



20 together

SLOVENIA



Twenty years ago, Slovenia became a member of the European Union. Thanks to its membership, Slovenia and its people have benefitted from and contributed to EU solidarity. The Slovenian economy has thrived in the Single Market, thanks to investment, trade and tourism. At the same time, Slovenia and the EU have worked together to deliver a cleaner, digital future. The EU has made Slovenia stronger. And Slovenia has made the EU a better place.

Creating opportunities and growth since 2004



Slovenia has witnessed positive economic growth in the 20 years since it joined the EU, with the country's **Gross National Income increasing by 4% per year** on average.



Slovenia's economy is closely converging to the average of the EU-27, with the country's Gross Domestic Product per capita reaching 90% of the EU-27 in 2022.



As part of the Single Market, **Slovenia has benefitted from the free movement of goods** across the European Union. Today, the EU is the main destination for Slovenia's exports of goods, taking 59%. **The value of these has quadrupled**, rising from €9.7 billion in 2004 to almost €40 billion in 2023.



In 2007, **Slovenia became the first country from the 2004 enlargement group to adopt the euro**, allowing citizens in Slovenia to enjoy the full benefits of the EU Single Market.



The Slovenian job market has also seen positive change over the past 20 years, with the country's **employment rate increasing** from 70% in 2004 to 78% in 2022.



With the support of EU funds, the percentage of Slovenian households with internet access has increased, going from 47% in 2004 to 94% in 2023.

Supporting Slovenia's economy and society

Over the past 20 years, the EU's Cohesion Policy has strengthened the economic, social and territorial cohesion of EU Member States. **Over €8 billion in Cohesion Policy funding has been invested in Slovenia, benefitting citizens living in the country.**

Driven by the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP), Slovenia has experienced significant progress in agriculture and rural development. **An investment of €4.4 billion in CAP funding has been directed towards the country, nurturing sustainable growth and prosperity in rural regions.**

With the support of up to **€1.6 billion in grants** and up to **€1.1 billion in loans from the EU's NextGenerationEU**, Europe is helping Slovenia transform its economy and society, by investing in:



Climate
49%



Digital
20%



Social
23%

Supporting the development of renewable energy

Over the past 20 years, the EU has supported Slovenia's efforts to unlock renewable energy and to decarbonise its energy system. Thanks to funding from the European Union, Slovenia is currently investing in various renewable energy sources from hydropower, geothermal and solar-power plants. With the support of the EU's NextGenerationEU, Slovenia will also introduce measures to encourage energy renovations of public buildings and residential buildings across the country.



Investing in Slovenia's transport network

In the two decades since joining the European Union, Slovenia has benefitted from EU investments in its public infrastructure. More recently, the EU has invested nearly €129 million in the Maribor-Šentilj railway, an important rail connection between Slovenia's second largest city and the border region of Austria. Today, there are 84 trains running on a daily basis along this line, strengthening transport links between Slovenia and those living close to the Slovenian-Austrian border.

Playing a role in Europe's digital future

Throughout the past 20 years, the EU has worked closely with Slovenia to boost the country's digital sector. Today, Slovenian technology specialists are supporting one of the EU-funded supercomputers - Vega. Based in the city of Maribor, it will enable Slovenian and European scientists to develop applications in science, public sector, and industry, especially in the fields of machine learning, artificial intelligence, and high-performance data analytics.



Standing in solidarity

Since 2004, Slovenia has worked with other EU Member States to mobilise emergency relief for other countries and itself. In August 2023, when Slovenia experienced severe flooding, EU countries swiftly stepped in to provide critical assistance to Slovenia. In a remarkable display of solidarity and cooperation with Slovenia, EU Member States mobilised mobile bridges, helicopters, excavators, and emergency work crews. Since the floods, the European Commission has paid €100 million from the EU Solidarity Fund to Slovenia as an advance to repair some of the flood damage to public infrastructure. NextGenerationEU will additionally finance the reconstruction of two regional railway lines (Bohinjska and Koroška) that were affected by the summer storms and floods in the amount of €182 million.

Protecting Europe's biodiversity

Slovenia is a biodiversity hotspot due to its location at the junction of four biogeographical regions. More than a third of Slovenia is included in the EU-wide Natura 2000 network, one of the highest shares among the 27 EU Member States. Over the past 20 years, Slovenia has worked on projects to protect Europe's biodiversity, both locally and EU-wide. As part of the LIFE DINALP BEAR and LIFE LYNX projects, co-financed by the EU LIFE programme, the Slovenian authorities and stakeholders have worked to improve the coexistence with and conservation status of large carnivores.





Creating study opportunities

Over the past 20 years, young Slovenian citizens have gained more opportunities to study across the European Union. Since 2004, over 32 000 higher education students from Slovenia have participated in the Erasmus+ programme. Through Erasmus+, over 31 000 EU citizens have also enjoyed the opportunity to attend universities in Slovenia.

Enriching our cultural heritage

Slovenian culture has become a true part of the EU's cultural heritage. The EU continues to promote and support Slovenian culture. In 2012, for instance, the city of Maribor was named the European Capital of Culture. In 2025, Slovenia will showcase its culture once again when Nova Gorica serves as one of Europe's Capital of Cultures, welcoming thousands of tourists to enjoy the country's cultural heritage.



Enjoying Slovenia's quality products

Over the past 20 years, EU citizens have been able to enjoy more high-quality foods, drinks and agricultural produce of Slovenian origin. Today, 42 products from Slovenia, including Piranska Sol (Piran salt), are featured on the EU's list of products with protected designations of origin.

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