

A nighttime landscape featuring a large rock formation on a hillside illuminated with a vibrant blue and green light. The surrounding area is dark, with some city lights visible in the distance. The scene is reflected in a body of water in the foreground. The sky is dark with some clouds.

Light up the world

Launch of the WHO Global Strategy to
Accelerate the Elimination of Cervical Cancer

Slovenia, 17 November 2020

Launch of the WHO Global Strategy to Accelerate the Elimination of Cervical Cancer in Slovenia

17. november 2020



Cervical cancer is the first cancer ever that we know how and commit to eliminate. With HPV vaccination, screening and treatment.

Ministry of Health of the Republic of Slovenia



Tomaž Gantar

Minister of Health of the Republic of Slovenia

Proud of the results of the ZORA Screening Programme

Cancer screening is amongst those lifesaving programmes which remain accessible in Slovenia during the Covid-19 pandemic. Thanks to the effective detection and treatment of precancerous lesions within the ZORA programme, fewer and fewer women are diagnosed with and dying from cervical cancer. It is a remarkable achievement, especially since Slovenia was one of the countries with the highest incidence rates of cervical cancer in Europe in the past. We can be proud of the accomplishment which would surely not have been possible without the efforts of all stakeholders, the lead team behind the ZORA programme, the Ljubljana Institute of Oncology Ljubljana, as well as all of the screening providers.

ZORA National Programme – Institute of Oncology Ljubljana Association of Slovenian Cancer Societies



dr. Urška Ivanuš

MD, PhD, specialist in public health

Head of the ZORA National Programme
Chairwoman of the Slovenian
Association of Cancer Societies

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Thanks to the results of the Cervical Cancer Screening Programme ZORA and the increasing HPV vaccine coverage, Slovenia may become the first European country to eliminate cervical cancer as a public health problem.

What differentiates cervical cancer from all other types of cancer is that we *know how* and we *can* prevent almost every single new case due to the HPV vaccination and the early detection and treatment of precancerous lesions. On 17 November 2020, the World Health Organization launched a global strategy to accelerate the elimination of cervical cancer. Countries all around the world raised awareness and support the initiative by lighting up in teal colour local monuments and landmarks. In Slovenia Bled Castle, Ljubljana's Butchers Bridge and Maribor's Quarantine.

Thanks to the results of the Cervical Cancer Screening Programme ZORA and the increasing HPV vaccine coverage, experts and decision-makers in Slovenia believe we are on track to become one of the first European country to eliminate cervical cancer. At Ljubljana Institute of Oncology, National Institute of Public Health, Ministry of Health, WHO and Association of Slovenian Cancer Societies we encourage women to participate in the ZORA Screening Programme and parents to vaccinate their daughters against HPV.

WHO Country Office in Slovenia



dr. Aiga Rurane

WHO Representative
Head of the WHO Country
Office in Slovenia

For the first time ever, the world has committed to eliminate a cancer. WHO Launch of the Global Strategy to Accelerate the Elimination of Cervical Cancer – 17. 11. 2020

To eliminate cervical cancer, we must achieve three targets: 90% of girls fully vaccinated with the HPV vaccine by 15 years of age; 70% of women screened using a high-performance test by age 35 and again by 45; and 90% of women identified with cervical cancer treated. For maximum impact, these 90-70-90 targets must be implemented simultaneously and at scale.

With remarkable results at 2 targets - 70% of women screened in the ZORA screening program and 90 % of women identified with cervical cancer treated - **Slovenia could very well become one of the first European countries reaching benchmarks with all three targets.**

This has been possible thanks to continued efforts and dedicated work for many years of many health professionals in Slovenia, multi-partnership and continued commitment of the government. Slovenia can be proud on what has been achieved and set an example to countries across the region and globally.

Gynaecology community



Video statement of Leon Meglič MD, PhD on the link below.

- [Download Attachment](#)
- [Available until 16 Dec 2020](#)

Prof. Assist. dr. Leon Meglič

MD, PhD, Specialist in Gynaecology and
Obstetrics
Gynaecology Clinic, UMC Ljubljana

Chairman of the Expert Panel for
Gynaecology at the Slovenian Medical
Society



HPV community



Prof. dr. Mario Poljak

MD, PhD, specialist in clinical microbiology

Institute of Microbiology and Immunology,
Faculty of Medicine,
University of Ljubljana

The International Cancer Screening Network observes the temporary suspension of cervical cancer screening programmes in 88% of countries and the suspension of HPV vaccination in over 70% of countries due to Covid-19

Since January 2020, we have been witnessing the unprecedented pandemic caused by Covid-19 and a series of unimaginable challenges faced by the two preventive programmes for prevention of cervical cancer. The International Cancer Screening Network observes the temporary suspension of cervical cancer screening programmes in 88% of countries and the suspension of HPV vaccination in over 70% of countries due to Covid-19.

Despite all the challenges and the temporary suspension of both preventive programmes in the spring, we can proudly say that Slovenia has managed to maintain its high percentage of women screened thanks to the ZORA initiative and that the HPV vaccination rate among girls remains similar to that of previous years. Since it would be extremely difficult to make up for the time lost and reduce the incidence rate of the only cancer which can be eliminated, I truly hope the current pandemic will not drastically affect the activities of both cervical cancer preventive programmes.

Association of European Cancer Leagues (ECL)



David Ritchie

Cancer Prevention Manager,
Association of European Cancer
Leagues (ECL)

The Association European Cancer Leagues (ECL) fully endorses, and stands ready to advance, the ambitious objectives of the global strategy to accelerate the elimination of cervical cancer as a public health problem.

Whilst the heaviest burden of cervical cancer is felt in low and middle income countries, Europe itself still has much to do stamp out this highly preventable disease. At present, organised population-based cervical cancer screening programmes, following quality assurance guidelines, has yet to be made available to all eligible women in every member state of the European Union. In addition, HPV vaccination coverage for girls varies dramatically amongst countries, ranging from 5% to 81%, and has yet to be introduced in several member states.*

Slovenia stands out as a positive example and role model for countries in Europe and beyond in how to organise and deliver systematic screening and drive uptake in vaccination. On behalf of ECL, I warmly congratulate the excellent work of our friends and colleagues in Slovenia and look forward to working closely over the coming years to make elimination of cervical cancer a reality.

* Arbyn M, Gultekin M, Morice P, Nieminen P, Cruickshank M, Poortmans P, et al. The European response to the WHO call to eliminate cervical cancer as a public health problem. *Int J Cancer*. 2020;4.

Mayors endorsing the elimination of cervical cancer



Zoran Janković
Mayor of Ljubljana

Ljubljana is proud to take part in the *Let's Light Up the World* initiative of the World Health Organization which serves as the official launch of the global strategy to accelerate the elimination of cervical cancer. We are very fortunate for the extraordinary results achieved in the field which put us in pole position in the race to eliminate cervical cancer.



Janez Fajfar
Mayor of Bled

The municipality of Bled is delighted to engage in such an important and global issue such as public health. At a time when the entire world seems to be afflicted by the coronavirus, we are excited to participate in the initiative and raise awareness about diseases more lethal than Covid-19. There are numerous occasions for which they light up the Eiffel Tower. Hence, I see no reason why we should not light up the cliff and Bled Castle in teal.

Mayors endorsing the elimination of cervical cancer



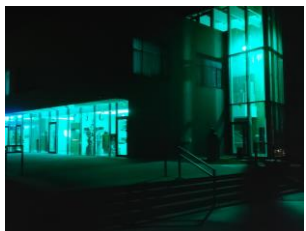
Saša Arsenovič
Mayor of Maribor

As a member of the WHO Healthy Cities Programme, Maribor strongly believes in global movements promoting health in social, economic and political agendas on a local level. By lighting up our Vetrinje Manor and Karantena Cultural Centre in teal, we at the Municipality of Maribor proudly participated in the global initiative to raise awareness of cervical cancer.



dr. Vlasta Krmelj
Mayor of Selnica ob Dravi

We truly believe that supporting the global strategy of the World Health Organization to eliminate cervical cancer is our social responsibility to every single member of the community. By lighting up the Arnold Tovornik Cultural Centre, we raised awareness of this serious health issue, and we will gladly endorse such initiatives to inform the public in the future as well. The municipality of Selnica ob Dravi follows the development strategy in which we defined our path towards a healthier society.





Bled Castle, Slovenia, 17 November 2020

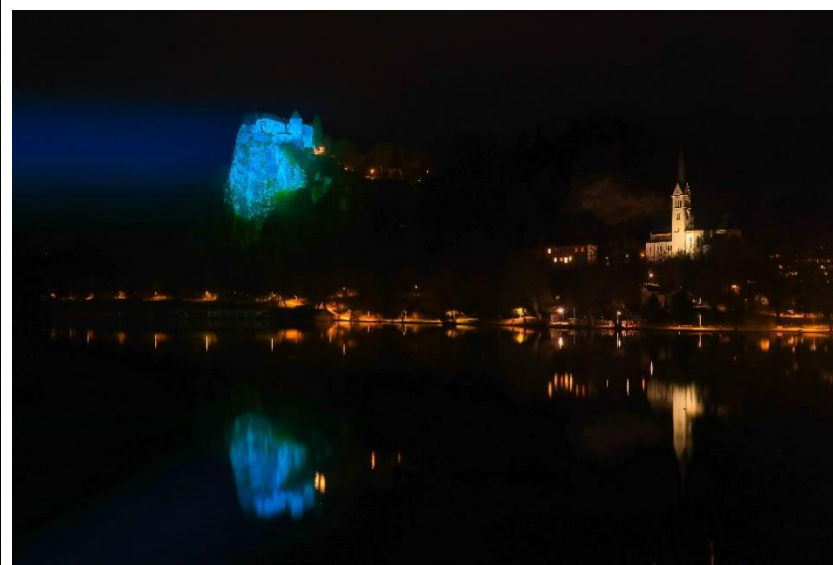


Bled Castle, Slovenia, 17 November 2020



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Bled Castle, Slovenia, 17 November 2020



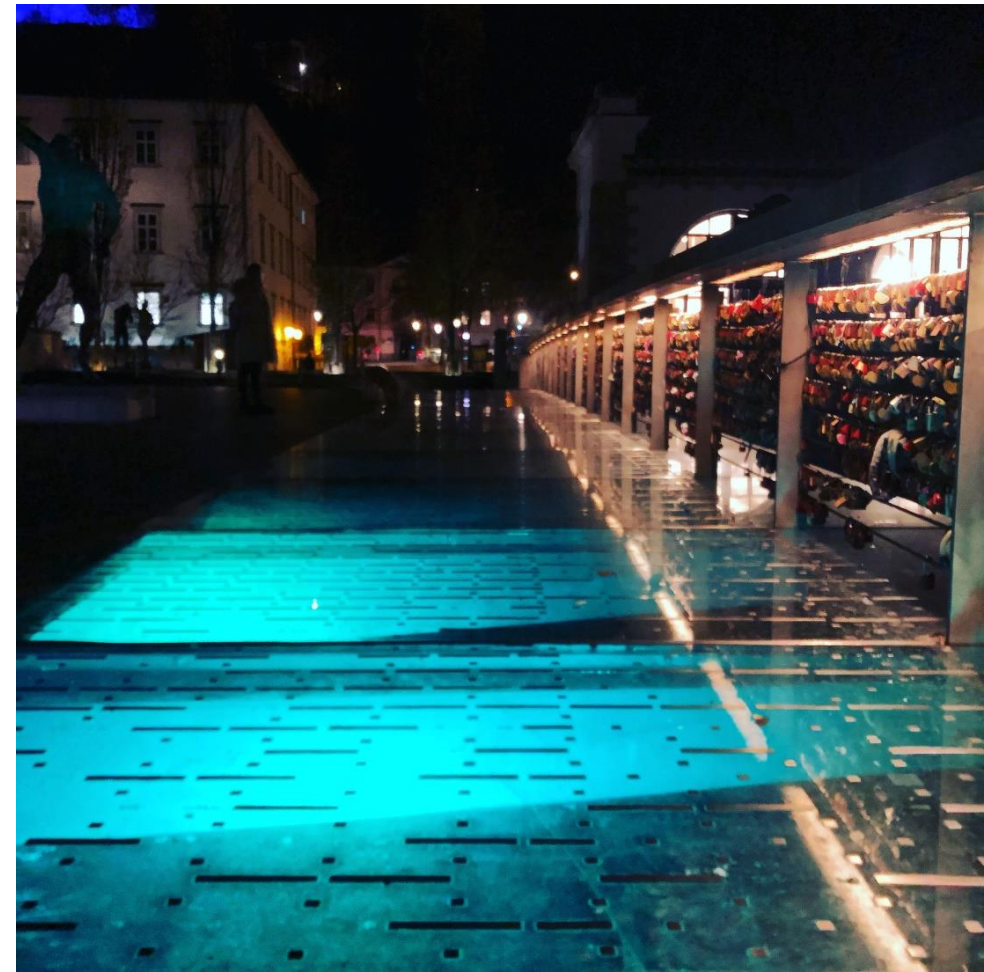


The Butcher's Bridge, Ljubljana, Slovenia, 17 November 2020



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The Butcher`s Bridge, Ljubljana, Slovenija,
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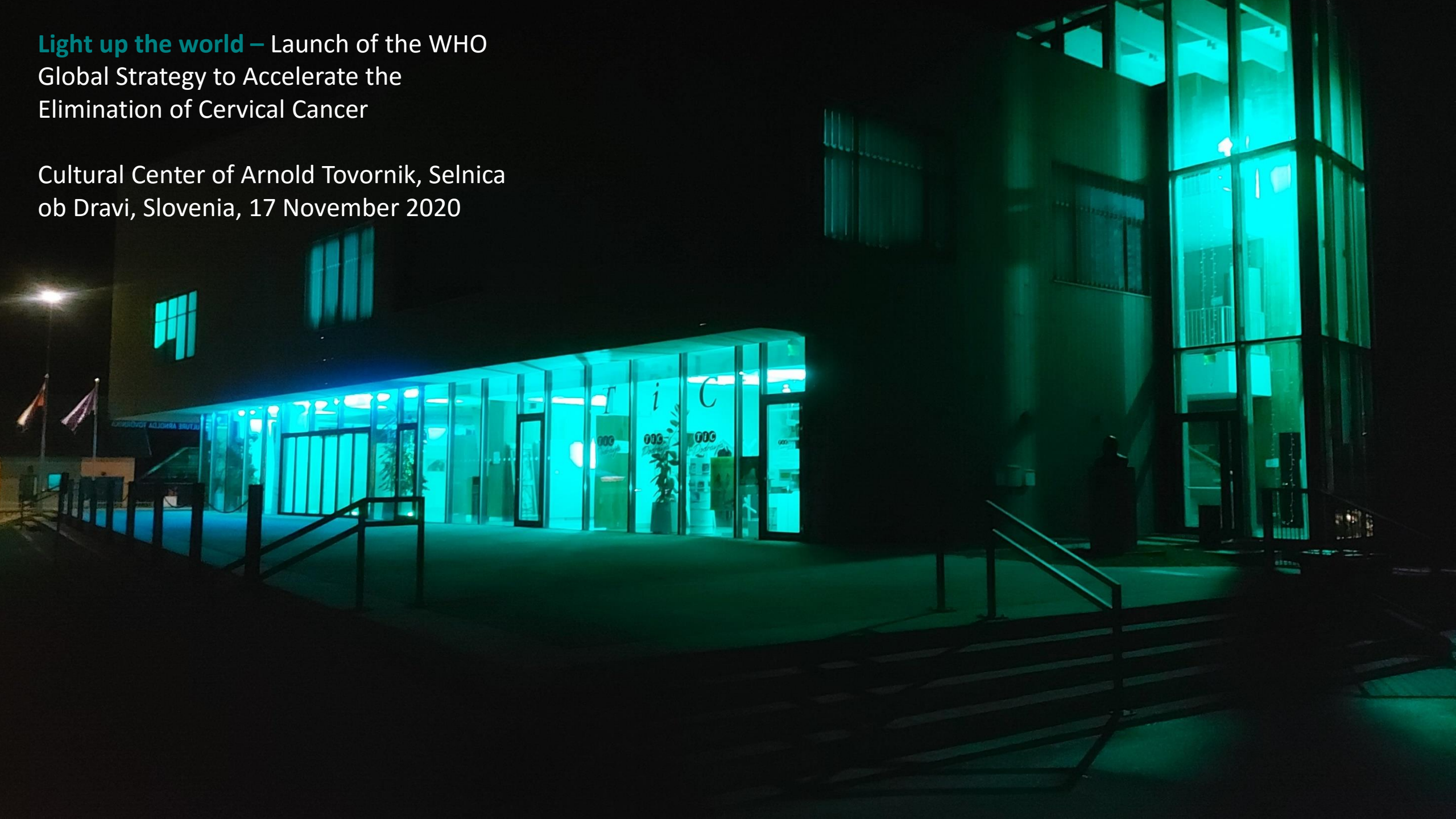
Vetrinje Manor, Maribor,
Slovenia, 17 November
2020



The Karantena Cultural Centre, Maribor, Slovenija,
17 November 2020

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Cultural Center of Arnold Tovornik, Selnica
ob Dravi, Slovenia, 17 November 2020



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Light up the world Infographics



Photo report of Launch of the WHO Global Strategy to Accelerate the Elimination of Cervical Cancer in Slovenia
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Electronic version, 17. November 2020
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