

Most is a 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.

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Slovene Government to fight grey economy with legislation and general measures

The Government of the Republic of Slovenia approved a programme of measures aimed to combat the grey economy, which also foresees curbing undeclared employment, inspection campaigns, amendments to health-care legislation and damages for illegal building. Measures also tackle cash payments, duties and eliminating administrative barriers.

The Government plans to launch a comprehensive campaign to reduce the grey economy, which includes incentives, eliminating the main causes, and greater oversight and sanctions. The plan, Mitigating the Grey Economy in the Republic of Slovenia, presents sector-specific policies and measures, and horizontal measures focused on improving the detection of the grey economy, better sanctions policy, prevention, and raising citizens' awareness of the significance of the grey economy and its consequences.

The document, which was drawn up on the basis of an intradepartmental project, foresees a number of measures in various ministries. In the area covered by the Ministry of Labour, a new act will reduce the amount of black market work and employment, and there will also be amendments to the Labour Inspection Act, which will seek to ensure more effective inspection. The Ministry of Infrastructure and Spatial Planning will tackle illegal buildings and structures, where damages will have to be paid regardless of whether they are legalised or not. The planned changes will also offer greater flexibility for those employed in road transport, particularly regarding taxis and buses. The Ministry of Economic Development and Technology will introduce measures aimed at more consistent collection of data on overnight stays. Plans for the Ministry of Agriculture and Environment include a clearer distinction between hospitality and tourism services on farms. The relevant legislation will also be amended to prevent illegally acquired wood and wood products from coming onto the market.

The Government also proposes several horizontal measures: better monitoring of cash payments, promotion of non-cash transactions, stricter oversight of products subject to excise duties, reducing red tape, combining databases and joint inspections.

The grey economy is increasingly becoming not only an economic, but also a moral issue and a problem of values in Europe. Therefore, the Government will regularly monitor and update the implementation of documents and measures.

There will also be a communication campaign to support government measures to raise awareness among the public about how the grey economy is a lose-lose situation, which cannot be eradicated without the combined efforts of all stakeholders.

The campaign will communicate the same message as the European Commission. Slovenia's expectations are similar to other countries: the Government plans to reduce the grey economy by half, which translates into at least 200 million euros in additional tax revenues.

Editorial



It is a bit special, dear readers, to present the 50th issue of *Most*.

Looking back to the start of SBRA in August 1999 one cannot but reflect briefly on what has

happened during this period – globally, in Brussels, and in Slovenia.

Global relations have changed dramatically, specially in economic outlook. Between 1995 and 2010 the share of world export of products shrunk from 47 to 33% for EU, US and Japan, and it exploded from 7.5 to 24% for China, India, Russia and Brazil. In 2015 about 90% of world growth will be generated outside Europe. China alone will invest next year more into R&D than the EU, while only in 2008 we have invested double compared to them. Reason for panic? No, since the combined GDP of China and India will represent the same share of global GDP as 2000 years ago. But, if we wish to continue enjoying comparable standard of living, we will have to work more, longer and better – improving our innovative and entrepreneurial performance. It can be done, and the only viable solution is to embrace the strategy of knowledge economy.

SBRA is doing its share vis-à-vis its members in Slovenia, and also by serving as Secretariat of the global Knowledge Economy Network, KEN, which has its annual Forum on 22-23 October in Cape Town, South Africa. This country is strongly committed to knowledge economy, and has won in the global competition for the enormous system of radio telescopes (SKA Africa – Square Kilometer Array) vital for deep space exploration. This commitment is manifested also by the fact that the government is hosting in 2013 three major international conferences on knowledge economy.

SBRA welcomes new member – National Institute of Biology

The National Institute of Biology (NIB) was founded in 1961. It is the third largest public research institute in the field of natural and life sciences in Slovenia and the leading institute in the area of biological sciences. More than 140



professionals are employed. NIB operates at two locations in Slovenia – in Ljubljana at the Biological Centre, and at the Coast where the Marine Biology Station Piran is located. The director of the institute has been Prof. Dr. Tamara Lah Turnšek since 1996.

The main research activities of NIB are closely intertwined basic and applied research in biological sciences, overlapping with other fields of natural sciences such as chemistry, physics, informatics, agronomy, ecology, and biomedical sciences. Research activities are supported mainly by research grants from the Slovenian Research Agency (ARRS).

Consulting and supporting services related to the needs of Slovenian and global society comprise an important mission of the National Institute of Biology. They include advising political bodies and various professional agencies, performing analyses, such as for genetically modified organisms, providing a source of expertise in the areas of agriculture and food chain, protection of the land and marine environments and biodiversity, and human health. Dissemination of basic knowledge in varied applications involves the Institute in close collaboration with partners in the public and business sectors. Joint basic research and development as well as contract research, is carried out, in particular with industries that are involved in or directed towards pharmaceuticals and biotechnology, and with food and environmental products and services.

Eurobasket 2013 – promotional event in Brussels

Permanent Representation of the Republic of Slovenia to the EU and Embassy of the Republic of Slovenia in Belgium organised an event promoting Eurobasket 2013 on Tuesday, 03rd September 2013 in Brussels. Main attraction of the event was a basketball tournament with participation of 10 national teams, including a team of Slovene members of European Parliament. The Lithuanian team won the tournament, the Slovenian team (including Commissioner Potočnik) came second and Slovene MEPs were third.

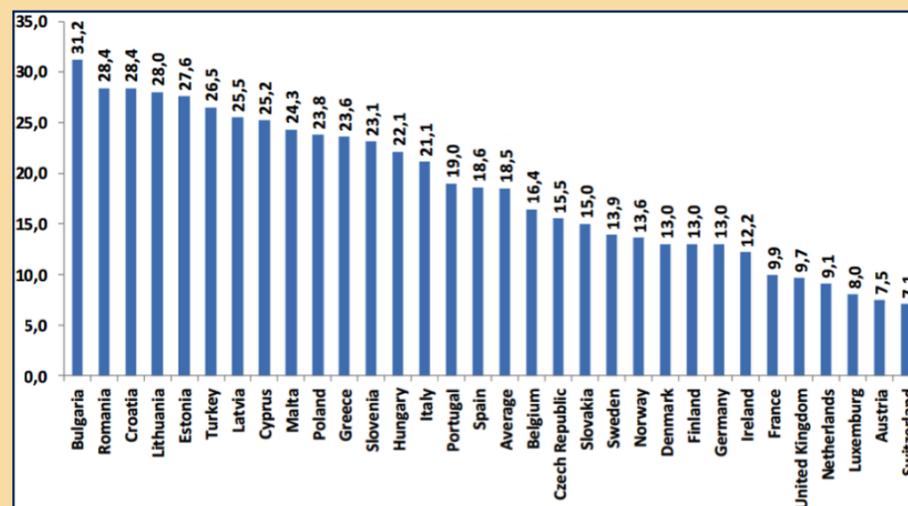


The event also featured some Slovene traditional culinary delights like krainer sausage, different stews, true Slovene apples and beer.

Slovene Business and Research Association also participated at the event, unfortunately not with its own basketball team, but with a stand promoting its members.

Size of the Shadow Economy of 31 European Countries in 2013 (in % of off. GDP)

Source: Johannes Kepler University of Linz



Business Briefs

SID Bank – founding member of ELTI



On July 5, 2013 sixteen European financial institutions established a European association of long-term investors ELTI, under which they will work together to promote a more sustainable, smart and inclusive growth in Europe, particularly for young people.

One of the founding members of ELTI is also Slovenska izvozna in razvojna banka – SID Bank.

ELTI Association was established as an international non-profit association with its headquarters in Brussels. The association and its members aspire to be a key player in the European debate on long-term investments.

ELTI's goal is to promote long-term investment that foster sustainable and smart growth and create jobs.

ELTI aims to include at least one member per EU Member State and is open to association with all financial institutions in EU or Candidate Countries.

Bled Strategic Forum 2013



Between 01st and 03rd September 2013 Bled hosted the 8th Bled Strategic Forum. The event, organised by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Centre for European Perspective, welcomed leading politicians, business and media representatives,

academics and experts from 37 countries. The participants were addressed by Foreign Minister Karl Erjavec, President Borut Pahor, and Prime Minister Alenka Bratušek.

The title of the main conference was "A Changing Europe in a Changing World". The main panel addressed the future of Europe in the light of European Year of Citizens, followed by a special panel addressing the water challenge in the Middle East and North Africa. Further discussions tackled the following topics: prospects for the EU Economic and Monetary Union, the role of international criminal justice, EU-Turkey relations and EU enlargement policy towards the countries of the Western Balkans region after Croatia's accession.

FDI Summit 2013 Slovenia



The 2013 FDI summit was held in Ljubljana at the Faculty of Economics (organiser) on 17th September 2013 with up to 30 speakers participating in seven round table discussions and evening reception, all together with up to 200 participants from Slovenia and abroad attending.

Major speakers included Prime Minister Alenka Bratušek, Finance Minister Uroš Čufer, Interior and Public Administration Minister Gregor Virant, Jean-Marc Peterschmitt, Managing Director, Central and South Eastern Europe, EBRD and many others who co-create the business environment in Slovenia and the region.

The FDI (Foreign Direct Investment) Summit 2013 Slovenia is a major international business event focusing on foreign direct investment and current development issues, specifically the measures for generating growth in the current volatile European and global economic environment.

The theme of this year's summit was "A Clear Vision For The Future" to highlight that endless and often self destructive political discussion is not what Slovenia needs but rather immediate action in terms of active economic policy and adoption of crucial structural changes.

Among the main topics discussed were:

- the need to open up to foreign direct investment and start the next wave of privatisation;
- the need to cut red tape;

- the need for efficient decision-making at all levels of government in order to increase certainty for investors;
- the need to improve the promotion of the country.

Research Briefs

Opening of the Pregl Research Centre

Director of the Chemical institute dr. Janko Jamnik and the European Commissioner for the Environment dr. Janez Potočnik opened in Ljubljana on the 28th June a new Pregl research centre. The ceremony was attended by President of the Republic of Slovenia Borut Pahor and Prime Minister Alenka Bratušek and Minister of Education, Science and Sport Jernej Pikalo. The research centre on 4000 square meters is equipped with the high-quality research equipment, including the newest transmission electron microscope by chemical analysis, which is unique in this part of Europe. Investment in the building and the research infrastructure in the amount of 15 million EUR was in 80% realized with the help of EU funds. The centre will allow 80 researchers to work in the most modern laboratories and is crucial for building scientific excellence in Slovenia. The building is designed as a low-energy and environmentally friendly facility.

R&D programmes of TCS – Toolmakers Cluster of Slovenia for the period 2014-2020

TCS is preparing R&D programmes, which are basis for participation in R&D projects on EU, regional and national level, especially projects within EU programme HORIZON 2020 and FoF - Factories of the Future programme. These programmes are »SMART MACHINE« and »EM IND – Emerging Industries«.

Smart Machine (SM) represents a new generation of manufacturing machines as part of the Factory of Future (FoF) philosophy. SMs are based on the concept of "Service Relief Technology". This concept is underpinned by postulate that every SM producer is responsible for the product during the whole life cycle. This includes development and delivery of contracted machine or equipment, controlling of it operations, maintenance,

upgrading and decommissioning at the end of it use. Typical potential SM examples are machine tools, tools and dies, machines for production lines etc.

SM is the main focus of international collaborative RTD program initiated by LENS Living Lab research partners and coordinated by TCS. The programme partners are manufacturing SMEs, ICT companies and R&D organizations from Slovenia, Austria, Denmark, Germany and USA.

EM IND – Emerging Industries Programme is based on the collaboration of clusters, which are active in the areas of key enabling technologies - advanced manufacturing technologies, advanced materials and information - communication technologies. The goal of the programme is to support the development of emerging industries especially in the direction of mobility industries, based on interaction of key technologies, supported by new business models.

New Rector of the University of Ljubljana



In June this year, Prof. Ivan Svetlik was elected the 43th Rector in the history of the University of Ljubljana, for the period 2013 – 2017. He assumes its duties at the beginning of October 2013.

Dr. Svetlik graduated from the Faculty of Social Science of the University of Ljubljana. In 1983 he obtained his doctoral degree.

He dedicated his career to academics, holding several positions – fulltime professor of human resources and social area, head of the Centre for Organization and Human Resource Research, vice-rector at the University of Ljubljana, Dean of the Faculty of Social Sciences and

others. Between 2008 and 2012 he was also Minister of Labour, Family and Social Affairs.

Slovenian Forestry Institute upgrades its scientific excellence with summer schools, workshops and seminars

EUFORINNO European Forest Research and Innovation, coordinated by the Slovenian Forestry Institute (SFI), is 100% financed by the European commission within its FP7 infrastructures programme. The overall goal of the project (see also MOST No. 48), is increasing its scientific excellence, visibility and research infrastructures. Scientific excellence is being supported through several activities: Firstly, purchase of new research equipment will be successfully finished till the end of this year. The second is focused directly on rising scientific excellence of SFI researchers. It is an on-going process though all three years of the project duration, fulfilled through secondments of SFI researchers visiting project partners and with seminars, workshops and summer schools given by partners at SFI. Among most interesting for a variety of scientists was the summer school by Prof. Dr. Reinhart Ceulemans on scientific writing and publishing. The professor, who is among 20 most cited authors in plant science and member of a number of editorial boards, also presented an open lecture on integrity in science. PICTURE Within the project a lot of activities are focused on dissemination of new and existing knowledge of SFI researchers. Among these the current focus is on building up an open access repository. To conclude: the SFI is taking a solid step forward to increase its scientific excellence and visibility in the field.

Regional Briefs

Ljubljana Forum 2013

Municipality of Ljubljana and GFS, GoForeSight Institute, are organising Ljubljana Forum 2013 on Managing Water & Transport in the Danube Region. This two-day event will be held between 17th and 18th October 2013, at Ljubljana Castle, Slovenia. Ljubljana Forum is an annual gathering that combines knowledge and experience of city governance and defines

key areas, visions and strategies of the future development of cities.

The aim of Ljubljana Forum is to promote opportunities for future development of cities and metropolitan areas of the South-East European region. Its objective is to offer a framework for cooperation, networking and learning among various stakeholders, namely political decision-makers, city administration, investors and banks, businesses, civil society, researchers, academics and students, who create future of cities through researching, developing and implementing the best practices of urban development. This year's Forum will focus on global challenges of managing water & transport in the Danube Region, water and transport governance issues, financial support mechanisms, industry solutions, new business models and new initiatives to move forward.

Regional Policy Commissioner Hahn Visiting Slovenia

European Commissioner for Regional Policy Johannes Hahn visited Slovenia on Friday, 20th September 2013, for talks on drawing of EU funds in the 2007-2013 budgetary period and preparations for the new seven-year period.

Hahn met PM Alenka Bratušek, Economic Development and Technology Minister Stanko Stepišnik and Infrastructure and Spatial Planning Minister Samo Omerzel.

Speaking ahead of the visit, Commissioner Hahn said that "Slovenia is at a crucial stage in planning investments under EU Regional Policy for 2014-2020 and in implementing the current generation of projects."

The commissioner also met members of the parliamentary EU Affairs Committee, Economy Committee, Infrastructure and Spatial Planning Committee, and the Committee for Labour, Family, Social Affairs and the Disabled.

He also visited 3 centres of excellence at the Technology Park in Ljubljana which were co-financed with EU structural funds: Centre of Excellence for Biosensors, Instrumentation and Process Control COBIK, EN-FIST Centre of Excellence and Centre of Excellence Polymer Materials and Technologies PoliMaT.

Commissioner Hahn concluded his visit saying: "Slovenia can be more self-confident and proud of what it has achieved."