

Country Profile - Slovenia

Job market

What are my chances of getting a job?

Slovenia felt the pressure of the global economic crisis in 2008 and since then progression has been slow. Manufacturing and construction were the worst hit and conditions still remain uncertain. Slovenia is dependent on its export market but there has been a drop in interest from international trading. Unemployment has increased in recent years but this is now slowing and there was a very small increase in the number of available vacancies at the beginning of 2012.

- **Typical problems encountered:** Slovenia is attempting to refocus the employment market from labour-intensive to technologically advanced companies, but growth in this is slow. The majority of long-term unemployed people are those with no qualifications or relevant work experience.
- **How to improve your chances:** it is important that UK graduates gain as much work experience as possible in a related area before going to Slovenia. Employers will be more likely to consider your application if they can see you have relevant practical skills. Additional skills, such as having a driving licence, knowledge of foreign languages and computer skills may also help when it comes to finding employment. Graduates should focus on international companies who communicate in English.
- **Language requirements:** the official and state language is Slovene, a distinct Slavic language. Other areas speak Italian and Hungarian. UK graduates may be able to find work in Slovenia without a good knowledge of the Slovenian language but this will mainly be in large or international companies. It is advisable to have some knowledge of the language to help you integrate in the country. [Language Trainers](#) offer courses for those wishing to learn Slovenian in London or online. The [Centre for Slovene as a Second or Foreign Language](#) allows you to learn the language in several parts of Slovenia including Ljubljana. Self-study courses are also available through [Eurotalk Interactive](#).

Where can I work?

- **Major industries:** commerce, construction, business services, manufacturing, food, electrical devices, metal processing and chemicals.
- **Recent growth areas:** service sector, IT, pharmaceutical and automobile manufacturing, tourism.
- **Industries in decline:** agriculture, mining and some parts of manufacturing. Employer demand has also recently fallen in recreational activities, public administration and real estate.
- **Shortage occupations:** engineers (mainly mechanical and electrical), doctors, nurses, pharmacists, software and application developers, construction workers and workers in electricity and gas supply and transport and storage.
- **Major companies:** Mercator (retailer), Slovenian Railways, Post of Slovenia, Gorenje (home appliance manufacturer), Krka (pharmaceuticals), Engrotus (retailer), Revoz (Renault-owned car maker), Lek (pharmaceuticals), Merkur (retailer), Unior (tools and machinery), Nova Ljubljanska banka (banking),

Zavarovalnica Triglav (insurance), Holding Slovenske elektrarne (HSE) (utilities provider).

- **Search for more companies:** the [Chamber of Commerce and Industry of Slovenia](#) provides a range of valuable information on business sectors and links to Slovenia company directories. [Kompas](#) is a worldwide business directory searchable by country and product/service.
- **Major cities:** Ljubljana (capital and largest), Maribor.

What's it like working in Slovenia?

- **Average working hours:** a full-time working week usually equals 40 hours and should be no less than 36 hours per week. A full working week may not be spread over less than four days a week.
 - **Holidays:** there are in total 13 public holidays, which are to celebrate religious and national festivals. In addition to public holidays, Slovenians are entitled to at least four weeks' leave per year, although this tends to rise with each year of service.
 - **Tax rates:** income tax must be paid and the rate varies depending on your income. Rates are set at 16%, 27% and 41%.
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Applying for jobs

It is possible to apply for jobs before moving to Slovenia as many positions are advertised online. As there are no visa restrictions for EU nationals it also means you can go to Slovenia and apply for jobs once you are there.

Application processes are similar to those in the UK. Candidates respond to vacancies via application forms or with a CV and covering letter. Your CV can be set out in a similar way to the one you would use in the UK and should be no longer than two pages of A4. Slovenian employers value a strong academic background along with relevant practical work experience so make sure this is demonstrated clearly on your CV.

Your covering letter or application form should be concise and clear, stating why you are suitable for the role and what skills you can offer. You may also wish to explain why you want to work in Slovenia.

The application should be written in Slovene, unless the employer has stated they will accept it in other languages - most often English or German, so read the advertisement carefully. You may be asked to send proof of your educational qualifications but make sure only photocopies are sent; originals can be taken to the interview if necessary.

Interview processes are similar to those in the UK but vary between organisations. It may be conducted by just one individual or by a panel and may include a second round of interviews for short listing. Assessment centres, group work exercises and psychometric tests may be used but they are more typically found in large or international companies.

More information can be found at [Slovenia.si – Finding and applying for a job](#).

Will my UK qualifications be recognised?

The [European Qualifications Framework \(EQF\)](#) helps to compare and explain national qualification systems and the various levels in different countries. This means your qualifications should be recognised in Slovenia.

If you wish to compare your professional, vocational or technical qualifications with Slovenian qualifications, visit [ENIC-NARIC](#) for information and help.

[Europass](#) can also help with the comparison of your qualifications in Slovenia. It provides five documents that enable international employers to understand your subjects of study, training and work experience. It also records non-formal learning and language skills.

Do I still need to pay UK tax and National Insurance?

If you are planning to live and work in Slovenia, check your UK tax and National Insurance position with [HM Revenue & Customs \(HMRC\)](#) to ensure that you are not losing any UK pensions rights.

Vacancy sources

Job websites

The [EURES - European Job Mobility Portal](#), maintained by the European Commission, provides information about job vacancies, living and working conditions, and labour markets in Slovenia, as well as a CV-posting service for jobseekers.

The [Employment Service of Slovenia](#) is also a good source for job adverts as all employers must notify the service of any vacancies they have.

Large companies usually advertise vacancies on their own websites, so you should regularly keep a check of companies you are interested in working for.

Job vacancies for teaching English as a foreign language can also be found on the following websites:

- [British Council in Slovenia](#)
- [Slovenian Ministry of Education, Science, Culture and Sport](#)
- [TEFL.com](#)

Recruitment agencies

Private employment agencies must own a concession issued by the [Slovenian Ministry of Labour, Family and Social Affairs](#). They are not permitted to charge a payment to jobseekers for finding employment.

[Euro-CIETT](#) - the European Confederation of Private Employment Agencies is a regulatory body for employment agencies and has a directory of members.

Newspapers

The following newspapers may be useful for job vacancies. They are all published in Slovene.

- [Delo](#)
- [Dnevnik](#)
- [Vecer](#)
- [Primorske novice](#)
- [Gorenjski Glas](#)
- [Dolenjski List](#)

[Kidon Media-Link](#) provides a full list of newspapers available in Slovenia.

Hidden vacancies

Speculative applications are a good way to secure employment in Slovenia and are commonly used. Look for companies that you would be interested in working for and send a letter that details the type of role you would like, your skills, and what you can offer the company. Even if they have nothing available at that time they will usually keep your letter on file for future use.

Sources of information for employers include the [Chamber of Commerce and Industry of Slovenia](#) and [Kompas](#), a worldwide business directory searchable by country and product/service.

Work experience

Work placements and internships

Course-related placements are available for undergraduates of science, engineering, technology and applied arts courses with [IAESTE \(International Association for the Exchange of Students for Technical Experience\)](#). Placements tend to start in the summer and last from four weeks up to one year.

Professional internships in management, technology, education and development are available from 6 weeks to 18 months through [AIESEC \(Association Internationale des Etudiants en Sciences Economiques et Commerciales\)](#).

You can also search for various placements in Slovenia on [Europlacement](#) and [Traineeships: Slovenia](#) links to other useful resources for work experience opportunities.

Many international companies may also offer internships. Consider which companies you would like to secure a placement with and then check their website for details.

Exchange programmes

Exchanges for vocational training and work placements with partner organisations in other countries are offered by the [Leonardo da Vinci Programme](#). Contact your institution's international office or careers service for more information on which projects may be available in Slovenia.

Teaching schemes

The [British Council Comenius Assistants Programme](#) is for those with an interest in becoming a teacher and allows them to work in a school in Slovenia for between 12 and 16 hours per week. This provides valuable experience and an understanding of a different educational system.

Teaching English as a foreign language is another option in Slovenia. In order to do so, you will need a Teaching English as Foreign Language (TEFL) qualification, available through various organisations. TEFL jobs can be found on a variety of job sites including [TEFL.com](#), [tefl-jobs.co.uk](#), [ESL Base](#), and [i-to-I TEFL](#).

Volunteering

Opportunities for voluntary work in social, educational and environmental projects are available through international agencies including:

- the [International Voluntary Service \(IVS\) in Britain](#) - offers volunteering opportunities in Slovenia;
 - [SCI International Voluntary Service](#) - can arrange work camps and other voluntary opportunities abroad;
 - [Volunteering: Slovenia](#) - has links to volunteering opportunities in Slovenia;
 - [Slovene Philanthropy](#) - has programmes aimed at community and social work;
 - [Prostovoljstvo](#) - database of volunteer opportunities in Slovenia.
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Postgraduate study

How does the higher education system work?

Higher education is offered in Slovenia through public and private universities, faculties, art academies and professional colleges.

The structure of the higher education system in Slovenia is similar to that of the UK. Slovenia has signed the Bologna Process Declaration and is part of the [European Higher Education Area \(EHEA\)](#) which works to standardise HE qualifications across the member countries. This means that Slovenia offers higher education qualifications on a three-cycle system equivalent to Bachelors, Masters and Doctorate levels.

Higher education is the responsibility of the [Slovenian Ministry of Education, Science, Culture and Sport](#).

What courses are available?

A wide range of postgraduate courses are available in subjects similar to those found in the UK. Study is generally carried out in Slovene with some courses also being available in English. Contact individual institutions for details of exact subjects offered in English. If you wish to study in Slovene you will have to prove you have sufficient knowledge of the language. The [Centre for Slovene as a Second or Foreign Language](#) runs beginners courses in many Slovenian towns.

Course availability is published by the Slovenian Ministry of Education, Science, Culture and Sport in the form of a call for enrolment. This is done in the spring for enrolment in the next academic year.

Where can I study?

Slovenia has four universities:

- [University of Ljubljana](#)
- [University of Maribor](#)
- [University of Primorska](#)
- [University of Nova Gorica](#)

The academic year starts in early October and typically runs in two semesters.

Applying for postgraduate study

Admissions policies are dependent on the institution to which you are applying: check the websites of the above institutions for more information on admissions procedures, potential funding opportunities and closing dates.

You need to wait for the call for enrolment issued by the Slovenian Ministry of Education, Science, Culture and Sport before you can apply to a postgraduate course. This is usually published in the spring for the next academic year. Applications should be made directly to each university.

EU citizens do not need a visa to study in Slovenia.

Fees and scholarships

Contact individual institutions to find out details on the cost of courses. These may vary depending on the institution, whether you are an EU citizen and whether you are on an exchange programme.

Scholarships may be available to foreign students and you should contact the [Slovene Human Resources Development and Scholarships Fund](#) for further details. Scholarships may also be advertised by employers or other institutions in Slovenian daily newspapers, particularly in the spring.

Are there any exchange programmes?

UK students on undergraduate degree programmes or postgraduate Masters and some PhD programmes may be interested in spending time studying in Slovenia through the [Erasmus](#) programme.

This programme is open to all subject areas, but check with your institution's Erasmus coordinator first (usually based in the international office) to see which countries they have links with and in what subject areas.

Will my qualification be recognised in the UK?

Slovenia is a member of the European Higher Education Area (EHEA) and as such it has adopted the European Credit Transfer System (ECTS), which means certain credits are given to subjects and courses to make them easily comparable across the EU.

If you want further help with comparing international qualifications, contact [UK NARIC \(National Recognition Information Centre for the United Kingdom\)](#), which gives information and advice on vocational, academic and professional qualifications from over 180 countries.

Visa and travel information

Visa requirements and applications

Citizens from EU countries do not need a visa to enter or work in Slovenia. If you wish to stay in Slovenia for a period longer than three months you need to confirm your registration of residence by applying to a local administrative unit of the area you are in. You will need a valid passport in order to do this.

If you have planned employment you will need to show evidence of this in the form of an employment contract or letter from your employer. You will also need to produce evidence if you are studying in the country. In addition you may be asked to prove you have sufficient funds for your stay as well as health insurance.

If you are staying for more than three months, while you are waiting for your registration of residence to be confirmed, you should register at the local police station.

Non-EU nationals may be required to have a visa or work permit in order to enter Slovenia. Contact the Slovenian embassy in the country where you are currently residing for further information. If you are living in the UK go to the [Embassy of the Republic of Slovenia London](#). You might also find it helpful to contact your ministry of foreign affairs (or your own embassy if you are not living in your home country) to ask whether there are any issues to be taken into account when considering working in Slovenia.

More information is also available at the [Ministry of the Interior of the Republic of Slovenia](#).

Permanent residency

EU nationals may apply for permanent residency if they have been living in Slovenia for a consecutive period of five years. This should be demonstrated by the confirmation of registration of residence. More information can be gained from the Ministry of the Interior of the Republic of Slovenia.

Help in an emergency

UK citizens can get help in an emergency from the [British Embassy Slovenia](#). It offers a range of services including issuing emergency travel documents, offering help if you've been the victim of a crime or if you get ill or injured and has details of local services.

The European emergency number 112 can be used in Slovenia for ambulances, fire brigade and police.

Travel advice

Find the latest travel advice and a travellers' checklist on the [Foreign and Commonwealth Office \(FCO\)](#) website.

Country overview

Geography

- **Full country name:** Republic of Slovenia
- **Population:** 2 million
- **Border countries:** Italy to the west, Austria to the north, Hungary to the east and Croatia to the south. The Adriatic Sea lies to the south west.
- **Climate:** the climate is seasonal with mild to hot summers and cold winters, which can see an average temperature of -2°C. There are Mediterranean conditions on the coast.
- **Terrain:** alpine mountains on the Italian coast, mountains and valleys and a coastline along the Adriatic Sea. More than half of the country is covered by woods and forests.
- **Natural hazards:** earthquakes and mild risk of flooding.

Living in Slovenia

- **Cost of living:** the cost of living in Slovenia is relatively cheap compared to that of the UK. Prices are highest in the capital of Ljubljana and along the coast. A two-room flat in Ljubljana costs around €620 to rent per month. See [Slovenia.si](#) for more information.
- **Internet domain:** .si
- **Health:** if you are visiting Slovenia you should make sure you have a [European Health Insurance Card \(EHIC\)](#). This entitles you to state provided medical treatment. Any treatment provided is on the same terms as Slovenian nationals, i.e. if a Slovenian national has to pay a fee for treatment, you will also have to pay a fee. It is important that you also have travel insurance as the EHIC does not cover ongoing medical treatment or non-urgent treatment.
- **Laws and customs:** you should carry your passport with you as a form of identification. It is also important that you register with the local police on your arrival. If you are staying in a hotel or bed and breakfast they will usually do this as part of your booking in process. If you are staying in private accommodation you should look into registering yourself.

Economy and finance

- **Currency:** Euro
- **Type of economy:** market economy, with less privatisation than most other countries in the EU.
- **Health of economy:** Slovenia suffered during the global economic crisis, with manufacturing and construction being the worst hit. Slovenia is dependent on its exports but interest from the international market has dropped in recent times. According to the [Statistical Office of the Republic of Slovenia](#) GDP fell by 0.5% in the third quarter of 2011. There has been no substantial growth in employment

although there were signs of the beginnings of a positive increase at the start of 2012.

- **Unemployment rate:** 11.8%
- **Main exports:** machinery and transport equipment, food, chemicals, manufactured goods.

Culture

- **People:** Slovene (83%), Serb (2%), Croat (1.8%), Bosniak (1.1%), other (12%).
- **Major religion:** Catholic (58%), Muslim (2%), Orthodox (2%), other Christian 0.9%, other or none unaffiliated (37%).
- **History:** see [BBC Timeline: Slovenia](#).

Politics

- **Type of government:** parliamentary republic.
- **Major political parties:** Slovenian Democratic Party (SDS), Civic List Party (LGV), Democratic Party of Pensioners of Slovenia (DeSUS), Slovenian People's Party (SLS), New Slovenia (NSi), Liberal Democracy of Slovenia (LDS), Positive Slovenia (PS), Slovenian National Party (SNS), Slovenian Youth Party (SMS), Social Democrats (SD), Zares.

More information

- [Embassy of the Republic of Slovenia London](#)
- [BBC Country Profile - Slovenia](#)
- [The World Factbook](#)
- [XE Universal Currency Converter](#)

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