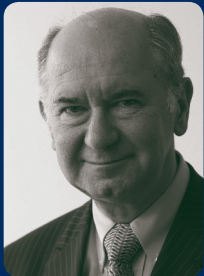


# Most

S B R A

Quarterly Bulletin of the Slovenian Business & Research Association

## EDITORIAL



On 13 January the Knowledge Economy Network (KEN) was created, and is being registered as an asbl in Brussels. This Network has its roots in the European Regional Economic Forum (EREF) Network, which evolved from annual

Fora (2005-2010) in Nova Gorica, Slovenia.

On 6-7 June 2011 the annual Forum will take place in the city of Maribor – the 2012 European Capital of Culture. Messrs. B.Cizelj and T.F.Konst have been elected as chair and vice chair, while SBRA has been appointed as the Network's Secretariat.

KEN will encourage and support knowledge economy developments in Europe and beyond, with emphasis on human capital. The domains to be covered include: education and training, research & development, innovation, and entrepreneurship, and the Network's International Advisory Board will reflect all of these domains. The activities of the Network include: information services, analysis, dissemination and promotion of good practice cases, training, policy dialogue, and consultancy.

Membership and various categories of partnership (patron, partner, sponsor) are open to a wide variety of knowledge stakeholders and policy-makers, as well as individuals: from regional and local authorities and their executive agencies, companies and business associations, science & technology parks, clusters, centres of excellence and competence, universities, research institutes, and development and innovation agencies, for example.

Before the annual Forum in June, preparatory workshops will be held in Ljubljana, Graz, and Oslo or Stockholm, Istanbul and Gorizia. The topics of those events will cover: business/academia partnerships, corporate social responsibility and business ethics, role of women in corporate decision making, university reforms, and venture capital.

For further details visit:  
[www.knowledge-economy.net](http://www.knowledge-economy.net)

Dr Boris Cizelj  
Chairman, Management Board

## R&D LEAD

### Government unveils innovation-oriented Research Plan for 2011-2020

In early November 2010, Economy Minister Darja Radic and Higher Education, Science and Technology Minister Gregor Golobic unveiled a proposed Research and Innovation strategy (RISS) for 2011-2020.

Minister Golobic stated, 'The goal of RISS is to set up a system of research and innovation that will enable a higher quality of life for everyone with the help of critical social reflection, effective resolving of social challenges and other added values per employee, as well as a greater number and better jobs'. He also stated that human resources, knowledge and innovation are the main areas of focus of RISS.

Public and private investment into R&D reached 1.66% of GDP in 2008, and RISS should aid a rise to 3.6% by 2020, 1.2% of which would be from public funding.

Minister Radic emphasised the importance of RISS for the economy, particularly towards the goal of converting expertise into money, and supporting entrepreneurs who can develop innovation into a product valued by the market. 'The basic core for securing economic growth is innovation, which is why it is important that it gets support when it is converted into competitive products or services with high added value,' she stated.

Minister Radic also highlighted the establishment of a high-quality network of support services for entrepreneurs, along with a reassessment of the operation of the Public Agency for Entrepreneurship and Foreign Investments (JAPTI) and the Technology Agency (TIA). The two organisations will be merged into a single organisation with a new role in line with RISS guidelines.

Other objectives include the development of independent public research organisations, increased international cooperation, and attention to ethics in research.

RISS entered a month-long public debate on 4 November.

### SBRA welcomes Ambassador Genorio



Dr Rado Genorio has been appointed Permanent Representative of Slovenia to the European Union. Prior to taking up this post, Ambassador Genorio was State Secretary at the office of the Prime Minister of Slovenia, where his work focused on EU affairs.

In 1992, Ambassador Genorio was appointed State Secretary at the Ministry of Science and Technology, where his work led to Slovenia's full membership of EUREKA in 1994. He has served as the Deputy Director of the Slovenian Government Office for European Affairs, and was a key figure in Slovenia's negotiations to join the European Union, NATO, and the Schengen area. He has made a significant contribution to the most recent enlargement of the Schengen area.

Ambassador Genorio took up his duties on 8 September 2010.

# BRIEFS

## Business Briefs

### ▶ Pipistrel receives a European Business Award



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From among 15,000 applicants, Pipistrel d.o.o.

Ajdovščina was selected as the winner of the UKTI Award for Innovation at the 2010 European Business Awards, sponsored by HSBC. General Manager Ivo Boscarol, has said that, 'The European Business Awards are widely recognised as the showcase for Europe's most dynamic companies. To be considered the most innovative company in the European Union is a success that exceeds our wildest dreams by far.'

The maker of light aircraft has grown exponentially in recent years, and has received a 30-year licence to build a factory in Italy, near the border with Slovenia. The new site will be used to assemble aircraft with four or more seats, while production and development will remain in Slovenia. This new agreement will allow the company to export to the United States.

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

### ▶ Slovenian and Turkish Chambers of Commerce sign trade cooperation agreement

A cooperation agreement recently signed between the Slovenian and Turkish Chambers of Commerce and Industry aims to develop existing links and increase the already significant amount of trade between the two countries.

Slovenia exported over 151 million EUR worth of goods to Turkey in 2009, while imports totalled 144.7 million EUR. Exports in 2010 increased by 19.4% between January and July, while imports rose by 21.2%. Ales Cantarutti, head of the Competitiveness Centre of the Slovenian Chamber of Commerce and Industry, stated that 'Turkey is one of the few countries that Slovenia has managed to increase exports to in the crisis year 2009'.

### ▶ JAPTI to fund Slovenian participation at international fairs

In November, JAPTI announced that it will provide financial assistance for



Slovenian companies interested in attending specialised fairs abroad. The agency will cover up to 60% of the costs of participation at fairs, with a cap of EUR 10,000 per company.

Director Igor Plestenjak believes this presents a good opportunity for building networks and striking new deals. In 2010 to date, JAPTI has participated in funding group appearances at 22 international fairs, involving nearly 200 Slovenian companies. Mr Plestenjak stated that surveys show, as a result of these fairs, companies generated nearly 6,000 new contacts and reached 250 new deals.

### ▶ OECD downgrades Slovenia's growth forecast for 2011

Growth figures released by the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) have predicted a 2% growth for Slovenia's economy in 2011, a drop of 0.4% since figures were last released in May 2010. It predicts a growth of 2.8% in 2012.

Despite the downgrading, the OECD maintains that the numbers are positive and Slovenia's economy has been recovering well due to exports and domestic public spending. The estimates offered by the Office for Macroeconomic Analysis and Development (IMAD), however, are slightly higher falling at 2.5% growth in 2011 and 3.1% in 2012.

### ▶ Slovenia and Serbia sign agreement to develop joint endeavours

JAPTI and the Serbian Investment and Export Promotion Agency have signed a new agreement to foster the development of joint endeavours in foreign markets. The agreement was signed in Belgrade on Friday 19 November as part of a JAPTI-sponsored business conference which focused on new means of cooperation between Slovenian and Serbian companies. 'Creating joint brands to jointly enter foreign markets - especially those of Russia and Asia - presents an opportunity for both economies and thus a promotion for economic ties in south-eastern Europe,' said Igor Plestenjak, Director of JAPTI.

### ▶ Rogaska Crystal launches cooperation with Trump

The US-based subsidiary of Steklarna Rogaska, Rogaska Crystal, has signed an agreement with American billionaire Donald Trump, allowing the company to sell goods under the Trump name for the next five years.

The primary products in the line will be business gifts. Rogaska Crystal products under the Trump brand will initially be available in the US and later in Slovenia, said Bojan Leskovar, Manager of Rogaska Crystal. Steklarna Rogaska chairman Davor Senija added that while the agreement does not secure a production increase, it brings higher selling prices.

## R&D Briefs

### ▶ Slovenian car companies form consortium for research & development

Eight Slovenian car companies formed a consortium in November, aimed at reducing individual research and development expenditures and following global trends in the industry. The SiEVA consortium includes companies Hidria, Cimos, Kolektor, Iskra Avtoelektrika, Iskra Mehanizmi, MLM, Polycom and TPV.

SiEVA is expected to create approximately 1,500 jobs and 20 new patents for environmentally friendly vehicles. The companies invested around 20 million EUR in the project and are committed to investing over 250 million EUR over the next three to five years.

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

### ▶ 1.86% of GDP Spent on R&D in 2009



The Statistical Office reports that Slovenia earmarked 1.86% of its GDP for research and development last year, an increase of 6%. The bulk of the investment went towards higher education and business, and engineering represents the sector with the most R&D investment with 47%, compared to agriculture, the lowest. The number of researchers increased by 802 people in 2009 compared to 2008, with women representing 38% of the total. Funding from abroad represented 15% of all R&D funds.

### ► **Seven consortia receive funding for establishing competence centres**

The Ministry of Higher Education, Science and Technology has chosen seven consortia to receive a total of 44.7 million EUR for the development of competence centres. The competition, based on the Europe 2020 strategy, saw 22 applicants enter in line with seven priority fields in which Slovenia can be successful, including processing technologies, energy efficiency, bio-medical technologies, and sustainable construction. The majority of the funding will come from the European Regional Development Fund, with the support of the national budget. According to Minister Golobic, this is an important step towards strengthening Slovenia's capacity for innovation through funding R&D activities. The consortia are expected to start setting up their centres towards the end of the year.

## Agriculture Briefs

### ► **Energy production from agriculture biomass**

Perutnina Ptuj, an international group of companies focused in providing natural and healthy food, has invested in a new biogas plant which represents a move into the use of more advanced technology. The plant will use the 'green' waste from agricultural production and chicken manure to produce 8,000 MWh of electric energy and slightly more of heat energy in just over a year. This figure represents approximately 25% of all annual electricity needed by the Group. This plant will decrease greenhouse gas emissions, while producing energy and delivering high-quality organic fertilizer.

[www.perutnina.com](http://www.perutnina.com)

### ► **Agriculture Ministry launches Dairy Quality campaign**

Minister for Agriculture, Food and Forestry, Dejan Zidan, has launched a campaign to ensure the high quality of Slovenian dairy products. The main focus is on ensuring milk is not diluted with water, and that vegetable proteins or fats are not added to cheese. The Minister pointed out the importance of milk production in Slovenia, which represents approximately 15% of the country's agricultural production, amounting to over 1

billion EUR annually. As part of the campaign, the Ministry has earmarked between 300,000 and 400,000 EUR for lab analyses this year.

### ► **New census presents figures for agriculture holdings**



Meir Jacob

An agriculture census presented by the Statistics Office in November shows that Slovenia has a total of 74,432 agricultural holdings, managing 466,941 hectares of farm land and 404,451 units of livestock. These figures are down by 14% since 2000. Changes have also occurred since 2000 in terms of the size of utilised agricultural land. Agricultural holdings cultivating more than 20 hectares of agricultural area cultivate a larger share of agricultural land.

## SBRA Partners

### ► **Maribor is the next European Youth Capital 2013**



Flavio Ferreira

The European Youth Forum has selected Maribor as its European Youth Capital for 2013, due to its innovative 'bottom-up' approach to the engagement of young people. The title will give the city the opportunity to showcase the involvement of its youth in the political, social and economic aspects of life in Maribor. Judges were impressed by the city's cooperation with stakeholders at both local and European level, as well as its diverse programme of activities aimed at addressing challenges faced by young people all over Europe.

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

### ► **Cargo 10 rail project attracts international interest**

The Cargo 10 rail project established in September 2010 between Slovenian, Serbian and Croatian national railways has already expanded to include Macedonia and is continuing to attract interest. The project objectives of increased efficiency along the tenth pan-European cargo corridor have drawn the attention of Bulgaria, Austria, Italy, Greece and Germany. Slovenske železnice boosted its freight transport by 21% this year compared to 2009, while revenues from transport were up by 23%. Total revenues increased by 26%.

<http://www.slo-zeleznice.si/>

### ► **Ljubljana launches Trubar Literature House**



A new house of literature has opened in the former Ljubljana home of Slovenian writer Primoz Trubar as part of the city's turn as holder of the title of World Book Capital. The house, located in Ljubljana's Old Town, is both a library and a museum, providing a reading room and a venue for events, readings and book presentations.

City Culture Commissioner Uros Grilc stated that this 16th century home will be a place to 'critically observe literary and cultural life'. Visitors will have access to books, newspapers and magazines, and the house will feature a light installation by Italian artist Allesandro Lippi, and a room dedicated to Trubar. Trubar, in 1550, published the first Slovenian language books.

At EUR 350,000, the Trubar House of Literature is the biggest investment of the World Book Capital city project.



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is a quarterly news bulletin published by the Slovenian Business & Research Association (SBRA). SBRA is a non-profit organisation acting as a 'bridge' between the business and research communities in Slovenia and the EU institutions, and other public and private bodies at EU level.

**SBRA**  
**Avenue Lloyd George 6**  
**B-1000 Brussels**  
**Tel + 32 2 645 19 10**  
**Fax + 32 2 645 19 17**  
**E-mail: info@sbra.be**

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**Editor: Dr Boris Cizelj**

**www.sbra.be**

## POLICY NOTEBOOK

### ● **Ljubljana Thermal Power Plant receives World Summit Award for mobile environmental information**



The Thermal Power Plant Ljubljana (TE-TOL) has been chosen by the World Summit Awards (WSA) as one of the five best practices in the world for the availability of environmental information. The WSA, a global initiative associated with

the United Nations World Summit on Information Society, selected Slovenia, the United States, Egypt, Austria and India as having the best mobile information practices in the field of environmental and health protection.

TE-TOL is the biggest electricity and heat cogeneration facility in Slovenia, providing approximately 90% of the city of Ljubljana's heating demand. Its focus is on supplying safe, reliable and environmentally friendly heat and electric energy using existing coal technology, as well as ensuring the production of steam processes and the provision of ancillary services for electric power transmission systems.

This is the first year that this particular award, WSA-Mobile, specifically for the provision of mobile content, has been given. The competition saw 420 projects from 100 countries submitted; five winners were chosen in each category. TE-TOL was the sole energy company and was chosen for its mobile portal, representing 'a stellar example of how mobility can be put to use in serving the common good of a diverse community'.

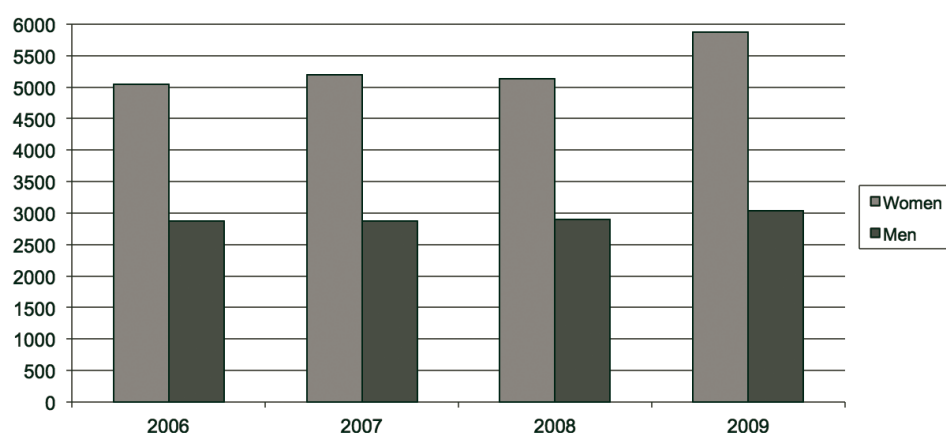
The TE-TOL mobile portal is a website designed to serve a range of audiences by making complex and comprehensive data available via mobile web browser access. Such an application connects the fields of environment, energy and mobile technology, making information widely available and accessible. The WSA criteria for evaluating the best mobile practices were content quality, aesthetic and functional value, technical solutions, and cost accessibility for different target groups. TE-TOL's mobile portal is aimed at allowing open, transparent communication between the company and the inhabitants of Ljubljana.

Blaž Košorok, General Manager of TE-TOL, stated: 'TE-TOL's mobile portal is a sophisticated communication tool that strengthens our social responsibility ... it helped us to upgrade the logistics and supply control system of wood chips, as well as the internal measurements of individual work processes'.

[www.te-tol.si](http://www.te-tol.si)

[www.wsa-mobile.org](http://www.wsa-mobile.org)

### Enrolment in full-time higher university education



Source: Statistical Office of the Republic of Slovenia, 2010