIAEOCSI001000201131967)

[www.tpg.si](http://www.tpg.si)





## Visegrad Already Accounts for 10% of Trade

**Slovenia is increasing its trade with Poland, the Czech Republic, Slovakia and Hungary (the Visegrad Four), and cooperation has strengthened in recent years.**

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

**Slovenia generates more than EUR 6.5 billion in merchandise trade with the Visegrad countries.**

The four Visegrad countries (V4) are an important trading partner for Slovenia – indeed, they are comparable in importance with the countries of South-Eastern Europe. Slovenia already generates more than EUR 6.5 billion in merchandise trade and EUR 1 billion in trade in services with these four countries. The combined figure of EUR 7.5 billion represents 10% of Slovenia's overall foreign trade. Merchandise trade and trade in services have increased strongly in recent years, as have mutual direct investments.

The volume of Slovenia's trade with the V4 amounted to EUR 6.5 billion in 2018 – a rise of 9.6% on the 2017 figure. Trade with the V4 accounts for 10.5% of Slovenia's total volume of trade. In 2018, exports to the V4 increased by 8% and imports from the V4 increased by 11%. Exports to these countries increased from EUR 2.2 billion in 2008 to EUR 3 billion in 2018 (a rise of 41%), while imports grew from EUR 2.2 billion in 2008 to EUR 3.4 billion in 2018 (a rise of 57.5%). Exports to the V4 account for 9.9% of Slovenia's overall exports, and imports account for 11.2% of the country's overall imports.

In terms of the value of Slovenia's merchandise trade, neighbouring Hungary ranked first in 2018 among the V4 (EUR 2 billion, or 3.3% of Slovenia's overall merchandise trade), followed by Poland (EUR 1.8 billion or 3% of the total), the Czech Republic (EUR

1.6 billion or 2.5% of the total) and Slovakia (EUR 1 billion or 1.7% of the total).

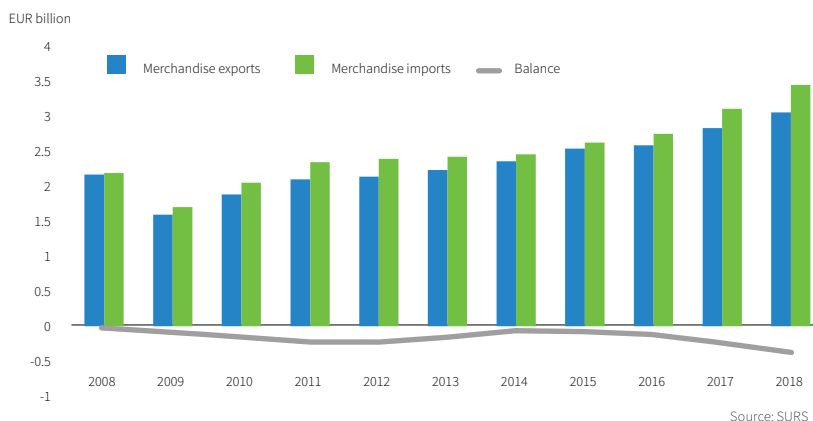
Merchandise trade with the Visegrad Four has continued to grow this year, with the total value standing at EUR 2.3 billion by the end of April 2019 – a rise of 10.3% on the same period the year before. Total exports accounted for EUR 1.2 billion of this figure (an increase of 9.5%) and imports for EUR 1.1 billion (a 11.2% increase on the first four months of 2018).

According to the latest available figures (2017), Poland was the most favoured of the V4 countries for Slovenian companies, with 1,688 involved in exports to and 5,040 in imports from Poland. These were mostly micro enterprises. The largest number of exporters to the V4 were involved in exporting to Hungary (2,109 companies). Seventy-four per cent of exports to the Visegrad are made by micro and small enterprises, which account for around 16% of the total exports in each country. The figures for imports break down in a similar way, with 84% of micro and small enterprises accounting for just over 35% of overall imports from the V4.

**Slovenia exports most to Poland (EUR 920 million in 2018) and imports most from Hungary (EUR 1.1 billion in 2018).**



### Merchandise trade with the Visegrad countries



**Slovenia has a trade deficit with the Visegrad countries.**

Total trade (exports and imports) in EUR million	2017	2018	Growth in %, 2018/2017	2019 (Jan–Apr)
TOTAL	5,915	6,480	9.6	2,294
Czech Republic	1,407	1,567	11.4	528
Hungary	1,839	2,020	9.8	727
Poland	1,682	1,820	8.2	629
Slovakia	988	1,074	8.7	410

Source: SURS

Exports (EUR million)	2008	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019 (Jan–Apr)
TOTAL	2,158	2,531	2,575	2,820	3,046	1,088
Czech Republic	486	557	582	685	749	256
Hungary	616	695	706	767	878	306
Poland	695	817	814	868	920	329
Slovakia	361	462	474	500	500	197

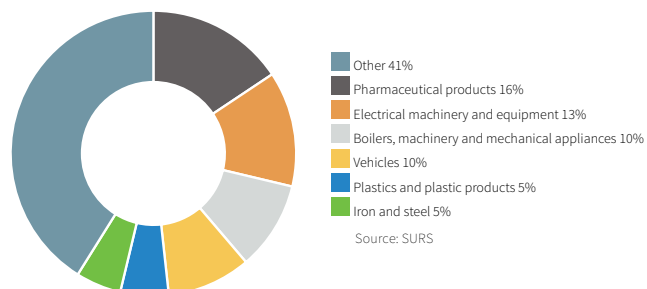
Source: SURS

Imports (EUR million)	2008	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019 (Jan–Apr)
TOTAL	2,180	2,616	2,741	3,095	3,434	1,206
Czech Republic	564	628	622	722	818	271
Hungary	896	1,014	1,012	1,071	1,142	421
Poland	411	623	696	813	899	300
Slovakia	309	351	411	488	574	213

Source: SURS

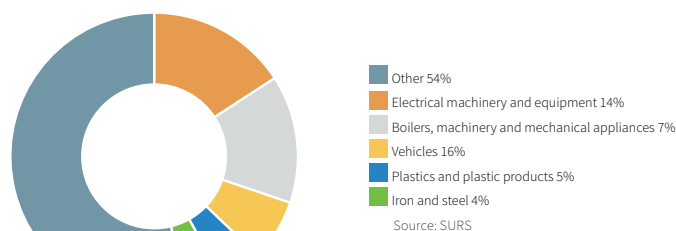
### Export products to the Visegrad countries

Share in %, 2018



### Import products from the Visegrad countries

Share in %, 2018





In the first four months of 2019, Slovenia saw exports of goods to the Czech Republic rise by **3.4%** and imports by **5.6%**.

### Slovenian Merchandise Exports to the Czech Republic Have Increased for the Last Five Years

Slovenian merchandise exports to the Czech Republic have increased for the last five years, while merchandise imports have been growing since 2013. Over the last ten years, Slovenia has seen its merchandise exports to the Czech Republic rise by 54% and its imports from the Czech Republic by 45%. The value of Slovenian exports to the Czech Republic was EUR 749 million in 2018, or 9.3% more than in 2017, while the value of imports stood at EUR 818 million, or a rise of 13.3% on 2017. The Czech Republic is Slovenia's 11th biggest export partner and 10th biggest import partner. Except for 2012 and 2013, Slovenia has recorded a merchandise trade deficit with the Czech Republic throughout. In 2018 the deficit stood at EUR 70 million.

Most of the products exported to the Czech Republic by Slovenian companies in 2018 came from the following categories: electrical machinery and equipment – electrical lighting equipment (16.5% of all exports to the country), pharmaceutical products – medicinal products (13.1%), machinery and mechanical devices – engine parts (9.9%), aluminium and aluminium products (8.1%), vehicles – vehicle parts and accessories (7.6%), and plastics and plastic products (5.5%). Slovenia mainly imported the following from the Czech Republic: cars and other motor vehicles (15.6% of all imports from the country), vehicle parts and accessories (7.6%), electrical appliances for line telephony and telegraphy (3.1%), iron and steel waste and residues (1.8%) and heterocyclic compounds (1.8%). There are more than 1,500 companies in Slovenia that export to the Czech Republic (71% are micro and small enterprises) and more than 4,200 that import from the Czech Republic (85% of these companies employ fewer than 50 people). A total of 104 Slovenian companies generated over EUR 1 million in exports to the Czech Republic in 2017 and 120 companies imported goods worth over EUR 1 million.

More than **1,500** Slovenian companies export to and more than **4,200** import from the Czech Republic.

Over **2,100** Slovenian companies export to and around **4,300** import from Hungary.



### Slovenia's Merchandise Trade with Hungary Stands at More Than EUR 2 Billion

Slovenia generated more than EUR 2 billion in merchandise trade with Hungary in 2018, which was an increase of 9.8% on the year before and accounted for 3.3% of Slovenia's overall trade. In 2018, the value of Slovenian exports to Hungary was EUR 878 million, or a rise of 14.4% on 2017, while the value of imports stood at EUR 1,421 million, or a rise of 6.6% on 2017. Hungary was Slovenia's 8th biggest export partner and 6th biggest import partner in 2018,

Slovenian exports to Hungary have increased year-on-year for the last seven years, while imports have been growing for the last three. Slovenia has recorded a trade deficit with Hungary every year, with the figure standing at EUR 264 million in 2018. In the first four months of this year, Slovenia saw exports of goods to Hungary rise by 13.9% and imports of goods from Hungary by 12.9%. As is the case with the Czech Republic, one key reason for this is the fact that both countries are home to car manufacturers and the value of a manufactured vehicle exceeds that of the parts incorporated within it.

Most of the products exported to Hungary by Slovenian companies in 2018 were vehicles (cars and other motor vehicles) and vehicle parts (16.5% of all exports to the country), electrical machinery and equipment – parts for rotational electrical machinery (11.6%) and pharmaceutical products – medicinal products (3%). Slovenia mainly imported the following from Hungary: electrical machinery and equipment – electrical appliances for line telephony, monitors and projectors (18.7%), pharmaceutical products – medicinal products (9.1%), mineral fuels and oils (9%), vehicles and parts (8.9%), and mechanical devices and machinery – automatic data processing computers (6.7%). Over 2,100 Slovenian companies, including 473 large and medium-sized enterprises, export to Hungary and around 4,300 import from Hungary (including around 604 large and medium-sized enterprises). A total of 128 Slovenian companies generated over EUR 1 million in annual exports to Hungary in 2017 and 188 companies imported goods worth over EUR 1 million.





### Medicinal Products Are Slovenia's Top Export Product in Poland

Slovenian exports to Poland have increased strongly year-on-year for the last three years, while imports have been growing since 2009. Slovenia generated more than EUR 1.8 billion in merchandise trade with Poland in 2018, which was an increase of 8.2% on the year before and accounted for 3% of Slovenia's overall trade. In 2018, the value of Slovenian exports to Poland was EUR 920 million, or 6% higher than in 2017, while the value of imports reached EUR 899 million, or 2.9% higher than in 2017. Poland was Slovenia's 6th biggest export partner and its 9th biggest import partner in 2018. Over the years, Slovenia has recorded a slight trade surplus with Poland. This surplus stood at EUR 21 million in 2018. In the first four months of this year, Slovenia saw exports of goods to Poland rise by 3.8% and imports of goods by 6.7%.

Most of the products exported to Poland by Slovenian companies in 2018 were pharmaceutical products – medicinal products (24.6% of all exports to the country), electrical machinery and equipment/generators (11.7%), vehicles/cars and other motor vehicles (10.6%), and machinery and mechanical devices/dishwashers (10%). Slovenia mainly imported the following from Poland: cars, parts and trucks (15.5% of all imports from the country), electrical machinery and equipment – boards, panels and consoles (9.8%), plastics and plastic products (6.8%), , cigars and cigarettes (3.7%), new tyres (2.2%) and copper wire (1.9%). Over 1,690 Slovenian companies export to and around 5,040 import from Poland (including around 546 large and medium-sized enterprises). A total of 116 Slovenian companies generated over EUR 1 million in exports to Poland in 2017 and 126 companies imported goods worth over EUR 1 million.

### More Than 20% Growth in Slovakia This Year

In the first four months of this year, Slovenia saw exports of goods to Slovakia rise by 18.4% and imports of goods by 25.5%. Slovenian exports to Slovakia have been growing since 2010 (although there was a slight fall in 2014), while imports of goods have been rising in the last five years. Slovenia generated more than EUR 1 billion in merchandise trade with Slovakia in 2018, which was an increase of 8.7% on the year before and accounted for 1.7% of Slovenia's overall trade. In 2018, the value of Slovenian exports to Slovakia was EUR 500 million (the same figure as 2017), while the value of imports stood at EUR 574 million, or an increase of 17.7% on 2017. Slovakia was Slovenia's 18th biggest export partner and its 15th biggest import partner in 2018. Slovenia recorded a trade surplus with Slovakia in 2012 and 2017, and a trade deficit of EUR 75 million in 2018.

Most of the products exported to Slovakia by Slovenian companies in 2018 were electrical machinery and devices for telephony, lighting and signalisation (13.1% of all exports to the country), machinery and mechanical devices – air or vacuum pumps and compressors (12%), pharmaceutical products – medicinal products (10.1%), artificial corundum and aluminium oxide (9.6%), iron and steel – flat-rolled non-alloy steel products (6.5%). Slovenia mainly imported the following from Slovakia: electrical machinery and equipment – telephones, monitors and projectors (20% of all imports from the country), vehicles – cars, parts and accessories (17.5%), paper and cardboard – uncoated (6.1%), boilers, machinery, mechanical devices (5.4%), and iron and steel – hot-rolled (5.1%). Over 1,760 Slovenian companies export to and around 2,050 import from Slovakia (including around 388 large and medium-sized enterprises). A total of 75 Slovenian companies generated over EUR 1 million in exports to Slovakia in 2017 and 69 companies imported goods worth over EUR 1 million.

Slovenia generated more than EUR **1.8 billion** in merchandise trade with Poland in 2018, which was an increase of **8.2%** on the year before.

Over **1,690** Slovenian companies export to and around **5,040** import from Poland.

Slovenian exports to Slovakia have been increasing since 2010.

Over **1,760** Slovenian companies export to and around **2,050** import from Slovakia.



Slovenia generates  
**EUR 1 billion** in  
trade in services  
with the V4.

Slovenia has a  
service trade  
surplus with the V4  
(**EUR 260 million**  
in 2018).

Hungary accounts  
for **40%** of overall  
service exports (**EUR  
258 million**) and  
the Czech Republic  
for **26%** (**EUR  
163 million**).

### Travel and Transport Account for the Bulk of Service Exports

Exports of services with the Visegrad Four reached EUR 1 billion in 2018, which was a rise of 13.4% on the previous year. Slovenia has a service trade surplus with the Visegrad countries (EUR 259.7 million in 2018) on account of travel and transport services. Slovenia is an attractive country for tourists and travellers, with the Port of Koper, the good motorway network, Slovenian railways and other players in the Slovenian logistics chain all playing a major role in the success enjoyed by the transport sector.

The export of services to the Visegrad countries accounts for 8% of Slovenia's total service exports; on the import side, this share is 7.1%. In 2018, service exports to the V4 increased by 13.6%, reaching EUR 636 million. Tourism accounts for the highest single share of service exports from the Visegrad countries (45.5% of the total), with travellers holidaying on the coast and in other tourist areas. This is followed by transport services (32%), telecommunications and computer services (5%) and other business services (12.5%). Transport service exports chiefly comprise services for clients from the manufacturing sector in the V4. Services have the greatest relative importance within overall trade (merchandise and services) in Hungary (22%), followed by the Czech Republic (17.6%) and Slovakia (17.4%). They have the least relative importance in Poland (10.4%).

Travel (tourist consumption in Slovenia) accounts for the largest single export service in Hungary (61.3% of overall service exports), followed by Poland (43.8%) and the Czech Republic (38%), while tourist consumption in Slovenia is the second most important export service for Slovakia (20.9%). Transport services account for 67.1% of all service exports to Slovakia, while these types of service are in second place in terms of importance in the other V4 countries (between 18 and 36% of service exports). The export of telecommunications and computer services is in third place in terms of importance.

Imports of services from the V4 increased by 13% to EUR 377 million in 2018. The main imported services are

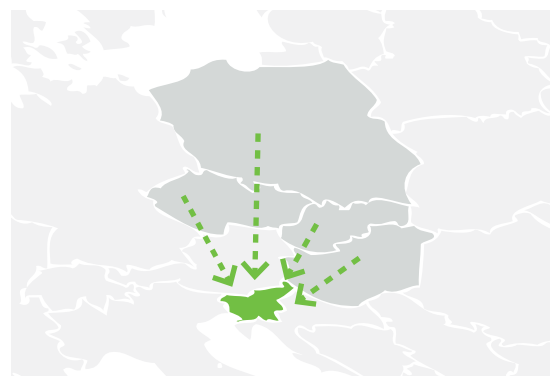
transport services (35.2% of total imports from the V4), tourism from Slovenia (9%), telecommunications and computer services (7.9%), construction services (7.5%) and other business services (32.8%). Slovenia imports the highest volume of services from the Czech Republic (EUR 111 million), followed by Hungary (EUR 90 million), Slovakia (EUR 88 million) and Poland (EUR 77 million).

The import of transport services was in first place across the V4 in 2018, with the share ranging from 41.9% in Slovakia (the highest) to 24% in Hungary (the lowest), with imports of telecommunications and computer services placed second in terms of importance in Poland (8.5%) and the Czech Republic (12.5%). Tourism from Slovenia was the second most important service import in Hungary (20.2% of Hungary's overall imports), while imports of construction services were the second most important import service in Slovakia (21.4% of all services).

### Growth of Foreign Direct Investment in Slovenia from the V4

Foreign direct investment (FDI) in Slovenia by companies from the V4 increased in 2018 by 13.3% to EUR 412 million, or 2.7% of all FDI in Slovenia. This was 2.8 times the figure recorded in 2008. The highest direct investments came from the Czech Republic (EUR 303.4 million), accounting for 2% of all direct investment in Slovenia. The latter increased by 4.3% compared to 2017 and was 3.8 times higher than the 2008 figure. The next largest V4 foreign direct investor in Slovenia is Hungary (EUR 59.3 million), followed by Poland (EUR 26.2 million) and Slovakia (EUR 22.9 million). The Czech Republic is the 10th largest investor in Slovenia, followed by Hungary (23rd), Poland (26th) and Slovakia (28th). In 2018 FDI from Hungary increased by 92%, from Slovakia by 40%, and from the Czech Republic and Poland by 4%.

In 2018, Slovenia's direct investments in the Visegrad countries amounted to EUR 184 million, or 5.8% more than in 2017. This represented 3% of all of Slovenia's FDI. The Czech Republic and Poland were ranked first in 2018 with respect to the value of



The highest direct  
investments in 2018  
came from the Czech  
Republic (just over  
**EUR 300 million**).

FDI from the V4 in  
Slovenia stood at  
**EUR 412 million**  
in 2018.

The export of  
services to the  
V4 accounts for  
**17%** of Slovenian  
service exports  
and the import of  
services from the V4  
accounts for **10%**  
of Slovenian service  
imports.

There was a  
**280%** increase  
in FDI from the V4  
between 2008 and  
2018.



Slovenian FDI in the V4. According to figures from the Bank of Slovenia, the value of Slovenian investments in the Czech Republic stood at EUR 74 million at the end of 2018 (an 8.2% increase on 2017). Slovenian investments in the Czech Republic account for 1.2% of all Slovenian FDI. Over the last decade, most of the V4 countries have been placed between 10th and 33rd among all targeted investment destinations for Slovenian investors.

Among the V4 countries, Poland is in second place behind the Czech Republic. Slovenian investors had

EUR 72 million in investments in Poland in 2018 (1.2% of all Slovenian outward investment). It was followed by Hungary with EUR 28 million (0.5%) and Slovakia with EUR 9.7 million (0.2%). In terms of FDI, Slovenia is in 13th place in the Czech Republic, 14th place in Poland, 20th place in Hungary and 33rd place in Slovakia.

**Slovenian companies have begun to secure the markets of the V4, in addition to those of the Western Balkans.**

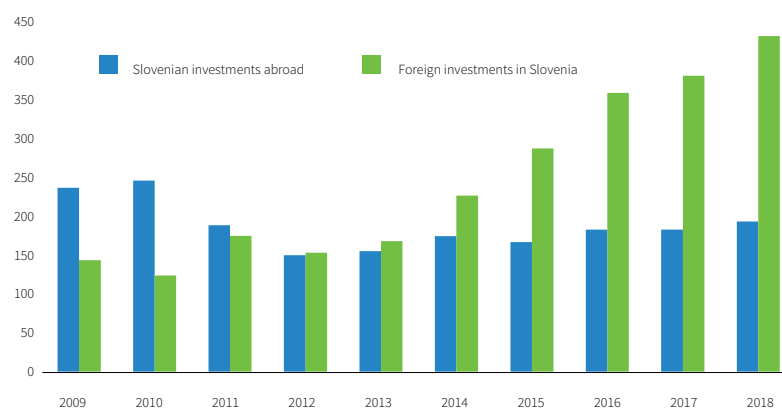
### Slovenian FDI by country (EUR million)

Country/ group	2015	2016	2017	2018
Czech Republic	61.4	71.7	68.6	74.2
Hungary	18.8	23.1	22.2	28.0
Poland	63.4	66.4	70.5	72.3
Slovakia	15.2	13.2	12.8	9.7
<b>Visegrad countries, Total</b>	<b>158.80</b>	<b>174.40</b>	<b>174.10</b>	<b>184.20</b>
Total (world)	5,460.6	5,713.5	5,969.4	6,062.2

Source: Bank of Slovenia, July 2019

### Investments in Visegrad countries

In EUR million



Source: SURS

### Foreign direct investment in Slovenia (EUR million)

Foreign investments in Slovenia	2015	2016	2017	2018
Czech Republic	223.6	265.7	290.80	303.4
Hungary	26.2	33.7	30.9	59.3
Poland	14.3	25.7	25.2	26.2
Slovakia	9.8	16.9	16.4	22.9
<b>Visegrad countries, Total</b>	<b>273.9</b>	<b>342.0</b>	<b>363.30</b>	<b>411.8</b>
Total (world)	11,612	12,970.5	13,956.9	15,152

Source: Bank of Slovenia, July 2019

### Who's Who in the V4

The following Slovenian companies have a presence on Visegrad markets.

- **Czech Republic:** Helios, Kovinoplastika Lož, Trelleborg Slovenija, Trimo, VEYANCE TECHNOLOGIES EUROPE, Frutarom EtoL, Gorenje, Krka, Alpod, Nektar Natura, IMP Plus, and others.
- **Hungary:** Hermes Softlab, Helios, Calex, Auta Marocchi, Teamtrans, Ferročrtalič, and others.
- **Poland:** Krka (manufacturing and distribution centre), Lek (state-of-the-art factory in Poland), Gorenje (warehouse and showroom), Eti Polam (subsidiary of ETI), Armeton (manufacture of concrete weights for washing machines), Helios, Apis Vita, Svilanit, Helios, Trelleborg Slovenija, Unija računovodska hiša, TitusPlus, Unior, and others.
- **Slovakia:** Helios, Alpod, European Contract Logistics.

### Visegrad investments in Slovenia:

- **Polish investments in Slovenia:** Trimo, Adria Tehnika, Intersport, CCC Obutev (Shoes & Bags), Reserved Fashion (LPPSA Group), Optotek, Aluminium Kety Emmi, PricewaterhouseCoopers, SDL Ljubljana, and others.
- **Slovakian investments in Slovenia:** NT LOGISTIKA, S3-KE.
- **Czech investments in Slovenia:** Radenska (owned by KOFOLA ČESKOSLOVENSKO A.S.), Litostroj Power, Savatech, SAOP, Vipap Videm Krško, TERME RESORT (owned by ARSENIJ - PLUS S.R.O.), Trelleborg Slovenija (owned by ČESKÁ GUMÁRENSKÁ SPOLEČNOST S.R.O.), LITOSTROJ POWER (owned by ENERGO-PRO INDUSTRIES, S.R.O.), Adria Airways Tehnika, Arex, Mimovrste, and others.
- **Hungarian investments in Slovenia:** TRIGO STORITVE, Silkem (via Silkem Plus), INTERSERVICE, Koper, NK Lendava.

# Success in the Face of Strong Competition

**Slovenian companies are expanding their networks in the Visegrad countries and say that quality and deliverability are, alongside price, the most important factors in the region. That said, several of them are expecting sales growth to slow soon as a result of the strong links between the V4 and the German economy.**

*Nina Šprohar, Ana Vučina Vršnak*



Photo: ETI

## **Tomaz Berginc, Managing Director of ETI Elektroelement**

We have been doing business on the V4 markets for a number of years via subsidiaries and long-standing business partners. The subsidiaries have built up a network of customers, one that is growing every year, and we work very closely with these customers. The largest subsidiary is located in Poland and employs over 400 people. The strong, technically skilled sales team has helped us to become a leading fuse supplier in Poland, and the subsidiary also has manufacturing capacities. Conditions on the V4 markets are favourable, although competition in our industry on these markets is very strong and there are considerable pressures on price. These are price-sensitive markets. Quality and deliverability of products, along with price, are very important here, and these are things that our company have been able to provide for a number of years now. We are strengthening our position and brand name on all markets from year to year, and have seen very good sales results this year, in Poland in particular as well as in the Czech Republic, where we have been operating through a subsidiary since last year. We don't see any major changes to our business moving forward, and are expecting further expansion of our customer network. Of course, we are expecting competition to get tougher, but are not anticipating any major economic fluctuations, at least for the next year. So we're hoping that cooperation remains strong in the future.



Photo: HELIOS

## **David Kubala, Managing Director of the HELIOS Group**

The Visegrad countries are important markets for the HELIOS Group. In 2018 we generated sales of almost EUR 59 million, which represents 15% of the Group's total sales in that year. HELIOS have a presence on all four markets through their own subsidiaries, which employ local specialists with many years of experience in the coatings industry. The Group's presence is strongest in coatings for the metal industry and in auto-repair coatings. HELIOS have expertise in comprehensive systemic solutions in the coatings and chemicals fields, which is why our solutions in the V4 region are trusted by many recognised manufacturers of machinery, containers, steel structures, and agricultural, construction and earth-working equipment. We also have customers from the railway industry. While the four countries have their own specific features, all of them have experienced dynamic economic growth and industrial development in recent years, making them among Europe's fastest-growing economies. Slovakia and the Czech Republic in particular have a very highly developed car industry, which gives the entire region extra impetus. We are expecting sales growth to slow in the next few years as a result of the strong links between the V4 and the German economy and their position within supply chains across Europe. The shift to electric vehicles, the risk of trade wars and competition from cheaper countries in South-Eastern Europe will all be key factors affecting the economic growth of the countries in this region. The key challenge will be the gap between supply and demand on the labour market, as we are expecting shortages of suitable workers to continue in all areas. Despite the slightly worsening outlook, we have strong belief in the V4 markets and expect the HELIOS Group to continue to be a major player in the coatings market in the region.



Photo: Krka

### **Tomaž Sever, deputy director of sales and director for Central Europe at Krka, Novo Mesto**

Krka first spotted the business attractiveness of the markets of what are now the Visegrad Group decades ago. Initial business contacts were established via the representative trade offices of which pharmaceutical companies used to be a part under the Yugoslav system. Later on, we opened our own offices in these countries. By professionally promoting our product portfolio, we have systematically been able to build a name for ourselves as a high-quality manufacturer of generic pharmaceuticals. This has led to sustained year-on-year growth in sales. Today, we have subsidiaries in the Czech Republic, Slovakia and Hungary. In the first half of 2019, the Visegrad countries accounted for 20% of Krka's total sales, with Poland accounting for almost half that amount, followed, in order, by the Czech Republic, Hungary and Slovakia. Krka are one of the leading manufacturers of generic drugs on the Visegrad markets. Patients and professionals are very familiar with our products. Economic growth in the region has been higher than the EU average in recent years; this has led to an increase in purchasing power and opened up new business opportunities. There are no major barriers to entry, which does mean strong competition among drug suppliers. We are not expecting any major changes in business conditions in the future. We will bolster our sales position by deepening business relations with our customers, organising and taking part in business events, and providing state-of-the-art and affordable drugs to treat cardiovascular disease, gastrointestinal diseases and diseases of the central nervous system, painkillers, anti-microbial drugs, and drugs for other therapeutic areas and purposes. All markets of the Visegrad Group are key to Krka and we are planning steady sales growth there in the years to come.



Photo: Pivka perutninarstvo

### **Damjan Oblak, Sales Director at Pivka perutninarstvo**

Through our Delamaris and Pivka brands we are presenting ourselves independently on different markets through our companies abroad and contractual agencies or selected distributors. The Delamaris brand has been present on the wider European and global market for 140 years, and is currently present on twenty-three markets. As an expert with a long-standing tradition, we've become known as a manufacturer of high-quality food products. We control the entire production process, from the selection of raw materials by checking the origin of sea fish, to the end products made from our own recipes and meeting high internal standards. We promote sustainable fishing, and the quality of our products is confirmed through our numerous medals, awards and national and international certificates of quality, such as IFS, FDA, EAC and MSC. With its various high-quality parboiled chicken products, the Pivka brand, which is celebrating its sixtieth anniversary this year, is present on fifteen markets. As a manufacturer we ensure high quality using an integrated approach to controlling all aspects of a product's creation. This includes our own preparation of selected plant-based animal feed without added poultry antibiotics, the selection of animals from local farms located an average of 80 km away from the manufacturing centre, and control of all stages of production and distribution to retailers or end-customers. The feed and products are regularly controlled in our independent in-house laboratories.

We will enter the Polish market via a selected distributor. For the markets of Hungary, the Czech Republic and Slovakia, we are still in the process of selecting long-term partnerships with agents and distributors that can credibly represent our brands in the high-quality pre-prepared food and healthy snacks segment.



Photo: Trimo

### **Božo Černila, Managing Director of Trimo**

All the Visegrad countries are among Trimo's most important markets. We have been operating there for a long time and systematically via local representative offices and companies. Despite intensive competition from local manufacturers and the price sensitivity of those markets, we have managed to make a strong name for ourselves there – one that is synonymous with high-quality products and services in the field of prefabricated façades and roofs. We have built a large number of partnerships with different business entities, from investors, architects and designers to construction and assembly firms. This is of key importance on these markets and brings us stable, long-term results. The customers we work with value our first-class quality, reliability and flexibility. In addition, fire safety and the ecological aspects of new buildings are coming increasingly to the fore. Most of the buildings into which our products are incorporated are industrial logistics buildings, commercial buildings, office buildings, car showrooms and public investments such as hospitals, sports facilities and research institutes.

Next year we are expecting stabilisation on all markets, as they are, to a large extent, dependent on the car industry and the German economy. We expect to see less 'speculative' construction than in the last few years. On the other hand, there is still considerable interest from foreign investors because of the location of these markets in the heart of Europe, with excellent access to the markets of Western Europe, and the competitive and highly qualified workforce, particularly in technical fields. New investments are increasingly being directed towards hi-tech manufacturing and to research centres with high value added. Investments in e-commerce enterprises are also extremely strong. We are expecting similar results on the Visegrad markets to those we have been posting this year.



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Among its many product ranges, ALPINA is globally best known as the first choice of Olympic and World Cup winners in cross-country skiing races. However, the top knowledge and standards needed to meet champions' expectations are integrated into all of the company's sports and fashion footwear, spreading ALPINA's flair across the globe.

Alpina sports key differentiation in the market are innovation, quality, comfort and reliability.

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## ALPINA

### ALPINA FASHION

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ALPINA fashion footwear has a major international presence, primarily in Germany, Russia, England, France, Switzerland, in the countries of former Yugoslavia, as well as in the other countries across Europe.

Alpina fashion key differentiation in the market are comfort, quality, tradition and value for money. Cemented and injection-molded footwear for women and men is characterized by fresh design approaches, carefully selected materials like natural leather or warm wool, and an ergonomically supported fit. Each shoe is made in Europe and is also available in half sizes.

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# Brexit Will Also Affect Business

**Business figures are predicting a number of uncertainties in international cooperation in the future, with current global challenges such as the trade dispute between the US and China and the UK's exit from the EU potentially affecting the Slovenian and V4 economies.**

Ana Vučina Vršnak

## **SLO/SLO Association: An opportunity for innovation-oriented companies**

“It is our assessment at the SLO/SLO business club that cooperation between Slovenian and Slovakian companies is, like overall economic cooperation between the countries, progressing well. While cooperation at the micro and macro levels alike is intensifying from year to year, we do believe that there remain considerable opportunities for that cooperation to further develop and deepen,” says Borut Meršak, Slovakia-based chairman of the SLO/SLO Association (Association of Individuals and Companies from the Republic of Slovenia and the Slovak Republic).

Meršak sees particular opportunities in greater cooperation between companies that create high added value, and especially newly formed companies involved in introducing new technologies, primarily digital, as both countries have decided to support explicitly innovation-oriented enterprises.

For him, the greatest currently unexploited opportunities for increased cooperation lie in tourism, as Slovenia still remains, for Slovakian tourists, primarily an intermediate stop or the chance for a short break before heading on down to the Croatian coast. Slovenes, on the other hand, too often confuse Slovakia with the Czech Republic.

“We are happy to note that nothing has happened in the last year that could have an adverse effect on cooperation between Slovenia and Slovakia. However, we do predict a number of uncertainties in international cooperation in the future, as current global challenges such as the trade dispute between the US and China, the UK's exit from the EU, certain areas of disagreement between the US and the EU and the slowdown in the German economy will have a more significant impact on the economies of the two countries and therefore on cooperation between them,” says Meršak. In his opinion, a considerable amount of work and effort will have to be invested to minimise the consequences, and adds that the SLO/SLO business club is ready for these challenges.

## **Business Club Triglav – Rysy: Entering the market with innovative products**

Business Club Triglav – Rysy fosters economic cooperation between Slovenia and Poland and offers comprehensive services in support of business operations for interested Slovenian and Polish partners. “Companies first want general information, such as information on the economic climate in Poland and/or Slovenia, and advice on setting up companies. Further cooperation is linked to the search for new business partners and advice on potential investments. Advice is also provided on projects, chiefly those financed with the help of European funds, at the regional and national levels. The club also organises B2B meetings and assistance in negotiations, business presentations at meetings, events and trade fairs,” says Matej Hojnik, president of the Business Club Triglav – Rysy.

As Polish GDP growth has been high for some time, interest is growing in the Polish market, says Hojnik, who adds that only two countries in the world, Poland and Australia, have managed to avoid recession since 1992, even during the global financial crisis. “As a result, Poland is seeing a rise in standards, wages and demand for more expensive products and services. There are opportunities in all sectors in Poland, although one should note that competition is extremely fierce and that entry onto the market should be made with innovative products.” Hojnik also points out that the economy will also be affected in the next few years by Brexit. This will present a risk to companies in the manufacturing sector in particular, but could also provide opportunities for new business as it shifts from the UK to other areas.

### **Additional information:**

<http://www.slo-slo.eu/>  
<http://triglav-rysy.si/>  
<https://eng.gzs.si/>  
<https://www.spiritslovenia.si/en>  
<https://www.sloveniapartner.eu/>  
<https://www.investslovenia.org/>



Borut Meršak

Photo: personal collection



Matej Hojnik

Photo: personal collection

**Rapid economic development has given rise to a need for efficient logistics solutions.**



Photo: Tomaž Primožič

**In 2018 throughput at Koper for the Visegrad Four was 391,500 basic container units (TEU), which was a rise of 8% on the year before.**

## Visegrad Countries an Important Catchment Market for the Port of Koper

**Because of its favourable geographical position, extensive network of rail links and high-quality port services, the Port of Koper is achieving high market shares in Hungary and Slovakia in particular.**

*Andreja Šalamun*

**Trade linked to the V4 has more than tripled at the Port of Koper in the last ten years.**

Slovenian companies still currently have a fairly low presence when it comes to infrastructure projects in the Visegrad countries, even though there are no major barriers to cooperation in this area. This is the opinion of Marko Jare from the Chamber of Commerce and Industry of Slovenia (GZS), who believes that the problem lies mainly in a lack of construction workers. "Slovenian firms are certainly capable of carrying out smaller infrastructure projects, and would be able to undertake larger ones with the support and hiring of foreign workers or subcontractors."

### **Trade Has More Than Tripled in a Decade**

The Port of Koper has been aware of its business opportunities on these markets for some time. Today, the Visegrad countries are among its most important catchment markets; indeed, the port has had a presence on those markets since the early years of its development. It says that the rapid economic development of the last 15 years, primarily the result of the mass of foreign investment, has led to a need for effective logistical solutions to ensure the supply of an ever increasing number of manufacturing plants in those countries.



“Because of its favourable geographical position, extensive network of rail links and high-quality port services, the Port of Koper is achieving high market shares in Hungary and Slovakia in particular, especially in the area of intermodality or container traffic,” say the port. In 2018, total throughput at Koper for the four Visegrad countries (Hungary, Czech Republic, Slovakia and Poland) was 391,500 basic container units (TEU), which was 8% more than in 2017. “Back in 2009, throughput for these countries was 120,000 TEU, which means that trade has more than tripled in the last ten years,” say the port. They add that cars, iron products, bulk cargo (particularly soya grain bound for Hungary) and highly perishable goods also travel through Koper in the import and export directions, in addition to containers. Last year, throughput for the four countries stood at just over 5 million tons of goods.

The port has permanent representative offices on all the above markets, which enables the company to take a more direct approach to customers, and they also organise at least one business event per country to present the Koper port community as a whole.

#### **Polish Market Increasingly Attractive**

The Polish market, particularly the southern regions in which industry is most heavily concentrated, has become increasingly attractive to the Port of Koper in recent years. “Exports of Polish fruit are increasing all the time and imports of cars are on the rise,” say the port.

Poland’s ambassador to Slovenia Pawel Czerwiński also believes that there are major business opportunities for Slovenian companies in Poland in terms of trade relations, development, innovation, investment and joint ventures on third markets. He points out that the Slovenian and Polish economies are similar in many ways, particularly when it comes to types of industry and the manufacture of consumer goods, and that Slovenian companies compete heavily with Polish ones in certain segments. However, he is convinced that Poland, with its numerous opportunities, is open for business and business cooperation. He stresses that while it is as difficult to secure business in Slovenia as it is in Poland, Poland’s market is much stronger with a population of almost 40 million.

He also sees quite a few opportunities in the field of infrastructure projects. Poland received EUR 102 billion between 2007 and 2013 for investments in infrastructure, with a further EUR 106 billion added to that between 2014 and 2020. This makes Poland one of the largest recipients of European funds, says Czerwiński. “Poland will most probably continue to receive net funding from the EU of around 0.8% of GDP per year after 2020 as well.” He adds that Poland is engaged in the dynamic development of transport infrastructure: road and rail, as well as aviation and maritime transport. “Because of its strategic position at the meeting point of major north-south

and east-west transport routes, Poland is placing increasing emphasis on its strong position on the logistics map of Europe.”

#### **Construction and Real Estate Are Flourishing**

Buoyed by infrastructure projects, the construction and real estate sectors are flourishing, and business activities and global service centres are expanding, says Czerwiński, who adds that infrastructure is being built under the “Morawiecki Plan”, Poland’s long-term development strategy, which will see further major investments in infrastructure, particularly the modernisation of the rail network, the construction of high-speed rail links and the country’s largest infrastructure project, worth around EUR 20 billion: the construction of a central communications centre (CPK). “A programme to develop the country’s sea ports is also currently under way. Its aim is to improve the competitiveness of these ports and increase their contribution to the social and economic development of the country, as well as increase the importance of sea ports as part of the international transport network,” explains Czerwiński.

“Poland is earmarking large amounts of money for the construction of infrastructure in all areas – and these major projects also open up opportunities for those Slovenian companies with the appropriate knowledge and skills.” Poles are seen to be extremely price-sensitive and very demanding when it comes to the quality of products and services, but the country is open for business and business cooperation. In the ambassador’s opinion, Slovenia can take advantage of the traditionally friendly relations between the two countries and their proximity in cultural terms.

**The Polish market has become increasingly attractive to the Port of Koper in recent years.**

**There are quite a few opportunities for cooperation between Slovenia and Poland in the field of infrastructure projects.**

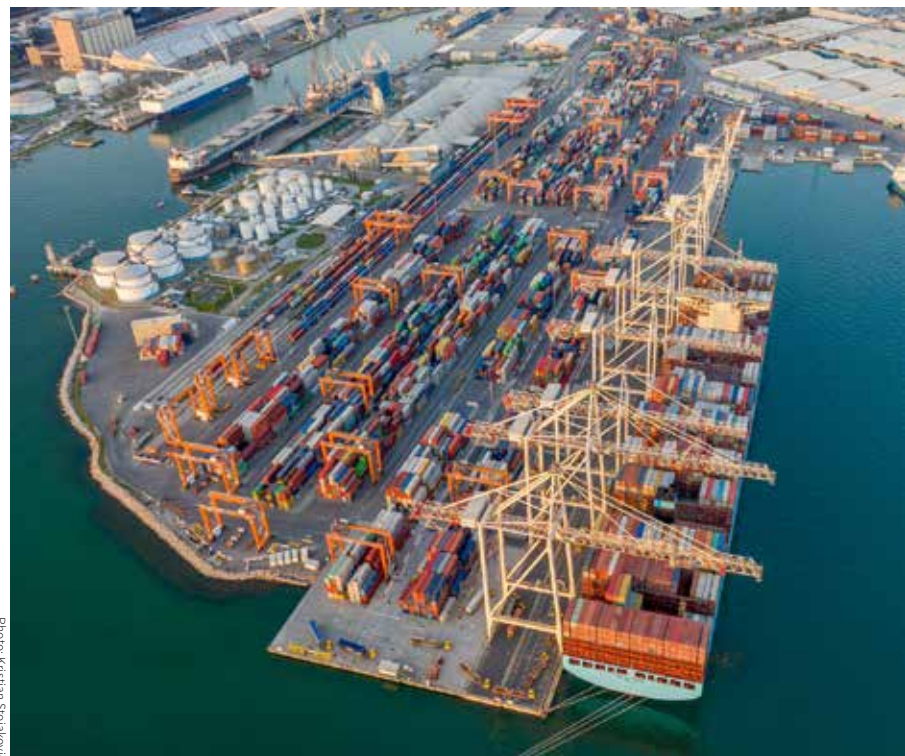


Photo: Kristjan Štorkar



Photo: Depositphotos

# Slovenia Has Potential to Become a Reference Country for Green Mobility

**The Slovenian automotive industry is an important creator of world trends in breakthrough technologies, particularly self-driving and electric vehicles.**

*Darja Kocbek*

**Slovenia's one major auto manufacturer, Revoz, is one of the largest companies in the country and has been, for a number of years, its largest exporter.**

The automotive industry is a very important sector of the Slovenian economy. Slovenia's one major auto manufacturer, Revoz, is one of the largest companies in the country and has been, for a number of years, its largest exporter. There are also over 600 companies in Slovenia engaged in supplying products and services to major automotive companies, mainly through partners in Germany.

## **Almost 1,000 Vehicles per Day**

Slightly less than 1,000 vehicles a day are manufactured by 3,400 employees, aided by some 450 robots, at Revoz, the Slovenian car plant based in the southern Slovenian town Novo Mesto, which is part of the Renault-Nissan-Mitsubishi Alliance. In addition to the Renault Clio and Renault Twingo, Revoz also manufactures the Smart ForFour and Smart ForFour EV in partnership with Daimler.

The company says that it is gearing up for new projects and investments in new technologies, including electric vehicles and digital transformation.

In December 2018 the Slovenian government approved a financial incentive to Revoz to establish a production line for the new Renault BJA model. The total value of the investment, which is slated for completion by December this year, is estimated at EUR 90 million, with the government adding a further EUR 6 million to

this in the form of an incentive. The government took the decision to offer the subsidy because it expects it to help create 75 new jobs at Revoz and contribute to a significant rise in added value per employee.

## **Several Hundred Suppliers**

The parts manufactured by auto industry suppliers in Slovenia are incorporated into vehicles produced by the world's largest automotive companies. One could go as far as to say that there is no car anywhere that does not contain at least one part from Slovenia. Slovenia is home to more than 100 companies engaged in directly supplying vehicle manufacturers and their suppliers, i.e. first- and second-level suppliers, while there are around 600 lower-level suppliers.

## **Hella Saturnus Upgrading Its Range of Lighting Products**

One of these direct suppliers is the Ljubljana-based Hella Saturnus company, which is part of the international HELLA Group. The company is engaged in developing and manufacturing automotive lighting systems, including headlamps, auxiliary fog lamps, daytime running lamps, and single- and multi-function lamps.

Hella Saturnus have been supplying products and services to some of the world's most important auto manufacturers since the beginning of the 1960s. The company explains that they have been involved in a constant process of upgrading the existing range of products and services in recent years, and expanding their development activities with the addition of departments for electronics, R&D for new products and technologies, the development of standard components and the development of internal (ambient) vehicle lighting.

**Every day, 3,400 employees, aided by some 450 robots, manufacture slightly less than 1,000 vehicles at Revoz.**

**One could go as far as to say that there is no car anywhere that does not contain at least one part from Slovenia.**

Revoz, Slovenia's largest exporter, exported vehicles worth a total of EUR 1.75 billion in 2018. Together with the several hundred suppliers to the auto industry based in Slovenia, Revoz contributes around EUR 4 billion to Slovenia's GDP annually – a staggering 10% of the country's entire GDP.

Since 2012, Hella Saturnus have headed up three group-level competence centres for auxiliary headlamps, lighting systems for sports cars and single-function lamps. Their largest customers by revenue volume are Renault-Nissan (42%), Volkswagen (30%) and General Motors (10%). Most of their sales in the last financial year were to customers in Europe, although their products are marketed across the globe, including South America.

### **Kolektor a Globally Important Supplier**

The Slovenian Kolektor Group from Idrija in the west of the country is one of the world's leading suppliers to global manufacturers of starters, fuel pumps and actuators. In addition to commutators, rotors and electronic, magnetic and hybrid components, the components programme also includes electronic sub-systems and plastic products for vehicle exteriors and interiors.

### **Hidria Sells to 55 Countries**

Hidria, from Idrija, is another leading Slovenian automotive technology company. It sells to 55 countries, with Germany its largest customer. Last year, for the second year in a row, Hidria received the "PSA Best Plant" award, given to the best supplier, from PSA Peugeot Citroën Opel.

### **TPV One of the Leading Development Suppliers**

The TPV Group is one of the leading development suppliers to the automotive industry in Slovenia. Its principal activity involves the development and manufacture of a variety of components for the auto industry, such as body and chassis assemblies, seat components and elements, and engine seals. They also develop and market comprehensive solutions for production logistics management, and their automated guided vehicles, developed in-house, are one of their key products.

### **Iskra Mehanizmi and Its Mechatronics Know-how**

Iskra Mehanizmi from Kropa in northern Slovenia supply complex mechatronic solutions, and provide automotive companies with know-how and experience in the field of mechatronics.

### **Plastic and Metal Products from Plamtex**

Plastic products and metal parts for vehicle exteriors are manufactured at Plamtex, a company based in the central Slovenian town of Komenda. Its sensors are used in the electronic assemblies of vehicles manufactured by established companies such as BMW and Mercedes. "We also manufacture various elements for car door interiors, small plastic parts for engine compartments (cable glands, caps, etc.), door handle coverings, and so on" say the company.

### **Lotrič Metrology Performs calibrations, SFC Automotive Provides Advice**

SFC Automotive from Ljubljana are one of a number of highly successful Slovenian companies with an

important role to play in the automotive industry without producing parts or components for it. Instead, it offers consultancy services in connection with the SAP information system. Calibrations for the world's largest automotive groups are performed by Lotrič Metrology, a family company from Kranj in Central Slovenia. Last year they opened the first metrology park in Slovenia.

### **Magna Steyr Starts Production**

The Canadian-Austrian company completed the construction of a paint shop for its own vehicles in Maribor, north-eastern Slovenia, in 2018. While in March 2019 a trial operation began, in July the production commenced fully. The first vehicle bodies to pass through the paint shop were for the Jaguar E-Pace H540. The Slovenian government provided state aid of EUR 18 million for this first phase of the project.

The company is planning a second phase involving whole vehicle manufacture. They are not prepared to release much information about this second phase as yet, as it depends mainly on orders from Magna's partners; what we do know, however, is that they intend to complete the phase without state aid.

That the Slovenian automotive industry is an important creator of world trends in breakthrough technologies, particularly self-driving and electric vehicles, and that Slovenia has the potential to become a reference country for green mobility, was something that all participants (and there were over 170 of them) agreed on at last October's conference, which was jointly organized by the Chamber of Commerce and Industry of Slovenia.

**Hella Saturnus have been supplying lighting systems to global automotive manufacturers since the beginning of the 1960s. They sell their products around the world, including South America.**

**There are over 600 companies in Slovenia engaged in supplying products and services to the automotive industry.**

**The Slovenian Kolektor Group is one of the world's leading suppliers to global manufacturers of automotive systems.**

### **Opportunities in the V4**

*Andreja Šalamun*

As elsewhere in the world, a major transition to clean electric and self-driving mobility is under way in the car industry in the Visegrad countries. This gives Slovenian auto suppliers additional opportunities for rapid growth and progress.

"In the last two decades, a significant part of Western European industry has moved to the countries of the Visegrad Group on account of lower costs. In tandem with an aggressive policy of attracting foreign investment, this has led to rapid growth in these economies," say the Idrija-based Hidria corporation. They point out that development capacities have also moved to the V4 region in recent years. Both factors apply to the car industry in particular, especially in Hungary. Hidria have their own manufacturing site in Gyöngyös, where they make key components for electric motors.

As a result, Hidria's supplies and sales in these countries, particularly Hungary, are experiencing rapid growth. "We currently employ 50 people in Gyöngyös. Over the next five years, we will invest intensively in response to the large number of projects we are involved in with various electric motor manufacturers, something we are also doing in Slovenia and at our other sites." Hidria say that sales and the number of employees will more than double as a result.

Impol, who are based in Slovenska Bistrica, sell products in all four Visegrad countries, with the Czech Republic accounting for the largest single share (6.35%). Other markets account for less than 1% of Impol Group sales. They point out that most of their new projects currently involve parts for electric cars and that the Czech Republic are gaining in strength in this segment, although they still lag behind Germany.



# Visegrad an Important Market for Slovenian Pharmaceutical Firms

The Slovenian pharmaceutical companies Krka and Lek export to many countries and the V4 are extremely important to both.

Darja Kocbek

**Lek pharmaceuticals exports more than 90% of the drugs it develops or manufactures in Slovenia, including to the V4.**

## Lek on the V4 via Sandoz and Novartis

Lek pharmaceuticals, a member of the Sandoz Group, exports more than 90% of the drugs it develops or manufactures in Slovenia. These drugs can be found in over 150 countries around the world, including those comprising the Visegrad Group, where they are available through the Sandoz and Novartis sales networks, explained Katarina Klemenc, Director of corporate communications for Slovenia at Novartis.

## Poland, Czech Republic, Slovakia and Hungary Among Krka's Key Markets

Visegrad countries are an important market for Krka, the Slovenian pharmaceutical company, and are responsible for over 20% of the company's total sales. This makes Krka one of the leading manufacturers of generic drugs in the region. The company employs more than 1,000 people across the V4, mostly graduates in pharmacy, medicine and economics, along with other disciplines.

"Krka first spotted an opportunity on the markets of what is now the Visegrad Group decades ago. Thanks to many years

of hard work, we have managed to systematically build a name for ourselves as a high-quality manufacturer of generic pharmaceuticals. Today we have a Polish subsidiary with its own pharmaceuticals plant, while in the Czech Republic, Slovakia and Hungary we operate companies engaged in promoting Krka products," explained Tomaž Sever, Deputy sales director and Director of the Central European region at Krka.

The Visegrad region is geographically and culturally close to Slovenia, and one that Krka knows well. Economic growth has been higher than the EU average for a number of years now. This has been followed by a gradual increase in purchasing power, which in turn

opens up new business opportunities. "Krka plans to continue to strengthen relations with its customers and deepen professional and business cooperation with them. Poland, the Czech Republic, Slovakia and Hungary are among Krka's key markets. We are planning further growth there in the coming years, although our market shares are already relatively high," adds Sever.

**V4 markets are responsible for more than 20% of Krka's total sales.**



Photo: Depositphotos



Photo: Depositphoto

**Niko Herakovič** from the Ljubljana Faculty of Mechanical Engineering argues that the concept of the factories of the future is conceived “very lightly.”

# A Factory in Which We'll Build Future on Our Own

**In June 2019, a smart factory demo centre opened in Slovenia. This is the only such centre in the country, whose goal is to demonstrate the implementation of Industry 4.0 technologies in a real industrial environment.**

*Ana Vučina Vršnak*

A smart factory demo centre was built in the Handling, Assembly and Pneumatics Laboratory (LASIM) at the University of Ljubljana's Faculty of Mechanical Engineering with the financial support of Kolektor Group. The centre was launched in early June this year, and is the only such demo centre in Slovenia. The goal is to demonstrate the innovative use and implementation of Industry 4.0 technologies and the smart factory concept in a real industrial environment.

Experts claim that it will be vital to know artificial intelligence in the future, because it will upgrade all current technologies. According to Niko Herakovič, Head of the LASIM lab and the Department of Manufacturing Technologies and Systems at the Ljubljana Faculty of Mechanical Engineering, artificial intelligence will upgrade everything we have and help people offer solutions faster than they would be able to on their own. Among the obstacles preventing the faster, more effective and large-scale introduction of such changes, he drew attention to the often superficial understanding of what a smart factory actually is.

Because it is conceived “very lightly”, and especially because everyone understands it in their own way, now entrepreneurs have the opportunity not only to visit but also spend some time at the

smart factory demo centre. The goal is to attract as many companies as possible, and to bring the concept of open innovation to life in practice.

## **Factories of the Future**

Among others, the Director of the Factory of the Future Strategic Development-Innovation Partnership (SRIP ToP), Rudi Pajntar from the Jožef Stefan Institute, is in charge of cooperation in the education-research-industry triangle. At the Future Factories event held at the Chamber of Commerce and Industry of Slovenia at the end of May, Pajntar noted that the digital revolution had already impacted the manufacturing industry. The digital connectivity of all participating stakeholders influences the value added and transforms the manufacturing environment. He sees the future role of factories not only in manufacturing products, but also (and primarily) in accumulating experience and transferring knowledge to new generations.

## **Future Skills**

The Chamber of Commerce and Industry of Slovenia Executive Manager, Samo Hribar Milič, reported that the value added per employee in Slovenian industry averaged around EUR 45,000 last year and that

**Among others, the Factory of the Future Strategic Development-Innovation Partnership (SRIP ToP) promotes cooperation in the education-research-industry triangle.**



Photo: Kraftart

**The goal of the business community is to increase the average value added per employee to EUR 60,000 by 2025.**

over EUR 60,000 per employee were generated by companies that together achieved EUR 10 billion in exports.

As pointed out by the General Manager of the Chamber of Commerce and Industry of Slovenia, Sonja Šmuc, the goal of the economy is to increase the average value added per employee to EUR 60,000 by 2025, and therefore it is crucial to invest in human resources and enhance the skills of staff. "It's vital for us to be able to predict which skills we'll need in the future," she added.

#### **Domel, Yaskawa, Gorenje Orodjarna and Iskratel: The Importance of Young People and Open Innovation**

According to the Chairman of the Board of Domel Holding, Matjaž Čemažar, Domel is pursuing the goal of raising the added value per employee by implementing digitalisation in business and manufacturing processes, and by connecting artificial intelligence with manufacturing processes. In his opinion the biggest current challenge is applying artificial intelligence to manufacturing processes. In turn, he believes the biggest challenge for Slovenian industry in general is connected with the education and training of young people. Completely different expertise than that currently provided by the Slovenian education system will be required in the future. If you do not possess all the required expertise yourself, open innovation is the only way.

Hubert Kosler, Director of Yaskawa Europe Robotics, also highlighted the problem associated with the skills required for managing the factories of the future: both skilled people and a right company strategy are vital for this.

Simple jobs will withdraw from Europe, in as much as they have not already. Asia is driving technological development forward, but we should not be pessimistic because Europe has the tradition and expertise required, it simply needs to invest in development.

The Director of Gorenje Orodjarna, Boštjan Dokl Menih, agreed with this, adding that they dedicate special attention to training older employees. All three companies also provide scholarships for young people.

For years Kranj-based Iskratel has been cooperating successfully and closely with knowledge institutions in Slovenia and Europe, as well as countries where they sell their products, such as Russia. In April this year, they held the first Iskratel Innovation Day for secondary-school and university students, and they have engaged as partners in the socially responsible project "Inženirke in inženirji bomo" (We're Going to Be Engineers) and the initiative "SKOZ – Vsak dijak v podjetje!" (SKOZ: Every Student to the Company!) since 2018. Last year the company participated in the Slovenian Economy Open Day, which takes place under the aegis of the Chamber of Commerce and Industry of Slovenia.

In addition, they are heavily involved in the Smart Cities and Communities Strategic Development-Innovation Partnership, especially in the area of security. 5G Security (5G Varnost) is their latest "safe and smart future" project. This is a Slovenian project with international support, with the Ljubljana Faculty of Electrical Engineering, Telekom Slovenije and OSI Sistemске Integracije involved as consortium partners.

#### **Siemens Slovenia: Digitalised Production Is the Foundation of a Smart Factory**

In practice, smart factories are an environment where intelligent devices, machines and equipment are interconnected into a system capable of permanent improvement and self-optimisation. This is how a smart factory is defined by Matej Kupljenik, Head of Digital Industries at Siemens Slovenia.

According to him, the concept of connectivity is not limited only to physical production, but also includes elements of planning, logistics, development and maintenance, which it combines into an autonomous manufacturing supply chain. Digitalised production is the foundation of a smart factory. Its building blocks are based on the digital twin concept, its production and business systems are interlinked and it has the integrated control of products and processes in place at all stages of their life cycle. The competitive advantages of smart factories are shown in the flexibility of production, which forms the basis for effective adaptations to new business models. In addition, the smart factory concept increases production effectiveness, reduces costs, increases the quality of products, and provides a high level of trackability and energy efficiency.

According to Kupljenik, the effects of digitalisation or the implementation of smart factories are currently most visible in the automobile industry, which launches highly personalised products to the market quickly, effectively and on a large scale. Smart factories entail automatization and a method of exchanging data in industry, which closely links automatization with new IT solutions and integrates it into the IoT concept (the introduction of cloud-based technologies). We are

**Smart factories are not something we will achieve overnight. Some have not even mastered automation yet.**

**Newly emerging technologies require skills that people do not have. The training cycles are long, which is why it is vital to adapt the education and professional training system.**



talking about new digital technologies, software tools, smart devices, self-learning systems, upgraded human-machine interfaces (HMI), a high level of robotisation and the use of artificial intelligence and cognitive computing – all this constitutes the smart factory concept.

#### When?

Kosler told us he knows two or three companies that are building factories of the future. In turn, in Kočevje his company is introducing attributes of such a factory at the level of automatisisation, but there is still a long way to go before a proper factory of the future is achieved. Yaskawa is pursuing the i3-Mechatronics concept, which they have already implemented in a factory near Tokyo and that involves a triple acceleration of production and significantly shorter supply times. It will be launched in Slovenia next year.

At the Future Factories event, representatives of the business world and scientists drew attention to the fact that automatisisation is only the first step in a long process, and that it in no way makes a factory of the future alone. Because many companies have not even mastered automatisisation yet, smart factories are not something we will achieve overnight.

Over the past three years, a new pillar of Kolektor Group has been taking shape at an accelerated pace: Kolektor Digital, which operates within the domain of smart factories of the future. Kolektor has defined five priority areas: artificial intelligence, digital twins, machine vision, robotics and a smart factory platform. Valter Leban, a member of Kolektor's Board of Directors, points out that innovation and research go hand in hand. The mission of research is to generate new knowledge about the foundations on which phenomena are based and facts are observed. In turn, the mission of innovation is to create new products, services and business models that generate economic benefits. Kolektor Digital has built a platform that is based on open innovation and combines the area-specific expertise and innovation of the corporation, the innovation of start-ups and the applied development of research institutes and universities.

Nonetheless, "it's very important that the companies' innovative development in the applied research segment is also supported by the state. A best-practice example is the GOSTOP project within the framework of SRIP ToP, in which Kolektor developed a smart factory of the future platform up to stage five of digital maturity in cooperation with the Jožef Stefan Institute, the Ljubljana Faculties of Mechanical Engineering, Electrical Engineering, and Computer and Information Science, and other partners," Leban explained. Before that, the corporation had achieved stage four of digital maturity, which means that they knew what was going on and why something happened. With stage five of digital maturity they will reach the stage of predictability, which means they will be able to predict what will happen. According to Leban, the last stage (i.e., stage six) remains the biggest challenge. That is when Kolektor's manufacturing process becomes completely autonomous.

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# How to Strengthen Ties Even More?

**Slovenia and the four countries of the Visegrad Group know each other very well. Their cooperation is excellent. The ambassadors of the V4 countries in Slovenia confirm their good relations, but are hoping for even stronger economic and trade ties.**

*Ana Vučina Vršnak*

## **Edit Szilágyiné Bátorfi, Ambassador of Hungary in Slovenia**

Slovenia and Hungary as neighbouring countries are natural partners. Both are open and export-oriented, and the main industries are interlinked within supplier value chains. In spite of this there is still room for further development, especially based on new technologies.

The bilateral trade turnover grows yearly by about 10%. The main commodities on both sides are products of the automotive industries, petroleum and medicines.

Besides small- and medium-sized companies, some larger Hungarian enterprises are also present in Slovenia: The Hungarian oil and gas company, MOL, has provided services on the Slovenian market since 1996. As part of its network of 2,000 service stations across 10 countries in Central and Eastern Europe, MOL operates 48 service stations across Slovenia. The largest Hungarian bank, OTP, has recently acquired the Slovenian SKB Bank from Société Générale.

Some major Slovenian companies, for example Hidria, Krka and Špica International, are also active on the Hungarian market. We appreciate the growing interest in investing in Hungary from Slovenian companies.

Hungary and Slovenia – together with Austria – signed a trilateral Memorandum of Understanding in 2018 on the development of smart mobility tools and autonomous vehicles. This cooperation is strongly linked with the ZalaZone test polygon for autonomous vehicles close to the border with Slovenia that was inaugurated in May this year. The automotive clusters of both countries are also entering into cooperation in this area.

Hungary and Slovenia are working on the improvement of their cross-border infrastructure. The last missing link of the highway joining the two capitals is expected to be completed this year. There are also other ongoing bilateral infrastructural projects.



Photo: Embassy of Hungary in Ljubljana

Hungary continues to encourage foreign direct investment. Partnership with potential investors is considered a national priority, and special attention is paid to the needs of companies already established in Hungary and to the further improvement of the business climate. In 2018 Hungary's GDP grew by 4,9% while foreign direct investment in Hungary reached EUR 5.4 billion. Hungarian exports reached a total of EUR 114.2 billion in 2018, a 4.3% increase compared to the previous year.

We see growing interest among Hungarian companies to enter business relations with Slovenian partners, either in the high tech sectors or in services, with many of them interested in traditional agricultural products and services. In the last four years Hungarian companies participated at the AGRA International Fair of Agriculture and Food in Gornja Radgona, and we are now preparing Hungarian participation at next year's MOS Celje fair as the partner country.

We look forward to the new business ideas with our Slovenian business partners.

### **Eva Ponomarenková, Ambassador of the Slovak Republic in Slovenia**

Trade between Slovakia and Slovenia has been growing steadily in recent years, and reached a historic level of EUR 938.7 million in 2018. Cooperation in the automotive, engineering, electrical and pharmaceutical industries is the most important. The Port of Koper is one of the most important terminals for Slovak exporters and importers – up to 80% of our container transport passes through it – and the most important partners on the Slovak side are US Steel Košice, Slovalco, Kia, Samsung, and LG. Slovak foreign direct investment is present in more than 80 Slovenian companies in areas such as finance, technical and construction consulting, retail, wholesale, transport, real estate and food & restaurant services.

Let me express my hope that the economic and trade relations between our countries will be strengthened. Mutual trade exchange is growing year by year, and I believe that this trend will continue further. We consider innovations as the most important element in our fruitful relationship. We are interested in strengthening our cooperation in the areas of smart cities, digitalization, artificial intelligence and the internet of things. We strongly support joint projects between research institutions affiliated with the Slovak Academy of Science and Slovenian research centres. Our main goal is to further develop good relations and to connect our scientists, entrepreneurs, start-up enthusiasts and academics. Both our countries have many talented and creative people, so we should try to connect our business activities as much as possible. And of course, besides business there are other areas where we could cooperate more. Both our countries have a lot to offer with regard to nature, culture, history, cuisine, and so on, and it is in our mutual interest to increase the number of Slovenian tourists visiting Slovakia, and vice versa.

We encourage Slovak companies to enter the Slovenian market. A good example is the Body and Future line of innovative and healthy beverages – smoothies – produced by the Slovak company McCarter. At this point, I am also very happy that the most innovative businesses from Slovakia and Slovenia participated in the Slovenian - Slovak Business Forum held on the occasion of the official visit of the Slovak President to Slovenia last year. The Business Forum held on the occasion of the Three Seas Initiative was another good opportunity to enhance business links between our countries. Consequently, I would like to inform all interested parties of the forthcoming international B2B event in Slovakia – the Slovak Matchmaking Fair to be held on



Photo: Embassy of the Slovak Republic in Ljubljana

24 October 2019 in Bratislava, the largest and most prestigious such event in the country.

Slovakia is an open economy that has built a competitive position on the market with one of the highest shares of industry's contribution to GDP within the EU, mainly due to cost effectiveness and a reliable workforce. A stable economic and political environment, strategic geographical location, use of the euro currency, good infrastructure, qualified workforce, and high productivity, all make Slovakia attractive for foreign investors. The country is the largest car producer per capita in the world, producing almost 200 cars per 1,000 inhabitants, with four carmakers located in Slovakia - Volkswagen in Bratislava, Kia Motors in Žilina, PSA Peugeot Citroën in Trnava and Jaguar Land Rover near Nitra. Together with the network of more than 300 automotive suppliers, they account for about 12% of GDP and produce more than one million cars annually. The second strongest pillar of Slovak industry is the electrotechnical industry, with an 11% share of total industrial production in the country. Other sectors with a tradition of success in Slovakia are the chemical industry and forestry. A very promising sector in Slovakia is ICT, with its contribution of 4% to national GDP. Slovakia has become home to several business service centres, most of which are currently located in the capital of Bratislava, which ranks as the 8th richest EU region in terms of GDP per capita. The transition of the economy towards services can be seen with the establishment of start-ups and R&D centres as the main sources of innovation, while it is our top priority to attract and support investments with high added value and innovation potential. Strengthening Slovakia's R&D capacities and investment in research and innovation in all sectors of the economy are a guaranteed way to ensure our economic competitiveness in the future.



### **Paweł Czerwiński, Ambassador of Poland in Slovenia**

The business links between Poland and Slovenia are growing quietly, but in a very stable and balanced manner, consistently and with a long-term orientation. The list of goods on import and export sides proves that both economies are complementary. The figures reveals a very similar sequence of trade in goods, with various machines, electrical and electronic equipment, vehicles and spare parts, plastics and numerous plastic products, mineral fuels and oils, as well as furniture, lamps and food products (the latter mainly on the Polish export side).

We should aim at fostering investments which will have a positive impact on bilateral relations. Slovenian mid-sized companies have already had to increase their international presence due to their relatively small domestic market. By contrast, Polish firms have been able to rely on the home market for much longer, as the country's population of 38 million is larger than that of the Czech Republic, Slovakia, Slovenia and Hungary combined. For this reason Slovenian companies have been extremely active in Poland, and been present here for many years since the very beginning of the country's economic transformation. Polish capital, on the other hand, needed much more time to find the courage to invest in the Slovenian market, with the greatest changes seen in the last five years.

The healthy pace growth in Slovenia's economy, strong gains in consumer spending and robust exports all encouraged successful Polish firms to enter the highly competitive Slovenian consumer market. The network of CCC shoes and bags retail outlets is growing quickly, and LPP, one of Poland's largest fashion companies, has already opened two RESERVED brand stores. In recent years Polish firms, in particular investment funds, have made significant acquisitions in Slovenia: Innova bought the engineering company Trimo, Lintech Holding purchased Adria Tehnika, Aluform Spółka bought the aluminium products maker Aha Emmi, while Enterprise Fund VII acquired the sports retailer Intersport ISI. Still more Polish firms are looking for good business opportunities. One of main features



Photo: Polish Embassy in Ljubljana

of the Polish business is that it is very dynamic, quite different compared to the slow-paced Slovenian model. As Slovenia's transition was slower and more gradual compared to that in Poland, Polish investors in Slovenia tend to agree that there are still significant challenges in operating on the Slovenian market, including a lack of transparency in economic and commercial decision-making, time-consuming bureaucratic procedures, unclear public tender procedures, and an often-inconsistent taxation and regulatory structure.

In 2019 new opportunities emerged, and we look forward to greater cooperation between start-up incubators and accelerators. As Poland is a well-recognized location for FDI – it was the best place in the world to invest or do business in 2018, according to CEO World magazine – I hope Slovenian start-ups will join the Poland Prize Programme which offers good access to finance (with accessible VC funds) in the country.

At our Embassy we are encouraging Slovenian companies and Slovenians to strengthen their ties with Poland - there is still much room to deepen cooperation in numerous fields, not only in business. Moreover, I hope for a significant increase in the number of Slovenian tourists visiting Poland, which has a lot to offer in this regard.

### Juraj Chmiel, Ambassador of the Czech Republic in Slovenia

The Czech Republic and Slovenia share a rich historical and cultural heritage going back several hundred years. We have therefore developed a mutual understanding, which is clearly visible in the common business culture focused on reliability, precision and quality. Both our states are proud of their open economies, strong rule of law and fair and competitive markets. The businessmen in both countries provide valuable goods and services with a high level of mutual trust. Czech knowledge and craft in the areas of machinery, automotive or sophisticated technologies have been famous in Slovenia for more than a century. There is therefore great potential in collaboration in the fields of nanotechnology, advanced solutions, smart cities or IT applications and other areas with high value added. There have been several very successful Czech investments in Slovenia, for instance Litoštroj Power or Radenska, which proved that the Czech investors are interested in developing their assets in this country, and have what it takes to succeed on the local market. There is also considerable potential with regard to defence and security cooperation between our two nations.

Both the Czech Republic and Slovenia are also attractive tourist destinations with historical capitals, beautiful regions and natural parks, well-preserved traditions and customs and some remarkable gastronomy and wine. We should cooperate to inform the world about our natural and cultural heritage. The number of tourist visits to the Czech Republic grows every year, and I am pleased that the people in Slovenia are discovering the whole range of Czech beauty, which reaches far beyond our great capital.



Photo: Embassy of the Czech Republic in Ljubljana

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The Czech Republic accounted for the biggest growth in the number of arrivals (17%) and overnight stays (21%) from the Visegrad countries in the first six months of this year. Arrivals and overnight stays from Slovakia are also up 10%, and numbers are increasing from Poland and Hungary.



Photo: www.slovenia.info / Jost Cantar

## Half a Million Overnight Stays in Six Months

Slovenia hosted over half a million guests from the Visegrad countries in 2018, with numbers increasing further this year. There were 200,000 visitors to Slovenia from Hungary, Slovakia, the Czech Republic and Poland in the first half of 2019; together they were responsible for around half a million overnight stays.

*Darja Kocbek*

In 2018, **525,000** guests from the V4 visited Slovenia and were responsible for just over **1.3** million overnight stays.

### Rising Numbers of Visitors from the V4

Slightly fewer than 200,400 guests from Hungary, Slovakia, the Czech Republic and Poland visited Slovenia in the first six months of this year, with the Slovenian Tourist Board (STO) giving the number of overnight stays by visitors from these countries at just less than half a million over the same period.

The Czech Republic accounted for the biggest growth in the number of arrivals and overnight stays from the Visegrad countries in comparison with the same period last year, with a rise in overnight stays of 21% and in arrivals of 17%. According to STO figures, between January and June this year the number of overnight stays by visitors from Slovakia rose by 10%

and the number of arrivals by 9% compared to the same period in 2018.

From Poland, the number of overnight stays rose by 12% and the number of arrivals by 6%, while the number of arrivals and overnight stays by visitors from Hungary rose by 7% and 5% respectively compared to the same period last year.

According to the STO, slightly fewer than 525,000 guests visited Slovenia from the Visegrad countries in 2018; they were responsible for just over 1.3 million overnight stays.



### Green, Authentic Experiences, Including Farmstays

The STO is regularly engaged in promoting the beauties of Slovenia to the general public and businesses (tour operators and agents) in the V4 markets. This year it has hosted study visits involving 36 media representatives and digital influencers; these have covered various topics from conference activities, gastronomy, camping and glamping to outdoor activities, hiking and cycling.

“We are finding that meetings, fairs and workshops are a successful way of getting our promotional messages across. Every presentation of Slovenian tourism has been well-received and well-attended, and visitors are, by and large, mostly interested in green, authentic experiences,” explained Karmen Novarlič from the STO.

According to the STO, great interest in Slovenia has been evident at other events, such as the Europe Days and the grape harvest festival at Prague Castle, and there have been large numbers of visitors displaying a considerable interest in Slovenia at the Slovenian Centre and Tourist Information Centre in the Czech capital.

Guests from the V4 are also keen on farmstays. Renata Kosi, who works on farmstay tourist development at the Slovenian Chamber of Agriculture



Photo: www.slovenia.info / Jošt Gantar

and Forestry, says that tourists from the Visegrad countries are seeking out information on Slovenian tourist farms via a number of different channels; these include, alongside fairs and meetings at which the STO promotes this type of tourism, the Slovenian farmstays catalogue, the [www.turisticnekmetije.si](http://www.turisticnekmetije.si) website, the central [www.slovenia.info](http://www.slovenia.info) portal, and the @farmstaySlovenia and #farmstaySlovenia social media tags.

**Visitors are largely interested in green, authentic experiences, including farmstays.**

## Holidays on farms in Slovenia – an unforgettable experience

Wake up to the countryside and discover what makes the perfect holiday experience for you.

This idyllic setting offers numerous opportunities for hiking, cycling, horse-back riding, watersports and more, while farms are excellent starting points for excursions around Slovenia. You can start the day with an excellent breakfast, freshly-cooked from local or home-grown food and finish it with delicious dinner accompanied by excellent wines.

To discover more about your perfect farm holiday, visit the official page [www.farmtourism.si](http://www.farmtourism.si), Facebook (@FarmstaySlovenia) or Instagram (#farmstayslovenia).







Photo: www.slovenia.info / Jost Gantar

**In August 2019, a guidebook was published in English, "The Slovenian Mountain Trail", setting out the entire trail as a series of individual day stages and containing instructions on mountain safety.**

**The Slovenian Mountain Trail is one of the oldest trails in Europe and is seeing more and more visitors from the V4.**

"Farmers tell us that guests get most excited about the wonderful natural surroundings, the orderly nature of the farms and, of course, the home-produced and home-processed food and the friendliness of the hosts," says Kosi. Most farm guests say that they arrange their stays directly, without the help of travel agencies.

#### **Kamnik, Velika Planina, Češka Koča**

As far as the V4 countries are concerned, Kamnik is a favoured destination above all for those from the Czech Republic, followed by Hungary. There are no figures pointing to larger numbers of visitors from Poland and Slovakia. What most attracts them are the mountains and the hiking opportunities, Velika Planina, the countryside generally and the activities on offer within it. "Czech tourists are particularly well-represented in this regard and are most keen on the Kamnik-Savinja Alps. Reasons

for this include Češka Koča, or the Czech mountain lodge, at Spodnje Ravni, and the strong promotional activities undertaken by the Kamnik-Savinja Alps Association on the Czech market," explained Samo Trtnik from Kamnik Institute for Tourism, Sport and Culture.

Kamnik is promoted on Visegrad markets via the Kamnik-Savinja Alps Association. Along with municipalities in the region, the town works in tandem with the STO representative in the Czech Republic. "It has been presented as a Kamnik-Savinja Alps destination at fairs in Prague and Brno, and for the last three years we have received high-level visits from Hradčany, the Prague Castle district. Following on from these collaborative activities, Kamnik recently hosted visits from Slovakian and Czech journalists interested in what the area had to offer in terms of camping and glamping," says Trtnik.

He points out that Kamnik Institute for Tourism, Sport and Culture and Volčji Potok Arboretum held presentations on their activities to visitors to Prague Castle as part of the "From the Alps to the Karst" exhibition this spring. In April and May, visitors to these Czech tourist sights were able to look at a series of snapshots from Volčji Potok Arboretum and Kamnik.

A hotel has sprung into life in the centre of Kamnik once again, there are English-language guided tours around the town every Friday during the summer, and this summer Kamnik Institute for Tourism, Sport and Culture are once again funding additional bus routes from Kamnik to popular tourist destinations. Among the new products and services from tourist providers, Trtnik mentions the fact that the Slovenia Eco Resort has opened a summer kitchen and additional accommodation facilities,

#### **Do You Dream of a Breathtaking Place? Welcome to Jeruzalem in Slovenia**

Over the Slovenske Gorice and Ljutomer-Ormož hills, with their hundreds of vineyards, to the mysterious Drava river – you'll reach a place that reflects the heavens. Jeruzalem is a small community with a big name. It lies 341 m above sea level amidst gentle, vineyard-covered hills. Legend has it that it was named by crusaders who stopped here during their campaigns to the Holy Land because it was such a heavenly place.

The winegrowing hills around Jeruzalem have always been home to excellent wines. "Šipon – C'est bon!" as the soldiers used to say during the time of Napoleon's marches through the region. And it really is an excellent, special and unique wine!

Who could resist Jeruzalem's local cuisine? It is a true eye-catcher, incorporating a rich variety of fascinating primary aromas and flavours. If you don't try at least one of local dishes when travelling through Jeruzalem, it will be as if you weren't even there!

Jeruzalem covers three local communities: Ormož, Središče ob Dravi and Sveti Tomaž. It has castles, museums, great history and heritage, and is heaven for cycling and beautiful romantic walks, as well as a perfect spot for those who would like to observe thousands of birds nesting in nature. The area is part of Prlekija, a land of warm and welcoming people, where time runs a bit differently ...



Photo: Jeruzalem Ormož

built a new terrace, and designated and equipped a number of energy points at the site. Terme Snovik spa is once again offering a nudist terrace and its most prominent product, the Barefoot Path, which has received a “Best Themed Trail” award from the Tourist Association of Slovenia.

**A New English-Language Hiking Guide**

According to the Alpine Association of Slovenia (PZS), the Slovenian Mountain Trail, the most popular long-distance trail in Slovenia and one of the oldest such trails in Europe (and indeed the world) is seeing more and more visitors from the V4. At the beginning of August, a guidebook was published in English, “The Slovenian Mountain Trail”, setting out the entire trail as a series of individual day stages and also containing instructions on mountain safety, explained Manca Ogrin from the PZS.

Czech tourists love visiting Češka Koča, and its caretaker, Karmen Karničar, says that 70% of visitors come from abroad. “We’ve been working with the great promoter Ladislav Jirásko since 1990, so increasing numbers of Czechs make it up to the lodge, proud that it was built by their compatriots. It is indeed something special in Slovenia, since it has



Photo: www.slovenia.info / Jošt Gantar

remained exactly as it was in 1900, bar a few cosmetic changes.” Karničar adds that the Czechs are friendly and polite guests.

Manca Ogrin points out that the Alpine Association of Slovenia received the more-than-2,000-strong Czech-Slovenian Alpine Society from Prague into its membership ranks in 2016.

**The Czechs are particularly keen on the Kamnik-Savinja Alps on account of Češka Koča, or the Czech mountain lodge, which was opened way back in 1900.**



# Try something new every day!

**Children’s fairytale with Edi the Pirate  
Discover the legends of magical Prlekija!  
A thermal Pannonian sea with waterslides.**

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Photo: www.slovenia.info / Tomo Jesenčnik

**As far as the V4 countries are concerned, Kamnik is a favoured destination above all for those from the Czech Republic, followed by Hungary.**

#### **The Attraction of the “Green Gold”**

It is no secret that Slovenia is known for its great food and drink. Guests rate the excellent wine, as well as the beer – something that the V4 countries are famed for producing themselves, of course. Nearly four years ago, the town of Žalec opened its “Green Gold” beer fountain, which serves six different beers brewed

using Štajerska hops. The fountain is a homage to the hop-growing heritage of the Lower Savinja Valley and Žalec, which is the centre of the industry in Slovenia. Slovenia produces about the same quantity of hops as Poland, although both countries are quite some way behind the Czech Republic. All three, however, are among the ten biggest hop producers in the world. Hops are the seasoning that give beer its flavour and distinctive character, and in Žalec they say that news of the beer fountain has spread around the world.

Guests also like touring breweries such as Pivovarna Laško. “An average of three coachloads of Hungarian day tourists visit us at Laško every year,” explained Laško Tourist Information Centre (TIC).

Slovenian cuisine is represented in the Visegrad countries, or more precisely in Prague, by the Cacao Prague coffee shop. They are satisfied with the number of visitors this year, said Tim Kolšek from the Slovenian company Cacao Portorož. “Our company is always looking to expand, which does require serious and compatible partners,” he said when asked whether they were thinking of expanding into Poland, Hungary and Slovakia in order to cover all four Visegrad countries.



## Enjoy a break in green surroundings

Come to Bioterme Mala Nedelja to replenish your body and mind. We are located in the heart of unspoiled nature in the Prlekija region, a unique blend of hills, forests, and vineyards ensuring a well-deserved time out. We offer comfortable accommodation in 68 rooms with solid wood furniture treated with natural materials (polished and waxed), waxed solid wood flooring, and special electromagnetic smog protection switches. Close by is the Glamping Sun Valley Bioterme, a separate complex offering complete privacy and a unique experience of staying and spending time in a pristine natural environment. Accommodation includes villas and tents sleeping two, four or six people, comfortably furnished and equipped with a kitchenette, bathroom, sleeping quarters and spacious terraces overlooking the nearby forest and biological swimming pool (in the warmer months). The heated villas are an excellent choice in all seasons, while the tents are a great experience in the warmer months.

Mala Nedelja Bioterme boasts two thermal mineral water springs with temperatures ranging from 42 to 51°C at the sources, and between 29 and 34°C in the swimming pools. The water is pure, un-mixed, high quality, hyper thermal, rich in sodium, potassium and hydrogen carbonate, and it is well-suited to recreation, sports and especially health care, as it has beneficial effects on the function of the motor system and the spine.

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**The Three Seas Initiative strives to reduce the differences with Western Europe.**



Photo: Nik Jevšnik/STA

**The goal of the summit was to accelerate the development of the economy and society.**

## Objectives Are Clear: Boosting Connectivity in All Areas

**The fourth summit of the Three Seas Initiative, hosted in June 2019 by Slovenia and President Borut Pahor, along with the business forum that took place in parallel, made it possible to present several energy, digital, infrastructure and innovation projects that would connect the Three Seas region even more strongly in the future.**

*Nina Šprohar*

The objectives of the Three Seas Initiative, which brings together twelve EU countries, are clear: boosting connectivity in all areas, strengthening transport routes and carrying out as many joint projects as possible to make the region between the Adriatic, Baltic and Black Seas more competitive with Western Europe. The speakers at the event, which took place in Slovenia, noted that differences are visible everywhere, including in the mentality, adding that while aspirations are generally high, funding is the main problem.

There are a total of over forty joint projects, and the improvement of the electrical grid between Slovenia and Croatia, the 5G digital highway and the construction of the second railway track between

Divača and Koper, are definitely among the most important ones.

“Our results are good, but they could be even better,” said the President of the Slovenian Chamber of Commerce and Industry, Boštjan Gorjup, stressing that the goal of the summit was to accelerate both economic and social development. The Slovenian Prime Minister Marjan Šarac stated that the forum opened opportunities for further cooperation and investment, and that the main goals of the initiative are promoting economic development and enhancing EU cohesion and transatlantic ties.

**The region is open to both foreign investors and potential partners, including the US.**



### Open to Foreign Investors, Including the US

At the presidential panel, the Polish President Andrzej Duda noted that alongside private-public partnerships the amount of EU funds used will be key to the further development of what he believes is “currently still a considerably neglected region”. He is primarily concerned about the differences between Eastern and Western Europe, which are visible everywhere. The Croatian President Kolinda Grabar Kitarović added that the difference between the east and west can be seen not only in industry, economy and transport, but also in people’s mentality. “Connectivity has been increasingly important for us since the fall of the Berlin Wall. We wish the standard of living was the same for our people as in other EU member states,” noted Kitarović, adding that they are always open to both foreign investors and potential partners.

These also include the US. The second summit of the Three Seas Initiative, held in 2017 in Warsaw, was also attended by the US President Donald Trump, and this year the US Secretary of Energy Rick Perry attended the event in Ljubljana. He “promised” Europe energy independence from Russia. However, the Director-General for Economic Affairs and Sustainable Development at the German Foreign Ministry, Miguel Berger, who did not attend the presidential panel, later explained that the situation is nonetheless not as black-and-white as presented by Perry, because “Russia is not the only country supplying natural gas to Europe”. By saying this he wanted to highlight the fact that by building the southern gas corridor, natural gas will be supplied from Azerbaijan and the connection will run through the southern EU member states. “Thus Germany will gain nothing from the billion and a half euros it will invest in the project, because the natural gas will remain in the south of the EU,” noted Berger, while stressing Germany’s intent to help in the project.

### Energy Independence

At the energy panel, the Slovenian Minister of Infrastructure, Alenka Bratušek, noted that the focus should be on sustainable energy and low-carbon economy, and that the goal is to remain high on the ladder of green countries. “Time flies, the climate conditions are clear, but unfortunately not everyone is keeping their promises specified in the Paris Agreement,” she added, expressing her concerns. Bratušek highlighted the importance of joint decision-making, which should take place at the EU level rather than fall on the shoulders of individual member states. “With these efforts, we could get rid of coal, oil, gas and other environmentally unfriendly energy sources once and for all,” she concluded.

The Czech President Miloš Zeman advocated the revival of connections between the countries in the Danube, Odra and Laba basins, suggesting enhancing the initiative with a safe water supply dimension because that is one of the most pressing problems. The Hungarian Foreign Minister Péter Szijjártó called for words to finally turn to action because Hungarians

The Three Seas Initiative brings together twelve EU countries in the triangle between the Adriatic, Baltic and Black seas. It was established after economic relations between the EU and Russia had cooled down. The first summit was held in 2016 in Dubrovnik, and the next one will take place in Tallinn.

want easier access to the alternative sources of energy. “Otherwise we’ll be forced into long-term arrangements with Russia,” he warned.

In this regard, Perry explained that the US is offering not only an alliance, but also technology and assistance in shaping the EU’s energy supply. “The US produces energy for many countries using different ways,” he stressed, adding that this would enhance the EU’s collective power and safety.

Uroš Salobir from Eles, a Slovenian electricity system operator, presented the smart-grid projects FutureFlow and Sincro.grid. “Coal will gradually disappear from the energy mix and there’ll be a big problem with flexibility. The solution may be a central storage, the use of natural gas or active consumers,” he said, adding that such a platform must be established at the international level due to the need for decentralised solutions and diversified investment. “Cooperation and clearly set goals are key,” he concluded.

Martin Novšak, the Director of GEN Energija Group, which also includes the Krško Nuclear Power Plant, stressed that nuclear power is an important energy source for Slovenia, and therefore also proposed the construction of the second block of the nuclear power plant, which would reduce emissions. At GEN Energija they think that the south-eastern EU countries are well aware of the significance of the key strategic-development topics. “Countries are already cooperating intensely in many areas, while at the same time seeking opportunities for

**The Czech President Miloš Zeman advocated the revival of connections between the countries in the Danube, Odra and Laba basins.**

**The Slovenian electricity system operator, Eles, highlighted the importance of the smart-grid projects FutureFlow and Sincro.grid, where cooperation among countries is key.**



Photo: Nina Spornar



Photo: Nina Sprohar

**The General Manager of the Chamber of Commerce and Industry of Slovenia, Sonja Šmuc (third from the left) says the region has extensive knowledge in technical fields and the natural sciences.**

further improving and strengthening infrastructure connections. As one of the industries that are fundamental for the operation of developed societies, energy is undoubtedly the central meeting point that provides numerous opportunities for even closer cooperation," Novšak added.

**“If We Want Innovations on the Market, We Also Need Innovations at the Government Level.”**

The following five innovative companies from the region presented themselves at the innovation panel: Microblink (Croatia), Vpplant (Poland), Elcom (Slovakia), Efos and Cosylab (Slovenia). Aleš Cantarutti, from the Slovenian Ministry of Economic Development and Technology, called upon them to inform the authorities in their countries what they should do and where they need to be even more active to stimulate innovation and improve the business environment. He thinks that all too often young, start-up companies receive too little attention in the EU.

According to Izet Ždralović, Microblink, which operates in most countries between the three seas, focuses on innovative infrastructure projects. “I believe we have the technology that can also reach the global level in digital identity,” he said.

Mark Pleško from Cosylab called for more open markets and greater boldness, because innovations also involve some risk. “I see cooperation opportunities everywhere, 110 million people live in this area and we have enough knowledge to form connections with anyone,” he commented. Their latest project (i.e., the Centre for Advanced Cancer Treatment and Research) brings together partners from medicine, science and the business world. “We could obtain funds through the Berlin Process initiative because they plan to invest a full half a billion euros in this region’s infrastructure to help it catch up with the development of other EU member

states. The term “infrastructure” should cover not only roads and water supply systems, but also high-tech infrastructure,” explained the director and co-owner of Cosylab. The initiative includes eight countries, with the Montenegrin Minister of Science being the driving force behind the project. “All major European research centres are helping us, and the EU decided to invest EUR 5 million in a study that will show if it makes sense to build such a high-tech centre within the region,” added Pleško.

The General Manager of the Chamber of Commerce and Industry of Slovenia, Sonja Šmuc, noted that the region has extensive knowledge in technical fields and the natural sciences, and that these innovations show we have a high-quality education system and are hungry for success. “But the fear of failing is still too great, and we still don’t respect the innovators and entrepreneurs,” said Šmuc, calling for changes in these cultural attitudes. The Slovenian Chamber of Commerce and Industry seeks more cooperation with the government, which should make faster decisions. “If we want innovations on the market, we also need innovations at the government level,” she commented. Cantarutti added that in most cases the problem is finance, but that we also have other funds available that can help entrepreneurs.

**In Favour of Greater Transport Connectivity**

The speakers agreed that connectivity and cooperation are the most important in transport, because it extends beyond national borders. According to EU Commissioner for Transport, Violeta Bulc, transport connectivity is key to economic and social development.

Here, too, Eastern Europe is being neglected. “A train ride from Tallinn to Constanta takes three and a half days, whereas it only takes a day to travel the same distance from Gothenburg to Barcelona,” said the Polish President Andrzej Duda, providing an example of poor transport connections. In recent years, the Three Seas region has spent a full EUR 100 billion on the development of transport connections, but the participants agreed that this is still not enough. The Estonian President Kersti Kaljulaid drew attention to the related environmental issue, proposing that the transport sector be restructured in such a way that will make it not only competitive, but also clean.

**Over Two-thirds of Goods Transhipped at the Port of Koper to Meet the Needs of Central Europe**

At the event the representatives of the Port of Koper, Slovenia’s largest port, highlighted the importance of Slovenia as a strategic country in terms of transport and logistics routes for the wider region. New opportunities for cooperation with the countries included in the Three Seas Initiative are opening up, especially with regard to the rail connection between the port and the mainland. In recent years, Slovenia has invested heavily in modernising its rail network.

**A train ride from Tallinn to Constanta takes three and a half days, whereas it only takes a day to travel the same distance from Gothenburg to Barcelona.**

Over two-thirds of goods are transhipped at the Port of Koper to meet the needs of Central Europe. “We literally connect Central Europe with the sea,” they commented. But the Port does not make a lot of business with other countries in Southeast Europe, except Serbia. “There are still strong business ties going back to Yugoslavia, but due to poor transport connections and the vicinity of other ports it’s difficult to be competitive on these markets.” This is how they summed up the issue of poor transport connections.

The largest markets, on which the Port holds a majority share in container transshipment, include Hungary and Slovakia. “Our presence is also growing nicely in the Czech Republic, even though the west of the country has stronger traditional links with the ports in the north. We’re also working well with Poland, especially its southern parts, where we can still offer the advantages of the Port of Koper,” they reported, being aware that their success can be credited primarily to good rail connections with these countries.

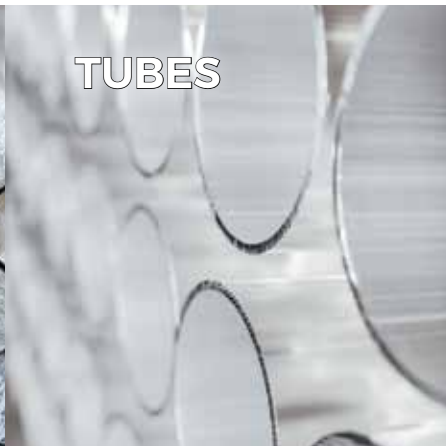
**Government Institutions Must Start Working Together and With Companies**

Digital transformation and cybersecurity were the main topics discussed at the digitalisation panel. The speakers agreed that setting up a new 5G network is key to meeting the goals set in this context. Due to high data transfer speeds and high security standards this would form the basis for further development. According to the President of the Slovenian Digital Coalition and the Chairman of the Association for Information Technology and Telecommunications at the Chamber of Commerce and Industry of Slovenia, Igor Zorko, digitalisation allows us to reach beyond national borders and forge even stronger links with neighbouring countries.

“Companies need a stimulating environment and procedures that will make it possible to upgrade the infrastructure in a simple manner and adapt to changes in business models,” commented the General Manager of Comtrade System Integration International, Klod Kolaro. He added that government institutions play an important role in this process. According to Kolaro, business forums form a link between the key players, allow the flow of information and the exchange of views between companies and institutions, and provide the opportunity to form connections. “Companies such as Comtrade can offer global insight and know what modern technology brings along, and can definitely transfer this to the local market. Government institutions must start working together as soon as possible and, together with technological partners, must help create innovative solutions that can also find their place on foreign markets,” he added.



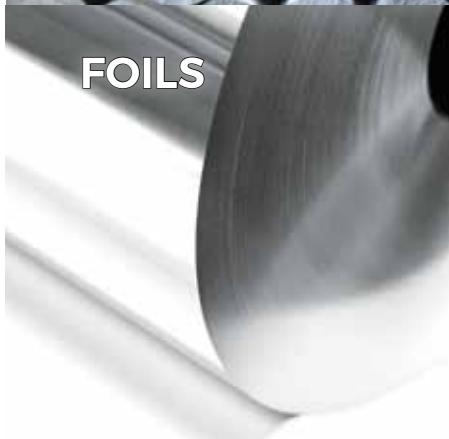
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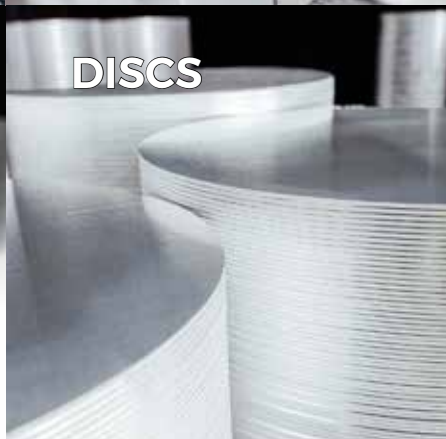
TUBES



PROFILES



FOILS



DISCS



SLUGS



# The Door of Our Chamber is Open to You

**The Chamber of Commerce and Industry of Slovenia (GZS) is the largest independent, voluntary, non-profit association of companies in Slovenia. It was founded more than 160 years ago and today boasts more than 6,000 member companies of all shapes, sizes, branches, and regional backgrounds. Our member organizations power more than 2/3 of the Slovenian economy in terms of capital and human resources. Business in Slovenia starts here!**

## What Can We Do for You?

The GZS 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 GZS offers you **services** developed especially for your needs.

## 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, the department 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.



**What do you gain by knocking on the door of the Chamber of Commerce and Industry of Slovenia?**

**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

## Market Intelligence

The GZS 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 GZS publishes a monthly electronic bulletin in English called **Slovenia Business Link**. This publication features information on upcoming events, op-eds on regulatory issues, and the latest economic data.

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 GZS 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.



go international  
slovenia

**Legal Framework**

The GZS 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 6,000 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 GZS offers several packages of promotional opportunities and advertising also to foreign partners to increase their visibility on the Slovenian market.

**Environmental Protection**

The GZS 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.

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 and actors



**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)

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Photo: Adria Mobil

# Slovenian Technology to Be Used by Entire Volkswagen Group

Year after year, Slovenian companies prove through their innovativeness, development competence and excellent production quality that they are perfect partners for companies in the car industry. At the same time, with their final products they are dictating trends in the field of mobility.

*Barbara Perko and Andreja Šalamun*

### **Electric-Powered Boat with Hydraulic Hardtop Roof Is a Hit**

The most popular boat from Alfastreet Marine last year was the 23 Cabin Prestige Line, with a 10kW electric motor and a hydraulic hardtop roof. "Our customers are mostly interested in the more luxurious models, and the look and comfort of the cockpit is very important to them," say company sources. They have also launched a model with semi-hybrid drive, which allows up to 20 hours of use; in the last few months there has been a lot of interest in this design, according to sources at the company. "We have also added options to the Model 23 Cabin Prestige Line that are offered by luxury-class car makers, so these boats are truly refined. Options include the installation of ambient LED lights on the console, black structural wood inlays on the console and Spradling Diamante

cushions, which are UV and water-resistant, have an opulent look and are exceptionally pleasant to sit on. The cabin version of the Model 23 also allows for installation of an electrical WC, so in an overall length



Photo: Alfastreet Marine



of 7.8 metres we can offer nearly all of the options available on larger craft,” say sources at Alfastreet.

In the last three years, Alfastreet Marine has been intensively expanding its sales network and is seeking distributors around the world, as demand for their boats is increasing every year. “Alfastreet Marine remains a synonym for quality and refinement, and above all we want to offer nautical enthusiasts maximum comfort on the water and technical solutions that make the boats fun and easy to use. We are currently the only manufacturer that has a category B CE certificate in the 7 metre category, meaning that we have also achieved the highest standard of safety on the water,” say company sources.

### 8.6 Metre Model Under Development

Their development team is currently focused on finishing the design for an 8.6 metre Model 28, through which the company will take a major step forward in the global range of vessels in this class. “The model will be available in two styles, one with a planing hull and one with a semi-displacement hull, which will allow the installation of various types of electrical drives and motors up to 600 horsepower. The boat will also be available with three cabin options, so we will try as much as possible to cover the wishes and demands of all of our customers. The Model 28 will also offer the option of a hydraulic hardtop roof, as the 95-percent sales of this option prove that the unique design is an excellent choice for both comfort and functionality,” say company sources.

### New Generation of Twin Vans on the Way

Adria Mobil is one of the three most respected and recognised caravan brands in Europe. Their leading new feature for the 2019 season is the new generation of Twin series vans, based on the Fiat Ducato, with exclusive new functions including the completely revamped Supreme model with a panoramic “sky-roof” and a spacious loft in the cabin, new kitchen and WC layouts and a completely redesigned interior. The new Plus model has a double sky-roof and a cabin loft, new kitchen and WC layouts and completely new interior furnishings. The entry level Axess Twin models will continue to be built on a Citroën Jumper chassis.

For the 2019 season, Adria Mobil has upgraded the competitiveness of the affordable Axess models and focused on the competitiveness of its entire range of motor homes. The more affordable Axess motor homes, based on a Citroën Jumper (except for the Sonic model), offer new features, layouts and additional value for money. The Sonic Axess also adds new interior furnishings and other improvements.

In the motor home range, new, innovative “Open Salon” (double sofa or “face to face”) layouts are being introduced in the Sonic, Matrix and Coral models. The new layout offers numerous improvements in terms of both living and driving, and a third bed is added to the popular Coral model.



Photo: Adria Mobil

The caravan range also includes new innovations and new layout options. The Alpina caravan now offers the Adria Live Stream app, which features remote smart control of the caravan and access to instructions for users, the authorised dealers network and information on campsites. Innovative new layouts have been designed for the Alpina and Adora, with a layout for teens in the Adora that features four separate living areas and two entrances.

### Houseboat Launched

In 2018, Adria Dom began selling houseboats, for which they have partnered with an Italian firm that is responsible for supplying the floating platforms. Their first houseboats have already been sold in the Italian resort town of Lignano. They are also betting on their Alpline modular house, which is designed primarily for the demanding northern European markets. The energy-efficient Alpline house is designed for year-round living, with various heating options.

Adria Dom has developed new features for the 2019 season in all of their product groups. In mobile houses they have completely revamped their entry-level SLine series. Both the interior and the exterior have been redesigned. The Compact model, which can be quickly adapted to the user's immediate requirements, has also been upgraded. The main living area has been designed so that it can be a children's playroom in the morning, a dining area for lunch and either a living room or an additional bedroom at night. The mid-level MLine series features a redesigned exterior and interior. The exclusive XLine series also received some new design features, including innovative 3D wood cladding.

Among glamping home for 2019 they have designed the new Safari Adriatic, the entry-level model in their



Photo: Adria Dom

most popular series, whose authentic character is captured by the slogan “Perfectly Simple”. Another important innovation is the new Safari L Loft model, which was developed on the basis of the success of the smaller M Loft model. The Safari Loft series features a spacious loft with a balcony, which is still a standout feature amongst the competition.

The competitive advantages of Adria Dom’s glamping home are quality, design, innovativeness and excellent post-sales service, which is recognised by customers in Sweden, Portugal, Spain, Croatia and Japan. The company is already developing ideas for the 2020 season. “We are planning and already beginning to develop smart house technology with which buyers can use the IoT system to manage one house or an entire neighbourhood.”

### Technology to Be Used by Entire Volkswagen Group

Last year, Hidria launched important new innovative designs for radically lowering fuel consumption and emissions in internal combustion engines and for new highly efficient hybrid and full electric drives. “After years of innovative development we launched a new innovative digital system for cold-starting diesel engines using a Hidria Optymus PSG pressure sensor, which received a European award. It significantly reduces fuel consumption and all emissions of harmful gases from diesel engines,” say sources at Hidria. “The closed-loop digital ignition system developed by Hidria can reduce fuel consumption and emissions of harmful gases by up to 30 percent in comparison with current technologies. Our global market share in this segment will consequently approach 30 percent. The entire VW Group will be using the system in its new two-litre diesel engine.”

Their innovative solutions in the totally new 48V light hybrid electric drive system contribute to the reduced emissions. “Using so-called starter-generator technology, it allows mechanical energy to be converted into electrical energy during braking and assists the electric motor during acceleration. The latest models which have both the Optymus PSG and the solutions for the new 48V light hybrid system built into their engines are Audi A6 and A7.”

Hidria also develops and manufactures key parts for steering systems, with a focus on premium marques. They have thus developed key parts of the steering systems for the new Mercedes C Class. They also develop and manufacture innovative and stylish

motorcycle frames, which they produce for BMW, Ducati and others, and as of last year also KTM.

In the field of heating, cooling and air conditioning, they have launched a completely new line of electronically commutated centrifugal fans, EC fan systems that feature low noise and high energy efficiency. The state-of-the-art electronics and highly efficient electric motors produced by Hidria ensure increased efficiency and reduced energy consumption.

Hidria’s key partners include Audi, BMW, Daimler, PSA Peugeot Citroën, Renault, Volkswagen, Bosch, Continental, ZF and many others.

### Exhaust for Kawasaki Ninja Well Received

Among the products launched by Akrapovič in the past year, they note in particular their aftermarket exhaust for the Kawasaki Ninja 400, which has been very well received on the market. Other top sellers include their exhaust systems for the Vespa GTV 300, Yamaha MT-09, Yamaha YZF-R6 and BMW R1200 GS Adventure. Their aftermarket exhaust systems for cars include systems for the Porsche Macan, BMW M5, Porsche Panamera Turbo/Turbo S E-Hybrid, Nissan GT-R, Porsche 911 GT3 (991.2) and Mercedes AMG E63/E63 S.

“Our recent projects include working with the motorcycle manufacturers Ducati and BMW Motorrad. In the car segment we manufacture exhaust systems for the Bentley Continental Supersports, Bentley Bentayga, Audi RS 6 Avant, RS 7 Sportback, Alfa Romeo 4C, Volkswagen Golf R and Koenigsegg Regera, and the BMW M4 DTM, BMW M6 GT3, BMW M8 GTE and Aston Martin Vantage GTE race cars,” say sources at Akrapovič.

Akrapovič exhaust systems can also be found as stock equipment or as options on various motorcycles and cars from leading manufacturers. These include the motorcycle manufacturers Aprilia, BMW Motorrad, Can-Am, Ducati, Honda, Kawasaki, KTM, Yamaha and others, and car makers Bentley, Audi, Alfa Romeo, Volkswagen R, Renault Sport, Koenigsegg, and Abarth, and race cars from BMW Motorsport, Aston Martin Racing and others. They supply numerous racing teams that compete in the MotoGP, MXGP, WorldSBK and other world championships.

“We are currently developing exhaust systems for several motorcycles and cars, including an aftermarket system for the Alfa Romeo Giulia Quadrifoglio,” say company sources, who add that they are also developing numerous exhaust systems and other motorcycling and automotive products,



Photo: Hidria



Photo: Akrapovič

which will be presented this year. The company hopes to establish new connections in the motorcycling field, particularly with motorcycle producers in the US and Asia, while their target group in the car segment is manufacturers of premium marques.

### The World's Most Environmentally-Friendly Trainer Plane

Pipistrel's most notable launch in the past year is Alpha Electro. "At this moment we are completing the full certification procedure, meaning that it will be the first totally electric aircraft ever to obtain a full EASA-Type certificate, and it is also certified for pilot training. We will begin delivering them to flight schools this year, as the greenest, quietest and most environmentally-friendly trainer plane in history," say company sources proudly.

Pipistrel sell under their own brand in 97 countries on every continent, and they are currently focusing on new markets in Africa, the Near East and Oceania. They also sell their electric drive systems to others for research or scientific purposes or for application. "A good example is NASA, which purchased several Pipistrel electric drive systems that are normally used to power our Taurus Electro G2 aircraft. They testing the systems as a part of their research into electrically-powered flight in preparation for their new experimental X-57 aircraft, which has 14 electrically-driven propellers integrated into the wings."

Another very significant and sizable project is their cooperation with Uber, which signed a long-term agreement with Pipistrel on cooperation in the manufacture of electric-powered VTOL aircraft. According to Pipistrel, the VTOLs will be in public use by 2025. The major part of their development capacities are currently focused on vertical take-off and landing aircraft.

### Camping Trailer Receives Award

The TPV Group is a leading development and pre-development supplier to the car industry that develops and manufactures products which critically affect handling, safety and comfort. They include various frame and body assemblies, seat components and engine seals. They also develop and market comprehensive solutions for smart factories, where their automated guided vehicles (AGVs) are one of their key products in the field of automated internal logistics. They also develop and manufacture light



Photo: Pipistrel

cargo trailers, where together with their partner Böckmann they are one of the largest manufacturers in Europe. "Among our more than 80 trailer models, one of the key new innovations in 2018 was our Off Road camping trailer, which won an award for innovation," say sources at TPV.

The TPV Group has earned the trust of the world's most demanding vehicle manufacturers and systems suppliers, which have entrusted them to develop products for the most prestigious marques such as BMW, Rolls Royce, Mini, Volvo, Mercedes Benz, Jaguar, Land Rover, Renault, Smart, Volkswagen, etc. They hope to further expand sales of their product groups already present on the European, North American and Asian markets.

### Products to Support E-Mobility

KLS is a global supplier to the car industry whose products are supplied to Tier 1 customers and OEMs in all of the major global markets. "Our ring gears, signal rings and mass rings for flywheels are installed in cars from the majority (more than 30) of the world's finest OEMs. Every year we develop a large number of new products for this series for prototype testing or batch production. In the last year we have developed 46 new products in this group to the batch production phase," say company sources, who add: "One of our major German customers even gave us a strategic partnership award in 2016 for the high quality of our products and services and overall excellence."

They are currently developing the production of products for e-mobility applications. "These are very precisely manufactured gears and rings, capable of transferring large amounts of power along with high wear resistance, for transferring power from the electric motor to the drive wheels in electric or plug-in hybrid drives," say company sources.



Photo: TPV



Photo: KLS





Photo: Pirnar

# Entrance Doors Like Never Before

Some very special developments in the world of entrance doors, new trends in battery-powered gardening equipment, the world's first digital actuator (with energy-saving functions), a sophisticated designer kitchen composter for organic waste, and technically advanced glass of super premium quality.

*Barbara Perko and Andreja Šalamun*

### **Domel's Electric Motor in the BMW i3 AC Compressor**

With its development of compact and highly energy-efficient electric motors, Domel are setting the pace when it comes to battery-powered gardening equipment. The leading names in professional gardening equipment, Stihl and Husqvarna, already incorporate electric motors manufactured by Domel into their chainsaws, mowers, harvesters and blowers. Alongside a series of components manufactured for the car industry, the company also produce electric motors for the AC compressor in the BMW i3 electric car. By developing a compact compressor, they have become an exclusive supplier to the Wagner company, which produces paint-spraying equipment.

Their vacuum, which received a Gold Award for innovation from the Chamber of Commerce and Industry of Slovenia, has been incorporated into the new vacuum cleaner from Kärcher, the German manufacturer of professional cleaning equipment. "The new vacuum unit has been developed for battery-powered stick vacuum cleaners. It is an innovative technological solution based on an electronically commutated motor of modular design that provides a great degree of adaptability to the varying requirements of customers," say the company.

By diversifying their product portfolio, they have managed to disperse their operations across several market sectors. Domel's motors are incorporated into vacuum cleaners manufactured by Philips,



Photo: Domel

Electrolux and Kärcher, as well as those produced by Slovenian manufacturer Hyla, which are marketed on all continents. They are strengthening their presence in the vehicle segment in tandem with Hella, Continental and other predominantly Tier 1 and Tier 2 concerns.

They are keen to use their own branded products to strengthen operations in the medical and laboratory equipment sectors. “When developing our new family of centrifuges, we strove to ensure that the devices were packed with top features. We also included elements of industrial design, which is very important for products,” say Domel.

The company have several e-mobility projects in development. Their key guidelines when developing their range of EC fan motors were high energy efficiency and high material efficiency. “New applications have appeared recently in which practically the only running cost is that of electricity consumption for cooling and ventilation. These are mainly large servers, computer centres and data centres, where our solutions are attractive not only from the ecological aspect but also in terms of cost-effectiveness and reducing running costs.”

### First Digital Actuator, Upgraded with Energy-saving Functions

Danfoss Trata are the world’s leading supplier of energy-efficient solutions and technologies for buildings, infrastructure, agriculture and the environment. The company outline their product portfolio, which includes 4,000 different products from four manufacturing programmes: “We supply products that are used in district heating and cooling

“A new approach has recently been taken in my area, combined with new technical solutions. We had issues with some valves and decided, in collaboration with an operations manager, to implement and test Danfoss’s new valves for our field of work. I didn’t know that heating equipment required so many tests, and it is very impressive to see that 100% of it was tested. We see the quality of the equipment.”

Valet Didier, Technical Department Director,  
Dalkia Paris

applications and for the regulation of heating and air-conditioning in residential and business buildings to partners in over 45 countries around the world.” Their most important products are those used for the regulation and hydraulic balancing of district heating and cooling systems, as well as heating and cooling systems in buildings, and brazed plate heat exchangers.

They see digital transformation as a massive opportunity, believing that the transition to smarter and more connected systems will increase value for their customers. They recently introduced three major new products. NovoCon is the world’s first digital actuator, complemented by a number of energy-saving functions. “These allow the user to install certain operating regimes to reduce energy consumption for heating and cooling, from limiting return temperature to setting the desired temperature range. We received a Gold Award for innovation for this product in 2017,” say the company.

The XB06H StS Evoflat brazed plate heat exchanger is a further link in the new chain of small and medium-sized heat exchangers manufactured by Danfoss. They are produced using alternative copper-free brazing materials. “The new heat exchanger boasts superior rust-resistant properties and an extended operating life of over 15 years when used in district hot water applications. With this new product, we have managed to upgrade our existing range of conventionally brazed variants of the same model, thereby facilitating its use in the most testing operating conditions – something that has hitherto not been possible,” say the company.

They have also presented a new generation of pressure regulators and Virtus flow regulators, which have been upgraded with an electrical drive unit that enables the desired values to be set. The main selling points of the digital transformation of mechanical pressure regulators are the option of setting the regulators remotely (iNET functionality)



Photo: Danfoss Trata



Photo: Pirnar

and the automatic recognition of oscillations in heating systems by adjusting the operating regimes of the pressure regulators (ISET functionality). Danfoss Trata are also preparing to launch a new generation of Virtus and Abqm4.0 products.

Their main B2B customers are wholesalers specialising in heating technology, including Skanska and the German company GC Gruppe, while their direct customers include district heating installations and district heating and cooling distributors, such as the ENGIE Group. Their largest export markets are Russia, China and Germany, but they are also increasing their presence in South Korea, Malaysia, Singapore, Spain and Italy.

### Unique Entrance Wall

The Pirnar company manufacture innovative entrance doors and walls – including a door that features the world’s first automatic one-touch handle – and last year they have managed to create another superbly innovative product. The company certainly know how to sell their entrance wall, the only one of its kind in the world: “We wanted to make something that excited admiration, thrilled with its innovation and knew no bounds. So we created two timeless and unique collections of handles, Magma Light and Crystal. Elegant. Timeless. Uncompromising. These are the words that describe our most exclusive and refined product, the Theatrica entrance wall. For perfectionists who know what they want and who delight in beauty. For bold, ambitious people with taste.” The products caught the eye of the international jury and the company received the Red Dot Product Design Award, the German Design Award 2019, and the German Innovation Award 2019.

Theatrica is an entrance wall that uses cameras to automatically identify the owner, before sliding open silently and then automatically closing (although it is still possible to operate it manually). The wall can be manufactured in the largest dimensions and is available in a wood, stone, glass or aluminium finish.

The company can also boast an entrance door featuring the world’s first automatic one-touch handle, for which they won a prestigious German Design Award in 2017. The “Ultimate Pure” range of entrance doors uses a OneTouch system to identify the owner by means of a fingerprint reader or other access system. The handle then emerges from a completely flat surface, the surrounding area is illuminated, the lock is released and the doors open. As the doors open, the handle moves back into its resting place.

The company are always looking for new challenges, and are planning even more new, unique masterpieces. Their doors can be found all over the world. “It’s worth reminding people that our doors adorn production companies and the magnificent homes of some world-famous celebrities,” they add.

### Compost, Fertiliser, Even a Drain Cleaner

Last year’s innovation and a last summer’s success story at the Velenje-based Skaza company, which is making a bigger and bigger name for itself on the outdoor living market, is the Pick&Go collapsible picnic set, made from environment-friendly materials, chiefly sugar cane. As the company are keen to point out, the natural materials used prevent any harmful long-term effects on the environment – and, what’s more, the picnic set is melamine- and BPA-free and can be recycled. The basic model is aimed at countryside adventures for up to four people, while the stacking system, which uses fasteners to keep the bowls in place, means that extra elements can be added for larger groups of picnickers.

The Bokashi Organko 2 kitchen composter for organic waste, which features a sophisticated new design, was also launched last year. As Skaza say, this new, improved product features a better range of functional solutions and, like the majority of the



Photo: Skaza



company's products, is made from recycled materials. "In addition to treating organic waste responsibly, a trend that is gathering strength in the developed world, Bokashi Organko owners get a superb compost base, and the fermented liquid produced as the waste breaks down is an excellent fertiliser for garden and indoor flowers, vegetables and fruit. It also makes a great drain cleaner, too."

Skaza have been working with world-renowned partners for decades, and have already contributed several products and solutions to the car and electronics industries in particular, such as switches and home furnishing components. "Here at Skaza we are always looking for new customers looking to expand our areas of operation. We are focused on markets whose shoppers are ecologically aware and value the concept of sustainability. This means Scandinavia, the UK, France, the Netherlands, Germany, Austria and a few other places. Our products can be found in more than 50 countries worldwide," say the Velenje-based company.

### Impressing the Caribbean and Mexican Markets

The products produced by the Steklarna Hrastnik glassworks company are distinguished by the excellence of the glass they use and the quality of execution. The new "Alaska" bottle, part of their 'High Glass Spirits' collection, more than meets the company's traditionally stringent quality requirements. The bottle is the result of an international design competition organised by the company. Like the other 14 standard bottles in the High Glass collection, it boasts technical sophistication and super premium quality (being made from some of the purest glass in the world), and can be used for a range of purposes. "It is this adaptability that enables the customer to add their own individual touch or a company to add their own branding elements by applying added decoration,

which gives the product authenticity and uniqueness," say the company.

Steklarna Hrastnik produce new bottles for prestige spirits such as cognac, rum, whisky and gin. "These bottles have opened up the Caribbean and Mexican rum-producing markets for us." Their spirit bottles are used by world-famous brands such as Hennessy, Heineken, Bacardi, Martini, Pernod Ricard and others. "Last year, together with one of our clients, the Pernod Ricard Group, we also applied to the Luxe Pack fair in Monaco in the hope of securing a 'Prix Formes de Luxe' prize, which rewards innovation, for the LGD bottle we have developed in cooperation with the client."

The company have also recently added to and refreshed their own collection of glass tableware. They have developed two new ranges, Freya and Jack, which feature water, whisky and cocktail glasses. As they reveal: "We have also taken a step forward in 2018 by developing our technically most exacting perfume bottle as part of the 'High Glass Parfums' collection." Their Callisto High Glass bottle has gained top recognition by being used by a prestigious ambient perfume brand. "We are already developing a fresh new design for the client, with additional volume sizes." The company is also preparing a product they hope will cement their place as a serious competitor on the perfume bottle market.

But that's not all the company are currently developing. They are also working on a line of special bottles for a global gin producer, and collaborating with an excellent Slovakian designer and outside partner on another spirits-related project, to be launched on the prestige drinks market in India this year. They would like to expand their presence in France, the UK and the US by 2021, offering glass tableware as well as glass packaging, and to expand their production of special glass packaging for super premium drinks brands and premium perfumes.



Photo: Steklarna Hrastnik



Photo: Sava Hotels & Resorts

# Health and Well-Being

**A comprehensive package for mind and body – from superb food to first-class locations and products your body will love.**

An innovative range of yoghurts, the first high-protein ice lollies and hemp-seed toast. Healthy and natural are the guiding principles behind the Slovenian food industry, which keeps a keen eye on food trends and offers consumers only the very best. They place great emphasis on locally produced ingredients of verified quality, but also on using new approaches to develop environment-friendly packaging.

Slovenia is also continuously engaged in introducing new developments in tourism, with guests opting in increasing numbers for comprehensive “well-being” products and services. Guests can therefore take advantage of a relaxation park comprising the four basic elements that help to improve well-being, rejuvenate their senses at a spa, or set out to explore one of the most beautiful caves in the world. A visit to a high-mountain pasture, a

unique example of cultural and architectural heritage, also makes for an unforgettable experience.

The principle of “a healthy mind in a healthy body” is something common to all the activities and experiences described above. The Slovenian pharmaceutical industry, which introduces new products to markets across the world, is also concerned with ensuring that people enjoy good health. Among other innovations, they have introduced a tablet to replace suspensions, and a tablet that dissolves in the mouth in a matter of seconds.

# Companies Win Over Customers with Healthy Products

**Demand for healthier foods and products is on the increase every year, and Slovenian companies have plenty to offer in this regard: additive-free premium fruit yoghurts, special types of bread ...**

Andreja Šalamun

## Innovative Range of Yoghurts

Last year, dairy producer Ljubljanske mlekarne unveiled Mu Natur, a new, innovative range of yoghurts containing yoghurt, premium selected fruits and nothing else – making them the only fruit yoghurts on the Slovenian market without any added sugar. “This innovative product was developed in collaboration with scientists at Ljubljanske mlekarne and specialists from Ljubljana University’s Biotechnical Faculty. The main idea behind this first joint development project was simple: to use only natural yoghurt and fruit, with no additives at all,” the company explain. They add that the Biotechnical Faculty has awarded the product one of its “100% natural” certificates as proof that it contains no added sugar, flavourings, colourings or other additives. “The Mu Natur range is our response to a growing trend in the food sector, which is increasingly turning to healthy food containing no added sugar.”

Ljubljanske mlekarne are part of the dairy industry’s largest concern, Lactalis, whose global brands, which include Président, Galbani, Lactel and Zymil (Parmalat), can be found in almost 90 countries around the world. The company say that they have made a name for themselves within the group for the exceptional quality of their products. According to them, “this is why our sister companies have entrusted the manufacture of various products under globally and regionally recognised brand names, including Président, Lactel, Zymil (Parmalat) and Nestlé, to us here in Ljubljana.” Their products also appear as ingredients in domestic food manufacturers’ products, for example in those of Pekarna Pečjak and Žito, the Conditus confectionery workshop uses its own ingredients to produce the famous cream slice, or kremšnita, from Bled for Hofer, while the Incom company produce ice cream.



Photo: Ljubljanske mlekarne

## Gorenjka Chocolate Making a Name for Itself Abroad

“The most successful products to be placed on the market in recent years by Žito and Podravka have been their ‘jubilee bread’ and a range of new part-baked products. We brought out the ‘jubilee bread’ product to mark the company’s 70th birthday. It is made from seven types of grain, comes in a classic oval loaf shape with longitudinal cuts, and has a fuller taste on account of the wheat sourdough, which also keeps it fresh for several days,” say Dr Mateja Modic, Žito’s Director of Development, and Matjaž M. Dremelj, Head of Exports. The new part-baked products, the company’s export flagships, are also popular. As they explain: “These Žito products are made in Slovenia, partly baked, then deep-frozen. They are then shipped abroad, where they are finished at shops and service stations.” The two point out that the products concerned are marked by innovation, originality, a rustic style and a recognisable flavour, making them distinct from the products produced by their global competitors.



Photo: Gorenjka





Photo: Žito

“Foreign customers also enjoy Gorenjka chocolate, including, over the last year, the new Mistica Wellness range of dark chocolates containing goji and maca, hemp seeds and orange, ginger and matcha, and coconut and collagen, as well as the Gorenjka Classic with 85% cocoa. Our customers also appreciate our spelt gnocchi.”

### Hemp Seed Toast Wins Awards

Žito have brought their “Krušnik” bread to market and it has already proved very popular, while the company won an award for most innovative food product in the pre-packaged food category for their hemp seed toast from the Ljubljana-based Nutrition Institute. “We have also launched a special range of pastas onto the market, including nettle pasta and tricolore mini penne rigate, which get their colour from the pumpkin, nettle and powdered beetroot added to the durum wheat. We are also developing a range of organic products, such as the Natura Bio mix of heritage flours. We have also introduced new flavours to our range of 1001 CVET teas: apple and turmeric and pineapple and ginger.”

Modic and Dremelj also point out that the development of new and the reformulation of existing products is a response to food trends on the market and to customers’ wishes. “We are taking account of the trend that is seeing an increase in the levels of naturally present functional ingredients, such as fibre, minerals and proteins. We are manufacturing

less complex products with simple labelling that are nevertheless of high quality. We are bringing back old grains and pseudo-grains, such as spelt and other ancient forms of wheat, buckwheat, quinoa and amaranth, and are increasing the use of pulses and products made from organic produce.”

Žito products can be found on the shelves of global retailers; such products include part-baked products and caramel and vegan jelly sweets. They are interested in new partners and new markets, particularly countries with higher purchasing power, such as France, Scandinavia, Benelux and the UK, as well as countries outside the European Union.

### Yeast Starters Improve Quality

The Don Don company introduced “Grandma’s cornbread” from Pekarna Grosuplje to the Slovenian market, and white and dark breads under the “Domača peka” label followed last year. “All three products are prepared using a lengthy dough-preparation process with the addition of a yeast starter, which we use to improve quality,” say Don Don. The yeast starter is prepared from flour, water and a little yeast; the mixture is then not worked into the other ingredients until the following day. “While the dough is resting, micro-organisms and enzymes cause changes that have a positive effect on the sensory properties of the product, giving a fuller flavour, a rich aroma and greater freshness,” they explain.

In autumn 2018 they also presented a new “Tvojih5minut” (T5M) dark toast product, which joins the range of toasts already available: classic toast, butter toast, seed toast and Maxi toast. “We manufacture T5M toasts for the entire Don Don Group on all the markets on which we currently operate,” say the company. They point out that the toasts are distinctive mainly because they contain no additives.

### World’s First High-Protein Ice Lollies

The Incom company from Ajdovščina manufacture ice cream and other frozen products. They make more than two million ice creams a day and export them to 46 countries around the world. The company say that they are constantly engaged in developing innovative products and new ice cream flavours. A year ago, in April 2018, they entered the European healthy lifestyle food market with the Leone ALIVE brand. “Consumers in Slovenia and elsewhere in Europe can now buy a functional ice cream that promotes a healthy, balanced lifestyle,” say the company. They add that they are the first in the world to offer high-protein ice lollies, as well as Greek yoghurt-flavoured ice lollies with added cereals and semi-candied fruit. Aronia-flavoured ice lollies are also part of the Leone ALIVE family. New “Leone Triple Pleasure” ice lollies have also been added to the Leone range last year.



Photo: Don Don

“We have received numerous awards for innovation for our ice cream, including an internationally prestigious Wabel award, which is given to the best food manufacturers, an international award from the British Frozen Food Federation (BFFF) and a World DAIRY Innovation Award 2018 (‘best ice cream’ category), which is given to only the most innovative dairy products. Our new ice creams have also won recognition at home: at the international Agra Fair in Gornja Radgona and at the 23rd meeting of business leaders of Primorska in Ajdovščina, where the Leone ALIVE range of healthier ice creams received a Gold Award from the Northern Primorska Chamber of Commerce and Industry and was put forward for national selection.”

### Manufacturing More Than 600 Different Types of Ice Cream

Incom collaborate with several key partners in Europe. “All our ice creams, more than 600 different types, can be found under global brand names. There’s a big chance that a consumer eating ice cream anywhere in Europe or the rest of the world is tasting a product made in Ajdovščina, particularly if they buy a licensed figurine lolly,” claim the company.

Their largest sales markets are the most demanding European markets, such as Germany, the UK, Scandinavia as a whole, Italy, France and Belgium and, beyond that, all the way to Israel, Australia, New Zealand and the US. “We would also like to break through with our innovative ice creams to the Middle East and Japan,” say the company that develop new ice cream flavours to meet two different types of demand: for healthy ice cream and for rich, sinfully good ice cream.

### Consumers Want Healthy Products Made from Local Ingredients

The group of associated companies, Pivka perutninarstvo and Delamaris, also follow consumer demand for healthy products of verified origin, with a high degree of control and the highest-quality ingredients. “With the huge demands on their time, consumers are ever more frequently reaching for food that is quick to prepare, but which has to be healthy, naturally seasoned and without artificial additives,” says Karmen Rodman, Director of Strategic Marketing at Pivka perutninarstvo and Delamaris.

Pivka perutninarstvo are therefore continuing to develop ready-prepared chicken for the grill, with added fresh vegetables and natural seasonings, and preservative-free parboiled chicken products. “The aim of the company is to control the entire chain from the selection and preparation of feed, to animal-rearing, production and distribution, all in line with the highest standards,” says Rodman.

Delamaris are specialists in fish with a tradition that stretches back to 1879. “With so many loyal customers, the company prepares its products in the way it always has, while also developing new flavours for its pre-prepared foods. In 2017 we revitalised



Photo: Incom

the tuna salad market, last year we presented new mackerel flavours featuring vegetables and without tomato sauce,” says Rodman. She guarantees that the company use only mackerel of the highest quality (*Scomber Scombrus*) caught in the FAO 27 area of the North Sea, along with naturally fermented vegetables. She points out that the products are manufactured without preservatives and other additives, gluten or GMOs, have high levels of naturally occurring Omega 3 fatty acids, and are packed in environment-friendly BPA-free aluminium tins.

### Working with Partners in More Than 20 Countries

Delamaris give priority to manufacturing products for their own brand, but also produce products for Pivka under the latter’s brand name. “To realise our vision, we work with different distributors and retailers in more than 20 countries worldwide. We also seek out new ways of getting our products closer to consumers in the European Union in particular,” says Karmen Rodman. She adds that they are present in an independent capacity on various different markets. “Delamaris have had a presence on the wider European and global market for 140 years. As experts with a long tradition, we have become famous for premium quality because we control the entire product preparation process, from selecting



Photo: Delamaris

the ingredients, checking the origin of the fish we use, insisting on sustainable fishing, controlling all production and recipe preparation processes, and designing striking packaging,” says Rodman.

As a manufacturer of various parboiled chicken products, Pivka believe that their quality stands out because of their integrated approach to controlling all aspects of creation of the product. “This includes our own preparation of selected plant-based animal feed without added poultry antibiotics, the selection of animals from local farms located an average of 80 km away, and control of all stages of production and distribution to retailers or end-customers. Feed and the end-products themselves are regularly inspected in the companies’ own and in independent laboratories, and the quality of our products has been confirmed by numerous medals, awards and domestic and international quality certificates, including IFS, FDA, EAC and MSC,” says Rodman.

### Eyeing Foreign Markets

“Delamaris products have long expiry dates which makes it possible to reach geographically dispersed and distant markets, while Pivka’s products require the targeting of markets closer to hand,” according to Rodman. She says that the leading markets for both brands are Germany, the UK and Sweden, although the Czech Republic and Switzerland are also important. What interests them most in these markets is working with sales agents that have an extensive business network of merchants able to credibly represent their brands in the pre-prepared food and healthy snacks segment.

As the development of products and packaging is one of the company’s basic activities, they earmark a considerable portion of funds every year to the development of technology and equipment, as well as to the human resources capable of successfully realising the vision of each individual brand. “We are currently placing particular emphasis on developing packaging that preserves the excellent ingredients that make up the product, makes handling easier, is practical to use and is made of sustainable materials. One of our past achievements was the aluminium packaging developed for Delamaris products, while further packaging development products are actively under way, alongside projects to create tasty new products,” says Rodman.

### Social Responsibility an Integral Part of the Business Strategy

Pivovarna Laško Union are the leading beer producer in Slovenia. The Ljubljana-based company, which has a tradition stretching back almost 200 years, brews its products at two sites, in Laško and Ljubljana. “Our brands, the best-known being the Laško Zlatorog and Union pilsners, reflect our passion for quality and our commitment to bringing pleasure,” say the brewery.

The company are constantly adding innovations to their beer portfolio and adapting them to beer-lovers’ desires and requirements. They point out

that they use top-quality natural ingredients and are committed to continuous improvement and innovation. “In 2016 Pivovarna Laško Union expanded its sales portfolio with Heineken and other brands manufactured by Heineken-owned breweries around the world. The range of beers is complemented by refreshing soft drinks such as Sola and by Zala spring water.”

The brewery say that they are constantly engaged in introducing new innovations. “They cover all areas, from new drinks categories and new types of beer and soft drink, to packaging redesign and the introduction of new beer-serving technologies.”

### EUR 9 Million of Investment in 2017

Since Pivovarna Laško Union was acquired by Heineken, “the level of investment in the core business has remained intensive”. In 2017 the brewery made investments of EUR 9 million. “Priority was given to ensuring the production and bottling of Heineken-branded products in Laško, the production and bottling of cider in Ljubljana, and projects to improve safety and innovation and to optimise production lines for sales on the domestic market and the wider region,” they explain.

The brewery exports 34 percent of its output, mostly to Croatia, Italy, Bosnia-Herzegovina and Serbia. The company say that their highest-selling products on foreign markets are Laško Zlatorog, Laško Club, Union pilsner, Union Radler and Sola soft drinks.

“The Adria region and neighbouring markets remain the brewery’s main area of focus. Our export-related ambitions include expanding brand presence to the American market, as well as to other countries in which Slovenes live and work,” they add.







Photo: Termalna Laško

# Relaxation Park for Improving Your Well-Being

**Individuals need relaxation that both represents and provides integrated well-being. Slovenia has something for everyone.**

*Andreja Šalamun and Barbara Perko*

## **Visitors Looking for Socialising and Adventure**

“The trend when spending holidays at our spas and wellness centres in Štajerska, Pomurje and Bled is developing in the direction of integrated well-being, which first of all attracts the ‘take care of yourself’ type of guest, and secondly the type of guests who are looking for socialising and adventure. Guests in both of these segments want to take care of themselves – relax, pamper themselves and recharge their batteries, which can mean for example bathing in thermal spring water, relaxing by the pool and reading a book, enjoying time with their families and friends, riding the water slides, tickling their taste buds with local and organic cuisine, enjoying authentic local experiences, cycling through the local hills and flatlands, checking their health status, going for a morning run, sampling typical local wellness products, treating themselves to a beauty treatment...,” say sources at Sava Turizem.

They believe that the trend of holidays that both embody and represent integrated well-being is “mainly the result of the fast tempo of everyday life, in which what we miss most is quality time for ourselves”.

## **Hotel Offers New Age Treatment Methods**

In the last two years, they have introduced numerous new features for guests at all of their destinations. At Sava Hotels Bled they have renovated the former Hotel Golf and renamed it the Rikli Balance Hotel, which has been open since March 2018, and the rooms have been given locally tinged stories. They also revamped the hotel’s menu, which is now based on fresh ingredients and local dishes.

With the opening of the hotel last year they have completed the second of three phases of renovation, and they are just now completing the third phase. “Our guests will now be able to experience New Age



Photo: Sava Hotels &amp; Resorts

treatment methods based on the methods of Arnold Rikli, the founder of natural healing in Bled in the 19th century, who relied on natural forces for healing: air, water and sunlight. He promoted exercise in the fresh air, good food in moderation and reinvigorating sleep. The Rikli Relaxation Park is the perfect place for guests to slow down and spend a few moments for well-being, focus on themselves, relax and gather new strength for their everyday challenges,” say sources at Sava Turizem.

The Rikli Relaxation Park is composed of four basic elements that each promote well-being: “Rikli’s Barefoot Path” (a walk over eight different surfaces that has a beneficial and relaxing effect on the body and soul), “relaxing in the shade of trees” (Rikli advocated spending time outdoors, and especially exercising, in order to increase your vitality, improve your mood, improve your concentration, strengthen your immune system and increase your ability to tolerate stress), “hugging trees” (vast amounts of life force flows through trees, which is beneficial to the body and soul) and “inner peace through yoga” (yoga in the park will still the participant’s thoughts, relax the body and return them to wellbeing).

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#### **A “Nature Pool” with Black Thermal Spring Water**

Upgrades have also been made at the Terme 3000 spa in Moravske Toplice. They have renovated the indoor thermal pool, the lower part of which is designed for lively and active guests, and in the “nature pool” guests can bathe in the black mineral water of the thermal spring, which is helpful for degenerative rheumatism, alleviates chronic infective rheumatic diseases, promotes recovery from injuries and operations, stimulates blood circulation, helps treat skin diseases, reduces anxiety and improves your general well-being. The upper part of the indoor pool has numerous peaceful corners intended for rest and relaxation, and there are several saunas to choose from.

At Terme 3000 in Moravske Toplice, a completely new experience awaits at the charming new cottages in the Prekmurje village of Ajda, which take their inspiration from the typical Prekmurje houses called “cimprače”, say sources at Sava Turizem. “The modern cottages have thatched roofs and wooden accents, giving them a natural airiness and warmth, and unlike the cimprače, the large windows let in a good amount



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Photo: www.slovenia.info / Alex Stokelj, Invidad.o.o.

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of sunlight. The cottages are located in the immediate vicinity of the Terme 3000 spa complex.”

They have also completely renovated the indoor pool at the Hotel Ajda at the Ptuj Spa, which is known as a destination for active regeneration, and guests at the Grand Hotel Primus have numerous sports options available, including morning yoga with a certified instructor which is shown on the hotel room televisions every morning.

The new drinking hall at the Hotel Radin at the Radenci Spa was completed in June this year. Guests can take the Henn drinking treatment three times a day, in which they drink mineral water directly from the curative spring.

### Holidays Worth the Money

“Our guests first of all look for holidays which offer personal care, and then for socialising and adventures. They are also interested in new products and services. We plan them according to trends on the market, the behaviour of our guests, the specifics of the local environment, and sustainable tourism,” say sources at Sava Turizem.

They note that in the last two years guests have been choosing holiday destinations that provide integrated experiences. “This means that they are interested in the story of their destination, which has to be unique, authentic, genuine, part of the local environment and having a sustainable signature. This inspires guests and convinces them to return to the destination and become brand ambassadors. A very important role is played here by paying careful attention and the hospitality and friendliness of the people at the destination,” say

company sources. “We only go on holidays for a short time, but guests are increasingly putting value for money higher on their list, meaning that the holidays they book have to be first of all worth the money they are paying,” they say.

They note that there has also been a change in the perception of what constitutes luxury tourism in the last two years. “The redefinition of luxury is a move away from five stars towards simple outdoor accommodations. Luxury in this sense relates to freedom, nature, purity, sustainable tourism and local experiences, i.e. fitness for the soul and a wonderful sense of well-being. The people who choose this type of holiday are usually people who lead very full, intense, active lives and are looking to take care of their body and soul and spend some quality time with their family,” say sources at Sava Turizem.

### Medically Supported Relaxation Programmes at Krka Spas

Krka Spas include the spa resorts of Dolenjske Toplice and Šmarješke Toplice, the Talaso Strunjan seaside centre, the Otočec Hotels with one of Slovenia’s best-known castles and an attractive golf course, and the Hotel Krka, a business hotel in Novo Mesto. “At our health centres we have a very wide range of health services for rehabilitation after injury and diseases of the locomotor system, cardiovascular and respiratory diseases, and we also operate modern diagnostics centres with various specialist clinics. We are also expanding our wide range of medical knowledge to include preventive medicine,” say company sources.

They say that they are the first in Slovenia to offer their guests medically supported relaxation programmes through which they help people overcome civilizational diseases and other difficulties such as stress, weight gain, premature ageing, etc. “There is increasing demand for effective programmes that pave the way back to a healthier and fuller life, and guests are inquiring about them more and more often. At the Šmarješke Toplice Spa the most popular programmes are detox with a VitaDetox cleanse and the SlimFit healthy weight-loss programme, and the ‘Healthy Ageing for a Longer and Better Life’ and ‘Manage Stress and Live Peacefully’ programmes at the Talaso Strunjan seaside centre,” they report.

**Active Relaxation and Recreation**

Krka Spas also offer diverse pampering programmes and active relaxation and recreation. “At the Dolenjske Toplice Spa the guests are primarily interested in the Balnea Wellness Hotel, a hotel with an artistic soul, which features popular programmes for couples. The Just the Two of Us programme includes accommodation (2 nights with half board for two, a romantic dinner or outdoor picnic lunch weather permitting, breakfast served in room and unlimited bathing in the thermal pools) and services included



Photo: www.slovenia.info / Dean Dubokovič



**TAKE A BREAK AND SEEK SOME INSPIRATION in Moravske Toplice and its surroundings**



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Photo: Postojnska jama

in the individual packages, which offer a focus on pampering, reflexology, relaxation through exercise and proper breathing, and detoxification. We also have a package for couples during pregnancy and a package for seniors. The Dolenjske Toplice Spa thus offers the possibility for two people who are close to one another to stop for a moment, spend some time with each other and harmonise their bodies and souls,” say sources at Krka Spas.

Active recreation programmes are also becoming increasingly popular at Otočec. “The Hotel Sport in Otočec is the only one of its kind in Slovenia – a hotel that encourages its guests to exercise. Its name is no coincidence – right in the entry hall, where all hotel guests can relax, is a punching bag and a set of boxing gloves, and its ‘sports’ rooms are something special – they stand out due to their dominant invigorating yellows, greens, light blues and reds, and sports equipment such as gym ladders, exercise balls, resistance bands for isometric training, etc.,” say sources at Krka Spas. There are also numerous opportunities for exercise in the vicinity of the hotel – an adventure park, walking and running trails, outdoor tennis courts and a 75-hectare golf course.

#### Focus on Wellness Tourism

The people at Krka Spas have been pretty active recently. At the Dolenjske Toplice Spa for instance they renovated and modernised the outdoor pool with four slides at the Balnea Wellness Centre in 2019. In addition, they have renovated the Medical Rehabilitation Centre, and at the Šmarješke Toplice Spa they have renovated the apartments at the Šmarjeta Hotel and the outdoor pool and patio, and installed a water slide at the sports pool. They have

also renovated the castle winery at Otočec Castle, and at Talaso Strunjan they renovated the apartments at the Hotel Laguna and installed a new pool on the hotel property last year. They expanded the sauna centre at the Hotel Svoboda, and have opened a new beach restaurant called Pinija, i.e. The Stone Pine, and they are also rearranging the facilities at Strunjan beach.

#### Baby Dragon Ice Cream at Postojna Cave

In addition to the very well-known and also most popular Postojna Cave, which in 2018 was celebrating the 200th anniversary of the discovery of its most beautiful parts and also of its tourism development, more and more visitors are also choosing to visit Postojna Cave Park and to purchase packages that include tours of Postojna Cave, Predjama Castle, the Proteus Vivarium, the EXPO pavilion and other attractions. “In this way our guests are also staying in Postojna longer, as increasing numbers are choosing to overnight here,” say sources at Postojna Cave.

Innovation and product development are a permanent process at Postojna Cave. “The main development guidelines for 2018 have been originality, authenticity and sustainability. The result is a very complex brand called ‘Authentic – Postojna Cave Park’, which includes a series of local products, from local ice creams, including the tasty Baby Dragon and Brillant ice creams, to typical souvenirs or the specially designed garden decorations in front of our restaurants, which remind one of the cave train, to an emphasis on the Slovenian identity and our natural and cultural heritage,” say sources at the cave.

They have put a lot of effort into the park’s landscaping, with an emphasis on indigenous Slovenian plant species, and there is also an apiary.



“In response to demand at the Hotel Jama, we have also created a ‘Presidential Suite’ with an even higher level of services and options. Another major upgrade is the renovated train boarding platform at the Concert Hall in Postojna Cave, which was named after its discoverer Luka Čeč, and which we opened last spring,” say sources at Postojna Cave.

In April 2019, the Hotel Jama opened a “Museum of Eavesdropping” – authentically preserved but well-hidden spaces within the Hotel Jama complex.

**Pets Can Be Left at Day-Care**

They pay particular attention to both conservation and limiting impacts on the environment, so visitors to Predjama Castle can get free bus rides from Postojna Cave Park. “We have also stopped using plastic bags at our shops and restaurants, and replaced them with biodegradable bags,” they say.

People who travel with their pets still have access to free kennels, where they can leave them while visiting Postojna Cave. “The wider view, outside of Postojna Cave Park, includes the total renovation of the Hotel Planinka in Jezersko into a unique little boutique hotel with 23 rooms, intended for the most discerning guests. Designs for the renovation



Photo: Postojnska jama

of the Hotel Cerkno and its thermal springs are in the preparatory phase. In short, we are doing a lot of things in line with our business philosophy: ‘We do only what is good for the Cave and the guest.’ This simple motto is also applied elsewhere, in both Jezersko and Cerkno,” say sources at Postojna Cave.

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**Fewer Guests from Asia, but More from Europe**

They note that their visitors include increasing numbers of families with children, and that the share of individual guests in relation to groups has been on the rise for several years. “There is slightly less demand coming from some of the Asian countries, but demand among the European countries is increasing, so that the number of visitors to Postojna Cave and the other attractions is still growing,” they say.

They expect demand for their services to continue to grow, as the expanded range of services has also extended the tourist season. “We are trying to distribute demand more evenly throughout the year and thereby take some pressure off of the high season, as this also makes for a better experience for our guests.”

**Tourists Charmed by Pastoral Life**

Velika Planina is a unique high-mountain Alpine pasture in Slovenia, with a correspondingly unique cultural and architectural heritage. The story of Velika Planina can be experienced by visiting a herder’s settlement, where especially during the summer months visitors can see what life was like on the mountain, visit with herders, try some of their local specialities, and learn about the old way of life, how the herders used to pass the time, and how they made sour milk, cottage cheese, cheese and other dairy products, at the herding museum called Preskar’s Hut. In addition to lovers of architecture and cultural heritage, Velika Planina is also popular among nature lovers. The broad meadows, endless paths and amazing views from every corner of Velika Planina will first intrigue you and then take your breath away.

During the winter, in addition to skiing, Velika Planina offers very popular night sledging on the 2.5 kilometre-long lighted piste. Sledges are available for hire for



Photo: www.slovenia.info / Aleš Frelih

winter sports enthusiasts. At this time of year, Velika Planina is also popular with hikers, cross-country skiers and other snow lovers. Lovers of skiing on natural snow can choose between the Šimnovec chairlift and the Zeleni rob rope tow, and the Jurček children’s rope tow is a perfect place for children and people who are taking their very first turns on skis. Affordable lift tickets are available for both individuals and families.

Foreign visitors are most intrigued by the pastoral life, the making of dairy products, and above all the free grazing of livestock. Tourists are also pleased with the local cuisine, as all of the food is locally sourced. The pastoral specialities also include homemade buckwheat mash and sour milk, and the Zeleni rob Inn features sweet cottage cheese dumplings, homemade stews and homemade sausages and sauerkraut. “The largest number of tourists come from France, followed by Israel, Italy and Germany. We were, however, positively surprised by the numbers of Spanish visitors last year,” say sources at Velika Planina.

The overnight capacities at the Alpe camp and on Velika Planina are planned to be expanded, bike trails will be built on Velika Planina, and adrenaline activities will be added to the menu.



Photo: www.slovenia.info / Aleš Frelih





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Photo: Krka

## Innovative and Patient-Friendly Pharmaceuticals

**When it comes to health, only the very best is good enough. In 2018, the Krka Group added a number of new products to their roster of prescription pharmaceuticals, non-prescription products, and animal health products. In 2018, Lek also experienced a very successful year.**

*Ana Vučina Vršnak*

### **Krka's Products Are the Result of Investments in Development and Innovation**

At Krka they realise that when it comes to health, only the very best is good enough, which is why they carefully plan the introduction of new medicines with the patient's needs uppermost in their mind. Their products contain the knowledge and experience of Krka experts who are continuously developing new generic products in the latest pharmaceutical forms to provide patients with effective, safe, and high-quality medicines.

Krka's R&D and production operations are characterised by a high level of vertical integration, which brings together development and production processes, and presents the key advantage of the company's development strategy. It ensures that Krka is able to enter markets as the first generic manufacturer with high value added products. Through systematic research and targeted

development, the company integrates into every product the very latest professional and scientific findings.

By monitoring trends and breakthroughs in medical science, Krka experts are able to respond quickly to challenges related to development, and to market requirements. Having their own production development capacities and the ability to integrate manufacturing, marketing and sales activities enables the company to introduce high-quality, effective and safe products onto the market at just the right time.

### **Krka Registered 23 New Products in 52 Pharmaceutical Forms and Strengths Last Year**

In 2018, the Krka Group added 23 new products in 52 pharmaceutical forms and strengths to their roster of prescription pharmaceuticals, non-prescription products, and animal health products. Most (18)

were prescription pharmaceuticals, one was a non-prescription product, and four were animal health products. More than 600 experts are currently engaged in the development of over 170 new medicinal products at Krka.

The company reinvests around 10% of its annual sales revenues in research and development. It plans to further strengthen its pharmaceutical and chemical activities, and its range of prescription pharmaceuticals in key areas, such as the treatment of cardiovascular diseases, diseases of the central nervous system, and diseases of the alimentary tract and metabolism. At the same time, the company is focusing on promising areas, such as medicines for pain relief and the treatment of cancer, antidiabetics, antibiotics, and medicines for the treatment of HIV/ AIDS. Krka also plans to enter a number of new therapeutic areas.

In key therapeutic areas, they plan to continue to introduce innovative generic products, such as fixed-dose combinations of two or three active ingredients, new strengths, and new pharmaceutical forms. They are also venturing into the area of biological medicines, particularly those for the treatment of autoimmune diseases and diabetes. In addition they are planning to strengthen their portfolio of non-prescription products and animal health products, in particular the range of companion animal products.

### **Krka's Medicines Are Used to Treat More Than 45 Million Patients Every Day**

The company says that they are at the very top of the global generic pharmaceutical manufacturing industry, perform effectively on existing markets, and are successful in entering new markets. New investments further strengthen this position. Exports account for 93% of overall sales within the Krka Group. "We have a strong network of subsidiaries and representative offices abroad. We are also expanding our production capacities outside Slovenia. More than 45 million patients around the world are treated with Krka products every day," say the company.

Krka has a strong presence in the generic pharmaceuticals markets of Western, Central, Eastern and South-Eastern Europe. The company is also strengthening its position in the overseas markets, such as the Middle East, the Far East, Africa, and the Americas. "We have production capacities in Slovenia, the Russian Federation, Poland, Croatia, and Germany. We are therefore most tightly focused on European, Central Asian, and overseas markets," they add.

### **Products Marketed Throughout the World In 2018**

Lek experienced a very successful year of business in terms of its targets, the company reported at the end of January. Last year they also continued the optimisation and adjustment of the production network in Slovenia, through which they are successfully fulfilling the Novartis strategy of focusing on patient-tailored and personalised medications in small quantities, and on medications with high value added, similar biological medications and digital therapies.

They produced three active ingredients for innovative medications that will arrive on the market in the coming years, while at their locations in Slovenia production is already underway on some innovative medications, development has been completed and numerous dossiers submitted for medications on existing markets and they launched important medications on the Slovenian market.

In 2018 the Slovenian Development Centre completed the development of and filed 20 registration dossiers for drugs on the markets of the US, Russia, Europe, Canada, Thailand and China, and one dossier for an active ingredient in the USA and Canada. They completed development of a high-quality innovative dietary supplement, Lincomplex™, which is already available to Slovenian users.

They launched important anti-inflammatory medications, drugs for balancing cholesterol, easing prostate problems and treating erectile dysfunction and fungal disorders. As the first to submit a dossier to the US Food and Drug Administration (FDA) on registering a drug with the active ingredient amantadine, they thereby obtained a six-month generic exclusive right to sell this in US market.

In Mengeš they collaborated on the development of three new Sandoz biosimilar medications, which entered the market in 2018. They are also involved in various stages of the development of innovative biological drugs. At that location they are constructing a new facility for the production of biologically active ingredients, which will further strengthen the role of the location as a key Novartis centre for biotechnology. The investment is valued at EUR 38 million.

Since 2003 Novartis has invested more than EUR 2.3 billion in Slovenia. Since then more than half of that has been earmarked for development, and the rest for modernisation and expanding production capacity.

It should be noted that Dr. Zdenko Časar and Dr. Jerneja Opara of the Slovenia Development Center last year received the highest Novartis award for outstanding achievements in the area of research and development (R & D Awards).





Photo: SIJ

# Steel in the Turbines of the Biggest Energy Companies

The SIJ Group launches industrial knives onto the market, Seven Refractories create temperature-resistant products, Belinka Perkemija remain the world's largest producer of sodium perborate, and Talum offer their customers closed-loop recycling.

*Andreja Šalamun and Barbara Perko*

The SIJ Group have been pretty active in recent years, launching a number of innovations that include SIMOLD S150R precipitation hardening steel, which is used for tools for producing vehicle headlights. “We are also proud of the way we have managed to break through onto the market with a product from the ‘Machine building’ line marketed by our company SIJ Ravne Systems, where we have successfully put systems equipment or turnkey projects into operation. The first of these is the loading-unloading table for the automated handling of rods, followed by steel ladle transfer cars, a charging table for the straightening machine and the transport system for aluminium ingots,” says Aleš Falatov, Head of Marketing at the SIJ Group.

### **SIJ's Customers Include Holtec, Andritz, Voith and Hobas**

The Group's products are used by Holtec, Andritz, Voith, Hobas, Bosch Rexroth and the SMS Group, among others. “SINOXX E770, SINOXX 4923 and SINOXX 4903 steel for turbine blades are incorporated into

turbines made by the biggest energy companies, while SIHARD2363 and SITHERM2344 steel for diesel engine injectors goes into the products of a number of major international companies. Our industrial knives are incorporated into internationally renowned brands of machinery for the manufacture and processing of wood, metal, paper, plastic and rubber,” adds Falatov.

The SIJ Group, which employs around 7,000 people, points out that, as one of the largest manufacturers of stainless and specialist steels in the European Union, they bring high value-added to niche steel markets and, as such, are less vulnerable to price pressures and less dependent on volume of production. This allows them to maintain constant operation even in times of uncertainty on world markets – something we have witnessed in the last year.

### **Developing New Specialist Tool Steel**

In autumn 2018, they were developing specialist tool steel for hot working with increased heat conductivity, useful for the manufacture of tools for pressure casting



and hot stamping, and were also actively engaged in developing specialist tool steel for cold working with increased wear-resistance for use in industrial knives and rollers for the cold rolling of sheet metal.

The SIJ Group would like, in future, to forge links with end-customers on the European, American and Asian markets. Where does their focus lie? "Mainly on users of high-quality tool and specialist stainless steel in the 'Industrial knives' product range. We are also looking for new distributors to help us expand our sales network to the American market. We would like to establish a strategic partnership on the European market for the 'Machine building' sales programme, specifically for the production of parts, housings and components of machinery and systems equipment. We are also continuing with an expansion of the portfolio of customers in the area of wrought-iron products for the aluminium industry," says Falatov, who points that they are always keen to forge new strategic and development partnerships around the world.

### Helios Group Expanding into Latin America and Africa with Mobihel

"In the last year we have added to our portfolio of industrial coatings a number of important products, and managed to set up e-coat lines in Poland and Russia for application by manufacturers of original vehicle equipment and in Belarus for application in industry," says Helios Group's General Director, David Kubala. Their Mobihel and other products are found in products manufactured by well-known companies, and they are currently engaged in entering the markets of Latin America and Africa.

"Our emphasis is on environment-friendly products, which is why we are focusing on developing the most advanced water-based resins," says Kubala. The new reactor used to produce these resins, which cost more than EUR 3 million, will replace the old reactor for organic-solvent-based resins, and will enable the total annual resins capacity at Helios to rise from 60,000 to 64,000 tonnes.

"We are also continuing to develop resins with high dry-matter content, as well as new industrial coatings for transport and e-coat lines. We are putting on the market a new portfolio of products under the 'Roof Expert' brand, which provides professional users with systemic roof solutions," adds Kubala.



Photo: Helios



Photo: Belinka Perkemija

### Largest Producer of Sodium Perborate in the World

Belinka Perkemija, a member of the Helios Group, are currently the world's largest producer of sodium perborate and one of eight European producers of hydrogen peroxide. With their BELOX® brand of products, Belinka Perkemija are managing to meet demand and trends in the biocides market as well, particularly as they relate to requirements for aseptic packaging for the food industry, as they specialise in the production of high-performance, nature-friendly chemical products for various branches of industry.

Their products are based on hydrogen peroxides, which decompose into oxygen and water as they work and are one of the most environmentally acceptable compounds. Other high-performance chemical products include peracetic acid, technical gases such as carbon dioxide and hydrogen, and demineralised water of the highest purity.

### Seven Refractories Work with the Biggest Ironworks and Steelworks

The Divača-based company Seven Refractories, which develop and manufacture fireproof concretes and taphole clays, produce a full range of monolithic fire-resistant materials. "Of all the products we have developed in recent years, we would like to highlight our environment-friendly taphole clays and the cement-free chemically bound products used for the most complex applications and enabling rapid installation and a short start-up cycle," says Group CEO Erik Zobec. As he points out, their goal is to provide their customers with integrated solutions for the installation and repair of industrial furnaces using taphole clays.

The company sell their products on all continents. "Our highest-profile customers are ironworks and



Photo: Seven Refractories

steelworks, including NLMK, TATA, voestalpine, thyssenkrupp, U.S. Steel, ArcelorMittal, Aluminium Norf, BMW, RUSAL Aluminum and Heidelberg Cement,” says Zobec, who adds that the biggest engineering and installation concerns operating in the field of fire-resistant materials base their products on Seven Refractories products. “These include Danieli Corus, Outotec and Losa,” he says.

#### Company Established in India

In 2017 they set up a new sales company with the Dalmia Bharat Group called Dalmia Seven. It is located in Katna, India, where they opened another new plant at the beginning of April 2018. In their assessment, India is one of the most promising markets for monolithic fireproof ceramics, and they expect annual growth of 10–15 percent there in the next few years. They have already established new links in South America, and have also started marketing their products in North America. They are also doing business on the Russian market, and focusing strongly on Germany, where 16 percent of their income was generated in 2017. Other major markets include Italy and Turkey.

They purchase the main raw materials for their products (alumina, bauxite, silicon carbide, corundum, fireclay and fireproof cement) on world markets, mixing them in Divača using their own processes and then shipping them out to their customers. They also develop their own recipes for fireproof concrete and taphole clays.

They are currently developing two innovations: Shot 92 NR 08 Z “shotcrete”, which facilitates the very rapid repair of steel ladles and requires less materials consumption than previous technologies, and the DCS line of products, which enables cement-free products to be used in all weathers because they do not require the use of liquid components, which are sensitive to fluctuations in temperature.

#### Every Fifth Tube or Canister in Europe Is Made from Talum Billets

Talum is one of the world’s most efficient manufacturers of electrolysed aluminium and aluminium alloys. “The development of our castings production is an important part of our growth, since in addition to low-pressure and gravity casting we have also managed to penetrate the high-pressure aluminium castings market. In the past year we have significantly improved our position in the area of production of highly complex castings for the car industry, which we manufacture using three different casting techniques,” say company sources. “Among other things, our competences and potentials in the area of castings development have been recognised by BMW, who hired us to develop and manufacture complex, load-bearing machinery elements.”

In the field of billets for the production of tubes and canisters, they are one of the largest and most technologically advanced manufacturers in the world. They have developed an alloy for manufacturing aerosol canisters which allows them to produce canisters with thinner walls and excellent mechanical properties.

“Every fifth tube or canister in Europe is made out of Talum billets, and we have a 60-percent market share in the segment of billets used for the bottoms of cooking pots, as aluminium is an excellent heat conductor,” say company sources. With their Alu Green Alu Can project they offer their customers closed-loop recycling. They buy manufacturing waste from their customers and use it as raw material for the production of billets for the same customer.

Talum is a market leader on the European market for billets. “Our products’ value-added for the customer includes the low weight of our specially formulated aluminium alloys, top quality and optimal mechanical properties, which are provided through our knowledge and experience,” say sources at the company. They are known as a reliable, regular and timely supplier with excellent post-sales service. “Our billets are used to make tubes and canisters for all of the world’s biggest multinationals in the foodstuffs (Nestle, Unilever, etc.), cosmetics (Beiersdorf, Henkel, P&G, etc.), and pharmaceutical (Krka, Bayer, Roche, Novartis, etc.) industries, and our billets are built into pots and pans made by WMF, Fissler, Tefal, Iittala, etc. Our foundry castings, which are used, for example, to produce engine blocks, can be found in Volkswagen vehicles. Our main customers for our castings also include Bosch, KTM, Wabco, Kaeser, and Doppelmayr, to name just a few,” say company sources. “The area of application is so wide that you will find Talum aluminium wherever you go, and use it every day.” The areas with the highest potential for expansion of billet sales in the future are India and South Africa.

The company’s staff is constantly looking for opportunities to develop and upgrade their existing technologies in order to achieve even better mechanical properties of their aluminium products and possibilities for manufacturing complex castings and structural parts. “We are heavily involved with e-mobility, as we hope to use our Roll-Bond technology, which is used to make evaporator plates, for cooling batteries in electronic vehicles. We have also developed alternative products made using Roll-Bond technology, such as hybrid photovoltaic panels and vaporisers for heat pumps,” say sources at the company.



Photo: Talum





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Photo: Iskratel

# Products That Respond to the Requirements of Sustainable Development

Technological development, digital transformation, the Internet of Things, renewable energy sources, the circular economy, efficient energy use, smart cities, green technology, AI, electric vehicles: Slovenian enterprises have solutions for all these developments and demands.

*Andreja Šalamun*

Numerous and rapid changes have taken place in the last few years in the field of smart electronics, occasioned by social transformations that are becoming ever more noticeable. How can companies face the challenges this brings?

Iskraemeco's leading product currently on the market is the AM550 smart electricity meter. As they explain: "The meter has been designed in a modular way, which means that we have a basic model from which we produce numerous variations depending on the needs of the market and those of our customers. This is also what's called a 'fair meter'," say the company. They explain that the essence of the fair meter concept is "ensuring meter transparency in terms of materials and working standards in the supply chain, and incorporating the principles of sustainable development and the circular economy into all processes within the company."

As part of the project, special attention is being paid to conflict minerals and critical materials, and to raising customers' awareness and that of other industry stakeholders. The product and the fair meter concept received a Gold Award for innovation from the Chamber of Commerce and Industry of Slovenia (GZS).

### **Iskraemeco's Products Are Bought by Energy Giants Across the Globe**

Iskraemeco are one of the world's leading suppliers of smart metering solutions. As they are keen to point out: "Our customers include electricity distributors throughout the world, including such giants of the industry as RWE, E.ON, Alliander and Vattenfall." They also point out that they are expanding their presence continuously on existing markets in Europe, the Middle East, Asia, Africa and Latin America. "As our

strategic plan sets out, we aim in the coming years to focus in particular on Latin America and Asia.” The company registered an 18 percent growth in exports in 2018. They are convinced that sales will grow on foreign markets because numerous European and other electricity distribution companies have commenced smart metering projects in the last few years.

They stress that they offer their customers integrated smart metering solutions comprising a smart electricity meter, communication devices, software and the appropriate support services. “As technology and digital transformation advance, we are in the process of designing a large number of solutions relating to the Internet of Things (IoT), e-mobility, smart cities and similar projects,” say the company.



Photo: Iskraemeco

**Iskra’s Big Range of New Products**

At Iskra’s business unit in Kranj, where they work on low-voltage switch technologies, they have brought out two new installation contactors with a designated current of 40, but in single- and dual-module versions. “Installation contactors are used for automatically controlling electrical devices and installations in housing, offices, shops and hospitals. They are suitable mainly for switching, lighting, heat pumps, air-conditioning devices and similar equipment, and for switching operations involving one- and three-phase electrical motors. Moreover, they operate silently,” they explain.

At the Otoče business unit, where work is carried out on measurement technologies, they have noticed that their own development know-how in the measurement of power quality is a fine match for the growing global needs for multi-point measurement of power quality, in residential and business buildings as well as in industry. On this basis, they have developed a one-phase (WM1) and three-phase (WM3) secondary smart energy meter. “Both are capable of measuring an expanded spectrum of power quality parameters and, within the context of smart installations, enable communication using the very latest industrial and

semi-industrial communication protocols,” say the Otoče unit.

They point out that the global market has responded positively to their iMC 784 power quality analyser, developed in 2016, and given them a clear signal that “there is a need for completely autonomous and well-equipped portable versions, alongside built-in installations. We have met electricity distributors’ expectations at different voltages through the newly developed PNA 784 mobile power network quality analyser.”

They add that the software and hardware components for the multi-point measurement and control of electrical current are adapted to the requirements and expectations regarding photovoltaic installation. “We have therefore ensured that our products are acceptable to and can be sold on this specific but growing market.”

Over the last year, the Semič business unit, which is responsible for manufacturing capacitor products, has brought out capacitors for electrical consumer devices (KNB1580), AC capacitors for renewable sources and converters (KNI5048, KNI4053 and KNI4051) and KNM1428-type engine capacitors.

**Their Contactors and Switches Have Caught the Eye of General Electric and Siemens**

As Iskra say, they have managed to attract customers from major global brands for their installation contactors and bi-stable switches, including General Electric and Siemens.

“With our newly developed SR-100 control relay, we have taken cooperation with one of our most important development partners and customers, the Danish DEIF Group, to a new level. This group is in the first rank of suppliers of decentralised electricity

**BUILDINGS INSTALLATIONS**

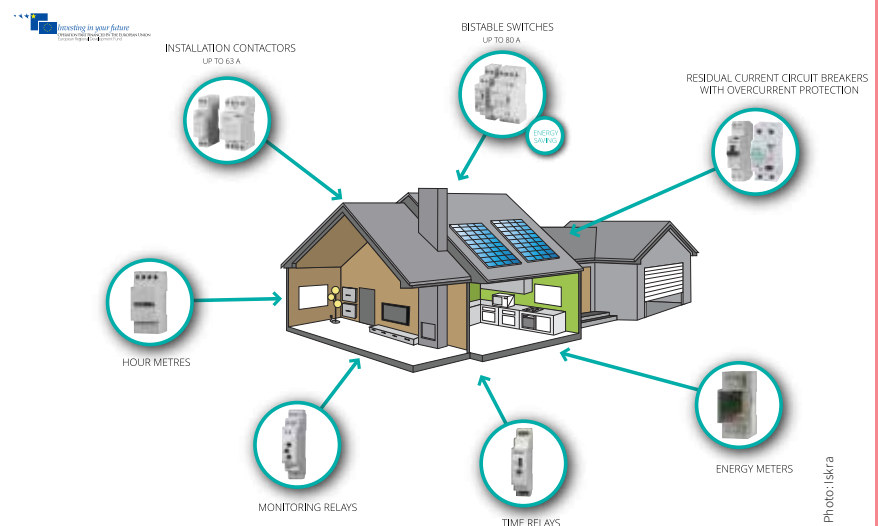


Photo: Iskra

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generation by land as well as under the most testing oceanic conditions,” they say.

They have tempted an important retailer of electrical materials and components, SCHRACK, into an OEM partnership with their “advanced compact measurement housing,” while they have also strengthened their development and product partnership with the leading global specialist in electrical installations at refineries and similar high-risk explosive environments, the German company R.STAHL, by embarking on a year-long development project involving analogue measuring devices for work in the most testing explosive environments.

In the field of capacitors, they have managed to acquire major business partners with their filters and XY capacitors for eliminating radiofrequency (RF) disturbances in household appliances. “These are global brands such as Miele, Bosch, Whirlpool and Beko,” say Iskra. Their KID capacitors are also used by Končar and Pfiffner.

### Links Forged with Producers of Electrical Charging Stations

Iskra reveal that they have adapted their installation contactors and bistable switches to match the corporate image of Siemens and General Electric, and develop a certain portion of their measuring technology manufacturing programme in cooperation with the world’s largest players; they then market these products under their own brand name as well as those of their partners (Siemens, Alstom, Gossen Metrawatt GMC, etc.).

They stress that they would nevertheless still like to establish new partnerships, and are working



Photo: IskraTel



Photo: IskraTel

mainly on establishing new development and sales partnerships on an expanded European market. “We are forging links chiefly with manufacturers of charging stations for electric vehicles, distributors of secondary electricity measuring equipment for industrial use, smart buildings, renewable sources and battery storage units,” say the company, adding that they are continuing to work intensively in the measuring technology field to develop power quality analysers for electricity distributors and industry, and are optimising measuring equipment for transformer station control.

They are clear about their aims: “We would like to establish links between our capacitor programme and new partners in Europe in particular, specifically involving collaboration on products used for renewable sources, such as the KNG-type DC link capacitors and KNI- and KNB191x-type AC capacitors.”

### Developing Differential Current Safety Switches and a New Series of Capacitors

The Kranj business unit is currently most focused on differential current safety switches, developing a new type of switch for designated currents of up to 125 A, at Otoče they are developing the iHUB family of communications interfaces for IoT support, smart applications for visualising measurement results and controlling consumption in modern buildings and households (IoT support is included, along with a high level of protection of user data through advanced use of the MQTT communication protocol), and a comprehensive range of secondary smart meters for a variety of fields (one- and three-phase, equipped with highly capable wired and wireless communication links and protocols).

The Semič business unit is developing a new series of KNB capacitors for eliminating RF disturbances, as well as a new series of KNG DC link capacitors which should be able to withstand humid conditions at high temperatures over long periods. They are also developing a new version of DC links in large housings (KNG9147).

### Collaborating on European Projects

“With the aim of creating an advanced solution for simple energy consumption management and the optimisation of photovoltaic power plants via user-friendly applications (IoT), we are collaborating with the Spanish software companies DEXMA and COSMA on an ENOPTUS development project titled Advanced solution for real-time energy-load management and the optimisation of PV resources,” say the company.

“With the objective of developing new technology for converting water into hydrogen and thereby making a decisive contribution to reducing carbon footprint as one of the more important properties of advanced glassware in tandem with Slovenian development partners (Petrol Energetika, ETI, Steklarna Hrastnik), we are collaborating on the OPERH2 project.” They add that the title of the project



is “Optimisation of energy conversion for reducing the share of consumption of fossil fuels with hydrogen in the industrial smelting of glass.”

### Iskratel Promotes Innovation

With over 70 years' experience, Iskratel is one of Europe's leading providers of communication solutions for the digital transformation of telecommunications, transport, public safety and energy. “With our own development and manufacturing centres, over 900 employees and a local presence in more than 50 countries, we combine experience and expertise with creativity and innovation. We pay a particularly large amount of attention to the latter in our company,” say Iskratel. They add that their group is able to adapt more quickly than the large global corporations by responding swiftly to changes, particularly by providing tailor-made solutions. They see this as one of their key competitive advantages.

### Solutions Rather Than Products

Their activities are based on the supply of integrated solutions. “We have supplied systems for core networks (virtual IMS – vIMS) and optical access (GPON), with associated end-user equipment (CPE), as well as IoT technology for solutions in the fields of transport, public safety and energy, for existing and new telecommunications partners. In the last year we managed to establish a presence in the testing laboratories of some of the largest European operators with our 10GPON CPE technology, which is the next generation of optical networks.”

In line with their strategic policies, the company provide integrated solutions to end-customers on the market. “These are mainly brands strongly integrated into their local environment, from telecommunications operators to railways. Gazprom are one of our very high-profile end-customers. We have been working with them for several years on operational and business communication solutions.”

“With our niche network transitions solution, we have managed to become part of the portfolio ecosystem of a world-renowned telecommunications multinational.” However, when it provides and integrates integrated solutions, the Iskratel Group's role is reversed: then they are themselves a company with a strong global brand that incorporates components from partner or external suppliers into their products, they explain.

They add that they are establishing a partnership sales network on EU markets and in certain target countries in South-East Asia, South America and Africa, chiefly in the field of broadband optical access solutions.

### New Generation of Optical Access Solutions

The company recently completed the development of a new generation of optical access (GPON) solutions, with the associated end-user equipment (CPE). “We are developing the new iteration of a core network

Photo: Iskratel



“The initial contact was exceptionally important. This was followed by a process of verifying Iskratel's expertise, and particularly its optical access solution (GPON). The Norwegian market is moving towards providing an optical network for all households in the country, which is why we needed to find a business partner to help make this possible. One of our conditions was that it had to be a European partner – because of the relationships involved, ease of understanding and development of the technology. The Iskratel Group impressed us with their responsiveness and their ability to provide solutions compatible with our operators' equipment. We were looking for a solution that could be integrated into the existing network – and Iskratel have been incredibly successful in this regard. Currently, for us, they are the number one provider of broadband solutions.”

Kurth V. Tviberg, CEO of Tantec Digital AS, CIP (Certified Integration Partner) of the Iskratel Group in Norway, on why they chose the Iskratel Group over a number of strong global ICT competitors.

system (vIMS) for high user capacity (10 million or more), and are moving all components of the solution to the Open Stack cloud platform. Iskratel's vIMS solution provides a wide range of telecommunications functions and interfaces, high operational availability with geo-redundancy, support for local survival at marginal locations, and the management of subscribers and services via a centralised portal,” say the company.

They are also investing in an operational communications platform and applications for the transport sector. “This involves the development of highly reliable platforms for ensuring the reliability of business and operational communications. The solution covers communication needs and requirements in the railway, underground, tram and motorway industries, facilitates the integration of analogue, TDM and IP networks, and provides speech, data and video services for passengers and staff. We are also working on an intelligent IoT platform for solutions in industry verticals.”

### Safe City a Priority

“Safe City” is an energy and public safety project for which a prototype is being produced in Russia as part of a complex project based on Iskratel's Intelligent Application Platform for Energy (IAPE). “With our partners, we are aiming for prototype installation of an application for advanced electricity management based on an active integration project. The longer-term plans in this area include updates to the public safety and energy solutions so that they provide a basis for upcoming ‘smart cities’ projects. The latter represent a step forward in advanced, smart management and the continuous exchange of information between all urban environment stakeholders,” say Iskratel.

They are also working on a new 5G Security project, the strategic goal of which is to conduct research and innovation work that paves the way for a new generation of broadband 5G-ready products and services adapted to the needs of the public protection and disaster relief (PPDR) sector.



Photo: Pošta Slovenije

# New Strategies and Excellent Information Support Are the Key to Success

**Sava Express tie Southeast Europe together, a region in which Intereuropa are more than at home, while Pošta Slovenije are upgrading their existing classic network, Dars are building a second tunnel through the Karavanke, and the Port of Koper continues to expand.**

*Nina Šprohar*

## **Sava Express Are Luring Road Freight onto the Tracks**

The Slovenian national railway company (Slovenske železnice, SŽ) are one of the largest logistics companies in the country, with services that respond to the market and to demand. "We are able to offer not just quick and reliable freight transport, but also numerous additional activities within our comprehensive portfolio. These include transport planning, advice on security and loading operations, high-quality goods transport using classic and combined methods at competitive prices, customs and forwarding services, and sea and road freight transport," say the company. They also maintain and repair freight wagons, and provide security for goods consignments. The company highlight the considerable advantages of having a wide network

of partner freight carriers from other countries. "We provide transport and additional services for a large number of big companies in different fields, including the steel, food, car and oil industries," they add.

SŽ act as a regional bridge between the countries of SE Europe, and take the initiative in designing new products. "We have developed the new Sava Express freight train that connects freight flows from Western and Central Europe with transit operations through Serbia via Ljubljana Zalog, Belgrade and Sremska Mitrovica." As the new train, which came into operation in March 2018, is an attempt to lure freight currently travelling by road onto the tracks, it is also set up to carry smaller quantities of goods. The value-added produced by Sava Express is the option of adding or removing wagons at Slavonski Brod, which enables connections with freight coming

from or into Bosnia-Herzegovina. As the company explain: “The new train connects to transit freight from Austria, Germany, Italy, the Czech Republic and other transit countries passing through Ljubljana. Sava Express provides reliable railway transport from Ljubljana to Belgrade, and a ‘one-stop shop’ integrated logistics solution. The new product also includes high-quality distribution in Slovenia, Serbia and those neighbouring countries that are part of the railway undertakings’ organisations, as well as other partners, and door-to-door freight delivery.” They add that they are also planning to enter other markets in the region, either independently or in strategic partnership with other railway undertakings. “Our goal is to take a leading role in long-distance transport routes and offer comprehensive logistics services to end-customers, developing them in tandem with our long-term partners.”

### Strong Information Support Contributes to Successful Marketing

Intereuropa provide logistics services in support of Slovenian exports using regular, well-established land routes to all European countries, as well as maritime routes with the rest of the world. “Our logistics business requires a complex logistics solution, as we provide a variety of services optimised to our customers’ needs. The aim is to provide them with more than merely an individual logistics project solution – so, transport and goods storage,” say the company. The company will continue to focus on customers from certain groups. “We see our greatest market opportunities on the markets on which Intereuropa companies are already present, such as those of the former Yugoslavia. Of course, when we spot new market opportunities, we are ready to expand our operations to other markets in South-East Europe. We cover other markets with a partnership network for products carried over land, by air and by sea.” Intereuropa have a competitive advantage when it comes to the services they provide, as their subsidiaries make it easier for them to achieve economies of scale for some services, such as groupage transport, and they have a better negotiating position in public logistics tenders, which makes them a more equal competitor with international logistics concerns. “Our strong information support, adapted to the specificities of different markets, also increases the effectiveness of



Photo: Slovenske železnice

the marketing of our services. Our company exploits the synergies of joint sales and improved supply services to customers, which enables us to provide a comprehensive set of logistics services, our own business network, our own warehousing capacities and information support for products,” they add.

### New Channels Enable Greater Flexibility

Pošta Slovenije (PS) follow global postal developments in postal and logistics services, and are constantly engaged in updating and overhauling their existing services, as well as developing new ones. “We are opening up new channels to get to our customers. These include automated parcel machines, self-service post offices and the PS 24/7 self-service units. These forms of service provision give customers greater flexibility when it comes to the time and place of provision of a service. Of course, we are careful to combine these solutions with the classic post office network,” say the company.

Last September, PS put into operation an outdoor PS 24/7 self-service unit in Koper. This outdoor self-service unit offers customers easy access to selected postal and banking services 24 hours a day, 365 days a year. As well as a “PS Paketomat” automated parcel machine, the unit comprises a Nova KBM cash machine and a vending machine containing selected products. The first unit was opened in Ljubljana in 2017 at Rudnik shopping centre. “Together with the 24/7 self-service post office on Čopova ulica in Ljubljana, the network of 24 modern automated parcel machines in larger towns around Slovenia and the possibility of sending consignments using the ‘PS Pošlji paket’ app, the two self-service units form an important part of the wide network of classic post offices. With its contemporary look and feel, interesting range of products and services and, in particular, the speed and simplicity of service and 24/7 availability, the units mark a new milestone in the development of PS and its operations going forward,” say the company.



Photo: STA



Photo: Pošta Slovenije



“We have been working with Pošta Slovenije for a number of years and I have to say that we are very satisfied with the quality of our cooperation and the way they go about their work.

PS distribute our products every weekday to small bars and large wholesalers alike. As they are available every weekday in practically all parts of the country, we can deliver Coca-Cola and other products to our customers whenever and wherever. That is what makes us competitive.”  
Gregor Knez, Logistics Manager of Coca-Cola HBC Slovenija

### The App Makes It Easier for Customers to Access Their Consignments

With the aim of providing addressees with better notification of when their letters and parcels arrive, PS have also introduced notification of addressees by text messages and e-mail using the telephone number and e-mail address provided by the sender. “Addressees receive a message when their parcel has been despatched by the sender and on the day of delivery. We have recently also offered addressees a new ‘Moja dostava – moja izbira’ app, which enables them to choose the method of delivery themselves,” say the company.

### Distribution of Temperature-Sensitive Products

PS also offer various forms of distribution support. They deliver goods from their online store to online retailers, supplies to classic retailers for their outlets and spare parts to manufacturing companies for their production-related activities. “Companies and sole traders can take advantage of domestic and international business parcel delivery services, and we also offer logistics services, warehousing logistics and order picking.” The company are giving increasing emphasis

to services tailored to specific customer segments. “We are making our presence felt in areas in which we previously had no presence, such as freight logistics (white goods, vehicle parts, beverage distribution) and online platforms, and are expanding our services throughout the Adriatic region. We are also trialling the distribution of temperature-sensitive products and attempting to further develop our production-line supply segment services. Companies can make use of app support for the despatch of consignments; this makes it easier to prepare consignments and enables information to be sent electronically,” they explain. Given the upward trend in growth in parcel and logistics services, they are focusing their strategic projects on expanding the capacities of mail sorting and logistics centres, constructing additional warehouse capacities, modernising the machine-sorting of parcels and letters, and optimising IT support and the network of contact points.

On the developed markets of the EU and the US, seven-day same-day delivery of goods from online retailers, and even delivery within a few hours, is becoming the trend in larger towns and cities. Retailers are looking at various ways of improving delivery from their online stores. One can expect a country of Slovenia’s size to move towards quick, flexible delivery in the future, provided by companies using the “sharing economy” model. “One such company is the Locodels Hrvaška start-up from Croatia, with whom PS have signed a letter of intent on business cooperation for the swift delivery of online purchases in the B2C segment. This is already being tested in the Ljubljana area,” say the company. Locodels offer an innovative solution for daily urban delivery using the “sharing economy” model, with individuals registering via an online platform and providing their own labour and vehicle for the delivery of parcels. These individuals also have the option of sharing their currently “unused” resources with others via the platform, for which they

*Apis-vita is a Slovenian company, that owns a Polish company Wytwornia Octu i Musztardy Parczew. With its combined offer, designs a wide range of naturally fermented vinegars and various sauces for dishes, under the brands Matej and Parczew. It connects tradition, modernity and high quality, and strives to meet complex consumer needs. The selection of Apis-vita brand products ensures high value-added products that meet social and environmental responsibilities.*

api  vita<sup>+</sup>

Matejev<sup>+</sup>





Photo: Posta Slovenije

receive payment. This means that the service provider does not have its own capacities but leases them on the market, with an online app being used to manage drivers, orders and deliveries.

**Next-Generation Green Delivery Solutions**

In June 2018, PS signed a business cooperation agreement with GEN-I in the field of freight e-mobility and next-generation green delivery solutions. The two companies are therefore pooling their knowledge in the area of e-mobility with the aim of providing urban residents with a comprehensive environment-friendly

service using electric vehicles driven, as far as possible, by clean solar energy or other carbon-free sources of power. “Through this partnership, we aim to become a leading player and driving force in the field of next-generation green delivery solutions in Slovenia and South-East Europe,” say the company. PS have been phasing electric vehicles into their fleet for a number of years already. In April 2018, the company also acquired the ISO 50001 energy-management standard, the latest ISO system management standard, which is awarded to companies that manage energy in a sustainable and efficient manner.

**Quicker Journeys for Heavy Goods Vehicles**

“Our goal is to optimise traffic flow capacity and, at the same time, ensure the highest possible level of safety on the Slovenian motorway network. We aim to achieve this by taking a modern, environment-friendly approach,” say the company. They expect the upward trend in motorway and dual carriageway use to continue. Slovenia is one of the busiest transit countries in Europe, with levels of vehicle use also fairly high up the scale. They will continue with activities towards the construction of the northern and southern parts of the third development axis, with plans under way for the preparation of project design documentation and the acquisition

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  - 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



freight forwarders and customers brokers



MEMBER OF:







Photo: DARS

of the required land. They will also start building a second Karavanke tunnel between the Slovenian-Austrian border.

By activating the state-of-the-art electronic toll system for freight vehicles, DarsGo has provided drivers of heavy vehicles with a toll-collection system that does not stop or slow down vehicles, making their journeys quicker, safer and more comfortable. This system is also more environment-friendly, as most exhaust emissions are produced when vehicles stop or move off. DarsGo enables payment to be made according to distance driven, and ensures flexibility in the event that new road sections are added.

### Adriatic's Number One

The Adriatic's largest container port and one of the largest ports of entry and exit for cars in the Mediterranean is currently satisfied with its business operations, as transshipment is growing mainly in the container and car sectors – which is an important factor in the Port of Koper's ability to realise its overall business strategy. Dimitrij Zadel, Head of the port, is also particularly delighted with the fact that several key projects have finally started, which will

give new impetus to the development of the port and provide a shot in the arm for company operations generally. "I am mainly targeting the acquisition of additional premises for the storage freight, or the expansion of the concession area, and continuation of the project to extend Pier 1," explains Zadel.

Considering the arrivals of cruise liners by the end of the summer 2019, the port announced that this year will be the most successful year ever. They estimate that 110,000 passengers from the 71 cruise ships will visit the cruise terminal. It is also encouraging that - thanks to their quality services - Koper and Slovenia are included in the itineraries of shipping companies which are considered the most prestigious in the world of cruising.

### Silk Road Through Koper

The port extended the concession area last year, meaning an additional 43 hectares in the land part of the port. "We should also mention the construction of a new lorry entrance, which will make life easier for freight carriers, which currently gravitate towards the edge of the city centre, and will increase traffic flow capacity. After a break of more than a year, we are continuing with the project to extend the Pier 1, after reaching agreement with the City of Koper on certain mitigating measures to reduce the impact of port-based activities in Basin I on Koper's residents," says Zadel, who adds that this is only one of several larger and more important projects under way this year. They are also considering increasing the size of the garage, constructing new berths and leasing larger plots of land for freight storage. All these investments are urgently needed in order to enable us to respond to the ever-greater volumes of trade between Europe and the Far East. The Port of Koper also officially became part of the initiative for a new "Silk Road" last year after reaching an agreement with the Ningbo Zhoushan Group. "Our goal remains unchanged: to become the leading port system for global logistics solutions for the countries of Central and Eastern Europe," says Zadel.



Photo: Depositphotos



## CUSTOMS PROCEDURES NON-STOP

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Our company, with 25 years' practical experience and a team of 46 professionals in logistics and customs operations, offer the following services:

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- Organisation of national and international transport (rail, road, sea and air)
- Warehousing. In cooperation with the Port of Koper, we offer warehousing for import, export and transit goods in open and closed spaces within the Port of Koper economic zone.
- Administrative services. Customs and tax representation, organisation of inspection controls, consulting in the classification of goods in the Combined Nomenclature, submission of reports to the EU system INTRASTAT.

### Why RCM d.o.o.?



RCM d.o.o. has obtained the latest ISO 9001:2015 quality management system certificate. ISO 9001 is the world's most widely recognised quality management standard and helps organisations to meet their customers' expectations and needs. As part of the ISO 9001:2015 certification process, RCM, d.o.o. engaged in a rigorous audit of its business processes.



#### Credit excellence, AAA class certificate

RCM d.o.o. is ranked among the top 4.2% of companies in Slovenia and has therefore been given the highest AAA credit rating.



Authorised Economic Operator (AEO) certificate for customs simplifications. **This certificate places the company in a more favourable position when using simplified customs procedures, and presents a lower level of risk in the risk analysis system.** The certificate allows the company to be identified as a safe and reliable partner in international trade and, as a result, to undergo fewer inspections during customs procedures.



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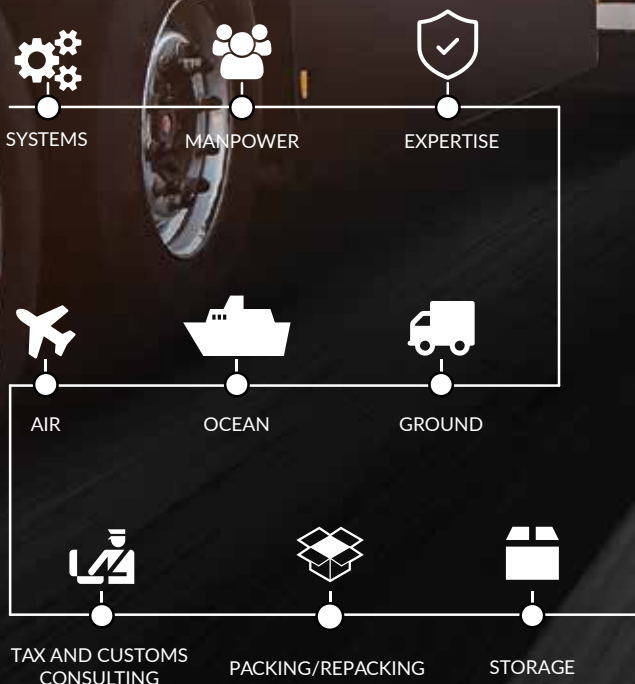
## Freight Forwarding to Cut Logistics Costs

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Photo: Špica

# Opening Doors with a Smartphone

Access control using a smartphone, without the need for readers or smartcards. Label-printing in milliseconds, full-featured software solutions for farming and marinas, and meeting the most exacting security requirements.

Nina Šprohar

### **DoorCloud Will Make Landlords' Lives Easier**

Last year the Špica company launched their DoorCloud innovation onto the global market. As owner and Managing Director Tone Stanovnik explains: "This is a solution that enables access to be controlled using a smartphone, without the need for readers or smartcards." It works by using an app to establish a bluetooth connection with doors that can be opened using a smartphone. "Our services could make life easier for Airbnb users. If a landlord installs a smart key on their doors, tenants will then be able to access the property using their smartphone," explains Stanovnik, adding that the neighbourhoods for young families being built abroad would also benefit from DoorCloud. "Families will be renting flats and sharing common areas. Access to the laundry, bicycle storage and multimedia rooms can

be controlled using the DoorCloud smartphone app," he explains.

Špica's flagship product is otherwise "Time & Space", which combines an access control system and time management system. "We have installed a time management system at Samsung's branch offices in the Adriatic region, for example, and provided access control solutions for Assa Abloy, the world's largest provider of door-opening systems. At the Port of Koper, the specific features of which mark it out as critical infrastructure and a place where physical security is of the utmost importance, we installed an access-control system over a single weekend, expanding it with tailor-made solutions," says Stanovnik.

At the Talum company, Velenje coal mine and Ljubljana University Medical Centre (UKC), the

company have installed a system for identifying and tracking clothing labels using RFID (radio-frequency identification) technology. “The main reasons for using the RFID system are security and cost-effectiveness,” Stanovnik explains. “We have found that in most cases workers have significantly more clothing on them than is necessary. The companies have therefore been able to reduce the quantity of equipment supplied, make considerable savings and, because of the new system, spend less time on clothing-related matters, thereby increasing the efficiency and speed of work processes,” says Stanovnik. “We would like to cover the ‘three seas basin’, from the Baltic in the north to the Mediterranean in the south and the Black Sea in the east. The second wave of expansion would include all the countries of the former Yugoslavia. We already have a presence there with the Time & Space system, which we are also expanding into the EMEA (Europe, Middle East and Africa) region. The partners we work with are primarily technology companies, i.e. value-added resellers and integrators. We want to train them to undertake development themselves so that they can prepare ‘boutique solutions’ for their own customers on the domestic market.” The company is currently involved in developing “Zone Touch BIO” terminals that control access using biometric sensors, as well as software solutions for hotel chains that enable smartcards to be programmed for visitors, access rights to be controlled and solutions to be implemented for managing and planning employees’ time at work.

### A Few Seconds Instead of Several Hours

“Over the last years, our new ‘NiceLabel 2017’ software platform has become established on the global market, as has the fully overhauled software solution for designing and printing labels and managing labelling processes, the most unique, state-of-the-art and efficient solution of its kind on the planet and one that we introduced to the market in the second half of 2016,” says Matej Košmrlj, CEO of Euro Plus, NiceLabel’s parent company. From the outset, the company have sold their solutions to strong brands. Via a Slovenian distributor of automatic identification systems, for example, they established links, shortly after the company was founded in the 1990s, with Sato, the well-established Japanese manufacturer of industrial printers, which needed a solution for the printing of diacritical marks. Sato were satisfied with the company’s work, which led to new orders and closer cooperation with Sato Europe and, in turn, opened the door to other international markets. “After we introduced our own NiceLabel brand, we began selling software solutions to other leading industrial labelling manufacturers and, by building partnership networks, gradually broke through into numerous manufacturing, trade and logistics companies across the globe,” explains Košmrlj, who adds that they have deliberately strengthened their presence in the segment of



Photo: Spica

solutions for large companies in recent years. They establish contact with those companies via their own partnership networks and, to an increasing extent, directly, as they enable them to digitise their labelling processes throughout the entire supply chain.

“Our solutions are used by well-known companies from a large number of sectors, including Abbott, Arla Foods, Benetton, Continental, Bosch, Gorenje, Hella, Krka, Lonza, Osram, Philips, P&G, Siemens, ThermoFischer and Würth,” adds Košmrlj. In addition to using NiceLabel’s design and printing software, these companies are opting in increasing numbers for the company’s Label Management System (LMS), an integrated labelling system for manufacturing and logistics companies, including specific industrial sectors, such as pharmacy, retail, automotive, food and beverage, and electronic industries. “We recently undertook our largest project to date: an integrated labelling solution for an American giant with 25 distribution centres and 4,000 stores. By using our solution, they have substantially increased their agility, and the time required to prepare and print new labels has come down from several hours or even weeks to a matter of seconds, which enables them to be more flexible and get their products to market much more quickly,” says Košmrlj. Before NiceLabel’s



Photo: NiceLabel





Photo: IRM

solutions came along, IT professionals in companies such as this needed a considerable amount of time to program labels. Now, specialist users can design, print and oversee the process from any department in a simple and transparent way. “Many practical examples prove that companies that employ our software solutions significantly reduce the risk of producing defective signs and characters, incurring the considerable expenses involved in recalling label batches, and losing millions in lost turnover as well as their reputation, which can prove fatal,” explains Košmrlj, who adds that companies that introduce integrated label management systems and provide their business users with direct access to label design programmes and document management and online printing systems are effective in preventing revenue losses. The costs of defects in printed signs and characters are considerably higher than the investment in introducing a state-of-the-art labelling system and training staff to use it.

#### Investment Recouped in Less Than Four Months

Siemens managed to recoup its investment in the integrated NiceLabel labelling system in less than four months, with the time needed to print labels falling from eight seconds to 300 milliseconds. They rolled the solution out from the pilot plant to 22 other plants (2,000 printers), supplying it to other Siemens Group plants as the best solution available.

“Five years ago, labelling was a highly involved process that lacked standardisation. We have a network of plants and have already employed three different labelling solutions at our main location – or more broadly speaking, five or six label-printing solutions. Several plants operated local domain

systems and pursued their own method of procuring and managing equipment. NiceLabel’s integrated labelling solution is now being used by 22 plants in four different business units, in six European countries as well as in China,” said Leon McDonnell, Head of IT services at Siemens’ manufacturing department. “The largest plant prints 150,000 labels a week on 200 printers, all relying on NiceLabel’s integrated system,” added Michael Buchmann, IT Solutions Architect at Siemens.

#### IRM Are Developing Several Marina Master Solutions

Vesna Pavlovič, Managing Director of IRM, says that they have developed and put on the market several software solutions last year. “These include the Marina Master advanced CRM, a set of software solutions for advanced CRM (Customer Relationship Management) adapted to the differing requirements of marinas, the myMarina mobile app, which enables marina customers to communicate with staff, and to order general and tailor-made solutions, the MarinaMaster mobile app, which is aimed at staff and enables them to manage the marina wherever and whenever, and Marina Master integration with large globally recognised payment systems such as Freeway and Merchant Warrior.” She adds that these products are already in use in marinas, yacht clubs and ports around the world, from Australia to the Caribbean. “At the moment, we are developing several other Marina Master software products, including solutions for the automation of booking systems and the optimisation of servicing processes.”

#### Simple Solution for Entrepreneurs

The Datalab company develops, installs and maintains Pantheon business software, and provides advice and professional training in its use. They are headquartered in Slovenia, with offices in Serbia, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Croatia, Macedonia, Montenegro, Bulgaria, Kosovo, Romania, Ukraine and Switzerland. “In the last year we have launched the Spletna Blagajna, an online checkout app, in collaboration with our partner Telekom Slovenije,” says Maja Fujan. This checkout solution is aimed at small businesses, small tradespeople, the self-employed and voluntary associations that need a simple solution with which to issue invoices in the office or in the field. “The solution works in conjunction with everything the business needs: a computer, telephone or tablet with an internet link, and a printer,” she explains.

“Pantheon is perfect for companies of all sizes and sectors, with strong specialisation in the computer, manufacturing, trade, agriculture and services sectors. We work with Bisnode, Deloitte, DM, Strabag, Deichmann, Hager, Fibernet, Plastika Skaza and other companies,” says Fujan, adding that their information system is a product that enables companies to manage their day-to-day business more effectively. They see strong support and sales reach in their



Leon McDonnell,  
Head of IT services at  
Siemens

Photo: Siemens

external partners, which allows them to provide high-quality coverage of the South-East Europe region, Ukraine and Switzerland. “We are also open to new partnerships in every country in which our branches are based, as well as in other European countries. We expect our partners to take over sales activities, implement a business information system, train employees and support the product,” says Fujan.

They are engaged in developing functionalities for and improving Pantheon, from the comprehensive introduction of electronic commerce for their customers (work processes, document systems, OCR) to full-featured solutions for modern farming. “Because of the complexities faced by farmers today, we decided to combine the various forms of agricultural activity into one system that includes apps, various integrations of the Internet of Things, data exchange via online services and back-office functions. We have adapted everything to the needs of farmers’ themselves,” adds Fujan. In the production field, they are developing a strong analytical planning system for finance and accounting work, as well as developing new features for payments abroad. “Every day we make improvements to our software, and we are delighted that 70 percent of all proposals for improvements incorporated into ERP (Enterprise Resource Planning) come from the users themselves.”

### Meeting Exacting Security Requirements

“We have been offering highly reliable remote-support software for over ten years,” says Saba Resnik, in charge of marketing and PR at XLAB. ISL Online software is frequently updated to enable it to remain in touch with the latest trends in the industry and provide customers with the highest level of security possible. Where do they get their inspiration from? “In addition to the ‘must-have’ remote desktop trends, customer feedback is the thing that gives us our most important ideas for new functions and improvements to existing functions. In April we brought out a new version of ISL Light (ISL Light 4.4), with 40 new functions and improvements, including improved merger and joint

Photo: DataLab



“We have been using the Pantheon program from the very beginning, when we opened the business in Bosnia-Herzegovina. At the beginning, Pantheon was used by an outside accounting company. Since 2010 it has also been used by our own personnel records and wages department.

The Pantheon program is simple to use, providing a company with everything it needs to keep personnel records, calculate wages and recruit new staff. It contains numerous report-drafting possibilities, and adapts itself to the legislative changes, which are always implemented extremely quickly. In a country going through a major reform phase, this is very important. I would also like to highlight the fact that the program enables processes to be imported so that it can be adapted to every user’s specific requirements. These processes speed up and ease the work process considerably.”

Jasmina Roša, HR and wages manager, DM drogerie markt, Bosnia-Herzegovina

use functions, speedier joint monitor use, improved security, new chat functions, a new blinking app icon and many other things,” explains Resnik. Exacting security requirements are the main reason why the company has managed to catch the eye of some of the world’s most successful companies. “Our state-of-the-art remote-support software is being used by a number of global brand names in a variety of sectors, including Konica Minolta, Mitsubishi Chemical Systems, AT&T, Mango and Canon.” She goes on to point out that Avast Business, the global online security company, which supplies industry-leading software and services for protecting devices, data and people, has integrated ISL Online into its Managed Workplace RMM (Remote Monitoring and Management) platform, thereby making access to countless remote computers possible. In addition to Europe, the company is focused mainly on the US, where they recently opened an office in North Carolina, Japan, where they have partnered with OceanBridge Inc. and the Santec Corporation, and South-East Asia, particularly Singapore and Thailand. “With its extremely rapid market growth, particularly in healthcare, and its good levels of purchasing power, Vietnam is the next destination to which we will expand our products and services,” says Resnik.



Photo: DataLab



Photo: Litostroj Power

# No Barriers for Innovative Enterprises

Better passports, hydraulic models for the world's biggest turbines, high-quality technical components and efficient systemic cleanroom solutions. In their respective fields, innovators are seeking new partners around the world.

*Nina Šprohar*

### **Most Reliable Solution on the Market**

Cetis are a company engaged in upgrading security paper and commercial print using comprehensive solutions. They produce around four million documents a year and say that they are “very proud of their long-term partnership with the Slovenian government and of having gained the trust of its citizens.” They also collaborate on projects involving central government authorities in Africa, Europe, Central America and the Middle East. In the last year, they have, among other things, developed a system for data capture and processing and the issuing of travel documents in Guinea-Bissau, systems for data capture and processing and the issuing of transport and driving documents in Guinea-Bissau and Madagascar, a criminal register in Equatorial Guinea, tachographic systems in Montenegro and Albania, and numerous other solutions.



Photo: Cetis



In the document production field, the company have upgraded their existing security paper with new protections that prevent it from being counterfeited. “Our most important innovation over the last year has been the new generation of polycarbonate bindings for data pages in e-passports, which have been recognised with a Gold Award for the best Slovenian innovations. The method by which data pages are bound into a passport is one of the key elements of the document, ensuring protection against forgery and counterfeiting,” say Cetis. This patented solution brings to the market a large number of improvements from the point of view of security, durability, flexibility and compatibility, and the company are sure that it is currently the most reliable solution out there. “The lifespan of the average passport is around ten years, but our innovation almost doubles that. The solution is already in use in Central America and Africa,” say the company.

As far as security paper is concerned, the company focus on comprehensive solutions, i.e. on adding services to products. Passports, visas, identity cards, driving licences and vehicle registration documents are among their most important products. In the area of commercial print solutions, the company highlights solutions for the pharmaceutical, food and cosmetics industries, for which they produce labels, sleeves, wrapping labels and forms. “In addition to Slovenia, our target markets are those of Western and Central Europe, chiefly Austria, Germany and France.” Their development activities are currently most strongly oriented towards the development of new security protections for documents and of comprehensive document-related information solutions.

### Hydraulic Model for the Largest Francis Pump Turbine in Europe

Litostroj Power manufacture one-off products to order, tailored to specific projects. “Most of our orders are for Francis, Kaplan and Pelton water turbines.” They used to manufacture mostly new equipment, but there has been growth recently in the proportion of work they do on the partial or complete refurbishment of old turbines. In 2017 they developed a hydraulic model for the largest single Francis pump turbine in Europe and a hydraulic mould for a Francis driver with the largest fall of water in the world. They also manufacture barrier components



Photo: Cetis

such as gates and valves. “We would like to establish new ties with end-customers in particular,” say the company. “In some cases, we are developing project-based partnerships with other suppliers, particularly of generator equipment, and with construction and engineering companies.” Litostroj Power are currently developing several new hydraulic moulds for drivers, all of them specifically optimised to meet the demands of customers.

### Cleangrad: The Only Fire Safety Windows under the GMP Standard

Cleangrad provides systemic cleanroom solutions, from the detailed design to the installation stage. As the company explain: “We tailor our cleanrooms to the demands of our customers with the complete integration of doors, media and furniture, in combination with ventilation and technologies. Our installation team are trained under the GMP (Good Manufacturing Practice) standard and place great emphasis on health, safety and cleanliness. This enables us to ensure that cleanrooms are handed over to our customers on time.” They support the qualification of cleanrooms in accordance with cGMP (Current Good Manufacturing Practice), FDA (Food and Drug Administration) and ISO (International Organization for Standardization) requirements, and also provide 48-hour service operations throughout the whole of Europe and the supply of spare parts. Cleangrad have their own development centre in which they are constantly engaged in developing new and improving existing products according to customers’ instructions and also in collaboration with them. “Last year we developed, manufactured, tested and installed a fire safety window for a well-known customer under the GMP standard, and we are still the only provider of this type of solution. Our customers



Photo: Litostroj Power



Photo: Sibco Group

are mainly large pharmaceutical concerns, such as Pfizer, GlaxoSmithKline, Mithra Pharmaceutical, DSM, Novartis, Sandoz, Octapharma, Alcon and Zoetis. We would also like to forge new partnerships and enter the German, Irish and Russian markets.” What are they developing at the moment? “Our main development challenges in the coming months will be in connection with cleanroom systems. In 2018, in addition to the fire safety window, we also developed an air-conditioning box and info booth,” they reply.

#### **Solutions for the Pharmaceutical, Medical and Electrical Industries**

The Sibco Group provides closure solutions for tubes, containers and other types of packaging, as well as solutions for technically complex products for the pharmaceutical, medical and electrical industries. One of its newest products is the PO50f/20 cap for use in the cosmetics industry.

“Our activities are not geared merely towards producing caps and shoulders but also high-quality technical components for the car, sanitary, telecommunications and other industries, containers for medicines, pharmaceuticals, food supplements and medical devices, and tools for manufacturing those products,” explains Jure Butinar, Head of marketing. “We operate in more than 60 countries around the world, have more than 300 business partners and manufacture more than four billion products every year. Our business partners include standard-bearers in the cosmetics, car, pharmaceutical, oral care and animal feed industries,” says Butinar, adding that almost all the company’s products, with the exception of their breast-milk pumps, are B2B products. Among the products incorporated into globally recognised products from some of the strongest brands are Sibco caps, shoulders, electronic device casings, water

meshes, printer components and thin-walled food containers.

Last year, owing to an increase in demand and the need to meet shorter delivery times, they have established two new companies, SIBO USA and SIBO RUS (Russia). As Butinar explains: “We would like to be present on both markets with an even greater number of products and tools sold. We also intend to establish production of our products and tools at both locations in the near future.”

#### **Ultracut Cutting-Off Wheels Enable Up to 30% Faster Cutting**

“Our business excellence, more than 135 years of experience on the global market, investments in know-how, development, equipment and automation, and our innovations: all of these are factors that give our customers the assurance that we manufacture high-quality abrasives and can meet the expectation of even the most exacting clients,” says Urška Vouri, Head of Marketing at Weiler Abrasives (formerly Swatycomet), one of the leading producers of artificial abrasives and synthetic fibres. Technical support is an important element, as the company provide complex technical and technological solutions tailored to the individual customer. “For our solid-core technology for the manufacture of Ultracut thin cutting-off wheels, which enables the thinnest products to be manufactured, we received a national award for innovation,” says Vouri. Their innovation reduces the time needed for cutting operations by up to 30% compared with other products – and, in addition to saving time, also cuts down on labor costs and consumption as well as ensuring more precise cutting. “The cutting-off wheels are extremely durable and stable, which ensures that the user is able to work safely and without fuss, providing them with value added.”



Pomurje Region –

# Where everything GROWS!



**POMURJE**  
REGION

Pomurje has a strategic position in the north-east of Slovenia, in the heart of Central Europe and at the intersection of one of EU's most strategic routes. The vicinity of neighbouring capital cities and a favourable geostrategic position make the region an important centre for transport and logistics activities.

Pomurje is also the flattest region of Slovenia, stretching for 1,337 km<sup>2</sup> along the River Mura. It has extensive arable land, fertile soil, wine-growing hills, natural surroundings and a continental climate, all of which create favourable conditions for agriculture and the production of fresh, local food.

Owing to the rich geothermal resources and the diversity and integrity of the landscape, Pomurje is a great environment for investing in sustainable tourism. A long industrial tradition, in-depth knowledge of the markets of south-eastern Europe, integrity, competence and motivation, as well as a good command of foreign languages, are some of the qualities appreciated by the foreign investors employing local people at their production facilities in Pomurje Region.

A SPRINGBOARD FOR OTHER MARKETS IN  
CENTRAL AND SOUTH-EASTERN EUROPE

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DEDICATED TO INNOVATION AND CREATIVITY

EXPERIENCED AND HIGHLY RELIABLE WORKFORCE

EXCELLENT QUALITY OF LIFE IN A SAFE AND  
HEALTHY ENVIRONMENT

WELL-PRESERVED NATURAL AND  
CULTURAL HERITAGE





# List of 100 Largest Exporters

Source: Bisnode Gvin, Agency of the Republic of Slovenia for Public Legal Records and Related Services (AJPES)

\* The list includes companies that present their financial statements, and have submitted data for the previous year to AJPES by the end of March. Figures on exports, value added, and number of employees do not include data from the subsidiaries. The order of top exports is different at the group level (consolidated balance sheets).

Company/Group name	Net sales revenue on foreign markets, in million EUR	Index 18/17	Percentage of sales on foreign markets (%)	Number of employees	Value added, in million EUR
1 GEN-I, d.o.o.	1,899.6	97.50	80.2	308	27.4
2 REVOZ d.d.	1,754.9	111.40	99.1	2,701	197.5
3 PETROL d.d., Ljubljana	1,657.2	122.30	39.0	1,736	198.7
4 KRKA, d.d., Novo mesto	1,177.3	102.80	95.6	5,002	536.6
5 Lek d.d.	1,014.1	112.20	95.5	3,793	426.4
6 HSE d.o.o.	945.7	82.90	63.8	167	65.8
7 Gorenje, d.o.o.	758.4	106.60	92.3	4,391	72.1
8 BELEKTRON d.o.o.	724.5	242.80	98.5	5	29.2
9 IMPOL d.o.o.	662.7	107.10	83.7	40	31.9
10 Interenergo d.o.o.	601.4	78.30	90.2	33	1.7
11 ADRIA MOBIL, d.o.o. Novo mesto	383.5	111.40	98.5	1,021	79.5
12 HELLA SATURNUS SLOVENIJA d.o.o.	379.5	101.10	96.7	1,743	104.7
13 SIJ ACRONI d.o.o.	373.7	102.90	86.6	1,372	70.5
14 Sandoz d.d.	309.4	134.10	100.0	937	51.8
15 TALUM d.d. Kidričevo	302.6	108.40	81.4	952	39.8
16 LTH Castings d.o.o.	289.7	113.20	99.6	1,816	112.4
17 BSH HIŠNI APARATI d.o.o. Nazarje	286.7	89.60	91.8	1,127	59.2
18 RENAULT NISSAN SLOVENIJA, d.o.o.	261.4	121.10	48.9	110	15.6
19 TAB d.d.	258.1	104.60	92.1	652	55.2
20 AquafilSLO d.o.o.	245.3	108.30	99.5	856	40.9
21 GEOPLIN d.o.o. Ljubljana	235.2	123.30	59.4	43	5.9
22 MAHLE Electric Drives Slovenija d.o.o.	227.4	112.30	95.2	1,759	53.7
23 CIMOS d.d.	215.5	89.10	96.2	890	34.7
24 Odelo Slovenija d.o.o.	199.9	111.60	99.8	1,210	58.4
25 HIDRIA d.o.o.	197.5	132.10	89.7	1,587	69.4
26 PRESKOK d.o.o.	195.6	131.50	99.3	11	6.3
27 CARTHAGO d.o.o.	193.5	95.40	100.0	765	32.8
28 GOODYEAR DUNLOP SAVA TIRES d.o.o.	179.6	103.40	81.5	1,538	75.9
29 ADRIA AIRWAYS d.o.o.	176.3	112.80	99.2	436	14.0
30 Helios TBLUS d.o.o.	173.0	97.50	85.2	789	43.7
31 SŽ - Tovorni promet, d.o.o.	159.1	97.60	89.4	1,206	67.5
32 LUKA KOPER, d.d.	154.6	106.80	69.3	1,021	153.7
33 KOLIČEVO KARTON, d.o.o.	154.3	100.70	92.6	389	41.5
34 UNIOR d.d.	152.4	103.60	88.4	1,780	64.7
35 BOXMARK LEATHER d.o.o.	151.7	96.40	99.9	1,552	23.4
36 KOLEKTOR GROUP d.o.o.	150.2	105.40	87.3	245	15.5
37 CINKARNA Celje, d.d.	142.3	86.70	86.8	876	78.9
38 SIJ METAL RAVNE d.o.o.	138.1	107.70	71.0	1,060	51.1
39 VALIANT d.o.o.	135.9	125.90	99.6	8	2.0
40 DOMEL, d.o.o.	129.7	105.50	90.3	1,030	42.4
41 Kuwait Petroleum d.o.o.	128.9	129.60	87.8	0	3.7
42 ADK d.o.o.	126.2	114.40	98.7	632	29.9
43 NOVEM CAR INTERIOR DESIGN d.o.o.	123.2	123.60	99.9	753	21.6
44 ISKRAEMECO, d.d.	120.9	117.50	96.0	732	35.6
45 TELEKOM SLOVENIJE, d.d.	120.6	95.10	18.8	2,196	242.7
46 DANFOSS TRATA, d.o.o.	115.3	109.70	94.1	476	36.7
47 Akrapovič d.d.	110.2	104.80	98.8	1,074	56.5



## EUROPACIFIC GROUP

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.



### MARITIME TRANSPORT

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.



### RAIL TRANSPORT

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.



### AIR TRANSPORT

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.



### ROAD TRANSPORT

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.



### WAREHOUSING & DISTRIBUTION

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.



### CUSTOMS CLEARANCE

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.

SLOVENIA  
SLOVAKIA  
CROATIA  
HUNGARY  
SERBIA

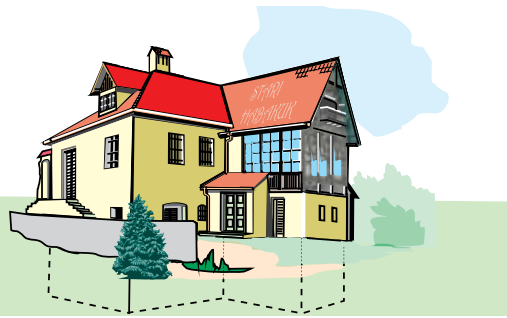
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Company/Group name	Net sales revenue on foreign markets, in million EUR	Index 18/17	Percentage of sales on foreign markets (%)	Number of employees	Value added, in million EUR
48 Droga Kolinska d.d.	109.4	93.20	64.6	443	39.3
49 PAPIRNICA VEVČE d.o.o.	103.2	109.10	95.6	143	8.8
50 PALFINGER d.o.o.	103.0	112.30	94.6	646	29.4
51 Trelleborg Slovenija, d.o.o.	101.4	102.40	89.2	822	43.3
52 Adient Slovenj Gradec d.o.o.	100.2	105.80	98.2	677	20.4
53 KNAUF INSULATION, d.o.o., Škofja Loka	99.9	107.70	78.2	395	38.6
54 GKN Driveline Slovenija, d.o.o.	99.6	132.40	92.7	426	21.6
55 ŠTORE STEEL d.o.o.	93.9	111.60	67.7	548	32.9
56 RASTODER, d.o.o.	91.4	88.50	78.9	55	13.6
57 ELRAD INTERNATIONAL d.o.o.	89.3	119.10	91.1	537	26.4
58 TRIMO d.o.o.	88.7	101.20	80.9	363	19.9
59 DINOS d.o.o.	87.4	113.30	57.2	311	13.0
60 KOLEKTOR ETRA d.o.o.	87.2	103.20	86.1	382	23.1
61 VIPAP VIDEM KRŠKO d.d.	86.8	108.30	89.6	338	16.3
62 STARKOM d.o.o.	86.6	103.50	97.7	328	19.3
63 ETI, d.o.o.	85.7	101.20	87.1	781	27.1
64 BAYER d.o.o.	84.9	104.70	66.5	128	16.4
65 FILC d.o.o.	80.1	105.80	93.9	341	32.7
66 GLOVIS EUROPE GmbH, Koper Branch	79.8	112.30	90.8	15	8.1
67 ISKRA MEHANIZMI, d.o.o.	78.8	105.30	89.7	491	16.8
68 NEK d.o.o.	77.9	99.20	49.5	619	71.0
69 ContiTech Slovenija, d.o.o.	77.3	92.70	97.7	353	24.6
70 ebm-papst Slovenija d.o.o.	76.2	98.20	98.4	412	14.0
71 DIVA TRADING d.o.o.	76.1	250.80	100.0	0	-12.1
72 WEILER Abrasives d.o.o.	75.9	98.70	93.6	786	28.5
73 PERUTNINA PTUJ d.d.	75.7	109.70	45.9	1,401	48.8
74 AVTO TRIGLAV d.o.o., Ljubljana	75.4	150.90	47.4	93	6.7
75 TOYOTA ADRIA d.o.o.	75.0	-	56.2	44	3.9
76 TPV d.o.o.	73.5	103.70	85.7	934	36.4
77 SILKEM d.o.o.	71.0	117.20	94.2	205	15.3
78 ARCONT d.d. Gornja Radgona	69.9	106.90	99.1	674	20.8
79 Titus d.o.o. Dekani	69.2	101.70	78.4	420	25.2
80 Paloma d.d.	68.3	96.10	83.4	549	11.3
81 KOVINTRADE d.d. Celje	68.2	112.40	40.8	189	10.0
82 Calcit d.o.o.	67.9	106.60	86.4	155	21.6
83 GORIČANE, d.d. Medvode	65.5	110.10	89.0	212	8.7
84 BRAVOPHONE d.o.o.	64.2	106.00	100.0	1	0.3
85 ELAN, d.o.o.	63.5	102.40	93.7	665	22.9
86 ITW Appliance Components d.o.o.	63.1	93.60	85.1	311	22.4
87 VOLNIK d.o.o.	63.0	249.30	97.4	1	1.2
88 TBP d.d.	61.6	101.70	99.7	865	24.6
89 LJUBLJANSKE MLEKARNE d.o.o.	61.1	100.40	36.2	606	30.5
90 RIKO, d.o.o.	60.5	140.30	62.2	121	7.8
91 ISKRA, d.o.o.	58.5	110.40	64.0	1,056	37.6
92 Continental Adria d.o.o.	57.5	99.10	63.5	32	4.5
93 TKK d.o.o.	57.0	106.10	88.5	214	14.7
94 STEKLARNA HRASTNIK d.o.o.	56.9	102.90	95.8	525	28.3
95 MEDIS, d.o.o.	56.8	129.40	57.7	140	16.5
96 Frutarom Etol d.o.o.	56.2	105.70	85.7	227	25.1
97 INTERBLOCK d.d.	56.1	79.10	97.7	202	28.5
98 INOTHERM d.o.o.	55.6	112.80	93.6	243	24.5
99 ODPAD d.o.o. Pivka	55.2	109.20	64.9	27	3.3
100 AYEN ENERGIJA d.o.o.	53.5	238.10	91.0	1	0.7



# 35 YEARS



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APPLICATION OF RESEARCH OF SICK BUILDINGS • BASED ON DIAGNOSIS RESULTS • REPAIRS AND SUSTAINABLE RENOVATION • PROTECTION KNOW-HOW → 19 PATENTS – 12 MODELS – 40 BRANDS  
INTERNATIONAL COMPETITIONS 64 AWARDS 64 PROFESSIONAL ARTICLES

## HORIZONTAL WATERPROOFING

- WACKER TECHNOLOGICAL SYSTEM – ING. KLAN, WITH SILICONISATION
- WITH CHROME PLATE EMBOSING
- WITH ELECTRO-OSMOSIS

## KLAN VERTICAL HIDROISOLATION ®

- MINERAL (PP) PLASTERS FOR (K/T)
- BIO KLAN R LIME PLASTER
- PLASTERS FOR THE INTERIORS AND FAÇADES
- NANOTECHNOLOGICAL MINERAL PROTECTION

## REINFORCED CONCRETE REPAIR

- MECHANICAL REMOVAL AND CLEANING OF WORN-OUT CONCRETE
- CONCRETE AND REINFORCEMENT SANDBLASTING
- PRESERVATION OF CONCRETE REINFORCEMENT
- CONCRETE FINISHING

## POOL WATERPROOFING TECHNOLOGY

- AQUAMINERAL TECHNOLOGICAL SYSTEM
- CONCRETE AND REINFORCEMENT SANDBLASTING
- AQUAMINERAL SEALANT
- AQUAMINERAL REINFORCEMENT PRESERVATION
- AQUAMINERAL WATERPROOFING FINISHING LAYERS

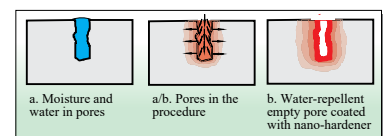
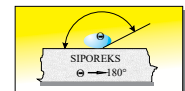
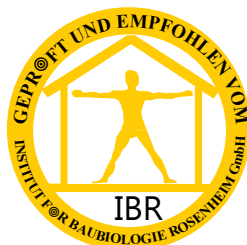
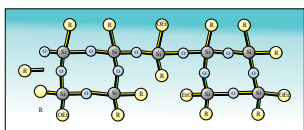
## SPECIAL REPAIR FORMULATIONS

- KLAN® STOP MOULD AND FUNGUS
- KLAN® STOP SALT, NITRATE AND SULPHATES
- KLAN® LIME BIO COLOURS IN 122 COLOUR TONES AND LEVELLING COMPOUNDS

## SPECIAL REPAIRS

- INSTALLATION OF HORIZONTAL AND VERTICAL EXPANSION JOINTS
- INSTALLATION OF MINERAL SEALANTS
- SANDSTONE REPAIR AND HYDROPHOBIC COATING
- NANOTECHNOLOGICAL REPAIR

## 101 INVENTIONS – 64 INTERNATIONAL AWARDS





I FEEL  
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