

ANNUAL TOURISM REPORT FOR SLOVENIA FOR THE YEAR 2012

1. INTRODUCTION

Council Decision 86/664/EEC of 22 December 1986¹ establishing a consultation and cooperation procedure in the field of tourism foresees that “each Member State shall send the Commission, once a year, a report on the most significant measures it has taken and, as far as possible, on measures it is considering taking in the provision of services for tourists which could have consequences for travellers from the other Member States”.

With the publication of the “Agenda for a sustainable and competitive European tourism”, the Commission announced that “in order to strengthen the collaboration with and among Member States, their current annual reporting through the Tourism Advisory Committee (TAC) will be used to facilitate the exchange and the dissemination of information about how their policies and actions safeguard the sustainability of tourism”.

This Communication was welcomed by the Competitiveness Council conclusions (22nd-23rd November 2007) and by the Presidency Conclusions of the Brussels European Council of 14th December 2007.

The main aims for the reporting process are:

- to be able to monitor the level of implementation of the “Agenda for a sustainable and competitive European tourism” by Member States;
- to facilitate the exchange of experiences among member States with regard to how they tackle issues which are important for the competitiveness and sustainability of European tourism.

MS reports referring to year n shall be sent to the European Commission by the end of February of year $n+1$.

If the reports are sent in English, the deadline is shifted to the end of April.

2. ORGANISATIONAL STRUCTURE

This section should provide an overview of the main organisational structure to illustrate how tourism is organised and managed, to identify linkages and to identify the engagement of other organisations/stakeholders.

The information required will only need to be prepared fully in year 1 as it will subsequently only be necessary to provide details of any changes.

2.1 Please identify the National Bodies responsible for tourism (Ministry and also any separate/related National Tourism Organisation), including key areas of responsibility, and their relationship to other national bodies. (maximum of 1.000 characters)

Tourism policy remains within the purview of the **Ministry of Economic Development and Technology** (change after the Parliamentary elections in December 2011) and remains as part of the overall economic policy of Slovenia. Administrative and legislative issues concerning tourism are delivered to the **Tourism and Internationalization Directorate**.

The Directorate is divided into two divisions:

- **Tourism Division** (national policy on tourism and structural policies with impact on tourism co-ordination, foreign and EU relations in tourism)

¹ Official Journal L 384, 31/12/1986 P. 0052 – 0053.

• **Internationalisation Division** (Foreign investments Promotion and Domestic industry and SMEs internationalization, Trade Policy).

Tourism Division is responsible for preparation and implementation of tourism policies, strategies and guidelines on national level, regulations in the field of tourism and catering.

The promotion of Slovenia as a tourist destination and the corresponding marketing activities are the responsibility of the National Tourism Organization named **Slovenian Tourist Board (STB)** (from 1st January 2013 *part of SPIRIT Slovenia Public Agency*²).

The STB was set up in 1995 by the Government as a partly-commercial, partly state-funded organisation. In 2010 the STB got a new status as full-state-funded institution responsible for development, promotion and marketing of the destination Slovenia. The STB provides certain services on a fee basis for the tourism industry as well. In general It is responsible for managing, promotion and advertising of the national tourism brand "**I feel Slovenia**", within it's annual working programme supports creativity, innovation and the design of new products and services (the Sower Award Competition, The Weaver Award competition and Bank of Tourism Potentials), promotes internationalisation and quality diversification of tourism supply, promotes quality and uniqueness of guest experience, manages visitors structure, cares about public relations and advertising campaigns in important consumer markets, carries out R&D in the field of tourism marketing, etc.

STB is the national umbrella tourist board, whose purpose is to plan and carry out the promotion of the country as a tourist destination, primarily in foreign markets.

More information:

Ministry of Economic Development and Technology <http://www.mgrt.gov.si/en/>
Slovenian Tourist Board <http://www.slovenia.info>

2.2 Please, describe what organisations/agencies are used to deliver services at the national and regional level and the services that they deliver. (maximum 800 characters)

To encourage small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs), including those in tourism, to invest at any phase during their lifecycle, to support SMEs through subsidies, favourable loans and guarantees for loans taken, Slovenia founded the **Slovene Enterprise Fund (SEF)**.

More information: Slovene Enterprise Fund (SEF) <http://www.podjetniskisklad.si>.

Through the **Public Agency of the Republic of Slovenia for Entrepreneurship and Foreign Investments (JAPTI)**, the Government enhances Slovenia's general economic competitiveness via technical and financial assistance to national and foreign entrepreneurs, businesses and investors.

Public Agency of the Republic of Slovenia for Entrepreneurship and Foreign Investments (**JAPTI**) (from 1st January 2013 *part of SPIRIT Slovenia Public Agency*).

More info: <http://www.japti.si/home>

² A public agency is effective and sustainable development based executive institution, in the field of entrepreneurship, technological development, innovation, foreign direct investment, internationalization and promotion of the Slovenian economy and Slovenia as a tourist destination. Agency provides and ensures favorable and supportive environment, financial initiatives, promotion and the visibility of Slovenia in the EU and internationally.

2.3 Please, describe which other bodies and organisations are involved at the national level and the process for involving them. (maximum 800 characters)

Very important organisations at national level are **the Chamber of Commerce and Industry of Slovenia – Chamber of Hospitality and Tourism** (http://www.gzs.si/slo/panoge/turisticno_gostinska_zbornica_slovenije) (representing among others by compulsory membership the interests of all **leisure and tourism entrepreneurs**) as well as the **Chamber of Craft and Small Business of Slovenia** (<http://www.ozs.si/eng/prispevek.asp?IDpm=19>) (representing among others the interests of the **tourism small entrepreneurs and craftsmen**) and the **Trade Union for Tourism and Catering workers** (<http://www.sindikar-git.si/eng/>).

The most important **civil society** organisation in the field of tourism is the **Tourist Association of Slovenia (TAS)** <http://www.turisticna-zveza.si>.

It is the oldest non-governmental, civil tourism association of friends of tourism in Slovenia (in the year 2005, it celebrated its centenary) and incorporates more than 655 local tourist societies (clubs with several thousands of civil friends of tourism) throughout the country.

There are some tourism associations at national level which represent the interests of their members (voluntary membership), these are:

the Association of Slovene Travel Agencies (<http://www.ztas.org/eng/>),
Slovenia Spas Association

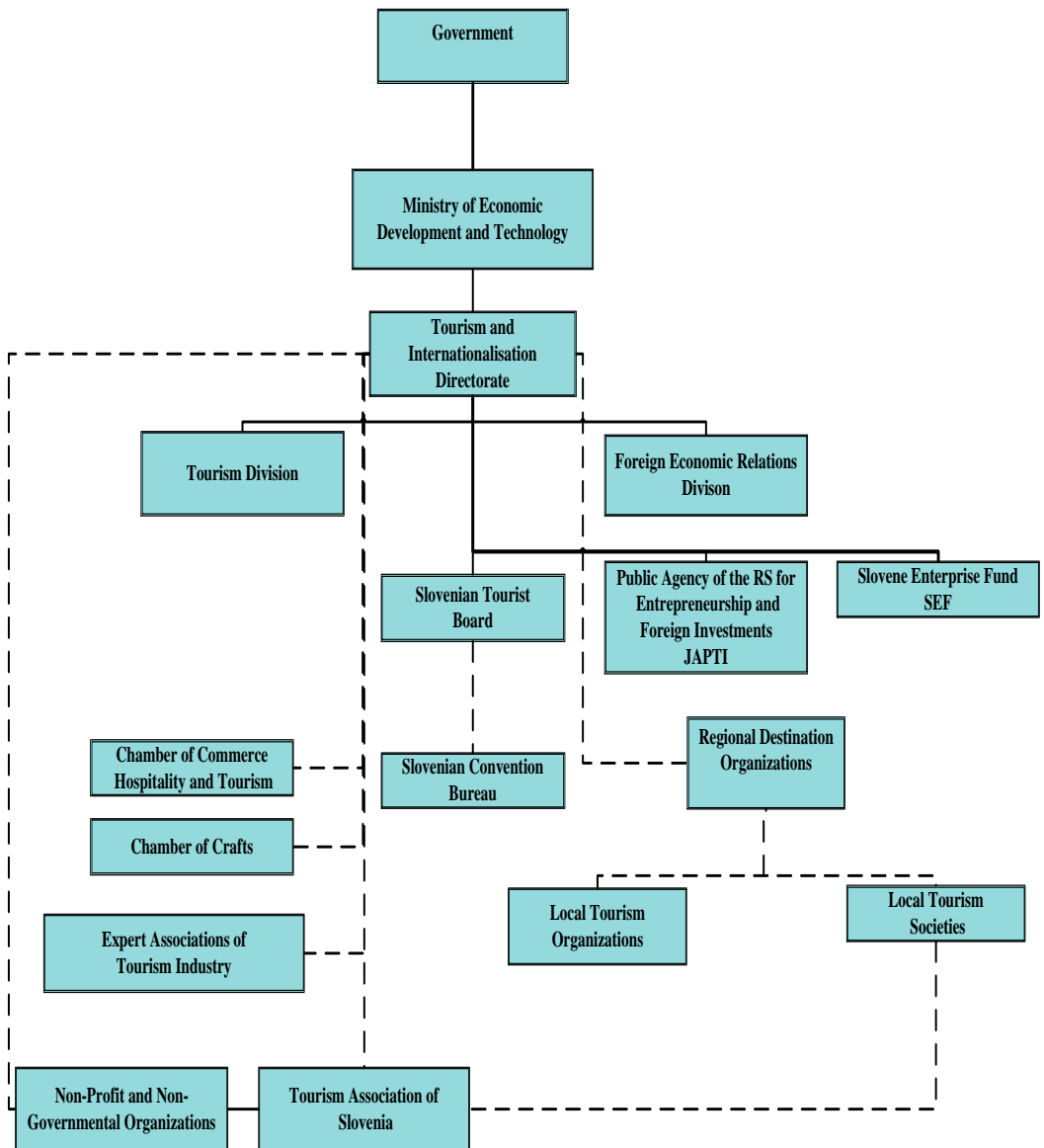
(http://www.slovenskazdravilisca.si/en/informacija.asp?id_meta_type=1&view=Splosno),

The Slovenian Convention Bureau, link: <http://www.slovenia-convention.com/>,

Association for Tourist Farms, and **National Tourist Association of Slovene tourism Industry**, the private Association that performs activities of private and public interest in Slovenia and abroad, link: <http://www.ntz-nta.si/>.

Statistical Office of the Republic of Slovenia - www.stat.si is in charge of collecting, analysing and disseminating data in tourism.

2.4 Please provide a diagram/organogram of the organisational structure for tourism identifying the relationship between national, regional and local bodies. Provide also a short description of the core responsibilities and competencies of each of the organisations. Include also information regarding the direct and indirect links between other departments, stakeholder organisations and unions. Information about mechanisms of decision making process participation from outsider organisations, e.g. forums, advisory committees is also requested. (maximum of 2.000 characters) (description is in 2.1. – 2.3.)



2.5 Please provide information about financial data, including spend on tourism as a percentage of overall government spend, the level of national funding support for tourism marketing, the amount of EU funding support made available for tourism and data concerning the support to SMEs and Destinations. (500 characters)

TOURISM BUDGET 2011- 2012

Budget (EUR)	2011	2012
National and European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) budget: co-financing budget for investments in tourism infrastructure construction and development of tourism destinations (national budget contribution: 15%)	16.753.540	21.912.956
National budget for Annual tourism policy implementation measures co-financing; R&D policy, HR development policy, policy for overall quality of Slovene tourism sustainability and competitiveness policy implementation, TAS programmes and projects co-financing	40.705	30.000
National STB (Slovenian Tourism Board) budget: Annual STB working programme budget and STB operational costs budget.	8.888.597	5.470.000
Total (with ERDF budget)	25.682.842	27.412.956
Total (without ERDF budget)	11.442.333	8.786.943,4
% in National Budget	0,14%	0,11%
% in National Budget (with ERDF budget)	0,32%	0,34%

3. POLICIES AND STRATEGIES

3.1 Is there a current National Strategy for tourism? Yes No

If yes, please, provide information in bullet point format about the key aims, objectives and priorities of the strategy highlighting those that are designed to address sustainability issues in economic, environmental and social terms in particular those related in the six aims included in the Agenda. In preparing the tourism strategy, explain how consideration has been given to the 9 principles set out in the Agenda (para2.3 p5) and given in the appendix. (maximum 1.000 characters)

Slovenian Tourism Development Strategy 2012-2016 was adopted by Government of Republic of Slovenia in June 2012.

The 2012-2016 Partnership for the Sustainable Development of Slovenian Tourism (the working title of the new tourism strategy) is based on experience of the previous two decades and discoveries from at least a century before that, on the theoretical knowledge and findings from the fifteen years of the Slovenian Tourist Board's operations, cooperation between the Ministry of Economic Development and Technology, the Slovenian Tourist Board and stakeholders from the private and civil society sectors and, especially, on a very clear image of what we wish to achieve in the future.³

Emphasis is placed on the sustainable concept of tourism development in all areas and levels.

³The strategy is based on the premises of two research papers: The Analysis of Slovenian Tourism from 1991 to 2010 (Turistica, 2011), and The Expert Groundwork for the Development and Marketing Strategy of Slovenian Tourism 2012–2016 (The Institute for Tourism of the Faculty of Economics, Slovenian Tourist Board, 2011).

In general, there are three development areas, but the main goal of the national tourism strategy is actually to achieve synergy among all of them:

- ✓ **increasing competitiveness,**
- ✓ **favourable business environment,**
- ✓ **effective and innovative marketing.**

These development areas definitely include investments in quality and innovation, 'climbing' the international ladders of competitiveness in both tourism in general as well as its components and areas, the development of strategic partnerships within the sector and with external stakeholders, the elimination of obstacles for effective tourism development, the development of measurement methods for various statistics and indicators, including Tourist Satellite Accounts, and increasing the cultural level of evaluation and competence, etc.

Summarised in other words, the main content-related objectives of the new strategy include:

- ✓ **competitiveness (innovation, quality, success, knowledge, safety, added value, traffic, inflows, tourist satisfaction, destination management, consumption per visitor, de-seasonalisation, etc.),**
- ✓ **quality of life and welfare (the well-being of the local population, balanced regional development, participation in tourism development, satisfaction of employees, quality of life, etc.),**
- ✓ **reputation and development of Slovenian tourism (the priority of tourism, partnership for development, public-private partnership, tourism as viewed by other activities, etc.),**
- ✓ **Slovenia's recognisability and reputation in the world (recognisability on foreign markets, market brand, image of Slovenia, internationalisation, etc.).**

All these objectives are accompanied by the basic orientation towards sustainable development, the concern for economic, socio-cultural and natural environment, management of the environmental impacts and quality of the environment, transition to a low-carbon society, etc.

As already pointed out, it is sustainable development that forms the strategic basis dictating steps and projects to be taken next, and that will allow the international expert and wider community to identify Slovenia as an **excellent, green, active, healthy and pleasurable destination** to visit and do business with.

The main quantitative objectives are:

- ✓ **increase the volume of tourist activity (tourism turnover: revenues and profit from the hospitality and tourism sector, number of tourists, number of overnight stays):**
 - ✓ number of overnight stays: 2% (annual growth rate),
 - ✓ number of tourists: 4% (annual growth rate),
 - ✓ inflow from the export of travel: 6%-8% (annual growth rate).

In order to reach the above objective, it is necessary that:

- ✓ **the principles of sustainable development of tourism be effectively enforced,**
- ✓ **a favourable business environment be ensured,**
- ✓ **higher quality be achieved and conditions be established that will lead to greater competitiveness of Slovenian tourism,**
- ✓ **efficient and innovative marketing and promotion of Slovenia as an attractive tourist destination be planned and implemented.**

3.2 Who was the initiator and who is responsible for its implementation? (maximum 200 characters)

The Slovenian Tourism Development Strategy 2012-2016 is a common document of all the stakeholders in Slovene tourism: public sector (all the ministries are involved), civil society, local tourist organizations and private sector (tourism industry). It has been developed and formed as a private-public partnership document

on the **Ministry of Economic Development and Technology initiative**. During preparation procedure Governmental level cooperated closely with private and non-governmental sector in order to make an agreement on common goals, measures and activities as well as on defining the role and responsibility of the particular stakeholder/partner in actual programming period.

3.3 How is the strategy monitored and how often? (maximum 500 characters)

Slovenia carries out periodical evaluations of progress towards the strategic objectives. Realisation of the general strategic goals and objectives of Slovene tourism strategy is evaluated each year at the Slovenian Tourism Forum. This is the key policy co-ordination platform between the private, public and civil sectors, at which representatives of all tourism stakeholders meet and discuss results, and agree on the future activities and challenges of Slovene tourism. Ministry of Economic Development and Technology – Directorate for Tourism and Internationalization has established the expert working group composed of experts from various stakeholders (representatives of ministries, public agencies, tourism associations etc.), which meets periodically with aim to discuss about realization of measures and activities written in the strategy and to monitor it.

3.4 What tourism specific legislation exists? (maximum 500 characters)

Tourism Promotion Act

The Tourism Promotion Act had been adopted by the Parliament in December 2003 and was published in January 2004 (Official Journal Nr. 2/04).

The Tourism Promotion Act defines planning and implementation of the tourism policy and its organisation at the national level and local level. It defines the value and the purposes of the tourist tax as well as other instruments for implementation of the tourism policy. The act also lays down conditions concerning organising and selling of package travel, package holidays and package tours as well as performing the services of tourist guides and tourist escorts. It is based on principles of sustainable development and public-private partnership and principle of equal treatment of the economic, social and environmental components. In 2012 some statutory provisions of the Tourism Promotion Act were changed. The changes concern establishment of the new agency, which is also competent for promotion of Slovenian tourism (SPIRIT Public Agency) and acts as the National Tourist Board. In the 2012 the draft of the new Tourism Promotion Act was prepared as well. This act is planned to be adopted in 2013.

Act on Catering Industry

In order to assure a good quality of services and high level of consumer protection, in the Catering Industry Act the requirements regarding minimum standards or conditions for the performance of certain services (e.g. catering, cooking, etc.) are preserved. There are requirements on minimum technical conditions, minimum services, measures and conditions according to classification of the accommodation facilities, minimum sanitary and health conditions. *In the catering sector the safety of services also includes adequate execution of health and sanitary provisions within the HACCP mechanism.*

Act on Mountain Guiding

It defines requirements regarding the profession "Mountain guide" and conditions for establishment and providing mountain guiding services.

In 2010 the Act on Mountain Guiding was been finally harmonised with EU and OECD legislation in terms of performing mountain guiding services as business activity.

Some other, general legislation with impact on Tourism sector

- Consumer Protection Act,
- Code of Obligations,
- The umbrella act for companies is the Companies Act, which defines the *performance of business activities in Slovenia*.
- *Gaming Act*,
- Law regarding health protection, concerning products, which, appearing to be other than they are, endanger the health or safety of consumers,
- Law on drown protection, implemented in the field of bathing water sanitary conditions and standards, first aid equipment and rescue procedures, baths and swimming pools technical conditions and standards and baths classification standards,
- Law on trade concerning the consumer in respect of contracts negotiated away from business premises,
- Entrepreneurship Promotion Act,
- Crafts Act,
- Environmental protection Act,
- Sports Act, etc.

4. MEASURES AND INITIATIVES

This section provides Member States with an opportunity to outline specific initiatives and policies that are or are going to be adopted to manage and develop tourism activity in ways which respond to the key challenges of the Agenda and which fall within the six main aims of the Agenda itself.

1 Economic prosperity

- a. **To ensure the long term competitiveness, viability and prosperity of tourism enterprises and destinations.**
- b. **To provide quality employment opportunities, offering fair pay and conditions for all employees and avoiding all forms of discrimination.**

2 Social equity and cohesion

- a. **To enhance the quality of life of local communities through tourism, and engage them in its planning and management.**
- b. **To provide a safe, satisfying and fulfilling experience for visitors, available to all without discrimination by gender, race, religion, disability or in other ways.**

3 Environmental and cultural protection

- a. **To minimise pollution and degradation of the global and local environment and the use of scarce resources by tourism activities.**

To maintain and strengthen cultural richness and biodiversity and contribute to their appreciation and conservation.

4.1 Please set out, briefly, the steps which have been or will be taken, if any, to address the 7 key challenges for the delivery of sustainable and competitive tourism, covered in the TSG report and referred to in the 'Agenda'.

Overall Tourism policy of Slovenia is based on **quantitative objectives** (raising the volume of the tourism infrastructure, raising the volume of arrivals, overnights stays and spendings, improving the visibility of Slovene tourism, new working places, new tourism SMEs, higher productivity and

profitability and competitiveness raise) and **qualitative objectives** (decentralisation of tourism, reduction of seasonality, promotion of changes towards better sustainability and green tourism, green innovations, quality, branding, ...).

In 2012 our basic measures and activities of the tourism policy were focused on ensuring successful development of tourism, increasing the visibility of Slovenia as attractive tourism destination on foreign markets, promoting SMEs start-ups (by SEF) and implementation of the investment cycle within the planned scope, promoting the development of Human Resources in tourism and stimulating green innovativeness for raising overall quality and competitiveness of tourism supply. The key activity in 2012 has been focused to new Tourism Strategy/policy preparation for programming period 2012-2016.

4.1.1 Reducing the seasonality of demand. (maximum 200 characters)

With a view to reducing seasonality and the discordance of regional development in tourism, Slovenia provides two basic measures: distributing winter school holidays in different regions and in different holiday periods and promoting and investments in tourism infrastructure (with different public incentives and ERDF grants) in remote areas with reach thermal and health water springs. Spa and health destinations allow year-round visits to those areas and assist in spreading tourist flows from well established coast and mountain destinations with intensive seasonal character to the interior of Slovenia, and to more remote regions where seasonality (due to all year Spa tourism offer possibility) is not huge problem.

4.1.2 Addressing the impact of tourism transport. (maximum 200 characters)

Common tourism, transport and environmental policy measures to sustain "Soft Mobility in Tourism" projects (road, rail, sea and air mobility) remain a challenge that will have to be tackled also in the future programming period under the general transport policy of Slovenia. However, in the transport area, a number of cycling paths have been created throughout Slovenia (mostly in towns and suburbs in order to respond to the issue of poor public transport networks), which represent the necessary infrastructure for national tourist cycling products supported and promoted by the STB. The cycling routes of Slovenia participating at the cross Europe cycling trail "**The Iron curtain trail**". The Slovenia Tourist Board is an active partner in the project „**The Alpe-Adria-Trail**". This long distance hiking trail runs along existing paths connects them. The Alpe-Adria-Trail connects the three regions of Carinthia, Slovenia and Friuli Venezia Giulia in 43 stages. The Trail runs through the non-Alpine area and as far as possible, there are only slight differences in altitude. For the Slovenian tourism, the air transport is very important as well. Cruising is a promising new tourist product in our country.

4.1.3 Improving the quality of tourism jobs. (maximum 200 characters)

The gap between demand and supply of adequately skilled work force in Slovene tourism as well as low stimulation of employees are the major problems particularly in Slovene Hotel and Catering Industry. Inscription in tourism and hospitality schools have been decreasing in recent years. To improve this situation, the Slovenian tourism administration in partnership with the Chamber of Commerce - Chamber of Tourism and Catering, Chamber of Craft and Small Business, National Institute for Vocational Education and Training and Employment Service of Slovenia organises workshops, seminars and media campaigns to support and promote vocational, entrepreneurial skills in tourism and hospitality-related jobs. We coordinate activities within the Coordination expert working group, where partners are also representatives of the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs and Workers Trade Union/ <http://www.sindikar-git.si/eng/> (GiT) that represents workers in Hospitality and Tourism sector and is a member of the European Trade Unions for Hospitality and Tourism the EFFAT. Some tourism and hospitality companies have been awarded with **Family Friendly Enterprise Certificate**. This awarding project stimulates employers for providing favourable working conditions and environment for employees. The project is co-financed by the European Social Fund. With adoption of the **Law on Social Entrepreneurship** in 2011 which will make feasible the responsible tourism entrepreneurship and establishment of Social Tourism SMEs as well, the first base for

socially responsible and sustainable tourism in Slovenia has been made. In 2010 and 2011, the Ministry of Economic Development and Technology organised workshops called “Contemporary style of human resources management” for tourism industry.

4.1.4 Maintaining and enhancing community prosperity and the quality of life in the face of change. (maximum 200 characters)

Most local communities in Slovenia are rural communities. With exception of some larger cities, the entire national territory of Slovenia is considered as a rural area and therefore eligible for EU measures and funds for promotion of Rural Development in Europe. Rural Slovenia, with its multitude of local communities and rich natural and cultural heritage, has great development potential. Development of the non-agricultural economy, as tourism is, enjoys support under Axis 3 of the Rural Development Programme and Leader.

To promote and enhance local communities prosperity which have due to rich natural and cultural heritage and available human resources a great potential as emerging tourism destinations, Slovenia decided to participate at EDEN competitions. Until 2012 four Slovenian EDEN destinations have been awarded: Dolina Soče, Solčavsko, Reka Kolpa in Idrija. In 2012 there was no new selection process, but a more active promotion of the selected EDEN destinations. A number of promotional activities have been carried out at the level of the European Commission and the Slovenian Tourist Board. The expert committee for the selection of destinations of excellence have revisited all winning EDEN destinations with the aim to check the state of play in sustainable development of tourism in destinations and marketing, and to advise them about further activities.

4.1.5 Minimising resource use and the production of waste. (maximum 200 characters)

Minimising resource use and the production of waste is part of Slovenia's environment policy. There are no specific and direct measures within the tourism policy focusing on reducing resource use and production of waste.

Slovenia promotes and stimulates (with specific public grants) **EU Flower** standards implementation by Slovene accommodation (hotels, guesthouses, camps, etc.). For the purposes of long-term conservation of natural resources as health drinking water and clean air are, Slovenia has elaborated different sectors planning documents, legislation and implementation measures in the area of air and water quality (drinking water and waste water), construction of housing and construction of industrial facilities regulations in terms of modern sewage systems, adequate spatial planning, including environmental impact assessments and environmental capacity assessments of all investment projects in tourism

4.1.6 Conserving and giving value to natural and cultural heritage. (maximum 200 characters)

Slovenian tourism policy is founded on an **overall sustainable development paradigm**, based on long-term use of the fundamental development potentials of tourism – natural, cultural, social and man-made resources. Slovenia has produced the appropriate supportive sector planning documents, legislation and implementing measures with a broad impact on tourism. Particularly important is legislation concerning protected areas (national, regional and landscapes parks, Natura 2000 areas), which represent the basis for nature-friendly tourist products. Construction of tourist infrastructure and residential construction in protected areas is subject to obligatory environmental impact assessment and environmental capacity assessment (Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) Directive.) Over one third of the Slovenian territory is part of the European network Natura 2000.

To support sustainable tourism projects, the Government assesses applications under calls for tenders for co-financing construction of tourism infrastructure and additionally encourages investors that associate investment projects with sustainable criteria on preservation and revitalisation of cultural heritage, and environment-oriented green investments. The STB supports development and promotes cultural tourism products of national importance.

Since September 2011 traditional Slovene Restaurants that satisfy strict criteria and standards of the Quality Label “Gostilna Slovenia” are in a position to acquire “Gostilna Slovenia” Quality Label Award. This new and attractive Trademark of Slovene Catering industry respects cultural Heritage and Traditions of Slovene Culinary and Hospitality. The basic quality standards of the “Gostilna Slovenia” are the following: traditional local architecture of Restaurants and Inns, traditional internal and external ambient design, local and regional food and beverages origin with accentuation on organic food and local vines provided by local producers, traditional music and folklore scenery, high quality service and variety of other requested components that justify “Gostilna Slovenia” certificate. The “Gostilna Slovenia” project was initiated by tourism administration, expert’s ethnologists and was carried out by the Section for Hospitality and Tourism at the Chamber of Crafts and Small Business of Slovenia.

GOSTILNA SLOVENIJA



4.1.7 Making holidays available to all. (maximum 200 characters)

For the time being, Slovenia has no special national systems/mechanism supporting “Tourism for all”, such as holiday vouchers or cards are. On the other hand, Slovenian legislation does provide for a universal system (i.e. for all social groups of employed and retired workers) of holiday bonuses (the amount of which is defined on annual basis by the Government with agreement of both social partners (employees and employers) as a percentage of the average wage). The holiday bonus in Slovenia is a taxable emolument, paid in cash, not exclusively linked to the annual leave and holiday activities, and as such often used to alleviate the difficult social condition of the beneficiaries as making their holidays accessible. Various trade unions and NGOs in Slovenia (Red Cross, Caritas, Slovenian Association of Friends of Youth, etc.) offer their own holiday facilities to young people, the elderly and persons with disabilities at lower-than-market prices (prices are partially subsidised by public grants). Usage of that particular service is accessible only for Slovene citizens; NGO’s mentioned do not cooperate internationally. Due to strong budgetary constrain caused by economic crisis, due to necessity for modification of a large scale of supportive legislation and because of no specific Industry and NGO interest in Calypso project, tourism administration on initiative of Tourism Industry took a decision in 2010 not to participate at the European initiative “Calypso” anymore. One of measures of the new Strategy of Slovenian Tourism 2012-2016 includes also the action: “Forming a strategic framework or scheme to develop socially responsible tourism in Slovenia.”

4.2 As key challenges may change over time, please identify any other areas that are becoming a new challenge. (maximum 600 characters)

Increasing the competitiveness is a key priority in the new 2012–2016 strategic period.

The main quantitative objectives for the year 2012 were:

- ✓ **increase the volume of tourist activity (tourism turnover: revenues and profit from the hospitality and tourism sector, number of tourists, number of overnight stays):**

- ✓ number of overnight stays: + 2 % (annual growth rate),
- ✓ number of tourists: + 4 % (annual growth rate),
- ✓ inflow from the export of travel: + 6 %-8 % (annual growth rate).

Promotion and marketing policy of the Slovenian tourism

Priority work areas of the STB in 2012 were:

1. Concentration of promotion in key incoming markets and the development of new markets & segments,
2. Establishment of new airline routes to and from markets with big potential,
3. Strengthening the recognisability and success of the " I feel Slovenia " Tourism brand
4. Strengthening web marketing and innovative marketing approaches.
5. Promoting the development and marketing of **green (sustainable)** tourism.
6. Strengthening and increasing the effectiveness of Partnership and co-branding (product associations, destinations, companies, inter-sectoral integration).

4.3 Please identify and describe a specific initiative, which is related to the 7 key challenges, that is innovative/ successful and which would be of interest to or of help to other Member States. (maximum 2.000 characters)

The Sower Award Competition, the Bank of Tourism Potentials of Slovenia and the Award Competition for Inventions in Tourism a "Weaver Award competition" introduced in 2009 , might be of interest of other Member States (http://www.slovenia.info/?ps_sto=0&lng=2).

The Sower Award is thus dedicated to market proven tourism innovations while Weaver Award is earmarked for inventions which normally emerge at the first stage of innovation process development.

The BTPS invites everyone who has "€-nergy" to offer (i.e. financial resources but also material resources and labour) and **invites everyone who has "i-deas" to offer** ("i-deas" because without good ideas, tourism is missing the dot on the i) to deposit either ideas or financial resources at this special bank account. These "i-dea deposits" in a BTPS bank account will help to make tourism in Slovenia better, more successful and more original. Clients who agree to the general operating conditions of the BTPS are presented to the public in a discreet manner. Potential customers, partners, funders – anyone interested in a particular deposit – can advertise. This ensures that compatible pairs of providers and customers are brought together, while guaranteeing appropriate protection for their business secrets. (<http://www.facebook.com/pages/Banka-turistinih-prilonosti-Slovenije-Bank-of-Tourism-Potentials/47660342868>).

BTPS has been awarded in 2009 by UNWTO special Ulysses jury price for innovations in tourism Government. The BTPS earned a lot of attention by experts of tourism innovation at the OECD Tourism Committee Task Force for enhancing Innovations in Tourism. BTPS has been successfully presented to the Nordic Innovation Centre and OECD members at BMI Conference in Copenhagen, 12. May 2012.

- **A new T-lab project was** launched in 2011 by the STB due to good experience with project BTPS. The T-lab project is co-financed by ERDF under the Operational Programme SI-IT Territorial Cooperation 2007-2013. The lead Slovenian partner is STB, the Italian partner is URES Unione Regionale Economica Slovena and S.I.PRO. - Agenzia Provinciale per lo sviluppo S.p.A.

Description: The on-going T-Lab project aims to transfer and upgrade the good practice of the "**Bank of Tourism Potentials in Slovenia**" (BTPS) to cross border regions and to widening access of existing Technologies to widespread users. The main expected project outcome is: establishing and upgrading cross-border BTP portal which will help joining and networking CB initiators of new tourism Ideas and potential CB Investors. The T-Lab project will encourage networking of tourism SMEs and companies within the CB region/destination and will support joint development and marketing of tourism products and services in the cross border area Slovenia-Italia.

5. MECHANISMS FOR IMPLEMENTATION THE AGENDA

Three mechanisms for implementing the Agenda were identified in the "Agenda": sustainable destinations, sustainable businesses and responsible tourists.

5.1 Sustainable destinations: What support is given to strengthen destination management at the regional/ destination level (supportive policy environment, knowledge networks, training programmes, establishment of measures/indicators for benchmarking, etc.)? (maximum 600 characters)

The new 2012-2016 Slovenian Tourism Development Strategy is based upon the **partnership for the sustainable development of Slovenian tourism**, signed by the Ministry, the Slovenian Tourist Board and stakeholders from the private and civil society sector.

Measures and activities are aimed at three development areas:

- Encouraging competitiveness of Slovenian tourism
- Ensuring a favourable business environment
- Efficient and innovative marketing and promotion of Slovenia as an attractive tourist destination

To adapt best to basic Agenda standards of sustainable destinations the prime aim of Slovenian national tourism is to define precisely our destinations on the local and regional level.

A specific call for granting the hotel SMEs, who are willing to introduce the **EU Eco label for tourist accommodation** is permanently open. Slovenia introduced **new e-technology hotel categorisation system** and encourages the **innovation process in tourism with annual Sower Award competition and the Weaver Award Competition**.

To encourage sustainable regional destination management and networking for better destination marketing competitiveness the former Ministry of the Economy launched in 2010 the Call for Proposals for establishing Regional Destination Organizations (RDO). The main aim and task of RDO's should be strengthening the sustainable management of destinations and supporting tourism suppliers networking to achieve better marketing and promotion results of entire regional destinations. As a result of 2010 Call for Proposals in 2011, 12 full boarded RDO have started to operate on regional level with several suppliers networks and successful marketing approach of emerged RDO.

Ministry for Economic Development and Technology plans to introduce a set of sustainability indicators (in compliance with basic sustainability criteria of Agenda indicators) with specific monitoring mechanism which will be tested on several tourist destinations within Slovenia as a pilot project. The results of the pilot project will be the base for further actions on this field toward establishing permanent destination sustainability monitoring mechanism of Slovene tourism. In 2011 tourism administration provided several workshops dedicated to regional and local destinations stakeholders to help them adapting to new realm of destination cooperation and common management and sustainable approach.

The Ministry of the Economic Development and Technology has taken initiative for preparing a new Vocational Standard and National Vocational Qualification "Destination Management Adviser" and is going to organise a seminar about Destination management for managers of RDOs.

- a. **Sustainable businesses:** What support is given to strengthen the sustainability and competitiveness of businesses (supportive policy environment, orientation of business support services to sustainability, training, financial incentives, etc.)? (maximum 600 characters)

Helping tourism SMEs to face global competition and sustainability

To help tourism SMEs and industry to adapt best to this process, the tourism administration publishes special manuals and carries out permanent seminars for direct service quality improvements of Slovene tourism Industry and SMEs. Within the frame of general entrepreneurship policy implementation a special **consulting system on the Voucher basis** (voucher is granted by the Government) is available for entrepreneur start-ups. To support sustainable tourism projects and investments, the Government assesses applications under calls for tenders for tourism infrastructure construction co-financing and additionally encourages investors that associate investment projects with sustainable criteria on preservation and revitalisation of cultural heritage, and environment friendly - investments

Slovene Enterprise Fund (SEF) <http://www.podjetniskisklad.si/index.php?id=86> enabling SMEs including tourism SMEs better access to bank guarantees, subsidized loans interests and favoured long and short terms loans conditions and grants.

Public Agency of the Republic of Slovenia for Entrepreneurship and Foreign Investments (JAPTI) <http://www.japti.si/home> as the Government Agency enhances Slovenia's general economic competitiveness through technical and financial assistance to domestic and foreign entrepreneurs, businesses and investors. (from 1st January 2013 is a part of SPIRIT Public Agency).

Slovenia promotes and stimulates Slovene hoteliers and other accommodation suppliers (with specific public grants) for **EU Flower** accommodation standards enforcement. Tourism administration prepares and provides workshops for industry sector and published special manual /guidance for candidates to help them adjust their accommodation facilities best to the requirements of the EU flower certificate.

Through green public procurement, green Calls for Proposals and Government incentives available for SMEs (including tourism SMEs) the sustainability of business is assured.

5.3 Responsible tourists: What support is given to promote responsible choices by tourists (e.g. sustainability in education, national marketing and media campaigns, promotion of certification schemes)? (maximum 600 characters)

Raising general public and tourist awareness about the importance of Tourism, conservation and protection of natural and cultural resources is the task of some civil society organizations and public sector. The civil society sector and local population are also included in the tourism related legislative process.

One of important partners in the field of tourism is the Tourist Association of Slovenia (TZS) <http://www.turisticna-zveza.si/> as non-profit non-governmental organization comprises more than 655 local tourist societies (LTS)/civil clubs of friends of Tourism throughout Slovenia. Its projects concerning environmental protection and promotion of tourism among young people are co-financed by public (governmental and local communities) sources. At the local level, local tourism societies carry out locally important activities which are financed by the local communities budgets, voluntary donations and own economic activities. These activities include: Local Tourism promotional campaigns, voluntary environment cleansing and beautifying actions, activities associated with raising the awareness of the importance of Tourism at local population, tourists, tourism friends, school-age young people, etc.

Their activities include publishing promotional brochures of local tourism and organising seminars, campaigns, managing local cultural (mostly traditional or ethnological ones) events. The Government of the Republic of Slovenia identifies the civil organisation TZS as an equal actor in the development of Slovenian tourism. One of their important activities is a Tourism as a selected subject in the Primary school, one project is oriented to protection of the environment and adornment of surroundings and is called "My country- beautiful and

hospitable.

One of the regular TZS (TAS) programmes is a very popular competition entitled “Think with your own head and help tourism” carried out among elementary school pupils participating in extracurricular activities on tourism issues. Special courses were introduced in elementary school curricula dedicated to promotion of tourism and particularly to tourism entrepreneurship promotion among pupils. A special awareness-raising programmes concerning tourism are also being introduced in kindergartens. A new activity of the TZS is ECO-patrol (regular environment pollution monitoring in tourism destinations) and one of the projects is dedicated to clean water.

National prime-time TV on regular basis performs special TV programmes dedicated to promotion of Slovene tourism, a lot of Slovene newspapers publishing on daily/weekly/or monthly basis special supplements, articles dedicated to tourism. STB - Slovene Tourist Board publishes Tourism newspaper for professionals monthly and set-up the STPA (Slovene Tourism Press Agency: http://www.slovenia.info/?e_casopis=0&lng=1).

6. DATA AND INDICATORS

Eurostat will provide, as an annex, the key statistical data required to support the reporting process covering around 20 indicators⁴. These are mainly related to the aim of ‘economic prosperity’.

Please, identify indicators that are being used or developed which could add to the range of information being provided by Eurostat, particularly in relation to social and environmental issues (other indicators from the TSG report, visitors/ residents satisfaction, etc.). (maximum 500 characters)

In the past decade, Slovenian tourism has shown extremely positive growth trends, both regarding the growth of the number of tourists and overnight stays as well as the growth of receipts from tourism. The economic recession in 2010 did influence the growth of turnover in tourism, but in 2012 we talk about the **record year of the Slovenian tourism**. The number of tourist arrivals increased in 2012 by 2.5% with respect to 2011 (3,297,556 arrivals in 2012), whereas the number of overnight stays increased by 1.3% compared to 2011 (9,510,663 overnight stays in 2012) (source: Statistical Office of the Republic of Slovenia, hereinafter SORS). According to the data provided by the Bank of Slovenia, the receipts from the export of travel in 2012 (2.011 billion EUR) increased by 3,1% (in 2011 by 8%) compared to the previous year.

The Statistical Office of the Republic of Slovenia (SORS) is mostly oriented toward “economic prosperity” indicators observation. **At the end of the year 2012 the results about the economic importance of tourism in year 2009 according to Tourism Satellite Accounts methodology were published.**

The regular (periodical) surveys data, prepared by the SORS provide base for further partial indicators caring out recommended in TSG report, like: Total day visitors estimation per annum or per month, % of visitors indicating that they are satisfied with overall experience, % of visitors who are on a repeat visit, % of visitors who say they will return, (% of visitors from lower socio-economic groups), etc.

The growth trend of domestic tourists, however, was slightly more moderate than the growth of the number of arrivals by foreign tourists. Domestic tourists plan their holidays more thoroughly, searching for the most suitable ratios between price and quality. Spending outside boarding houses has also decreased lately.

⁴ These indicators have been selected from the 50 TSG indicators on the basis of the possibility to calculate them at the European level.

SORS: General Sustainable development indicators which are monitored permanently by SORS are grouped into three sections:

1. Well-being
2. Balance and modesty
3. Intergenerational cooperation

Latest indicators (mostly for the year 2011 are available on:

http://www.stat.si/eng/tema_okolje_kazalniki_trajnostnega_razvoja.asp

7. COMPLEMENTARY ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

If necessary use the following box to provide additional complementary information that has not already been covered.

The priority measures adopted by the Government of the Republic of Slovenia to tackle the economic crisis focus on strengthening banking liquidity for strengthening the accessibility of businesses to investment funds for development projects. As a result, in tourism the measures are aimed at:

1. **Strengthening the investment cycle for the development of tourism infrastructure within the framework of the promotion of tourism entrepreneurship and competitiveness. This includes:**
 - further support for small and medium-sized enterprises;
 - investment in public tourism infrastructure;
 - support for the development of the sustainable management of tourism industry companies and destinations;
 - promotion increasing the quality of tourism products and services;
 - promotion of innovation;
 - development of human resources for the needs of tourism;
 - Support for the preservation and implementation of sustainable development in tourism (balanced and harmonised structural policies and implementation of measures to increase competitiveness in Slovenian tourism).
2. **Strengthening activities related to promotion and marketing of Slovenian tourism. The Slovenian Tourist Board undertakes to work in close co-operation with the tourist industry to:**
 - organise more marketing communication campaigns co-financed by the tourist industry (in traditional tourist markets, particularly in neighbouring countries and in perspective markets not strongly affected by the financial crisis);
 - organise more expert meetings, educational workshops and study trips for the purpose of improving professionalism and the knowledge needed for the planning, design, management and marketing of tourist services;
 - provide further training in tourist destination management;
 - set up an incubator network with the aim of promoting innovation in tourism;
 - launch additional tourist service advertising campaigns intended for the general public in domestic as well as foreign mass media
 - intensify public relations activities (additional study trips for journalists);

- strengthen the thematic campaign “Taste Slovenia”, advertising campaigns and communication aimed at the target tourists (B2C) in the nearest markets and in moderately distant markets;
- approach more actively the development of new air routes in co-operation with the national airline;
- intensify market communication activities in the domestic market within the framework of the promotion campaign “Lots of S-love-nia” to take advantage of the trend of increased holiday-making by Slovenes in their own country;
- strengthen e-marketing and website advertising
- Strengthen the monitoring of the situation and the provision of information to key stakeholders on overall developments in tourism at home and at the European and international level (EC, UNWTO; ETC; OECD/Tourism Committee).

APPENDIX

Principles of sustainable tourism:

- **Taking a holistic and integrated approach**
All the various impacts of tourism should be taken into account in its planning and development. Furthermore, tourism should be well balanced and integrated with a whole range of activities that affect society and the environment.
- **Planning for the long term**
Sustainable development is about taking care of the needs of future generations as well as our own. Long term planning requires the ability to sustain actions over time.
- **Achieving an appropriate pace and rhythm of development**
The level, pace and shape of development should reflect and respect the character, resources and needs of host communities and destinations.
- **Involving all stakeholders**
A sustainable approach requires widespread and committed participation in decision making and practical implementation by all those implicated in the outcome.
- **Using best available knowledge**
Policies and actions should be informed by the latest and best knowledge available. Information on tourism trends and impacts, and skills and experience, should be shared across Europe.
- **Minimising and managing risk – the precautionary principle**
Where there is uncertainty about outcomes, there should be full evaluation and preventative action should be taken to avoid damage to the environment or society.
- **Reflecting impacts in costs – user and polluter pays**
Prices should reflect the real costs to society of consumption and production activities. This has implications not simply for pollution but for charging for the use of facilities that have significant management costs attached to them.
- **Setting and respecting limits, where appropriate**
The carrying capacity of individual sites and wider areas should be recognised, with a readiness and ability to limit, where and when appropriate, the amount of tourism development and volume of tourist flows.
- **Undertaking continuous monitoring**
Sustainability is all about understanding impacts and being alert to them all the time, so that the necessary changes and improvements can be made.