

Dear Mr Frederiksen,

I enclose the questions of Euroreport magazine. I would appreciate if you could answer them as soon as possible.

- Next year Slovakia together with 9 other Central European countries becomes member state of EU. How does the Norwegian public react on this EU enlargement? Is there still no majority will to join the Union?
- NATO membership is the Slovak priority as well. In NATO our two countries will become closer partners. What is the Norwegian strategy towards new members in general? Can we expect any special steps from the Norwegian side?
- What is the main part of your work as the Honorary Consul?
- How well do you know Slovakia? Why did you decide to be the Honorary Consul of Slovakia?
- Midnight sun, the fjords, the oil, the fish, the mountain peaks, the forests deep - this is how anybody can describe Norway. How would you describe Slovakia with couple of words if a Norwegian from the street asks you? How known is Central Europe in Norway?
- What do you consider to be your biggest success as Honorary Consul?

Since every interview in Euroreport is of course published with the photo please send your picture as well. The address for the photo is: inzercia@euroreport.sk

Thank you so far.
Regards

Henrieta Majkova

Dear Henrieta Majkova,

Thank you for the honor of being chosen as an interview object. I will do my best to answer your questions.

- Next year Slovakia together with 9 other Central European countries becomes member state of EU. How does the Norwegian public react on this EU enlargement? Is there still no majority will to join the Union?

I am in no real position to answer this though I can refer to a recent newspaper article in Aftenposten ([link](#)) which reported that support levels remain unchanged over the last month after falling substantially in September which was seen as a direct result of Sweden's rejection of the Euro. At present, 54% support Norway's inclusion in EU while 38% are against.

- NATO membership is the Slovak priority as well. In NATO our two countries will become closer partners. What is the Norwegian strategy towards new members in general? Can we expect any special steps from the Norwegian side?

Again, I am in no position to answer this question, I can however, say that I have always supported Slovakia's desire to be a member of NATO and the EU. I believe having Slovakia as an ally in a united Europe will only help to facilitate further cooperation between our countries. And through this type of cooperation, I strongly believe that we can look forward to a safe and prosperous EU.

- What is the main part of your work as the Honorary Consul?

As Honorary Consul I am responsible for both North and South Trønderlag together with Møre and Romsdal and have as my main objective is to promote and support the Republic of Slovakia, culturally and with regards to economic development. In practice this means frequent contact with the Slovakian Embassy in Oslo, regular, ongoing contact with Mid-Norway Chamber of Commerce arranging meetings with Slovakian business leaders and their Norwegian counterparts. With regards to cultural development, I have become better acquainted with numerous Slovakian musicians and artists and this promotion of Slovakian art and culture is an important part of my work as Honorary Consul.

- How well do you know Slovakia?

My personal knowledge of Slovakia is ever expanding. When thinking of Slovakia I think of both the tragic and heroic history of Slovakia. Every encounter I have with a Slovakian business or culture representative, every book I read on Slovakia and, of course, every trip I make to Slovakia, only adds to my knowledge of Slovakia. I hope to spend more time visiting Slovakia in 2004. In fact, when my current ambassador, and good friend, Ambassador Andrej Sokolik, retires, I plan to engage him as my personal travel companion and guide!

- Why did you decide to be the Honorary Consul of Slovakia?

I decided to become an honorary consul because it was something I had never done before and yet something that I felt I had a great deal to offer and also a great deal to gain. I would be learning more about a country I knew mostly from my history books while contributing to my community and to the young country of Slovakia.

- Midnight sun, the fjords, the oil, the fish, the mountain peaks, the forests deep - this is how anybody can describe Norway. How would you describe Slovakia with couple of words if a Norwegian from the street asks you?

When I think of Slovakia, I think rolling mountains, a fascinating history and fine art and architecture. And after my recent visit, I think of the incredible beer and sausages!

- How known is Central Europe in Norway?

Again, I believe the average Norwegian has a more school-days' history-book knowledge of Central Europe than any practical first-hand experience of Central Europe. At the same time, I believe that things are changing; Prague is a popular travel destination whose popularity is creating a growing interest

of Central Europe in Norway. People are interested in seeing first hand the part of Europe that not so long ago was nearly inaccessible.

- What do you consider to be your biggest success as Honorary Consul?

My biggest success would have to be Slovak March in Trondheim a month long festival of Slovak music, art and design which took place here in Trondheim last March. In putting together this cultural arrangement, I founded the Norwegian-Slovakian Foundation and the Norwegian-Slovakian Cultural fund. While I was by no means alone in arranging this cultural event, it did prove to be a very popular event which without any doubt introduced Slovakian culture to many Norwegians.

Sincerely,

Erik Frederiksen