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Slovenian Citizens Provide Concrete and Unique Input to the European Union's Research and Innovation Agenda

The Slovenian Business & Research Association is one of 24 partners in the EU project CIMULACT. CIMULACT – which stands for Citizen and Multi-Actor Consultation on Horizon 2020 – is engaging citizens, along with a variety of other actors, in redefining the European research and innovation agenda and thereby making it relevant and accountable to society. The Kick Off meeting was held in Copenhagen on 29 September – 2 October 2015 and marked the official start of the CIMULACT project. The project is to last until 2018.

The project has engaged more than 1000 citizens in 30 countries in Europe to formulate their visions for desirable sustainable futures, to debate and develop them with other actors, and to transform them into recommendations for future research and innovation policies and topics. By no longer reserving these questions for experts and policy makers only, CIMULACT makes the building of the future more accessible by commonly sharing and discussing our visions for how research and innovation can take us there.

In short, CIMULACT will:

- Involve citizens in the actual formulation of the EU research and innovation agendas;
- Provide concrete and unique input to the identification of the future European research agenda by eliciting concerns about, wishes for and visions of desirable sustainable futures from 1000 citizens in 30 countries in Europe;
- Make the European research and innovation agenda relevant and accountable to society by engaging citizens, stakeholders and experts in co-creating research agendas based on real, validated and shared visions, needs and demands;
- Contribute to responsible research and innovation (RRI) in the EU by promoting the engagement and inclusion of the public in the identification of desirable sustainable futures;
- Set a new standard for public participation through the development, testing, training and assessment of methods for citizen and stakeholder engagement;
- Make the building of the future more accessible. It is no longer only a question discussed by policy makers and experts; it is a wider public conversation for a greater democracy.

National Citizen Vision Workshop!

The Slovenian Business & Research Association organized its first National Citizen Vision Workshop on 9 January 2016 in Ljubljana, Slovenia at the Chamber of Commerce and Industry of Slovenia. SBRA collected unique input from 51 Slovenian citizens, which will influence the future of EUROPEAN RESEARCH and INNOVATION AGENDA! This is the most ambitious public participation projects ever funded by the European Commission!



Photo:
National Citizen Vision Workshop in Ljubljana, Slovenia on 9 January 2016.

Editorial



On the 3rd of March 2016, the Slovenian Business & Research Association (SBRA) will organize – alongside key Slovenian & European industry players – the

Transport & Logistics Conference 2016.

European Commissioner for Transport Ms. Violeta Bulc will be the keynote speaker, alongside Dr. Peter Gašperšič, the Slovenian Minister of Infrastructure. Although the event will cover the wider EU agenda on transport & logistics, a special emphasis on the central European region will be given, including the TEN-T Baltic-Adriatic Corridor. Important stakeholders from the transportation & logistics industry will be present at the event, including Slovenian Railways and Port of Koper, as well as DRI Investment Management, the largest Slovenian engineering & consulting company in the field of transport & logistics.

In case you would like to have further information concerning the event, please do not hesitate to either call or send us an email! We are strictly targeting participants that are most active and relevant to the European transport & logistics agenda, & space is limited!

On a different note - SBRA as one of 24 partners in the EU project CIMULACT - organized its first National Citizen Vision Workshop in Ljubljana, Slovenia on 9 January 2016. The aim of the workshop was for ordinary Slovenian citizens to formulate their vision of Europe in 2050. The project aims to influence the future of European Research & Innovation Agenda.

Lastly, I would like to take this opportunity, to wish our readers a wonderful, happy, healthy and prosperous 2016 or as I often say all the best and the rest.

Prof. Dr. Draško Veselinovič
President, Management Board

IEDC-Bled School of Management presents itself in Vienna

IEDC-Bled School of Management organized Master Class, titled "Today's Challenges of Leadership" in Vienna in late September 2015. It was participated by 80 managers and other important guests from Austria, including Dr. Rahten, Ambassador of Republic of Slovenia in Austria. "We live in the times when the need for leadership is tremendous. Even the Third World War is not impossible and the lack of leadership is definitely not a good precondition for preventing it," warned Dr. Erhard Busek, President of IEDC Supervisory Board and former Vice-Chancellor of Austria, who gave an introductory speech at this IEDC event. Prof. Danica Purg, President of IEDC-Bled School of Management, stressed that IEDC is recognized for its innovative way of leadership development. "IEDC is focused on what we call artistic leadership and we believe that arts help us to develop better leaders for a better world". The inspirational lecture was led by Prof. Pierre Casse, Leadership Chair at IEDC-Bled School of Management, who is a specialist in intercultural dynamics, leadership, organizational development and change within the context of the global market place. "Leaders are facing some major and unique challenges today. They need to challenge some of their basic assumptions and values. They must re-invent themselves and adopt new leadership styles", stresses prof. Casse and adds "it is exciting and scary for many men and women in leadership positions. To think outside the box is not good enough anymore. One must create the new boxes".



Elea iC's Building Information Modelling: A New Concept in Tunnelling and Engineering Geology

Civil design has changed in many ways since the introduction of Building Information Modelling (BIM) technology in its most recent form. But until now this technological breakthrough had not been successfully applied in traditionally oriented Engineering Geology. So paper, pencil and hand drawn sketches still represent the state of the art and are used in the elaboration of highly subjective geological reinterpretations.

Therefore a paradigm shift was inevitable. Using the technology available, Elea iC have developed a set of procedures and techniques to combine the latest surveying and remote sensing technology, GIS based tools to manage large data sets and BIM modelling techniques in 3D geological environment. To prove the concept, the Karavanke tunnel project in Slovenia has been chosen for testing techniques that enable digitizing geological data while communicating with Leapfrog Geo 3D modelling algorithms. This new procedure allows the engineers at the construction site to use a real-time 3D model for prognosis and evaluation, while upgrading it daily with new information.

Until now a tunnelling engineer had to decide on important design issues during construction using data from various providers using different design tools. Thus a model backed up by a structured database of graphical and non-graphical information is a tunnel designers dream come true.

Business Briefs

Slovenia macroeconomic forecast upgraded

In 2016, Slovenia's economy is projected to expand by 2.3%, up from its earlier forecast of 2%. The same pace of growth is to continue into 2017. Private spending recovered in 2014 after a three-year slump and the trend is expected to proceed apace this through 2017, with growth rates of between 2% and 2.6%.

While the uptick will be driven by improvements on the labor market, demographic trends were holding back the labour market recovery, as the share of those over 64 will continue to widen. As for investments, a volatile category strongly associated with the drawing of EU funds, IMAD – the government's macroeconomic forecaster – notes that private investments are still flat while public investments will grow this year and decline in 2016.

IMD World Competitiveness Yearbook 2015

Despite achieving a sound market economy and a peaceful transition process of political power, Slovenia's investment landscape presents a mixed picture. The Swiss-based IMD World Competitiveness Yearbook 2015 edition highlights some key issues that negatively affect the Slovenian investment environment and contribute to a somewhat adverse image abroad of the country. Slovenia's trade to GDP ratio remains strong. Similarly, the international trade sub-factor ranks high at 18th (of 61 economies) in the Yearbook's ranking. Slovenia's international investment sub-factor, however, ranks at 59th. The country's basic and technological infrastructures also rank relatively low (40th and 43rd respectively). In the overall competitiveness ranking, Slovenia ranks 49th.

Capital market dynamics show the same fluctuating pattern. Direct investment flows (inward), stock market capitalization and banking sector assets (all as percentage of GDP) have increased since 2011 while investment risk sharply declined in the same period. The adequacy of the finance and banking regulation remains low despite the fact that it has been steadily improving since 2013.

Interactive introduction to the 24alife mobile health application



On 9 November 2015, SBRA member the Development Centre RC IKTS Žalec presented their 24alife mobile health application at the Permanent Representation of the Republic of Slovenia to the EU, hosted by the Slovenian Business & Research Association.

The interactive workshop was intended for a smaller group of participants to test the mobile application. The 24alife team briefed participants on how to recognize and evaluate work-related stress, suggested coping methods and use of relaxation strategies. Participants were also encouraged to partake in light exercise (however, no sportswear was required)! Being one of the first in the world, 24alife combines knowledge of top Slovenian experts from medicine, psychology, sports and nutrition in one. The application is available via www.24alife.com

Research Briefs

The National Institute of Biology applies new LAMP technology



The National Institute of Biology (NIB) has applied a LAMP technology for fast and affordable molecular diagnostics of phytoplasmal diseases of grapevine on

site. Phytoplasmas are cell-wall-free plant pathogenic bacteria with a broad range of plant hosts including many important crops. Grapevine hosts two phytoplasmal yellows diseases of grapevine – the most devastating and quarantine one Flavescence dorée and more widespread Bois noir. NIB has developed a new diagnostic protocols based on the molecular method LAMP (isothermal nucleic acid amplification) for their detection. Because of its speed, robustness, simplicity and affordable cost, the use of LAMP is gaining popularity for diagnostics in plant health. More important, it is also suitable to be deployed in the field.

New LAMP protocol for the Flavescence dorée detection, developed during the EU FP7 project Vitisens, was shown on FAO headquarters in Rome to the national plant protection service delegates from more than 100 countries and on EXPO in Milano. New LAMP protocols have been tested in a test performance study (TPS) in ten laboratories from the research and plant protection area from Europe and Australia as a part of GRAFDEPI2, an ERA NET EUPHRESKO (network of organizations funding research projects and coordinating national research in the phytosanitary area) project, in which NIB is the leading partner.

Slovenia has signed 128 Horizon 2020 grants, of which University of Ljubljana has the biggest EU contribution



In the first two years of the Horizon 2020 programme, Slovenia has signed 128 grants with the total value of roughly 40 million euros. University of Ljubljana is on the first place with 5.9 million euros, followed by the Jožef Stefan Institute with 5.6 million euros and the National Institute of Chemistry with 3.7 million euros.

Other organizations making the top 20 list include (from January 2014 until July 15): pharmaceutical giant Lek; software development company XLAB; retail business M Sora; electronic equipment manufacturer Iskra; telecommunications company Telekom Slovenije; University of Maribor; propulsion technology

company Elaphe; Slovenian Railways; Ministry of Education, Science and Sport; communication technology firm Polycom; industrial conglomerate Hidria; University Medical Centre Ljubljana; transmission system operator Elektro Gorenjska; Agricultural Institute of Slovenia; public company Ljubljana parking facilities and marketplaces; R&D performing SME Emorodjarna; and lastly the Slovenian National Building and Civil Engineering Institute.

Slovenian Innovation Hub launched

The year 2015 marked a special chapter in Slovenian history, the University of Ljubljana together with other 23 co-founders – including the Slovenian Business & Research Association – founded the Slovenian Innovation Hub. Thus, the newly established Slovenian Innovation Hub will operate mainly as a facilitator and promoter of development and research teams in the academic and business sphere. As part of the priority areas of the Smart Specialisation Strategy, the Hub shall assist the crystallisation of the capabilities and forming of projects that shall build on the achieved and developing areas of excellent knowledge and technologies with the goal of developing and launching new products and services on Slovenian and foreign markets, enabling new job creation with high added value and encouraging the establishment of new companies. The basic goal is to contribute towards the development of knowledge-based economy and to raise Slovenia's international competitiveness.

Information Days 2015

On the 9th and 12th of October 2015, the Slovenian Business & Research Association co-organized in partnership with the Chamber of Commerce and Industry of Slovenia and the Ministry of Education, Science and Sport the seventh instalment of Information Days 2015. The event primarily focused on the Horizon 2020 work programmes 2016-2017, but also proved to be a great networking opportunity. In fact, up to 350 participants attended the two day event, which included researchers, entrepreneurs, local administrations, among others.

The programme also included presentations of EU project good practice cases, tips on how best to find project partners or join existing consortia, discussions also touched research and innovation priorities

of Slovenia in the 2014-2020 period, as well as synergies between Horizon 2020 and Cohesion Policy. The programme also included detailed introductory presentations of the various work programmes 2016-2017.

Regional Briefs

European Mobility Week 2015



This year marks the 14th year in a row that Ljubljana, capital city of Slovenia and winner of the European Green Capital Award 2016, took part in the European Mobility Week, the most wide-spread sustainable mobility campaign which traditionally takes place from 16 to 22 September 2015. This year the European Mobility Week was merged with the campaign "Do the right mix" with the slogan "Choose. Change. Combine". It focused on encouraging multimodality – combining different forms of mobility in one journey with an emphasis on walking, cycling and using public transport, which can often lead to more pleasant and quicker journey times. Special emphasis has been placed on the effect of everyday active life on our health and well-being. As always, primary schools and kindergartens actively participated in awareness-raising activities. Over 4,000 children from primary and secondary schools danced at the opening ceremony.

EU Design Days 2015

EU Design Days 2015 was a two-day event held in Brussels on 24 – 25 September 2015, which focused on the future of design. It examined future trends in design and innovation and the role the public sector can play in supporting these trends. The future of design was examined under three main sub-themes: eco-design, social innovation, and strategic design. EU Design Days is about bringing together stakeholders in design in a cross-sectoral and multicultural environment to foster exchange between regional stakeholders

and the EU Institutions, to discover EU funding opportunities and project partners.

The Slovenian Business & Research Association – one of the co-organizers of the event – alongside the Regional Development Agency of the Ljubljana Urban Region (RRA LUR) presented the Library of Things. The Library of Things, which instead of books offers various practical items (e.g. tools, sports gear, toys, electronics, home appliances) to its members. Borrowing items not used regularly by a single person is an innovative approach to confronting the economic crisis, since it enables individuals to use items they might otherwise not be able to afford. Next to reducing financial costs, the 'sharing economy' saves space and fosters social capital at the neighbourhood level (the space offers opportunities for socializing and cooperation not only through coincidental run-ins, but also through hosting various events).

Open Days 2015



During 12 – 15 October 2015 the 13th European Week of Regions and Cities made its presence felt in Brussels, attracting close to 6,000 participants; a 5% increase from the 2014 edition. Among the participants, two out of three came from local, regional, national and EU administrations, and app. 75% of participants travelled to Brussels specifically to attend the event. Participating regions and cities – which included three SBRA members – were grouped in so-called 'regional partnerships', each of which organized a Brussels-based workshop during the event.

Aleksandra Pivec from the Scientific Research Centre Bistra Ptuj co-organized its workshop on How Entrepreneurial Discovery Process contributes to Growth and Employment, Martin Čopič, the vice-rector of University of Ljubljana lead the discussion on Responsible Research and Innovation as part of Regional Innovation Ecosystem, while Miran Gajšek, from the City of Ljubljana moderated the Drive Me Green: Partnership for Sustainable Mobility.