

### Slovenia national football team



The **Slovenia national football team** (Slovene: Slovenska nogometra reprezentanca) represents Slovenia in men's international football and is controlled by the Football Association of Slovenia, the governing body for football in Slovenia. The national squad is under the global jurisdiction of FIFA and is governed in Europe by UEFA. It competes in the three major professional tournaments available to European nations: the FIFA World Cup, UEFA Nations League and the UEFA European Championship. Slovenia played its first official match in 1992, one year after the country gained independence from Yugoslavia. The majority of Slovenia's home matches are played at Stožice Stadium in Ljubljana.

Slovenia have qualified for a major tournament four times, twice for the FIFA World Cup and twice for the UEFA European Championship, but have never progressed beyond the group stage of a finals tournament. At the 2010 FIFA World Cup, Slovenia achieved their first (and so far only) victory in a major tournament, defeating Algeria 1–0. The team have achieved some noteworthy results, such as beating the 2006 FIFA World Cup winners Italy 1–0 in 2004, which was Italy's only defeat in the entire 2006 World Cup campaign. Their biggest defeat came in 2002 with a 5–0 loss to France, while their highest-scoring victory was a 7–0 win over Oman in 1999.

Boštjan Cesar holds the record for most appearances for Slovenia, having played 101 times between 2003 and 2018. Zlatko Zahovič scored 35 goals for Slovenia and is the record holder for most goals scored.

### History

### Origins and pre-independence years (1921–1991)

Before Slovenia's independence in 1991, the national football team of Slovenia existed only as a regional team, not officially recognised by FIFA. On 23 June 1921, the Slovenian capital Ljubljana hosted a match between France and a selection of players from Slovenian clubs. One of the guests at the match was the acting FIFA president Jules Rimet, [2] who later initiated the first FIFA World Cup tournament. The French team won the match 5–0 and, although the match was not official by international standards, it was, at least in Slovenia, generally accepted as the first appearance of the Slovenian national team. [2][3] In the following decades, Slovenia played four more

#### Slovenia



2010)

First international

134 (December 1993)

Lowest

unofficial friendly matches: in 1956 against China, in 1968 against Austria, in 1990 against Bosnia and Herzegovina, and in 1991 against Croatia. [3]

# Independence, first victory and first qualifiers (1992–1998)

In 1992, one year after Slovenia's independence from Yugoslavia, the national team was admitted to <u>UEFA</u> and FIFA. On 3 June of the same year, Slovenia played its first FIFA-recognised game, a friendly match against <u>Estonia</u> in <u>Tallinn</u>. The match ended in a 1–1 draw, and the first official goal for the team was scored by <u>Igor Benedejčič</u>. The first team manager was <u>Bojan Prašnikar</u>. On 7 April 1993, the two teams played another friendly, and this time Slovenia achieved its first international victory by winning the match 2–0.

In 1994, managed by Zdenko Verdenik, Slovenia debuted in official competitions as the team competed in the UEFA Euro 1996 qualifiers. Slovenia played in Group 4 and finished in fifth place out of six teams, with eleven points. [8] In the opening match of the qualifiers, Slovenia drew 1–1 at home against the 1994 FIFA World Cup finalists Italy. [9] In the qualifiers for the 1998 FIFA World Cup, in a group with Denmark, Croatia, Greece and Bosnia and Herzegovina, Slovenia finished in last place, registering just one point in eight matches. [10]



#### Golden generation (1998–2002)

#### **UEFA Euro 2000 campaign**

In July 1998, <u>Srečko Katanec</u> was appointed as the new manager of the team. <u>[11]</u> Under his guidance, Slovenia finished the <u>UEFA Euro 2000 qualifiers</u> in second place, only behind <u>Norway</u>. <u>[12]</u> <u>Zlatko Zahovič</u> scored eight of Slovenia's twelve goals in the qualifiers. <u>[13]</u> In the <u>additional playoffs</u>, Slovenia faced <u>Ukraine</u>. The first leg was played in Ljubljana, which Slovenia won 2–1 after going a goal behind. Zahovič scored Slovenia's first goal, and <u>Milenko Ačimovič</u> scored a goal from the halfway line late in the match for the final score of 2–1. <u>[14]</u> The second match was played in snowy conditions in <u>Kyiv</u>. <u>Serhii Rebrov</u> scored from the <u>penalty spot</u> in the 68th minute to give Ukraine a lead, while Slovenia equalised eight minutes later with a goal by <u>Miran Pavlin</u>. <u>[15]</u> The 1–1 draw meant that Slovenia won 3–2 on aggregate and qualified for its first major tournament. <u>[15]</u>

At UEFA Euro 2000, Slovenia were drawn into Group C, together with Spain, FR Yugoslavia and Norway. In the first game, Slovenia played against Yugoslavia and took a 3–0 lead after one hour of play, with Zahovič scoring twice and Pavlin once. However, Yugoslavia made a comeback as they scored three goals in just six minutes for a final score of 3–3, playing with only ten players after Siniša Mihajlović was sent off when the score was still 3–0 for Slovenia. The second game against Spain was played in Amsterdam. Spain took a 1–0 lead with a goal by Raúl, but Slovenia equalised after one hour of play as Zahovič scored his third goal of the tournament. Just a minute later, Spain was leading again as Joseba Etxeberria scored the winning goal. In the last round of the group stage, Slovenia played against Norway and still had a chance to progress to the quarterfinals. The match finished in a goalless draw and Slovenia won its second point of the tournament, but was eliminated. [18]

Pos	Team	Pld	W	D	<u>L</u>	GF	GA	GD	Pts	
1	Spain	3	2	0	1	6	5	+1	6	Advance to
2	Yugoslavia	3	1	1	1	7	7	0	4	knockout stage
3	Norway	3	1	1	1	1	1	0	4	
4	Slovenia	3	0	2	1	4	5	-1	2	

Source: RSSSF (https://www.rsssf.org/tables/ooe-final.html)

#### 2002 FIFA World Cup campaign

For the 2002 FIFA World Cup qualifiers, Slovenia were drawn into a group with Russia, FR Yugoslavia, Switzerland, Faroe Islands and Luxembourg. [19] In its first five qualifying games, Slovenia won only one match (away at Luxembourg), and even the underdogs Faroe Islands held them to a 2-2 draw, despite the Slovenes leading 2-0 with less than five minutes remaining. [20] In the next five matches, Slovenia won four times, including a last minute victory over Russia. [19] Slovenia finished in second place without a single defeat, and advanced to the playoff stage. [19] In the playoffs, Slovenia faced Romania. They came from a goal down to win the first game 2-1 with the goals from Ačimovič



at a major tournament, against FR Yugoslavia at the UEFA Euro 2000 [16]

in the first half and Milan Osterc in the second half. [19] In the second leg in Bucharest, Slovenia took the lead with a goal scored by Mladen Rudonja. [19] The final result was 1-1, and Slovenia qualified for its second consecutive major tournament and first ever World Cup. [21][22]

At the World Cup, Slovenia played in Group B with Spain, Paraguay and South Africa. In the first game, Slovenia faced Spain for the second time in a row at a big tournament, having lost the previous game at Euro 2000. Spain took the lead in the first half with the goal from Raúl. Juan Carlos Valerón scored Spain's second goal 15 minutes before full-time for a 2-0 lead. A few minutes later, Sebastjan Cimirotič scored the first World Cup goal for Slovenia to reduce the score to 2-1, before Fernando Hierro scored in the 87th minute for the final score of 3-1.[23] The match is notable due to the conflict between manager Katanec and star player Zahovič, after which Katanec announced his retirement after the tournament, while Zahovič was expelled from the team and sent home. [24] Slovenia lost the two remaining matches against South Africa (1-0) and Paraguay (3-1) and finished last in the group with three defeats. [25][26]

Pos	Team	Pld	W	D	<u>L</u>	GF	GA	GD	Pts		
1	Spain	3	3	0	0	9	4	+5	9	Advance to kneekeut stage	
2	Paraguay	3	1	1	1	6	6	0	4	Advance to knockout stage	
3	South Africa	3	1	1	1	5	5	0	4		
4	Slovenia	3	0	0	3	2	7	-5	0		

Source: RSSSF (https://www.rsssf.org/tables/2002full.html)

### Decline (2003-2007)

After the resignation of Katanec, Prašnikar took over the team on a four-year contract. [27] The team has undergone some major changes, with several key players retiring from the national team. [28]

In the UEFA Euro 2004 qualifying campaign, Slovenia played against France, Israel, Cyprus and Malta. The team finished in second place with four wins out of eight games, however, they lost both matches against France without scoring any goals. [29] In the playoffs, Slovenia played against its biggest rivals, Croatia. The first leg was played in <u>Zagreb</u>, where Croatia took the lead as <u>Dado Pršo</u> scored a goal in the fifth minute, while Slovenia equalised in the 22nd minute with a goal by <u>Ermin Šiljak</u>, for the final score of 1-1. In the second leg, Pršo scored the only goal of the game 15 minutes into the second half. Croatia qualified for the UEFA Euro 2004 with the aggregate score of 2-1, and Slovenia failed to qualify for its third consecutive major tournament. Šiljak scored a total of nine goals in the whole campaign, thus becoming the top goalscorer of the whole UEFA qualification tournament.

In May 2004, Prašnikar was replaced by <u>Branko Oblak</u>. Under Oblak's management, Slovenia played in the 2006 FIFA World Cup qualifiers. Grouped with Italy, Norway, <u>Scotland</u>, <u>Belarus</u> and <u>Moldova</u>, the team started with victories over Moldova and Italy and a draw against Scotland, but still finished in fourth place after securing only five points in the remaining seven matches. With the victory over Italy, Slovenia became the only team to beat the <u>eventual world champions</u>, as Italy did not lose another game during the entire campaign (qualifiers and the main tournament).

Oblak was still in charge of Slovenia when the <u>UEFA Euro 2008 qualifiers</u> started. Grouped with the <u>Netherlands</u>, Romania, <u>Bulgaria</u>, Belarus, <u>Albania</u> and Luxembourg, the team started out with defeats to Bulgaria and Belarus, thus significantly reducing their chances to qualify, and as a result, in November 2006, Oblak was dismissed by the Football Association of Slovenia. During his two-year stint as the manager, Oblak tried out over forty different players. [36]

In January 2007, <u>Matjaž Kek</u> was appointed as the new manager of the national team. [37] He led Slovenia in the remainder of the Euro 2008 qualifiers, where Slovenia finished in sixth place, only above Luxembourg. [38]

#### First World Cup victory (2008–2011)



Slovenian players celebrating <u>Nejc</u> <u>Pečnik</u>'s goal against Russia in the 2010 World Cup playoffs.

For the 2010 FIFA World Cup qualifiers, Slovenia were drawn into a group with the Czech Republic, Poland, Northern Ireland, Slovakia and San Marino. [39] In its opening match, Slovenia held Poland to a 1–1 draw in Wrocław, before winning two consecutive home games against Slovakia and Northern Ireland, respectively. [40] Slovenia then won only one point in the two games against the Czech Republic and lost away to Northern Ireland, and thus fell to fifth place in the group. [41] However, the team greatly improved its form and won the last four games without conceding a single goal. [40] As runners-up, Slovenia qualified for the playoffs, where they were drawn against Russia. [42] The first leg was played in Moscow. The match ended in a 2–1 win for the home side, with Nejc Pečnik scoring a crucial away

goal for Slovenia late in the game. [43] In the second leg, held in Maribor, Slovenia defeated Russia 1–0 with a goal by Zlatko Dedić, advancing to the main tournament with an aggregate score of 2–2 due to the away goals rule. [44] The top scorer of the national team during the qualifying campaign was Milivoje Novaković with five goals. [45]

At the 2010 FIFA World Cup, Slovenia played in Group C alongside England, Algeria and the United States. In the opening game against Algeria, Slovenia achieved its first ever victory at the World Cup after Robert Koren scored the only goal in the match for a 1–0 victory. [46] In their second game against the United States, Slovenia were leading 2–0 at half-time with goals from Valter Birsa and Zlatan Ljubijankić, however, Landon Donovan and Michael Bradley scored in the second half for the United States for the final score of 2–2. [47] In their last match of the group stage, Slovenia lost to England 1–0 with a goal by Jermain Defoe. As the United States defeated Algeria with a late goal, Slovenia dropped to third place and was eliminated from the tournament. [48]

After the 2010 World Cup, Slovenia achieved their highest ever position in the <u>FIFA World Rankings</u>, as the team was ranked 15th in October 2010. However, Slovenia started the <u>UEFA Euro 2012 qualifiers</u> with an unexpected home defeat against Northern Ireland. Two defeats against Italy and another unexpected home

defeat, this time against Estonia, meant that Slovenia finished only in fourth place in the group, behind Italy, Estonia and Serbia. [51]

## Katanec's second spell and management changes (2011–2018)

In October 2011, the Football Association of Slovenia appointed <u>Slaviša Stojanović</u> as the new manager. He led the team in only nine matches, including the first four matches of the 2014 FIFA World Cup qualifiers, where Slovenia recorded one victory and three defeats. He was sacked by the end of 2012 and was replaced by Katanec, who had previously led the team between 1998 and 2002. Under his leadership, Slovenia lost at home to <u>Iceland</u>, before winning four consecutive games to finish third in the group, two points behind Iceland. In the <u>qualifiers</u> for <u>UEFA Euro 2016</u>, Slovenia came close to directly qualifying for the tournament for the first time, however, the team lost a decisive game away to Switzerland. Slovenia led 2–0 with less than 15 minutes remaining, but the Swiss team then scored three times to win 3–2. As the third-placed team, Slovenia



Slovenia vs. United States at the 2010 World Cup

advanced to the playoffs, where they were eliminated by the Ukraine 3–1 on aggregate. The <u>qualifiers</u> for the <u>2018 FIFA World Cup</u> were similar to the previous ones, as Slovenia narrowly lost two decisive away matches against Slovakia and England. After the defeat at <u>Wembley</u>, where <u>Harry Kane</u> scored the only goal of the match in the 94th minute, Katanec announced his resignation as the manager. In December 2017, <u>Tomaž Kavčič became the new manager.</u>

In 2018, Slovenia competed in the inaugural edition of the <u>UEFA Nations League</u>. In accordance with the FIFA World Rankings, the team competed in the third-tier <u>League C</u> along with Bulgaria, Cyprus and Norway. [61] After the poor run of results, in which Slovenia obtained only one point in the first four matches, Kavčič was sacked. He became the manager with the shortest tenure in Slovenian history, leading the team in only seven games. [62] As Slovenia finished last in the group, they were supposed to be relegated to the bottom tier League D, but UEFA changed the system for the next edition and the team remained in League C. [63]

### Kek's second spell, Nations League promotion, and Euro 2024 (2019 to present)

Kek was appointed as the manager for the second time in November 2018. Slovenia failed to make a breakthrough during the UEFA Euro 2020 qualifiers, losing both games against Austria and obtaining only one point against North Macedonia. Despite the unexpected 2–0 home victory against Poland, Slovenia finished fourth in the group. In the 2020–21 UEFA Nations League C, however, Slovenia remained undefeated in all six games against Greece, Moldova and Kosovo. Under the leadership of team captain Jan Oblak, Slovenia held Greece to a 0–0 draw in both matches and also obtained all twelve available points against Moldova and Kosovo, thus securing first place in the group and promotion to League B for the 2022–23 edition. In the 2022 FIFA World Cup qualifiers, Slovenia once again failed to qualify for the main event. They started the campaign with a 1–0 home victory versus Croatia with a goal by Sandi Lovrić, which was notably Slovenia's first victory over their neighbour rivals after failing to beat them in the previous eight official matches. After two narrow defeats against Russia and a surprising defeat to Cyprus, Slovenia finished fourth in the group with four wins in ten matches, behind Croatia, Russia and Slovakia.

In 2022, Slovenia made their maiden appearance in <u>League B</u> of the Nations League, and avoided relegation after finishing third in a group with Serbia, Norway and <u>Sweden</u>. <u>[69] Benjamin Šeško</u> scored three of Slovenia's six goals in the competition, <u>[70]</u> including a goal in the decisive 1–1 away draw to Sweden that secured a crucial point on the last matchday. <u>[71]</u>

In the <u>UEFA Euro 2024 qualifiers</u>, Slovenia finally ended its major tournament drought and qualified for the Euro finals for the first time in 24 years. [72] Šeško was once again one of the key players, scoring five goals in nine appearances, [73] including a goal in the decisive home game against <u>Kazakhstan</u> on the final matchday, which Slovenia won 2–1 in front of 16,432 spectators, a record home attendance for the Slovenia national team. [74][75] The team finished the qualifiers in second place, behind only Denmark, with a record tally of 22 points from 10 games. In addition, it was also the first time that Slovenia directly qualified for a major tournament without having to play an additional play-off. [76][77]

### Team image

#### Nickname and mascot

The Slovenian national team does not have an official nickname and was the only team at the 2010 FIFA World Cup without one. The slovenian tried to choose a nickname for the team, but the process failed to gain the support of  $\overline{\text{fans.}}$  In 2010, the Slovenian web portal  $\overline{\text{Siol}}$  organized a fan vote and the nickname "Kekci", a reference to the Slovenian fictional child character  $\overline{\text{Kekec}}$  and the then national team manager  $\overline{\text{Matjaž Kek}}$ , finished in first place. However, the nickname was never officially adopted by the Football Association of Slovenia. Kekci" is still occasionally used by the Slovenian media when referring to the national team.

During the 2010 World Cup, some foreign media articles used the nickname "Zmajčeki" (English: Little Dragons) when referring to the Slovenian national team, [84][85] however, this was the old nickname of Slovenian club NK Olimpija Ljubljana when they competed in the Yugoslav football system. [78] Because Olimpija had a long tradition in the former Yugoslav First League, football fans and the media in the countries of the former Yugoslavia still use this nickname today when referring to the Slovenian team. [86][87] The 1998–2002 generation, managed by Srečko Katanec, is still referred to as the 'golden generation'. [88][89]

In 2002, Slovenia received an official mascot for its appearance at the  $\underline{2002}$  FIFA World Cup. The mascot, called Trigi, is based on a round shape representing the Earth or a ball, with a stylized depiction of  $\underline{\text{Triglav}}$ , the highest Slovenian mountain, on its head in a green, white and blue colour combination.  $\underline{[90][91]}$ 

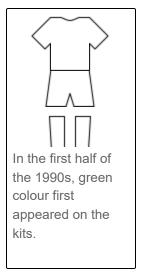
#### Kits and colours

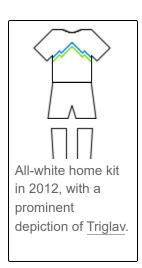
Until 1993, [92] Slovenia played its matches in white, blue and red, which are the traditional colours of the country. [93][94] In 1993, the board of the Football Association of Slovenia decided to change the main colours to green and white, inspired by NK Olimpija from the capital city of Ljubljana. [95][96]

In December 2009, the board voted to change the kit's colours to white for home matches and blue for away matches. [97] The new colours came into effect in April 2012, when a new all-white home kit with a blue and green trim was unveiled. [98] The new away kit, introduced a couple of months earlier, was all-blue with a white and green trim. [96] In 2016, the all-green version returned as an away kit, while the light blue kit became the new home kit. [99] In 2022, the new Slovenian kits were selected through an online fan vote for the first time. [100] The home colours were again changed to all-white and the away colours to all-blue. [100]

For their World Cup appearances in 2002 and 2010, the Slovenian kit featured a stylized depiction of Triglav. [95] Since 2010, the depiction has been used on each new kit set. [100][101]







#### Kit suppliers

<u>Nike</u> has been the team's kit provider since 2007. Previously, the kit providers were <u>Puma</u>, <u>Adidas</u>, <u>Uhlsport</u>, and Kappa.

Kit provider	Period				
Puma <sup>[103]</sup>	1993–1996				
Adidas <sup>[104]</sup>	1997–2001				
Uhlsport <sup>[105]</sup>	2002–2003				
Kappa <sup>[106]</sup>	2003–2006				
Nike <sup>[102]</sup>	2007-present				

#### Home stadium

Slovenia's home matches have been held at ten venues in eight cities. [107] Since 2010, most matches have been played in Ljubljana at the Stožice Stadium, with a seating capacity of 16,038. [108][109] The final training sessions and physical preparation of the team before domestic matches are held at the National Football Centre Brdo in Predoslje. [110][111]

The first home stadium of Slovenia was the Bežigrad Stadium, located in the Bežigrad District in Ljubljana. It was the main stadium of the national team until 2004, when UEFA banned it due to insufficient infrastructure. In the same year, the newly built Arena Petrol in Celje became the new main venue of the team for the next three years. For the 2010 World Cup qualifiers, Slovenia moved to the recently renovated Ljudski vrt stadium in Maribor, where the team remained undefeated in their six home matches during the qualifying campaign (five wins and a draw), consequently qualifying for the main tournament. Stožice were built in 2010, and since then the venue has hosted most of the national team's home competitive matches. The venue also holds the record for the highest home attendance of



Stožice Stadium, the main stadium of the Slovenia national team

the Slovenia national team, as 16,432 spectators gathered for the final match of the <u>UEFA Euro 2024</u> qualifiers against <u>Kazakhstan</u> on 20 November 2023, which saw Slovenia qualify for the 2024 Euros. [74][117]

Other venues where Slovenia played at least one home match are the Bonifika Stadium in Koper, Fazanerija City Stadium in Murska Sobota, Domžale Sports Park in Domžale, Nova Gorica Sports Park in Nova Gorica, Stanko Mlakar Stadium in Kranj, and ŽŠD Ljubljana Stadium in Ljubljana. [107]

#### **Rivalries**

Slovenia's main football rivals are its neighbours Croatia. The matchup between the two sides is known as the Neighbourhood derby (Slovene: Sosedski derbi, Croatian: Susjedski derbi). [28][118] As of March 2022, they have faced each other twelve times (eleven official matches and one unofficial match).[119][120] One of the most notable matches between Slovenia and Croatia took place in 2003, where the two teams met in the qualifying playoffs for UEFA Euro 2004. After a 1-1 draw in the first match in Zagreb, Slovenia then lost 1-0 at home and failed to qualify for its third consecutive major tournament. [28] In March 2021, Slovenia finally managed to win a game against Croatia after failing to do so in the previous nine matches, as they won 1-0 at home during the 2022 FIFA World Cup qualifiers. [121]

### **Results and fixtures**

The following is a list of match results in the last 12 months, as well as any future matches that have been scheduled.

	Win	Draw	Loss	Fixture
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2023			
UEFA Euro 2024 qualifying	23 March	Kazakhstan 1–2 📥 Slovenia	Astana, Kazakhstan [show]
	21:00 <u>UTC+6</u>	Samorodov 24' Report (ht Brekalo 47' tps://eu-fo otball.inf o/_match. php?id=1 8458)	Stadium: <u>Astana Arena</u> Attendance: 27,122 Referee: <u>Glenn Nyberg</u> ( <u>Sweden</u> )
UEFA Euro 2024 qualifying	26 March	Slovenia 2-0 📤 San Marino	Ljubljana, Slovenia [show]
	18:00 <u>UTC+2</u>	Šeško	Stadium: Stožice Stadium Attendance: 10,282 Referee: Nathan Verboomen (Belgium)
UEFA Euro 2024 qualifying	16 June	Finland + 2-0 = Slovenia	Helsinki, Finland [show]
	19:00 <u>UTC+3</u>	Pohjanpalo  13' Report (ht  Antman 64' tps://eu-fo otball.inf o/_match. php?id=1 8447)	Stadium: Helsinki Olympic Stadium Attendance: 32,560 Referee: Guillermo Cuadra Fernández (Spain)
UEFA Euro 2024 qualifying	19 June	Slovenia 1-1 Denmark	Ljubljana, Slovenia [show]
	20:45 <u>UTC+2</u>	Šporar	Stadium: Stožice Stadium Attendance: 14,382 Referee: François Letexier (France)

UEFA Euro 2024	7 September	Slovenia 👛	4–2	Northern Ir	reland Ljubljana, Slovenia [show]
qualifying	20:45 <u>UTC+2</u>	<u>Šporar</u> <b>3</b> ', 56' <u>Evans</u> <b>1</b> 7' (o.g.) <u>Šeško</u> <b>4</b> 2'	tps://eu-fo	Evans 😯 53'	Stadium: Stožice Stadium Attendance: 12,587 Referee: <u>Marco Guida</u> ( <u>Italy</u> )
UEFA Euro 2024	10 September	San Marino 📤	0–4	<b>Slovenia</b>	Serravalle, San Marino [show]
qualifying	20:45 <u>UTC+2</u>		tps://eu-fo otball.inf o/_match	t Vipotnik	Stadium: San Marino Stadium Attendance: 844 Referee: Mykola Balakin ( <u>Ukraine</u> )
UEFA Euro 2024 qualifying	14 October	Slovenia 📥	3–0	+ Finland	<u>Ljubljana,</u> Slovenia [show]
qualitying	18:00 <u>UTC+2</u>	<u>Šeško</u> <b>③</b> 16' ( <u>pen.</u> ), 28' <u>Janža</u> <b>③</b> 90+2'	Report (h tps://eu-fo otball.inf o/_match php?id=1 8451)	<u>.</u>	Stadium: Stožice Stadium Attendance: 15,823 Referee: Daniele Orsato (Italy)
UEFA Euro 2024	17 October	Northern Ireland	0–1	Slovenia S	Belfast, Northern Ireland [show]
qualifying	19:45 <u>UTC+1</u>		Report (htps://eu-football.infoo/_matchphp?id=18462)		Stadium: Windsor Park Attendance: 16,332 Referee: István Kovács (Romania)
UEFA Euro 2024 qualifying	17 November	Denmark 👭	2–1	Slovenia	Copenhagen, Denmark [show]
<u>чаашуш</u>	20:45 <u>UTC+1</u>	<u>Mæhle</u> <b>❖</b> 26' <u>Delaney</u> <b>❖</b> 54'	Report (h tps://eu-fo otball.inf o/_match php?id=1 8442)		Stadium: Parken Stadium Attendance: 35,608 Referee: José María Sánchez Martínez (Spain)
UEFA Euro 2024 qualifying	20 November	Slovenia 📥	2–1	<b>Kazakhsta</b>	n <u>Ljubljana,</u> Slovenia [show]
qualitying	20:45 <u>UTC+1</u>	<u>Šeško</u> ❖ 41' (pen.) <u>Verbič</u> ❖ 86'	Report (h tps://eu-fo otball.inf o/_match php?id=1 8453)		Stadium: Stožice Stadium Attendance: 16,432 Referee: Szymon Marciniak (Poland)
2024					
Friendly	20 January	United States	0–1	Slovenia	San Antonio, United [show] States
	14:00 <u>UTC-6</u>		Report (h tps://eu-fo otball.inf o/_match php?id=1 8672)	<u>.</u>	Stadium: Toyota Field Attendance: 9,191 Referee: Pierre-Luc Lauzière (Canada)
Friendly	21 March	Malta 🖢	V Papart (h	Slovenia	Ta' Qali, Malta [show]
	19:00 <u>UTC+1</u>		Report (h tps://eu-fo otball.inf o/_match	<u></u>	Stadium: <u>National Stadium</u>

		php?id 8736			
Friendly	26 March 20:45 <u>UTC+1</u>	Slovenia v  Report tps://eu otball. o/_mat php?ic	Portugal (ht u-fo inf ch. =1	Ljubljana, Slovenia Stadium: Stožice Stadi	[show] um
Friendly	4 June : <u>UTC+2</u>	Slovenia v Report tps://eu otball.o/_mat php?ic 8750	Armenia (ht u-fo inf ch. =1	<u>Ljubljana</u> , Slovenia Stadium: <u>Stožice Stadi</u>	[show] um
Friendly	8 June : <u>UTC+2</u>	Slovenia v Report tps://eu otball. o/_mat php?ic 8749	ı-fo inf ch. =1	Ljubljana, Slovenia Stadium: Stožice Stadi	[show] um
UEFA Euro 202 C	4 Group 16 June	Slovenia 📥 🔻 v	<b>Denmark</b>	Stuttgart, Germany	[show]
<u>5</u>	18:00 <u>UTC+2</u>	Report tps://eu otball. o/_mat php?id 8686	i-fo inf ch. =1	Stadium: <u>MHPArena</u>	
UEFA Euro 202	4 Group 20 June	Slovenia 📥 🔻 v	Serbia	Munich, Germany	[show]
<u>C</u>	15:00 <u>UTC+2</u>	Report tps://eu otball. o/_mat php?id 8688	i-fo inf ch. =1	Stadium: <u>Allianz Arena</u>	
UEFA Euro 202	4 Group 25 June	England + v	Slovenia Slovenia	Cologne, Germany	[show]
<u>C</u>	21:00 <u>UTC+2</u>	Report tps://eu otball. o/_mat php?id 8689	i-fo inf ch. =1	Stadium: RheinEnergie	Stadion
2024–25 UEFA	•	Slovenia 📥 🔻 v	<b>A</b> ustria	Ljubljana, Slovenia	[show]
Nations League	20:45 <u>UTC+2</u>	Report tps://eu otball. o/_mat php?ic 8793	i-fo inf ch. =1	Stadium: Stožice Stadi	<u>um</u>
2024–25 UEFA	•	Slovenia 🛶 🔻 v	Kazakhstan	Ljubljana, Slovenia	[show]
Nations League	20:45 <u>UTC+2</u>	Report tps://eu otball. o/_mat php?ic 8794	i-fo inf ch. =1	Stadium: Stožice Stadi	um_

2024–25 UEFA	10 October	Norway 🏪	٧	Slovenia	Oslo, Norway	[show]
Nations League						
	20:45 UTC+2		Report (l		Stadium: Ullevaal Stad	lion
			tps://eu-f			
			otball.in o/ match			
			php?id=			
			8795)	<u> </u>		
2024–25 UEFA Nations League	13 October	Kazakhstan 🔼	V	Slovenia Slovenia	Kazakhstan	[show]
	18:00 UTC+5		Report (l			
			tps://eu-f			
			otball.in o/ match			
			php?id=			
			8796)	<u>-</u>		
2024–25 UEFA	14 November	Slovenia 📥	V	<b>Norway</b>	Ljubljana, Slovenia	[show]
Nations League						
	20:45 UTC+1		Report (l		Stadium: Stožice Stad	um
			tps://eu-f			
			otball.in o/ match			
			php?id=			
			8797)	<u>.</u>		
2024–25 UEFA	17 November	Austria 💳	V	Slovenia	Austria	[show]
Nations League						
	18:00 UTC+1		Report (I			
			tps://eu-f			
			otball.in			
			o/_match php?id=			
			8798)	1		

### Management

Since 1991, eight managers have been in charge of the national team. Bojan Prašnikar, Srečko Katanec and Matjaž Kek are the only three managers with more than one spell. 122

<u>Tomaž Kavčič</u> is the manager with the shortest managerial tenure, having been in charge for only seven matches in 2018 before being sacked. He was replaced by <u>Igor Benedejčič</u>, who became the first manager to be appointed as a caretaker.

### **List of managers**

Statistics updated as of 20 January 2024, after the match against the United States.



Katanec (left) and Kek (right) managed Slovenia at the <u>FIFA</u> World Cup in 2002 and 2010, respectively.

Manager	Tenure	Played	Won	Drawn	Lost	Major tournaments	Ref.
Bojan Prašnikar	1991–1993	4	1	2	1	_	[125]
Zdenko Verdenik	1994–1997	32	10	8	14	_	[126]
Bojan Prašnikar	1998	5	1	1	3	_	[125]
One Ylee IKetanaa	4000 0000	47	40	40	40	Euro 2000 – Group stage	[127]
Srečko Katanec	1998–2002	47	18	18 16 13		2002 World Cup – Group stage	[127]
Bojan Prašnikar	2002–2004	16	6	3	7	_	[125]
Branko Oblak	2004–2006	23	6	7	10	_	[128]
Matjaž Kek	2007–2011	49	20	9	20	2010 World Cup – Group stage	[129]
Slaviša Stojanović	2011–2012	9	2	2	5	_	[130]
Srečko Katanec	2013–2017	42	16	7	19	_	[127]
Tomaž Kavčič	2017–2018	7	1	1	5	_	[131]
Igor Benedejčič	2018	2	0	2	0	_	[132]
Matjaž Kek	2018–	51	25	14	12	_	[129]

### **Players**

### **Current squad**

The following 22 players were called up for the friendly match against the  $\underline{\text{United States}}$  on 20 January 2024.  $\underline{^{[133]}}$ 

Caps and goals are correct as of 20 January 2024, after the match against the United States.

<u>No.</u>	Pos.	Player	Date of birth (age)	Caps	Goals	Club
1	GK	lgor Vekić	6 May 1998	1	0	Vejle Vejle
12	GK	Klemen Mihelak	31 December 2001	0	0	<u> </u>
16	GK	Denis Pintol	7 February 2000	0	0	Olimpija Ljubljana
2	2 <u>DF</u> <u>Žan Karničnik</u>		18 September 1994	25	1	<u> </u>
3	DF	Srđan Kuzmić	16 January 2004	1	0	Viborg
4	DF	Marcel Ratnik	23 December 2003	1	0	Olimpija Ljubljana
5	DF	<u>Žan Zaletel</u>	16 September 1999	1	0	Viborg
6	DF	David Zec	5 January 2000	1	0	<u>Celje</u>
7	DF	Mitja Ilenič	26 December 2004	1	0	New York City FC
18	DF	Sven Šoštarič Karič	7 March 1998	1	0	<u> </u>
21	DF	Matija Kavčič	11 July 1997	0	0	<u> </u>
8	MF	Luka Vešner Tičić	25 October 2000	1	0	<b>—</b> Koper
10	MF	Timi Max Elšnik	29 April 1998	11	0	Olimpija Ljubljana
13	MF	Adrian Zeljković	19 August 2002	1	0	Spartak Trnava
14	MF	Mark Zabukovnik	27 December 2000	1	0	<u> </u>
15	MF	Sandro Jovanović	23 April 2002	0	0	Aluminij Aluminij
20	MF	Jan Repas	19 March 1997	4	0	Maribor Maribor
22	MF	Tamar Svetlin	30 July 2001	1	0	<u> </u>
9	FW	Andrés Vombergar	20 November 1994	3	0	<u></u> Ittihad Kalba
11	FW	Nejc Gradišar	6 August 2002	1	1	<u>Fehérvár</u>
17	FW	Danijel Šturm	4 January 1999	1	0	<u> </u>
19	FW	Matej Poplatnik	15 July 1992	1	0	<u> Bravo</u>

### Recent call-ups



Pos.	Player	Date of birth (age)	Caps	Goals	Club	Latest call-up
GK	Jan Oblak	7 January 1993	62	0	Atlético Madrid	v. Kazakhstan, 20 November 2023
<u>GK</u>	Vid Belec	6 June 1990	19	0	✓ APOEL	v. Kazakhstan, 20 November 2023
<u>GK</u>	Martin Turk	21 August 2003	0	0	Parma	v. Kazakhstan, 20 November 2023
<u>GK</u>	Matevž Vidovšek	30 October 1999	1	0	Olimpija Ljubljana	v. Finland, 14 October 2023 INJ
<u>GK</u>	Aljaž Ivačič	29 December 1993	0	0	Portland Timbers	v. — Finland, 16 June 2023 WD
DF	Petar Stojanović	7 October 1995	50	2	Sampdoria	v. Kazakhstan, 20 November 2023
DF	Jaka Bijol	5 February 1999	45	1	Udinese	v. Kazakhstan, 20 November 2023
<u>DF</u>	Jure Balkovec	9 September 1994	31	0	<u>C.</u> Alanyaspor	v. Kazakhstan, 20 November 2023
<u>DF</u>	Miha Blažič	8 May 1993	30	0	Lech Poznań	v. Kazakhstan, 20 November 2023
<u>DF</u>	Erik Janža	21 June 1993	7	2	Górnik Zabrze	v. Kazakhstan, 20 November 2023
<u>DF</u>	Vanja Drkušić	30 October 1999	4	0	Sochi	v. Kazakhstan, 20 November 2023
DF	David Brekalo	3 December 1998	11	1	Orlando City	v. — Northern Ireland, 17 October 2023
MF	Jasmin Kurtić	10 January 1989	89	2	Südtirol	v. Kazakhstan, 20 November 2023
MF	Benjamin Verbič	27 November 1993	56	6	Panathinaikos	v. Kazakhstan, 20 November 2023
MF	Miha Zajc	1 July 1994	39	8	<u>Fenerbahçe</u>	v. Kazakhstan, 20 November 2023
MF	Sandi Lovrić	28 March 1998	32	4	Udinese	v. Kazakhstan, 20 November 2023
MF	Adam Gnezda Čerin	16 July 1999	27	3	Panathinaikos	v. Kazakhstan, 20 November 2023
MF	Jon Gorenc Stanković	14 January 1996	20	1	Sturm Graz	v. Kazakhstan, 20 November 2023
MF	Nino Žugelj	23 May 2000	0	0	Bodø/Glimt	v. Kazakhstan, 20 November 2023
MF	Domen Črnigoj	18 November 1995	26	3	Reggiana	v. Denmark, 19 June 2023
<u>MF</u>	Tomi Horvat	24 March 1999	4	0	Sturm Graz	v. Denmark, 19 June 2023
FW	Andraž Šporar	27 February 1994	49	10	Panathinaikos	v. Kazakhstan, 20 November 2023

Pos.	Player	Date of birth (age)	Caps	Goals	Club	Latest call-up
FW	Benjamin Šeško	31 May 2003	26	10	RB Leipzig	v. Kazakhstan, 20 November 2023
FW	Luka Zahović	15 November 1995	15	0	Pogoń Szczecin	v. Kazakhstan, 20 November 2023
FW	Jan Mlakar	23 October 1998	14	2	Pisa	v. Kazakhstan, 20 November 2023
FW	<u>Žan Celar</u>	14 March 1999	8	0	<b>Lugano</b>	v. Kazakhstan, 20 November 2023
FW	<u>Žan Vipotnik</u>	18 March 2002	8	2	Bordeaux	v. Kazakhstan, 20 November 2023
FW	Aljoša Matko	29 March 2000	0	0	<u>Celje</u>	v. <u>A</u> San Marino, 10 September 2023

#### Notes

- INJ = Withdrew due to injury
- WD = Player withdrew from the squad due to non-injury issue.

### Records

#### Individual records

As of 20 January 2024, 236 players have made at least one appearance for the Slovenia national team. With 101 caps, Boštjan Cesar has the most appearances for Slovenia. Cesar also started the most matches as captain (39) and had the longest career as a Slovenian international footballer: 15 years, 1 month and 15 days. Zlatko Zahovič is the highest-scoring Slovenia player with 35 goals. Sašo Udovič scored the most goals in a single match, scoring five against Iceland in 1996.

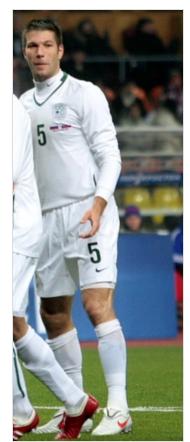
As of 20 January 2024<sup>[136]</sup>
Players in **bold** are still active with Slovenia.

#### Most appearances

Rank	Player	Caps	Goals	Career
1	Boštjan Cesar	101	10	2003–2018
2	Bojan Jokić	100	1	2006–2019
3	Valter Birsa	90	7	2006–2018
4	Jasmin Kurtić	89	2	2012-present
5	Samir Handanović	81	0	2004–2015
6	Milivoje Novaković	80	32	2006–2017
O	Zlatko Zahovič	80	35	1992–2004
8	Josip Iličić	79	16	2010–2021
9	Mišo Brečko	77	0	2004–2015
10	Milenko Ačimovič	74	13	1998–2007
10	Aleš Čeh	74	1	1992–2002

#### Top goalscorers

Rank	Player	Goals	Caps	Ratio	Career
1	Zlatko Zahovič	35	80	0.44	1992–2004
2	Milivoje Novaković	32	80	0.4	2006–2017
3	Sašo Udovič	16	42	0.38	1993–2000
S	Josip Iličić	16	79	0.2	2010–2021
5	Ermin Šiljak	14	48	0.29	1994–2005
6	Milenko Ačimovič	13	74	0.18	1998–2007
7	Tim Matavž	11	39	0.28	2010–2020
	Benjamin Šeško	10	26	0.38	2021-present
8	Primož Gliha	10	28	0.36	1992–1998
0	Andraž Šporar	10	49	0.2	2016-present
	Boštjan Cesar	10	101	0.1	2003–2018



Boštjan Cesar is Slovenia's all-time most capped player.

#### **Team records**

- Biggest victory: 7–0 vs. Oman, 8 February 1999<sup>[141]</sup>
- Heaviest defeat: 0–5 vs. France, 12 October 2002<sup>[141]</sup>
- Most consecutive victories: 4
  - From 5 June 1999 against <u>Latvia</u> to 4 September 1999 against Georgia<sup>[141][142]</sup>
  - From 18 November 2009 against Russia to 13 June 2010 against Algeria [141][142]
  - From 6 September 2020 against Moldova to 14 October 2020 against Moldova<sup>[142]</sup>
  - From 17 November 2022 against Romania to 26 March 2023 against San Marino [142]
  - From 7 September 2023 against Northern Ireland to 17 October 2023 against Northern Ireland [142]
- Most consecutive matches without defeat: 9, from 3 September 2020 against <u>Greece</u> to 24 March 2021 against Croatia<sup>[142]</sup>
- Most consecutive defeats: 4 (achieved on five occasions, most recently in 2014)[141][142]
- Most consecutive matches without victory: 9, from 6 September 2018 against <u>Bulgaria</u> to 7 June 2019 against Austria<sup>[142]</sup>
- Most consecutive matches without scoring: 4
  - From 13 October 2004 against Norway to 26 March 2005 against Germany [141][142]
  - From 5 March 2014 against Algeria to 8 September 2014 against Estonia<sup>[141][142]</sup>
- Most consecutive matches without conceding a goal: 6, from 3 September 2020 against Greece to 11 November 2020 against Azerbaijan<sup>[142]</sup>

 Most consecutive matches scoring: 11, from 12 August 2009 against San Marino to 18 June 2010 against the United States<sup>[142]</sup>

## **Competitive record**

### **FIFA World Cup**

FIFA World Cup record									Qua	lifica	tion	recor	d			
Year	Round	Pld	W	D	<u>L</u>	GF	GA	Squad		Pos.	Pld	W	D	<u>L</u>	GF	GA
1930 to 1990	Part of Yugoslavia										Part	of <u></u>	Yug	oslav	ia	
1994	Did not enter											Did n	ot en	ter		
1998			Dia	l not	qual	lify				5th	8	0	1	7	5	20
2002	Group stage	3	0	0	3	2	7	Squad		2nd (PO)	12	6	6	0	20	11
2006			Dia	l not	qual	lify				4th	10	3	3	4	10	13
2010	Group stage	3	1	1	1	3	3	Squad		2nd (PO)	12	7	2	3	20	6
<u>2014</u>										3rd	10	5	0	5	14	11
2018			Dia	l not	qual	lify				4th	10	4	3	3	12	7
2022										4th	10	4	2	4	13	12
2026																
2030	To be determined										To	be d	letern	nined		
2034																
Total	Group stage	6	1	1	4	5	10	_		2/22	72	29	17	26	94	80

### **UEFA European Championship**

	UEFA Eur	opean	Cha	mpio	onsh	nip red	cord			Qua	alifica	tion	recor	'd	
Year	Round	Pld	W	D	L	GF	GA	Squad	Pos.	Pld	W	D	L	GF	GA

1960 to 1992	Part of <u>Yugoslavia</u>										Part	t of 🚤	<b>Y</b> ug	goslav	ria	
<del></del> 1996		Did not qualify									10	3	2	5	13	13
2000	Group stage	3	0	2	1	4	5	Squad		2nd (PO)	12	6	3	3	15	16
2004										2nd (PO)	10	4	3	3	16	14
2008										<u>6th</u>	12	3	2	7	9	16
2012			Dia	l not	qual	ify				<u>4th</u>	10	4	2	4	11	7
2016										3rd (PO)	12	5	2	5	19	14
2020										4th	10	4	2	4	16	11
2024			(	Qual	ified					2nd	10	7	1	2	20	9
2028											Τ.	o be c	letern	nined		
2032	To be determined										70	J DE C	ielei I I	iii i <del>C</del> U		
Total	Group stage	3	0	2	1	4	5	_		2/17	86	36	17	33	119	100

### **UEFA Nations League**

	UEFA Nations League record												
Season	Division	Group	Round	Pos	Pld	W	D	<u>L</u>	GF	GA	P/R	RK	
2018–19	<u>C</u>	3	Group stage	4th	6	0	3	3	5	8	=	38th	
2020–21	C	3	Group stage	1st	6	4	2	0	8	1	<b>A</b>	33rd	
2022–23	В	4	Group stage	3rd	6	1	3	2	6	10	=	25th	
2024–25	В			T	o be de	termine	d						
	1	Total			18	5	8	5	19	19	_	_	

### Head-to-head record

The following table shows Slovenia's all-time international record, correct as of 20 January 2024 after the match against the  $\underline{\text{United States}}$ .  $\underline{^{[143][144]}}$ 

Team	Pld	.W.	D	<u>L</u>	GF	GA	GD
Albania	7	4	2	1	6	2	+4
Algeria	2	1	0	1	1	2	-1
Argentina	1	0	0	1	0	2	-2
<b>***</b> Australia	1	1	0	0	2	0	+2
Austria	4	1	0	3	2	5	-3
	1	0	1	0	0	0	0
Belarus	5	1	2	2	5	8	-3
Belgium	2	0	1	1	0	2	-2
N Bosnia and Herzegovina	4	0	0	4	4	10	-6
Bulgaria	4	0	1	3	2	8	-6
<b>I</b> ◆I Canada	1	1	0	0	1	0	+1
China	1	0	1	0	0	0	0
Colombia	1	0	0	1	0	1	-1
<u>Croatia</u>	11	1	4	6	10	19	-9
	12	6	3	3	19	11	+8
Czech Republic	5	1	1	3	2	7	-5
Denmark	6	0	1	5	3	14	-11
+ England	6	0	1	5	4	10	-6
<b>E</b> stonia	9	6	1	2	13	5	+8
+ Faroe Islands	4	3	1	0	12	3	+9
+ Finland	4	1	1	2	4	5	-1
<b>■</b> France	3	0	0	3	2	10	-8
++ Georgia	4	2	1	1	5	4	+1
Germany	1	0	0	1	0	1	-1
<b>Ghana</b>	1	1	0	0	2	0	+2
<u></u> Gibraltar	1	1	0	0	6	0	+6
Greece	7	0	4	3	3	11	-8
Honduras	1	0	0	1	1	5	-4
Hungary	4	3	0	1	5	3	+2
lceland	4	3	0	1	15	7	+8
srael	5	2	3	0	8	5	+3
<b>■</b> Italy	7	2	1	4	3	5	-2
<b>■</b> Ivory Coast	1	0	0	1	0	3	-3

Team	Pld	W	Ď	Ţ.	GF	GA	GD
Kazakhstan	2	2	0	0	4	2	+2
Kosovo	2	2	0	0	3	1	+2
Latvia	5	4	0	1	9	2	+7
Lithuania	6	2	2	2	11	7	+4
Luxembourg	4	4	0	0	9	1	+8
Malta	8	7	1	0	15	1	+14
<b>■●■</b> Mexico	1	1	0	0	2	1	+1
Moldova	4	4	0	0	10	1	+9
Montenegro	3	2	1	0	4	1	+3
Netherlands	2	0	0	2	0	3	-3
New Zealand	1	1	0	0	3	1	+2
North Macedonia	7	1	2	4	7	13	-6
Northern Ireland	7	3	1	3	7	5	+2
Norway	11	2	3	6	10	17	-7
Oman Oman	2	2	0	0	11	0	+11
Paraguay	1	0	0	1	1	3	-2
Poland	8	2	3	3	9	9	0
Qatar Qatar	3	1	1	1	4	2	+2
Romania	9	3	3	3	12	14	-2
Russia	7	2	1	4	8	11	-3
San Marino	7	7	0	0	26	0	+26
Saudi Arabia	1	1	0	0	2	0	+2
Scotland	5	0	3	2	3	7	-4
Serbia <sup>[a]</sup>	8	1	6	1	11	13	-2
Slovakia	8	3	4	1	9	6	+3
South Africa	1	0	0	1	0	1	-1
Spain	2	0	0	2	2	5	-3
Sweden	4	0	2	2	1	4	-3
Switzerland	9	2	1	6	8	17	-9
Trinidad and Tobago	1	1	0	0	3	1	+2
Tunisia	2	1	1	0	3	2	+1
Turkey	2	1	0	1	2	1	+1
Ukraine	6	2	3	1	7	7	0

Team	Pld	W	D	J.	<u>GF</u>	GA	<u>GD</u>
United Arab Emirates	2	0	2	0	3	3	0
United States	3	1	1	1	5	5	0
<b>=</b> Uruguay	2	0	0	2	0	4	-4
<b>Wales</b>	1	0	1	0	0	0	0
Total	287	106	72	109	364	339	+25

a. Includes matches against FR Yugoslavia and Serbia and Montenegro.

#### **Honours**

#### **Minor tournaments**

■ Rothmans International Tournament [145][146]

Winners: 1994Runners-up: 1996

Cyprus International Tournament<sup>[147]</sup>

Runners-up: 1998, 2006

■ Oman International Tournament<sup>[148][149]</sup>

Runners-up: 1999, 2000

Carlsberg Cup<sup>[150]</sup>

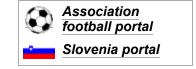
Third place: <u>2002</u>

#### Other awards

Best Mover of the Year: 1999

#### See also

- Slovenia national football B team
- Slovenia national under-21 football team
- Slovenia national under-19 football team
- Slovenia national under-17 football team
- Sport in Slovenia



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### **External links**

- Football Association of Slovenia (https://www.nzs.si/) official website (in Slovene)
- FIFA team profile (https://www.fifa.com/about-fifa/associations/SVN)
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