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## Cohesion funds for Slovenia 2014-2020

Overall, the reformed cohesion policy will make available up to EUR 366.8 billion to invest in Europe's regions, cities and the real economy. It will be the EU's principle investment tool for delivering the Europe 2020 goals: creating growth and jobs, tackling climate change and energy dependence, and reducing poverty and social exclusion. This will be helped through targeting the European Regional Development Fund at key priorities such as support for small and medium-sized enterprises. There will be stronger result-orientation and a new performance reserve in all European Structural and Investment Funds that incentivises good projects.

Slovenia should be satisfied with the outcome of negotiations concerning the European Cohesion Policy funds, as it is set to remain a net receiver. For the 2014 - 2020 period, Slovenia has been allocated more than EUR 3.3 billion for its two regions. The region of East Slovenia will remain a convergence region (73% of EU average) and is set to receive EUR 1.12 billion, while the region of West Slovenia (which exceeds the EU average) will receive EUR 860 million. Slovenia will also be eligible to receive up to EUR 1.06 billion for transport and environmental infrastructure and sustainable energy use from the Cohesion Fund.

Slovenia is in the process of preparing three documents that will be used as a base for drawing EU structural and cohesion funds:

- (i) partnership agreement;
- (ii) operational programme for the whole of Slovenia and;
- (iii) programme for territorial cooperation.

These documents will derive from Slovenia's Development Strategy.

The available EU Cohesion Policy funds for the period 2014 - 2020 represent significant funds which will have to be carefully targeted to those areas with the greatest impact on development and new jobs. At least 50 percent of the funds will be directly targeted at the promotion of economic development that is at the promotion of the competitiveness of small and medium-sized enterprises, promotion of research, technological development and innovations, low carbon economy, employment (especially employment of youth), better skills and competences and labour mobility.

Big focus will be also on energy efficiency and renewable energy, climate change, saving the environment, biodiversity, social inclusion, reducing the poverty, active aging and health. Big part of funds will be invested also in the infrastructure for sustainable mobility.

## Editorial



Earlier this year, it looked as if Slovenia was going to become the next Eurozone hostpot, but we managed to introduce some of the necessary structural reforms and the country

seems to have bought itself some needed breathing space.

The launch of the new Horizon 2020 Framework Programme for Research and Innovation – held in Ljubljana on 29 November – could not have come at a better time. It will provide more encouragement and funding at all stages of the innovation process. The record participation at the event (over 650 registrations) with Commissioners Geoghegan Quinn, as well as her predecessor Janez Potočnik, demonstrated that Slovenian business and academia are eager to be involved. The resources obtained by Slovenian organisations through FP7 will surely exceed 170 million euros.

As Secretariat of Knowledge Economy Network, KEN, SBRA co-organised the Annual Forum in Cape Town on 22-23 October. With over 126 participants from 12 countries the Cape Forum was undoubtedly the best so far.

On behalf of the host and KEN Partner the South African Department of Science and Technology, Minister Hanekom presented the priority policies of his government in developing innovation-driven knowledge economy through education and training.

To access the adopted Forum Resolution, Policy Recommendations drafted by the 11 Thematic Tables, as well as additional documents, please visit our website [www.knowledge-economy.net](http://www.knowledge-economy.net)

Finally, the SBRA Team wishes to all MOST readers Season's Greetings and a Happy New Year!

Prof. Boris Cizelj  
 President, Management Board

## SBRA welcomes new member – GEA College



GEA College - Faculty of Entrepreneurship is the leading private business school in Slovenia with 20 years of experience in the provision of courses focused on entrepreneurship. The Institution provides high-quality, practically-oriented undergraduate and postgraduate courses. It utilizes modern teaching methods employed by the best and the most acknowledged universities and higher education institutions in Europe and the USA. Our academic team does not only possess adequate academic track but, also numerous experience form different business disciplines: entrepreneurship, economics, finance, marketing, and from several business related fields: mathematics, psychology, law, and philosophy.

Among the staff, there are people with extensive international experience, who served on prestige posts in companies and in public sector, consulted companies and taught at well known foreign universities. Majority of teachers can be also proud of their own entrepreneurial experience. Coursework and activities are designed to suit small study groups and promote both, individuality and interactivity. All programs have been accredited by the Ministry of Education of the Republic of Slovenia, thus the degrees are recognized internationally. The Institution is also a full member of various leading international associations of business and managements schools.

## Smart Specialisation Strategy adopted

Slovenia will tackle societal challenges through sound, socially and environmentally responsible investments in areas where it has identified the capacities and competences, and become a recognisable, competitive medium and high-tech (and eco) oriented country, offering innovative and integrated solutions which will reflect in higher economic and material productivity.

The recently adopted Smart Specialisation Strategy is a strategic approach seeking to concentrate targeted support for research, development and innovation in the areas that deliver maximum economic impact. Through analysis of the economy, capacities, competences and potentials in Slovenia the draft of the strategy identifies the following priority areas: manufacturing, processing and information communication technologies; solutions for electrical and electronic components; materials and technologies. Funding in the above areas facilitates the tackling of key social challenges (sustainable energy; sustainable mobility; sustainable building; energy efficiency; food, health and the environment; inclusive and safe society) which stand as the vertical priorities helping to demonstrate the existence of markets that justify investments in priority areas prior to delivering financial incentives.

Smart Specialisation Strategy represents a supportive environment for a wide array of branches and activities. Creativity and innovative offer of services within form the backbone of investment in research, development and innovation, responsible governance and indirect promotion of social responsibility. Smart Specialisation Strategy fosters the development of integrated solutions which would put the Slovene industry on the international value chain map.

## Acquired EU Cohesion Funds per Operational Programme 2007–2013 (as of October 2013)

	Allocated funds 2007-2013 (EUR)	Commitments (EUR)	Commitments (%)	Payments (EUR)	Contribution from Slovenian budget (%)	Refunds to state budget (EUR)	Execution rate (%)
	(A)	(B)	(C)=B/A	(D)	(E)=D/A	(F)	(G)=F/A
Strengthening Regional Development Potentials	755,699,370	704,058,991	93.2%	502,255,378	66,5%	453,392,310	60%
Human Resources Development	1,768,249,522	1,714,080,758	96.9%	1,335,881,364	75,5%	1,250,603,288	70.73%
Environmental and Transport Infrastructure Development	1,577,099,744	1,177,020,911	74,6%	578,352,296	36,7%	473,735,650	30.04%
<b>Total</b>	<b>4,101,048,636</b>	<b>3,595,160,660</b>	<b>87,7%</b>	<b>2,416,489,039</b>	<b>58,9%</b>	<b>2,177,731,248</b>	<b>53.10%</b>

Source: Ministry of Economic Development and Technology

## Business Briefs

### Clustering – Ticket to the World



Chamber of commerce and industry of Slovenia organized on December, 5th 2013 an expert consultation and round table on clustering and other types of enterprise integration and networking for effective performance in foreign markets. Domestic and foreign examples of such mergers on their projects were introduced, both positive and negative experiences and useful tips to participants.

Despite the growing demands of global markets for integrity of supply and extremely fierce competition, Slovenian companies are still insufficiently involved. However, in the long term, development-oriented partnership also requires greater accountability, high standards of business ethics, compromise and a willingness to share knowledge and experiences. We have discussed how to overcome the limitations (including in our minds) and together address the new challenges in international markets at the final round table through the presentations of examples of good practice.

### Luka Koper Group Posts €12.3 million profit



The port of Luka Koper posted a €12.3 million profit in the first nine months of 2013, which is 49% more than in the same period last year. The core company accounted for €11.3 million of the total profit, which is

55% more than last year. Additionally, the company's revenues were meanwhile up by 3% to €101.6 million.

Revenues at the group level also increased by 3% to €106.5 million, with transshipment going up by 2% to €13.4 million tonnes, primarily on the account of higher container and general cargo transshipment revenues. The group's operating profit stood at €14.5 million, which is down 1% year-on-year. Its debt was reduced from €183.9 million to €159.5 million in the period.

However, the group still recorded a loss from financing, which amounted to €2.8 million, 35% less than in the same period last year. The group's profit for the whole year is estimated to be on par with last year's, of €10.5 million.

### Startup Weekend in Ljubljana



The start-up environment in Slovenia has become very lively, and many start-ups have enjoyed considerable success, according to Forum 100% Startup, an event held in Ljubljana on 22 November. The winners were de TENS, SUNit and Checkster.

On the world stage, start-ups Lumu Labs, Chipolo and Flykly have successfully met their funding targets on crowdfunding site Kickstarter. Layer won the prestigious Disrupt San Francisco event and the DORA team won second place at the Imagine Cup 2013, said Urban Lapajne of the Startup Slovenija initiative. Despite the successes, financing is still limited, but plans are afoot that could change that. Maja Tomanič Vidovič, the head of the Enterprise Fund, said existing schemes would be upgraded with a seed capital fund.

## Research Briefs

### Workshop on forest monitoring

In September, Slovenian Forestry Institute organized a workshop networking two LIFE + projects EMoNFUr and MANFOR C.BD and Public Forestry Service task. Its purpose was the presentation of contents

and workflows of these projects, education for representatives of the Slovenia Forest Service for the monitoring of urban forests, as well as knowledge transfer to interested professionals.

After the morning lectures in the great hall of the Slovenian Forestry Institute, the participants visited the research locations of urban forest "Rožnik" and peri-urban forest "Gameljne". A practical demonstration of sampling and measuring was presented to participants, as well as monitoring equipment.

### Horizon 2020 kick-off event in Ljubljana



On the 29th of November, more than 650 researchers, companies and other stakeholders attended the national event which officially launched the new research and innovation programme, Horizon 2020. The event was organised by the Slovenian Ministry of Education, Science and Sport in cooperation with the Slovenian Business & Research Association, the Slovenian Chamber of Commerce and the European Commission. High level speakers, including EU Commissioner for Research, Innovation and Science Ms. Maire Geoghegan-Quinn and the Slovenian Minister for Education, Science and Sport, Mr. Jernej Pikalo, presented the objectives, the various thematic areas and new rules of participation.

Slovenian researchers and companies have a good track record in successfully participating in EU Framework Programmes and are considered reliable partners. SBRA members are busy preparing project proposals and are actively searching for European partners. The main areas of interest are new technologies for district heating and cooling, cluster facilitated projects, green vehicles, factories of the future, marine biology, technology transfer, smart cities and access to risk finance. Should you have any project ideas or are looking for partners, please do not hesitate to contact SBRA and we would be happy to provide you with further details.

### Jožef Stefan team winner at the annual Activity Recognition competition EvAAL 2013



Valencia, Spain, hosted the Third world competition in the Activity recognition in July. The award ceremony took place at the AAL Forum, which is organized by European Union program "Ambient Assisted Living", and was held in the end of September. Beside competitors from European countries, the participants also came from USA, Japan and Russia. Jožef Stefan Institute team (Simon Kozina, Hristijan Gjoreski, Matjaž Gams and Mitja Luštrek) was victorious due to a combination of accurate and fast activity recognition sensors embedded in clothes and open source software, which was developed for the competition.

At the Department of Intelligent Systems at "Jozef Stefan" Institute are dealing with ambient intelligence area that aims to integrate intelligent computer systems in the human environment in the most unobtrusive way. Applications of ambient intelligence strive to offer the user the right service at the right time, for which they must understand his situation.

### Novel Orthoreovirus Discovered in Stool Sample from Child Hospitalized with Acute Gastroenteritis

Collaboration of NIB, Ljubljana, with the Institute of Microbiology and Immunology at Faculty of Medicine in Ljubljana, Department of Infectious Diseases, University Medical Centre Ljubljana and the Omega company led to confirmation of the first case of mammalian orthoreovirus\* (MRV) detected in a child with acute gastroenteritis. Novel virus was detected by next generation sequencing (NGS) Ion Torrent Personal Genomic Machine. This is the first report of discovery of this orthoreovirus in humans and is concurrently the first new generation sequenced viral genome found in humans in Slovenia. Virus showed the highest similarity to MRV reported in bats. Another novelty of the research was the use of the convective interaction media (CIM®) monolithic chromatography (Slovenian technology by

BIA Separations company) for enrichment and purification of the target virus, prior to the sequencing.

### Introducing the Biotechnical Faculty, University of Ljubljana



The Biotechnical Faculty's mission is to offer higher professional education, undergraduate and postgraduate university study programmes as well as research, professional, and advisory services.

The Faculty is organised into seven departments: agronomy, biology, forestry, landscape architecture, wood science, zootechnics, and food science.

The distinguished professors and researchers at the Biotechnical Faculty perform extensive fundamental, applied, and developmental research work. Research work is organised in 49 research teams. The Faculty is involved in approximately in many national and international research projects, in three Centres of Excellence and is a partner in one Development center and in one Competence center.

The Faculty's research and advisory services are very important to biotechnical development and the transfer of knowledge into practice. The Faculty's research encompasses applied botanics; genetics; microbiology; biotechnology; technological agricultural research from agricultural mechanisation to rationalisation in animal rearing and technological processes; research into agricultural land from its organisation to soil use, typology, classification, and evaluation of Slovenian landscapes, landscape and spatial planning, landscape architecture, ecology of urban landscapes, management, marketing and agricultural policy; and in forestry, from the study of forests, to forests as subject of protection and as an economic resource, and as part of our environment.

## Regional Briefs

### Ljubljana wins Eurocities 2013 Award



The cities of Brighton and Hove, Gijon and Ljubljana have won the EUROCITIES 2013 awards. The awards took place last night in Ghent to reward cities for their efforts in developing smart cities and engaging with smart citizens. The awards are part of the EUROCITIES annual conference which is taking place in the Belgian city on 27-29 November.

Awards were granted in three separate categories:

- smart governance (Gijon)
- smart jobs (Brighton and Hove) and
- smart living (Ljubljana)

Providing safe and equal opportunities in traffic for children and people with disabilities Ljubljana has been working with schoolchildren, parents, and disabled citizens to make travelling around the city easier, safer and more convenient. For schoolchildren, the city developed a web portal mapping transport options to different schools and identifying danger hotspots to help plan journeys. Ljubljana has developed a range of services to help citizens with disabilities travel by public transport, including a change in legislation and providing drivers with special training.

### Slovenia's biggest skate park to open in Nova Gorica

The new venue in Nova Gorica will be the biggest skate park in Slovenia. The park will open its doors to the public in mid December and will be open to everyone and for all ages. The park will be made entirely out of concrete and cover some 3000m<sup>2</sup>. For skate culture in Slovenia, the new concrete park is a big step forward. Rumors have it that other cities are likely to follow the example of Nova Gorica.