

斯洛文尼亚与中国之间的贸易额在五年内增长 61%

斯洛文尼亚的出口商创下空前绝后的佳绩

Edition China

Discover Slovenia

March 2020



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production of 3D multi-layer
based technologies



斯洛文尼亚荣获“全球化赢家”称号

斯洛文尼亚经济增长连续第六年高于欧元区平均水平。这主要归功于该国的出口商们，他们在国际市场上的影响力逐年增强。近十年来，斯洛文尼亚的出口翻了一番，而且还在继续增长。根据 2019 年的预测，其出口额将达到 420 亿欧元大关，占 GDP 的 88%。虽然工业向来是斯洛文尼亚出口的重要支柱，但服务业现已成为其经济发展的中坚力量：斯洛文尼亚运输系统的竞争优势以及旅游产品和服务范围的不断扩大，对其服务业出口增量作出了决定性的贡献。其服务业出口额从 2011 年的 50 亿欧元已增加到今年的 87 亿欧元。

高份额出口占比（占 GDP 的 88%）表明，没有几个欧洲小国比斯洛文尼亚更能融入复杂的价值链。为了促进经济发展，我们一直致力于与国际伙伴建立联系和合作，因此斯洛文尼亚荣获 2018 年贝塔斯曼“全球化赢家”称号。事实上，若将 1990 年至 2016 年间的 GDP 增长和购买力考虑在内，斯洛文尼亚排名世界第二，仅次于瑞士。自 2016 年以来，斯洛文尼亚经济实现逆势反弹，而且未来保持向好趋势。

尽管国际商品贸易呈现下滑趋势，但斯洛文尼亚的经济增长依旧保持积极向好的预期，计划在 2020 年和 2021 年保持 2.5% 的增长率。有时日历也会帮上大忙。2020 年，因一些法定节假日刚好在周末，斯洛文尼亚将有六个额外的工作日，这将有助于确保经济增长不会放缓，并将再次保持高于欧盟 28 国的增长率。

斯洛文尼亚的经济增长率与欧盟平均增长率之比是衡量我们经济发展的一个重要指标。在 2008 年金融危机之前，斯洛文尼亚一直在迅速缩小与欧盟平均水平的发展差距；然而，随着危机不断加剧，这一差距再次开始扩大。近年来的巨大成功大大弥补了我们之前的损失。保持这种动态增长水平的一个动机，是我们有望在 2025 年达到欧盟平均水平。实现这一目标后，我们将着手迈向下一个阶段，即推动斯洛文尼亚进入欧洲前 25% 的行列。

这是一个雄心勃勃的目标。但是，只要我们巧妙地做好经济工作，并奉行良好的经济政策，我们就可以实现这一目标。我们希望到 2025 年，将目前每位员工的附加值（44,415 欧元，比 2007 年高出三分之一）提高到 60,000 欧元。各企业和机构在发展领域建立的良好合作关系、斯洛文尼亚企业良好的财务和资本状况（负债率低、良好地融入国际市场）、高素质劳动力以及生活水平不断提高而扩大的国内需求，将共同带动我们实现这一愿景。

斯洛文尼亚的公共债务也在加速减少，并将在两年内降至马斯特里赫特标准之下，使斯洛文尼亚能够在主要贸易伙伴中保持竞争力。然而，我们清楚地意识到，许多斯洛文尼亚企业依赖于汽车行业的欧洲合作伙伴，使得斯洛文尼亚在结构调整中主要面临个人流动性的风险。全球贸易中地缘战略关系的变化，已经导致全球经济增长放缓，这对斯洛文尼亚（一个明显以出口为导向的国家）的影响可能比不那么依赖出口的国家大得多。然而，即使面对这些情况，斯洛文尼亚在适应性、谋略和创新性等方面的优势，仍将使我们成为国际舞台上公认的、值得尊敬的合作伙伴。■



斯洛文尼亚工商会总经理
Sonja Šmuc

照片: Zare Modic

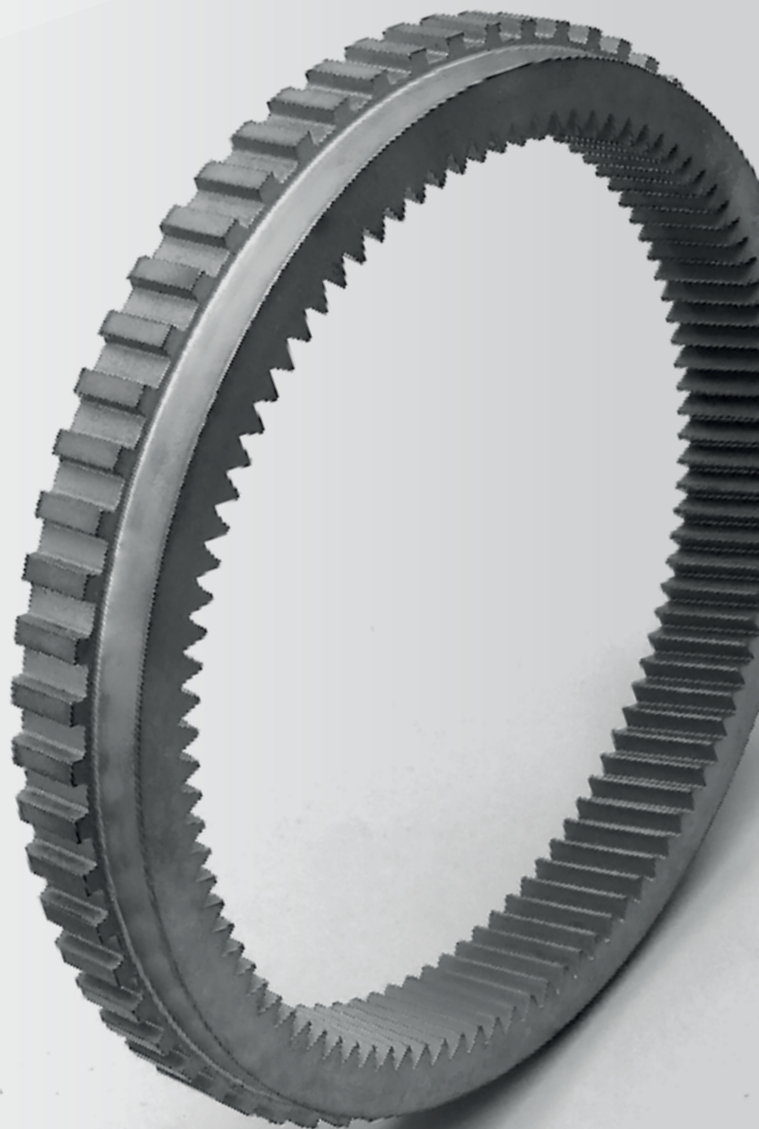


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斯洛文尼亚

正式名称: 斯洛文尼亚共和国

首都: 卢布尔雅娜

政府: 议会共和制

国家总统: Borut Pahor

首相: Janez Janša

当地政府: 共有 212 个市级行政单位, 其中 11 个为市; 12 个统计区, 分为两大区 - 西斯洛文尼亚与东斯洛文尼亚

面积: 20,273 平方公里

人口: 2,089,310 (2019 年 7 月 1 日)

区位: 与奥地利、意大利、匈牙利和克罗地亚相邻; 连通所有欧洲市场, 四通八达, 地理位置优越

货币: 欧元

人均 GDP (2019 年预计值): 23,050 欧元

2019 年预计增长值: 2.9%

2020 年预计增长值: 2.7%

(2019 年 12 月 CCIS 分析)

时区: 欧洲中部时间 (格林威治时间+1) 以及欧洲中部夏令时间 (格林威治时间+2)

夏季施行夏令时

官方语言: 斯洛文尼亚语以及 在意大利和 匈牙利少数民族区使用意大利语和匈牙利语。

来源: 斯洛文尼亚共和国统计署 (SURS)



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更多信息



照片: Depositphotos

主要商业数据

经商便利、贸易开放、教育和创新是一个国家成功的最有力支柱。

Bojan Ivanc, CFA, CAIA, 斯洛文尼亚工商会分析部首席经济学家

第一名

(190 个国家)
跨境贸易 (DB)

第一名

(141 个国家)
宏观经济稳定性(WEF)

第八名

(163 个国家) 全球和平
指数 (IEP)

第九名

(190 个国家)
破产处理 (DB)

第十二名

(63 个国家)
物价 (IMD)

第十五名

(28 个国家)
创新联盟记分牌(EC)

第三十二名

(63 个国家) IMD 世界数字
竞争力排名

第三十三名

(141 个国家)
基础设施 (WEF)

第三十五名

(167 个国家) 物流
绩效指数 (WB)

第二十三名

(190 个国家)
通电 (DB)

第二十六名

(141 个国家)
技能 (WEF)

第二十八名

(141 个国家)
创新能力 (WEF)

来源: 全球营商环境报告(世界银行), IMD - 世界竞争力排名, IMD - 世界数字竞争力排名,
WEF - 全球竞争力报告, 物流绩效指数 (世界银行), 创新联盟记分牌 (欧盟)



斯洛文尼亚与中国之间的贸易额在五年内增长 61%

2019 年来自中国的商品进口额增长 17%

Darja Močnik, GZS Analytics

中国对斯洛文尼亚的商品出口总额为 **12 亿欧元**。

GZS Analytics 的预估数据显示, 2019 年斯洛文尼亚与中国之间的商品和服务贸易额达 15 亿欧元, 同比增幅逾 10%。来自中国的商品进口额占总贸易额的四分之三以上。过去 5 年, 贸易总额(商品和服务)平均年增长率为 14%, 从 2015 年的 9.51 亿欧元增至 2019 年的 15 亿欧元。

2019 年, 对华贸易占斯洛文尼亚贸易总额的 2% (其中商品贸易占 94.5%, 服务贸易占 5.5%)。过去 4 年中, 斯洛文尼亚对华商品贸易逆差扩大, 2019 年达 9.07 亿欧元。另一方面, 斯洛文尼亚在 2019 年实现了 2800 万欧元的服务贸易顺差。

斯洛文尼亚第八大进口伙伴

2018 年, 中国商品对斯洛文尼亚的出口额增至 10 亿欧元, 预计 2019 年将超过 12 亿欧元, 比上年增长 17%, 比 5 年前增长 55%。2019 年, 汽车、汽车零部件和汽车仪表在商品进口中所占比例最高(占中国进口总值的 12%), 其次是医药产品(11%)、矿物燃料和石油(10%)、核反应堆、机械和机械装置(9%)和电气机械和设备(8%)。

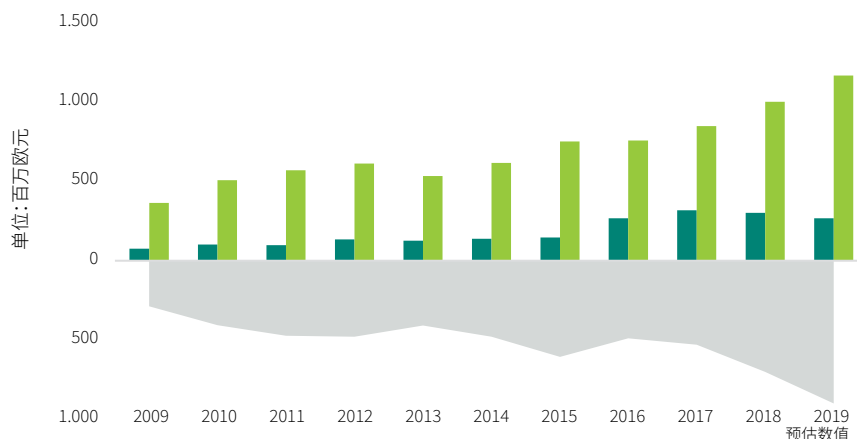
斯洛文尼亚对中国的商品出口额为 **2.7 亿欧元**。

在非欧盟国家中, 中国是斯洛文尼亚仅次于瑞士的第二大贸易伙伴。大约 5700 家斯洛文尼亚公司从中国进口, 其中大部分是微型和小型企业。从中国进口的大企业约有 160 家, 中型企业约有 400 家。个人从中国进口产品也很普遍, 曾一次或多次从中国进口产品的人数是上述数字的两倍。

对华商品贸易逆差

斯洛文尼亚 2019 年对华商品出口额为 2.7 亿欧元, 较 2018 年下降 11%, 较 5 年前下降 83%。斯洛文尼亚主要向中国出口汽车和零部件(占出口总额的 15%), 其次是医药产品(14%)、电机和零部件(11%)以及核反应堆、机械和机械装置(10%)。大约有 550 家斯洛文尼亚公司向中国出口。其中大多数是微型和小型企业, 大型企业仅有 75 家左右。

斯洛文尼亚与中国的商品贸易额(百万欧元)



来源: 斯洛文尼亚共和国统计局

共有 **5700** 家斯洛文尼亚公司从中国进口, **550** 家出口商与中国进行交易

对华服务贸易占贸易总额的 5.5%

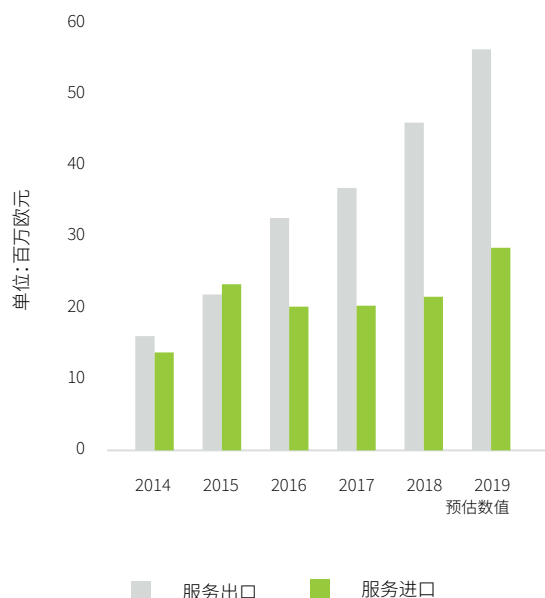
2019 年,中国与斯洛文尼亚的服务贸易额为 8500 万欧元,比上年增长四分之一,比 5 年前增长 87%。斯洛文尼亚的服务贸易顺差在过去 5 年中有所上升,2019 年达到 2800 万欧元。2018 年,中国在斯洛文尼亚服务出口国中排名第 29 位,在服务进口国中的排名为第 34 位。

2019 年,斯洛文尼亚向中国的服务出口增长 22%,达到 5600 万欧元。在服务出口总额中,旅游服务出口(中国游客在斯洛文尼亚的消费)占 40% 在,地位非常重要,运输服务和其他商业服务出口占 28%。

2019 年,从中国进口的服务增长了 32%,达到 2800 万欧元,在过去 5 年中增长了 22%。主要进口服务包括运输服务(56%)、其他商业服务(34%,主要包括广告和市场调查)和旅游服务。其中,斯洛文尼亚游客在中国的支出仅占服务进口总额的 1.8%。

2019 年,向中国出口的服务增长 **22%**,进口增长 **32%**。

对华服务贸易变动(百万欧元)



中国在斯洛文尼亚的投资相对较少

截至 2018 年底,中国投资者在斯洛文尼亚的直接投资总额(根据投资者所在国计算)为 440 万欧元(2017 年为 1030 万欧元),而资产净值总额为 210 万欧元。直接投资的统计数据显示,中国是斯洛文尼亚最重要的最终投资国。作为最终投资国,中国 2017 年向斯洛文尼亚进行的直接投资为 180 万欧元,2018 年达到 3.569 亿欧元。就最终投资国与直接合作伙伴国的重要性相比而言,来自中国的间接投资也取得了重大进展,主要是通过卢森堡分支机构进行的投资(3.43 亿欧元)。

2018 年,斯洛文尼亚在中国的直接投资总额为 5770 万欧元(比 2017 年的 4500 万欧元增长 28%),占斯洛文尼亚对外直接投资总额的 1%。这一比例前几年为 0.5% 至 0.8% 之间。

旅游服务(即中国游客在斯洛文尼亚的消费)是服务出口中最大组成部分。

中国在斯洛文尼亚投资力度最大的企业包括 Arctur Nova Gorica (电脑)、Tam Durabus (巴士生产商)、Hisense Gorenje Europe (家电生产商)、Fotona (光电器件)、Elaphe (推进技术) 以及 Acies Bio。

在过去两个季度，Adria Dom 已经公布了一些新开发产品，包括移动房屋、移动帐篷、模块化和浮动房屋，并且正在为 2020 年季准备一些新惊喜。



照片: Adria Dom

公司开发了一个智能计量平台“公平计量表”(Fair Meter)项目，使得公司于 2018 年连续第二次荣获斯洛文尼亚工商会 (GZS) 颁发的创新金奖。

斯洛文尼亚的出口商创下空前绝后的佳绩

2019 年 7 月，斯洛文尼亚创下前所未有的出口记录，主要得益于出口企业不断扩大并完善其产品和服务范围。

Nina Šprohar

70 多年来，Iskraemeco 一直在为遍布全球的能源公司提供优质的产品和服务，使高效的能源利用成为现实。

Iskraemeco 公平计量表设定能源领域新标杆

70 多年来，Iskraemeco 一直在为遍布全球的能源公司提供优质的产品和服务，使高效的能源利用成为现实。其主要市场位于欧洲、中东和非洲地区。公司现出口逾 80 个国家，最大的市场是德国、荷兰、埃及、奥地利、阿联酋和马其顿北部。

公司开发了一个智能计量平台“公平计量表”(Fair Meter)项目，使得公司于 2018 年连续第二次荣获斯洛文尼亚工商会 (GZS) 颁发的创新金奖。该解决方案基于将可持续发展融入公司商业模式和战略的理念。

然而，公司指出能源市场正面临着巨大的变革。“如今公用事业所采用的商业模式将发生翻天覆地的变化。公用事业已开始采用智能技术(智能电表、自动需求响应、电网集成分布式发电和微电网)。智能计量产生大量需要分析、处理和安全存储的数据，因此数据安全在现在和将来都是公用事业部门的一个重



照片: Iskraemeco



照片: TKK

TKK 是一家斯洛文尼亚制造商，生产密封剂、粘合剂、聚氨酯泡沫、工业喷雾和混凝土和砂浆添加剂，目前业务范围遍及 70 多个国家。

大问题。可持续性和循环性正成为重要议题，”该公司表示。

他们补充道，在我们的生活方式和经营方式方面，最重大的变化将是物联网 (IoT) 日益普及并发挥越来越重要的作用。“物联网致力改善商业模式，是设备互联的下一轮热潮，”Iskraemeco 解释道。该公司仍将继续在研发、生产、IT、智能计量解决方案、能源物联网和能源分析，以及拉丁美洲、非洲、亚太地区，尤其是欧洲地区进行投资。

TKK 未雨绸缪、蓄势待发

TKK 是一家斯洛文尼亚制造商，生产密封剂、粘合剂、聚氨酯泡沫、工业喷雾和混凝土和砂浆添加剂，目前业务范围遍及 70 多个国家，主要市场为意大利、德国、波斯尼亚、黑塞哥维那、西班牙和塞尔维亚。

“我们在克罗地亚、波斯尼亚和黑塞哥维那、塞尔维亚、保加利亚和俄罗斯设有五家子公司，并由母公司聘用销售代表在德国、意大利、奥地利、匈牙利、乌克兰、希腊、北马其顿、科索沃、黑山、罗马尼亚等国进行销售工作，最近扩展至伊朗。我们在捷克共和国、斯洛伐克、瑞士、阿尔巴尼亚、阿尔及利亚、利比亚和智利也有经销商，”公司解释道。

在销售不同品牌名称的产品时，区域经理受雇于公司总部，负责与西欧、北美和南美、中东和非洲地区以及亚洲的其它品牌开展业务。

鉴于该公司在各个市场的运营上存在巨大差异，很难预测其于 2020 年的业务发展。“在国内，我们预计会有数个重大投资项目，并预计目前商业和住宅地产建设将保持发展势头。就我们的主要市场而言，我们估计，虽然建筑业务可能略有下降，但仍有足够的空间让我们增长或扩大我们的市场份额。我们预计中东和非洲地区以及北美和南美的需求将增加，”他们补充道。

公司目前最关注的是通过增加投资、有机客户增长和新的销售项目来扩大销售网络和增强品牌建设。2017 年，公司开启了一个密集的投资周期，以扩大生产和储存能力并实现现代化，并对项目和设备进行改造大修。因此，公司将在 2017-2020 年期间拨款约 1100 万欧元，用于这些投资、建筑物的能源改造并进一步改善环境指标。

公司还开发了大量的新产品，包括混凝土和砂浆的 DIY 添加剂系列产品、优质粘合剂 (Fi-X.expert) 系列产品、防水隔热系列产品、彩色 MS 聚合物基混合密封剂系列产品、丙烯酸产品系列 (丙烯、丙烯 Profi、丙烯快速、丙烯透明、丙烯粗糙面涂漆)、高级有色硅酮系列产品 (Tekasil 彩色) 和一个全新的 TKK 花园和户外细分系列产品，称为 TKK 花园。

Adria Dom 开发未来移动房屋

Adria Dom 是一家发展迅速、专注于开发的公司，在过去的两个季度里，几乎在所有细分产品领域都发布了新的开发成果。“我们改进了我们的整个移动房屋系列，增加了更大版本、具有吸引力的“阁楼”模型，这是我们的移动帐篷“旅行”系列的一部分，还推出了全新的“亚得里亚海”系列。在北方市场，我们已经成功开始销售适合全年居住的“阿尔卑斯”模块化房屋。我们也开始销售浮动房屋。第一座已经在意大利建成，”该公司表示。

对于公司而言，产品开发贯穿全年，在这个过程中，产品升级和新产品开发是对市场调查结果、与客户沟通和监控趋势的快速响应。客户对公司的创新建议和发展非常满意。

公司正在为 2020 年推出多项全新产品。“我们将推出新的‘极光’移动房屋，这是一款介于‘阿尔卑斯’模块化住宅和标准移动家庭之间的产品。”“极光”主要针对需求旺盛的北方市场，其开发主要是

2017 年，公司开启了密集的投资周期 (1100 万欧元)，将于 2020 年完成。

“极光”移动房屋主要针对需求旺盛的北方市场，其开发主要是为了填补全年型住宅房屋系列产品的缺口。



照片: Adria Dom

为了填补全年型系列产品的缺口。“一个同等重要的项目正在发展未来型“凤凰”移动房屋的概念。该公司表示,这将在各个方面都具有创新性,该项目的指导原则是将综合型露台等模块化元素和创新的建筑细节以及由新材料制成的智能多功能家具结合起来。

正如他们所解释的,新产品符合各个市场的建筑标准,并结合了能源和建筑解决方案(现代地板布局智能解决方案)。“新技术和物联网(IoT)也正在将新概念引入连通、能源和传感器技术领域。”

公司致力于提供延长内燃机的使用寿命的环保型、有竞争力的产品。

一直到前不久,克罗地亚和意大利都一直是公司最重要的市场——甚至在两年前,这两个国家的销售额达到了 90%。然而,通过开发新产品,公司也开始瞄准其它市场,寻找新的目标群体,这一措施取得了巨大成功。其它市场的销售额不断增长,目前占总销售额的 38%。德国、荷兰、瑞典、丹麦和奥地利的销售额不断提高,该公司已进入法国市场,并在以色列安装了第一套移动住宅房屋。2019 年 9 月,该公司甚至在菲律宾搭建了他们第一批帐篷。

“作为一家稳定的、不断成长的公司,我们深感骄傲。我们已经连续 16 年在市场上取得成功,成为国内一家公认的重视和尊重员工并为员工提供成长机会的公司,”公司还表示,他们非常重视组织文化,并保持与员工沟通顺畅,让员工保持消息灵通,同时感受归属感。2018 年,公司收入为 3000 万欧元,利润为 230 万欧元。“2019 年,公司收入增长超过 20%,预计我们的净利润将大大高于去年。我们大大提高了每位员工的附加值,已经超过 50,000 欧元。高利润率确保了我们的资产在不承担额外借款的情况下保持增长,”公司总结道。

Hidria 解决方案将推动宝马和奔驰发展

Hidria 是世界领先的汽车和工业技术公司之一,其收入的 90% 以上来自出口。公司的业务遍及世界各地,主要市场包括德国、法国、意大利、美国、匈

利和中国。“除斯洛文尼亚外,我们还在德国、匈牙利和中国设有生产基地,并与美国 Orchid International 公司建立战略合作关系”,公司表示。

公司致力于提供延长内燃机的使用寿命的环保型、有竞争力的产品。“我们的国际获奖创新型柴油机冷启动系统使用 Optymus PSG 压力传感器,已运用于现代柴油机中,确保其符合环保清洁要求。同时开发了 48V 混合动力系统的关键部件,该系统采用了启动和发电机技术,能够在制动时储存能量,并通过电动机辅助加速。这些要素构成了最先进的技术,从根本上改善了柴油机的性能,降低了有害健康和环境的排放,”公司表示。

为了确保高品质生产制造我们生活中必需的高性能发动机的关键部件,Hidria 已经开发了一种全新的、有竞争力的创新流程,将叠片固定在转子和定子叠层上—此流程称作“Hidria 连结”。“利用该工艺流程,在制造转子和定子的几百次敲击过程中,将对于电机制造至关重要的金属电气薄片的整个表面有效地整合到冲压工具中。这一创新解决方案将于 2020 年首次纳入宝马和梅赛德斯汽车全新的启动发电机或“软混合动力”系统。之后,我们会迅速扩大,这对我们来说是一个重大的发展机遇,”Hidria 说。

所有这一切都需要加快对开发、高科技产量和设备的投资,最重要的是投资“我们的专业人员,他们是 Hidria 公司的核心和引擎”。2013 年至 2018 年期间,公司在新的高科技设备上投资超过 1 亿欧元,并在前期开发和开发活动中额外投资 5000 万欧元。“我们预计在未来五年内将进行更高水平的投资,”公司补充说。

尽管全球市场增长放缓,Hidria 凭借其创新性、竞争力和高品质仍在创建新项目。“我们已赢得世界上一些最重要的汽车和工业制造商的信任。”公司有信心:“预计 2019 年的销售额将与创纪录的 2018 年持平。预计 2020 年也将保持上行势头。”

Hidria 专注于全球汽车和工业技术领域。其主要市场包括德国、法国、意大利、美国、匈牙利和中国。



照片: Hidria

Argeta – 欧洲最流行的肉酱

食品加工企业 Droga Kolinska, 隶属于 Atlantic Grupa 集团, 生产并销售地区内一些顶级食品品牌产品。包括著名的 Argeta 肉酱、鱼酱和蔬菜酱、居家 Barcaffè 咖啡以及餐厅 Horeca 咖啡, 起泡软饮 Cockta 以及 Donat Mg 天然矿泉水。

“由 Atlantic Grupa 运营, Droga Kolinska 专注于识别、预测并共同创造消费者需求, 为消费者服务。我们卓越的销售业绩、品牌实力和令人羡慕的高市场份额是我们成功最好的见证。在我们的大多数市场上, 我们是同类公司的佼佼者,” 他们说。

事实上, 该公司的产品远销所有东南欧市场, 并占据领先的市场地位。在欧洲和世界其它地区的其他市场, 公司品牌主要出售于较小的世界食品商店和熟食店, 而 Argeta 和 Donat Mg 在全球有自己的专卖店, 成功销往全世界。“依据 Nielsen 市场调查公司调查, Argeta 是当前欧洲第一大肉酱品牌。在九大欧洲市场独占鳌头。就价值而言, 公司在奥地利和瑞士分别占有 36% 和 32% 的肉酱市场份额。我们要补充的是, 在世界各个角落几乎每秒钟都有四包 Argeta 酱料被打开,” 公司说。

作为一种产品和品牌, Donat Mg 具有完全不同的特色, 是消费者健康养生之选。产品远销 20 多个市场, 由于其药用特性, 主要通过药店等专卖店和网上销售形式。



照片: Droga Kolinska

Droga Kolinska 产品远销所有东南欧市场, 并占据领先的市场地位。他们的足迹从欧洲扩展至世界其它市场。



照片: Droga Kolinska

Donat Mg 可以追溯到 1908 年, 迄今已有 110 多年的历史。Cockta 成立于 1953 年, 迄今已有 67 年历史, 而 Argeta 创建于 1977 年。

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与全球翘楚同台竞争

凭借适当的技能发展、高水平的资质、专业知识、经验和投入，斯洛文尼亚公司通常被视为开发新产品平台的宝贵战略合作伙伴。

Andreja Šalamun

在欧洲，斯洛文尼亚是仅次于爱尔兰和捷克共和国的第三大工业发达国家，工业企业占国内生产总值 (GDP) 的近四分之一，其出口正在稳步增长。根据国家统计局 (SURS) 的数据，2018 年，约有 18,000 家公司的雇员规模超过 20,000 人，其收入超过 300 亿欧元，约占斯洛文尼亚经济总收入的三分之一，占斯洛文尼亚商品出口额的一半以上。2018 年，斯洛文尼亚工业公司的产品和服务销售额近 260 亿欧元，较 2017 年增长 9.4%。鉴于这些公司对斯洛文尼亚经济的乘数效应，工业对斯洛文尼亚国民经济的重要性不言而喻。

在所有私营部门研发、创新和发展投资中，工业也占五分之四。2018 年，工业企业每位员工的平均附加值为 45,000 欧元。共有 35,000 名员工在每名员工创造超过 60,000 欧元附加值的公司工作，其工业产品总出口额超过 100 亿欧元。排名前 100 的斯洛文尼亚公司创造了斯洛文尼亚出口总额的一半以上。

我们访问了数位斯洛文尼亚最成功公司的首席执行官们，共同探讨让斯洛文尼亚的工业企业能够与世界顶级企业并肩而立的背后故事。

Photo: Barbara Reya



Mirko Strašek, CEO, KLS Ljubno:

“在过去几年中，斯洛文尼亚工业取得了令人鼓舞的增长和进步，因为我们认识到，我们的公司必须做好自己的工作，保持足够的增长水平和高于平均水平的业绩，才能在众多竞争中存活下来。在我看来，同样重要的是认识到，为了取得成功，斯洛文尼亚公司必须提高其在全球市场上的竞争力，并与世界上顶级公司竞争。我们拥有优秀的人力资源，他们虚心学习、锐意进取并设定高远目标。近二十年来，斯洛文尼亚涌现了一大批高素质的中小企业，为斯洛文尼亚工业的发展、壮大和进步提供了优质的支持。我还要指出的是，斯洛文尼亚媒体和非政府组织在促进斯洛文尼亚工业公司的增长和进步方面发挥着非常积极的作用。”

Boštjan Šifrar, CEO, SIBO G.:

“成功是许多因素相互影响的结果。这在经济和社会环境日新月异、经常发生程序性变化的行业中尤其如此。然而，我们可以抓住人力资源优势带来的绝佳机会。在 SIBO G.，我们相信斯洛文尼亚工业的成功是多种因素综合作用的结果。良好的教育体系促使国民建立成功事业，这也带来了企业增长。我们比邻欧洲最强大市场，市场环境催人奋进，这是我们额外的优势；斯洛文尼亚工业发展的无限可能实际掌控在我们手中。尽管我们有非常好的成功机会，但斯洛文尼亚的商业环境给斯洛文尼亚工业带来了巨大的挑战。例如，欧洲所有讲德语的国家和波兰作为全球企业最显著的制造中心，拥有具有吸引力的营商环境和对企业有利的税率，而在斯洛文尼亚，仅劳动力成本在过去 13 年就上升了近 80%。但我们公司的生产力一直受工资增长的影响，工资收入从每名员工 40,000 欧元增长到 75,000 欧元。尽管如此，我们对斯洛文尼亚的商业环境感到满意，但如果我们希望继续取得进展，我们必须扩展到新的国家，从而缩短全球和本地客户的交货时间。”



Photo: SIBO G

Matjaž Čemažar, CEO, Domel Holding:

“斯洛文尼亚工业的成功在很大程度上取决于创新解决方案，让以发展为导向的公司能够在全球市场上成功营销。尽管普遍认为斯洛文尼亚缺乏家喻户晓的大品牌，但在全球范围内，许多斯洛文尼亚公司在其市场细分市场中处于领先地位。凭借适当的技能发展、高水平的资质、专业知识、经验和投入，斯洛文尼亚公司通常被视为开发新产品平台的宝贵战略合作伙伴，尤其是在跨组织市场层面。斯洛文尼亚出口商面临着来自东欧和东南欧邻国的非常激烈的竞争，特别对比劳动力成本较低的国家时，因此，认识到成本效益、持续改进和生产力增长显得尤为重要。流程自动化和运用机器人的技术程序已经成为标准程序，我们对数字化带来的流程变化的认识逐步提升，我们有越来越多的先进公司展示未来工厂的元素。”



Photo: Žare Modic



Photo: Livar

Rok Rozman, CEO, Livar:

“灵活性和快速适应商业环境变化的能力是斯洛文尼亚工业的主要竞争优势，确保其在细分市场稳操胜券。相对较小的国内市场需要明确瞄准出口方向，从而在竞争激烈的国际市场上保持不败。在这种环境下，要想长期成功运作，关键在于创新方法，不断改进以实现最佳运作，并不断发展。在这方面，增加专业人员投资，促进其有计划发展是斯洛文尼亚工业今后能够保持其竞争地位的一个关键先决条件。”

Andrej Kolmanič, CEO, Impol 2000:

“斯洛文尼亚工业的主要优势是高水平的从业人员资格和培训，这得益于普通民众的高水平教育、良好的商业道德和适应环境的意愿。作为一个小国，我们非常有能力迅速适应环境，寻找最佳解决方案。这种思维方式已经在商业中得到了应用，灵活性、创新性和适应性的价值观是许多斯洛文尼亚工业公司的组织文化的一部分。同时，斯洛文尼亚在中欧的优越地理位置和追溯到 19 世纪初的工业传统，这无疑也为斯洛文尼亚工业的发展做出了贡献，这也让其历史可追溯到 1825 年的 Impol Group 集团受益匪浅。数十年来，斯洛文尼亚工业企业积累了大量的专业知识，我们必须知道如何充分利用这些知识。为了确保我们自己有一个美好的未来，我们必须及时赶上并尽快适应工业 4.0 浪潮，从而打造显著的优势，战胜反应较慢的竞争对手。”



Photo: Impol

我们的产品在欧洲市场广受赞誉, 在中国也声誉卓著

Drago Lemut 先生是 Le-Tehnika 企业主, 深谙欧洲市场和中国市场。他表示由于 Le-Tehnika 产品在欧洲市场广受赞誉, 因此在中国市场也备受追捧。

Ana Vučina Vršnak

自 1989 年以来, Le-Tehnika 已从一家只有一名员工和一款产品的小企业成长为一家跨国公司。您是如何在全球市场, 尤其是中国市场取得成功的? 是的, 自 1989 年以来, Le-Tehnika 已从一家只有一名员工也就一款电动卷发棒产品的小公司, 成长为一家拥有四大产品线或部门且客户遍及全球的跨国公司。由于我们正在转向开拓全球市场, 因此关闭了我们在欧洲的产品线, 转而利用多种不同策略, 将重点直接放在遍布世界各地的终端客户身上。我们是第一家涉足中国市场的斯洛文尼亚公司, 我们目前正与另外两家斯洛文尼亚公司 Iskra Zaščite 和 Iskra Mehanizmi 合作共同耕耘这片广阔市场。这使得我们三家公司能够分担进入新市场的初始成本, 而且随后, 我们还需要考虑很多重要事项。我与我的儿子一起选择了建厂地点, 并测试了当地雇员的英文水平, 对当地的经商灵活性颇感惊喜, 并初步了解有哪些我们可以选择招募的人才, 最优物流距离等等现实问题。随着时间推移, 我们也将为我们的产品在中国申请专利, 同时流程控制也是很重要的因素。

贵公司的产品范围覆盖了广泛应用于道路和工业领域的电话、液压、气动、低温和 LED 照明等众多产品。贵公司产品的目标客户群体是什么? 除电话、液压和低温产品外, 我们还有 LED 照明等应用于道路和工业领域的产品, 隶属于我们已申请专利的 Luxtella 品牌。尽管 LED 灯是最近推出的新品, 但已在我们的业务中占据了相当大的比重。我们将这些产品销售给各行各业的终端客户, 例如市政部门、公司客户和代理商等。我们与客户合作多年, 熟悉其需求, 这些产品都是根据客户需求完全定制。

我想重点介绍一下我们的低温领域产品, 这些应用于低温领域 (约 -200 °C) 的特定特殊产品 - 包括有比人小指还小的迷你冷却器, 专门用于特殊用途, 例如集成到测试或控制装置中。我们另外还有用于夜视 (红外) 摄像头的散热装置。

具体来说, 您会如何与客户和供应商合作? 与现有客户开发某种产品一般会耗时多久?

我们在斯洛文尼亚开发我们的各种电话产品, 然后与我们在中国的合作伙伴合作生产一些半成品。之后我们在斯洛文尼亚利用这些半成品生产最终产品。实际开发耗时取决于产品的复杂程度。有可能需要数月。

贵公司对负责开发新产品新技术的研发部门十分重视。有哪些最近开发成果是您特别感到满意的?

在 LED 照明灯具方面, 我们尤其满意的是一些全新的、创新产品, 例如一些能够直接在灯柱上进行维修的灯具产品。而低温产品方面, 我们已在国外斩获多项专利, 而且我们也与斯洛文尼亚最高学府卢布尔雅那大学开展了合作项目, 此外还与多家国内外公司, 在新产品的生产方面开展了合作。

在中国市场以及整个亚洲市场, 您面临哪些挑战? 您在这些市场有哪些经验可以和我们分享?

中国市场是一个很特别的市场。他们十分热切地了解技术复杂度高的产品, 例如低温领域产品。同时, 中国 LED 照明灯具市场竞争激烈, 当地价格低廉, 我们很难与他们展开价格竞争。

但是, 如果我们把亚洲市场作为一个整体来考虑的话, 中等技术复杂度产品的细分市场就截然不同了 - 实际上, 这是一个充满希望的市场。在远东, 就像其他地方一样, 客户们都希望买到来自于欧盟的产品。而斯洛文尼亚正是欧盟一员, 这给我们在市场渗透方面带来了很大的优势。我们的产品已获得各种欧盟认证, 而且质量也属顶级。所以很多远东国家市场的大门向我们敞开, 例如马来西亚、越南、孟加拉国和菲律宾等。

在于中国开展合作方面, 斯洛文尼亚公司和斯洛文尼亚技术有哪些优势?

准确来说就是: 我们的产品在技术要求严格的欧盟市场广受赞誉, 已获得了欧盟认证, 同时也是欧盟市场上的标杆产品。在我看来, 这些是斯洛文尼亚产品的主要竞争力。作为一家斯洛文尼亚制造商, 我们具有快速、灵活且技术精湛的优势。斯洛文尼亚经济的优势在于其创新能力、国际贸易经验、发展历史以及在欧盟市场的销售经验。



照片: Le-Tehnika



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.



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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.

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Their medical laser devices help to clear and restore your vision

Optotek develops and manufactures innovative ophthalmic laser systems that are used primarily for secondary cataract surgery, iridotomy, and SLT (selective laser trabeculoplasty for the treatment of open angle glaucoma). The company is celebrating 30 years of operation this year.

Optotek has been actively present in China for ten years, where it markets its products under Optotek Medical brand. Through cooperation with a local partner, the company has installed and maintains a large number of ophthalmic laser systems from the OptoYag&SLT family of medical devices in mainland China, Taiwan R.O.C., and Hong Kong S.A.R.

World leader in ophthalmic diode-pumped solid-state lasers

Optotek offers only cutting-edge technological solutions, which enables them to thrive in the highly competitive Chinese market. The company is currently the global leader in the development and application of diode-pumped solid-state lasers in ophthalmic products used for SLT (selective laser trabeculoplasty). They are very proud of the first registered system to use this evolution

of laser technology, OptoSLT Nano. This innovative technological application is characterized by very high pulse-to-pulse energy stability, which ensures greater treatment safety for the patient. In the future, Optotek aims to develop the technology for use in other applications.

In-house research and development, manufacture, and marketing

Optotek encompasses in-house development, production, and marketing both of its own brand of laser systems and of OEM lineup.

"We further manufacture OEM articulated arms, which are opto-mechanical sub-assemblies for products with various applications in surgery, dentistry, dermal medicine, industry, restoration, to name a few. All optical, mechanical, and software solutions are developed and manufactured for use in our products. This enables us to maintain a high level of quality and at the same time, offer a range of highly competitive products. We are proud to cooperate in research projects with various Slovenian scientific institutions, such as the University of Ljubljana, Ljubljana University Medical Centre and the Jožef Stefan Institute," says



Optotek. Cooperative work with academic and research institutions add significantly to the company's technological excellence.

Paving the way for future success

The success of Optotek in the Chinese market is a result of its ability to combine high-quality devices with competitive sales policy.

Local business performance can also be attributed to great extent to its partner company Clinico Inc., a major distributor of various ophthalmic equipment, with considerable knowledge of the industry. It has enjoyed solid sales of Optotek's products, thanks to the ability to bring the right strategies to the market. Together they are currently in the process of registration renewal for Optotek's products in the Chinese territory, which will ensure steady business development and continuous market share growth for years to come.

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Empowering Slovenian Business: Green. Creative. Smart.

In 2019, SPIRIT Slovenia launched an international communications campaign called Green. Creative. Smart. under the national brand I feel Slovenia.

Ana Vučina Vršnak

The Slovenian public agency SPIRIT Slovenia is an entrepreneur-friendly institution for both potential and existing investors, providing assistance to businesses during their start-up, growth and development phases. "In designing our services portfolio, we monitor the needs of the economy, follow the global trends, and tailor support services for the entrepreneurs of tomorrow. We are working towards establishing a single point of information with fast and transparent compilation of support activities for companies. This will help them increase their work in the innovation area, improve their international competitiveness, and expand globally," said Ajda Cuderman, Director of SPIRIT Slovenia.



Cuderman strives for a win-win situation for both Slovenian and foreign investors who recognise Slovenia's highly educated and productive workforce as well as the country's advantageous geostrategic location. "This is confirmed by the fact that Slovenia doubled its exports and FDI stock in the last 10 years," added Cuderman.

The **Green. Creative. Smart.** campaign highlights the key competitive advantages of the Slovenian economy in the fields of environmental technologies, robotics, mobility, digitisation, development and research, and the creative industries.

The Green. Creative. Smart. campaign highlights the key competitive advantages of the Slovenian economy in the fields of environmental technologies, robotics, mobility, digitisation, development and research, and the creative industries.

Slovenia is known for its green landscape, however, its economy is green as well. It is focused on sustainability, green technologies, corporate social responsibility, and is committed to reducing the carbon footprint and caring for the natural and social environment.

In addition, the Slovenian economy is creative. It recognizes and promotes human talent and the creativity of professionals who create value added in companies.

The Slovenian economy is also smart, with numerous efficient, globally recognised high-tech solutions, services and products that help companies gain a competitive edge on the global market.

Through the Green. Creative. Smart. campaign, SPIRIT Slovenia aims to help companies enter global value chains and make it easier for them to find foreign business partners.

The impact of the promotion of the Slovenian economy abroad is being enhanced with the help of other partners in the economic ecosystem, including the Ministry of Economic Development and Technology; Slovenia's business points system (SPOT); the Ministry of Foreign Affairs with its network of diplomatic missions and consular posts abroad; the Government Communication Office; regional chambers of commerce and the Chamber of Commerce and Industry of Slovenia; business associations, etc.

Ministry of Economic Development and Technology Supports R&D, Digitalisation and Internationalisation

A stable business environment means that the economy is healthy and that operations can be successful.

The Slovenian economy has numerous key competitive advantages in the fields of environmental technologies, robotics, mobility, digitisation, development and research, and the creative industries.

More about the Green.Creative.Smart. campaign



The government's job is first of all to provide a stable, predictable and competitive business and investment environment, and a supportive environment for companies.

The government allocated nearly 1 billion euros from 2016-2018 to implement the Smart Specialisation (S4) Strategy.

One of the main challenges for the Slovenian foreign ministry in 2020 will be to promote effective economic diplomacy.

Slovenia's economic diplomacy team analyses bilateral economic cooperation with other countries and develops proposals for expanding cooperation.

"Therefore the government's job is first of all to provide a stable, predictable and competitive business and investment environment, and a supportive environment for companies," says Slovenian Minister of Economic Development and Technology Zdravko Počivalšek.

The stability of the economy is affected by several factors: from legislative changes and changes in consumer needs to technological innovations that determine who can keep up with the changes and how well. The Slovenian Ministry of Economic Development and Technology is therefore carrying out several measures designed to increase competitiveness. It is focusing on support for research and development and promoting innovative organisations, and supporting digitalisation and internationalisation, i.e. increasing exports.

Investments in research, development and innovation are a key factor in this area. From 2016-2018, the Smart Specialisation (S4) Strategy was supported by measures with a total value of more than EUR 939 million for R&D projects, development of corporate skills and innovation potentials, pilot/demonstration projects, support for development innovation partnerships, etc.

The ministry developed the Digitalisation and Digital Transformation Programme in order to help firms carry out the digital transformation of their operations.



Photo: Barbara Reya

"The year 2020 brings the additional challenge of providing as stable a business environment as possible for the Slovenian economy despite a globally changing political and economic situation. An environment that will allow for further development and growth," says Slovenian Minister of Economic Development and Technology Zdravko Počivalšek.

A country's competitiveness also depends on its global positioning and its economy, therefore the economics ministry encourages internationalisation and supports the efforts of Slovenian firms on foreign markets, participation in trade fairs, market research, partnerships, e-business, new business models for easier inclusion in global value chains, trademarks

and other activities through which we respond to the specific needs of companies.

Experienced and Responsive Team at the Slovenian Foreign Ministry

Slovenian economic diplomacy under the aegis of the foreign ministry includes 138 honorary consuls abroad, 56 diplomatic missions and consular posts and 23 economic advisers.



Photo: Ministry of Foreign Affairs

The main challenges of the Slovenian Ministry of Foreign Affairs in 2020 will be related to the promotion of the effective economic diplomacy, the encouragement of the inflow of foreign direct investment and the protection of the Slovenian investments abroad.

The team analyses bilateral economic cooperation with other countries and develops proposals for expanding cooperation, for which it also establishes appropriate legal bases (treaties, memorandums). It also promotes the internationalisation of the Slovenian economy, with the objective of increasing Slovenian exports and achieving increased geographic diversification, and on the other hand it promotes inflows of foreign direct investment into Slovenia.

The economic advisers primarily help to establish contacts with institutions – ministries, other state institutions, chambers of commerce, business associations, and media at the national and regional levels, and to connect them with the corresponding institutions in Slovenia.

We should also mention B2D (Business to Diplomacy), where Slovenian diplomats present Slovenian economic operators to the diplomatic community in Slovenia. ■

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SŽ-Tovorni promet is expanding both sales and production activities to the markets of Central and Southeast Europe, and particularly to the countries of the former pan-European Corridor X (the planned Corridor RFC 10).

Photo: SŽ-Tovorni promet

Slovenia Investing in New Rail Links and Modernising its Logistics Network

Still a great deal of potential for logistics development due to growing trade between Asia and Europe.

Andreja Šalamun

Those familiar with the situation agree that Slovenia is highly competitive in logistics, mainly due to the fact that it sits at the crossroads of two major European routes (European Transport Corridors V and X). Corridor V leads from Lisbon via Barcelona to Ljubljana and Kiev, and connects Southern, Central and Eastern Europe, while Corridor X connects Central and Southeast Europe with Asia and runs from Munich via Jesenice and Ljubljana to Belgrade and Istanbul.

“This competitiveness is reflected above all in servicing goods flows between Asia and Europe via the port in Koper and goods flows between Western and Central Europe and the countries of the Western

Balkans,” says Intereuropa CEO Ernest Gortan. He finds that the first relation in particular has exceptional potential due to the immense flow of goods between Asia and Europe. “The main obstacle to the exploitation of that potential is the need for additional rail and storage infrastructure in Slovenia,” says Gortan.

At Pošta Slovenije they see that Slovenia is an important meeting point between the north, south, east and west, which in their opinion is insufficiently exploited. “The main reason is the transport connections, i.e. the delay in the construction of the second track on the Divača-Koper line,” say sources at Pošta Slovenije, who add that Slovenia also lacks spatial

Slovenia sits at the crossroads of two major European routes – European Transport Corridors V and X.

SŽ-Tovorni promet has taken on the role of the integrator of rail transporters in the area of Southeast Europe.

The Sava Express from Ljubljana to Belgrade is a regular route that connects goods flows from Western and Central Europe with transport flows through Serbia.

The Port of Koper is planning to build on its already satisfactory market share in the countries of Central Europe, and is increasing its presence in southern Germany. They are also looking towards Asia.

The core activities of the Port of Koper are port and logistics services, but as the port operator it also oversees the connecting of all of the stakeholders in the logistics chain.

capacities in the area of logistics. Sources at the Port of Koper also state that we are currently lagging behind in the area of rail connections. "However, we have to admit that in the last few years Slovenia has invested substantially in new rail connections and the modernisation of the entire network," they say.

The Second Track on the Divača-Koper Line Has to Be Built as Soon as Possible

According to sources at SŽ-Tovorni promet, Slovenian Railways' freight subsidiary, the efforts of the logistics companies, which are able to compete on an equal footing with foreign firms, are not enough to take full advantage of Slovenia's potential for the development of logistics. "The most important thing is to create a modern, state-owned transport infrastructure. In the area of rail transport, the second track between Divača and Koper and the modernisation of at least the main transport axis, which is also partially included in European Corridors RFC 5 and RFC 6, have to be completed as quickly as possible" they say, and add that the neighbouring countries are rapidly upgrading and modernising their rail infrastructures, "which creates the danger of the long-term re-direction of goods flows. However, the state, like many other European countries, could implement appropriate financial and other measures in order to support combined transport and the transport of individual wagons." Sources at SŽ-Tovorni promet state that this would put rail transport in Slovenia on an equal economic footing with goods transporters using other types of transport and with rail transporters in other European countries.

Hoping to Revive the Transport Route Through the Countries of Former Yugoslavia

SŽ-Tovorni promet has taken on the role of the integrator of rail transporters in the area of Southeast Europe. "In 2018, at our initiative and in cooperation with the Croatian and Serbian railways, we launched a new product called the Sava Express, which runs from Ljubljana to Belgrade. This is a regular route that connects goods flows from Western and Central Europe with transport flows through Serbia," they state. They note that this product is an integrated

solution that includes all necessary handling, regular deliveries and flexibility of schedule.

"This is an important step towards the revival of the transport route through the countries of former Yugoslavia, which carried nearly 12 million tonnes of freight every year before 1990, while today this figure is less than four million. The share of goods transported by rail in the region is between 15 and 20%, which means there is a lot of potential," say sources at SŽ-Tovorni promet, which provides integrated transport and logistics services using standard rail transport (transport of wagons with different types of goods, tankers, car transport trains, hazardous goods transport, etc.) and combined transport (containers, exchangeable containers, lorries, etc.). In both Slovenia and elsewhere in Europe they offer organisation and provision of door-to-door transport services, including road delivery to the final recipient and additional services. "We are also expanding our activities abroad. In addition to Slovenia we also transport goods as an independent operator in Austria and Croatia."

Intereuropa Upgrades Warehouse Capacities and Operating Technology

Intereuropa has recently upgraded their storage capacities and operating technology for several customers, thereby providing them with easier access to new markets. "We invest a great deal in ensuring the safety of the goods and information of operations, and through IT connections throughout the entire chain we offer our customers faster and more reliable services, and in particular real-time information on the status of the goods," says Gortan. He adds that Intereuropa offers integrated logistics services via its three areas of operation (land transport, logistics and intercontinental transport), and that it can meet all needs for logistics services for all types of goods and for any destination.

Port of Koper in the Middle of Investment Cycle

The Port of Koper is in the middle of an investment cycle in which they are expanding their capacities. "At the moment we are working on extending the first pier, i.e. the shoreline at the container terminal, and we will soon begin construction of the parking garage. With regard to vehicles we should also mention the dedicated berth in the third basin and the construction of additional rail lines for the car terminal," state sources at the Port of Koper, whose core activities are port and logistics services, but which as the port operator also oversees the connecting of all of the stakeholders in the logistics chain. "Customers nowadays are looking for integrated solutions for moving goods from point A to point B, i.e. a competitive solution for the maritime and overland parts of the transport route."



Photo: Pošta Slovenije

Pošta Slovenije Now Using Robot

In 2018, Pošta Slovenije installed a EUR 14.7 million parcel sorter at the postal logistics centre in Ljubljana, which is one of their largest investments in the recent period. They say that they kept up with the state-of-the-art technology and that this investment significantly improved their intralogistic parcel distribution processes, as they have expanded their processing capacities. Last year they also installed a third production line for machine sorting of unaddressed direct mail (promotional mail) and at the same time introduced a new palletising line with a robot and automatic wrapping of pallets, which means that their first robot is now part of their work process. They have introduced a new online and mobile application which allows recipients to choose an alternative delivery location and time during the shipping procedure.

In the area of next-generation delivery they have begun working with the start-up company Locodels, which offers extremely fast and intra-city express delivery of products purchased online according to the 'sharing economy' model. The essence of the business model is the combining of delivery orders with automatic optimisation through a delivery platform. Sources at Pošta Slovenije say that standard postal services are in decline worldwide, and therefore they are developing more advanced services that are competitive in the wider region, and not just in Slovenia. "The key growth areas are parcel delivery, logistics and information services, while in addition to standard postal services we are also offering more complex individual solutions that provide complete supply chains in the area of parcel logistics, as well as effective IT solutions."

Looking for New Partners

Pošta Slovenije wants to increase its presence in the area of parcel delivery and logistics services in the Adriatic region and the markets of Southeast Europe,

where it is already present in the form of bilateral agreements and through its subsidiary PS Logistika. "The goal is to become one of the most important providers of parcel delivery and logistics services on the individual regional markets."

At the Port of Koper they are constantly searching for opportunities on the market and are targeting both shipping and logistics companies and the owners of the goods. "We have already achieved a satisfactory market share in the countries of Central Europe, which we are intending to increase, and we are also increasing our presence on markets on which we have a smaller market share, such as southern Germany. On the other hand there are the Asian markets, where we also see opportunities for expansion," they state.

"We want to grow and to meet the needs of both our existing and new customers. We are capable of offering integrated logistics services," says Gortan of Intereuropa. He says that they have subsidiaries on the markets of the Western Balkans, and cover other European and global markets via their business partners.

Expansion is also planned at SŽ-Tovorni promet, where they will be expanding both sales and production activities to the markets of Central and Southeast Europe, and particularly to the countries of the former pan-European Corridor X (the planned Corridor RFC 10). They will be trying to increase their presence on key markets in order to obtain access to customers and manage goods flows. "This primarily refers to Austria, Italy, the Czech Republic, Slovakia, Poland, Hungary, Croatia, Serbia, Romania and Bulgaria," say company sources, who add that they will be cooperating with existing and new partners. "In cases where it makes sense and when there is demand on the market, we will also provide transport services ourselves using our own stock, without involving foreign railway companies."

Sources at Pošta Slovenije say that standard postal services are in decline worldwide, and therefore they are developing more advanced services that are competitive in the wider region, and not just in Slovenia.



Photo: Intereuropa

Intereuropa has subsidiaries on the markets of the Western Balkans, and covers other European and global markets via their business partners.

Intereuropa invests a great deal in ensuring the safety of the goods it carries and in the informatisation of operations.

Trends in Logistics

Larger Ships, More Online Trade and Increased Rail Capacity

One of the most significant trends is the digitalisation of the logistics industry, which means faster processes, lower costs in the transport chain and therefore increased competitiveness, say sources at SŽ-Tovorni promet. They say that the introduction of standardised rail traffic management systems at the European level (ERTMS/ETCS) will also bring major changes. "This will mean increased capacity of the existing lines (more trains at the same time) and will additionally stimulate cross-border rail transport. In the area of production and sales we will have to react appropriately to the increased demand for transport and to the increasing pressures from competing

transport methods, and this will require better responsiveness and custom tailoring solutions to the needs of individual customers and markets," say company sources.

Shipping Companies Facing Increasing Challenges

"Logistics depends greatly on the global economic situation, and therefore it is not immune to economic slowdowns," say sources at the Port of Koper. They add that e.g. shipping companies are facing numerous challenges, such as International Maritime Organisation (IMO) regulations on reduction of emissions and the use of cleaner fuels, and increasingly large container ships that shipping companies have to fill, and the

fact that ports also have to follow and adapt their infrastructure to developments in the shipping industry.

Lack of Manpower in Postal Services and Logistics

Numerous trends are indicating that automation, robotisation and digitalisation are the main priorities at postal logistics companies, and the postal logistics field is also facing an increasing lack of workforce, while at the same time the field can also take advantage of technological advances in advanced robotics in warehousing, analytics for transport and warehousing, autonomous transport and delivery, the Internet of Things and smart sensors, and virtual and enhanced reality, according to sources at Pošta Slovenije.



Photo: Pošta Slovenije

Pošta Slovenije sees the country as an important meeting point between the north, south, east and west, which could be much better exploited.

SŽ-Tovorni promet: Expecting an Exceptionally Challenging Business Year

SŽ-Tovorni promet is expecting 2020 to be an exceptionally difficult business year. "Economic growth is slowing, and negative trends are already appearing in some important segments, for instance the car industry." They are also expecting their competitive position to suffer with the entry of new railway companies onto the Slovenian market, and that the numerous construction and maintenance works on the public rail infrastructure will have a negative effect on their work and reduce the quality of their transport services. "Despite these negative factors, in 2020 we are planning to maintain the quantities of goods carried and work performed at the 2019 level and to achieve profitability. We will consolidate our role as an important regional carrier and operator, and we will expand our capacities through the gradual updating of our rolling stock and other equipment, and our information system," say company sources.

Intereuropa is not yet able to speak about concrete numbers they will achieve in 2020, but according to CEO Gortan, their strategy up to 2022 foresees growth in all areas of operations and on the majority of markets, and particularly in products with high value added. "In order to provide competitive logistics services your employees also need to have the right know-how, skills and motivation, excellent IT support, and the company's operations have to be financially stable", says Gortan.

Despite the slowdown of the global economy, forecasts indicate the growth of online trade, which is the main driver of the logistics industry.

Pošta Slovenije Enjoying Growth of Online Sales

Despite the slowdown in the global economy, forecasts for the growth of online trade, both national and cross-border, are positive, and this growth is the primary driver for the logistics field, which the people at Pošta Slovenije are aware of. They say that in recent years postal operators have had to deal with various crucial sector-specific factors impacting operations, such as the decline of letter mail (forecast to reach five percent globally by 2025). The growth of e-trade has brought about growth in parcel quantities, but also pressures to optimise networks, lower costs and raise prices.

"According to the consulting firm Accenture, revenues/parcel have decreased for many operators in recent years, as much as 5.4% for FedEx, 3.3% for Poste Italiane, and 1.7% for La Poste. E-trade has also brought about the growth of logistics services, but this is

accompanied by pressures to develop and expand logistics networks," say sources at Pošta Slovenije. Operations are also being affected by increasingly demanding consumers – a full 70% of whom for example expect free delivery of goods from online retailers, and they are also expanding the categories that they purchase online, e.g. furniture and food. The competition is also continuously growing and the online retailer market is becoming consolidated – a full 40% of online sales on seven of the ten key markets take place on portals operated by Amazon, Alibaba and JD.com, according to sources at Pošta Slovenije. They also point out the costs for postal operators. "Labour costs for postal operators usually amount to between 50 and 60% of all costs and are often 20 to 40% higher than for competitors that do not have trade unions (e.g. DPD or Hermes in Europe), as postal operators' wage policies and HR models are less flexible, which lowers productivity. Similarly,

Fewer Postal and Payment Services, More Logistics

At Pošta Slovenije, they find that the volume of postal and payment services has been declining in recent years, while the structure of such business is also changing due to the migration to e-operations, legislative changes, changing customer habits and competition on the postal and financial services market. They explain that other postal operators in the EU and around the world are also experiencing similar trends and that they are recording growth in logistics services, parcel delivery and express mail services as a result of market growth (particularly online sales) and sales activities. Therefore they are upgrading their existing services in this area and developing new services, and following global trends, good practices and user needs. They are also planning new business in the area of logistics services (warehouse services, supply chains, transport, distribution, etc.) and are focusing additional development activities on expanding onto new markets and new logistics segments. The group's key projects are therefore directed towards optimisation of the network, informatisation of operations, upgrading the range of services and automation and digitalisation of operations in order to increase efficiency, and their applications will also be adapted for use on mobile devices. Among other things they will also be introducing "a network of smart parcel lockers, which in the future will make it possible for all parcels to be delivered directly to the addressee at the selected address." ■

postal operators are often among the largest employers in the country, which means increased public exposure when changes are needed, regulations in the area of universal service dictate a wide network of branch offices and frequent delivery, and in addition the price is regulated." They also note the lack of digital literacy among postal operators, who are lagging behind their online competitors in this area.

"Logistics is an activity that is on the one hand exceptionally important to the successful sale of goods by producers and traders, but on the other hand represents a large percentage of the cost in the final price of the goods," says Intereuropa CEO Ernest Gortan. "It is a continuous challenge to find a compromise between the demand for the constant availability of goods and providing lower costs of logistics along with changing conditions on the market and the risks that appear with them," he adds.



Certificate EXCELLENT SME

The Chamber of Commerce and Industry of Slovenia issues certificates for SMEs to outline to potential business partners and all customers if a company is safe to do business with. It supports companies by showing to other stakeholders (creditors, partners or customers) that they can be trusted.

Additional information and cooperation proposal:
Mrs. Mojca Osojnik, Project Manager
Chamber of Commerce and Industry of Slovenia
E: mojca.osojnik@gzs.si, T: +386 1 58 98 101

Summary

The main purposes of the certificate, coinciding with EU directives, are to support successful small and medium enterprises, to secure business relations, to exchange best practices and increase market transparency. Additionally, it helps customers and business partners to decrease their financial risks when buying products/services or signing business agreements. The certificate enables local and international business partners to verify company's existence with a legitimate web address, and most importantly credit worthiness. By using the certificate, potential and existing partners and customers can differentiate between successful and less successful companies in the cyber world and in a real business date-to-date operations. The mandatory elements to obtain the annual certification is a credit report and regular monitoring from COFACE Adriatic. In parallel, the SafeSigned™ website technology prevents copying the "Excellent SME" quality seal and use on any other website.

Main results

Until now, 2183 companies were certified as Excellent SMEs, including 435 in Slovenia, 959 in Serbia, 281 in Montenegro, 346 in Romania, 90 in Hungary, 71 in Macedonia and 1 in Bulgaria.

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SeanTech

process engineering

www.seantech.eu

PRESS

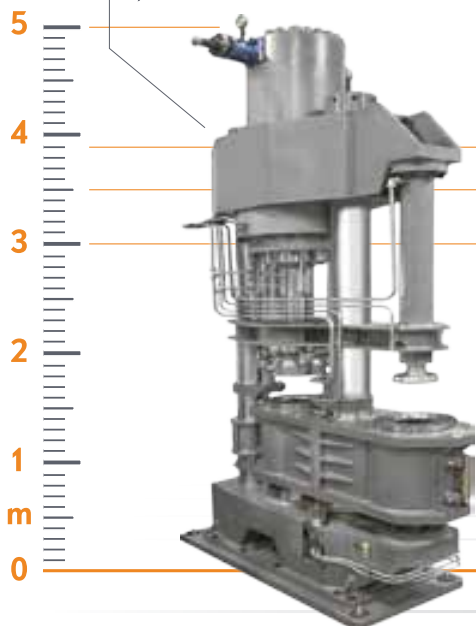
Type HPV Hydraulic Vertical Presses for energetic materials pressing and extruding with one or two hydraulic cylinders

MIXERS

for mixing and homogenizing of pastes, liquid or powder media:

Type MP-1000 Mixing Drum (mixing or polishing energetic materials' surface with graphite or other agents)

Type VMP-600 Vertical Planetary Mixer (mixing nitrocellulose and alcohol with nitro-glycerine and chemical additives)

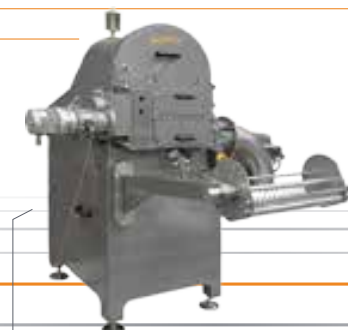
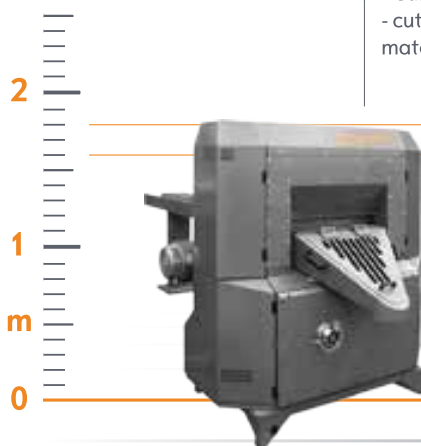


CUTTING MACHINES

"Guillotine" type Cutting Machine - cutting of extruded energetic material into bundles or strips

Type P-4 Cutting Machine is a single channel table cutting machine designed for cutting energetic material into strips and blocks

Cutting machine type CM - cutting of semi-dry sticks and tube shape



SeanTech, process engineering, Ltd.,

is a privately-owned Slovenian engineering company present on the global market with tailor-made solutions for process equipment for a variety of industries.

In 2017, SeanTech celebrates 70 years of tradition and references in process equipment production under the brand name "Gostol" as a legal successor of the Gostol-Gopan company and as its former division.

SeanTech offers a segment of highly developed dual-use equipment for energetic material production in the civil and defence industries.

SeanTech services consist of developing heavy duty process equipment, its production, the assembly of machines procured by the buyer or supervising the assembly and final commissioning at the customer's site, training of personnel and aftersales activities.

SeanTech equipment key benefits:

1. Custom design according to the technological requirements of the customer's product or process
2. Compliance with EU standards and Directive 2014/34/EU (ATEX)
3. State-of-the art technical solutions, elements of well-known European suppliers
4. PC/PLC control and (video) monitoring of the technological process
5. Very high parameters of accuracy regulation
6. Long-term performance
7. Robust construction, precise machining and a reliable execution
8. Own software development
9. Ideal combination of superior quality, price and acceptable delivery time

● MH-5000 Homogenizer
(mixing or homogenizing of energetic material granules and other agents)



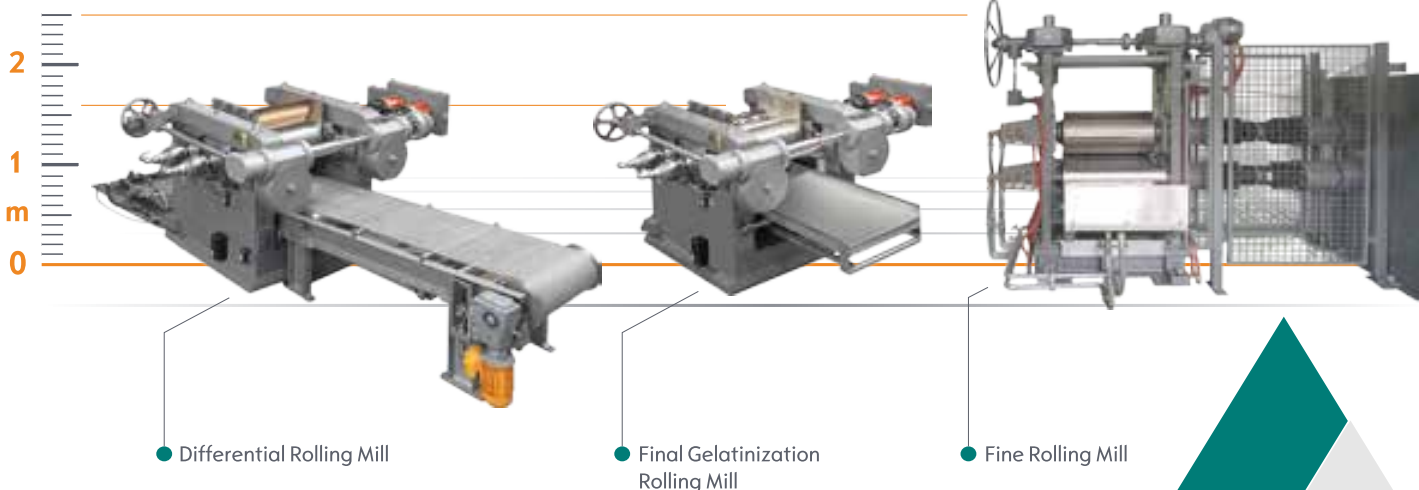
● KNEADING MACHINES

designed for kneading, mixing and homogenizing pastes



ROLLING MILLS

are designed for dewatering, gelatinization of energetic material and final shaping (thickness) of energetic material sheets:



● Differential Rolling Mill

● Final Gelatinization Rolling Mill

● Fine Rolling Mill

A vibrant green landscape with rolling hills, a single large tree, and a bright, cloudy sky. The word "Green" is written in large white letters across the middle of the image.

Green

The Slovenian economy is green. It is focused on sustainability, green technologies, and corporate social responsibility. Slovenian tourism offers authentic green experiences, including high quality local food. In addition, Slovenian companies in the fields of energy and mobility are committed to reducing the carbon footprint of this and future generations.

Boutique, Authentic, Unique

According to the Statistical Office of the Republic of Slovenia (SURS), the year 2019 was a record year in number of foreign visitors to Slovenia. Three quarters of the arrivals and overnights were recorded from foreign visitors.

Darja Kocbek and Ana Vučina Vršnak

Tourism is an important economic sector in Slovenia. Tourism's total contribution to the gross domestic product in 2018 was 12.3%.

In 2019, more than 4.7 million foreign visitors visited Slovenia, which is 6.3% more than in 2018, reports SURS. This accounts for 76% of all guests recorded by Slovenian tourism workers during that period. In 2019 Slovenia recorded 11.3 million overnights by foreign guests, up 1.8% on 2018.

The highest numbers of foreign guests were Italians, who accounted for 600,000 arrivals (12.7%) and 1.3 million overnights (11%). However, the highest number of overnights (1.5 million) was recorded by the Germans (13%) who accounted for 580,000 arrivals.

According to SURS data, in 2019 just under 400,000 guests also visited Slovenia from Austria, the Netherlands (186,000 arrivals and 580,000 overnights), the Czech Republic (190,000 arrivals and 510,000 overnights), Croatia (235,000 arrivals and 540,000 overnights), and Hungary (190,000 arrivals and 500,000 overnights).

Highest Numbers of Overnights in Ljubljana, Piran and Bled

According to data from the national statistical office, the highest numbers of overnights by foreign visitors were recorded in Ljubljana, Piran and Bled. Ljubljana recorded 10% more arrivals and 2.2% more overnights in 2019 in comparison with 2018. The highest growth, 18%, was recorded in April, which is in line with the strategic objective of increasing growth outside the warmest months, said Nina Kosin of Ljubljana Tourism. In 2018 and 2019, the highest numbers of visitors to Ljubljana came from Italy, Germany, the USA, Great Britain.

Meetings Between Visitors and Locals

We are looking to attract visitors with stories about life, history, food, its ingredients and their local origin, and therefore complex experiences are being offered, so-called integrated tourism products, where the

guests are "employed" for a half day or even a whole one. During that time they meet with locals from the town, learn about their history and cultural heritage, enjoy traditional cuisine and also have the opportunity to spend a night in the town, says Kosin.

Central Market Designed by Jože Plečnik

Ljubljana Tourism also support projects that promote the significance of Ljubljana and Slovenia's rich culinary tradition and contribute to the development of gastronomic tourism. They introduce new features every year, and recently began offering breakfast at the Ljubljana Market under the slogan "Let's meet at the Market". Visitors learn about Slovenia's culinary habits and typical products offered by local farmers, and are then served an authentic Ljubljana breakfast. Visitors also get to explore the central market, which was designed by the famous Slovenian architect Jože Plečnik and which is important from both the cultural aspect and the aspect of Slovenia's culinary tradition. "One of the reasons for introducing new culinary experiences was Slovenia being awarded the title of European Region of Gastronomy 2021," notes Kosin. More information at www.visitljubljana.com.

In 2019, more than 4.7 million foreign visitors visited Slovenia, which is 6.3% more than in 2018.

Ljubljana recorded 10% more arrivals and 2.2% more overnights in 2019 in comparison with 2018.



Photo: Jošt Gantar

Slovenia was awarded the title of European Region of Gastronomy 2021.

Increasing Numbers from the Czech Republic, Slovakia and Poland

Portorož and Piran, the most popular tourist destinations on the Slovenian coast, recorded 1.4 million overnights in the first eight months of 2019, which is up 1% on the same period in 2018. Foreign guests accounted for just under 1 million of those overnights, which is also up 1% on the same period last year. The highest numbers of guests come from Austria, Italy, Germany and Hungary, who outpaced the Russians in 2018. "We are seeing major growth in the number of visitors from the Czech Republic, Slovakia and Poland," says Lea Šuligoj of the Portorož Tourist Association.

In its promotional campaign for 2019, the association emphasised the wide range of five-star experiences available in Portorož and Piran and the surrounding area. It invited three Italian influencers to sample them, each of whom experienced them in their own way and presented them to their followers on their social media channels. At tourism fairs and exchanges, Portorož and Piran usually present themselves under the slogan Love Istria, together with the destinations Izola, Koper and Ankaran.

They also invest a great deal in online presentations. According to Lea Šuligoj, the website www.portoroz.si is one of the most frequently visited tourism websites in Slovenia. In September 2019 the redesigned website also received a Websi award.

Pino the Robot Provides Tourist Information 24 Hours a Day

Igor Novel, Director of the Portorož Tourist Association, said that they are using a smart speaking robot named Pino, who offers users tourist information 24 hours a day. Pino "lives" in his Facebook profile, and chats with guests via Facebook Messenger. For now he can only communicate in English. Visitors can ask him about accommodations, activities at the destination, general information about events, the weather or guided tours. He will tell you for example about his favourite hidden corners in Piran, where to find the best coffee in Portorož, the



Photo: Marco Coppo

location of the nearest car park, or what is available for visitors with children.

Portorož and Piran the Main Destination for the Majority of Visitors

Portorož and Piran are the main destination for the majority of visitors, while for visitors from more distant countries, such as China, South Korea and Japan, they are just one of the destinations that they visit on their holidays in Slovenia.

Bled and Sustainable Tourism Development

To the end of September 2019, Bled was visited by 5% more guests than in 2018. The large majority of its visitors are foreign, with guests from the UK having been in first place for many years, followed by Germans, Italians and Americans. Increasing numbers are also arriving from Central and Eastern Europe, and Asians and Indians are also visiting more often. "We will continue to pay a great deal of attention to Europe," says Romana Purkart of Turizem Bled.

Bled as a tourist destination is mainly promoted through programmes of the Slovenian Tourist Board (STO) and the Julian Alps community. "We participate in the major fairs and events abroad, and for the last few years we have bet on sustainable tourism development," says Purkart.

Bled Listed on Outdooractive

As part of its online promotions the website bled.si is being redesigned, and promotion of Bled can also be found on the Outdooractive platform. Bled is the main destination for the majority of people who visit it, and is also a starting point for destinations in the vicinity – Triglav National Park, Radovljica, Kropa and Ljubljana.

Postojna Records 20% More Visitors in 2019

The people of Postojna are very satisfied with the 2019 tourism season. In 2019 they recorded 116,000 visitors, which is up 14.9% in comparison with 2018. Almost 95 % of the guests came from abroad, mostly from Italy, Germany, France and Spain, said Špela Peric, who is responsible for tourism at the Postojna Knowledge Institute.

Bled is the main destination for the majority of people who visit it, and is also a starting point for destinations in the vicinity – Triglav National Park, Radovljica, Kropa and Ljubljana.



Photo: Dean Duboković

More Visitors Seeking Authentic Green Experiences

According to Peric, increasing numbers of visitors are looking for authentic green experiences. In particular, guests who visit Postojna on their own are looking for special experiences with a local flavour. The website visit-postojna.si and social networks such as Facebook and Instagram are excellent promotional resources. Postojna features the renowned tourist attraction the Postojna Cave, so visitors come every year. Since attracting visitors to the town is not a problem, the tourism professionals who work here are more concerned with the question of what type of guests they want to attract. In this case it is undoubtedly the type of guests who value local stories and legends, appreciate the rich cultural heritage and respect the wonderful, unspoiled natural environment. They put a great deal of energy into ensuring that all of the tourism workers and the locals are the destination's primary tourism promoters.

The Galerija tourist information centre in the centre of town received the prestigious award Adventure Experience of the Year 2019, which is conferred by the specialised tourism magazine Travel and Hospitality. It received the award for its high-quality service and the authenticity of its tourist information providers.

Stories and Legends

"Stories and legends are some of the best ways to promote our destination. We are very proud of Postojna Tourism brand, whose logo was partly designed by the well-known illustrator Polona Pačnik. The souvenir collection under the Postojna Tourism brand is distinguished by original, modern interpretations of the motifs of the Proteus salamander, Predjama Castle and Erasmus of Predjama, and of course the dragon from Postojna Cave and the courageous shepherd Jakob," says Špela Peric.

The 2019 product range features guided bike tours, all of which were completely sold out. The visitors were very pleased, as they saw some of the hidden corners that only the locals know about, and the local tour guide showed them a lot of points of interest that cannot be found in the tourist guide. Visitors are still excited to see forest creatures in their natural environment, particularly the largest predator, the brown bear. Experienced hunters who work as tour guides lead guests into the heart of the forest either on photo tours or on hikes on the many different trails. This year, the advisors at the Galerija and Postojna tourist information centres are also providing information about Europe's longest hiking route, the Via Dinarica, as the first seven stages of the trail are located in the Postojna area.

Increasing Numbers of Foreign Visitors at Terme Krka Spas

The Terme Krka group, which includes the Dolenjske Toplice and Šmarješke Toplice spas, the Talaso Strunjan coastal centre and the Otočec Hotels with



Photo: Miha Krivic, Postojnska jama

golf course, generated EUR 18.4 million in the first half of 2019, which is up 6% on the same period in 2018, said Andreja Zidarič of Terme Krka. Foreign guests accounted for more than a quarter of the visits. Increasing numbers of guests are arriving from Austria and Germany, as well as Croatia, Sweden, Belgium and the Czech Republic. "We believe that there are good opportunities to increase sales in the future on the American market, in Eastern Europe and Asia," says Zidarič.

Hormone Tests at Šmarješke Toplice Spa

The new attractions for 2019 at the Dolenjske Toplice spa include a new pool with a slide, and a wide range of exercise and meditation courses that help increase mindfulness and relaxation and inspire a deeper experience of nature and living in the moment. At the Šmarješke Toplice spa, guests can also take a hormone test for cortisol, i.e. the "stress hormone", and melatonin, the "sleep hormone", as well as a test for food intolerances. Depending on the test results, experts make adjustments to their diets, and even provide them with menus to take home. Otočec Castle has installed a castle wine bar. Guests at the castle can also enjoy guided tastings.

Rogaška Slatina and Potential in the Gulf States

Rogaška Slatina, which is a popular destination particularly for visitors from the Russian Federation, recorded a 3% increase in overnights by foreign

The Galerija tourist information centre in the centre of Postojna received the prestigious award Adventure Experience of the Year 2019.

At Terme Krka they believe that there are good opportunities to increase sales in the future on the American market, in Eastern Europe and Asia.



Photo: Bor Dobrin

The new attractions at the Dolenjske Toplice spa include a new pool with a slide, and a wide range of exercise and meditation courses that help increase mindfulness and relaxation and inspire a deeper experience of nature and living in the moment.

Last year, the Rogaška Medical Centre hosted part of an international event for luxury travel organisers called Connection Wellbeing.

ROI natural mineral water will be the official mineral water of the Slovenian pavilion at EXPO 2020 in Dubai.

guests in the period from January – September 2019 in comparison with the same period in 2018. Foreign nationals accounted for 84% of all guests who overnights in the destination in 2019. They are particularly satisfied with the results on the markets of the former Soviet Union (Russia, Ukraine, Kazakhstan and Azerbaijan), which account for 59% of all overnights by foreign visitors. They see the highest growth potential on the markets of the Gulf States, which are already very well represented at various spa locations in Austria, the Czech Republic and Slovakia, and in the reviving Italy.

In 2019, the Rogaška Medical Centre hosted part of an international event for luxury travel organisers called Connection Wellbeing, and in October they hosted this year's Slovenian tourism exchange SPA-CE. "We also hosted several study groups of travel agents from our partner travel agencies, Russian journalists, and Austrian journalists and influencers, and we organised a presentation for representatives of Russian insurance companies and a study group of Ukrainian doctors. Our doctors also participated in webinars for travel agency representatives. We are also active on social networks. We are planning on carrying out similar activities in 2020," said Manuela Kolar Škrabl of the Rogaška Medical Centre.

Sole Providers of Full Body MRI

Additional medical specialists were hired last year due to an increase in gastroenterological and cardiologic treatments. Due to the additional knowledge that the institution gained, they were able to expand their range of cardiac magnetic resonance imaging, and now plan to conduct this type of examination under sedation. "Full body magnetic resonance imaging continues to be an important part of our range of services, as we are the only ones in Slovenia who provide it, and in the year and a half that we have been offering it we have made some important discoveries which allowed for the timely continuation

of treatment. We also updated our Expanded Preventive Programme for Managers, which allows the truly holistic treatment that we are famous for," said Kolar Škrabl.

They introduced new services in the area of testing gut bacteria, which makes it possible to eliminate numerous health issues. Their new programme for treating diabetic wounds will be of great service to diabetic patients. In 2020 they will open some newly renovated areas and put new diagnostics equipment (x-ray, gastroenterology and cardiology) into service. They will begin treating benign lesions in the thyroid and the prostate using laser ablation. They are also preparing to introduce new physiatry services (magnetic resonance therapy) and aesthetic plastic surgery.

Increased Demand from the USA and Canada

The Hotel Sava Rogaška records more than 90,000 overnights per year, which is more than a third of all overnights in Rogaška Slatina. More than 55% of the guests come from Russian-speaking countries, particularly Russia, Ukraine, Kazakhstan and Azerbaijan. They are followed by guests from Italy, who account for more than 20% of all guests. "There has also been increased demand from the USA and Canada recently. Based on the special programmes (Body Slim, Detox, Diabetes and ROI Medico) that we have designed on the basis of our services at the ROI Medico centre and Rogaška's unique mineral water, we also see a great deal of potential in the countries of the Near East and Scandinavia," says Stanislav Pšeničnik, managing director and owner of the Hotel Sava Rogaška.

New services this year include a special diabetes programme with 24-hour blood sugar monitoring and various activities designed to lower and manage blood sugar levels. The entire programme is based on a specially designed diet, sports activities, medical procedures and drinking treatments with multiple award-winning ROI mineral water.

"We expect that 2020 will be a successful year for the promotion and sales of our ROI Premium natural mineral water, which we currently market in China, Russia, Ukraine and the Near East. ROI natural mineral water will also be the official mineral water of the Slovenian pavilion at EXPO 2020 in Dubai, from which we are also expecting many new guests for our hotels," said Pšeničnik.

The Shepherds Path at Velika Planina

By October 2019, 15% more foreign visitors had been recorded at Velika Planina than in the entire calendar year 2018. The majority come from European countries: Germany, France, Spain and Italy. There are also increasing numbers of Czech and Dutch visitors. "We see the biggest opportunities to increase the number of arrivals in European countries such as the Czech Republic, the Netherlands, Spain, Croatia, the United Kingdom, Russia and the Scandinavian countries," says Leon Keder, Managing Director of Velika Planina d.o.o.



Photo: Rogaška Medical Centre

Keder spoke about a new feature for 2019: the Shepherds Path interpretive trail, which has several entry points. One of the entry point signboards, with a map and the stations of the interpretive trail, is located at the lower gondola station. It can be walked in approximately two hours, and during that time you can learn a lot of interesting facts about life at Velika Planina, the people's customs and habits, the architecture, the shepherds' lifestyle and the natural attractions that Velika Planina has to offer.

"Winter also offers foreign tourists the fantastic adventure of night tobogganing. Hiking on snow-covered Velika Planina is made easier for guests by providing them with snowshoes. In the 2018/2019 winter season we opened a new children's winter park, which will also be open during the coming winter season. We are also preparing cross-country skiing trails," says Keder.

Velika Planina is usually visited by one-day visitors. However, renting huts similar to those used by the shepherds, but outfitted more luxuriously, is becoming more and more popular. This allows visitors to spend several days on the mountain, experience the life of the shepherds, and enjoy comfort in the huts. We are making more huts available every year; there are currently 15. Based on conversations with foreign visitors, Keder believes that Velika Planina is one of the top four most popular destinations in Slovenia.

Maribor and Partnership in the Development of the Drava Cycling Trail

In 2019, tourism workers in the Maribor – Pohorje area recorded 9% more overnights and 31% more visitor arrivals than in 2018. Foreign guests accounted for 79% of those overnights. Slovenia's second-largest city, Maribor, recorded 2% more overnights and 7% more visitor arrivals. Foreign guests accounted for 87% of those overnights.



Photo: Teddy Verneuil

"The highest numbers of overnights were accounted for by guests from Croatia, Germany, Serbia, Austria, Poland and Italy. From more distant countries by far the highest number of overnights was recorded by guests from China and the USA," said Monika Jurišič Hlevnjak of the Maribor – Pohorje Tourism Board.

The main promotional activities in 2019 included the city's partnership in the development of the Drava Cycling Trail. In 2020 they are planning to continue intensive promotional activities on digital advertising channels, and are also planning to update their presentations of the city's attractions via virtual and enhanced reality. In line with the strategy at the national level, the Maribor – Pohorje Tourism Board will also promote the development of boutique, five-star and sustainably-oriented tourism products, particularly in the area of wine and fine dining. In September they launched a new website, www.visitmaribor.si.

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In 2019, tourism workers in the Maribor – Pohorje area recorded 9% more overnights and 31% more visitor arrivals than in 2018.



Foto: Juri Pivka

The Maribor – Pohorje Tourism Board promotes the development of boutique, five-star and sustainably-oriented tourism products, particularly in the area of wine and fine dining.



Photo: Kompas Travel

Kompas is investing a great deal in the markets of Southeast Asia, Japan and China, and opened a new branch office in Malaysia in 2019.

Slovenia Increasingly Popular in Germany and France

Kompas travel agency says that Slovenia is becoming increasingly popular among Germans and particularly among French tourists, and more and more Czechs, Hungarians and Poles are becoming interested in visiting Slovenia. Kompas continues to bring the largest numbers of visitors to Slovenia from the Benelux countries, Israel and the USA. They have also recorded the highest growth in visitor demand on the American market, particularly for trips where they visit Slovenia in combination with other countries. "We are expecting the largest increases in the number of guests in 2020 from Germany and France, and we are also investing quite a bit in the markets of Southeast Asia, Japan and China," says Head of Incoming Vlado Tance.

Kompas carries out an average of 50 promotional activities every year, including participating at trade fairs, Slovenian tourism workshops, and regular sales avenues on key markets. In 2020 together with a French partner they are planning Slovenian Evenings in France. "In 2019 we also opened a new branch office in Malaysia in order to promote our products in Southeast Asia, and we also have sales representatives in Japan, China and Vietnam," says Tance.

Kompas develops and markets programmes for its customers that include outdoor activities, gastronomy, oenology and traditional crafts, for which there is quite a bit of interest particularly in Germany and France.

According to data from the Slovenian Tourist Board (STO), 2018 was the fifth year that a record was set in the number of arrivals and overnights by foreign visitors. ■



Photo: Jošt Gantar



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Slovenian Food Combines Tradition and Modernity

A rich selection of food products enhances Slovenian cuisine, and there are growing numbers of small, rapidly growing companies that are inspiring people with craft beers, local wines and other specialities.

Nina Šprohar

Perutnina Ptuj's Natural Chicken Cutlets Are a Delight

Besides being one of the rare vertically organized systems in the world, Perutnina Ptuj has also introduced a new standard of breeding which observes the latest findings on animal welfare. Meat and meat products from chickens bred under this standard (PPR) are present in the market under the PP Natur Premium brand. "Currently we are introducing three new products under this brand which are also produced with new packing technology," say the company. "As our focus is on animal welfare, we plan to introduce new value added poultry products from chickens that are bred in the improved living conditions," they add. Perutnina Ptuj is currently exporting to more than 20 markets in the European Union (EU), USA and other countries. "For the near future our focus is on strengthening our position in the markets where we are already present in Central and Western Europe and also on conducting preparations to enter the Chinese market," they say.

Delamaris Offers Fish Preserves as a Healthy Alternative to Fast Food

In the Delamaris range of products, customers most often go for the fish with vegetables, which include the best known items Izola Brand, Weekend and

Picnic, while Delamaris has offered a very wide range of fine food items throughout its history. Store shelves feature canned mackerel fillets, tuna salad and tuna steak, anchovies, sardines and various flavours of fish pâté from Delamaris. One of the secrets of the unique fish with vegetables in tomato sauce is the fermented vegetables, which maintains the flavour and firmness.

The quality of Slovenian recipes is recognised in 23 markets around the world. Slovenians eat as many as 9.78 million cans of food a year. They export around 50% of their products to foreign markets, mainly to Austria, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia and Switzerland. "In the future we plan to grow in the North Macedonian and German markets, and we are also in talks regarding more 'exotic' markets such as Kuwait, Zimbabwe and Eritrea," say the Delamaris managers.

Nimrod Expanding Its Range of Game Meat

Nimrod is the largest Slovenian exporter of game and one of the largest exporters of game in Europe. Their products are present in top-notch restaurants and on shelves of well-known retailers. While marking their 25th anniversary they say they want to strengthen their direct performance on selling and buying European markets. They have four different types of customers – for retail, horeca, industry and pet food.



Photo: Perutnina Ptuj

Perutnina Ptuj has introduced a new standard of breeding which observes the latest findings on animal welfare.

Delamaris has been operating for more than 140 years. Their ready-made fish dishes offer a healthy alternative to fast food.



Photo: Delamaris



Photo: Nimrod

Nimrod is the largest Slovenian exporter of game and one of the largest exporters of game in Europe.

Photo: Paradajz



The company Paradajz is the biggest producer of tomatoes in Slovenia.

The two famous beers Laško Zlatorog and Union Svetlo reflect the passion for quality at the brewery Pivovarna Laško Union.

Slovenia is also seeing the growth of smaller craft breweries.

The newest products are Skin trays for the Grill Wild game segment. "At the moment we serve Slovenia, Italy, Hungary, Croatia, Austria, Germany, Belgium, the Netherlands, France, Switzerland and Norway, however, our goal is to enter the markets of Romania, Sweden and Denmark," they add.

LUŠT Tomatoes Inspire Top International Chefs

The company Paradajz is the biggest producer of tomatoes in Slovenia. Under the recognisable LUŠT brand it offers various types of fresh tomatoes. "Our absolute classic is the vine tomato in both large and small sizes, while our Luštek-miks range is popular, since it is a mixture of small varieties of tomato of various colours and flavours," as they describe their top product range.

The great majority of their tomatoes are sold on the domestic market. They are present in all the retail systems in Slovenia, and plenty of people come to visit their Luštna domačija homestead (a tiny store at their home location in Renkovci), while the little they export goes mainly to the markets in Croatia, Hungary and Italy. "Recently we have had interest in our products from various 'starred' chefs, from France all the way to Dubai. We are particularly proud of this, since these chefs are looking for special flavours. To produce a tasty tomato is the highest objective, which our entire team is pursuing," the company stresses.

Pivovarna Laško Union Offer Even More Non-Alcoholic Beverages

The Laško Union brewery, the biggest beverage producer in Slovenia, boasts the two famous beers Laško Zlatorog and Union Svetlo. Union supplements its range with Radler, a kind of shandy, and Laško with a non-alcoholic malt beverage, while their apple-based Jabolčni Tat gives them a presence in the cider product category. With drinks bearing the brand name Izbira 0,0 % (0.0% Choice) they have enhanced the range of beer and shandy with low or zero alcohol content. "We are also supplementing the product portfolio with the refreshing Sola non-alcoholic drinks and Zala natural spring water," the company adds.



Photo: Laško Union

In the past three years they have launched in the domestic and international markets more than 60 new products under their own brand and under brands from the Heineken family, and have introduced some successful innovations. They overhauled the shandy category and added to it two new flavours: cucumber in an alcoholic variation and 0.0 grapefruit. In the beer category there are three new products – Laško Golding, Laško IPA and Union Pivnica Selection Red Ale, the company explains. In the future they plan to expand the 0.0 portfolio both for 0.0 beer and for beer and malt mixtures. They will also continue the development of beer styles and categories within the Union Pivnica Selection portfolio.

Today exports account for nearly 40% of all the company's production volume. "The largest share of exports is focused on the neighbouring markets of the Adriatic region, but we are also boosting our presence in the markets in Italy, Austria, Hungary and Greece and even Switzerland," they say.

Pelicon Creates the First Real Slovenian Tonic

Slovenia is also seeing the growth of smaller craft breweries. One of these is Pivovarna Pelicon. They have a lot of new features, something almost every week. In autumn 2019 they brought out their seasonal beer Harvest Moon, made with fresh picked and non-dried Slovenian hops. Later in 2019, they launched a limited series of bottled beer brewed, which had matured for several months in a wine barrel. In December they presented the Winter beer, a dark brew with winter spices.

In addition, in 2019 they launched the production of sodas, featuring the creation of the first real Slovenian tonic – Hoppy Tonic for mixing with gin and a lemonade with hops called Hoppy Collins. The largest amount of Pelicon beer is drunk at home in Slovenia, while exports go to Italy, Croatia, Switzerland, Austria and Hungary.



Photo: Miha Bratina

Klet Brda Raises Value Added

Klet Brda (Brda Cellar), which brings together 400 families, is the biggest producer and exporter of Slovenian wines. “Our mission is to express in wine the unique quality of the Goriška Brda terroir and through successful marketing to contribute to the development of this sector and the prosperity of the local people,” they affirm.

At the end of 2018 they launched a new brand of wines in the highest quality class, de Baguer, which matures in the historical cellar of Dobrovo Castle. “The de Baguer chardonnay-sauvignon blanc and merlot-cabernet franc wines are a response to the challenges of the latest cuisine,” say Klet Brda, adding that the “oenologist is not looking to find in them a strong body but rather clear varietal aromas and a mineral quality that best expresses the Brda land.” In the future they want to give greater emphasis to communicating the sustainable orientation of their cooperative, both in terms of sustainable production of grapes by the vineyard managers and in terms of wine production in the cellar. For now they are exporting to 26 countries, among which the main customers are the USA, China, Japan, the UK, Germany, Italy and Poland.

Pullus Wines from Ptujška Klet

Through its Pullus range of wines, the company Ptujška klet (Ptuj Cellar) is striving to create a synonym for a distinct varietal aroma, full balance, drinkability, health and the highest quality. This is confirmed by more than 250 commendations and medals received over the past decade at prestigious international wine competitions (Decanter, AWC Vienna, Concours Mondial de Bruxelles, Mundus Vini, SFWC S. Francisco, Finger Lakes and more). Alongside wines they also offer spirits, and a new feature in 2019 was the wine cocktails in cans – SpriTzar. They already have a presence in markets of the USA, China, Austria, Germany, Czech Republic and Belgium, and in the future they want to strengthen their line of drinks in Canada.



Photo: Pullus

JNK to Offer Orange Wines in the Future

Behind the JNK brand stands a small producer of natural and high-quality wines from the Vipava Valley, Kristina Mervič. Her products are most prized by those looking for something special. She currently offers white and red bottled wines, but she will

start producing orange wine. Her wines are already sold in Italy, Czech Republic, the UK, Belgium and Spain. “Soon I am also planning exports to Denmark, Switzerland, Poland and to two states in the USA,” says Mervič.

Žito Offers Healthy Flakes and Crackers

In the area of bakery and confectionery products, one of the leading companies in Slovenia is without doubt Žito. In addition to the above, under the same brand name they produce frozen food, under the Zlato polje and Natura brands they produce milled products, flakes, pasta, rice, porridge, meal, legumes and flour, under the Maestro brand spices, under Gorenjka chocolate, and they also produce Šumi and Herba sweets and within the brand 1001 CVET they offer herbal, fruit and black teas.



Photo: Žito

“In 2019 we brightened up store shelves with Breakfast Bread, Žito Protein sliced bread and gluten-free Crispy crackers in various flavours – Classic, Protein, 5 grain and Quinoa. We also designed four new flavours of our popular Sport müsli breakfast flakes and new oat porridges,” they list off.

The development of new products also reflects how they are keeping pace with food trends and responding to consumer needs, by taking into account the trends of increasing naturally present functional ingredients and introducing the use of legumes and products made from organically produced ingredients. They are also adapting to export markets by obtaining various certificates such as the Halal certificate.

The biggest export markets for Žito are Italy, Germany, Spain and Austria, along with countries in the Adriatic region, while via the Podravka Group they are reaching more distant markets such as China, Russia, Japan, Australia, Saudi Arabia, Israel, the USA and Canada. Exports account for around a quarter of sales, and their most popular export product is buckwheat bread with walnuts.

Don Don Combines Tradition with Modern Recipes

Another company operating in the baked goods sector is Don Don, which has a portfolio including the brands Pekarna Grosuplje and Tvojih5minut. The Pekarna Grosuplje bakery offers various types of bread and rolls, along with pastries, and under the brand Tvojih5minut they offer a range of fried



Photo: JNK

Behind the JNK brand stands a small producer of natural and high-quality wines from the Vipava Valley, Kristina Mervič.

Klet Brda brings together 400 Brda vineyard families. At the end of 2018 they launched a new brand of wines in the highest quality class, de Baguer, which matures in the historical cellar of Dobrovo Castle.

Ptujška klet has received more than 250 commendations and medals over the past decade at prestigious international wine competitions.



Photo: Don Don

In the area of bakery and confectionery products, one of the leading companies in Slovenia is without doubt Žito.

pastries, packed sandwiches, packaged bread with extended shelf life and packaged rolls and sliced bread. "At Pekarna Grosuplje we combine tradition with modern recipes. A large part of our bread was developed through traditional, long processes of preparing dough with the addition of natural sourdough, so this bread has no extra additives," they explain.

They also make up products with yeast starter or 'pre-dough'. At the beginning of 2019 they offered Super Bread, and the latest product bearing the Pekarna Grosuplje brand is the LCHF Zdravko bread, a product with a very small amount of flour, made principally of seeds, without yeast and additives. "For the Tvojih5minut brand we are supplementing the sandwiches with new flavours, and we are also planning to enhance the range of sliced bread," they promise. They are present in the markets of SE Europe, and are also planning to enter other markets.

Incom Offers a Rich and Exciting Selection of Ice Cream

Slovenia can also produce outstanding ice cream. When someone asks the company Incom, what do they offer, their answer is that a better question would be, what don't they offer? "We have roughly 600 different ice cream products due to our presence on various markets and cooperation with different retailers. But speaking broadly, we produce cones, sticks, tubs and some special products like mousse shots, winter desserts, bars, and ice cream cakes," say the company, whose focus is on innovative and special products.

In 2019 they've gone through a major rebranding project which included their hero products - LEONE and Leone ALIVE tubs filled in layers, Leone ALIVE protein sticks and LEONE Unicorn Cones. They say that the Unicorn Cones were a great hit. "We've got some breakthrough innovations to be launched in 2020, which will shake up the market," they promise. They are already present on more than 40 markets and their main target for 2020 is China. In the future

Don Don, which also operates in the baked goods sector, has a portfolio including the brands Pekarna Grosuplje and Tvojih5minut.

Slovenian companies Incom and Ljubljanske mlekarne offer outstanding ice cream and dairy products, respectively.

they will target the Southern Hemisphere in order to balance the seasonality of ice cream sales.

Ljubljanske Mlekarne Launch Icelandic-Style Yoghurt

The Ljubljanske Mlekarne company is the biggest producer of dairy products in Slovenia. They produce fresh and long-life milk, yoghurt, quark, cream, cheese and ice cream. "Our key products for foreign markets are principally long-life milk and various yoghurts, and we are especially proud of Sigg'i's, an Icelandic-style yoghurt we launched in 2018 and which we are making for eight European countries," they confirm. They are present mainly in the markets of SE Europe, in Sweden, Greece and Italy, although in total they export to more than 40 countries worldwide. "As regards doing business internationally, Ljubljanske Mlekarne are involved with the French group Lactalis, where we take advantage of the synergy from membership in the biggest dairy industry in the world," they explain. ■



Photo: Ljubljanske mlekarne



Photo: Incom

Challenges in 2020:**Enver Šišič, Perutnina Ptuj:**

In 2020, we will focus on increasing our market shares and production capacities in the key markets of Perutnina Ptuj Group, as well as implementing optimisation and automation of production processes in the Group's production facilities. We also plan to carry out investment projects related to ecology within the Group.

Andrej Smodič, Lušt:

The goal in 2020 is to produce high quality products with distinctive flavours that will continue to delight our customers and to complete upgrades that will ensure the year-round presence of our products on the market.

Tomaž Žnidarič, Ljubljanske mlekarne:

We have a challenging year ahead in 2020: the price of our main raw material, milk, has reached its highest level in the last four years, while the prices of energy have grown and labour costs are set to rise. This means our challenge will be how to maintain competitiveness in export markets, where we sell half of our production volume. Our key advantage remains high quality, which is recognised by customers throughout the world.

Silvan Peršolja, Klet Brda:

Rebula, which is our most important and most recognised variety, is produced in the Brda border area and in the Italian area of Collio and Colli orientali. Just as the associated Brda wine makers are more successful in promoting Rebula abroad, in cooperation with the Italian wine makers from Collio and Colli orientali we would be even stronger. For this reason we are striving to join together with Italian producers in raising the value of Rebula, which is cultivated on hilly ground and is thereby different from the Rebula grown in the lowlands, which is certainly more affordable but not comparable in quality. This will without doubt be our biggest challenge in 2020.

Alenka Mozetič Zavrl, Don Don:

The biggest challenge for the entire Don Don group in the coming period will be further industrialisation of production, whereby we will increase capacities including in segments where up until now we have not been competitive and in this way we will enable continued growth of sales.

Boštjan Jerončič, Incom:

Firstly, our biggest challenge is Brexit, since our biggest customer is based in the UK, but we are sure we will find our way around it. Secondly, balancing out production and turnover between summer and winter months, and thirdly, entry into the Chinese market. Sounds like a big scoop of challenges, but for Incom Leone, the sky is the limit.

Zooullis Mina, Pivovarna Laško Union:

In 2020 Pivovarna Laško Union will continue to pursue five key strategic orientations deriving from the Heineken company, specifically: growth in income, increasing efficiency, sustainable development, employee involvement and development and digital connection.

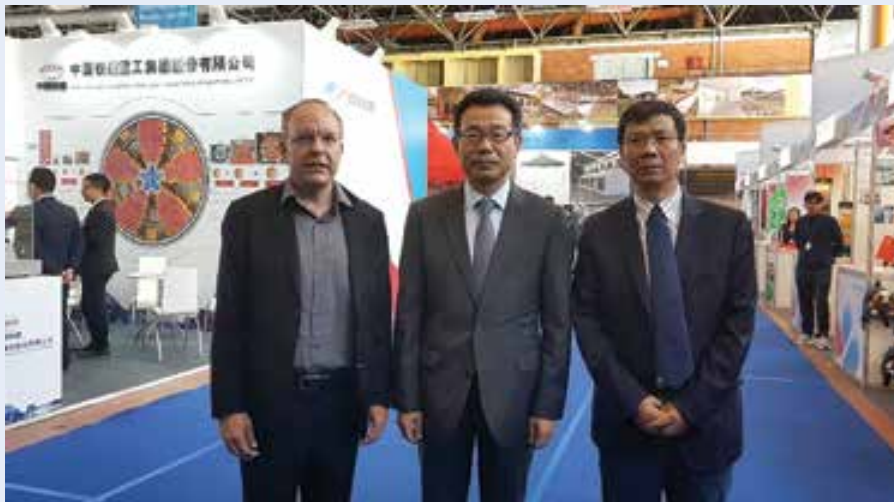
Matej Pelicon, Pivovarna Pelicon:

In 2020 the greatest challenge will be increasing production and replacing the filling line. Of course this will lead also to an expansion of the team and business network and the development of new products. We look forward to all the challenges, since we do all this because we love beer.

Chinese and Slovene know-how and science hand in hand

As world leaders in the development of cutting-edge instruments with 22 years of experience, our objective at Instrumentation Technologies is to offer qualified expertise and high-performance instrumentation that create solutions for technologically demanding fields.

We aim to further strengthen our contribution to China's Belt and Road Initiative and to be a part of the global development of high technology and research. Our ambition has guided us to the establishment of an R&D company in China that will focus on marketing and technical support. Among our core technologies we provide fast signal readout, processing instruments, and communications systems for particle accelerators; radio frequency electronics design; digital electronics design; FPGA and software programming; mesh network communication and many other services. Instrumentation Technologies also possesses wide-ranging expertise and project management skills in the areas of hardware and software development for the instrumentation and controls of all types of accelerators. Moreover, our



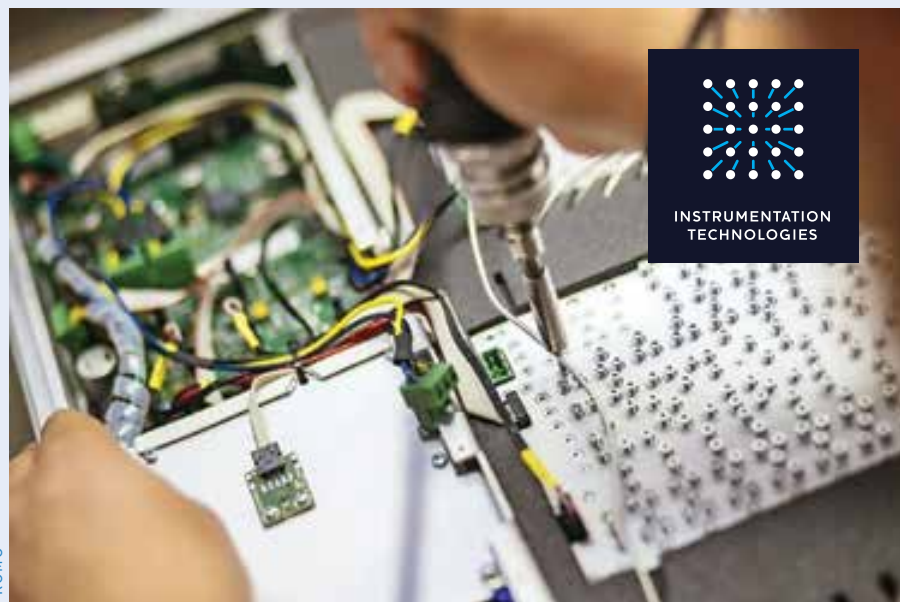
Elvis Janežič, director of Instrumentation Technologies with the Ambassador of the PRC in the Republic of Slovenia at MOS Fair in Celje, September 2019.

Masters and PhD engineers offer consultation expertise in fields such as MedTech, IoT, Smart Cities, telecommunication, aerospace, and university research.

The achievement of China's progress over the past 70 years shows that the country is committed to a path of peaceful

development and is pursuing the important strategy of opening doors. President Xi and other Chinese leaders view science as a central element in building bridges with other countries, while China's drive to explore high technology for the benefit of the country and the world is globally recognized. The Red Dragon has proven to the world that it has much to offer in many areas, including science, and that it does not have to rely on other countries to carry out even the most advanced research.

We see strong potential in China's fast technological development and believe that China is redrawing the map of world science. The mutual trust between China and Slovenia has deepened over almost 30 years of solid bilateral relations that have been promoted and consolidated across various levels. We always seek a partner with whom we can build a united team in a single purpose together. We deeply trust that the cooperation between Instrumentation Technologies and a potential partner who shares our common vision will bring powerful mutual benefit. When people act with one mind and one heart, they can even move Mount Tai.



Many Enterprises Have Sustainable Mobility Solutions

As suppliers involved in the development of sustainable mobility, enterprises in Slovenia follow the requirements of automotive companies as well as urban and transport infrastructure development for the introduction of sustainable mobility.

Darja Kocbek

According to Violeta Bulc, the European transport commissioner in the period 2014-2019, Slovenia has a large number of forward-looking companies involved in micromobility, which is a sub-section of sustainable mobility, and is also very advanced in its development of autonomous mobility technologies. Within the European Union, Slovenia is, together with Austria and Hungary, a virtual area for the testing of green and self-driving technologies.

Danilo Rojko, Managing Director of TBP Tovarna bodenov in plastike, told us that, as a development supplier to the automotive industry, the company follows trends in the industry and therefore also developments in the field of sustainable mobility. "Of course, this does not encompass merely the transition to electric vehicles or the replacement of vehicles with classic internal combustion engines, but rather

a change to the entire concept of mobility. Urban and transport infrastructure development is part of this concept, as are changes to mobility-related habits," he explained.

The TBP company are therefore searching for new opportunities in the development of electric vehicle components, as well as in the development of new conceptual forms of transport within the scope of sustainable mobility. These are adapted for use in city centres where vehicles with internal combustion engines are no longer used or will in future no longer be allowed, or where the movement of classic delivery vehicles, even of the electric type we see today, will be restricted or even prohibited. To this end, TBP are establishing a special development department where operations are already partly under way to develop different models and modes of transport.

Slovenia is, together with Austria and Hungary, a virtual area for the testing of green and self-driving technologies.



Adria Mobile started the "eco motorhome" project a few years ago with the aim of seeking out materials and technological possibilities for developing and manufacturing sustainable holiday vehicles.

Sustainable Mobility Is Also Social Responsibility

Adria Mobil explain that holiday vehicles are a special vehicle segment and compete first and foremost with other tourist products. From this point of view, they are among the greenest forms of leisure activity. If we look at the cycle as a whole, they emit lower levels of carbon dioxide than many other travel combinations. On the other hand, they would like to see faster moves towards sustainable mobility in the field of development. However, as holiday vehicle manufacturers, they are dependent on suppliers of base vehicles – and the increase in weight resulting from the requirement to electrify the powertrains means that sustainable mobility will not become part of the holiday vehicles segment in the near future.

“We are actively involved in the area of social responsibility through general sponsorship of the Adria Mobil Cycling Club, as well as through support for the development of bike-sharing schemes and similar activities that create new possibilities for the development of sustainable mobility,” explains Damir Dominić from Adria Mobil.

They started the “eco motorhome” project a few years ago with the aim of seeking out materials and technological possibilities for developing and manufacturing sustainable holiday vehicles. Despite the fact that there are restrictions in this regard, they are endeavouring to develop and manufacture every product with an eye on the ecological aspect, and thereby to reduce the waste and emissions produced during the holiday vehicle manufacture process. “At Adria Mobil we are, of course, also investing in the acquisition of new knowledge in this field, thereby upgrading our over 50 years of experience in the development, manufacture and marketing of holiday vehicles,” says Dominić.

Creating a Carbon-Neutral Society in the Area of Delivery

According to Danilo Rojko, some TBP products are currently in the development and testing phase and are being unveiled at sustainable mobility fairs in Europe and beyond. “These products are oriented towards creating a carbon-neutral society in the area of the delivery or transport of smaller packages in city centres,” explains Rojko. The products they are developing are designed to cause fewer harmful exhaust and noise emissions and to take up less space, which is at a premium, in city centres.

TBP are keen to place their products and concepts on European markets first, as they are the markets they are most familiar with, given their proximity. “We are familiar with their laws and, in particular, their trends,” says Rojko. TBP are focusing mainly on those markets on which sustainable mobility, high awareness of the use of green logistics and the strategic introduction of environment-friendly vehicles are already routine occurrences. These markets are Scandinavia and the countries close to them. “Of course, we realise that we are not alone and that there is considerable competition. Only after that will we focus on other markets, including outside Europe, where green logistics is still more or less in its infancy. This is a marathon, not a sprint,” says TBP’s managing director.

As an explicitly export-oriented company, Adria Mobil have a presence on more than 30 markets and on three continents (Europe, Australia and Asia). “In addition to seeking out opportunities for entry onto new markets, where one condition is, of course, suitably developed infrastructure at the destination and adequate scope of demand for such products, we are also focused on expanding the volume of operations on existing markets, where, also because of the increasing importance of sustainable mobility and green tourism, caravanning is gaining a new lease of life and therefore new possibilities,” says Dominić.

TBP are focusing mainly on those markets on which sustainable mobility, green logistics and the strategic introduction of environment-friendly vehicles are already routine occurrences.

Hidria are among the leading corporations in Europe and the world for automotive and industrial technologies.



Photo: TBP



Photo: Hidria

As their competitive advantages, Adria Mobil highlight their innovativeness, quality and premium design. These are also elements that distinguish Adria's products from the competition. They are keen to be more efficient in transferring innovative projects from the idea stage to the market in the shortest possible time. "Adria covers the entire range of vehicles for all customer segments, and has an extensive sales and servicing network of more than 500 sales outlets capable of delivering consistent and high-quality user experiences," explains Dominić.

In contrast to its rivals, TBP are able to offer tailor-made solutions, which also means that, because they are relatively small, they can adapt to the wishes and needs of the individual customer. "At the same time, we make use of our considerable experience in large serial production and quality assurance, which reduces the final product price, creates customer satisfaction and enables rapid response to the needs of the market," explains Danilo Rojko.

TBP's main products are components and modules for first installation exclusively for the automotive industry. These can be roughly divided into Bowden cables, plastic components, coated components and metal components. TBP's main product line currently comprises Bowden cables that perform various functions within vehicles.

The company's business results in 2019 were in line with expectations and the strategic plan.

Holiday Caravans the Main Product Line

Damir Dominić of Adria Mobil says that the main Adria product line comprises holiday caravans, motorhomes and vans (converted minibuses), supplemented by mobile homes and "glamping" tents, which have, in recent years, become an ever-more popular form of campsite accommodation.

Regarding business operations this year, he says that they have set ambitious operating targets and are happy to announce that they will be met, thereby strengthening Adria's market share on the European holiday vehicles market, which fluctuates around the 6.5% mark for both product lines, the holiday caravan and the motorhome.

Developing Innovative Relays for Engine Cold Start Systems

Hidria say that they are among the leading corporations in Europe and the world for automotive and industrial technologies, and highlight the fact that they have developed innovative relays for engine cold start systems that make today's vehicles operate more efficiently. These systems enable the air heater in an internal combustion engine of emission standard EURO6 to be monitored and controlled. They were awarded a silver medal at last year's Innovation Day, which is organised by the Chamber of Commerce and Industry of Slovenia (CCIS).



Photo: Cimos

Cimos are able to develop complex turbo and powertrain modules that meet the high technological standards of today's automotive industry.

Cimos Develops Complex Turbo and Powertrain Modules

At Cimos, which was founded in 1972 and has been an important member of TCH Group since 2017, they ensure that they are able to develop complex turbo and powertrain modules that meet the high technological standards of today's automotive industry. Their advantage is the capability to offer a complete range of services, from product conception to final production. Years of experience, state-of-the-art equipment and efficient production facilities, combined with highly professional and skilled employees, make Cimos a reliable partner.

The company's goal is to become the leading supplier of turbocharger components. In addition, they would like to become one of the best suppliers for specific powertrain products in Europe.

Guiding Principle of Development Is the Lowest Possible Environmental Impact

The ebm-papst Slovenia company's aim is to become the leading manufacturing and development location within the ebm-papst concern for small-scale motors, pumps, ventilators and components for household appliances. They highlight the development of motors and ventilators that produce the lowest possible levels of noise pollution. The use of reusable materials free of harmful substances is the company's first requirement when developing new products.

At the micromobility conference organised by the European Commission in October 2019, several Slovenian companies unveiled vehicles that they had developed themselves. The conference offered participants the chance to try electric scooters, bikes, a flying taxi and an electric airplane. Docking systems for electric bikes and scooters featuring locking and battery-charging infrastructure were also on show. ■

The ebm-papst Slovenia company point out that the use of reusable materials free of harmful substances is the company's first requirement when developing new products.



Photo: ebm-papst

New capacities on the horizon for the Port of Koper

Luka Koper, port and logistic system, d.d. is a public limited company which develops and manages the Port of Koper, the only Slovenian seaport of very strategic interest.

The company operates all 12 specialized terminals in the multipurpose port, handling all types of cargo: containers, cars and Ro-Ro, various general cargo products, dry bulk, liquid bulk and passengers. The total throughput of the port in 2019 was 22.8 million tons, including 959,354 TEUs and 705,993 car units, making Koper the largest container terminal in Adriatic and one of the most important car terminals in Europe.

The Port of Koper has a strategic geographic position in the North Adriatic region and therefore important opportunities for servicing its Central European markets. It represents the shortest link from the Far East via Suez to Europe with a distance that is about 2,000 nautical miles shorter compared to other North-European ports and consequently enabling around 5 days

shorter navigation time. The consequent advantage is the optimization of the whole supply chain, making it more efficient and leaner, with substantial cost and time savings for the customer. Port of Koper offers also a developed network of railway services with daily train connections to main logistic and industrial centers in Central and Eastern Europe.

Over the past year, Port of Koper has been rapidly building new cargo-handling and storage facilities in order to preserve its leading position in north Adriatic port and in the Mediterranean. For 2020 there are 7 major infrastructure investments in the design or construction phase.

More information on www.luka-kp.si

Major investments in 2020

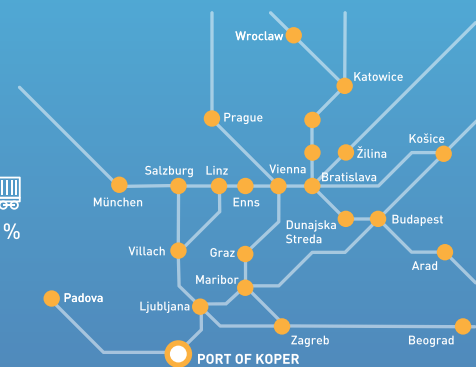
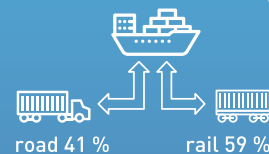


Daily train connections to Central Europe

 no. of trains handled annually >22.000

 no. of European rail destinations served weekly >25

Modal split
(of total throughput)



Solutions for Saving the Planet with the Help of the Sun and the Earth

In the future, the growing needs for energy will have to be met at the same time as the harmful effects on the environment are reduced. If we really want to save the planet, we will have to be “green” and “smart” at the same time.

Andreja Šalamun

Petrol see the circular economy as an opportunity for new business models and greater material efficiency, and a chance to create new green jobs.

Petrol Has Solutions for Reducing Consumption and Optimising Needs

Petrol, Slovenia's largest energy company and largest importer, say that electricity needs will certainly increase in the future in all segments – in industry as well as in transport, heating, cooling etc. “New sources of renewable energy will be required and are the only real answer if we want to save the planet,” they say.

“Petrol's mission lies in offering energy and environmental solutions that tackle both challenges, as our activities are focused mainly on reducing energy consumption and optimising needs, where we provide the required energy predominantly from renewable sources.” They have embarked on numerous energy-efficiency and renewable energy projects, and are also involved in sustainable mobility and sustainable urban development. They see the circular economy as an opportunity for new business models and greater material efficiency, and a chance to create new green jobs.

The company stress that practically all their energy and environmental systems solutions can be classed as green energy or environmental protection solutions. For example, they generate electricity and heat from renewable sources. “We want to be producing 500 GWh of electricity annually from renewable sources alone by 2025. This will be sufficient to supply 100,000 final customers,” they say.

They are also offering partners the “DISSy” (Digital Intelligent Smart Systems) comprehensive district heating solution, which enables a sustainable business model to be established and a district heating system to be developed as part of smart urban infrastructure, renovating public lighting systems (as

well as interior and exterior building lights), re-using industrial process water and water from automatic car-wash facilities, carrying out the comprehensive technological energy renovation of buildings, and providing solutions for alternative and e-mobility (biofuels, LPG, electricity).

The key markets for Petrol's energy and environmental systems are Slovenia and SE European markets (particularly Croatia, Serbia, Romania and Bulgaria); they also have projects under way in Italy, Austria and several countries in Eastern Europe.

BISOL Group Present on More Than 90 Markets

The BISOL Group are the only Slovenian mass producer of photovoltaic modules, and are one of the leading companies in Europe in this field. In addition to modules, they offer a variety of aluminium and polyethylene support structures for solar power units, hybrid and off-grid solar systems, solar lamps and other solar components.

In 2019 they sold 20% more of their products. The company are consolidating their leading position on several of the most important European markets, as well as expanding into new ones. “In 2018 and 2019 we made extensive investments in the updating of our production equipment and increased our production capacities by approximately 70%. We have also made excellent advances in our support structure solutions, and are awaiting the official launch of a new generation of support structures. We have unveiled higher-performance modules with higher peak power, and a new series of BISOL Duplex photovoltaic modules is just about to come out. We have upgraded our range of modules for niche markets with modules containing coloured glass,” say the company.



Photo: BISOL Group

The BISOL Group are the only Slovenian mass producer of photovoltaic modules, and are one of the leading companies in Europe in this field.



Photo: BISOL Group

The BISOL Group sell products on more than 90 markets. Although most of their sales are still in Europe, their share of Arabic and Asian markets is growing every year, and they are banking on future success in South America. They are keen to maintain and strengthen their position in Western Europe, focusing on bolstering their activities on those markets they have entered in recent years (including former Soviet countries, SE Asia, the Middle East and South America) and on the more forceful exploitation of new opportunities. When seeking new partners, the markets of the G20 are important to the company from a strategic point of view. As they point out, these are countries where economic growth is, in most cases, above average and where there is, consequently, a large energy deficit; moreover, the vast majority of these countries lie in areas with an abundance of sunshine.

Among the company's medium-term plans are the expansion of production to an additional location and the reintroduction of more active investment in their own solar power plant projects, which was a feature of the company's operations at the start of the decade. They say that their products have been incorporated into thousands of projects, and that they have been working with the large majority of their partners for years, whole decades or even longer. "They include energy multinationals such as ENEL, Engie, EDF and CEZ, some of the largest global distributors of electrical material (Sonepar, Rexel, Marchiol, etc.) as final customers, as well as some of the most globally recognised brands, including Volvo, BMW, IKEA, ALDI and Lidl," they explain.

Kronoterm Unveil a New Generation of Heat Pumps

The Slovenian Kronoterm company, which manufactures heat pumps, is able to boast that their heat pumps have been called "the most efficient in Europe" on multiple occasions. In 2019 they unveiled a new heat pump that is environment-friendly in terms of both carbon footprint and noise pollution reduction. "We are very innovative in pump development, ensuring that the products are efficient, economical to run, environment-friendly and useful – all of which is confirmed by the new generation that we presented to the market in September 2019," say the company. They are the first in Europe to use a new coolant that ensures that the pump's potential contribution to global warming is 78% lower.

They point out that the future lies in smart heat pumps networked into the central heating system so that the user merely has to set the desired room

The Slovenian Kronoterm company, which manufactures heat pumps, is able to boast that their heat pumps have been called "the most efficient in Europe" on multiple occasions.

Electricity needs will certainly increase in all segments – in industry, transport, heating, cooling and so on – which means that new renewable energy sources will be needed.



Photo: BISOL Group



Photo: Kronoterm

temperature. They have used more easily degradable materials that are more environment-friendly and can be recycled. They see industrial users and energy contractors in the household consumption market as comprising their main customer base.

Kronoterm have their own development laboratory in which they adhere to the relevant environmental parameters as dictated by legislation, conditions on the market, and their own desire for better and ever more efficient, smart and useful devices. When developing the “Adapt” heat pumps, they focused in particular on listening to all stakeholders involved in the planning, sales, installation, start-up, use and servicing processes.

One important major project is the heating of the Lušt greenhouse operated by the Slovenian company Paradajz (see page 40). “We have produced a system with 2 MW of power that uses waste geothermal energy from geothermal boreholes as its energy source, cools the tomato warehouses and heats 9 ha of greenhouse space. The investment was returned in one year,” say Kronoterm, who also point out that they carry out projects like the one above by looking to tailor their solutions to individual challenges and needs.

Almost Half Is Exported

The Slovenian market accounts for around 60% of Kronoterm’s sales, with the remainder being exported mainly to nearby countries. “Italy is very much opening up to us, as are Switzerland, Austria, Ireland, the Netherlands, the Czech Republic and neighbouring Balkan countries,” say the company, who add that private consumers and those involved in housebuilding (hot water heat pumps and heat pumps for heating smaller buildings) account for the biggest share of their activity abroad. In the last two years, the market for commercial, industrial solutions, involving 30 kW heating systems with up to 3 MW of thermal power, has seen continuous growth.

“We have loads of ideas, which means the challenges will be considerable, mainly in relation to the incorporation of heat pumps into larger systems and their operation. Development is moving towards having devices that are as easy as possible to install, that can be serviced in line with the ‘plug and play’ principle, that are as universal as possible regardless of heating system, and that meet the needs to the requisite extent,” say Kronoterm. Another challenge is ensuring smarter operation of the whole system. ■

BISOL sell products on more than 90 markets. Their share of Arabic and Asian markets is growing every year, and they are banking on future success in South America.

Increasing desire for energy autonomy

Over the last decade, photovoltaics have trod an interesting path: from their initial installation in larger electrical power plants to their introduction into numerous smaller-scale projects, and from the transmission of all generated electricity into the grid to today’s increasing consumption at the location itself. During this time, it has been transformed from one of the most expensive to one of the cheapest renewable energy sources. “In the past, it was dependent on subsidies and these were the main reason for investment. Now it has already become almost an economic imperative, as individuals and companies are investing in it in order to save on energy costs,” says Marko Poličnik, Vice-president of the management board of the BISOL Group. He adds that they sell most of their production on markets where there is no longer virtually any financial support. He believes that the gap between the market price of electricity and that of solar energy is strengthening in favour of the latter and that the desire for energy autonomy will only increase. “Where investments in renewable energy used to be founded on perceived value added, today it is becoming ever more indispensable for both progress and growth,” he adds.



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Creative

The Slovenian economy is creative. It recognises and promotes human talent and the creativity of professionals who create value added in companies. There are a number of hidden gems dotted around the country, aiming at tailored solutions for the most demanding global customers. One would be surprised at how many creative solutions in relation to special materials and intelligent living were found by Slovenian innovators, trying to make everyday life easier for everyone.

Tailor-Made Products

From extremely high-power cameras and biometric documents to gear wheels.

Barbara Perko

Up to 700 High-Quality Images in One Second

The Optomotive company develops, manufactures and sells cameras for machine vision applications. Their embedded cameras with enormous computing power are capable of image pre-processing in real time, and are thus most suited for demanding high-speed applications. They are tailored and equipped with different image processing cores, such as triangulation, blob-detection, edge-detection, RLE compression and the fastest JPEG compression on the market. "The camera itself carries out the basic image processing procedures. Our camera determines what should be visible in the image, which allows us to avoid two bottlenecks: the interface bandwidth and the computer's computing power, so we are able to obtain images in real time," says the company's managing director Barbara Rakovec Gorkič.

Gorkič. Since the images are processed in the camera itself, they can offer very high image capture speeds and high resolution. "We have built a camera that can capture 700 images per second at 2.8 megapixels," says Rakovec Gorkič.

Their cameras are therefore used to scan rails used by high-speed trains. The camera is built into a special device installed between the wheels of passenger trains which scans the tracks as the train passes over them. Their cameras are also used in physiotherapy and sports. They place markers on a person's joints, and then track the person's movements using sixteen cameras placed at various angles. In this way they can determine whether patients have correct mobility after head injuries. They are also used in sports technique analysis.

The majority of their cameras are used for 3D laser scanning, surveillance, robot guidance and artificial intelligence. In the latter category they are introducing a new feature for 2020, an AI camera, which they think will be a very interesting product.

Optomotive generates more than 90% of its sales on foreign markets, with its largest market being Scandinavia, followed by the EU, Israel, the USA and Canada. They develop both new company products and tailor-made products. "One customer wants a different connector, while another wants a different change. Our individualised approach, flexibility and speed separate us from the competition," says Rakovec Gorkič.

From Personal Documents to Packaging Solutions

CETIS is one of the leading European companies in security and commercial printing. In the field of security printing CETIS has been a proud partner of Slovenia with regard to all travel and personal security documents since the country's independence in 1991. Their target markets are in Africa, Latin America and the Middle East. They provide travel and personal documents as well as other security printing materials (e.g. biometric passports, ID documents, visas, birth certificates, driving and vehicle licences, ballot papers). They also offer comprehensive turnkey solutions for identity management and



Photo: Optomotive

Optomotive's embedded cameras with enormous computing power are capable of image pre-processing in real time, and are thus most suited for demanding high-speed applications.

The company are introducing a new feature for 2020, an artificial intelligence (AI) camera, which they think will be a very interesting product.

CETIS has been a proud partner of Slovenia with regard to all travel and personal security documents since the country's independence in 1991.



Photo: Optomotive



Photo: Cetis

document issuance for a complete e-Government solution. Increasing security challenges all over the world are increasing demand for more effective personal protection and stricter identity control. Therefore they are developing new and better-protected features for security documents as well as comprehensive turnkey solutions for modernisation of e-Government which facilitate work and save time and money.

CETIS, together with its subsidiaries AMBA CO. and EGP, also provides a wide range of packaging solutions for the beverages and food industry, and the pharmaceuticals and cosmetics industries in Western and Central Europe (especially Austria, Germany and France). Together these companies form the largest graphic packaging group in Slovenia. They provide labels, sleeves, wraparound labels, various solutions for brand protection, multicolour printed flexible packaging and offset-printed cardboard packaging. Following the industry trends their development is focused on flexible packaging, smart packaging solutions, brand protection and sustainable alternatives.

The Polycom company develops processes and tools for products in accordance with their customers' designs.

Development According to Customer Designs

"The Polycom company develops processes and tools for products in accordance with our customers' designs. We are continuing to develop the market, processes and tools for gear wheels," say company sources. They work chiefly with the car industry, followed by household appliances and industrial markets. The majority of their turnover is generated in Germany (32%), followed by Romania (15%), Mexico (over 11%), Austria (at just under 9%) and Slovenia (at 7.3%).

"Current forecasts in the car industry indicate a 5% drop in orders next year, while the household appliances market is forecast to grow by 10-15%. In view of the new projects we have obtained, we believe that in 2020 we will be able to increase sales by 10% over 2019," company sources say.

The industry is facing increased competition due to structural changes in the car industry, increased demand due to supplier consolidation and increased customer interest in establishing local suppliers. In 2020 Polycom will be facing significant challenges, among them, the execution of new projects on industrial markets. ■



Photo: Marež Paternoster



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Development Dictated by Environmental Protection and Reduction in Environmental Footprint

Consumer awareness of the importance of health and a clean environment is rapidly rising, and demands for the smallest possible environmental footprint are getting ever louder. Consumers are becoming ever more demanding and this is influencing the development of the materials industry.

Andreja Šalamun

MATPRO, one of nine Slovenian strategic development and innovation partnerships (SDIP), is attempting to increase value added per employee in companies engaged in the production of alloys and metals by 25%, exports and value added per employee in the area of smart coatings by 20%, and investments in the development of smart multi-component materials by 15%, value added per employee in the field of multi-component materials by 5% and exports in that field by 10%, all by 2023. As they point out, this goal will be achieved through targeted cooperation, activities in support of internationalisation, human resource development, sustainable development, enterprise, and the sharing of knowledge and resources in the materials field, where Slovenian companies are already creating success stories at the global level. An adequate research and development environment, particularly for small and medium-sized enterprises, must be established. So what are the companies doing?

Talum Enters E-mobility Market

In recent years, Talum have been producing increasing numbers of aluminium products with high value added, in addition to primary aluminium. They say that they are Europe's market leader on slugs and discs market and that "by offering all three of the most commonly used casting technologies, [they] are successfully entering the e-mobility market".

In 2018 Talum were the first (and are so far the only) manufacturer of slugs on the European market that contain more than 25% recycled waste aluminium.

They have developed battery housing for Samsung for hybrid and electric cars, wheel brackets for THK (to be incorporated into Jaguar Land Rover products), and the C6 heat exchanger for Bosch TT, and are manufacturing structural aluminium cast alloys and billets with specific characteristics at their own foundry.

They have registered a new trademark, HEATRAPLATES (HEAT TRAnsfer PLATES), aimed primarily at the electric vehicles and vessels markets (cooling plates for battery packs), and their products have also found a use as condensers in hot water heat pumps, in laboratory freezers, in waste-heat recovery units in commercial kitchens and solar receivers.

By 2023 value added per employee in alloy and steel manufacturing companies should increase by 25%.

Talum have been producing increasing numbers of aluminium products with high value added, in addition to primary aluminium. They are Europe's largest manufacturer of slugs and discs.



Photo: Talum

They have registered a new trademark, HEATRAPLATES (HEAT TRANSFER PLATES), aimed at the electric vehicles and vessels markets.

In the area of castings, the most high-profile companies that Talum work with are KTM, VW, Scania and Wabco.

Aluminium-based composites have great potential for use in the automotive industry.



Photo: Seven Refractories

Seven Refractories highlight their environment-friendly taphole clays and cement-free products, which enable rapid installation and a short start-up cycle.

Products for Strong Brands

By development of alloyed slugs they became recognised as a developing, sustainable and innovative company in the packaging business. Alloyed slugs enable thinner-walled aerosol cans to be manufactured, thus saving on material and consequently decrease the CO₂ footprint of the product. "We have therefore been able to successfully position the Talum brand name on the aerosol cans market. Indirectly through our customers, we have managed to persuade multinationals including Unilever, L'Oréal, Henkel and Procter & Gamble of the advantages of using alloyed aerosol cans. As a result, Talum's validation as a supplier of slugs for aerosol cans for those companies' projects is taking place much more quickly and in a much more straightforward way," say the company.

In the area of castings, the most high-profile companies that Talum work with are KTM, VW, Scania and Wabco. They are a well-known supplier of cast alloys to an increasing number of European car part foundries (Nemak, Magna, Georg Fischer) and billets for construction, machine construction and the automotive industry (Impol, Kety, Sepal). For many years they have manufactured evaporators for well-known refrigerator manufacturers such as Gorenje, B/S/H, Whirlpool and Liebherr, and more recently have been working with major manufacturers of battery packs for electric vehicles.

Key Markets Are Packaging and Transport Industries, Heat Technology and Machine Engineering

Their key market for slugs is the packaging industry for food, cosmetics, personal care, chemicals and other products in Europe, while for castings their key markets are the transport industry (cars, commercial vehicles, motorcycles), heat technology (heat exchangers) and general mechanical engineering (filter housings, cableway technology, machine components).

"Our products are in demand in situations where very high efficiency for the heat transfer of plate exchangers is required, and at a moderate price. These are: high-efficiency coolers in household and commercial refrigerators, solar receivers (solar thermal collectors, hybrid photovoltaic (PVT) panels), manufacturers of sanitary heat pumps and manufacturers of battery packs for electric vehicles," say Talum.

They add that cooperation with new business partners is always in full swing in all segments of production, but admit that "the need and desire for growth and the saturation of the market in Europe are forcing us to look for new opportunities for our slugs outside Europe." They have recently developed 21 new products for four existing and seven new customers in the castings segment; these are international corporations that offer great potential for an increase in the scope of collaboration. Efforts



Photo: Talum

have been stepped up in the electric vehicles product group. While the company has known customers on the European market for its cast alloys and billets, sales on distant markets are of little interest given the high transport costs.

Adding Particles to Improve Mechanical Properties

They are currently developing a process of manufacturing aluminium alloys in an electrolytic cell where, through the continuous or periodic addition of metal oxides into the electrolytic process, they are able to partly produce an alloy for further use. "The guidelines requiring lower product weight and therefore lower CO₂ emissions are guiding us in our efforts to upgrade our aluminium alloys by mixing in particles that significantly improve their mechanical properties. These are aluminium-based composites that have great potential for use in the car industry," the company explain.

In the area of slug manufacture, they are developing new alloys that will upgrade the existing ones and enable aerosol cans to be manufactured even more efficiently, while a starter housing for the BMW R18 motorcycle is in its final stage of development. "Serial production will start in 2020. We are also developing several new motorcycle components for the same customer," they say.



Photo: Seven Refractories

Optimising Inventories

Talum have noticed that the market is cooling in all manufacturing segments. "European economic growth is slowing, so preventive optimisation of inventories along the whole sales chain is taking place," they point out. They are noticing negative trends mainly in the car industry, while the household refrigeration sector is coming under considerable pressure from cheaper imports from the Far East and the new EU Energy Labelling Directive.

Taphole Clays from Seven Refractories Designed for World-leading Companies

That the ecological component of any product is becoming increasingly important is something Seven Refractories are only too well aware of. As chairman of the management board Erik Zobec points out, requirements for high production quality, a reduction in energy costs and the shortest possible interruptions to the production process predominate on the key industries in which they operate, while ecological standards require environment-friendly products and energy efficiency in their installation.

They are present on all continents and most heavily on the Russian, German, Italian and Indian markets, with Dalmia Seven operating successfully in Katna, India.



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Photo: Helios

Helios have been engaged in developing innovative functional coatings for a number of years, with the raw materials coming from renewable sources.

Helios are expanding business operations into new markets in Africa and Central Asia, where they have launched numerous projects.

"Of all the products we have developed in recent years, we would like to highlight our environment-friendly taphole clays and cement-free products, which enable rapid installation and a short start-up cycle," says Zobec, who also points out that the clays are manufactured for world-leading iron and steel works such as NLMK, VoestAlpine, U.S. Steel and ArcelorMittal.

"We listen and cater to customers, design and seek out suitable high-quality solutions, present our products and tailor them to our customers' requirements. Our technical teams install materials and provide solutions 'in situ'. The biggest names we do business with are Heidelberg, Isdemir, Danieli, ArcelorMittal and Evraz," says Zobec, adding that they are present on all continents and most heavily on the Russian, German, Italian and Indian markets. "Our joint venture with the Indian giant Dalmia Bharat Group and the establishment of Dalmia Seven has fully consolidated manufacturing and operational realities in Katna, India after only two years," he says. The next challenge is to expand business into Asia and the United States.

Adapting to Customers

They are constantly expanding their range of products (particularly their cement-free products). Their greatest challenge and, at the same time, greatest advantage lies in development and in tailoring their products to the individual needs of the customer. "In the case of the Shot 92 NR 08 Z 'shotcrete', which enables steel ladles to be repaired very quickly and uses less material than previous technologies, we already refined several variations in 2019 and achieved the high quality target we set ourselves," says Zobec. They are aware that their activity is also subject to fluctuations in production in heavy industry, which has itself already seen crises of varying magnitudes. "In moments such as those, the development and diversification of the end-product range has enabled Seven Refractories to keep growing," he

adds. He is convinced that this will continue in the future and that they will continue to seek out new markets and consolidate their position on existing ones. "What are required are a clear vision, ambitious targets and a little bit of luck."

Helios Develops Innovative Functional Coatings

Helios have been engaged in developing innovative functional coatings for a number of years. They are continually launching new products and development achievements that meet the strictest environmental regulations, offer more protection, and are more cost-effective and durable. "We are focused on the development of water-soluble materials, materials with very high levels of dry matter, various 'functional' coatings, and coatings and polymers from raw materials from sustainable sources," say Helios.

They have gained the trust of many recognised manufacturers of machines, containers, steel structures and equipment for agricultural, construction and excavation work. They also have customers in the commercial transport and wood-processing industries. "We work with larger European transport infrastructure operators and subcontractors, who use our coatings on road surfaces across Europe. Our products are also used by major European household appliance manufacturers, and our architectural coatings can be found on homes across Central and Eastern Europe, as well as on major construction projects such as hotels, shops and so on," they say.

Present in More Than 100 Countries

While they export mainly to EU and ex-Soviet countries, they are also developing successfully on many other markets. Indeed, they have a presence in more than 100 countries.

As Helios point out, the worsening of the situation on Western European markets provides them with additional impetus to expand business operations into new markets in Africa and Central Asia, where



Photo: Helios

they have launched numerous projects. "We should point out here the success enjoyed by the company's car-repair coatings in South Africa."

Reduced Carbon Footprint

The Helios Group are also developing new coatings and solutions with the aim of reducing the consumption of all types of resources and their products' carbon footprint. "We would also like to help our customers improve their processes in terms of coating sustainability or general optimisation of the process," they say.

Most recently, they have introduced several innovative products, including products designed for the generation of energy from renewable sources. "We should highlight the coatings for the photovoltaic industry that provide customers with a cost-effective and permanent solution for supplying cheap and reliable solar energy to end-users. A new backsheet coating for photovoltaic panels offers the functionalities of the existing multi-layered system with a greater number of sheets, but with the same level of efficiency and at a considerably lower price. Using the innovative coating increases the process efficiency of backsheet producers and reduces their carbon footprint considerably," they explain.

They point out that the key guidelines driving development in the coatings industry are a growing awareness of the importance of health, a clean environment and a reduction in environmental footprint, together with ever greater expectations regarding coating properties on the part of customers. In 2020 the company are expecting sales growth to slow on Western European markets and a strong influence exerted by the political and macroeconomic environment, which will have negative effects on demand.



Photo: Tomo Jesenčnik

Advanced Tool Steel, Winner of a CCIS Award, Developed by the SIJ Group

In 2019 the SIJ Group successfully launched the SITHERM 2343 hot-work tool steel, which is designed for the manufacture of tools for the hot-working and casting of non-ferrous metals. "We have developed an innovative cost-effective and time-saving manufacturing process in which the steel retains its typical characteristics. We have also successfully developed the SIHARD S671 – DURAWEAR cold-work tool steel, for which we won a national silver innovation award from the Chamber of Commerce and Industry (CCIS). In addition to steels, we should mention two new products from the 'mechanical engineering' line from the SIJ Ravne Systems company. The first involves a unique system for the automated handling of rods, while the second features an adapted technological solution or automatic device for the batching of bulk



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the European market for the “mechanical engineering” sales programme, specifically for the production of parts, housings and components of machinery and systems equipment. They are also pressing ahead with expanding the portfolio of customers for wrought-iron products for the aluminium industry. “We are always keen to forge new strategic and development partnerships across the world,” says Falatov, adding that a process of certification under the AS9100 aviation industry standard is under way for the marketing of a new range of SIJ Metal Ravne specialist steels on the American and European aviation markets.

They are currently developing specialist hot-work tool steel with increased heat conductivity, useful for the manufacture of tools for pressure casting and hot stamping, and are also actively engaged in developing specialist cold-work tool steel with increased wear-resistance for use in industrial knives and rollers for the cold rolling of sheet metal.

Steels and Steel Products No Longer Being Bought for Inventory

While orders were satisfactory in the first half of 2019, the tool and specialist steels programme has begun to see a reduction in the number of new orders, reflecting reduced demand from the automotive industry and related metalworking and mechanical engineering sectors. Falatov explains that customers have become extremely cautious in their purchasing decisions because of the unstable market conditions, and that they are opting not to buy steel and steel products for inventory.

He believes that the slowdown in economic growth in the EU, the increase in geopolitical tensions and tensions between the superpowers, and the protectionist measures taken by the US are all introducing great uncertainty into business decision-making and, at the same time, encouraging the introduction of money-saving measures.

“To ensure that we retain our market position, the SIJ Group will have to invest more effort in maintaining and strengthening partnerships with key customers and ensure cost-effectiveness and the retention of competitive capacities at all levels,” he stresses. He adds that the SIJ Group are developing steel for the exacting nuclear industry and, in so doing, exploiting synergies between their two steel-making concerns. At SIJ Metal Ravne, therefore, they are manufacturing the purest forged steel, which is then rolled and heat-treated at SIJ Acroni for the nuclear market. ■

The SIJ Group are developing steel for the exacting demands of the nuclear industry.

aluminium into the induction furnace,” explains SIJ Group marketing head Aleš Falatov.

The group’s SINOXX E770, SINOXX 4923 and SINOXX 4903 steels for turbine blades are incorporated into turbines made by the biggest names in the energy industry, while customers for the SIHARD2363 and SITHERM2344 steels for diesel engine injectors include major global companies. SIJ Group industrial knives are incorporated into internationally renowned brands of machinery for the manufacture and processing of wood, metal, paper, plastic and rubber.

Large Majority of Income Generated Abroad

Every year the SIJ Group generates almost 85% of its income on foreign markets, particularly in Germany, Italy, America and Russia. As Falatov says, the Group would like, in future, to forge links with new partners, and particularly with final customers on the European, American and Asian markets.

“We are also focusing on and investing in cooperation with users of high-quality tool and special stainless steels and industrial knives. So we are looking for new distributors to help us expand our sales network to the American market,” he explains. They would like to establish a strategic partnership on

Every year the SIJ Group generates almost 85% of its income on foreign markets, particularly in Germany, Italy, America and Russia.

A strategic development-innovation partnership called SRIP MATPRO (MATERIALs as final PROducts) is active in Slovenia. Its key objective is to establish a value chain, with an emphasis on the manufacture of materials designed for the production of complex products with high value added and great potential for incorporation into global value chains.

Smart Appliances Will Conquer the World

Intelligent living is not just technologically perfected, but also energy-efficient and environmentally friendly. These are the very objectives being pursued by Slovenian companies trying to make everyday life easier and to raise the standard of living.

Nina Šprohar

Gorenje Focused on Digitalising Household Appliances

At the company Gorenje, which manufactures household appliances, they are currently developing the new platform ConnectLife, which will link the operation of smart appliances and services for all the Hisense Group brands via one single application. "This means that your home can have an Asko oven, Gorenje washing machine and Hisense air conditioning, and you can control them all via the same application on your phone, through a Hisense television or by voice commands through a smart speaker or assistant," the company explains.

In addition to this, their appliances will be able to 'take care of themselves', for instance by reporting a fault to the service provider, being able to communicate with each other (for instance the hood will turn off the cooker ring if the temperature in the pot is too high), and will also be able to guide users (for instance on how to prepare a tasty dish). They will be boosting their range of household appliances, and at the end of March 2020 under the Atag brand they will be offering users in the Netherlands a complete set of smart kitchen appliances, enhanced with the useful digital services as part of ConnectLife.

Their smart appliances under the Hisense brand are already present in multiple markets, with TV sets and air conditioning in Australia, the USA, South Africa and several European markets, and Hisense TV sets are also available in Slovenia. Sales of smart appliances under other brands, such as Asko and Gorenje, are planned to start at the beginning of 2021.

They say that demand is growing for innovative products such as smart appliances, and for new services such as content platforms on smart televisions. In the words of Vladimir Nardin, head of digital marketing at Gorenje, in the last three years the Gorenje Group has already digitalised extensively,

ranging from databases and backup processes to the new digital platform and new products and services, while digitalisation is continuing within the Hisense Group.

Pirnar Makes the First Contactless Entrance Wall

The company Pirnar believes that innovations are vital to the development and competitiveness of the company, since innovative products on a global level increase recognisability and credibility. They have developed the OneTouch door – it has no visible handles and operates by fingerprint – and they have taken this one step further by creating the Theatrica entrance wall, the first contactless and completely automatic entrance wall on the market – it opens by the owner looking at it. Their novel features also include handles with an illuminated pattern or wording called LabelLux, plus Magmalux handles of glowing metal and Crystalux handles of glowing crystal.



Photo: Gorenje

The new platform ConnectLife will enable users to manage connectable or smart appliances and services of all Hisense Group brands via a single application.



Photo: Gorenje

Pirnar's OneTouch door operates by fingerprint, and the Theatrica entrance wall, the first contactless and completely automatic entrance wall on the market, opens by the owner looking at it.



Photo: Pirnar

Pirnar have their own franchises in the USA, Germany, UK, Spain, Austria, Luxembourg and the United Arab Emirates.

In its development of bio or recyclable lines the Skaza company is collaborating with external institutions, principally faculties and their laboratories, to develop the best possible products.

Bokashi Organko facilitates for users the implementation of a circular economy at home, where biological waste is generated, in the kitchen.

To date their products have earned numerous international awards, such as the Red Dot Product Design Award, German Design Award Winner, German Innovation Award Winner, Architizer and more.

They currently have their own franchises in the USA, Germany, UK, Spain, Austria, Luxembourg and the United Arab Emirates. They are striving to expand their wide network of partners across the world, and they expect to be present soon in new markets. They are ready for new growth; in 2018 to this end they made their production premises several times bigger, thereby doubling their production capacity.

Skaza Battling Against Single Use Plastic

The Skaza company is continuing its development, which involves collaborating with external institutions, principally faculties and their laboratories, to develop the best possible products. They are focused mainly on the development of organic or recyclable lines, and have also created a new, smarter generation of the kitchen composter Bokashi Organko 2, of which they are currently especially proud, since it has received a lot of national and international acclaim, including placement in the Solutions 2019 category and a Red Dot design award. It facilitates the implementation of a circular economy at home, where biological waste is generated, in the kitchen. By means of a special natural grit, the Bokashi Organko converts organic waste into the basis for compost, and the fermentation liquid that is generated can be used to water flowers and garden produce. "The organic waste lifecycle is thereby completed," Skaza explain.

Another novel feature is the EcoCareCup made from sugar cane, which is degradable and intended for multiple use to replace single use plastic coffee cups.

Their products and solutions can be found in more than 50 countries around the world. "Our markets

and their customers are very environmentally aware, they are responsible to themselves and their health and towards preserving the planet in general. This is especially true of the EU countries, all of Scandinavia, Canada and gradually others," they explain. In this way they are pursuing the trends that dictate the sustainable development of new materials and technologies and the transfer of knowledge via products without additional environmental burdens. "The common thread of development is sustainable materials. Not just recycled materials and bio polymers, but also materials where we are increasingly focused on LCA analysis, and in this way we monitor all environmental aspects," they conclude.



Photo: Skaza

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Steklarna Hrastnik is collaborating with the Slovenian start up company Perfume-Tech to develop the first smart perfume bottle in the world.

Domel has developed an innovative new electric motor with a power range from 5 to 50 kW, which in combination with its electronics achieves the highest efficiency of any of its batch-produced motors.

In the sector of energy-efficient electric motors to drive ventilators Domel succeeded in breaking into the demanding market of data centres in 2019.

Hrastnik Glassworks Make Smart Perfume Bottles

The Steklarna Hrastnik glassworks company is currently intensively involved in the development of the first smart perfume bottle in the world, and they are collaborating with the Slovenian start up company Perfume-Tech. "Modern technology today offers endless possibilities for designing glass to which we add new functionalities – so for instance the smart perfume bottle will enable the personalisation of the fragrance, protection against counterfeiting and the collection of data," the company explains.

They are especially proud of all their reference projects in the area of packaging glass, with pride of place going to their collaboration with the Fragrance Foundation France (a foundation that awards FiFi prizes in the area of perfumes). Recently they expanded their range of products in the HighGlass Spirits collection, developing three new spirit bottles – Jupiter Polaris, Orion and Luna – and adding new sizes to existing bottles.

Parallel to this they are seeking new solutions with the aim of further reducing their environmental footprint. Recently they installed a solar generator, which they will link to a hydrogen pilot plant in which they will generate hydrogen. "In this way we will develop new technologies for melting glass with hydrogen, and consequently reduce the carbon footprint of the glassworks," they add.

Their products are present in 55 different world markets, and they want to consolidate their position in the USA, France and UK. "We are constantly seeking new opportunities and possibilities there to increase cooperation with the owners of spirit and perfume brands, including opening our own sales offices; one is already open, in the French city of Cognac, and the opening of an office in the USA will follow," they say of their plans. They are continuing to invest in automation, digitalisation and the use of robots, in this way establishing the foundations for the transition to industry 4.0.



Domel's Motors Cool Google and Facebook Server Premises

Domel, which develops electric motors, is currently involved in several development projects to electrify cars and garden equipment. The emphasis is on motors of small and medium power, with importance given to innovative solutions in terms of energy and materials efficiency. Domel recently developed an innovative new motor with a power range from 5 to 50 kW, which in combination with its electronics achieves the highest efficiency of any of its batch-produced motors. "With the new motors we have filled a gap in the product range and can now offer a complete range of motors with over 96% efficiency," they say. The products were created on the basis of years of experience with standard materials and existing technologies, which is at the same time compatible with control electronics, which offers very high efficiency of the entire system.

Domel are continuing their strategy of diversification, and in 2019 in the sector of energy-efficient electric motors to drive ventilators they entered the demanding market of data centres. "Our motors are used to cool rooms where IT equipment for servers is installed, for instance Facebook and Google," they say. By starting to offer data centre applications their profile has been enhanced, so they anticipate more opportunities with new customers and thereby growth in earnings.

Through new investments they are also strengthening their position in the area of battery powered garden equipment and e-mobility, but in the market they are already sensing the consequences of a slowdown in economic growth, while they will try to compensate for any shortfall in orders through new projects entering production in 2020 and 2021.

Trimo Has Growing Market for Renovating and Remodelling Old Buildings

Trimo offers comprehensive fireproof wall and facade systems. They say that this means they need to be constantly considering lifestyle trends and responding to environmental policy, and in their planning to take into account climate change. They also focus on systems that they can provide in the same time frame and with the same efficiency, but with more rapid installation.

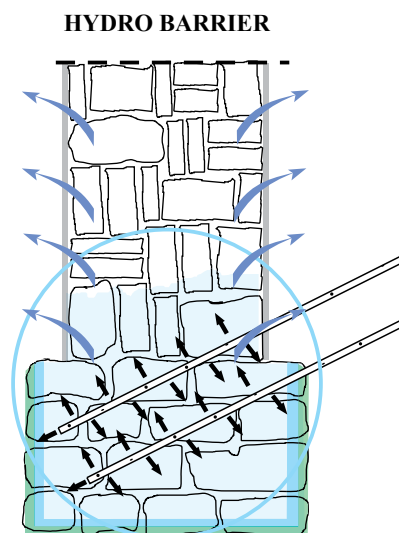
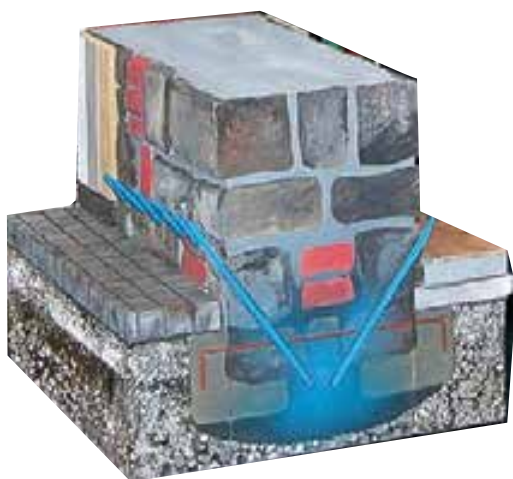
The core of their business is comprised of mineral wool installations. "We were the first in the world to start continuous production of the fireproof sandwich panels with mineral wool – the best known one is our facade system Qbiss One," they say. This is a highly insulating prefabricated facade system with modular facade elements and a smooth metal surface. "In 2019 we developed another new product, a highly innovative ventilated facade with a special middle part of aluminium honeycomb, which stands out for its aesthetics and durability," they add.

Their systems are present in more than 100 markets, with priority going to the countries of Western Europe, especially Germany, the UK, France

STABILISATION OF SOIL, FOUNDATIONS AND BUILDING WALLS

EUROPEAN PATENT EP – 2000100035 STATIC STABILISATION OF BUILDINGS AND SOIL

- DETERIORATED MASONRY FOUNDATIONS
- MASONRY STRUCTURES WITH NO FOUNDATIONS
- BELOW WATER TABLE



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From now on Marles will design buildings using virtual reality technology: customers will be able to walk around a new house even before it's been built.

Development at Marles is geared towards complete energy self-sufficiency for the majority of buildings.



Photo: Marles

and Benelux, where they want to consolidate their position, and the Balkan region, where they have a factory in Serbia. Although economic growth might be slowing down, an important market in the renovation of old buildings is opening up.

Marles Aiming for Zero-Energy Buildings

Marles produces wooden prefabricated low-energy, passive or almost zero-energy buildings. "Our system of construction is being adapted as far as possible to environmental construction, which in our opinion will make further gains in the future," they say. In addition to their environmental appeal, renewable materials also enable minimal maintenance costs throughout the lifetime of the building, and an important guideline in development is the individual, since each house is the fruit of individual wishes. Their development is geared towards complete energy self-sufficiency for the majority of buildings.

From now on Marles will design buildings using virtual reality technology. "Using this we will enable customers to walk around a new house even before it's been built," they explain, adding that the new technology also enables a simulation of the daily movement of the sun, which is of great help both for the customer and architect in placing the building in the location.

They export around two thirds of their buildings, with their biggest export markets being in Switzerland, Austria, Italy and Germany. In the future they want to strengthen their presence in the Benelux markets and also to gain a presence in Scandinavia. Currently their biggest project is in Germany, involving 18 residential units. They carried out a similar project for the same customer three years ago, and this earned them the Deutscher Holzbau Preis 2017.

In the future they want to strengthen their presence in the Benelux markets and also to gain a presence in Scandinavia.

Trimo offers comprehensive fireproof wall and facade systems. Trimo systems are present on more than 100 markets.

They say that in 2020 they are practically fully booked up. Bogdan Božac of Marles adds that the biggest challenges in the first half of 2020 will be associated with the extensive reorganisation and modernisation of production, then they want to further strengthen the distribution network in key markets and consolidate their position as the leading Slovenian manufacturer and exporter of wooden buildings. ■

Stilles's Innovations in Wooden Furniture

Stilles is one of the best and most successful Slovenian companies involved in the manufacture and installation of top-quality hotel furniture and doors, as well as finishing works in hotel construction worldwide. Stilles is present in more than 30 markets in Europe, Asia and North America. "Our objective for the next five years is to rank among the five largest hotel interior design companies in Central Europe," says Rok Barbič, CEO of the company.

He also explains that the company employs a range of materials – wood, stone, metal, and glass. In 2018, the company developed a wood surface treatment with a patinated brass effect, which was awarded as the best innovation by the Chamber of Commerce and Industry of Slovenia. Even more important is their innovation in wood surface protection, dubbed Re:NEW. This special treatment process produces a matting agent that ensures water repellency and fingerprint and stain resistance on a variety of surfaces. The major advantage of this process is that small scratches on the treated surface can be easily repaired with a cloth and hot water. "This gives a much greater durability to our furniture," explains the CEO.



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The Slovenian economy is smart. It offers an array of efficient, high-tech globally recognised solutions, products and services in the fields of smart electronics, IT and pharmaceuticals, to name but a few areas. Digitalisation and virtualisation are already shaping our future and, hopefully, a smart factory demo centre, opened in Slovenia in mid-2019, will help develop a better future for us all.

Slovenia Presents a Smart Factory Demo Centre

A smart factory demo centre opened in Slovenia in June 2019. This is the only such centre in the country, which 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 the Kolektor Group. According to Niko Herakovič, Head of the LASIM lab, artificial intelligence will upgrade all current technologies 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 (CCIS) at the end of May 2019, 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

Samo Hribar Milič, CCIS Executive Manager, reported that the value added per employee in Slovenian industry averaged around EUR 45,000 in 2018 and that 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 CCIS, Sonja Šmuc, the goal of the economy is to increase the 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 is vital for us to be able to predict which skills we will need in the future," she added.

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

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



Photo: Kraljart

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 value added 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.

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. They organized its first Iskratel Innovation Day for secondary-school and university students, and they have engaged as partners in the socially responsible

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.

projects. One of them is called We're Going to Be Engineers!, the other one Every Student to the Company! In the past, the company participated in the Slovenian Economy Open Day, which takes place under the aegis of the CCIS.

In addition, they are heavily involved in the Smart Cities and Communities Strategic Development-Innovation Partnership, especially in the area of security. 5G Security 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 Sistemske 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.

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

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.





Photo: Depositphotos

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 traceability 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 automatisisation and a method of exchanging data in industry, which closely links automatisisation with new IT solutions and integrates it into the IoT concept (the introduction of cloud-based technologies). We are 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 in 2020. ■

Kolektor Digital

Over the past three years, a new pillar of the 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.

According to Leban, "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". 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.

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

Digitalisation and Virtualisation Crafting the Future

Virtualisation and digitalisation are without doubt key technological trends that are already marking the development of technologies and will also strongly shape society in the future.

Andreja Šalamun



Photo: ETI

ETI Elektroelement has already won several awards for innovations on the national level.

Currently ETI are very interested in the areas of sustainable energy, i.e. solar and wind energy, protection of battery systems and also e-mobility and smart houses.

The Iskratel Group's products and systems for a safe and smart future are present in more than 50 countries.

Innovations Are the Driver

ETI Elektroelement operates in a conservative market, yet their progress is driven by innovations, for which the company has already earned awards several times on the national level. They have a very wide product range and are present in the segment of protecting electrical installations in residential and commercial buildings, in industry, low and medium voltage electricity distribution, power electronics and semiconductors, photovoltaics and other renewable sources and in the area of special purpose fuses. They also produce technical ceramics and plastic.

They are present in more than 60 countries. "We sell mostly in Europe, where we have created a network of subsidiaries and business partners with whom we have cooperated for a number of years," says the managing director of ETI Elektroelement, Tomaž Berginc.

Banking on Higher Value Added Products

"Through products with higher value added we are securing new customers, generating additional earnings and greater profits which we can invest in the development of new products. Also the firm is ranked among innovative companies in its sector, and thereby among the leaders in the market," says Berginc.

He explains that new business partners are always welcome, but stresses that proper business relations with existing partners is even more important. "Currently we are very interested in the area of sustainable energy, i.e. solar and wind power and protection of battery systems. Of course another opportunity lies in e-mobility, where ETI products already have a presence. Products for what are called smart houses are also of interest," he says. He anticipates that in the coming year they will further increase sales, mainly owing to products with higher value added.

Berginc is convinced that one of the significant trends demanding attention is the area of smart networks together with sustainable energy.

Developing a New Generation of the Platform for Smart and Safe Cities

The Iskratel Group's products and systems for a safe and smart future are present in more than 50 countries, and in Germany they are opening a representative office. They are linking up business partners with the digital technologies of the future: cloud systems, virtualisation and the 5G network. Iskratel will be the first partner in setting up the fifth



Photo: ETI

generation network, or 5G, in Slovenia, and currently they are collaborating on 5G development projects in Russia.

They are developing a new generation of the platform for smart and safe cities, and based on IoT technology they are providing a platform for managing large quantities of data in the energy sector and for responding to emergencies (IRM-R) in rail transport.

"In the area of broadband networks we are proud of the innovation GPON OLT as an 'amphibian', the first such system in the world, which at the end of September received a silver award from the Slovenian Chamber of Commerce (CCIS)," say Iskratel. They point out that they are market leaders with solutions in the area of pLTE in mines. The first such project is already in the testing stage and will take off in the Russian market next year. In 2020 they are also planning to set up a 5G partner programme as a platform for developing a 5G ecosystem in the region.

They point out that with more than 70 years of experience in electronics manufacturing services (EMS) they are entering growing markets and sectors such as renewable sources, waste management, industry 4.0 and medicine. "We received the medical certificate EN ISO 13485 in November 2019. Our



Photo: Iskratel

goal is to produce niche products to meet complex requirements, and at the same time to produce our own medical accessories. Depending on the agreements with customers, we are planning the first series production items for the first half of 2020," they reveal.

Iskratel are linking up business partners with the digital technologies of the future: cloud systems, virtualisation and 5G.

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Photo: Iskra

Recently Iskra have devoted considerable attention to maintaining a healthy living environment, specifically the treatment of agricultural and industrial water.

They say that their systems in the domain of 5G for transport, energy and public safety will enable partners to digitally transform industry. "We are in the concluding stage of the European research assignment 5G Safety, which focuses on reliable 5G communication systems for stakeholders in the field of PPDR - Public Protection and Disaster Relief," they say.

"Virtualisation and digitalisation are without doubt key technological trends that are already strongly marking the development of technologies and influencing our business and product portfolio, and will also strongly shape society in the future," say Iskratel with confidence.

Products Known All Over the World

Iskra's line of business covers a wide range of different products and systems. "We are proud of our measurement technology, especially the Power Quality Meter MC 784, which is a global leader of such products," they say at Iskra. They manufacture energy condensers, and are widely recognised for their electronic condensers for white goods, as well as being ranked

Iskraemeco works with numerous power distribution companies throughout the world. As much as 96% of their income is generated on foreign markets.

among the best for filters to prevent electromagnetic interference. And their production of professional-grade special-purpose batteries should not be disregarded.

"In the area of telecommunications we have our own production of various types of antennas, both for the general retail market and for special-purpose professional uses, which we combine with our devices for wireless data transfer," they say, pointing out also their special devices for data transfer via optics using the SDH protocol principle, special equipment for data transfer through high-voltage lines and low and medium-voltage protection relays. Recently they have devoted considerable attention to the treatment of agricultural irrigation water, treatment of industrial water and also providing drinking water for public water mains or mobile drinking water stations.

Iskra products and systems are present in more than 60 countries. Since they have signed a major contract for the modernisation of the railways in Bulgaria, they opened a branch office there. Recently they implemented major infrastructure projects in North Macedonia, and have carried out a large number of projects in Turkey, where they have been present for a number of years in the area of automation of rail transport. In the coming years they will also focus on the Romanian and Hungarian markets. In the area of process automation they are seeking to break into the German market, so they have established a subsidiary there.

Alongside market expansion, they are also spreading their activities – to the shipbuilding sector, having this year purchased a shipyard in Šibenik. They are convinced that currently several fields are opening up that will demand a lot of attention. They emphasise timely and appropriate digitalisation and robotisation of production processes, since this creates new opportunities for sales and promotion of products and systems.

Iskraemeco Provides Smart Metering

One of the leading suppliers of smart metering systems on the global level, Iskraemeco is working with all the Slovenian electricity distribution companies in implementing smart metering in their networks through various projects. Nevertheless the vast majority – as much as 96% – of their income is generated on foreign markets. Their customers are power distribution companies throughout the world. They include energy giants such as RWE, E.ON, Alliander and Vattenfall, and they export the largest amount of products to countries included in the EMEA (Europe, Middle East and Africa) region. They are looking to expand their business mainly to Latin America and India. They also anticipate securing new business in the area of smart metering in the Scandinavian countries, where they are already preparing to replace the first generation of smart meters. ■



Photo: Iskraemeco

Business Software, Analytical Tools, Custom-made Solutions and Technology Innovators

Six percent of the total value added of all Slovenian companies whose primary activity was trade in 2018 was generated by IT companies.

Darja Kocbek and Ana Vučina Vršnak

According to data from the Slovenian national statistical office, companies in the information and communications technology (ICT) sector generated EUR 4.139 billion in revenues in 2018, which amounts to 4% of the total revenues of all Slovenian companies whose primary activity was trade in 2018. ICT companies generated EUR 1.438 billion in value added, which is 6% of the total value added of all Slovenian companies whose primary activity was trade in 2018.

High Level of Knowledge in Slovenia

According to sources at the Chamber of Commerce and Industry of Slovenia (CCIS), when formulating its smart specialisation development programme, Slovenia recognised the importance of the development of human resources in ground-breaking ICT areas and supported a horizontal ICT network in order to develop human resources for the entire Strategic Development and Innovation Partnership.

Slovenia should focus on the development of expert knowledge and solutions, and on innovation, as we have a high level of knowledge, high productivity and high-quality software development, says the director of the CCIS's Information Technology and Telecommunications Association Nenad Šutanovac.

Datalab Launches eServices Product Line

One of the leading Slovenian companies in the field of information technology development is Datalab, which develops, installs and maintains PANTHEON Business Operating System, and provides advice and professional training in its use. PANTHEON provides comprehensive coverage of all business processes, from materials handling operations to accounting, finance, HR, manufacturing, wholesale and retail, warehousing and more.

The software is developed by the parent company, located in Slovenia. Within the region it provides localisation, support, sales and other support

services, says Maja Fujan, Vice President Marketing. The primary markets on which Datalab is present via subsidiaries are Serbia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, North Macedonia, Montenegro, Bulgaria, Kosovo and Ukraine. "Going forward, we see the greatest potential on these markets in business information systems and other complementary services aimed at digitalisation of operations," says Maja Fujan.

In 2018 and 2019, Datalab began the launch of its eServices product line, which includes corporate digitalisation tools such as eDocumentation, certified storage, backup copies, ePosting, etc. "All of these tools and solutions are available to users of the PANTHEON business suite throughout the region that we cover," she adds.

In 2018 and 2019, Datalab began the launch of its eServices product line, which includes corporate digitalisation tools such as eDocumentation, certified storage, backup copies, ePosting, etc.



Photo: Datalab

In 2019 Datalab were expanding their product line to include web applications – Pantheon Web.

CRMT is a systems integrator that works with the world's most advanced and highly specialised providers of analytical tools.

CRMT is currently involved in several projects in the area of big data analytics.

NiceLabel / Euro Plus, with its headquarters in Slovenia and branch offices in Germany, the USA, Singapore and China, offers professional label design and printing software.

In 2019 they were expanding their product line to include web applications – PANTHEON Web. According to Maja Fujan, these applications will have a significant impact on operations in the coming years. At first they will be intended for the segment of small businesses, which work closely with their accounting firms, and whose everyday work will be speeded up, automated and digitalised on several levels.

The advantages of this business suite are that it is designed for companies of all sizes and in all areas (the main customers are companies with between 20 and 50 employees), it allows the program to grow together with the company, it can be integrated with external business software, and it is open to various upgrades depending on the specific needs of the user, explains Maja Fujan.

Furthermore, Datalab offers additional services including installation of the business operating system, user support, training, software upgrades, business consulting, digitalisation of processes, etc.

For the financial year ending on 30 June 2019, Datalab surpassed the planned results throughout the region. "These good results are always the result of hard work by the entire team. We put a lot of emphasis on our strategic orientation towards the markets of SE Europe, as we market our PANTHEON ERP product successfully via our subsidiaries and partners. To date we have sold more than 60,000," said Maja Fujan.

CRMT – Systems Solutions Development

CRMT is a systems integrator that works with the world's most advanced and highly specialised providers of analytical tools. They develop custom-made systems solutions tailored to the needs of their clients. In the area of regulatory reporting for insurers in the Adriatic region, they are developing solutions for IFRS 17 – the International Financial Reporting Standard that insurers have to satisfy by 2022. In the area of IFRS 17, CRMT is carrying out projects in both the Adriatic region and the USA.

They are also very active in the area of big data analytics, in which they have several ongoing projects. They use various analytical approaches and tools to help companies obtain useful information and indicators that can serve as a basis for improving their existing manufacturing processes, creating new business models, increasing efficiency and profitability, and improving the success of corporate leadership and management. They see additional potential here, as foreign companies in particular ask about establishing a data catalogue, which is the basis for analysis. The new markets that CRMT is targeting include the Scandinavian countries.

Forecasts for 2020 in the areas in which CRMT operates are good. Their solutions in the area of big data analytics are crucially important for a successful transition to the industry 4.0 environment, and the same holds for the areas of regulatory reporting and CPM.

The company is most proud of its closely-knit team, who have professional knowledge and experience in the area of leadership of various projects both at home and abroad. This is also the reason that their clients choose long-term cooperation with CRMT.

NiceLabel – Streamlining Business Process through Digital Transformation

NiceLabel, established in 1993, is a leading global developer of label design software and label management systems. With its headquarters in Slovenia and offices in Germany, the USA, Singapore and China, and via its network of partner companies NiceLabel offers services and support to customers from all over the world. It employs a diverse team of 160 people based in 12 countries, helping companies of all sizes improve the quality, speed and efficiency of their labelling, while reducing cost. With NiceLabel, organizations are able to digitally transform their entire labelling process, from design to printing to label management. The result is a leaner, more agile operation that enables them to respond more quickly to changing market conditions and requirements, get products to market faster and compete more effectively in the sectors where they do business.

In 2018, the company launched Label Cloud, the world's first public cloud label management system, developed to allow businesses to rapidly digitally transform their factory and warehouse labelling process. In 2019, they introduced its global partner programme, which is designed to help NiceLabel channel partners meet the customer demand for the digital transformation of on-demand label printing.

NiceLabel's success has been recognized internationally. In the last years, the company has received several national and international awards for its fast growth and development, including the Golden Gazelle, Top Exporter, European Business Award for growth strategy. NiceLabel is a member of ELITE - London Stock Exchange Group's international program for ambitious high growth businesses. The company has been recognized by AIM - worldwide



Photo: NiceLabel

association for the automatic identification industry and listed among London Stock Exchange Group's 1000 Companies to Inspire Europe.

"NiceLabel is ambitious. The company has grown rapidly in recent years as it has extended its product range, geographic presence and channel. Focusing on organic growth within its target market, it is investing in a balanced way across its development and commercial teams to extend its technology advantage and to increase global presence. The company's core strategy choice remains differentiation based on domain expertise and superior technology. In the longer term it sees the opportunity to apply its world-class software development skills to adjacent high growth markets," pointed out Chris Walsh, NiceLabel CEO.

Špica First Went South, then to Central Europe, Now to the USA

Špica International has been helping companies automate their processes for 30 years. The company vision is to become a leading provider of digital transformation software in the area of human resources and supply chain management, as they specialise in identification technologies for the widest possible range of applications, which they have harnessed for business applications, particularly software for access control and work time and supply chain management.

They have 50 employees in Slovenia, and the same number in their subsidiaries in the countries of former Yugoslavia. In 2018 they concluded a partnership with the English firm IBCS and began expanding their operations more intensively towards Central Europe (Slovakia, Czech Republic, Poland, Hungary and Bulgaria), and they are now targeting the West. In 2019, Tone Stanovnik, CEO and founder of Špica International in Ljubljana, established the company Špica Global in the USA.

"Technological breakthroughs typically create opportunities for ambitious, creative, ground-breaking companies that break through into the leading ranks. Our development in the last few years has been laser-focused on cloud computing," says Stanovnik, who adds that "this extremely risky decision" has clearly paid off: Gartner, a leading global IT analytics company, recognised them as a representative supplier of solutions in the area of workforce management (WFM). Nearly at the same time, Microsoft invited them to join its Co-Sell partner programme in the USA. "This led to the logical decision to establish a new company in New York," says Stanovnik.

The American market is very different to the European market when it comes to work time management. Špica's cloud-based IT platform www.myhours.com allows the exchange of data on time and activities that freelancers spend and

In 2019, NiceLabel unveiled Label Cloud, the first publicly accessible system for cloud-based labelling.

Špica International wants to become a leading provider of digital transformation software in the area of human resources and supply chain management.



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Photo: Špica International

Tone Stanovnik, CEO and founder of Špica International in Ljubljana, established Spica Global in the USA in 2019.

XLAB, with its headquarters in Slovenia and offices in Switzerland, Great Britain and the USA, is one of the leading regional providers of cloud computing services.

carry out on projects. “We caught the trend of the extremely rapid expansion of freelance work,” says Stanovnik, who adds that “time is the key asset, and Špica’s mission is to help our clients manage it successfully.”

The company is continually looking at new areas and innovative technologies which have not yet yielded concrete results, but which show a lot of potential. At the same time they are realists and therefore they maintain the balance required for successful operations. They are especially proud of their automatic location detection, which allows them to make records of work time and carry out access controls nearly without the use of readers, “since the room itself detects us via IoT technology and based on our location carries out the necessary services, e.g. recording the time of arrival, opening

the door, turning off the alarm and setting the thermostat.”

Stanovnik also notes that they work closely with young ground-breaking companies such as Chipolo and Carlock, and have created totally new products “for success tomorrow” – BLE iDentification and location using the new LTE/G5 technology.

XLAB Transfers Complex Research Knowledge into Industry

XLAB is a global IT solution company focused on remote desktop technology (ISL Online), management and automation of hybrid infrastructure (XLAB Steampunk), security and privacy, IoT and data analytics, building on the breakthroughs of its own research team. As a highly professional technology innovator with more than 100 employees, XLAB is renowned for its outstanding execution of complex research and industrial IT projects, and transferring the knowledge and results of complex research projects into industry. It is also a firm believer in open collaboration. Working with different technologies to build agile solutions, XLAB has contributed thousands of lines of code to the open source community.

“Our products are based on the extensive expertise acquired from complex research projects that tackle the real problems of our time,” say XLAB, which has one of the strongest computer research departments outside academia in Slovenia. The firm is proud of being “the most successful Slovenian company in terms of acquiring European research projects of the Horizon 2020 programme and among the Top 50 SME’s in Europe by the same measure”. XLAB Research, established in 2003 for basic and applied research, the development of complex software, and technology transfer to other XLAB departments, has participated in 50 EU and 25 national research projects.

It’s prime product, ISL Online, is a remote desktop software that allows users to instantly access and control any computer or mobile device to provide ad-hoc technical support or manage systems remotely. It is used by millions of IT professionals and helpdesk technicians across the world, with significant remote desktop market share in Japan.

XLAB Steampunk, as a trusted Red Hat partner, enables unified automation and management of hybrid infrastructure by integrating third-party technologies into Red Hat Ansible Automation and Red Hat CloudForms. Gaea+ is a customizable 3D visualization solution, awarded by NASA. MedicView 3D dental and radiology imaging solutions are used by medical specialists worldwide.

XLAB is trusted by the world’s leading companies, among which are: Red Hat, Konica Minolta, Microsoft, Canon, Idexx, Singtel, AT&T, Mitsubishi Chemical, Avast, World Wide Technology, and Nokia Nuage. ■



Photo: XLAB

Lek and Krka World-Leading with New Products

Of the pharmaceutical manufacturing companies in Slovenia, by far the best-known, most profitable and most export-oriented are Krka of Novo Mesto and Lek of Ljubljana.

Nina Šprohar

Krka Present on Almost All Continents

Krka began turning their attention to foreign markets very early on, in the 1960s. Today, it is an internationally focused company which sells its products in more than 70 countries worldwide. Sales outside Slovenia account for just over 94% of Krka Group sales. "We have a strong network of companies and offices abroad. We are also expanding our production capacities outside Slovenia," say the company, which has manufacturing companies in Poland, Russia, Croatia and Germany. They are now increasing their presence on overseas markets, particularly in the Middle and Far East, Africa and Central America. Via Krka and their TAD Pharma concern, they have been on the Chinese market for several years. At the end of 2017, they set up a new company, Ningbo Krka Menovo, which manufactures and markets drugs in collaboration with a local partner.

Emphasis on R&D

"Our main challenges in the future are export orientation, entry onto new markets, investment in knowledge and investment generally, risk management and good corporate governance," say the company.

The half-yearly results indicate that 2019 will be another year of growth. "We are planning sales of EUR 1.375 billion and profits of EUR 172 million." The growth in Krka's sales depends chiefly on the share of new products resulting from the company's own research and development (R&D) work. "The products that we have begun to market in the last five years account for 29% of total sales, so we are investing around one tenth of the value of our annual sales in R&D."

Some 1,700 specialists from more than 30 natural science and technical fields are involved in drug development – and they added 23 new products in 52 pharmaceutical forms and strengths to the product range in 2018 alone. "With our vertically integrated

business model we are able to develop drugs in pharmaceutical forms and strengths that are not yet available," say the company.

In October 2019 the company opened a development and control centre in the factory zone in Ločna, Novo Mesto, investing EUR 55.6 million to double R&D and analytical capacities for quality assurance of their own products.

New Krka Project in Russia

"We are investing mainly in increasing and technologically updating production and development, in quality assurance, and in our production and distribution centres around the world. We are planning investments of EUR 124 million by the end of the year," say Krka.

A new project, with production and laboratory capacities, is in the planning phase, and will mark the company's next five-year investment period in Russia. The investment is estimated at EUR 33 million and will enable Krka, in their own words, to increase the manufacturing capacity at the plant to three billion tablets a year.

Krka sell their products in more than 70 countries worldwide and have set up a company in China, Ningbo Krka Menovo, in collaboration with a local partner.

The products that Krka have begun to market in the last five years account for 29% of total sales, so they are investing around one tenth of the value of their annual sales in R&D.



Photo: Krka

In October 2019 Krka invested EUR 55.6 million in the opening of a development and control centre in Slovenia.



Photo: Krka

Krka are also focusing on combination drugs that can treat two diseases at once.

In addition, they are completing investment in the manufacture of veterinary products in solid pharmaceutical form in Jastrebarsko, Croatia.

Attention to Combination Drugs

“In accordance with the EU directive, we have introduced security features to the packaging to prevent patients from taking counterfeit drugs. That has required numerous upgrades to technological equipment and manufacturing procedures, and we have invested approximately EUR 20 million in these upgrades in the last three years,” they add.

They are also turning their attention to combination drugs. “Their advantage lies in the fact that the patient is able to take one drug instead of two or three, and may even be treated for two diseases at once. This reduces the number of doses and ensures that the drugs work in a coordinated way and in a way that is safer for the patient. At the same time, this improves treatment supervision,” they explain. When new European recommendations were issued last year that introduced combination tablets as the first choice for the treatment of hypertension, Krka already had 80 different combination drugs on the market.

Lek's Patient-tailored and Personalised Medications

Since becoming part of Novartis, Lek's products, developed or manufactured in Slovenia, have been marketed throughout the world via the extensive sales network employed by both Sandoz and Novartis. Some key products also contain active ingredients developed and manufactured by the company itself. Novartis's product portfolio will focus in future on patient-tailored and personalised medications in smaller quantities. “In addition to focusing on biologics and complex differentiated generic drugs, we are making huge efforts to design a range of medications with high value added that will offer patients important additional benefits and help to strengthen the sustainability of healthcare systems around the world,” they add.

In 2018 the Slovenia 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 US and Canada.

New Dietary Supplement from Slovenia

“We have completed the development of a high-quality innovative dietary supplement, Lincomplex™, which is already available to Slovenian customers,” said the company. They have also launched important anti-inflammatory medications, as well as 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, we have thereby

Since becoming part of Novartis, Lek's products, developed or manufactured in Slovenia, have been marketed throughout the world.

In 2018 Lek 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 US and Canada.



Photo: Lek

Lek and Krka both received gold awards for best innovation in Slovenia 2019.

- Krka: First generic drug with extended release of paliperidone based on osmotic pump technology – a modern approach to treatment
- Lek: Continuous and connected process for purifying biopharmaceuticals – making biopharmaceuticals more accessible to patients
- Lek: LinComplex™: New generation of high-quality probiotics with the most highly-researched strain *Lactobacillus rhamnosus* gg – a new-generation probiotic.

obtained a six-month generic exclusive right to sell to the US market,” they explain.

“In Slovenia we are expanding the range of production of active ingredients for the manufacture of innovative drugs. In 2018 we began manufacturing three active ingredients in Mengeš for innovative drugs that will come onto the market in the next few years. The final stages of production of certain innovative medicines are taking place at their other sites in Slovenia,” Lek explained.

In Mengeš they have collaborated on the development of three new Sandoz biologics, which entered the market in 2018. “We are also involved in various stages of the development of innovative biological drugs, and are building a new facility for the production of biological agents,” say Lek. ■

In the future Lek will focus on patient-tailored and personalised medications in smaller quantities.



PHOTO: LEK



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The Door of Our Chamber is Open to You

The Chamber of Commerce and Industry of Slovenia (CCIS) is the largest independent, voluntary, non-profit association of companies in Slovenia. It was founded in 1851 and today boasts more than 6,000 member companies of all shapes, sizes, branches, and regional backgrounds. Our member companies contribute about 50% of gross value added of the Slovenian economy and generate 2/3 of sales in foreign markets. Business in Slovenia starts here!

What Can We Do for You?

The CCIS is the ideal **local partner** for foreign investors and business professionals. It can support and facilitate your entrance into the Slovenian market. It can help you search for **new contacts** and provide you with a wide range of useful business information.

If you are interested in doing business in Slovenia, the CCIS offers you **services** developed especially for your needs.

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 Slovenia's Chamber of Commerce and Industry?

1.
The most powerful representative of the Slovenian private sector

2.
A partner who stands by your side as you enter the Slovenian market

3.
A networking megahub, where best practices are freely exchanged

Market Intelligence

The CCIS provides a wide range of insightfully discerning information on the economic situation in Slovenia. This includes everything from economic indicators and trend forecasts to information on companies' credit ratings. You also get access to contacts for potential business partners.

The CCIS 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), where you can find both Slovenian and international business partners.

Go International

The CCIS is the primary meeting hub for Slovenian development and export-oriented enterprises, which are the very engine driving the core of development and innovation in the Slovenian economy. Our continuous interaction with foreign enterprises, institutions, and experts is converted into engaging activities like business delegations, educational and other major events, and B2Bs. It is our mission to provide you with our assembled information about inquiries on international markets, assistance in connecting Slovenian and foreign enterprises, and making your business experience here as productive and lucrative as possible.



go international
slovenia

Legal Framework

The CCIS can provide you with information about Slovenian legislation or offer you legal consulting on Commercial, Corporate, Property, Enforcement, and Labour Law, as well as information on public procurement and insolvency procedures.

SloExport: All Major Slovenian Companies in One Place

SloExport is a database catalogue containing information on more than 6,000 Slovenian exporters. It is a tool that will be of great assistance in seeking information on individual Slovenian companies.

SLOEXPORT
Database of Slovenian Exporters

Excellent SME Certification

In conjunction with the renowned global credit insurer COFACE, the Chamber of Commerce and Industry of Slovenia is now issuing Excellent SME certificates to Slovenia's most successful small and medium-sized enterprises.

This certificate enables potential investors or business partners to verify a company's existence, its actual web address, and, most importantly, its creditworthiness.



Ljubljana Arbitration Centre

The Ljubljana Arbitration Centre is an autonomous and independent arbitration centre providing administrative services for the resolution of disputes between parties through arbitration, mediation, conciliation, and alternative forms of dispute resolution.



Promotion and Advertising

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

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MARKETING

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The CCIS can provide information on new and existing environmental legislation, and other environmental aspects, including exchanges of best practice and benchmarking through conferences, training activities, and individual consultations.

4.

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5.

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6.

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List of 100 Largest Slovenian Exporters

Data source: audited and consolidated annual reports of groups/companies for 2018, Agency of the Republic of Slovenia for Public Legal Records and Related Services (AJPES).

Ranking criteria: Sales revenue on foreign markets in 2018.

Company/Group name	Sector	Exports (in EUR million)	% of foreign sales	Value added (EUR million)	Number of employees	Value added per employee (in EUR)
1 PETROL GROUP	Wholesale and Retail Trade	2,677	49.4	253	3,659	69,257
2 GEN GROUP	Energy	1,887	79.6	139	1,344	103,212
3 REVOZ d.d.	Manufacturing	1,755	99.1	198	2,701	73,127
4 LEK GROUP	Manufacturing	1,323	97.0	478	4,959	96,441
5 KRKA GROUP	Manufacturing	1,238	93.3	727	11,129	65,299
6 GORENJE GROUP	Manufacturing	1,070	90.3	277	11,098	24,931
7 HSE GROUP	Energy	933	63.4	253	3,082	81,976
8 Gorenje, d.o.o.	Manufacturing	758	92.3	72	4,391	16,423
9 BELEKTRON d.o.o.	Wholesale and Retail Trade	725	98.5	29	5	5,608,669
10 IMPOL GROUP	Manufacturing	687	94.4	126	2,348	53,488
11 SIJ GROUP	Manufacturing	679	84.6	184	3,825	48,012
12 Interenergo d.o.o.	Energy	601	90.2	2	32	53,559
13 KOLEKTOR HOLDING GROUP	Manufacturing	522	63.5	251	5,776	43,507
14 LIDL SLOVENIJA GROUP	Wholesale and Retail Trade	387	98.6	62	1,625	38,154
15 HELLA SATURNUS SLOVENIJA d.o.o.	Manufacturing	375	96.4	93	1,703	54,554
16 ELES GROUP	Manufacturing	325	60.7	135	2,081	64,813
17 TAB D.D. GROUP	Manufacturing	325	96.6	86	1,420	60,598
18 LTH CASTINGS GROUP	Manufacturing	314	99.6	146	3,004	48,545
19 ADRIA MOBIL GROUP	Manufacturing	297	96.1	86	1,800	47,829
20 BSH HIŠNI APARATI d.o.o. Nazarje	Manufacturing	287	91.8	59	1,127	52,510
21 HELIOS GROUP	Manufacturing	276	88.4	82	1,723	47,405
22 TAB tovarna akumulatorskih baterij d.d.	Manufacturing	258	92.1	55	652	84,619
23 AquafilSLO d.o.o.	Manufacturing	245	99.5	41	856	47,826
24 HIDRIA HOLDING GROUP	Manufacturing	243	91.4	96	2,129	45,113
25 GEOPLIN d.o.o. Ljubljana	Energy	235	59.4	6	42	139,409
26 MAHLE Electric Drives Slovenija d.o.o.	Manufacturing	227	95.2	54	1,758	30,528
27 CIMOS d.d.	Manufacturing	216	96.2	35	991	34,910
28 UNIOR GROUP	Manufacturing	208	84.5	101	3,112	32,384
29 CARTHAGO d.o.o.	Manufacturing	203	100.0	33	759	43,907
30 odelo Slovenija d.o.o.	Manufacturing	200	99.8	58	1,210	48,268

Company/Group name	Sector	Exports (in EUR million)	% of foreign sales	Value added (EUR million)	Number of employees	Value added per employee (in EUR)
31 PRESKOK d.o.o.	Wholesale and Retail Trade	196	99.3	6	11	574,782
32 SLOVENSKE ŽELEZNICE GROUP	Transport	188	44.4	334	8,543	39,127
33 CIMOS GROUP	Manufacturing	187	91.9	73	2,384	30,800
34 GOODYEAR DUNLOP SAVA TIRES d.o.o.	Manufacturing	180	81.5	76	1,538	49,367
35 LUKA KOPER D.D. GROUP	Transport	156	68.8	162	1,172	137,993
36 KOLIČEVO KARTON, d.o.o.	Manufacturing	154	92.6	42	389	106,866
37 UNIOR d.d.	Manufacturing	152	88.4	65	1,780	36,374
38 BOXMARK LEATHER d.o.o.	Manufacturing	152	99.9	23	1,552	15,062
39 CINKARNA Celje, d.d.	Manufacturing	142	86.8	79	876	90,072
40 CONTITECH SLOVENIJA GROUP	Manufacturing	142	98.7	41	638	64,443
41 VALIANT d.o.o.	Wholesale and Retail Trade	136	99.6	2	8	265,721
42 DOMEL HOLDING GROUP	Manufacturing	136	91.0	50	1,268	39,239
43 LES-MMS GROUP	Wholesale and Retail Trade	134	57.7	59	1,518	38,937
44 ADK d.o.o.	Manufacturing	126	98.7	30	646	46,271
45 I.P.S. D.O.O. GROUP	Manufacturing	126	98.4	38	997	37,720
46 ELRAD INTERNATIONAL GROUP	Manufacturing	125	93.5	42	1,549	26,962
47 ISKRAEMECO GROUP	Manufacturing	122	96.1	37	759	49,294
48 NOVEM CAR INTERIOR DESIGN d.o.o.	Manufacturing	121	99.9	24	806	29,600
49 Droga Kolinska d.d.	Manufacturing	118	69.5	39	472	82,727
50 DANFOSS TRATA, d.o.o.	Manufacturing	115	94.1	37	476	77,049
51 ETI GROUP	Manufacturing	113	91.6	45	1,614	27,953
52 TELEKOM SLOVENIJE GROUP	Information and Communication Technology	111	15.5	298	3,361	88,731
53 AKRAPOVIČ GROUP	Manufacturing	110	98.8	58	1,088	53,139
54 CALCIT GROUP	Manufacturing	108	90.9	29	230	127,790
55 KOVINTRADE GROUP	Wholesale and Retail Trade	107	51.9	16	367	44,424
56 TRIMO GROUP	Manufacturing	105	81.7	25	533	47,461
57 PLASTA GROUP	Manufacturing	104	69.1	45	875	51,769
58 PAPIRNICA VEVČE d.o.o.	Manufacturing	103	95.6	9	147	59,927
59 PALFINGER d.o.o.	Manufacturing	103	94.6	29	624	47,063
60 Trelleborg Slovenija, d.o.o.	Manufacturing	101	89.2	43	822	52,668
61 Adient Slovenj Gradec d.o.o.	Manufacturing	101	98.2	23	677	34,237
62 KNAUF INSULATION, d.o.o., Škofja Loka	Manufacturing	100	78.2	39	395	97,817
63 GKN Driveline Slovenija, d.o.o.	Manufacturing	100	92.7	22	426	50,675
64 INTEREUROPA GROUP	Transport	95	59.2	42	1,286	32,715
65 ŠTORE STEEL d.o.o.	Manufacturing	94	67.7	33	548	60,182
66 RASTODER GROUP	Wholesale and Retail Trade	91	82.2	13	55	244,636

Company/Group name	Sector	Exports (in EUR million)	% of foreign sales	Value added (EUR million)	Number of employees	Value added per employee (in EUR)
67 ACH 2 GROUP	Wholesale and Retail Trade	91	25.3	27	532	49,848
68 ELRAD INTERNATIONAL d.o.o.	Manufacturing	90	91.1	26	553	47,832
69 VIPAP GROUP	Manufacturing	89	89.5	18	456	40,412
70 DINOS d.o.o.	Environment and Waste	87	57.2	13	311	41,792
71 TPV GROUP	Manufacturing	87	57.3	39	1,202	32,189
72 STARKOM d.o.o.	Manufacturing	87	97.7	19	328	58,820
73 ETI, d.o.o.	Manufacturing	86	87.1	27	781	34,663
74 BAYER d.o.o.	Wholesale and Retail Trade	85	66.5	17	128	130,460
75 FILC d.o.o.	Manufacturing	80	93.9	33	341	95,663
76 WEILER ABRASIVES GROUP	Manufacturing	79	93.0	30	814	37,234
77 ISKRA MEHANIZMI GROUP	Manufacturing	78	89.1	18	624	29,031
78 ELAN GROUP	Manufacturing	78	92.0	28	781	35,360
79 JUB GROUP	Manufacturing	78	70.1	30	760	38,976
80 ContiTech Slovenija, d.o.o.	Manufacturing	77	97.7	25	353	69,677
81 INTERBLOCK GROUP	Manufacturing	77	95.0	50	375	132,648
82 ebm-papst Slovenija d.o.o.	Manufacturing	74	98.4	14	441	31,274
83 FRUTAROM ETOL GROUP	Manufacturing	72	87.8	31	327	94,262
84 SILKEM PLUS GROUP	Manufacturing	71	94.2	16	226	71,078
85 PALOMA GROUP	Manufacturing	68	83.0	12	592	21,070
86 Calcit d.o.o.	Mining and Quarrying	68	86.4	22	155	139,541
87 PAPIRUS GROUP	Manufacturing	66	89.1	9	213	42,221
88 DON DON GROUP	Manufacturing	65	69.8	29	1,585	18,282
89 BRAVOPHONE d.o.o.	Wholesale and Retail Trade	64	100.0	0	1	316,711
90 ELAN, d.o.o.	Manufacturing	63	93.7	23	665	34,797
91 ITW Appliance Components d.o.o.	Manufacturing	63	85.1	22	313	71,664
92 MSIN GROUP	Manufacturing	63	56.7	44	1,210	36,752
93 INTERSPORT GROUP	Wholesale and Retail Trade	63	56.1	19	1,060	17,829
94 TBP d.d.	Manufacturing	62	99.7	25	865	28,439
95 G4 GROUP	Manufacturing	62	69.3	31	799	38,897
96 LJUBLJANSKE MLEKARNE d.o.o.	Manufacturing	61	36.2	30	606	50,302
97 RIKO, d.o.o.	Engineering	61	62.2	8	121	64,828
98 TBP GROUP	Manufacturing	60	93.3	25	865	29,437
99 ISKRA GROUP	Manufacturing	58	64.2	41	1,172	34,599
100 Continental Adria d.o.o.	Wholesale and Retail Trade	58	63.5	5	31	147,094

List of 50 Fastest Growing Exporters

Data source: audited and consolidated annual reports of groups/companies for 2013 and 2018, Agency of the Republic of Slovenia for Public Legal Records and Related Services (AJPES).

Ranking criteria: Growth in exports in the period 2013/2018 for groups/companies and at least EUR 5 million in exports in base year 2013.

Company/Group name	Sector	Exports (in EUR million)	Growth index of net sales on the foreign market (2018/2013)	Proportion of sales on the foreign market	Value added (EUR million)	Number of employees	Value added per employee (in EUR)
1 AVTO TRIGLAV d.o.o., Ljubljana	Wholesale and Retail Trade	75	861.1	47.4	7	93	75,826
2 SCANIA SLOVENIJA d.o.o.	Wholesale and Retail Trade	47	571.9	43.2	11	88	129,480
3 PERUTNINA PTUJ GROUP	Manufacturing	183	532.8	67.8	91	3,513	25,774
4 BELEKTRON d.o.o.	Wholesale and Retail Trade	725	477.3	98.5	29	5	5,608,669
5 Interenergo d.o.o.	Energy	601	469.8	90.2	2	32	53,559
6 BRINOX d.o.o.	Manufacturing	28	434.2	73.4	12	214	56,187
7 GEOPLIN d.o.o. Ljubljana	Energy	235	420.6	59.4	6	42	139,409
8 GEN GROUP	Energy	1,887	397.7	79.6	139	1,344	103,212
9 STILLES d.o.o.	Manufacturing	29	394.3	91.7	9	259	34,860
10 Astellas Pharma d.o.o.	Manufacturing	57	357.1	81.7	6	37	158,977
11 LEDINEK ENGINEERING d.o.o.	Manufacturing	41	355.4	96.4	9	134	66,584
12 MAROVT d.o.o.	Manufacturing	25	348.7	95.9	12	239	49,701
13 GG Bled d.o.o.	Forestry	48	347.6	79.5	8	87	86,429
14 BELIMED d.o.o.	Manufacturing	38	346.7	97.3	10	213	46,574
15 GEA VIPOLL d.o.o.	Manufacturing	28	344.3	99.3	8	127	62,485
16 RLS d.o.o.	Manufacturing	25	331.5	95.6	17	187	89,241
17 VALIANT d.o.o.	Wholesale and Retail Trade	136	328.5	99.6	2	8	265,721
18 PLASTA GROUP	Manufacturing	104	323.1	69.1	45	875	51,769
19 AREX d.o.o. Šentjernej	Manufacturing	21	320.8	84.0	13	121	104,717
20 NOVEM CAR INTERIOR DESIGN d.o.o.	Manufacturing	121	319.6	99.9	24	806	29,600
21 MASS, d.o.o.	Wholesale and Retail Trade	20	301.7	40.9	8	163	51,132
22 VIP VIRANT, d.o.o.	Manufacturing	37	297.4	85.1	4	97	39,269

Company/Group name	Sector	Exports (in EUR million)	Growth index of net sales on the foreign market (2018/2013)	Proportion of sales on the foreign market	Value added (EUR million)	Number of employees	Value added per employee (in EUR)
23 SIJ RAVNE SYSTEMS d.o.o.	Manufacturing	29	296.2	66.1	16	549	29,563
24 TOMPLAST, d.o.o.	Manufacturing	32	285.7	60.4	15	339	43,779
25 G4 GROUP	Manufacturing	62	285.6	69.3	31	799	38,897
26 TERMIT d.d.	Mining and Quarrying	15	280.8	69.2	7	198	33,927
27 WILLY STADLER d.o.o.	Manufacturing	26	280.3	75.7	11	131	85,281
28 MDM d.o.o.	Manufacturing	19	275.6	37.4	7	109	64,218
29 REVOZ d.d.	Manufacturing	1,755	272.6	99.1	198	2,701	73,127
30 I.H.S. d.o.o.	Manufacturing	21	272.5	99.6	7	125	54,896
31 INCOM d.o.o.	Manufacturing	50	268.8	90.8	16	369	44,654
32 REM d.o.o.	Manufacturing	22	265.0	75.9	7	146	47,290
33 KOVIS-LIVARNA d.o.o.	Manufacturing	17	263.6	68.2	7	171	40,983
34 MSIN GROUP	Manufacturing	63	260.9	56.7	44	1,210	36,752
35 MEDIS INTAGO GROUP	Wholesale and Retail Trade	57	259.8	57.4	26	320	79,878
36 ELRAD INTERNATIONAL GROUP	Manufacturing	90	258.4	91.1	26	553	47,832
37 Pivovarna Laško Union d.o.o.	Manufacturing	40	258.3	26.1	64	596	107,166
38 ELRAD INTERNATIONAL GROUP	Manufacturing	125	257.5	93.5	42	1,549	26,962
39 POČKAJ d.o.o.	Manufacturing	25	255.6	99.0	7	105	69,918
40 GMT d.o.o.	Wholesale and Retail Trade	35	251.1	46.5	7	129	52,351
41 INTERBLOCK GROUP	Manufacturing	56	246.2	97.7	27	202	134,779
42 LIV SYSTEMS d.o.o.	Manufacturing	13	244.7	84.1	6	174	33,113
43 PIRNAR d.o.o.	Manufacturing	25	243.2	86.7	5	92	58,379
44 OMEGA AIR d.o.o. Ljubljana	Manufacturing	16	241.3	69.1	9	225	41,121
45 TEKSTINA d.o.o.	Manufacturing	14	236.9	99.4	6	72	89,050
46 FARMTECH d.o.o.	Manufacturing	41	236.7	88.1	10	308	33,947
47 KOLEKTOR KOLING d.o.o.	Civil Engineering	21	234.2	17.5	7	153	46,557
48 PRIMET d.o.o.	Wholesale and Retail Trade	22	233.9	71.5	1	5	123,691
49 FOTONA d.o.o.	Manufacturing	52	232.0	99.0	24	271	90,177
50 POLYCOM Škofja Loka d.o.o.	Manufacturing	27	229.9	76.7	11	258	44,335



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