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MIKROFON

COMPLIMENTARY ISSUE
INFORMATIONAL BROADCAST
OF MIKRO+POLO COMPANY



MORE ABOUT THE MIKROFON



MIKROFON is the internal magazine of Mikro+Polo d.o.o. Authors of articles in sections such as »BARE ON AIR,« »FIELD MIC,« »YOU ASKED, WE ANSWER,« and »THE MICROWAVE« are nominated to write. The nomination system means that the current article's author selects a colleague for the next issue of MIKROFON. So, read each article carefully –you might be the next nominee!

Do you have a question for an expert, are facing a dilemma, or need advice? Our company employs numerous specialists across various fields who may be able to help. We have at least one architect, biochemist, biologist, biotechnologist, economist, electrical engineer, pharmacist, geographer, civil engineer, IT specialist, chemical technologist, chemist, woodworker, media communicator, microbiologist, lawyer, mechanical engineer, and food technologist—covering everything from A to Z.

You can submit your ideas, articles, suggestions, opinions, praises, comments, or questions at any time in one of the MIKROFON mailboxes. The first is located at the employee entrance in the administrative building (above the mailboxes), and the second is at the warehouse entrance.

Alternatively, you can reach us via email at marketing@mikro-polo.si. We appreciate every message!

MIKROFON

Internal magazine of Mikro+Polo d.o.o.

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IMPORTANT DATES

APRIL

April 1st

Emanuela Pavalec 22 years at M+P
Boštjan Perko 9 years at M+P
Boris Sevšek 2 years at M+P

April 2nd

Birthday Mario Križanič

April 3rd

Slavko Kulundžić 3 years at M+P

April 4th

Birthday Amila Muminović Memić ... never 29 again

April 9th

Birthday Valerija Šlamberger

April 10th

Birthday Tadeja Mihev

April 11th

Birthday Milan Drobnak

April 12th

Birthday Vojko Kunstl

April 14th

Birthday Mojca Jarc Sojč

April 15th

Mirela Vučić 11 years at M+P
Darja Kozar 2 years at M+P

April 18th

Birthday Leonida Mušič

April 22nd

Matjaž Bezjak 2 years at M+P
Birthday Žerina Bešič

April 24th

Birthday Rajko Vučenovič

April 28th

Mojca Vek 17 years at M+P

April 30th

Birthday Špela Grubelnik

MAY

May 1st

Valerija Šlamberger 34 years at M+P

Peter Jamšek 19 years at M+P

Anja Vajnhandl 8 years at M+P

Marko Gril 4 years at M+P

Aleš Obrulj 3 years at M+P

Andrej Bogdan 3 years at M+P

May 3rd

Zdravko Kmetec 26 years at M+P

Arijana Suljagić 9 years at M+P

Birthday Daniel William Beckler

May 6th

LUNCH FROM THE MICROWAVE

May 8th

Birthday Marko Gril

Birthday Živa Ladič

May 9th

Birthday Zoran Vejič

May 10th

Birthday Amina Karić ... never 49 again

May 15th

Lara Hudej 3 years at M+P

Birthday Nino Stojković

May 16th

Rene Gole 4 years at M+P

May 21st

Teja Pihlar 4 years at M+P

May 23rd

Birthday Žan Cigler

May 26th

Birthday of Emanuel Pavalec

May 27th

Birthday of Petra Muern

May 28th

Birthday of Tanja Nakov

May 29th

PICNIC

JUNE

June 1st

Andreja Zimič 34 years at M+P

Domen Šmigoc 18 years at M+P

Mitja Ketiš 5 years at M+P

Gorazd Kmetič 3 years at M+P

Katja Kampuš 2 years at M+P

Miha Škerget 1 year at M+P

Lukas Podlesnik 1 year at M+P

Maja Marolt 1 year at M+P

Mirnes Muratović 1 year at M+P

June 3rd

Birthday of Leo Lukman

June 4th

Birthday of Luka Dobaj

June 5th

Birthday of Iva Kovačič

June 7th

Birthday of Tilen Podgornik

Birthday of Gorazd Kmetič

June 9th

Birthday of Anja Vajnhandl

Birthday of Damjan Zupanič

June 11th

Birthday of Matjaž Holc

June 13th

Birthday of Matic Košir

Birthday of Aljaž Žmavc

June 15th

Birthday of Franjo Kosi

June 16th

Tina Hohnjec 8 years at M+P

Patrik Horvat 1 year at M+P

Petra Muren 2 years at M+P

June 17th

Birthday of Gregor Leutgeb

June 20th

Birthday of Sabina Kmetec

June 21st

Birthday of Jani Roškar

June 23rd

Birthday of Boris Grobelnik

June 28th

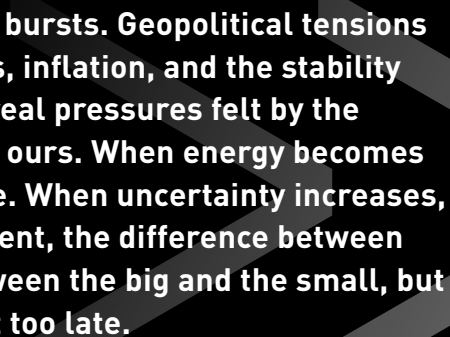
Birthday of Maja Lavrenčič



 ■ **MARKO PODGORNIK VERDEV** CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

WORLD OF CHANGES

The world is no longer changing slowly. It changes in bursts. Geopolitical tensions in the Middle East are already affecting energy prices, inflation, and the stability of supply chains. This is no longer distant news, but real pressures felt by the European economy and, along with it, companies like ours. When energy becomes more expensive, everything becomes more expensive. When uncertainty increases, investments are postponed. And in such an environment, the difference between companies begins to increase rapidly. No longer between the big and the small, but between those who react in time and those who react too late.



To these global conditions, we must also add the domestic environment. Slovenia is becoming an increasingly demanding business environment. Labor costs are rising, new contributions are being introduced, the minimum wage is being raised, obligations in the field of healthcare and long-term care are increasing, and the corporate tax rate has also increased. If we add volatile energy prices and inflationary pressures to this, it becomes clear that there is no longer much room for error. In such an environment, responsible leadership means taking timely action – not when the consequences are already visible.

That is why we at MIKRO+POLO have also decided on a more disciplined management approach. Not because we are in a crisis, but to prevent one from occurring. Greater attention to costs, increased efficiency, higher productivity, and greater responsibility are not limitations, but conditions for long-term stability. This mindset is also reflected in the specific organizational measures we are introducing. In the coming period, we will devote more attention to the organization of working hours, responsible management of work and processes, and the reduction of hidden costs. Some benefits that may have come to be taken for granted over time will be temporarily adjusted, while at the same time, we are introducing new ones, such as PassSport, which gives employees access to a wide range of sports and wellness activities. Our intention is clear: to maintain a balance between responsibility toward the company and care for the well-being of employees.

Such measures are not a step

backward. They are a sign of the company's maturity. They are proof that we understand the environment in which we operate and that we want to protect the long-term stability of the company and the security of all employees. Our goal remains the same: to create more value with the same number of people. This, however, requires professionalism, discipline, and responsibility from every individual.

And at this very same time, something is happening that gives this story even greater weight. While the environment is becoming more demanding, we are growing. Analytica in Munich has confirmed this once again. More than 50,000 visitors in four days. Hundreds of concrete leads. Recognition from partners, customers, and designers. Ten years ago, we came to this fair for the first time – with an idea and without our own production. Today, we are one of the few who have been continuously present there since 2016. Today, we have more than 60 people in the LAB INTERIOR program, our own production of laboratory furniture, fume hoods, and service modules, as well as projects for the largest pharmaceutical companies in the world. We are currently completing a project worth nearly 3 million euros for one of the largest global players.

This journey was not a given. For many years, we were an engineering company. We equipped laboratories. And then came a decision that was not logical, but courageous: that we would start developing and manufacturing laboratories ourselves. Not as mechanical engineers, not as carpenters, not as natural scientists. But as entrepreneurs. As someone who believes that ideas are not limited by education, but by courage. From this idea, an international company has emerged today, present in five countries, which not only equips laboratories with PREGL DIGITAL smart laboratory furniture but also digitalizes them.

This is the essence of the moment we are in. On one hand, a world that is becoming more demanding and less predictable. On the other hand, a company capable of growing in exactly such an environment. And this is no coincidence. It is the result of people, discipline, and courage.

Therefore, the question today is not whether a more demanding period is coming. It is. The question is how we will face it. As a company that reacts – or as a company that leads. We have proven many times that we know how to choose the latter.



 ■ IVANA SZABO LAB INTERIOR PROGRAM

GRAY CELLS AT WORK: LBI DEVELOPMENT STORIES

In the laboratory furniture development and design department, we are aware that quality development does not happen overnight. Every new product, improvement, or technological solution requires a thoughtful approach, numerous tests, and a great deal of professional expertise. This is precisely why the development process takes place gradually – from the initial ideas and planning to the final solutions that provide users with safety, functionality, and long-term reliability.

Currently, several development activities are underway in the department. In addition to collaborating on ongoing projects, providing daily technical support to other LBI colleagues, and preparing for the Analytica trade fair, work is also being done on setting up a 3D configurator, which will enable easier planning of laboratory spaces.

As we live in a time of rapid digitalization, we also strive in our company to keep pace with modern technologies. We are currently preparing documentation for an application for a call for development projects, through which we aim to obtain funds for the further development and digitalization of our fume hood. The goal of the project is to improve digital functionalities and further increase the efficiency and user experience of our solutions.

Two students are also significantly helping us in the development of new ideas, contributing to the search for innovative solutions with their fresh perspective, new knowledge, and research approach. Collaboration with young professionals allows us to connect academic knowledge with industrial practice and opens up new possibilities for future development.

In the development department, we therefore regularly "train" our gray cells – sometimes over plans, sometimes over computer models, and sometimes over a stubborn idea that refuses to give in easily. But it is precisely these ideas that most often lead us to the best solutions. If nothing else, we can say with certainty that our gray cells are definitely not on vacation.



 ■ LEONIDA MUŠIČ LAB INTERIOR PROGRAM

THE "RUSH" WE LOVE – GLIMPSES FROM LAB INTERIOR SALES

If we had to describe our current state with a weather forecast, we would say: **"Heavily increased cloudiness of inquiries, with occasional downpours of projects and a tailwind."** In short — it's busy. But the kind of busy we like!

Inquiries are "falling like autumn leaves," so everyone who knows how to hold a pencil, a mouse, or just bravely say "I'll take it on!" is in action. Organizationally, it's still zigzagging a bit, like a ship on the open sea, but we are sailing in the right direction — and with full sails. Changes are here, as is the dynamic, but it is exactly this energy that drives us forward.

At this year's Analytica fair, our sales and development dream team proudly presented everything we can do and why Lab Interior laboratory furniture is still our most beautiful piece of furniture (and not just at the exhibition stand!).

In the next issue of *Mikrofon*, you will also be able to read an exclusive report from the fair — we promise there will be no shortage of interesting highlights.

Until then, back to the hustle... because we're obviously doing something right!



 ■ IVA KOVAČIČ LABORATORY PROGRAM

AUTOIMMUNE DISEASES: MODERN CHALLENGES IN DIAGNOSTICS AND HEALTH POLICY

Autoimmune diseases represent a heterogeneous group of chronic medical conditions in which the immune system mistakenly recognizes its own tissues as foreign and triggers damage to its own organs and organ systems (Davidson and Diamond, 2001; WHO, 2024). Among the most common autoimmune diseases are **type 1 diabetes, rheumatoid arthritis, multiple sclerosis, systemic lupus erythematosus**, and various **gastroenterological and endocrine autoimmune diseases** (NIH, 2023).

EPIDEMIOLOGY AND GLOBAL SIGNIFICANCE

Although precise global epidemiological data are difficult to determine due to the diversity of the diseases and the lack of comprehensive registries, scientific literature clearly confirms that autoimmune diseases represent a significant public health challenge (Cooper et al., 2009; Hayter and Cook, 2012).

Available studies estimate that **at least 4% of the world's population** has been diagnosed with at least one autoimmune disease, with prevalence in developed countries reaching **up to 8%** (Hayter and Cook, 2012; Autoimmune Registry, 2024). Data from the United States of America show that approximately **15 million people** are affected by more than **105 different autoimmune diseases**, which further confirms the extent of the burden (Cooper et al., 2009; CDC, 2024).

Global epidemiological trends show that the **age-standardized prevalence of autoimmune diseases nearly doubled between 1990 and 2021**. This reflects both an actual increase in incidence as well as significant progress in diagnostic methods (Global Burden of Disease Collaborators, 2022).

There are distinct **gender differences** in autoimmune diseases, as women are affected significantly more often than men in many forms – in some cases **up to nine times more frequently**. This is attributed to a combination of genetic, hormonal, and environmental factors (Fairweather et al., 2008).

PATHOPHYSIOLOGY AND CLINICAL DIVERSITY

Autoimmunity is based on the **loss of immunological tolerance** to self-antigens and the formation of **autoantibodies and autoreactive T-lymphocytes**, which cause immune-mediated tissue damage (Rosenblum et al., 2015; Rose and Bona, 1993). Immune dysregulation can be limited to a single organ, for example, pancreatic beta cells in type 1 diabetes, or systemic, as in systemic lupus erythematosus (Davidson and Diamond, 2001).

Due to diverse pathogenetic mechanisms and affected organ systems, the clinical presentation of autoimmune diseases is extremely heterogeneous, therefore often requiring **interdisciplinary management** involving immunologists, rheumatologists, endocrinologists, and other specialists (NIH, 2023).

THE KEY ROLE OF LABORATORY DIAGNOSTICS

Laboratory diagnostics play a central role in the early detection and monitoring of autoimmune diseases. Clinical practice relies on **specific immunological tests** that enable the detection of target antibodies and other immune markers (Mahler and Fritzler, 2010).

Among the most commonly used methods is the **enzyme-linked immunosorbent assay (ELISA)**, which allows for highly sensitive and specific determination of antibodies in a patient's serum and represents the foundation of modern immunodiagnosics (CDC, 2024; NIH, 2023).



SEBIA: advanced solutions for autoimmunity diagnostics

The company **SEBIA** offers a comprehensive range of diagnostic tests for autoimmune diseases, based on established immunodiagnostic methods and supporting modern clinical decision-making. Their solutions include tests for **rheumatoid arthritis, autoimmune gastrointestinal diseases, autoimmune thyroid diseases, type 1 diabetes, and connective tissue diseases** such as systemic lupus erythematosus and Sjögren's syndrome (SEBIA, 2025).

SEBIA combines **ELISA** and **indirect immunofluorescence (IFA)** methods, enabling the precise identification of clinically significant antibodies and improving diagnostic reliability (Mahler and Fritzler, 2010). In addition to tests, the company offers **advanced automated analyzers**, such as the **Alegria 2**, which allows for random access to testing and high laboratory productivity, which is crucial for modern diagnostic workflows (SEBIA, 2025).

WORLD AUTOIMMUNE DISEASES DAY

Every year on **December 18**, we observe **World Autoimmune Disease Day**, which aims to increase awareness among the public and healthcare professionals about the importance of early recognition, research, and holistic treatment of patients with autoimmune diseases (WHO, 2024). The initiative also promotes the improvement of epidemiological monitoring and the accessibility of standardized laboratory diagnostics on a global level.

CONCLUSION

Autoimmune diseases represent a significant global health burden with increasing incidence and growing complexity. Advanced laboratory tests, particularly immunodiagnostic methods, remain a key element in the early detection, classification, and monitoring of diseases (Rosenblum et al., 2015). Solutions such as those offered by SEBIA, with a comprehensive range of specific tests for autoantibody determination and a high degree of automation, contribute significantly to improving diagnostic quality and, consequently, to better clinical management of patients with autoimmune diseases.

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 ■ SAVINA PREMZEL MARKETING

WHEN IDEAS OUTPACE PLANNER



Lots of ideas, a bit of Planner, and quite a few good stories

If we had to describe the first quarter of this year in marketing honestly, we would put it like this: we started organized, continued creatively, and landed somewhere in between.

At the beginning of the year, we set a fairly bold goal – to structure, plan, and manage marketing projects even more transparently this year. We opened MS Planner, set up tasks, deadlines, colors, and responsibilities. Everything looked very promising.

Then came the ideas. And another idea. And a video. And a podcast. And a conference. And a new mailing. And some spontaneous idea that was too good to wait until next week.

We quickly realized that our creative brains sometimes run faster than Planner. Not because we don't believe in order, but because marketing sometimes simply happens where there is energy, a good story, and the right moment.

Looking back, we have actually had a very nice quarter.



PODCASTS: A SPACE FOR REAL CONVERSATIONS

In the first months of the year, we recorded five podcasts that open up space for conversation about entrepreneurship, leadership, values, and human stories.

Podcasts gave us the opportunity to take a step away from traditional marketing and create something that is more of a conversation than a promotion. When the microphone turns on and the guest forgets about the camera, moments are created that have real weight. And that is what excites us most about podcasts.

VIDEO FOR MARCH 8TH: A TRIBUTE TO THE WOMEN IN OUR COMPANY

The March 8th video holds a special place in this quarter.

The video was created as a clear response to a world where professions are still too often divided into "male" and "female."

At Lab Interior, there is no room for such prejudices. But there is plenty of room for successful, capable, and determined women, each leading exceptional stories in their own field.

FROM ORDER TO DRAWER UNIT

One of the more interesting projects of the first quarter was a new production video titled From Order to Drawer. With the camera, we followed the entire journey of the product: from the initial drawing and preparation of the project folder to production and the final moment when the product is ready and protected for transport.

A project like this makes you pause for a moment. It reminds you



how much knowledge, precision, and cooperation between different departments is required to create something that, in the end, seems completely self-evident.

And that is precisely where the beauty of such stories lies.

MEN-TAL 2026: AN IDEA THAT IS GROWING

In the background, the MEN-TAL 2026 project is also growing quite seriously.

The program design is taking shape, we have carefully selected the guests, and set the program.

I am leading a large part of the

preparation in collaboration with Mariko, and it is already clear that this will not just be an event, but a space for conversation about topics that are often pushed into silence in the business world: illness, loss, grief, and the courage we need to return to life and work after such experiences.

NEW MAILINGS: SMALL CHANGE, BIG IMPACT

In the first quarter, we revamped the visual identity of our mailings. More transparent, cleaner, clearer. Sometimes, small changes make the biggest difference in how a message reaches people. For the creative and design solution, sincere thanks go to Miha, who ensured that the mailings received a fresh and modern look.

WHAT HAVE WE LEARNED?

That the Planner isn't bad. That organization isn't the enemy of creativity. That marketing, despite all the spreadsheets, schedules, and plans, remains a living organism.

Sometimes a bit wild. Sometimes a bit loud. But almost always full of ideas.

If the first quarter was anything to go by, then it seems that 2026 in marketing certainly won't be boring. And honestly, that's exactly how we like it.



 ■ DEJAN HOJNIK DIGITAL BUSINESS

SIX THINKING HATS - WHEN WE BECOME A MORE ALIGNED TEAM

This year, the managers at Mikro+Polo embarked on a slightly different path of competency development. We decided to implement Edward de Bono's *Six Thinking Hats* method, which is one of the most well-known techniques for structured, focused, and, above all, **synchronous thinking**. Why? Because we want to be faster, more efficient, clearer, and, most importantly, more aligned when solving the challenges we encounter in our daily projects.

The role of a leader today is no longer just about managing a department. It is the ability to guide a group toward well-considered decisions—those that take into account facts, risks, benefits, feelings, and creative opportunities. And that is exactly what the Six Hats method requires of us: to think **synchronously**, rather than everyone pulling in their own direction.

FROM VIVID EXAMPLES TO REAL BUSINESS CHALLENGES

In the beginning, we "warmed up" with hypothetical examples where we had no emotional or business involvement. The purpose was to le-

arn the technique, the functioning of the individual hats, and above all, the discipline to stick to a specific way of thinking, regardless of our personal preferences.

Once our coach Nastja assessed that we felt confident enough, we moved on to concrete challenges relevant to Mikro+Polo.

One of the key ones was our focus statement: **"Why is it beneficial for Mikro+Polo to have its own furniture production?"**

The goal was not a "for or against" decision, but rather to look at the matter from all angles that we, as managers, often overlook because we are preoccupied with our departmental priorities or our "natural" way of thinking. **What did we disco-**



ver? More than 80 advantages... and just as many disadvantages.

During the positive thinking phase, we quickly realized that in-house production offers numerous strategic advantages.

As managers, we highlighted in particular:

→ **Visibility and market position.** Brand strength, international credibility, competitive advantage in the domestic market, greater quality control, and the reputation of being a "serious player" in the laboratory industry.

→ **Market and customer growth.** In-house production means we are not limited to the Slovenian market; we can enter global markets and

expand our customer base and competencies.

→ **Company development and greater independence.** In-house product development, long-term stability, strategic security, unique products, own brand... and of course, significant independence from foreign suppliers.

→ **Greater flexibility, speed, and control.** We can test prototypes faster ourselves, respond more quickly to inquiries, and adapt more easily to trends in laboratory equipment.

→ **A more comprehensive offering for customers.** A “turnkey laboratory” is a competitive advantage understood by anyone who has ever worked with customers who expect a fast, professional, and holistic solution.

→ **Organizational and social benefits.** Employment, strengthening the region, new jobs, and greater stability of the company's ecosystem.

But the method does not only require us to wear the positive hat. It also requires others, such as the “black” one, with which we look for weaknesses, challenges, and risks.

And here, too, we encountered a list of challenges that we, as leaders, must not ignore

Among the most frequently highlighted weaknesses of in-house production were:

→ **Organizational and process complexity.** Production requires more processes, more documentation, different logistical flows, more coordination, and risks.

→ **Human resource challenges.** Specific expertise, new hiring, adaptation of existing teams, greater need for ICT support, and the workload of key personnel who are already operating

rating in multiple areas simultaneously.

→ **Financial exposure.** Investments in equipment, machinery, premises, working capital, inventory... and significantly higher fixed costs.

→ **Operational risks and compliance.** Dependence on raw materials, regulatory compliance, delays, greater responsibility to customers, and increased exposure to errors.

→ **Coordination with existing partners.** Partners may see our expansion as a loss of focus or even as competition, which requires sensitive communication and trust.

AN EXERCISE TO FIND SOLUTIONS FOR THESE CHALLENGES WILL FOLLOW. BUT THAT STILL AWAITS US.

Why is this exercise so valuable?

The Six Hats method forced us to:

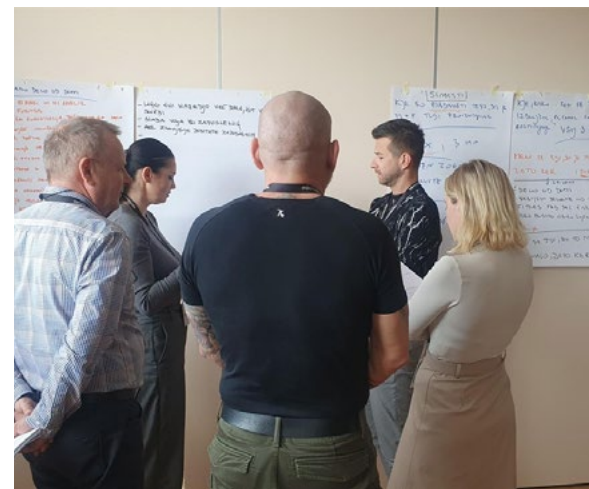
- think with **discipline**, not impulsively,
- hear **all perspectives**, even those we might never have highlighted,
- acknowledge that every decision has both advantages and risks,
- **align ourselves** and support each other with sound arguments,
- build a culture of cooperation, not competition.

The exercise involving our own furniture production was an excellent example of how we, as a collective, can stop and think strategically, long-term, and in a multi-faceted way.

In a company where we have

strong ideas, high ambitions, and a lot of energy, we also need methods that help us structure these ideas. Six Hats is not just a tool. It is a way of thinking that we can use in meetings, when preparing strategies, in inter-departmental coordination, or simply when we want a better understanding of our interlocutor. I believe that by continuing these exercises, we will be even more aligned as leaders, and the company will be even more stable and ready for growth.

And if we have learned one thing from this exercise, it is this: **when we think in alignment, the company is also more aligned. Big decisions require broad thinking – and that is exactly what we are building now.**




 ■ TINA HOHNJEC PROGRAM LABORATORY

SEVEN PEOPLE, ONE TEAM

At the Little School of Entrepreneurship, the director mentioned an interesting fact: years ago, there were seven of us in the order processing department... and today, there are still seven of us. Thank you, director, for the kick in the butt that helped this article come to life.

At first glance, it is just a number. In reality, however, there is much more behind it. In a time of reorganizations, changes, and ever-increasing work demands, maintaining a stable team is anything but a given.

If we had to write a recipe for this, it would start very simply: **noticing people's qualities, encouraging them, and building the team on what each individual is best at.**

Today, our department no longer operates as it once did, when everyone tended to "their own little garden." The work is intertwined – we know how to hand it over to one another, help each other, and step into each other's shoes. That is why we can truly disconnect even while on vacation, knowing that things in the background continue to run.

EMANUELA – THE QUIET, STRONG FORCE OF THE TEAM

Emanuela has been with the company for more than twenty years. She contributes to the company's success efficiently, modestly, and thoughtfully, while constantly seeking improvements.

She is characterized by resourcefulness, speed, orderliness, and independence. When she encounters an obstacle, she finds a solution – short, clear, and without unnecessary complications.

Despite the great pressure re-

sulting from changes in the field of chemicals, the quality of her work has remained at a high level, which is also confirmed by error analysis – she has reduced her number of errors by half compared to the previous period. She doesn't overcomplicate things; she simply gets them done.

Emanuela is that stable pillar of the team that we can all rely on.

ŠPELA – PROOF THAT PROGRESS PAYS OFF

When Špela joined us four years ago, everything was new to her – from the SAP system to communicating with customers. The beginnings were not easy, and there was no shortage of challenges.

But one thing quickly became clear: she did not repeat mistakes and took every one of them very seriously.

Today, Špela is organized, reliable, and independent. She also successfully took over the area of consumables and applied the working methods from chemicals to it, which significantly accelerated the processes. In terms of the number of processed orders and tickets, she has long been at the very top.

As a manager, I can say today: Špela is proof of how far a person can go when they get an opportunity and seize it.

BOŠTJAN – A DESIRE FOR LEARNING AND FINDING NEW SOLUTIONS

Boštjan joined the team from the fifth floor. He is the one who knows the functioning of our integrated systems with customers best. He instantly identifies why a customer is facing challenges when ordering in the online store.

His desire for learning and discovering something new is extremely strong. He takes an interest in attending internal training and education sessions – whether it's learning a new language, finding new SAP solutions, or the "Little School of Entrepreneurship." Boštjan is curious in the best sense of the word.

PETER – THE "HUMAN FACE" OF THE COMPANY FOR CUSTOMERS AND COLLEAGUES

In our team, Peter has a slightly different role. As an agent with a high level of communication skills, he looks after selected key accounts and represents a single point of contact for their needs.

His work does not only involve processing orders – it is about monitoring customer needs, coordinating processes, and building long-term relationships. Peter knows how to calm demanding clients and, based on his long-term experience in the company, knows exactly how to tackle more complex challenges without forgetting any "random little detail."

But even an agent never works alone. Behind every resolved situati-



on stands a cohesive team that Peter never forgets – from warehousing and logistics to service and order processing.

One of his special qualities is certainly that he knows how to adapt to different types of people.

TADEJA – THE ONE WHO CONNECTS PEOPLE

In every team, there is a person who always steps in to help when someone needs it and encourages communication within the team. For us, that is Tadeja.

Because she enjoys talking and collaborating, she helps resolve misunderstandings. With her openness, she encourages cooperation between departments, which is extremely welcome – especially now that we have newly established work teams and merged with sales and service staff.

Her special trait is that, despite a heavy workload, she never forgets about people.

MOJCA – PRECISION YOU CAN RELY ON

Mojca is always smiling and in a good mood, while also being extremely focused on her work. She checks tasks thoroughly and, thanks to her many years of experience in the company, knows exactly who to turn to for a specific challenge. There is no nervousness around her, which is very rare in today's world. She wants things to be done correctly, respectfully, and fairly.

Her greatest virtues are precision and fairness. In the second half of the year, she didn't make a single mistake in order processing – which, in our dynamic environment, speaks louder than a thousand words.

TINA – THE WILDCARD IN THE TEAM

Every team needs someone who knows how to take a step back and at the same time jump in where they are needed most.

As a department head, I often take on the role of a "wildcard" – sometimes helping with orders, other times with resolving complications, and at other times with work organization or supporting colleagues.

Perhaps it is this very role that gives me the best overview of the team. I see how each of us contributes their part and how the various strengths of individuals come together as a whole.

A RECIPE FOR A TEAM THAT STAYS TOGETHER

Looking at our department, it is easy to see that we are all very different. Someone might say that there is "too little" of someone in one area, or "too much" of someone else in another.

But I see it differently. One person brings stability and years of experience. Another brings energy and development. A third, efficiency. A fourth, customer relations. One person connects people, while another ensures flawless precision and respectful communication. This very diversity is our greatest strength. Perhaps this is precisely why there were seven of us in the department years ago – and there are still seven of us today.

Because we have learned something simple:

You don't build a team by demanding that everyone be the same. You build it by recognizing what each person is best at – and giving them the space to shine in that area.

That is why I believe one of a leader's most important tasks is to recognize what someone is good at and give them the opportunity to develop their potential there. How does that saying about numbers and people go? I'll paraphrase it in my own way: "Don't focus too much on the numbers; they won't matter if the people leave."

 ■ MOJCA VEK LABORATORY PROGRAM

CST AND NEB DISTRIBUTORS MEETING IN MALAGA

Every year, distributors of New England Biolabs and Cell Signaling Technology meet at a traditional annual training session, where, in addition to professional knowledge, we also strengthen our mutual connections. This year's meeting took place in sunny Malaga and once again offered an excellent combination of learning, exchanging experiences, and pleasant socializing.

The first part of the week was dedicated to Cell Signaling Technology. In addition to presentations of the latest products, the organizers also provided some more relaxed but very bonding activities. Between individual lecture sessions, we tried our hand at a game of Pictionary, and in the afternoon, we went on a fun treasure hunt through the streets of Malaga. Such activities are an excellent way for participants to get to know each other better and, at the same time, strengthen team spirit in a slightly different way.

The conclusion of the Cell Signaling Technology training took place according to tradition – in one of the local bars, which are almost completely empty outside the tourist season, so for one evening, the venue became essentially "reserved" just for our group.

In the second part of the week, Jelena joined me, and together we continued with the training led by New England Biolabs. The program was very rich in content – we refreshed our knowledge of already established products and at the same time learned about the new additions to their portfolio.

Such meetings are not only valuable because of product presentations. They also represent an exceptional opportunity to exchange sales approaches, ideas, and best practices among distributors from different countries. It is these conversations that often bring new perspectives and solutions that we can successfully incorporate into our daily work.

After the training concluded, Jelena and I took some free time to view Malaga from the nearby hills, which offer a wonderful view of the city and the coast.

We always return from such meetings enriched with new knowledge, ideas, and experiences. That is why this type of training is extremely important – not only for professional development but also as additional motivation for further work in sales.



JELENA ERDELJA LABORATORY PROGRAM

MY ONBOARDING EXPERIENCE AT MIKRO+POLO



This is how it all began. Who would have thought that an ordinary job advertisement would hide such an extraordinary experience. All the job interviews were professional, pleasant, and promising. All that was left was to beat the other 140 candidates who applied for the job.

In the Maribor office, I was greeted by warm faces. I felt welcome at every step. From the girls on the fifth floor who introduced me to the Mikro Polo world (Jasmina, Teja, and Maja), to every manager, mentor, and other colleagues who, after providing help, would say "it was nothing" (especially Matjaž Bezjak). I believe that passion is necessary for quality work, especially in sales, so thank you to everyone who is part of this special company.

I am 47 years old and have extensive work experience, but I have never experienced an onboarding like this. But so as not to bore you with the story, here are some pictures...

PROFESSIONAL MENTORSHIP – Mojca Vek

I couldn't have wished for better mentorship or a better colleague. Even though she loaded me up to my teeth with professional literature and threw me into the beautiful world of molecular biology from day one. I won't say it was easy to navigate tongue-twisting

terms and customers who have at least three prefixes and three suffixes in their first and last names. But a challenge has never been a problem for me, and with such professional help, it has even become a pleasure. Thank you, Mojca, and forgive me for all my ignorance and frustrations.

OVERARCHING MENTORSHIP – Tanja Marhold

My overarching mentor Tanja is responsible for making sure I understand and fit into the company culture. Pleasant conversations over coffee, making sure everything is okay, and answering a bunch of my questions mean a lot to me.

THE FIRST TWO WEEKS

Getting up before 5 AM and returning home after 6 PM almost every day during the first two weeks was much easier with such a great team. Greetings from the car in the early morning hours.

EVERYTHING FOR WORK

An important and, unfortunately, rare thing (at least in Croatia) is work equipment. From day one, everything worked, and what didn't was resolved in record time. From the car, contract, laptop, mobile phone, everything needed for visiting customers, all the "hardware and software" things requ-

ired... I received everything. And the icing on the cake – a small portable cooler for carrying samples (my favorite item).

FIRST PROFESSIONAL TRAINING

New England Biolabs – distributor meeting in Malaga

A wonderful experience and getting to know the people and products that I will represent with pride.

MIKRO+POLO SOCIAL GATHERINGS

A few photos for the end. The whole team – it's wonderful working with all of you.

I don't have a photo of every individual I met on this onboarding journey of mine, but if I am writing honestly, I must highlight one more person who is very important to me and because of whom I ultimately chose to work at this company. I didn't bother Zoran with taking photos because I bother him enough with my Croatian laws and the Croatian market. Care, knowledge, speed, tasks, the way of working, all the agreements... that is the level at which I want to work and the person I want to work with.

And for the end of the beginning of this story of mine, I want to say to everyone reading – **thank you for the help and acceptance. Even though I am from Croatia.**

 ■ BREDA KODBA COMMERCIAL BUSINESS

WHEN SPRING "KNOCKS" ON THE TEAM AS WELL



Spring never arrives all at once. Colors do not explode overnight; instead, they creep in slowly. First, the days get a little longer. Then comes a warm, sunny day. And somewhere in between, you realize – something is moving. It is similar with us.

This year, too, spring brought not only the blooming of nature but also changes in the team. Those quiet, hardworking, sometimes slightly uncomfortable changes (or even a shock) that we do not welcome with open arms at first. **Let's be honest – we rarely greet changes with enthusiasm. More often, we accept them with a slight sigh and the thought: "Was this really necessary?"**

And yet, it turns out time and again that we are up to the task. We are a team that pulls together – not just during working hours, but also when it is necessary to go the extra mile. Even over the weekend, if needed. Not because we have to. **But**

because we understand that only together can we achieve more. Logistics team, hats off! Every change we tackle together becomes easier. And there are quite a few of these changes this year. And we have barely stepped into the second quarter of this year.

The public procurement team is, as every year, preparing to attend the Public Procurement Congress in April – an opportunity for new knowledge, networking, and a perspective beyond our daily routines. Ladies, we expect you to shower us with the updates and new knowledge you will acquire.

The calibration laboratory is

awaiting an important audit. That moment when everything we do every day is put under the microscope. And rightly so – because we know we stand behind our work. Valerija and Marko G. are successfully preparing everything requested by the certification body.

We have revived telephone customer satisfaction surveys, and the first results are already here. That direct contact, where you don't just measure numbers, but hear the voice on the other side. And here we can say with a smile – the results are excellent. **Confirmation that we are doing things right. And at the same time, motivation to do even better.**



Our new Market is gaining new customers. The transfer is not just a technical process – it is also an opportunity to set things up even better, more transparently, and more user-friendly. We have upgraded the search engine and believe we are on the right track.

With Simona, we have opened another important chapter – a different approach to monitoring and measuring complaints. Not as a necessary evil, but as an opportunity for learning. We are still pushing, pondering, and adjusting. And that is okay. Because it means we care.

In reality, this is our spring. Not the calendar one, but an organizational one. Spring as a state of the

team that is not afraid of change, but slowly, persistently, and together transforms it into progress.

We live in a time when global market conditions are anything but stable. Turbulence is not the exception, but the rule. And that is exactly why it is important to set things up thoughtfully and in an optimized way.

We don't look for shortcuts. We look for solutions. And although we sometimes still "grind" and "ponder," we know one thing – every change we go through together makes us stronger.

Spring reminds us every year that "growth" is not always comfortable. But it is always worth it.




 ■ DEJAN HOJNIK DIGITAL BUSINESS


MIRACLE OF THE DAY: SKIING, SWIMMING, SLEDDING, AND NO INJURIES

On Friday, March 6, 2026, we had a winter sports day at Mikro+Polo. And not just a relaxed one, but a real sporting and slightly less sporting schedule: part of the team went skiing at Rogla, while the other part went to Terme Zreče to soak their bones. Basically, everyone chose their own form of exertion.

The first bus for the skiers departed at 6:45 from in front of the company. Some were full of energy from the early morning, others could barely find their right leg, and others sincerely hoped that the coffee at Rogla would work miracles. The swimmers followed us on the second bus at 7:45. They didn't have any trouble with their morning coffee.

At Rogla, we were greeted by surprisingly well-maintained slopes. Given that spring was already showing its teeth, we all had some doubts, but we got quite a bit of skiing in. The slopes held up, and so did our legs (at least for the first three hours). And the sun... just as ordered. So beautiful that it was already inviting us into the huts in the morning, where we paid the most attention to hydration. Some once, others several times... basically, each according to their abilities. Colleagues from Zreče sent us photos from the pools and saunas; they were holding glasses of that liquid gold, and their faces were shining as if they were on vacation.

At 2 p.m., we all met up at the hut. A few Bombardinos were had, maybe an Aperol, maybe something else – we

won't list everything now. The atmosphere was superb, the legs a bit less so, but no matter – lunch was waiting for us at Hotel Planja. The food was excellent... well, those who remember, know. Those who don't probably had a very good day. Let's just say: some tables were more playful than others.

Just when we thought that was it, a group of nine children (well, adults by age, but very doubtfully so in spirit) decided to go sledding. Mojca Vek and I made this plan in the morning – right after we turned off the highway at Slovenske Konjice. In short: speed, wind-induced tears in the eyes, screaming, laughter... the perfect combination to end the sports day.

And most importantly – I remained uninjured! For me personally, that's quite a major success. All of you who know me know that in the last two years, I went blind three times, but also regained my sight three times. Even Esmeralda would be envious. But this time – nothing. A miracle.

In short: it was insanely good.

Sun, snow, water, skis, sleds, and good company. That's it. That's what counts. And I can't wait to do it again.



2nd SLOVENIAN MEN-TAL CONFERENCE

CHARITY EVENT

Illness. Loss. Grieving and returning to the work environment.



Who is the conference for?

ENTREPRENEURS AND LEADERS. | HR PROFESSIONALS. | EVERYONE WHO WANTS TO UNDERSTAND.

FROM PEOPLE WHO HAVE SEEN DEATH TO THOSE WHO HAVE PREVENTED IT:
We chose the speakers for a reason.



Saša Einsiedler
Event Host



Željko Čurić
Psychiatrist,
communication scientist



Tanja Mejak Bordon
FAM Association of Business
Women



Mojca Duhovnik
Head of HR Development



Mirjana Mladič
HR Development Consultant



Marko Podgornik Verdev
Entrepreneur and
book author



Mark Floyd Bračič
MA in Psychology and clinical
psychologist



Katarina Katja Mihelič
Full Professor in the field
of management and
organization



Julija Pelc
Certified EuroPsy
psychologist



Jon Kanjir
Hospice Association
volunteer



Jaka Kladnik
Expert in advanced forms
of work



Ivica Flis Smaka
MD



Dolores Rožan
Head of HR Development



Barbara Zupančič
Psychologist



Ana Kordeš
Internationally accredited
coach



Andrej Klančar
Owner and CEO



Ana Kamenik
Writer, graduate
physiotherapist

All funds collected from sponsorship contributions will be donated in full to the Slovenian Hospice Association, specifically 50% to the Slovenian Hospice Association and 50% to the Maribor regional unit of the Hospice.



ARE YOU READY TO TAKE THE FIRST STEP?

Get your ticket now!



www.men-tal.si

 ■ SAVINA PREMZEL MARKETING

MEN-TAL 2026: THIS YEAR WE ARE OPENING UP IMPORTANT TOPICS EVEN MORE COURAGEOUSLY

This year, we are preparing the **MEN-TAL** conference for the second time – and I admit that we are tackling this challenge much more confidently this year. While last year we built the project primarily with courage, heart, and a lot of goodwill, this year we are developing it even more thoughtfully and organized, with a clear vision that MEN-TAL is becoming a traditional space for topics that companies often run out of words for.

In terms of organization, we have also shifted into a higher gear and partnered with co-organizer **Planet GV**, which allows us to provide an even better user experience, more transparent organization, and a wider reach. Perhaps the best sign that the project is growing in the

right direction is that this year, speakers are increasingly contacting us themselves because they recognize the value and importance of such a conference.

MEN-TAL 2026, which will take place on May 20th at Cankarjev dom, will focus this year on the themes of **illness, loss, grief, and returning to the work environment**. These are topics that we still too often leave "for another time" in the business world, even though they eventually find their way among us.

The conference also has a charitable note, as all funds raised will be donated to the **Slovenian Hospice Association**. I would be happy if you follow the MEN-TAL story, share it, or join us in May.



DO YOU STILL REMEMBER? WILD, WILD WEST



 ■ SANELA GERMAN PROGRAM LABORATORY

 ■ ZORAN KODBA PROGRAM LABORATORY

CHALLENGES, VICTORIES, AND STORIES THAT CONNECT

The first months of the year passed quickly. Not quietly, not unnoticed. Rather than at a steady pace – in waves. In conversations, in the field, at training sessions, in projects that came together slowly, and in those that surprised with their weight. If we had to summarize them in a single thought, we could say: a lot happened – and a lot was achieved.

In March, Timotej, with his webinar "Analytical Chemicals Without Ambiguities," opened up space for questions that we encounter in laboratories every day, but for which there is often no time. More than 70 participants from various fields received clear, useful answers in 45 minutes – without complications, without sales tricks. Such moments remind us why we do what we do: because knowledge builds trust, and trust builds relationships.

On the sales floor, things moved with calm determination. In the pharmaceutical sector, Mojca V. concluded another success story with the Nova Biomedical Flex analyzer, while selflessly supporting Jelena in opening paths for NEB products on the Croatian market. In recent months, Jelena has left countless traces – more than a hundred visits, more than 450 conversations. And the results are here: orders are coming in, the first public tender in

Croatia was successful, and the field is returning the energy invested in it. Malaga, Frankfurt, new knowledge, and new contacts – all of this is slowly but surely coming together into a broader picture.

Andreja M. remained firmly anchored in the field even during a demanding period. Between Merck and chromatography, which is particularly close to her heart, she proves that continuity is not a given, but a conscious decision.

Katja M. has taken an important step – her probationary period is behind her, and with it, her first major challenges. With increasing responsibilities and the management of key accounts, she is integrating well into the team's rhythm and adding her energy to the collective story.

In the field of LabInterior Slovenia, we started the year confidently. The tender for the new laboratories of the Biotechnical Faculty in Lju-

bljana is an important milestone, as well as a sign that we are moving in the right direction. As opportunities grow, so does the team – Alen will join Ružica in May. And yes, more heads do know more, but more importantly: more hands can pull together.

Things are also moving in the field of environmental protection. The new MN adapter is opening doors where they were previously ajar, and projects with Miele in the pharmaceutical sector are nearing completion. At Nordic Lab Tech, Lara H. has taken the helm and is successfully concluding major projects from last year, while we have once again succeeded at the Faculty of Medicine in Ljubljana despite a repeated tender. The numbers are growing, the base is expanding, and trust remains.

However, not everything is without complications. In the area of consumables, we are once again short-staffed as Janja recovers from an additional surgery. We are keeping





our fingers crossed and wishing her a peaceful recovery.

After a long and arduous journey, the bioMérieux team has finally seen its victory in the story of UKC Ljubljana and Spotfire. It was demanding, emotional, and intense – but it succeeded. And this is only the beginning. Golnik is still waiting, while LabAssessment with Copan promises a very lively continuation of the year.

Meanwhile, Tanja N. is not letting up – from swabs to cryopreservation, from the ULT project, the largest in the company's history, to patiently waiting for new steps at IN-COM. Iva is catching the year in full swing: between deliveries, visits, testing with Sebia, training in Mainz, and a new installation of the MiniCap system.

Pia successfully completed the visit from supplier Kirsch and brought back good news about the upcoming changes.

One of the more bitter moments was the loss of Leica Biosystems. It was surprising, it hurt, and it left questi-

ons. But despite that – or perhaps because of it – we move forward. Without sugarcoating, but with a clear direction.

Rok will be saying goodbye in the coming months and heading toward new challenges. Thank you for everything you have left behind – and good luck on your new path. At the same time, we feel more strongly every day that the teams are connecting, collaborating, and breathing as one – and that is one of our greatest victories.

To top it all off, at the end of February, we loosened up a bit with bowling at the Strike center, shared some laughs, and remembered that we are strongest when we know how to take time for ourselves.

Although the first months were more modest in terms of turnover, the result was better. And if this is the direction, then we want many more such months.

And moving forward?

We move forward the way we know how. With knowledge, with will, with people. With the awareness that not every path is straight – but it is ours.



UNCOVERING
SAVINA & ALJAŽ

IDENTITY CARD

Savina Premzel

Commercial Operations



Current position
MARKETING ASSOCIATE

Previous employment
PLASTIKA SKAZA

Date of employment at Mikro+Polo
SEPTEMBER 2022

First job at Mikro+Polo
MARKETING ASSOCIATE

Birthday
7TH MARCH

Hometown
MARIBOR

Number of children
2

Number of grandchildren
0

Aljaž Verbek

LAB INTERIOR



Current position
DEVELOPMENT ENGINEER

Previous employment
/

Date of employment at Mikro+Polo
SEPTEMBER 2022

First job at Mikro+Polo
STUDENT WORK IN THE SAME POSITION

Birthday
11TH MARCH

Hometown
ROGOZA

Number of children
0

Number of grandchildren
0

THREE MAIN "SINS" AT MIKRO+POLO?

The director's "indulgence" is immediately issued for the mentioned sins.

■ Once (well... several times) I entered the wrong event time into Marko's calendar. When I found that out, I almost had a stroke – because yes, I manage his calendar.

■ Typos. Those insidious ones. Which I then try to eliminate as elegantly as possible with the help of ChatGPT.

■ The belief that everything will somehow work out. And usually... it works. (The director's indulgence is accepted with great gratitude.)

■ Dear Director, I am sorry that I have sinned. The last time I went to confession was before my confirmation, so quite a few sins have accumulated by now. Honestly – I don't know which ones are the main ones, so I suggest one major penance and we are probably all on the safe side. Sometimes I unintentionally complicate the work for the installers. The same applies to production – sometimes a change comes through at the last minute.



SAVINA

■ WHO ARE YOU AND WHAT DO YOU DO AT MIKRO+POLO?

I am Savina – a creative soul who loves exactly where she is right now: in a great job, in good company, and in an even better family. At Mikro+Polo, I take care of social media content, participate in internal events, put together email marketing, and connect ideas into stories that are a pleasure to read (and watch).

■ DO YOU REMEMBER ANY ANECDOTE THAT HAPPENED TO YOU AT MIKRO+POLO?

Definitely the collaboration with creative chef Gregor Vračko – Denk, about a month after I joined the company. We decided on a slightly different holiday campaign: holiday pastries for business partners. Until the last moment, I didn't know if the pastries would even arrive on time. Everything happened in between: unanswered messages, a scheduled meeting when the chef was just in the forest chopping wood, a forgotten appointment... and when the pastries finally arrived, he didn't have sugar for the final packaging. All's well that ends well: the pastries were superb, the campaign was successful, and I got a quite substantial "adventurous" experience right at the start of my career at Mikro+Polo.

■ WHAT ARE YOUR MAIN STRENGTHS/SPECIALTIES THAT YOU EXPRESS/USE THROUGH YOUR WORK AT MIKRO+POLO?

- Creative thinking and the belief that everything is truly possible.
- Relatively calm nerves (at least most of the time).
- A sincere desire to learn – here, I learn something new almost every quarter, which is really TOP.

■ HOW DO YOU SEE YOUR ROLE IN THE COMPANY'S DEVELOPMENT IN THE FUTURE AND WHAT ARE YOUR AMBITIONS, VISIONS?

To go with the flow of change, as digitally and smartly (AI) as possible, and to add my own little piece of uniqueness to the collective Mikro+Polo mosaic.

■ DO YOU HAVE A QUIRK THAT YOUR COWORKERS LIKE OR THAT GETS ON THEIR NERVES?

Probably the fact that I firmly believe everything will be fine, even when we dive in headfirst without all the information and without knowing exactly how deep the water is. *Spoiler:* we usually stay afloat.

■ WHAT IS YOUR FAVORITE TEAM-BUILDING ACTIVITY?

A trip to the seaside and skiing. No complications.

■ **WHAT DID YOU DREAM OF AS A CHILD?** My mom says I used to say I would work at a cinema – taking tickets. *The main reason:* unlimited access to popcorn.

■ IF YOU WERE APPOINTED AS THE NEW DIRECTOR OF MIKRO+POLO TOMORROW, WHAT WOULD YOU CHANGE/SUGGEST IMMEDIATELY?

Honestly? I wouldn't change a thing. I'm happy where I am – and with the director we have.



ALJAŽ

■ **WHO ARE YOU AND WHAT DO YOU DO AT MIKRO+POLO?**

My name is Aljaž and I work at Mikro+Polo as a development engineer in the Lab Interior department. I take care of various solutions needed by customers, the company, and colleagues – from finding the right washer, creating plans, 3D modeling, preparing bills of materials, and visualizing components, to solving bureaucratic issues and more demanding technical challenges.

■ **DO YOU REMEMBER ANY ANECDOTE THAT HAPPENED TO YOU AT MIKRO+POLO?**

Before the start of a project in the Netherlands, a security guard prevented a colleague from entering because the scanner misread the place of issue on the ID card (UE Pesnica) as Pakistan. After a long explanation that the colleague did not need a visa, but was merely from the Maribor area, we resolved the complication and successfully closed the deal. Residents of Pesnica, be careful on your travels; you are apparently quite "exotic" abroad.

■ **WHAT ARE YOUR MAIN STRENGTHS/ UNIQUE QUALITIES THAT YOU EXPRESS/ USE THROUGH YOUR WORK AT MIKRO+POLO?**

I am quite self-critical, which means that I rarely settle on a solution quickly and am always thinking about how I could make things more optimal.

■ **HOW DO YOU SEE YOUR ROLE IN THE COMPANY'S FUTURE DEVELOPMENT AND WHAT ARE YOUR AMBITIONS AND VISIONS?**

I want to remain actively involved in product development and contribute to increasingly thoughtful, useful, and reliable solutions. It is important to me to continuously upgrade my knowledge and co-create an environment where good ideas are heard, tested, and realized.

■ **DO YOU HAVE ANY QUIRKS THAT YOUR COLLEAGUES LIKE OR THAT GET ON THEIR NERVES?**

My colleagues probably like that they can turn to me whenever they need help. I might get on their nerves, though, when I can't jump right in or fully commit myself.

■ **WHAT IS YOUR FAVORITE TEAM BUILDING ACTIVITY?**

Eating and drinking.

■ **WHAT DID YOU DREAM OF AS A CHILD?**

I wanted everyone to be happy to see me – but unfortunately, I didn't become an ice cream man. Joking aside: as a child, I had many wishes and goals. I fulfilled those that really meant something to me, but some I didn't (for example: I'm still not a Boeing 747 pilot). Nevertheless, that eternal child in me is still alive – constantly coming up with new ideas and new dreams.

SAVINA

■ **HOW DO YOU USUALLY START YOUR DAY?** With a large cup of black Turkish coffee with cinnamon. You can't do without it.

■ **WHAT IS THE FIRST THING YOU USUALLY DO WHEN YOU GET HOME FROM WORK IN THE AFTERNOON?** I rush to the kindergarten to pick up my daughters Ema and Eva, and then it's on to activities: dance, yoga, story time, creative workshops... and in the summer, of course, to Trikotna.

■ **WHAT ARE YOUR FAVORITE HOBBIES?** Power walking to Trikotna jasa or puffing up to Bellevue. Excellent reset.

■ **WHAT KIND OF MUSIC DO YOU LIKE BEST AND WHICH SONG DO YOU ALWAYS SING ALONG TO?** I'm quite versatile, but the reality with children means: Hajdi, Čuki, and Dejan Vunjak on the afternoon repeat program.

■ **WHEN I DANCE, I LOOK LIKE...** I have the best batteries, plenty of will, no style, and minimal coordination. But I'm enjoying it.

■ **WHERE DO YOU LIKE TO GO ON VACATION MOST, AND WHAT WOULD BE YOUR DREAM DESTINATION?** Last year I realized that a mobile home in a campsite with my three [kids] is the absolute best vacation for me. I don't have a dream destination – I love discovering new places and look forward to every new departure.

■ **WHICH SPORT DO YOU LOVE AND WHO IS YOUR FAVORITE ATHLETE?**

I'm not a sports fanatic, but for my soul, I love hiking, rollerblading, or cycling to get ice cream. My favorite athlete remains Tina Maze, also because I met her and she was really pleasant.

■ **WHAT WOULD YOU COOK FOR YOUR COLLEAGUES IF YOU INVITED THEM OVER FOR DINNER, AND WHAT IS YOUR FAVORITE FOOD?**

Since I love seafood: octopus salad, mussels in buzara sauce, and black risotto.

■ **WHAT IS YOUR FAVORITE DRINK DURING THE DAY AND WHAT IS IT AT A PARTY?** During the day: all colors of effervescent tablets. In the evening: a glass of Hugo. At a picnic: a radler.

■ **WHAT IS THE WEIRDEST THING YOU HAVE IN YOUR FRIDGE?** Face masks and a crystal face massage roller. Yes, really.

■ **IS THERE ANYTHING ELSE YOU WOULD LIKE TO SAY TO YOUR COLLEAGUES?** Thanks to everyone who is always happy to jump in and help when we need people for content filming.

■ **WHO DO YOU WANT US TO REVEAL IN THE NEXT ISSUE OF THE NEWSPAPER?**
Matjaž Bezjak.



ALJAŽ reveals SAVINA

■ **IF YOU HAD THE CHANCE TO SIT DOWN FOR COFFEE FOR AN HOUR WITH ANYONE IN THE WORLD – FROM THE PAST OR PRESENT – WHO WOULD IT BE AND WHY WOULD THIS CONVERSATION BE SPECIAL TO YOU?**

It will probably sound a bit boring, but I wouldn't choose anyone famous. The most precious hours to me are those I spend with my loved ones: my two children, my partner, my parents, and my friends.

■ ISSUE 55



ALJAŽ

■ HOW DO YOU USUALLY START YOUR DAY?

During the week with five alarms and a sip of water. On weekends, with a longer sleep, coffee in peace, and then onwards.

■ **WHAT IS THE FIRST THING YOU USUALLY DO WHEN YOU RETURN HOME FROM WORK IN THE AFTERNOON?** First, I change into a tracksuit, and then I open a can for the two cats – before they decide to eat me.

■ **WHAT ARE YOUR FAVORITE HOBBIES?** I devote a lot of time to volunteer firefighting, play the accordion every now and then, I like cycling, and occasionally I also cast a fishing line.

■ WHAT KIND OF MUSIC DO YOU LIKE BEST AND WHICH SONG DO YOU DEFINITELY SING ALONG TO?

I really like Slovenian folk-pop music, but I listen to practically everything. My musical taste ranges from "beef music," Croatian pop music, and klapa, all the way to metal.

■ **WHEN I DANCE, I LOOK LIKE...** It is said that musicians are not dancers – I am successfully keeping that myth alive.

■ WHERE DO YOU LIKE TO GO ON VACATION MOST AND WHAT WOULD BE YOUR DREAM DESTINATION?

I love the sea, so I visit our southern neighbors almost every year. Once in my life, I would like to travel to South Korea.



SAVINA exposes ALJAŽ

■ WOULD YOU PARTICIPATE IN A NEW VIDEO I'LL BE FILMING FOR SOCIAL MEDIA?

Thanks for the invitation, but I'd rather decline this time. I don't feel my best in front of the lens, and filming or photography really isn't my thing. I'm happy to participate and help in some other way if that would be useful.

■ WHICH SPORT DO YOU LOVE AND WHO IS YOUR FAVORITE ATHLETE?

I'm not a die-hard athlete, but I follow sports where our aces shine. I most enjoy watching my favorite athletes in MXGP (Gajser) and the NBA (Dončić).

■ WHAT WOULD YOU COOK FOR YOUR COLLEAGUES IF YOU INVITED THEM OVER FOR DINNER, AND WHAT IS YOUR FAVORITE FOOD?

If I'm the one cooking, there unfortunately won't be any culinary masterpieces. My cooking skills include eggs in a few ways, toasted sandwiches, frozen pizza in the oven, and something on the grill in the summer. For anything more, my partner would have to lend her ten fingers.

■ WHAT IS YOUR FAVORITE DRINK DURING THE DAY AND WHAT IS IT AT A PARTY?

During the day, I mostly drink water, I can't go without coffee, and at a party, a beer hits the spot.

■ WHAT IS THE WEIRDEST THING YOU HAVE IN YOUR FRIDGE?

Surprisingly, nothing special – the fridge is completely standard.

■ IS THERE ANYTHING ELSE YOU WOULD LIKE TO SAY TO YOUR COLLEAGUES?

Nothing.

■ WHO DO YOU WANT US TO EXPOSE IN THE NEXT ISSUE OF THE NEWSPAPER?

I hope I won't suffer any consequences for this, but my vote goes to my manager – **Ivana Szabo**.



THE INTRUDER WHO CONFUSED ALMOST EVERYONE

On International Women's Day, we shuffled the cards a bit – we hid an intruder in the Lab Interior team video. Most "find" him... but almost everyone chooses the wrong one. A classic Mikro+Polo twist.



Seksologija

Duševno zdravje delovnih okolij

A PODCAST THAT WAS NOT CREATED FOR LISTENING. BUT SOMETHING TO THINK ABOUT.

Between two issues of Mikrofon, we launched our own podcast (yes, we really did!). In four episodes, we open up topics that we often prefer to skip – with candid guests, good questions, and no filters. This is not a background podcast. This is a podcast that stops you.

CARNIVAL + MIKRO+POLO = A COMBINATION YOU HAVE TO EXPERIENCE

On Shrove Tuesday, we allowed ourselves something that we actually do quite often – to be human. Colors, masks, laughter, and that energy when you know you're part of a team where you can be a little "too much."



PRIZE CROSSWORD

A crossword puzzle that ended with pampering! Our prize winner Lara exchanged the solved crossword puzzle for a pampering gift voucher. Fair, isn't it?





THE CAMPAIGN THAT DID NOT END WITH THE PUBLICATION. BUT WITH A STORY

Miško+Polo saved Christmas. But the real reward? Faces, encounters, and the feeling that the campaign is not just a campaign. With us, we don't finish things – we experience them.



WHEN SCIENCE MEETS PEOPLE

Gaber Kobal became the Science Promoter 2026. He came, met the team, experienced a "wild west" party and... stayed. Because with us, science never comes without people.

ARTEMIS

At the Managers' Association event, we were once again reminded of why we do what we do. Congratulations to all the award winners – especially our Judita Rigler.



A PUNCH THAT DIDN'T JUST FEED LITTLE STOMACHS

The day was a little nicer because Iva prepared a chicken bowl that impressed not only with its taste but also with a sense of hominess. Sometimes the simplest things count the most.

 ■ SAVINA PREMZEL MARKETING

NEW MIKROPOLOVCI

Decision-makers of the future

What drives them forward? What puts them in a good mood? And – why do they say the world is a better place with them? Get to know them... through 5 questions.



Mitja Potisk
Program Lab Interior / Project
Implementation Coordinator

→ **What brought you to us?**

I was drawn to Mikro+Polo by the company's very positive reputation. I had heard before that the atmosphere and relationships here are good, and above all, that the people who work here are very satisfied.

→ **What did you like most about your first days at Mikro+Polo?**

The warm welcome from colleagues and the breakfast and lunch.

→ **What are you really good at?**

Various sports-related things.

→ **Coffee or peace?**

Coffee in peace, I would say, is the ideal combination.

→ **What is your hidden talent (or funny habit)?**

My funny habit is that I almost never follow a recipe in the kitchen and prefer to improvise, and surprisingly often it works out.



Brin Podgornik
Program Lab Interior / Production

→ **What brought you to us?**

Since school didn't really appeal to me, I decided I'd rather go to work.

→ **What did you like most about your first days at Mikro+Polo?**

I liked assembling the components of media cells and fume hoods the most.

→ **What are you really good at?**

I'm very good at downhill and BMX cycling.

→ **Coffee or peace?**

That depends on the situation and the company I'm in.

→ **What is your hidden talent (or funny habit)?**

My hidden talent is apparently procrastinating on cleaning my room; I say I'll clean it, and then it waits for me for another three days.



Andrej Simić
Lab Interior Program / Projects and
Installation / Fitter

→ **What brought you to us?**

I was brought to Mikro+Polo by Boris Kolmanič, who gave me the information that made it easier for me to decide to come.

→ **What did you like most about your first days at Mikro+Polo?**

In the first few days, I liked the relaxed atmosphere, the friendliness, and the willingness to help that you need when you are new to a company.

→ **What are you really good at?**

I am best at grilling.

→ **Coffee or peace?**

Peace while drinking coffee.

→ **What is your hidden talent (or funny habit)?**

My hidden talent? I make sure things are fun even when everything isn't going according to plan.



Klemen Kumer
Lab Interior Program / Projects and Installation / Fitter

→ **What brought you to us?**

I chose your company because I wanted a change. The literal answer, however, is Petra herself. You can only dream of a project manager like her.

→ **What did you like most about your first days at Mikro+Polo?**

The first days in a new company can be difficult. Personally, I liked them very much because of the warm welcome from colleagues and all the employees at Mikro-polo in general. The positive energy is palpable.

→ **What are you really good at?**

I'm good with money. Haha. Joking aside. Connecting with people. Bringing good vibes. I am very communicative and not afraid of new challenges.

→ **Coffee or peace?**

Both together. Coffee in peace.

→ **What is your hidden talent (or funny habit)?**

There are no hidden talents. Everything is visible.



Igor Bojchovski
Program Lab Interior / Development and Planning / Lab Planner

→ **What brought you to us?**

Actually, a former colleague "brought" me here, who knew I was looking for a new job. Then I delved a bit deeper, did some research, asked around, and everything I heard convinced me that this could be the right choice. I am happy to say that I was not mistaken.

→ **What did you like most about your first days at Mikro+Polo?**

What I liked most was that I felt welcome right away. The atmosphere is pleasant and relaxed, while at the same time everyone is professional and takes the time to explain and help. That is why my start was easier than I might have expected.

→ **What are you really good at?**

I am good at coordinating technical requirements and finding solutions that are also feasible in practice. I like projects that require technical thinking while also considering

the client's needs.

→ **Coffee or peace?**

Coffee for energy, peace for realization.

→ **What is your hidden talent (or funny habit)?**

A funny habit? I always notice details in a space – the ceiling, joints, finishes, windows, installations... It's almost a reflex. Besides that, I also try to find some humor in every situation.



Žiga Šut
Lab Interior Program / Furniture Sales

→ **What brought you to us?**

Petra Gašparič (laughs). She mentioned to me that the Sales department was looking for a new colleague. She also mentioned that it's a rejuvenated department, full of positive energy, a bit "wacky" (in a good way), where there's a lot of laughter but it's definitely hardworking... and she won me over.

→ **What did you like most about your first days at Mikro+Polo?**

The fact that everything Petra mentioned earlier is true (laughs). I also thought it was great (and of course I still do) how the company introduces a new employee – Maja takes the "newbie" through the departments and introduces them to everyone; that's the right way! I also like the visits from colleagues' pets. They make the day more dynamic, provide some funny moments, reduce stress...

→ **What are you really good at?**

I'm interested in many different things, but it's hard to say that I'm particularly good at any of them. I'm a versatile person who isn't afraid of anything but isn't exactly a specialist in anything either.

→ **Coffee or peace?**

It depends on the situation and mood, but lately I've been seeking peace more often.

→ **What is your hidden talent (or funny habit)?**

I like solving challenging technical problems. I have a "nose" for finding solutions and an excess of ideas. Provided, of course, that I have enough time available. Otherwise, I don't have any special talents.



Nino Stojkovič
Lab Interior Program / Apprentice



 ■ GABER KOBAL PROMOTER OF SCIENCE 2026

OUR NEW SCIENCE PROMOTER 2026:

GABER KOBAL

As the 2026 Science Promoter, we proudly present Gaber Kobal, a young biotechnologist whose research in the field of **3D bioprinting** is opening new paths toward a better understanding and faster detection of **ovarian cancer**.

We believe that knowledge should be shared, supported, and developed together with young people who have the courage to ask questions for which we do not yet have simple answers. Our mission is to stand by them with programs, knowledge, and trust, and to support them in research that pushes the boundaries of science.

*I am Gaber Kobal, a second-year master's student of biotechnology at the Biotechnical Faculty. By nature, I am quite curious, and I have always been most attracted to fields where different systems intertwine and where there are no simple answers. That is precisely why, during my studies, I was most drawn to **immunology and cancer research**—extremely complex fields where many open questions still remain.*

*I conduct my research at the **Faculty of Medicine**, at the **Center for Functional Genomics and Biochips**, where I work on the use of **3D bioprinting** as an advanced method for disease modeling. Specifically, I am researching how we can use 3D bioprinting to create more realistic laboratory models of **ovarian cancer**.*

This is a form of cancer that is particularly challenging—it often develops unnoticed, progres-

ses rapidly, and involves a very complex interaction between cancer cells and their microenvironment. It is this very complexity that represents one of the greatest challenges of modern medicine.

Why do I find this important? A large part of cancer research is still conducted on rather simplified laboratory models that do not fully reflect what happens in the human body. Because of this, many drugs that show promise in the laboratory later fail to achieve the desired results in clinical trials.

*With the help of **3D bioprinting**, we can create complex structures in the laboratory that mimic the behavior of cancer cells in the body much more accurately. I believe that the development and use of such advanced models can significantly contribute to more effective drug testing and a better understanding of diseases that still pose a major challenge to modern medicine.*

■ ANDREJ BOGDAN LABORATORY PROGRAM

GOOD MORNING, SUNSHINES!

You all think I am a service technician, but that is not quite accurate. I am a member of the Dream Team, which, besides me, consists of Tilen and Rene. This team ensures that our customers have truly clean glassware. It is true that Miele appliances—which are good—help us with this, but because of us, they are top-of-the-line appliances. We also ensure that customers have exceptionally pure water with StakPure appliances.

My duties involve repairing these high-end appliances, although from my perspective, there is too little of that. Installations—there are a ton of those. Our Rene can't keep up with writing quotes anymore. A real paradox arises here: there are more and more people in the world, but fewer and fewer who want to wash by hand... Of course, then there are IQ, OQ, YI, validations—you name it. Sometimes there is so much of this "paperwork" that I wonder why my email signature even says "service technician" when my hand hurts more from the pen than from the screwdriver. And in the end, there's Zerina's good sales and yippee—we're going to Bosnia! Then there is all the support for customers and colleagues.

To make sure I don't get bored, my boss Damjan thought I could take the exam for cooling systems to be a "backup" for Matjaž with the Kirsches. And even that's not enough—I'm also Aleš's "backup" for fume hoods. And probably for something else too. I admit, I haven't read all of Damjan's emails. At the same time, I also help other colleagues from the "old service department": if they need someone strong, they take me; if they need someone smart, they take me; if they need someone handsome... well, then I just stay at the company.

"Good morning, sunshines!" My workday begins with



this greeting. There aren't many differences between the days, except on Mondays when we have a briefing. What manager wouldn't want such a dream team early on a Monday morning? The sooner Zoran checks us off, the sooner his good week begins.

Then a quick trip to the kitchen for two sandwiches, into the 61, and off to the clients. Tilen and I generally have our schedule planned in advance, so there is no scrambling in the morning about where to go or who to visit. We do our job at the client's, then head back to the office to handle the paperwork: work orders, quotes, preparing documentation, analyzing and researching problems we might not have been able to solve at the client's, emails, ordering materials, getting on Branka K.'s nerves... In short: it's never boring.

Future

To keep working as we do now—at a top level. The number of appliances on the market is increasing because there are two types of customers: those who have a Miele and those who want one.

We want to maintain this level and comprehensive support and upgrade it even further to create the perfect solution for the customer. You see, the Dream Team doesn't just sell and repair Miele appliances. **The Dream Team solves customers' problems at the highest level.**

For the next edition, I nominate **Gregor Leutgeb**. Any information on how a fume hood is assembled will be very useful to me.

■ VALERIJA ŠLAMBERGER COMMERCIAL OPERATIONS

THE FIRST AUDIT AFTER THE UPGRADE OF THE DOD 2 CERTIFICATE SUCCESSFULLY COMPLETED – AND A CLEAR PLAN FOR 2026 IS ALREADY AHEAD OF US

“Social responsibility begins with each of us – in our choices, relationships, actions, and the way we care for one another and for the environment in which we work and live.”

We have completed the first audit following the upgrade of the Socially Responsible Employer (DOD) certificate to the expanded, five-pillar version. The audit, conducted in early February 2026, was successfully concluded. The auditor confirmed that we carried out the transition to the new version of the certificate thoughtfully and with high quality, and that most of the selected measures are already fully implemented.

OBSERVED STRENGTHS

Our commitment to sustainability and strategic thinking was particularly praised. The new Sustainability Report and the Social Responsibility Strategy were assessed as being prepared in an exemplary manner. Both documents are uploaded to our media center.

Our focus on employee well-being, health promotion, intergenerational cooperation, and the **Intergenerational Excellence Label** was also highlighted.

MOST UPGRADE MEASURES ARE ALREADY IN PRACTICE

With the upgrade, we have expanded our activities across all five areas of the certificate:



- work-life balance,
- organizational management,
- organizational culture and employee development,
- occupational health and safety,
- environmental care.

A large portion of the measures we selected for the 2025–2027 period has already been introduced, updated, or formalized. The measures are implemented regularly, and many are integrated into broader quality systems (ISO standards), which the auditor assessed as a strong advantage for the company.

WHAT ARE THE SUGGESTIONS FOR THE FUTURE?

The auditor did not provide any corrective measures, but highlighted several areas where we can further strengthen our system with additional improvements. These include:

- **review and optimization of the set of measures** – content overlap was detected in some measures, so we will review them again in 2026 and replace or



rename them if necessary to make the sets even more targeted;

→ **additional training for managers** – suggests the preparation of training that will cover topics of organizational management, sustainability, and social responsibility;

→ **clearer placement of certain topics in strategic documents** – especially the area of respect for private life, to further emphasize it in key documents (Our Chemistry, CSR Strategy).

PLANS FOR 2026

Based on the recommendations and our strategic goals, we will carry out several important activities in 2026:

→ **Manager assessment** – after manager rotations in recent years, 2026 will again be a year of formal manager assessment, with an emphasis on culture, communication, employee support, and work-life balance.

→ **Employee satisfaction**

survey – we will conduct the next cycle of the employee satisfaction survey; we will repeat key indicators and add questions about culture, leadership, and work-life balance.

→ **Preparation of the brochure "DOD in Mikro+Polo"** – we will prepare a clear, modern brochure that will provide employees with a quick insight into the measures, rights, procedures, and contact points of the certificate.

→ **Additional activities in the field of diversity and inclusion** – we will continue with activities within the framework of the Diversity Charter and strengthen the implementation of measures that create an inclusive, respectful, and multi-generational work environment.

THE ROLE OF THE CSR TEAM IN 2026

The team will pay special attention to:

→ **listening to employees** – everyone can contribute their sug-

gestions, ideas, or initiatives for new measures or improvements to existing ones; the CSR team will collect and consider them when preparing the next revision of the set of measures;

→ **spreading good practices and CSR ideas** – suggestions from colleagues are extremely valuable, as your experiences help shape measures that are truly useful and adapted to our daily lives.

TOGETHER WE ARE BUILDING A RESPONSIBLE FUTURE

The audit confirmed that we are on the right track.

With your support, suggestions, and active participation, we will continue to strengthen the culture of responsibility, respect, health, and cooperation in 2026.

Thank you for creating Mikro+Polo with a responsible heart together.

 ■ PETRA GAŠPARIČ LAB INTERIOR

WHAT PETS TEACH US ABOUT WORK

Pets are often our loyal companions at home, but they can also — if we pay attention — teach us a lot about how to work better. Their behavior is simple, sincere, and often surprisingly useful even in a business environment. Some of the qualities we admire in animals are very similar to the qualities we value in good colleagues.

DOG - LOYALTY AND RELIABILITY

Dogs are known for their loyalty. They are always happy to see us, and we can always rely on them to accompany us on a walk or wait for us at home. Reliability is similarly important in the work environment. Colleagues who keep their promises, fulfill agreed-upon tasks, and are ready to help the team create trust and a stable work environment.

CAT - CURIOSITY AND INDEPENDENCE

Cats are often a symbol of curiosity. They love exploring new corners, trying out new paths, and quickly finding interesting solutions to small challenges. This curiosity is also very valuable at work. When we are ready to explore new ideas, ask questions, and think differently, we often arrive at innovative solutions. The independence that cats master so well helps us carry out tasks efficiently even without constant supervision.

BIRDS - COMMUNICATION AND COOPERATION

Birds, especially parrots, are known for their ability to mimic sounds and communicate. Although we don't need voice mimicry in the office, good communication is one of the key skills of every successful team. Clearly expressing ideas, active listening, and respecting different opinions help projects run smoothly and ensure misunderstandings are resolved quickly.

CAN A PET SAY SOMETHING ABOUT OUR WAY OF WORKING?

Of course, the choice of a pet does not define our personality, but it can sometimes reveal interesting highlights in our character.

→ **Dog owners** often enjoy company, teamwork, and an active lifestyle. At work, too, they are often collaborative, communicative, and like to build good relationships within the team.

→ **Cat owners** are often a bit more independent and value peace and focus. Such people can be very focused on tasks, work well independently, and often bring thoughtful ideas.



→ **Owners of birds or small animals**, on the other hand, often demonstrate great patience and attention to detail. Caring for such animals requires consistency, which is a very useful trait even in projects where precision is important.

Of course, these are just fun parallels, but they remind us how diverse our personalities can be – and how this very diversity enriches the work environment.

PERSISTENCE AND PLAY

Many animals also teach us persistence. A dog that persistently brings back a ball, or a cat that tries over and over again to reach a toy, remind us that effort often pays off.

At the same time, animals never forget to play. Short moments of relaxation, humor, or informal conversation can improve the mood and strengthen team relationships, even in a work environment.

A SIMPLE BUT IMPORTANT LESSON

Pets remind us every day of values that are important both at home and at work: trust, curiosity, communication, and persistence.

Although we differ from animals in many ways, their simple habits can be a good reminder that it is often the basic qualities that create the best results – both in relationships and at work.

Perhaps the next time we observe our pet, a new idea will await us that we can also transfer into our workday.



MARK, TRANSLATE, GUESS THE PASSWORD, AND SHOW THAT WE REALLY ARE ONE DIVERSE SUPER TEAM!

This time, we have upgraded the Micro Language Corner section into a corner for networking, collaboration, and a sincere "hey, do you speak any other language?" moment. Before you is a slightly different table, and you mark the fields.

For the fields marked with numbers (1, 2, 3, 4), translate the word into the specified language. **Once you have translated all four words, take the first letter of each translated word – together they form a password.** While solving it, take time for a short conversation – maybe you'll learn something new, interesting, or just have a laugh. That counts too.

Send the password to: marketing@mikro-polo.si A small prize awaits the first one!

1. Translate "moč" into English	Is not present on social media	Has lived abroad	Has a pet	Has a garden
Is a middle child	2. Translate "prijateljstvo" into German	Has been working with us the longest	Likes to bake	Likes to get up early
Has more than two siblings	Has broken a bone before	Find a colleague who...	Knows how to juggle	Has a birthday this month
Has two degrees	Wears contact lenses	Has been working with us for more than 5 years	3. Translate "povezovanje" into Bosnian/Croatian	Has a birthday this month
Speaks another language	Has more than two children	Likes to camp	Is a vegetarian	4. Translate "spoštovanje" into French

 ■ IVANA SZABO, LAB INTERIOR PROGRAM

MY HOMETOWN – NOVI SAD



Novi Sad, known as the "Serbian Athens," has a rich and diverse history. Over the centuries, the city has represented a cultural, political, and economic center, which has shaped its unique identity. It is not just a city, but a symbol of cultural heritage and the intellectual flourishing of Serbia, which is why it earned the title "Serbian Athens."

It is considered that the settlement on the left bank of the Danube, from which today's Novi Sad later developed, was founded after the expulsion of the Turks from these parts in 1694, and likely even a year or so earlier, when the construction of the Petrovaradin Fortress began. On the left bank of the Danube, huts were needed for the craftsmen who accompanied the builders and the Austrian army. The settlement was initially known by the names Raitzenstadt or Ratzen Stadt (Serbian Town), and later it was named Novi Sad. The original inhabitants were mostly Serbs, but also Germans, Jews, Hungarians, Armenians, Bulgarians, Romanians, and Greeks. Numerous architectural and cultural monuments bear witness to their presence. In 1748, the wealthy inhabitants of Racka varoš went to Vienna, where they purchased the status of a free royal city from Empress Maria Theresa. With this, Novi Sad also received its current name.

My earliest childhood memories are tied to Novi Sad. I grew up in a residential block neighborhood by the Danube, near the university campus and the Spens sports and cultural center, built for the World Table Tennis Championships. Multiculturalism, openness, and the intertwining of different cultures are what give the city a special charm and richness. The Danube riverbank is certainly one of the symbols of the city – it also marked my childhood.

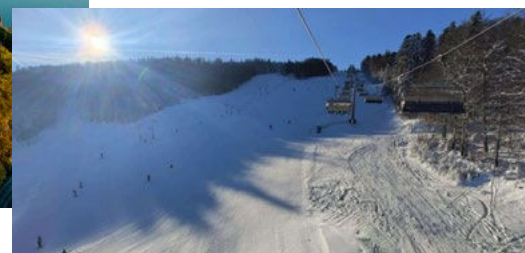
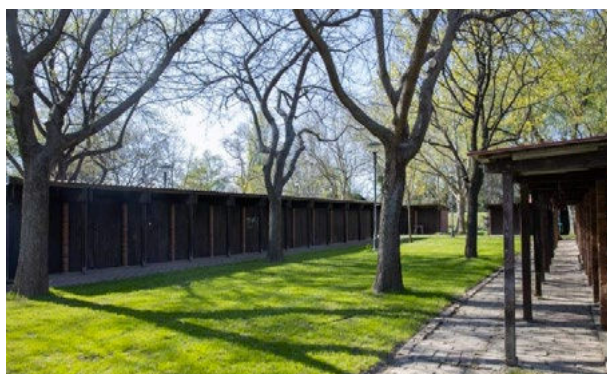
I took my first steps and met my first friends right on

the banks of the Danube, at the famous Štrand beach. For every resident of Novi Sad, this is a place of growing up, first loves, family moments, and later, retirement days. If you are lucky enough to get a turn, you can rent your own cabin (a small beach hut) and never let it go for as long as you live. After a hard day's work, it is the ultimate escape to the river, where you can cool off in the summer heat and let your mind wander. Just like me, my children also took their first steps and met their first friends along the same paths at Štrand.

On the other side of the Danube, the Petrovaradin Fortress stands proudly. In addition to being a symbol of the city, it is considered one of the most important preserved European fortifications and the most attractive tourist area in Novi Sad. Today, it is home to about a hundred art studios, as well as restaurants, cafes, museums, and galleries.

The most recognizable symbol of the fortress is the clock tower, whose face has a diameter of more than two meters, with the hours marked in Roman numerals. A unique feature of the clock is that the large hand shows the hours and the small hand shows the minutes—so that the time is more easily visible from a distance. The clock mechanism is wound every day, a task overseen by "Uncle Lajčika." Due to temperature fluctuations that affect the clock's accuracy, residents have nicknamed it the "drunken clock."

When I write about the Petrovaradin Fortress, the sounds of the famous tamburitza song "*Eight Tamburitza Players from Petrovaradin*," my father's favorite song, echo within me. These sounds take me back to my childhood, and the image of the calm Danube and church bell towers that stand out above the rest of the architecture comes to mind.



Novi Sad is a city that lives by day and by night. Crowded streets, pedestrian zones, cafes open until late at night – a lively pulse everywhere. Every time, it surprises me how many new places open and how quickly they fill up from morning to evening. I love visiting the “čardas” along the Danube, where they serve excellent fish soup. If I crave tamburitza music and traditional Vojvodina food, we head to the well-known “Salaš 137.”

It is impossible not to mention the EXIT festival, a world-famous international music festival. It first took place in 2000 and lasted nine days – nine days of concerts, theater performances, and film screenings. We hardly slept back then. The first EXIT was held at the university campus by the Danube with local bands, but later it moved to the Petrovaradin Fortress and became an internationally recognized festival visited by nearly four million people from over a hundred countries.

I can summarize all this in one thought: **you simply have to experience Novi Sad.**

Today, “some new kids” live there, as Đorđe Balašević would sing, while I am moving with my family to my new place...

MARIBOR

I am often asked, why Maribor of all places. It was love at first visit. In 2012, I was on a professional excursion as a conservation architect visiting the Institute for the Protection of Cultural Heritage Maribor. I was captivated by the architecture, the openness of the people, and the positive energy of the city.

In 2018, when we had to decide which place to move to, there was no longer any dilemma: the first and only choice was Maribor. Somehow, green is not my color — purple suits me much better.

I traded my life in a Novi Sad apartment block for life in a house in Košaki Valley. You are in the city, yet you are not in the city – nature is all around you: vineyards, forest, and a view of Piramida and Pohorje. Many things connect Novi Sad and Maribor; perhaps that is why I feel so good here.

I replaced the Danube with the Drava, along which I very often go for walks to Maribor Island. I traded sledding on Fruška Gora for skiing on Pohorje. Maribor is everything in miniature: a university city and a city of culture and sports. Life there takes place without excessive crowds or haste. The open Styrian mentality is very close to me, and it is precisely because of it that I feel accepted and, at least in part, already like a Maribor local. Poštna Street, Lent, and the city squares give the city its liveliness. During the Lent Festival, St. Martin's Day celebrations, and football matches, an indescribable positive energy reigns in the city.

Pohorje, “this hill of ours,” as Darja called it in the previous issue of *Mikrofon*, is our true luxury – a ski resort in the city. We are lucky to be able to take advantage of everything it offers: from skiing to cycling and walks. I am grateful, and I often think about it, that I can spend winter days with my family in the fresh Pohorje air and snow.

In conclusion, I can only say: **Maribor – CHAMPION.**

For the next issue, I nominate **Aljaž Tuš Plesničar.**

 ■ ROK PURG LABORATORY PROGRAM

SICILY, A BEAUTIFUL ISLAND

San Vito Lo Capo & Palermo: croissant crumbs, the azure sea, and the city pulse

Sicily welcomed us in the rhythm of a slow breath – the sea that hypnotizes and cities that breathe slowly. We set off in colorful company: 5 motorhomes, 9 adults, 10 children, and 3 dogs. Not at all ordinary, but that's exactly why it's so much fun.

SICILY'S FIRST STEPS

Terrasini has that harbor charm: the scent of salt and diesel, bordered by old pastel-colored houses huddled closely along narrow streets. At first, we asked ourselves the same question as all the tourists: How on earth does a bus even get through this?

He gets the answer quickly – he is coming. And every time they arrive, the air on the bus vanishes for a moment, and a collective “uuff” is heard.

Since we had stayed overnight for a day, we boarded the bus in the morning without any rush and enjoyed the ride toward San Vito. Just under two hours of driving passed while admiring the landscape: cacti, lemon trees, old houses, solitary mopeds, and moments when the houses recede for a moment and a view of the sea opens up.

“UN CAFFÈ...” – A BIT THE ITALIAN WAY

■ ISSUE 55



Upon arriving in San Vito Lo Capo, we felt that the vacation had truly begun. A beach like a canvas of soft sand, long, luxurious, with a turquoise sea that a phone cannot capture quite as one would wish. On the right side rises Monte Monaco, which catches even the highest clouds.

On the first morning, we said to ourselves: let's do the most Sicilian thing – coffee and a croissant, without looking at the clock.

After fifteen minutes of practice (I don't speak Italian), I finally utter:

“Un caffè macchiato e un caffè lungo e due cornetti, uno al cioccolato e uno alla marmellata.”

The waiter smiles and says: “Perfetto.”

And I am as happy as a child that he understood me – and quietly hoping that no further questions follow.

That is how our ritual began: coffee, croissants, a view of the sea. And then, throughout the day, whatever comes.

SCOOTER, FREEDOM, AND WINDS FROM THE ROAD

In San Vito, we rented a scooter. Those first few meters, when you pull away with a twist of the wrist, are freedom of the purest kind. The smell of salt mixing with the greenery along the road, the feeling that you can turn anywhere and never go wrong.

The goal? Hidden beaches – those that are harder to reach by car.

We ignored the shortest routes. We chose the most beautiful ones.

Quite a few kilometers accumulated on the odometer, but the warm wind that cools you doesn't force you to stop. That is how we also reached the wonderful Cala Tonnarella dell'Uzzo.

THE BLUENESS OF THE SEA

San Vito Lo Capo beach calms you at first sight. In the morning, when most are still asleep, the sea is just cold enough that, upon jumping in,



it reminds you: you are alive.

Sunscreen isn't a recommendation here, it's a protocol, and shade is a rare commodity. You enjoy the beach until noon, and then reality sets in:

"Why is everything closed?"

"Because this is Sicily."

Once you accept this, you realize the afternoon lull offers three excellent alternatives: sleeping, swimming, or eating ice cream.

FLAVORS THAT LINGER

In San Vito, we visited **Ristorante Il Giardino di Gnà Sara**, a Michelin-starred restaurant. A small but intimate garden, a pleasant atmosphere. Despite the wide selection of seafood, we chose pizza.

And that pizza was mind-blowing – one of the best of my life. Of course, the atmosphere, the surroundings, and the state of mind added to it.

San Vito is touristy, but pleasantly touristy. The pace is slow, people aren't in a rush, yet paradoxically, the days pass too quickly. Wherever you sit, you get the feeling that the place reminds you of your priority list: **the sea, food, sleep, company**.

Everything else can wait.



SWITCHING TO THE CITY: PALERMO

Since our flight home was from **Palermo**, we took a bus to Sicily's capital. The shift is visible right through the window: more people, more buildings, balconies overhanging the streets, laundry on lines, noise – but a friendly noise.

In the evening hours, the old buildings bathed in warm light steal your attention. **Teatro Massimo** rises in a soft golden glow, surrounded by palm trees, serving as a natural backdrop for the evening ritual – the *passeggiata*.

PARKS, STATUES, AND THE ORANGE HOUR

We walked through several green corners; we were especially impressed by Villa Giulia – courtyards with palm trees like something out of a movie, luxurious fountains, statues standing serious and silent, as if they have been pondering the same story for centuries.

Palermo has this beauty: in the park, you find almost the same silence as in a small seaside village, just a step away from the city noise.

At sunset, the city glows. Orange hues embrace the streets and facades, followed by the old lights that further warm the tone. The streets fill with locals and tourists; no one seems to be in a real hurry, yet you feel the city – greater density, more voices, more possibilities.

PLATES AND CURIOSITY (EVEN WITH CHAINS)

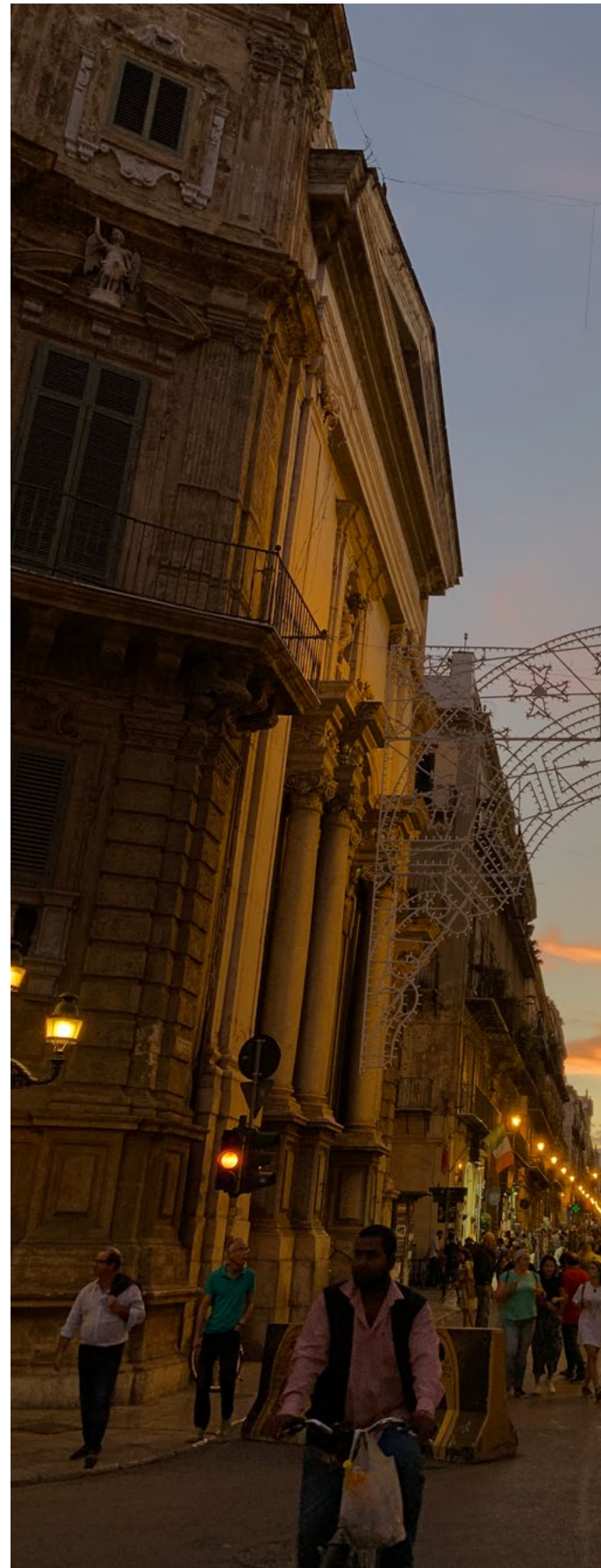
As far as food is concerned, Palermo does not disappoint: street classics and a diverse range of restaurants from different parts of the world. Today a local dish impresses you, tomorrow curiosity gets the better of you and you go to check if McDonald's here is different than back home (there are no significant differences). Our street favorites? If you are in doubt in Palermo about where to go next: *ask the waiter*. The answer will usually come with a mini story.

THE CITY

In Palermo, we noticed that the pace of the day unfolds in waves: markets and parks in the morning, a lull in the afternoon, events and socializing in the evening. And somewhere in between, a cup of coffee at the counter – quick, but with attention. That little ritual that integrates you into the local pulse. Palermo teaches you that you can be both an observer and a participant at the same time: it is enough to be there, capture a picture of buildings or people through your lens, or simply try what the city offers you.

AN ISLAND THAT MUST BE EXPERIENCED

Why did Sicily impress me so much? It is hard to describe with





just places or photographs. It seems to me that **it captures the way of thinking and lifestyle**. In the middle of the day, the shops close simply because they close – and life kindly reminds you through this that you will come back if you really need to. A lot can be agreed upon without complications; people take the time to talk, and no one is in an unnecessary hurry. If you sit down for a coffee in San Vito and observe the people who arrived yesterday, you won't recognize them in three days – their pace slows down, softens. The rhythm of the place starts to affect your schedule.

Sicily is also an island of *contrasts*: between the blue of the sea in San Vito and the **city noise** of Palermo. On one side **sand and a scooter**, on the other the **steps of Teatro Massimo** and evening conversations over good food.

WE WILL RETURN AGAIN.

Etna remains on the wish list – to step onto the volcano, see the black landscape, and feel the *oldest* part of the island. Next time I would like to explore the other side of the island and perhaps take a few more turns into the interior, among the villages that are not touristy.


Until then, we will carry with us the sea, food, the scooter, coffee, evenings, and the beauty of nature at sunrise and sunset.

Sicily taught us something that cannot be carried in a suitcase, but stays for a long time: how to be patient, calm, how to drop your shoulders, slow your steps, and allow the place to set the pace.

And once you feel this, you know that you haven't returned only with photographs, but also with a different perspective.

I nominate **Damjan Zupanič**



 ■ SAVINA PREMZEL MARKETING

STORIES WRITTEN BY TIME... AND THE PEOPLE WHO REMAIN ITS MOST BEAUTIFUL PART.

In the Micro Treasury, we open up space for stories that are not measured in years, but in experiences, courage, and the impact on the people around us.

After Andreja, we continue with another 33-year story, Tanja Marhold. Public procurement administrator, mentor, trip organizer, and that colleague we like to turn to for direct, practical advice.

Her journey is not just a professional story about legislation, deadlines, and precision. It is a story about growth within the company, about the courage to step out of one's comfort zone, and about how you can stay true to yourself even when the world around you is changing at the speed of light.

Do you still remember your beginnings at Mikro+Polo? Where and with what did you first encounter?

→Of course, I still remember my beginnings very well. I joined the company in a completely different time than today. This was my first job and my first encounter with a new work environment, six colleagues, and a way of working that was unknown to me at the time, but at the same time very interesting.

I started with basic tasks, through which I gradually got to know the company's operations, products, and processes. Right from the start, I felt a sense of belonging to the team and a great willingness of my colleagues to help, which made my first steps easi-

er and left a beautiful impression that stays with me to this day.

How did you perceive the company and your role in it back then?

→ I perceived the company as a smaller but very close-knit team, where every individual played an important role. Everything was more personal, and the relationships between colleagues were genuine.

I saw my role as an opportunity for learning and gaining experience. I was aware that I was at the beginning of my journey, so I tried to be reliable, curious, and ready to help wherever needed. I felt that through my work, I could contribute to the company's growth, which gave me additional motivation and a sense of purpose.

What attracted you the most at the beginning?

→ What impressed me the most was the connection between colleagues. There were only a few of us, but we were like one.

PROFESSIONAL PATH AND GROWTH

How has your role as a public procurement manager evolved over the years?

→ My role evolved gradually and organically. Public procurement as a formal legal framework began to emerge in Slovenia in the 1990s, but at Mikro+Polo, we started tackling it more seriously around 2010. At that time, I gradually took over responsibility for this area, which became increasingly complex and demanding over the years.

Before that, I worked in procurement, where I ordered equipment and ensured the smooth running of processes. Even earlier, my work involved coordinating the work of four sales representatives led by the director and ensuring that obligations to customers were met on time. It was precisely this variety of tasks that gave me a broad insight into the company's operations and helped me delve into the role of public procurement manager in a holistic and responsible manner.

Which skills or experiences were pivotal in your development?

→ The pivotal skills were those I acquired along the way, through practice and experience. Understanding legislation and public procurement rules was important, as were organization, precision, and perseverance.

I learned to think strategically, anticipate complications, and seek solutions, while remaining consistent and reliable — which doesn't mean I don't make a slip-up every now and then. Knowing the company, the products, and my colleagues also means a lot to me, as it allows me to connect different departments toward a common goal.

Have you ever faced a challenge where you had to step out of your comfort zone?

→ Yes, many times. One of the major challenges was taking over the field of public procurement, as it is demanding and responsible work involving legislation, deadlines, and great precision.

In the beginning, there was quite a bit of uncertainty, but that is exactly what gave me confidence, greater professionalism, and a sense of personal growth. I learned to trust myself and make responsible decisions. These challenges showed me that with perseverance and openness, I can push my own boundaries.

What have you mastered down to the last detail today?

→ Today, I would say that I have mastered finding the way to a

solution down to the last detail. Years of experience have taught me resourcefulness, a broader perspective, and calmness even in demanding situations.

I know how to connect information, people, and processes so that things run as smoothly as possible, even when the path seems complicated. I believe that almost everything can be resolved if there is will, some persistence, and the right amount of passion for work.

WHY STAY

What was your main "why"?

→ The main reason is the people and the sense of belonging. I had the opportunity to grow together with the company and always feel trust and support.

Mikro+Polo has never just been a workplace to me, but an environment where I could be who I am, and where my effort was noticed and appreciated. It is precisely this combination of relationships, challenges, and shared values that is the reason I stay.

What does the company's development mean to you?

→ For me, it is an extraordinary sense of pride. I have experienced the evolution from the typewriter to digital solutions and artificial intelligence. Being part of such a story means that you are not just an observer of changes, but their co-creator.



Sometimes I even said to myself: do we really always have to push into new challenges? But it is precisely this courage for development that gives us an advantage and energy.

PEOPLE, HUMOR, AND HUMANITY

Where does your direct approach come from?

→ *I have always believed that everything goes easier with good will and a touch of humor. This approach stems from life itself — from experiences, mistakes, and the realization that we often do ourselves more harm than good with complexity.*

It is true, however, that honesty sometimes costs me something.

How do you see the role of humor and humanity at work?

→ *Humor, honesty, and humanity are a golden combination. Humor relieves tension, honesty builds trust, and humanity reminds us that behind every task, there are people.*

When all this comes together, work is not just work — it becomes collaboration.

TRAVEL AND MENTORSHIP

What do trips and connecting mean to you?

→ *For me, travels are an opportunity for authentic conversations and connecting outside the office. Although I am still a little afraid of flying, curiosity always wins.*

When I see how colleagues take a beautiful memory with them, I know the effort has paid off.

How do you experience the role of a mentor?

→ *I experience the role of a mentor as a combination of a guide, a confidant, and an occasional translator of corporate culture. In addition to knowledge, I try to pass on unwritten rules — how the company breathes and why culture is important.*

At the same time, I learn a lot from younger colleagues myself.

WISDOM FOR THE FUTURE

Your "Tanja-style" advice?

→ *Learn, ask, collaborate, be honest. Even when a question seems simple or unusual. It is questions that open up space for growth.*

And one more thing: as many times as you fall, get back up. Knowledge is also built on falls.

What do you wish for the future?

→ *I want Mikro+Polo to remain its own, diverse, and brave. That we don't become a copy of a copy, but remain an original.*

If we know how to listen to each other and maintain a culture of respect, we will remain recognizable, a bit unique, and exactly as we should be, even decades from now.

With Andreja and Tanja, Mikro zakladnica proves that growth does not necessarily mean a change of environment, but rather the courage to grow where you are.

Thirty-three years of dedication, development, falls, and rises again is more than just a period of employment; it is a story of trust, perseverance, and the people who give the company its character.

And it is precisely these kinds of stories that we want to record. So that they remain. So that they inspire. And to remind us that a company's greatest capital is always its people.



KURENT, WELCOME!

Some stories live not only in tradition but in the people who carry it forward. One such story is the kurent – a symbol that chases away winter and brings new energy.

This time, we present a colleague who not only knows this role but also lives it. What is it like to be a kurent today? What does it mean to carry this tradition?

First of all, I am definitely interested in when you became a kurent and who can even become a kurent?

→ *In our area, you grow up with the kurent tradition, which is evident from the number of children participating. The youngest members are about four years old. According to old tradition, only young, unmarried men could become kurents, but this no longer applies today. Anyone can wear the kurent costume, though it naturally depends on the individual group and their internal rules.*

The kurent is considered one of the most recognizable figures of the Slovenian carnival. How would you describe the kurent's role in carnival customs?

→ *The Kurent's most famous role is chasing away winter and calling for spring. He doesn't just chase away winter, but also everything bad, misfortune, and illness. He brings*

luck, satisfaction, and a good harvest.

Do you feel today that you have successfully chased away winter this year?

→ *Considering the current weather, I would say we succeeded well – with the exception of one day, for which the Croats are "to blame," as they organized a carnival before Candlemas (a Kurent must not ring his bells before the so-called Kurent's Jump, which happens exactly on Candlemas, from February 2nd to 3rd).*

Your outfit is very impressive – bells, sheepskin coat, flowers on the hat... Which part is your favorite?

→ *My favorite is the Kurent's headgear, as it is unique for every Kurent. Everyone chooses their own painting, feathers, ribbons, tusks, tongue... Thus, no Kurent is the same as another – each stands out in their own way.*

Is this equipment heavy? How many calories do you burn when jumping with the bells?

→ The weight of the equipment depends mainly on the size of the sheepskin coat and the bells. My set weighs about 30 kg, while for larger Kurent, this figure can exceed 40 kg.

I haven't counted the calories yet, but it's enough to say that I haven't gained weight in the Kurent costume yet – which, considering the diet during Carnival, is a bit of a miracle.



What is your favorite part of the Carnival season? The parties? Walking among the people? The children?

→ For me, the most beautiful part of Carnival is the rounds through the home village. When you see how people at every house make an effort to host us, and how they are delighted by our visit every year, you get extra motivation to do your best and fulfill your mission.

Is it true that a kurent's eyes light up when they see doughnuts?

→ Doughnuts are one of the main sources of nutrition



for a korant, especially when we are served homemade ones that are still warm. If there's also a homemade spritzer to go with them, it makes for a very pleasant snack.

However, it's true that once the carnival is over, I hardly touch them until the following year.

Do you prefer being in a group, or do you sometimes like to head out on your own?

→ Koranti always walk in a group – at least three to four members plus a little devil. One reason is that it's difficult to put on the bells by yourself, but it's mainly because of tradition, as the korant has always been a group mask.

Do you "taunt" each other among kurenti, or do you have any internal rules?

→ In the past, relations between different groups of korants were quite tense, and fights could even break out. Today, that is no longer the case. If we encounter another group, we exchange a few friendly words, and then everyone continues on their way.

Every group has certain humorous internal rules – for example, if someone manages to steal or hide your *ježevka* (hedgehog-stick), the penalty is usually a "liter-liter" at the nearest tavern.

Have you ever thought about starting a fitness program: "Kurent workout – 10 kg of bells for stronger legs"?

→ I doubt anyone thinks of the *korantija* tradition in terms of fitness, although such a program would probably be quite successful. It is definitely physically demanding, but once you are dressed in the full gear, you don't even feel it anymore, as you get a special energy that just carries you along.

What message would you like to send to the people you inspire so much every year?

→ I would like to thank everyone for all the lovely welcomes, hospitality, invitations, group photos, and visits ...

If we notice that people are enthusiastic about us, we return the same measure of enthusiasm to them. I hope that we actually manage to bring them happiness.

Otherwise, you never have to wait long for us – the year turns quickly and the fifth season, which we are all eagerly awaiting, is here again.



 ■ ALJAŽ SLATINJEK FINANCE AND BUSINESS SUPPORT

HAMBURGER SCANDAL

Ingredients (1 large burger + roasted potatoes)

Main ingredients:

- burger buns (brioche or potato)
- beef burger patty
- cheddar cheese
- salad
- cucumbers
- caramelized onions
- "my mayonnaise" sauce
- roasted potatoes with peppers

1. Burger bun (burger buns)

Ingredients:

- burger bun (store-bought or homemade)
- a little butter or oil for light browning

Procedure:

1. Cut the bun in half.
2. Lightly grease the inside with butter or a drop of oil.
3. Sear it on a hot pan or grill for 20–30 seconds, to become golden and crispy.

The bun must be soft, slightly warm, and nicely browned.

2. Beef burger patty

Ingredients:

- 150–180 g ground beef (80/20 ratio is ideal)
- salt
- pepper
- cooking oil

Procedure:

1. Shape the meat into a flat, even patty, without excessive pressure.
2. Heat the pan or grill to a high heat.
3. Salt the patty just before cooking.
4. Cook for 2–3 minutes on one side until nicely browned.
5. Flip, add cheddar cheese and cook for another 2 minutes until the cheese melts.

The patty should be juicy, nicely seared on the outside, and the cheese should melt over the edges.

3. Onion preparation

Ingredients:

- 1 large onion, thinly sliced
- 1 tablespoon of butter
- 1 teaspoon of sugar
- a pinch of salt

Procedure:

1. Melt the butter in a pan and add the onion.
2. Sauté slowly for 10–15 minutes.
3. Add sugar and salt and sauté for another 5 minutes, until it browns nicely and softens.

The onion must be soft, sweet, and a glossy brown.

4. Burger sauce

Ingredients:

- 2 tablespoons of mayonnaise
- 1 teaspoon mustard
- 1 teaspoon of lemon juice
- ½ teaspoon honey
- a pinch of salt
- a pinch of paprika or garlic powder (to taste)

Procedure:

1. Mix all ingredients well.
2. Add a drop of water as needed, to become more spreadable.

The sauce should be creamy, slightly sweet, and full-flavored.

5. Roasted potatoes with peppers

Ingredients:

- 250 g potatoes, cut into wedges
- 1 tablespoon of oil
- 1 teaspoon red paprika
- salt, pepper
- optional: garlic powder

Procedure:

1. Mix the potatoes with oil and spices.
2. Bake for 25–30 minutes at 200 °C until crispy. Crispy on the outside, soft on the inside.

6. Assembling the hamburger

1. Spread on the bottom half of the bun my mayonnaise sauce.
2. Add a layer of lettuce.
3. Place the burger patty with melted cheddar.
4. Add the caramelized onion.
5. Place the pickles on top.
6. Spread the top of the bun with a little sauces and close the burger.
7. Serve with crispy roasted potatoes with paprika.
8. Cold beer

Voila. Enjoy your meal!

I nominate: **Mitja Potisk**



LEONIDA MUŠIČ LAB INTERIOR

CINEPHILE LEONIDA RECOMMENDS

PRISONERS / THE LIVES OF OTHERS



PRISONERS

IMDb rating: 8.2

Directed by Denis Villeneuve

Country: USA

Year: 2013

Genre: psychological thriller, crime, drama

Cast: Hugh Jackman, Jake Gyllenhaal, Viola Davis, Maria Bello, Terrence Howard, Melissa Leo, Paul Dano

Why I like it:

The film captivated me with its intense tension, moral gray areas, and atmospheric weight that lingers long after watching. On the surface, it is about the search for two missing girls, but in reality, it is a test of the limits a person can reach when driven by despair and fear. The film constantly builds doubt: every decision has its price, no one is completely clean, everyone carries their own shadow.

Favorite scene:

The scene of the rescue of one of the girls, where relief intertwines with horror.

First "tear":

At the mixture of relief and helplessness due to the open ending. When it seems that justice will finally find its trail, the camera still persists in uncertainty. A single tear fell precisely because of this ambiguity — because life rarely closes doors with a perfect answer.



DAS LEBEN DER ANDEREN (The Lives of Others)

IMDb rating: 8.4

Directed by: Florian Henckel von

Donnersmarck

Country: Germany

Year: 2006

Genre: drama, psychological thriller

Cast: Ulrich Mühe, Martina Gedeck, Sebastian Koch, Ulrich Tukur, Thomas Thieme

Why I like it:

The film stands out because of the quiet transformation of a character who is professionally trained to listen to others, but for whom this listening slowly turns into a mirror of his own conscience, moral dilemmas, and the atmosphere of East German repression. The story glides along the thin line between the system and the individual: instead of grand speeches, we follow subtle gestures, small decisions, glances... How much are we willing to risk to remain human?

Favorite scene:

The motif of the "Sonata for a Good Man" – the quiet power of music that changes a person.

First "tear":

At the quiet, unspoken courage of someone who will never be rewarded — about someone who persists year after year in invisible courage, without recognition, without applause, simply because they know it is the right thing to do. It was a tear of bittersweet respect.

I nominate **Katja Kampuš**.

ULTIMATE SUDOKU CHALLENGE

TEST YOUR SKILLS

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