



REPUBLIC OF SLOVENIA
MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS

NEWSLETTER

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Minister Novak Opens PoliMaT – S-ABA Headquarters in Akron, OH

Mrs. Ljudmila Novak, Minister for Slovenians Abroad, on Monday, November 26, opened U.S. headquarters of the Slovenian Center of Excellence for Polymer Materials and Technologies (PoliMaT) in the Akron Global Business Accelerator in Akron, Ohio, the city's business incubator downtown. The Slovenian innovation office also contains the headquarters of the Slovenian-American Business Association (S-ABA), launched in January 2012.

S - A B A , initiated by the Consulate General of Slovenia in Cleveland, provides an immense opportunity for the promotion of successful bilateral business relationships between Slovenian and American entities.

On this occasion, CE PoliMaT, which brings together 17 for-profit polymer companies



Mrs. Ljudmila Novak, Minister for Slovenians Abroad opening PoliMaT – S-ABA Headquarters in Akron, OH together with Deputy Mayor of Akron.

between American in Slovenia and two of that country's largest universities and two government-sponsored research institutes, signed a memorandum of understanding with Austen BioInnovation



Institute in Akron, agreeing to develop new products for orthopedics, wound healing and other medical applications, and to work together on commercialization and job creation in Akron and Slovenia.

The agreement was signed by Frank Douglas, President and CEO of the Austen BioInnovation Institute, and Mateja Dermastia, chief executive officer of PoliMaT. On Monday, November 12, research experts from CE PoliMaT as well as Slovenian Centre of Excellence for Research in Biotechnology, Pharmacy and the Physics of Matter (CE EN-FIST) and Centre of excellence for Biosensors, Instrumentation and Process Control (CO-BIK) began workshops and expert programs in Akron.

The growing relationship between Slovenia and Akron began in the spring, when Consul General of Slovenia in Cleveland, OH,



Minister Novak with the Mayor of Cleveland Frank Jackson.



Opening of PoLiMaT - S-ABA headquarters.

Jure Žmauc, was among a group of delegates from the Chicago International Trade Commissioners Association, who were visiting Akron. Akron leaders then visited Slovenia in September — a trip that resulted in an agreement between the Technology Park Ljubljana in Slovenia and the Akron Global Business Accelerator to work together.

Minister for Slovenians Abroad Ljudmila Novak began her eleven-day tour in the United States on Friday, November 23. One of the aims of the visit is to encourage businessmen and experts of Slovenian descent to cooperate with their ancestral homeland as well as to stimulate the work of Slovenian community associations and societies to strengthen their cooperation with Slovenia.

While in Ohio, Minister Novak also gave address to the guests at the Centre for

Slovenian Studies at Cleveland State University, visited the Slovenian National Home, the Slovenian Museum and Archives, the Slovene National Benefit Society, the Polka Hall of Fame, and also met with the Mayor of Cleveland, Frank Jackson. Prior to her visit to Cleveland, Minister Novak was welcomed at Minneapolis, MN, airport by newly appointed honorary consul of Slovenia Mr. Miro Medved, she also met with the representatives of the Slovenian community in Minnesota.

The minister accompanied, by a former Consul General of Slovenia in Cleveland, Dr. Zvone Žigon, will wrap up her tour on December 2 and 3, 2012, in New York where she will meet members of the Slovenian community, businessmen and representatives of the Slovenian Union of America in New York.

Society for Slovene Studies Annual Meeting in New Orleans

The Society for Slovene Studies (SSS), established in 1973, is a scholarly, non-profit and internationally recognized organization. Its goals are to promote the dissemination of scholarly information about Slovenia, to initiate and generate research on various aspects of the Slovene culture, and to foster closer communication among scholars around the world who are interested in Slovenia. The Society is an affiliate member of the Association for Slavic, East European and Eurasian Studies (ASEEES). Therefore it uses the ASEEES annual convention as a forum for some of its activities.

This year's ASEEES convention, with the theme "Boundary, Barrier and Border Crossing", took place Nov. 15-18, 2012, in New Orleans.

There were hundreds of panels attended by more than 1000 participants at the conference; the following eight panels dealt with or touched on Slovenia:

- Crossing So Many Borders: Translating from Bosnian, Croatian, Macedonian, Serbian and/or Slovenian.
- Recent American Translation of Slovene Novels
- Reviving Resistance: Partisans' Songs in Post-Yugoslav Cultural Spaces
- Interdisciplinary Approaches to Former Yugoslavia III: Art and Popular Culture 1960s to present
- Thinking Globally, Acting Locally: Nesting Fields in Architecture and Urban Planning

in Socialist Yugoslavia

- Legal Framework and Societal Change in Slovenia and the Czech lands since 1918

- Frontlines and Frontiers: Diplomatic Divides and Writings of War in Slovenia and Yugoslavia
For more detailed information about the panels, their participants and papers see: <http://www.aseees.org/convention/program.html>

The Society for Slovene Studies also holds its annual business meetings at the ASEEES conventions. Thus, Prof. Raymond Miller of Bowdoin College, the new president of the Society, as well as other officers gave at the convention their reports on SSS activities in the past year. Among new business, several important issues were discussed. Mary-Allen Johnson, the associate curator of the Hilander Research Library at the Ohio State University, spoke about the newly established SSS archives, which are now available for research. See: http://ead.ohiolink.edu/xtf-ead/view?docId=ead/OhCoUHR0002.xml;chunk.id=bioghist_1;brand=default.

Also discussed was the 40th anniversary of the Society, and a celebration is planned for April 2013 at Columbia University in New York City.

In pursuit of its goals, the Society publishes annually two newsletters and a scholarly, peer-reviewed journal Slovene Studies, back issues of which can be viewed online at <http://>

SLOVENE
STUDIES

JOURNAL OF
THE SOCIETY FOR
SLOVENE STUDIES

The society publishes reviews of books concerning Slovene topics in its journal Slovene Studies.

journals.lib.washington.edu/index.php/ssj.

The SSS also supports "Slovene"-related research by students with the Joseph Velikonja (undergraduate level) and the Rado Lenček (graduate level) Prizes. There were no entries for the Rado Lenček Prize this year; however, the winner of the Velikonja Prize was Andrej Markovčič from the University of Washington, Seattle. His paper is titled "The Nietzschean Ideal in Vladimir Bartol's Al-Araf."

For the past twelve years, the Society has sponsored a panel featuring younger scholars in Slovene Studies. The sessions have been very well received and provide an opportunity for the Society to learn about new researchers in the field.

For more information about the Society and membership applications see the web site <http://www.slovenestudies.com>.

Selška Valley (Selška dolina)

The Selška valley (Selška dolina) is a long, narrow valley that stretches along the river course of Selška Sora, below the Ratitovec ridge in the Gorenjska region. The valley was named after the settlement of Selce, which is in the middle of the valley, while the biggest town is Železniki.

The history of the Selška valley dates back to 973 AD, when the bishops of Freising received land along the Selška Sora river as a gift, which for the following 830 years belonged to the Škofja Loka nobility. Archaeological discoveries reveal that certain areas in the Selška valley were inhabited long before the arrival of the bishops, who initiated systematic settlement of the land. Colonization of the hilly part of the Selška valley was completed by mid-14th century, whereas the area of today's Železniki remained uninhabited. Sufficient quantity of iron ore



On the way to Ratitovec. (photos: courtesy of Igor Mohorič Bonča)

in the land, extensive forests, and water power enabled the development of iron industry in the valley of Selška Sora, which has resulted in the growth of the region's economic center – Železniki.

For more than 500 years, the people of Železniki dug iron ore, smelted it in blast furnaces, processed crude iron into malleable iron in iron foundries, and forged end-products in forges. Numerous tradesmen also were active in surrounding villages (miners, charcoal burners, load carriers, barrel makers, and sawyers), who contributed to the successful ironworks story.

In the beginning of the 20th century, due to lack of iron ore, exhaustion of growing stocks, and lack of competitiveness on the market, the ironwork industry in Železniki witnessed its end. Many people found themselves without work

and some even went abroad; however, the modern industry, established after World War II, created new jobs for the locals.

A blast furnace from the 19th century stands in the old part of Železniki. It was part of the ironworks facility, where iron was extracted from iron ore. In 1941, the blast furnace was declared a protected technical monument. Opposite the blast furnace is the Železniki museum and gallery, which holds many collections such as the iron collection, which shows the history of mining, foundries and forges; carpentry collection with cooperage, charcoal-burning and sawmilling, and other collections.

The main feature of the area is bobbin lace-making, which came to Železniki from Idrija in 1881 and can also be seen in the museum. The technique of twisting and interweaving thin flax or cotton



Tall iron blast furnace in Železniki.

threads into tender laces quickly spread among girls. The closing of blast furnace in 1902 forced everyone who stayed in the impoverished town to turn to lace making: adult women and men, girls, and children. For several decades, the sale of lace provided the only source of income for many families. Even a lace-making school was established in 1907 in Železniki, and is still open today.

Villages on the slopes and ridges of the Škofjeloško hribovje hills, Ratitovec, and Jelovica preserve the cultural landscape of the region. These prealpine foothills have recently been witnessing a successful development of an important industry sector – agritourism. The town of Železniki and the surrounding rural houses are decorated with wall paintings, latticed windows, and wrought-iron window bars; another typical architectural feature



Sorica village. (photo: www.slovenian-alps.com)

of the region is slate roofing. Numerous village pillars and churches give the cultural landscape a special appearance.

Towns and villages below Ratitovec offer various options for leisure activities. Extensive forests promise tranquility and provide shelter to its dwellers, while the lively brooks form

mysterious pools, rapids, and waterfalls, which charm every traveler with their mightiness and beauty. Marked hiking and cycling trails lead past highlands to nearby peaks, which offer spectacular panoramic views of the surrounding region, whereas winters invite skiers to ski resorts and numerous running tracks.

WORLD JUSTICE PROJECT

Slovenia Ranks Between 19th and 36th Among 97 Countries In The Rule Of Law Index 2012

On November 28 the World Justice Project (WJP) presented its "Rule of Law Index 2012", in which Slovenia ranks between 19th and 36th among 97 countries. Findings are based on data derived from a poll of the general public and detailed questionnaires administered to local experts.

WJP Rule of Law Index is a quantitative assessment tool offering a comprehensive picture of the extent to which countries adhere to the rule

of law in practice, identifying nation's strengths and weaknesses in comparison to similarly situated countries, and tracking changes over time. The Rule of Law Index 2012 assesses nine dimensions of the rule of law: limited government powers, absence of corruption, order and security, fundamental rights, open government, regulatory enforcement, civil justice, criminal justice, and informal justice.

According to WJP Rule

of Law Index 2012, Slovenia outperforms most countries in the Eastern Europe and Central Asia region in most dimensions of the rule of law, particularly in the areas of open government (ranking twenty-second overall and second in the region), limited government powers (thirtieth overall and fourth in the region), protection of fundamental rights (nineteenth overall and fourth in the region), and absence of corruption (thirty-first overall and fifth in the region).

Innovation Forum Focuses on Sustainable Development

The 7th Slovenian Innovation Forum presented on Monday, November 26, 2012, 48 best Slovenian innovations selected from among 136 applicants. The forum, focused on sustainable development, was organized by Public Agency for Entrepreneurship and Foreign Investments (JAPTI), which aims at helping innovators promote and sell their innovations.

Most of the 48 chosen innovations and inventions come from the fields of electronics and telecommunications -- 35 are products, nine are services and four are business models. The

majority, 25, were submitted by micro-, small- and medium-sized enterprises, 13 by individual innovators or groups, five by large companies, three by

students and two by research institutions. More information (in Slovene): <http://www.foruminovacij.si/>



SPORTS

Maze Wins G-Slalom in Aspen

Slovenian skiing star Tina Maze confirmed her dominant form in the opening of the 2012/2013 World Cup season by winning the second straight giant slalom event in Aspen, Colorado, on Saturday, November 24, 2012. Maze, who opened the new season with a victory in the giant slalom on October 27 in Sölden, Austria, and then finished fourth in the slalom in Levi, Finland, on November 11, overcame her earlier troubles on American snow by eclipsing the field. The 29-year-old Slovenian finished whole 0.9 seconds ahead of Kathrin Zettel of Austria, with Germany's Viktoria Rebensburg 1.54 seconds behind in third place.

Moreover, Tina Maze bagged third place in Sunday's World Cup slalom event in



Photo:
www.tinamaze.com

Aspen, finishing behind Kathrin Zettel and Marlies Schild of Austria. The Ambassador of Slovenia to the U.S. Roman Kirn congratulated Tina Maze on her latest achievements.

Maze maintains her

lead in the overall World Cup standings. With 310 points, she is 50 points ahead of Zettel. Next Ski World Cup event is scheduled for November 30 through December 2, 2012, in Lake Louise, CA.

CoE BIK

Centre of Excellence for Biosensors, Instrumentation and Process Control (CoE BIK) was established in 2009 in Primorska region, Slovenia, as one of the best four-year hi-tech project proposals for improving European innovation competitiveness from Slovenia.

CoE COBIK is a privately founded research institution that employs 87 highly qualified researchers from the most challenging and promising fields, such as bio-chemistry, bio-engineering, bio-instrumentation, control systems, precision electrical instrumentation, optics and advanced new cleaning processes in pharmacy. These diverse and expanding technological fields are merged for innovative applications and products in medicine, biotechnology and chemical engineering.

CoE COBIK consists of six laboratories with state-of-



COBIK

Centre of Excellence for Biosensors,
Instrumentation and Process Control

the-art equipment, and currently runs 20 research projects. Laboratory for Bio-Analytics, Laboratory for Control Systems, Laboratory for Advanced Sensors and Instrumentation, Bio-instrumentation Laboratory, and Laboratory for Advanced Materials Systems are horizontally bound through Laboratory for Open Innovation Systems, which provides basic business knowledge and sets a model of innovations acceleration.

CoE COBIK merges the best partners, the best researchers, the best national research institutions and the best internationally recognized

companies from Slovenia to create better, more stimulating environment. The focus of the CoE COBIK is to create cutting-edge solutions and integrate them into partners' industrial processes or upgrade them through new partnerships and new research challenges. This focus results in a broad, world-wide network. CoE COBIK is an excellent research partner with many years of experience with preparing and performing E.U. projects. In the near future, some of the projects will result in creating spin-offs. For more information about CoE COBIK, please visit: <http://www.cobik.si/en/>.

ANNOUNCEMENT

Slovenian Presidential Elections

Slovenia held its presidential elections on Sunday, November 11. Former Prime Minister Borut Pahor was first with 39.98 percent of the vote, followed by incumbent president Dr. Danilo Türk with 35.86 percent and center-right candidate Dr. Milan Zver at 24.16 percent.

As none of the candidates won the majority of votes, a runoff between the top two candidates will be held on **Sunday, December 2, 2012.**

Second round of elections, on December 2, 2012, will also be held at the Embassy of the Republic

of Slovenia in Washington DC and the Consulate General of the Republic of Slovenia in Cleveland. Voting at the Embassy of the Republic of Slovenia in Washington, located at 2410 California Street, NW, Washington D.C., 20008, will be possible **between 9:00 a.m. and 5:00 p.m. local time.**

Slovenian citizens with registered residence (»stalno prebivališče«) in the United States can vote in person at the above listed representations or by mail. Voting procedure at the embassy is the same as in Slovenia - voter identification with a personal ID,

the signature of the voter, voting by ballot. If voting by mail, instructions and voting material has been sent to the voter's permanent residence address.

Slovenian citizens with registered residence in Slovenia and visiting or temporarily residing (»začasno prebivališče«) in the United States can cast their vote in person at the listed representations or by mail if they had registered with the National Electoral Commission by November 16, 2012. More information is available on the website of the National Electoral Commission www.dvk.gov.si.

19th Winter School of the Slovene Language

Between **21 January and 1 February 2013** the Centre for Slovene as a Second/ Foreign Language at the Faculty of Arts, University of Ljubljana organises the 19th Winter School of the Slovene Language. The intensive course of Slovene is aimed for those wishing to learn as much as possible in two weeks only, and learn about Slovene culture and society in the various accompanying programme.

Winter school participants can choose among:

- morning course: every day for 4 school hours (9.00 am–12.30 pm)
- regular language course
- preparation for the exam of Slovene at the advanced level
- afternoon course: every day for 2 school hours (2.00–3.30 pm)
- conversation with phonetics for beginners
- conversation for the intermediate and the advanced
- grammar

Every other day in the afternoon or evening the Winter school accompanying programme takes place: the get-together afternoon, a visit to the old town centre of Ljubljana, visit to the Ljubljana Opera Theatre, traditional Slovene dances, closing evening with language games and book prizes.

For more information, prices and application please visit http://www.centerslo.net/l2.asp?L1_ID=1&L2_ID=14&LANG=eng

ANNOUNCEMENT

The minister for Slovenians Abroad, Ljudmila Novak in New York

The Minister for Slovenians Abroad, Ljudmila Novak will meet with Slovenians living in New York on **Sunday, December 2, 2012 at 5pm** after the 4:30 Sunday Mass at St. Cyril's Hall, 62 St. Mark's

Place (8th Street), East Village, New York (between 1st and 2nd Aves.)

The purpose of the visit is to gather information for the Slovenian government about the problems that the

Slovenian community faces in the U.S. and to encourage the local institutions to connect and cooperate with the experts of Slovenian origin that are a part of the community.

TO DO LIST

[Beyond by Michael Benson](#)

A spectacular photography exhibition of images from space.

When: Monday through Friday 9:00 AM – 5:00 PM

Where: Embassy of Slovenia, 2410 California Street, NW, Washington, DC 20008

More information about the work of Michael Benson on: <http://www.kinetikonpictures.com/>

[SlovenSki Program for 2013](#)

Schedule:

February: 1-3, 2013, SlovenSki weekend Windham, NY

February 15-23, 2013, SlovenSki trip to 3 Vallees, France

March 18-24, 2013, Nastar Nationals Aspen/Snowmass (qualified racers)

April 1-7, 2013, SlovenSki week in Sun Valley, ID

More information and application form: John F Kamin, 61-32 75th Place, Middle Village, NY 11379, phone: (718) 424-2711, email: Jfkamin@verizon.net