

SUMMARY

HOW TO ACTIVATE THE HIDDEN POTENTIAL OF THE MEETINGS INDUSTRY IN LJUBLJANA

A summary of key findings

Desperate times call for desperate measures

Extreme climate conditions

The strategy recognises Ljubljana as a human-centric city where we create **HUMAN-CENTRIC EVENTS**.

Ljubljana Convention Bureau will take on **AN ACTIVE AND LEADING ROLE** in the post-corona transition period to transform sustainably and become a case example for other destinations.

The document was prepared in uncertain times when the meetings industry was severely affected. Since the start of the corona crisis, we have sought the right approach to oppose climate and social change.

One of the strategy's guiding principles is for Ljubljana to create human-centric events. That approach is reflected in multiple aspects, such as the balance between hotel and meeting capacities, the accessibility of meeting capacities and the high quality of living.

The mentioned advantages enable Ljubljana to react to omnipresent changes. However, that is only possible if Ljubljana Convention Bureau continues its mission and takes on the leading role in Ljubljana and regionally. The crisis has shown the importance of convention bureaus to spearhead change and development.

... we need a new paradigm to take a step further ...

... en route to a sustainable society

The regenerative paradigm

Events in Ljubljana **FACILITATE AND BOOST** development in the field of science, culture, sports and economy.

Events play the role of **GAME CHANGERS**. The strategy sees them not only as a means to multiply financial benefits and achieve constant growth but identifies them as crucial for sustainable development and regeneration. Event organising based on a sustainable approach contributes to Ljubljana's prosperity and has multiplicative effects on the community.

Within the framework of the project, we reflected on the sustainable aspect of the meetings industry, as opposed to the strategy in 2011, where we focused on economic effects.

In line with the new paradigm, one sentence from the 2011 strategy would sound like this: **Every euro created in the meetings industry leads to a broad spectre of interconnected economic, social and environmental effects with a positive impact on people, the planet and Ljubljana's prosperity.**

The strategy thus aims not only to increase the measured multiplicative effects of tourism expenditure of congress guests by 3,5 times compared to classic tourists. Instead, Ljubljana Convention Bureau will direct and guide the meetings industry into regeneration. The following graph shows how Ljubljana will implement measures for regeneration.

... we have set ourselves an ambitious goal to ...

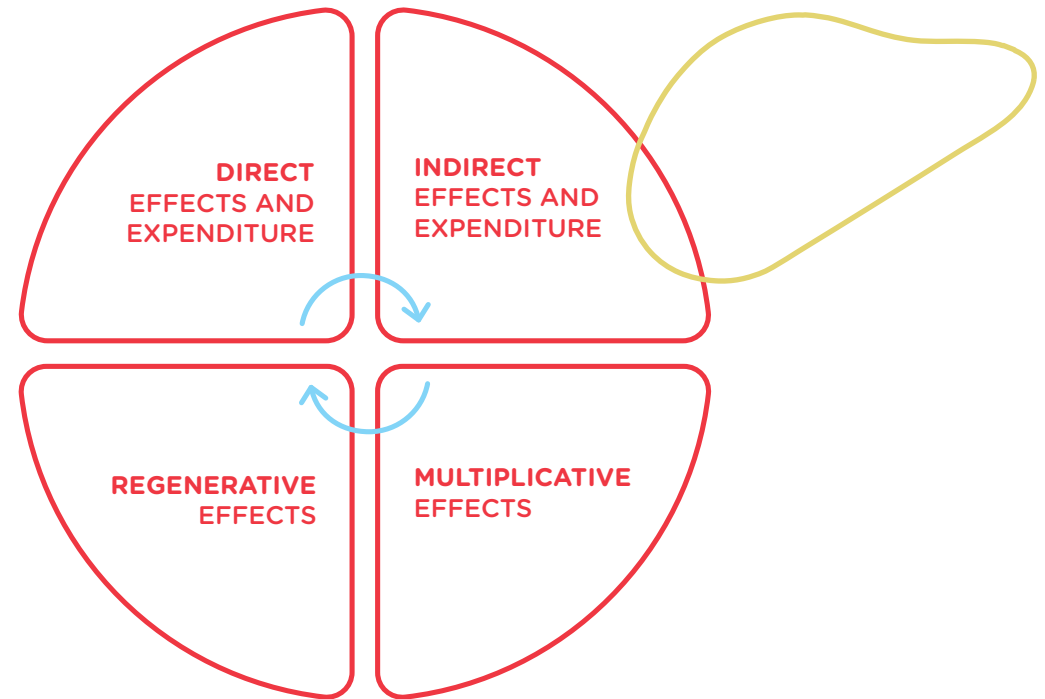
THE REGENERATIVE EFFECTS OF THE MEETINGS INDUSTRY IN LJUBLJANA

Direct expenditure

refers to expenditure in industries directly connected with the meetings industry (specialised event organisers, convention centres, incentive and DMC agencies and convention bureaus).

Indirect expenditure

refers to suppliers of the meeting industry (providers and suppliers of accommodation, transport, technical equipment, catering services etc.). Induced expenditure is generated from the consumption of employees in the meetings industry and their providers.



Regenerative effects

will be in **science** (the development of new technologies and know-how and scientific research), **tourism** (revisiting the destination and reducing seasonality), **culture** (promoting local culture), **sustainability** (supporting local self-sufficiency, protecting local ecosystems, sustainable mobility etc.).

Multiplicative effects

will provide full-time and part-time jobs, income generated from work and taxes on a local and national level (income tax, excise tax, VAT etc.)

... become a think-tank for the regenerative meetings industry

The first regenerative meeting destination in Europe - giving back to the planet more than it takes

Pioneering prototypes already exist:

- **The 27th Biennial of Design (BIO27)**
- **Conventa Show**
- **European Food Summit**

By 2027, Ljubljana will become the first regenerative meeting destination in Europe.

Ljubljana is the ideal think-tank for boosting innovation in this field. As the Green Capital of Europe, it has tradition and know-how in sustainable transformation.

Ljubljana Convention Bureau will connect activities to create an established network of experts and companies that will aim to create a regenerative meetings industry. The process will build on the experience of key stakeholders and existing projects.

... we must use the hidden potential of Ljubljana to develop into ...

... the gateway to South-East Europe and the Adriatic

Where we are and where others stand

International rankings and comparisons in 2021

— **52nd place** on the ranking of cities, evaluated by the Intellectual Capital Study

— **45th place** globally according to the ICCA Worldwide Ranking for 2021 (among 1040 cities worldwide)

— **34th place** according to the ICCA Europe Ranking for 2021 (among 520 cities across Europe)

— **22nd place** according to the Meeting Experience Index (among 125 destinations)

Our research compared Ljubljana with 18 meeting destinations according to the Meeting Experience Index. Compared with the competitors, Ljubljana's final mark of 4,51 ranks in the middle of the evaluation (rank: 4.41 - 4.70). In this category, competition is fierce. Therefore, Ljubljana can improve in all evaluated segments.

In light of the findings shown by our analysis, the meetings industry in Ljubljana is using only 50% of its potential for live events, 40% of its potential in hybrid events, and 35% of its full potential for online events.

Ljubljana edges out its competition because of its safety, exceptional natural and cultural factors and destination marketing. Compared to other destinations, we are still trailing in terms of air accessibility, general and traffic infrastructure and the hotel offer.

... and wisely use the current maximum holding capacity of the destination to become ...

... a human-centric meeting destination

Emerging destination

June 2022: The maximum holding capacity of Ljubljana was 1696 meeting attendees.

January 2023: Given the new hotel rooms expected to open, Ljubljana's holding capacity is 2151 meeting attendees.

MULTIFUNCTIONAL HALL

A multifunctional hall that will provide at least 3,500 m² is still missing in Ljubljana.

79 SPECIAL VENUES

The offer of large meeting venues and hotels is complemented by special venues. Such venues are an integral element of Ljubljana as a competitive destination.

Following the opening of new hotel capacities, Ljubljana will be able to host 2151 meeting attendees. This information is crucial for market positioning.

Most destinations in our comparison offer at least one multifunctional hall, which boasts at least 3,500 m². Such a hall would improve the competitiveness of Ljubljana, particularly when hosting banquets. Currently, this is most problematic in terms of infrastructure.

*The maximum holding capacity of a destination is calculated as an index of 80 from the overall number of rooms if the hall's theatre setting allows it. Thus, Ljubljana could host 1696 attendees in 2021, whereas in 2022, it could already host 2151, courtesy of newly-opened hotels.

... our clients appreciate that in Ljubljana ...

... everything is within spitting distance

Therefore, they expect

— **QUALITY INFRASTRUCTURE** with an ideal ratio between hotel and meeting capacities and a diverse hotel offer.

— **PROFESSIONALISM** of standardised providers and a one-stop shop for visitors.

— **EASY ACCESSIBILITY** in the heart of Europe. Ljubljana is renowned as a paradise for walking and bicycling.

— **GREAT VALUE FOR MONEY** that includes affordable prices and a transparent pricing policy.

— **SAFETY** in the city, alongside a high standard of living.

In light of clients' expectations, we must highlight

QUALITY INFRASTRUCTURE: Ljubljana offers accommodation and meeting capacities for all tastes and lifestyles. Ljubljana has further improved its image with recent hotel openings.

PROFESSIONALISM: Ljubljana Convention Bureau connects the best providers and suppliers in Ljubljana, offering a one-stop-shop solution. Event organising is thus much easier in Ljubljana.

EASY ACCESSIBILITY: Ljubljana has a favoured geostrategic position in the centre of the Alpe-Adria region. It is easily accessible from nine airports in its immediate vicinity. In the summer season, 119 airlines from 227 destinations fly to these airports.

URBAN MOBILITY: Only a handful of European cities are as friendly to bicyclists and pedestrians as Ljubljana. Public transport is well-managed too.

GREAT VALUE FOR MONEY: Ljubljana offers comparable, reasonable and competitive prices, similar to regional destinations.

SAFETY: Numerous global indexes place Slovenia among the safest counties worldwide.

... the right selection of clients

Key development products of the future

Group: ASSOCIATIONS

- Scientific congresses
- Intergovernmental meetings

Group: CORPORATIONS

- Business conferences
- Incentives
- Corporate hospitality events
- Sport events

Group: B2B EVENTS

- Business trade shows
- Business workshops
- Specialised fairs

Group: SPECIAL EVENTS

- Festivals
- Theme-inspired events
- Larger gatherings

We have selected individual groups based on profiling clients who attended our workshop and an online survey conducted among foreign event organisers.

The profiles (personas) of clients are segmented into client groups who have similar behavioural patterns when deciding on a meeting destination, a venue or share similar personal expectations. Personas tell us directly who our client is, how they think, where they seek information and what kind of problems we help them solve. When creating personas, we avoided stereotyping, generic information or making a persona based on only one client.

The profiles were the basis for defining core products that Ljubljana must develop by 2027. We have joined the products into four groups, which partners of the Ljubljana Convention Bureau

Consortium find strategically important:

- ASSOCIATION EVENTS
- CORPORATE EVENTS
- B2B EVENTS
- SPECIAL EVENTS

... we will also change our promises and communicate Ljubljana as ...

... a Central European capital with a Mediterranean spirit

— **EMOTIONAL PROMISE: Central European capital with a Mediterranean spirit**
A relaxed atmosphere and a city you must visit.

— **EXPERIENCE PROMISE: Creative human-centric events tailored to the society and the environment**
Ljubljana boasts memorable events and is full of authentic experiences you would want to organise for yourself.

The communication campaign will have to present Ljubljana in a new context, not only as a friendly, likeable and charming destination. Ljubljana will raise its reputation on:

— **EXCITEMENT** as a

- BOLD
- INNOVATIVE
- LIVELY destination

— **COMPETENCE** as a

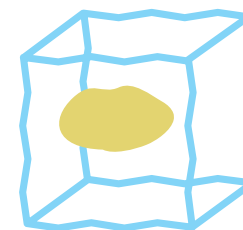
- RELIABLE
- SMART
- SUCCESSFUL destination

— **HONESTY** as a

- LOVING
- POSITIVE
- AUTHENTIC destination

— **SOPHISTICATEDNESS** as a

- CHARMING destination



... We will position Ljubljana as ...

.... so, we decided to take another look at the segmentation of clients and came up with ...

... a city that inspires and where friendships are forged

Where we wish to be by 2027 Positioning of Ljubljana

SEEING IS BELIEVING

In Ljubljana, you will feel like you are in your living room, co-created for you by the renowned architect Jože Plečnik.

CREATIVE REGENERATION

We will regenerate your event creatively and sustainably in Ljubljana.

CREATIVE CAPITAL

Ljubljana has tremendous intellectual and creative capital that enriches your event.

FLOW OF IDEAS AND INNOVATIONS

The creative heart of Ljubljana is home to brilliant minds, hidden talents and creative professionals that make the city colourful and Instagrammable.

Ljubljana is an inspiring city that lets you in on its secrets. All key stakeholders of the meetings industry in Ljubljana are immensely proud to present our beautiful city to event organisers and thrill every attendee. We justify the city's reputation with the following arguments:

- As a meeting destination, Ljubljana is packed into an enticing and professional package. The city offers everything that larger destinations do.
- The creativity of the entire meetings industry ensures you will have an unforgettable experience in one of Europe's most stunning cities.
- Ljubljana has an exceptional creative capital waiting to be discovered by European event organisers.
- Creative individuals are one of the reasons why event organisers fall in love with Ljubljana. Likewise, event attendees continue returning to our capital. Ljubljana is, above all, a human-centric city tailored to event attendees.

... we wish to present Ljubljana as a ...

... city that exceeds expectations

Where we wish to be by 2027 Ljubljana's vision

Ljubljana is **COOL**, which means that it is:



C-reative



O-pen



O-riginal



L-ivable

Ljubljana is the creative capital of Europe for innovative events, responsible to attendees, environment and society or a **“Cool Place for Creative Experiences”**.

Based on the positioning of Ljubljana, we have designed a **VISION** of the meetings industry in Ljubljana that will primarily appeal to the classic **CREATIVE PERSON**.

The typical creative person feels best as an artist, scientist, inventor, entrepreneur and innovator. Their goal is to create something original and different. They firmly believe that their work can change the world for the better. Ljubljana is ideal for such people, as event attendees are not only observers but co-creators of the experience.

In our estimate, the vision gives a broad framework to promote Ljubljana successfully. In addition, it goes hand in hand with the vision of general tourist development for Ljubljana.

... the time has come for ...

... further development of the Ljubljana Convention Bureau Consortium

Where we wish to be by 2027 Ljubljana Convention Bureau

MISSION: Creating business opportunities in the international and local market, advocacy and developing strategic partnerships within the meetings industry in Ljubljana and Central Europe.

CORE VALUES:

- professionalism
- agility and solving challenges effectively
- care for the environment and advocacy for sustainable event organisation
- creativity
- proficiency
- know-how to measure event attendees' and event organisers' satisfaction

One of the project's main goals is to establish a new, modern model for development and encourage activities that will have a short-term impact and, more importantly, long-term effects. The help of the entire community and the stakeholders is required to make the project a reality. A pivotal part of the project is also the advocacy of the industry. Hence, the role of the Ljubljana Convention Bureau, operating within the framework of Visit Ljubljana, is changing fundamentally. It is changing from an operative to a strategic organisation.

To reach our goal, we will have to comprehensively evolve the current organisational structure while continuing to digitalise and adapt to the new hybrid reality. Our ultimate goal is to develop a greatly digitalised marketing and development platform for the entire meetings industry in Ljubljana.

... the professional, agile, responsible and creative Ljubljana Convention Bureau has set the ambitious goal of becoming ...

*... the best and most creative
Convention Bureau in Europe*

Our main goals

To establish a **MEETING FUND** that will provide subsidies for 70 to 162 in-person events and 35 to 94 hybrid events from 2024 to 2027.

The Meeting Fund of Ljubljana will generate at least 168.053 overnight stays in 2027 - 7,5% of all overnight stays in 2019.

The core strategic objective is to increase the average daily expenditure of business guests by 10%. The amount will thus be 565 EUR per day per participant. In other words, we wish to increase their expenditure by 3,5 times compared to classic tourists.

From 2024 onwards, we wish to support 70 to 162 international in-person events and 35 to 94 international hybrid events by implementing various measures and providing subsidies.

In 2027, we will thus generate at least 168.053 overnight stays, which equals 7,5% of all overnight stays in Ljubljana in 2019*. Considering that the overall expenditure of congress guests is 3,3 times higher than average tourists**, we can expect to generate 24,75% of all overnight stays.

**The number of all overnight stays in Ljubljana in 2019 was 2,229,511, according to data gathered by the Statistical Office of the Republic of Slovenia.*

*** Study conducted by Ljubljana Tourism: Conference delegates, their customs and expenditure 2019.*

*... among the top 40 meeting
destinations according to the ICCA
Worldwide Index*

Our future goals

- active management of events
- redirecting events to be organised during the low season
- selecting events with added value
- TOP 40 according to the ICCA Worldwide Ranking
- TOP 15 according to the MEETINGS STAR ranking

Some of Ljubljana Convention Bureau's goals include:

- Ljubljana Convention Bureau will actively oversee events at the destination.
- Ljubljana Convention Bureau will try to direct events to be organised during the low season (reducing seasonality).
- Ljubljana Convention Bureau will advocate attracting congress guests to Ljubljana, as they have shown to create the most added value (segmentation).
- Ljubljana will rank among the 40 leading meeting destinations worldwide according to the ICCA Worldwide Ranking. Currently, Ljubljana ranks 45th among 1040 cities globally.
- We will rank among the 15 leading meeting destinations evaluated according to the Meeting Experience Index methodology. Currently, Ljubljana ranks 22nd among 125 evaluated destinations.

... accomplish goals faster

What sets us apart?

MEETING FUND 2024-2027

The fund will provide a subsidy for events with more than 50 attendees. The Meeting Fund will co-finance in-person and hybrid events.

An integral segment of the project is the **MEETING FUND**, which will be based on the annual tender for supporting events in Ljubljana. The fund will significantly raise the role and prominence of the Ljubljana Convention Bureau, as the organisation will overview main events and will be able to position events in the low tourist season. The multiplicative effects of such a model are measurable and bring benefits to the entire ecosystem of the meetings industry in Ljubljana.

Requirements to receive a subsidy:

- Minimum of 50 attendees in-person
- Length of the event must be at least one day
- There have to be at least 50% of foreign attendees that will stay in Ljubljana for at least one night
- The maximum subsidy is limited in regard to the number of attendees. It ranges from 1,200 EUR and 12,800 EUR.
- Hybrid events can receive a subsidy if 40% or more attendees join the event in person.

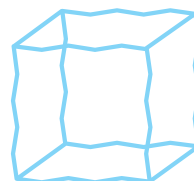
*... the ambitious objective will place
Ljubljana ...*

*... the most noticeable change will
be prompted by the Meeting Fund,
which will enable Ljubljana to ...*

*... The expected results of the
Ljubljana Meeting Fund will be ...*

EXPECTED RESULTS OF THE LJUBLJANA MEETING FUND

EXPECTED RESULTS OF THE LJUBLJANA MEETING FUND	2024	2025	2026	2027
Number of all subsidized events	105	153	198	256
Number of subsidized in-person events	70	104	136	162
Number of subsidized hybrid events	35	49	62	94
Number of event attendees	28,700	44,160	57,350	80,025
Number of overnight stays in hotels	60,270	118,510	120,435	168,053
Amount of investments into the Meeting Fund	207,120 €	322,720 €	422,560 €	564,080 €
Evaluation of multiplicative income	41,500,200 €	63,855,360 €	82,928,100 €	115,716,150 €
The ratio between investment/ROI	0,50 %	0,51 %	0,51 %	0,49 %



... we also plan to establish a one-stop-shop for Ljubljana Convention Bureau ...

What sets us apart?

LJUBLJANA CONVENTION BUREAU'S ONE-STOP-SHOP will include the following services:

- Free help in obtaining information regarding permits
- Promotional help
- Destination tips
- Support for the national Guarantee scheme 2023 – 2027
- Information regarding tax relief

All services will be digitalised as much as possible!

We wish to connect and intertwine all core services for event organisers into a unified one-stop-shop that will be based on the following services:

— **A unified point** for obtaining information regarding permits needed to execute events. Such help includes information on filling out forms for event registration, information regarding public services, acquiring permits to temporarily close roads etc.

— **Assistance** will take the form of free promotional materials and partial financial aid for covering the expenses of fam trips and guided tours.

— **Free counselling** regarding destination providers, speakers, ambassadors, services offered by the Municipality of Ljubljana and logistical support (transport, incentive programmes, special venues).

— **A guarantee scheme** will provide event insurance in uncertain times after the corona crisis. It will cover 80% of expenses in case of a cancelled event or 60% in case an event is organised to a limited extent. The guarantee will further advance the project created by the Slovenian Ministry of Economic Development and Technology in 2021. Ljubljana Tourism aims to support the renewal of the aid scheme.

... all planned goals and results will be measured precisely with key indexes, as we believe that ...

... what we can measure, we can improve

How will we measure success?

KEY INDEXES:

- Results of the Ljubljana Meeting Fund
- Number of classic bids and inquires
- Lead generation
- Social media traffic
- Sustainable indexes
- Regenerative indexes

Conducting two annual studies:

- Congress statistics
- Analysis of the expenditure of congress guests

To measure and follow results, we have created matrixes that show our success rate in six fields.

The ultimate goal and main criteria at the same time will be the NUMBER OF EVENTS IN LJUBLJANA. To get an insight into this field, we recommend conducting a study on the statistics of congresses or actively following the number of events in Ljubljana.

... stay agile and react to change swiftly

How will we get there?

DETAILED ACTION PLAN with 83 urgent and 59 less urgent projects

PARTNER MARKETING 29 urgent activities and 32 less urgent activities

DIGITAL AND CONTENT MARKETING 18 urgent activities and 12 less urgent activities

DIRECT AND PERSONAL MARKETING 24 urgent activities and 13 less urgent activities

DEVELOPMENT AND INNOVATION 12 urgent activities and 14 less urgent activities

The action plan was based on a workshop hosted with partners on 9 June 2022. The workshop aimed to create a prototype of a communication and action plan focused on innovative marketing and thinking outside the box. We made further corrections during two redaction meetings together with the team of Ljubljana Convention Bureau on 7 and 8 July 2022.

A detailed action plan enables the strategy to be realized swiftly. At the same time, it represents a strategic tool for adapting to ongoing changes in the industry. It represents the framework for coordination with partner institutions, particularly the Slovenian Convention Bureau.

... cooperation always bears fruit

How will we be organised?

In 2027, the Ljubljana Convention Bureau will comprise **a team of 6 professionals:**

- Head of the Convention Bureau
- Manager of the Ljubljana Meeting Fund
- Manager of Marketing and Communication
- Manager of Association Events
- Manager of Corporate Events
- Manager of Sports Events

As part of the strategy, we have set an ambitious action plan demanding a reorganised team.

In line with our plan, the core activities of the Ljubljana Convention Bureau will be:

- 40.0 % Destination Marketing
- 30.0 % Marketing the destination through congress bids
- 20.0 % Destination Management and Advocacy
- 10.0 % Development and Research

The key activities will be digitalised to a large extent and merged into an advanced, innovative marketing platform for the entire meetings industry in Ljubljana.

... a thought-out action plan will enable us to ...

... The world-class team of Ljubljana Convention Bureau will accomplish the set goals, as we believe that ...

... Ljubljana Convention Bureau will be ensured systematic financial support, as we are well aware that ...

... what is rare is precious

Our potential sources of funding

- Increased public funding
- Implementing a membership system
- Marketing services
- Congress tax
- Other sources

In order for the ambitious plan to become a reality, we must seek new funding sources. There are several possibilities at hand. One of them is to increase funding by the organisation's founders, seek more funding from the government or apply for European tenders in cooperation with the public sector.

An alternative, even though not popular among members of the Ljubljana Convention Bureau Consortium, is to create a membership system. It would include selling marketing services to partners of the Consortium and would be modelled on similar convention bureaus. Another idea suggests establishing a congress tax or congress euro.

... to become a ...

... green, healthy, safe and stress-free environment for events

WHAT WE NEED TO ELIMINATE:

- **FINANCIAL IMPEDIMENTS** to develop the industry
- **STAFF** shortage within the industry
- **RESTRAINTS** before cooperation
- **LACK OF KNOW-HOW** among key stakeholders
- **GREENWASHING** by individual providers

WHAT WE NEED TO IMPROVE:

- **POOR AIR** accessibility
- **POOR RAILWAY** accessibility
- **IMAGE** of the meetings industry after the corona crisis
- **AMBITIONLESS** part of the industry
- **DISPERSITY** of goals by individual stakeholders

The entire meetings industry must focus on solving issues in areas where we can make an impact. That can trigger a slew of positive effects for the industry.

Among other activities, we must:

- 1 Ensure suitable payment and benefits for employees
- 2 Ensure the education and certification of employees
- 3 Encourage collaboration among partners through various modern platforms
- 4 Encourage organising events in a sustainable and regenerative manner
- 5 Improve Ljubljana's image as a meeting destination and stay proud of our city because

Ljubljana is our city, home and pride - a destination where we love to create our events. That is why we care about what happens to Ljubljana in the future.

... the leading destination in New Europe

... in 2027, we will ...

WHERE WE WILL GROW:

- **ASSOCIATIONS** with scientific and political events
- **CORPORATIONS** with business conferences, incentive travel, new product launches, sports events and corporate hospitality events
- **B2B EVENTS** with business tradeshows, fairs and workshops
- **SPECIAL EVENTS** with festivals, thematic events and large gatherings

WHAT WE NEED TO DEVELOP:

- **SYSTEMATIC** model of bidding for new congresses and events
- **MEETING FUND** and other measures listed in the strategy
- **POSITIONING** the destination through extensive marketing
- **DIGITALISATION** of marketing activities
- **DEVELOPING** new sustainable products
- **SUSTAINABLE** event organising

Together, we must focus on segments that bring the meetings industry in Ljubljana the greatest added value.

It is imperative that the Strategic Guidelines become an operative document, not another wishlist that will not come true. For this purpose, an integral part of the project is a concrete action plan. One of the project goals is to establish a new, modern development model and bolster activities that will have short-term benefits and, more importantly, long-term effects.

To execute the plan, we need the help of the entire community. A crucial part of the project is the advocacy of the industry. The project foresees Ljubljana Convention Bureau's role to change thoroughly. It will transform from an operative to a strategic organisation, thus enabling Ljubljana and Slovenia to develop in the future.

WELCOME YOU TO THE COOLEST DESTINATION IN EUROPE