

SLOVENIA – a shiny



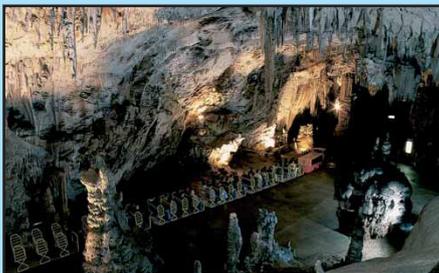
Mountain Triglav



Slovene seaside



Town of Piran



Postojna Cave



Lippizaner horses in Lipica, Karst

BASIC FACTS ABOUT THE REPUBLIC OF SLOVENIA

Area: 20,273 km²

Length of borders: 1,370 km in total;
with Austria, 318 km; with Italy, 280 km;
with Hungary, 102 km; with Croatia, 670 km

Length of the Adriatic Sea: 46.6 km

Population: 2,008,516 (30.6.2006)

Nationalities: (2002 census):

Slovenian 1,631,363; Italian 2,258;
Hungarian 6,243; other nationalities:
149,259; nationality undeclared: 174,913;

Language: Slovene; also Italian and
Hungarian in nationally mixed areas;

Currency: euro

Capital: Ljubljana

GDP per capita in 2006: EUR 14,808

Growth in GDP in 2006: 5.2 %

Inflation in 2006 (annual average): 2.5%

Unemployment in 2006: 6.0% (surveyed
unemployment level according to ILO
standards)

Important dates:

- Independence - 25 June 1991

- Member of EU - 1 May 2004

- Introduction of the euro - 1 January 2007

Geographical division of Slovenia:

Alps: 42.1% of territory

Dinaric Alps: 28.1% of territory

Pannonian Plain: 21.2% of territory

Mediterranean: 8.6% of territory

Highest peak: Mt. Triglav; 2,864 meters

SLOVENIA AND THE WORLD

Slovenia lies at the heart of one of Europe's ethnic crossroads. Throughout history the territory of present-day Slovenia has been an important transitional zone in Europe, and thus continually subject to cultural, economic and political domination by centers of civilization outside its ethnic territory. From the time of their earliest settlement here in the 6th century, the Slovenes have had to struggle for living space and to safeguard their cultural, political and economic existence with more populous Germanic, Latin, Magyar and Slavic peoples. In this struggle the Slovenes lost nearly two-thirds of the territory they originally settled.

On 16 May 2007 the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) invited Slovenia to start the process of its accession to the OECD. After successfully undertaking the OSCE Presidency in 2005, Slovenia is now presiding the EU Council in the first half of 2008.

ECONOMY

Slovenia is among the most successful of the countries in transition from socialism to a market economy. It boasts a stable growth in GDP and is viewed as a safe country, ranked among the countries with the lowest degree of risk. Since its independence, Slovenia has privatized its economy, stabilized inflation and wage growth, halted rising unemployment, strengthened its currency, changed over to the common currency of European Union euro, relaxed the flow of capital and modernized its taxation system. Throughout its history Slovenia has always been a part of larger countries or even great empires. The country saw many changes in its economic system – from the mainly agricultural and artisanal period of the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy, the slightly more industrialized Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes, the socialist state-centered industrialization of the former SFR Yugoslavia, to today's independent Slovenia, directed towards development and a market economy. At the time of its independence in 1991, Slovenia was the

wealthiest and most open Yugoslav Republic. Although Slovenes represented only 8% of the Yugoslav population, Slovenia exported almost one-third of all goods exported from Yugoslavia. After gaining independence, Slovenia managed to overcome the loss of the markets in the former Yugoslavia in a short period of time, as its trade flows were redirected towards the EU and the associated partners. In the economic sphere, Slovenia's level of development is quickly catching up with that of the EU. Its major trade partners are Germany, Italy, Croatia, Austria and France.

GEOGRAPHICAL CHARACTERISTICS, CLIMATE

Slovenia lies at the heart of Europe, where the Alps face the Pannonian plains and the Mediterranean meets the mysterious Karst. To the north is Austria; Hungary is to the east; Croatia to the south and Italy to the west. Green is the dominant colour. There are many woods and forests in Slovenia – covering more than half of the country – and numerous preserved and protected plant and animal species. In one of the last primeval forests of the Kocevje area, it is possible to hike through for days without ever emerging onto the plain. As a small, beautiful and picturesque country, Slovenia makes a great tourist destination. You can ski in the morning and surrender yourself to the luxury of the Adriatic Sea in the afternoon. It is very easy to get here as the country is connected with the rest of the world by a modern highway network, railway system, international airport and seaports.

PEOPLE

Slovenia has a population of 2 million, of which 83.1% (2002 census) are Slovenes. In Slovenia there are also two national minority communities of Italians and Hungarians. They are considered indigenous minorities, and their rights are protected under the Constitution.

LANGUAGE AND RELIGION

The country's official language is Slovene, which