



A region with a tradition of excellence, export, connectivity  
and sustainable responsibility: **SE (South-East) Slovenia**

# DIVERSITY, TRADITION OF EXCELLENCE AND EXCEPTIONAL INVESTMENT POTENTIAL



# A thousand years of advanced technology

## Roots in science

In 500 BC our region produced highly advanced products, which were technologically advanced on a global scale. Later, in Roman times, our products were exported throughout the Roman Empire. Archeologists still regularly discover evidence of this. This evidence confirms the advanced position of the people, who live here. Many world-class innovators and inventors originate from this region. Today, we are still technologically advanced society.



**Josef Ressel**

1793–1857, Austrian forester and inventor of Czech-German descent, who designed one of the first working ship's propellers and tested it on the Krka river.



**Ernst Mach**

1883–1916, Ernst Mach spent his early years coming up with experiments. He was the role model of Albert Einstein and contemporary of the great Slovenian scientist, Jožef Stefan.



**Jurij Levičnik**

1925–1989, He proposed the creation of the first delivery vehicles, camper vans and the production of cars in Slovenia. He is credited with establishing the car factory in Novo mesto.



Amber bead in the shape of a double-sided animal head. Novo mesto, Kapiteljska njiva (500–400 BC).

# Welcome to SE Slovenia



The region of South-East Slovenia is one of the most successful and high-performance regions in the country, standing in clear first position according to revenue generated by imports and to added value per employee.

The leading business sectors are the automotive industry and pharmaceutical industry, which directly and indirectly employ over half of all employees in the region. Our pillars of excellence are founded on our integration in the international environment, achievement of the highest of global standards and the ability to quickly adapt to changing circumstances.

The features we offer that attract new investors are our skilled labour force, development of higher education, excellent infrastructure and the many companies, which attract new suppliers.

**Franci Bratkovič,**

Managing Director of Development Centre Novo mesto



The founder of the pharmaceutical giant Krka, Boris Andrijanič, once said that Novo mesto is a small town, but has two big suburbs – Ljubljana and Zagreb.

This comical observation also applies to the wider region of South-East Slovenia. On the area between the two capitals located approximately 140km from each other lies an area of exceptional business potential, which is proven by the many success stories that have taken place here. These are stories of large and internationally recognised players with long histories, as well as stories of new and ambitious ideas at the very start of their journey.

On our shared path we can rely on the drive and vision of the people in the region, its natural resources and its tradition of excellence. This ensures that the development of the regions of Dolenjska, Bela Krajina and Kočevsko–Ribniško will continue to be built on a firm foundation.

**Gregor Macedoni,**

President of the SE Slovenia Regional Council and Mayor of the Novo mesto Municipality

# sLOVEnia – the very heart of the EU

Slovenia joined the EU a relatively short time after gaining its independence and was able to quickly adapt to its new position as a member state. Its geostrategic position is important for globally strategic routes and for development of its natural features. With regard to certain indicators, Slovenia even outdid the EU average in this short time and Slovenians are proud that it exceeded in the fields of high-tech, education and languages, as well as in its awareness of the importance of protecting nature. Slovenia's business people have successful worldwide projects, some even dictate global trends and development. Slovenians have experience and skills in speaking foreign languages. English can be used both in business and in daily life. Since joining the EU, we are one of the most successful countries in the Natura 2000 project.

 **2,084,301**

CITIZENS - 144<sup>TH</sup> COUNTRY BY POPULATION (2019)

**1<sup>st</sup> May 2004**

EU MEMBER

**€ & SCHENGEN**

AREA MEMBER SINCE 2007

**ranked 9<sup>th</sup> globally**

INDEX OF ENGLISH PROFICIENCY AND SKILLS AS SECOND LANGUAGE  
OTHER LANGUAGES ARE GERMAN, CROATIAN AND ITALIAN

**67%**

SLOVENIANS SPEAK TWO OR MORE LANGUAGES

**37%**

OF SLOVENIA'S SURFACE IS PART OF NATURA 2000, WHICH IS THE HIGHEST PERCENTAGE IN THE EU

**114**

PLANT AND ANIMAL SPECIES ARE PROTECTED

**4<sup>th</sup> BEST**

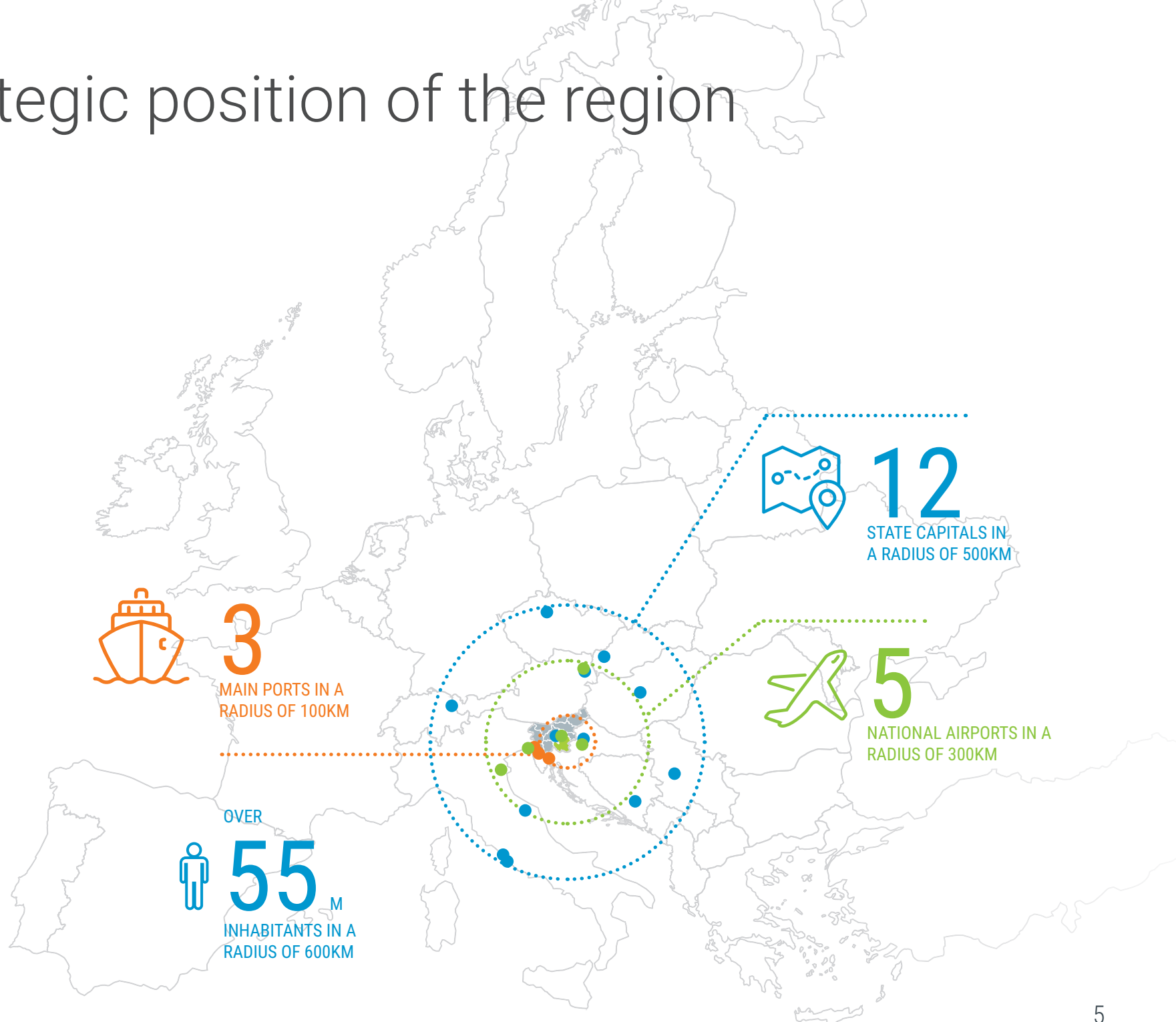
EDUCATED NATION IN THE EU

Slovenia's education ranks as 4<sup>th</sup> best in the EU and 12<sup>th</sup> best in the world by the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD). The educational institutions in the region skilfully bring together the flow of knowledge from schools to industries and vice versa.

# Geo-strategic position of the region

South-East Slovenia is the largest region in Slovenia, with forest covering as much as three-quarters of its surface area. The region has an extremely favourable geographical position due to the proximity of neighbouring countries.

Within a radius of 500 km there are 12 capitals, 5 state airports (300km radius) and 3 main ports (100km radius), which makes the region an excellent starting point to reach the whole of Europe.



# Regional characteristics

This region is known for its diversity; various services and industries are present here and the region is economically very strong and export-oriented. On the other hand, South-East Slovenia is also very rich in natural resources (water, thermal water, agricultural land and forests) and represents a relatively unpolluted and peaceful environment with lots of greenery.

Consequently, the region offers a lot of potential for various types of tourism (sport, culinary, cultural heritage, congress, thermal, incentive, industrial, etc.).

**South-East Slovenia comprises the regions of Dolenjska, Bela krajina and Kočevsko-Ribniško.**



# 4

GREEN DESTINATIONS  
– THE REGIONS OF  
KOČEVSKO, BELA KRAJINA,  
NOVO MESTO AND  
ŠMARJEŠKE TOPLICE

 **150**<sub>K</sub>  
INHABITANTS IN THE REGION

**66 %** → **27 %**  
OF REVENUE IS GENERATED IN FOREIGN MARKETS  
MORE EXPORT THAN THE NATIONAL LEVEL

**50 %**  
OF THE REGION IS PART OF NATURA 2000

**73 %**  
OF THE REGION IS COVERED IN FOREST

## Tradition in craft and technology

Since the time of the Roman Empire the region has been very much export-oriented. With a decree from Emperor Frederic in 1492 free trading rights were obtained for trading with local products and travelling trade developed throughout the empire. Even today, crafts play a key role: traditional dry wooden accessories, pottery and other crafts. Companies here have their own histories and a respect for tradition, they maintain stability while ensuring sustainable development. The region is home to a successful international company which, through its entire 60 years of history, had only three different directors. The pharmaceutical and automotive industries hold the leading position and, together, directly and indirectly employ almost half of the employees in this region.

€54,930

IN ADDED VALUE PER EMPLOYEE

3 OUT OF 6

OF THE LARGEST SLOVENIAN  
EXPORTERS COME FROM SE SLOVENIA

€6.9<sub>B</sub>

IN REVENUE

€481<sub>M</sub>

NET PROFIT



A decorated bronze vessel  
Novo mesto - Kandija  
(500–400 BC)

## Nature and tourism

### River destination

In 2010, the Kolpa river was awarded the prestigious title of European Destination of Excellence (EDEN) by the European Commission. The region is characterised by exceptionally diverse flora and fauna, a rich natural and cultural heritage, as well as a well-preserved cultural landscape. While Bela krajina is a winegrowing region, the Kočevsko region boasts pristine forests and the Dolenjska region is famous for its thermal springs along the Krka river.

### Forestry

Forests are one of the region's greatest feature from a production, ecological and social perspective. 50% of the forests are part of the NATURA 2000 network. Slovenia has 14 primeval forests, 8 of which are in the SE Slovenia.

**66 %**  
PROTECTED AREAS,  
PRIMEVAL FORESTS

**2**  
NATURE PARKS KOLPA  
NATURE PARK AND  
LAHINJA NATURE PARK

**2**  
NATURAL HEALTH  
RESORTS

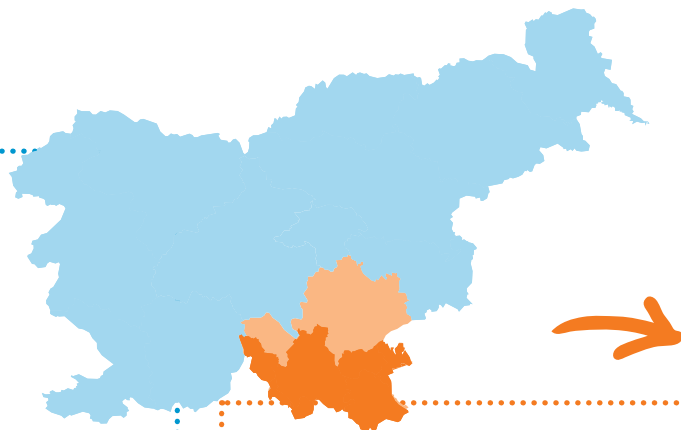
**96 %**  
OF TOURISM SERVICE  
PROVIDERS ARE  
SMALL FAMILY-OWNED  
BUSINESSES.

# Special benefits and investment support

## ONE STOP

SUPPORT FOR INVESTORS ON A NATIONAL LEVEL

**InvestSlovenia Team** provides expertise that guides investors in the right direction. It operates within SPIRIT Slovenia (Slovenian Public Agency for Entrepreneurship, Internationalisation, Foreign Investment and Technology) entrusted with the regulatory, expert and development tasks serving to increase the competitiveness of Slovenia's economy in the area of entrepreneurship, internationalisation, foreign investment, and technology.



14

LOCAL AND REGIONAL SUPPORT INSTITUTIONS

The region offers a well-functioning labour market with a highly qualified workforce that can rapidly acquire new skills.

68

BUSINESS ZONES

572

HA TO INVEST

### Special benefits until 2020

**Pokolpje** is part of the South-East Slovenia region that covers the area of seven municipalities and for which special investment conditions apply.

**Public tenders and financial support for SMEs and start-ups.**

70 %

TAX RELIEF FOR HIRING AND INVESTING IN THE POKOLPJE REGION

# Selected business zones in SE Slovenia/Pokolpje

## BUSINESS AND INDUSTRIAL ZONE CIKAVA (NOVO MESTO)

capacity m<sup>2</sup>

1,022,100

vacant m<sup>2</sup>

628,800

NOTE: right by a major  
transport connection  
(Austria to Croatia) due to  
finish in 2021



## INDUSTRIAL ZONE TREBNJE

capacity m<sup>2</sup>

420,000

vacant m<sup>2</sup>

294,000

 4.5km



## COMMERCIAL ZONE DOLENJA VAS (MIRNA PEČ)

capacity m<sup>2</sup>

626,388

vacant m<sup>2</sup>

496,694

 0.1km




## TRIS KANIŽARICA (ČRNOMELJ)

capacity m<sup>2</sup>

1,151,593

vacant m<sup>2</sup>

695,217


 SLO 35km CRO 40km



## BUSINESS SERVICES ZONE 'PRI PILDU' (METLIKA)

capacity m<sup>2</sup>  
**175,000**

vacant m<sup>2</sup>  
**96,250**


 SLO 30km CRO 25km



## BUSINESS SERVICES ZONE IN VRTAČA (SEMIČ)

capacity m<sup>2</sup>  
**194,495**

vacant m<sup>2</sup>  
**116,697**


 SLO 30km CRO 43km



## INDUSTRIAL ZONE LIK (KOČEVJE)

capacity m<sup>2</sup>  
**750,000**

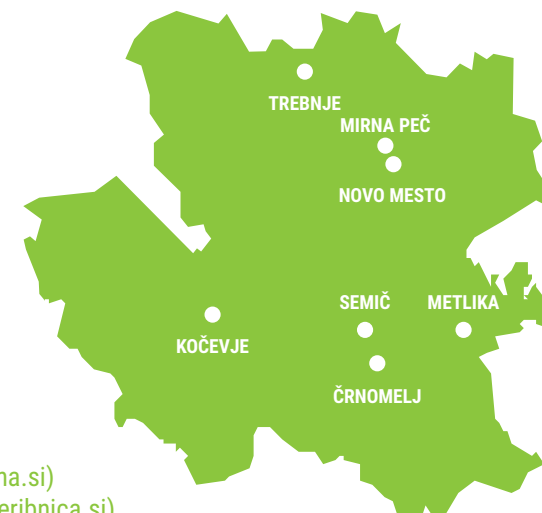
vacant m<sup>2</sup>  
**112,500**

 SLO 60km CRO 40km



**55%**  
VACANT PREMISES  
IN BUSINESS ZONES

[www.rc-nm.si](http://www.rc-nm.si) (info@rc-nm.si)  
[www.ric-belakrajina.si](http://www.ric-belakrajina.si) (info@ric-belakrajina.si)  
[www.rc-kocevjeribnica.si](http://www.rc-kocevjeribnica.si) (info@rc-kocevjeribnica.si)



# Support at the highest national level

In order to assure maximum possible support to Slovenia-based companies, there are various support institutions established in the Republic of Slovenia on the highest national level.

Their activities are well integrated, coordinated and managed within the broader system of Slovenian foreign policy.

The Directorate for Economic and Public Diplomacy ensures the effective work of economic diplomacy.

Close relationships and cooperation are nurtured between the various governmental and non-governmental institutions, as well as with a network of diplomatic missions and consular posts across the globe dealing with the internationalisation of the Slovenian economy.

## 22

ECONOMIC ADVISERS  
WITHIN THE MINISTRY OF  
FOREIGN AFFAIRS

## 13

REGIONAL CHAMBERS IN  
THE NETWORK OF CCIS  
SYNERGY OF REGIONAL  
AND LOCAL SUPPORT  
INSTITUTIONS

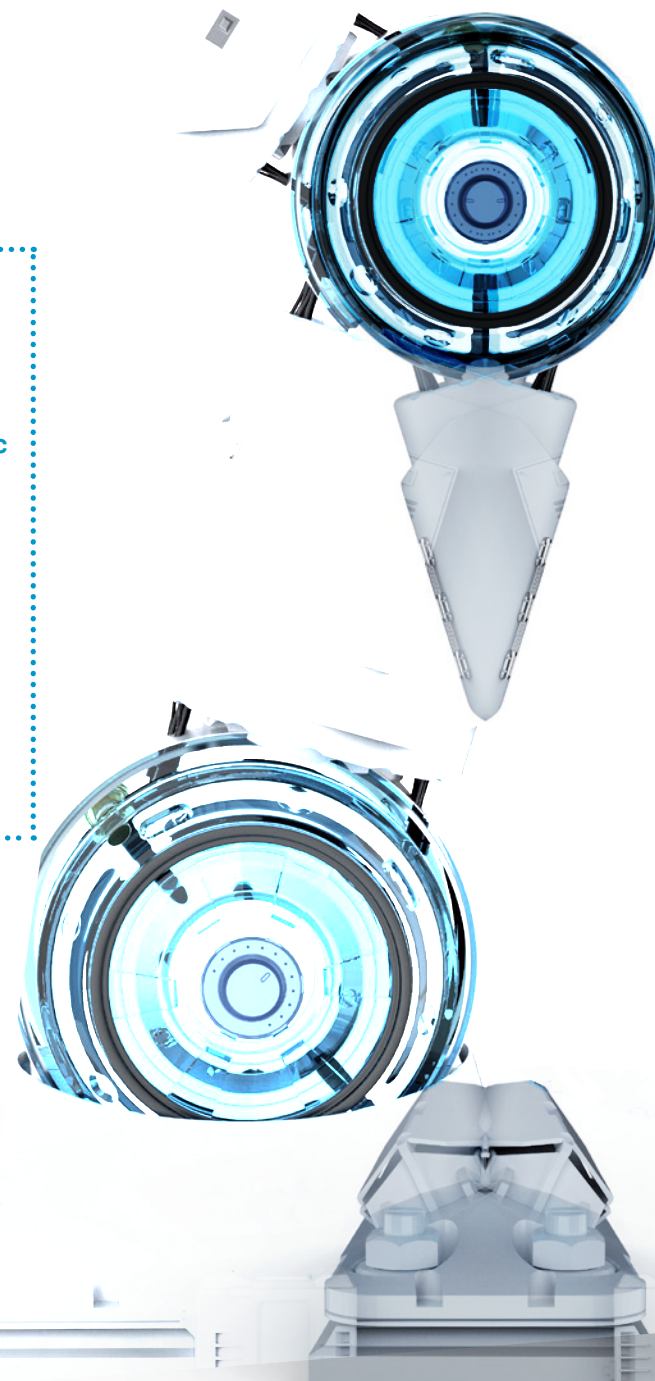
Important  
institutions on a  
national level:

**Ministry of Economic  
Development and  
Technology**

**SPIRIT Slovenia**

**Chamber of  
Commerce and  
Industry of Slovenia**

**Chamber of Craft  
and Small Business  
of Slovenia (CCIS)**



# Synergy of regional and local support institutions



1  
UNIVERSITY

2  
CHAMBERS OF  
COMMERCE AND  
INDUSTRY

4  
BUSINESS  
INCUBATORS

6  
CHAMBERS OF  
CRAFT AND  
SMALL BUSINESS

For investors and their long-term business success, regional and local support plays an important role, in addition to national support.

Local and regional environment offers a variety of business support organisations. **Development Centre Novo mesto** is the main regional development agency. Alongside the **Development Centre Kočevje Ribnica** and the **Development and Information centre Bela Krajina** it offers a supportive environment for the growth of entrepreneurship and regional excellence, while also offering the necessary support to potential investors.

The supportive environment is strengthened by the Chambers of Craft and Small Business and regional Chamber of Commerce and Industry. In addition to the SPOT Slovenian business point, the ecosystem enables enhancement for the growth and excellence of entrepreneurship.

Integrated and professional support to potential investors is carried out through key activities:

- Availability of information about local investment opportunities.
- Assistance in finding suitable business premises and properties.
- Integration with complementary local suppliers.
- Up-to-date database of consultants in various fields (taxes, customs and legislation, construction engineers, project offices, etc.).

# Success stories

“

As the CEO of the Italian company Transpack, I met Mr Branko Butala years ago and recognized this as a partnership opportunity. Together we realized his lifelong vision to establish a company in his hometown that would explore synergies with local wood suppliers. The support of the local environment, the availability of wood and skilled workforce were the main reasons for us to take part in the investment, and so in 2014, Paklog, pakiranje in logistika, d.o.o. was founded in Črnomelj. The company produces wood packaging and offers transport packaging services (including seaworthy packaging) and currently (2019) employs 40 people.

**Andrea Sancin, Managing Director and co-owner of Paklog**



“

June next year will mark 15 years since Treves was established. The company is French-owned company founded primarily to supply components to the Revoz factory. In this time, we obtained new buyers, tripled sales and the number of employees, while we also increased profits four-times. Within the Treves SA group, Treves is recognised as a company that, thanks to its employees, achieves above-average results both from a financial perspective and from the perspective of quality in all areas.

**Andrej Baškovič, General Manager of Treves d.o.o.**





We decided on the Ribniško region in 1996 when we were searching for the optimal location to set up a factory producing positioners and robot cells. We were able to use Italian industrial zones, which operate on the basis of synergy, as a model. This led to us establishing a supply network that proved itself with its superb synergy between the suppliers and us as buyers. For the new factory for robots, we chose a location by the main road Kočevje–Novo mesto due to its excellent microlocation, the favourable price of the plot of land, and the wonderful support offered by the Municipality of Kočevje, as it arranged all the required infrastructure in the set time frame.

“

**Dr. Hubert Kosler, Managing Director of Yaskawa**



The company was established in 2004 and began with production in 2006. Its location in Slovenia was interesting to us as foreign investors due to its geostrategic position. The company was founded in Novo mesto primarily because of the connections to key management staff at the time. The production facilities are located in Sodražica. The support of local institutions played a key role in the company's developmental plans, as well as in seeking and training staff.

“

**Konstantinos Psaroulis, Managing Director of FIBRAN d.o.o.**



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