

*Dear Readers of Geodetski Vestnik!*

*The cover of this issue of Geodetski Vestnik features the graduates of all first- and second-level study programmes at the Department of Geodesy of the Faculty of Civil Engineering and Geodesy of the University of Ljubljana at the graduation ceremony in the university's assembly hall. The traditional annual event has a special significance this year. Firstly, it occurred three years after we finally broke out of the grip of restrictions imposed due to the pandemic. Even more meaningfully because the demand for our graduates, new experts in geoinformatics, and spatial planning, has been constantly rising. Due to the significant aging of the employees and the lack of new experts in the field of surveying, the Surveying and Mapping Authority of the Republic of Slovenia has been employing graduates from other professions and fields for years. The situation in geodetic companies and the Geodetic Institute of Slovenia is similar: everybody is striving to attract the most promising employees. As a result, people tend to move to more attractive environments, where they also deal with geoinformatics; some start working abroad, where their knowledge and expertise are properly appreciated; others even went to completely different areas, where they take on different challenges.*

*Also, the situation in educational institutions, where future professionals gain their skills, does not seem especially favourable; both at the Secondary School of Geodesy and at the Department of Geodesy of UL FGG, the share of older educators is increasing; given the current trend, we can predict a shortage in a few years. In addition, enrolment for the secondary school is low. On the face of it, things are better at the faculty. Advertised enrolment slots are usually filled every year, but the success rate of students; thus, the proportion of those who finish their studies is unfortunately low, and it takes too long for the students to complete their studies. Last year's Land Surveying Day tried to shed some light on the problem at a round table, where selected representatives of all branches of surveying, as well as representatives of future graduates, presented their views and suggested solutions. We heard about the problems of insufficient recognition of the profession, the undervalued role of the surveyor in society, the insufficient number of enrolment positions at educational institutions, insufficient incomes of young people, especially in private companies, inappropriate working hours, and the challenges of fieldwork and working with clients. Promotional activities to raise the visibility of surveying among young people should be organised; we could appeal to them by pointing out the attractiveness of the profession, help them achieve their career goals with scholarships and offer them higher incomes to prevent their moving into other professions.*

*These measures have already been considered or introduced in many other professions and, quite often, they remain just promises. Lately, debate has been growing regarding a shortage of staff, workers, and personnel in many fields, not only in Slovenia. Understaffing has affected health care, social care for vulnerable groups, education, catering and tourism, construction, manufacturing, and IT. Everybody is searching for the best, the most committed, the most dedicated workers, those who could 'contribute to the development of the profession' or, even better, generate more profit for their employer, for a reasonable income and working conditions. At the same time, the population of Slovenia remains more or less stable, admittedly also due to immigration, which is otherwise much frowned upon by society. Moreover, the population is rapidly ageing, and young people, who are fewer and fewer, are drastically changing their lifestyles and goals. Therefore, it is clear that there are increasingly fewer young people who could potentially choose to study in different fields and later enter the labour market. At the same time, the demands for infinite economic growth, which is being expected*

*and demanded, call for human resources. It is not possible to fill this ever-widening gap with promotional campaigns and optimistic rhetoric. Even if we do manage to lure a few more young people into our profession in the short term, this will be reflected in an even greater shortage in others.*

*At the same time and in contrast to 'developed environments', the world's population has been growing rapidly. Climate change, combined with poor working and living conditions, has driven people to leave their homes and risk everything just to be able to reach the regions with high rates of population decline. Once here, we categorise them as 'economic migrants' and reject them, while Germany, on the other hand, was able to take advantage of the last large wave of refugees; it was the immigrants that helped it to at least partly tackle the labour shortage that affected the country.*

*We need to sober up and accept that our way of thinking offers no long-term sustainability to society. We cannot have continuous economic growth, constantly increasing standard of living and falling burden of taxation, plus an increasingly 'efficient state', as few immigrants as possible, more and more space and unspoiled nature, unless we rely on technological development, on swift penetration of artificial intelligence, which will be able to replace human resources in various fields of work. Will it – if and when it happens – replace humans, too?*

*The editorial team of Geodetski Vestnik has completed the first year of operation under the leadership of the new editor-in-chief and managing editor. We remain committed and complete, and we can say that at least we have not had any understaffing issues (yet).*