

SLOVENIA

Where business meets
innovation, sustainability and growth



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Central Europe's most compelling investment bet

The Alpine nation enters the second half of the decade as a compact, outward-looking eurozone economy that is steadily transforming itself into one of Europe's most dynamic and sustainable business locations. Economic growth has moderated after the post-pandemic rebound, but resilient fundamentals, rising foreign investment and deep engineering and scientific talent continue to drive the shift toward a green, knowledge-based economy.

Slovenia's geography has always shaped its ambition. Nestled between the Alps, the Adriatic and the Pannonian Plain, it has built an identity around openness, strong institutions and a long tradition of science and culture. President Nataša Pirc Musar describes a country "with a clear vision," where development is deliberately aligned with European principles of unity, resilience and innovation rather than short-term gain. This vision translates into a model that keeps GDP per capita close to the EU average while preserving social cohesion and a strong middle class, a balance highlighted in the European Commission's latest country forecast. Healthcare, education and social protection remain pillars of the Slovenian system, helping to generate one of Europe's lowest levels of income inequality and the EU's lowest share of children at risk of poverty or social exclusion.

“We believe in a future where economic growth is balanced with environmental responsibility and where talent is nurtured alongside the preservation of our heritage”

President Pirc

Slovenia has also emerged as a serious innovation player, scoring strongly in human capital, research and digital infrastructure in the European Innovation Scoreboard. Its ecosystem combines institutions such as the Jožef Stefan Institute with globally recognized companies in advanced manufacturing, aviation and green technologies, helping the country build a reputation for smart products and high-value patents within the OECD. President Pirc Musar frames this trajectory as a deliberate choice: to couple



H.E. Nataša Pirc Musar, President of the Republic of Slovenia

technological progress with social responsibility and environmental stewardship so that digitalization and artificial intelligence strengthen, rather than erode, social cohesion. This orientation underpins Slovenia's advocacy of the Paris Agreement, EU cohesion and international partnerships in circular economy, solar energy, sustainable transport and AI.

After several years of robust expansion, Slovenia's economy grew by 1.6 percent in 2024, a slowdown linked to weaker external demand and the impact of 2023's floods, according to the national statistics office and international agencies. Yet both the European Commission and the OECD expect Slovenia to accelerate again, with Brussels projecting real GDP growth of 2.0 percent in 2025 and 2.4 percent in 2026—compared with EU and euro-area averages of around 1.4 percent—confirming that Slovenia is set to grow significantly faster than its wider European environment.

Foreign investors are responding to this momentum. The Bank of Slovenia reports that the stock of inward foreign direct investment reached about 22.1 billion euros at the end of 2023, up more than 9 percent year-on-year and now representing just over a third of national GDP. Investment is particularly dynamic in pharmaceuticals, automotive components, ICT, logistics and green technologies, sectors that continue to post strong export performance and underpin Slovenia's role in regional value chains.

Few people embody Slovenia's entrepreneurial evolution as vividly as Joc Pečenik, president of the Slovenian Business Club (SBC). From early ventures in point-of-sale software, he built a gaming-technology group that at its peak controlled more than 60 percent of the world market for electronic table games before



selling the business to a major US investment fund. That journey, from a small engineering team to a global export champion, illustrates how Slovenian founders convert technical excellence into scalable, investor-ready businesses that can compete on any continent.

Today Pečečnik channels his experience into real estate and technology investments and into leading the SBC, which gathers around 500 of the country's top entrepreneurs employing nearly 30,000 people—over 7 percent of Slovenia's workforce. Membership is reserved for "real entrepreneurs," many of whom started in garages or family firms, and the Club has become a reference point for international partners seeking credible counterparts in Slovenia's private sector. Pečečnik insists that the real strength of Slovenia's business community lies in values.



Over 60 percent of Slovenia is covered in forests

The SBC operates under seven "golden rules," including zero tolerance for corruption, strict tax compliance, fair treatment of employees and a strong commitment to community and youth support, with members backing their commitments with their personal assets. Economic success, he argues, is almost secondary to integrity, because a reputation for honesty and reliability is what ultimately attracts long-term investors and customers.

To translate those principles into practical impact, the SBC runs three major annual gatherings and around 150 smaller events, publishes several widely distributed business magazines and operates a digital TV studio that produces more than 100 podcasts each year.

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ON SLOVENIA'S ECONOMY**

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Joc Pečečnik President of The Slovenian Business Club

Through its Global Department and a growing international network, the Club positions itself as a one-stop entry point for anyone wanting to understand Slovenia's market culture, connect with high-quality suppliers or co-invest in technology-driven projects.

Likewise, Slovenia's appeal is reinforced by its strong and distinctive national institutions. The National Council, Slovenia's upper house of parliament, represents regional, economic and professional interests, and serves as a check on hasty legislation. Its president, Marko Lotrič, explains that by scrutinizing draft laws, issuing opinions and, when necessary, exercising its veto powers, the Council reduces regulatory volatility and strengthens legal certainty for both domestic and foreign investors.

Behind many Slovenian success stories stands the Slovene Enterprise Fund (SEF), which for more than three decades has provided a continuum of finance to small and medium-sized enterprises. Director Maja Tomanič Vidovič has steered the Fund from a vehicle funded by privatization proceeds into an institution offering grants, guarantees, subsidized loans and an expanding range of venture and seed-capital instruments, ensuring that promising startups and SMEs can access the right form of capital at every stage of their development.

Top 5 reasons to invest in Slovenia

- A strategic position at the heart of Europe
- An excellent transport and ICT infrastructure
- Easy access to a 500-million consumer market
- A corporate culture of transparency and accountability
- A qualified workforce with high levels of education and skills



Janja Božič Marolt
Founder
Mediana

Slovenia thrives as a society of knowledge, where data precision fuels informed decisions across business and policy. Janja Božič Marolt, founder of Mediana, Slovenia's leading market research firm, has grown it into a regional powerhouse by blending data precision with strategic insight. Its proprietary methodologies and AI-enhanced analytics deliver actionable intelligence that shapes policy and business decisions across Central Europe. Equally important is safety. According to the

Global Peace Index 2024, compiled by the Institute for Economics and Peace, Slovenia ranks as the ninth most peaceful country in the world, the only Central European nation in the global top ten. For investors and talent, that translates into an environment with very low levels of violent crime and political instability, combined with high health and hygiene standards and strong social trust. Data-driven policymaking complements this green and safe orientation.

Slovenia's innovation and globalization indicators show that despite demographic pressures and skills shortages, the country continues to advance in human capital, knowledge intensity and integration into international value chains. For investors, this means access not only to incentives and strategic infrastructure, but also to a society that values trust, moderation, mutual assistance and a broad sense of belonging - values President Pirc Musar presents as the foundation of Slovenia's modern social contract. Education has long been one of Slovenia's greatest success stories, driving a nation

that consistently outperforms its peers in innovation and sustainable growth. From its youngest students to its world-class universities, Slovenia's commitment to knowledge is both cultural and strategic, forming the backbone of its modern economy. In the OECD's 2022 PISA assessment, Slovenian students scored well above the global average, with 485 in mathematics and 500 in science, ranking among Europe's top performers.

These results arise from a forward-looking, inclusive system that fosters critical thinking, STEM and digital skills, disciplines that power the country's dynamic industrial and pharmaceutical sectors. Higher education is a key pillar of this ecosystem. The University of Ljubljana, Slovenia's oldest and largest, drives national research and partners with leading companies such as Novartis and Lek.

Together with the University of Maribor, it is actively involved in the Slovenia Biotech Hills cluster near Ljubljana, linking academia, startups and corporations to accelerate applied innovation in biotechnology and advanced manufacturing.

The IEDC-Bled School of Management further complements this ecosystem with world-class executive education and a global alumni network spanning over 75 countries. As Slovenia raises higher education spending to 1.5 percent of GDP by 2029, the synergy between academia and enterprise is poised to sustain growth and global competitiveness for decades to come.



Maja Tomanč-Vidovič
Director
Slovene Enterprise Fund

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TECH & ICT

Alpine tech drives cybersecurity and AI

Slovenia's technology sector has become a visible catalyst of the country's modernization, complementing its strong industrial and services base with a stream of high-value digital solutions for global clients. From industrial artificial intelligence to control systems for fusion reactors and advanced cyber-defense, local companies are building tools that serve demanding international partners and reinforce Slovenia's reputation as a serious innovation hub.



Generative AI thrives with privacy-first Alpine expertise

A clear example of this transformation is Comtrade, whose Slovenian story begins with the acquisition of Hermes Softlab, then regarded as the nation's leading software company and a symbol of its early digital ambitions. Instead of simply absorbing this "crown jewel," CEO Alexis Lope-Bello and his team, turned the acquisition into a foundation for new businesses such as Comtrade 360, focused on sophisticated IT services and public-sector projects, alongside system-integration and distribution companies that now serve the wider region from a Slovenian base.

Lope-Bello views Slovenia as offering a rare blend of deep IT and AI expertise, EU-level regulatory stability and relatively efficient public administration, which allows complex technology projects to be delivered quickly and then replicated in larger markets.

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Local universities like the University of Ljubljana and Maribor together with IEDC provide highly capable engineers, and the country's proactive use of European innovation funds gives Comtrade a robust platform to finance ambitious research and product development from within Slovenia. Comtrade's evolution reflects the broader transformation of digital business, moving from gaming and embedded systems toward enterprise-grade artificial intelligence, cybersecurity and data-driven operations. Using Slovenian talent as a core asset, the group has built an internal incubator that has already produced three successful exits, including sales to a Boston-based private investment firm and a NYSE-listed company, evidence that Slovenian-developed IP can command global investor interest.

Today, Comtrade's fastest-growing activities are in AI, where Slovenian teams design secure solutions tailored to sectors with strict regulatory requirements. A flagship innovation is HyperSharp, an AI gateway that anonymizes data and keeps it inside the client's own environment while still enabling access to leading cloud models, giving enterprises the benefits of generative AI without compromising privacy or compliance.

“Slovenia is a highly educated society with a strong tradition in technology, especially in IT and artificial intelligence”

— Alexis Lope-Bello

This kind of product shows how Slovenia's long tradition in intelligent systems can be translated into scalable, exportable platforms. Alongside Comtrade, Slovenia is home to deep-tech firms that quietly support some of the world's most advanced infrastructures. Mark Plesko's Cosylab has grown from a group of physics students into a global provider of control-system software for particle accelerators, telescopes, cutting-edge cancer radiotherapy and major plasma-fusion projects. In cybersecurity, Beno Ceglar leads NIL, part of the Conscia Group, which uses Slovenia's compact market as a proving ground for advanced managed-security and AI-enhanced defense services before rolling them out across Europe, while also serving as president of AmCham Slovenia and linking the country's digital ambitions with the international business community.

Together, these companies show how the tech sector amplifies the strengths of the broader Slovenian economy, offering investors not just a competitive place to develop software, but a strategic partner in building the digital backbone of industry worldwide.



Alexis Lope-Bello
CEO / COO
COMTRADE Group

PHARMA, BIOTECH & HEALTHCARE

Global pharma meets cutting-edge biotech

Slovenia's life sciences sector is emerging as a tightly connected cluster where global pharmaceutical manufacturers, nimble biotech firms and innovative healthcare providers operate side by side. This ecosystem integrates viral-vector purification, cell and gene therapies, microbial bioprocessing and patient-centered care delivery, leveraging the country's compact geography for seamless collaboration and efficient supply chains.



High-tech Slovenian laboratories turn cutting-edge science into real treatments

Spanning generics production, biosimilars development, advanced diagnostics and integrated clinical networks, the sector benefits from EU-aligned regulations, a skilled STEM workforce, and strategic R&D incentives. Slovenia's life sciences output has grown 15 percent annually, driven by public-private partnerships and proximity to Central European markets, positioning it as a hub for scalable biotech innovation. Key strengths include regulatory clarity from national agencies, robust manufacturing infrastructure, and a focus on high-value niches like bioprocessing technologies validated by global blockbuster therapies. Investors access de-risked opportunities through established pharma scale, agile biotech R&D and healthcare models emphasizing efficiency and outcomes. This outward-looking platform combines scientific depth, industrial capacity and policy support within a stable EU member state. Innovation from well-established pharma giants such as Krka, Novartis and Sandoz also extends into care delivery itself, exemplified by Dr Marko Bitenc. Through Kirurgija Bitenc, Zdravstveni zavod Zdravje and the Carpe Diem Longevity Clinic, he has built an "all-in-one" network that links primary care, diagnostics, specialist consultations and surgery in a coherent, patient-centered pathway designed to shorten waits and improve outcomes.

One of the most remarkable business success stories in this landscape is Sartorius BIA Separations and its founder Dr. Aleš Štrancar.

In the 1990s his team turned polymer research from



Marko Bitenc
CEO & Founder
Surgery Bitenc



Gregor Makuc
CEO
Lek



Aleš Štrancar
Managing Director
Bia Separations

St. Petersburg into chromatographic materials for purifying viral vectors, betting on gene therapy at a time when it was still regarded as experimental. The path included severe setbacks, from early-2000s doubts about gene therapy to investor disputes that nearly pushed the company into bankruptcy, but restructuring and a disciplined focus on core technology kept the Slovenian operation alive. The breakthrough came in 2017 with a partnership on Zolgensma, now one of the world's highest-value gene therapies, which validated BIA Separations' platforms and brought a wave of top-tier international clients. In 2020 Sartorius acquired the company in a transaction exceeding 360 million euros, integrating its viral-vector purification solutions into a global bioprocessing portfolio while keeping R&D and production rooted in the Vipava Valley. Štrancar stresses that Slovenia's strong scientific education, work ethic and export orientation, allowed a small biotech to become a reference name in gene-therapy manufacturing technology and a magnet for global investment. Today the Slovenian site continues to develop next-generation materials and processes for viral vectors and nucleic-acid medicines, supporting clients from clinical trials through to commercial scale. For investors, BIA's trajectory shows how breakthrough science, patient capital and a resilient entrepreneurial culture can transform a local start-up into a strategic asset within one of the world's leading life-science groups.

Sartorius BIA Separations

The Biotech
Hub of
Tomorrow in
the Heart of
Europe

- Strategic Location
- Biopharmaceutical Excellence
- Global Partnerships
- Innovative Campus
- Advanced Therapies



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INDUSTRY & AUTOMOTIVE

Precision manufacturing leads global value chains.

Industry and automotive remain central pillars of Slovenia's export-oriented economy. Manufacturing alone accounts for around 19 percent of GDP and nearly \$14 billion in value added in 2024, according to World Bank data. Exports of goods and services exceed 80 percent of GDP, underscoring how factories, suppliers and engineering firms compete far beyond their home market, navigating global supply chains with precision and agility that punches well above Slovenia's weight as a small EU nation.

This vibrant economic story springs to life through many local visionary entrepreneurs like Sandi Češko, co-founder of Studio Moderna, whose remarkable journey from a modest post-socialist market in the early 1990s perfectly mirrors Slovenia's broader reinvention and determined climb up the global value chain.

Emerging from Yugoslavia's dissolution, Češko transformed a fledgling operation into a half-billion-euro direct-to-consumer and omnichannel retail powerhouse that now spans more than 20 countries across Central and Eastern Europe, reaching millions of customers through sophisticated e-commerce platforms, iconic proprietary brands and meticulously optimized data-driven logistics networks refined over nearly three decades of relentless adaptation. He drew invaluable lessons from the region's turbulent transition years, grappling with hyperinflation, supply shortages, political instability and limited domestic demand, turning these very constraints into a powerful engine for disciplined execution, ceaseless experimentation with marketing channels and lightning-fast cross-border scaling. As a result, he pioneered innovative direct-to-consumer models in fast-recovering markets such as Russia, Ukraine, Moldova and beyond, where GDP growth often outpaced sluggish Western economies. Slovenia

emerged as the ideal proving ground for such bold ambition: a compact yet affluent market of just 2 million high-spending consumers, brimming with world-class engineering talent forged in decades of industrial



Igor Akrapovič
Founder
Akrapovič



Sandi Češko
Founder
Studio Moderna

excellence and offering seamless access to the vast EU single market through an efficient web of highways, rail lines and the strategic deep-water port of Koper, which handles millions of tons of cargo annually.

Rather than succumbing to cutthroat volume-driven price wars that erode margins, Studio Moderna strategically maximized its intangible assets, an approach that echoes the sweeping transformation across Slovenian industry toward sustainable, higher-margin, innovation-driven business models resilient to economic headwinds. In this evolutionary process, the company didn't just grow; it fundamentally professionalized Slovenia's entire retail and marketing ecosystem, elevating industry-wide benchmarks in sophisticated data analytics for granular customer insights, hyper-efficient logistics spanning multiple borders with real-time tracking and exemplary after-sales service programs. At the very heart of Studio Moderna's success we find the revolutionary patented Octaspring foam-spring technology, which originated as a specialized pressure-relief cushion designed specifically for wheelchair users. Over time, this breakthrough evolved into a highly versatile platform technology now applied across diverse categories including premium mattresses for restorative sleep, ergonomic furniture for home and office, advanced automotive seating systems that excel in vibration damping and long-haul comfort

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and even specialized aviation cushions, achieving up to 50 percent less material usage than conventional foam or spring-based designs while dramatically enhancing breathability, hypoallergenic properties and zoned support.

Češko is now doubling down on next-generation sleep technology with the global rollout of AI-driven Sleep Simulator pods destined for retail stores worldwide: these immersive pods employ arrays of high-precision sensors to meticulously scan and map a customer's real-time body pressure profile across dozens of points, dynamically reconfiguring Octaspring firmness zones through intelligent actuators to craft a bespoke "comfort DNA" digital profile tailored uniquely to the individual's physiology, sleep posture and preferences.



Iztok Podkrižnik
CEO
Podkrižnik Group



Simona Petrič
CEO
Elvez



Robert Vuga
CEO
Unior Group

Retail partners then leverage this profile in fully automated robotic production lines to manufacture made-to-measure mattresses on demand, obliterating traditional inventory waste, enabling lightning-fast global deployment with an ultra-minimal physical footprint and slashing lead times to days rather than weeks. This seamless fusion of intelligent adaptive materials, real-time AI data processing powered by machine learning and hyper-scalable precision manufacturing doesn't merely elevate a once low-tech commodity product into a premium high-margin sleep-tech powerhouse; it boldly positions Slovenia as an unlikely yet formidable frontrunner in the exploding global market for personalized wellness technologies, riding the wave of surging demand for smart-home health devices that promise data-backed improvements in sleep quality, recovery and overall well-being.

While Studio Moderna charts new frontiers in consumer-facing innovation, Slovenia's traditional industrial heavyweights continue to thrive by honing razor-sharp focus on core competencies, as exemplified by Unior Group under the steady leadership of CEO Robert Vuga. Across its primary Zreče facility in Slovenia and strategic international outposts like Ningbo Unior Forging in China, the firm supplies leading global OEMs with an arsenal of high-performance forged automotive parts, robust undercarriage components for heavy-duty applications, intricate steering elements and bespoke specialized hand tools engineered for extreme durability.



Slovenian engineering excellence fuels Europe's value chains

Vuga credits Slovenia's deep-rooted industrial heritage, nurtured through generations of skilled craftsmanship, combined with a highly competent technical workforce and an unapologetic export orientation supercharged by EU membership and world-class logistics infrastructure, but he warns that true longevity hinges on governments delivering predictable, business-friendly policies and pragmatic green-transition targets that safeguard competitiveness rather than impose burdens. Sustainability isn't a buzzword in Slovenia, it's woven through every facet of its business fabric, vividly embodied by Skaza under the visionary guidance of Igor Skaza, a family-led enterprise that ingeniously transforms vast quantities of plastic waste into premium, award-winning kitchenware, stylish furniture lines, and innovative eco-products destined for more than 50 countries worldwide. Evolving from humble family roots, Skaza has amassed a trophy case of global accolades including the 2014 Golden Gazelle for rapid growth, the 2016 European Business Award for environmental excellence and the 2019 German Economy Prize for pioneering circular economy models, while churning out hundreds of thousands of tons annually en route to its audacious goal of 100 percent recycled content across its portfolio.

**SLOVENE
ENTERPRISE
FUND**



Bridging these diverse worlds of heavy industry, consumer goods and sustainability stands Peter Nikolić's dynamic Alpine Group, a Ljubljana-headquartered holding company established in 2010 that masterfully spans high-value nutraceutical trading, specialized AI automation consulting for manufacturing efficiency, rigorously science-backed performance supplements for wellness markets and hands-on guidance services helping ambitious Slovenian firms scale their operations internationally while deftly orienting foreign investors through the intricacies of local regulations, optimized supply chains and sector-specific opportunities in booming areas like pharmaceuticals, biotechnology and advanced materials.



Advanced factories produce components for premium vehicles worldwide.

Slovenia's automotive and mobility suppliers, which account for around one-fifth of the nation's total exports, amplify this compelling narrative of excellence with prowess. Igor Akrapovič meticulously grew his eponymous workshop-born brand into a globally revered powerhouse, mastering the arts of titanium and carbon-fiber exhaust systems, primarily tailored for high-performance motorcycles, while serving elite MotoGP factory racing squads and premium OEM automakers through a relentless commitment to in-house R&D, obsessive materials innovation and symbiotic partnerships with the cutthroat world of motorsport that have cemented Slovenian craftsmanship as a hallmark of uncompromised performance engineering. Complementing this high-octane flair, Podkrižnik brings essential mechatronic depth with its comprehensive suite of drive systems, precision gearboxes, advanced hydraulic modules and bespoke precision components serving automotive giants, cutting-edge robotics platforms and heavy industrial applications, masterfully handling the full lifecycle from initial concept prototyping through rigorous testing to high-volume serial production all under one integrated roof for unmatched speed and quality control.

Pushing the boundaries of electric mobility innovation, GEM Motors under the leadership of Simon Mandelj pioneers patented in-wheel electric drives that merge compact motor and intelligent controller directly inside the wheel hub, delivering true plug-and-play



Peter Nikolić
CEO
Alpine Group



Igor Skaza
Owner
Skaza



Mihael Babnik
CEO
CorSapio

solutions for an array of light electric vehicles from nimble urban scooters and efficient delivery bikes to versatile microcars and autonomous service robots—garnering 22 hard-won patents alongside prestigious international design awards that brilliantly spotlight Slovenia's densely clustered motor expertise as a shaping force in the future of sustainable urban mobility worldwide.

Rounding out this formidable chain, Elvez, headed by Simona Petrič, emerges as a pivotal player specializing in intricate cable harnesses, high-precision plastic components and sophisticated automotive subsystems, crafting fully customized solutions for electric vehicle wiring architectures, seamless sensor integration and ultra-lightweight assemblies that rigorously meet the exacting standards of top-tier OEMs for unwavering reliability, electromagnetic compatibility and operational efficiency.



Efficient infrastructure networks link manufacturing to global markets

With a sharp emphasis on just-in-time production philosophies, deep collaborative engineering partnerships with global carmakers spanning concept design to validation testing, and proven expertise in navigating complex supply disruptions, Elvez exemplifies how Slovenian precision manufacturing underpins the seismic industry shift toward full electrification, ensuring flawless integration across intricate vehicle architectures from high-voltage battery management systems and power distribution to advanced driver-assistance infotainment ecosystems and beyond.

REAL ESTATE & FINANCE

Market shortages yield sustainable and attractive returns.

Slovenia's real estate market has moved from post-crisis recovery to a strategic asset class, driven by eurozone stability, tourism growth and a persistent shortage of quality space. Ljubljana apartment prices have hit €4,500 to –€6,500 per square meter in prime segments, with residential yields averaging 4.34 percent, among Europe's more attractive.



Sustainable builds deliver attractive investment yields.

Foreign developers have quickly recognized Slovenia's under-supplied market. Bratislava-based CORWIN, led by Michal Maco in the country, has delivered sustainable residential like Kvartet and is completing Vilharia, Slovenia's first LEED Platinum/Zero Carbon office. Similarly, Mendota Invest, under Pál Forgács and backed by OTP Group, drives Emonika, the country's largest private development at 190,000 square meters including offices, hotels and retail.

These visions rely on contractors like STRABAG Slovenia, directed by Dietmar Cerjak. Now the country's largest building firm, STRABAG uses BIM and lean processes for projects like Emonika while targeting carbon neutrality by 2040. Such international momentum creates demand for sophisticated local guidance, which is where advisors step in.

A key figure in this field is Maja Lavrič, co-founder and managing director of REconsult & Partners and CEO of Fort Vega. She launched with brokerage for foreign clients but saw the need for deeper support on regulation, capital markets, permitting and risks, evolving into a full-cycle firm. Fort Vega integrates legal, financial, technical and valuation services in-house, handling income assets from land deals through tenanting, management and exit. Lavrič stresses Slovenia's logistics advantage near Koper's port and Ljubljana's business-hub role, driving offices, retail and hospitality. Logistics benefits from Pan-European corridors; offices and retail see new pipelines as ESG upgrades replace old stock. Limited land and strict permitting make the market slow-moving and discourage speculation, but they help keep prices high and Ljubljana still attracts 60 percent

of all foreign investment, so she advises newcomers to begin there to benefit from liquidity and growth.

A central player in the market is Zoran Đukić, founder and CEO of Stoja Trade, one of Slovenia's most influential real estate leaders across three decades. He built his reputation renting premium apartments to diplomats and corporates when quality stock was scarce, then scaled into brokering, investing and developing hundreds of units. Landmark Quadro office in Ljubljana—leased to Sportradar, the global sports-data leader—shows Stoja's execution power. Đukić has innovated with an art gallery fused into luxury real estate and patented Diplomatic Corporate Services (DCS.si), easing relocations for embassies and

multinationals while expanding to Croatia and the Adriatic. Slovenia is a "hidden gem" at the Alps-Adriatic-Central Europe crossroads. It offers stability, euro-zone transparency and less saturation than the West. Local demand thrives on a strong ownership culture "Slovenians are born with a brick in their stomach." Tourism powers coastal hotspots like Portorož, Piran and Izola, plus other demanded areas such as Lake Bled. Logistics via Koper's new rail, wellness resorts and rental shortages offer upside despite permitting delays. Stoja's holistic advisory clearly thrives here. Current market conditions remain favorable for entry, with a balanced risk-return profile, provided investors work with a qualified local advisory team capable of navigating regulatory, financial and operational complexities.



Zoran Đukić
CEO
Stoja Trade



Maja Lavrič
CEO
Fort Vega & REconsult



LEGAL, TAX & ADVISORY

Navigating regulations for seamless investor success

Slovenia's legal framework, aligned with EU standards since 2004 and Eurozone entry in 2007, offers a stable yet nuanced environment for investors seeking Central Europe's next growth hub. In this compact market of just over two million people, where export-oriented firms can ship more than 90 percent of their output, success hinges on mastering protective labor laws, relatively high tax burdens and egalitarian social commitments that distinguish Slovenia from many EU peers. The country's economy was reshaped by post-independence reinvention, as companies pivoted away from former Yugoslav markets toward Western Europe and learned to compete through specialization, sophisticated exports and relentless innovation.

Foreign investors often arrive expecting inefficiency but instead encounter a highly educated workforce. Profitability, however, still demands sophisticated navigation of regulations that favor stability over rapid restructuring. The same rules that slow blunt cost-cutting can, in the right hands, secure long-term labor peace, reputational benefits, and smoother integration into EU value chains. In this environment, top legal specialists are indispensable, bridging the gap between EU-wide familiarity and local intricacies to enable seamless transactions and mitigate risks in M&A, insolvency and finance.

Ožbej Merc, senior partner and head of the transaction unit at Jadek & Pensa, Slovenia's largest law firm by revenue and headcount, embodies this expertise. With the firm since 2003 and holding an LL.M. from Columbia University, he leads advice on the nation's most demanding deals, serving multinationals in pharmaceuticals, technology and finance. Jadek & Pensa integrates a full-service legal offering with a pioneering tax department under one roof, helping investors avoid costly disconnects between legal strategy and tax optimization when entering or restructuring in Slovenia. The firm has advised on many of the country's landmark restructurings and cross-border M&A transactions, giving it a clear vantage point on how regulation, politics and banking practice interact in real time. A particular strength is the firm's ability to coordinate complex, multi-stakeholder negotiations involving sponsors, banks, state-owned entities and international financial institutions. Merc's team is known for rigorous execution and a hands-on approach, staying close to management and owners throughout a transaction rather than limiting its role to drafting documents. This combination of scale, sector depth and direct partner involvement is rare in such a small market, giving international investors a single trusted interface for everything from initial screening and structuring to post-closing integration. Boutique advisory firms are likewise emerging to



Ožbej Merc
Senior Partner
Jadek & Pensa

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3 ASSET MANAGEMENT 4 MARKET INTELLIGENCE 5 LEGAL SUPPORT

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CENTRAL AND EASTERN EUROPE

“The market size is small, yes, but that drives companies to be innovative and export-oriented. Investors who look beyond the obvious find niche opportunities with great potential”

Ožbej Merc

JADEK & PENSA

help manufacturers and other businesses navigate succession, regulation and digitalization. CorSapio, led by Mihael Babnik, exemplifies this new layer: a multidisciplinary consultancy that combines corporate finance and tax expertise with process automation and ESG advisory, while helping launch investment funds to deepen Slovenia's capital markets and support Industry 5.0-style transformation. Building on mandates with banks and development institutions, CorSapio guides investors through tailored state incentives and complex EU-funding frameworks, turning policy instruments into practical tools for long-term value creation.



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Excellence
Meets
Excellence*

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TOURISM

Green luxury from Alps to Adriatic shores

Slovenia captivates as Central Europe's green boutique tourism powerhouse, packing astonishing variety into its compact 20,000 square kilometers: 60 percent forest coverage, crystalline lakes like Bled and Bohinj, soaring Triglav peaks, emerald Adriatic coast and climates from alpine chill to Mediterranean warmth, all luring high-value travelers seeking immersive escapes. One of the countries' most important upcoming projects is Golf Resort Arboretum near Ljubljana, led by Joc Pečenik, group owner of Elektronček.



Joc Pečenik, Group Owner, Elektronček Group

This transformation turns a declining site into a premier destination: rebuilt greens, state-of-the-art clubhouse, AI robo-coaches for advanced training, cashless operations and high-end amenities like the Porsche lounge and Veuve Clicquot bar draw local and international crowds. A French-partnered luxury hotel integrates sustainability, positioning Arboretum as a tech-hospitality benchmark for events, sports and leisure, merging local creativity with global appeal to redefine regional tourism. Back in the city of Ljubljana, NEU Residences, managed by Tilen Albreht Centrih, pioneers unique serviced apartments for digital nomads and families with 90 percent digital check-ins, app-controlled smart buildings and omnichannel comms for seamless stays. Guests rave over breathtaking panoramic views from spacious units, the rooftop pool for summer dips and trendy café serving local flavors.

Likewise InterContinental Ljubljana, under Duško Božić, elevates the capital with five-star polish. Green Key certified, plastic-free operations and staff-driven innovation crafting bespoke experiences, from curated breakfasts to personalized receptions that spotlight Slovenia's proximity to Venice and Michelin-starred dining.

Slovenia keeps surpassing expectations and is rapidly emerging as Central Europe's standout investment destination. It offers the rare combination of EU and eurozone stability, a strategic location between Western Europe and the Balkans and a compact size that allows investors to move fast and scale efficiently.



Tartini square harbor in Piran

This is a country where Alpine landscapes meet the Adriatic coast, but also where strong universities, R&D centers and a skilled, multilingual workforce support cutting-edge pharma, green tech, manufacturing and IT. A dense network of SMEs and start-ups feeds larger players with innovation, while established global firms use Slovenia as a base for regional operations. The business environment is underpinned by legal clarity, predictable regulation and digital public services that simplify cross-border deals and corporate structuring. Real estate, logistics and tourism assets offer solid, long-term opportunities, increasingly aligned with ESG standards and Slovenia's ambitious climate and circular-economy goals. From resilient family businesses to visionary corporate leaders, Slovenia combines natural beauty, economic dynamism and human ingenuity in a way few markets can match. In a Europe struggling with slow growth and uncertainty, it stands out as a rare, credible growth story that serious investors cannot afford to overlook in 2026.

NEU
RESIDENCES
SERVICED APARTMENTS

NEU way
of living

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