



SLOVENIA

Implementing the 2030 Agenda
for Sustainable Development

2018 Update

DECISIONS

Between two words
choose the quieter one.

Between word and silence
choose listening.

Between two books
choose the dustier one.

Between the earth and the sky
choose a bird.

Between two animals
choose the one who needs you more.

Between two children
choose both.

Between the lesser and the bigger evil
choose neither.

Between hope and despair
choose hope:
it will be harder to bear.

Boris A. Novak

Translation: Mia Dintinjana

SLOVENIA & AGENDA 2030

In 2017, Slovenia conducted its first Voluntary National Review (VNR) of the Implementation of the 2030 Agenda. It showed that Slovenia was performing significantly well in aspects of equality, education, health, the environment, and sustainable tourism. It also features several great examples of Slovenian policy measures, activities, and good practices. Nevertheless, several gaps remain to be overcome to reach all targets of the Sustainable Development Goals by 2030. Although the distances remaining to achieving these targets are small in many areas, challenges remain, and Slovenia stands committed to addressing them.

Slovenia recognises the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (2030 Agenda) as a sign of realistic hope for the world as it stands at a crossroads. Communities around the world are experiencing catastrophes, the causes of which are manifold – everything from violence and conflict, mass violations of human rights and economic migration, to natural disasters resulting from the increasingly adverse effects of climate change. Many still live in poverty, and there is a growing gap between the rich and the poor. At the same time, the speed of technological progress is completely changing the expectations of society, while also significantly overtaking the capacity of social adaptation. For this reason, there has been an increasing paradox of global social progress that is opening new opportunities and increasing growth potentials, but also posing threats and creating numerous challenges. This creates questions about the future of education, labour, social order, the relationship between citizens and the state and, above of all, providing social justice.

However, the need to develop more agile and adaptable policies that consider unpredictable, faster-paced, and more fundamental shifts in the world, as well as addressing the challenges in Slovene society, called upon the Government to develop a new approach towards planning for the future, which includes designing and implementing coherent policies for sustainable development. A clear commitment has been set to prepare a new long-term national development strategy and to

continue our development path towards sustainable, inclusive, and responsible development. Slovenia started its nation-wide process of preparing a national development framework that will be forward-looking, close to the people, for the people, and with a clear vision of what Slovenia as a country and a nation wants to become.

In the early days of this process, the Government decided that Slovenia would implement the 17 SDGs on a national level by embedding them into Slovenia's new Development Strategy 2030, rather than designing a separate parallel process. Slovenia's Development Strategy 2030, adopted by the Government in December 2017, is a development framework that builds on the Vision of Slovenia 2050 and the current state of the economy, the society and the environment; it takes into account global challenges and trends and is designed to incorporate the SDGs. In that regard, the new national development goals share characteristics of the SDGs, such as deep interconnections and cross-cutting elements, tackling and addressing the three pillars of sustainable development – economic, social and environmental – and inclusiveness in aiming to leave no one behind.

While Slovenia has set its path towards well-being, it is intensely aware of its shared responsibility for global peace and prosperity. Slovenia has achieved progress in its development cooperation in recent years, supporting development and humanitarian projects in priority geographical areas: the Western Balkans, Eastern Europe, and Africa. Slovenian NGOs have also been contributing to women's and children's empowerment, strengthening good governance and the rule of law, environmental protection, and human security. Slovenia is contributing to improving the technical expertise of civil servants in target countries. Continued attention remains devoted to rehabilitation programmes and addressing a broader range of global post-conflict and disruptive challenges that threaten the security of individuals and communities.

Flourishing in the Age of Acceleration

In the current era, we are facing numerous challenges and long-term trends with significant consequences. Conditions at home, in the European Union (EU), and around the world have changed dramatically. We are experiencing increased uncertainty and unpredictability and are searching for new development paradigms that take our planet's capacities into account. In addition to dangers, these development challenges also bring numerous opportunities. In order to become a society that understands how to deal with change, uncertainty, and challenges, Slovenia wants to establish and create the conditions for a systemic approach to sustainable development. Therefore, we have placed a high quality of life for all at the centre of the Slovenian Development Strategy 2030.

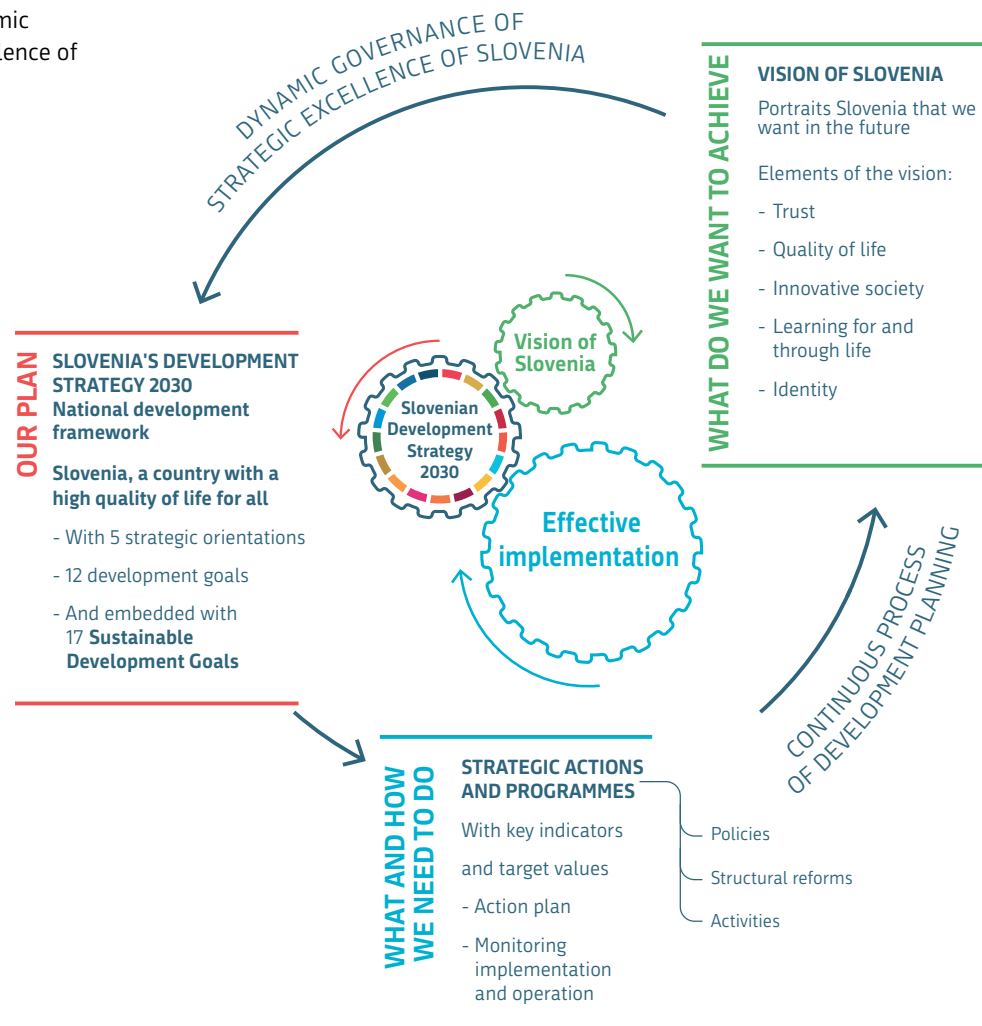
The speed of technological progress has completely changed societal expectations, while simultaneously rapidly exceeding society's capacity to adapt to it. Therefore, the paradox of global social progress is becoming increasingly significant, as it brings new opportunities and increased development potentials but simultaneously also constitutes a threat and creates numerous challenges. This raises questions about the future of education, work, the social order, the relationship between the citizen and the state, the response to demographic changes and climate change, and the ensuring of social equality and justice. In such circumstances, the strengthening of the whole of society's ability to respond to challenges is crucial.

Since attaining independence, Slovenia has achieved numerous development goals. We have also been a part of some of the most significant international integration processes and become an active international partner in global efforts towards peace and security, respect for human rights, cultural diversity and the rule of law: this is a conscientious response to global challenges and the creation of trends. Slovenia has abundant natural features, is well placed between the Mediterranean, Central and Southeastern Europe, and offers numerous opportunities which could be taken even better advantage of through a good strategic approach. Also significant in this respect is our strong national brand ("I Feel Slovenia"), which indicates the country's competitive advantages, orients the development of its functional characteristics and gives it emotional weight and personality.

In December 2017, the Government of Slovenia adopted the Slovenian Development Strategy 2030, which presents a new long-term national development framework. Its central goal is titled The Quality of Life for All. With the five strategic orientations and twelve interlinked development goals, it sets a new foundation for the future development of Slovenia. By including SDGs and the 2030 Agenda adopted by the United Nations, Slovenia recognises the importance of a sustainable, inclusive, and more conscious future where society as a whole can flourish.



Figure 1: The system of dynamic governance of strategic excellence of Slovenia



The Slovenian Development Strategy 2030 is, first and foremost, a document intended for the policymakers who are responsible for delivering it, while the outcomes are oriented toward results that benefit and matter for Slovenian citizens, who are at the centre of the agenda – both at the level of individuals and at the level of society as a whole. The new national development framework is also significant for the implementation of the 2030 Agenda due to clearly defined ways of achieving national development goals and hence the objectives of sustainable development:

- Policy coherence for sustainable development will be checked at the policy-making stage.
- The implementation of sustainable development objectives at the national level will be systematically monitored on an annual basis together with national development objectives.
- The development of capacities in the horizontal understanding of the national and international development context, together with strategic assumptions, will aid in better adapting the implementation of individual development goals.

The Slovenian Development Strategy 2030 represents the state's new core development framework (Figure 1) as set out in the Vision of Slovenia, and a review of the current situation and global trends and challenges. The decision to draft a new long-term national development strategy was influenced not only by the changed conditions, but also by the fact that Slovenia's existing strategic development framework, which was set out in the Slovenian Development Strategy 2005–2013, had expired. In designing the developmental paths to a better life for all inhabitants of Slovenia, we are aware of our responsibilities in the global context. The Slovenian Development Strategy 2030, therefore, also includes sustainable development goals in order to implement the global development plan set out in the UN's 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda (2030 Agenda).



Slovenian Development Strategy 2030

The primary objective of the Slovenian Development Strategy will be pursued through balanced economic, social, and environmental development that generates the conditions and opportunities for present and future generations.

A high quality of life for all Slovenian residents will be manifested in:

- better opportunities for work, education and creativity;
- decent, safe and active life in the well-preserved natural environment;
- active inclusion in democratic decision making and co-governing of society.

The country's strategic guidelines (presented in Figure 1) to achieve quality of life and well-being are:

- an inclusive, healthy, safe, and responsible society,
- learning for and through life,
- highly productive economy that generates value added for all,
- well-preserved natural environment
- high level of cooperation, competence, and governance efficiency.

Slovenia will implement those strategic orientations for the attainment of the strategy's primary objective by operating on different mutually connected and interdependent (policy) areas that are covered in the Strategy's twelve development goals. Each goal contains a rationale of the goal's relevance, key guidelines that require further activities in order to attain the high quality of life for all, two to three core outcome indicators that represent desired outcomes of each development goal, and link to the Sustainable Development Goals.

Slovenia's national development goals share the characteristics of the SDGs, such as deep interconnections and cross-cutting elements, tackling and addressing the three pillars of sustainable development and inclusiveness. Through the national development goals, the SDGs are linked to strategic orientations.

■ www.vlada.si/en/2030

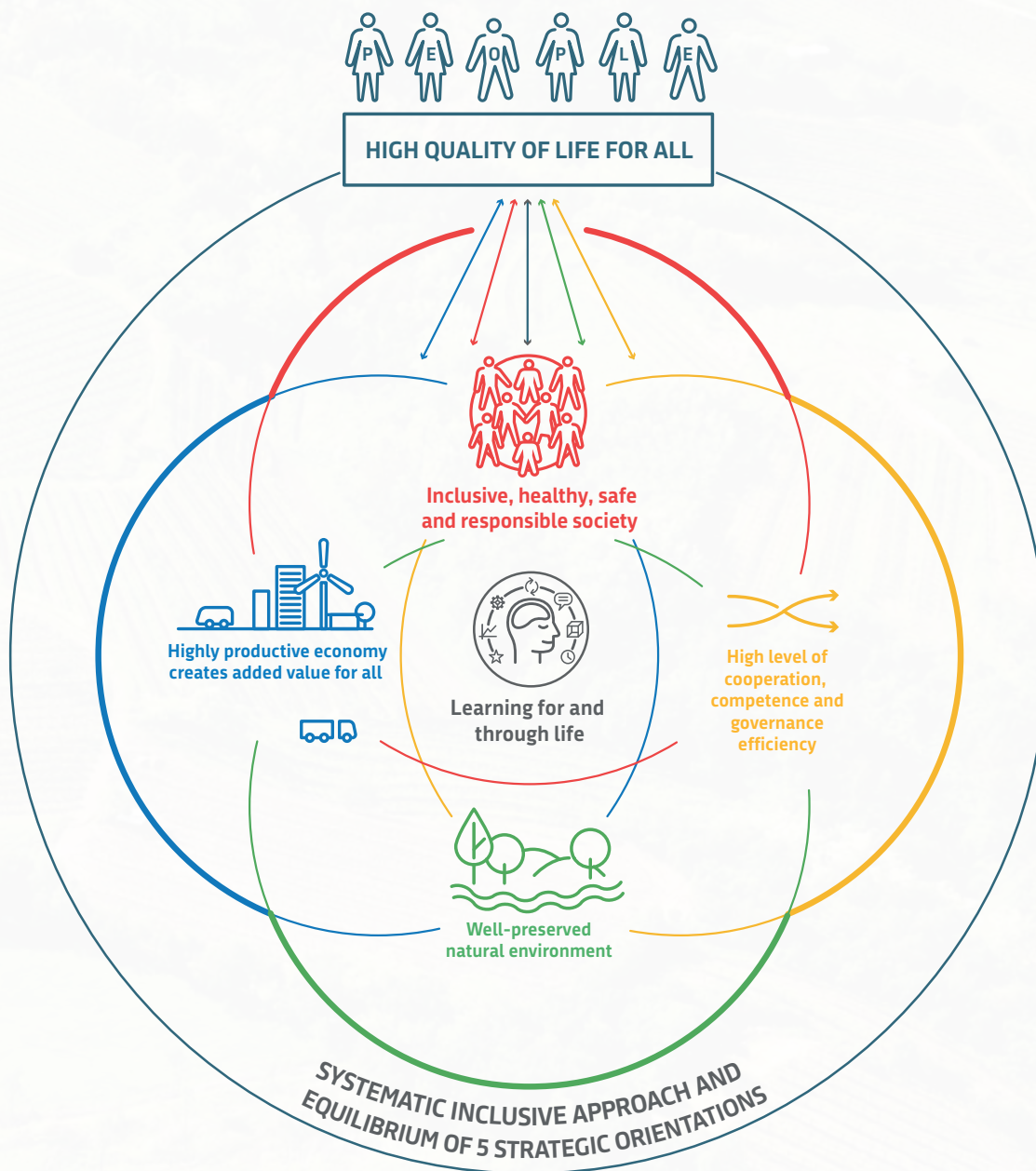
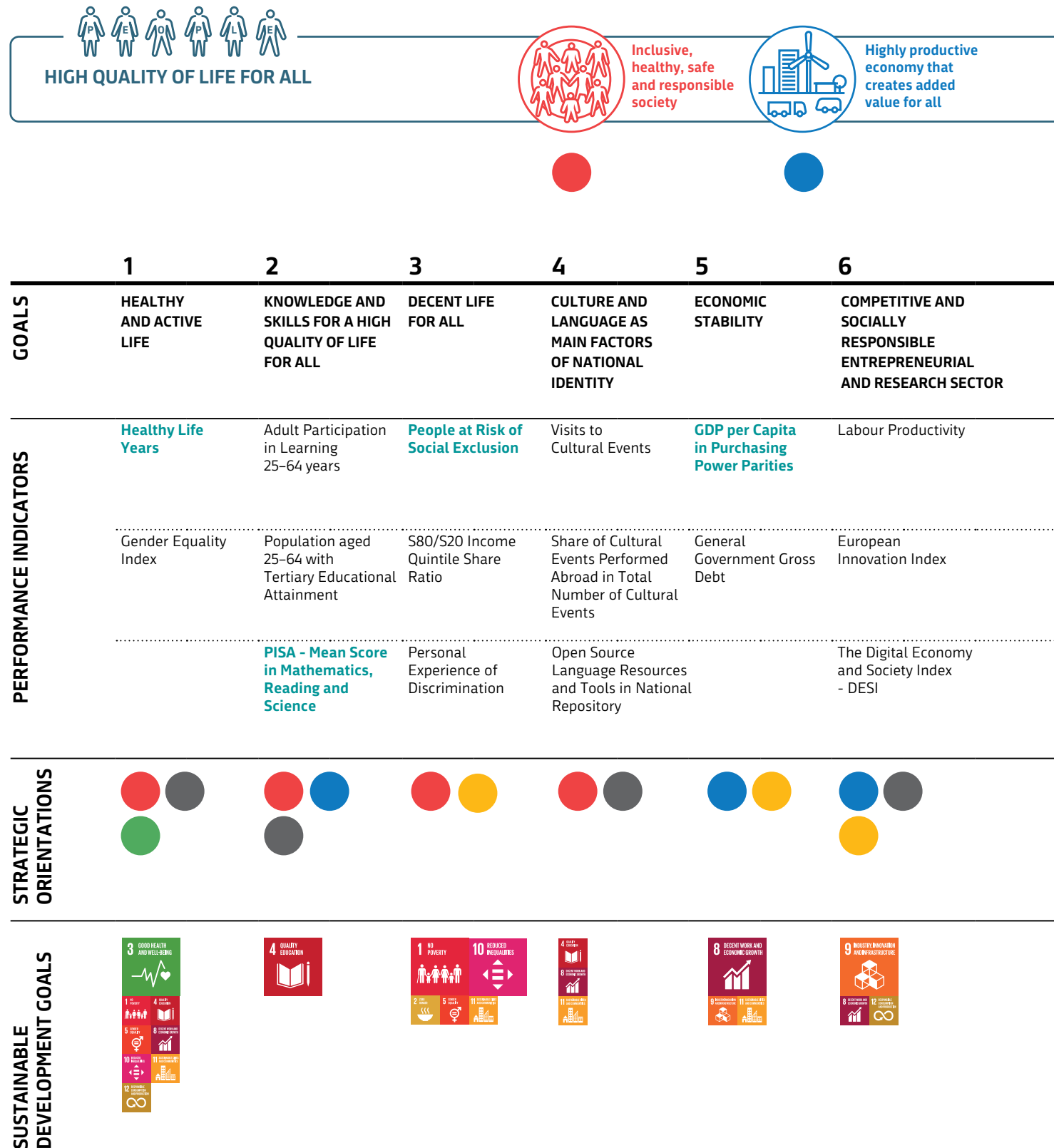


Figure 2: Equilibrium of 5 strategic orientations of the new Slovenian Development Strategy 2030 and the inclusive approach to achieving well-being for all.

Figure 3: Graphic outline of the Slovenian Development Strategy 2030 with 5 strategic guidelines, 12 national goals, key performance indicators for each goal and mapped SDGs to the national goals.





Learning
for and
through life



Well-preserved
natural
environment



High level of
cooperation,
competence and
governance efficiency

7

**INCLUSIVE
LABOUR MARKET
AND HIGH-QUALITY
JOBS**

Employment Rate
(age 20 to 64)

In Work at-Risk-
of-Poverty Rate
(age 18 and over)

8

**LOW-CARBON
CIRCULAR
ECONOMY**

Material
Productivity

Share of Renewable
Energy in Gross
Final Energy
Consumption

GDP per
Total Greenhouse
Gas Emissions

9

**SUSTAINABLE
NATURAL
RESOURCE
MANAGEMENT**

Utilised Agricultural
Area

Biochemical
Oxygen Demand
in Rivers

Ecological Footprint

10

**TRUSTWORTHY
LEGAL SYSTEM**

Rule of Law Index

Time Needed to
Resolve Civil and
Commercial
Court Cases

11

**SAFE AND
GLOBALLY
RESPONSIBLE
SLOVENIA**

Share of Population
That Reported
Occurrences of
Crime, Violation or
Vandalism in Their
Area

Global Peace
Index

12

**EFFECTIVE
GOVERNANCE AND
HIGH QUALITY
PUBLIC SERVICE**

Trust in Public
Institutions

Executive Capacity



Slovenia's first Voluntary National Review

Slovenia participated in the High-Level Political Forum (HLPF) in 2017 and presented its first VNR.¹ Slovenia decided to incorporate the goals and targets of the 2030 Agenda in its new national development framework to avoid duplication and to respond to national circumstances, capacities, needs, and priorities. However, the decision to participate the VNR in the second year since the adoption of the 2030 Agenda also had another reason. For Slovenia, the VNR process served as a significant and helpful tool to raise awareness among stakeholders, to internalise the ownership among ministries, and to understand the universal nature of the 2030 Agenda as well as to foster coordination and cooperation to track the progress in implementing the global goals.

The process was led by the Government Office for Development and European Cohesion Policy, which is responsible for the preparation and implementation of the new Slovenian development framework and which also functions as a focal point for the 2030 Agenda. Although the process of preparing the VNR has been government-led and government-driven, the review also included contributions from representatives of youth, civil society, and the private sector. Various stakeholders were also included in the drafting of key national development frameworks: the whole-of-society Vision of Slovenia and Slovenia's new development strategy. The preparation of the first Slovenian VNR was closely connected and interlinked with the process of drafting the Slovenian Development Strategy 2030.

The review itself, as well as its presentation, produces several lessons-learned that Slovenia will benefit from in the next steps of the Agenda 2030 implementation. To successfully address all seventeen integral and indivisible SDGs and their 169 targets, a whole-of-government approach is paramount. The Slovenian approach is based on a clear political commitment that Slovenia, while realising its own development path sustainably and inclusively, is also firmly aware of its responsibility for world peace and prosperity.

¹ The HLPF is the main UN platform on sustainable development, and it has a central role in the follow-up and review of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the implementation of the SDGs at the global level. The HLPF, under the auspices of ECOSOC (UN Economic and Social Council), also carries out regular reviews on a national level that are voluntary and state-led, involving ministerial and other relevant high-level participants and stakeholders, based on the General Assembly Resolution 70/1.



Slovenia as a responsible global citizen

At the regional and global levels, Slovenia contributes to poverty eradication, sustainable development, and gender equality on the basis of updated legal and strategic documents, which are being prepared in line with the new paradigm and with the aim of pursuing new trends. A New Resolution on International Development Cooperation and humanitarian assistance was adopted by Parliament in September 2017 as a key strategic document.

Specific attention in Slovenia's development cooperation will continue to be given to the strengthening of peaceful and inclusive societies, with focus on good governance, equal opportunities, including gender equality, and quality education, as well as the sustainable management of natural resources, with focus on addressing climate change. Slovenia will continue its work, especially in the Western Balkans, but also in the European Neighbourhood and Sub-Saharan Africa, with attention devoted to the least developed countries in the latter. We will also work for the effective implementation of the 2030 Agenda in the development cooperation of the EU, actively promoting innovative, diverse and inclusive partnerships with civil society and the private sector. We believe that micro-, small- and medium-sized enterprises are essential drivers of sustainable development and are engines of growth, employment, innovation, and social development, including the empowerment of women; we will, therefore, continue to promote their role.

Slovenia's international development cooperation in 2016 in numbers:

- Slovenia's Official Development Assistance (ODA) in 2016 was 81 million USD, which represents 0.19% of the GNI.
- ODA rose by 29% in comparison to 2015.
- Multilateral aid of Slovenia increased by 40% in comparison to 2015, specifically due to increased contributions to the EU ODA budget, increased contributions to the European Development Fund, selected missions of UNDPKO and the International Development Association (IDA).
- Bilateral aid increased by 12% and amounts to around 28 million USD, of which 2.3 million USD is for humanitarian assistance.

How does Slovenia compare?

In evaluating the position of Slovenia in achieving the SDGs, we used international studies and analyses, among which the SDG Index and the OECD Study on Distance Measurement to the SDGs' Goals proved to be the most appropriate ones.

According to the 2017 SDG Index developed by the Bertelsmann Stiftung and UN Sustainable Development Solutions Network, Slovenia ranks 9th among 157 countries with an overall SDG performance rate of 80.5%.

Note: The SDG Index methodology is based on absolute thresholds. To assess a country's progress on a specific indicator, such absolute quantitative thresholds differentiate between situations in which an SDG threshold has been met (green), where (significant) challenges remain (yellow and orange), and where major challenges must be overcome if the country is to meet the goal (red).



Figure 4: 2017 SDG Index Dashboard for Slovenia

The 2017 edition of the OECD Pilot Study on Measuring Distance to the SDG targets, based on the 126 available indicators allowing coverage of 95 of the 169 SDG targets, shows that most countries have already achieved between 8 and 23 targets. In 2016, Slovenia fully achieved eight targets, and in 2017 that number increased to 12. The remaining distances to achieve the targets are small in several areas, but a few open challenges remain (See Figure 2).



Figure 5: Slovenia's current distance from achieving SDGs' 2030 targets, based on the 2017 OECD Study²

² The chart shows how far Slovenia has progressed towards each measured target. The longer the bars, the shorter the distance to be travelled by 2030. Targets are clustered by goal, and goals are clustered according to the "5Ps" of the 2030 Agenda (outer circle).

SDG Stories from Slovenia

We have prepared a selection of stories from Slovenia that show how we are taking an active part in achieving Sustainable Development Goals in 2018.







Social security programmes

Slovenia runs several social security programmes for the groups of the population most vulnerable to social exclusion. This applies to children and adolescents, the elderly, women who experience domestic violence, people with mental health problems, homeless people, users of illicit drugs, people with various forms of functional disability, Roma, and immigrants. These programmes complement the social security services and measures carried out by the public institutions. They are carried out by non-governmental organisations who are active on the field and are often the first to detect the hardships and the needs of people.

By co-financing social security programmes over a long period, the Government of Slovenia promotes employs more than 500 experts (social workers, psychologists, educators, etc.) in approximately 400 full-time positions. These programmes also include more than 8,000 volunteers, whose work and, in particular, experience is a vital contribution to the greater quality of the implementation of the programmes.



The School Fruit and Vegetable Scheme

The School Fruit and Vegetable Scheme has been providing free distribution of fruits and vegetables to children in schools for eight years. Because of its success, it was expanded in 2017, adding milk and other dairy products. The goal of the scheme is to increase the consumption of fruits, vegetables, milk and other dairy products among children, improving their nutritional habits and consequently reducing the number of overweight and obese children. It also aims to connect the children to agriculture, educating them about healthy eating habits, local food chains, organic production, sustainable production and the prevention of food waste. Over 90% of all elementary schools in Slovenia are included in the scheme, and each year 560 tonnes of fruit and vegetables are distributed. The schools are also invited to participate in different projects, such as school gardens, workshops for little chefs and school camps.



Robin Food

Robin Food is a Slovenian social enterprise that seeks to help those in need by using surplus food that would otherwise end up in a landfill. Each year 150,000 tons of foods in Slovenia are wasted, while many families struggle with providing their daily meals. Robin Food wants to solve this problem by connecting those who have too much and those who do not have enough, while reducing the amount of wasted food.

It all began three years ago as a project that called for the promotion and donation of food stocks with an upcoming expiry date. Since then, the idea has gone far beyond the initial goals. There are currently two shops in Slovenia where products near their expiry date are sold at a discount, with more to be opened in Slovenia, Croatia, Serbia, and the Netherlands. Stores aim for "zero waste" strategy and therefore offer products without packaging where customers can put food from larger containers into their own reusable packaging. Robin Food collaborates with companies that either donate or sell products at a very low cost so that items that would otherwise be discarded are used instead. The Robin Food Bistro opened its doors in 2017. It serves meals at one third of the usual price. The dishes are made from ingredients that would otherwise be thrown out, and the surplus food is processed in ways that generate as little waste as possible.

■ <https://robin-food.com/>



IRYO

IRYO is a Slovenian start-up with a mission to redefine the landscape of traditional healthcare IT by providing bleeding edge system solutions focused on promoting standardised medical data. By implementing blockchain technology, it seeks to establish transparent access to health information while assuring safety and preventing hacker attacks. Their goal is also to put the patient at the centre of the data distribution, all while advertising open-source standards to incentivise participatory software development.

IRYO created a special partnership with a non-profit organisation Walk With Me that is currently operating in six countries (Iraq, Syria, Jordan, Lebanon, Egypt and Djibouti), providing primary healthcare, education, vocational training and trauma counselling to a refugee population of 11 million. IRYO has deployed the first version of the system to support the Walk With Me primary healthcare initiatives. Due to the high fluctuation of medical staff in refugee camps, it is paramount that the system prevents the loss of medical history by keeping it safe and available to the newly incoming doctors.

■ <https://iryo.io/>



Screening programmes for the early detection of cancer

Treatment of most cancers is more effective if they are detected at an early stage of development. Screening programmes can discover cancer or precancerous changes prior to the development of symptoms or signs of the disease. Three screening programmes for the early detection of cancer are carried out in Slovenia. All three were recommended by the Council of the European Union in 2003: **ZORA** – early detection of premalignant and malignant changes of the cervix; **DORA** – early detection of breast cancer; **SVIT** – early detection of colorectal cancer. The primary purpose of all cancer screening programmes is to reduce the mortality rate by treating precancerous lesions and reducing the incidence of these cancers.

The programmes show measurable results: ZORA, the oldest programme, managed to halve the mortality rate for cancer of the cervix; the SVIT programme has already shown a decrease in the incidence of cancer of the colon and rectum; the DORA programme is successfully being expanded in the screening centres throughout Slovenia with a view to bringing this quality service closer to all women.







Alpine space – Solčava

The municipality of Solčava in the Upper Savinja Valley is a remote and mountainous municipality with the 80% of the territory under the natural protection regime. It is demographically endangered, with only a little over 600 inhabitants, scattered on highlands in valley farms and the village of Solčava. In the past, the opportunities for young, educated people were low, resulting in their migration to more prosperous areas. A special form of intergenerational experience sharing model has been developed in this picturesque valley of Slovenia. It mobilises older people's experience and connects them with the needs of young people. A lifelong learning programme has thus been essential to enable activities and interconnecting different generations, matching expectations, vision and development plans.

Natural resources in Sočava are preserved at the highest level of quality, for which the municipality received several awards and has also been an attractive tourist destination (over 100,000 visitors annually). To ensure sustainable development in those circumstances, a high level of innovation and cooperation, as well as education, was necessary. A highly sensitive natural environment is a major challenge and requires greater mental shifts, while preserving identity and heritage and simultaneously seeking modern solutions that will enable development and prosperity for future generations. In partnership with other municipalities in the region and student club of Solčava Valley, many successful initiatives resulted in creating new green jobs. Connecting less educated, older housewives and farm owners with young unemployed people contributed to social cohesion and can be understood as a sustainable development laboratory for community learning.



Seeds of change

In 2015, over a year-long process was initiated with the citizens of Slovenia to determine where we as a society want to be in the future. As a result, a long-term Vision of Slovenia (see the last page) was created with five key elements of the vision – learning for and through life, innovative society, quality of life, trust and identity. To start a discussion about these elements with those who will affect our way to the future the most – our children, we started a special value-based learning and mentorship programme for primary schools. In the 2017/2018 pilot project, over 100 schools throughout Slovenia joined and started a discussion about the future and our values with the pupils in the fifth year. The programme is based on different practical activities for the pupils, in which team-work, innovative thinking, cooperation, and trust-building are encouraged.

■ <https://slovenija2050.si/>







Strengthening the role of women and girls in the Western Balkans, in the Middle East, and in sub-Saharan Africa

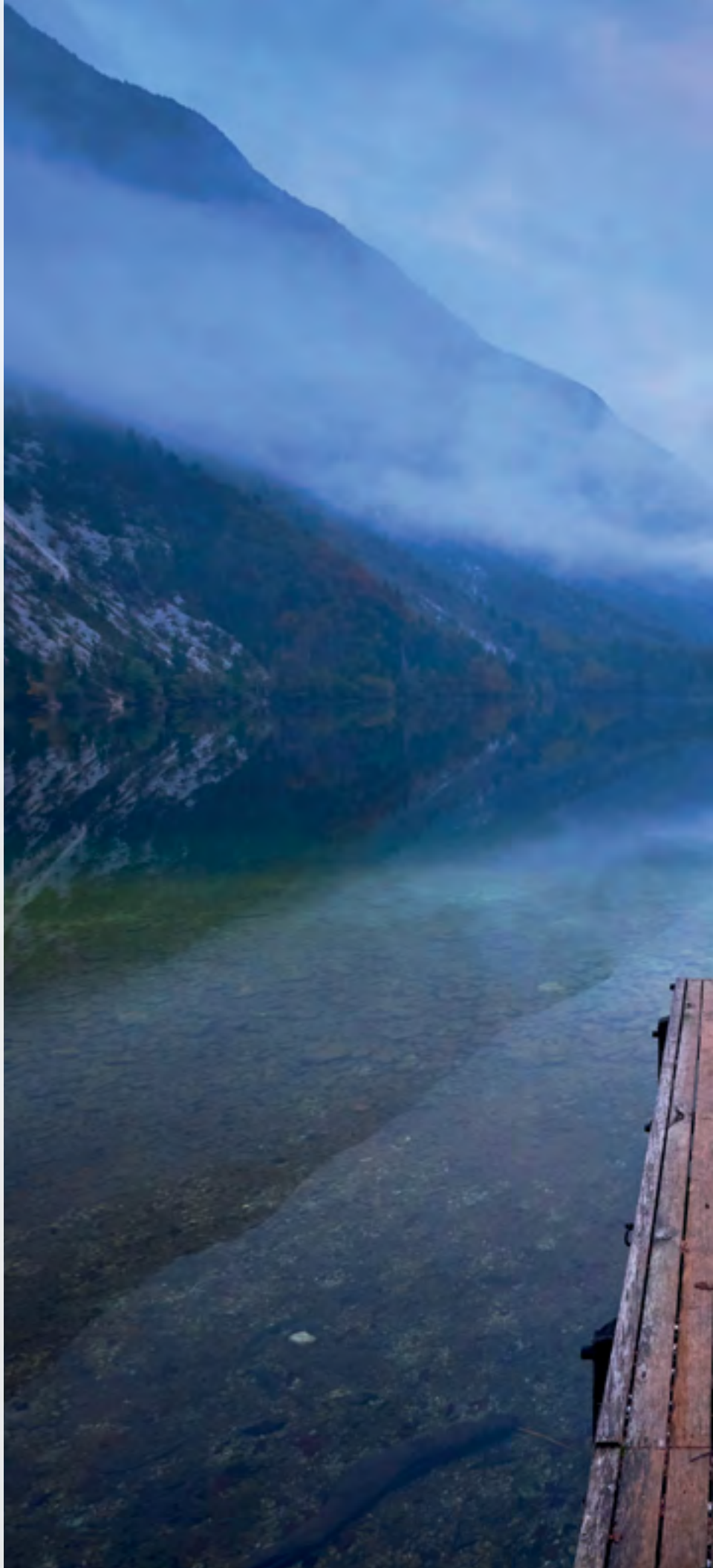
Ensuring equal opportunities and gender equality is a precondition for sustainable development, poverty eradication, inclusive growth, and the well-being of society as a whole. It also stands as a priority and a crosscutting issue of international development cooperation of Slovenia to achieve gender equality both at home and in partner countries.

In the Western Balkans, Slovenia is collaborating with NGOs to focus on strengthening the role of women and girls, promoting employment and a balanced representation of women and men in the top management positions in the business sector. Development projects are placing great emphasis on education, raising the awareness of young people through social and mass media, connecting local organisations and transferring knowledge. In addition to projects in Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro, Macedonia and Serbia, we are promoting economic and psychosocial empowerment of women refugees in the Lebanese refugee camp Ein El Helwah and Syrian mothers and children in Jordan. This year, women's empowerment will also be addressed in Sub-Saharan Africa, particularly in Rwanda through a project of education and economic empowerment of vulnerable women.



Right to Water in the Constitution

In 2016, Slovenia declared the right to water a fundamental human right by including it the constitution. The newly introduced article stipulates that everyone has the right to drinking water, that water resources are a public good managed by the state, that they preferentially and sustainably serve to supply the population with drinking and household water, and that in this regard they are not tradable goods.





Energy Renovation of Public Buildings

Energy efficiency is one of the most cost-effective measures to achieve the reduction in greenhouse gas emissions and increase the share of renewable energy sources in gross final energy consumption. Energy efficiency in households is of key importance for managing the cost of living, strengthening purchasing power, and improving the quality of life and adaptation to climate change.

The Long-Term Strategy for Mobilising Investments in the Energy Renovation of Buildings was adopted in 2015 and presents a systematic approach to the energy renovation of buildings owned by the public sector with ambitious operational targets to be met. The plan calls for 3% of buildings in the narrow public sector and 1.8 million m² of floor area in the wider public to be renovated annually until 2023. The strategy also seeks to improve the ratio between the invested public funds and the investment incentives in the public sector to 1:3 as well as implement five demonstration projects in energy renovation for different building types.

Fair Meter Initiative

Iskraemeco is one of the leading smart metering solutions providers on a global scale. With one of the largest R&D departments in the industry in Europe, it strives to provide facilities with quality and next-generation sustainable energy solutions. It is a part of the Fair Meter initiative, an open network to raise sustainable practices in the smart metering solutions for measuring gas or electricity consumption.

The project addresses all major issues that the electronic industry is facing today – energy intensity, labour standards, use of conflict materials (3TG), material scarcity and E-waste. Iskraemeco's goal is to tackle the above issues by implementing transparency throughout the supply chain, developing higher standards in the industry, and lowering exposure to risks in volatile material markets globally. As part of the initiative, they are developing a Transparency Tool, an application for educating and raising awareness and promoting responsibilities among communities, consumers, industries and the general public.

■ <https://www.fairsmartmeter.com/>









Competence Centres for Human Resources Development

Strengthening professional-specific competences represent a comparative advantage for the economy and the wider society. Slovenia has established several Competence Centres for Human Resources Development, which now represent a significant investment and are an incentive for employers to provide training as a strategic tool that can contribute to sustainable development of the companies.

Through these centres, partnerships among industries, value chains and other forms of cooperation in Slovenia have been established. The key objective is to develop a model in which competences of the key employee profiles are defined together with paths for their future development. Within the Competence Centres, knowledge is shared through internal, group and individual training. Focused on leadership and soft skills, these trainings have a significant impact on the commitment of employees, the performance of the organisation, and the results.



The PlanHab

The PlanHab project (Planetary Habitat Simulation) investigates capabilities of human life beyond planet Earth. It researches the effects of the environmental stressors (such as reduced gravity and hypoxia) in future planetary habitats. It also provides valuable information regarding the effects of planetary habitats on the health and well-being of astronauts.

The research takes place at the Olympic Sport Centre in Planica, Slovenia, where special Biomedical Planetary Research Centre is also based. This simulation facility includes hypoxic chambers and physiological laboratory. The main objective of the planetary research is to assess the scope of the effects that future residents of the Moon and Mars will experience, including loss in bone mass and muscle atrophy due to smaller gravitational forces. Since 2012, an international group of scientists has been conducting different research trials and studies in the area of sport medicine and biomedical planetary research, supported by the European space agency (ESA). The results of the PlanHab also provides further insight into the changes in organ systems of specific patient populations, such as patients with chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD).

■ <https://www.nc-planica.si/en/>



Strategic Research and Innovation Partnerships

In 2015, The Government of the Republic of Slovenia adopted the Slovenian Smart Specialisation Strategy (S4). Its goal is to increase the value added per employee, improving Slovenian competitiveness on global markets, the share of knowledge and technology in exports, and overall entrepreneurial activity. S4 is strategically focused on sustainable technologies for a healthy life that will help turn Slovenia into a green, creative, and smart region with outstanding conditions fostering creativity and innovation. Focused on the development of middle- and high-tech solutions in niche fields, S4 facilitates Slovenia's transformation from a follower to a co-creator of global change.

In cooperation with the private sector, nine fundamental areas were identified as the focus of our economic development and our future prosperity. In 2017, Strategic Research and Innovation Partnerships (SRIPs) were officially constituted, and Action Plans for operations were prepared. The form and the operations of SRIPs (Smart cities and communities, Smart buildings and homes, Networks for transition into circular economy, Sustainable food production, Sustainable tourism, Factories of the future, Health-medicine, Mobility, and Development of materials as products) will enable the implementation of Slovenia's Smart Specialisation Strategy in practice. These nine clusters represent over 500 of the most dynamic Slovenian companies, over 100 research institutes, and practically all the institutions of knowledge and supportive environment in Slovenia. Today, there are partnerships of over 600 stakeholders with plans to increase the number in the future.



Better communication between immigrants and medical staff

Numerous experiences faced in the recent years testify of difficulties in communication between health workers and foreigners who seek health care, which leads to numerous language and cultural misunderstandings. The publishing of a dictionary with a handbook in eight languages (Slovenian, English, Arabic, Farsi, French, Russian, Albanian, and Mandarin) aims to facilitate the communication between immigrants and medical staff. It includes most common questions and answers arising from the standard course of health treatment and is intended for health workers in different medical institutions in Slovenia and those who do not understand the Slovenian language but seek medical care in Slovenia.

A training titled 'The Patient does not speak Slovenian! Challenge for the health workers in Slovenia' was conducted in 2017 at different locations in Slovenia, which called upon an interdisciplinary group of experts to partake in interactive classes to develop skills for the quality medical treatment of foreign people. The project is co-financed by the European Union from the Asylum, Migration, and Integration Fund, and the Slovenian government.



Sustainable and inclusive urban strategies

We are fully aware of the importance of our cities as generators of the local, regional and national economies, and places where people can live healthy, safe, and prosperous lives. Slovenian cities have a leading role in the field of environmental awareness. This is proved by the continuation of Ljubljana's various activities after carrying the title of "European Green Capital 2016", as well as increasing the visibility of the circular economy project Wcycle in Maribor.

Preparation of sustainable urban development strategies is an example of leading a constructive dialogue with our cities and municipality administrations. The use of integrated approaches in preparing sustainable city policies, as well as including the citizens and interested stakeholders in the development and implementation, has shown substantial progress in defining joint visions and strategic goals. Furthermore, the cooperation and integration of various sectors within the local administration have been strengthened, enabling a more efficient overview of the implementation of projects in the city area. We recognise the importance of defining a national framework for sustainable urban and spatial development, with cooperation among cities, national government, citizens, and other stakeholders, that leads to inclusive and effective urban development policies.



No ordinary paper

Invasive alien plant species are one of the greatest challenges in European ecosystems. They displace local vegetation, destroy agricultural land, and cause billions of euros of damage to the European economy every year. Many of them are daily removed and mainly burned. Since there are no special landfills for invasive alien plant species, all collected biomass is taken to incinerators. Ljubljana, as a 'Zero waste City', recognised the potential of setting up a systematic, participatory model that uses collected biomass to develop new sustainable products. Through large-scale educational and awareness-raising campaigns, citizens are encouraged to participate in invasive alien plant species harvesting and use. Collected invasive alien plant species are to be used in three main transformative ways, including domestic usage (for food, dyes, etc.), transformation into products at tutored workshops (wood or paper products) and in craft laboratories to manufacture innovative products with market potential in social enterprises, employing vulnerable groups of people.

In 2016, an alliance of five partners was coordinated by the City of Ljubljana which was successful in using Japanese knotweed, one of world's worst invasive plant species and has been used as an alternative source of raw material in the papermaking process.







FRISCO1 Programme

Slovenia is often faced with the challenge of floods, which are occurring in an increasingly frequent manner due to climate change. In the last 25 years, the biggest flood events caused approximately €1.8 billion worth of damage in Slovenia, with €1 billion in the last decade alone. As a way of conducting flood risk management, a set of 20 flood protection measures was made several years ago, which aim of reducing and preventing the occurrence of additional flood risk.

FRISCO1 is a vital strategic project aimed at reducing flood risk in the river basins of Dragonja, Kolpa, Sotla, and Bregana, as well as in parts of the Drava and Mura River basins. The consequences of floods have cross-border implications; thus, international cooperation is essential to successfully address the challenge of floods and the implementation of measures. It is carried out within the framework of INTERREG V-A Slovenia-Croatia cooperation programme. The aim is to tackle common challenges that have been recognised by both sides in the border area, and at the same time exploit untapped growth potentials and strengthen the cooperation process for the overall harmonious development of the European Union.



Towards the Green Coast

In the Koper hinterland where the rivers Rižana and Badaševica flow into the sea, there once were salt pans. The area was threatened with complete destruction as a result of long-term flooding and planned drainage for urban and industrial purposes. Coordinated action of all interested parties, assistance from domestic and foreign non-governmental organisations and individuals, the support of the media and, last but not least, 7,000 signatures of support of the general public in 1998, led to the permanent legal protection of this area. Now Škocjanski zatok is an important Slovene wetland and the largest braked (semi-marsh) swamp in Slovenia. It is a 122-hectare large Mediterranean wetland of exceptional importance due to the rich fauna and flora and the good practices of the co-existence of a natural habitat and the nearby port.

By closing the coastal road between Koper and Izola in 2017, Slovenia returned nearly a tenth of its coastal belt to sustainable use. This enabled the creation of a green corridor (linking ecosystems and habitats) between Italy and Istria, and invited the neighbouring country to follow similar examples of cross-sector cooperation and space planning.

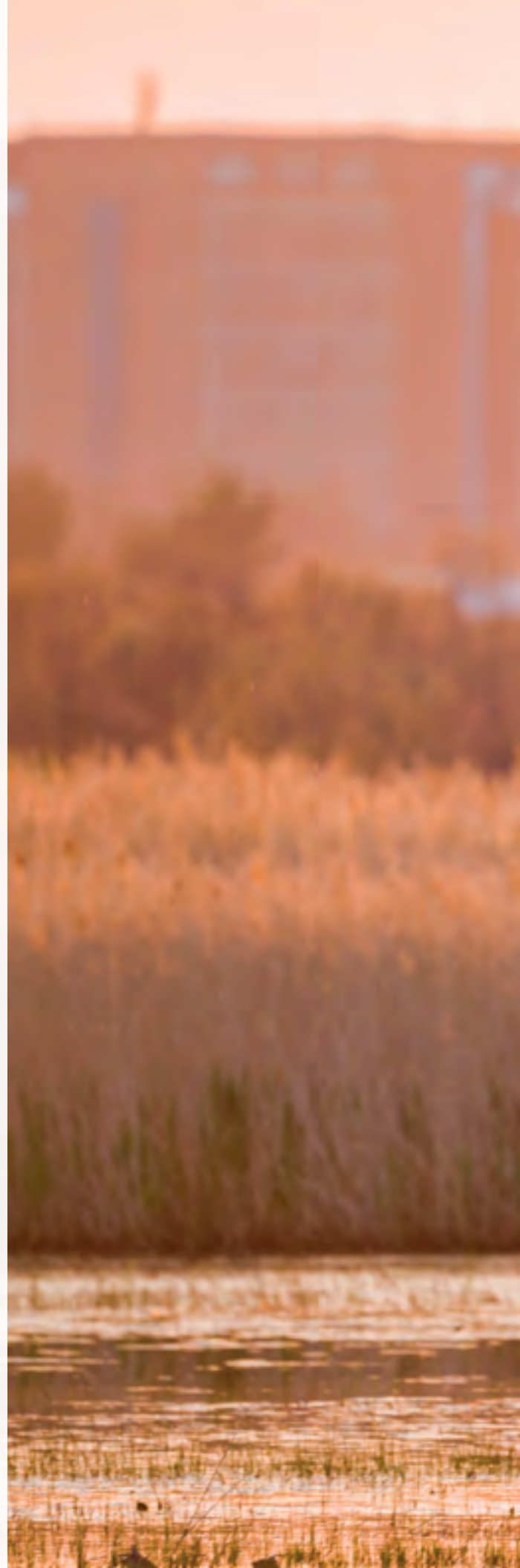


World Bee Day

Bees play a crucial role in increasing crop yields and promoting food security. Slovenia is the first country that recognised the importance of honeybees in sustainable agricultural production, food safety around the world and nutritional safety of the population. The initiative resulted in declaring 20 May as World Bee Day by The United Nations General Assembly in December 2017. The resolution was adopted by consensus while being co-sponsored by 115 UN Member States, which shows strong partnership and dedication towards ensuring the global safety of the food supply chain.

Each year on 20 May, the attention of the global public will be drawn to the importance of preserving bees and other pollinators. People will be invited to take concrete action to preserve and protect the bees and be reminded that we are all largely dependent on them, particularly in terms of global food security, ecological balance and biodiversity in nature.

■ <https://www.worldbeeday.org>





Leading the way in the public sector open data

Slovenia ranks at the very top of the openness of public sector data. National Open Data Portal (OPSI) established in 2016 as a single web site for publishing open data for the entire public sector, provides metadata descriptions of public sector collections and a collection of open data. The following can be freely reused by anyone, without a specific request or registration, for the creation of new value-added products or services, thereby promoting the digital economy.

Data is available in machine-readable form, which enables researchers, journalists and entrepreneurs to produce new analyses, applications, and visualisations. Slovenia is one of the few European countries that have made government material of the General Secretariat of the Government of the Republic of Slovenia and data from the National Statistical Office publicly available; it was ranked 7th among EU countries in the field of open public-sector data in the Open Data Maturity Report 2017. An annual Open Data Festival is organised by state institutions together with the University of Ljubljana, which brings together students who can demonstrate their knowledge and skills in solving the challenges of open data processing.

The Court of Audit of the Republic of Slovenia

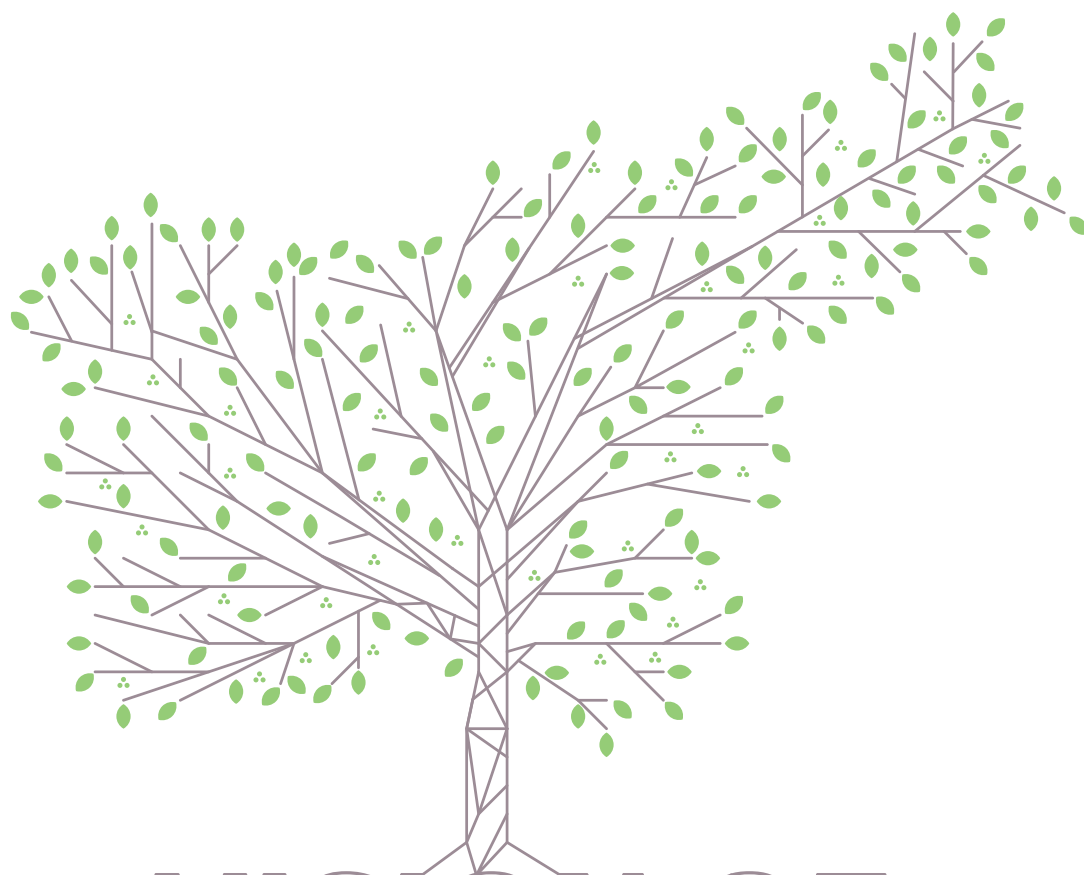
The Court of Audit of the Republic of Slovenia is fully aware of its responsibility to properly respond to emerging issues in terms of sustainable development and is convinced that the use of public funds in the future strongly depends on the recognition of sustainable development.

Slovenian supreme audit institution (SAI) supports our recently adopted Slovenian Development Strategy 2030 and is seriously committed to the SDGs and the 2030 Agenda. The Court of Audit follows implementation gaps and considers them to be one of the key criteria for making decisions on what to audit and points out areas where problems might occur. Audit reports are not just critical towards the past issues, but are also visionary and sustainably oriented; floods, droughts and other extreme events, waste management, drinking water resources, forests, biodiversity, management of protected areas of Natura 2000, migration, youth policy, health care are just a few of the topics addressed in the last year's audits. Besides the scope of its supreme audit powers, the Court of Audit is recognised nationally and within relevant international forums for raising awareness of the implementation of SDGs. That is, not just by several presentations and discussions but also through its efforts in greening the institution. One of the latest acquisitions of the Court of Audit is beehives on its roof, which also providing our SAI all the protocol gifts. Their bees and their honey symbolically represent the importance of sustainable development.









VISION OF SLOVENIA



LEARNING FOR
AND THROUGH
LIFE



QUALITY OF LIFE



INNOVATIVE
SOCIETY



TRUST



IDENTITY

Steps towards the vision

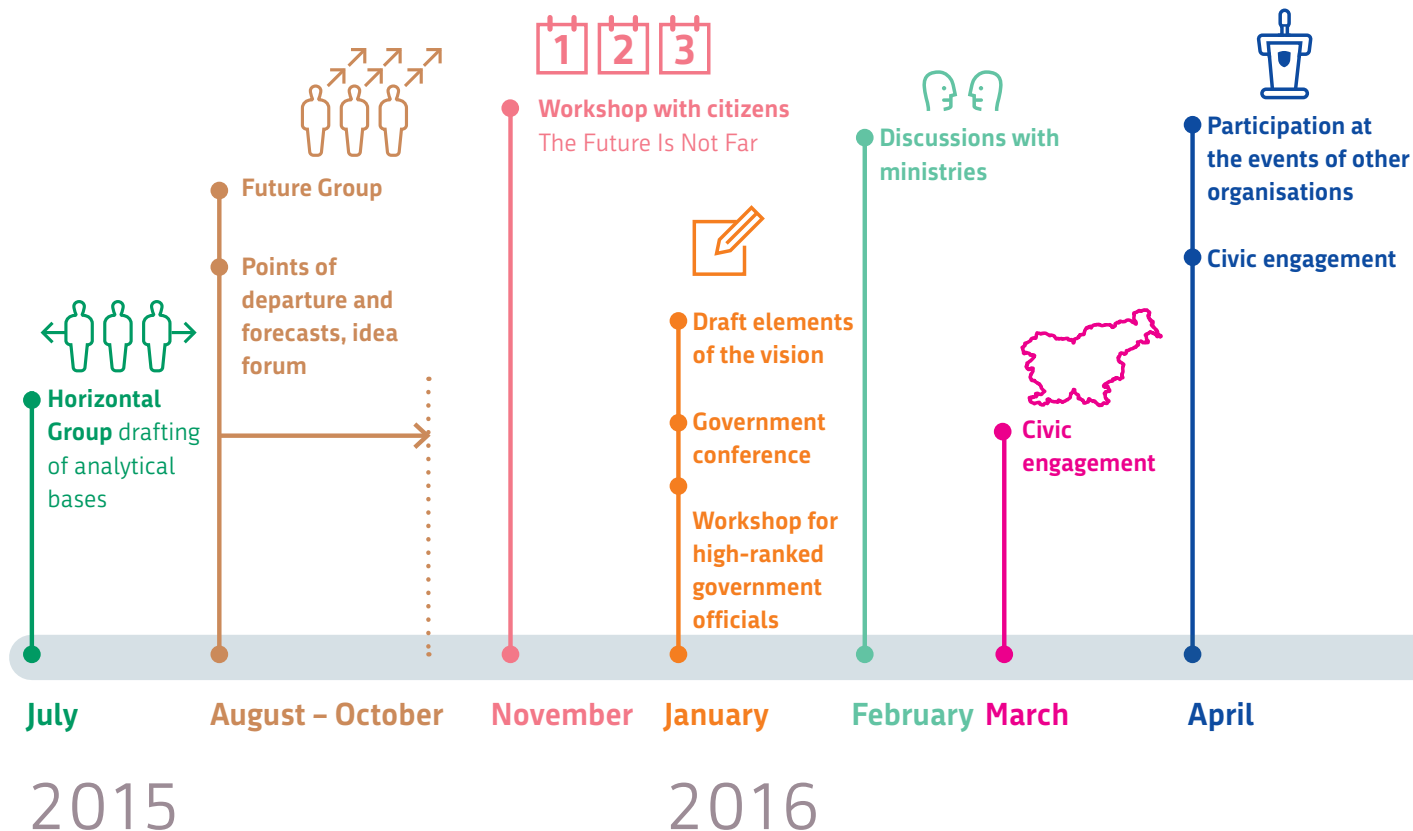
We organised a series of interactive events throughout 2016, at which we discussed the kind of future we want for ourselves, examined the first draft of the vision, identified potential gaps in the text and sought elements for improvements.

27
events

100
hours of
discussions on the
future of Slovenia

611
individuals
involved in
discussions

1,010
individuals' views on
their quality of life

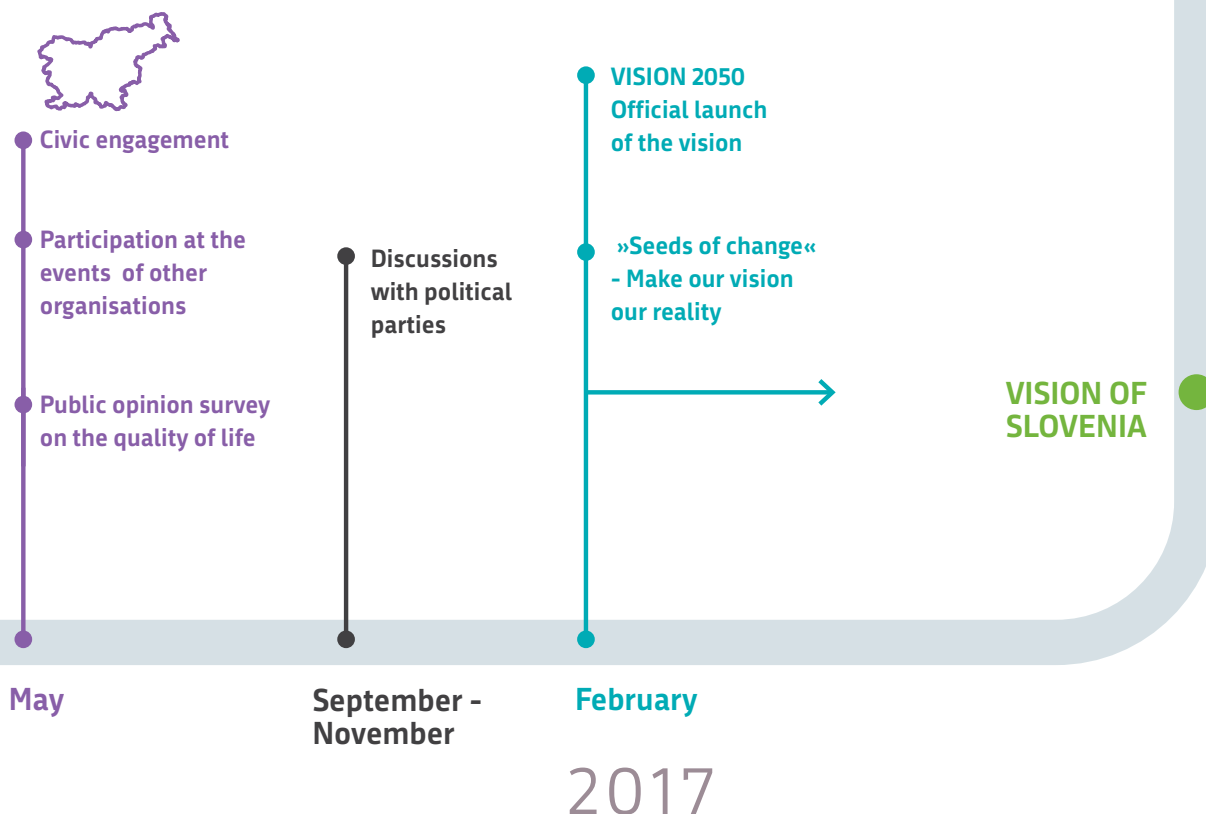


What is a vision? It's a view of the future that we as a society want to become. A strong and clear vision is necessary in a world where global trends affect everyone.

The population in Slovenia as well as around the world is ageing, which means that a diminishing workforce is supporting an increasing number of seniors. Regional instability and risks from climate change are emerging global trends. Technological disruption and rising inequality are immense challenges our society is already facing today. Since the beginning of the financial crisis, we have been especially affected by the slowdown in economic growth.

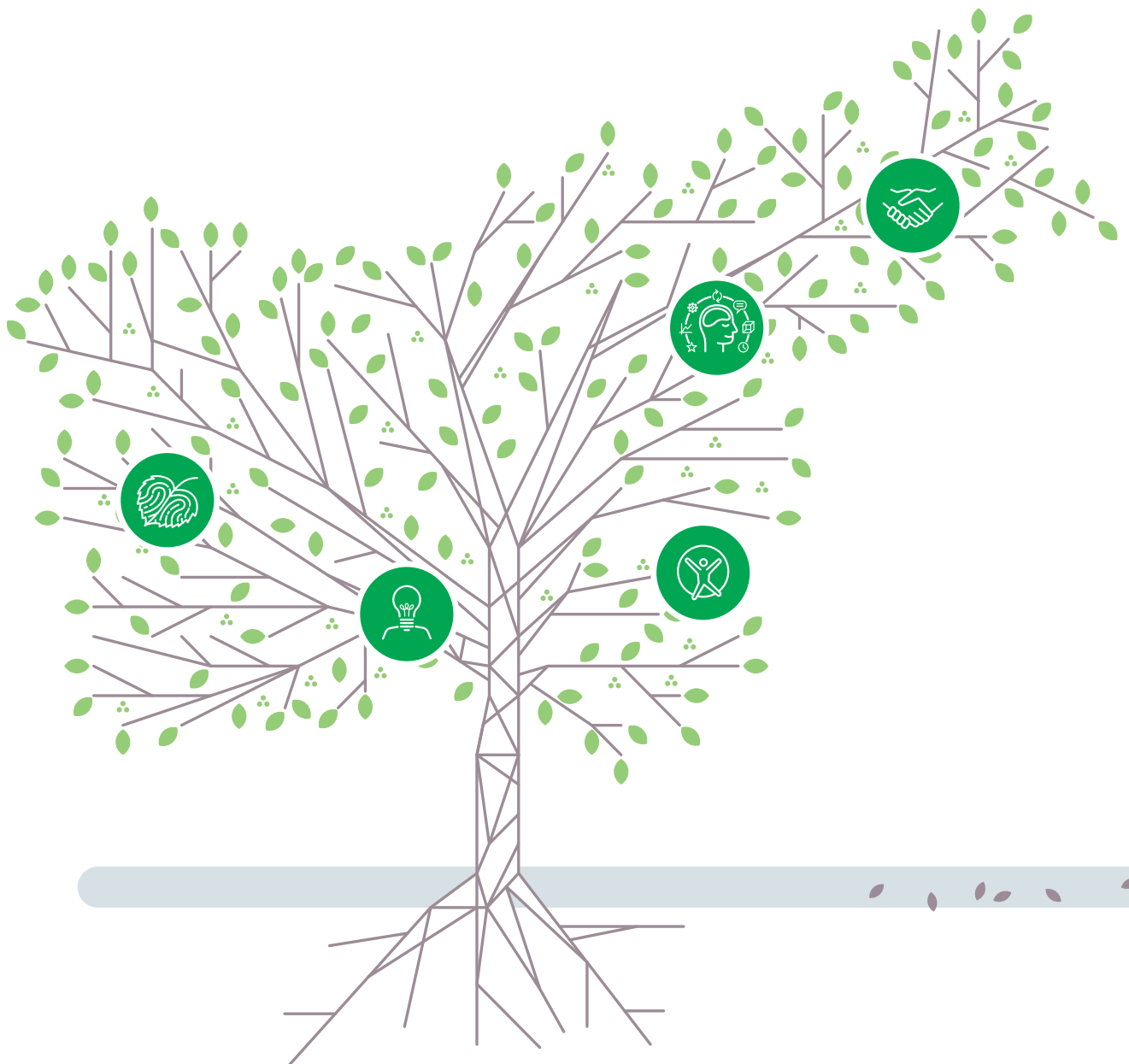
Now more than ever, wise choices are necessary in order to take advantage of the opportunities offered by a globally connected, multipolar world, where added value is shifting from manufacturing to services. All of these are significant global trends, but they alone do not determine our future: What really counts are people, our decisions, and our actions, guided by our common vision.

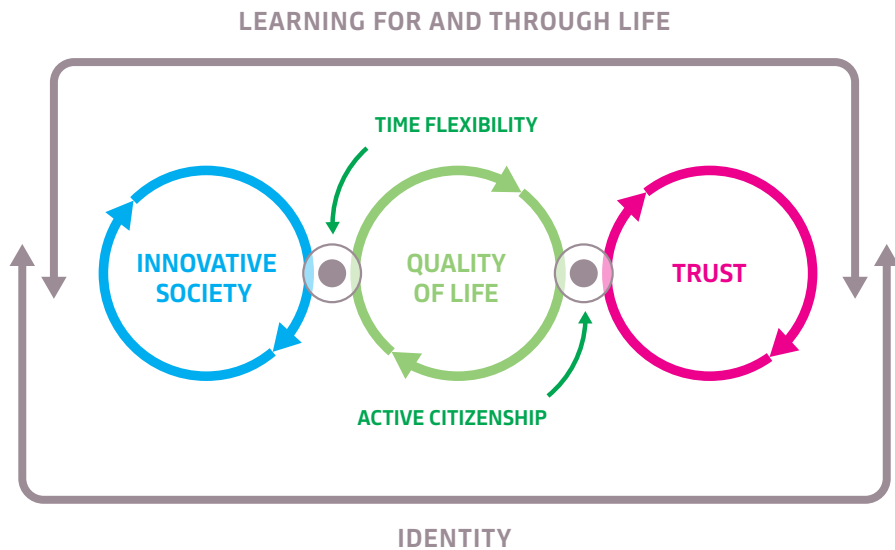
A good vision considers everybody and benefits the greatest number of people and society as a whole. That's how the vision of Slovenia was created – with the input of different people from all parts of the country.



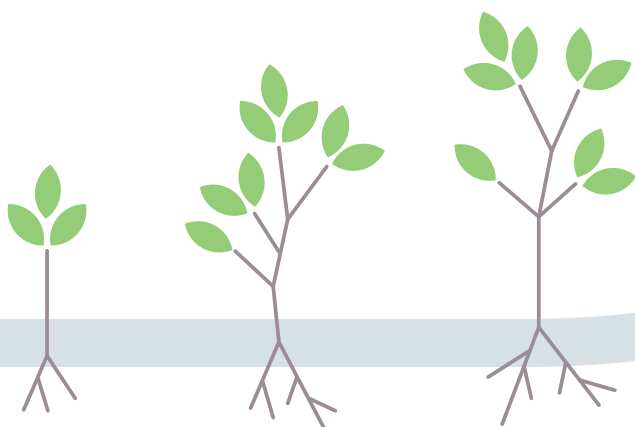
Seeds of change

The vision is like a tree, full of fruit hidden in its crown, which represent the five main elements of the vision. When fruit ripens it transforms into seeds that fall from the tree and sprout into new shoots if they fall on fertile soil. We are planting these small seeds so that they will someday grow into new trees, into a new and better future! The seeds represent the ideas and actions of all of us: actions and commitments to improve our trust in fellow people and institutions that are established to serve the public good. A better future can sprout from even the smallest commitment, change or action by any one of us.





If we want to understand how the elements of our vision fit together, this is the way we can imagine our future: The quality of life in Slovenia strongly depends on developing a high degree of trust and social innovations. This is possible in a society driven by learning for and through life and our Slovenian identity, with its distinctive language and culture.





What did our fellow residents say?

We asked Slovenes about our country. The most frequently mentioned words are presented in the diagram. The larger the words, the more frequently they were mentioned. Highlighted and circled words were frequently used together. Colour indicates which words were tied to one another. The size of circles indicates the frequency of references.

In harmony with our environment and our era, we have achieved a balanced, high-quality standard of living. By learning throughout our lives, we are well-equipped to take on the biggest challenges. We are innovative and translate ideas into actions. We create positive relationships based on trust and are building a society of solidarity and tolerance. With confidence, we open Slovenia to partners willing to cooperate. We are proud that our cultural uniqueness makes a difference around the world.



In the Slovenia of 2050, we create new success stories. As active citizens and critical thinkers, we contribute to the shaping of society. With its unique development model, Slovenia is just the right size to foster flourishing innovation. By **learning for and through life**, we gain new knowledge and skills and increase our resilience to face new challenges.



Creative individuals are at ease in the nexus of the institutional, social, and technological innovations of our **innovative society**. These innovations help us find solutions for pressing social challenges, such as the rapidly ageing population, inequality, and poverty. The relaxed and understanding living environment attracts successful individuals and enterprises to Slovenia. Their attention is first caught by excellent products and services, and then by high-quality scientific research and creative solutions.



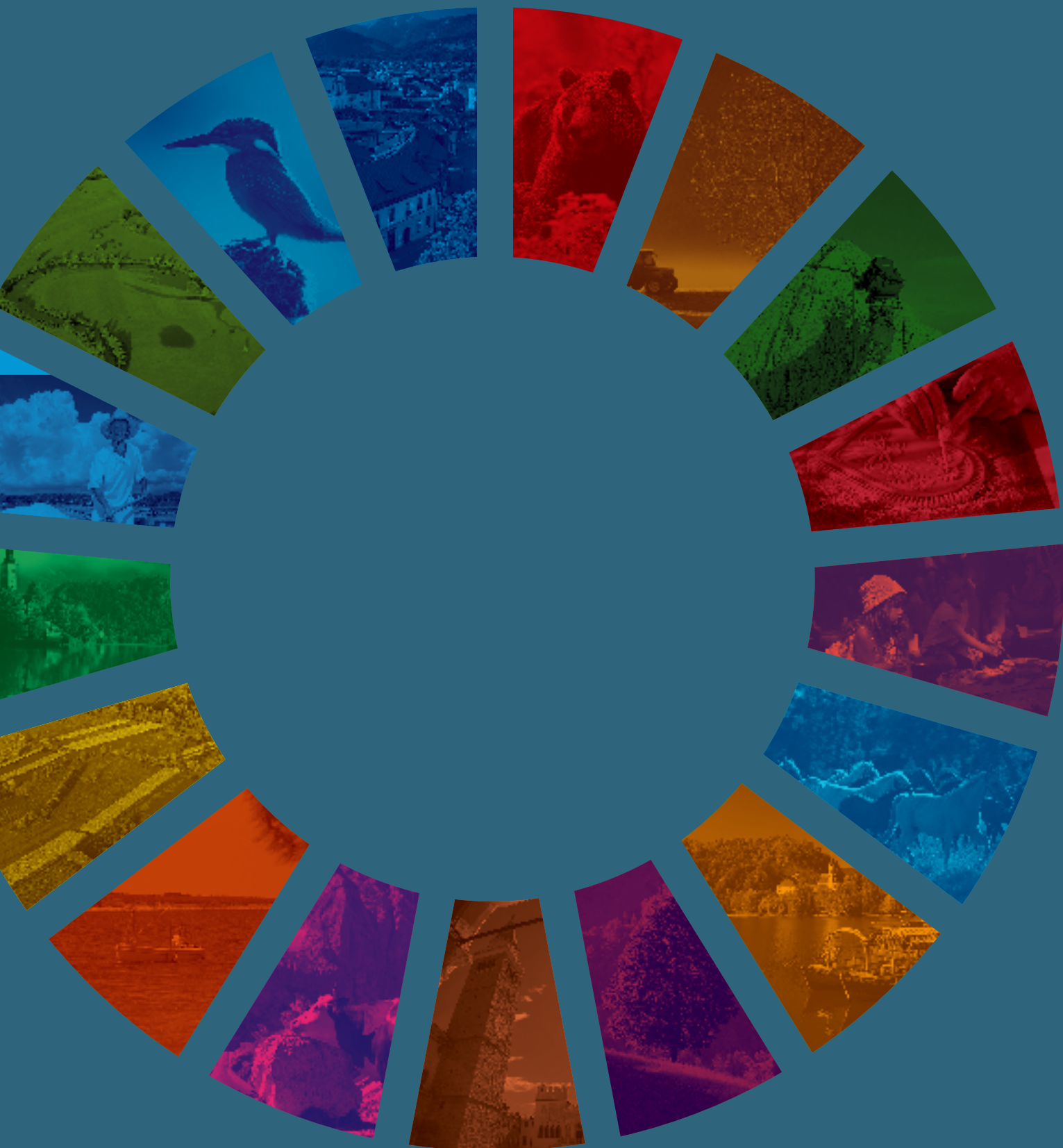
The vital generation of 2050 has left behind the divisions of the past. Today, mutual **trust** is of much greater importance and value. We also have trust in transparent and responsible public institutions. People respect their accessibility and user-friendliness, but first and foremost, their smooth and swift procedures. Excellently supported by an efficient legal system, we waste no time and energy in unproductive disputes. Rules are rules – they apply equally to all. We responsibly honour all intergenerational commitments. We respect the values of solidarity, security, tolerance, cooperation, and peace.



In 2050, Slovenians are a happy people. Our everyday life validates the global prosperity rankings that put Slovenia in a top position. We have a high **quality of life**: we live better, healthier, and longer. Societal and environmental responsibility matter. We respect nature and manage natural resources in a sensible manner. Digital excellence and the circular economy drive our economic development and create new employment opportunities. We have made it – because we are bold, enterprising, and responsible. We highly value our time and devote it to things that bring joy to our lives.



The greatest wealth of this country is its people. Ours is an inclusive and dynamic society. Our **identity** and culture foster cooperation in creating synergies and facing challenges. The Slovene language is a precious asset, and our unique culture is a great inspiration. Through determination, we have risen to prominence in global affairs. Owing to our geographic situation, connections and infrastructure, we are part of a broader international context. In it, we assert ourselves with confidence, adaptability, and perseverance. In exchanges with their homeland, Slovenians living abroad add value to our global network. Slovenia's voice, reputation, and visibility reach far beyond its borders.



REPUBLIC OF SLOVENIA
GOVERNMENT OF THE
REPUBLIC OF SLOVENIA



www.slovenija2050.si/SDG

