DIGITALIZATION OF BUSINESS FROM ORDER TO PAYMENT

Standardization of eInvoicing and eOrdering

CONTENTS

THE SITUATION IN SLOVENIA

THE STANDARD APPLIED

In Slovenia, a single standard for eSLOG eDocuments is used for B2B, B2G and B2C eBusiness, whereby the public sector is in line with the economy.

NUMBER OF COMPANIES USING eINVOICING

Percentage of companies using eInvoices

invoices in a standardized structured electronic format, suitable for automatic processing
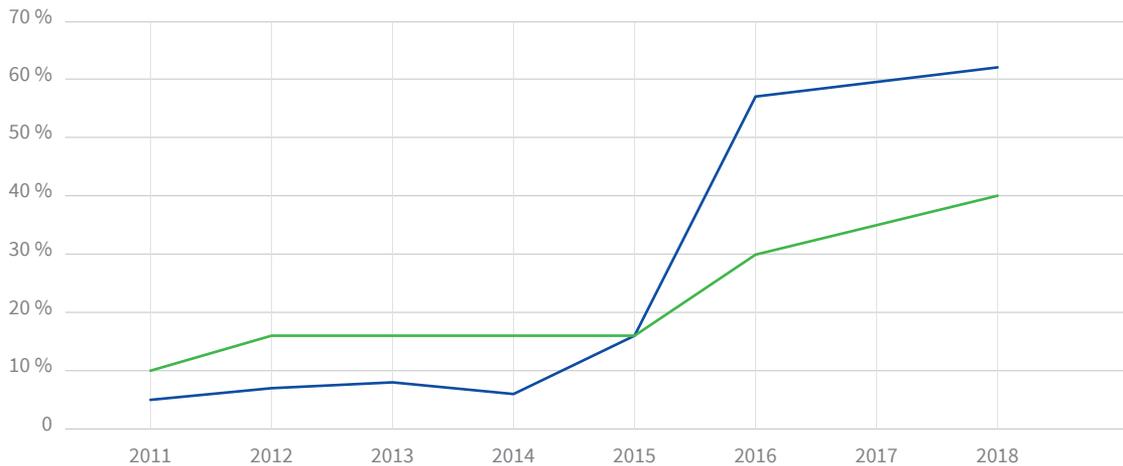
source: SURS

● Issuing eInvoices ● Receiving eInvoices

DATA ON eINVOICING FOR BUDGET USERS

eInvoices received
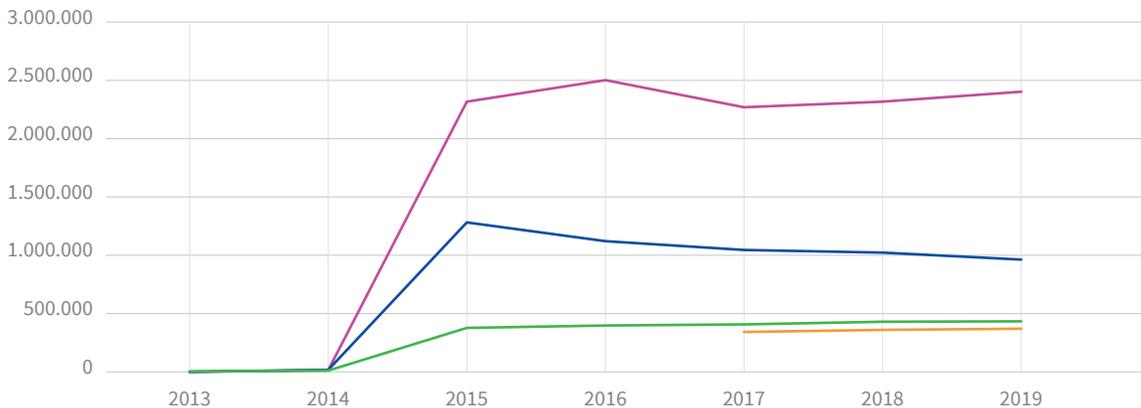
source: PPA

Network service providers • Banks • Internal exchange between budget users • Portal UJP eRačun

eInvoices sent
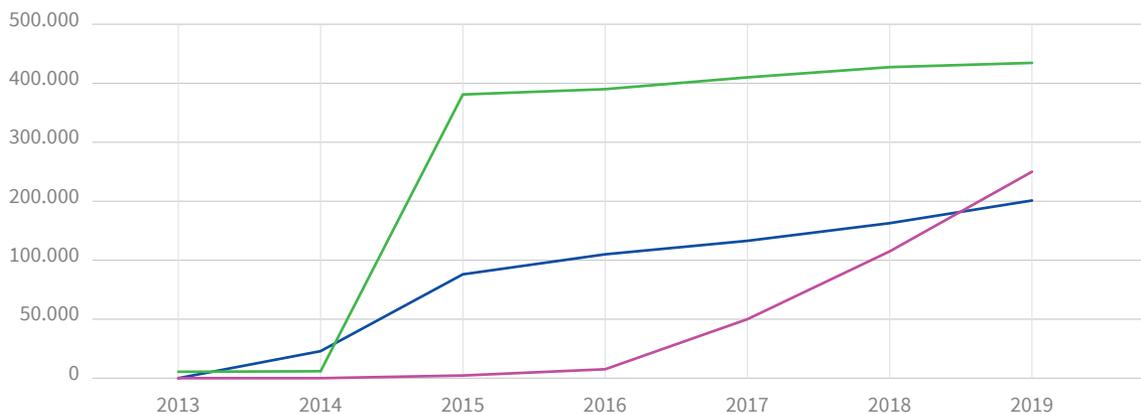
source: PPA

Network service providers • Banks • Internal exchange between budget users

The use of eInvoices in Slovenia is constantly growing, with the largest increase in 2015 being with the mandatory receipt of eInvoices for all budget users. Most companies issue eInvoices, but not to all recipients.

Despite the fact that many steps have been taken in recent years towards a comprehensive ecosystem, where everyone could easily issue and send eInvoices to everyone, the mass use of eInvoices among economic entities has not yet taken place.

Therefore, an additional legal incentive would be very welcome for a more widespread use of eInvoices.

Most eInvoices are exchanged through network service providers, followed by exchanges through banks.

Exchange of eInvoices through service providers

Data for the period from 2016 to 2019

other providers
31%

ZZI
45%

BASS
5%

Pošta Slovenija
6%

SETCCE
13%
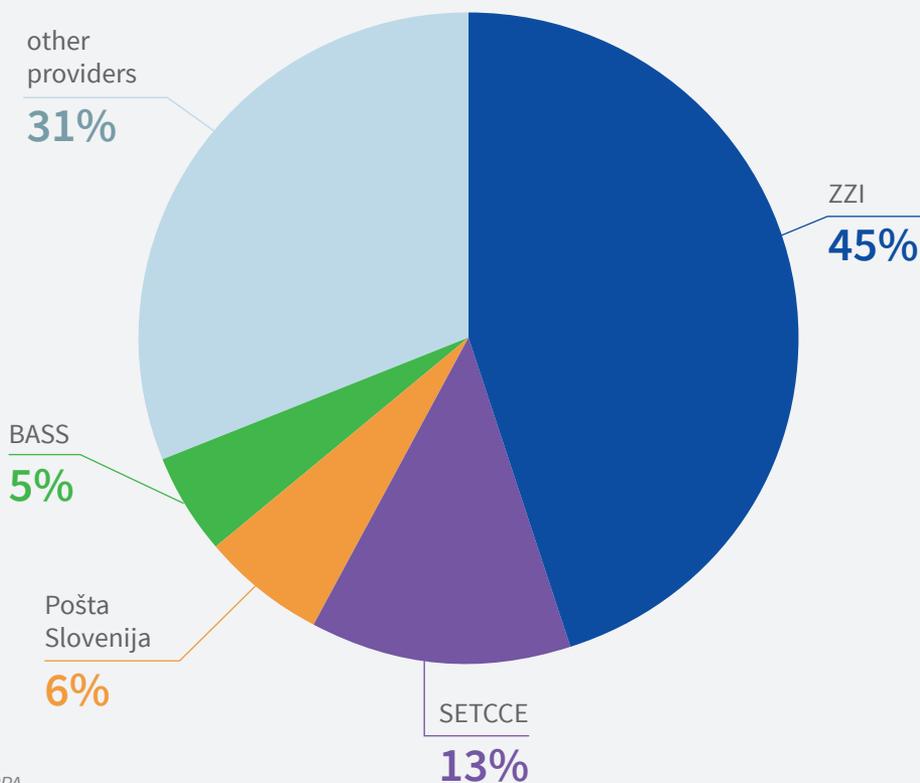
source: PPA

IMPORTANT EVENTS RELATED TO eBUSINESS IN SLOVENIA

2001
Establishment of the eSLOG project

2003
Start of application of the eSLOG standards

2005
Mass use of the eSLOG eInvoice among companies

e-SLOG

2018
Completion of the ROSE project (eSLOG 2.0 Invoice, eRegistry, PEPPOL)

2015
Fiscalization of invoices

READINESS OF SLOVENIAN
E-INVOICING
ROSE

2019
Slovenian National eBusiness Centre (EPOS) launched

2019
Start of application of the eSLOG 2.0 invoice

Slovenian National
eBusiness Centre

2009

Start of certification of
eArchiving providers

2010

Introduction of the eInvoices
exchange among budget users

1. 1. 2015

Mandatory receipt of
eInvoices for budget users

2012

Establishment of the
National eInvoicing Forum

Slovenian National
eInvoicing Forum

2020

Completion of the ROSE2 project (eSLOG 2.0
Order, Order Response and Despatch Advice)

01. 10. 2020

Use of the
eSLOG 2.0 Invoice only

READINESS OF SLOVENIAN
E-INVOICING
ROSE 2

e-SLOG
2.0

DEVELOPMENT OF eBUSINESS IN SLOVENIA

IT ALL STARTS WITH eSLOG

The start of eBusiness in Slovenia dates back to 2001, when at the initiative of companies, the Chamber of Commerce and Industry of Slovenia started implementing the eSLOG project "Electronic business of the Slovenian economy". The project involved experts from over 90 companies with the aim of preparing and enforcing eBusiness standards for companies, which include a purchase order, despatch advice and invoice in .XML format. As part of the eSLOG project, the eSLOG 1.3 standards were published, which after the year 2003 began to be used for business-to-business transactions.

Among the eSLOG documents, eInvoices are the ones most established. They were first used by companies that issue many invoices: communication operators, energy companies and companies within retail chains. After 2005, eSLOG 1.5 eInvoices began to be widely used in Slovenia in other companies as well.

The exchange of eInvoices and other eDocuments has already been carried out at that time, mostly through network service providers, who acted as mailmen for eDocuments. This way, end users were able to quickly, efficiently and easily introduce eBusiness between companies and other organizations. The instrument for certification of providers for authentic eArchiving of eDocuments is also regulated by law.

End users were able to quickly, efficiently and easily introduce eBusiness between companies and other organizations.

In 2010, the Administration of the Republic of Slovenia introduced the exchange of eInvoices between budget users, and from 2012 onwards the exchange between budget users, business entities and natural persons, by including in the interbank system the exchange of eInvoices via Bankart, and from 2014 onwards via other network service providers.

THE NATIONAL FORUM IS ESTABLISHED

In 2012, the Chamber of Commerce and Industry of Slovenia and the Public Payments Administration of the Republic of Slovenia established the National eInvoicing Forum at the initiative of the European Commission, with the aim of taking on active leadership and the coordinating role in popularizing and introducing the positive effects of eInvoices.

The main two goals of the National eInvoicing Forum are to promote the use of eInvoicing and to reach a critical mass of users in the process of exchanging eInvoices, which will be adapted to a more modern and simplified way of doing business. Aleksandra Miklavčič (PPA) and Dušan Zupančič (CCIS) took over the leadership of the National Forum at that time[1].

The National Forum brings together more than 160 experts from the economy, public administration, the university environment and the banking sector. The National Forum actively participates in the European Multi-Stakeholder Forum on eInvoicing (EMSFeI), which operates within the European Commission.

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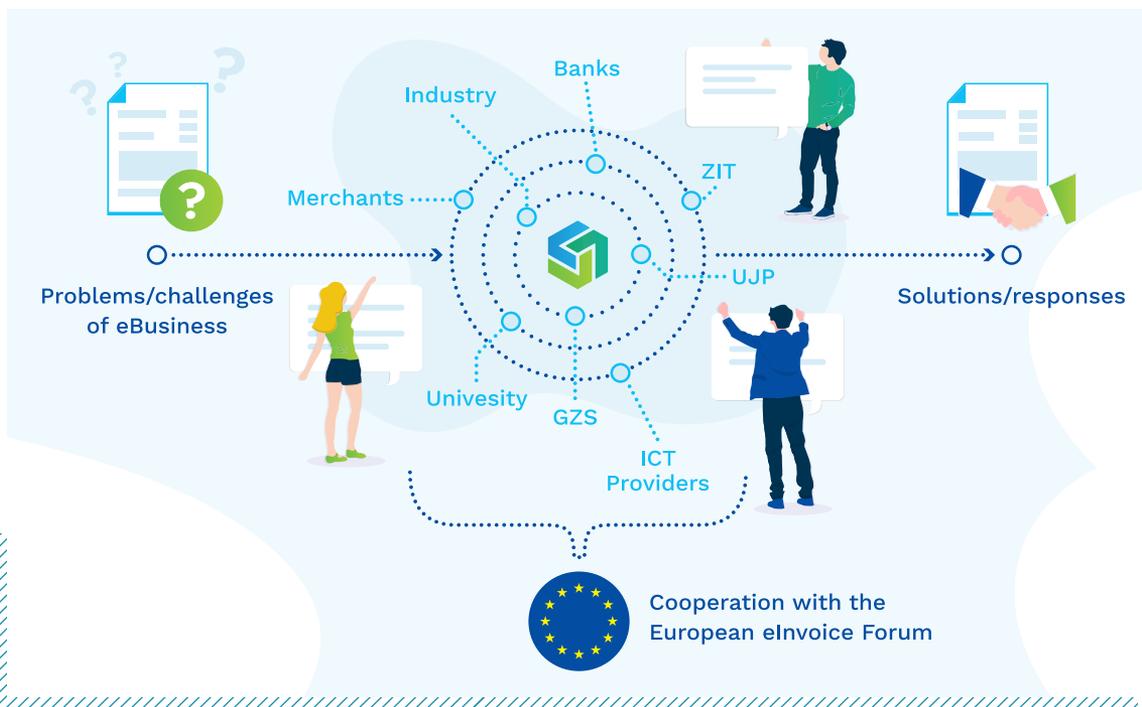
[1] Since 2018, the National eInvoicing Forum has been run by Jorgo Bertalanič (PPA) and Rok Bojanc (ZZI).

MANDATORY eINVOICING FOR BUDGET USERS

1 January 2015 was an important milestone. Since then, all budget users have only accepted eInvoices. The legislation prescribes the use of structured eInvoices in .XML format according to the eSLOG standard, whereby the sender can also attach a visualization of the invoice in .PDF format and other optional attachments.

Since January 1, 2015 all budget users have only accepted eInvoices.

The exchange of eInvoices with budget users takes place exclusively through the single entry and exit point of the Public Payments Administration of the Republic of Slovenia (PPA).

Issuers can send eInvoices to budget users through network service providers and through banking networks who have concluded a contract with the PPA on the exchange of eInvoices, while smaller issuers can enter the eInvoice manually on the PPA web portal.

Based on the experience from the practice of using eInvoices in Slovenia, we supplemented the eInvoice standard and added parameters for tax certification of invoices to the eSLOG 1.6 standard, which was developed in 2015.

EXCHANGE OF eDOCUMENTS THROUGH PROVIDERS

It is especially positive for Slovenia that in the field of eInvoice exchange it supported the so-called 4-corner model of cooperation, in which eInvoices and other eDocuments are exchanged through network service providers.

This way, both the sender and the recipient can each use their own network service provider, as the providers connect with each other. In order to ensure the basic level of reliability, quality and security for all providers, in 2015 the National Forum prepared the Code of network service Providers, where this level is defined.

Most eInvoices in the economy in Slovenia are exchanged through the bizBox network of the provider ZZI and the Bankart banking network.

[2] Provision of Payment Services to Budget Users Act (ZOPSPU-1)

NATIONWIDE SUPPORT IN SOFTWARE SOLUTIONS

Providers of software solutions for companies (ERP-solutions) and accounting programmes have supported the eSLOG standard in great numbers, and so eInvoicing with eSLOG is possible in practically any programme. More and more providers already support other eSLOG documents, such as the order and the despatch advice.

For the operation and simple nationwide use of eBusiness in Slovenia, it is very important that all major Slovenian providers of software solutions have integrated their solutions with the eExchange services provided network service providers.

This allows end users to fully automate processes for sending and receiving eInvoices and other business documents, as they do not need to use additional software solutions to manually copy, import or export documents, but instead perform all procedures through existing software solutions which their company already uses.

EUROPEAN STANDARD FOR THE eINVOICE

A very important step towards cross-border transactions with eInvoices was provided by Directive 2014/55/EU on eInvoicing in public procurement, which introduces a single European standard for eInvoices.

The project also included the establishment of the eRegistry of eInvoice recipients, an upgrade of the environment for the exchange of eInvoices, inclusion of Slovenia in the European PEPPOL[4] network for the exchange of eInvoices and promotional activities in the form of conferences and workshops.
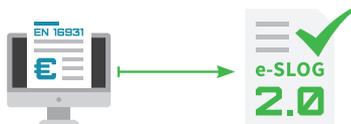
For the introduction of the European semantic standard EN 16931-1 in Slovenia, the ROSE "Readiness of Slovenian eInvoicing" project was established in 2017[3]. One of the main objectives of the project was to upgrade the eSLOG eInvoice standard to version 2.0, which is in line with the European standard.

[3] The ROSE and ROSE 2 projects are co-financed through the Connecting Europe Facility (CEF).
[4] There are two certified PEPPOL access points in Slovenia, the PPA for budget users and the ZZI for other users.

READINESS OF SLOVENIAN E-INVOICING ROSE 2

Co-financed by the Connecting Europe Facility of the European Union

- Upgrading the eRegistry
- Preparating eSLOG standards for eProcurement
- Training of users and providers
- Upgrades systems for eDocuments exchange
- Promoting the use of eSLOG 2.0 eDocuments
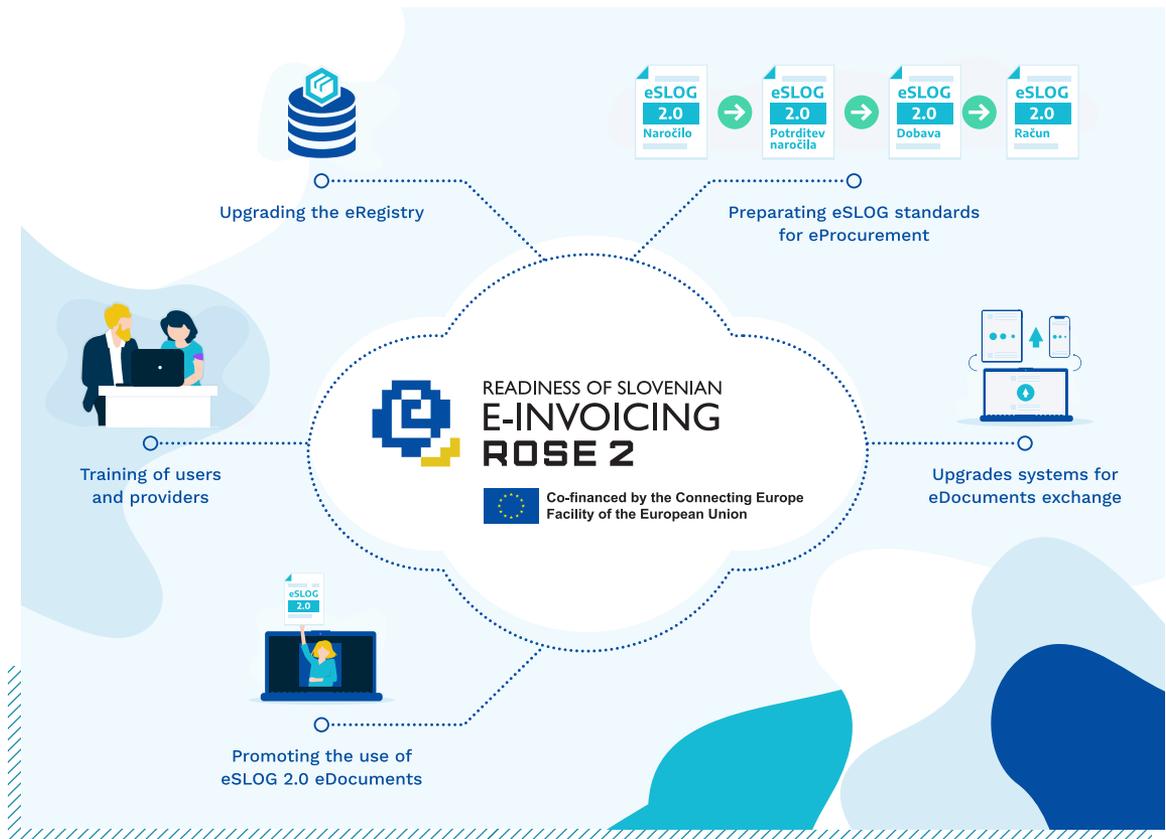
NEXT STEPS

In 2019, under the auspices of the Chamber of Commerce and Industry of Slovenia, the Slovenian National eBusiness Centre (EPOS) was launched, which combines various activities in the field of eBusiness, which until then had been carried out separately. The National Forum became actively involved in the technical committees of the Slovenian Institute for Standardization (SIST) and the European Committee for Standardization (CEN). At the annual meeting in 2019, the National Forum proposed that the mandatory exchange of eInvoices between legal entities in Slovenia be regulated by law.

In 2020 the ROSE 2 "Readiness Of Slovenian e-Invoicing 2" project, came to a close, within which the remaining eSLOG documents were also upgraded to version 2.0: order, order response and despatch advice.

As of October 1, 2020, only the eSLOG eInvoice 2.0 is valid, as the eSLOG eInvoice 1.6 and 1.6.1 ceased to be used.

THE ROSE 2 PROJECT

With the ROSE 2 "Readiness of Slovenian E-invoicing 2" project we are upgrading the results of the ROSE project in order to enable the automation of the entire process from order to payment in the public sector and in the economy.

The "Readiness of Slovenian eInvoicing 2" project (2019-SI-IA-0006) is co-financed through the Connecting Europe Facility (CEF). CEF Telecom is a key EU instrument to support cross-border contacts between public administrations, businesses and citizens, through the use of digital service infrastructure (DSI) and broadband networks.

The supported project will contribute to the creation of a European ecosystem of interoperable and interconnected digital services which distinguish the digital single market.

The project involves the Public Payments Administration of the Republic of Slovenia, the Chamber of Commerce and Industry of Slovenia, ZZI d.o.o., Mojdenar IT d.o.o. and Vinibis d.o.o.

REPUBLIC OF SLOVENIA
MINISTRY OF FINANCE

PUBLIC PAYMENTS ADMINISTRATION
OF THE REPUBLIC OF SLOVENIA

Gospodarska
zbornica
Slovenije

Chamber of Commerce
and Industry of Slovenia

mojdenar IT
uporabne programske rešitve

VINIBIS
NEPOVRATNA SREDSTVA EU

Benefits

Preparation of standardized electronic documents for **purchase order** and **despatch advice** in eSLOG 2.0.

Upgrading the national registry of eInvoice recipients to include, in addition to the information on the eInvoices, information on ePurchase Order and eDespatch Advice.

Promoting the use of eSLOG 2.0 electronic documents in eOrdering processes.

Training of users and providers of software solutions for working with eSLOG 2.0.

Upgrading the PPA system for the **exchange of eDocuments for budget users** with comprehensive support for eSLOG 2.0 eDocuments.

Upgrading the exchange hub for the **exchange of eDocuments for business users** with comprehensive support for eSLOG 2.0 eDocuments and eOrdering processes.

SLOVENIAN NATIONAL eBUSINESS CENTRE

Slovenian National eBusiness Centre (EPOS) offers companies, other organizations and individuals all the important information and assistance for the introduction and effective implementation of eBusiness in one single place.

The establishment of the eBusiness Centre stems from the eSLOG project, the operation of the Slovenian National eInvoicing Forum, cooperation with the Ministry of Economic Development and Technology and other initiatives to ensure and promote the introduction of eBusiness in the Slovenian economy. The main goal of the Centre's programme is to raise the competitive advantage of the Slovenian economy by encouraging the introduction of dematerialized business in all Slovenian companies and organizations of the public administration.

The eBusiness Centre has an ambitious goal of maintaining Slovenia as one of the leading countries in the EU in the field of eBusiness, which will be achieve through accelerated introduction of eBusiness standards, effective support and promotion in the economy. This will influence companies in various industries to decide in favour of eBusiness sooner.

The main goals of the eBusiness Centre by 2022

- Increase in the volume of B2B eBusiness by 50%

- Development of a new version of business eDocuments (purchase order, order response, despatch advice) based on EU standards

- Development and provision of eBusiness services

- Introduction of secure standardized exchange of eInvoices for natural persons

- Introduction of eBusiness standards in the entire public administration supply chain

Slovenian National eBusiness Centre

Areas of the Centre's activity

- Standardization of electronic documents (eSLOG, participation in SIST, CEN)

- National eBusiness Registry

- National eInvoicing Forum

- Recommendations and good practices for sending, exchanging, receiving and archiving business eDocuments

- Research in the field of eBusiness

- Cooperation and networking with key stakeholders of eBusiness in Slovenia and abroad

The website of the Slovenian National eBusiness Centre is www.epos.si.

NATIONAL eBUSINESS REGISTRY (eREGISTRY)

One of the major obstacles in expanding the use of eInvoices and other eDocuments in Slovenia is that it is difficult for the issuer to easily determine to which of its recipients it can send an eInvoice, eOrder or eDespatch Advice and to which it cannot.

The eRegistry is intended primarily for issuers who can automate the process of sending eInvoices and other eDocuments on the basis of data in the eRegistry. For instance, a company which wants to send eInvoices to its buyers can quickly and easily find recipients in the eRegistry and obtain information on who receives eInvoices, in which standard, in which manner and through which provider.

eRegistry is open and enables providers of business software solutions to integrate the functionalities of eRegistry into their software solutions and thus enable automation in the issuance of eInvoices, eOrders or eDespatch Advices. Companies can register themselves as recipients in the eRegistry, or this can be done for them by their provider. Through the ROSE 2 project, the eRegistry has been upgraded to support other eDocuments in addition to eInvoices (eOrder, eOrder Response and eDespatch Advice).

To solve this problem, the National eBusiness Registry[5] has been established, which contains a list of companies and other organizations which can and want to receive eInvoices and other eDocuments via secure electronic networks.

National eRegistry of eInvoice recipients

Which document to send · To whom to send · To which address · Throught which provider

Business

Government

Integration of eRegistry functions into existing software solutions

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[5] As part of the ROSE project, the National register of recipients of the eInvoices was established. The register was in the ROSE 2 project renamed to the National eBusiness registry and upgraded with functionalities.

eSLOG DOCUMENT STANDARDIZATION

IMPORTANCE OF STANDARDIZATION

Standards have a significant impact on business of companies and of public administration. They enable orderly and coherent business both internally within an organization, as well as inter-organizationally with partners, suppliers, buyers and the state. Through the integration and application of coherent standards in EU legislation, companies have the power to act coherently in the digital single market.

Furthermore, standards play an important role in promoting and understanding the use of new technologies or transforming existing technologies and systems into new, innovative systems and combining them with other technologies. Innovation and the use of advanced technologies provide support in the challenges posed by the global market, the society and the economy.

The European Commission has identified five priority areas for the digital single market (i.e. 5G, cloud computing, cyber security, mass data and the Internet of Things), where standardization is identified as the most important element in the completion of the digital single market.

The five priority areas for the digital single market

5G

Mass data

Cyber security

Internet of Things

Cloud computing

INTEROPERABILITY – CONNECTIVITY

Standards define how systems, processes, services or methods should meet technical or quality requirements.

One of the key requirements here is compatibility and interoperability between systems, processes or services. Interoperability is the ability to seamlessly execute business processes across organizational boundaries, which is achieved by understanding how business processes in different companies can be interconnected. The overall goal of interoperability is to enable consistent presentation of information between business systems, regardless of the technology, application or platform used. Thus, companies can transmit and use information through several different technologies and systems, which allows companies not only to communicate with each other electronically, but also to communicate with each other in a way that they act as one large "virtual organization".

Interoperability is key to the establishment and effective development of eBusiness, while fostering competitiveness and promoting networking effects. Currently, it is the very lack of interoperability that is one of the biggest obstacles to eBusiness, especially in the business of small and medium-sized enterprises. That is why the use of standardized documents is so very important.

It is crucial for efficient eBusiness that information can be transmitted, processed and used between business information systems in different organizations, regardless of their technology, use or platform. To enable this, it is important to standardize the information exchanged, both at the level of content (semantics), form (syntax) and the way information is exchanged.

eSLOG

In the field of eBusiness, eSLOG standards for electronic documents are widely spread and used in Slovenia, and they equally replace paper invoices, purchase orders and despatch advices.

eSLOG is supported in all established business information systems in use in Slovenia.

eSLOG is a standard for the exchange of business documents, which is supported in all established business information systems in use in Slovenia and is the basic standard used for the exchange of information by both companies and public administration. Software solution providers have supported eSLOG standards in their software solutions. Reliable and secure exchange of eDocuments between the buyer and the supplier is ensured by network service providers.

Currently, the most widespread eSLOG documents are eInvoices, and some software solution providers have already introduced the remaining eSLOG documents for the purchase order and despatch advice in their solutions.

Interoperability between eSLOG documents and other standardized eDocuments used in other countries is enabled by network service providers through data mappings between standards. The network service provider converts the document sent by the sender into a standard or syntax accepted by the recipient. This way, the sender and the recipient do not have to agree in advance on the use of the same standard for their eDocuments; instead, everyone can use the standard they already use in their business. Mappings between standards are greatly facilitated by semantic standards like EN 16931 for eInvoice, which define the set of data which each document must contain.

eSLOG documentation is available on the website **www.epos.si/eslog**

FROM ORDER TO PAYMENT – eORDERING

Companies try to optimize internal processes in all fields. In order to achieve greater responsiveness and speed of the decision-making process according to the needs of the market, external processes with partners must be digitized. Electronic exchange of eDocuments, automatic information processing and smart decision-making based on market data have become important building blocks of efficient business operations.

Any organization in the public or private sector depends on materials and services supplied by other companies or organizations. Purchasing is therefore one of the basic functions of every company. Most often, the goal of procurement is defined as the supply of the right materials or services, in the right quantity, at the right time, in the right place, from the right source, at the right price.

Especially in recent years, purchasing processes in the economy have changed greatly. In the management of production chains, the principles of lean production are gaining ground. This means that inventories are reduced, that suppliers practically deliver their products to production lines, and therefore the time between order and delivery is shortened.

Even large retail companies can no longer make orders in paper form due to the large number of suppliers and the reduction of intermediate warehouses. Therefore, automated ordering with electronic documents is becoming a reality and increasingly unavoidable, as all these processes can no longer be performed via paper ordering. The ordering process usually consists of several phases or stages.

In the ROSE 2 project, the upgrade of standardized eDocuments for eOrdering enabled automated processes of eBusiness of companies and public administration from the order, delivery, and invoicing to payment by electronic exchange of eDocuments via secure electronic networks.

| Identification of procurement needs from a technical and commercial point of view | Offer requests | Offer analysis and supplier selection | Negotiation & conclusion of a contract |

PREPARATORY PHASE

The first phase of the purchasing process is usually carried out only when the supplier is first selected, when the company decides on new purchasing materials, products, services, etc. The steps of the second phase, however, are usually performed repeatedly at regular purchases. As the agreement with the supplier has already been concluded and the details have been harmonized at this stage, here the possibility of automation and optimization arises.

Ordering → **Fulfilling the order** → **Acceptance of goods and resolution of any complaints** → **Payment based on supplier's invoice**

IMPLEMENTATION PHASE

The digitization of the second phase with the introduction of eDocuments for the automated execution of orders, deliveries and payments represents important benefits for buyers and their suppliers alike. Automated eOrdering makes business cheaper and simpler, speeds up delivery, eliminates manual labour, and standardizes and tracks processes in supply chains.

For that, a company does not need to introduce eOrdering in all processes at the same time. One of the advantages of eOrdering is that the company can introduce the use and exchange of eDocuments in the ordering and delivery processes gradually, depending on its needs and the requirements of its partners and the legislation. It is important that the company can uniformly carry out eOrdering with all partners in the economy, and in public administration both at home and abroad through network service providers.

BENEFITS OF eORDERING

Reduction of costs

The use of eDocuments in eOrdering reduces the cost of paper, printing and shipping. Due to the automation of processes, the time spent by employees is considerably reduced and the productivity increases. An initial investment into a system that enables eOrdering and eInvoicing can be repaid quickly.

Greater security

eDocuments can be exchanged via secure and protected communication channels. The use of an electronic data interchange or of an advanced electronic signature ensures the authenticity of the origin and the integrity of the electronic invoices' content.

Faster delivery and processing

An efficient process of sending and receiving and integration with secure exchange networks enable reliable, secure and fast exchange of eDocuments.

Higher efficiency and fewer human errors

Manual entry of data from the order, despatch advice or invoice into to the information system is no longer necessary, thereby reducing the possibility of errors.

Automation and integration of procurement procedures

Automation of the issuing, receipt, processing and storage of the eDocuments and integration with secure exchange networks enable automated implementation without manual work.

Traceability of processes

There is greater traceability over the order-delivery process, as both the buyer and the supplier have available feedback on the status of the order, delivery and invoice.

Faster and secure storage of documents

eDocuments are automatically stored in the appropriate electronic document archieving system.

Centralisation of information

All eDocuments are stored in one place and accessible via the same user interface.

DOCUMENTS IN THE eORDERING PROCESS

In an automated process, ordering can take place automatically, as the information system can detect a reduction in stock, automatically prepare an order and send it to the supplier.

The supplier's information system receives the message and can, depending on the terms of delivery and payment defined in the contract, automatically send the order response and delivery details when the goods are ready. The customer receives the despatch advice with which they can prepare for the collection of goods on a specific day, at a specific time at a specific collection point.

However, in order for this process to run automatically, the customer and the supplier must, in addition to prices and other business parameters, also coordinate data, such as item codes, location codes, units of measure, etc. In addition, they must also agree on the structure of the messages and the method of exchange of electronic documents.

The eOrder, eDespatch advice, eInvoice and other eDocuments are standardized structured electronic documents in .XML format, which equivalently replace documents in paper or other electronic form not suitable for automated processing (eg PDF).

The eSLOG standards define the structures of the following electronic documents

> **The eSLOG 2.0 Electronic Order** is an electronic document that the customer sends to the supplier and usually contains the specification of the required materials or services, required quantities, delivery times, delivery locations and other parameters required for delivery.

> **The eSLOG 2.0 Electronic Order Response** is an electronic document that the supplier sends to the customer to confirm the order or to notify of any changes in the delivery.

> **The eSLOG 2.0 Electronic Despatch Advice** is an electronic document with which the supplier sends data on the actual delivery to the customer upon delivery.

> **The eSLOG 2.0 Electronic Invoice** is an invoice for a service provided or goods delivered, issued in electronic form.

eOrdering for the buyer

- The eOrder is automatically generated from the data in the business information system and sent to the supplier via the network service provider.

- The system automatically receives and processes the supplier's order response.

- Upon receipt of the eDespatch Advice, it can automatically compare the delivered items with the data in the order response.

- Upon receipt of the eInvoice, automatic liquidation is possible according to the data in the eOrder and eDespatch Advice.

- Constant traceability of order execution, contractual obligations, deliveries and payments is enabled.

- Paper is eliminated and the amount of manual labour and associated costs of document processing and transmission to systems are reduced.

eOrdering for the supplier

- The business information system automates the receipt and control of the received eOrder, without the need for manual entering or copying of data.

- Based on the data in the system, an eOrder Response can be automatically generated for an individual order and sent to the buyer through the network service provider.

- eDespatch Advices and eInvoices can be automatically pre-filled with the data in the eOrder.

- The payment cycle is shortened, as the system automatically issues an eInvoice when the order is fulfilled.

- Errors are reduced, and both service and customer support are improved.

- Paper is eliminated and the amount of manual labour and associated costs of processing and transmission to systems are reduced. By eliminating manual labour, responsible persons can focus on tasks such as strategic planning, decision-making, and building good customer relationships.

Exchange of eDocuments in eOrdering

Network service provider

Customer purchase

Supplier sales

Contract

Order

e-SLOG 2.0 eOrder

Order Response

e-SLOG 2.0 eOrder Response

Despatch Advice

e-SLOG 2.0 eDespatch Advice

Invoice

e-SLOG 2.0 eInvoice
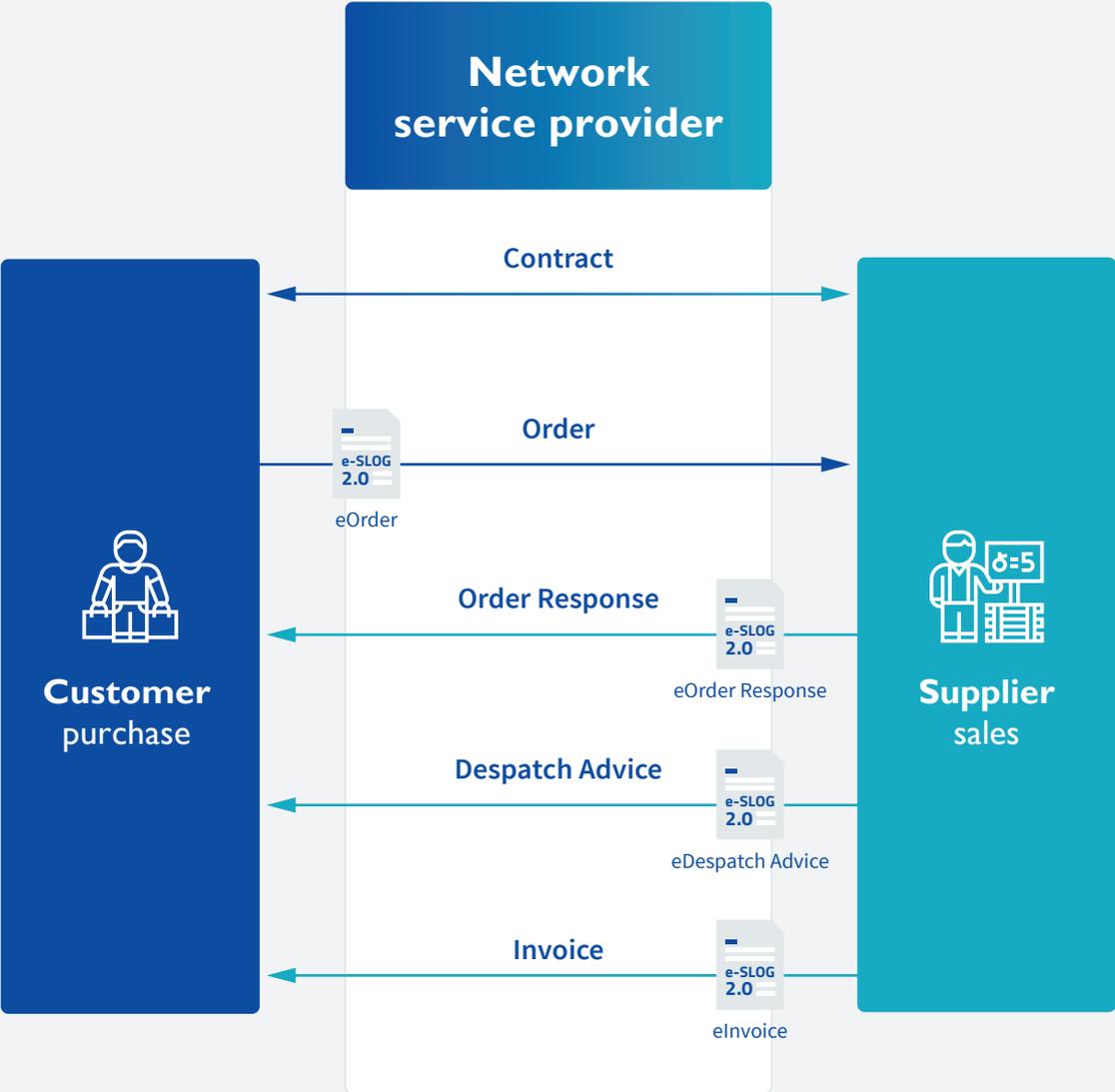
ARCHIVING OF eDOCUMENTS

Prepared, exchanged and received eInvoices and other eDocuments must be archived in an appropriate manner. Archiving eInvoices is easier than archiving paper invoices, access to the archived documents is faster and more controlled, much less physical space is needed for archiving, and the documents themselves are more secure.

In eDocument archiving, legislation requirements must be observed. Authenticity of the source and integrity of the content of the eInvoice must be ensured the for the entire duration of archiving. Although the legislation does not prescribe in which information system eInvoices must be archived, eInvoices and other business eDocuments should be archived in a way that ensures secure and reliable archiving throughout the document's life cycle.

The Slovenian legislation also defines certification of services and software solutions for eArchiving. State-certified services and solutions are verified in accordance with the legislation. The use of certified services or solutions is not mandatory for businesses, but it greatly relieves the organization, as the compliance of services or solutions with the legislation in this case has already been confirmed by the state.

The concept of a dedicated system for eDocument archiving integrated to business applications that employees use in their work is gaining ground among users. The transmission of processed eDocuments to the eArchiving system is performed automatically, without user intervention. This way, users do not need to run additional user interfaces and programmes to enter documents or search through the documents.

Important functionalities of the eDocument archieving system

- The possibility of integration with existing business applications.

- Ensuring integrity – ensuring that the content of the document has not been changed without authorization during archiving.

- The system keeps audit trails of all activities performed by users.

- Use of advanced technological mechanisms to ensure integrity and consistency (e.g. advanced electronic signature, time stamp).

- Setting the duration period for archiving of individual documents according to legal requirements.

- Access archived documents at any time and from any device.

WHERE TO START

1 — Decision to introduce eOrdering

2 — Preparation of the project for the introduction of eOrdering

3 — Selection or upgrade of the information system for eSLOG 2.0

4 — Selection of a secure network service provider

5 — Entry in the National eBusiness Registry

6 — eArchiving of documents

7 — Arrangement of company master data

8 — Start of receiving and sending eDocuments
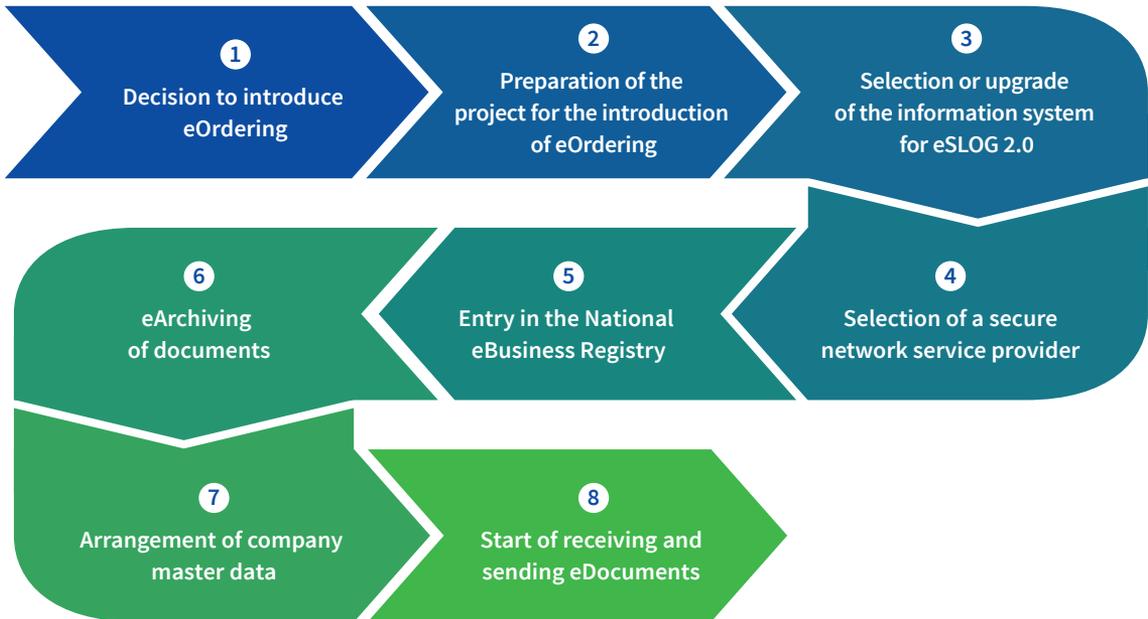
I.

The decision to introduce eOrdering

or the assessment of the return on investment of the introduction of eOrdering with your partners. This should include an analysis of the readiness of partners (buyers and suppliers) for eOrdering with the possibility of communicating through eSLOG eDocuments, an estimate of paper documentation costs, an overview of internal processes and systems, an overview of the existing information solution and the existing secure network service provider. During this stage, we recommend determining the scope of the introduction of eOrdering, which eSLOG eDocuments to introduce, and the scope and, of course, the number of business partners.

2.

Preparation of the project for the introduction of eOrdering.
Designating the team depends on the scope of the project, it is good for the team to include representatives of the procurement, sales, accounting, logistics and IT departments. In smaller companies, this can also be just one person.

3.

Selection or upgrade of the information system for eSLOG 2.0.
Most companies in Slovenia already use one of the software solutions, but the existing solution does not necessarily support eOrdering processes and eSLOG 2.0 eDocuments. Therefore, before you start, you should check what your existing software solution already provides and whether it should be upgraded with additional functionalities or perhaps if the business information solution need to be replaced. Some providers provide this functionality to their customers free of charge, while with others they are charged. It is important that the business information solution also includes the option of integration with secure network service providers and thus automation of receipt and issuance, so you do not need to manually enter issued and received eDocuments into your software solution.

4.

Selection of a secure network service provider.
You need a secure network service provider for the secure and reliable exchange of eDocuments. This way, you do not need to coordinate the method of eDocument exchange separately with each partner, because the exchange of all eDocuments with your buyers, suppliers, the public administration at home and abroad is taken over by the network service provider. In that, it does not matter that your partner with whom you exchange eDocuments is using the same provider, as the providers connect with each other. When choosing an network service provider, it is a good idea to check which other providers it is connected to or whether you can exchange documents with all the desired partners through it.

5.

Entry in the National eBusiness registry (eRegistry).
By entering your data in the eRegistry, you will provide clear information to your partner about whether you use eOrdering in the company, which eDocuments are supported, who your network service provider is, and the contact details of the person in your company responsible for this part of business. Based on this information, your partner will already have all the necessary information to enter the world of electronic ordering with you.

6.

eArchiving of documents.
The issued and received eDocuments must also be properly archived in electronic form. Therefore, before introducing eOrdering, decide in which system you will archive eDocuments. This can be your existing business information system or a dedicated service or solution for long-term eArchiving of documents. Many providers of business software solutions and network service providers have already prepared the option of integration with providers of dedicated eArchiving solutions, so that the issued and received eDocuments are automatically transmitted to the system for long-term eArchiving of eDocuments. It is welcome that the archiving service or solution is certified[6].

7.

Arrangement of company master data.
It is welcome to arrange your master data before the introduction of eOrdering, as this greatly facilitates the execution of eOrdering. It is recommended that you arrange a GLN location number[7], which serves to uniquely identify the company and each location involved in the supply chain. One of the important activities is also the harmonization of data about items (names, classification, dimensions, weight, GTIN…) with your partner.

8.

Start of receiving and sending eDocuments.
Congratulations, you have arranged everything necessary for the implementation of eOrdering in your organization. Communicate this to your suppliers and customers and start sending and receiving orders, order responses, despatch advices and invoices.

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[6] The list of certified services and solutions for eArchiving can be found on the website of the Archives of the Republic of Slovenia *reh.ars.gov.si/index.php?page=webInterface&idDefinition=2*.

[7] In Slovenia, you can obtain a GLN (Global location number) from GS1 Slovenia, *www.gs1si.org*.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR CHOOSING eBUSINESS PROVIDERS

The offer of solutions and services for eBusiness on the market in Slovenia is relatively wide and adapted to different sizes of companies and industries. There are also various pricing models adaptable to the needs of Slovenian companies. Providers offer a wide range of solutions, from general business information solutions, secure electronic exchange, eOrdering, eArchiving, eSignature and other specialized solutions.

Increasing efficiency, streamlining processes, and saving costs largely depend on the solution or service that you choose. It is important to understand your needs and critical assumptions that help define the functionality of the selected solutions and trusted partners, therefore below there are some key factors to consider for choosing an eBusiness provider.

1 Support for eSLOG documents

2 Interoperability

3 Tracking and control

4 Automation of sending and receiving eDocuments

5 Using the eRegistry

6 eArchiving of eDocuments

7 Security and reliability

8 Partnership with other service providers

9 Adding your partners

10 Customer support

11 Technological advancement

12 Certifications

13 Knowledge, experience

14 Customer portfolio

1 Support for eSLOG documents

The eSLOG eInvoice is now supported in practically all business information solutions used in Slovenia. It is important, however, whether the provider enables the preparation and issuance of other eSLOG documents such as eOrder and eDespatch Advice. It is crucial for the automation of receipt whether the provider ensures the receipt of eSLOG documents in the system without the need for manual labour.

2 Interoperability

Although the eSLOG standard is most widely used in Slovenia, the recipient can use another standard that is established at home or abroad. In such cases, you need a provider that adapts to different standard formats, exchange methods, and recipient protocols. The provider automatically converts the eSLOG eDocument into the format used by the recipient. In the same way, the provider can convert your received eDocuments from other formats into eSLOG, thus making it readable by the system you are using.

3 Tracking and control

The provider of the software solution or electronic exchange should support automatic sending and exchange of feedback (eReturnReceipt) to the sender about the receipt of the eDocument, as in this way the eDocument can be tracked. It should also enable the receipt and processing of received eReturnReceipts.

4 Automation of sending and receiving eDocuments

For efficient eCommerce, it is crucial to ensure automated sending of issued eDocuments and automated receipt and processing of received eDocuments. Therefore, good cooperation is needed between different software solutions and services that can be offered by one or more providers. It is very important that the solutions and services you use in the company are open and allow integration and connection with other solutions and services. An example of such a connection is the integration of the services of the network service provider for eExchange of eDocuments into the business information system (ERP).

5 Using the eRegistry

The integration of the solution with the National eBusiness registry (eRegistry)[8] enables automation of eDocuments issuance. In addition to the use of the eRegistry in software solutions, it is important that the provider also enables the registration of its eRegistry users and thus ensures the public publication of user data for the receipt of eDocuments[9].

6 eArchiving of eDocuments

It is crucial that the provider provides long-term secure and reliable electronic archiving of eDocuments for the entire life cycle of the documents[10]. eArchiving can be provided by the provider of a business information solution in its own solution or by connecting to a dedicated service or a solution for long-term archiving of eDocuments.

7 Security and reliability

eInvoices and other eDocuments contain sensitive data, so it is crucial that providers ensure confidential data processing and secure data management and archiving in accordance with international standards such as ISO 27001.

8 Partnership with other service providers

Your service provider should enable connectivity with other providers (solution integrators and network service providers)

to ensure the accessibility and availability of as many recipients as possible both in Slovenia and abroad. The goal is to be able to perform eOrdering and eInvoicing with anyone through your provider. One of the key pieces of information for international business is to have access to or a PEPPOL certified hotspot – *peppol.eu/who-is-who/peppol-certified-aps*.

Adding your partners

Your customers and suppliers are often added to eOrdering and eInvoicing at your initiative. The provider can help you make the addition of your partners quick and easy. If the provider also enables online portal solutions for the preparation and exchange of eDocuments, this will ensure better and faster readiness, especially of your smaller partners, who do not have advanced solutions and services for the introduction of eOrdering.

Customer support

Good customer support is of great importance, because in case of any ambiguities and problems it can quickly solve many worries. It is important that the support on the part of the provider is personal and professional, and that it is available 24/7. Providers offer support to their customers in a variety of pricing policies, from free support for all their customers to paid packages or on-call billing.

Technological advancement

Given the rapid development of technology in the world, technological advancement and familiarity of the provider with new technologies is almost considered a condition when selecting a provider, as it can quickly happen that outdated technology does not allow proper implementation of interoperability, tracking, control and security, and is not as user-friendly as it could be with constant upgrades and new technology.

Certifications

Your provider must provide the availability of services or solutions and incident support in accordance with the SLA. It is also important that your provider is certified according to international standards and operates in accordance with the recommendations for the provision of services (e.g. ISO 27001, ITIL, etc.).

Knowledge, experience

It is important that your provider has the appropriate knowledge and experience in providing services, solutions and implementation of projects of eOrdering and eInvoicing, as it is not only about document transfer services in these processes, but also about the implementation of interoperability, traceability and security throughout the process.

Customer portfolio

When selecting a provider, it is important to know the scope of the provider's customers and to determine whether the provider operates only in Slovenia or also internationally. In addition, it is important which provider has the majority of partners or that the provider is connected to other provider networks used by your partners – at home or abroad.

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[8] The website of the eRegistry is *e-register.gzs.si*.

[9] A provider wanting to register its users in the eRegistry must be registered in the eRegistry as a provider.

[10] The duration of archiving for individual types of documents is defined by the legislation.
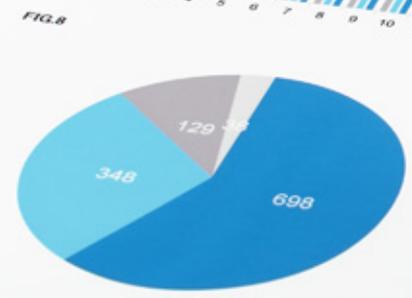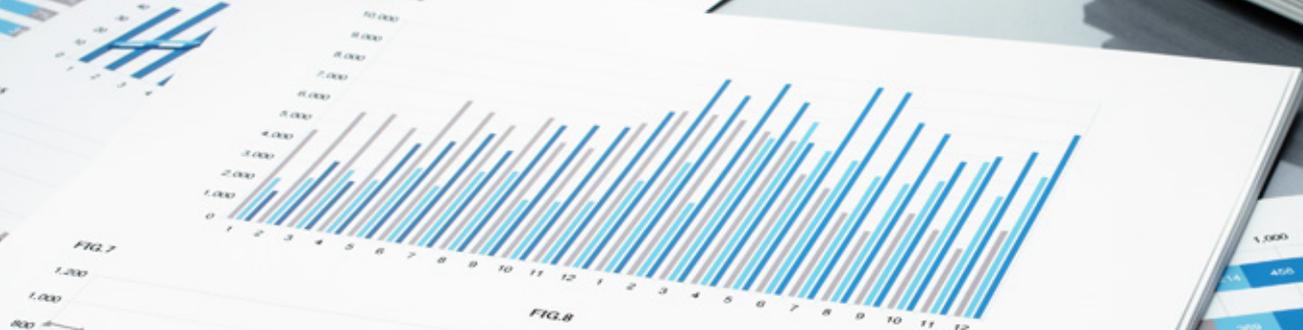
eINVOICE SITUATION IN NEIGHBOURING COUNTRIES

CROATIA

Standard:
OASIS UBL 2.1, Cross Industry Invoice (CII)

Obligation:
From 1 July 2019, sending eInvoices is mandatory for all suppliers to the Croatian public sector.

Exchange method:
The central state platform for the exchange of eInvoices is managed by the financial agency FINA. The exchange for issuers in Slovenia is possible via the bizBox network or PEPPOL.

source: CEF Digital eInvoicing Country Factsheets

ITALY

Standard:
FatturaPA

Obligation:
B2G eInvoicing have been mandatory since 2014, and as of 1 January 2019, eInvoicing are also mandatory for B2B and B2C, for all companies with an annual revenue of over 65,000 EUR.

Exchange method:
The central state platform for the exchange of eInvoices Sistema di Interscambio is managed by the Ministry of Finance. The exchange for issuers in Slovenia is possible via the bizBox network.

AUSTRIA

Standard:
ebInterface & PEPPOL-BIS 3.0

Obligation:
From 18.4.2020 onwards, receipt is mandatory for the entire public administration.

Exchange method:
Any platform can be used as long as it is connected to authentication services on the federal portal *E-rechnung.gv.at*. The exchange for issuers in Slovenia is possible via the bizBox network.

source: CEF Digital eInvoicing Country Factsheets

HUNGARY

Standard:
XML standards compliant with EN 16931 (UBL 2.1, CEFACT Cross Industry Invoice (CII))

Obligation:
From 1 July 2018 onwards, fiscalisation by reporting the invoice to the tax office is mandatory for Hungarian taxpayers.

Exchange method:
There is no centralized system for eInvoice exchange, the choice of method and provider is arbitrary.

source: CEF Digital eInvoicing Country Factsheets

WHO IS WHO

Slovenian National eBusiness Centre (EPOS)

Slovenian National eBusiness Centre offers companies, other organizations and individuals all the important information and assistance for the introduction and effective implementation of eBusiness in one single place. EPOS is active in the field of standardization of electronic documents (eSLOG), cooperation and networking with key stakeholders of eBusiness in Slovenia and abroad, publication and sharing of recommendations and good practices for sending, exchanging, receiving and archiving business eDocuments, and conducting research in eBusiness. EPOS operates within the Chamber of Commerce and Industry of Slovenia.

Slovenian National eBusiness Centre

e info@epos.si
e eslog@epos.si

Public Payments Administration (PPA)

PPA is the single entry or exit point for the exchange of eInvoices issued and received by budget users. Budget users can only receive and issue eInvoices through the PPA. Everyone in business with budget users must send eInvoices for the delivered goods and services.

REPUBLIC OF SLOVENIA
MINISTRY OF FINANCE
PUBLIC PAYMENTS ADMINISTRATION OF THE REPUBLIC OF SLOVENIA

e e-racun@ujp.gov.si

Slovenian National eInvoicing Forum

The Forum is a consultative body in the field of eInvoicing at the national level, which includes representatives of interested stakeholders in the economy (small, medium and large companies), the public sector, associations, chambers and educational institutions. The Forum was established by the Chamber of Commerce and Industry of Slovenia and the PPA and has over 160 members. The members of the Forum prepare joint guidelines for the operation of the Slovenian eBusiness ecosystem of companies and public administration.

Slovenian National eInvoicing Forum

e forum@epos.si
e e-racun@ujp.gov.si

The European Multi-Stakeholder Forum on Electronic Invoicing (EMSFEI)

EMSFEI brings together stakeholders from national e-invoicing forums and from the user side of the market. Its objective is to help pave the way for a broad-scale adoption of e-invoicing at national and EU-level. The Forum creates a unique opportunity to exchange experiences and best practice across borders. It also discusses issues of common interest and may issue recommendations to the Commission.

Association of Informatics and telecommunication

e zit@gzs.si

Association of Informatics and telecommunication (ICT Association)

ICT Association is one of the youngest associations operating within the Chamber of Commerce and Industry of Slovenia. The activities of the ICT Association follows the interests of the ICT companies, that are members of the Association, and together we co-create the business ecosystem that enables the final users to use the ICT technologies and solutions in the most optimal way, improves the conditions in the ICT sector for the companies to do business and supports their export activities. The Association cooperates with the Ministry of Economic Development and Technology planning to promote the digitalisation of the economy and enhance digital competencies. Furthermore the Association works together with the Ministry of Public Administration at developing innovative business environment and with other ministries to prepare the best legal framework and legislative proposals.

e info@digitalna.si

Slovenian Digital Coalition

Slovenian Digital Coalition (Digitalna.SI) is formed as a consortium and is member of the European Digital Coalition. We are a representative agent of the interests of all key stakeholders in Slovenia for 4 years and have full support of all relevant professional associations and ministries and other society stakeholders. Slovenian Digital Coalition Digitalna.SI is striving to bridge the digital skills gap in Slovenia using also EU mechanisms & instrument. With this action we will be able to create a single point of access for digital skills and jobs activities, news, events, founding opportunities, good practices training resource, at national and European level and across countries/sectors.

bizBox

The bizBox ecosystem is a single entry point for eBusiness, which enables user-friendly paperless operations and connections with other business partners without additional software installations and costs. The interoperability of the bizBox system allows a large number of business partners to connect to the network in such a way that none of them need to change existing information systems and standards. Partners are flexibly connected only through the eDocument exchange system. More than 15,000 organizations decide to actively use the bizBox for exchange and eBusiness with partner companies (at home and abroad) and public administration.

e prodaja@bizbox.eu

Digital Innovation Hub Slovenia (DIH Slovenia)

DIH Slovenia is a central national point for providing, connecting and supporting business and technological knowledge, technologies, experimental and pilot environments, best practices, methodologies and other activities necessary to enable Slovenian industry to build digital competencies, model innovations and processes; support their digital transformation and raise their competitive advantages based on digitalisation.

e info@dihslovenia.si

GS1 Slovenia – Institute for Identification and Electronic Data Exchange

GS1 Slovenia is an independent and non-profit organization in the field of international GS1 standards for identification, receipt and electronic data exchange in Slovenia. It has over 3,500 members/users, mainly from the industries of manufacturing and trade, logistics and healthcare. GS1 Slovenia is the national representative of the international organization GS1 AISBL.

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