The latest from Slovenia

IN FOCUS INTERVIEW: Roman Jakić, Minister of Defence
BUSINESS INTERVIEW: Andrew Page, British Ambassador to Slovenia
EUROBASKET INTERVIEW: Ivo Daneu
Inspiring Stories

The September edition of Sinfo concludes the successful story of the preparations, happenings and successes surrounding EuroBasket 2013. As we were wondering before each game or during it whether the Slovenian team would beat their opponents, we discovered that, as well as technique, teamwork and playing with heart were needed to win. And each time these were combined, we were able to celebrate at the end. But we were proud throughout that Slovenia was being represented at EuroBasket by such a superb team, even when things did not go smoothly. You will learn more about the sport and the history of Slovenian basketball in the interview with the legendary Ivo Daneu, the best Slovenian basketball player of all time.

The central topic of this issue is a theme that has received little attention in the past, but is nevertheless very current. We interviewed the Minister of Defence, Roman Jakič. A comprehensive regional meeting of defence ministers from South-Eastern Europe and the Western Balkans will be held at Brdo pri Kranju between 1 and 3 October. On issues of defence and other topical political and economic questions, we spoke to Andrew Page, Ambassador to Slovenia of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland.

The articles on the start-up company, Koofr, and innovator Erika Drobnič are proof that, with enough inspiration, success is possible even in an economic crisis. We also invite you to read our other interesting articles, which include a summary of impressions from the Bled Strategic Forum, and presentations of Slovenian mountain trails. We hope you find the stories inspiring.
This September, Slovenia seems to be a veritable Europe in miniature. The matches of the European Basketball Championships are behind us and we can all be satisfied with the attendance and the organisation of the tournament, which was running smoothly. It is interesting to note, in terms of sport, that EuroBasket 2013 has become a championship of surprises, with basketball superpowers such as Russia and Turkey eliminated in the qualifying rounds, while Finland, an outsider without any particularly notable previous results, qualified for the next stage. The towns of Celje, Koper, Ljubljana and Ljutomer have all turned out to be very friendly hosts. Here I should give special mention to Ljubljana, which will now have had a reputation as a ‘basket town’, the atmosphere in the Podmežakla sports hall was great, with supporters behaving well and no incidents reported. More generally, it is worth mentioning that the supporters’ passion to the great atmosphere during the championships has been considerable; this is true, in particular, of the fans from Finland, who couldn’t praise highly enough the friendliness of their hosts in Koper. They were also enthusiastic about the low prices they found here, at least compared with those in Finland. The championships then moved to Koper’s Siunice Sports Centre, where all further matches were to be played, including the final on Sunday 22 September.

The European Basketball Championships have nearly overshadowed the economic and political events in Slovenia, though these are no less interesting or tense than those in the sports halls. The Government of Alenka Bratusek is preparing a revived 2014 national budget aimed at achieving a very ambitious goal: a maximum three percent deficit as required by the European Commission. With recession still on in Slovenia, this will be very hard to accomplish, which explains why the political temperature in the country is on the rise. Along with budget documents, the Government has been drawing up a package of measures to ensure economic growth and new jobs. With the Prime Minister Bratušek having established good working relations with all partners, in particular, the Prime Minister of Finland, who couldn’t praise highly enough the friendliness of their hosts in Koper. They were also enthusiastic about the low prices they found here, at least compared with those in Finland. The championships then moved to Koper’s Siunice Sports Centre, where all further matches were to be played, including the final on Sunday 22 September.

In September, the Bank of Slovenia, in accordance with its powers, took a very important decision to initiate the procedure of controlled liquidation of two Slovenian banks, namely Posbanka and Factor banks. These are two smaller Slovenian banks with relatively low market shares, but the Bank of Slovenia has effectively started the process of rehabilitation and stabilisation of the Slovenian banking system, which is crucial for our way out of the crisis. In this respect, the Bank of Slovenia has finally taken over the central role, which is fundamentally more expensive since it excludes relevant servicing and guarantees. Obviously, such campaigns take time in order to have the desired effect. But this was also the problem with the separation of waste, and today Slovenia is one of the most successful countries in this area, while only a decade ago it was way down in comparison with other European countries.

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The Government 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 grey economy is increasing. By 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.

**Slovenia: successful host to EuroBasket 2013**

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Striving for a better Europe

The Prime Ministers of Slovenia, Italy and Croatia met in Venice, where they shared the idea of enhanced cooperation on energy and infrastructure projects in the Northern Adriatic.

At a joint press conference held by Slovenian Prime Minister Bratusek, Croatian Prime Minister Milanović, and the host, Italian Prime Minister, Enrico Letta, the latter said that they saw many possibilities for cooperation between the three countries. As a concrete example, he stressed that the Northern Adriatic ports in all three countries should not compete, but could develop only through mutual cooperation and thus compete against other larger ports in the world. The Prime Minister also agreed to harmonise positions at the European level. In this light, they advocated the prompt establishment of a banking union.

**Foreign Direct Investments Conference**

Prime Minister Alenka Bratusek attended this year’s Foreign Direct Investments Conference – FDI Summit Slovenia 2013 under the theme “A Clear Vision for the Future”.

In her address, the Prime Minister presented to the conference participants the key measures the Government has adopted in the last six months to improve the economic and social climate in Slovenia. She highlighted Slovenia’s competitive advantages and the efforts of the Government to enhance the opportunities for quality investments in Slovenia, which will also create new jobs. Prime Minister Bratusek is convinced that Slovenia is very attractive and suitable for foreign direct investments, as it has a healthy industrial base, well-developed infrastructure, and qualified, hardworking and talented people.

**Against grey economy**

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The excellent relations between the countries are clear

At the beginning of September, the Austrian President Heinz Fischer made an official visit to Slovenia. In his talks with Slovenian President Borut Pahor, President Fischer often emphasised support for Slovenia in resolving its economic problems. He also discussed current issues with the President of the National Assembly, Janko Veber, and the Prime Minister, Alenka Bratusek.

President Pahor emphasised that he and President Fischer were meeting officially for the second time in six months, which in his opinion “demonstrates the excellent political relations between the countries”. They focused primarily on the issue of the Slovenian economic and financial crisis. President Pahor expressed his belief that Slovenia can resolve its problems alone, but stressed that time is running out. President Pahor also informed his Austrian counterpart of Slovenia’s efforts in connection with the Western Balkans and activities within the Beda Process.

European parliamentary elections will also be an opportunity for Europe to decide on the new method for selecting its senior representatives and the presidents of the European Commission and European Council. He is convinced that the selection of the highest representatives should reflect the will of the people rather than the choice of leaders in Brussels at late night sessions.

Austrian guests pointed out that the official language issue has not yet been resolved to the satisfaction of all parties. However, in time and with the help of dialogue, he expects progress in this field.

Getting to work by train and bicycle

The Slovenian Prime Minister Alenka Bratusek took part in this year’s European Mobility Week which is taking place under the slogan ‘Clean air – It’s your move!’. From Kranj to Ljubljana she travelled by train and from Ljubljana Railway Station to the government building she cycled.

More than 2,000 European cities are expected to participate in the European Mobility Week which is taking place for the twelfth year in a row. This year’s edition runs until end of September under the slogan ‘Clean air – It’s your move!’. The 2013 campaign aims to encourage citizens to improve their health and well-being by changing their daily-to-day mobility behaviour, and to raise the awareness about the impact of transport on local air quality. Air pollution also affects the environment, resulting in acidification of soil, biodiversity loss, ozone depletion and climate change.

Chemical weapons attack in Syria is a crime against humanity

A UN inspection team published a report confirming that on 21 August, chemical weapons were used during an attack in the Damascus neighbourhood of Ghouta. The attack, in which sarin poison gas was used, claimed many victims, including children, and is obviously a gross violation of international law and a war crime.

The report, which focuses primarily on the use of chemical weapons rather than identifying the perpetrator, contains certain evidence based on testimony and laboratory results. Slovenia commends the team of experts, who in difficult conditions successfully carried out the field investigation and wrote a credible and unbiased report based on testimony and laboratory results.

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At the main discussion of the 8th Bled Strategic Forum (BSF), which took place between 1 and 3 September, the Slovenian and Austrian Presidents, Borut Pahor and Heinz Fischer, and Italian Prime Minister Enrico Letta stressed that Europe, often too slow in its response to change, needs a vision.

The leaders pointed out that 2014, when European parliamentary elections will be held, will be vital for the development of the EU. The President of the Republic of Slovenia, Borut Pahor, believes in a joint Europe; however, not in the form of a melting pot, but by respecting the different identities of Europe. “The different identities of Europe are the form of a melting pot, but by respecting the different identities of Europe; however, not in the form of a melting pot, but by respecting the different identities of Europe.” The leaders pointed out that 2014, when European parliamentary elections will be held, will be vital for the development of the EU. The President of the Republic of Slovenia, Borut Pahor, believes in a joint Europe; however, not in the form of a melting pot, but by respecting the different identities of Europe. “The different identities of Europe are the form of a melting pot, but by respecting the different identities of Europe.”

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He also stressed that regulations from national democracies can
not simply be transferred to the European level, although this
direction should be followed. “People do not want Brussels to
have so much power, because they think it is too remote from
them,” he warned.

SMART INTEGRATION

The participants at the Bled Strategic Forum were first greeted by
the Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Slovenia, Karl
Erjavec, and Slovenian Prime Minister Alenka Bratisek, who
highlighted that “Only a stronger and more connected Europe will
be able to face its challenges. We need smart integration, which does
not mean new legislation, but a simplification of procedures and
rules and reduction of administrative burdens. We have to be
sure that reforms and fiscal consolidation are not urgent only
because of Brussels. Regular regular and gradual change and evolu-
tion can lead to sustainable development and growth. I advo-
cate further enlargement of the European Union, as the enlarge-
ment policy has so far been successful.” Karl Erjavec, Minister of
Foreign Affairs said: “Europe has not been in such a difficult position since the Second World
War and as it seems if it is being forced to change against its will. If
it does not find answers to the challenges, it will gradually lose its competitive advantages in the
global environment.”

APPEALS TO ENHANCE ECONOMIC COOPERATION WITH RUSSIA AND CENTRAL ASIA

The discussions about busi-
ness at the Forum, organised by
IEDC-Bled School of Manage-
ment and the Slovenian Rus-
ian Business Council, were held
before the official opening of the
BSF. They focused on opportuni-
ties to enhance economic coop-
eration and make new business
deals between Russia and Central Asia. The markets of Russia and Central
Asia are growing and offer many opportunities for positive
synergies with the Slovenian economy and diplomacy. But there
is a need to cooperate in spite of the opportunities, the
participants also pointed out several limitations:

more than 500 distinguished guests, senior representatives from
politics, business, the academic sphere and international community
participated at the 8th Bled Strategic Forum.

Dr. Nalaya Zuevamuyeva, Head of
the CoGolo Chair of Sustainable Development at IEDC-Bled School of
Management said: “It sometimes seems that companies do not understand region of ex Soviet
Union and Central Asia very well, or do not know how work is
done there. This is a market with specific rules, so it is very impor-
tant to know how to address such a market. I am glad that so many
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Samo Omerzet, Minister of In-
ter- and Spatial Planning of the
Republic of Slovenia: “Infla-
tion, structure and spatial planning
offer opportunities for enhanc-
ing cooperation with Russia and Central Asia (in the field of
sustainability and mobility). Many small and medium-sized com-
panies in Slovenia have good
information technology; there
is also a lot of knowledge about so-called smart communities.
Slovenia should also seek op-
portunities in this field. At the
time of recession in the country we have been decreasing during the crises, on the other hand, total transpor-
tation has been growing, par-
ticularly due to the increasing re-
exports. As a result, we can be
in the same case of Slovenia. We wish to
entire Central Asia. Slovenia lies on
the shortest path towards the Adriatic and the countries of South-Western Europe (Italy,
France, Spain and Portugal). In
strengthening, cooperation and
taking advantage of opportuni-
ties, one of the toughest chal-
Ces will be the field of trans-
port, which is an inseparable factor and condition of econom-
ic development.”

Dorian Arzenie, Le Monde Diplome-
tique: “I am thrilled about the number of participants in Bled. I believe it is the largest yet.
A lot was said about dreams during the discussion on the future of Europe. We all have
of them, of course, but I think there words like solidarity, social jus-
tice, redistribution of wealth, which were fundamen-
tal ideas in post-war Europe. I believe that we will be able to present our hopes also to the
USA, where social injustice or social differences are the great-
test. I have a dream that re-
shipping companies in Greece
could pay off 300 billion euros of Greek debt if they gave up twenty per cent of their assets
held in tax havens. To be suc-
cessful only by becoming richer is something that leads to reck-
less future conflicts.”

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titled “The Clash of Gs”. Young professionals from
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ness world, representatives of think tanks and students dis-
cussed the challenges facing youth in the EU, the digital revolu-
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The young participants were
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The Minister of Education, Sci-
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ON THE POLITICAL AGENDA

With regard to water supply, the situation in the Western Balkans following Croatia’s accession to the EU, cooperation between the EU and Turkey, and the role of international criminal justice. Besides Austrian President Heinz Fischer and Italian Prime Minister Enrico Letta, this year’s BSF was attended by numerous ministers of foreign affairs and senior representatives of international organisations.

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IN FOCUS

Slovenia to host this year’s NATO conference

Between 30 September and 4 October 2013, the planning conference for the NATO Crisis Management Exercise (CMX 14) will be held in Portorož, one of the most beautiful Slovenian coastal towns. The conference is being organised by the Ministry of Defence of the Republic of Slovenia (MORS), which expects some 250 representatives of member states of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization and representatives of Finland and Sweden, who participate in exercises and their planning in NATO and in their own countries, to attend the conference.

Portorož, often referred to as the capital of Slovenian seaside tourism and nightlife, is one of Slovenia’s most popular beach resorts. It has a long fine sandy beach with top-rate bathing facilities. The seaside promenade is lined with restaurants, hotels, and nightclubs.

The planning conference in Slovenia concludes with a full plenary session to present a summary of the work of individual groups and findings on the final agreement or harmonisation of issues discussed about the CMX 14 exercise. The exercise is intended to verify the readiness of states’ decision-making procedures and the Alliance when responding to a cyber crisis and the ability to exchange information to establish the most comprehensive and realistic picture of events possible.

Following the introductory speech by Roman Jakšič, the Minister of Defence of the Republic of Slovenia, and a plenary session of the coordination conference in Portorož, participants will be divided into several different working groups which cover the full scenario of the CMX 14 exercise. The exercise is planned for March 2014.

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Over the past seven years, the BSF has grown into a successful platform for high-level strategic dialogue among leaders from the private and public sectors on key issues facing Europe and the world in the 21st century.
The idea of organising the Comprehensive Regional Ministerial (CRM) arose at the beginning of 2012, when the Ministry of Defence of the Republic of Slovenia (MORS) conducted an analysis of regional defence initiatives in the Western Balkans and South-Eastern Europe. The analysis showed that the Minister of Defence at the time had been invited to six meetings to discuss regional initiatives in 2011, which amounted to almost one month of Minister’s participation at regional meetings alone.

The idea was to hold several meetings for different initiatives at one location within a condensed period of one week at the most, which would otherwise have been held at different locations and different times in the second half of the year. The main objective was to save time and money for participants. In June 2012, MORS submitted a proposal to all countries in the region and several donor countries on participating at the CRM or on rationalising regional defence cooperation. The countries in the region and international and regional organisations were then regularly updated on details at almost all regional meetings. The idea of holding the CRM between 1 and 3 October 2013 at Brdo pri Kranju received a favourable response and was also confirmed for individual initiatives (also on the basis of numerous bilateral harmonisations and discussions).

The short-term effects such as saving funds and time (from all delegations) must be highlighted. But the expected long-term effects are even more important for example, the rationalisation of regional cooperation within the framework of individual projects and initiatives, as well as the contribution of Slovenia to the stabilisation of the region, particularly of the Western Balkans, as the implementation of the CRM would enhance defence cooperation between all the countries in the region. And finally, the effect that the event will have on the growing recognisability of Slovenia in the region and internationally should also be considered.

AGENDA 2013

The CRM will begin on 1 October 2013 with a meeting of the Western Balkans Defence Policy Directors (WBPD), and will continue on the following day (2 October) in a similar format with a ministerial meeting of the U.S. - Adriatic Charter (A-5). The last day (3 October) will see the hosting of the ministerial meeting in the broadest format, the South-Eastern Europe Defence Ministerial. Additionally, a brief ad hoc meeting of all participating delegations will be held, which will include representatives of all countries in the region.

WHAT WILL SLOVENIA GAIN FROM THIS EVENT?

The comprehensive meeting is expected to host 17 ministers and several of the most senior representatives of regional and international organisations (NATO, OSCE, EU, UN, BCC, ICVIA, etc.). The rationalisation of time and funds is most directly visible if all participants in individual formats are added up, in which case some 300 people would have to participate at all meetings. However, because the formats of individual initiatives overlap (individual countries) and were to participate at WBDPD, A-5 and SEDM, the final number of participants is expected to be about 120. Considering that the participants will have the opportunity to participate at three events for three different initiatives in three days, this type of meeting also provides an excellent opportunity to discuss the rationalisation of regional projects and initiatives. Furthermore, the condensed implementation of two ministerial meetings means the presence of several ministers and highest representatives of international organisations, which will contribute to the improvement of cooperation between different regional initiatives and international and regional organisations.

Although the entire implementation of the comprehensive meeting will not cost MORS significantly more than the annual income of an officer in the Slovenian Armed Forces on an international operation or mission, the relevant question for the Slovenian public is: what will Slovenia gain from hosting the meeting? The short-term effects such as saving funds and time (from all delegations) must be highlighted again; these could become permanent if this type of forum becomes traditional. But the expected long-term effects are even more important for example, the rationalisation of regional cooperation within the framework of individual projects and initiatives, as well as the contribution of Slovenia to the stabilisation of the region, particularly of the Western Balkans, as the implementation of the CRM would enhance defence cooperation between countries in the region in conflicts between countries in crisis cooperation are less likely to develop). And finally, the effect that the event will have on the growing recognisability of Slovenia in the region and internationally should also be considered.

Roman Jakić, Minister of Defence

For an open dialogue on defence and security cooperation

The purpose of the regional meeting is not only to save resources, but also an opportunity for open discussions on methods to reduce unnecessary duplication, provide coherence, rationalise structures and improve working methods. This direction is also noted in the title of the comprehensive regional meeting – ‘Harmonisation of Regional Defence and Security Cooperation’, said Minister of Defense Jakić before the beginning of the meeting.
A comprehensive regional meet-
ing of defence ministers from South Eastern Europe and the Western Balkans will be held at Brdo pri Kranju between 1 and 3 October. This will be the first such meeting and is undoubt-
edly extremely demanding in terms of organisation. Here are the preparations going, and what is the meeting about?

The preparations for the Compre-
hensive Regional Ministerial are being conducted by the Defence Policy Directorate in cooperation with other internal organisational units of the Ministry of Defence, the Slovenian Armed Forces and several other state authorities (e.g. Police). This is the largest project our ministry is organis-
ing this year, and it will also be a unique opportunity to promote Slovenia. The ministerial meet-
ing is an innovative project aimed at rationalising costs and saving precious time. In three consecu-
tive days, we will be hosting three meetings of three regional in-
centives which would otherwise be held in the second half of the year in different countries; these are the meeting of defence policy directors of the Western Balkans, the meeting of defence mini-
isters of the Adriatic Charter (A-5) provided by Montenegro and the meeting of defence ministers of South Eastern Europe (SEDEM) provided by Romania. The value of such an event is that defence ministers will have the opportu-
nity to acquaint themselves in a short time with the most relevant regional incentives in the field of defence, which will possibly lead to harmonisation and to avoid-
ing the duplication of certain re-
gional projects.

More than twenty ministers and highest represen-
tatives of international and re-
ional organisations are expected at the meeting, which is a total of about 200 representatives. At this point, I can already confirm that the OSCE Secretary General and NATO Deputy Secretary-General confirmed their attendance. I would also like to highlight that representatives of Serbia and Kosovo are expected to attend the meeting. We hope that these meetings become traditional and some other country in the region will host a similar event in 2014.

With regard to the anticipated high level of attendance, the comprehensive regional meet-
ing will be a great opportunity for bilateral meetings and enhancing cooperation between individual regional defence incentives and regional and international organi-
izations.

Are there any reservations about enlargement within NATO and outside as well?

Of course, there are. There are countries which are sceptical about enlargement or accepting new members; then there are others which are happy to re-
cieve new members – members in a package; then there are still others – we are among them – which believe that the enlarge-
ment of the Alliance has to be approached individually. As far as the accession of Montenegro is concerned. I hope that pub-
lic opinion will turn in NATO’s favour, and that the decision to join will not be problematic. I am certain that it will receive public support and the support of the Alliance. The Montene-
grin authorities are waiting for our signal for the right moment to join. The wish, if not require-
ment, of Slovenia is to expand further to the Balkans, which will contribute to stabilising the region. That Slovenia has conclud-
ed an agreement with Kosovo and appointed NATO forces as a guarantee for the protection of minorities, is grounds for hoping that Serbia is also near-
ning the Alliance. As you know, Serbia has the most reservations about membership, especially because of past events; however, their membership is extremely important to us.

How is Slovenia involved in the process of Montenegro’s inclu-
sion in Euro-Atlantic integration? Slovenia is one of the greatest supporters of South Eastern Inter-
gation. In addition to the Ministry of Defence, several other bodies and ministries are involved in the process of including Montenegro in Euro-Atlantic integration. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs moni-
tors the activities of other bodies, mainly the activities of the Minis-
try of Defence in the field of de-
fence and military cooperation, which is also our jurisdiction and responsibility.

Has the share of GDP earmarked for defence increased or de-
creased recently?

From 630 million euros in the last few years, we dropped to a budget of 300 million for defence, which is 1.1 per cent of GDP, which does not meet the obligation to NATO, which requires 2 per cent per year. Only three countries among the 28 EU Member States are able to provide that. Therefore, Slovenia has an important role to play. As far as numbers are concerned, we are near the bottom of the list, which is un-
derstandable, because the crisis does not allow any major invest-
ments in defence at the moment. While we can still fulfill our oblig-
atations on international missions, the budget cuts will not have an externally visible effect on de-
fence; however, it will have a great impact on the development and future funcioning of the sys-
tem. At the moment, it is impor-
tant to ensure a sufficient number of personnel for NATO, EU and UN missions.

Your numerous activities are di-
rected towards transforming the Slovenian Armed Forces, staff-
ing, peacekeeping operations in missions, Euro-Atlantic in-
tegration and international mis-
sions. The ministers of the Slove-

niain Armed Forces currently posted in Afghanistan, Kosovo, Bosnia and Herzegovina and elsewhere perform their duties in the name of the country and are also Slovenian ambassadors and an important element of Slove-

niain foreign policy interests.

The fundamental document de-
defining decision-making frame-
works on Slovenian cooperation in international operations and missions and a general selection of capacities for its implementa-
tion is the ‘Cooperation strategy of the Republic of Slovenia in in-
ternational operations and mis-
sions (of 12 November 2009).’ Among other issues, the strategy discusses the integration of busi-

dness entities, non-governmental organisations and other non-military, environmen-
tal bodies in implement-
ing international operations and missions in the framework of a comprehensive approach to ensuring national security and welfare, and realising the foreign political, security, economic, de-
velopmental and other interests and objectives of the Republic of Slovenia. In accordance with this, the possibilities for Slovenian businesses to provide logistical support for individual operations or missions and to acquire pos-
sible business opportunities re-
lated to post-conflict reconstruc-
tion of affected areas are studied by the relevant line ministries and services during the planning, coordination and implementation of cooperation on international operations and missions. The missions do not have a direct economic impact, unless the protection of economic inter-

tests is concerned. The Slovenian foreign policy interest is small, but as such it is trying to help the eco-
in credible ally which is oriented towards a joint future.

The force available in international regions is small, so it is important to us. We hope that these meetings become traditional and some other country in the region will host a similar event in 2014.

The value of such events is that defence ministers will have the opportunity to acquaint themselves in a short time with the most relevant regional incentives in the field of defence; this will possibly lead to harmonisation and to avoiding the duplication of certain regional projects.

The Ministry of Defence, Roman Jakic, also supports the Slovenian basketball team. The Ministry of Defence contributed supplies and the assistance of the Slovenian Armed Forces to the staging of the basketball championship. From the National Centre for Protection and Disaster Relief, the Administration of the Republic of Slovenia for Civil Protection and Disaster Relief provided four mobile and nine large aggregates for lighting, twenty containers for one thousand square metres of umtech panels, cargo vehicles for transporting and removing equipment, wireless communication equipment, a tent for lighting, premises for the control centre in Ljubljana, a sports hall in Ljubljana for training and parking premises in Celje, Kranj, Ljubljana and Kranj. Eighty-one members of the Slovenian Armed Forces were involved in staging the event.

In the photo: Slovenian President Borut Pahor, Croatian Prime Minister Zoran Milanovic, Slovenian Prime Minister Alenka Bratusek, Minister of Foreign Affairs Karl Gracnar and Minister of Defence Roman Jakic.
IN FOCUS INTERVIEW

It’s our desire, in spite of the crisis, to preserve and develop indirect cooperation between companies and the Ministry of Defence, which must serve as a foundation for launching Slovenian companies in military markets at home and abroad.

Slovenia has more talent per square kilometre than any other country in Europe

Andrew Page
British Ambassador to Slovenia

The importance of the Administration of the Republic of Slovenia for Civil Protection and Disaster Relief for the civil environment is seen during every major natural or other disaster. We have encountered several catastrophic floods in recent years, where the members of the Administration and other rescue services, also fire brigades and medical services, promptly and efficiently responded to the calls of citizens in distress. Engineering teams set up several prefabricated bridges, enabling access to urban centres for residents in cut-off areas. The Slovenian Armed Forces provide an emergency helicopter team for emergency medical services and mountain rescue; the construction machinery of the Slovenian Armed Forces is used to reconstruct roads and other infrastructure of local communities whenever possible. Let us not forget the assistance of members of the unit for water purification, which ensured drinking water to the residents of the Municipality of Lož Valley.

It is in the interests of the state to provide jobs also in the defence industry, is this plan being realised?

It’s our desire, in spite of the crisis, to preserve and develop indirect cooperation between companies and the Ministry of Defence, which must serve as a foundation for launching Slovenian companies in military markets at home and abroad. The Slovenian Armed Forces provide an emergency helicopter team for emergency medical services and mountain rescue; the construction machinery of the Slovenian Armed Forces is used to reconstruct roads and other infrastructure of local communities whenever possible. Let us not forget the assistance of members of the unit for water purification, which ensured drinking water to the residents of the Municipality of Lož Valley.

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...
Banks must be cleaned up and provided with the conditions to lend normally again. Therefore, I strongly support the establishment of the Bad Bank.

An ambassador’s role is to serve their country. In a world dominated by the capitalistic mentality, the idea of service is not popular. How do you perceive it?

There is no doubt that diplomats are honest people sent abroad to lie for their country. I do not believe in lying. I think diplomats should always tell the truth, while still trying to influence a state to work in the interests of my country and believe in the public service ethic. I regularly report to London about Slovenia, and I am happy to say that my cooperation with the Slovenian ambassador Iztok Jurcic is excellent. We have done a huge amount together.

Do you think the United Kingdom is tackling the crisis successfully?

I think the Government led by Alenka Bratusek has taken some good measures and approached the crisis with real purpose. Minister of Finance Uroš Ceferiš immediately set about solving the banking crisis as a priority. Your government deficit is not that high, but the proportion of non-performing loans in the banks is Slovenia is among the few EU Member States which remain in recession. Banks must be cleaned up and provided with the conditions to lend normally again. Therefore, I strongly support the establishment of the Bad Bank. I know that the Slovenian political parties had different opinions on this issue, but Slovenia must bear in mind the opinions of the IMF, the European Commission and, importantly, the financial markets and credit rating agencies. All this assessed the measure as positive. I am still convinced that Slovenia will find a way out of this economic crisis without foreign assistance. I also believe that Slovenia will soon begin the privatisation process which will facilitate foreign investment. This will not only provide more capital to help the economy to grow, but also open the way for investment by new business leaders, free from political influence, to work alongside your many able business leaders here, so strengthening corporate governance.

In the United Kingdom, the Coalition Government entered this financial crisis with an 11 per cent budget deficit, which was unsustainable. The government decided to take strict fiscal measures. Some people thought the measures too harsh, but the policy proved successful, to the extent that the deficit has been reduced by one third, the UK retains a healthy credit rating and the economy is gradually returning to growth. An other of the United Kingdom’s advantages is that our bureaucracy is relatively unembarrassed by regulation, we enjoy flexible labour markets and have a low rate of corporatization tax, so global companies like to establish their parent company or factories in the United Kingdom. The crisis definitely affected us, too in a big way, but indicators suggest that we may be over the worst.

Much has been said in public recently about the United Kingdom leaving the European Union. What is your position on that?

Public opinion in the UK is divided. David Cameron’s speech at the beginning of the year was a seminal one for the UK’s position. He proposed that the UK remain part of the European family and attempt to reform the EU from within. In the event of the Conservative Party winning the next election, he gave a commitment that the British people will be given a chance to decide at a referendum, with a “yes” vote, by half way through the next Parliament. At the same time, he effectively told British diplomats to negotiate changes with the UK’s settlement with the EU, based on a review of competences undertaken in the UK; i.e. which policy areas should be decided in Brussels and which by national Parliament. The British are among the leading champions in the EU in favour of extending the Single Market, in financial and digital services and the energy sector. We are also very active, along with France, in foreign and security policy, as we saw over Libya and now over Syria, not to mention Iran. We are also strongly in favour of including citizens in politics, and addressing what is known as the “democratic deficit”, whereby voters feel disenchanted on an ever increasing number of decisions made in Brussels. The idea of repatriating certain powers to Westminster is popular in the UK, conversely, the idea of pooling more sovereignty in the EU has fewer supporters. Some people thought the referendum was a waste of time, but in the end, it showed that the UK is a fundamental member of the Union, India, China and some other countries which are the markets of the future: the Bled Strategic Forum also focused on these topics, particularly on cooperation with Russia. Compared to Slovenia, which markets is the United Kingdom focusing on?

It is true that we are all interested in the emerging markets of the BRIC countries, but some indicators show that these markets have not been growing as rapidly as before. During my time here, the British Government has been focusing more effort also on what we are calling “Emerging Europe.” We have established a “Central European Network,” which includes British embassies in the Czech Republic, Slovakia, Poland, Hungary, Slovenia, Austria, Croatia, Romania.

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When the Earl and Countess of Wessex visit ed in June, the main topic discussed during their meetings with the President and Prime Minister was youth unemployment. Youth entrepreneurship was also the theme of the BSCC Business Breakfast at which Prince Edward spoke, and was the focus of my speech at the Queen’s Birthday party to 800 guests at Vila Podrožnik. This is an urgent policy priority not only for Slovenia, but also for the United Kingdom.
During my time here, the British Government has been focusing greater effort on sport also on what we are calling “Emerging Europe.” We have established a “Central European Network,” which includes British embassies in the Czech Republic, Slovakia, Poland, Hungary, Slovenia, Austria, Croatia, Romania and Bulgaria.

and Bulgaria. For example, when a CEO of a British company is passing through Warsaw or Prague, British ambassadors in these countries will also highlight business opportunities in this region. This approach is already bearing fruit, and we are able to access more funds for trade promotion work as a result of it, including as part of the GREAT campaign that was launched in 2012, the year of the London Olympic and Paralympic Games.

I have noticed that the issue of youth unemployment is particularly important to you. What can you tell us about this?

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What is your position on military intervention in Syria? The political parties in Slovenia are taking different positions. Is the UK more or less on the same page with you?

The UK’s goal is for Syria’s chemical weapons (CW) to be identified and destroyed, for the Chemical Weapons Convention (CWC) to be upheld and for chemical weapons to never to re-emerge anywhere in the world as an instrument of war. The British Parliament did not agree military interven- tion in Syria I think this was partly because military intervention in Syria is something that I value very much also in the parliamentary and public memory.

Nevertheless, the British Govern- ment remains very actively in- volved in the political, diplomatic and humanitarian fronts. We have been participating intermittently in diplo- machy with the USA, France and Russia to achieve a binding resolu- tion at the UN, making clear that if the Syrian regime does not comply, the UN Security Council should impose measures under Chapter VII of the UN Charter. The UK has been allocating large amounts of money to Syrian refugees. After the USA, the UK is the second largest donor to humanitarian organisa- tions providing aid to Syria. The Russian proposal for Syria to surrender control of its chemical weapons to the international com- munity has so far not made the dynamics of the issue. This would be a stern test of foreign policy in Britain and else- where, after Iraq and Afghanistan. If the international community, with a constructive role played by Russia, can succeed in reaching an agreement on a CW inspection and destruction programme, this will put President Bashar al-Assad and his regime under enormous pres- sure. A lot will depend on unity at the UN. For Syria to give up its chemical weapons, it is essential that the threat of international ac- tion in the event of non-compli- ance remains credible. The possi- bility of a targeted military attack to degrad e Syria’s CW capabilities still has not gone away. After the clear report by UN inspectors pointing to Assad’s regime’s capabilities, Syr- ia’s rhetoric hardened. I hope they will now support the robust stance at the UN that we and others are advocating.

Do you know where will be the postponed at the beginning of 2014? And finally, how have you felt, or how do you feel in Slovenia?

I will be heading back to London, but I don’t yet know which job I’ll be doing. I have enjoyed Slovenia enormously – most of my friends here are Slovenes. Every British person who comes to Slovenia is delighted to discover the beauty of its nature – and many are sur- prised it’s like a well kept secret. During my term, I have visited ev- ery part of the country, I love tour- ist farms, for instance, and I have attended lots of sporting events, and tasted your fantastic dishes and wines. I am an active mem- ber of golf and tennis clubs. I have visited many British embassies, and met many British expats, and I am sure that they would all have made a strong impression on me too. But I don’t yet know which job I’ll be doing.

Why is that?

I spent three years in Ukraine in 1995 -96. Before my posting to Kiev, I learnt Russian and Ukrainian. Since I already spoke into Slavic languages, it was much easier for me to learn a third one when I came to Slovenia. Ukraine became independent in 1991, the same year as Slovenia. I felt there how much it appealed to Ukrainians’ sense of national pride that I had learnt and used their native tongue, not just Russian. And here in Slovenia too I have sensed how much people ap- preciate the efforts I have made to help them in their future employ- ment, in their future.

You have been to a Eurobasket match or followed the European Championship?

I have not seen a match live, be- cause I was away for the opening stages organising a Slovenian Team and Gold Trophy to Britain with my Slovenian sporting friends, but I have been following the Cham- pionships closely on television. I also paid a visit to the British team just before the Championship be- gan. At the beginning, they did well and were very happy, with wins over Israel and Germany, but sadly they did not make it to the second round. I have also followed the matches of the Slovenian team, which were very tight, especially when early leads appeared to di- integrate towards the end. The Dragon- brothers made a strong impression on me they already seemed to play better as pressure mounted, which I admire.

So you think there are reasons to be optimistic?

Yes, I do. Slovenia has come a long way since it gained independence. It is easy to overlook how much it has achieved over the last two de- cades - a rising star among all the countries that came into the EU in 2004, and a really well conducted Presidency in 2014. Unfortu- nately for many, my four years in your country have coincided with recession and many of Slovenia’s greatest difficulties, but it is im- important not to let these difficul- ties blind one to the achievements including, for instance, on the sporting field, where Slovenia has a huge amount to celebrate, with successes at both summer and winter Olympics. Tine Maze’s ex- ploits etc. Looking back at my time here, we have hosted a lot of high- level visits – by our Speaker of the House of Commons, Lord Mayor of the City of London, Europe Min- ister etc. – and I was delighted that my term was crowned in 2013 with a royal visit. After the Earl and Countess of Wessex’s visit, Slovenia had been visited since Indepen- dence by all immediate members of the Royal Family. Her Majesty The Queen and their Royal High-nesses Prince Charles, Princess Anne, Prince Andrew and Prince Edward have all been here. As Prince Edward put it, Slovenia has had a “Royal Visit”, and not many countries in the world can claim that.

This is definitely an embarrassment of the UK’s goal is for Slovenia. The quality of life in Slovenia remains high. I know that the Prime Minister has made on the adoption of the Action Plan for Green Diplomacy.

The Green Day programme promotes the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in collaboration with the British Embassy on the occasion of the European Mobility Week. The planting of a tree is the part of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs as part of the commitment made on the adoption of the Action Plan for Green Diplomacy.
THE SLOVENIAN INNOVATION FORUM

This year’s Slovenian Innovation Forum is already the 8th in a row; which goes to show that the Slovenian creative spirit is by no means lacking. The Forum, which will take place from 12-13 November in Ljubljana, will feature a diverse enterprise innovation programme, covering topical issues in the areas of entrepreneurship, innovation and various development-oriented topics. Particular emphasis will be laid on the international presentation of priority areas of activity where Slovenian companies and research institutions can enhance their comparative advantages and competitively enter foreign markets.

Last year’s Forum saw the presentation of 48 of the best ideas, of which as many as 70 per cent are already in the implementation or realization phase. Last year the Innovation Forum’s award for best innovation went to the Elan company, for its development of a noise attenuation system for rail bridges called Bremen Amnys Basic. And a special award for the best innovation by an individual innovator went to Peter Stinari for his children’s ski jumping bindings for younger ski jumpers (up to the age of 15).

Slovenian innovators have recognised the Innovation Forum as a springboard for the breakthrough of their innovations onto both Slovenian and international markets. Their success stories prove that Slovenians really are innovative people.

I feel Slovenia - Made in Slovenia - Slovenia Origin!

Foreign experts often “surprise” us with the opinion that the “I feel Slovenia” brand is a unique and innovative approach to branding. In Slovenia we are still insufficiently aware that the concept of a brand should be applied consistently at all levels. David Aaker (1996) says that the value of a brand is the sum of advantages (and responsibilities) associated with the brand’s name and symbol, adding value to products and services that are provided under the brand to their stakeholders.

The meeting was held in the spirit of an exchange of views, addressing Slovenian and opportunities that are of strategic importance for the life, power and wealth of the brand. Through workshops, the participants presented their views of the “I feel Slovenia” brand’s value to the brand’s providers of success stories, each success story being an experience before encountering the brand, actual experience with it and experience after encountering it. A brand is a promise that must be kept.

The area of the economy represents a huge potential for the use of the national brand in Slovenia, as a number of successful and innovative entrepreneurs, their products, services, activities and their success stories, may add to the “I feel Slovenia” brand the necessary market value and power. A successful and strong national brand could benefit the Slovenian economy by making it more attractive for investments and economic integration, more over, a well-established brand also helps companies in entering foreign markets. The same applies to other areas where the country may show itself to be outstanding, different, superior and successful.
SILENT REVOLUTIONS

Quite a few Slovenian designer products are setting new standards at a global level with their turning point innovations. In 2011, Slovenia prepared an exhibition entitled “Silent Revolutions”, featuring a selection of designer products created in the 20 years of its independence. In the production of the selected items, design was included as an important integral part of development and competitive advantage. These works highlight the innovative approaches, outstanding strategies, inspiring visions and new design ideas of the designers and companies alike, all of whom have played key roles in the realisation of the projects exhibited.

The exhibition, which presents more than 25 selected works, is the first large international presentation of Slovenian product design in the last two decades. By linking the economy and culture, and by active participation of government institutions in the field of creative industries, we wish to promote cutting-edge Slovenian products and companies, and increase the visibility of Slovenia through industrial design.

After its premiere at London Design Festival 2011 – Tent London, the exhibition was also successfully presented at Dutch Design Week 2011 – Zona Verde, La Triennale di Milano 2012, Maribor European Capital of Culture 2012, Belgrade Design Week 2012 and Helsinki Design Week 2012. The first stop in 2013 was Vienna, and the next is Moscow (11–17 October 2013).

“I had seen the Slovenia exhibit during Salone del Mobile in April in Milan and was very impressed. I thought their exhibition in London was even better – with great information and a wonderful mixture of industrial design and fashion. I am looking forward to seeing more.” – Beth Dickstein, BDE, New York.

THE STORY OF SLOVENIA IN THE FIELD OF THE ECONOMY

Slovenians want to be recognised in the pursuit of personal interests, we are building a niche-based economy, based on dealing with things that are dear to us. The eagerness with which we pursue our business goals is contagious. As a society of individuals, we create a wide range of outstanding works, which however have a common source – the balance between our wishes and capabilities, between man and nature.

DELIBERATELY CHOSEN NICHE-BASED ACTIVITIES

Special energy is present in Slovenia in those activities that we undertake with pleasure and enthusiasm, and it is in these that we are the best. The development of personal interests has resulted in a variety of economic activities with a common denominator – a niche-based economy, which in accordance with the zeal involved becomes “boutiqueness”. We want to draw investments to those activities in which we are the best, as Slovenian diligence in the things that we love will help to create added value in these areas.

ORGANIC DEVELOPMENT

Slovenia advances hand-in-hand with nature. This also applies to the economy and its controlled development. By supporting technological development, the Slovenian economy helps to create and maintain the essential distinctive advantage of Slovenia – its preserved environment. The consensus on organic development as a vision for Slovenia’s future calls for investments in its own potentials and capacities.

Koofr d.o.o.

Redefined hybrid storage

Innovativeness, will and persistence produce results. This has also been demonstrated by the team at Koofr d.o.o., a company which was established only in February this year. At the end of May, they had already won the national ‘Start-up of the Year’ competition.

In her brief speech, Slovenian Prime Minister Alenka Bratušek described the forum as an important opportunity to strengthen cooperation between Slovenia and Germany. “Innovations in a knowledge-based society are motors of the economy,” she stressed. She also emphasised the important role of young people in kick-starting economic growth and finding an exit from the current crisis, which she admitted has hit Slovenia hard.

Koofr is a web and mobile interface for access to various data storage systems, which enables the storage, management and distribution of files with the use of a cloud based on clients’ existing hardware.
**Business Start-up**

**Matičič told the Slovenian Press Agency (STA) that it was very important to reveal new people and start-up cultures in other countries. “We are looking for best practices to bring to Slovenia,” he explained.**

**WHAT IS KOOFR?**

Koofr is a web and mobile interface for access to various data storage systems, which enables the storage, management and distribution of files with the use of a cloud based on clients’ existing hardware. According to the company’s director Damjan Matičič, it could best be described to final users as a service which is an improved and more private Dropbox. Their clients are primarily providers of internet services which serve as intermediaries for traffic exchange between users and services like Dropbox or Google Drive. The company operates in the global storage ‘as a service’ market. Its clients can offer their users data storage in the cloud.

**START-UP COMPANIES HAVE GOVERNMENT SUPPORT**

Representatives of Koofr were in the Prime Minister’s delegation on her visit to Germany. “Germany is a very interesting market for us. Deutsche Telekom, with its subsidiaries, is one of the biggest mobile operators,” said Damjan Matičič, who met representatives of a very active German start-up association and representatives of potential partner companies in Berlin. “The Embassy in Berlin provided great assistance with organising meetings, for which we are very grateful. We certainly believe that we made good use of the opportunity and succeeded in making some good business contacts on which we will build future cooperation.”

**The main results of the visit to Berlin were agreements on cooperation with Deutsche Telekom and a number of German venture capital investors.**

**Government Communication Office**

**The company’s long-term goal is to expand to all continents and the majority of countries, according to Damjan Matičič.**

**Start-up companies are established by people who want to change the world, or the things around themselves. A large number of recent start-up companies deal with new technologies related to the internet, the development of mobile applications, geo-location, etc. Koofr d.o.o. is a company which develops software for cloud computing.**

**Turnkey Service**

Koofr has established good relations with some of the largest global providers of hardware, with which we can offer our clients comprehensive turnkey services,” said Damjan Matičič. The company has also formed partnerships with leading producers of hardware in order to merge hardware and software solutions into new, comprehensive products. Such connections enable the company to increase its competitive advantage and gain easier access to new sales channels.

**Start-up companies are estimating to Berlin for the Prime Minister’s delegation, which they plan to follow with an expansion of their sales teams in individual target markets.**

More information at: http://koofr.net/
The cradle is not just a piece of furniture, but symbolises life, a new beginning, hope and happiness. Cradles are closely linked to the loving relationship with children, between a man and a woman, their marriage, young family and succession. And marriage, young family and succession. And marriage, young family and succession. And marriage, young family and succession. And marriage, young family and succession.

THE POETRY OF WOOD, GLASS AND LACE

The cradle combines three noble, but simple materials: wood, glass and lace. The hand-blown glass part was made by Steklarna Hrastnik, the architect Julijan Krapež, the designer Irma Vončina, ethnologist Anja Likar and the company Vitapur.

The cradle is aimed at Slovenian and foreign markets. The ‘Kiara’ cradle is a unique Slovenian-made multi-purpose product that parents can use throughout the entire period of a child’s growth. Already at first sight, the cradle appears different, as it combines modern design and innovative multi-purpose use: the beautiful colours and motifs are guaranteed to excite every child. The ‘Kiara’ cradle is a product which you will be proud of whether you receive it or present it as a gift. The ‘Kiara’ collection was very successful at the Kind + Jugend fair in mid-2013, is still in its initial phase; the company expects to complete it in three years. It is protected as a Community design and has received several awards at international innovation fairs around the world. The cradle is a product of exclusively Slovenian work, knowledge and materials, it complies with all EU standards, which is confirmed by the conformity marking.

At present, the cradle can be purchased in Slovenia and Europe, but Erika Drobnič is hopeful of a breakthrough in the American market.

THE CRADLE IS AIMED AT SLOVENIAN AND FOREIGN MARKETS

Slovenian-made multi-purpose cradle. A traveller would thus see the entirety of the Štajerska region and Maribo. A traveller would thus see the entirety of the Štajerska region and Maribo.

ON THE CREATOR OF THE SLOVENIAN MOUNTAIN TRAIL

Ivan Šumljak (1899–1984) was an all-round mountaineer: hiker, writer, photographer and lecturer. On the creation of the trail, he said, “I began working with my friends. We blamed the entire Pohorje. We marked that ridge trail with a Knafelc (uniform) blaze and the number one. When I was resting once at Crni vrh, pleased with the work we’d accomplished, I had an idea: what if the trail marked number one was extended to Učja and to the sea and through the Notranjska and Dolomiti regions back to the Sažerjska region and Maribo. A traveller would thus see the beauty of the entire Alpine world.”

IN A CURVE FROM THE MOUNTAINS TO THE SEA

The large curve of the Slovenian Mountain Trail which connects forests, mountains and sea, consisted initially of 80 control points. Today, it has 75 points over a length of about 600 kilometres.

The magic of the mountain landscape enriches the body and spirit.
The peak of Triglav

The Slovenian Mountain Trail passes 58 mountain huts where you can get a stamp to prove that you actually walked the trail.

The Slovenian Mountain Trail is not intended solely for ac-

cumulating stamps. Ivan Šumjak advises, “Walk slowly, my friend. You can actually finish the trans-

versal in a month, but it is the best if you walk for five years. You will benefit from it more, much, much more. The badge of honour will still be waiting for you.”

Estimates vary as to how quick-

ly you can walk the Slovenian Mountain Trail. If you walk mod-

erately without breaks, it would take 28 days (30 days according to the latest reliable information, only seven people have managed to run the trail in less than 14 days. Kl

en Triller set the current record in 2012 of 8 days, 14 hours and 45 minutes.

EXHIBITION ON THE SLOVENIAN MOUNTAIN TRAIL

This year marks the 60th anniver-

sary of the Slovenian Mountain Trail, so the Alpine Association of Slovenia decided to prepare an exhibition which so far has been showcased at the Regional Ar-

chives Maribor, in Celje, in the central library in Koper the culture centre in Mladin na Dravinjski polji and library in Hoče. The exhibition will be showcased at Mariborška koča mountain hut in Pohorje at the end of the summer.

WALKING FOR THE VIEW

The Slovenian Mountain Trail includes ascents to 23 separate peaks. Personal mountaineer-

ing equipment (boots, backpack) suitable for your planned climbing goal (do not forget to take a hel-

met and self belaying kit for very demanding trails), a camera and good mood are essential when you walk the trail. Before you start, check the short-term weather forecast for the region and do not oversaturate your abilities. If you want to spend a night in a moun-

tain hut, check its opening hours.

Some 9,500 mountaineers have so far completed the Slovenian Mountain Trail, all of whom re-

ceived commemorative badges.

MEETINGS ON TRAILS

A walk along the Slovenian Mountain Trail is an excellent opportunity to experience the beauty of the Slovenian land-

scape, to discover cultural sites, to stroll along the path, flora and fauna, hear the diverse dialects of the local residents and admire the architecture. You will be ac-

companied by the murmurs of waterfalls, streams and rivers, and you can climb the highest peaks and fill your heart and soul at a sunset or an early morning dawn. The magic of the moun-

tain landscape enriches the body and spirit.

The most heartfelt and genuine meetings are those with the lo-

cal people in the various regions. Different seasons, weather con-

ditions and our own attitude en-

sure that we never forget the im-

pressions that the trail makes on us. And that is the reason that so many people return to it time and time again, or at least to individual parts which they have come to love in particular. See you on the Slove-

nian Mountain Trail!

ON THE SLOVENIAN MOUNTAIN TRAIL – IN BRIEF

(adapted by Borut Peršolja as recorded by Jurem Čermek)

The Slovenian Mountain Trail be-

gins at Kranjska gora (1,543 m) where it ascends to Pokljuka, a 60-kilometre mountain chain with the highest point at Črišnik (2,043 m), and numerous mountain huts and ski tows. In the west, the trail descends to Slovenia Grade (420 m) and then ascends to Carniškem monadnock, Ušica gora (1,099 m). From here, the trail continues over Smečko (1,377 m) and Komen (1,684 m) to Raduha (2,062 m) and past Bukovnik (1,327 m). The high-
est saw in Slovenia, then descends to Solčava (642 m) in the Upper Savinja Valley.

Through the picturesque Ro-

hanska Kot Lakes Park, the trail approaches the foothills of high mountains for the first time. From Molganica planina (1,780 m), with the second oldest Slovenian mountain hut, now renovated, named after Fran Kocbek, the trail ascends via Korčula (1,808 m) to Opek (2,152 m), our sec-

ond most beautiful mountain. The trail continues to Planika (2,394 m) and from Kamniško sedlo (1,864 m) to Brana (2,252 m), Truska gora (2,332 m) and past Kukeljev sedlo (1,793 m) to Grimovec (2,158 m), the highest peak in the Kamnik–Savinja Alps. Via Kočna (2,540 m) and Čelika koča mountain hut at Spodnje Runje (2,542 m), the trail descends to Zgornje Jezersko (880 m), which used to be known as a health resort.

The trail continues to Stolška (2,132 m) with magnificent views and descends via Tolški vrh (1,715 m) and Križka gora (1,473 m) to Trič (353 m), which was once an im-

portant industrial town. It then descends to Dobra (1,634 m) and past Boblevec dum mountain hut (1,677 m) to Begunjščica (2,060 m) and Steč (2,326 m), the high-
est peak in the Karavanke; which bears an inscription in Slovenian and German: “The mountains of friendship”. The trail continues below the ridge along high moun-

tains to Češka (1,853 m) before which lie extensive meadows famed for their dahlias.

After descending into the valley, the trail leads to Dojče (754 m), where the priest Jakob Alaj, au-

thor of the mountaineering an-

thology ‘Oj, Triglav, moj dom’ (Oh, Triglav, My Home), worked for many years. From Mojstrana (641 m), home of the Slovenian Alp-

ine Museum, the trail continues through the valley of Vota past Peričnik waterfall to Aljažev dom mountain hut (1,051 m). A steep trail goes via the remarkable Tra-

gnal tower past Vodice (2,156 m) with the highest mountain hut in Slovenia and on to Triglav (2,864 m), the highest peak and a symbol of Slovenia, where Alaj Tower is situated. Via Križni podi (2,050 m) with high mountain hut Rast (2,064 m) and Pri-

sank (2,547 m), the trail continues to Fratarica (2,611 m), a mountain pass between the Gorenjska region and Trenta with five mountain huts.

The trail to Javornik (2,643 m), ac-

According to many, the most beauti-

ful Slovenian mountain, whose image is also in the coat-of-arms of the Alpine Association of Slove-

nian, is easy at first, but extremely challenging in the final sections.

The trail then descends into the valley of Trenta with the spring of the Soča River, Slovenia’s most beautiful river. Through Gadš-

jica, the trail again ascends to Pre-

hodolica (2,071 m) and into the Trič Trail Lakes Valley or the Val-

ey of the Seven Lomns (1,685 m) where the present Triglav National Park has its origins here. From Kutrina (1,520 m) and along the Icns Lomns (1,383 m) the trail ascends to Koro (2,244 m) which offers beautiful views. The trail continues along the northern slope of the Lower Bohinj Mountains from Vogl (1,922 m) to Črna pol (1,844 m), below which a new mountain hut was built recently at the site of the former oldest Slovenian mountain hut, the Osemul hut. The trail con-

continues to the Cerkniško and Mir-

jko Hils to Idrija (225 m) which once boasted the second largest mercury mine in the world.

From Trnovska gora and Ja-

vornik (1,280 m) further to Na-

magie the mountain landscape enriches the body and spirit.

WONDERLAND
International Biennial of Graphic Arts

**Interruption**

The 30th Biennial of Graphic Arts began with a gala opening outside the International Centre of Graphic Arts (MGLC) in Ljubljana. As the Minister of Culture, Uroš Grilč, mentioned in his opening speech, this year’s biennial entitled ‘Interruption’ is actually a return to tradition. The opening was also attended by the President of the Republic of Slovenia, Borut Pahor.

According to the jury citation, its complex design enables possibilities of visual literacy and everyday communication.

**The Biennial Connects Various Venues**

The Cankarjev Dom Gallery is hosting the exhibition ‘The Biennial of Graphic Arts. Serving You’, which first took place in 1955. It has always served as Slovenian art’s window onto the world and has invited global artists to Ljubljana, as its name is known around the world. The Biennial has seen many changes, but never an ‘interruption’. On the other hand, as Minister Grilč said, interruption is a topic which is inseparably related to the idea of the Biennial itself and its perception by the broader public. In recent years, the issue of interruption has focused on the question of whether traditional graphic art is appropriately placed in the context of the Biennial and whether reproductive techniques should dictate how the concept of the Biennial may expand.

This year’s central exhibition, entitled ‘Interruption’ with the Biennial, is being shown at the Montagio Tower at Ljubljana Castle. The international jury of Chema González for her ‘Tree Talk’ series, which accompanies and examines the radical transformation of means of visual literacy and everyday communication.

**Men in Slovenia dress**

Men in Slovenia dress in a wide variety of ways. Their clothing has definitely become less formal than it was years ago. The tie is an everyday item only for those men who hold positions of leadership, while most men have a “smart casual” dress code. Slovenians do not tend to wear daring clothing with bold prints, patterns and colours like the Italians, though they do admire their creative choices in dressing. Without doubt, Slovenians value aesthetics more than Americans and are more careful about quality in comparison with the English. Our Slovenian textile companies have taught us to recognise good quality and we regret that there are hardly any left. Thus we are increasingly reaching out to foreign brands. There are many connoisseurs of clothing culture among Slovenians, who appreciate designed pieces defining their style of dressing. Quite a few of them follow the fashion trends, but it is true to say that the city via Facebook. The winning artist will be able to use the artist’s residence of the MGLC graphic studio.

According to the jury citation, its complex design enables possibilities of visual literacy and everyday communication.

**The Audience Award is Now**

Severija Stravec, director of the MGLC, highlighted the new feature of this year’s Biennial, which is the audience award. Visitors will be able to vote for their favourite artist in the main exhibition at various venues or via Facebook. The winning artist will be able to use the artist’s residence of the MGLC graphic studio. Men in Slovenia dress in a wide variety of ways. Their clothing has definitely become less formal than it was years ago. The tie is an everyday item only for those men who hold positions of leadership, while most men have a “smart casual” dress code. Slovenians do not tend to wear daring clothing with bold prints, patterns and colours like the Italians, though they do admire their creative choices in dressing. Without doubt, Slovenians value aesthetics more than Americans and are more careful about quality in comparison with the English. Our Slovenian textile companies have taught us to recognise good quality and we regret that there are hardly any left. Thus we are increasingly reaching out to foreign brands. There are many connoisseurs of clothing culture among Slovenians, who appreciate designed pieces defining their style of dressing. Quite a few of them follow the fashion trends, but it is true to say that the city via Facebook. The winning artist will be able to use the artist’s residence of the MGLC graphic studio.

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Sport and Fashion

Although a pharmacy graduate, TINA MARTINEC SELAN has been engaged in fashion as an amateur ever since her childhood. After finishing her university studies, she expanded her hobby by writing a blog entitled Ogledalodig (FromHealthToElegance) intended for various topics in the area of personal style and neat and tidy appearance. Since the blog received a very good response, she decided to change her career after giving birth to her second child. She attended colour consultant training at the international company Colour Me Beautiful (ICMB). After receiving the ‘ICMB – colour and makeup consultant’ certificate, she became a CBM consultant in the field of colour consulting and make-up.

Do you still recall the time when people couldn’t care less about the way they dressed when they decided to do some recreational exercise? If one went for a walk, a run, to aerobics, etc, one put on the bottom half of a haggly track suit, a T-shirt and sneakers, and that was it. Those times are gone forever. I have been observing for some time how people’s attitudes towards the clothing they put on for sport activities have changed. In sports shops, unattractive clothes are practically impossible to buy, while the shelves are full of very stylish clothing, in which sport is more a matter of prestige than torment.

The invasion of fashion in the world of sportswear is a mutual phenomenon. Sportswear has invaded the area of sportswear. New and other interesting colours, fancy cuts, advanced materials and aesthetic clothes in general have now become the reason that, while running in a park, we glance at fellow runners not because of their speed, but because of joy we get from looking at their running outfits. Pilates, yoga and certain other forms of exercise in gyms offer, in general, a view of splendid clothes which, in certain combinations, we could easily put on when going downtown or even to work.

For people whose love of sport is not in their blood and find it some kind of torment that must be forced upon oneself, this certainly represents a good stimulation and motivation: if one can look slightly fancy even while participating in sports, everything is much easier and more pleasant. Sportswear, therefore, is also very practical for obvious reasons, nice sportswear in attractive colours is a welcome way to enhance our look.

I know quite a few people who admit that it is much easier and more pleasant for them to buy sportswear than clothes for the office or fancy events.

What about you? Is it also important to you to look good during recreation?

Cities and Fans

The European Basketball Championship is an extremely important international event and a spectacular for Slovenia. It gave Slovenia the chance to feel the euphoria in the spirit of the national promotional slogan ‘I Feel Slovenia’. The fans collected different fan tools which carry the message of the national brand. With the purpose of promoting Slovenia, flags bearing the official ‘I Feel Slovenia’ national brand were flown in the host towns of Celje, Koper, Jesenice and Ljubljana. The show windows near the event sites were furnished with billboards and balloons, and tourist centres offered diverse informative materials for foreigners.

The fans received different props: a fan hand in the form of a heart with the inscription (Narjam za Slovenijo – I’m cheering for Slovenia), a clap banner with the sign ‘I Feel Slovenia’ on one side and the Slovenian flag on the other. Fans could also use face stickers which feature the Slovenian flag on one side and the official brand on the other, and many green balloons were also available.

During the championship, the Congress Square became a city fan zone, with a big screen for watching the games, which were also followed by an entertainment programme before the championship had even begun. A special conference for fans was held, where they competed in throwing three points with Slovenian basketball legends, and equipped themselves with fan props in the spirit of the slogan ‘I Feel Slovenia’. They watched films aimed at encouraging fans in a funny and entertaining way to be sporting and thus contribute to a successful championship and the positive image of Slovenia.

A flash mob was organised in front of the Triple Bridge in Ljubljana, where a basketball count was set up to shoot some scores. Cheerleaders dressed in suits with official Slovenian logos were also present.

There was a lot of interest in watching the Slovenian team’s matches. On average, 2,567 spectators watched the games. The stands were full and the viewing rate was the largest so far. No game has ever attracted so many viewers as the one between Slovenia and Croatia. 427,979 people watched the game on television, which is 54 per cent of those watching television at that time. The last minutes of the game between Slovenia and Croatia were watched by 535,000 viewers all around Slovenia, or more than 70 per cent of those who were watching television at the time.

The match between Slovenia and Croatia also broke records of official visitors, since no basketball game has attracted so many high-ranking politicians before.

Along with the Slovenian President, Borut Pahor, the match was watched by the Prime Minister, Alenka Bratusek, and the Croatian Prime Minister, Zoran Milanovic. Many ministers, presidents of political parties, deputies of the National Assembly and presidents of management boards of some major Slovenian companies were also present.

During the European championship, the atmosphere was intense, exciting, happy and some times even bitter, due to the failures of the home team. However, this was an event that overwhelmed us all. Slovenian and foreign fans alike. The host fans also enjoyed the company of foreign ones. We met and socialised at the home team. However, this was an event that overwhelmed us all. Slovenian and foreign fans alike. The host fans also enjoyed the company of foreign ones. We met and socialised at the sports stadiums during EuroBasket. The cheering colours were quite diverse at the end of the summer, despite the gloomy rainy days. But, there is no colour like green, of course: I feel Slovenia – I feel basketball.
In the beat of basketball

Lipko says...

Let me show you some exciting happenings at the biggest sporting event in Slovenia yet!

Prime Minister Alenka Bratusek stressed at the opening...

May the best team win!

SLOVENIA!

This is how pretty girls stick to me!

It's nice to be a mascot...

SLOVENIAAAAA!

Our fans are naturally the loudest...

I love everyone who supports our team...

The fans follow the latest fashion trends...

Oh, not so hard!

Irena Kogoj, photo: Tamino Petelinšek/STA, Nebojša Tejić/STA

Boundless enthusiasm among the fans...

GO, SLOVENIA, GO!

Great hoop!!

The drumming heats up the atmosphere...

Crowds cheering in front of the arena...

We are the best!

You could shoot hoops in the fan zone in Congress Square...

We are ranked at the next European and World Championships!

The players are excited about their success as well...

Too much winning makes the headache...

It's nice to be a mascot...

Our fans are naturally the loudest...

I love everyone who supports our team...

The fans follow the latest fashion trends...

Lipko says...
Promotion of EuroBasket 2013

From underground to the sea and to the peak of Triglav

The promotional events for the 2013 European Basketball Championship, the biggest sporting event in Slovenia, have caught the eye of the whole of Europe because of their originality and innovativeness. The first shots into a hoop were taken in a cave 60 metres under ground, then at sea level (0 metres), and finally on the highest Slovenian peak, 2,864 metres above sea level. EuroBasket is also an organisational success story.

It all started less than a year ago, with the attractive draw for EuroBasket 2013, which for the first time in the history of the competition took place under ground, in the large Concert Hall of Postojna Cave. The draw put the Slovenian national basketball team in Group C with Spain, Croatia, Poland, Georgia and the Czech Republic. It was also the first time a basketball game had been played in the karst underground. The game featured six legendary former Slovenian national team players, who played three on three. Bojan Horvat will be remembered as first basketball scorer in the first underground game in the history of basketball. The game was played so fast that the score keepers could not keep score, so there was no official winner.

The unique event took place on the largest raft in Slovenia, with a real basketball court on board. The competing teams featured basketball legends from three Adriatic countries, Croatia, Italy and Slovenia. They played three games with ten minute halves. The Slovenian team beat the Italians, but fell to the Croats, who also beat the Italians to win the tournament. The spectators enjoyed extensive media coverage both in Slovenia and abroad, as it was attended by about 150 Slovenian and foreign journalists.

After the historic underground basketball game, the EuroBasket 2013 teams prepared another ground-breaking event: the first basketball game at sea. This unique event took place on the largest raft in Slovenia, with a real basketball court on board. The competing teams featured basketball legends from three Adriatic countries, Croatia, Italy and Slovenia. They played three games with ten minute halves. The Slovenian team beat the Italians, but fell to the Croats, who also beat the Italians to win the tournament. The spectators enjoyed extensive media coverage both in Slovenia and abroad, as it was attended by about 150 Slovenian and foreign journalists.

France, which won the championship, also has the most renowned player in its team, the three-time NBA league champion, Tony Parker. As the host of the championship, Slovenia gave the famous French basketball player specially made glasses. The unique glasses were created by the young Wood Stock designers from cherry and lime wood, and they are 98 percent hand made.

The promotional activities before EuroBasket 2013 reached their peak one day before the championship began. Lipko (the mascot) organised a special campaign with the help of the championship organisers, and set up a basket at 2,864 m above sea level, directly beneath Aljaž’s Tower. He scored with his first shot, the first basketball score ever achieved on Mt Triglav. This was Lipko’s way of wishing all the players and fans a successful and interesting EuroBasket 2013.

In conclusion, we can rightly say that Slovenia has proven once again that the Slovenian people love sports, are very hospitable and know how to organise and promote such an extensive event successfully.

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Wood Stock for Tony Parker
Wooden glasses of the young design group Wood Stock for French basketball player Tony Parker

In the framework of promotional activities organised by the European Basketball Championships by the Communication Office of the Government of the Republic of Slovenia and related to the promotion of the ‘I Feel Slovenia’ brand, a special event took place at the friendly match between Slovenia and France. Slovenia, the host country of Eurobasket, presented French basketball star Tony Parker with wooden glasses manufactured especially for him by the young design group Wood Stock.

On behalf of Slovenia, Parker was handed the glasses by Slovenian basketball player and Parker’s former teammate Rašo Nesterovič. The glasses are a unique recycled product made of old wood. Wood is a great natural asset of Slovenia and tradition-ally present in almost every Slovenian home.

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On behalf of Slovenia, Parker was handed the glasses by Slovenian basketball player and Parker’s former teammate Rašo Nesterovič. The glasses are a unique recycled product made of old wood. Wood is a great natural asset of Slovenia and tradition-ally present in almost every Slovenian home. This led to the idea of a unique and original present that links the tradition and modernity in the spirit of the Slovenian national brand, and reflects Slovenia’s boutique character and handicraft.

As more than two thirds of Slovenia is covered by forests, green is the predominant colour. We like to call it ‘Slovenian green’, and it tells a story about unspoilt nature and our desire to keep it in such condition. Slovenia ranks third in Europe by the share of wooded areas; to put it simply: forests grow almost everywhere.

Slovenians are closely connected with sport. Our story is also a story of sport – exercise fills us with vigour and gives us the energy necessary for recreational and professional goals. We excel at sports. We ski and climb where no one has before; we swim and cycle for longer distances than anyone else. We not only overcome natural laws and limits we discover and extend them. Slovenia radiates a special sport energy because its people are constantly in motion and in touch with nature. Sport is a part of Slovenian identity and an indispensable element of the Slovenian brand and its green colour.

The green at the core of the national brand ‘I Feel Slovenia’ has a particular place in the hearts of Slovenians – it reflects the balance between nature and society and the asiduity of Slovenians. The Slovenian green also characterizes the Slovenian people’s orientation to the elements, that is, to what can be felt in their hands. The diverse landscape has marked a rich natural and cultural tradition, giving rise to the creativity of its people and inspiring different artists. Last but not least, the memory of Slovenia combines the scent of the forest, the murmur of the brook, the remarkable taste of its water and the softness of wood. We feel Slovenia.

WHO ARE WOOD STOCK?
Wood Stock is a group of young and creative people with a vision of an authentic Slovenian product. They are aware of the distinctiveness of Slovenian wood. Wood Stock believes that the future of entrepreneurship lies not in companies in pursuit of fast profits made by selling mass produced goods, but in companies focused on quality and environmentally friendly sustainable products.

The new model of glasses developed for Tony Parker will be manufactured in only nine exclusive copies: two will be kept by the company; five will be sold at auctions, and one will be reserved for a presentation on a special opportunity. The glasses have the ‘I feel Slovenia’ logo and the basketball star’s signature ‘branded’ on the inner side of the temples. The package is a unique product of its own. It resembles a wooden house and is made of wild cherry wood, in fact of a discarded old chest.

WHY WOODEN GLASSES?
The anorex is self-evident: wood is the most important natural material for creativity. Wood has never been merely a building and heating material, it represents the warmth of home and a material for creativity. Throughout the centuries, the linden crown and leaf has reflected the Slovenian national identity. The linden tree has been and remains a vital symbol of Slovenia. Wild cherry is another tree with a long history and tradition. Each Slovenian owns a wooden kitchenware item, a toy or another traditional wooden product. This led to the idea of a unique and original present that links the tradition and modernity in the spirit of the Slovenian national brand, and reflects Slovenia’s boutique character expressed in handmade items.

The lenses used are of the highest functional value by recycling old goods, but in companies focused on quality and environmentally friendly sustainable products.

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ABOUT THE PRODUCT
Wood Stock glasses are hand made from different sorts of wood and can also be customised. The glasses are also made from different old wooden objects (wardrobes, barrels etc.) that are no longer functional. Thus, we can talk about ‘upcycling’, which produces new objects with higher functional value by recycling old products. Each pair of glasses is protected by coatings of citrus oils and beeswax, which are natural and environmentally friendly. The lenses used are of the highest quality.

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The new model of glasses developed for Tony Parker will be manufactured in only nine exclusive copies: two will be kept by the company; five will be sold at auctions, and one will be reserved for a presentation on a special opportunity. The glasses have the ‘I feel Slovenia’ logo and the basketball star’s signature ‘branded’ on the inner side of the temples. The package is a unique product of its own. It resembles a wooden house and is made of wild cherry wood, in fact of a discarded old chest.

WHY WOODEN GLASSES?
The anorex is self-evident: wood is the most important natural material for creativity. Wood has never been merely a building and heating material, it represents the warmth of home and a material for creativity. Throughout the centuries, the linden crown and leaf has reflected the Slovenian national identity. The linden tree has been and remains a vital symbol of Slovenia. Wild cherry is another tree with a long history and tradition. Each Slovenian owns a wooden kitchenware item, a toy or another traditional wooden product. This led to the idea of a unique and original present that links the tradition and modernity in the spirit of the Slovenian national brand, and reflects Slovenia’s boutique character expressed in handmade items.
The story of a legend of Slovenian, Yugoslavian, European and world basketball

If basketball didn't exist, Ivo Daneu would have invented it

Ivo Daneu was born on 6 October 1927 in Maribor. In the Second World War, his family was deported to Serbia. After the war and their return to Maribor, his father died in 1949. Due to his height (184 cm), exceptional motor skills and the ability to throw (shoot), he was a playmaker and guard. After graduation, he decided to play for the ASK Olimpija basketball club. Already during his first year in Ljubljana, he became a champion in Yugoslavia. He won six national championships in the fourteen seasons he spent in Olimpija. He played in over 200 international games for the Yugoslav national team, including three Olympic Games, three world and six European championships. He ended his career victoriously in 1970 by winning the national and world championships. After retiring, he was Olimpija's coach for one year. In 1972, he became active again and played one season for Rudar club in Trbovlje. Today, he enjoys an active retired life. He plays sports and cards with his friends and travels. His grandchildren are his greatest pleasure. He usually starts his day with a cup of coffee and a newspaper in one of the coffee shops near his home in the centre of the Slovenian capital, which was where we met.

In the film, Ljubodrag Simonović says: “Ivo Daneu was the founder of so-called modern basketball. It wasn’t just about competing, winning, achieving good results, but also about developing elements of the game: dribbling, moving around in space, dynamic passes, intelligent play, speed, versatility of moves, etc.”

In the interview with Ivo Daneu, we discussed not only his rich career, but primarily an event which is still relevant. EuroBasket...It wasn’t just about competition, winning, achieving good results, but also about developing elements of the game: dribbling, moving around in space, dynamic passes, intelligent play, speed, versatility of moves, etc.”

Why did you decide to play basketball and not another sport? As a child, I actually wanted to become a tennis player, but my family - my mother was left alone with four children after my father’s death - didn’t have the money, because tennis is a relatively expensive sport. There was a football field close to my home and I started playing football. But I disliked this sport after I accidentally got a hard blow in the head from a ball. A basketball court was also nearby and that gradually became my passion. I didn’t think about other sports after that. I started training with the Polet club in Maribor and later with Branik. I played there until the end of grammar school and then I joined Olimpija.

What are your memories of the so-called ‘golden era’? Those were very good times, although I had to find a job very quickly. I first enrolled at the Faculty of Sport. I was already in the national team that year, I remember that the competition was in Poland. And because I had to be absent for five weeks. I went to the faculty administration, but unfortunately they weren’t prepared to grant me such a long absence. So I didn’t finish university because I was forced to choose between basketball and study. And I chose basketball. I was soon permanently employed. So, I went to work and played basketball. But I still managed. Others trained twice a day, I only trained in the evenings. Basketball experts call you a legend, a golden boy. In addition to all your other successes, you are known for your famous throw which won the world title for the Yugoslav team. To tell the truth, I was injured at the time. If the competition hadn’t been in Ljubljana, perhaps I wouldn’t have even played. The club management was afraid that if I didn’t play, the spectators would boycott the game. I didn’t play much in the championship due to my injury, although I did play against the USA, but only in the last five minutes. And then in that crucial or necessary moment, I scored.

Such an achievement for Slovenian basketball players to become world champions seems almost impossible. Why was this possible then, but is probably not today? Great credit undoubtedly goes to the management, especially Boris Kristančič. He had a vision that we would be the best. He almost planned it. The coach was at the time. If a player had to be given the same instructions three times, he was considered a bit stupid. We got the instructions, considered them and worked very hard. It’s true that the competing system back then was different from today. We also played in three groups, which were located in the former republics of Yugoslavia in order to reduce Slovenia’s costs. Only six teams from the qualifiers played in Ljubljana.
EUROBASKET INTERVIEW

SPORT was highly appreciated in the former Yugoslavia. I've had the same impression now as ambassador of EuroBasket.

What was the role of ambassador of EuroBasket in your opinion?

The role of ambassador of EuroBasket is ideal for you? Accept it with great pleasure. Because English is not my first language, I asked to be the ambassador for the countries of the former Yugoslavia. I communicate more easily in these languages. And because I speak Russian, I also participated in the promotion of EuroBasket in Russia.

Did players ask you for any advice?

I didn't share any in particular, the Slovenian coaches are good and very knowledgeable, so I didn't interfere at all. You see, not everything depends on the coach. He can control substitutions, but he can't play defence on the court instead of the players. The victory is always won by the players, if they score or if they block a throw.

What was the atmosphere like in the team and what were the circumstances then?

There weren't any disagreements. We were friends and we socialise with the players who played at that time but not only with them, with others as well. Sport was highly appreciated in the former Yugoslavia. I've had the same impression now as ambassador of EuroBasket.

What is your message to the national team now at the end of the European championship?

I sincerely congratulate all of them, and especially the winners. They were the best; somebody has to. Congratulations also go to everyone, because the sporting spirit was present throughout. Again, congratulations to everyone.

Do you think that the promotion of Slovenia during EuroBasket was sufficient?

I feel that all the participants worked very hard at the promotion. EuroBasket 2013, the Slovenian Basketball Association, the Government Communication Office of the Republic of Slovenia, and everyone else. Many people worked day and night. You see, it's always possible to do more, but it's also important to give recognition.

Even more now, when financial resources are limited. Many volunteers participated in this project and I really think that Slovenia did an excellent job. I was happy to see a great number of passionate fans, and many officials and other VIP guests who were attending the games from the beginning. EuroBasket was a great sporting and diplomatic event, and certainly important for Slovenia in every way.

What is your message to the national teams now at the end of the European championship?

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When Ivo Daneu raised the winners' cup, everyone shared the same thought in the Tivoli Hall on 24 May 1990: for years it was believed that basketball was safest in Ivo Daneu's hands and the cup was also handed to him.

Government Communication Office

Slovenian information

Ivo Daneu is the only Slovenian that the International Basketball Federation has inducted into its Hall of Fame, next to the best in the world.
The City of Ljubljana opens the House of Sport

An exhibition in memory of Yugoslav basketball’s glory days

Located in Ljubljana city centre, on the bank of the Ljubljanica River, a House of Sport has opened its doors to sports enthusiasts. The House serves as a sports information centre, where fans can buy tickets for all sports events in Ljubljana and season tickets for matches and events organised by individual clubs in the city and find out about upcoming sports events. Here you can also make reservations for recreational sports facilities and find a range of promotional materials.

The main message to visitors is encouragement of tolerance, solidarity and fair play.

The only other teams recording such results in major competitions in the second half of the 20th century were those of the Soviet Union and the USA.

The visit of Yugoslav basketball’s golden generation added a special touch of magic to the House of Sport. At the invitation of the Basketball Federation of Slovenia and President Borut Pahor, Ljubljana again, after 43 years, hosted the 1970 basketball world championships.

The legendary basketball players were honoured at an exhibition in the atrium of Ljubljana City Hall, entitled “We were the World Champions. The Never-Ending Ascent to the 1970 Basketball Gold and Beyond.” It was staged by the Museum and Galleries of Ljubljana (MGML) in cooperation with the Municipality of Ljubljana and the Intermedia Network production company.

Yugoslav basketball was a sporting phenomenon in which Slovenian players took part from the very beginning. In the 1960s and 1970s, Ivo Daneu, Ajoša Žorga and Vinko Jelovac, wearing the dress of the Yugoslav national team, were setting the standards for Slovenian basketball. The success achieved in 1970 in Ljubljana – the team’s first major championship title – remains the greatest achievement of the Slovenian basketball team.

The exhibition was staged in cooperation between the Museum and Galleries of Ljubljana, the Municipality of Ljubljana, Sections for Culture and Sport, and the Intermedia Network production company. The exhibition vividly presents Yugoslav national basketball team’s path from its first performances in major competition to the gold medal at the 1970 world championships in Ljubljana, and the never-ending ascent to the world basketball gold and beyond.

The exhibition was attended by local athletes – former basketball player Ajoša Žorga and Ivo Daneu.

The House also offers refreshing drinks, snacks and pastries and acts as a focal point, bringing together people from different areas of sporting activity in Ljubljana – from athletes to fans, sponsors, tourists and recreationists – who can follow various sporting events on small or large TV screens inside or in front of the House.

The exhibition is accompanied by the world premiere of the documentary “We were the World Champions. The Never-Ending Ascent to the 1970 Basketball Gold and Beyond”. The exhibition was staged in cooperation between the Museum and Galleries of Ljubljana, the Municipality of Ljubljana, Sections for Culture and Sport, and the Intermedia Network production company. The exhibition vividly presents Yugoslav national basketball team’s path from its first performances in major competition to the gold medal at the 1970 world championships in Ljubljana.

Ingredients of tolerance, solidarity and fair play.

Yugoslav basketball is an unforgettable phenomenon. The exhibition, which was shown in the course of Eurobasket 2013 – the European Basketball Championships, was accompanied by the world premiere of the documentary “We were the World Champions,” which was made in the course of Eurobasket 2013 – the European Basketball Championships. The exhibition was shown in the course of Eurobasket 2013 – the European Basketball Championships.
Kolektor plans EUR 1 bn in revenues in 2022

The concern Kolektor has never generated a loss in its 50-year history and plans to reach EUR 1 billion in revenues in 2022, the industrial conglomerate’s chairman Stojan Petrič stated at an event marking the company’s 50th anniversary.

Slovenian Prime Minister Alenka Bratušek, who attended the ceremony, said that Kolektor was a role model. Bratušek noted at a press conference that the company had been able to avoid the economic crisis and that she could only wish to have a balance sheet like Kolektor’s as prime minister.

Nikolko, meeting with a group of students and their new German language teacher and featuring an impressive cast of some of Slovenia’s leading actors, including Igor Šamsorob and Nataša Barbara Gračner.

Veronika Award goes to Krčrk as best volume of poetry

The Veronika Award for this year’s best volume of poetry in Slovenia, awarded by the Municipality of Celje, went to poet Karlo Hmeljak for his collection, Krčrk, published by LUD Literatura.

A Golden Coin for Poetry was also awarded at the same event to Niko Grafenauer for his lifetime achievement in poetry and creative enrichment of the Slovenian language and culture.

Tina Maze also among the record holders

Tina Maze, winner of a record-breaking number of points in last year’s women’s alpine skiing World Cup, has taken her place among the world’s record holders.

Record holders also include Matija Ferarič, with the largest number of world championship titles in precision paraglider landing. A place in the book of records was also won by Andraž Mavec and the Glasbeno agencija GIG music agency for the world’s largest picture postcard (measuring 52.48 sq. m) and the ARC Group from Gorica for printing the world’s biggest Qur’an.

Two Slovenian innovators awarded at the International Fair on Innovations in Croatia

The sixth International Fair of Innovations, eco-ideas, products and technologies in the agriculture and food industry ended with a ceremonial awarding of prizes and recognitions in Bledgrad na Moru. Seven innovations from Slovenia were featured at the fair, and two Slovenian innovators received plaques for innovativeness.

The AGRO ARCA plaques were awarded to Bojan Goršič from Kranj and Ivan Gregorič from Vojniki. Goršič presented a thoughtful invention called ‘Canper’, a plastic device which enables beverages to be drunk simply and hygienically directly from the can. Gregorič presented a new and improved model of his previous multifunctional mobile lawn mower which does more than ten different jobs in gardening and agriculture.

Deloitte Central Europe Top 500

The auditing firm Deloitte has compiled a list of the 500 biggest companies in Central Europe. The list includes 18 Slovenian companies, one more than last year.

A third of the companies listed come from Poland, followed by those from the Czech Republic, while Slovenian companies represent 3.6%. Given Slovenia’s GDP of EUR 35 billion, compared to Poland’s EUR 380 billion, “this is a good result”, Deloitte Slovenia’s official Janez Škrubej said as he presented the survey to reporters in Ljubljana on Wednesday. The leading Slovenian company, Petrol, generated EUR 3.8 billion in sales revenue last year to rank 32nd, followed by retailer Mercator (44th) and power utility HSE Petrol, generated EUR 3.8 billion in sales revenue last year to rank 32nd, followed by retailer Mercator (44th) and power utility HSE.

GEM Motors develops a new electric motor

Slovenian company GEM Motors has developed a new electric motor with permanent magnets. Its simple design and construction, high efficiency and innovative technology are the main advantages of this motor, giving it great potential for the electric vehicles market.

The company, a member of the Ljubljana University incubator, was established three years ago to develop a new electromagnetic motor for electric vehicles that would be eco-friendly and highly efficient for the people.
TIPS!

The “Transferzala” season ticket
2013-2014 season, Ljubljana

At the beginning of this year’s theatre season, five independent theatre stages have joined forces to introduce the new “Transferzala” season ticket. It is a theatre and dance season ticket for a selection of shows on the stages of Center kulture Španski borci, Gledališče Glej, Stara mestna elektrarna – Elektro Ljubljana, Mini teater and Plesni teater Ljubljana. The joint action stems from the desire of all those involved to provide visitors with the best that the participating independent theatres have to offer and to attract those visitors who find it difficult to choose quality shows from the repertoire of the city’s main theatres and from the more fragmented independent theatrical offer.

The season ticket will represent a transferzala, i.e. a trail across five of Ljubljana’s cultural outposts. It will provide season ticket holders with the possibility to choose one from among the fifteen different performances in each participating theatre. The five performances of their choice will be followed by a final event including a surprise programme and a party at which they will be able to meet the actors.

More information available at: www.transferzala.si

The Ljubljana Marathon
27 October 2013, Ljubljana

Running amateurs have certainly marked 27 October as an important event including a surprise programme and a party at which they will be able to meet the actors.

More information available at: www.ljubljana-marathon.si

The “Four seasons of the Kino Šiška Urban Culture Centre”
2013 season, Ljubljana

The Kino Šiška Urban Culture Centre starts this year’s season with its fourth anniversary celebration. The home of the Urban Culture Centre is the former Šiška motion picture theatre, which had been abandoned and left to ruin for many years. The refurbished theatre has now become well integrated into the local community and the Ljubljana cultural scene, and its popularity extends beyond Slovenia’s borders. The Kino Šiška Urban Culture Centre staged 1,000 events, of which 400 were concerts, and attracted almost 260,000 visitors since its opening in 2009.

More information available at: www.kinosiska.si

The exhibition “Basketball 1970 – You Get the Moon, We Get the Gold”
You Get the Moon – We Get the Gold showcased at the National Museum of Contemporary History. It was open until the end of September. The exhibition coincided with the greatest ever sporting event in Slovenia, the European Basketball Championship.

The exhibition returned us to 1970, when the Yugoslav national basketball team with three Slovenians (Ivo Danču, Aljoša Žorga and Vinko Jelovac), beat the United States of America 70 to 63 in the finals on their home turf in Ljubljana’s Tivoli Hall, winning the first gold medal in world championships. The exhibition takes its title from a motto on a fan’s banner addressed to the Americans: “You Get the Moon – We Get the Gold.”

The winning event and celebration of basketball players and their fans were presented at the exhibition as seen through the lenses of recognised Slovenian news photographers. Žan Koželj, Sverzun Busić, Marijan Ciglč, Egon Kaše, Edi Selhuš, Miloš Šabac and Marika Junjić captured individual games and the introductory and closing ceremonies, as well as other events that accompanied the championship. In addition to the photographs, the exhibition featured a film by director Jože Pogačnik loaned by the Archives of the Republic of Slovenia and audio-video testimonies by two legendary Slovenian basketball players, Ivo Danču and Aljoša Žorga, who provided additional insight into the championship.

To quote Delo newspaper: “All paths lead to Tivoli. The hall at the foot of Rožnik Hill had never before seen so many spectators. That happened on the first day and every day until the end of the World Basketball Championship in May 1970.” Continuing: “The basketball players were hugging and kissing each other. They were jumping like happy children. Exhausted Trajko Rajković could not stay on his feet; he fell to the ground with all his weight and cried. The tears of joy ran like happy children. Exhausted Trajko Rajković could not stay on his feet; he fell to the ground with all his weight and cried.”

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And how did Delo newspaper describe the atmosphere in the Slovenian capital on that triumphant and euphoric day? “Ljubljana did not go to sleep until three in the morning. Parades and flags, convoys of cars, a loud concert of car’s horns. Even at dawn, groups of people were circling the town and cheering. "Gold, gold!" The leading names in the victory echoed in the streets for a long time. Ljubljana was crazy with joy and enthusiasm.”

Slovenian national teams competed in the sixth world championship, which was being held in Europe for the first time. The qualifying matches were played in Split, Karlovac and Sarajevo. The six best teams and Yugoslavia as the host state competed in the finals in Ljubljana. The winner was decided in games where each team played against another.

There was an exceptional atmosphere, which drowned the referees’ whistles in Tivoli Hall that day. The hall was filled with flags and sirens. One of the banners read “You Get the Moon – We Get the Gold.” The fans were connecting the historic steps of Neil Armstrong on the Moon in 1969 with the medal from the World Basketball Championship. In such an atmosphere, never before seen in Tivoli, a difficult and strenuous battle commenced. “You have to endure it. The opponent will not give up until the last minute,” Žeravica told the players. The Americans were never in the lead in the second round, but they pushed on. The 27th minute was the most difficult moment, when Krešimir Ćosić was sent off for five fouls. Žeravica substituted him with Ivo Danču, as he was counting on Danču’s invaluable experience. “In the dramatic play-off, our team increased the lead and deservedly won 70 to 63,” wrote the Belgrade newspaper Politika. The conclusion of the Sovetsky Sport sports newspaper was: the more difficult the opponent, the better the game of the Yugoslav national team.

The last match against the Soviet Union was a mere formality, because Yugoslavia already had an unassailable lead over its rivals for gold. The tempestuous game under the baskets calmed down. The victory was Yugoslavia’s and no one could take it away from the national team. This was a victory for the record books.
Pokal, ki ga je prejela jugoslovanska reprezentanca ob osvojitvi naslova svetovnega prvaka v Ljubljani leta 1970.

The cup received by the Yugoslav national team after it had won the title of the 1970 world champion in Ljubljana.