

Spletni nakupi so zdaj še bolj varni in enostavni.

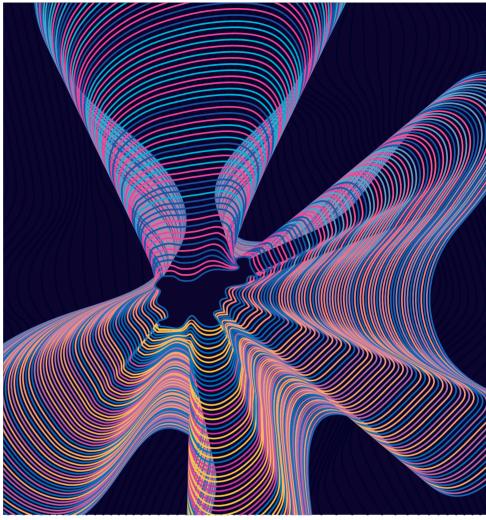
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LETTER FROM THE CEO THE ANGCHAN BUSINESS COMMUNITY REMAINS COMMITTED TO OPPORTUNITIES

Thave a great desire for us to all stay healthy and safe.

Dear AmCham Slovenia members, friends, and supporters,



f we were to ask people, many would probably say in a heartbeat that the year behind us would be best forgotten. But still, this year, someone had a baby, someone fell in love, achieved a significant sports victory, someone set up a business, and

another discovered a breakthrough idea. For me, however, it was a year of many insights. A time when I was able to travel more than the world to my inner universes. When I realized that the work we do together with the team only adds value when we manage to create trust, a positive dialogue, when we are not afraid to express our opinion, even if we know it differs from others' views. The realization that the AmCham business community remains committed to opportunities and optimism.

Health, knowledge, security, and the business environment are topics promoted by our advocacy through constructive proposals. Empowering young people in the YOUng platform is our motive and what gives us energy. We continue to work for the open market, free trade, the rule of law, and democracy, which are vital to achieving sustainable development goals at the global level. That is why I am glad that my colleagues from 43 countries have once again placed their trust in us. After two years, in which we changed the umbrella organization AmChams in Europe together despite challenging conditions, they elected me Vice-Chair and Slovenia has the umbrella organization seat again. It is not only a great responsibility, but also an opportunity. An opportunity to show that Slovenians know and want to change the world for the better. And I believe that this will also be a key principle when our country presides the EU Council.

Above all, I have a great desire for us to all stay healthy and safe.

I

Ajša Vodnik, MSc. CEO of AmCham Slovenia and Vice Chair of AmChams in Europe



MY VISION OF Slovenia IS: A magnet For talents!

Q&A with Blaž Brodnjak

Blaž Brodnjak, CEO of NLB, and President of AmCham Slovenia



PHOTO: Unsplash A s the president of AmCham Slovenia, you run a business community of opportunities and optimism. What do you believe to be the biggest opportunity in the business world and where do you think the most optimism is needed?

B.B.____ It's hard to unambiguously define individual opportunities, but when it comes to Slovenia, I dare say that it is an incredible opportunity in itself. We live in one of the most beautiful corners of the world; in just a few hours every visitor can experience and taste Europe in miniature. We represent the closest way to the heart of the continent, while in character we are fairly balanced between the northern discipline and diligence and the southern casualness and ability to improvise. We achieve incredible results in sport, and the same is true for a great number of entrepreneurial projects. If we could manage to harmonize in terms of the most important strategic goals for the state, its crucial assets, and for us, Slovenians, and work decisively and coherently in this direction, anything is possible.

What would you like to achieve during your mandate as the head of AmCham Slovenia? What are your priorities, and what do you consider most important?

B.B.___ As an individual, I can't do much, Am-Cham is certainly an excellent platform through which to advocate a balanced approach towards the creation of a supportive environment for the people and enterprises who live and operate here. No matter how much some people would like, we cannot escape from the fact that we are a part of global movements and that, as a small open economy, we simply must understand and internalize that an indispensable factor for long-term sustainable success is international competitiveness. On the one hand, this is true for the administrative support environment and on the other, even more so, for the most important thing, us people. How quickly we develop as a collective depends solely on our knowledge, experience, positive energy, and hard work in all social subsystems. I want a society of mutual respect in which being different doesn't preclude dialogue and where with the same requirements we have the same opportunities, regardless of age, sex, religion, world view, or historical trauma. Where people in need get help, but the most creative and the hardest working get crucial positions and are appropriately

rewarded. My vision of Slovenia is: "A Magnet for Talents!"

Which values accompany you in your work?

B.B. First and foremost, good old-fashioned common sense, taking the middle way founded on solid arguments, first hard work and results, then rights; and absolutely offering help in honest distress.

What skills set do you think a good leader should possess?

B.B. They should be ready to grasp the flag in their own hands and lead the way, in good times as well as the bad. Above all, they should do so with authenticity and enough energy for people to trust them and be ready to walk by their side in the most difficult times. Without followers you are your own leader.

We live in fairly uncertain times; what positives do you believe the business community can take from the crisis we are currently facing?

B.B. I'm experiencing this crisis as a sort of a "reset". Sustainable topics are taking center stage, local/homemade is regaining value, global supply chains are, at least partly, moving closer, people are showing more solidarity, and quality and authenticity are replacing the instant, the superficial. I'm very optimistic that it has hit home that this cannot go on any longer and that we can start healing our planet and will feel better while doing so.

In these times of fast change and rapid digitalization—which was even accelerated by the crisis—, what do you think is that one thing that will determine the business world in the future?

B.B. I believe in people, in looking them in the eye and in a firm handshake. When we climb out of the present health crisis, these things will become even more important. Everything that can be simplified, standardized, automatized, and based on algorithms will be digitalized, but all of that has to be developed by someone, which means that the sought-after knowledge profiles are changing. People will still have work, although it will be different and it will be performed more efficiently, making it easier to balance private and work life which will merge into one. I believe it will be of higher quality and more fulfilling.

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b. Tanja Petakovič Office Manager

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c. Tonja Avsenik AmCham Young Platform Leader & Project Leader

d. Mart D. Buh Chief Experience Officer

e. Ajša Vodnik, MSc CEO, AmCham Slovenia Vice Chair, AmChams in Europe

f. Nina Marinšek Chief Community Officer & Advisor to the CEO

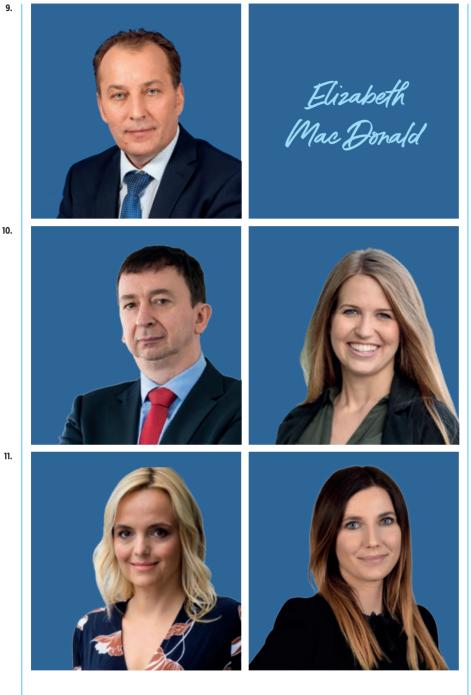
g. Katja Čenčur Membership Manager & YLC Manager

h. Vida Dolenc Pogačnik COO & International Cooperation Leader

AMCHAM Board of Governors



6.



Blaž Brodnjak President of AmCham Slovenia, CEO, NLB

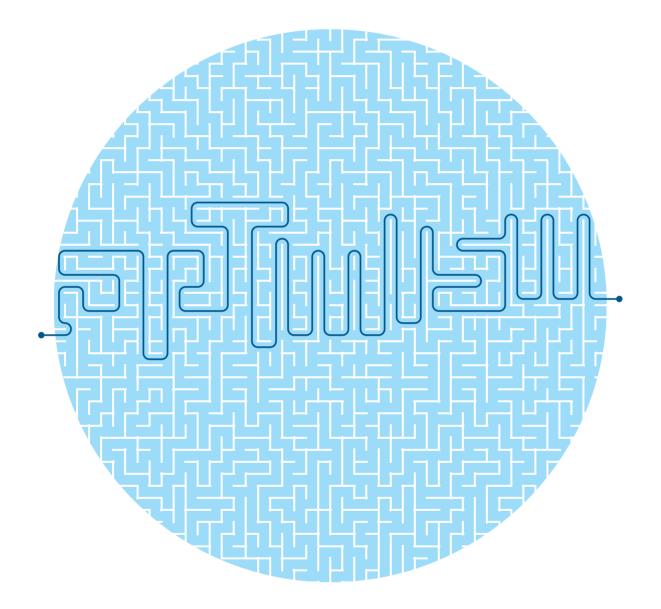
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- 2. Tomaž Lanišek First Vice President of AmCham Slovenia, Development and Smart City Manager, City Municipality of Kranj
- 3. Barbara Domicelj Second Vice President of AmCham Slovenia, General Manager, Microsoft Slovenia
- 4. Nevenka Črešnar Pergar Governor of AmCham Slovenia, owner and director, NP Consulting
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- 11. Ajša Vodnik CEO, AmCham Slovenia
- 12. Elizabeth MacDonald Political and Economic Counselor, US Embassy Ljubljana
- 13. Nina Pejič AmCham Top Potential of the Year 2020, Researcher, Centre of International Relations, Faculty of Social Sciences, University of Ljubljana, Co-Founder, Gender Equality Research Institute
- 14. Urška Kajtner AmCham Top Potential of the Year 2020, HR Business Partner, Nice Label



Dear friends,



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ongratulations on a productive year of advocacy on behalf of US and Slovenian businesses. AmCham adapted to the challenges presented by the COVID pandemic with resilience and creativity, deftly using virtual technology to bring together an impressive array of speakers for the Bled Strategic Forum and your Coffee to Connect series. These

avenues allowed us all to stay engaged on issues that are important to the business community. Your hard work is producing results, with the International Monetary Fund projecting 5.2 percent GDP growth for Slovenia in 2021. We have already seen positive news on the safety and efficacy of vaccines that will be available in early 2021, which gives us hope. As we look forward to a successful 2021, I would like to take a moment to highlight our accomplishments in 2020.

In 2020, we witnessed a strengthening of US-Slovenian ties across the board. In August, during Secretary Pompeo's visit to Slovenia, the United States and Slovenia signed a Joint Declaration on 5G Security, strengthening cooperation on this critical next generation technology. Our two countries also stepped up cooperation on cybersecurity in response to growing threats in the region from malign actors. The Defense Investment Bill passed in November reflected Slovenia's renewed commitment to NATO, ensuring it will remain a capable, reliable ally and strong partner. We ended the year on a high note with Foreign Minister Logar's December meeting with Secretary Pompeo in Washington. During this trip, Minister of Infrastructure Vrtovec signed an agreement on civil nuclear cooperation with the United States, solidifying our long-term cooperation in this sector.

We strengthened our collaboration with AmCham with the establishment of Slovenia's first Overseas Security Advisory Council (OSAC) in May. The OSAC is the US Government's premier public-private global security partnership, and we are proud that Slovenia joined over 140 OSAC Councils worldwide. We remain committed to sharing timely and relevant information on a range of security-related topics through the initiative.

Our bilateral ties are deeply rooted in the mutual respect for democracy, human rights, and the rule of law that are at the heart of the transatlantic relationship. There is much to be optimistic about in our bilateral relationship in the new year. We are especially looking forward to Slovenia's EU Presidency in the second half of 2021.

Building on this momentum, the US Embassy will work in close partnership with AmCham Slovenia in 2021 to improve the business climate for both US and Slovenian companies. We are seeing increased two-way trade flows in the health, energy, cybersecurity, and technology sectors—all of which contribute to innovation, job creation, security, and prosperity. We are committed to facilitating and fostering these partnerships. Together with our partners in AmCham, I am confident that we can accomplish much in this new year. Here's to a happy and successful 2021!

Susan Falatko

Deputy Chief of Mission US Embassy Ljubljana

AMCHAM SLOVENIA HONORARY MEMBER Lynda C. Blanchard

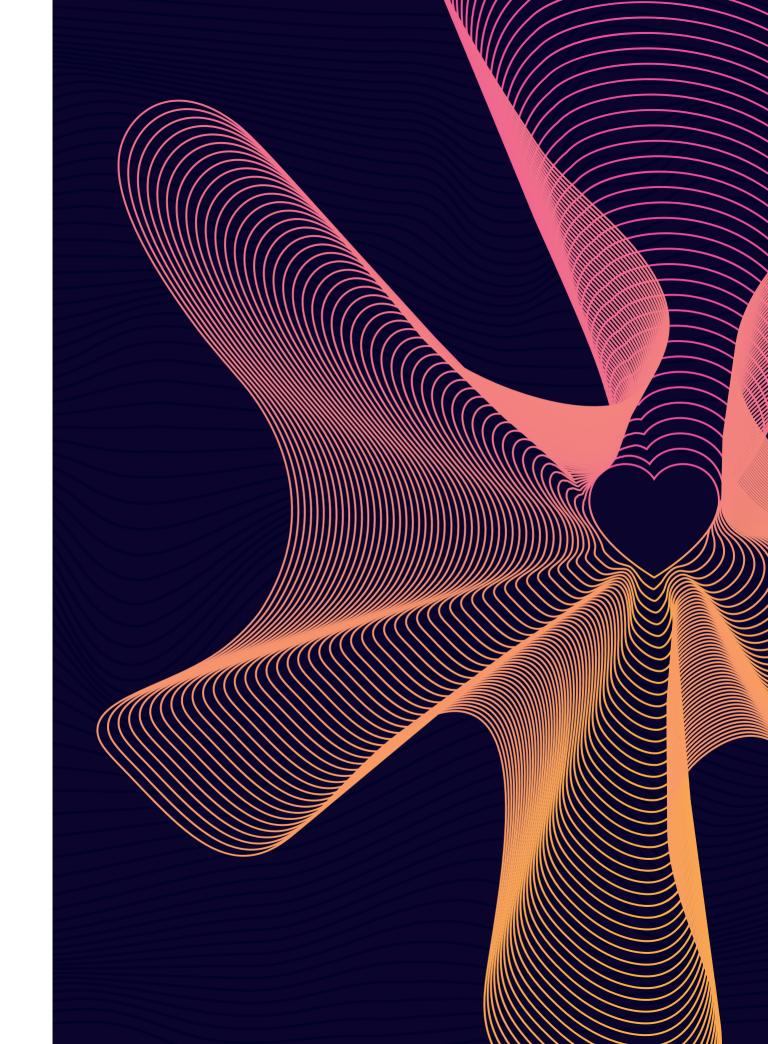
HER EXCELLENCY LYNDA C. BLANCHARD

AmCham Slovenia awards Her Excellency Lynda C. Blanchard, US Ambassador to Slovenia, the title of honorary member.

During her service in Slovenia, she has devotedly sought ways to connect Slovenia and the United States in various fields. She has emphasized the importance of mutual respect, democracy, human rights, and the rule of law as central values of transatlantic relations. She has advocated for an even greater intertwining of the Slovenian and American economies, especially in areas that also bring innovation, new jobs, and security to the Slovenian environment. Two-way trade flows have also increased in many areas, such as the health, energy, cyber, and ICT sectors.

Last but not least, together with the embassy team, she also actively responded to the challenges of the health crisis brought by 2020 and looked for ways to help both the Slovenian healthcare system and Slovenian society.







BY Urša Lakner & Andrej Črepinšek

KNOWLEDGE AND SUPPORT





Η



Urša Lakner, Corporate Affairs Manager, Pfizer, Co-chair of the AmCham Health and Wellbeing Committee



Andrej Črepinšek, CEE Partner Ecosystem CTO, IBM Slovenija, Co-chair of the AmCham Health and Wellbeing Committee

ealth was and still is the key value of Slovenian society. At a time when we are facing the consequences of a pandemic, care for our health has become crucial. Every conversation starts with this topic, and all activities are directed towards

staying healthy, safe, and in top shape. With honest concern and gratitude, we observe how fragile and, at the same time, mightily resilient our healthcare system is. We are very well aware that, at this point, the functioning of our healthcare system depends on people with great courage and compassion. They truly are amazing. It could be that it was in this pandemic that we realized how strong the impulse of healthcare workers—by which we mean all doctors and nurses as well as support staff—is to help people.

Nevertheless, the day after will come and with it the issue of long-term sustainability of healthcare, a question which we encountered prior to the pandemic. What is our key hope? We will have to continue taking more active steps that will lead the healthcare system to its necessary upgrade—the upgrading

of infrastructure, an upgrade with new knowledge, and new solutions adapted to modern times. After the pandemic, we will be left with exhausted healthcare and exhausted business and industry that will have difficulties handling the resulting pressures. Will that really be the time for new, greater strains through contributions? medical Shouldn't we take a breath and rethink where and how can we reorganize this system better? Where can it be optimized? Where can we relieve people? What do we need to do that? Every additional burden will only further limit the vulnerable economy and further decrease the competitiveness of companies working in the Slovenian business environment. The consequences of decreased competitiveness are long-term and affect several generations, and are a heavy burden on the growth and development of entrepreneurship, that is the healthiest foundation of our economy, and as a consequence it will also be revealed in the financing of healthcare.

What is crucial are better organization, introduction of processes, and optimal distribution of means. We have to discuss this structurally. The AmCham Slovenia Health and Wellbeing Committee strives for constructive, professional, and open communication between all stakeholders in healthcare, since calculations, projections, and concrete decisions that will optimize the operation of healthcare institutions have to be determined. Doctors should also be invited to participate in this conversation with their solutions which would save them lengthy administrative procedures or outdated patterns that limit the work with patients-which is, after all, their calling.

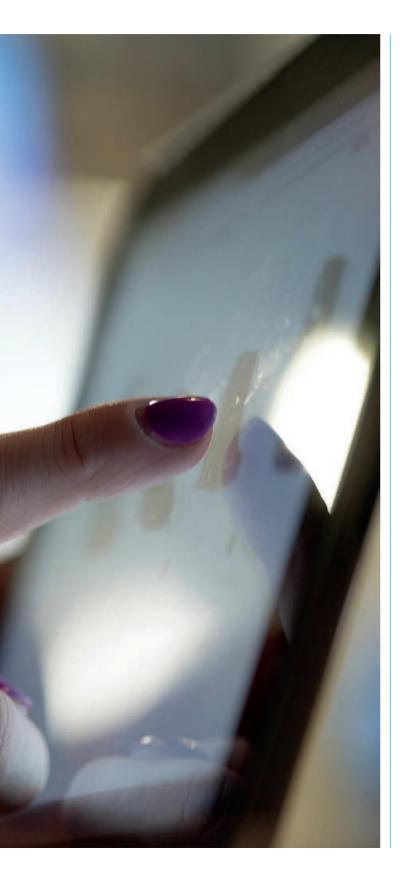
Our Committee includes more than 50 experts, representatives of Slovenian and international companies, who see public healthcare as an important value that should be protected in such a way that the system is approached with the very best solutions! The healthcare system, including industry connected to healthcare (information technologies, insurance, pharmaceuticals, logistics companies, complementary medicine), employs mostly highly educated people who bring services with high added value to every part of society. Our vision has to be quality-based, modern, and competitive healthcare, which, together with tourist capacities and the natural beauty of Slovenia, can become an interesting and attractive medical destination, also for other EU citizens. Healthcare as an important sector could thus significantly and long-term contribute to the growth of GDP.

We have emphasized several times that we advocate solutions connected to the digitalization of hospitals and place the patient in the center of treatment, providing them with coordinated and integrated care founded on refreshed and synchronized clinical data. We suggest information solutions that fulfil the requirement of protection of patient data, and support the execution of healthcare services and their traceability. We support the continuation of the discussion on changing the network of public hospitals, doing so with the proposal of specialization of regional hospitals and implementation of so-called specialized hospitals. We support the division and simultaneously the coexistence of public and private execution of healthcare services. We support autonomous management of hospitals, and the introduction of legal-organizational changes which enable the implementation of corporative management and modern hospital management with clear responsibility and power. Fast and successful implementation of innovation is crucial for greater efficiency of healthcare. In the field of HTA, we propose the establishment of an independent group of experts who would work within the Ministry of Health of the Republic of Slovenia. This should be done together with the proposals about raising the awareness

of citizens about health protection, and the implementation of programs adapted to different life styles and which are not patronizing. Healthcare should be treated as an important competent business branch, deserving of all the credit for playing a crucial role in the pandemic and which, due to its expertise in this region, can be justifiably positioned as top-notch and deservedly excellent in the long term!

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The future or the present?



The future is here. The right treatment at the right time for every individual.

^{BY} Nina Remškar& Mateja Malnar Štembal

We at Roche support every step that leads to the realization of the concept of personalized treatment. In addition to exceptional benefits for everyone, not just patients, it also brings positive effects for the healthcare system and society as a whole. T

f classical medicine is based on the principle of the same treatment for all patients with the same disease, personalized treatment predicts that every patient receives therapy tailored to their needs.

Personalized healthcare treatment has the potential to improve the efficiency and safety of treatment. While a certain medicine can be very effective for one patient, it is possible it will not yield the desired results for another patient with the same diagnosis. Individual characteristics linked to the illness and related to other characteristics of a person, including lifestyle, have a great influence on how medicine works. The WHO data show that many patients still receive treatment that is not optimal for them.

The future or the present?



Mateja Malnar Ste Reputation and Communication Partner, Roche

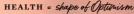
The united power of pharmaceutical industry and diagnostics

The Swiss company Roche, which will be celebrating its 125th anniversary in 2021 and has been present in the Slovenian market for 25 years, is passionately devoted to advances in science. Science and innovation are practically in the company's DNA. Roche is the biggest investor in research and development in the industry. Last year, we dedicated almost 11 billion euros to R&R alone. One of our key priorities is to make personalized treatment a standard of the routine health care of every patient. Since we know we cannot do it alone, we are open to partnerships. "If we want to influence better care and the sustainability of the health fund, we need to organize and use the data that exists and, based on these, continuously learn and optimize a person's treatment path," says Nicole Arming, General Manager at Roche Slovenia. The complete implementation of personalized medical treatment is a demanding and complex process that can be performed only with the help of partnership collaboration of state institutions, decision-makers, experts, providers of IT solutions, and industry. All the stakeholders mentioned are connected by the same goal—patient care.

Patients are our common denominator and we are here to work for their benefit. If there are solutions, we have a duty to provide them to our society.

JUST THINK WHAT CAN ALREADY BE MEASURED WITH A SMARTWATCH OR A SMARTPHONE! LEVERAGING THIS INFORMATION COULD HELP TO IMPROVE THE OUTCOME AND AVOID THE COSTS OF INEFFECTIVE TREATMENT AND EXPENSIVE RE-HOSPITALIZATION.

- NICOLE ARMING, GENERAL MANAGER, ROCHE SLOVENIA





рното Unsplash

It can be different. Meet Klara.

Klara today:

Klara just turned seven, she loves math, books, and plays football. Today she has a regular check-up with her doctor. Prior to her arrival, her doctor examined the data about her heartbeat, blood pressure, height, weight, and her sleep statistics. He reached all this data through the app on Klara's smart watch and phone, which are sent to the girl's carefully protected electronic medical file, and over a virtual consultation with Klara's father. Even before today, the family was visited by a field nurse. She drew a blood sample, since during the conversation with Klara's father, the doctor was familiarized with the history of diabetes on the father's side of the family. Therefore, the doctor ordered the measuring of Klara's blood sugar, the results of which are available to him today. Klara is healthy, but her medical condition will be carefully monitored in the years to come. On her mother's side, cancer appears in the family's history. The doctor

explains that with the help of personalized medicine and genomic data the disease can be diagnosed even before it appears. Moreover, since within the European Union countries share anonymized data about such patients, we now know more about them than ever before. Thus, the disease is frequently prevented even before it appears.

Klara in thirty years:

Klara is a successful businesswoman. She has two children and she still likes kicking the ball. Thanks to regular testing, fluctuations in her insulin levels were noticed when she was 14. New developments in personalized care and regular monitoring prevented the development of diabetes in her case. Klara's mother was diagnosed and treated for breast cancer when Klara turned 18. Due to early diagnosis, the safe and robust data system of the European Union, and precise treatment based on genome insight, today her mother lives cancer-free and is a happy grandmother to Klara's kids. Additionally, Klara has regular annual tests which can detect even the smallest changes on her genome level.

Who would not want to use the opportunities afforded by such a treatment?

As we can see, this is an approach that considers the characteristics of an individual, molecular characteristics of diseases, differences and similarities between patients, and how therapies work.

It can:

X

- · Detect patients with increased risk of a particular disease and prevent the development of the disease through preventive measures,
- Enable early and more precise diagnostics, introduce on-time, more specific, and optimal treatment, monitor and record the response to it, and use the insights for a self-learning health-care system with the help of artificial intelligence,
- · Exchange data across borders and enhance research and development as well as the approval of innovations,

· Improve cost efficiency of medical care.

IN THE WORLD TODAY, ONLY A GOOD TEAM CAN WIN



with Matjaž Turel

PHOTO: Diana Zajec, Zdravstveniportal.si



Prim. mag. Matjaž Turel, dr. med, specialist internist pulmonologist, head of the hospital department at the Clinical Department of Lung Diseases and Allergies, University Medical Center Ljubljana



All the world is dealing with the coronavirus pandemic. The disease is new to us and we have to learn from it as we go along. In your opinion, what will society gain from the epidemic? What will we learn?

M.T.___ Out of something bad, something good can grow, too. We will perceive life and infections differently-all of us, not just experts. The epidemic will bring a variety of consequences, including some which will be good, both in the wider society and in the specific fields of expertise. For example, children will acquire distance learning skills which could benefit them immensely in the future. Adults will be more organized with their shopping and do it less frequently. On average, people will do more sports. These are just a few of the positive effects of the epidemic. However, benefits will be especially noticeable in the field of medicine, since the entire world is currently working in the direction of increasing knowledge about viruses, and developing vaccines and medicines.

Do you think we will overcome the disease at some point or will we simply get used to living with it and controlling it?

M.T. We will certainly manage, or better, overcome the disease one way or another. It is simply a matter of time. Until then, it is very important to adapt to the present situation. As we know from an evolutionary perspective, it's the most adaptable, not necessarily the smartest who succeed or survive (laughter).

In the time of the epidemic, isolation, and maintaining social distance, how should people maintain their psychological and physical health, which are of crucial importance?

M.T. _ The basic unit is the family, immediate and extended. In the present situation, there is generally more time for the family. Family members can talk to each other more, enjoy meals together more often, and play board games. Contact with the extended family should be maintained through tools for internet communication or over the phone. The same goes for friends. If possible, we should visit older members, but in front of the house or apartment and abide by all the necessary measures. Some people will read a few more books that will also benefit their well-being. Others will transform into chefs and some will become recreational athletes. In any case, exercise has a beneficial influence on our psychological stability. Above all, we should not give up. There will always be sunshine after the rain.

You are also the doctor of the Slovenian Olympic Team. What is that one characteristic of professional athletes you most admire and how would you apply it to society in general?

_I've stressed several times before M.T. that we should look up to athletes for a number of reasons. In the period when they compete and reap success, athletes sacrifice many things. Actually, they generally live quite a similar life to what we all have to do now in the time of the epidemic. Their everyday routine is limited to training, eating correctly, getting enough rest, and ensuring psychological stability. They are mostly quite isolated socially, too. All of that is not difficult for them because they have a clear goal in mind: to succeed in their field, achieve the most that is possible, and become world champions or Olympic champions. Nowadays, we are competing, too. We compete against the virus and our goal is to stay healthy and protect the health of others. If there is a clear goal and if there is a will, it will be achieved. We should also keep in mind that many matches are won with the head.

When you were a guest at one of the Am-Cham events, you said that a good team and good relations within the team are of key importance for success. How do you motivate your coworkers and transfer your immense knowledge to your younger colleagues?

M.T.____ Indeed, in the world today, only a good team can win. Relations within a team are extremely important. It is important that each and every member of the team receives praise for the work they do. Every member is an indispensable link. And it is important that every team member realizes that. I have to say that everything I have learned, from experience as well as from books, I was always glad to pass on to my younger colleagues. They don't need to waste precious time arriving at certain conclusions or findings if I can help them get there faster and easier. On the other hand, I must say that I myself learn a lot from my younger colleagues when they upgrade their knowledge.

What do you find inspirational and where do you draw your energy from for continuous learning, and training in your field of expertise? How do you unwind?

M.T._____ Medicine is truly great and is an inspiration in itself. I wouldn't hesitate for a single second if someone were to ask me again what I wanted to study. Medicine would be my only answer. After all these years, I still happily drive to work every morning. Medicine is not easy, but it is a lot easier if you know how to do it. Hence, it's not difficult for me to sit in front of the computer or reach for a scientific book or magazine and learn something new. Exchanging opinions about a specific case or problem means so much to me. Every interdisciplinary council teaches you something. A lot, including being calm in your job, comes with experience.

I unwind in many ways. My family—two sons Anže and Andraž and my daughter Taja—are actually the biggest factor. My wife Gabi usually adds a lot to our joint relaxation, but she has been significantly more occupied than me in the last couple of months. She's actually an infectious disease specialist and has been working in departments with COVID patients since March. I'm so grateful to her for the work she does so well and she has taught me a lot about this disease through her experience.

The next thing is sport, of course, wherever and whenever possible. My favorites are cycling, SUPing, skiing, hiking in the solitary mountains around Bled, and underwater fishing in the summer. I also unwind when I work in the garden or when I'm at the stove. I love to cook. Nevertheless, in these corona times, I do miss hanging out with my friends, with whom we do occasionally unwind together (laughter).

X



BY Borut Čeh







Borut Čeh, Co-Owner and Managing Director, Labena Ltd.

hen, in 2015, Labena bought out a small but agile research & development and quality control laboratory from biotech company Bia Separations Ajdovščina, we did not fully understand how this would be the key to transforming our company both inside and out. At the same time, this was

also the ticket to enter one of the sectors with the most added value—biotech and pharma. Once we started vertically integrating the activities of the laboratories under Labena's umbrella, we began to change. Not only has the smaller, just-acquired unit (the laboratories) begun to have a significant effect on the much bigger Labena as a whole (that was three-times bigger in numbers at the time), but we started to really understand, live, and co-create the biotech and pharma community and sphere.

PHOTO Labena

Slovenia – Where the knowledge is being produced

Having two major multinational pharmaceutical companies based in Slovenia presents a major advantage for all SMEs working in the biotech-pharma business. Among other things, Slovenia is recognized in the international business space as a country with a strong pharmaceutical background. A whole added value chain of business from construction and inspection to manufacturing. research & development, and production, etc., is being supported and constantly developed by the biotechpharmaceutical segment This offers a variety of business opportunities for SMEs and start-ups not only to do business, but especially, to learn and grow outside the borders with the industry surrounding them.

Slovenia – Strategically positioned

Slovenia is strategically positioned in Central Europe, with good motorway access, an airport almost in the centre of the country, and with four more airports not more than a 2-hour drive from the capital Ljubljana. It has one of the busiest seaports in the Mediterranean and the biggest in Adriatic. It has everything: the sea, the mountains, the rivers, and plains. It can be hot, cold. rainy or snowy. The (small) size of Slovenia is a strength that enhances the quality of life, especially for families and people who, outside of work, like to explore, travel, and enjoy life.

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Slovenia – Top quality of life

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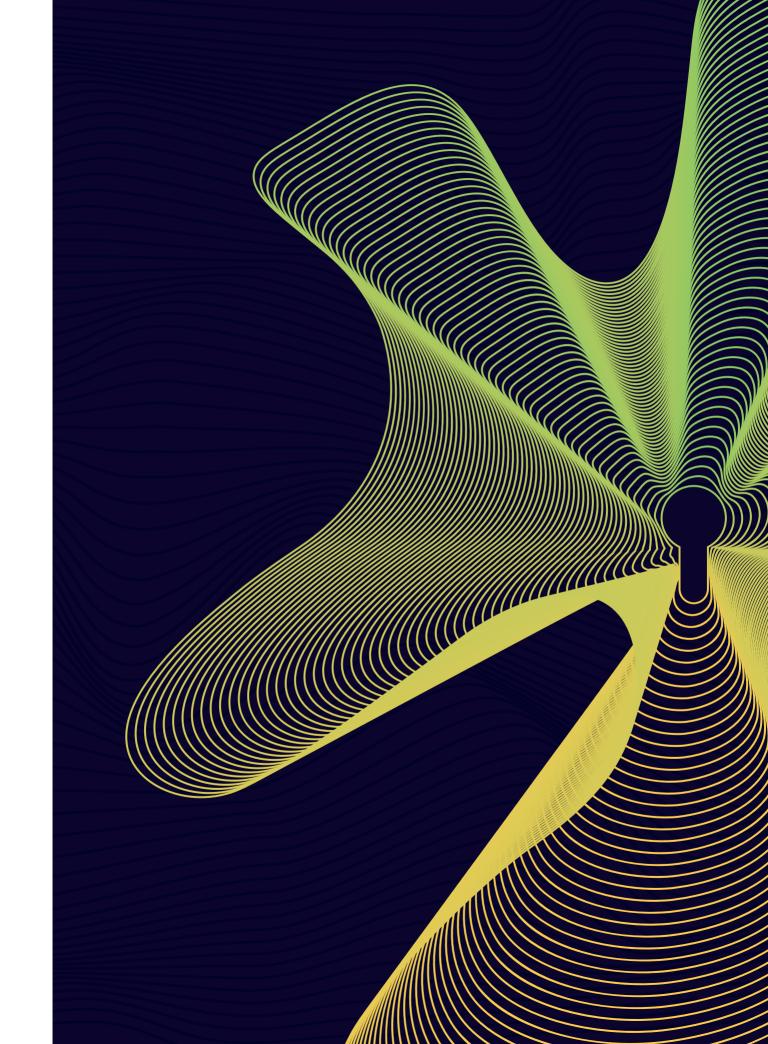
Slovenia has been rated between 21st and 10th position on different scales as one of the best countries to live in. The ranking took into account such indicators as the standard of living, the level of education, medicine, access to technology, sanitation, freedom of speech, freedom of choice, tolerance, and the protection of human rights. Taking into consideration the biotechpharma sector where salaries are above average, the cost of living, access to infrastructure, nature, medicine, technology, etc., Slovenia would be easily recognized by more investors and multinational companies if it had more strategic investments into promotion and infrastructure, especially as the knowledge and expertise already exist.

Slovenia – Ideal platform for biotech-pharma SME's

Having the history and culture of the pharmaceutical and biotech industry coursing through its veins, Slovenia is ideal for this segment. The University of Ljubljana with the Faculty of Pharmacy and Biotechnology, two medical faculties, two big multinational pharmaceutical companies, and a very lively spectrum of biotech SMEs provides a sufficiently wide environment where knowledge is exchanged, distributed, and developed. Most of these SMEs are internationally active, having partners and customers from all over the world which offers a good base and attracts experts to either stay, move to or return to Slovenia.

The only thing that might be missing is a more strategic approach and investment from the State itself into branding Slovenia as a final destination in which to work, live, and grow your knowledge and expertise.

Being present in six countries of South-East Europe, we have, for the reasons outlined above, decided to make our Excellency research & development headquarters for biotech and pharma in no other country than Slovenia. It offers a unique mixture between access to highly educated specialists domestically and regionally and holding an attraction for talents and experts from abroad. For biotech and pharma SMEs with high enough added value, this is exactly what Slovenia offers: a working environment with high enough knowledge, where everything is easily accessible, not too expensive, green, and offers opportunities for fast professional development and growth.





SECURITY IS THE VALUE OF EVERY INDIVIDUAL

ву Blaž Markelj, PhD

Security should be the value of every individual in a safe society. The perception of security for every person changes through the years, just as society and everything influencing security and the functioning of the society changes, too. Thus, technology can be placed in the center of changes of how society functions, its norms, and value.

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Blaž Markeli. PhD. Assistant Professor, Faculty of Criminal Justice and Security, University of Maribor

n recent years, through the rapid digitalization of society, technology has offered us numerous advantages, on the one hand, and on the other, it has set many traps. Advanced technology makes a person's job easier, and it enables faster access to information, which is extremely important for quick and efficient decision-making nowadays. At the same time, the number of cyberthreats is increasing, which threaten the

privacy of individuals as well as the data people work with through information technology. Therefore, it is of immense importance to know and maintain information security in the use of information and communication technology (ICT).

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Today's faith in people, their work, and simultaneously also the faith in organizations, since they are, after all, composed of people, is also reflected in how safely people manage their data: whether they take care to maintain the integrity, confidentiality, and accessibility of information. The right information at the right time is an important element in a person's decision-making process. Mobile devices are an example of technology that enables all this for people. Namely, today, access to data crucial for making a decision at a given moment is possible from practically anywhere. However, mobile devices should, like other ICT, be used in accordance with safety principles of information security.

In recent years, we have witnessed many cyberthreats that were published in the media, ranging from blackmailing viruses to numerous phishing e-mails. Mobile devices became a target of many cyber attackers. The number of cyberthreats is increasing at a time when many people are working from home due to COVID-19. Thus, at a given moment, some organizations have a plethora of 'dislocated' locations, from which individuals connect to the server infrastructure of organizations with different ICT. This should increase care for information security at all points where data is used and processed. On the one hand, the preservation of uninterrupted organizational processes (uninterrupted operation) is important, while at the same time, it is necessary to ensure a certain level of information security. These two go hand in hand. In the case of an insufficient level of information security and the realization of a cyberthreat, an organization's processes might also be interrupted, which can lead to financial damage.

It is hard for people to internalize threats we don't see and the origins of which are difficult to pinpoint, while the time of their realization is indefinable. We speak of cyberthreats to ICT users. Therefore, it is difficult for people to understand the risks that exist when using this technology and data. It is even harder to understand the investments that should be made by individuals, as well as organisations, to reduce the level of risk of these threats being realized. Investments need not be financial; we can also be dealing with training, the implementation of policies that deal with the field of information security in an organization, etc.

On the international and national levels, there is legislation (Information Security Act, GDPR, Criminal Code-1, Electronic Communications Act, etc.), protecting the user and organization with legislative measures. Despite the fact that cyberspace knows no borders, when speaking about individuals and their acts within cyberspace, borders are very clear in the legislation. When we speak about providing information security, we always eventually arrive at the ICT user and data. In cyberspace, the ICT user is the weakest link. Even if the organization the individual works for has a very advanced information security system, it increases the risk of information loss or possible realization of a cyberthreat if a person doesn't know it or use it.

Therefore, it is important that the state ensures a legislative framework, within which the information security of an individual community works, and for response centers (Cert), while individual organizations should ensure technical and organizational protection of their data and the technology they use, and for users. The most important thing is that every ICT user is aware of which ICT equipment they use, what it is capable of doing, and which data it manages. We need to be aware of their true value.

It is up to every individual to participate in the training available (for example: the Information Security: Confidence in Man and Technology conference) and to connect with other stakeholders who try to increase the level of information security on the national level (for example: the Faculty of Security Sciences of the University of Maribor, Ready 4D Future AmCham committee, etc.). Threats in cyberspace are constantly changing, making it all the more important for knowledge in the field of information security to be improved through the connection of academic and business stakeholders, on the one hand, and shared among all ICT users, on the other. It is only by bringing awareness, and sharing knowledge and experience that we are stronger in opposing cyberthreats. х

LIFE, LIBERTY, & THE PURSU **OF HAPPINESS**

6 рното: Unsplash

nly miracles make sense today. Only they make us feel like we've achieved something, done something new. The long global quest for knowledge, education, advanced technology, and enabling scientific systems has changed human perception. So, does that mean nothing really changes in the business world now?

No, but instead of talking about industrial revolutions, digital transformations, and (ro)botization as miracles to come, it's now time for their full-speed implementation. It's about making new an everyday thing. A digitally transformed entity is nothing new today, digital cloudbased solutions are ubiquitous. But in the world of many copies, only one easy reachable world champion solution exists, ready to be used.

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The future can be controlled and numerically predicted and looking forward has never been so easy. Industry now heavily relies on predicting problems and preventing quality issues or expensive repairs. Having processes under control is mandatory, the use of out-of-the-box AI models and (ro)bots is highly expected. Digitally transform, be systematic, secure your data and focus on enterprise risk management as core competence. Prevent risk or even better-if you can predict it, use it.

Optimism without a clear plan is just a colorful daydream. Strong, single cloud- and medical system-based healthcare, focused on the patient experience; the education system creating miracles; future-ready internationally interconnected businesses and transport infrastructure, all accessible to everyone-those are some of the strong potentials Slovenia has and can give to the world.



Deian Spasovski Owner and CEO. Ineor

It's not about the past; it's about the future.

It is crucial that those areas also stay "free" and accessible. We must have people who can do, and public-private partnership enabled businesses to achieve that. I am excited to be part of this changing world again and super proud to co-create some of the best digital support systems in those fields, some of them made in the USA.

Safe and secure. Imagine all the above (and much more) not being safe and secure. Imagine it being accessible to anyone and everyone in the world at any time. Bad science, committed to evil goals, robots and cloud-based systems made to compromise and misuse on one side and machines and production systems with possibility to be controlled from anywhere in the world. Imagine a country that is digitally not protected: personal healthcare data open to all, self-driving cars driven by your enemy or businesses invaded and interconnected with the worst organizations in the world or the entire electricity distribution network defeated at the press of a button. How much compromise can we take here, especially today, when we are enjoying those past miracles, the technological benefits, directly from our own homes with our own families?

So, think about information security first and foremost. Not only because of all the things above, security has never been more important. Secure your data even before the first data has been created. Start securing your projects even before they start. Make them secure to secure your company, to secure your homeland, to secure the world. Don't make compromises here.

Freedom is a vision. We like to group, same with the same, staying equal. We must decide where we belong now. Strong individuals build strong organizations by doing amazing things together. Why? Not because it's easy, but because it's hard.

And again, it's not about the past; it's about the future. The energy and the spirit that keeps us together. We all simply love Slovenia, the best place to live in the world. Let's grow that.

WITH CAUTIOUS OPTINISN OPTINISN ON THE ROAD TO DIGITAL IMUNITY

ast year, we have not had many reasons for optimism: from the medical crisis that has affected the entire world to natural and humanitarian catastrophes that have claimed the lives of too

many; from swarms of locusts in Eastern Africa to the biggest drop in shares values in the history in USA. Furthermore, cyber criminals took advantage of all these calamities for their own profit—from sending fake e-mails and attacking the already vulnerable healthcare environments to theft and encryption of data resulting in blackmail.

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Within the European Cyber Security Month, the European Union Agency for Cybersecurity ENISA has, with the help of local partners in EU member states, been focusing on organizing of a campaign to educate the wider audience about the threats endangering users in their use of internet services, secure e-mail use, secure use of mobile devices, and incorrect password use since 2011—in short, they strive for a comprehensive public and business user awareness. Awareness-raising topics do not change much from one year to another, especially not for business users, which points to the fact that, unfortunately, business security challenges do not significantly change either.

One of the main reasons for such a situation in the business world can be found in the lack of appropriately educated employees: at the end of 2019, ENISA issued a report in which they analyzed the level of employees' skills in the field of cybersecurity and made a comparison between the EU and the rest of the world. The research showed that EU lacks almost



Stojan Rančić IT Architect, NIL d.o.o. 300,000 appropriately educated analysts, engineers, architects, and management staff in the field of cybersecurity, and that almost 60% of companies have trouble filling job positions in this sector.

The combination of the lack of staff, technical debt, and current COVID-19-related difficulties poses quite a challenge for ICT managers. How to ensure the uninterrupted safe operation in an environment that was forced to transform overnight, from the traditional office-based workspace into one that is geographically and logically dispersed, to retain the visibility of data flows, and to stop leakage of confidential information, to prevent or at least limit the non-purpose use of laptops and mobile devices, and to simultaneously still ensure the functioning of crucial IT processes which the company depends upon?

Faced with the health crisis and its consequences in the ICT environment, risk management teams have several common guidelines:

• Opportunity knocks but once. At least the affordable one.

We cannot afford the optimism that we are immune to problems pestering the entire world around us. The timely detection of problems and facing them is of key importance, for which, unfortunately, we occasionally run out of time, willpower, or both.

• Divide and conquer.

Although the measures such as the ban on crossing municipality borders and the imposition of a curfew may seem too harsh, in the IT environment, too, we have to use the same measures to stop the spread of a virus, from strict environment segmentation to isolation of potentially compromised devices.

• Prevention is better than cure.

Why should we be getting over a virus infection if we can prevent it by washing our hands and a timely vaccination? And why should we stop the operations of an entire company after a breach due to restoring safety backup copies, if we can ensure the detection of attacks and elimination of vulnerabilities in advance?

At NIL's Security Operations Centre (NIL SOC) we can function as the immune system of your ICT environment, by improving its cyber resilience. Our team of top cybersecurity experts is stocked with the essential expertise in detecting and responding to suspicious security events. These experts in NIL SOC constantly (24/7) provide expert management of your security incidents. Thus, the companies can achieve a fast and affordable "digital immunity", by employing the NIL SOC services.

The near future prospects allow us to be optimistic, as we can expect several highly efficient vaccines in a short period of time, which will stop the spread of this coronavirus. The predictions for your digital immune system are just as optimistic, as NIL has an experienced team of experts working on its protection.

Everything is running as it should, so we can look forward to the New Year with great optimism, expecting that our private and business lives should return to normal and our personal immune system will have nothing more than a common cold or hay fever to deal with.

Don't battle the cyber epidemic without the mandatory safety equipment—pick up your NIL SOC prescription today!

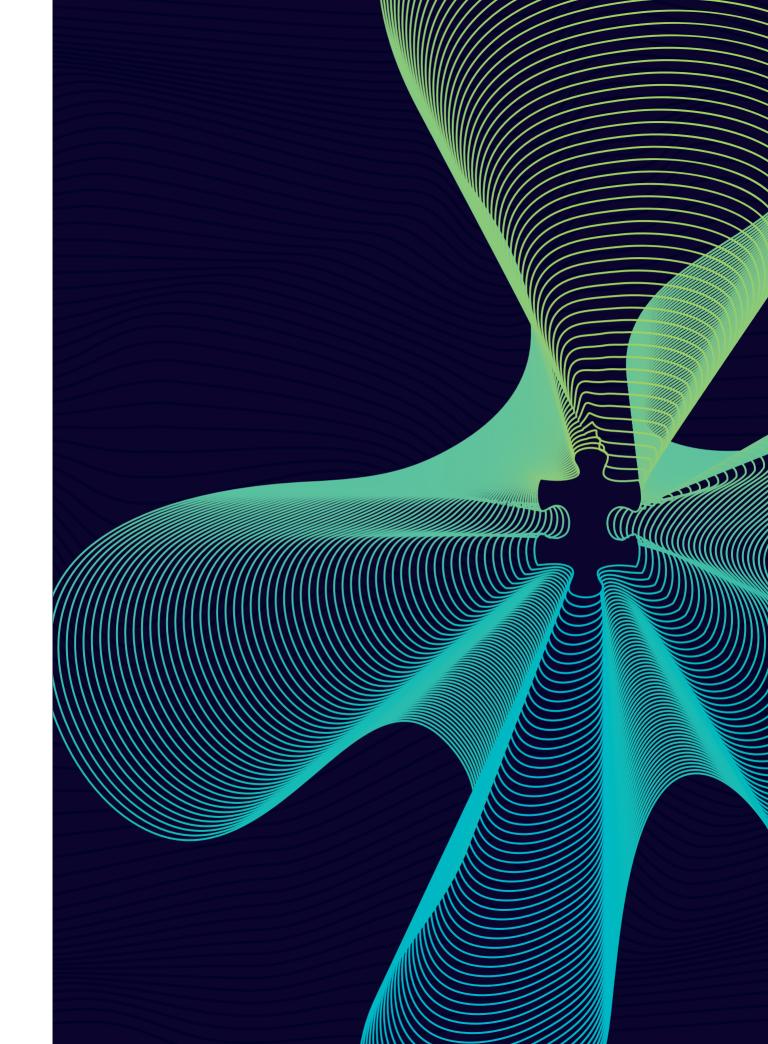


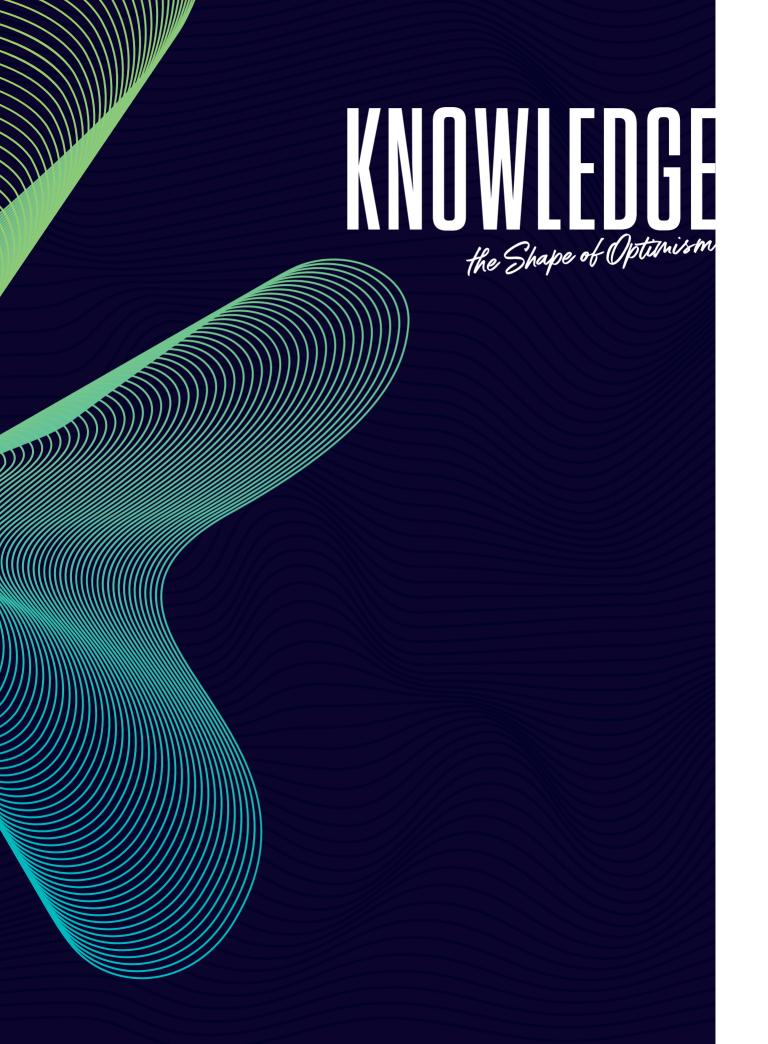
THINK BUSINESS. LEAVE THE IT SECURITY TO US.

NIL'S SECURITY OPERATIONS CENTER CONSISTS OF MORE THAN 25 TOP-NOTCH IT SECURITY EXPERTS









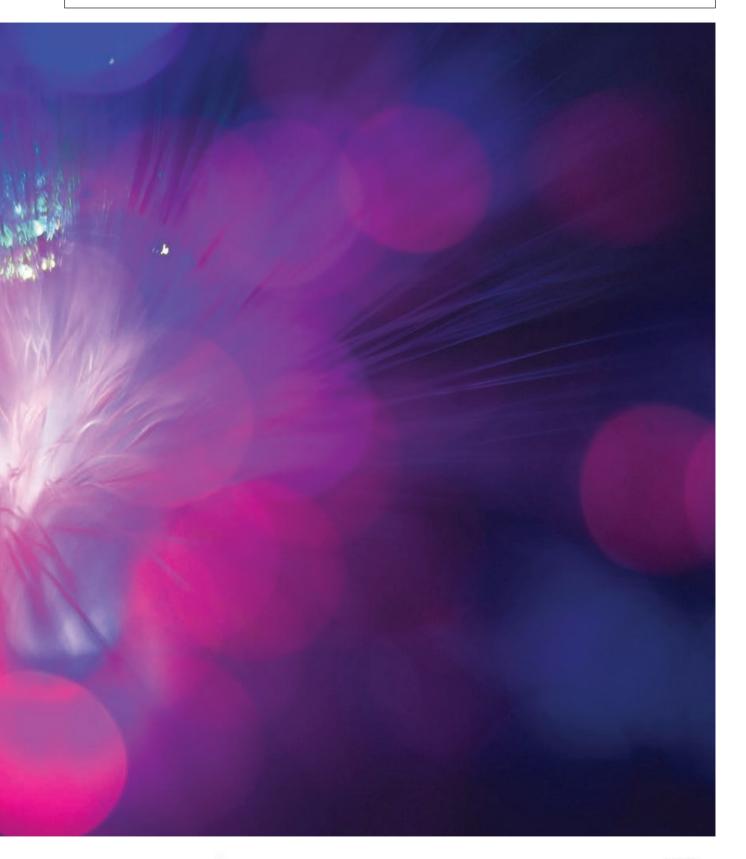
PARTNERSHIP FOR CHANGE WE COLLABORATE

Challenges of the 7th Round of Partnership for Change

Partnership for Change, the national platform for collaboration between employees in the private and public sectors, headed by AmCham Slovenia and the Ministry of Public Administration of the Republic of Slovenia, and which runs under the slogan "We Collaborate", entered its 7th round, in which it is to solve three exceptional challenges. This year's tender was entered by the National Institute of Chemistry with the NICKI challenge: the Proof of Concept incentive; the Knowledge Transfer Office of the University of Ljubljana with the challenge Dodana v(r)ednost: Usklajenost med univerzitetnim znanjem in trgom dela; and the Institute of Oncology Ljubljana with the challenge Protonska terapija v Sloveniji - odgovoren prispevek družbi in javnemu zdravstvenemu sistemu. All three challenges are outstanding and will be dealt with jointly until October next year.

ිට PHOTO: Unsplash











PARTNERSTVO ZA SPREMEMBE 7. krog: SODELUJEMO.

THE NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF CHEMISTRY: NICKI: the Proof of Concept Incentive

Slovenia invests grants solely into research activities which, in many cases, lead to innovation with commercial potential. Before such innovations can get near investors, researchers first have to prove that their ideas are practical, useful, commercially eligible, and worth further financial investment. Unfortunately, in the process of technological innovation development, a financial gap occurs at this point, which is the consequence of undeveloped financing of innovations from the level of patent to the prototype development. The gap could be closed in such a manner that the financing of research through research activities would be followed by "Proof of Concept" (PoC) financing or verification of the technical feasibility of the technology. PoC financial support on the state level should be established for the technological development of the state and society.

The PoC means serve for or enable validation, commercialization of the new product, new technology or new process, enable support in the construction of a team and its knowledge finely specialized for the situation in which researchers with commercially interesting, yet market unadapted and commercially untested technologies find themselves. In the establishment of innovative enterprises, PoC is an essential step prior to the phase of searching for investors in the form of startup capital, seed capital, and venture capital. With the intent to enable researchers with commercially interesting innovations to break into the market, the National Institute of Chemistry founded an internal, first in Slovenia, "Proof of Concept" (PoC) financial incentive, called NICKI. The purpose of the incentive is to increase the technological level of development (TRL) and innovation value, increase the sales or licensing opportunities, and to create links with partners in the industry.

KNOWLEDGE TRANSFER OFFICE, UNIVERSITY OF LJUBLJANA: DODANA V(R)EDNOST! Usklajenost med univerzitetnim znanjem in trgom dela (ADDED VALUE/ADDED KNOWLEDGE! Compliance between university knowledge and the labor market)

Employer (companies, institutions) perceptions of the competences of graduates from higher education programs are frequently different from the perceptions of higher education institutions (as well as graduates themselves). Employers want a "made" graduate who will be incorporated into the working process as fast as possible, while universities think that their primary task is creating and transferring knowledge in a manner that builds the abilities of an individual for the acquisition of competences and not to teach skills. The challenge is how to put into practice the "triple helix" model, in which employers are important stakeholders in the (co)creation of the higher education space while retaining the academic freedom that enables the development of fields which are not (yet) commercially interesting, but are the basis for the development of creativity and thus long-term progress and prosperity.

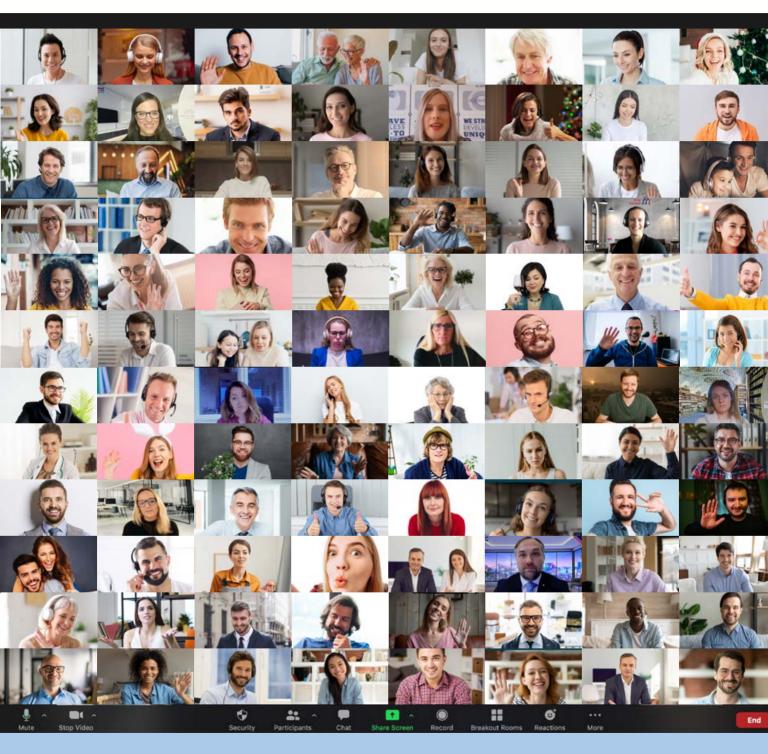
The first step in the establishment of a constructive dialogue is the harmonization of expectations by companies and educational programs through the inclusion of knowledge, initiatives, and the needs of business and industry in the most promising sectors. By encouraging learning with the help of "challenge-based learning", we can gradually change the views and perceptions of both sides, the academic-research sphere and employers. The new approach means nurturing a culture of openness and learning based on solving specific problems from business and industry, faster synchronization and transfer of information between both spheres, encouraging an entrepreneurial mindset in researchers, and the promotion of the knowledge most relevant for the market, increasing the competences of students and graduates, a more lasting connection of graduates with the university, and a more connected academic-business community, as well as greater competitiveness of Slovenian higher education institutions and business internationally.

THE INSTITUTE OF ONCOLOGY LJUBLJANA: Protonska terapija v Sloveniji – odgovoren prispevek družbi in javnemu zdravstvenemu sistemu (Proton Therapy in Slovenia – a Responsible Contribution to Society and the Public Healthcare System)

Proton therapy is an established and the most contemporary form of radiotherapy in the world, and is one of three basic treatment methods of oncology patients; however, Slovenian oncological patients have very limited access to it. The construction of the Slovenian Proton Center for the Treatment of Oncology Patients (SIPTC) is a great challenge, both from the viewpoint of technology and execution, financing, and operation. On the world scale, especially the first aspect is managed, in part, due to the important contribution of Slovenian knowledge.

The need for the establishment of SIPTC derives primarily from the needs of oncological patients and the medical field, and secondarily, also from the scientific and business potential in Slovenia. Nevertheless, challenges remain and include the understanding and readiness of key stakeholders to consider contemporary forms of partnership in the construction of such demanding projects within the framework of the public healthcare system; a business model of operation that enables the treatment of oncological patients from abroad; planning of the center which also includes the calculation of the optimal capacity; planning the facility; the selection of technology and its positioning in the public healthcare system; financing, since the capital-demanding investment needs deliberation about the possible ways of financing and collaboration of public and private partners: the construction of a demanding structure demands appropriate engineering competences: a property that meets technical and static requirements of the structure and requirements of protection against ionizing radiation; and the functioning and managing of the Center that requires high-tech knowledge and experience. X





Tako delamo najboljši.

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COMPANIES SHOULD BE AWARE OF THE IMPORTANCE OF THEIR OWN KNOWLEDGE FOR IT GIVES THEM A COMPETITIVE ADVANTAGE



Eva Gostiša, Senior Counsel, Jadek & Pensa Law Office, Co-chair of the AmCham Intellectual Property Committee



Jaka Repanšek, Founder, RePublis, Co-chair of the AmCham Intellectual Property Committee

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ompanies and non-commercial research institutions invest in acquiring, developing, and applying the expert skills and experience, as well as information, which are the currency

of knowledge economy and provide a competitive advantage. This investment into the creation and use of intellectual capital is a decisive factor for their competitiveness and innovative success on the market and, therefore, their return on investment, which is the basic motivation for business research and development. When their openness does not permit the full use of their investments in research and innovation, they can reserve the rights over the results of their innovation-related activities in different ways. One of these ways is the use of intellectual property rights, such as patents, rights from the model, or

copyrights. The second way of reserving rights over the innovation results is the protection of access to knowledge that is valuable for a subject and not generally known, as well as the exploitation of this knowledge. This valuable expert knowledge and experience, as well as valuable business information that is undisclosed and should remain confidential, is called trade secrets." This quotation is part of the introductory statement of the Directive (EU) 2016/943 of the European Parliament and of the Council, dealing with the protection of

expertise, experience, and business information, and nicely portrays the importance of knowledge and its protection.

First and foremost, it is important *that companies* realize the importance of their own expertise, which gives them a competitive advantage and thus added value, and the possibility of protecting it, either with industrial property rights or copyright or with the use of the institute of professional secrecy. The next step is appropriate protection, and the third step is (effective) exercise of these rights. What should not be overlooked is the workers who create all these inventions and who have to be appropriately rewarded for their work and effort. The state provides the legislative framework, while in practice problems arise with its realization, for example, no later than in the definition of whether an invention on the job is direct or indirect, what the amount of a reward that an employee is entitled to depends on, and even more in the calculation of a reward.

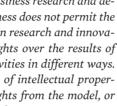
Especially important for the state and economy is the transfer of knowledge from research institutions to business and industry, since innovation in research institutions is not and cannot be an end in itself. An appropriate regulatory framework for the efficient transfer of knowledge needs to be ensured, and that in a manner which will be stimulating, alos from the tax perspective, so that all the stakeholders (research institutions, companies, and creative and diligent individuals) are motivated and strive for the transfer of this knowledge. Furthermore, state programs in this field should be more efficient. In these uncertain times, every incentive is very important since the knowledge originating from research and development is that which will help companies survive (more easily). We are noticing that there is a deficit in the promotion of knowledge accumulated in research institutions and so business and industry frequently do not know what research institutions are involved

> in and what they have to offer. The transfer and exploitation of this knowledge are thus more or less dependent solely on initiatives from individuals who have this expertise and are aware of the importance of transferring it to business and industry. The merging of one with the other on a common platform is certainly the right way to success, and this is also where the attention and efforts of the AmCham Intellectual Property Committee lie.

> To conclude, let us add that in practice we continue to notice the need for the synchronization

of the content of the intellectual property rights with the needs of the present-day business and industrial reality. We strive for greater predictability of (legal) relationships in the field of intellectual property for both the holders and users of intellectual property rights. As mentioned at the beginning, we find that there is a need for greater flexibility of relations in the field of intellectual property in business relationships, which mostly pertains to licensing and other contractual relationships. Due attention in our operation is also given to questions related to the judicial protection of intellectual property rights in Slovenia, in which we occasionally miss the more efficient (and faster) protection of exclusive rights while, at the same time, we realize that not even within judicial decision-making are excessive interventions in the legitimate interests of intellectual property users acceptable. Let us conclude by saying that it is still all about the encouragement and strengthening of awareness of individuals regarding the duty to respect and legally use industrial property rights. X

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ESPECIALLY

ECONOMY IS

IMPORTANT FOR

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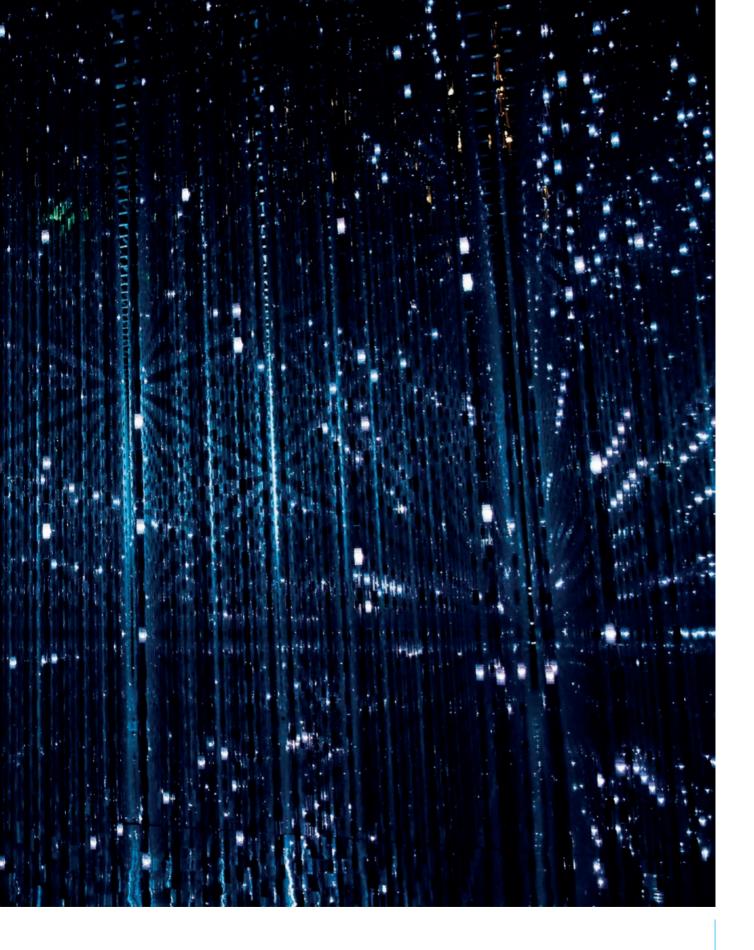
FROM RESEARCH

INSTITUTIONS TO

BUSINESS AND

INDUSTRY.





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ith the coronavirus pandemic, digitalization accelerated incredibly and the world got even smaller and more accessible. What do you see as the biggest advantages the current crisis will bring to business and networking?

_ The current crisis managed to achieve two J.L. things simultaneously: digital distances got even smaller, while the physical ones grew bigger. By this, I mean that the process of digitalization already has and will continue to accelerate, digital communication and services are becoming increasingly important. Digital services enable us to order practically anything from the comfort of our living room, whatever we desire the postman can deliver the next day to our front porch. At the same time, the world has become more local or regional. Long supply chains have slowed down, there are much fewer cheap products from countries far away, we spend much more time at home being with each other, we have grown aware of the importance of local supply and local industry once again. Those who know how to adapt to the new reality best, to link digital technology and physical processes, will be the winners in this crisis.

At the AmCham Business Breakfast within the Bled Strategic Forum, you spoke about the fact that the crisis brought on by the coronavirus epidemic will be an opportunity for talents from smaller countries, such as Slovenia. Why do you think so?

J.L.___ The world is becoming increasingly regional. Working from home is becoming a reality. Tools for working and communicating remotely keep developing, and so do the ways of remote employee leadership. In the past, if you wanted to work with the best in a branch with high added value, you had to be present in a certain part of the world-for finance in New York, for technology in Silicon Valley, for biotechnology in Boston or San Francisco. Now, I think, due to the work we do remotely, is the time when these professions will spread around the world. For this manner of work, companies will truly start searching for talents all over the world and an employee's physical location will not be as important. At the same time, countries are becoming more aware of the importance of home production. Therefore, this epidemic has two interesting effects: the dispersion and smaller concentration of highly educated workforce at a few points in the world, while simultaneously the production and local products will regain value. This is an opportunity for countries such as Slovenia, where we have a lot of educated workforce and where our products are high-quality and good.

How do you perceive the development and position of talents in Slovenia? What do you think should change so that talents want to stay or return to Slovenia? Jure Leskovec, PhD. Associate Professor of Computer Science, Stanford University

_Almost 10,000 people move away from Slove-J.L. nia every year. This is almost one half of one generation! The majority of people who move away are young people between 25 and 35 years of age who have been educated in Slovenia. The institutions in charge of this issue don't pay special attention to that since the circles researching this area mostly believe that as long as we have 10,000 migrants moving to Slovenia every year, the number of inhabitants isn't decreasing and there's no reason for panic. Therefore, there's currently no serious institutional strategy as to how keep the young at home or how to connect and attach those studying and working abroad to their homeland. Furthermore, two erroneous arguments are frequently emphasized: (1) that Slovenians abroad are not interested in collaborating with Slovenia, and (2) that Slovenians don't want to return to Slovenia due to the low salaries and smaller professional challenges. The research performed by the ASEF Foundation and the VTIS society showed just the opposite: (1) 85% of Slovenians around the world think about returning to Slovenia or want to cooperate with Slovenia, and (2) expectations of Slovenians abroad considering their salary are smaller and adapted to the Slovenian reality.

Therefore, there are numerous opportunities that need to be addressed: one, companies need a better organized approach to talented young people, especially those who are currently working or studying abroad. Two, it is crucial that many institutions in Slovenia become less incestoid and start accepting the best Slovenian talents from around the world. It happens much too often that driven people are perceived as a threat to the current norm. Three, we need a national strategy and programs



for the circulation and return of Slovenians to Slovenia. And four, the work of civil-social organizations, such as the Association of Slovenians Educated Abroad (VTIS) and the ASEF Foundation, needs to be supported since they connect Slovenians at home and abroad and enhance the flow of

knowledge, culture, and entrepreneurship among them. By this, I have in mind that companies can contribute a lot with their support, especially those which are members of the AmCham, since their support of such socially beneficial projects will return tenfold in the long run.

You said in one of the interviews that more man, more humanism needs to be placed into technology, which has become a big part of our lives, and even more so with this crisis. Why do you see this as necessary and how would this be achieved?

J.L.___ Technology has to come closer to people. For example, today we operate the computer with the keyboard, mouse, and screen. In the future, this will not necessarily hold true anymore, since we'll be able to communicate with computers with speech or in some other way less foreign to man. With the development of artificial intelligence technologies, technology will become more people-friendly, more accessible, and useful. In the future, systems will become less artificial and a lot more intelligent, which will make their usability and interactions with them a lot more accessible, easier, and friendlier. Technology suited to man is more accessible and increases collaboration between people. It also puts a person in the forefront, enables much more cooperation between people, easier and faster work, and facilitates companies and groups to be much more agile, adaptable, and successful in solving problems. And the last important component is the fact that we need to be aware of the reverse impact of technology on people and society, especially in the fields of the discrimination and bias of various automatic systems. I think that companies are growing increasingly aware that the technological landscape and its abilities change very quickly and that traditional IT departments are not the right way of dealing with this. Hence, employee training will become more and more important and will be a sort of lifelong learning, for employees need to learn new skills and keep their finger on the pulse. Technology can be very helpful in employee training, since learning can be adapted and personalized to every employee and thus, we can truly measure which competences a person has and which can be learned for better efficiency.

How do you perceive collaboration between science and business and industry? Where are the main dif-

I see an especially bright future in the branches that require knowledge, precision, diligence, and - JURE LESKOVEC

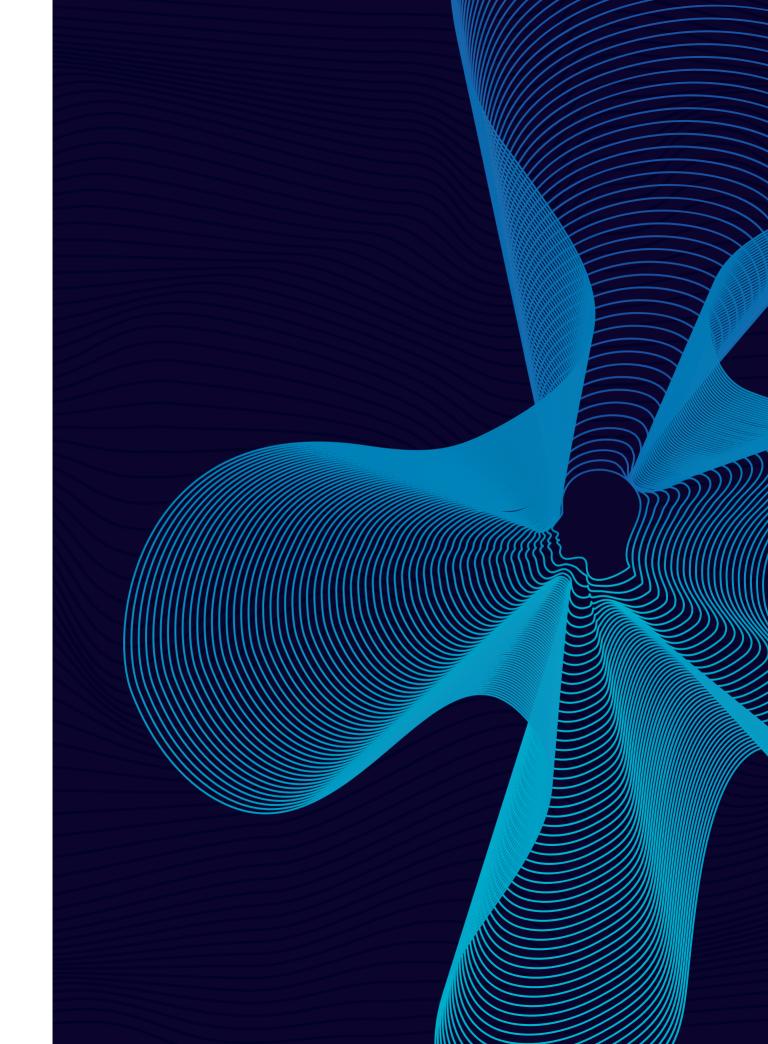
ferences between Slovenia and the USA and what could be improved on our side?

J.L.___ Let me give you a brief summary of how we embark on such a collaboration at Stanford University. The cooperation between science and business is re-

ally important since, in doing so, both sides win and benefit greatly from it. Companies gain access to young, ambitious, and smart students and professors who solve difficult problems in a new way with their unencumbered and innovative viewpoint. There are several benefits for companies: they get a solution, a transfer of knowledge happens, and the company gets access to educated and experienced staff. On the other side, universities and institutes also receive numerous gains: they acquire research funds, get access to real problems which make a difference in real life, students can work on interesting problems, and they get prepared for work in real sectors. However, such a relationship demands a lot of trust and the realization that this is not a purely commercial relationship, meaning that you get paid for a specific product agreed upon in advance. This relationship includes a lot more complex, long-term, and multi-layered collaborationsometimes it is enough to make a single breakthrough that can have big consequences for the operation and future of a company. Yet, such breakthroughs are difficult to plan in advance and write down in specific contractual deadlines; thus, it is very important for companies to understand that they are building a lasting relationship based on trust and reciprocity.

Where do you see the greatest potential of Slovenia and how should it be used to our advantage?

J.L.___ It is important for Slovenia to build on the future. Not on the present and even less on the past. By this, I mean that we should constantly wonder where the world is heading, how it is changing, and how can Slovenia be best positioned in these changes. Here we need more ambition, courage, and determination. We have a highly educated workforce, many internationally directed companies that compete on the global market and have high added value, we are a relatively organized country and have great potential that we can use. I see an especially bright future in the branches that require knowledge, precision, diligence, and innovativeness. These are qualities Slovenians like to pride ourselves on. And these are branches with high added value. Furthermore, these are fields in which small and medium-sized companies can make the biggest difference. I think we should be more aware of that. To bring it to the funny side: We love nature and forests, but today we make robots instead of woodenwares in Ribnica. I hope the entire state of Slovenia will be capable of such transformation. X





MORE BOLDLY TOWARDS PROMOTING INVESTMENTS

By Nevenka Črešnar Pergar

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ur country is green and beautiful, and we all love it. We believe that it is one of the most attractive lands to live in far and wide. This is something the whole world acknowledges. Nevertheless, the comprehensive attractiveness is not measured only by the beauty of

nature, comfort of living, safety, and similar, most certainly of important criteria. The attractiveness also has to be gauged by the opportunities a particular country offers individuals for them to realize their ambitions and potential to the greatest extent possible. And here, I would like to stress, it is not just about individual ambition and potential, but rather about the potential of the entire society.

The biggest group of ambitious citizens and at the same time the greatest potential are young people who

D PHOTO: Unsplash





Nevenka Črešnar Pergar, Owner and Director, NP Consulting, Co-chair of the AmCham Investment Committee look ahead, because they are interested in the future and want to be active participants in the creation of this future. I'm talking about energies that can be sufficiently released only if they take place in an environment that has ambitious, bold, even daring strategic goals, and appropriately ambitious development policy.

Shift into a higher gear!

I have a feeling that in our beautiful Slovenia we are scared of the leap from the comfortable to the dynamic, creative state. To shift into a higher gear. We are scared of people who know more, we are reserved about foreign investments, we fear bolder moves. We are all aware of the fact that our country's future is not in heavy industry, but also not solely in tourism, regardless of how much we all love it; it is, however, in the industries of the future supported primarily by complex knowledge, modern technology, and innovativeness.

A shift from the lower into a higher gear can be achieved relatively quickly. We have numerous young, educated people who work abroad or are waiting for their opportunity at home. We have a host of advanced companies and research institutes that can very quickly make the necessary shift. We have the European Union that wants the quickest possible transformation of the European economy into a more competitive, technologically advanced, green, and environmentally responsible economy. We have a large EU market. We almost have it all.

Money "seeks" good investments and friendly environments

So, what are we missing? We're primarily missing a broad, sincere commitment, a consensual decision that we have to tread the path of development quicker. We're missing investment audacity, and sometimes some managerial and specific skills. And, above all, an environment that will stimulate investment activities, that will be easier to comply with, transparent, stable, and will instill investors with the greatest possible faith. The establishment of the Strategic Council of the Government of the Republic of Slovenia for Debureaucratization seems like an important message from the government not only to citizens but also to investors. In the past, there have been many attempts to remove bureaucratic obstacles; nevertheless, it seems that this approach is the most serious.

What about the money? There's enough money in the world, we only need to know how to attract it. If the investment is sound and the business environment friendly, money comes.

A dangerous path towards cheap sales

The credibility of the state has an important role in foreign investment, too. Examples when a state, the owner, halts

the sales process in the last stage, just before the signing of the sales contract, so to speak, without any real, clear explanation dissuade investors from investing in our country. In the end, those few assets that still remain in the state's hands will be sold off for pocket change, since serious, strong investors will no longer be interested in investing in our country.

That is what we're dealing with at the Investment Promotion Commission. We stimulate advanced entrepreneurship, educate young people, and equip them with leadership skills; we suggest changes to the regulatory environment which we want to be friendly and procedurally quick and efficient, so that investors consider it trustworthy; and, last but not least, we invite investors. Slovenian and foreign.

Active collaboration with

governments brings results

Our proposals to improve the situation in the economy address every current Slovenian government and this year's preparation of "anti-corona measures" was not much different. We are pleased to find that several of our proposals were adopted, one of them being the debureaucratization of our economy and investment environment. Let me also mention one recommendation that I find extremely important and that is the issuance of government bonds with a fixed yield, which would be bought by our citizens, while the means would be invested into Slovenian development projects. Furthermore, we follow with great interest the establishment of the Demographic Fund which is to manage the majority of state assets. Will we know how to ensure its management in accordance with the high standards of OECD corporate governance and thus provide returns that are very much needed and not only for the pension fund?

We see difficulties in both the international and Slovenian economy as an opportunity for new, daring ideas, for shifts from the traditional to the new. These shifts are most easily made by small, yet quality-based economies with appropriate potentials, the group of which the Slovenian economy is also a part.

Will we be able to take a leap from the "comfortable" to the dynamic? Will we be able to unite the energies we too often waste on the useless for the useful? Will we roll up our sleeves?

"Slovenia can become one of the 15 most competitive countries in the world," were the words of the Prime Minister in a talk at the AmCham Business Breakfast on September 29, 2020. That is a totally realistic, realizable, and yet ambitious, bold strategic goal.

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We can and know how to l

A GOOD WORD FROM AN INVESTOR WITH POSITIVE EXPERIENCE GOES A LONG WAY

Janez Škrubej Partner, Invera Equity Partners



ased on your experience, how would you estimate the Slovenian business environment? What is that one thing that attracts investors to Slovenia and what drives them away?

J.S.____ In many respects, the Slovenian business environment is positive for foreign investors: for ex-

ample, the fact that we are an EU and eurozone member state, we have an educated and well-qualified work force, especially in the field of technical engineering, a good work ethic, we have an excellent geostrategic location, etc.

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Somewhat less attractive are, as we well know, the taxation environment, also labor legislation, the lengthiness of various administrative procedures (e.g. obtaining a building permit), lengthy court proceedings, and recently, also poor flight connections, especially in the central part of Slovenia. There is also the question of other infrastructure that investors check, such as international schools.

What do you think Slovenia should do to become more competitive and attract more investments and funds?

J.S._____In the past, some of the privatization procedures reflected poorly on Slovenia, since some investors spent considerable means, and especially a lot of time, on transactions which were then, for one reason or another, closed unsuccessfully. In recent years, these problems have subsided and we now have some very positive investment stories that we need to continue. Naturally, investors swap stories and "a good word" from an investor with positive experience can go a long way. As far as the competitiveness of the business environment is concerned, the things I've already mentioned as currently







less attractive should be improved.

Which branches are currently 'on trend' for investment in Slovenia?

J.Š. Considering the present COVID situation in Slovenia and around the world, investors are seeking out branches that have proven to be resistant to COVID or which will be able to adapt appropriately to the changed circumstances. Currently, the most sought after are, for example, technological companies, certain niche producers with global potential, etc.

What about Slovenian companies and their employees in comparison to the region? What is the situation regarding qualified staff and innovativeness? Where does the competitive advantage of Slovenian companies lie and where is there room for improvement?

J.S.____ Considering the size of the Slovenian market, investors are mostly interested in companies which have succeeded with their products or services on the wider European or global market and, luckily, many Slovenian companies meet this requirement. As I like to say: in Slovenia, every valley has at least a couple of such successful companies. In these sectors, there is a lot of knowledge and plenty of qualified workers on the highest level. Improvements are possible with better connectivity between the educational system and business and industry as well as in better connections and help between business entities as such.

Why is it good to have a foreign investor in a company? What, besides money, can they bring? What kind of companies does your fund invest in? What are your criteria for investment?

_ Our Invera Fund, headquartered in the Neth-JŠ. erlands, has 60 million euro available for investment. The biggest investors into Invera are, in addition to other institutional investors, the EBRD and EIF. Our intention is to invest in smaller and medium-sized companies which have already proved their worth on the market, but at the same time need a partner which is strong in terms of capital; in addition to financial means, this partner also brings other global skills and necessary contacts in the region and beyond, which might be lacking in the company. If we do not have the skills that we judge the company needs, we source them on the market through our contacts. We, as the investor, become a partner to the existing owners, with whom we then pursue business goals set when we entered the company. Unlike some other funds, the management structure of our fund, which includes three partners (one in Bosnia and Herzegovina, another in Croatia, and me in Slovenia), enables a good insight into the happenings on these markets and thus the possibility of regional consolidation in certain sectors. Besides the three countries mentioned, we can also invest in Serbia and Montenegro.

What will the investment trend be in the future?

J.S. We expect it to be "lively" at the beginning of next year, when the impact of COVID will become more apparent on the future of certain branches and the global geopolitical situation. In Slovenia, we expect that owners of family companies and other enterprises in our focus will continue to recognize that, at a certain point, the entry of a financial partner is appropriate, since they can relieve the owners of specific risks to a certain extent and simultaneously provide a boost to the company's development.

GOOD CORPORATE GOVERNANCE WILL HELP COMPANIES REPRESENT THEIR BUSINESS & SLOVENIA AS A TRUSTWORTHY PARTNER

BY Marko Srabotnik & Aleš Lunder

The Slovenian economy is defined as a small open economy where export represents 40% of GDP. The 500 biggest companies generate 54.48% of total revenues and employ 34.35% of all employees in the Slovenian economy. Out of the top 500, there are 86 companies owned or regulated by the state. At the end of November 2020, the overall number of such companies in Slovenia was 480, including daughter companies. Due to their size and organizational structure, 221 companies have supervisory boards with 1,099 supervisors, the whole management board structure in all companies includes 683 official board members.

The primary objective for a good corporate governance structure in each company is to enable the Supervisory Board (the "Board") to drive a long-term strategic vision for the company, thus facilitating effective, entrepreneurial, and prudent management that can deliver the company long-term success. While having too long-tenured supervisors on the Board should be avoided, frequent fluctuation of Board composition is most likely not advantageous to the company's long-term stability. Graph 1 shows the number of changes in supervisory boards and Graph 2 shows the changes in management boards. The relatively high level of changes indicates the possible effects on the efficiency of continuous management activities.



PHOTO: Unsplash



Aleš Lunder, Partner, CMS Slovenia, Co-chair of the AmCham Corporate Ethics and Transparency Committee

While in recent years Slovenia has made some encouraging steps towards untangling the membership in management boards from political influence, like the six-month cool-off period the Slovenian Sovereign Holding (SDH) has to observe when appointing management boards in state-owned companies, this same provision shows the fundamental lack of understanding of basic principles of corporate governance by Slovenian politicians, as the provision does not apply to supervisory boards.

The recent resignation of three Board Members of Telekom Slovenia d.d., being subject to the appointment of new Board Members by the shareholders assembly and the subsequent appointment of three new Board Members by the court upon a request by SDH is troubling as it shows that neither the SDH nor the court adhered to the basic principles of corporate

governance. It appears that in Slovenia

the broad public, including the politicians, is still convinced that supervisory board members are representing the best interest of the shareholders of a company, which seems to be confirmed by the actions described above.

However, despite the seemingly discouraging news outlined above, we observe that the professional public, like the Slovenian Association of Supervisory Board Members and its members, are very active in changing the culture and the understanding of corporate governance within its members and in the Slovenian public, thus introducing good corporate governance in



Marko Srabotnik, Area Head of Presales, South Eastern Europe, Bisnode, Co-chair of the AmCham Corporate Ethics and Transparency Committee

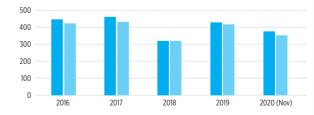
various Slovenian companies.

The implementation of good corporate governance will help companies and their business endeavors outside Slovenian borders represent their business and Slovenia as a trustworthy partner.

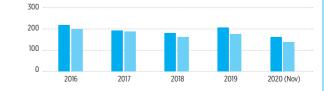
Also encouraging are the AmCham activities in the area of corporate governance, such as underlining the benefits of good corporate governance in the wider business community with the emphasis on younger professionals where we get very good feedback. Another light at the end of the tunnel is that the perception of the importance of good corporate governance has significantly improved in the wider public in recent years.

*This article reflects solely the personal opinion of the authors and does not reflect any opinion of the AmCham Corporate Ethics and Transparency Committee nor the organizations for which the authors work.

Changes in supervisory boards Graph 1







New member of prolonged mandat Exit member of expired mandat

Source: Official Public Registry of Republic of Slovenia



WHEN WILL CHAMPAGNE CORKS POP IN THE TOURISM INDUSTRY AGAIN? Restart tourism after Covid - 19

When the world stopped in March 2020, we thought the crisis would last a couple of months. At that time, tourism professionals predicted a fast and steep recovery to the record revenues reached in 2019. However, no one could ever have predicted such a long-lasting crisis and such a huge second wave with so many casualties. This truly is an unprecedented situation for the world travel industry that has suffered from an 80% to 90% decline in revenues in 2020 compared to 2019.

Slovenia used to be a global destination, with American and Asian guests among the most numerous visitors. The most popular spots for overseas guests were Ljubljana, Bled, and Postojna. These destinations have been hit the most by the crisis. Not only because of the sudden halt of overseas arrivals but also because of the complete cessation of business travel, conferences, seminars, events, etc. After the end of the first wave, individual leisure travel re-established slowly but surely, although sadly just for the summer months till the start of the second wave. However, business travel remained banned by all serious companies worldwide. All travel-related businesses switched to video conferencing and it seems the world can function on video calls simply because there is no other option for communication. However, I do not think this solution can be sustainable in the long term: securing new business via a video call cannot be as successful as meeting in person.

As hopeless as it all seems to be in the tourism industry and many other service-oriented industries all of which are closed during lockdowns, there is a glimmer of light in the tunnel showing us hope of a recovery. Vaccination will clearly save our businesses. but the million-dollar question is still: when? As we look closely into the near future of the travel industry, we can see a slow recovery. It may take up to as long as five years to see revenues approaching those of 2019. We do foresee a fairly quick recovery of individual leisure tourism, because people are simply fed up with staying locked in at home. Leisure travel will therefore restart as soon as people are successfully vaccinated and thus fit to travel. Airlines, hotels, and even countries will allow only vaccinated visitors to travel. When this happens, we can start talking about the new normality. But I am more concerned about business travellers, about world events such as international congresses, the Olympics, Expo, etc. Will we be quick enough to vaccinate the whole world in order to make the Olympic Games happen? Sure, there are still huge challenges in front of us before we can open a bottle of expensive champagne and drink a toast to the safe, new normal world of travel. If that moment arrives quicker than we expected, there will be challenges. Airline companies put almost all large overseas fleet into retirement, so these planes are no longer available; when demand rises again, we will have to wait for new aircraft to be manufactured.

I think this greatest ever crisis in the hospitality industry is also an opportunity to restart our businesses and make them more attractive to our clients. I believe we need to become more innovative than ever before. Even though the service industry is almost all about humans servicing humans with kindness, professionalism, and an overall excellent authentic attitude, we must provide more digital-oriented services with just one common goal: to make our guests happier than ever before. The digitalization of the hospitality industry should be focused on customer-redefined tailor-made experiences. However, we should not undermine the continuing importance of sustainability, the evolution of it. We should, therefore, take a very good care of our employees, our guests, and our environment. X



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The EU and the US must team up to face challenges on a platform of common values

Susan Danger, CEO of AmCham EU, and Chair of AmChams in Europe



Established in 1963, AmChams in Europe serves as the umbrella organization for 45 American Chambers of Commerce (AmChams) from 43 countries throughout Europe and Western Asia. In Europe the organization represent the interests of more than 17,000 American and European companies employing 20 million workers – account for more than \$ 1.1 trillion in investment on both sides of the Atlantic.

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hy is an excellent transatlantic relationship so crucial for both Europe and the USA? Are the USA and Europe natural allies, as some say, and why?

s.p.___ Europe and the United States are highly integrated economically. In ade and investment the transationtic eco-

terms of both trade and investment, the transatlantic economic relationship is the largest bilateral economic relationship in the world. It accounts for one third of global GDP and half of global consumption. It supports 16 million jobs on both sides of the Atlantic. When Europe does well, the US does well too – and vice versa. The economic relationship is the strongest of the enduring ties that bind Europe and the USA together.

However, Europe and the USA are bound together by more than economics alone. A common history, common values and a sense of common destiny underpin an alliance that dates back centuries. Throughout their common history, Americans and Europeans have stood shoulder to shoulder to fight for their shared values. In the current context, our societies face a host of new challenges. The EU and the US must team up to face these challenges, on a platform of common values, as we have in the past. We thrive together.

What are the challenges Europe and the US face in this new reality that we have found ourselves in with the COVID-19 pandemic?

s.p. The pandemic has rocked the global economy to an unparalleled degree. It quickly became apparent early on in the outbreak that cross-border cooperation is the only effective way to tackle a borderless crisis. COVID-19 has highlighted just how integrated our global supply chains really are. The transatlantic relationship has been well-placed to respond to the virus thanks to innovation and cross-border and cross-industry collaboration. Both sides now need to work together on strengthening multilateralism.

Both the US and the EU will be focused on the longterm economic recovery in the aftermath of this pandemic. For this, we must focus on rebuilding an economy for the future, addressing climate change, and taking full advantage of the transformative potential of the digital economy. And of course, we must continue to foster and expand transatlantic investment in these sectors. How do you see the future of the transatlantic relationship in the next four years? How high will a good relationship with Europe rank with the new US administration?

s.p. We are hopeful that, under the new administration, the US and the EU can continue their strong engagement. Given the context of the COVID-19 emergency, it is understandable that any new administration would prioritize domestic affairs. However, President-elect Biden is a former chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, and is known to be an Atlanticist. We hope the new administration will put EU-US cooperation at the top of their international agenda. We see a number of areas where the EU and the US would benefit from working more closely together: artificial intelligence, international standards, and reform of the WTO, just to name a few. Transatlantic leadership will be critical.

You are now Chairwoman of the AmChams in Europe. How would you describe the purpose and the power of the network? How is the network helping AmChams around Europe?

s.p. AmChams in Europe, also known as ACE, was established in 1963 and it serves as the umbrella organization for 45 American Chambers of Commerce from 43 countries throughout Europe and Asia. As a bilateral voice of American and European companies, AmChams in Europe works to communicate the importance of the transatlantic economy in both Europe and the United States.

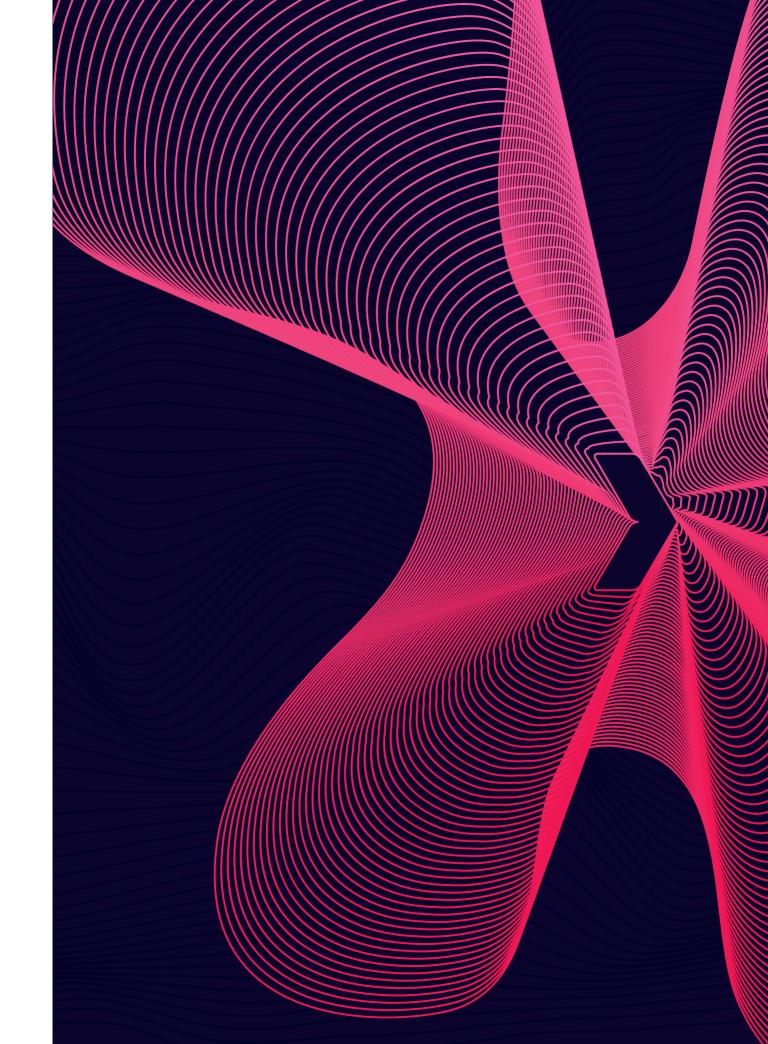
The network is powerful and thriving. During the last 11 months we have spoken out for solidarity, coordination, and action; we hosted a virtual conference in Washington DC to engage on transatlantic issues; we met 'in Bulgaria' to exchange on trends and opportunities for our chambers and member companies; we brought together both our colleagues and our members throughout the network more than ever before. We have remained positive throughout the current crisis and continue this way. Together we have been stronger.

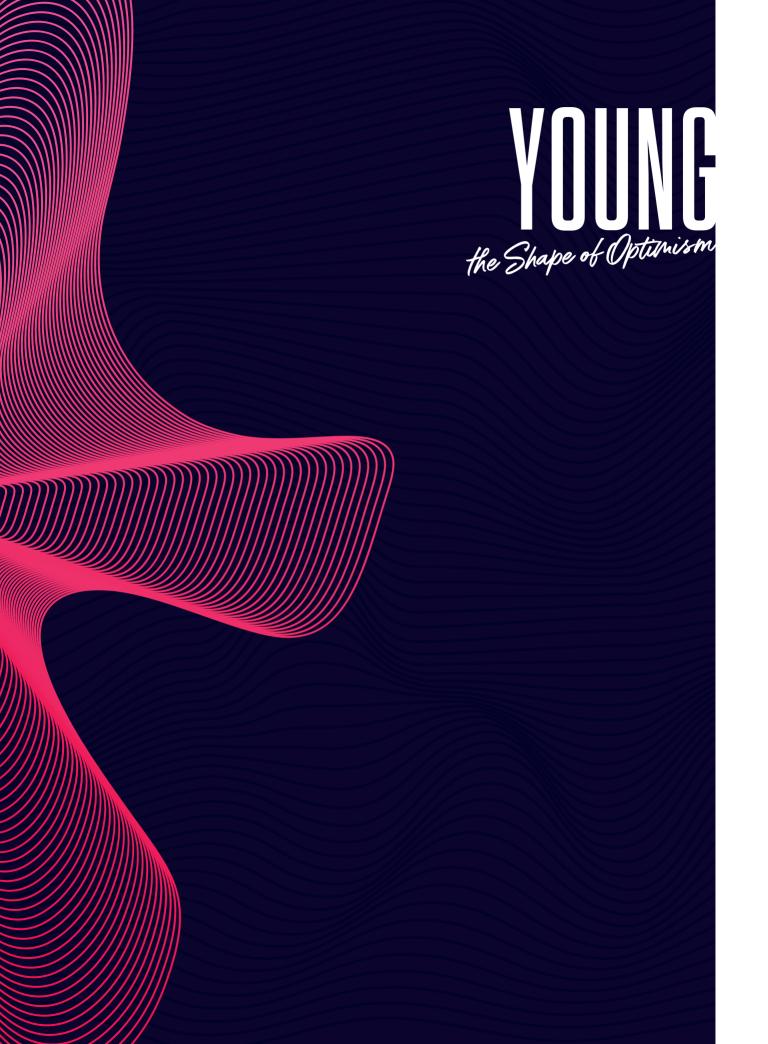
What is your main mission as Chair? What would you like to leave as your legacy to the network?

s.p. When I took on the role of Chair in January 2020, my motivation was to work with my colleagues and with the entire network for peace and prosperity, but also and simply to focus on the ACE mission. As we have so clearly seen this year, never has it been so critical to speak up and promote the shared values of democracy and fair trade and to re-build trust between communities, nations, continents, friends, and allies. This has also been my mission.

I stood for Chair because I am passionate, committed, and ready to work hard to achieve goals. I hope that my legacy to the network will be one of having strengthened even further the collaboration and connections in our network. I hope that it will also be a legacy of strong and courageous engagement during turbulent times in the transatlantic relationship; a legacy of having spoken out more loudly and boldly than ever before during a crisis period not only in Europe but globally. My hope is to bring additional value to ACE to enable a stronger voice for European, American, and international business both big and small. Importantly, by encouraging even more positive collaboration, creativity, communication, and critical thinking, I would like to leave a legacy of positivity, hope, and optimism that together we will have played our part in helping to create a more prosperous, kind, and peaceful world for all of us and the generations to follow. 🗙

I would like to leave a legacy of positivity, hope, and optimism...







with Urška Kajtner

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ith the title AmCham Top Potential of the Year, you have become the ambassador of the generation and you represent the voice of young people both in Am-

Cham and beyond. What are you going to stand for this year and where would you like to leave your mark?

U.K.____ I often say that I'm not really living if I'm not an active participant in the society we all live in. My voice is always reserved first and foremost for a fellow human being. Putting that into a business perspective, I stand for employees, who are the brain, the soul, and the heart of each company and they deserve to be seen, acknowledged, and treated with respect! This year, I am also shifting the focus to the Snowball where we are co-creating policies and proposals aimed at Slovenia becoming the prototype of a country encouraging talents. I will try to support the very important First Mentor initiative, where students find their first mentor match and jointly grow and develop their skills and future professional steps. At the same time, I will also dedicate my time and energy to building a firm relationship with my mentor, Laura Smrekar, and be active in the AmCham Young Leaders Club.

What did you learn in the year you spent with colleagues from the 10th generation of AmCham Young Professionals and what will you take with you on your business path?

и.к.___ The broader business community confirmed that what I believe in is acceptable and necessary. I have learnt how extremely passionate I am when it comes to people, culture and organizational design. The 10th generation brought me the clarity, focus, and drive that can easily be lost in our day-to-day work. The past year also brought

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me a strong network of professionals where you can reach out with a challenge and get instant support, knowledge transfer, or a good craft beer and a shoulder to lean on.

The 10th generation of AmCham Young Professionals was special. With the coronavirus epidemic, the normal course of the generation turned upside down. This year, for the first time, we got two Top Potentials of the Year. What makes your generation so special?

U.K.____ Coming down from more than 150 participants to the top 10 and later the top 5, we quickly realized that main focus between us was not competition but how we could deliver our own value and worth in a collaborative sense. We were so different and unique that it was impossible to compare us. We went through the same journey, met and presented ourselves to the same people and we ended up at the same final destination. I know this phrase is old, but we all won. Nina and myself just got a bit luckier.

You are a synonym for charity and social responsibility. Where does your desire to help come from and what drives you on this mission of yours?

U.K. I accept this comparison with great humility. For me, existence in this world has to be purposeful and connected to selflessness. I was born with a deep sense of fairness and justice, always fighting for "the right thing". Staying loyal to my values and beliefs, caring for people, and seizing opportunities to help as much as I can brings me inner peace. I believe that we are all responsible for identifying opportunities to improve our environment, society, and the quality of life of others. Most of the time, the greatest magic happens around the smallest deeds, when no one is watching.

At Roche Slovenija, where you were employed, you and your colleagues were responsible for the introduction of new business models and innovative business practices, and at the company Nice Label you took on the role of HR Business Partner. How hard is it to promote an innovative culture in a company and how do you convince employees to follow you?

U.K._____At Roche, we were talking about holistic change on multiple levels. Building culture, an agile mindset, structures, and processes that are ready for the future—I must admit, it was hard work for everyone, emotionally exhausting at times, but also extremely rewarding when the internal and external positive effects were seen. In the first place, you have to understand why you are making



AmCham Top Potential of the Year 2020 Urška Kajtner, HR Business Partner, Nice Label

the change. Secondly, you have to build up in-house skills and an army of ambassadors because the journey is long and the company needs passionate drivers for this transition. Leaders are, of course, the most important part of the equation. People will follow only if leaders deliver a strong vision (why) and strategy (what), transparent communication, and a lack of unhealthy silo, hierarchical or micro-managerial behaviors (how). It's helpful to have a great sense of humor, too. At Nice Label, I am deep diving into HR topics and I am continuing to build my skills around organizational design and its complexity.

How do you see the future of work in the coming years and who will be the leaders who will know how to take companies into the future?

U.K.____ The recent pandemic has accelerated the evolution of the entire ecosystem. Working from home is becoming a constant, caring for the well-being of employees is one of priorities. The future of work requires companies to realize the potential of every employee in the company, regardless of the job description, and to create the conditions where this can be met in practice. Leaders will have crucial roles. They have to take care of the employees, because employees take care of the business. Great value will be created by visionaries who support innovation, and lead by example, demonstrating stability, transparency, and resilience, and who know how to quickly pull their employees out of critical situations. A leader is becoming a strong coach and mentor who leads with empathy and not only with business intelligence, but above all with that of the emotions and the heart.

What advice would you give to young people just beginning their business careers?

U.K.____ I would say: "It is your own responsibility to take care of your development. Be curious: if you don't ask, you don't progress. Be yourself, know your worth but always make space in which you can grow. Learn as much as you can from good and bad experiences. Search for opportunities that light your inner spark. If you find yourself caught up in a toxic culture with toxic people, try open and honest conversation, everybody deserves a second chance. If it doesn't work, leave. Be kind and laugh as much as you can."



Nina Pejič, Researcher, Centre of International Relations, Faculty of Social Sciences, University of Ljubljana, Co-Founder, Gender Equality Research Institute, AmCham Top Potential of the Year 2020 Year 2020

UXA with Nina Pejič

he title of AmCham Top Potential of the Year has made you the ambassador of the generation and thus, you represent the voice of young people both in Am-

Cham and wider. What will your priorities be this year, and where do you wish to leave vour mark?

Т

N.P.____ I come from science, so I would like scientific facts, findings, and advances to be the focus of our social future, especially in the present era of misinformation. I would also like our society to be more inclusive for everybody; within the YLC, we have already been working on gender equality. The third thing is definitely my international focus: I'd like to work on the collaboration of young people across borders, not only European, through various initiatives. I don't wish to leave my mark in these fields "only" as the AmCham Top Potential of the Year, but as someone who strives for sustainable and constructive collaboration and believes in the immense untapped potential of inclusive teams, societies, and states.

What did you learn and what will you take with you in your professional career from the year you spent with your colleagues in the 10th generation of AmCham Young **Professionals?**

N.P.____ I learnt patience; a career and personal growth take time. On the other hand, I started realizing the importance of action at the right moment; the Young Professionals program should be taken advantage of, the opportunities offered should be seized. This generation taught me boldness, I gained numerous skills, and an incredible professional and friendship network was opened up for me, something we will all find indispensable in our professional careers. I would like to think that I can be of assistance, too. I hope that, building on this foundation, we can effect shifts in numerous fields.

The 10th generation of AmCham Young Professionals was special because the coronavirus epidemic turned your work upside down. This was also the first year when two people became Top Potentials. What do you think makes your generation so special?

N.P. The fact that two of us were awarded points to the fact that collaboration has taken on the utmost importance. It reveals the codependence of the world today, especially during crises. There's strength in numbers. As a generation, we saw a glimpse of the future: digital is not necessarily about separating, it doesn't necessarily mean distancing from so-ciability. It can offer opportunities that weren't there before, especially when it comes to international operations. I hope we will see a more

connected world; as a generation, we were definitely a successful experiment.

How do you link your research career and your entrepreneurial touch? What would your dream enterprise be like?

N.P. Practice developed automatically from knowledge. If I deal with Asia scientifically, this helps me with the consulting work I do for companies on new technological trends and entering these markets. My dream company would be an international strategic consultancy, where high-tech predicts untapped trends and connects Europe and Asia.



▲ Nina Pejič, AmCham Top Potential of the Year 2020

Where does your passion for discovering Eastern Asia come from and what have you learnt from that part of the world?

N.P. Eastern Asia was set as a challenge for me. China is a giant which in many respects rules the world and, at the same time, faces numerous challenges. But it also sets many challenges and opportunities for Europe, and this is where I find my passion. There have been many lessons. The Chinese have a word for non-doing: wu wei. Sometimes, it is necessary to do nothing, thus saving anger, nervousness, and hurry. The second crucial lesson is primarily personal to me. Just before a series of business meetings in Beijing,

which I was terrified about at the time, I met a Chinese businesswoman on a plane who gave me this advice: in meetings, say less and learn more. Silence does not symbolize ignorance. Sometimes, young people (aspiring and ambitious) forget this; I, personally, was afraid that if I wasn't visible enough, I wouldn't be successful. Asia has taught me just the opposite.

What kind of leaders does the world need today to steer it in the right direction? Do we know any such leaders?

N.P. The world today is complex: we are facing problems that can't be solved by one person, company, or organization. We need community-oriented leaders. Locally and globally. True leaders today mobilize humanity: Greta, who reaches thousands and thousands around the world, Malala, the youngest Nobel Prize winner in history, Black Lives Matter, Li Wenliang in China. It is networks, not individuals, that are strong. Only communities are strong.

What would be your advice to young people who are just embarking on their career?

N.P. Go for it. When you look back, it all makes sense. All these steps don't seem hard, but logical. Go for it! And while doing so, don't forget about the people around you—only a community is strong.



▲ Urška Kajtner & Nina Pejič, AmCham Top Potentials of the Year 2020

AMCHAM YOUNG = shape of Optimism



"AmCham Slovenia is Young Professionals. And young professionals will make change happen. With trust, honor, and by being different."

 TOMAŽ LANIŠEK, Sector for Development and Smart Cities, City Municipality of Kranj, First Vice President of AmCham Slovenia, AmCham Top Potential of the Year 2011



"The AmCham Young program was a lovely invitation into a new chapter of my professional life in Slovenia; I returned from study and work abroad and my becoming the second ambassador of the program bloomed into many acquaintances, friendships and finally, new business roles and positions. The AmCham Young program is an incredible platform for quality business networking of burgeoning professionals and part of a comprehensive and all-encompassing environment of AmCham Slovenia, that is optimistic, invigorating and enhancing."

 NANA ŠUMRADA SLAVNIČ, PhD, LL.M., Ekipa2 d.o.o. (Outfit7), VP of Legal Affairs, AmCham Top Potential of the Year 2012



"AmCham Young stepped into my career back in 2012. At that point, I was given the chance to participate in a program I didn't know what to expect from. But when I look back now, I'm incredibly grateful to have been given this opportunity for learning, expanding my network of business contacts, and making real friendships. This common path has been fulfilling me for the last eight years now; when I meet every new exceptional generation of AmCham Young, I am convinced that our common future is bright."

> BLAŽ JAKIČ, Member of the Executive Board, Triglav osiguranje, AmCham Top Potential of the Year 2013



"When I found myself at a crossroads in 2014 and wondered how I wanted to continue my personal and career growth, the direction was made clear by the AmCham YP program. It was the right choice and the right path. We have grown together and mutually. Today, AmCham Young is a unique platform for the development of potential, where the hopes of the younger generation can draw positive energy and

- open mindedness from. The latter are so very important for a healthy future and the environment we coexist in. I still like to visit this environment because it takes me forward and only forward."
 - Dr. GAJ STAVBER, Strategy Global Product Development at Sandoz, AmCham Top Potential of the Year 2014



"I stumbled upon the amazing AmCham Young program by lucky coincidence. Because I spent some time in the USA, a country that especially enthralled me with its "the sky is the limit" mentality, which is close to me personally, a friend who participated in the program one year earlier suggested that I join. I'm grateful to him for that to this day. Thanks to positivism, mutual respect, and especially a desire to change things for the better, all of which present the main foundations of the program for me, AmCham

(AmCham Young platform) became an important part of my life."

 TOMAŽ ŠVAJGER, Commercial Director, Heads Adriatic d.o.o., AmCham Top Potential of the Year 2015



"I've been sharing my career with AmCham Young for five years now and our beginnings go back to the 6th generation of the YP program. We soon became very close; Young became part of me, and I part of it. We have been developing and learning constantly—both together and each one individually. It is extremely varied and unites many initiatives, among which I am most involved in leading The Snowball today, and as a member of the Executive Committee of AmChampions."

> NINA LANGERHOLC ČEBOKLI, Independent Consultant for Organization Design, AmCham Top Potential of the Year 2016



"It started with the year of Young Professionals. I felt as if I were entering the most prestigious school, where, in a stimulating environment, teachers bring out the best in you, and together with your classmates, you can pursue your common goal. My place is in education, but here I could also step up my mission outside my company, as part of a bigger story – the U itelj sem! U iteljica sem! project. If it's true that you are the average of five people that you spend most of your time with, then as an active member, your personal and business growth is practically guaranteed."

 DEANA JEZERŠEK, Managing Director, LanguageSitter d.o.o., AmCham Top Potential of the Year 2017



"Our director suggested I join the 8th generation of AmCham Young Professionals without me really knowing what the program was about. After meeting many like-minded peers from different sectors, I quickly realized that it is a great platform for enthusiastic young people, and I even ended up winning the coveted Top Potential title that allowed me to get to know AmCham even better and actively participate in its initiatives: the IP committee, YLC, Prvi mentor, AmCham Mentor, Snežna kepa, and Business Leaders' Book Club."

> - VITA GODEC. PhD. MBA. COO. Lenis farmacevtika d.o.o. AmCham Top Potential of the Year 2018



"AmCham Young became part of my career on my own initiative when, together with my employer, we identified it as a good way to acquire a wide spectrum of knowledge and experience. Today, AmCham Young makes it possible to keep in touch with friends and acquaintances of various profiles from different sectors, who bring numerous ideas and so much inspiration into my life and work. What I like the most about Young is that we have a sound measure

of optimism, criticism, and proactiveness."

 MATEJ GOSTIŠA, Digital Strategy and Innovation Manager, Zavarovalnica Triglav, AmCham Top Potential of the Year 2019



"I joined the AmCham Young Professionals platform in June 2019 and that membership soon outgrew all my expectations. I am still amazed how open, supportive, optimistic, and passionate this business community is. Today, I am actively co-creating a better society through amazing initiatives "The Snowball" & "First Mentor" and I am developing myself through AmCham Young Leaders Club. On top of that, I have my own amazing mentor and I am surrounded with new friends who entered my life and made a great difference."

> - URŠKA KAJTNER. HR Business Partner. Nice Label. AmCham Top Potential of the Year 2020



"My AmCham Young path is unusual: I am a researcher and I don't work for a private company, so I was a 'wild card', a guest in the

program. Today, for me, AmCham Young is a peer community, to which I turn with ideas and challenges, a platform where young people are given the opportunity to spread protrusive changes for the bettering of our society, and last but not least, a door that opens onto many new paths. For me personally, the program directed me deeper into entrepreneurship and above all, gave me the confidence thanks to which I now value my competences much more."

NINA PEJIČ, Researcher, Centre of International Relations, Faculty of Social Sciences, University of Ljubljana, Co-Founder, Gender Equality Research Institute, AmCham Top Potential of the Year 2020



"The future always relies on new, fresh, and protrusive ideas. We co-create ideas with young talents who inspire us at every step with their attitude and positive energy. AmCham Young creates the environment which stimulates the connecting of ideas and opens new opportunities for the development of the entire society in the future. This is why I am honored to be part of the AmCham Young story from the beginning."

- MATEJ POTOKAR, Certified Executive Coach, Mentor and Business Consultant, Director, Emma, President of the AmCham Young Advisory Board



"My heart beats with energy-young. I believe that this energy has led me step by step on a holy journey of experiences to give me the challenge of business life. The story of every generation is unique and strengthens the program for every future generation. The exceptional AmCham Slovenia team and the platform itself create this story with the Young Board. I am happy to be enjoying this marvelous journey with every generation of the cosmic ship called Optimism. Eight generations built this ship, and the ninth was the first to travel with it unconsciously and safely lead it to the AEIOU cosmic harbor. The 10th generation invested immense AROHA/ love/energy into this COVID situation and they made it. What is the challenge for the 11th generation? EB - omnipresence linked to the energy of America as a continent. I believe that everyone reading these lines can feel how I experience every new day on this path with deep happiness, gratitude, and humility in my heart."

- BOGO SEME, intuitive coach of the AmCham Young Platform

AmCham Young **Advisory Board**

Young Leaders AmChampions

is a governing body within the AmCham Young Leaders Club. It acts as a committee and it consist of 13 members, one President, two Vice Presidents and a Snowball representative.



Vice President

NINA PEJIČ

Researcher, Centre of International Relations, Faculty of Social Sciences, University of Ljubljana, Co-Founder, Gender Equality Research Institute

"YLC is the future. It is a reflection of the society of the future – I hope it will be a society of knowledge, progressiveness, and understanding."



Vice President
ALEŠ CELAR
Project Manager, BE-terna

"People are all alike in their promises. It is only in their deeds that they differ." — Moliere



President

ALJOŠA KRDŽIĆ, LL.M. (NYU) Senior Associate, Rojs, Peljhan, Prelesnik & Partners

"Leading by example, respecting the diversity of opinions, tolerance, inclusiveness, aiming to find the balance between social and economic aspects. This is what leads us toward a better future."



Snowball representative NINA LANGERHOLC ČEBOKLI Individual Consultant

"Without optimism, we'd be stuck in problems – it's so much more exciting to search for solutions with creative minds and sparkling eyes."

AMCHAM YOUNG = shape of Optimism



ARTJOM BAJDAK Founder, Bajdak & Family

"You ask, we find."



MART D. BUH Chief Experience Officer, AmCham Slovenia

"Courage, tenacity, and patience! Then everything else is easy."



MATEJ GOSTIŠA Digital Strategy and Innovation Manager, Zavarovalnica Triglav

"One of the greatest tragedies is wasted potential. I am glad that the AmCham community is actively influencing the realization of the business's potential and civil society in Slovenia."



ROK KOŽELJ Marketing Director, GEA College

"To be and stay an optimist is much easier when you work with passion and together with individuals who share a burning desire to make a positive change. This is YLC for me."



TOMAŽ LANIŠEK Head of Development and Smart Community Sector, City of Kranj

"Leadership is really being tested now, so each of us has a lot of responsibility as well as opportunity to pave the way to a better world."



KLEMEN MEDVED Project Director, Mercator d.d.

"Grateful to be part of a community based on positive values, sustainability, and the win-win principle, where we learn from each other, support one another, and together create a better world for all."



PETER MERC, PhD Managing Partner, Lemur Legal Ltd.

"Be open for changes and dare to disrupt!"



ŽIVA PRAPROTNIK HR specialist, Ljubljanske Mlekarne

"Be the change you want to see in the world."



ŽIGA VAVPOTIČ Co-founder, Ypsilon Institute, initiator of the Symbiosis project, non-executive director, Outfit7

"Live and leave a trace!"

AMCHAM YOUNG = shape of Optimism



NEVENKA KRŽAN Partner, KPMG

"At KPMG in Slovenia, we organize up-to-date professional training for our young employees. All employees have access to the platform with an unlimited number of training opportunities. Every year, carefully selected young talents apply for the AmCham Young Professionals program."



TOMAŽ BERLOČNIK Partner, Avantcar

"We develop young talents through the concept of empowerment that showed to be a powerful tool for relationship building and leadership development. We gain 360-degree learning, where young people can share their knowledge as 'mentors' to senior colleagues. I see talent development as continuous intergenerational cooperation."



EVP, Managing Director, EMEA, Sales & Services, Aviat

"Aviat cares about the development of talents amidst our employees. Especially young ones. For participation in the AmCham Young Professionals program, we hold an internal 'competition', for which young potentials present their ideas to the management. We then apply the candidates selected."

PANAGIOTIS ALEKOS Managing Director, Bayer

"At Bayer, we have always focused—and in these times, it is even more important than ever—on attracting and developing talents. Lately, we have been reorganizing our Talent Search by establishing a new platform based on Artificial Intelligence, which, together with our own expertise, will bring us to a new level in embracing the new normal and the new reality, which is already here, in a positive and open-minded way."





DAMJAN KRALJ CEO. BTC

"In the BTC Company, we aim to develop the potential of young employees mainly through everyday interaction as well as through regular development dialogue techniques between managers and employees. Such dynamic approach ensures that expectations on both sides are sufficiently and individually met, including the training and the developmental needs of individuals. In addition, we are planning to further upgrade our HRM platform, which will systematically manage not only talent development but also succession planning and knowledge sharing via the e-library system."

How do AmCham Heroes

A D R I A N J E Ž I N A President of the Management Board, Telemach

"In today's world the only certain thing is constant change. Daily and dramatic change over the last decades is mainly driven by two factors— technology and globalization. On top of these factors, we got pandemic that has had great impact on everyday life and business, often accelerating some ongoing processes. Humans are an intelligent race which allows them to adopt, survive and move on. Due to this change, more than ever before, forward thinking is becoming an almost daily routine and talented leaders must think about how they fit into the ecosystem of tomorrow."





VANJA HROVAT President of the Management Board, GENERALI Zavarovalnica

"Great companies invest in their people, but in the end it's the great talents who go the extra mile and proactively invest in themselves. We encourage them on their journey through individual coaching and offer them an opportunity to broaden their knowledge horizons through educational programs at the region's best institutions. They take part in the international talent program delivered by Generali Group. Each year, three top talents participate in the AmCham Young Professional program."

AMCHAM YOUNG = shape of Optimism



MATEJ ZAVRI Managing Director

"Young talents in our company have the possibility to participate in designated workshops that help them hone their skills and grow their leadership potential. First-Time Leader, Exploring the Leadership Landscape, and 7 Habits of Highly Effective People are workshops that are always gaining lots of attention, including in 2020, when we moved all training to an online platform. Every year for the past 11 years, our talented individuals have also joined AmCham

Young Professional programs."

BLAŽ BRODNJAK CEO NI B

"Our employees are one of our greatest assets. We encourage them to reach their potential and we invest extensively in their knowledge and expertise with numerous professional training courses. One of those is the AmCham Young Professionals program, in which we are delighted to take part. We are very proud that two of our young colleagues currently participate in this project—one from our HR department and the other from our 24/7 Contact Centre. We are certain they will value this experience and make good use of it in their careers. Their success will be our success."



VANJA LOMBAR General Manager, OMV

"OMV Slovenia supports young talents and includes at least two employees in the AmCham Young Professionals and Young Leaders programs every year. This year, for the first time, we have nominated one of our colleagues for the #Prvimentor project."



JANEZ ŠKRABEC Director, Riko

"We at Riko strive to include young talents in all activities and thus (em)power them with an authentic experience and good challenges. We encourage their further education and training and their participation in important programs, among which AmCham Young Professionals stands out."



MILAN DRAGIĆ Area Director - South East Europe, Bisnode

"Bisnode plans how to develop the potential of our younger colleagues in several ways, including providing individuals with the possibility to develop leadership skills by being a mentor to a group of co-workers. The most promising young mentors are given the possibility to be trained through the AmCham Young Professionals program."

Take Care of Talents?



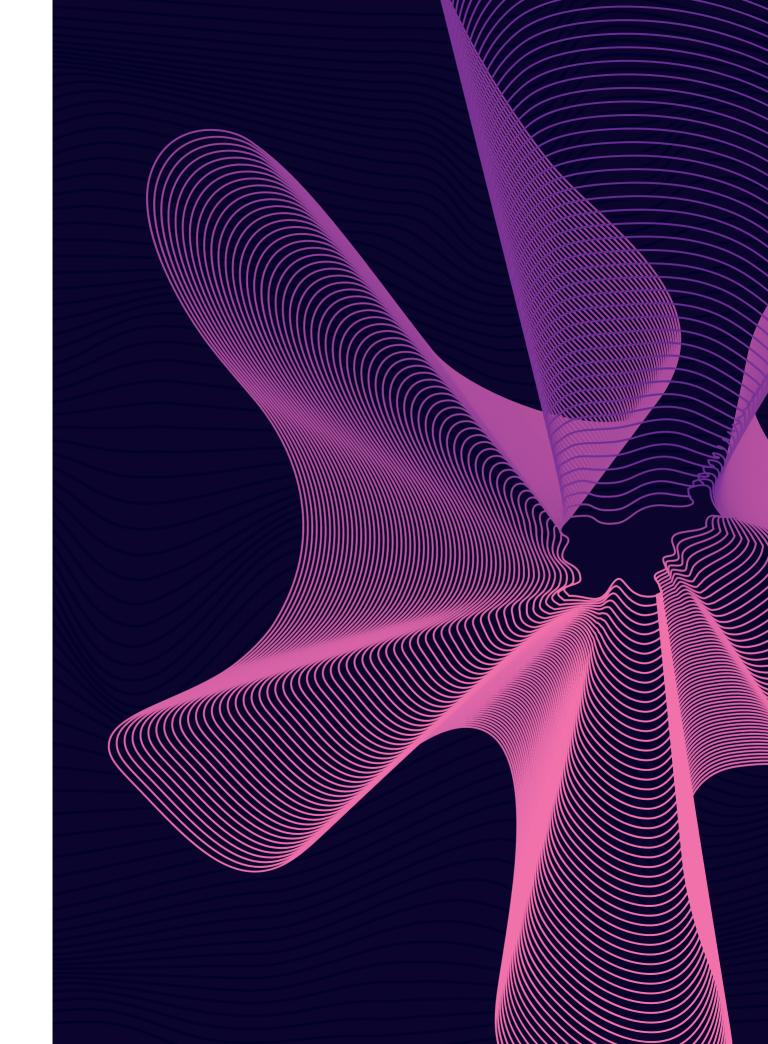
ENZO SMREKAR Vice-President for Savoury spreads, Donat Mg and international expansion at Atlantic Grupa. General Manager of Atlantic Droga Kolinska

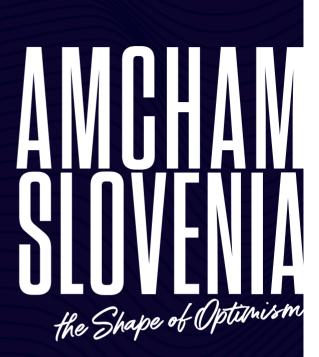
"At Atlantic Grupa, we care for the development of all our employees and we have therefore launched numerous activities and programs in which we include our employees according to different criteria. The Trainee program, which offers the first professional experience to those just out of university, and the Adventure program, which is an international development program for young experts and leaders at Atlantic Grupa, are intended precisely for young people. Every year, we also send three young talents to the AmCham Young Professionals program."

GREGOR RAJŠP HR Director, Member of the Management Board, Pivovarna Laško Union (Heineken International)

"Pivovarna Laško Union offers its talents for the recreation of their skills the participation in various competitions (hackathons, case study competition, etc.); the best are included in Heineken's platforms for talent development, while every year two or three apply for the AmCham Young Professionals program. The most important thing, however, is that we continually develop the environment and circumstances for their retention in a 360-degree manner."







20+





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1.7K MEMBERS OF OUR YOUNG PLATFORM

NHAT NE DO

AmCham Slovenia = A Business Community of Optimism & Opportunities

4 PILLARS OF OUR ACTIVITIES

Networking and events

We address various topics and subjects, we inform and exchange good business practices. At the same time, these events represent an excellent opportunity to expand your opportunities and knowledge.

Advocacy

There are more than 280 people, experts in their fields, working in eight committees, and we are working together to improve the living and business environment in Slovenia.

Young Platform

The AmCham Young Platform connects generations of young and active individuals who stand out from the average. Programs within the platform guide the personal and career development of the next generation of business leaders.

International Collaboration

We represent an entry point for Slovenian companies that want to penetrate the US market, and open doors to investors into Slovenia. We are also part of the AmChams in Europe network.

NETWORKING & EVENTS



AmCham Business Breakfast Networking with content since 2002.

AMCHAM FOKUS

AmCham Focus

We create value through knowledge.



Slovenia Business Bridge™ Investment and Development Conference Finding opportunities & making them happen.

AmCham Business Leaders Club

AmCham Business Leaders Club Sharing ideas and experience at the highest level.



Best of the Best Innovation, Motivation, and Collaboration, exchange of best business practices.



AmCham Exchange

Exchange of practices between corporations and SMEs. Business transformation, people and culture, business models, digitalization, and sustainability.



Coffee to Connect Virtual conversations with interesting guests from various fields and parts of society.

ADVOCACY

As changes in society require an open dialogue between the economy, science, the state, and civil society, AmCham Slovenia, with a diverse network of members from different branches of society, combines knowledge and acts as a voice of Slovenian and international companies.

Health and Wellbeing Committee

For a sustainable, accessible, and fair healthcare system. Co-chairs: Andrej Črepinšek, IBM & Urša Lakner, Pfizer

Finance Committee For a predictable and more competitive fiscal-financial environment. Co-chairs: Jana Jovanovska, Philip Morris & Žiga Vižintin, Pokojninska družba A

Intellectual Property Committee

Awareness of the importance of intellectual property rights. **Co-chairs:** Eva Gostiša, Jadek & Pensa Law Office & Jaka Repanšek, RePublis

Future of Work and Education Committee

Education and the labor market in line with development and the needs of the economy. **Co-chairs:** Nevenka Oštarjaš, IBM & Sanja Savič, PwC

Investment Committee

Slovenia should become the first choice of investors coming to Europe. **Co-chairs:** Nevenka Črešnar Pergar, NP Consulting & Aljoša Krdžić, Rojs, Peljhan, Prelesnik & partners

Corporate Ethics and Transparency Committee

Transparency, compliance and values at the heart of every company and institution. **Co-chairs:** Aleš Lunder, CMS Slovenia & Marko Srabotnik, Bisnode

Ready4DFuture Committee We need to be "Future Fit". Co-chairs: Uroš Majcen, S&T Slovenia & Boris Horvat, Abelium

Sustainable Growth Committee

As individuals and the business community we must actively participate in the sustainable mindset. **Co-chairs:** Mojca Markizeti, Iskraemeco & Gregor Skender, Deloitte



Partnership for Change Innovative collaboration between public administration and the private sector.



Učitelj sem! Učiteljica sem!

A project that highlights great stories of Slovenian teachers who with their innovation, dedication to students, and sense of responsibility write exceptional stories.



Talent Cloud Collaboration between companies and people in a different way.

YOUNG PLATFORM

The AmCham YOUng Platform represents a way of thinking forward.



Summer Economics Institute (20 – 25 years) AmCham Slovenia in cooperation with the US Embassy in Slovenia links academic and business career through its student internship program.



AmCham Young Professionals™ (25 – 35 years) Personal and career development for the next generation business leaders.



AmCham Young Leaders Club (35 – 45 years) A network of business leaders of the younger generation, whose desire and goal is to work together and co-create a better future, strong economy, and a high quality of life.

Prvi mentor (First mentor)

Members of AmCham Young Leaders Club offer mentoring to young people between the ages of 15 and 25 who are considering a career, starting to dream about their business path, or looking for the best way to jump from school to business.

Snežna kepa (Snowball)

Snowball is the center of optimism. It is a group of active young people, brought together by a common vision – to make Slovenia a country of optimism and opportunity, with a high quality of life.

Empower Lunch

#YLCfun



AmCham Mentor

Informal transfer of knowledge, social capital, and support. A powerful personal development and empowerment tool.

INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION



AmCham Business and Development Delegations to US. Business and investment opportunities for Slovenian companies in the US.



USA Meetup

Informal conversations and concrete answers as well as examples and first-hand experience for a better understanding of the US market.

USA Boot Camp

We share knowledge and experience and provide detailed insights into individual industries, their specifics, and trends.



Enter USA

Custom made business training for companies that are entering or expanding business operations on the US market.





Believe in Slovenia

Discover the stories of our »ambassadors of friendship« and their true belief in Slovenia.



AmChams in Europe

A network of 45 AmChams in 43 countries across the wider European region. With Ajša Vodnik as Vice Chair of AmChams in Europe, Slovenia holds the Secretariat of the organization.



A.T. Kearney Svetovanje d.o.o. Branko Žibret, Partner www.kearney.com

KEARNEY

AVIAT storitveno podjetje d.o.o. Steven D. Toteda, EVP, Managing Director, EMEA, Sales & Services

www.aviatnetworks.com



Bayer d.o.o. Panagiotis Alekos, Managing Director

www.bayer.si





AGILCON d.o.o. Marko Perme, CEO www.agilcon.com



Bankart d.o.o. Dr. Rainer Schamberger, Managing Director, CMO

www.bankart.si

🛆 bankart

BISNODE d.o.o. Milan Dragić, Area Director - South East Europe

www.bisnode.si





Our vision:

Health for all, Hunger for none

We are contributing to a world in which: // diseases are not only treated, but effectively prevented or cured // people are able to truly look after their health // enough food is produced for all, while the natural resources of our planet are respected // success in business goes hand in hand with sustainability.

Science for a better life



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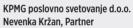


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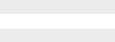
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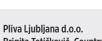
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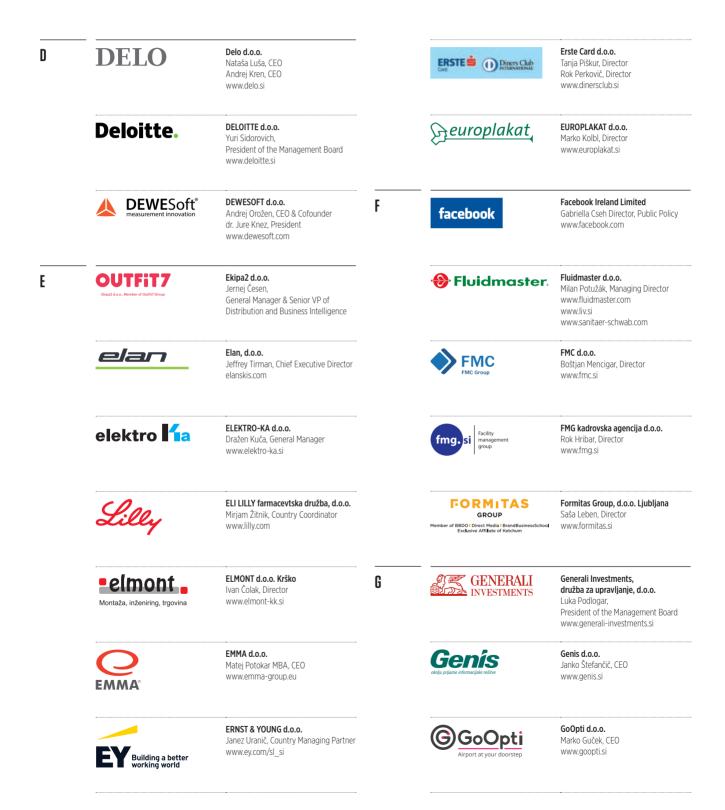


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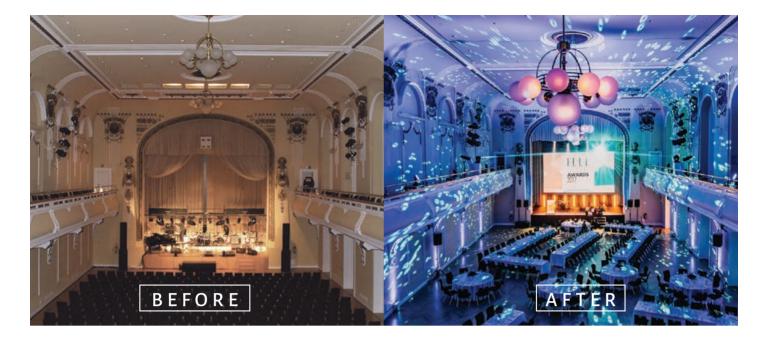
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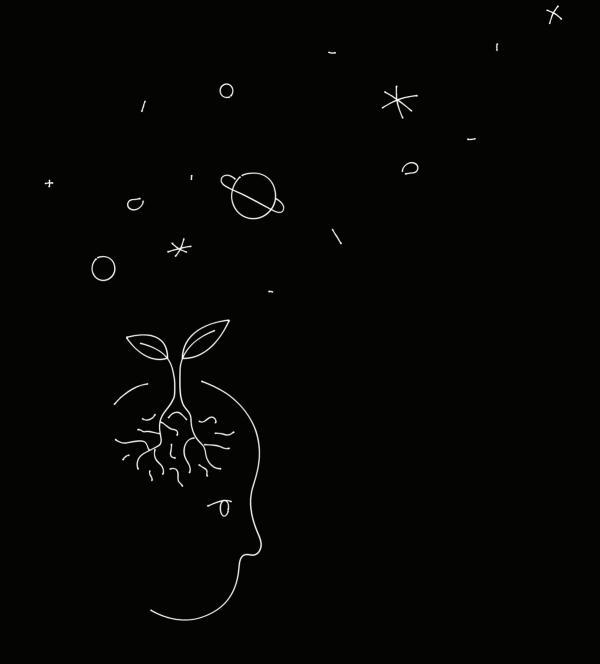
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| Zovod za uveljivljanje pravic avtorjev, izvajaljev in producentov avdiovizualnih del Slovenije | AIPA Gregor Štibernik, Director www.aipa.si | Slovenia Chapter | IIBA Slovenia Chapter Aleš Štempihar, President slovenia.iiba.org |
| ALMA MATER EUROPAEA THE UNITED ITY FOR LEADERMITY | Alma Mater Europaea – ECM Ludvik Toplak, PhD, LLM, President www.almamater.si | Jožef Stefan Institute, Ljubljana, Slovenia | Inštitut Jožef Stefan prof. dr. Boštjan Zalar, Director |
| CORRECT Padaret center Kranj Resource padaret center Kranj Resource resource space (Correspondence) | BSC Kranj, d.o.o., Poslovni podporni center Kranj, Regionalna razvojna agencija Gorenjske Rok Šimenc, Director www.bsc-kranj.si | Intellectual Property Institute | Intellectual Property Institute, IPI Maja Bogataj Jančič, PhD, LL M, LL M, Director www.ipi.si |
| | CEED Slovenija Andrej Šolinc, Director www.ceed-slovenia.org | NATIONAL INSTITUTE | National Institute of Chemistry Proffesor Gregor Anderluh, PhD, Director www.ki.si |
| CER | CENTER ENERGETSKO UČINKOVITIH REŠITEV Zavod za spodbujanje inovativnega Ana Struna Bregar, CEO www.cer-slo.si | NOVA UNIVERZA | Nova univerza Olga Jambrek, MSc., Director www.nova-uni.si |
| Conversion of Conference SEBD 122 Conference Conversion of Businetics ExecutionNCF | Center of Business Excellence, School of Economics and Business Ljubljana University Monika Lapanja, Director www.cpoef.si | | Quality Schools International Daniel C. Bastien, Director of Operations www.qsi.org |
| Circular Change | Circular Change Ladeja Godina Košir, MSc, Founder & Executive Director www.circularchange.com | SIMBIØZA MED GENERACIJAMI | Simbioza Genesis, socialno podjetje Katja Pleško, Director www.simbioza.eu |
| | Evropski Inštitut za skladnost in etiko poslovanja Andrijana Bergant, EMBA, Adv.Cert (Bus.Comp), Managing Director www.eisep.si | Ljubljana | TEDXLJUBLJANA, DRUŠTVO ZA ŠIRJENJE DOBRIH IDEJ Grega Čufer, President www.tedxljubljana.com |

Non-profit



ZAVOD 404 Rok Capuder, CEO 404 si



Zavod DIHS Katja Mohar Bastar, Director dihslovenia.si



74VOD YPSILON Dino Kovačević, Program Director www.ypsilon.si



Zavod za celostno retoriko Dober stik Nina Dušić Hren, Psychologist, Director www.doberstik.si

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AMCHAM BUSINESS BREAKFAST. NETWORKING WITH CONTENT. Internationalization – Achilles' Heel or the Only Option for the Slovenian Economy?

DATE: January 28, 2020

숪 GUESTS:

Prof. dr. Andreja Jaklič, Center of International Relations, Faculty of Social Sciences, University of Ljubljana Dr. Iztok Seljak, Director, Hidria Holding d.o.o. Ajda Cuderman, Director, SPIRIT Slovenija Damir Opsenica, Director of Business Unit, Iskratel Matjaž Grm, Executive Sales and Marketing Director, Adria Mobil

O MODERATOR:

Jaka Repanšek MBA, RePublis Consulting



Jaka Repanšek, RePublis Consulting; prof. dr. Andreja Jaklič, Faculty of Social Sciences; Ajda Cuderman, SPIRIT Slovenia; dr. Iztok Seljak, Hidria Holding; Damir Opsenica, Iskratel; Matjaž Grm, Adria Mobil 🥥 Jaka Repanšek, RePublis Consulting; prof. dr. Andreja Jaklič, Faculty of Social Sciences; Ajda Cuderman, SPIRIT Slovenia 🌍 Julij Božić, Oracle; Ajša Vodnik, AmCham Slovenia 🌚 Julij Božić, Oracle; Ajša Vodnik, AmCham Slovenia 🌚 Iztok Klančnik, Hewlett Packard Enterprise - Operated by Selectium; Jaka Kavčić, Summit avto 🕲 Katja Lisac, InterContinental; Mart D. Buh, AmCham Slovenia; Živa Praprotnik, Ljubljanske mlekarne 🌚 AmCham Business Breakfast



COMBO AMCHAM BUSINESS BREAKFAST ECONOMY 2020: Crisis, Fear and an Uncertain Future or an Opportunity for Innovation and Sustainable Transformation?

DATE: June 10, 2020

☆ GUESTS:

Jernej Vrtovec, Minister of infrastructure of the Republic of Slovenia Nevenka Kržan, Senior Partner, KPMG

Blaž Brodnjak, CEO, NLB Biljana Weber, Vice President and Managing Director for Central & Eastern Europe, Russia, Turkey and Africa, Hewlett Packard Enterprise Nevenka Črešnar Pergar, Owner and Director, NP Consulting, Co-chair of the AmCham Investment Committee

MODERATOR: Ajša Vodnik, MSc., CEO, AmCham Slovenia







Jernej Vrtovec, Minister of infrastructure of the Republic of Slovenia; Nevenka Kržan, KPMG; Blaž Brodnjak, NLB; Božo Kernika, Trimo S Combo AmCham Business Breakfast O Combo AmCham Business Breakfast S Barbara Domicelj, Microsoft Slovenia; Beno Ceglar, NLL; Nevenka Kržan, KPMG; Blaž Brodnjak, NLB S Devenka Kržan, KPMG; Jernej Vrtovec, Minister of infrastructure of the Republic of Slovenia

BLED STRATEGIC FORUM - AMCHAM BUSINESS BREAKFAST

Collaboration Between Businesses, State, Civil Society, and Academia as the Right Response to the New Normal

DATE: August 31, 2020

☆ GUESTS:

Dr. Igor Cesarec, Vice President, Global Economics Research, Citigroup, Founder and President Emeritus, Association VTIS Jonathan Moore, Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary for the Bureau of Oceans and International Environmental and Scientific Affairs, United States Department of State

Dr. Jure Leskovec, Associate Professor of Computer Science, Stanford University

Joe Philipsz, Senior Director, Amber Infrastructure

Ulrik Vestergaard Knudsen, Deputy Secretary-General, Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD)

♀ MODERATOR:

Ajša Vodnik, MSc., CEO, AmCham Slovenia











Joe Philipsz, Amber Infrastructure; Dr. Igor Cesarec, Citigroup; Dr. Jure Leskovec, Stanford University; Jonathan Moore, US Department of State; Ajša Vodnik, AmCham Slovenia AmCham Business Breakfast AmCham Business AmCham Business Breakfast AmCham Business AmCham A





A Dialogue with the Prime Minister of the Republic of Slovenia Janez Janša

- Ë DATE:
- September 29, 2020

☆ GUESTS:

Janez Janša, Prime Minister of the Republic of Slovenia AmCham Slovenia's business community views and key proposals of eight AmCham working Committees were presented by mag, Ajša Vodnik, CEO of AmCham Slovenia, Vice-chair of AmChams in Europe, and mag. Blaž Brodnjak, President of AmCham Slovenia.

- Ø MODERATOR:
 - Nevenka Črešnar Pergar, owner and director, NP Consulting; Co-chair of the AmCham Investment Committee



Danez Janša, Prime Minister of the Republic of Slovenia; Nevenka Črešnar Pergar, NP Consulting Danez Janša, Prime Minister of the Republic of Slovenia Blaž Brodnjak, NLB O Ajša Vodnik, ArnCham Slovenia; Blaž Brodnjak, NLB; Danez Janša, Prime Minister of the Republic of Slovenia Dohn Denhof, Nova KBM; Janez Janša, Prime Minister of the Republic of Slovenia Amcham Business Breakfast Amcham Business Breakfast



COMBO AMCHAM BUSINESS BREAKFAST

Far From the Eyes, **Far From the Heart?**

🗂 DATE: October 21, 2020

☆ GUESTS:

Janez Cigler Kralj, Minister of Labour, Family, Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities of the Republic of Slovenia Enzo Smrekar, Vice-President for Savoury spreads, Donat Mg and international expansion at Atlantic Grupa and General Manager of Atlantic Droga Kolinska, Manager of the Year 2020

MODERATOR: Ajša Vodnik, MSc., CEO, AmCham Slovenia



Ø Ajša Vodnik, AmCham Slovenia; Janez Cigler Kralj, Minister of Labour, Family, Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities of the Republic of Slovenia ② Ajša Vodnik, AmCham Slovenia; Enzo Smrekar, Atlantic Grupa; Janez Cigler Kralj, Minister of Labour, Family, Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities of the Republic of Slovenia S Ajša Vodnik, AmCham Slovenia; Janez Cigler Kralj, Minister of Labour, Family, Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities of the Republic of Slovenia



COMBO AMCHAM BUSINESS BREAKFAST

Lighthouses of Change. Which Will be the Best Business Practice in 2020?

DATE:

- December 4, 2020
- $\overleftrightarrow{} \text{GUESTS:}$
 - Dr. Iztok Seljak, president of the management board, Hidria Holding Dr. Jure Knez, co-founder and technical director, Dewesoft

♀ MODERATORS:

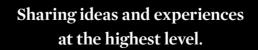
Ajša Vodnik, CEO, AmCham Slovenia and Tonja Avsenik, AmCham Young Platform Leader and Project Leader

BEST OF THE BEST 2020 FINALE: Hidria: Hidria Bond DEWESoft: Dewesoftov unikatni model lastništva DEWESoft: Katapult



Spela Bolka, Hidria; Andrej Orožen, Dewesoft; Petra Škarja, Katapult; Tonja Avsenik, AmCham Slovenia Špela Bolka, Hidria; dr. Iztok Seljak, Hidria Miha Brajnik; Ajša Vodnik, AmCham Slovenia; Blaž Brodnjak, NLB; Tonja Avsenik, AmCham Slovenia; Marjan Beltram, Nomago dr. Iztok Seljak, Hidria; dr. Jure Knez, Dewesoft; Ajša Vodnik, AmCham Slovenia

AmCham Business Leaders Club







t Packard D Labena

22nd REGULAR ANNUAL GENERAL ASSEMBLY SEPTEMBER 15, 2020





Tomaž Lanišek, City Municipality of Kranj; Nevenka Črešnar Pergar, NP Consulting; Ajša Vodnik, Am Cham Slovenia; Blaž Brodnjak, NLB; Barbara Domicelj, Microsoft Slovenia; Matej Zavrl, Goodyear Dunlop Sava Tires

Blaž Brodnjak, MSc, CEO of NLB, was elected President of AmCham Slovenia for a two-year term.

Nevenka Črešnar Pergar (Director, NP Consulting) and Damjan Kralj (CEO, BTC) were elected as new members of the AmCham Slovenia Board of Governors. Barbara Domicelj (General Manager, Microsoft Slovenia), Tomaž Lanišek (Head of Development and Smart Community Sector, City Municipality of Kranj) and Matej Zavrl (CEO, Goodyear Dunlop Sava Tires) were re-elected to two-year terms as members of the Board of Governors.



Lynda C. Blanchard, US Ambassador to Slovenia;



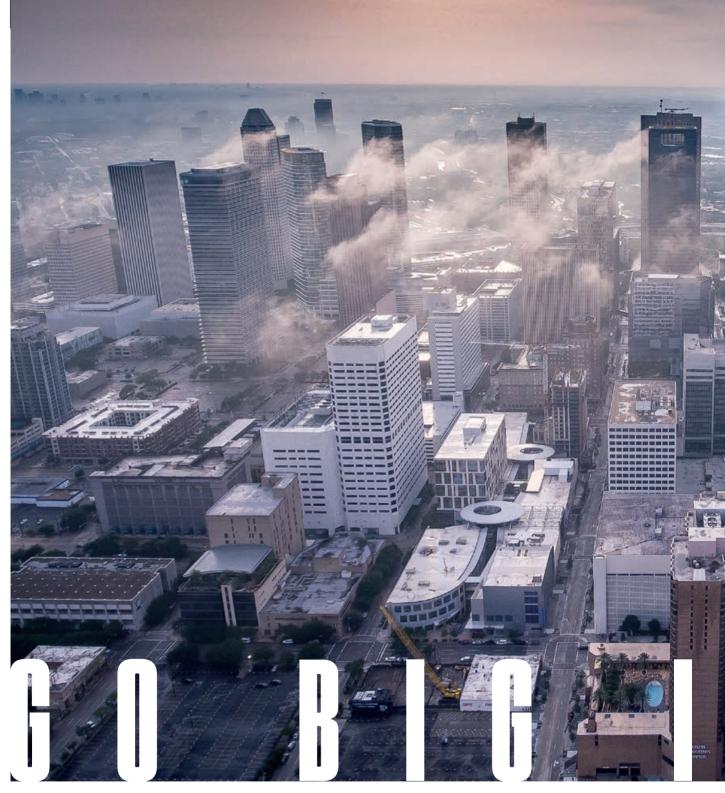
 Urška Kajtner, Nice Label; Tonja Avsenik, AmCham Slovenia, Deana Jezeršek, LanguageSitter



AmCham Regular General Assembly



 Michele Leonardi, IBM Slovenia; Tomaž Lanišek, City Municipality of Kranj; Mark Pleško, Cosylab



AmCham Business Development Delegation Houston & Dallas



Renewable sources of energy, high technology, space industry and sports were the highlights of 2020 business development delegation to Texas.



AmCham Slovenia







important missions strengthen business point for Slovenian companies.

*The implementation of the entire program of the delegation was interrupted by the global covid-19 situation.

AMCHAM EVENTS = shape of Optimism



AmCham Business Delegation in Dallas, Texas





▲ AmCham Business Delegation in Texas

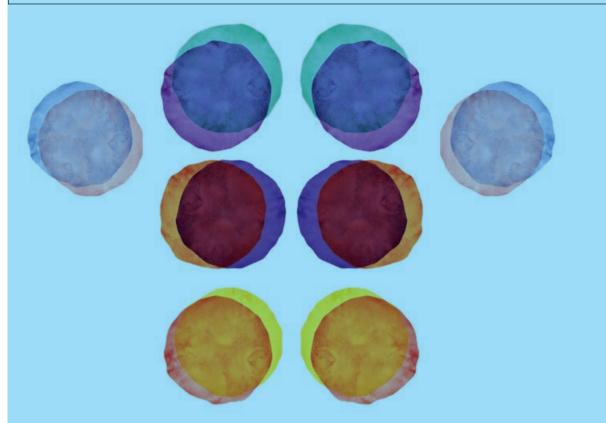
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▲ Dallas Mavericks basketball game

▲ Randy Bresnik, Nasa; Rebecca Bresnik, Johnson Space Center; Ajša Vodnik, AmCham Slovenia

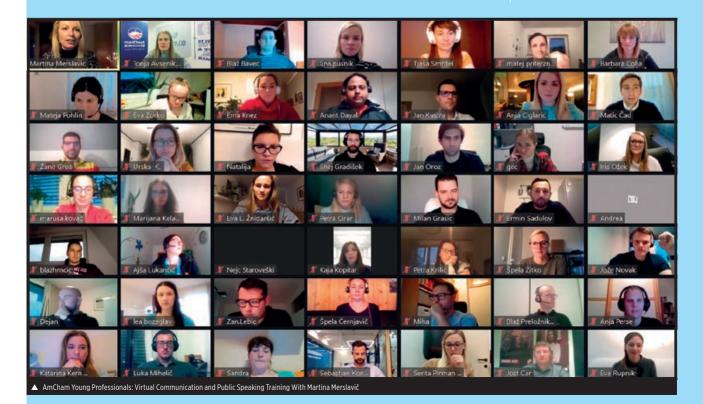


▲ Ajša Vodnik, AmCham Slovenia; Donnie Nelson, Dallas Mavericks; Vida Dolenc Pogačnik, AmCham Slovenia



AmCham Young Professionals[™]

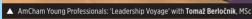


















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▲ Matej Gostiša, Zavarovalnica Triglav; Dean Habuš, OptiBar; Vita Godec, Lenis Farmacevtika



▲ Matej Potokar, Emma; Nina Pejič, FDV, University of Ljubljana



▲ Nana Šumrada Slavnič, Ekipa 2; Urška Kajtner, Nice Label; Tomaž Švajger, Heads Adriatic



▲ Gaj Stavber, Sandoz; Patricija Krt, Pivovarna Laško Union; Nina Langerholc Čebokli, Dodo Consulting

AmCham Top Potential of the Year 2020

TV Show with the 10th Generation of AmCham Young Professionals™



▲ Tomaž Lanišek, City Municipality of Kranj; Ognen Jakasanovski, Lek; Deana Jezeršek, LanguageSitter





▲ Maša Tiselj; Enzo Smrekar, Atlantic Grupa; Aleš Celar, BE-terna



▲ AmCham Top Potential of the Year 2020



▲ Tomaž Lanišek, City Municipality of Krani; Ajša Vodnik, AmCham Slovenia; Tanja Subotić Levanič, Pivovarna Laško Union; Žiga Vavpotič, Outfit 7; Rok Hribar, FMG

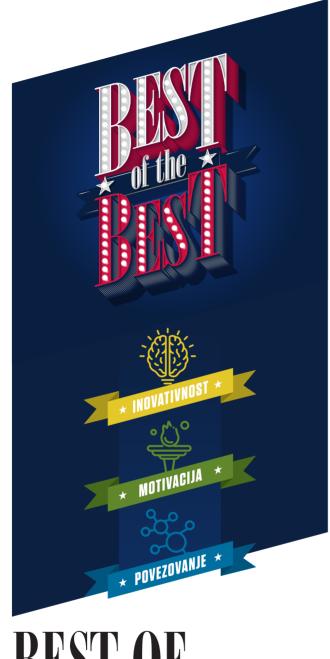


Enzo Smrekar, Atlantic Grupa; Milan Dragić, Bisnode; Jasna Mihelj Coustaury, Plume Design; Nevenka Črešnar Pergar, NP Consulting; Matej Potokar, Emma; Ervin Pfeifer, Avanton; Janez Škrabec, Riko; Blaž Brodnjak, NLB





▲ Urška Kajtner, Nice Label; Nina Pejič, FDV, University of Ljubljana



BEST OF THE BEST

😇 triglav

Luna \TBWA HIŠ∕\VIZIJ

SEPTEMBER 10, 2020 Innovation



Hidria: Hidria Bond Kemijski inštitut: Projekt NICKI mBills: Mobilna denarnica za življenje







▲ Best of the Best: Innovation

OCTOBER 13, 2020 Motivation



Steklarna Hrastnik: Skupaj v nove zgodbe NIL: Center odličnosti DEWESoft: Dewesoftov unikatni model lastništva



Best of the Best: Motivation



▲ Best of the Best: Motivation



▲ Best of the Best: Motivation

NOVEMBER 10. 2020 Collaboration



DEWESoft: Katapult Zavod Ypsilon: I'mpowered for the Future Zavarovalnica Triglav: Skupaj za prometno varnost



▲ Best of the Best: Collaboration

DECEMBER 4, 2020 Finale

Hidria: Hidria Bond **DEWESoft**: Dewesoftov unikatni model lastništva DEWESoft: Katapult



NAGRADO PODELJUJE



NAJBOLJŠA MED NAJBOLJŠIMI JE HIDRIA.

2020

of the



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GENERALNI POKROVITELJ BEST OF THE BEST

NAJBOLJŠI PARTNER POTOVANJ

PARTNERJA

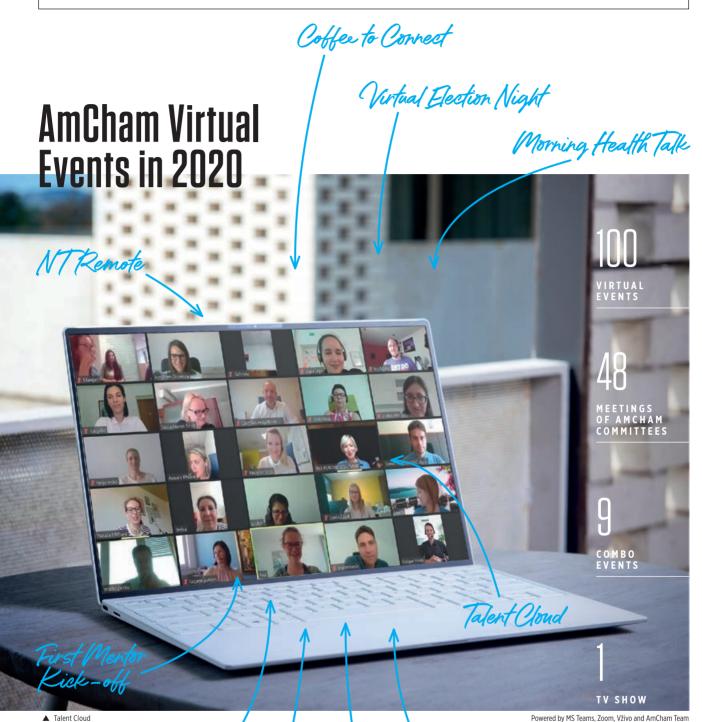








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Talent Cloud

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AmCham Young Professionals Meetings

AmCham Committees Meetings

Partnership for Change

143



5 Moduls





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▲ Enter USA, module 5





REPUBLIC OF SLOVENIA







AmCham Exchange

Share. Learn. Connect.

New opportunities and knowledge, exchange of experience from large systems and lessons of entrepreneurial growth, entrepreneurial mindset and proactivity, corporations and SMEs, facilitated access to new markets and search for potential business partners.



MAY 27, 2020 AmCham Exchange: The Human Experience the Importance of Human Experience for a Successful Business G U E S T S P E A K E R S : Matej Zalar, Co-founder and CEO, Visionect Inc. Lovro Peterlin, Managing Director, A1 Slovenija





Borut Čeh, Labena; Miro Smrekar, Adecco Adriatik;



SEPTEMBER 30, 2020 AmCham Exchange: Remote Work as Part of the New Reality

G U E S T S P E A K E R S : Miro Smrekar, Adecco Adriatik Borut Čeh, Co-Owner and Managing Director, Labena

Partner:







AMCHAM Young Leaders Club





▲ YLC meeting with Sotiris Karagiannis



network of of exceptional business leaders of the younger generation. Their desire is to cooperate and create a better future, a stronger economy and a high-quality of life. They lead by example and set new standards of business leadership. They create new business opportunities through networking. They are committed to creating a stim-

ulating environment that generates confidence. They give back to the community. They strive to become a good example in their own area of expertise and for greater effect, they can connect with like-minded individuals and organizations.





▲ YLC meeting with **Rok Vodnik** and **Peter Merc**





AmCham Young Leaders Out Z Rokom Vodnikom m Petrom Mercem

▲ YLC meeting with **Rok Vodnik** and **Peter Merc**

1.1

▲ #YLCfun

FIRST MENTOR



he First Mentor program is intended for young people aged 15 to 25. For young people who are undecided in high school when deciding to enroll in college; perhaps their business vein is already flashing in their second year of high school, but they don't have a person to talk to and gain some knowledge and experience from the business world. Later, students also face challenges at the faculties. During the studies itself, in the transition to the business world, and the like. Members of the AmCham Young Leaders Club gained experience as mentees after

completing the AmCham Young Professionals Program and gained experience and knowledge over the years in the business world.







First Mentor team



▲ Martin Ivanjko and Klemen Medved



▲ Kim Turk and Petja Oplotnik



▲ Živa Praprotnik and Gregor Rudolf



▲ Matin Stariha and Iris Nuhanovič



▲ Mateja Panjan and Katarina Grad





Artjom Bajdak and Žiga Leskovšek



▲ Kick-off of the 3rd generation of First Mentor



▲ First Mentor picnic

AMCHAM EVENTS = shape of Optimism







Učitelj sem! Učiteljica sem!

We believe that the driving force of Slovenian education are individuals who with their innovativeness, dedication to students and responsibility write exceptional stories. We are committed to giving them a voice. In less than two years, in cooperation with the Delo media house, we have spread the word of over 100 exceptional teachers, who have become an inspiration to their colleagues from all over Slovenia, role models for future generations of teachers and a source of new trust in teachers in general public.

Partners:



\O7 Pošta Slovenije



Suzana Puš Seme; Deana Jezeršek, LanguageSitter; Brina Tomovič Kandare, AmCham Slovenia







 Lidija Štepec, OŠ Trnovo; Breda Banovšek, OŠ Toma Brejca Kamnik; Petra Majdič; Suzana Puš Seme; Brina Tomović Kandare, AmCham Slovenija; Deana Jezeršek, LanguageSitter; Nevenka Oštarjaš, IBM Slovenia: Metka Glas. Studio Moderna

OCTOBER 14, 2020 WOMEN IN STEM Science and Technology are Female

OUR GUESTS WERE: Dr Aida Kamišalić Latifić

Assistant Professor at Faculty of Electrical Engineering and Computer Science, University of Maribor, Woman Engineer of the Year 2019

Medeia Lončar CEO, Siemens Slovenia and Siemens Croatia

Rina Musić, Managing Director, MSD Slovenia and Croatia

mag. Edita Krajnović, Director, Mediade; Co-founder, "Let's Be Engineers!"

Partner:









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