



REPUBLIC OF SLOVENIA  
MINISTRY OF THE ECONOMY,  
TOURISM AND SPORT



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MINISTRY OF HIGHER EDUCATION,  
SCIENCE AND INNOVATION



# FRENCH-SLOVENIAN BUSINESS AND INNOVATION DAYS

## Panel discussions

### Hydrogen



**Uroš Kerin** earned his PhD from the Faculty of Electrical Engineering at the University of Ljubljana, Slovenia. From 2010 to 2017, he worked at Siemens Power Technologies International in Erlangen, Germany, as a Senior Key Expert, leading or contributing to major international infrastructure projects in power transmission, distribution, and the oil and gas industries.

He joined ELES in 2017 as a senior power systems expert and technical lead. Since 2019, he has served as Assistant Director for Asset and Project Management, driving the organizational and professional development of the division. Currently, he leads the Diagnostics and Analytics Center at the Beričevo Technology Hub and serves as an Executive Advisor to the CEO of ELES.



**Prof. Blaž Likozar** is a head of the Department of Catalysis and Chemical Reaction Engineering at the National Institute of Chemistry (NIC), leading the programme "Chemical Reaction Engineering", as well as numerous research projects (15 H2020 / 50 in Horizon Europe alone). His expertise lies (among others) in heterogeneous catalysis materials, modelling, simulation and optimization of process fluid mechanics, transport phenomena and chemical kinetics. He worked at the University of Delaware in 2014-2015 as a Fulbright Program researcher. He has authored >400 articles, was cited >10000 times, having a h-index of 61. He is also involved in many industrial projects, amongst others, with TotalEnergies, Evonik Industries, UPM, Novartis, Carbon Recycling International... He is a recipient of Pregl and Zois awards.



**Etienne Viénot** is the Europe and International Manager of the Auvergne Rhône-Alpes Energie Environnement agency.

Actively involved in the coordination of the Energy Group of the European Union Strategy for the Alpine Region, he co-leads the EUSALP H2 focus group made up of 10 Alpine regions driving the development of hydrogen in Europe and the Alpine Space AMETHyST project, which supports the implementation of hydrogen ecosystems in mountain areas.



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**Geoffroy Ville** landed the hydrogen world 15 years ago after graduation from a business school in international business.

He took part in the development of major hydrogen French start-ups (McPhy and Ataway) towards industrial companies. Passionate about energy technologies, he developed skills in the fields of electrolysis, H<sub>2</sub> storage and H<sub>2</sub> refueling station.

## HRASTNIK1860



**Tilen Sever** is the Director of Development, Technology, and Innovation at Steklarna Hrastnik, a renowned glass manufacturer. He holds an MSc in Chemical Engineering and is a C. Phil in Nanoscience and Nanotechnologies. Since joining the company in 2017, Tilen has coordinated multiple R&D projects and investments, focusing on renewable technologies. Notably, he led the initiative to incorporate hydrogen as an energy source in glass production, achieving a significant reduction in carbon emissions. Under his leadership, Steklarna Hrastnik successfully conducted industrial production of premium glass bottles using over 60% hydrogen fuel, reducing the direct carbon footprint of the melting process by more than 30%.



**Urban Pevnik**, founder and director of Hiproject, is an expert in the field of heat treatment and automation of production processes. He is an innovator at heart, with innovations that have been repeatedly awarded by the Slovenian Chamber of Commerce. He is always researching new areas and working in line with global development trends. As far as technological progress is concerned, he advocates the necessity of a technological transition to Industry 5.0, saying "Industry 5.0 is not just a technological advance, but a new paradigm that makes companies more resilient and competitive. The key to success is a combination of smart technologies and sustainable practices that ensure the long-term stability of industrial processes".



**Dr. Abdelilah Slaoui** is the Deputy Research Director in charge of Energy at the National Scientific Research Centre (CNRS) in Paris. He earned his Ph.D. from the University Louis Pasteur in Strasbourg and has held various research positions since 1984. Currently, he also serves as the Scientific Director of the National Program on Low Carbon Hydrogen (PEPR-H<sub>2</sub>), overseeing research activities related to energy across CNRS laboratories in France. Abdelilah has been a key figure in coordinating research efforts aimed at advancing decarbonized hydrogen technologies.



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## Artificial Intelligence

**IN516HT**  
know your numbers



**Grega Jerkič**, with over 20 years of experience, works as co-owner and CEO of IN516HT, an award-winning data and AI services company in the EMEA region. IN516HT is a globally recognized data and AI services company helping clients when they need expert guidance for building modern data and AI platforms, modernizing large on-premises analytical solutions to Snowflake, and implementing AI solutions tailored to their business needs. Headquartered in Slovenia, it has subsidiaries in the UAE and KSA. Since 2017, their dedicated focus on cloud technology has positioned us as a leading Snowflake partner in the EMEA region, earning several awards, including the Snowflake EMEA System Integrator Growth Partner of the Year 2023 and the most innovative EMEA Snowflake partner in 2021.

**ELLIPSE PROJECTS**



**Frank Simonet** graduated from Paris Business School ESLSA in 1992, and started his career as an Account Manager in South East Asia for Alcatel. After several years working in Asia, he came back to France in 2001 to manage various customers such as France Telecom.

In 2007 he joined a US-based tech start-up and another one in 2008, later on acquired by Ericsson. After several account management positions in the Swedish group, he decided to join Ellipse Projects in 2014. He is now Sales Director, developing digital and health projects in East and South Europe, and Africa.



**Dr. Primož Cigoj** is the founder and CEO of PC7, a company developing advanced solutions in the field of artificial intelligence. He holds a PhD from the Jožef Stefan Institute and has co-created several innovative platforms, including PandaChat - an award-winning solution for improving digital communication with AI, Hai.news - a system for faster news browsing, and AstroChart.ai - a platform for generating and interpreting birth charts. As a lecturer, he regularly shares his knowledge while continuing to lead PC7 and develop new technologies for the future.

**Anteja**



**Miha Škrokov** is a Circular Economy Project Manager at Anteja ECG. With a strong academic background in environmental engineering, Miha focuses on sustainability and circular economy principles. He has been instrumental in projects that integrate artificial intelligence with circular economy strategies, such as his participation in the "Circular Economy Meets AI – Rethinking Business Models" workshop at Salz21 in March 2025. Additionally, Miha played a key role in organizing the Slovenian Bioeconomy Hub event titled "Bioeconomy – The Rise or Fall of Circular Investments" in September 2024, aiming to connect bioeconomy projects with appropriate financial resources.



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**Peter Butoln** is the Director of Business Development at C-Astral Aerospace, global leader in fixed-wing small Unmanned Aircraft Systems (UAS).

He has represented the company in various panel discussions on artificial intelligence and has been involved in initiatives addressing cybersecurity challenges. Peter's role involves expanding C-Astral's market presence and fostering partnerships in the aerospace sector.



**Alexandre Rocchi** is a professional associated with Thales Group, a global leader in advanced technologies for defense, aerospace, and security. In March 2024, he participated in the Slovenian-French Business Forum held in Kranjska Gora, representing Thales in discussions aimed at fostering cooperation in the space sector between Slovenia and France. Later that year, in October 2024, Alexandre, along with Mickael Ulvoa from Thales Alenia Space, visited BD SENSORS in Buchlovice to discuss the development of business cooperation. In November 2023, he was recognized with the Innovationspreis (Innovation Award) at the VIE-Traineeprogramms 2023 in Austria, highlighting his contributions to innovation within Thales.



**Tomaž Blatnik** is the technical Director and Project Manager of the EE vehicle industrialization project at Revoz. Revoz is currently in the phase of transition to green vehicles, with a focus on the small vehicle segment. The Technical Directorate is leading teams in Slovenia/France and China, aiming at an extremely fast start-up of the new vehicle family projects in our factory. Revoz is the only Slovenian car manufacturer. The plant produces thermionic and, since the Twingo IV project, electric vehicles in series production. As part of the Renault Group, Revoz is also accelerating the introduction of new process solutions to accompany production.