

What International and Scientifically Validated Models Suggest for the Global Competitiveness of Construction Companies

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What Economics Has Taught Us for Over 250 Years

Adam Smith (1776)

- Productivity increases through better organisation of work, not by working harder.
- division of labour increases output,
- saved time is reallocated, not eliminated,
- productivity enables growth and reinvestment.

John Maynard Keynes (1930s)

- Productivity growth creates prosperity if managed through investment and institutions.
- productivity enables higher value creation,
- time saved must be reinvested into new activities,
- unmanaged productivity creates risk; managed productivity creates growth.

Key message: Productivity creates capacity – not unemployment.

Productivity in Construction: A System Outcome

- Productivity does **not** mean:
- faster site work,
- longer working hours,
- higher individual effort.

In construction:

- fewer errors and rework,
- better coordination,
- better use of information,
- better decision-making.

Sources: OECD (2021); McKinsey (2020)

Where Construction Productivity Is Actually Lost

Research shows:

- up to **70%** of productivity losses occur before construction starts.

Main causes:

- poor project preparation,
- late design changes,
- fragmented responsibilities,
- inappropriate delivery models.

Sources: OECD; ECSO; WEF

What International Practice Confirms

Successful companies:

- apply production-based delivery systems,
- standardise processes,
- manage knowledge across projects,
- treat projects as part of a system.

Key shift

- From **project improvisation** → **production logic** !

Sources: Lean Construction; Koskela; Horizon Europe projects

DELIVERY MODELS: OPPORTUNITIES & PITFALLS

PPP, EPC, DBO, Alliancing: Lessons from Research

New delivery models are not a guarantee of higher productivity.

PPP, EPC, DBO and alliancing models deliver results only when risks are allocated according to real capabilities of project partners. Unbalanced risk transfer, weak client capacity and insufficient contractual expertise are among the main causes of disputes and underperformance.

What International Practice Confirms

Global Success Means Exporting Systems, Not Labour

Internationally competitive firms export:

- organisation,
- management systems,
- delivery know-how.

Not just workforce capacity.

Sources: EU Industrial Strategy; ISO 19650; IMD

What Research Clearly Indicates

KEY TAKEAWAYS FOR SLOVENIAN CONSTRUCTION

What Research Clearly Indicates

- Productivity is organisational, not individual.
- Technology supports systems – it does not replace them.
- Delivery models require new competences.
- Risk management is essential.
- Productivity enables growth and attractiveness of the sector.

Too often, productivity is discussed at the level of policy narratives and strategic documents. What truly matters, however, is having a deep understanding of productivity and the capability to apply this knowledge effectively in project preparation, delivery and management.

Why International Comparison & EU Cooperation Matter

Testing innovation, productivity and new delivery models with EU support

Key EU Programmes Relevant for Construction & Project Delivery

[Horizon Europe \(2025-2027 calls, incl. 2026\)](#)

Focus: construction productivity, digitalisation, BIM, AI, circular construction, climate-resilient infrastructure

- Ideal for:
 - testing new project delivery models,
 - productivity improvement methods,
 - digital and data-driven construction processes
- Typical partners: companies + universities + research institutes + public clients
- TRL 5-8 (from pilot to demonstration)

[I3 Instrument \(Interregional Innovation Investments\)](#)

Focus: market-oriented innovation, value chains, industrial scale-up

- Ideal for:
 - SMEs and larger companies testing new construction solutions,
 - cross-border cooperation between regions
- Strong emphasis on commercialisation and real market uptake

[Digital Europe Programme](#)

Focus: AI, digital twins, data spaces, advanced digital skills

- Ideal for construction companies introducing AI-supported planning, cost control, productivity monitoring

[LIFE Programme \(Built environment & climate\)](#)

Focus: energy efficiency, sustainable construction, new materials and processes

- Ideal for pilot buildings, renovation models, nZEB solutions

Why International Comparison & EU Cooperation Matter

Learning faster, reducing risk, and increasing competitiveness

- **EU projects allow companies to test innovation with reduced financial risk**
 - part of development costs covered by EU funding
- **Comparison with international partners accelerates learning**
 - understanding how productivity, contracts, risk and delivery models work abroad
- **Pilot projects = proof of concept**
 - validated solutions are easier to scale in the Slovenian market and beyond
- **Cross-border cooperation strengthens competitiveness**
 - companies gain references, credibility and access to new markets
- **EU cooperation is not academic — it is a business tool**
 - many Horizon / I3 projects are industry-driven and company-led

National Funding Opportunities & GZS Support (Slovenia)

In addition to EU programmes, **Slovenian companies also have access to a wide range of national funding schemes** supporting innovation, sustainability, digitalisation and strategic investments.

The Chamber of Commerce and Industry of Slovenia (GZS) **actively monitors, publishes and supports access to national calls**, helping companies identify suitable opportunities and prepare for participation.

These instruments are particularly relevant for companies seeking:

- first pilot investments,
- innovation scale-up,
- sustainability and climate-related solutions,
- strategic technologies and industrial development.

GZS serves as a bridge between companies, funding instruments and international cooperation.

How GZS can help you?

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Informacije in pomoč

- Podatkovne zbirke
- Infopika
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- Informacije o slovenskem in tujem poslovnem okolju
- Aktualni razpisi**
- Poslovne priložnosti iz mreže EEN
- Cenik produktov in storitev GZS
- Uporabne povezave
- Projekt Start up 50+
- Projekt VIRIDI
- Glas gospodarstva
- Discover Slovenia
- Poslovni tednik

Informacije in pomoč - Aktualni razpisi



Aktualni razpisi



REPUBLIKA SLOVENIJA
MINISTRSTVO ZA KMETIJSTVO,
GOZDARSTVO IN PREHRANO

Prvi javni razpis za aktivnost »Blažitev podnebnih sprememb in krepitev ekonomske trajnosti sektorja«

Datum novice: 11. januar 2026

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SLOVENSKI
PODJETNIŠKI
SKLAD

Javni razpis za izvedbo celovitih podpornih storitev za inovativne posameznike in inovativna zagonska podjetja 2026–2029 (JR Start-up konzorcij 2026–2029)

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