

# Sinfo

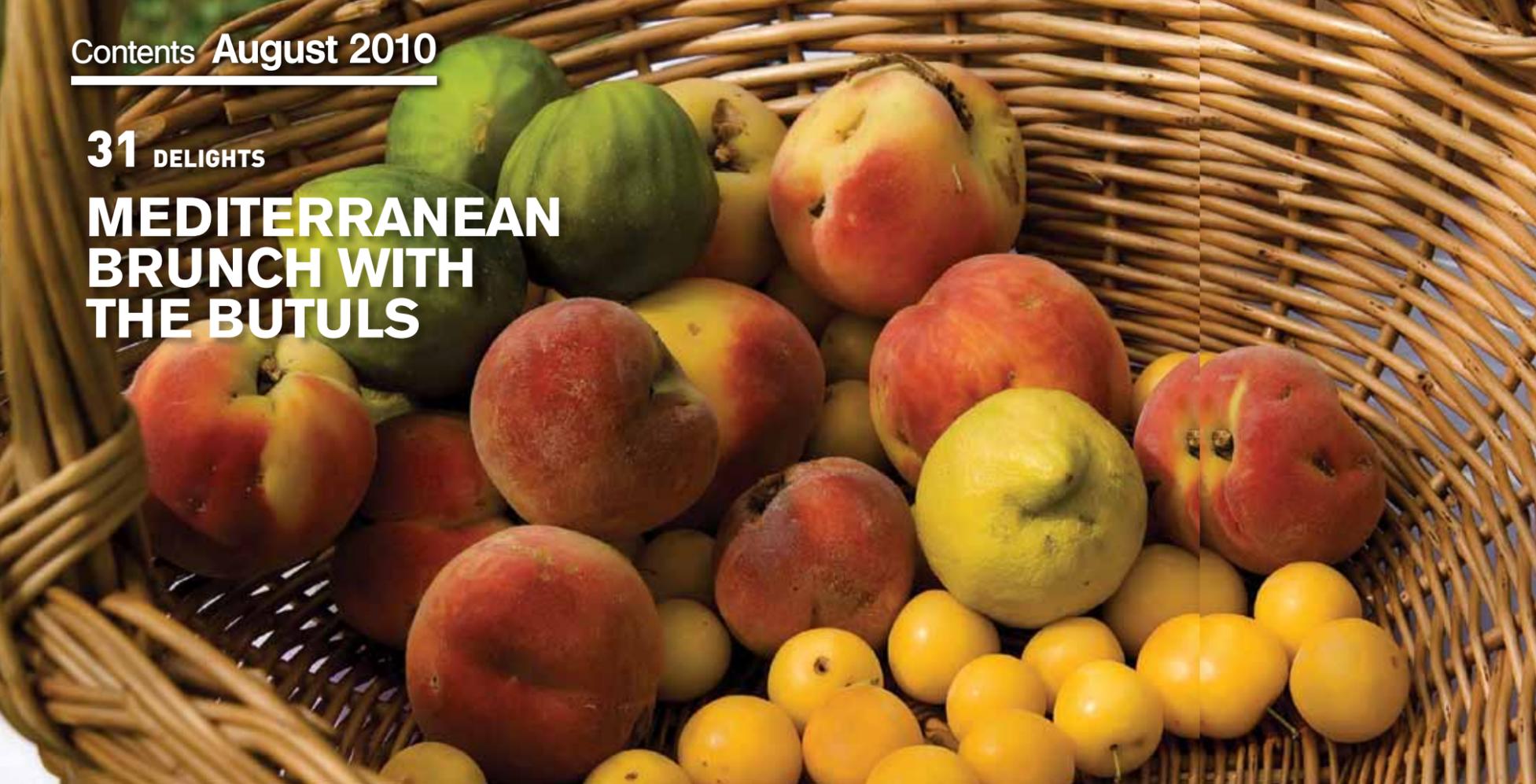
AUGUST 2010

BUSINESS • CULTURE • ENVIRONMENT • POLITICS • SPORTS

Heads held high,  
but the worst luck  
of the tournament

31 DELIGHTS

MEDITERRANEAN BRUNCH WITH THE BUTULS



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Cover photo: Xinhua/STA



Darijan Košir  
Director

IT'LL ALSO BE HOT IN AUTUMN – BUT NOT TOO HOT

**A**FTER THE SUCCESSFUL RESOLUTION OF THE country's border dispute with Croatia, Slovenia now awaits – along with the rest of Europe – the significant economic and structural changes that will happen in the autumn of this year. The resolution of short or medium term problems are targeted, such as suitable pension provisions and healthcare policies, legislation adapted to align with demographic trends and public finances. Government administration will need to be adjusted to take the economic crisis into account, as well as diminished national income, a more open employment market suited to an open economy, the removal of administrative boundaries, the modernisation of government legislation and the continuation of privatisation. These moves will all serve to make Slovenia more competitive and, in addition to infrastructural and other investments in development, will ensure constant development for the State – these are at least ten large tasks Slovenia will grapple with in autumn and which it needs to carry out (or at least address) before the end of the current government's term.

“ THE RECENT HISTORY OF SLOVENIA ALSO TEACHES US THAT OUR CITIZENS ALWAYS CORRECTLY EVALUATE WHICH CHANGES IN DEVELOPMENT AND THEIR EXTENT ARE REALLY NECESSARY, AND THE SIZE OF CONTRIBUTION THAT EACH OF US HAS TO MAKE. ”

As we know, such extensive changes are happening everywhere – with the Greek example being particular to Europe – and are not carried out without reluctance, opposition and even widespread revolt, despite the understanding of the affected classes that these changes are necessary. We cannot expect a Greek scenario in Slovenia as this is, after all, not in the Slovenian tradition. However, this does not alter the fact that those changes will have to be carried out in the widest sense in order to achieve at least the minimum social consensus, something Slovenia is familiar with, during almost twenty years of change and transition.

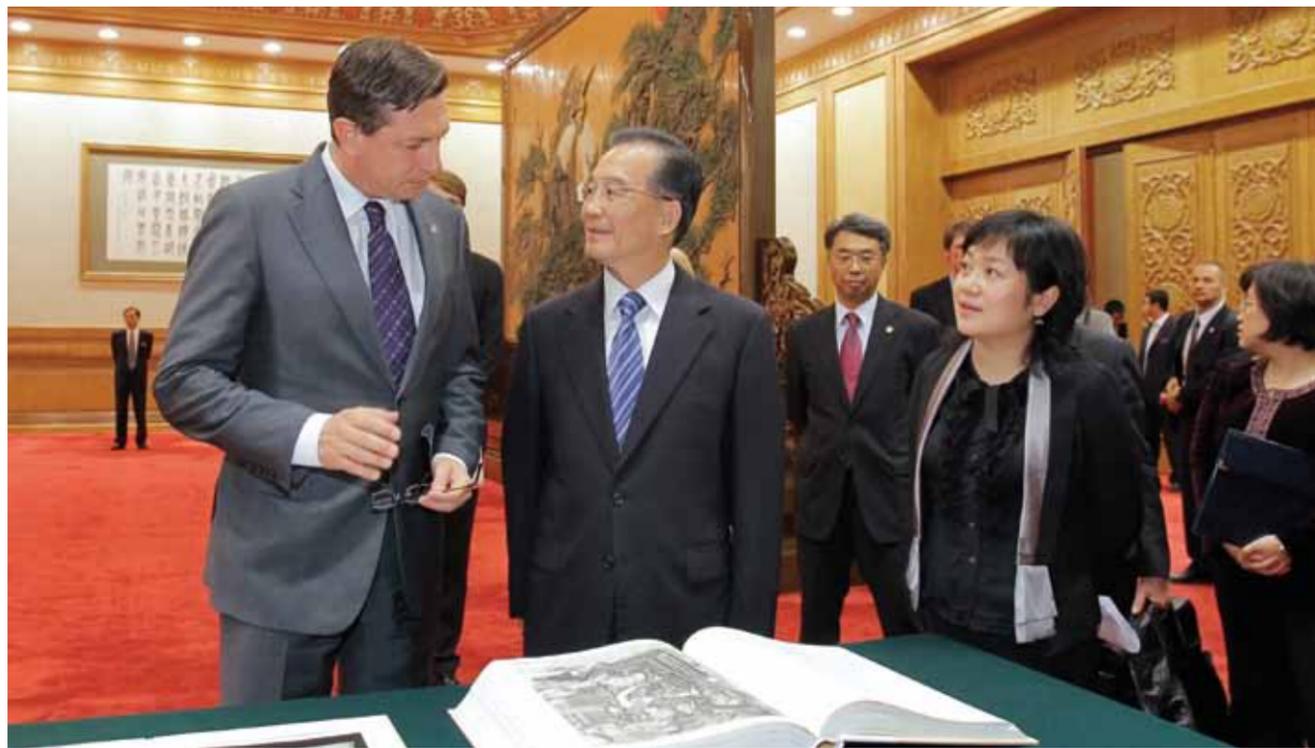
This is why the media is forecasting that Slovenia, after what we hope will be a pleasant summer holiday, awaits a politically “hot autumn”. This is undoubted, but the recent history of Slovenia also teaches us that our citizens always correctly evaluate which changes in development and their extent are really necessary, and the size of contribution that each of us has to make. We have no doubt that this time will be the same.

Sinfo - Slovenian information

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**Gateway to information on Slovenia** www.slovenia.si  
**Government Communication Office** www.ukom.gov.si  
**Government of the Republic of Slovenia** www.vlada.si  
**Slovenian Tourist Board** www.slovenia.info  
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**State Portal of the Republic of Slovenia** e-uprava.gov.si

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## STRENGTHENING TIES WITH CHINA

Mateja Malnar Štembal  
Photo STA

**A**T THE END OF JUNE THE PRIME MINISTER, BORUT PAHOR, SPEND TIME WITH A government and business delegation visiting China, where he met the Chinese Premier Wen Jiabao. Mr Pahor's first visit to China as Prime Minister was aimed at strengthening bilateral relations and promoting Slovenian businesses in China.

During the visit, the Slovenian government representatives told the Chinese that they were open to foreign investment, while their Chinese counterparts emphasised their willingness to see Slovenian investment.

**The Slovenian pavilion and exhibition concept reflected the image of Slovenia as a small, successful, ambitious and orderly country.**

The Prime Minister's visit coincided with the 3rd Slovenian-Shanghai economic forum, which focused on the role and importance of small and medium-sized enterprises in China, Slovenia and the European Union. Ivan Svetlik and Franc Križanič, Slovenia's ministers for labour, family and social affairs and for finance respectively, participated in the conference, which called on Chinese companies to increase their investment in Slovenia.

The Prime Minister also visited the Shanghai World Expo, where he participated in celebrations of Slovenia's national day. After viewing the Slovenian pavilion, he expressed his satisfaction with the presentation of Slovenia at the Expo fair, and that he was proud of the work done. He went on to say that the Slovenian pavilion and exhibition concept reflected the image of Slovenia as a small, successful, ambitious and orderly country.

## Reforms to continue in autumn

AT THE START OF JULY THE GOVERNING coalition agreed to continue the pension and health reforms, and reforms of the public sector, clearly expressing its commitment and responsibility for carrying through urgently needed structural reforms.

According to the Prime Minister,

Borut Pahor, the legislation for the pension reforms will be ready in early September, with the government setting out its overall view of the health reforms by autumn.

The government's aim in preparing the 2011 and 2012 budgets is to reduce the budget deficit and become

competitive, but the Prime Minister agreed that the measures needed to achieve that would be "quite tough."

Measures to aid the Slovenian economy should come into effect this year, with the government set to establish a stimulus and development platform and speed up administrative



**'The legislation for the pension reforms will be ready in early September, with the government setting out its overall view of the health reforms by autumn.'**

procedures in various areas, offering companies a one-stop-shop for the financial and information support they need to effectively finance their development.

As forecast by Mitja Gaspari, Minister of Development and European Affairs, the platform will offer greater synergy and increase the effectiveness of funds provided by the government and the European Union for development purposes. The platform will link ministries, the Slovenian Export and Development Bank, the ECO fund, the Slovenian Regional Development Fund, the Slovenian Enterprise Fund, the Slovenian Technology Agency, the Public Agency for Entrepreneurship and Foreign Investment and other institutions.

## Change at the top of the Ministry of the Economy

AFTER MATEJ LAHOVNIK LEFT THE coalition party Zares at the beginning of July, submitting his irrevocable resignation from the position of Minister of the Economy a few days later, on the proposal of Prime Minister Borut Pahor, in the middle of July the National Assembly voted 47 in favour and nine against to appoint Darja Radič, until then State Secretary at the Ministry of the Economy, as the new Minister of the Economy.

Upon her appointment, Ms. Radič said that she will strive along with her associates at the ministry to apply measures and activities to mitigate the crisis as much as

possible, and she will be committed to helping the Slovenian economy attain a higher technological level and to securing for it a competitive position. At the same time, the new minister added that a healthy economy is the sole fundamental guarantee of social security and prosperity for the citizens of Slovenia.

Her work at the head of the ministry will be focused on supporting the enhancement of development activities and the competitiveness of the Slovenian economy, promoting the competitiveness of Slovenian tourism and ensuring stable, competitive and sustainable energy supplies.



## Guidelines for operations in the Western Balkans

AT THE START OF JULY THE Government adopted guidelines on operations in the Western Balkans, which will give a foundation to and act as a lever for strengthened and more coordinated action by Slovenia in the region. The final objective is to create a positive environment in the Western Balkans that is supportive of Slovenian interests and the Slovenian economy, and contributes to lasting stability across the entire region.

The guidelines' aims include identifying and eliminating internal administrative barriers within Slovenia that relate to the region in order to accelerate trade and commerce and social and communications flows with the region and therefore consolidate Balkan cohesion, based on positive experiences from the former Yugoslav state as well as via traditional international relations.

In order to ensure its operations are successful, Slovenia will create a special coordinating committee for the Western Balkans, which will be an informal body for exchanging positions and forming initiatives for the national coordinator regarding operations in the Western Balkans.



# BLED STRATEGIC FORUM 2010: DISCUSSING FUTURE ISSUES

Ministry of Foreign Affairs Photo STA

**T**HIS YEAR, FOR THE FIFTH TIME, THE BLED STRATEGIC Forum will take place in late August. In the last five years, the Bled Strategic Forum has established itself as a leading international gathering in the region. Every year, this event brings together businessmen, intellectuals, academics, media, opinion leaders and policy-makers from both national capitals and numerous international organisations, including the EU, UN, NATO, OECD and OSCE. The Bled Strategic Forum is co-organised by the Slovenian Foreign Ministry and the Centre for European Perspective.

Under the title "Global Outlook for the Next Decade", some of today's top leaders and thinkers will at the forum examine the great challenges of the 21st century: how to reform international institutions to be better prepared for future

challenges, innovating in a crisis, the future of new energy and how to better manage the world's water supplies. Participants will also discuss the role of the EU in a multipolar world, security challenges in Central Asia and ways to re-connect the Western Balkans.

For the first time, the Bled Strategic Forum is joining with the OECD, an organisation that Slovenia recently joined as a new member state. The OECD has agreed to co-organise a panel on the importance of innovation for economic recovery.

## Leaders and their ideas matter

In the last Sunday in August, Bled will once more become a lively meeting point of distinguished speakers and guests. Among those who have already confirmed their participation

## Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Slovenia, Samuel Žbogar:

I would like to welcome you to the fifth annual Bled Strategic Forum. We meet at a moment of great opportunity, as we enter a new decade, labelled by many "the Age of Transformation". Changes in the international system are inevitable. How we adapt to these changes, however, remains to be seen. The rise of emerging powers, a globalising economy and the growing influence of non-state actors will put further pressures on the world's limited resources. Competition for these resources, responses to the economic crisis, cyber security, as well as trans-border issues among states, will require from us more collective action if we are to develop a more positive outlook for the next decade.

Under the title "The Global Outlook for the Next Decade" the Bled Strategic Forum will gather distinguished thinkers from the global spheres of politics, industry, and academia.

## The Secretary-General of the Bled Strategic Forum, Miriam Možgan:

The Bled Strategic Forum has become a popular large-scale brainstorming event and we're happy that it generates so much interest among policy-makers, businessmen and experts. We're proud to welcome as a guest speaker this year the former US Secretary of State, Colin Powell, and many, many other high-profile guests. We're looking forward to welcoming them all soon to Bled, to the lively debates, and to meeting old and new friends. I would especially like to thank our main sponsors, Bisol, d.o.o. and BMW AG, and all our other sponsors, for their support for the conference.



are Colin Powell, former United States Secretary of State, Mr Amer Moussa, Secretary General of the Arab League, Dr R.K. Pachauri, Chairman of the IPCC and Nobel Peace Prize Laureate, Dr Janez Potočnik, European Commissioner for the Environment, Hon. Peter Gordon MacKay, Minister of National Defense and Minister for the Atlantic Gateway of Canada, Ambassador Antonio de Aguiar Patriota, Secretary General for External Relations of the Federative Republic of Brazil, and many more ministers from the EU, South Eastern Europe, Africa, Asia and Latin America. The President of Slovenia, Dr Danilo Türk, and Prime Minister Borut Pahor will welcome the distinguished guests and address the conference.

## Five distinguished years

Let us look to the past for a moment. The first Bled Strategic Forum took place in 2006 as a follow up to the Slovenian chairmanship of the OSCE. Under the title "Caspian Outlook 2008", the Bled conference addressed the geopolitical importance of the Caspian region regarding energy supplies. The second Bled Strategic Forum took place just before Slovenia took over the EU presidency, the first of the new Member States to do so. Under the title "European Union 2020: Enlarging and Integrating", participants discussed the future of the EU. The 2008 event, titled "Energy and Climate Change: Si.nergy for the Future", tackled questions of energy security and the impact of climate change. Last year's conference discussed the geopolitical consequences of the global financial and economic crisis. More at [www.bledstrategicforum.org](http://www.bledstrategicforum.org).

## Bled Strategic Forum 2010 looks ahead

As the importance and recognisability of the forum have grown over the past four years, the organisers of this year's forum, which will take place on August 29 and 30, decided to address the global challenges of the Age of Transformation, as many have labelled the decade we have just entered. In the next ten years, the international system will probably undergo the most radical changes since the end of the Second World War. By 2020, we will likely have witnessed a change in the geopolitical balance, the rise of new non-state actors in international relations and increased pressure on numerous strategic resources, including water, energy sources and food. Under the title "Global Outlook for the Next Decade", participants will discuss these pressing matters. By the next decade, the world will be in the midst of a fundamental energy transition in terms of both fuel types and sources. An energy transition from one type of fuel to another is an event that historically has only happened once a century. Is this decade already seeing the start of a post-petroleum age? Conversely, unlike energy, water has no substitutes or alternatives. We simply cannot manage water in the future as we have in the past or the economic web will collapse.

The organisers are planning several relevant and interesting panel discussions, in which speakers will exchange views on the following topics: "The EU in a multipolar world", "The transition to new energy", "The water challenge", "Trust (in) the Balkans", and "Reconnecting the Balkans through business, energy and transport".

This year's night-owl session with the title "Innovation on the rebound from the economic crisis" will be organised in partnership with the OECD and will tackle the role of innovation in economic recovery.

Two round-table discussions will also take place at this year's forum. At the 20th anniversary of the Internet, one discussion will be dedicated to its transformational power. This round-table discussion, entitled "The Internet does change everything!" draws attention to this potential. Another discussion, "The challenges of Central Asia", will tackle the security and co-operation challenges of Central Asia.



# OECD MEMBERSHIP

Vesna Žarkovič Photo STA

## After a fourteen-year process, Slovenia is finally a member of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD)

**T**HE SECRETARY-GENERAL OF THE ORGANISATION for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) Angel Gurría and Minister of Development and European Affairs Mitja Gaspari signed an agreement on Slovenia's membership of the OECD in Ljubljana on 1 June.

"Of course Slovenia co-operated with the OECD in order to satisfy the conditions for today's signing, but now it will be co-operating in a different way, especially after the ratification has been completed in all of the member states," said Prime Minister Borut Pahor at a press conference after the signing. According to Pahor, Slovenia will participate as an active member and will make use of the information and advice from this important group of countries. However, it will not directly copy them or translate them, but take them into consideration with respect to local conditions in the preparation of laws, decrees and other government decisions required for the successful governing of the

country. "In this sense we are a part of the OECD, and it is our partner and consultant," said Pahor, who added that by joining the OECD, Slovenia had made one of the important steps towards becoming part of the developed world that it wants to be a part of in the future.

"Today is also a very important day for the OECD", added Gurría, who said that from the viewpoint of the OECD Slovenia's accession process had gone exceptionally smoothly. During this process, Slovenia also adopted the Law on corporate governance of state capital investments, which according to Gurría is very beneficial for Slovenia.

**'Slovenia will participate as an active member and will make use of the information and advice from this important group of countries.'**

### "Stati inu obstati"

In the light of the world financial and economic crisis he added that the words of Slovenian writer and translator Primož Trubar, "stati inu obstati" (stand and withstand), are highly apposite. Especially in these times, said Gurría, it will be important to stand and withstand together. The

crisis has shown that economies have to co-operate and take co-ordinated measures.

The co-ordinated actions of economies are also the basic mission of the OECD, said Gurría, who added that the OECD is trying to develop a stronger, cleaner and more honest global economy. "Therefore we have to be more plural, global, and inclusive, which means that the accession of Slovenia is an important step on our path to becoming a focal point for dialogue on global issues," said Gurría.

Pahor also showed the head of the OECD the "traffic light for adopting laws", with which the Government hopes to lead the country out of the economic crisis. He stated that it in some way obliged the Government to implement the planned measures, and at the same time allowed the public to monitor the Government's success.

Gurría, who was delighted by the traffic light, added that the implementation of the planned measures will require a lot of work to reach a consensus with regard to the reforms, and strong leadership and courage on the side of the Government. "You have very ambitious goals and we are here to help you, we will work with you to make them happen," said Gurría, who also remarked on the significant wealth that Slovenia has in its forests.

### Beginning of Slovenia's continuous and active work

Minister Gaspari, who led the negotiations for accession to the OECD, added further that the conclusion of one process was the beginning of another – Slovenia's continuous and active work as a member of the OECD. "There are numerous benefits available to the members of this organisation. We shall try to take the best possible advantage of them," said Gaspari.

According to Gaspari, Slovenia wants to engage in fruitful co-operation with OECD experts, and to use their help to create an effective post-crisis development strategy, introduce the necessary structural adjustments and create a modern economic, societal and social model based on sustainable growth, knowledge, innovation and responsibility towards the environment and people.

An OECD technical team has already arrived in Slovenia, and will perform a comprehensive economic overview of Slovenia by the end of the year. When it is finished, they will present it to both the Government and the public, most likely at the beginning of next year. They will also pay attention to the introduction of corporate governance and the measures required in order to achieve sustainable economic growth and increased competitiveness.

With Slovenia, Estonia and Israel, the OECD will now have 34 members. Russia is already involved in negotiations for accession, and five large economies – Brazil, China, India, Indonesia and South Africa – currently have the status of privileged partners of the OECD and have the opportunity to become future members of the OECD.

The organisation with its analyses and guidelines operates in several economic and also other fields, such as education, health and science. On the basis of their analyses, which enable an excellent comparison among countries and emphasise examples of good practice, they obtain numerous indexes and lists of countries, which also serve as an informal tool for encouraging countries to implement the adopted standards.

### Benefits of membership in the OECD

The adoption of high standards in the field of international business, financial transactions, company management, corruption in international business transactions, quality of public administration, social services, the environment and various special areas such as nuclear safety, chemical safety, the internet etc. OECD standards can be even more rigorous than those of the EU, as they include the criteria of the world's most developed nations, such as the USA, Canada and Japan.

### Exchange of experiences and good practices among countries and governments, particularly

in the area of preparation and implementation of structural reforms. Co-operating with the other members of the OECD is an opportunity for Slovenia to make comparisons, learn and exchange experiences with the most developed countries in the world. Membership also offers opportunities for:

- direct comparison of experiences in implementing policies,
- seeking of solutions to common challenges,
- recognition and exchange of good practices,
- easier co-ordination of domestic and international policies.

### Better conditions for international economic co-operation,

and in the political sphere, stimulation and models for reformatory processes. OECD membership is not just a prestigious foreign policy goal, but also brings real benefits to the economy.

### Inclusion in OECD statistical bases and databases

will allow numerous international comparisons and rankings.

### Inclusion in recognized analytical materials

such as the OECD Employment Outlook, Health at a Glance, Pensions at a Glance, Innovation Scoreboard, Taxing Wages, Going for Growth, and last but not least the prestigious OECD Economic Outlook, will increase Slovenia's reputation and the trust of the wider international community.

### Conditions and criteria for OECD membership

The satisfaction of three basic criteria is a prerequisite for membership:

- an open economy
- democratic pluralism and
- respect for human rights.

The basic criteria for membership are defined in the OECD's Strategy for Enlargement and Outreach, which states that prospective members have to exhibit like-mindedness, must be significant players, must represent a mutual benefit and have global considerations.

“The healthiest, greenest, safest and most accessible tourist destination in Europe”

# MARJAN HRIBAR

Vesna Žarkovič Photo Mateja Jordovič Potočnik

THE DIRECTOR-GENERAL OF the Tourism Directorate at the Ministry of the Economy, Marjan Hribar, stresses that Slovenia has already been committed to excellence in years past. “In this way we are consolidating a commitment to not being average, and we would prefer to offer products with added value that at the same time place a value on nature,” he said, adding that the European destinations of excellence designation is not a competition, but cooperation between countries included in the European network of the project.

**Tourism is not the only thing, but an important economic activity that will help shape the future development of Slovenia. How will the government set about developing Slovenian tourism?**

We are developing tourism along the lines of sustainable development, meaning that we take into account the environmental, economic and social dimensions. It is true, tourism is one of the main drivers of the economy, since it represents more than 10% of GDP and in recent years it has grown faster than economic growth overall. Of course tourism will continue to play a major part in the area of balanced regional development.

**Slovenia is still very much a transit country.**

That is true of course, vast rivers of tourists move through this country in the summer from northern Europe en route to southern Europe, and given our capacity, we could not even accommodate all of them for any lengthy period. We don't compare well with our neighbours Croatia, since they have capacity for one million tourists.

Slovenia is actually getting its share of the pie here, but tourism involves flows that know no borders and precise predictions, and over the past five years, for instance, our volume of tourism has doubled.

**Is the form of sustainable tourism development in Slovenia the same as in other countries?**

Yes, we can speak of similar development. The OECD and European Commission pinpoint sustainable development as a key topic that is recognised as an element of competitive advantage. In Slovenia we started getting involved in this quite early on, back in 2003, and so we are a step ahead of the other countries. We are building up our promotion intensively in terms of green Slovenia, with the slogan: I feel Slovenia....

“ WE WILL NEVER BE PRICE-COMPETITIVE, BUT WE SEE A MAJOR OPPORTUNITY IN THE LINKING OF TOURISM WITH SLOVENIAN AGRICULTURE. I AM DELIGHTED WITH THE VIEWS AND SUPPORT OF THE MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE, FORESTRY AND FOOD, DEJAN ŽIDAN, WHO SUPPORTS THE CONCEPT OF SHORTENING THE PATH FROM THE PRODUCTION OF FOOD TO FINAL CONSUMPTION ON THE TABLE. ”

**... which attracts a certain type of person.**

Of course, this is our aim. The emphasis is on green Slovenia. Almost 60% of Slovenia is forest, the third-highest level in Europe. Forestation has been increasing in recent decades, as

over 1,200,000 trees are planted each year. More than a third of the land is protected, and included in Europe's Natura 2000 network, which protects biodiversity. Slovenia is one of the most biodiverse countries in the world.

**A new green-oriented umbrella tourism strategy is already being prepared.**

Our ambition is to become the healthiest tourist destination in Europe, the greenest, safest and most accessible destination. There are no obstacles involved in such a strategy, and the only condition for fulfilment is the firm commitment of every tourism provider to implement the strategy. Some tourism providers are already following this thinking very strongly. We are focusing our entire philosophy on this, all the

elements of wellbeing are the common thread of good business operations, and it seems to us that this is the right path. We will never be price-competitive, but we see a major opportunity in the linking of tourism with Slovenian agriculture. I am delighted with the views and support of the Minister for Agriculture, Forestry and Food, Dejan Židan, who supports the concept of shortening the path from the production of food to final consumption on the table. Transport is indeed the biggest polluter of the environment.

It is right that Slovenian food and wine should be placed high on the scale of tourist attractions, we already formulated a strategy for developing Slovenian culinary attractions in 2007 and we are implementing this very intensively, and this gave rise to the culinary pyramid, which sets certain rules about the most typical dishes



in Slovenia. We also enjoy excellent cooperation with Slovenian restaurants.

**Much has been said about competitiveness in the economy. How do you propose to increase this in tourism, and how will you increase the scope of tourist activities?**

In connection with competitiveness there are criteria in the form of a tourism and travel competitiveness index, published by the world economic forum. In this regard, Slovenia has taken major steps, moving from 57th place to 35th. Numerous factors are analysed in the ranking. The index is a proper mirror of the real state of tourism competitiveness, and as such is an ideal instrument for everyone involved in it.

**And what does it tell us?**

That we are at the top in terms of access to natural drinking water, that our strategic position is our major advantage, and that Slovenia is the only country in Europe that combines the Alps, the Mediterranean, the Pannonian Plain and the Karst. However, we are very uncompetitive in terms of the number of air services and connections, we also lag behind in promotion, our range of cultural attractions is below average, as is the number of structures under Unesco protection... we have done too little in properly establishing festivals that draw big crowds. All of this, unfortunately, is holding back the advancement of Slovenian tourism. The aim is to achieve recognition for festivals such as that enjoyed by Salzburg, which is intended for tourists who stay in the country for a few days. These are the main tasks, while we are also less competitive in terms of being a business-friendly environment and in legislation, and we have our work cut out in this area.

**In May the Ministry issued a public tender for the activities of regional destination organisations in the amount of 4.2 million euros, and in this framework, the recipients will be able to use the funds for three years. What kind of tender is this?**

This is a tender drawing on European



“ WE ARE AT THE TOP IN TERMS OF ACCESS TO NATURAL DRINKING WATER, THAT OUR STRATEGIC POSITION IS OUR MAJOR ADVANTAGE, AND THAT SLOVENIA IS THE ONLY COUNTRY IN EUROPE THAT COMBINES THE ALPS, THE MEDITERRANEAN, THE PANNONIAN PLAIN AND THE KARST. ”

structural funds – and it will serve to set up a network of regional tourist organisations. In Slovenia we have a tourist board, which is the umbrella organisation for promotion, but this is lacking on the regional level in a form set up more to suit the individual tourist, and filling the gap between the umbrella organisation and local offices. Until

now, no one has been concerned with the promotion of regions, so the new network is precisely what we need. There are good links being made by Obsotelje and Prekmurje. We are modelling this on other countries, which have been doing this for a long time, such as Spain and France, and these countries have strong regional tourist organisations.

Austria, for instance, is another country that is too big for the global market, so it markets itself on the regional tourism level. Here, too, there are large local variations, and these can be marketed extremely well on the regional level. There is major interest in the tender, it covers the whole of Slovenia, and it is a three-year tender with funds available for each region.

**The Ministry is proposing that development funds for tourism should be provided in future in a slightly different way than to date – no longer from gaming concessions, but from one percent of foreign exchange inflows generated.**

It is true, this is our aim. We believe that tourism itself must command its own share of development funds, and in this way Slovenian tourism will take this precise course in future.

**You will also soon be issuing a tender to promote thematic tourist products on the national level, in the amount of a million euros...**

The tender has not yet been published, and it is intended to support development for the integrated promotion of thematic products. This is the promotion of spas, conference tourism, mountain centres and sports facilities. It is a kind of crisis measure, whereby we will be helping to provide market communication for those organisations that would otherwise find it hard to afford promotion.

**What are the flagships of Slovenian tourism?**

First and foremost, without doubt the Slovenian spas and natural health resorts, and in terms of arrivals they account for more than a third of all turnover generated from tourism, and then the coast, which is a strong conference destination all 12 months of the year. In third place I would put mountain centres, which are also thriving in all seasons, while the cities are a major tourist magnet, along with tourist farms, while gaming tourism is also a significant sector. These are the flagships of Slovenian tourism.

All these sectors are competitive, and we have only recorded a drop in income in Ljubljana and Bled, although this year has already been better, while the sector with the biggest decline is conference tourism, with numerous big companies cancelling mega events. A fierce battle is being fought in this area, if we compare it to 2008, when Slovenia held the EU Presidency and there was the highest number of accompanying events.

Meanwhile my predictions are quite optimistic, we are monitoring developments, and we will soon have a clear picture of the forecast for six months. August is the most important month, with as much as 23% of the tourist pie being created in that month.

**What makes a country strong in tourism terms?**

The main trump card of tourist attractions is in the priorities that people set: from the quality of life to the attitude of each inhabitant to tourists, general safety, transport links, a favourable business environment for investment, favourable legislation – all these things derive importantly from the index of competitiveness drawn up by the world economic forum.

**And where is Slovenia in this?**

The services and facilities we wish to develop are family hotels, in the way that these are set up in northern Italy. We lack this kind of facility. We have had problems with catering and hospitality personnel, especially since not enough school pupils enrolled in catering schools, and investments must be continued, with funds needed for cable lifts, and ski resorts and mountain centres need to be linked together. You know, good tourism does not mean that we leave everything to nature. We also need to ensure comprehensive development. Slovenia is an open country for foreign investment, and we desire numerous investments. Planica, Rimske toplice, old Hotel Palace – all of these are the latest investments, showing that we have taken a step forward. Ljubljana urgently needs a big hotel, and on the coast there are also for instance some development projects, while we are

committed to getting a golf course on the coast, and for Lipica golf course to add another nine holes – of course not at the expense of the pastures – and moreover we need a new gaming centre.

**Where are you going to spend your holiday this year?**

A week in Turkey, then in the Slovenian mountains. In this way my family and I are going to make the best combination of sea and mountains.

**And how would you describe Slovenia to a foreigner in a few sentences?**

Slovenia is the only country in Europe that combines the Alps, the Mediterranean, the Pannonian Plain and the Karst. The changing landscape is constantly surprising, time and again. You can have one eye on the sea, then look in the other direction and be surrounded by high mountains. Heading up into the forests, you can see the green plains below you. From upland meadows your view stretches into river gorges. This proximity of opposites and contrasts is a hallmark of the country.

In Slovenia you can still walk through virgin forest, or watch the grapes ripen on the oldest vine in the world. You can hear tales of bears, and eat forest fruits that you have foraged yourself on a brief walk out of town. Here you can uncover the secrets of the land, and what lies beneath it. Here you are part of nature.

Slovenia has numerous sites of special natural interest, with features of all four main areas: the Alps, the Mediterranean, the Karst and the Pannonian Plain. It also has a wealth of diverse architecture and urban design. You can truly feel at home in Slovenia's towns.

Slovenia is a land of greenery, which offers great opportunities for activity holidays. Its high-quality accommodation guarantees a comfortable stay. It is perfect for a summer holiday, a winter break or a weekend away. Slovenia is famed for its excellent food, accompanied by one of its fine wines. The friendly, hospitable and attentive locals will guarantee you a pleasant stay. You can feel Slovenia, come and visit us. ●

# URGENT RESTRUCTURING OF RESEARCH ACTIVITIES

Slovenia's GDP has fallen by half a percentage point in the first quarter of this year which means that despite some encouraging signs, particularly in foreign trade, Slovenia has not yet completely extricated itself from the recession.

Vesna Bertonec Popit, Delo Photo STA

**T**HIS RESULT IS ALL THE MORE UNWELCOME because the forecasts were different and because some of Slovenia's biggest foreign trade partners have once again achieved growth. Since Slovenia's foreign trade is greatly dependent on the economic situation in Germany, which is Slovenia's biggest customer and supplier, an improvement in conditions would have been expected. But since, on the other hand, the Germans are also adopting serious economising measures, perhaps they are not yet out of the woods either.

In Slovenia the government is trying to reduce public sector expenditure through measures to reduce the budget deficit ratio, but this is leading to conflict, particularly with teachers and doctors. While public sector workers, like all employees in Slovenia, must by law work 40 hours a week and a maximum of eight hours of overtime, some doctors work up to 400 hours a month, in other words 10 times more than is prescribed by legislation. The reason they work such long hours, along with turns of duty, is put down to a shortage of doctors, but despite this doctors also work in numerous private clinics. As a result of measures affecting payment for turns of duty and some benefits, doctors are threatening to strike or to cut their working hours to the statutory 40 hours per week. Teachers are also threatening to strike. At the same time, the number of public sector employees did not fall between December 2008 and April 2010, but actually increased by 2,400. The majority of this increase relates to jobs in education, healthcare, social care and in ministries or ministry bodies.

The government has reduced this year's state expenditure by 600 million euros by means of a budget amendment and intends to replace the missing revenue with higher excise duties on electricity and natural gas, refined petroleum products and tobacco products, bringing taxation into line with the level of taxation in the EU. Car fuel, in particular, is now set to become among the most expensive in Europe and the most expensive in Slovenia in recent years. If until now people have come to Slovenia from other countries to fill up with petrol, it now looks as though Austria is set to become more attractive to Slovenians and, in particular, road hauliers for this purpose.

Among the reforms which the government wants the



Slovenian parliament to approve as soon as possible are the pensions reform and the reform of labour legislation, for which, however, the government is unable to reach agreement with the unions. Even when it was raising the minimum wage, the government made it clear that in exchange for this it would reduce termination payments for employees made redundant by companies and make it easier to make workers redundant. The

unions are strongly opposing this, in part because all these changes relate to employed workers but not to managers for whom, in accordance with their individual contracts, salaries and redundancy payments remain high, while on the other hand these measures do not relate to supervisors either, who should also be liable for poor supervision,

but who have got off scot-free even though some companies sank into losses even when economic conditions were very favourable.

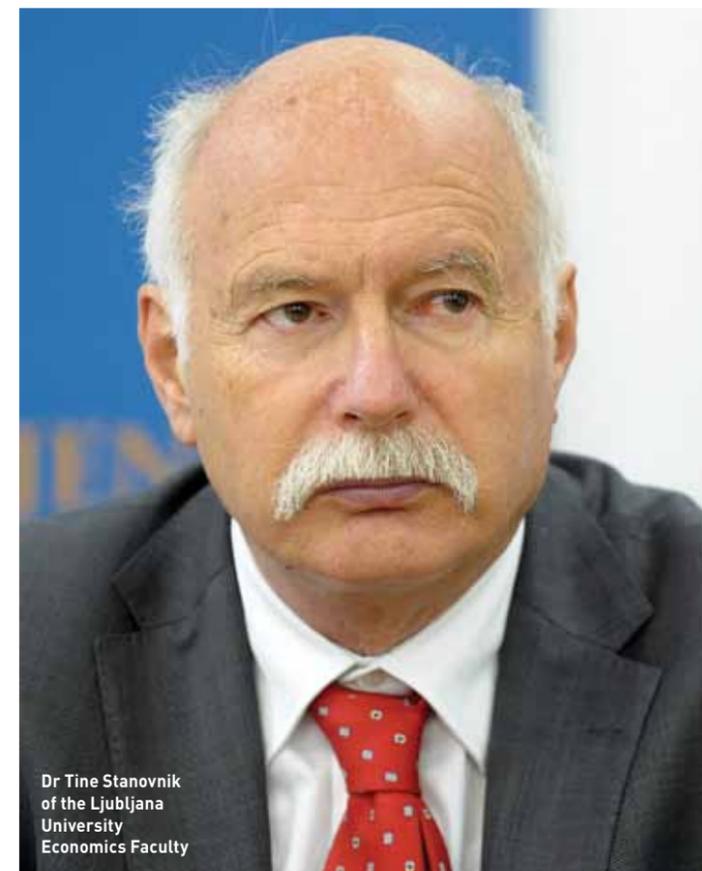
Dr Tine Stanovnik of the Ljubljana University Economics Faculty is in favour of the draft pensions reform under which

the retirement age would be increased to 65 for men and 63 for women, with the retirement age for the two sexes being equalised in a second phase, and working life extended to 43 years for men and 41 years for women. Dr Stanovnik compared the retirement age with neighbouring countries and in this way justified the Slovenian proposals, since measures or designs of measures in these countries are apparently similar. He is, however, critical of the fact that in Slovenia, as he puts it, too many fronts have been opened unnecessarily in the labour and social spheres. In his opinion, the adoption of the pensions legislation would be an important success for the government and would give a clear sign that Slovenia is capable of adapting in good time to changing demographic and fiscal conditions.

Many managers have found themselves in serious difficulties as a result of the economic crisis, having completed management buyouts of the companies they managed shortly before the crisis began, borrowing heavily to do so. These companies are now generating too little revenue for them to be able to repay the obligations due. As a result, the companies and their employees have become hostages of these managers. One such company is Merkur from Naklo near Kranj, while Istrabenz of Koper has sold the Slovenian food company Droga Kolinska to Croatian buyers, and with it the long-established Slovenian non-alcoholic drinks brand Cockta.

As independent researcher Dr Marko Kos points out, a development breakthrough which would increase added value and the competitiveness of the Slovenian economy is of key importance for Slovenia. Dr Kos emphasises that having a large number of researchers in the academic sphere has in no way contributed to improving prosperity in Slovenia, partly because research positions were established under the Soviet model and have been retained to the present day. If we want to catch up with Austria, says Dr Kos, it will be necessary to restructure research. In Dr Kos's opinion, if some of the existing researchers were transferred to the university sector and others to industry, we would achieve a restructuring of industry towards higher technologies, amplify technological fields and increase added value, as a result of which both wages and pensions could increase. Dr Kos's recommendation is that the government should opt for such changes, for which there are several models in Europe, and not seek consensus in the academic sphere, since by transferring researchers – which is already envisaged by the national research and development project – an innovation potential could be achieved that would enable Slovenian enterprises to compete with small, highly developed EU countries.

While in the Slovenian market opportunities for the domestic construction industry are currently quite poor and, according to some forecasts, will only begin to improve at the end of next year or in 2010, some more enterprising builders have signed significant contracts abroad, particularly in Libya, where leading Slovenian constructor SCT apparently has work for at least five years, but also in Serbia, Bosnia and Herzegovina and Albania. SCT alone is said to have signed contracts worth over a billion euros in Libya, while according to some estimates SCT, which has earned itself a good reputation in Libya in the past, will undertake construction



Dr Tine Stanovnik  
of the Ljubljana  
University  
Economics Faculty

projects in the country to a value of two billion euros.

At a recent round-table discussion hosted by the Institute for Macroeconomic Analysis and Development, Slovenian economists stated that Slovenia must begin the consolidation of public finances as soon as possible. Although it is currently among the less debt-burdened members of the euro area, this year's borrowing and the envisaged borrowing next year mean that without consolidation of public finances Slovenia's credit rating could worsen. Dr Mojmir Mrak of the Economics Faculty at Ljubljana University warned that it is too late for this consolidation this year because all the targets have been shifted to next year. Tatjana Fink, the director of Trebnje-based company Trimo, pointed out that before the crisis the banks gave significant credit to the business enterprise sector, while now they only give short-term loans with which it is not possible to create new technologies and breakthrough products. The Institute for Macroeconomic Analysis and Development has found that training and re-qualification of workers who have lost their jobs are not effective enough for them to increase their employability, because the majority of companies train their workers themselves.

If expectations are met, Slovenia should be obtaining a quarter of all the energy it needs from renewable sources by 2020, which means that from these sources, particularly solar, water and wind and, to a lesser extent, biogas, biomass and geothermal energy, it would produce over 3,100 gigawatt hours of energy.



# ANGEL GURRÍA

“STATI INU OBSTATI” (“Stand and withstand”)

**W**HEN SLOVENIA ADOPTED THE EURO IN 2007, IT CHOSE TO engrave its one-euro coins with “STATI INU OBSTATI” (“Stand and withstand”), words borrowed from Primož Trubar. In the current difficult climate, these words could not be more relevant and we hope that they will guide us in this historic moment.

Indeed, accession to the OECD comes at a time when standing and withstanding together is becoming increasingly important. The economic and financial crisis has underlined the need for economies to stick together and define co-ordinated policy responses to restore growth and confidence. This is the essence of the OECD and the role for which it was created.

Our organisation strives for a stronger, cleaner and fairer world economy. To fulfil this mandate, we need to become more pluralist, more global, more inclusive. Slovenia's accession is an important step in our quest to become a hub of dialogue on global issues. Its role as a bridge between east and west will be a significant contribution to multilateral dialogue and mutual understanding. And, in these complex times, balance is strength.

There are many fields in which the OECD will benefit from Slovenia's experience and perspective. Slovenia's public-governance policies can serve as a model to all. Its drive in promoting sustainable forest management and biodiversity conservation is a source of inspiration. Its infrastructure policy, driven by the quest to become a transport hub, will surely make a contribution with innovative solutions.

But the question that many of you may have is: what can Slovenia gain from joining the OECD?

Slovenia will now have access to cutting-edge policy advice in a wide range of strategic areas for its development; it will be able to compare its policies with international best practice and measure progress with the most advanced calibration tools; and it will be able to influence the redesign of global governance architecture.

Many of you know the OECD and the value of its work. But for those of you who are still not familiar with our work, let me give you a few examples of how the OECD operates as an international setter of standards and as a club for best practice.

Consider, for example, the recent decision by the G20 to put an end to banking secrecy as a tool for international tax evasion. As the global standard-setter in this field, the OECD provided all the elements needed to reach this crucial political decision. Many governments can now increase their access to previously hidden resources. This will help to ensure that all are paying their fair share, will increase equity, and will, of course, aid budgets in times of mounting deficits.

The OECD is also the leading voice in the battle against

international corruption, with policy tools such as its Anti-Bribery Convention. Signed by 38 countries, the Convention has sparked investigations into more than 250 cases. During the past ten years, around 150 companies have been sanctioned for committing foreign bribery and related offences in host countries.

We were also the first international organisation to develop standardised comparative performance indicators of national education systems. Our PISA report, which now encompasses over 70 countries, has advanced the agenda for quality education throughout the world and has become the benchmark for policy making and reform in a crucial field to reduce disparities, and promote innovation and green growth.

There are many other examples of OECD studies or rules that have formed the basis for change and better policy decisions in a wide range of areas: agriculture, health, labour, governance, investment, and science and technology, to name but a few. Slovenia now has access to all of this know-how.

As you may have noted, the OECD accession process has already triggered important changes. Over the past two years, Slovenia has made a comprehensive and in-depth analysis of its economic, social and environmental policies, practices and institutions, and has taken significant steps to improve policies and policy frameworks in a number of areas.

At the beginning of the accession process, Slovenia already compared well with OECD members in many fields, including investment and fiscal affairs. Our 2009 Review of Labour Market and Social Policies revealed that income distribution in Slovenia was more equal than in most OECD countries. Due to its status as an EU Member State, much of its legislation and policy was already in conformity with a number of OECD standards.

In those areas where further progress was needed, Slovenia has reacted rapidly to the recommendations of OECD Committees. Only a few weeks ago, Slovenia adopted key legislation to improve its corporate-governance framework for state-owned enterprises (SOEs). In the investment field, Slovenia has agreed to extend measures of liberalisation to all OECD members in a number of key areas. The recommendations of the Working Group on Bribery have also translated into concrete decisions.

The accession process has been a catalyst for reform. But this is just the beginning. From now on, we will be in a position to work together even more closely and we must keep the momentum going. Recall the old Slovenian proverb: “Pray for a good harvest, but keep on hoeing”.

Angel Gurría - Secretary-General OECD



# MITJA GASPARI

Slovenia in the Company of the World's Most Developed Countries

**B**Y JOINING THE OECD, SLOVENIA COMPLETES THE PROCESS of accession to all of the world's major international business and financial institutions. We are joining the ranks of the world's most economically developed countries, which adhere to the highest standards in the area of economic and development policy.

This project, which was initiated by my predecessor, lasted three years and was extremely broad in scope. We worked very hard to satisfy all of the conditions which this organisation requires of its new members. Slovenia had to demonstrate its preparedness in several areas, from the free flow of capital and services, investments, the fight against corruption, protection of competition, corporate company management, the quality of the public administration, social services and environmental protection to various specific areas such as nuclear safety, chemical safety and the Internet.

Being a member also gives us improved opportunities for international economic cooperation and foreign investment. Membership is also an opportunity to increase the country's reputation and the trust of investors, which is all the more important in times of economic and financial crisis. It is a form of potential insurance against external risk; we could call it insurance against hard times.

From now on, Slovenia will have the opportunity to collaborate with and to participate in the dialogue on an equal footing with the world's most important economic partners. We are joining a group of countries with a high intellectual pedigree. This will allow us to take advantage of the opportunity to obtain the high-quality analyses which this organisation supplies to its members. Slovenia will thus obtain a clear picture of its position, particularly because the OECD members are not just from the European Union.

We will get a better idea of how much progress we are making, what our advantages and disadvantages are, and how the latter can be remedied with the help of OECD professionals. One such analysis, which could come into play very soon, is e.g. an analysis of the state

“FROM NOW ON, SLOVENIA WILL HAVE THE OPPORTUNITY TO COLLABORATE WITH AND TO PARTICIPATE IN THE DIALOGUE ON AN EQUAL FOOTING WITH THE WORLD'S MOST IMPORTANT ECONOMIC PARTNERS. WE ARE JOINING A GROUP OF COUNTRIES WITH A HIGH INTELLECTUAL PEDIGREE. THIS WILL ALLOW US TO TAKE ADVANTAGE OF THE OPPORTUNITY TO OBTAIN THE HIGH-QUALITY ANALYSES WHICH THIS ORGANISATION SUPPLIES TO ITS MEMBERS. SLOVENIA WILL THUS OBTAIN A CLEAR PICTURE OF ITS POSITION, PARTICULARLY BECAUSE THE OECD MEMBERS ARE NOT JUST FROM THE EUROPEAN UNION.”

administration. This will allow us to discuss in a more objective manner the functioning and efficiency of the individual units in the public sector, or more narrowly within the state administration (e.g. the number of ministers, the payment system, e-administration etc.).

As a member of the OECD, Slovenia will be included in the statistical and other databases and various materials, and will also have direct access to databases and the numerous professional publications published every year by the OECD.

We shall endeavour to take the best advantage possible of these assets. We hope to achieve fruitful collaboration with OECD professionals at all levels, and to use their help to develop an effective post-crisis development strategy and introduce the necessary structural adaptations in order to design a modern economic and social model. A model based on sustainable development, knowledge and innovation, and which will be environmentally responsible.

The signing of an agreement between Slovenia and the OECD is not just the end of the accession process and the hard work of the last three years, in which we have learned so much. It is also an important commitment for the future. With accession, a new process begins – Slovenia's continuous active

involvement as a member of the OECD. I believe that it will be successful.

Mitja Gaspari - Minister of Development and European Affairs



## A SUMMER OF CULTURE

Jože Osterman Photo Stane Jerko

**S**LOVENIAN CULTURAL LIFE – IN fact social life in general – has reached an almost unprecedented level in recent years. The old complaints that in summer there is too little happening in the field of culture and events have practically disappeared, since every year, towards the end of June, there is such an eruption of cultural events that it is difficult to keep up with all of them. This Slovenian phenomenon is a positive one that probably derives from the fact that a reasonably dense network of associations and clubs devoted to tourism, culture, sports and other activities is distributed relatively evenly across the country, making it possible to organise a large number of events of different types. These are now joined, even in the summer, by a functioning network of professional events agencies and similar organisations capable of staging even the most demanding events.

We have already written about most of the biggest events. The Lent Festival in Maribor and the Ljubljana Summer Festival are both famous even in an international context. Yet it would be a mistake not to draw attention to some other events which, at the rate they are growing, will soon take their place alongside these two giants of the summer cultural calendar. This year saw the 13th edition of the Ana

Desetnica Street Theatre Festival, which brought excitement to Ljubljana at the beginning of July. This year's programme ranged from pyrotechnic artists, fire-eaters and other fire-related spectacles to excellent small groups who used improvisation to create an experience for spectators that was no less satisfying than a visit to a traditional theatre (and in any case traditional theatres are closed over the summer). This year, for the first time, Ana Desetnica also visited other towns around the country, bringing variety to their cultural lives.

As well as the projects connected to Imago Sloveniae and the Seviq Brežice early music festival, which we cover or have already covered elsewhere, the ambitious happenings on the rock scene also deserve more attention. Rock Otočec, a cult favourite among Slovenian rockers, has gained an important complement in the metal festival in Tolmin, at the confluence of the Soča and Idrija rivers. The latter has already become something of a pilgrimage for metal fans from all over Europe. The Posočje region, which for years has been slightly off the Slovenian cultural radar, is starting to wake up. With its almost exotic beauty, which has an increasing number of admirers at home and abroad, it is beginning to cultivate its own cultural image too. The theatre

festival in the mysterious old fortress of Kluže, a few kilometres from Bovec, opens its doors in August.

In a way it is surprising that fewer new cultural events are to be found on the coast, the destination of a large number of domestic and foreign holidaymakers. A long time has passed since the last edition of the theatre festival, so maintaining a relatively high level of culture is mainly left to the Portorož Auditorium, which, in collaboration with other Slovenian events organisers, hosts concerts by groups and orchestras which then go on to appear in other venues around Slovenia. There is no doubt that events organisers in the Gorenjska region have the upper hand in this sense. The Bled Festival, which offers audiences a broad selection of many musical events, has now really taken off, and then there is the world music of the Okarina Festival. Inventive organisers in Kranjska Gora put on a good number of events of local cultural interest which also attract large numbers of visitors from Italy and Austria.

For the time being, the recession has not significantly affected cultural events, which is proof of just how resistant culture can be. For the even more difficult economic times that may be on the horizon, culture could become an important psychological reserve. •

# A BRIDGE WHICH IS MUCH MORE THAN THAT

Jože Osterman Photo Darinka Mladenovič

**T**HE NEW BUTCHERS' BRIDGE IN the heart of Ljubljana connects the central market to the Petkovšek embankment. It stands, in other words, in a location which is probably one of the most sensitive not only in Ljubljana but in the country as a whole. Ljubljana's central market, built by the celebrated architect Jože Plečnik (who himself envisaged the Butchers' Bridge as an important element of the project), is in fact a place that has accumulated so much history, both of the city and of the nation, that a watchful public followed the laying of every stone of the new structure.

The new bridge, an elegant structure bridging the Ljubljanica in a single flourish, is 33 metres long and 17 metres wide. These dimensions in themselves

reveal that the new bridge is not a traditional, narrow bridge (and this is not the only way in which it differs radically from Plečnik's original design), but a broad platform over the river, paved with tonalite from the Pohorje massif and edged with reinforced glass, which in the coming years will take on its own function: as a separate part of the market, an elegant new promenade, a venue for important cultural events or something else. With its new elegance, it calls for something new, elite and select.

This basic premise appears to have been successfully realised by the planning team at the Atelierarhitekti studio. Recognisable in their solution are the concepts used in the regulation of the Ljubljanica embankments,

particularly in Dvorni Trg, by the architects Matej and Vesna Vozlič. Even more felicitous was the decision to occupy the entire space with sculptures by Jakov Brdar, without a doubt the most exciting Slovenian sculptor working today. His dramatic and incredibly dynamic sculptures, which today stand on the Butchers' Bridge leave few visitors unmoved. This is especially true in the case of his statue of Prometheus, a creature of human form but with his internal organs exposed, revealing the humours and vital functions, drawing attention with almost uncomfortable realism to the products on sale a little further on, in Plečnik's market: parts of once-living creatures that are now part of our food chain. Brdar is more playful and friendly





with the little bronze figures that he has installed as part of the bridge parapet: these cheerful fish heads, shells and octopus tentacles are pleasant to look at and to touch, and put one in mind of good food. Two other sculptures stand on the bridge, albeit temporarily: a giant Satyr and a tender statue of Adam and Eve, which somehow closes the eternal circle of physicality and spirituality of the human race as it passes by on its way to the market. Something unique and almost too beautiful for a food market!

If you descend the steps at the side of the bridge down to the river Ljubljanica, which at this point is enclosed between tall concrete walls, you will be charmed by the beauty of the new riverboat jetty below the bridge, which has suddenly brought the river much closer to the people of the city. In a single stroke – the building of a bridge which is much more than that – a kind of miracle has happened in this most sensitive location: the river and the market, art and people have been reunited. An almost unrepeatable achievement!

## 6TH TRIENNIAL OF CONTEMPORARY ART IN SLOVENIA: AN IDEA FOR LIVING, REALISM AND REALITY IN CONTEMPORARY ART IN SLOVENIA

Andrej Savelli

The Modern Gallery in Ljubljana opened its doors for the 6th U3 Slovenian art triennial on 15 June. The work of 44 artists is on display under the title of “Living, Realism and Reality in Contemporary Art in Slovenia.”

This year’s triennial was prepared by the English curator, Charles Esche, contemporary art theoretician and director of the Van Abbemuseum in Eindhoven. He discovered Slovenian art while travelling round the country and meeting its artists. The selection is “entirely his own and he carries all of responsibility for it”. The triennial is the most extensive to date, both in terms of the number of contributing artists and the size of the exhibition area. The majority of those contributing are contemporary artists. Among them are many young artists, some still unknown as well as famous artists who have continued with their fresh approach to the art scene.

The exhibition is a celebration of the way in which we

currently understand our relationship to art and how art treats reality. The exhibition is at the forefront of an artistic approach which presents new views on history, the environment, political and social questions as well as exploring intimate relations in a collective setting, such as those with family and with friends. On the whole, the pieces do not concentrate on the inner life of the artists, but on their relation to the external environment.

The focal point of the exhibition is a small, eclectic collection – an example of historical realism – from the Modern Gallery’s collection. The exhibition then turns towards contemporary artwork, reflecting subjects as varied as party politics, interior design and artistic training in the playful manner that is characteristic of the whole exhibition.

Artistic performances, film projections and discussions will take place at the exhibition and the triennial will close on 19 September.

# EARLY MUSIC CONQUERS SLOVENIA

Jože Osterman Photo Archive Ars Ramovš

OVER TWO DECADES HAVE PASSED since Klemen Ramovš, then a young recorder virtuoso, took on the demanding role of cultural manager (in parallel with his successful career as a musician) and founded a festival of early music in ancient Radovljica. The endeavour was a success and quickly took off, and although Ramovš later transferred his festival to Brežice, where conditions were apparently more favourable, early music has become an important part of the cultural landscape in Slovenia, particularly in the summer months.

The Brežice Festival, without a doubt the most successful focus of music of this genre, opened its gates once again at the end of June. The festival is now officially known as *Seviq Brežice*, which is an abbreviation of the Latin expression *Semper Viva Quam Creata*, in reference to music that lives forever just as it was created. This year’s festival runs from 22 June to 4 August in 22 different municipalities around Slovenia and includes 43 concerts. The festival was opened by one of the highlights of this year’s programme: the first modern performance of the *Missa Viennensis* by Johannes Baptista Dolar. This was a demanding project, since the work calls for 16 solo singers, 16 instruments and organ, and is full of dramatic sound effects. The Orchestra Barocca di Bologna from Italy, the Chorus N’omen from Slovenia and the Grazer Choralschola from Austria were conducted by Tomaž Faganel, one of Slovenia’s top choir directors.

As already mentioned, this year’s *Seviq Brežice* festival literally criss-crosses Slovenia. With seven of its concerts, the festival even becomes part of the European Capital of Culture Maribor 2012 project, which this year begins a kind of ‘warm-up’ for the main event, due to take place in two

years’ time. In this context, Maribor, Murska Sobota, Novo Mesto, Ptuj, Slovenj Gradec and Velenje – all partner towns in the ECC project – will host notable performers of early music this year. Also worth mentioning are the 13 concerts due to take place in important historical locations around Slovenia, featuring 12 European early music ensembles.

That festival founder Klemen Ramovš also planted a good seed in Radovljica, where it all began, is demonstrated

by the fact that the local early music festival Radovljica 2010 takes place from 7 to 22 August in traditional locations around the Gorenjska region, with performances by 38 musicians from 12 different countries. The ensembles and soloists appearing at Radovljica 2010 may be smaller than those performing in Brežice, but this in no way detracts from the fact that early music has made itself well and truly at home in Slovenia and earned a loyal following among the concert-going public.





# GATHERINGS OF SLOVENIAN EMIGRANTS

Jože Osterman Photo Archive

LATE JUNE AND EARLY JULY IS traditionally the season for gatherings of Slovenian emigrants, who choose this period to return, in ever-increasing numbers, to the places where they or their ancestors were born. These pleasant events, coloured by emotions, memories and a degree of nostalgia, officially began with a meeting of representatives of emigrants' associations and groups in the National Assembly, and continued with events such as Gathering in My Country, organised by the Slovenian Emigrants' Society, and the 17th Slovenians in the World Camp, organised by Slovenia in the World.

The main event of this gathering took place this year at the former partisan

airfield in Prilozje, near Metlika in the Bela Krajina region, and was attended by a good number of locals and guests from all over the world. The participants, who enjoyed the fine weather and the wonderful setting characteristic of this part of Slovenia, were welcomed by Dr Boštjan Žekš, the minister responsible for Slovenians abroad. A rich cultural programme featured performances by cultural groups from Slovenian communities in other countries: the Lipa cultural association from Munich, the Triglav choir from Banja Luka, the France Prešeren choir from Skopje, the Encijan choir from Pula, and a group of actors from the Kredarica cultural association in Novi Sad. They were joined by local performers: the Ivan Navatril folklore

group from Metlika (one of the finest in Slovenia) and a local wind band. The performances, particularly those of the choirs from Banja Luka and Skopje, were of a surprisingly high standard – evidence that cultural groups in Slovenian communities abroad are capable of more than simple reproductions of works from the mother country and are able to tackle even the most demanding pieces and explore new artistic directions. Since these are Slovenian groups operating in the relatively strong Slovenian emigrant strongholds of the large cities of the former federal Yugoslavia, this is to a certain extent understandable. Nevertheless, it is also a reminder that assistance needs to be offered to these groups in order to help them maintain



their quality at this excellent level.

Another very important factor is that this year's emigrants' gathering also took place, for the second year running, on the streets of Ljubljana, more precisely in Pogačarjev Trg. The capital, which in previous years, perhaps because of the busy programme of summer cultural events, has been somewhat reserved towards emigrant culture, thus

demonstrated once again that it has a big heart. The emigrants were welcomed by the Mayor of Ljubljana, Zoran Jankovič. The symbolic importance, for the emigrants, of a performance in the capital was demonstrated by the fact that the majority of the members of cultural groups considered this event to be the highlight of their visit to Slovenia.

The Slovenians in the World Camp in

Dolenjske Toplice saw some profound reflections on the ties that bind Slovenians around the world, while members of the younger generations of Slovenians from Canada and Argentina were prominently featured in the cultural programme. A few days earlier, young people took part in a special camp in Vipava – proof that one can never forget one's roots.

# JAZZ FESTIVAL

Polona Prešeren Photo Archive

WARM SUMMER EVENINGS ARE perfect for all kinds of events, and there are many to choose from in towns across Slovenia throughout the summer. One particular treat for musical gourmets is the Ljubljana Jazz Festival. This year's 51st edition took place at the beginning of July.

Once again the festival organisers laid on an excellent musical programme at Cankarjev Dom, as well as a number of accompanying events. A succession of top

performers appeared at Cankarjev Dom, Križanke and Klub Gromka – including Pat Metheny and other guests from all over the world, as well as the best home-grown jazz musicians.

The opening concert – in the opinion of many the highlight of this year's festival – featured jazz legend Pat Metheny, who first appeared in Ljubljana just a few days before Slovenia's declaration of independence, and he shared his experiences of that time with the public. Many audience members were also there 19 years ago. 'For me it was one of my best concert experiences ever, so I had to come to Metheny's concert and the other events of festival', said one enthusiastic festival-goer.

The concerts were accompanied by a varied programme of events including round-table discussions, exhibitions, and



a piano for the use of the public in the Križanke foyer... Ljubljana Jazz Festival hopes to see you here at the same time next year.

# REVIEWING THE HISTORY OF RELATIONS BETWEEN EAST AND WEST THROUGH ART

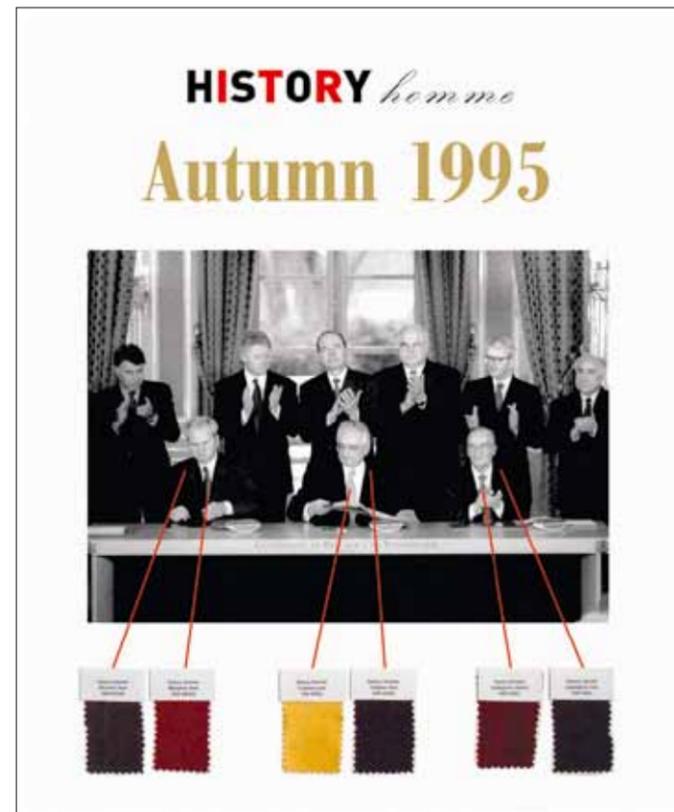
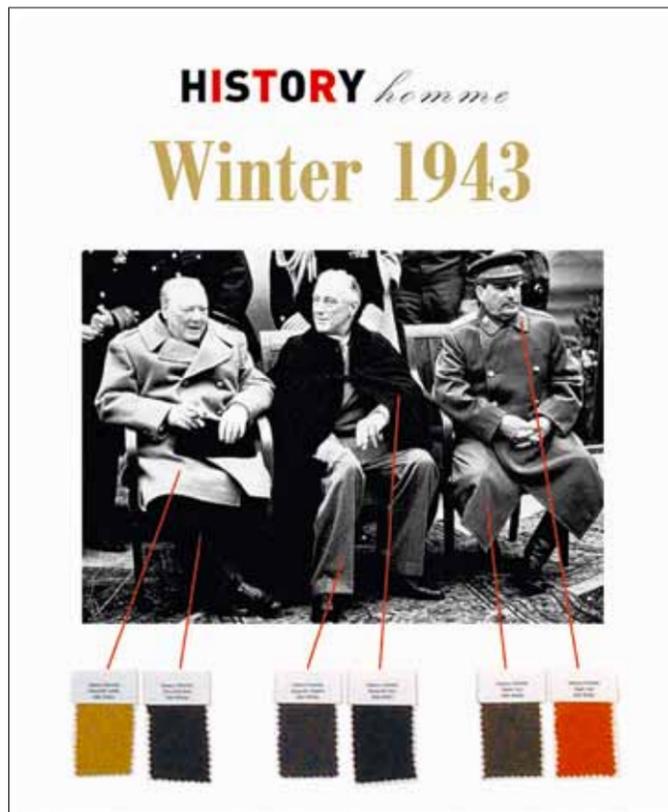
Andrej Savelli Photo Matej Andraž Vogrinčič & Vuk Ćosić: History Homme

THE NEW YORK GALLERY LMAKprojects, which focuses on promoting the development of young artists and curators, thereby also broadening the base of its own operation, has invited the cooperation of Tevž Logar, the artistic director of Ljubljana's Galerija Škuc, as part of an international programme to present the stances of younger generation curators.

The exhibition, which Logar designed for the LMAK gallery, opened to the public on 26 June and stayed open until 1 August. The central thread of the exhibition, which showcases Vuk Ćosić & Matej Andraž Vogrinčič, Braco Dimitrijević, IRWIN and Agnieszka Polska, is a reinvestigation of "official" history, which is written to suit their own tastes by the victors, and in this light relations between East and West, which appear in a new light following the fall of the Berlin Wall.

The exhibition, entitled Disobedience, in the eyes of anyone who has read history, is man's original virtue, is neither an

attempt at a historical narration of the "former" East, nor a negation of the "official history" of the West, but rather a musing on the approaches we might employ to tackle the concept of historicification – of course through art. Each artistic work in its own way questions the point of reconstructing the past, which is clearly based on a coexistence of the interests of the victors and clippings from time and space. The exhibition addresses the issue of exclusion and the deliberate expunging of activities in certain spaces, while at the same time it seeks to draw attention to the problematic and atrophied methodologies in the processes of historicification, which all too often apply Procrustean bed standards. It would be especially useful if institutional mechanisms withdrew from classical historical narratives and created an entirely new experience of time and space, which would not be hidden in stasis behind the barricade of infallibility, but would become a living organism.



# INVENTIVE WOMEN IN SLOVENIA

Sanja Prelevič Photo Archive

SLOVENIAN INVENTORS REGISTER BETWEEN 300 AND 360 inventions at the Intellectual Property Office every year. Of these, an average of 21 patents are registered by women: just 7% of all patents registered. No one is able to offer an answer to the question of why there are so few women inventors, so perhaps we should turn to the facetious explanation that circulates among Slovenian inventors themselves: 'There are fewer women because they don't have the laziness and leisure that you need in order to be able to come up with new ideas.'

Despite the fact that inventions cannot be divided into 'male' and 'female', a desire to stimulate more women to present and patent their discoveries led to the creation of the prestigious annual Korea International Women's Invention Exposition (KIWIE) held in Seoul, South Korea, and exclusively devoted to inventions and innovations by women. At the last edition of this event, in May, women inventors from Slovenia achieved notable results.

Among a total of 300 inventions from 25 countries, seven patents submitted by five Slovenian women won medals and awards. They included patents for scientific breakthroughs and for useful innovations such as domestic appliances. The award-winning inventors were Mojca Mihael, Dr Anita Kovač Kralj, Tina Pulko, Erika Drobnič and Romina Znoj. The last of these, Romina Znoj, won the prize for the second-best innovation at the exposition, for her discovery of a molecule which is predicted to cure cancer – the biggest success of a female inventor from Slovenia at an international event.

'For this new molecule, which we discovered in a laboratory-created plant extract in collaboration with researchers at the Jožef Stefan Institute and the Institute of Chemistry in Ljubljana in January 2010, we discovered that it works like an "eraser" – that it triggers necrosis in several types of cancer cell. Now it needs to be tested. First of all we need to establish how the molecule behaves in a living organism, in other words we have to prove that the

“ THERE ARE FEWER WOMEN BECAUSE THEY DON'T HAVE THE LAZINESS AND LEISURE THAT YOU NEED IN ORDER TO BE ABLE TO COME UP WITH NEW IDEAS. ”

molecule actually triggers gradual necrosis of a tumour in a living organism,' explains the 33-year-old inventor from Ljubljana.

Anita Kovač Kralj received a silver medal for her invention of an improvement to the efficiency of a heat pump. Mojca Mihael won a gold medal for a mental wellness innovation and a bronze medal for a fine-matter device offering protection from negative radiation. Tina Pulko won a silver medal for a candle with a secret message.

Erika Drobnič, a 39-year-old economics graduate from Železniki, received two medals in Seoul for her practical inventions. A gold medal for her 'two-in-one' cot and a bronze medal for her 'three-in-one' children's bed. Later the same month, in Ljubljana, her children's bed received an award for the best female innovation from the International Federation of Inventors' Associations. The essence of both these inventions is that parents can take a specially designed children's bed or cot which they no longer need and convert it in such a way as to give it a new use for a growing child. In the second stage, the bed becomes a play/sleeping area in the form of a castle, and in the third phase a desk with shelves. The cot, on the other hand, converts into two chairs and a table for small children. The basket remains unchanged, perhaps to be used for toy storage. In this way, the cot is useful for at least the next five years rather than just for a few months.

'An invention comes about,' explains Drobnič, 'when you come across an object or an appliance that you don't like, and then you ask yourself how you would change it so that you do like it, or so that it becomes more useful. My idea was that furniture like this could "grow and develop" together with the child,' says Erika Drobnič, the mother of four-year-old Kai and 18-month-old Kiara.

Despite the fact that Erika Drobnič comes from a family in which patents are not unknown – her father and brother can both boast registered patents – until recently she did not imagine that inventions and innovations would also be part of her own career. It was not until she lost her job that she was encouraged to become more active in the field of innovations.

She admits that she has always been creative and, above all, very practical. These two qualities initially helped her to



**“AN INVENTION COMES ABOUT, EXPLAINS DROBNIČ, 'WHEN YOU COME ACROSS AN OBJECT OR AN APPLIANCE THAT YOU DON'T LIKE, AND THEN YOU ASK YOURSELF HOW YOU WOULD CHANGE IT SO THAT YOU DO LIKE IT, OR SO THAT IT BECOMES MORE USEFUL.’”**

create a career. It was not until later that she began thinking about starting a family. But last autumn, her life was turned upside down. When she returned to work after the birth of her second child, she was informed that her position at the bank where she had been working for eight years no longer existed. Erika Drobnič did not waste time and

immediately again devoted herself to the inventions which she had sketched while on maternity leave. To begin with she sought the opinion of her husband, a timber technician who is completing a part-time diploma in wood science and technology. Then she began to solicit the opinions of young parents in her circle of acquaintance. Her husband made wooden models based on her ideas, after which came appearances at fairs and exhibitions and the first awards.

'The reactions have been excellent. Everyone has reacted very positively and the final confirmation came in Seoul. I really believe in my products,' says this energetic young woman with great simplicity. She is already preparing a new patent: a uniquely functional ironing board.

Her first disappointment, however, came shortly after her return from Korea. Having offered models of her innovative cots and children's beds to a furniture company in the town where she lives, with a view to putting them into production, she was turned down flat on the grounds that her inventions would not



**“CREATIVITY AND A SENSE FOR INNOVATION ARE SOMETHING THAT YOU ARE SIMPLY BORN WITH”**

fit into their product range. Now, however, she is well on her way to finding partners to commercialise her ideas.

'At the moment the system of innovations in Slovenia is not working. It is not enough to be an innovator, they also expect you to be a marketing expert and a manager. You have to be an all-rounder – even foreign languages are important,' explains Erika Drobnič when asked how it feels to be an innovator. This is also the main reason that as chair of the scientific council of Active Slovene Innovators (ASI), an organisation that brings together 181 Slovenian innovators, she is endeavouring to help innovators in the processes of patenting, protecting and marketing their inventions. She says that the first thing that needs to be changed is an atmosphere that is not conducive to innovation. We need to start to looking at innovations (again) as the driving force of progress and, at the same time, an important factor in the future of every economy. Drobnič is convinced that a proper relationship between inventors and State institutions has not yet been established. 'Some inventors invent in their garages, with very limited funds, and often without the knowledge that is needed to complete a patent. In cases like these, cooperation with a university, for example, would be extremely useful.'

ASI director Tomaž Pevc, himself an award-winning inventor, agrees with her. He says that the present climate is not sufficiently motivating for inventors, and adds that the economic crisis

**“IT IS NOT ENOUGH TO BE AN INNOVATOR, THEY ALSO EXPECT YOU TO BE A MARKETING EXPERT AND A MANAGER. YOU HAVE TO BE AN ALL-ROUNDER – EVEN FOREIGN LANGUAGES ARE IMPORTANT.”**

could help change attitudes towards inventions. He is convinced that the use of innovations in production could give Slovenia fresh economic impetus. As a positive example of cooperation between inventors and State institutions, Pevc cites Germany, where inventors are given financial help when completing a patent application to help them develop their invention to the prototype stage.

**Innovations do not happen by chance**

Both Erika Drobnič and Romina Znoj have had a chance to experience in their own environments how inventors are viewed as eccentric visionaries, or even as a bit strange. They agree that creativity and a sense for innovation are something that you are simply born with.

Romina Znoj began inventing things when she was just four years old. 'I took a red plastic dish, poured water into it and coloured it with a spice. I proudly walked around proclaiming it to be my new medicine for all illnesses. Then, I stole a syringe from my grandmother and stuck it into a tree. I was deeply disappointed at being unable to take a blood sample from it. I have always learned through curiosity.'

While Drobnič devoted herself to inventing for practical reasons, in the desire to create multifunctional, practical furniture, Znoj explains that her desire to innovate comes from: 'my inner drive, my inner inspiration'.

'I am keen to learn how the material world functions and at the same time to understand the laws of the spiritual world.' This philosophy and personal orientation also explains her character as an all-rounder – she speaks seven languages and holds degrees in both microbiology and Egyptology. For the last six years she has been researching (at the Jožef Stefan Institute, on a voluntary basis) a molecule which she believes could help cure cancer. This discovery, for which she received an important award in Seoul, is also the basis of her future doctoral thesis.

Alongside her scientific research, Romina Znoj has in the meantime patented another interesting invention: she has developed a prototype of a computer model (a 'virtual mouse') which enables the accurate calculation of the effectiveness of new medicines. Use of the 'virtual mouse' could take the place of experiments on live mice and other lab animals.

Both women – and perhaps this is a general characteristic of all inventors – are full of enthusiasm and confidence in themselves and their abilities. Both of them glow with optimism. And they hope to get the opportunity to put their award-winning ideas into practice at home rather than abroad, which is, unfortunately, what usually happens.

President Danilo Türk with Law students.



# SLOVENIAN STUDENTS AT INTERNATIONAL COMPETITIONS

Seeking knowledge among the best

Jože Prešeren Photo Stanko Gruden/STA

It is common knowledge that there are currently in Slovenia three fairly large public universities. The oldest, and internationally the most distinguished, is the University of Ljubljana, founded in 1919 following the establishment of the state of Serbs, Croats and Slovenians, later Yugoslavia, and under a range of international criteria it is commonly ranked among the 500 most highly regarded universities in the world, with its faculties regularly numbering more than 50,000 enrolled students. The second Slovenian university is in Maribor, founded in 1975 on the basis of a tradition of numerous professional colleges, and its full and part-time student body numbers more than 20,000. The third public university in Slovenia is Primorska University, based in Koper. Virtually since their founding, and especially after Slovenia joined the

EU, all three public universities have been involved in a range of international and inter-university links. Alongside these three universities there are two private universities operating in Slovenia – the University of Nova Gorica and the officially as yet not fully accredited New University based at Brdo pri Kranju. In addition there are a number of smaller colleges and higher education centres with individual schools and departments, and these are officially part of one or other of the previously mentioned universities; there are such centres in Kranj, Celje, Novo mesto, Krško and elsewhere, and some of them are even considering in the long term setting up their own independent universities, for instance in Novo mesto, Celje and perhaps elsewhere.

Evidence of the high quality of Slovenia's universities can

be seen in the success of Slovenian students at international competitions for various professions, and reports can be found frequently in a number of Slovenian media outlets about major international successes. An interesting point is that right at a time when there is much talk in Slovenia about the international arbitration process, which should finally determine the border between Slovenia and Croatia, with attention of course being focused primarily on the maritime border, a report came in recently about the outstanding performance of students of international law from the Ljubljana law faculty at a prominent world student competition in international law. The competition is called the Philip C. Jessup Moot Court Competition, and has been running for 51 years in Washington, DC. This year's competition saw more than 600 teams apply, with 127 teams securing a place in the competition, and the Slovenian team finished in third place, thereby emerging as the best team from Europe! Of course the students proudly point out that they beat numerous other much more distinguished and world-famous universities such as Oxford and Cambridge, as well as the celebrated American university of Harvard. The Slovenian team comprised the full-time undergraduate students Ana Kastelec, Jan Primec and Nastasja Suhadolnik, and they were mentored by Prof. Dr Vasilka Sancin. The competition is staged as a simulation of court proceedings at the International Court in The Hague, and comprises written memorandums and oral presentations of arguments in the form of submissions made before a panel of judges.

One of the team members, Ana Kastelec, said that the Slovenian competition group studied a mountain of legal books, especially those concerning the responsibilities of states in international law. An interesting point is that the test case they received was an international territorial dispute involving some islands claimed by two states. They also prepared well for the oral submissions, and were clearly very successful in this, since they were the only ones of the best-performing competitors whose native language was not English. In her opinion, this competition also provided them with exceptional experience in international law, in the fields of legal argumentation and public speaking, and most importantly they gained a special insight into the processes of how the rules of international law are created. And sure enough, once they complete their regular courses at the Ljubljana Faculty of Law, all the members of the team intend to continue studying, preferably abroad. Although they place a high value on the base of their academic knowledge gained at their home faculty, they can supposedly enhance their knowledge by studying abroad, while also gaining new international experience.

“ THIS COMPETITION ALSO PROVIDED THEM WITH EXCEPTIONAL EXPERIENCE IN INTERNATIONAL LAW, IN THE FIELDS OF LEGAL ARGUMENTATION AND PUBLIC SPEAKING, AND MOST IMPORTANTLY THEY GAINED A SPECIAL INSIGHT INTO THE PROCESSES OF HOW THE RULES OF INTERNATIONAL LAW ARE CREATED. ”

As is clear from various newspaper reports, and especially in the online presentations of Slovenian universities, the kind of success notched up recently by law students from Ljubljana can also be boasted by students from other faculties. There was the notable participation of students from Ljubljana's natural sciences faculties last year, at the international synthetic biology competition at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) in Cambridge, USA, where they won the gold medal against exceptionally stiff international competition. For this project they developed a new technology for preparing nanomaterials from proteins prepared in bacteria.

A Slovenian, telecommunications student Andraž Piletič, was also the winner of the distinguished Cisco networking competition, International NetRiders, which took place simultaneously in 41 countries.

Major international success at numerous domestic and international competitions has also been enjoyed by students from Maribor University, who are becoming increasingly involved in international cooperation. Recently students from Maribor's law faculty took part in the European Law Moot Court Competition, making it to the final, which is held each year at the court in Luxembourg. They were also contenders in

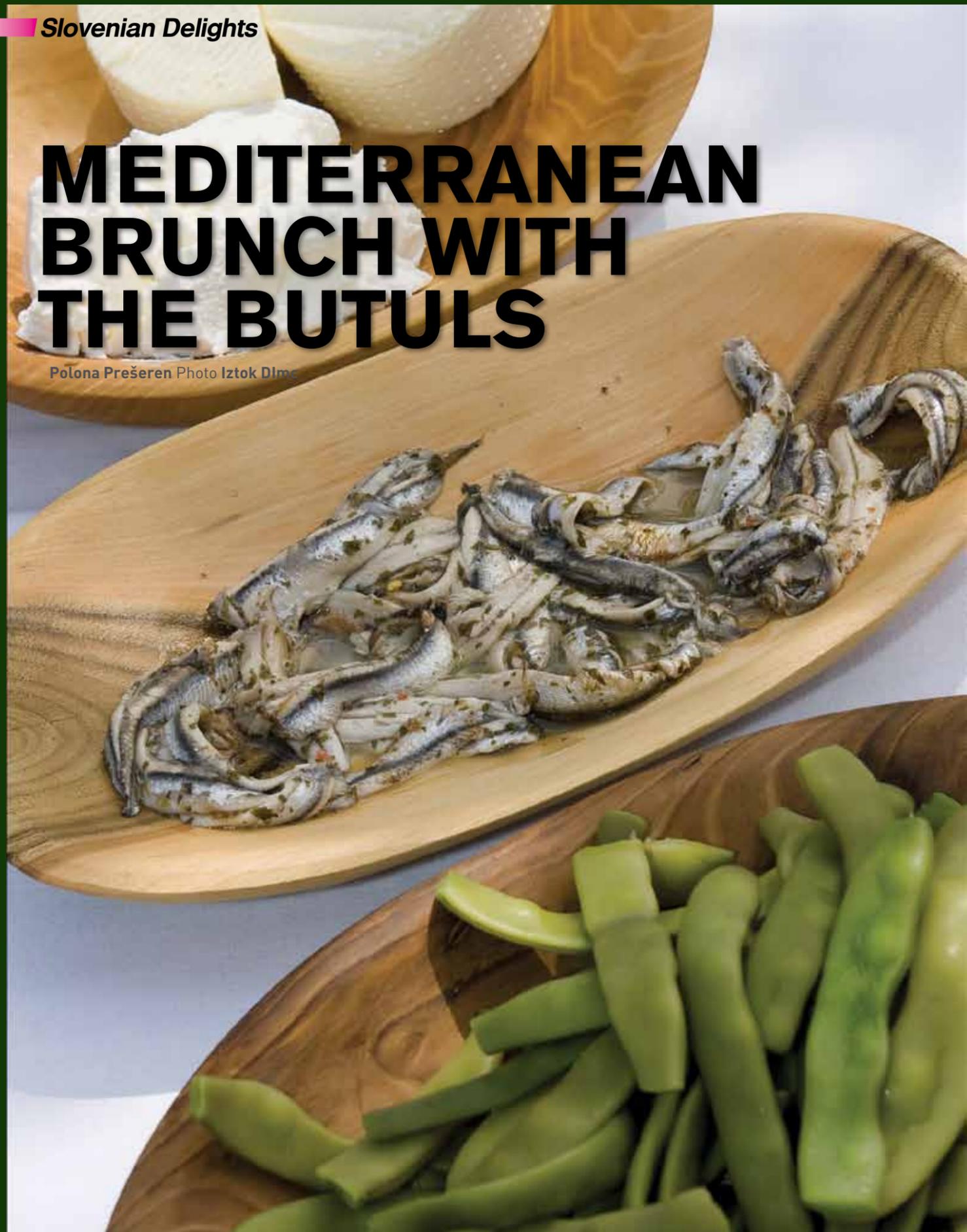
the international competition in international commercial arbitration, the Willem C. Vis Arbitration Moot Court in Vienna and Hong Kong. The students, as well as the professors mentoring them, have the opportunity at these international meetings to become familiarised with legal issues, they learn how to resolve them, formulate arguments and present written positions, and they learn how to make oral representations. Only rarely do students have the chance to learn about all these

legal skills while they are still in full-time courses. Naturally, at all the universities it is stressed that participation at international student competitions and with the collaboration of their professors is extremely important for the international standing of each university.

Each year the Ministry of Higher Education, Science and Technology usually holds a special reception for students who have recently enjoyed noted success at international competitions. Looking over the list, it is clear that the students attending these receptions are not just students of law, which has featured prominently in this piece, but also computing, electronics, IT, communicology, technical sciences, students from art academies, mathematicians, economists and more. It should be acknowledged that they are not all winners in the competitions they attend, but they can boast numerous high finishing places, so we can justifiably say that they were among the best.

# MEDITERRANEAN BRUNCH WITH THE BUTULS

Polona Prešeren Photo Iztok Dimec



**W**HEN I GET OUT OF MY CAR outside the Butul farmhouse in Manžan, a little village not far from Koper, I am greeted by friendly hosts and the smell of lavender. I stop and sniff. Unbelievable. Slovenian Istria is welcoming me with all its charms. Tatjana Butul just smiles: 'This lavender smell is really wonderful and look how many butterflies there are around. Butterflies love lavender.' It will soon be time to harvest it, but by then there will already be another scent in the air. Nature knows how to make every season beautiful.

A special energy surrounds Slovenian Istria. It is full of different smells and flavours, and there is a gentle breeze and a view over the northernmost end of the Adriatic Sea. All around are olive groves, promising olive oil of the finest quality, and vineyards that are home to the finest wines. Vegetable gardens bear plentiful crops, as do the fruit trees. The herbs have a distinctly Mediterranean fragrance. The people, too, are open and warm-spirited. This is, after all, the Slovenian Mediterranean.

All of this is of course reflected in the region's cuisine, in the preparation of food, in the wine cellar and in the herb garden. The food is rich and varied, full of flavours that are complemented by herbs. In my desire to get to know Slovenian Mediterranean cuisine, I set off to the Butul farmhouse, where for several years they have been organising themed events and culinary workshops. It all began when a mother and son combined their passion for cooking and decided to pass it on to other people. The workshops are always well attended: up to 80 people in a single day. All catered for by Tatjana and her son Črt.

'At these workshops we pass on our way of life. People discover things here that are always on our table and that are seasonal. When it is the asparagus season, we prepare asparagus dishes. Another time it might be beans, or kakis



(also known as Japanese persimmons). We always use ingredients that are in season. The Mediterranean climate means that we have something fresh in the garden all year round,' explains Tatjana. Everything is based on olive oil. They like to share their experience and the heritage of their ancestors with others. They enjoy teaching people about eating well. It is no surprise, then, that their visitors return, call them to ask for culinary advice, or simply stop in for a visit or a chat.

Most of the time the workshops are run by Črt. Tatjana steps in when there are a lot of participants. Otherwise she devotes her time to making jams, sauces and tinctures, drying fruit and vegetables and doing various other household chores. There is always plenty to do. Črt really is the right person for the workshops. Although he is barely 20 years old, he has an extremely mature approach

to cooking. He studies, reflects, and tries out new things. He also has experience as a sommelier. With enthusiasm, he explained to me about the herb garden which he planted himself this spring. The workshops are designed for a maximum of 15 people, since this is the only way he can be sure to devote proper attention to everyone. All the workshops are of course adapted to the season. Črt tells me that some of the participants at his cookery workshops are men whose wives have convinced them that it is time they learned to cook something. Then there are workshops for children, designed to get them interested in the colours and flavours of Mediterranean herbs.

## A Mediterranean herb garden in Slovenian Istria

'Come on, let's go to the herb garden,' Tatjana Butul says to the photographer and me. Tatjana is continuing a house tradition by offering workshop participants simple cookery secrets that are a normal part of the everyday life of the Mediterranean housewife. On the way to the herb garden she shows me

**'A special energy surrounds Slovenian Istria. The people, too, are open and warm-spirited.'**

where she dries vegetables and herbs. Olive trees grow around the house. There are also kaki trees and lavender bushes. This is the lavender season and Tatjana and Črt are already preparing culinary workshops on the theme of lavender.

Tatjana loves lavender and uses a lot of it in her cooking and to make various products. She even mixes salt with this aromatic plant. 'A lot of people think that lavender is only good as a perfume for wardrobes. But when they try food made with lavender, they soon change their minds,' she says. She loves to try out new things, experimenting with flavours and aromas. And now they have the Mediterranean herb garden planted by her son Črt.

Mediterranean cuisine is based on herbs, which not only give dishes aroma and flavour but also have effects on our body. Every herb contains its own beneficial ingredients, explains Tatjana, which is why we feel good after eating food made with herbs. The Butuls use herbs to make syrups and herbal infusions. They use them in sweet and savoury sauces, for herb salt and even for specialities such as rosemary wine (which helps in cases of fatigue or exhaustion). Rosemary and lavender are also used to prepare various tinctures. St John's wort soaked in olive oil is used to treat back problems. A new product this year is dark chocolate with lavender.

Because the climate is so warm, herbs do very well here. Previously they had a flower garden in the same spot, but the great heat caused the flowers to wilt. The setting of the herb garden is excellent for outdoor culinary workshops, where delicate olive trees offer protection from the summer heat.

**Gastronomy**

'Are we going to cook something today?' I ask. Tatjana merely smiles, disappears off somewhere and comes back with fresh courgettes, tomatoes, curd cheese, young cheese and figs. Also marinated anchovies and cooked green beans, and bread that she had baked the day before. She buys the flour locally from a trusted miller. Nothing is left to chance.

What marinade does she use? Tatjana



explains that it is made from their own olive oil with lemon from her mother's garden, chopped marjoram and coarse salt from the Sečovlje saltworks. Anchovies in this marinade can be kept in the fridge for up to four days but, believe me, they are unlikely to last that long. Before serving, they are sprinkled with chopped fresh basil.

Meanwhile, Črt deals with the green beans, which he seasons with olive oil, fleur de sel, lemon juice and lemon thyme. Tatjana explains why green beans are on the menu today. In Slovenian Istria it

was the custom for every village to have a festivity or fête tied to a particular saint. Since there is no church in Manžan, the locals came up with a fête dedicated to the green bean. This usually takes place on the second weekend in July, and the Butuls celebrate the event with their friends.

Now it is time for the other delights.

**'We enjoy teaching people about eating well.'**



While Črt is preparing the barbecue, Tatjana tears off a few vine leaves and wraps the young cheese in them, seasoning with fresh marjoram and thyme. We chop the courgettes and tomatoes into large pieces. Everything is now ready for the grill. We cut the figs in half and slice a peach. Črt grills everything to perfection on the barbecue.

Tatjana quickly mixes the home-made curd cheese with chopped balm, spoons some into a bowl and sprinkles it with lavender flowers, and tops it with half a grilled fig and slices of peach. The finishing touch is a pinch of fleur de sel. But this valuable seasoning is only used sparingly.

When everything is ready, we sit in the shade of the olive trees and eat. Our lively



chatter soon dies away as we concentrate on the food. Tatjana remembers that with food like this a glass of wine is needed to make the pleasure complete. And so we have one. Malvasia from Slovenian Istria,

to complement the flavour. And so, at the Butul farmhouse, I learnt how to prepare a simple Mediterranean brunch. My friends were very appreciative. For more information: [www.butul.net](http://www.butul.net)

# HEADS HELD HIGH, BUT THE WORST LUCK OF THE TOURNAMENT

Andrej Stare Photo Andrej Stare, STA

**T**HE NINETEENTH FOOTBALL WORLD CUP IS HISTORY. For the first time since the first World Cup in 1930, a European side has won outside of Europe. Up to now, the tournaments in South America, Mexico, the USA and Japan/South Korea have all been won by South American teams (Brazil, Argentina, Uruguay).

Slovenia will remember this World Cup fondly, as it finally placed us in the upper echelons of world football. Simply qualifying was a minor sensation, and our excellent showing among the world's elite is proof of the exceptional footballing talent of a generation that few were willing to credit.

The matches against Algeria (Slovenia won 1:0), the USA (a 2:2 draw) and England (Slovenia lost 0:1) demonstrated the excellent fitness and tactical preparedness of the squad selected by manager Matjaž Kek and his staff. Slovenia proved to be an extremely well-organised team which left an indelible mark at all three venues (Polokwane, Johannesburg and Port Elisabeth) where its matches were played. Their fighting spirit, cohesiveness, knowledge and desire to win propelled Slovenia among the ranks of the world's best.

Slovenian President Danilo Türk's visit to the national side's training camp during the World Cup in South Africa just made this fantastic Slovenian football fairy-tale all the better. And the side also enjoyed great support from the stands. Quite a few football enthusiasts made the more than 10,000 kilometre trip to support our team. The estimates are that there were over 1000 Slovenian fans. But not just Slovenians, even the locals were cheering for Slovenia, especially in the games against Algeria and the USA. The locals surprised everyone who knows football, as they followed the matches in their own glorious way. We can't think of football without the sound of vuvuzelas anymore, and I am sure that the now-famous Zulu horn will soon find its way to every stadium in the world and of course to Slovenia as well. Hundreds of thousands of plastic vuvuzelas were sold during the tournament, and the Chinese



**“THE ANTHEM OF THE SLOVENIAN SUPPORTERS RINGS OUT ON NELSON MANDELA SQUARE IN JOHANNESBURG: “IF YOU DON'T JUMP YOU'RE NOT SLOVENIAN”**”



manufacturers struggled to keep up with demand.

Slovenia's excellent showing at the World Cup in South Africa also has wider implications even outside of football. In that part of the world they finally stopped mixing us up with Slovakia. Fortunately the Slovaks also made the finals, so some people had to put a little bit of effort in to distinguish the two countries. Recognition of Slovenia was everywhere. All

of the towns where the matches were played were decorated with the flags of the participating countries. You could see Slovenian flags everywhere, Slovenian football kits and t-shirts with the Slovenian football logo could be bought all over the place, and they even made vuvuzelas in Slovenian colours. In the main venue outside of the stadiums, on Nelson Mandela Square in the Sandton district of Johannesburg, you could hear Slovenian songs. And when a crowd of several hundred Slovenians gathered beneath the statue of the great revolutionary and Nobel Prize laureate the song rang out: “If you don't jump you're not Slovenian”, a refrain which has been

**“ON SLOVENIAN NATIONAL TELEVISION, THE SLOVENIA MATCHES WERE THE MOST WATCHED PROGRAMMES OF THE YEAR IN TERMS OF NUMBER AND PERCENTAGE OF THE SLOVENIAN POPULATION WHO TUNED THEIR SETS TO RTV SLOVENIA 1.”**

the sporting and football anthem of our supporters since 2000, when Slovenia qualified for the European Championships in the Netherlands and Belgium. Football, and particularly the matches against the USA and England, has helped Slovenia establish its place in the world.

Slovenia's play was watched with a great deal of appreciation by renowned football experts in the local media. The local TV stations dedicated the majority of their programming time to the World Cup and the expert assessments and discussions about this and that. The match between Slovenia and England was watched in the studio of the local television station by Luis Felipe Scolari (former Brazil manager, 2002 World Champion), Kevin Keegan (former England team captain), Ruud Krol (former Dutch team captain, two-time World Cup finalist), J.J. Okocha (Nigerian footballer, twice African Player of the Year) and Ricardo Villa (Argentinean player, 1978 World Champion). They were unanimous in their praise for the maturity, cohesiveness and commitment of the Slovenian team. They all expressed disappointment over Slovenia's elimination,

which happened in the waning moments of extra time during the match between Algeria and the USA.

The local television station showed scenes of the Slovenian team returning to Ljubljana on their main news programme. They talked about the exceptional connection of the entire nation with football and sports, and described our players as national heroes. Only the Ghanaians (after their quarter-final loss to Uruguay) and the Argentineans (after their 4:0 loss to Germany) received such a footballing welcome. The local media expressed their displeasure over the Nigerian president, who banned their football team from international competition for two years and suspended the managers and all of the players because of their poor showing at the World Cup.

Other media outlets also covered the Slovenian team. Spanish sports paper Marcia wrote "Slovenia and New Zealand – the worst luck at the World Cup". Why? New Zealand were eliminated without losing a game, and Slovenia missed out on the round of sixteen when the Algerian keeper lost control of an easy ball during extra time, allowing the Americans to advance.

Parisian paper L'Équipe wrote: "Mature, seasoned and iron-willed – that's Slovenia", and compared our footballers after the match between Algeria and the USA to our ski jumpers and swimmer Sara Isaković, and wrote: "Slovenians are a nation of athletes and in various championships have approximately the same number of medals as France, with a population half as big as the southern suburbs of Paris".

USA Today was more reserved with its superlatives regarding the Slovenian team. After the draw against the Americans they wrote: "We showed we were unbeatable again", and in the article they compared the comeback from 2:0 down to a 2:2 draw with the nearly lost war in the Pacific during World War II and the eventual victory.

The comments and reports on the internet were interesting as well. Before the World Cup, the teams were ranked in various forums. The biggest favourites before the tournament were Brazil, Argentina, Spain and the Netherlands, with Slovenia ranked between 28th and 32nd place. But at the end Slovenia was officially ranked in 18th place. The only team ranked higher that failed to make the knock-out rounds was the Ivory Coast.



**“ YOU COULD SEE SLOVENIAN FLAGS EVERYWHERE, SLOVENIAN FOOTBALL KITS AND T-SHIRTS WITH THE SLOVENIAN FOOTBALL LOGO COULD BE BOUGHT ALL OVER THE PLACE, AND THEY EVEN MADE VUVUZELAS IN SLOVENIAN COLOURS. ”**

**The Slovenian National Football Team at the 19th World Cup in South Africa:**

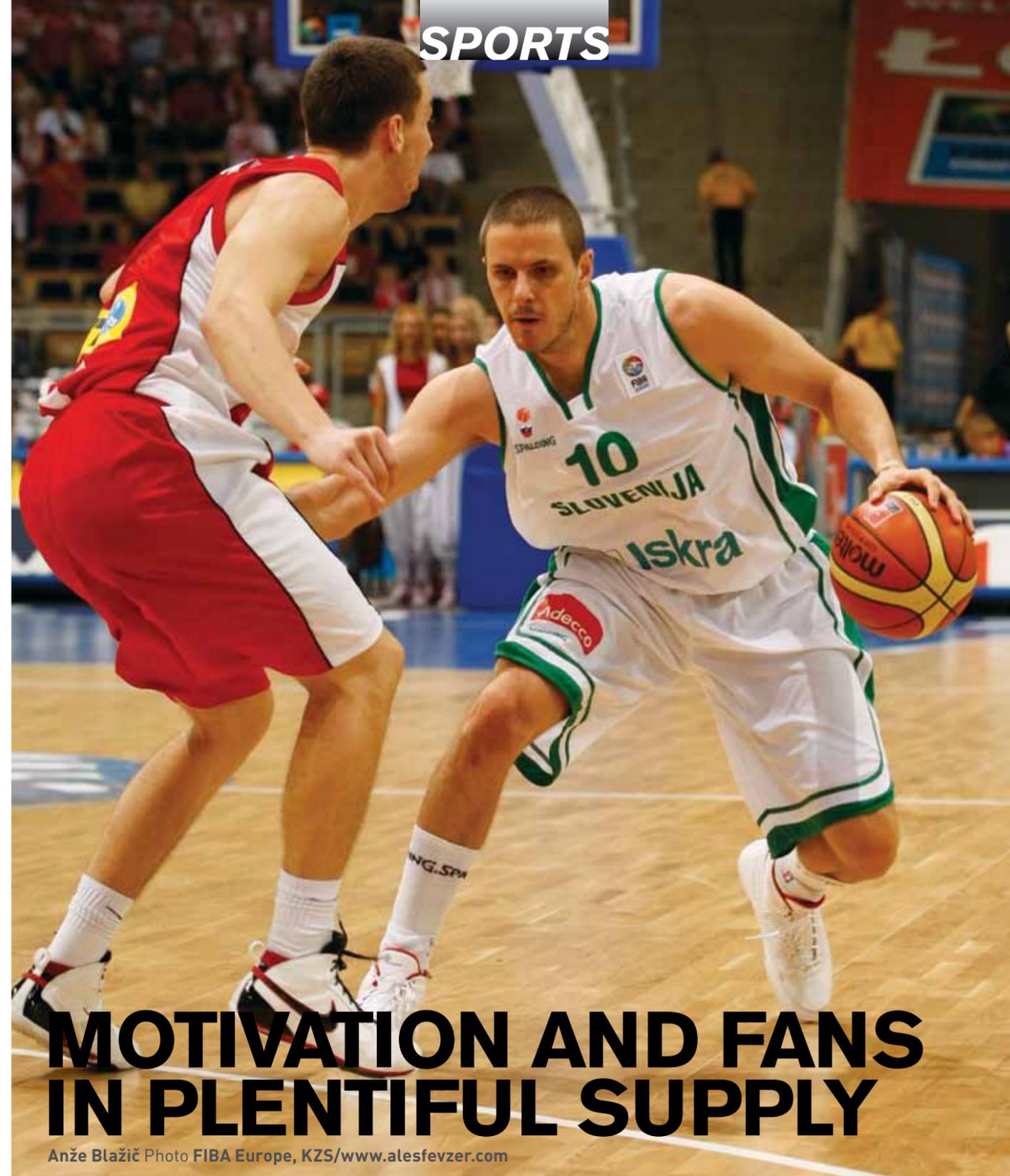
Samir Handanović, Jasmin Handanović, Aleksander Šeliga, Mišo Brečko, Bojan Jokić, Marko Šuler, Boštjan Cesar, Suad Fileković, Elvedin Džinić, Matej Mavrič Rožič, Branko Ilič, Rene Krhin, Andraž Kirm, Dalibor Stevanović, Valter Birsa, Robert Koren (captain), Andrej Komac, Aleksandar Radosavljevič, Zlatko Dedič, Milivoje Novaković, Zlatan Ljubijankič, Nejc Pečnik and Tim Matavž.

**Results and scorers:**

Slovenia : Algeria 1:0 (Koren 79')  
 Slovenia : USA 2:2 (Birsa 12', Ljubijankič 45')  
 Slovenia : England 0:1

**Final Standings Group C**

- 1. USA 5 (4:3)
- 2. England 5 (2:1)
- 3. Slovenia 4 (3:3)
- 4. Algeria 1 (0:2)



**MOTIVATION AND FANS IN PLENTIFUL SUPPLY**

Anže Blažič Photo FIBA Europe, KZS/www.alesfevzer.com

**W**ITH THE WORLD'S MAJOR FOOTBALL TOURNAMENT now long gone, we are rapidly approaching the basketball equivalent in Turkey, where the Slovenian team will be competing for only the second time in its history. From 28 August to 12 September, Istanbul will be infused with the rhythms of basketball – and Slovenia.

"I believe we have a good team, and the primary target is the last sixteen. As I said before, I'm a winner, and I know that

we'll give everything, and that we'll represent Slovenia well at this World Championship," said coach Memi Bečirovič at the June press conference when he made his selection of 17 candidates to appear in the team. He was given this weighty task for the first time in December 2009. His job is to lead Slovenia to another major success.

After defeat to Turkey in the last 16 of the 2006 championship, success four years later would be a place in the

quarter finals, which would give Slovenia a historic ranking in the biggest basketball competition in the world. “We’ll talk about objectives just before the championship, when our preparations are behind us, and I’m convinced we’ll be successful, since there is no lack of motivation,” said Boštjan Nachbar, point guard on the Slovenian team and for the last season a resident of Istanbul, at the same press conference. “Turkish people really love basketball, and look forward a lot to this World Championship, an event I’m sure will be well organised.”

The draw, which saw Slovenia grouped with Tunisia, Olympic champions the USA, long-time rivals Croatia, winners of the all-American championship Brazil and Asian champions Iran, luckily landed Slovenia’s green-and-white boys in Istanbul, which has excellent air links with Slovenia, as well as being an attractive and affordable tourist destination. For this very reason the Basketball Federation of Slovenia, which has been focused intensively on the World Championship project ever since the last European Championship ended in Poland, anticipates in the first part of the tournament some 3,000 to 4,000 Slovenian fans, who have earned fame since the earliest days as some of the most vocal, loyal and numerous fans in Europe.

Coach Memi Bečirovič has had no easy task putting the team together, losing Erazem Lorbek, who needs a bit of rest after a heavy season and is devoting the summer to his family, which has grown this year, Matjaž Smodiš, whose back is no longer up to major exertions, and Domen Lorbek, who has been troubled for a long time with a knee injury. So that means that this year’s preparations and perhaps even the World Championship itself will be an opportunity for some new names to make their mark with good performances. This includes Zoran Dragič, Matej Krušič, Dino Murič and Hasan Rizvič, who will be playing for the first time in the Slovenian kit.

As expected the strategist from Slovenska Bistrica has named as his captain Jaka Lakovič, a 32-year-old player with Regal FC Barcelona who has earned 56 caps with Slovenia, and since 2001, when he first won himself a place in the squad, he has not missed a single major tournament. “We don’t have the easiest group at the Championship, but a team like Slovenia can’t get bogged down worrying about opponents, and needs to think only of winning, game after game,” said the Ljubljana native, describing the stature of the Slovenian team.

After last year’s injury in the warm-up game against Germany, which ruled him out of the European Championship, Beno Udrih is also hungry again for major success, but regretfully he decided not to play for this championship. His last major tournament appearance for Slovenia was actually at the last World Championship, at which with 2.8 goals he was the top scorer in Aleš Pipan’s squad. The 28-year-old guard is otherwise part of two fraternal pairings in the team, with his older brother Samo, who played for Cibona last season, also vying for a place in the World Championship team during the preparations, while the Dragič brothers, Goran and Zoran, are



Jaka Lakovič



Goran Dragič



Primož Brezec



Beno Udrih

also showing what they can do this year as guards.

This season, Goran has made a fine showing for the Phoenix team, and this has brought him world fame, as well as a record that currently stands unbeaten. The 24-year-old Ljubljana native, who made his debut for Slovenia at a major tournament at the World Championship in Japan, set an NBA record on 7 May for the highest number of goals per minute – in the semi-final of the Western Conference he notched up 26 points in 17 minutes in the third game against San Antonio.

Among the guards, those fighting to earn minutes also include Jaka Klobučar, who before the preparations enhanced the pleasant surprise of the past season, the Belgrade team Partizan, Sandi Čebular, who experienced the spirit of the team in 2007 and Sani Bečirovič, who missed the European Championship in Poland, while the oldest member of the team, 36-year-old Goran Jagodnik, has also been a stalwart this year, and his fighting spirit has been an inspiration day after day, championship after championship.

Lining up for team places as forwards are the former members of Union Olimpija, Uroš Slokar, Miha Zupan, Primož Brezec and Gašper Vidmar. Vidmar spent the last part of the season at Fenerbahce Ülker, where he had already played in the 2008/09 season, and this has helped him prepare even more for the Turkish climate awaiting Slovenia at the Championship. Which will certainly feature some Slovenian colour.



## BEAUTIFUL YET ALWAYS REPLACEABLE THINGS

Jože Osterman Photo Barbara Jakše

**R**IGHT ON THIS YEAR'S MIDSUMMER night, the shortest night of the year, when Tadej Golob was on Ljubljana's Rožnik hill to receive the Kresnik [Midsummer Bonfire Lighter] prize from the newspaper house Delo, for the best Slovenian novel of the past year, our hearts were also warmed in the editorial office of Sinfo. Indeed Tadej is one of our permanent associates, and the fact that column inches in your magazine are being written by a man who has been confirmed by a jury of big names in Slovenian literary criticism as

an outstanding writer, winning a major literary prize, is not to be sniffed at. So right from the outset, our heartfelt congratulations!

### Tadej and his prize

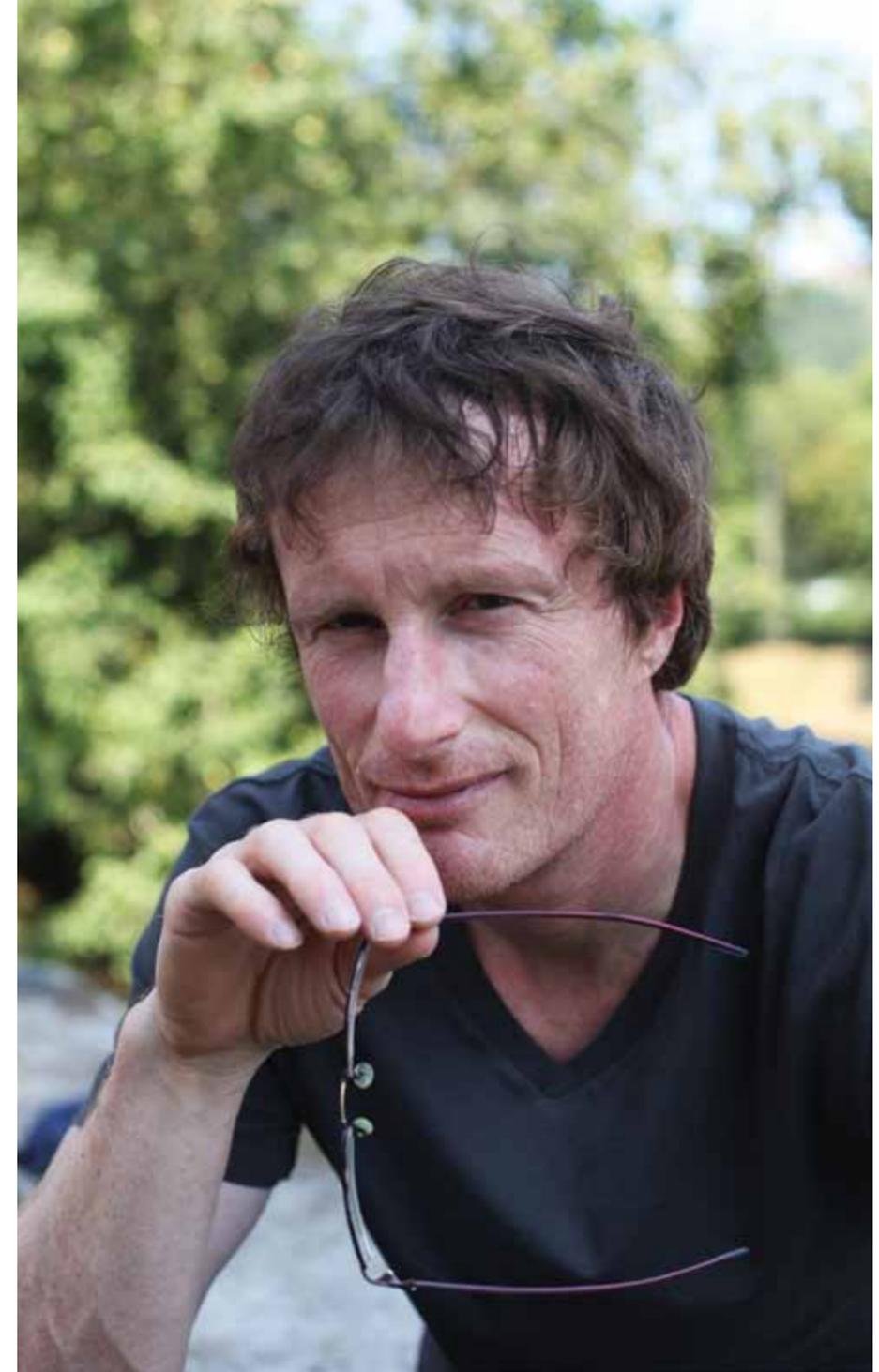
Who is Tadej Golob? In the Slovenian journalism "market", his name has of course been familiar for some time. He is a permanent (contract) associate of the company Adriamedia, which publishes magazines of a lighter genre, in which his columns in the Slovenian version of Playboy are a high point, he is an

outstanding Alpinist who has stood on top of Mount Everest (you can't get any higher!), he has written biographies of musician Zoran Predin and basketball player Peter Vilfan, he is the author of a book on Davo Karničar's expedition up Everest and descent from it on skis, and in our Sinfo he has shown himself able to write about rather unusual subjects and people (such as the Fairy-tale of the frozen waterfall in Mojstrana, on his writer colleague Miha Mazzini and on climber Urban Golob). His bibliography makes interesting reading, but many

people would turn up their nose and say that the writer has not yet proven himself with some weightier literary work, since the closest thing to that would be his (truly witty) Playboy columns. But there are plenty such writers in Slovenia.

For this reason the novel *Svinjske nogice* [Pig's Trotters] is a fundamental shift for its author, something immediately felt quite strongly by Golob himself. The media attention that swarmed around him in the last few days of June and into July, gives food for thought. In a country that declares itself the home of a people that was transformed into nationhood in fact chiefly because of its culture, in which literature plays by far the biggest part, such attention would appear to be the logical consequence of such high principles, but what about when practice paints quite a different picture? Relative to the other tasks performed by ordinary people in this country, writing books is one of the worst paid and least attention-worthy jobs, despite the fact that it is still quite widespread. The print runs of even the best literary works do not usually exceed 600 or 700 copies, meaning that the accessibility of even the greatest such achievement is virtually negligible. In this context, writing pure literature, something tackled by Golob in his *Svinjske nogice*, is therefore an almost bizarre act, something that can only be done by a person with a large dose of self-confidence or by a person for whom the external circumstances for writing are not that important and who is convinced that the aim of writing a good book is in fact the only thing that can effectively get you into that kind of work. Hmm, you don't come across very much of that Platonic motivation in our everyday life.

At this point of course, we get to like Golob, and in this way he has clearly gained the affection of the media and a large swathe of the literary public, who have suddenly got into his books in quite enviable numbers. And apparently before that, in a similar way he gained the affection of the professional jury, whose decision in favour of Golob in fact showed unbelievable courage, given the stereotypical Slovenian conception of literature. Indeed it is worth pointing



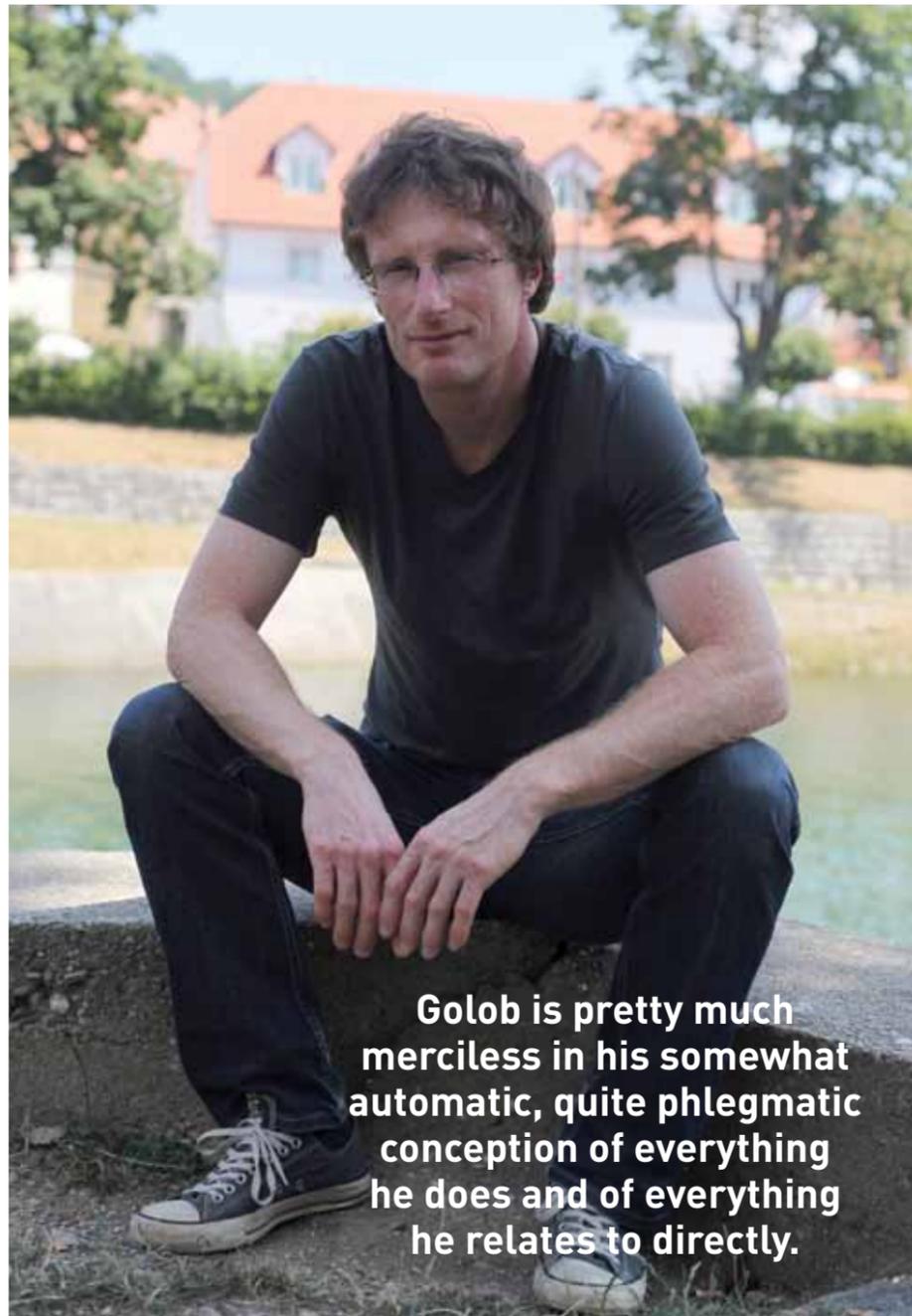
**'AND IF SVINJSKE NOGICE MARKED THE MOMENTOUS SHIFT FOR GOLOB INTO THE "TRUE" LITERARY SPHERE, IT MARKED FOR SLOVENIAN LITERATURE THE FIRST SUCCESSFUL FOCUSING OF ATTENTION ON A LESS DEDICATED, BUT UNDOUBTEDLY EXCITABLY DYNAMIC LITERARY ENERGY ENTERING INTO THE ARENA OF SLOVENIAN ARTS.'**



out that Golob won against extremely good company and competition, in the novels *Opazovalec* [Observer] by Evald Flisar, *Lahko* [Easy] by Andrej E. Skubic, *Ljubezen v zraku* [Love in the Air] by Jani Virk and the posthumously published novel *Zrele reči* [Mature Things] by Lojze Kovačič, in other words highly distinguished names, among whom prior to the selection, many could have felt Golob to be an outsider. Yet apart from being able to appreciate Golob's unusual, in terms of literary theory almost anarchic, and in terms of message perhaps even too light and none too cathartic work, the jury perhaps sensed an opportunity, where in the framework of Slovenia's virtually cult novel literature there is a need to spread the "dedication" to a field that – perhaps in a way similar to what happened some years ago in Croatian novel writing, we are observing similar phenomena in our neighbours and in the majority of literatures – will give to reading and readers greater scope for relaxation, humorous playfulness and lightness. And if *Svinjske nogice* marked the momentous shift for Golob into the "true" literary sphere, it marked for Slovenian literature the first successful focusing of attention on a less dedicated, but undoubtedly excitable dynamic literary energy entering into the arena of Slovenian arts.

**Tadej is a bit of a lad**

In the first days of summer, the plentiful media attention focused on Golob in the pages of Slovenia's print media (interestingly, the TV stations made far less use of this good opportunity) introduced quite a few new and undoubtedly interesting values or at least habits espoused by the unburdened and slightly younger generation of Slovenian writers and journalists. Golob is pretty much merciless in his somewhat automatic, quite phlegmatic conception of everything he does and of everything he relates to directly. This, of course, in the present day, when attempts are made to ascribe to even the most mundane things a profound background that they do not have, or things that are naturally quite banal



**Golob is pretty much merciless in his somewhat automatic, quite phlegmatic conception of everything he does and of everything he relates to directly.**

entertainment, increases our sympathy for people on the current literary scene such as Miha Mazzini, Matjaž Pikalo, Tadej Golob and others, and on the philosophical scene for instance Slavoj Žižek and also Mladen Dolar, who have brought into the philosophical arena a great deal of relaxed creativity and humorous analysis of the paradoxes of our everyday lives. Of course this is no case of false modesty, which in these parts frequently consolidates the image of the suffering and misunderstood

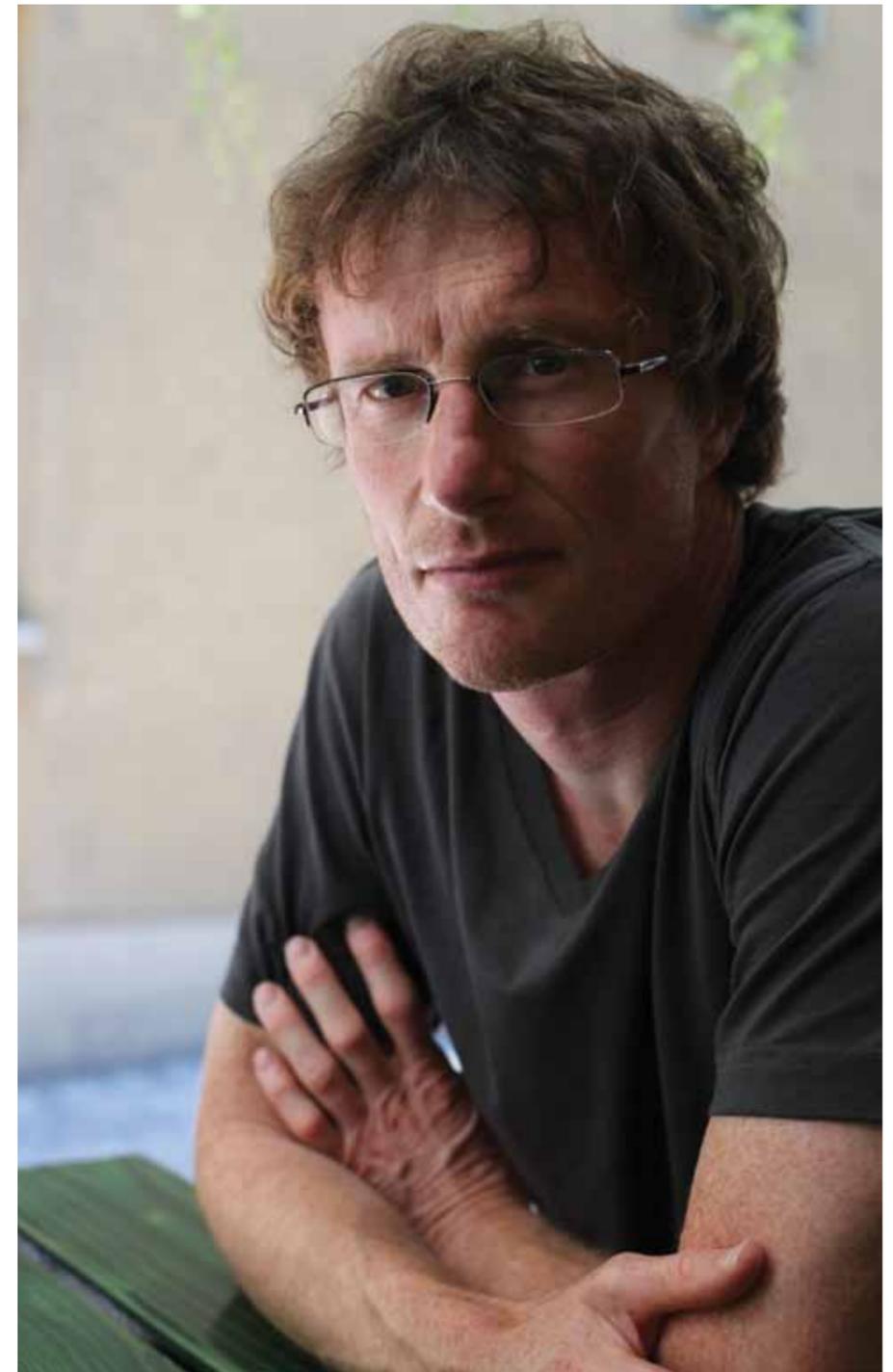
artist as the only role model capable of producing superlative works, but rather a lucid and consistently open provocation of our values and customs, for which reason we are also quite capable of being stubborn, intolerant and conspiratorial, nor indeed is this a cynical negation of everything on which our life is built.

In this respect, Golob's relationship with his own family is touching. The first wonder noticed by the media was that a laureate appeared at an award ceremony with his partner and two small children,

**AT THE START, SVINJSKE NOGICE WAS SOMETHING QUITE DIFFERENT FROM WHAT CAME OUT IN THE BOOK ALMOST FOUR YEARS LATER," SAYS GOLOB, ADDING QUICKLY: "THANK GOD!"**

something you don't actually associate with the majority of writers. The other thing was Golob's explanation of a newly discovered responsibility to his nearest and dearest, which struck him right there. This is what he said in the interview for the *Objektiv* page in *Dnevnik*: "When my children asked who would win, as a real "dad" I of course said that without doubt it would be me, who else. Then, after the announcement, my daughter wafted over to me and hugged me, but a few metres away my son, a six-year-old child, was crouching and crying inconsolably. I thought he had hit himself on the swings or something like that, because they were close and he was jumping around them. But he said: "From happiness". I didn't have the faintest idea it would mean that much to them."

In contrast to that emotional relationship, which is typical of him in some other things and which he reveals in things close to him, Golob is completely cold regarding what he does. The fact that he wrote an indisputably good book, he declares laconically from the fact that each person is more or less creative, and through his writing he has exploited the potential within him. "I don't deny in any way that if people want to be good, they each do their work professionally, with great motivation and they strive to make it the best they can. But to think that in this work you are guided by some hand of God or some other mission – that is of course nonsense. To think that this work is



irreplaceable and that the world would collapse if it was not there, is just human vanity, which leads nowhere." His writing plans are somehow in tune with this; the prize itself has in no way changed them. He is currently putting together a youth story about mountaineering, but he is not thinking much about long-term plans. In writing books, too, he makes up no special projects or schemes, since

for him a book emerges on an ongoing basis, and the story is formed in the same way. "At the start, *Svinjske nogice* was something quite different from what came out in the book almost four years later," says Golob, adding quickly: "Thank God!" He would like some day to live from writing books, since in that way you can truly maximise your concentration and be good.



# MADE WITH LOVE

Polona Prešeren Photo Irena Herak Usenik

IT IS TRUE THAT HOT SUMMER weekends lend themselves to walking outdoors, where the intense heat is veiled in the pleasant ambience of nature, perhaps with a swim in a lake or river. The urban environment also has its charms, characterised by urban activity.

In Ljubljana, Saturdays in the summer are best spent having a coffee and browsing the markets – not only those where delicious delicacies are sold, but also the Art Market, which brings the Ljubljana embankment to life. The urban environment is a place where friends and acquaintances meet, tourists slowly take in the local sights, cafés serve large cappuccinos and various other types of fragrant coffee. Somewhere in between, there are stalls selling individual handmade products – the Art Market.

For more than a decade the Art Market has provided people with an opportunity to demonstrate their creativity and their artistic streak. This year, the Art Market has found a space on the renovated embankment of the Ljubljana, giving credence to the view that Ljubljana is developing into an exceptionally aesthetic capital. The Art Market has a wide selection of goods on sale – from jewellery and fashion accessories to decor, ceramics, prints, paintings, pencil drawings and even mosaics. The Art Market takes place every Saturday from May to September, rain permitting. Although at first sight the market seems to be a tourist attraction, it is actually much more than that. It is a pleasant walk through the town's streets and a tribute to its creativity, with items on show which differ in design from mass-produced articles in many important respects – most of them are made by hand, and most of them are one-offs. Many of them receive their finishing touches right there on the stall, perhaps in response to the comment of a passer-by.

'Made with love and dedication', is the slogan which could be inscribed under the goods on sale, which attract admiring glances at the Art Market. The vendors include a mother and daughter who have combined their creative strength and ideas, two friends who delight in the creation of truly individual jewellery, a



**'Made with love and dedication', is the slogan which could be inscribed under the goods on sale, which attract admiring glances at the Art Market.'**

sociologist who makes handbags, a young mother who now makes felt slippers for newborns, and other enthusiasts full of ideas. The fact that they have the courage to display their concepts at the market is of even greater importance. It does not matter if these artists have discovered their talents a little later in life; this is their chance to develop them. Some even find new employment opportunities as a

result – quite an achievement. Of course, all the participants have to submit an application to the Creative Programmes Association, meet the application conditions and receive an invitation to take part. Although the Art Market bids us farewell in September, we can look forward to seeing its brand-new products in the future. Saturday can be a truly beautiful day in Ljubljana! >>



**Handbags and fashion accessories**

Fensišmensi are elegant handbags made from start to finish by Ana Hribar. Ana is not a professional designer, but a sociologist who has successfully developed her hobby and love for handbags. Her bags are made from felt or silk. She prints the silk herself. Fensišmensi are not only handbags, but also brooches and purses. Ana puts the finishing touches to them on her market stall – Fensišmensi are elegant accessories for all occasions. [www.fensismensi.com](http://www.fensismensi.com)

**Slippers and More**

Urša Nina Cigler's felt slippers have been a success for some time now. Urša Nina is an art teacher who employs a seamstress while she develops new products. She started out making slippers for adults, then handbags and purses. After giving birth to her son, she realised it was high time to start a children's line. Her little



slippers for little feet are so cute that passers-by stop just to admire them and a toddler in a pushchair wearing her designs would be the coolest in town. [www.ursanina.si](http://www.ursanina.si)

**Good Fairies**

Wherever in the world they travel, mother and daughter Mankica and Viktorija Kranjec watch, observe and seek

out interesting materials for their Good Fairies line. Every Good Fairy they create is unique and has its own name. Their Fairies have magic legs and a pleasant smell – each one smells different. If you touch the doll and connect to its colour and mood, it talks to you. The magical concept of scented Good Fairies on their stand is complemented this year by a cake shop. Naturally, they did all the

decorating themselves. <http://disecedobrevile.blogspot.com>

**Magic Moments**

This is the name chosen for her stall by Barbara Hvala, a designer who travels from Gorica to the Ljubljana Art Market every Saturday – because there is no equivalent of the Art Market where she lives, and she wants to present her creations to the public. She makes unique clothes, felt jewellery and fabric earrings. Fascinating.

**Lunatico**

Three young women (Špela Simšič, Maja Nastav and Tadeja Matičič), each with her own career, but still committed to creativity. Working in an office is no obstacle as their stand contains beautiful stands for jewellery, handbags, unique earrings and jewellery made using a découpage technique. [www.lunatico.si](http://www.lunatico.si)

A true realm of diverse creativity is on offer at the Art Market – ceramics, jewellery made from a great variety of materials (including wire lace), handbags, one-off •

I FEEL  
SLOVENIA

I FEEL  
SLOVENIA

ko košarko skrbimo od 1950



Boštjan Nachbar  
Photo KZS/www.alesfevzer.com