

ABOUT SLOVENIA

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Slovenia is situated in Central Europe, at the confluence of four distinct regions – the Alps, the Dinaric Alps, and the Pannonian and Mediterranean basins – and four cultural regions – Slavic, Germanic, Romance, and Hungarian. It is in these unique conditions that Slovenes have nurtured, protected, and transformed their small corner of the world. Today, it is not only a place where we live and work, but also a place we carry in our hearts.

Facts

Area: 20,273 km².

Land border (km): with Austria 330, Italy 232, Hungary 102, Croatia 670 (total: 1,334).

Coastline: 46.6 km on the Adriatic Sea.

Highest peak: Mount Triglav (2,864 m).

Deepest sea point: –37 m (550 m from Cape Madona, Piran).

Average elevation: 556.8 m.

Average inclination: 13.1°.

The land is crossed by some 26,600 km of rivers and streams, and some 7,500 springs of drinking water rise to the surface, including several hundred first class therapeutic mineral springs.

Land use (cadastral data, 1998)

Cultivated fields: 12.4%.

Orchards: 1.9%.

Vineyards: 1.1%.

Grasslands: 28.1%.

Built-up: 3.8%.

Forests: 48.9% (Landsat-TM satellite data indicated 56.5% forests cover in 1993.)

Other: 3.8%.

Climate

In Slovenia, the climate ranges from alpine through temperate continental to mediterranean. The major part of the country has a temperate continental climate (Ljubljana: January –1.1° C, July +19.9° C, 1,394 mm precipitation). There is less precipitation and average temperatures are higher on the coast (Portorož: January +4.5° C, July +23.3° C, 1,032 mm).

Biodiversity

Slovenia's varied geological composition, diversity of relief forms, and the fact that Slovenia encompasses four distinct biogeographical regions make possible a wealth of animal and plant species. Slovenia is home to more than 3,000 fern and flower species and more than 50,000 animal species. Many animal and plant species are endemic.

Protection of nature

Natural reserves protect 5.9% of Slovenia's territory. The largest is Triglav National Park, which covers 838 km² (4.1%). Within the framework of »Natura 2000,« around 36% of the country is protected in regional and landscape parks.

Population

1,964,036 (2002), the vast majority are Slovenes (83.06% in 2002).

Ethnic minorities (2002): Hungarians (0.32%) and Italians (0.11%) are considered indigenous minorities with constitutionally protected rights.

Other ethnic groups (2002): Serbs (1.98%), Croats (1.81%), Bosnians (1.10%), Macedonians (0.20%), Montenegrins (0.14%), Albanians (0.31%), Romany (0.17%), and others (6.14%).

There are indigenous Slovene minorities in Italy, Austria, and Hungary. Between 250,000 and 400,000 Slovenes (depending on whether second and subsequent generations are counted) live outside the country, mostly on other continents and in European Union countries.

Population density: 97 inhabitants per km².

Birth rate (2002): 8.8 per thousand.

Mortality (2002): 9.4 per thousand.

Natural increase per 1,000 inhabitants: 3.1 (1985), 1.9 (1990), 0 (1995), -0.2 (2000), -0.6 (2002).

Age distribution (2002): 70.0% 15–64 years, 15.3% 0–14 years, 14.7% 65 and over.

Life expectancy (2002): 72 years (men), 79 years (women)

Urban population (2002): 50.1%.

Religion (2002): The majority of Slovenes are Roman Catholics (57.8%), although there are some small communities of other denominations: Protestants (0.8%), Orthodox (2.3%), Muslims (2.4%), and others.

Official language: Slovene, which in addition to singular and plural employs the almost unique dual conjugation form for two people. In ethnically mixed regions, also Italian and Hungarian.

Some Important Milestones

The ancestors of present-day Slovenes first settled in the area in the 6th century.

7th century: The Duchy of Carantania was the first Slovene state.

745: Carantania became a part of the Frankish empire; the Slavs converted to Christianity and gradually lost their independence.

10th century: The Freising manuscripts, the first known writings in the Slovene and Slavic dialect in Latin script.

14th century to 1918: All the Slovene regions passed into the possession of the Habsburgs, later the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy. The Reformation brought literacy and the first printed book in 1550, and in 1584 the first Slovene translation of the Bible was printed.

1809–1813: The establishment of the Illyrian Provinces – half of Slovenia was included in Napoleon's French empire – strengthens Slovene national consciousness.

1848: The United Slovenia movement demands the unification of all Slovenes in a single province within the Austrian Empire.

1918: At the end of World War I, after the unsuccessful attempt at Trialism (the division of the Habsburg Monarchy into Austrian, Hungarian, and Yugoslav parts) and the collapse of Austria-Hungary, Slovene ethnic territory is divided among four countries; within the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats, and Slovenes

(Kingdom of Yugoslavia), Slovene territory is initially divided into two administrative units (under Ljubljana and Maribor authorities) and then incorporated in the Drava ban's domain.

1919: Prekmurje is included in the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats, and Slovenes.

November 29, 1945: The Slovenes secure their own republic within the Federal People's Republic of Yugoslavia.

September 15, 1947: The greater part of Primorska is rejoined to Slovenia on the basis of the Treaty of Paris.

April 1990: First democratic elections.

December 23, 1990: 88.5% of voters cast their votes for an independent Slovenia in a referendum.

June 26, 1991: Proclamation of Slovenia's independence.

December 23, 1991: The new Slovene constitution is adopted.

January 15, 1992: Slovenia is recognized by all the members of the European Union.

May 22, 1992: Slovenia becomes a member of the United Nations.

March 29, 2004: Slovenia becomes a member of NATO

May 1, 2004: Slovenia becomes a member of the European Union.

Government and Political System

Constitutional type: parliamentary democracy.

Conventional long/short name: Republic of Slovenia, Slovenia.

Local long/short form: Republika Slovenija, Slovenija.

Legislative authority: National Assembly (90 deputies).

Capital: Ljubljana (260,543 in 2002).

Other main cities: Maribor, Celje, Kranj, Velenje, Koper, Novo mesto, Ptuj, Jesenice, Trbovlje, Nova Gorica, Murska Sobota.

Municipalities: 193 (11 have the status of City Municipality: Celje, Koper, Kranj, Ljubljana, Maribor, Murska Sobota, Nova Gorica, Novo mesto, Ptuj, Slovenj Gradec, Velenje).

Economy

Currency: Tolar (SIT), made up of 100 stotins (192.26 SIT = 1 EUR, July 2004).

GDP per capita: 8,699 USD (1990), 9,527 USD (2000), 11,775 USD (2002).

Real growth of GDP: 3.4% (2002).

Standardized rate of unemployment (ILO): 7.7% (1998), 7.2% (2000), 6.4% (2003).

Inflation rate: 9.1% (1997), 7.9% (1998), 6.1% (1999), 3.8% (2003).

International Trade Exports of goods and services: 6.7% (1998), 1.7% (1999), 8.2% (2003).

Imports of goods and services: 10.4% (1998), 8.2% (1999), 8.4% (2003).

Main foreign trading partners: Germany, Italy, Croatia, Austria, France, Bosnia-Herzegovina, United States of America, Russia, United Kingdom, Hungary, and The Netherlands.

Source of data: Statistical Office of the Republic of Slovenia,

<http://www.stat.si/eng/index.asp>