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## The 12th Government of the Republic of Slovenia Sets its Priorities

The National Assembly voted in the 12th Slovenian Government on 18 September 2014. The coalition comprises the Party of Miro Cerar (SMS), the Pensioner's Party (DeSUS) and Social Democrats (SD). The new ministerial team will support wider public interest based on five key principles:

- Respect for the rule of law: crucial focus will be on ensuring systemic support to implement legislation, decisive action against corruption and permanent tenure of judges with a probationary period. Within the judiciary, there will be zero tolerance of corruption;
- Creating a predictable and stable business environment by simplifying procedures for acquiring funding, permits and information, improving the control over the collection of contributions and taxes, implementing controlled privatisation and the effective absorption of development funds;
- Developing the professional potential of public servants and improving public services;
- Promoting an open dialogue with civil society, particularly by including representatives of civil society as initiators of development and to optimise the operation of the public sector, by establishing a transparent and stable system of financing civil society and by including the results of the non-governmental sector in general performance indicators of society;
- A healthy, innovative and competent society that provides social support.

Based on an analysis of the current situation some priority projects have been defined:

- Comprehensive improvement and renovation of buildings owned by the government, local authorities and private owners, with which the Government seeks to increase energy efficiency (saving energy, implementing so-called green public procurement), promote government and household spending and provide an indirect incentive to the construction and wood-processing sectors;
- Simplifying the public procurement system, which is significant particularly in terms of lowering costs, the economy of procurement and greater efficiency;
- Green budget and tax reform, which should become a long-term guideline and promote a faster structural overhaul of the Slovenian economy and its sustainable development. This refers to a gradual reduction of grants for projects detrimental to the environment and using taxes to lower the tax burden on labour. One of the key tasks of the project is to establish a model for rewarding environment-friendly projects and penalising projects that are harmful to the environment;
- Introducing fiscal cash registers and the prompt payment of social contributions, which is another step in tackling the grey economy;
- Promoting social entrepreneurship, cooperatives and economic democracy, as this sector supports innovation and creativity, strengthens society's social capital and creates new jobs for various groups of people in local environments.

## Editorial



Slovenia's GDP growth rate in the first half of 2014 was an "astonishing" 2.5%, a result of strong exports and infrastructure investments supported also by European funds financing. Consequently, EBRD just published its "modest" but improved projection for Slovenian GDP growth for the whole 2014 at 0.7%. Bank of Slovenia is more optimistic with its 2014 growth projection at 1.6% and for 2015 at 1.3%. Still relatively low overall growth figures are results of expected minor cooling down of investments and exports and still relatively low domestic consumption. UMAR (Institute of Macroeconomic Analysis and Development in Slovenia) still in the spring this year predicted 0.5% growth for Slovenia in 2014; however, with all the improvements in the Slovenian economy this figure was just corrected to optimistic 2%.

Additionally, in the absence of international price pressures and with low domestic consumption we can, therefore, expect overall inflation rate in 2014 at 0.3% and in 2015 a little bit higher but still comfortably below 1% on the yearly basis.

In September this year the economic climate index improved compared to August for 1 percentage point and even 11 percentage points compared to September 2013, which clearly shows increased overall optimism everywhere. This must be welcome news for the new government just sworn in, and let us all wish the 12th government of independent Slovenia all the best in the continuation and improvement of the above figures. Lastly, let us also mention that the Slovenian Bourse Index (SBI), with almost 30% growth this year, holds the European record.

Prof. Dr. Draško Veselinovič  
 President, Management Board

## Bulletin of the Slovenian Business & Research Association

### SBRA Welcomes New Member – University Medical Centre Ljubljana

The University Medical Centre Ljubljana (UMCL) is a public health care institution providing medical services at the secondary and tertiary level, and for some fields also at primary level. The UMCL is the leading medical institution in Slovenia and one of the largest hospitals in Central Europe. It covers all subspecialties that define a hospital as a tertiary care centre, and operates an extensive and successful transplantation programme. As the main training base for the Faculty of Medicine in Ljubljana, the UMCL effectively combines clinical work with education and research.



The centre's principal aim is to provide quality care to patients from Slovenia and other European countries. Its organization and activities are geared at continuous improvement of its services, development and introduction of new methods of treatment, and transfer of knowledge to younger generations of health professionals. UMCL's major objectives are to acquire European accreditation, implement a comprehensive system of quality assurance, and achieve international quality standards. UMCL has close contacts with similar institutions in the European Union, and aims to create a favorable working environment for its employees and provide quality professional care to its patients.

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### SBRA Welcomes New Member - IEDC-Bled School of Management

IEDC-Bled School of Management is the most innovative international business school in Central and Eastern Europe with excellent ties to the business community in the region. More than 80% of its participants come from countries other than Slovenia, and more than one third of them are top managers. This makes IEDC a centre of excellence and a major meeting point for the exchange of ideas and for exploration of best management practices in the region.

IEDC is well known for its innovations in how management education is conceptualized, designed, and delivered. In 2009, it was named among 100 top business schools in the world concerning innovations for demonstrating significant leadership in integrating social, environmental and ethical issues into its programs according to the Aspen Institute's 2009-2010 edition of Beyond Grey Pinstripes, the only ranking that evaluates how well schools are preparing their students for the environmental, social and ethical complexities of modern-day business. IEDC was the only school from Central and Eastern Europe to receive this recognition.

IEDC believes in ethical and socially responsible leadership which can be promoted through learning from art, science, sport and other different professions, drawing parallels around them and making people reflect. In terms of introducing ethics and esthetics into the business curriculum, IEDC has designed an ethics component into all its longer management programs more than twenty years ago. As an additional innovation, sustainable development has also been added to the curriculum.



*A School with a View*

## GDP Indicators of Slovenia, 2014

Real growth rates in %, unless otherwise indicated

	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016
	forecast											
<b>GROSS DOMESTIC PRODUCT</b>	4.0	5.7	6.9	3.3	-7.8	1.2	0.6	-2.6	-1.0	2.0	1.6	1.6
GDP in EUR m (at current prices and at current exchange rate)	29,227	31,555	35,153	37,951	36,166	36,220	36,868	36,006	36,144	36,931	37,755	38,789
GDP per capita in EUR (at current prices and at current exchange rate)	14,608	15,719	17,412	18,769	17,714	17,678	17,960	17,506	17,550	17,899	18,277	18,761
GDP per capita in USD (at current prices and at current exchange rate)	18,165	19,715	23,863	27,606	24,708	23,436	25,000	22,492	23,308	24,217	24,345	24,989
GDP per capita (PPS) <sup>1</sup>	19,600	20,700	22,100	22,700	20,200	20,600	21,200	21,400	21,300			
GDP per capita (PPS EU28=100) <sup>1</sup>	87.4	87.5	88.5	90.6	86.2	84.2	84.3	83.7	82.7			

<sup>1</sup> Measured in purchasing power standard

Source: Institute of Macroeconomic Analysis and Development

# Briefs

## Business Briefs

**Chamber of Craft and Small Business of Slovenia and the Trade Union of Crafts and Entrepreneurship Slovenia successfully conclude joint project**



In August the Chamber of Craft and Small Business of Slovenia and the Trade Union of Crafts and Entrepreneurship Slovenia successfully concluded the joint project »PRO ZA STO«, funded under European Social Fund and Ministry of Labour, Family, Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities. The project aims further development of social dialogue in the field of health promotion and safety at work, performance of cross-border services (implementation of Service Directive). In the period of 12 months both partners have organised four study visits, several workshops, seminars and conferences in order to reflect the challenges in the mentioned fields. In addition to the events, the "Study on Health Promotion" and "Proposals of measures for better economic environment for SMEs" were also issued.

**Long-term Development for Ljubljana Airport**



The German airport operator Fraport, which recently acquired a 75.5% stake in Aerodrom Ljubljana, promises long-term development in both passenger and cargo transport at the airport. Fraport has already announced it would be seeking an outright stake in the near future, which puts the total value of Aerodrom Ljubljana at €234.4 million. The company has no plans of acquiring other airports in the region, and will focus exclusively on Ljubljana.

**En.future: Futurism and the Future of Energy with Arnold Schwarzenegger**



Media and publishing house Energetika.NET will host the first-ever conference on futurism and the future of energy in the capital of Slovenia, Ljubljana on 13 November 2014. The conference will represent a bridge between the progressive Central Europe and the potential-rich Southeast Europe. The conference will shed some light on what the future of energy and humanity will look like.

The main speaker on development challenges and their future solutions with his insights into the energy future will be Arnold Schwarzenegger. Prominent international experts will discuss topics as Smart Cities and Society, Nuclear Power, Fossil Fuels, Renewables, Cleaner and Smarter Transportation.

**Credit Growth Recovery Conference in Portorož**

During the high-level conference, organized jointly by the International Monetary Fund and Bank of Slovenia, participants emphasized the importance of generating conditions to avoid "credit-less" recoveries, which are often associated with prolonged periods of slow output and employment growth. The potential impact of regulatory reform and foreign bank engagement on capital flows and credit growth in Central, Eastern, and Southern European countries was also discussed.

## Research Briefs

**United States and Slovenia Sign Fulbright Agreement**

Representatives of the United States of America and the Republic of Slovenia signed an amendment to the Memorandum of Understanding concerning the Fulbright Exchange Program. The amendment updates the 2011 agreement so that Slovenian Fulbright participants may reduce their income tax burden with the Government of Slovenia for program-related expenses.

Since the program began in 1964, nearly 400 Slovenian scholars and students have participated in this prestigious educational program, which is operational in over 155 countries worldwide. This coming academic year a total of ten Slovenian postdoctoral candidates and visiting research students have been awarded the scholarship.

**Slovenian Nanosatellite Seeks Sponsors**

A cutting-edge nanosatellite, presented by Iztok Kramberger from the Maribor Faculty of Electrical Engineering, could be put in space by 2016. Equipped with instruments for observing Earth, governments could use it to monitor vegetation, detect flooding and fires. The nanosatellite, which weighs only four kilograms, is a 1 million dollar project by Slovenian firms, including SkyLabs with the help of Faculty of Electrical Engineering experts and under the watch of the European Space Agency.

**NIB joined researchers in worldwide Ocean Sampling Day**



Scientists at the Marine Biology Station Piran, National Institute of Biology on the Slovenian coast joined researchers around the globe in a worldwide Ocean Sampling Day (OSD) on 21st of June 2014. OSD is the first global, simultaneous sampling of microbes in ocean, coastal and Great Lakes waters. The sampling will be conducted at

more than 160 marine research locations from Iceland to Antarctica and from Moorea in French Polynesia to South Africa. The sampling program will support international missions to provide information on the diversity of microbes, their function and their potential economic benefits.

MBP/NIB scientists will collect and process samples in the Bay of Piran at the Oceanographic Buoy Vida sampling station. This activity will also be a part of an on-going water-quality monitoring program that MBP has supported for more than 15 years. The sampling program is coordinated jointly by Jacobs University in Bremen, Germany and the University of Oxford, U.K. The effort was launched under the umbrella of the European-funded project Micro B3, which aims to boost marine research and innovation opportunities.

**GEA College active in a variety of national and international projects**



The Competencies of Future (COFFE) project proposes transferring and modernizing an online tool "Enterprise Simulation", dedicated to vocational school students which enables users to run virtual enterprise producing mobile phones and manage it in an environment reflecting real economic conditions. The game is concentrated on developing entrepreneurial skills and encouraging users to run in the future own business.

While, the Accessibility improved at border CROSSings for the integration of South East Europe (ACROSSEE) project investigates, through specific surveys, rail and road cross-border points and cross-sections. The results will be extremely important to elaborate an integrated transport model completed with the inclusion of local and international flows but also to help the elaboration of actions plans for cross-border points and bottlenecks in South East Europe Area and also synergy of European Macroregional Strategies.

Lastly, Advances in Business-related Scientific Research Conference (ABSRC) is an important international gathering of business and business-related sciences scholars and educators. In addition to

scientific papers, the focus is on various best practices and solutions, which are important for business-related policies and activities at the individual, organizational, group, network, local, regional, national, international, and global level.

## Regional Briefs

**RRA LUR awarded for its efforts in improving business environment through creativity**



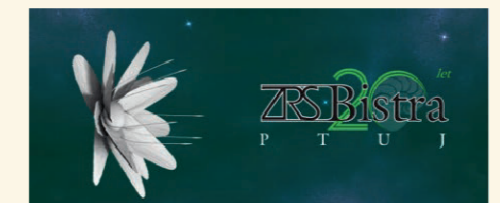
Regional Development Agency of Ljubljana Urban Region (RRA LUR) received the European Enterprise Promotion Award at the national level for improving business environment in Ljubljana Urban Region. The Agency's Regional Creative Economy Centre (RCKE), devoted to promoting development of creative economy, was recognized as an initiative which – through connecting a broad spectrum of stakeholders and introducing innovative approaches to both private and public sectors – is achieving outstanding results not only at a regional and national level, but also internationally. Promoting urban regeneration, creative industries and creativity in general, the initiative has a positive influence on both the economy and quality of life in the region. This is best reflected in tangible results of projects the centre is involved in; such as developing a set of board games for persons with dementia, a mobile application 'A to B: LJ' promoting use of sustainable modes of transport in Ljubljana, and a self-help forum for persons suffering with arthritis.

**Kreazin - a bilingual online publication connecting creative hubs - now published**

In July a new online publication connecting creative hubs of Ljubljana Urban Region was launched. Kreazin (a joint project of several creative hubs in the region) provides a platform for cooperation and communication among hubs themselves

as well as their communication with a wider public at a regional, national, and international level. The publication was developed within CCAIps (an EU funded project) and RCKE (a regional project) at the initiative of the Regional Creative Economy Centre (RCKE) – a centre established by the Regional Development Agency of Ljubljana Urban Region (RRA LUR). In developing Kreazin, RCCKE was joined by other founding members: Coworking Slovenia, DUKZ, prostoRož, Creative Zone Šiška, MAO, Service Design Slovenia, RogLab and RTO, which together identified common needs, knowledge, resources, and opportunities of hubs at a workshop named Bottom(s) up. Additional hubs are welcome to join Kreazin (as Creative Mornings already has). For more, go to <http://www.kreazin.si/en/>

**Scientific Research Centre Bistra celebrates 20 years**



During this time, the centre has certainly yielded some results into local environment and created a lot of ideas that have resulted in many projects carried out in different areas. It has created and actively directed development in the region and it has created connections for efficient and useful cooperation between the public and private sectors and between industry and academic institutions in Slovenia and beyond.

The centre has become an important part of the consortium and partners for a number of projects and stories within Slovenia and the EU. To present their work to a wider audience, they organized Open Days between 23 and 26 of September 2014.

The centre's next challenge is the organization of Zero Waste Pro – International Environmental Conference on the 19th November 2014 in Ptuj. The conference is a part of Zero Waste Pro project which belongs to European Programme of Territorial Cooperation MED 2007-2013 and is co-financed by the European Regional Development Fund, the IPA fund as well as from National Resources. The topic of the conference will be circular economy with new jobs and sustainable growth.