

Editorial



The second half of 2024 was an especially active period for the Slovenian Business & Research Association

(SBRA), with a range of events organized on topics including: Social economy, specifically focusing on social innovation; Strengthening skills through regional initiatives; Sustainable Transportation in the EU; Innovating for a Just Transition to Hydrogen Economy, Advancements in Cancer Treatment, among others.

For 2025, we have a range of events scheduled that address key topics including: Digitalisation; EU's Innovation Fund; the European Research Area; smart factories; micro-credentials; Natura 2000; European defence and security cooperation; as well as EU's cannabis policy. For further details, please visit www.sbra.be.

On that note, the University of Maribor will celebrate its 50th anniversary, and we are planning to host an event to honor this significant milestone.

Lastly, at SBRA, we specialize in EU projects and strive to connect our members with relevant consortia. Our members include a diverse range of organizations, such as research institutes, universities, private companies, and municipalities. If any of the topics mentioned resonate with you, we encourage you to get in touch to discuss partnerships, co-organize a conference, or collaborate on an EU project.

Dr. Draško Veselinovič
President, Management Board
of SBRA

Business Briefs

Eles and Siemens Energy partner to drive advanced energy technology



Slovenian power grid operator Eles has signed a memorandum of understanding with Siemens Energy, establishing a strategic partnership aimed at advancing digital and sustainable technologies for the global energy market. Together, they will develop augmented reality (AR) and virtual reality (VR) tools, design robotic systems for transformer station inspections, and build digital twins of high-voltage transmission lines and transformer stations. This collaboration is set to enhance innovation and efficiency across the energy sector.

Medex: Innovating health through the inspiration of bees



Medex, a global leader in apitherapy, has transformed from a honey exporter into a top producer of food supplements derived from bee products, drawing inspiration from the remarkable world of bees. In partnership with the University of Primorska, Medex's research and development team conducted a pioneering clinical study, demonstrating for the first time the powerful anti-inflammatory effects of royal jelly in humans. The company's ongoing investments in research, development, and innovation reflect its

commitment to driving both business success and social well-being.

Slovenia set to become the 23rd Member State of the European Space Agency



Slovenia has cultivated a rapidly expanding space sector over recent years, now comprising over 40 small and medium-sized companies, some of which lead in areas like Earth observation, innovative technology development, and new materials. Currently, three Slovenian satellites orbit in space, including the groundbreaking Skylabs Trisat-R satellite, launched via ESA's Vega rocket. This satellite stands out as a significant European advancement in space technology miniaturization. Slovenian scientists are also contributing to human health research, with an ESA research facility established in Planica through efforts by the Jožef Stefan Institute to study physiological adaptation to weightlessness.

Research Briefs

Krka unveils new €20 million facility in Slovenia



Slovenian pharmaceutical company Krka has inaugurated a new €20 million facility at its Novo Mesto headquarters in southeastern Slovenia, dedicated to enhancing operational quality and fostering the development of innovative products. The new Pavilion 3 spans 9,600 square meters, with

40% of the space allocated to microbiological laboratories. Designed to bolster microbiological quality assurance for pharmaceutical products, the facility also enables faster access to critical information.

MultiXscale - NIC at the Forefront of Exascale Multiscale Simulations



The National Institute of Chemistry (NIC) is leading MultiXscale, a Centre of Excellence designed to boost the performance, productivity, and portability of exascale computing for multiscale simulations. MultiXscale addresses real-world challenges, including helicopter design for civil aviation, battery technology for sustainable energy, and ultrasound applications in biomedicine. NIC's expertise, combined with leading scientists from the CECAM and EESSI networks, will enable the scientific community to adopt cutting-edge exascale technology through scalable workflows and accessible tools. Running from 2023 to 2026 with a €5.98 million budget (50% EU-funded), MultiXscale strengthens EuroHPC's impact across Europe.

New research brings hope for glioblastoma treatment



Researchers at Slovenia's National Institute of Biology (NIB) are making promising strides in the fight against glioblastoma, the most aggressive form of brain cancer. The team, led by Barbara Breznik, has identified several biomarkers in glioblastoma tumor cells that could serve as

future drug targets. Although glioblastoma is rare in Slovenia, with around 100 new cases annually, it presents a critical health challenge due to its high mortality rate—patients often survive only about 18 months, and current treatments provide limited extension of life expectancy.

Slovenia to establish third medical school



University of Primorska

The Slovenian government has approved plans to open the country's third medical school at the University of Primorska. The program is set to welcome its first cohort of 100 medical students in the 2027/28 academic year. Students will study in a new facility planned for the existing Faculty of Health Studies, located next to the Izola General Hospital. The building project, valued at approximately €18 million, will be funded by contributions from two ministries alongside the university.

Regional Briefs

Integrated Territorial Investments (ITI) mechanism in Slovenia – success story



The Association of Urban Municipalities of Slovenia (AUMS) represents all 12 urban municipalities in Slovenia and acts as the intermediary body for the selection of projects of

the Integrated Territorial Investments (ITI) mechanism, a EU specific instrument of the Cohesion policy, used in Slovenia to support sustainable urban development. In the 2014-2020 period, Slovenian cities successfully implemented 91 ITI projects, nearly fully utilizing €139 million in funds and generating more than €277 million investments. Slovenian ITI was recognized as a best practice by the European Commission.

Drawing on the success of the ITI mechanism from 2014–2020, AUMS proposed a TSI project (»Improve Efficiency of the ESI Funds Absorption Processes in Slovenia«) to the government in October 2022 to streamline lengthy cohesion policy procedures, particularly the time between expenses and EU reimbursement. The government prioritized the proposal, and in February 2024, the European Commission approved it—a notable achievement, as only 30 of around 130 applications were accepted. With the support from EU the implementation of ITI will be analysed and proposals for improvements will be prepared by international and local experts which will enhance the efficiency of the mechanism and the wider cohesion ecosystem.

Most – meaning bridge in the Slovenian language – 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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