

## REGIONAL REPORT – SLOVENIA – AUGUST 2009



## Project Management Update from Slovenia

*By Prof. Andrej Skarabot  
International Correspondent for PMForum & PM World Today  
Ljubljana, Slovenia*

**Project Management Forum 2009 in Slovenia**

Each year a project management (PM) conference – named Forum - is organized by the Slovenia Project Management Association. Forum achievements of research and practice of Project Management in Slovenia for the last year are presented.

This year the conference was at Bled from 4th – 5th June 2009. The title of Forum was **Innovations and projects for better business results**.

30 papers were presented at the conference. There were 95 participants from all fields, from public institutions, companies to university members, etc. A book and CD were printed.

The Forum was run in three streams:

1. Projects and innovations
2. Development of project management
3. PM Best Practice

Some **conclusions from the Forum** have been:

The characteristic difference from previous Forums is that this year many papers did not deal with a single project but mostly with **programme and portfolio orientation**.

The themes were the programme and portfolio organization structures, information systems, problems of resource allocation, matrix organizations, etc.

On the panel discussion managers from three firms: Iskratel Telecommunication Systems, Ironworks Acroni and Iskra Avtoelektrika Automotive industry presented their practice. Last year they all won the highest prizes in Republica Slovenija for their **technical inovations**.

But the qestion was: are they organized in project management way? Of course, there is no doubt that the PM system exists in all these firms. But on which level ? The answers were, that the project management was on an aproprate high level in one firm only. The audience was surprised that the project management systems in the other two firms have been on pretty low level.

It was seen that the **commercial projects are run better than the development and research projects**.

Many researchers behave in the traditional way and do not like PM. They say, in the PM system is a lack of innovation freedom. When you use project management information system you are obliged to report, to be on time, to be within cost, etc. Many technically oriented employees do not like this system; they want to have more time to be inventive.

On the other side, management is tied to business success.

Some papers dealt with **European projects** for European Union funds. Slovenia is a relatively new member of the European Union, so many managers are not very familiar with procedures to run these types of projects. The procedures are rather complicated, the stakeholders are not very will informed, the time is short, the cost of start up manual is high, etc.

In many firms the **PM culture has been growing** in the last ten years. All people know projects, but many of them think that they do not need any theoretical knowledge. They treat a project as a very simple methodology which does not need any training. Big companies and ministeries have **project offices** mostly. It means that the general management admit the importance of PM.

The diametric points of view were about the paying of the project manager. When a researcher becomes a part time project manager, should he get higher salary or not?

The **author of the best paper** was Dr Jaro Berce, profesor at the Ljubljana University. His project was rather exotic but very interesting: **Martial arts for project leadership**. The rich knowledge from martial arts can be successfuly transferred in the field of leadership. There is very useful, to know different leadership approaches.

Forum is not only a professional meeting but also a **social event**. At the Forum nearly all project management experts from Slovenia meet; they make personal contacts, which is the catalyst for the development of PM in Slovenia.



The Forum logo and the President of Slovenia Project Management Association and Forum Project Manager Mr. **Aljaz Stare**

**About the Author:****Andrej Skarabot****Author**

*International Correspondent  
Based in Ljubljana, Slovenia*



**Andrej Skarabot**, PhD, is an international correspondent for PMForum and *PM World Today* in Slovenia. He has a diploma in Chemical Engineering (1963) from Ljubljana University in Slovenia and a Masters of Science (M.Sc.) in Business Administration (1975) and Ph.D. in Business Administration (1985) from Zagreb University in Croatia. Dr. Skarabot was a professor at the University of Ljubljana, Slovenia from 1980, retiring in 2007. During 1989 – 2006, he was also a partner in d.o.o., a management consulting firm based in Ljubljana. Beginning in 1965, Andrej was the first to write articles and teach seminars about network analysis and project management. Since then, he has extensive experience in the construction, pharmaceutical, electro, mechanical engineering and governmental sectors. He is currently President and First Assessor of the Slovenian Certification Body (SloCert) for the International Project Management Association (IPMA) and an assessor for IPMA's international awards. Dr. Skarabot has taught more than 300 seminars and published over 190 articles and papers in the management field. Andrej lives in Ljubljana, Slovenia and can be contacted at [andrej.skarabot@guest.arnes.si](mailto:andrej.skarabot@guest.arnes.si).