

Press Release  
Wednesday, 8 April 2026

## 13<sup>th</sup> International Logistics Congress opens in Portorož; milestone 20th Logistician of the Year award presented to two winners

Portorož, 8 April 2026 – The 13th International Logistics Congress – *Supply Chain Management in Science and Practice* opened today in Portorož, where over the next three days it will bring together more than 700 participants from 30 countries. Once again, the congress is bringing logistics, transport, industry, technology, science and young talent together in one place, while placing a central question at the heart of this year's edition: how to build resilient supply chains in increasingly unpredictable conditions.

Organised by the Slovenian Logistics Association (SLA/SLZ), the three-day event is introducing several important developments in 2026, including the return of the TelematicsCEEurope conference & expo, a new International Academic Symposium, and an international student hackathon. The opening day also featured the milestone 20th presentation of the *Logistician of the Year* award, which this year was presented to two recipients: Branko Butala, owner and Managing Director of the family company Comark, and Miha Bezjak, Director of F.A. Maik.

### Opening addresses and the *Future of Logistics* plenary session

The congress opened with welcome addresses by **Igor Žula, President of the Slovenian Logistic Association**, **Miloš Miličev of MSC Mediterranean Shipping Company**, and **Dr Markus Mau, President of the European Logistics Association**. The opening segment was followed by the presentation of the *Logistician of the Year* award and the opening plenary session, *Future of Logistics*, which launched the discussion on key global shifts, collaboration and the future of supply chains.

The plenary also featured a presentation on MSC's contribution to integrated logistics and connectivity in Slovenia, in which **Alkan Aličik of MSC Mediterranean Shipping Company** highlighted the importance of integrated logistics capabilities, the strategic role of Koper as a key Adriatic gateway, and the growing influence of digitalisation, sustainability and multimodal solutions on the future of logistics.



Photo 1: Opening ceremony of the Logistics Congress 2026

Other speakers in the plenary included **Vincent Iacopella**, Chief Strategy Officer and President for Government and Trade Relations at Alba Wheels Up International, LLC, USA, **Dr David Saive**, Head of Legal Product Development at Open Logistics Foundation, Germany, and **Dr Igor Jakomin** of In-Quadra. The discussion explored how logistics can adapt in time to major global change and how current challenges can be turned into opportunities for stronger connectivity, resilience and competitiveness.

In his opening remarks, Žula underlined that the congress is designed as a three-day format that brings together technology, industry, academia, telematics, the hackathon and B2B networking in one place. As he explained, the aim is to create a space where areas that often operate separately can meet: young talent through the hackathon, academia through the symposium, and professional content focused on artificial intelligence, the Internet of Things, telematics and other modern technologies, all supported by concrete case studies and examples of good practice.



Photo 2: Alkan Aličik, MSC Mediterranean Shipping Company

## **20th anniversary presentation of the *Logistician of the Year* title**

The *Logistician of the Year* title, presented by the organiser since 2006, is an honorary award recognising the most successful Slovenian logistics professional whose work and expertise have delivered exceptional achievements in the field over the past period.

Robert Biček, Chair of the Selection Committee, emphasised that the award matters not only as recognition for the best, but also as encouragement for the wider profession. As he noted, strong examples and good practice help pull the whole sector forward. The award recognises the best and most ambitious while also sending an important message to everyone aiming higher, as it contributes to the broader competitiveness of Slovenian logistics.

For this milestone 20th edition, the jury made a special decision: rather than naming a single winner, it chose to honour two recipients. The jury highlighted that both lead companies with strong results, highly organised logistics operations, advanced information systems, a clear development focus, ambitious investment strategies and a commitment to environmental responsibility. It also noted that both companies generate added value per employee above both the Slovenian average and the logistics sector average, while the EBITDA of both companies reached almost EUR 3 million in 2025.

**The *Logistician of the Year 2025* title was therefore awarded to Branko Butala of Comark d.o.o. and Miha Bezjak of F.A. Maik d.o.o.**



Photo 3: The 2025 Logistics Awardees (center) with their teams — F.A. Maik Team on the left and Comark on the right; far right: Robert Biček

## Two winners, two strong models of logistics excellence

### Branko Butala and Comark: project logistics, flexibility and group development

Founded in 1992, Comark specialises in project logistics and is today recognised as one of the leading companies in oversized cargo packing, special transport and project cargo. The company covers the full spectrum of project logistics, from organising multimodal transport, special transport, sea, road and air cargo packing, to permits, escorts, industrial equipment relocation, government and defence logistics, shipping agency services and chartering.

Comark operates from Ljubljana, Črnomelj and Koper, and is also present in Rijeka and Belgrade. Through close cooperation with Adriatic ports, it provides solutions for the wider Balkans region as well as Central and Southern Europe. In recent years, the company has further strengthened its position in the maritime segment, including through a new business unit in Koper and an ownership stake in Bluemarine. An important part of the group is also Paklog, which specialises in industrial and export packing.



Photo 4: Branko Butala, Comark, d.o.o.

On receiving the award, Branko Butala said: *“The Logistician of the Year award means a great deal to me, above all as confirmation of the path we have been building as a company over many years.”* He added that this path had been built by translating theory into practice, but above all through working with people, and that colleagues, partners and relationships are at the heart of every success. He also stressed that, following the takeover of Comark in 2009, the group gradually developed Paklog and Bluemarine as well, and that in today’s logistics environment flexibility and adaptability are decisive. *“Today, we know that flexibility and the ability to adapt are essential in logistics. On this occasion, I would like to sincerely thank everyone who helps shape the Comark story – it is a shared story, and it continues,”* Butala added.

### **Miha Bezjak and F.A. Maik: specialisation, reliability and integrated 3PL/4PL services**

F.A. Maik is a 100 per cent family-owned private company with more than 33 years of experience, providing a full range of 3PL and 4PL services as well as end-to-end supply chain management solutions. The company is particularly well known for its specialisation in hazardous goods storage and ADR transport, its modern warehousing facilities, customs capabilities, AEO-F status and its own WMS system, which enables transparent cargo tracking.



Photo 5: Miha Bezjak, F.A. Maik, d.o.o.

It operates 65,000 pallet positions, more than 40 company-owned vehicles, a network of more than 600 long-term transport partners, and locations in Slovenia, Croatia, Austria, Serbia and Hungary.

Miha Bezjak said that receiving the award represents not only a personal achievement, but also confirmation that the company’s overall strategic direction is the right one. He stressed that in a sector where precision and safety – especially when handling hazardous materials – are non-negotiable, the award belongs to the team managing the most demanding logistics processes every day. He also sees it as a continuation of the family tradition and as a responsibility to keep setting standards of reliability while remaining a stable regional partner. *“On a personal level, the award carries additional weight, as it symbolises the continuation of a family tradition and the responsibility to lead the company thoughtfully and with a long-term view,”* Bezjak added.

### **Artificial Intelligence Festival and International Academic Symposium**

On the first afternoon, the programme continues with the **Artificial Intelligence Festival**, one of the central plenary sessions of this year’s congress. Through concrete case studies and examples of good practice, it will show how artificial intelligence is already reshaping logistics, transport and industry.

The focus will be on solutions and experiences from companies including **Belgrade Airport, Pošta Slovenije, Adria Mobil, BMW, RNDC** and **N Sport**. The use cases will range from optimising logistics

flows, production planning and quality management to master data management, demand forecasting and intelligent decision-making across the supply chain.

An important part of Wednesday's parallel programme is also the **International Academic Symposium**, one of the new features of this year's congress, further strengthening its international and developmental dimension. Through its call for research papers, the symposium placed the impact of artificial intelligence on supply chains and the shaping of competitive and innovative logistics at the centre of discussion. **Fourteen papers from seven countries** have been included in the programme. As Igor Žula noted, the symposium is not intended only for a narrow circle of researchers, but for everyone interested in the development perspective of logistics and the future direction of the industry.

### **Thursday: keynote addresses, best practice, IoT and TelematicsCEEurope conference & expo**

On Thursday, the congress will continue with opening addresses by **Robert Sever, Director of the Transport Association at the Chamber of Commerce and Industry of Slovenia**, and **Marko Lotrič, President of the National Council of the Republic of Slovenia**.

The programme will then feature successful regional business stories from **Nelt, T.L. Sirk, BTC Logistics Centre, Milšped** and **ENNA Logic**, as well as examples of technological modernisation from **Strauss, Intersocks, Hofer**, and the cooperation **between INCOM, GS1 Slovenia and BTC Logistics Centre**.

Another important international highlight of this year's congress is the return of the **TelematicsCEEurope conference & expo**, which is rejoining the programme after a break of several years under the umbrella of the Slovenian Logistics Association, as a specialised international format within the congress. The organisers place telematics at the centre of modern logistics, given its role in smart vehicle management, connectivity, data visibility and the development of telematics solutions.

Among the keynote speakers will be **Vladimir Prodanovic, Principal Program Manager at NVIDIA**. Companies including Gurtam, Pave Insights, GSMA and Fleetguru will also present, alongside additional technology companies featured within the Technology Hub Expo.

### **Friday: hackathon final and B2B meetings**

The congress will conclude on Friday with a strong focus on development and networking. Part of the programme will be the conclusion of the international student hackathon, which brings together students from different faculties and four countries in interdisciplinary teams to solve concrete industry challenges. The official start of the hackathon follows later today.

Friday will also feature individual meetings with other participants, sponsors and speakers as part of the B2B networking programme, through which the organisers aim to translate high-quality content into concrete new partnerships.

**Press accreditation:** [https://live.meetpoint.si/logisticni\\_kongres\\_2026/registration\\_press](https://live.meetpoint.si/logisticni_kongres_2026/registration_press)

**Photos:** Marko Pigac

Additional photos and the visual identity of the Congress are available in the [Media Centre](#).

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### ABOUT THE LOGISTICS CONGRESS

**The Logistics Congress – Supply Chain Management in Science and Practice** is the leading and largest logistics event in the region, organised by the Slovenian Logistics Association (SLZ) since 2013. Over more than a decade, it has evolved into a major international platform connecting logistics, transport, manufacturing, technology, science and young talent, fostering the exchange of best practices, professional dialogue and new business partnerships. The Congress translates future-oriented discussions into practice through expert content, case studies, technological solutions, an international academic symposium, an international student hackathon, B2B meetings and specialised events such as the TelematicsCEEurope Conference & Expo. As a result, more than 80 % of participants return each year.

### ABOUT THE SLOVENIAN LOGISTIC ASSOCIATION

**The Slovenian Logistic Association (SLA/SLZ)** is a voluntary, independent and non-profit organisation bringing together members and supporters from transport, traffic and business logistics. It connects over 300 managers, professionals, entrepreneurs and other stakeholders, contributing to the development, visibility and international standing of Slovenian logistics. Its mission is to promote the profession internationally and strengthen competitiveness through technological and business transformation, fostering collaboration between industry, knowledge institutions and international partners. SLZ is also actively involved at a European level through its membership of the European Logistics Association (ELA).