

SANPAOLO IMI

SANPAOLO IMI, due diligence of Banka Koper

Turin, 27 June 2001- From today until July 31st SANPAOLO IMI will conduct a due diligence on Bank Koper d.d.. The Slovenian Bank decided this at the request of its three main shareholders, the harbour company Luka Koper d.d. (30.9%), the petroleum company Istrabenz d.d. (29.8%) and the transportation company Intereuropa d.d. (20%).

At the conclusion of the due diligence it is envisaged the negotiations will be commenced for the possible purchase, pursuant to the current regulations of Slovenia, of a substantial shareholding stake in the Istrian bank by the Italian Group. Banka Koper, which is the fourth largest in Slovenia by total assets, has 37 branches (of which 11 are in the area of Ljubljana) and has a market share of more than 7%.

Slovenia is the eastern European country with the most positive macroeconomic indicators and it is nearest to European Union levels with a GDP pro-capita of 70% of the European Union average. In 2000, Slovenia has moved towards a freer economic environment and had a total commercial flow of 91%. In 2000, Italy was also the second most important commercial partner of the country, after Germany and before France, Austria and Croatia, with an import-export trade of 3.3 billion Euro, corresponding to 15.7% of the total Slovenian import-export trade.

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