



# GLOBAL GOVERNANCE INSTITUTE

## National Backgrounders – European Foreign Policy

### Country Profile

#### *Slovenia*

<b>Capital:</b>	Ljubljana
<b>Geographical Size:</b>	20 273 km <sup>2</sup>
<b>Population:</b>	2 061 085 (2014)
<b>Population as % of total EU population:</b>	0.4% (2014)
<b>GDP:</b>	€ 35.274 billion (2013)
<b>Defense Expenditure:</b>	€ 381 million (2013)
<b>Official EU language(s):</b>	Slovenian
<b>Political System:</b>	Parliamentary republic
<b>EU member country since:</b>	1 May 2004
<b>Seats in European Parliament:</b>	8
<b>Currency:</b>	Eurozone member since 1 January 2007
<b>Schengen area member?</b>	Schengen Area member since 21 December 2007
<b>Presidency of the Council:</b>	Once: in 2008

Source: Europa.eu

## GGI National Backgrounders – European Foreign Policy 2015

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Peace & Security Section

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## a. Political System

The Slovenian political system is a parliamentary democratic republic with a multi-party system. The President is the head of state and is elected by popular vote for five years with a maximum of two consecutive terms. Borut Pahor (Independent) currently holds this position. He serves a representative role and is the commander-in-chief of the Slovenian military forces.<sup>1</sup> The executive and administrative authority is held by the Government of Slovenia (*Vlada*) and is led by the Prime Minister and the Council of Ministers, all elected by the National Assembly (*Državni*)<sup>2</sup>. Since September 2014, Miro Cerar (Modern Centre Party, *SMC*) has been the Prime Minister of Slovenia. He leads a centre-left cabinet composed of a coalition of sixteen ministers from the Modern Centre Party (*SMC*), the Democratic Party of Pensioners of Slovenia (*DeSUS*), and the Social Democrats (*SD*). It notably has the highest number of female ministers in the history of Slovenia.<sup>3</sup>

The legislative power is vested in the bicameral Parliament of Slovenia. The National Assembly (lower house) represents the nation and retains the most power. It is made up of 90 members directly elected every four years; 88 members are elected via proportional representation, while the remaining two are elected by the registered members of the Hungarian and Italian minorities. The *SMC*, *DeSUS* and *SD* parties currently hold 52 seats altogether in the National Assembly, while the opposition is made of 38 deputies from the Slovenian Democratic Party (*SDS*), the United Left, New Slovenia, and independent deputies. The National Council (upper house) consists of 40 members representing various interests and social groups, not directly elected by the Slovenian population. It has very limited power, thus many view the Slovenian parliamentary bicameralism as “incomplete”.<sup>4</sup>

## b. Foreign Policy

Slovenia maintains good relations with its immediate neighbors and international partners. In recent years it has become a member of numerous international organizations, including the UN in 1992 and the EU and NATO in 2004<sup>5</sup>. A key area of focus for Slovenia is the Western Balkans, not only as a result of previous territorial debates regarding Croatia (solved in 2011), but also because the area is important for international stability and regional integration<sup>6</sup>. However, foreign affairs in Slovenia have a limited outreach and have rarely achieved first-rank status. Most of the time, Slovenia was absorbed in bilateral issues with neighboring countries and occupied with fulfilling the EU's *acquis communautaire* in order to accede to the Union<sup>7</sup>.

<sup>1</sup> Robbers, G. "Slovenia." In *Encyclopedia of World Constitutions*. New York: Facts On File, 2006. Print.

<sup>2</sup> Borak, N. and Borak, B. "Institutional Setting for the New Independent State", In Mrak, M. et al. (ed.) *Slovenia: From Yugoslavia to the European Union*. Washington, D.C.: The World Bank, 2004, p. 53-66. Accessed November 15, 2015. <https://openknowledge.worldbank.org/bitstream/handle/10986/15032/283760PAPER0Slovenia.pdf?sequence=1&isAllowed=y>.

<sup>3</sup> "Government of the Republic of Slovenia", *Republic of Slovenia*, 2015. Web. Accessed December 15, 2015. <http://www.vlada.si/en/>

<sup>4</sup> Pavlič Možina, S. and Prešeren, P., *Facts about Slovenia*, 8<sup>th</sup> edition, Government Communication Office, April 2011. Web. Accessed November 25, 2015 ; "About Slovenia", *Culture.si – Culture Slovenia*, last update July 30, 2015. Web. Accessed November 15, 2015. [http://www.culture.si/en/About\\_Slovenia](http://www.culture.si/en/About_Slovenia) <http://www.ukom.gov.si/fileadmin/ukom.gov.si/pageuploads/dokumenti/Publikacije/2011/FACTS2011W.pdf>

<sup>5</sup> "Foreign Policy", *Slovenia House Berlin*, n.d. Web. Accessed November 5, 2015. [http://www.sloveniahouse.org/index.php?en\\_slovenia\\_foreign-policy](http://www.sloveniahouse.org/index.php?en_slovenia_foreign-policy)

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>7</sup> Vidmajer, S. "Letter from Ljubljana", *Judy Dempsey's Strategic Europe*, Carnegie Europe, April 24, 2015. Web. Accessed November 24, 2015. <http://carnegieeurope.eu/strategieurope/?fa=59895>.

### *European Union (EU)*

In June 1991, Slovenia gained independence by expelling the Yugoslav People's Army, and the Republic of Slovenia was born. Among European states, Germany, Austria, and the Vatican were active supporters of the newly independent state. Slovenia's ethnically homogenous nature prevented the ethnic cleansing and continued conflict many other former Yugoslav states suffered in their post-independence period. Accession talks to join the EU began after nearly a decade of strong economic performance and of bilateral disputes with neighbors such as Italy. On May 1, 2004, almost 13 years after independence, Slovenia joined the EU. Over the past years, the country has both received funds and contributed to the European Project. As a part of the EU, Slovenia has improved international relations and strengthened ties with neighboring countries: Austria, Croatia, Hungary, and Italy. The country has also contributed to military missions with its EU partners by sending troops or humanitarian personnel to countries ranging from Bosnia and Herzegovina, Iraq, Kosovo, and the Democratic Republic of the Congo.<sup>8</sup> Slovenia supported EU views on Russian sanctions and the Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership (TTIP), however the country did not take controversial positions on many issues.<sup>9</sup>

### **c. Peace & Security Policy**

Slovenia's defense policy is based on two fundamental values: security and welfare of the state and its citizens. It aims at maintaining the national identity while simultaneously maintaining openness to the world. Slovenia prioritizes contributions to missions in **Southeast Europe and the Balkans**, as historic cultural and ethnic ties have made security in the region a top priority. The largest contingents were so far deployed in Bosnia and Herzegovina and in Kosovo. Slovenia's preferred channels for participation in peace operations are regional organizations, **NATO and the EU** in particular<sup>10</sup>.

### *European Union (EU)*

Since May 2004, Slovenia has contributed to a wide array of EU Common Defence and Security Policy (CSDP) missions. Slovenia has taken part in regional affairs through EU military and civilian crisis management operations, particularly in Kosovo, Bosnia and Herzegovina, and a number of Western Balkan missions. With neighboring states, foreign relations are particularly amiable through the protection of respective Italian and Hungarian minorities on Slovenian territory. In return, other EU States containing Slovenian minorities such as Austria are protected. As a result of becoming a EU member, Slovenia has also been able to expand its security policy, not just concentrating on regional issues.<sup>11</sup>

### *North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO)*

Since 2004, Slovenia has showed a strong commitment to NATO principles and values and is a valued ally, specifically in terms of its cooperation and engagement in the Western

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<sup>8</sup> "Foreign Policy", *Slovenia House Berlin*, n.d. Web. Accessed November 5, 2015.

[http://www.sloveniahouse.org/index.php?en\\_slovenia\\_foreign-policy](http://www.sloveniahouse.org/index.php?en_slovenia_foreign-policy)

<sup>9</sup> "Slovenia", *European Foreign Policy Scorecard 2015*, European Council on Foreign Relations, 2015. Web. Accessed November 6, 2015. <http://www.ecfr.eu/scorecard/2015/countries/slovenia>

<sup>10</sup> Vuga, J. "Peacekeeping Contributor Profile: The Republic of Slovenia", *Providing for Peacekeeping*, August 2014. Web. Accessed November 24, 2015. <http://www.providingforpeacekeeping.org/2014/09/02/peacekeeping-contributor-profile-slovenia/>.

<sup>11</sup> "Foreign Policy", *Slovenia House Berlin*, n.d. Web. Accessed November 5, 2015.

[http://www.sloveniahouse.org/index.php?en\\_slovenia\\_foreign-policy](http://www.sloveniahouse.org/index.php?en_slovenia_foreign-policy).

Balkans<sup>12</sup>. Slovenia took part in KFOR in Kosovo and, until 2014, also in ISAF in Afghanistan, two important NATO-led operations<sup>13</sup>. In 2015, Slovenia devoted 1.0% of its GDP to defense expenditures<sup>14</sup>. During 2014-2015 Slovenia contributed to 0.22% of the *NATO Common-Funded Budgets and Programmes*<sup>15</sup>.

#### *United Nations (UN)*

Slovenia joined the UN in 1992, shortly after gaining independence. Since 1997, Slovenia has contributed uniformed personnel to the following UN missions: UNMIK in Kosovo, UNSMIS in Syria, UNFICYP in Cyprus and UNMISSET in East Timor<sup>16</sup>. In October 2015, Slovenia had 17 nationals engaged in UN peacekeeping missions (14 troops in UNIFIL in Lebanon and 3 experts in UNTSO in the Middle East)<sup>17</sup>. Over the course of 2014-2015, Slovenia contributed to 0.10% of the UN Peacekeeping budget<sup>18</sup>.

#### *Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE)*

Slovenia joined the OSCE in 1992. In 2014, the Organization expressed concern over free media in Slovenia and how the threat could stifle investigative journalism in the country<sup>19</sup>. In the same year, Slovenia contributed 0.2% (€273,677) of the Organization's budget<sup>20</sup>, and 4 nationals were involved in its staff<sup>21</sup>.

#### *Council of Europe (CoE)*

In May 1993, Slovenia became a member of the Council of Europe. In 2014, the European Court of Human Rights issued 31 judgments concerning the country, of which 29 were violations and one was a non-violation. In 2015, Slovenia contributed 0.19% (€788,119) of the total budget of the Organization<sup>22</sup>.

<sup>12</sup> n.a. "NATO Secretary General Praises Slovenia's Role in the Western Balkans", Newsroom, *NATO*, Jul. 13, 2015. Web. Accessed Nov. 6, 2015. [http://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/news\\_121749.htm](http://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/news_121749.htm)

<sup>13</sup> Vuga, J. "Peacekeeping Contributor Profile: The Republic of Slovenia", *Providing for Peacekeeping*, August 2014. Web. Accessed November 24, 2015. <http://www.providingforpeacekeeping.org/2014/09/02/peacekeeping-contributor-profile-slovenia/>.

<sup>14</sup> "NATO publishes defence expenditures data for 2014 and estimates for 2015", Press release PR/CP(2015)093-COR1, *The North Atlantic Treaty Organization*, June 22, 2015, p. 6. Web. Accessed November 24, 2015.

[http://www.nato.int/nato\\_static\\_fl2014/assets/pdf/pdf\\_2015\\_06/20150622\\_PR\\_CP\\_2015\\_093-v2.pdf](http://www.nato.int/nato_static_fl2014/assets/pdf/pdf_2015_06/20150622_PR_CP_2015_093-v2.pdf)

<sup>15</sup> "NATO Common-Funded Budget & Programmes", *The North Atlantic Treaty Organization*. Web. Accessed November 24, 2015.

[http://www.nato.int/nato\\_static\\_fl2014/assets/pdf/pdf\\_2014\\_06/20140611\\_20140601\\_NATO\\_common\\_funded\\_budgets\\_2014-2015.pdf](http://www.nato.int/nato_static_fl2014/assets/pdf/pdf_2014_06/20140611_20140601_NATO_common_funded_budgets_2014-2015.pdf)

<sup>16</sup> Vuga, J. "Peacekeeping Contributor Profile: The Republic of Slovenia", *Providing for Peacekeeping*, August 2014. Web. Accessed November 24, 2015. <http://www.providingforpeacekeeping.org/2014/09/02/peacekeeping-contributor-profile-slovenia/>.

<sup>17</sup> "UN Mission's Summary detailed by Country", *United Nations Peacekeeping*, October 31, 2015, p. 37. Web. Accessed November 24, 2015. [http://www.un.org/en/peacekeeping/contributors/2015/oct15\\_3.pdf](http://www.un.org/en/peacekeeping/contributors/2015/oct15_3.pdf).

<sup>18</sup> United Nations General Assembly, "Implementation of General Assembly resolutions 55/235 and 55/236", *Report of the Secretary General*, December 27, 2012, p. 3. Web. Accessed November 24, 2015. [http://www.un.org/en/ga/search/view\\_doc.asp?symbol=A/67/224/Add.1](http://www.un.org/en/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=A/67/224/Add.1).

<sup>19</sup> Cocoli, I. "OSCE Condemns Harassment of Journalists in Slovenia, Bosnia-Herzegovina", *Voice of America (VOA)*, October 10, 2014. Web. Accessed November 3, 2015. <http://www.voanews.com/content/osce-condemns-harassment-of-journalists-in-slovenia-bosnia-herzegovina/2479695.html>.

<sup>20</sup> The Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE), *Annual Report 2014*, July 2015, p. 105. Web. Accessed November 24, 2015. <http://www.osce.org/secretariat/169971?download=true>.

<sup>21</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 109.

<sup>22</sup> "Slovenia - Member State", *Council of Europe*, 2015. Web. Accessed November 3, 2015. <http://www.coe.int/en/web/portal/slovenia>.

### *Strategic Culture*

In terms of strategic culture, Slovenia does not have a grand strategy. Its military strategy, as most small states, is based on asymmetric warfare, defined as a conflict involving two states with unequal military and economic resources. Slovenia has focused on national security goals and has advocated for **further integration with NATO and the EU**, two regional organizations which provide peace and security in a region with similar political, economic, cultural, and security interests. This takes priority over contributions to UN missions<sup>23</sup>. Civil society, as a factor of strategic culture, is playing a role in the security of cyberspace and reinventing the attitudes towards technology<sup>24</sup>.

#### **d. Economic Policy**

##### *European Union (EU)*

Slovenia is the second richest of the Slavic countries after the Czech Republic.<sup>25</sup> It has been a member of the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) since 2010. From 2004 to 2006 the Slovenian economy grew by nearly 5% a year on average and expanded nearly 7%. In 2007, Slovenia introduced the euro as its currency. As a result of the European financial crisis, the Slovenian GDP shrunk by 8% per capita in 2009.<sup>26</sup> Since 2012, growth has been recorded in the Slovenian economy, but it does not compare to the boom experienced from 2004-2006. Slovenia has recently taken action to alleviate pressures on the medium-term sustainability of the pension system and the banking sector has been further stabilized<sup>27</sup>.

##### *Economic Diplomacy & Foreign Trade*

In late 2014, Slovenia indicated that the economy remained one of the most important factors in diplomacy. Slovenia exports mostly motor vehicles, furniture and household electrical equipment, pharmaceutical products and clothes. The country imports machinery and transport equipment, manufactured goods, chemicals, fuels and lubricants, and food. The **European Union** (especially Germany, Austria, Italy, and France) is by far its largest trading partner accounting for about 71% of exports and 79% of imports<sup>28</sup>.

**Russia** continues to be a strategic partner for Slovenia in terms of economic diplomacy. Slovenia's trade in goods with Russia increased from 1.3 billion USD in 2012 to two billion USD in 2013, according to the Slovenian foreign minister Karl Erjavec (Democratic Party of Pensioners). The minister also stressed that Slovenia must open up to foreign investors in

<sup>23</sup> Vuga, J. "Peacekeeping Contributor Profile: The Republic of Slovenia", *Providing for Peacekeeping*, August 2014. Web. Accessed November 24, 2015. <http://www.providingforpeacekeeping.org/2014/09/02/peacekeeping-contributor-profile-slovenia/>.

<sup>24</sup> Dvoršak, A. "Cyber Defence in Slovenia", *DeFactual*, July 17, 2013. Web. Accessed November 3, 2015. <http://www.defactual.com/cyber-defence-in-slovenia/>.

<sup>25</sup> "GDP per capita in PPS", *Eurostat*, June 1, 2015. Web. Accessed November 6, 2015.

<http://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/tgm/table.do?tab=table&init=1&language=en&pcode=tec00114&plugin=1>

<sup>26</sup> Mramor, D. "Double Dip Recession is the 'Official' Reality", *The Slovenia Times*, March 13, 2012. Web. Accessed November 15, 2015. <http://www.sloveniatimes.com/double-dip-recession-is-the-'official'-reality>

<sup>27</sup> Council of the European Union, "Council Recommendation on the 2015 National Reform Programme of Slovenia and delivering a Council opinion on the 2015 Stability Programme of Slovenia", *Official Journal of the European Union*, C272/7-8 (July 14, 2015). Web. Accessed November 24, 2015.

[http://ec.europa.eu/europe2020/pdf/csr2015/csr2015\\_council\\_slovenia\\_en.pdf](http://ec.europa.eu/europe2020/pdf/csr2015/csr2015_council_slovenia_en.pdf)

<sup>28</sup> "Slovenia Balance of Trade", *Trading Economics*, last update November 9, 2015. Web. Accessed November 24, 2015. <http://www.tradingeconomics.com/slovenia/balance-of-trade>.

order to modernize its economic infrastructure<sup>29</sup>. However, the EU's Economic and Financial Affairs Council (ECOFIN) underscored in its 2015 recommendation that low investment levels in Slovenian business are caused by the high number of laws and numerous changes in the legislation, creating an unsupportive business environment<sup>30</sup>.

e. Other Diplomatic Priorities

*Priorities at the European Level*

In terms of European diplomatic priorities, Slovenia is a large contributor to the maintenance in peace in **Bosnia and Herzegovina** and **Croatia**. In Bosnia and Herzegovina, Slovenia has contributed logistical support to NATO's Implementation Force (IFOR), as well as NATO's Stabilization Force (SFOR), which is a peacekeeping force, in the region. Slovenia has also contributed military personnel in Sarajevo since 1999. Slovenia has also promised \$56 million in mine removal and victim rehabilitation services in Bosnia and Herzegovina, as a part of International Trust Fund for Demining and Humanitarian Assistance in this country.<sup>31</sup> Slovenia also maintains close relations with its neighbors; Croatia, Hungary, Italy, and Austria.

*Priorities at the Global Level*

Internationally, Slovenia has little influence outside of Europe. Most of its global outlooks conform to EU ideals and views. Slovenia took an active response to the Ebola outbreak as well as remaining engaged in Libya, but there was no real response on Slovenia's part in terms of military operations.<sup>32</sup>

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<sup>29</sup> "Yan, "Slovenia Puts Priority on Economic Diplomacy in 2015", *Xinhuanet*, December 8, 2014. Web. Accessed November 6, 2015. [http://news.xinhuanet.com/english/europe/europe/2014-12/08/c\\_133840912.htm](http://news.xinhuanet.com/english/europe/europe/2014-12/08/c_133840912.htm)

<sup>30</sup> Council of the European Union, "Council Recommendation on the 2015 National Reform Programme of Slovenia and delivering a Council opinion on the 2015 Stability Programme of Slovenia", *Official Journal of the European Union*, C272/8 (July 14, 2015). Web. Accessed November 24, 2015. [http://ec.europa.eu/europe2020/pdf/csr2015/csr2015\\_council\\_slovenia\\_en.pdf](http://ec.europa.eu/europe2020/pdf/csr2015/csr2015_council_slovenia_en.pdf).

<sup>31</sup> Prešeren, P. "International Trust Fund for Demining and Mine Victims Assistance", *Slovenia.si*, June 2010. Web. Accessed November 4, 2015. <http://www.slovenia.si/slovenia/state/slovenia-in-the-world/international-humanitarian-assistance/international-trust-fund-for-deminind-and-mine-victims-assistance/>

<sup>32</sup> "Slovenia", *European Foreign Policy Scorecard 2015*, European Council on Foreign Relations, 2015. Web. Accessed November 6, 2015. <http://www.ecfr.eu/scorecard/2015/countries/slovenia>

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