



**20 YEARS OF INDEPENDENCE
REPUBLIC OF SLOVENIA**







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We Slovenes see ourselves as a nation of hard work and persistent fighting. The history confronted Slovenia with many challenges. Independence and autonomy, too, were attained through our own efforts, risk and sacrifices. The path to our independence included agitation of the civil society which was infused with the powerful idea of human rights. Independence was essential and became reality for the sake of protecting human rights in our territory, of shielding our people against the aggression and danger of a spreading war, and at the same time also became a path for new development opportunities. All this proved to be indispensable and attainable.

Twenty years ago we pledged ourselves to democracy, freedom, respecting human dignity and rights, respecting minorities and immigrants, and to openness and co-operation with others. We often quote unity as a key foundation of the independence process. It is true, that the political unity was of utmost importance, nevertheless I would like to recall that it was reached in a democratic process taking into account pluralism and harmonization of the then very different political factors.

The political will of the time respected also the civil society and its initiatives which created a platform for dialogue and new ideas. Why not apply the same principles today when we almost despondently assess how disunited we are? Certainly, critical self-reflection is necessary, whereas despondency isn't! Let us be objective, the goals we have attained are not to be disregarded. Today, life is better than it was two decades ago and new opportunities have arisen, even if we not recognize them easily due to the economic crisis. The crisis has exposed numerous deficiencies and mistakes which have been accompanying us for a long time. Today we have the opportunity and duty to eliminate them, establish efficient mechanisms of the rule of law, ensure solidarity and encourage creativity, enterprise and civil courage.

Twenty years ago, dreams were allowed. Today, however, we most of all need trustworthy situation analyses and innovative considerations on how to proceed.

Both, the world and Slovenia are in a process of changing. We have to find and determine our position within these changes, and increase the quality of everything, either material or spiritual, we create.

Therefore, let us define well-considered priorities and let us search for the best we can find in ourselves to realize them! Let us be self-confident. Today's trials are not the hardest in our history, but they demand serious consideration and more determination. Let us use the available time and sense. Let us make brave steps ahead.

Dr Danilo Türk

President of the Republic of Slovenia

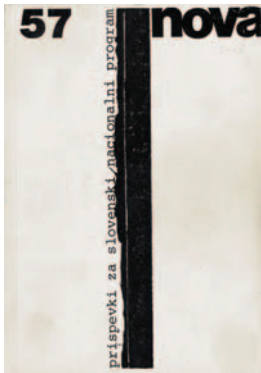
Slovenia 1991–2011

Flag on Triglav, 12 July 1991
(Photo: Joco Žnidaršič)





Call to abolish Article 133 of the then Penal Code, which limited freedom of opinion, speech and writing
(Photo: Joco Žnidaršič)



Cover of Nova Revija, no 57
(Source: National Museum of Contemporary History)

Slovenia became an independent state on 25 June 1991. The events which led to its birth took place mostly in the 1980s. At that time, Slovenians lived in the Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (SFRY) where, after the death of long-term president Josip Broz Tito (1980), an economic crisis erupted. Through various (largely unsuccessful) measures, the federal leadership attempted to deal with the deteriorating situation, which was characterised by a shortage of basic consumer goods and crude oil derivatives, and by intermittent power cuts. Worsening conditions, the ever-increasing demands made by the SFRY on Slovenia, and an insistence on old models of governance further increased dissatisfaction. Alongside the authorities, in which the leading role was played by the League of Communists, individuals and groups began to emerge that were particularly critical of the strong reliance on the past and the unclear vision of the future. Ecological, peace, feminist and philosophical civil society movements were born. Under the auspices of one socio-political organisation — the Alliance of Socialist Youth of Slovenia — two media organs appeared that challenged the status quo: the weekly magazine Mladina and Radio Študent. Demands for the democratisation of society and the state became ever more frequent. In the fifty-seventh edition of the Nova revija journal in February 1987 the opposition published 'Contributions to a Slovenian National Programme' in which it stated its demand that Slovenia's statehood be strengthened. In addition, there was a debate about changing Slovenia's constitution. Another reason that the official authorities lost their leading role was the newly born alliances, later transformed into parties,



which strove for Slovenia's statehood and the democratisation of the then Yugoslavia. The first of these — the Slovenian Farmers' Alliance — was founded in May 1988, whilst most of the others were formed in 1989. The wider Slovenian public reacted en masse to the arrests of three Slovenian media figures and an employee of the Yugoslav People's Army, referred to collectively as JBTZ (Janša, Borštner, Tasić and Zavrl). The four were accused of stealing a confidential military document and this led to a court martial in Ljubljana in the summer of 1988. The four defendants received a great deal of support from their fellow countrymen, as well as from the Council for the Protection of Human Rights, which was founded for this very purpose.

Protest gathering in support of the Four, 21 June 1988, Kongresni trg, Ljubljana (Photo: Joco Žnidaršič)



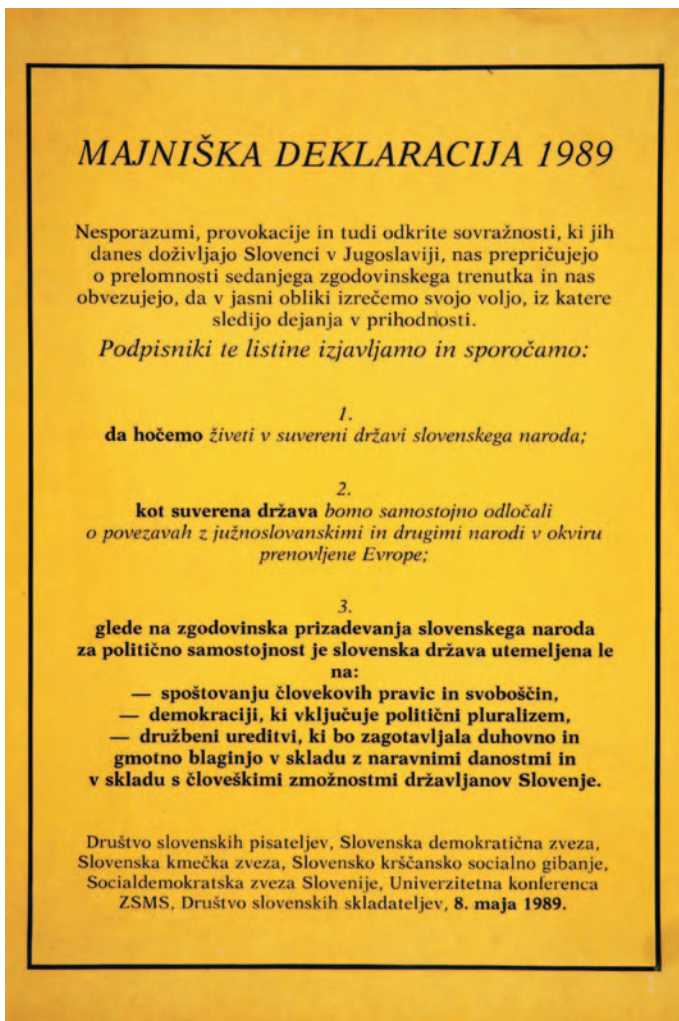
Janez Janša, David Tasić, Ivan Borštner and Franci Zavrl, after the trial in front of the military court, 27 July 1988, Roška cesta, Ljubljana (Photo: Joco Žnidaršič)



Poet Tone Pavček reading the May Declaration, 8 May 1989, Kongresni trg, Ljubljana (Photo: Tone Stojko, source: National Museum of Contemporary History)

May Declaration 1989 – the basic programme of the opposition (Source: National Museum of Contemporary History)

Fundamental Charter for Slovenia 1989 – the programme of socio-political organisations (Source: National Museum of Contemporary History)



In the first half of 1989, both the opposition and the authorities formulated their own national programmes: in its May Declaration, the opposition demanded a sovereign state, whereas in the Fundamental Charter for Slovenia, the authorities promoted the idea of remaining part of a democratically reformed Yugoslavia. However, in certain respects, their standpoints were moving closer together. In September 1989, the League of Communists of



Slovenia, increasingly torn between the requirement for adherence to already outdated ideological patterns and the demands of the federal centre in Belgrade, and the pressures of the opposition, renounced its leading role in the republic by adopting constitutional amendments. This meant that new political parties could now be formed, as well as allowing the possibility of breaking away from Yugoslavia. In April 1990, the first democratic elections since the Second World War were held in Slovenia, at which the majority of votes for deputies in the assembly went to the Demos (Democratic Opposition of Slovenia) coalition, comprising most of the opposition parties. Milan Kučan became the President of the Presidency of the Republic of Slovenia, the President of the Assembly of the Republic of Slovenia was Dr France Bučar, and Lojze Peterle became the head of a government made up of 27 members (known as the Executive Council of the Assembly of the Republic of Slovenia). At the same time, Slovenian defence forces began to be secretly assembled — the Manoeuvre Structure of National Defence. In September, most of its members were incorporated into the Territorial Defence (TO) force; exclusive authority over this was given to the Republic of Slovenia by way of a constitutional amendment and its command assumed by the Presidency of the Republic of Slovenia. In July 1990, a symbolic reconciliation ceremony took place in Kočevski Rog, which was intended to contribute towards reconciling the divisions among the Slovenian people that occurred during the Second World War and its aftermath.



Founders of Demos, 8 January 1990
(Photo: Tone Stojko, source: National Museum of Contemporary History)

Dr France Bučar signing the solemn declaration after being elected President of the Assembly of the Republic of Slovenia, 9 May 1990
(Photo: Tone Stojko, source: National Museum of Contemporary History)



Members of the Executive Council of the Assembly of the Republic of Slovenia, 16 May 1990
(Photo: Tone Stojko, source: National Museum of Contemporary History)

Members of the Presidency of the Republic of Slovenia: Dr Matjaž Kmecl, Ivan Oman, President Milan Kučan, Ciril Zlobec and Dr Dušan Plut, 9 May 1990
(Photo: Tone Stojko, source: National Museum of Contemporary History)





The National Assembly of the Republic of Slovenia voting on the Plebiscite Bill, 21 November 1990, Ljubljana (Photo: Joco Žnidaršič)

Plebiscite on the Sovereignty and Independence of the Republic of Slovenia, 23 December 1990 (Photo: Joco Žnidaršič)

The next step towards the final goal — an independent Slovenia — soon followed. At a plebiscite held on 23 December 1990, the Slovenian people, with a majority of 88.5 per cent of the vote, decided in favour of an independent Republic of Slovenia. Over the next six months, the Slovenian leadership was tasked with preparing the grounds for political, economic, military and monetary independence.



The training of the first generation of Slovenian soldiers at the Territorial Defence training centres in Pekre and Ig led to the first open challenge with the Yugoslav People's Army in Slovenia. On 23 May 1991, the armoured vehicles of the Yugoslav Army surrounded the 710th Territorial Defence training centre in Pekre, demanding the conscripts there to surrender. The local inhabitants gathered around the training centre in support of the conscripts and, in the later demonstrations against the Yugoslav Army held in Maribor, the first casualty occurred when an armoured vehicle of the Yugoslav Army ran over a civilian, killing him.

The new national symbols, the flag and coat-of-arms, were confirmed by the assembly deputies just before the formal declaration of independence, whilst the seventh stanza of the poem *Zdravljica* (A Toast) by France Prešeren was proclaimed the national anthem through the Act on the Anthem of the Republic of Slovenia that was passed on 29 March 1990. Even before this, it had been declared the anthem of the Socialist Federal Republic on 27 September 1989, by way of a constitutional amendment.

Rejoicing after the plebiscite, 23 December 1990, Prešernov trg, Ljubljana (Photo: Tone Stojko, source: National Museum of Contemporary History)





Solemn declaration of independence, 26 June 1991, Trg republike, Ljubljana (Photo: Joco Žnidaršič)

Arrival of the three presidents at the ceremony of the declaration of independence (Photo: Tone Stojko, source: National Museum of Contemporary History)

It was announced that the declaration of independence would take place on 26 June, but the Slovenian assembly adopted the independence documents on 25 June 1991, a day earlier, as there were fears that Belgrade would want to prevent Slovenia from taking this step. Even before the evening declaration on 26 June, there were movements made by the Yugoslav Army and federal police units towards the border crossings with Italy. The first shots fired by a member of the Yugoslav Army occurred in Divača. In the early hours after the solemn declaration of independence, on 27 June 1991, several tanks and other armoured vehicles belonging to the Yugoslav Army could be heard on Slovenia's roads. Soon after, the first skirmish in the Ten-Day War between the Territorial Defence forces and the Yugoslav People's Army occurred near Poganci, between Metlika and Novo Mesto.



Encounter at Dravograd,
2 July 1991

(Photo: Tone Stojko,
source: National Museum of
Contemporary History)



Yugoslav National Army (YNA) tanks
approaching the Vrtojba border
crossing, 27 June 1991
(Photo: Tone Stojko, source: National
Museum of Contemporary History)

Owing to the Croatian representative, Stipe Mesić's failure to be elected as the President of the Presidency of the SFRY, the Yugoslav Army was formally without a supreme commander. The role was taken on by the President of the Federal Executive Council, Ante Marković, who approved an attack on Slovenia. The main targets were the borders with Italy and Austria, as well as Brnik airport, and the goal was the re-establishment of control over the borders and the collection of federal customs duties. Thus, the Yugoslav People's Army was on one side (a regular force consisting of conscripts in barracks in Slovenia, some Slovenians among them, and 10 per cent made up of special units from other military areas), and on the other side the members of the Slovenian defence forces (Territorial Defence forces, the militia, National Protection and civilian defence volunteers), led during these critical circumstances by an organisation known as the Republican Coordination, in close cooperation with the highest organs of the state. The conflicts that took place in a number of locations in Slovenia brought both military and civilian casualties and caused a great deal of material damage. The international public was informed of the Yugoslav Army's invasion at very well-attended press conferences; many individuals and professional organisations made use of their contacts abroad, and Slovenes around the world also offered a great deal of help and support.



Rejoicing after
the retreat of the YNA tank unit,
3 July 1991, Gornja Radgona
(Photo: Tone Stojko, source: National
Museum of Contemporary History)

The outcome was ultimately determined by the fact that the Slovenian authorities were informed in advance about the intentions of the Yugoslav Army, by the defence forces being prepared for an armed struggle and by the Slovenian side's success in informing the international public about events taking place, as well as by the other side underestimating Slovenia's resolve and its defence capacities and, as a result, being inadequately prepared.



Setting up X-shaped barricades,
5 July 1991, Ljubljana
(Photo: Tone Stojko, source: National
Museum of Contemporary History)

European Community negotiators
on the Brijuni Islands,
7 July 1991, Croatia
(Photo: Joco Žnidaršič)



On 7 July, after ten days of war, a conference was organised on the Brijuni (Brioni) Islands by representatives of the European Community and attended by representatives of the Republic of Slovenia, the Republic of Croatia, members of the SFRY Presidency and the President of the Federal Executive Council. The negotiations resulted in the Brijuni Agreement, which stipulated a cessation of hostilities and froze Slovenia's independence process for three months. The Slovenian assembly ratified the Agreement with a two-thirds majority. The three-month moratorium was marked by the decision taken by the federal and military authorities to withdraw the Yugoslav People's Army units from Slovenia, by strained relations in the ruling coalition and, above all, by a hive of diplomatic activity and efforts made to persuade those not yet convinced of the necessity of Slovenia's independence.



Slovenian delegation
at the negotiations
on the Brijuni Islands
(Photo: Joco Žnidaršič)

The three-month period expired at midnight on 7 October and the Slovenian authorities resumed control over the state borders. A new Slovenian currency was introduced, initially in the form of coupons, in September 1992 the first tolar banknotes were issued.



Celebration at the departure of the last YNA soldier, 26 October 1991, Koper (Source: Military Museum)

The Yugoslav Army left Slovenia on 26 October 1991, when the last ship carrying Yugoslav soldiers left the Port of Koper. Despite the international endeavours made to preserve Yugoslavia, by the end of 1991 it was clear that the country was disintegrating. The war in Croatia, which was already spreading to Bosnia and Herzegovina, had a further impact on the recognition of Slovenia as an independent state. On 30 June, Slovenia was recognised by the newly founded Lithuania, with Iceland leading the way among the Western European countries in recognising Slovenia on 19 December 1991. At the end of 1991, Slovenia achieved two important goals: the adoption of the Constitution of the Republic of Slovenia, the document forming the basis of an independent Slovenia, and a decision reached by European ministers concerning the recognition of Slovenia as an independent state, set for 15 January 1992.



Francesco Cossiga, the Italian President at the time, was the first foreign statesman to visit Slovenia, 17 January 1992, Ljubljana (Photo: Tone Stojko, source: National Museum of Contemporary History)



Visit of the then German Foreign Minister, Hans-Dietrich Genscher, 22 February 1992, Brnik Airport (Photo: Tone Stojko, source: National Museum of Contemporary History)

Unfurling the Slovenian flag
in front of the United Nations,
22 May 1992, New York, USA
(Photo: Bobo)



In 1992, Slovenia affirmed its position in both Europe and the rest of the world. Following its recognition by the members of the European Community, it became the 176th full member of the United Nations on 22 May that year. In December, voters attended the first parliamentary and presidential elections to take place in an independent Slovenia. The proportional representation system brought the highest number of votes for the Liberal Democratic Party (LDS). For the next twelve years, albeit with an interruption of six months in 2000, this party led Slovenia's government. In 2004, a coalition led by the Slovenian Democratic Party (SDS) took the helm. At the next parliamentary elections in 2008, the Social Democrats (SD) received the highest number of votes. The beginning of its period of office was marked by the onset of the international economic and financial crisis which, to a large extent, has determined its policies.

The then Prime Minister,
Dr Janez Drnovšek and president
Milan Kučan, during the visit of US
President, Bill Clinton to Slovenia,
21 June 1999, Kongresni trg, Ljubljana
(Photo: Bobo)



The first state president, Milan Kučan, was elected for two terms (1992–1997 and 1997–2002). He was followed by Dr Janez Drnovšek (2002–2007) and Dr Danilo Türk (2007–present).

During the early years of independence, Slovenian governments were tasked with dealing primarily with the serious economic crisis that emerged as a result of the loss of Yugoslav markets and the collapse of uncompetitive companies, which with the resulting unemployment and high inflation at the time reached its nadir in 1993. During this time, the general public was also involved in a debate concerning the Denationalisation Act and the manner in which state owned companies would be privatised. A total of 20 per cent of what used to be publicly owned was now to be divided among Slovenia's citizens in the form of certificates, which were invested with varying degrees of success in undertakings and companies. As a result of a raft of government measures, economic indicators began to rise in the second half of the nineties and, in 1995, the tolar became a convertible currency. There was also an ongoing dialogue regarding the shared border with the Republic of Croatia, which reached an important point with the signing of the arbitration agreement, which decided that the final border between the two countries would be drawn up by international arbitration. This decision was confirmed by Slovenian voters at a referendum held on 6 June 2010. Another major subject of discussion during the nineties were the different perspectives held on Slovenia's past.



Tolar bills
with images of notable Slovenians
(designed by Miljenko Licul)
(Source: Brumen Foundation)



The first decade of Slovenia's independence was characterised by the transition from a socialist to a market economy, a gradual rise in social divisions, the influence of capitalist thinking and changes to the way of life. At the same time, this decade and the one that followed was a time when Slovenia was approaching, acceding to and presiding over the world's most important international, political, economic and security organisations.



Slovenia was also becoming a part of global development. Foreign retailers, the opportunity to buy hitherto inaccessible cars at reasonable prices, the emergence and rapid spread of mobile communication, and the popularity of the Internet and electronic entertainment equipment all made life easier and brought the rest of the world closer, whilst at the same time changing everyday life and customs. According to statistical data, at the end of 2010 there were 2.121.950 (1,03 mobile phones per inhabitant) registered mobile phone users, initially a status symbol, but now an obligatory piece of equipment. Very few households in Slovenia are without a computer: in 2010, a total of 70 per cent of Slovenian homes had one. The list of the most popular names for newborns has also changed. Although France and Marija are still at the top, Luka has been in the lead as the most popular boy's name over the last two decades, and Anja and Nika for girls. Completely new names are also appearing: the most commonly used names that appeared for the first time after 1990 are Tian for boys and Kiara for girls.



Postage stamps with various Slovenian motifs (designed by Miljenko Licul) (Source: Brumen Foundation)



With regard to foreign policy, Slovenia's priority was to join the European Union and NATO, as well as to increase its influence within the UN and other important international organisations. In Luxembourg, in 1996, Slovenia signed an Association Agreement with the EU, formally applying for membership, and a year later received an invitation to commence accession negotiations. At the same time, the first negotiations for joining NATO also took place. In 1994, Slovenia became a member of the Partnership for Peace and an Associate Member of NATO, and in 1996 joined the North Atlantic Cooperation Council. Despite support for NATO oscillating in the second half of the nineties for various reasons, political leaders supported Slovenia joining NATO and with this aim in mind redoubled its membership efforts.



Commemorative coins of the Ministry of Defence of the Republic of Slovenia (Source: National Museum of Contemporary History)



Raising the Slovenian flag during the celebration of the accession to the NATO Alliance of seven new members, 2 April 2004, Brussels, Belgium (Photo: Bobo)





Celebration marking the accession of the Republic of Slovenia to the European Union, 1 May 2004, Nova Gorica (Photo: Uroš Hočevar/Salamon 2000, source: Government Communication Office)

At the start of the twenty-first century, EU and NATO membership remained Slovenia's principle goals. In 2002, euro coins and banknotes appeared for the first time in twelve countries within the European monetary union, Slovenia became a candidate state for EU membership. In April the following year, Slovenia signed the Treaty of Accession to the EU. At the preliminary referendum on 23 March 2003, 89,64 per cent of voters supported accession to the EU and 66,08 per cent joining NATO. On 1 May 2004, Slovenia became a full EU member, whilst NATO membership occurred even earlier, on 29 March 2004.



After the declaration of the referendum results (Source: Center Europa)

On 1 January 2007, Slovenia entered the European monetary system, the euro became the legal currency and the characteristic Slovenian symbols moved from the tolar to the new euro coins.



Late 2007 was marked by Slovenia becoming a part of the Schengen Area, which has facilitated direct contact with the Slovenian minorities in Italy, Austria and Hungary, and abolished border controls on the internal mainland, sea and air borders within the EU. Slovenia began 2008 as the Member State presiding over the Council of the European Union.



Removing border controls marking the solemn entry to the Schengen area, 20 December 2007, Rožna Dolina (Source: Gorica Regional Museum)



Slovenian Presidency of the European Council (1 January 2008–30 June 2008) (Photo: Mirko Kunšič)

Irwin
– A collective of Slovenian artists
(Source: Irwin)



Zoran Mušič – Slovenian painter
(Photo: Lado Mlekuč, Matija Pavlovec,
source: Gallery of Modern Art)



Boris Pahor and Drago Jančar
– Slovenian writers
(Photo: Bobo)



Dr Slavoj Žižek
– Slovenian philosopher
(Photo: Tomaž Gregorič)



Theatre play Tesla Electric Company
directed by Tomaž Pandur
(Photo: Aljoša Rebolj)

A single beam of light could have changed the entire course of my life, the destiny of an administration, it could have changed upon the Earth's surface...



Sabina Cvilak, soprano and the Slovenian Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Uroš Lajovic (Photo: Andrej Kríž)

Film *Let's Go Our Own Way* directed by Miha Hočevar, production Vertigo Emotionfilm, 2010 (Photo: Mitja Ličen, source: Emotionfilm)



Film *Bread and Milk* directed by Jan Cvitkovič, production Vertigo Emotionfilm/RTV Slovenija/VPK, 2001 (Photo: Toni Laznik, source: Emotionfilm)



The Avsenik Brothers Ensemble (Source: Avsenik Publishing)



Primož Kozmus, Olympic champion in hammer throw, Beijing, China, 2008 (Photo: Bobo)



Alpine ski racer Tina Maze won silver medals in giant slalom and super giant slalom at the 2010 Winter Olympics in Vancouver, Canada (Photo: Stanko Gruđen/STA, source: Government Communication Office)

Cross-country skier Petra Majdič won the bronze medal in classic sprint at the 2010 Winter Olympics in Vancouver, Canada (Photo: Stanko Gruđen/STA, source: Government Communication Office)



Dejan Zavec, the current IBF Welterweight Champion (Photo: www.dejanzavec.com)



First bronze medals for independent Slovenia at the 1992 Summer Olympics in Barcelona, won by rowers Iztok Čop and Denis Žvegelj in the coxwainless pairs and by Milan Janša, Sadik Mujkič, Sašo Mirjanič and Jani Klemenčič in the coxwainless fours. (Photo: Aleš Fevžer)



The Slovenian national football team at the 2010 FIFA World Cup in South Africa (Source: Government Communication Office)

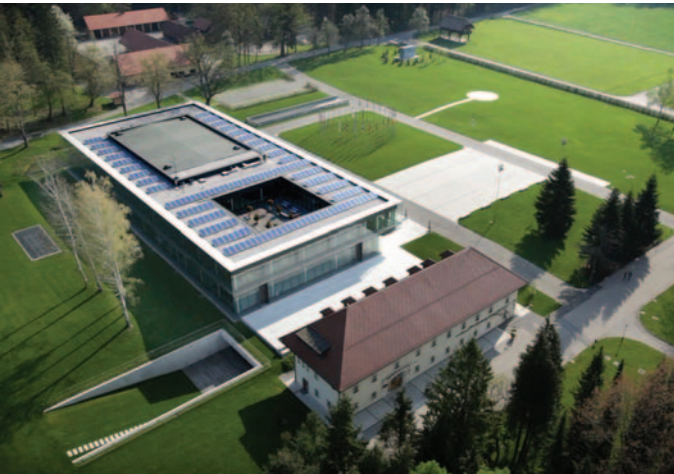
Alongside professional diplomats and economists with their achievements, also artists and athletes are the best representatives of our country (e.g. as Slovenia is ranked among the most successful sporting nations in the world, relative to the size of the population).



In 2010, the Pipistrel company, among other recognitions received an award for being the most innovative company in Europe (Source: Pipistrel)



Seaway's Greenline Ocean Class 70 Hybrid motor yacht (Source: Seaway)



Bisol's solar power plant at Brdo Congress Centre (Source: Bisol)

Architectural installation designed by Nika Zupanc using the Qbiss by Trimo facade system (Source: Nika Zupanc)



In 2011, twenty years after gaining independence, Slovenia is still preserving its national identity and has a secure place within Europe and the world. Meanwhile, the integration process continues, as last year Slovenia became a member of the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), which unites the world's most economically developed countries.

National Symbols of the Republic of Slovenia

Presidential Palace
(Photo: Bobo)



The use of the coat-of-arms, flag and anthem, which indicate affiliation to the Republic of Slovenia, is governed by the Act Regulating the Coat-of-Arms, Flag and Anthem of the Republic of Slovenia and the Flag of the Slovene Nation (OG RS, no. 67/1994 and 14/1999 – Constitutional Court Decision U-I-296/94; http://zakonodaja.gov.si/rpsi/r05/predpis_ZAKO365.html).



The Coat-of-Arms

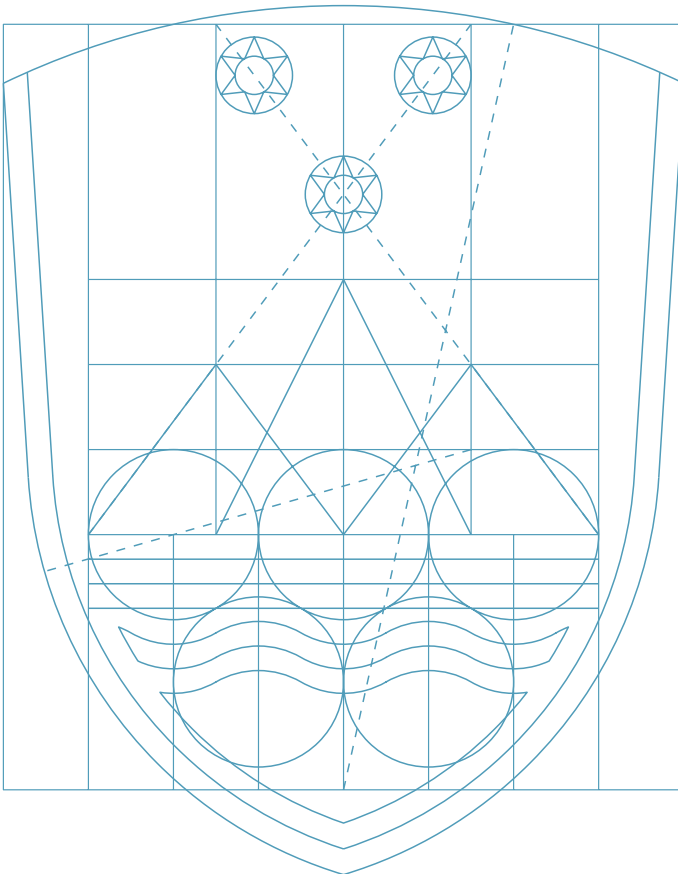
The coat-of-arms of the Republic of Slovenia takes the form of a shield, in the centre of which is a representation of Mount Triglav, Slovenia's highest peak, on a blue background; below it, there are two undulatory blue lines symbolising the Adriatic sea and rivers, and three golden six-pointed stars arranged in an inverted triangle above. The colour of the stars preserves the memory of the golden colour on the historical flag of the Duchy of Carniola. The left and right edges of the shield are bordered with red, meaning that all three colours of the Slovenian tricolour are included in the coat-of-arms.

Its designer, the sculptor Marko Pogačnik, described the coat-of-arms as a 'cosmogram' of the state of Slovenia, an artistic symbol that brings energy to and supports the Slovenian identity. He did not take historical messages, symbols or other signs as inspiration. To him, the coat-of-arms represents an all-encompassing representation of the space in which Slovenia exists: a natural imprint of sorts. Therefore the coat-of-arms has a precisely determined conceptual framework, in which its content is encoded. As his starting point, the designer took two works of art which signify a similar 'representation of space' to him. The first is the epic poem by France Prešeren *Krst pri Savici* (The Baptism at the Savica), including the introductory scene through which Slovenia's symbolic space was constructed by the poet: Mount Triglav above the surface of Lake Bohinj and the golden light above the mountain. The other work of art is Mary's column, designed by the architect Jože Plečnik, which now stands in front of Bled parish church and on which a similar image to the new Slovenian coat-of-arms, depicting Triglav below a six-pointed star, appears on Mary's cloak.

Pogačnik added other elements to this basic delineation of Slovenian space. The central system is represented by three main axes running from Mount Triglav: the axis of completeness in the direction of Istra; the axis of creativity towards Ljubljana and onwards to Bela krajina, the Kolpa river, and the village of Rosalnice; and the axis of transformation across Slovenj Gradec and Murska Sobota to the border with Hungary. These axes create three connected triangles. All the ancient elements are included in the coat-of-arms: air (the blue sky), fire (the golden stars), water (the waves) and earth (the mountain). These elements, amongst others, convey two fundamental messages: 'Slovenia is a country where the skies and the earth are interconnected and

balanced,' and 'The male and the female poles of existence are both polarised and balanced, therefore, a creative tension arises between them and encourages development and transformation in the country.' From an artistic perspective, the triangles are arranged in an image that can be identified as Mount Triglav, and the stars can be interpreted as representing the stars of the Counts of Celje; this is necessary, as a national symbol calls for a historical background. However, in essence, the whole symbol represents the earth's energy field, connected to the energy field of the universe, a connection without which a country cannot survive.

The law is very specific with regard to the use of the coat-of-arms, which is understandable as its use is tied chiefly to seals and documents, as well as the official logo of national institutions that represent the state outwards.



The Flag



The flag of the Republic of Slovenia comprises the white, blue and red of the Slovenian national flag and the coat-of-arms of the Republic of Slovenia. The ratio of the flag's width to its length is one to two. The colours are arranged in a sequence of white, blue and red. Each colour takes one third of the width of the flag up. The coat-of-arms is positioned in the top left corner of the flag in such a way that its central point occupies a position one quarter of the length along the line formed where the white and blue colours meet. The top half of the coat-of-arms, which features the stars, reaches into the white band of the flag and the bottom half into the blue band. The height of the coat-of-arms is one third of the width of the flag.

The law specifies and governs the use of both flags: the flag of the Republic of Slovenia and the Slovenian national flag. Both can be used at the same time. The first one represents the Republic of Slovenia and the latter the 2.5 million Slovenian people living around the world.

The law determines that **the flag must be permanently flown** from the buildings housing the official premises of the President of the Republic, the National Assembly, the Government and the National Council, at border crossings, buildings housing the representations of the Republic of Slovenia abroad, and on the vehicles used by the heads of representations in the performance of their official duties in line with international regulations and the customs of the country where the representation is situated or the rules and practices of the international organisation at which the representation is based. In addition, the flag must be flown permanently on ships and other Slovenian vessels, as well as displayed on planes and other public means of transport, in accordance with the conditions and in the manner laid down by the regulations.

The flag of the Republic of Slovenia **is flown** on the following national holidays:

- 8 February: Slovenian Day of Culture,
- 27 April: National Resistance Day,
- 1 and 2 May: Labour Day Holiday,
- 8 June: Primož Trubar Day,
- 25 June: Slovene National Day,
- 17 August: Uniting of the Slovenes of Prekmurje to their Mother Nation,
- 15 September: Return of Primorska to the Homeland,
- 23 November: Rudolf Maister Day,
- 26 December: Slovenian Independence and Unity Day,

on the buildings housing the official premises of state bodies and local community bodies, as well as, on occasion, from other public buildings and facilities, residential buildings and houses and other suitable locations. The flag is also flown at other official events and on days of mourning (at half mast high), as determined by the Government of the Republic of Slovenia.

The flag **may be flown** at international gatherings; sporting, cultural and other competitions; humanitarian, military and other events; at public gatherings where the Republic of Slovenia is represented or attending in accordance with the rules and customs pertaining to these gatherings; on local community holidays; at public events that are determined by the Government of the Republic of Slovenia to be of importance to Slovenia; and in other cases as long as the use of the flag does not contravene the law.

The flag **may be permanently flown** in order to mark buildings housing the official premises of ministries or other state and local community bodies. In instances where the flag of the Republic of Slovenia is flown beside another flag, it must always be positioned to the left, if viewed from the front; in exceptional cases it may, again when viewed from the front, be positioned to the right to a foreign flag or a flag belonging to an international organisation when the latter is flown on the occasion of an official visit of the head of another country or the authorised representative of an international organisation. In cases where the flag of the Republic of Slovenia is flown together with two other flags, it must be positioned in the middle.

When the flag of the Republic of Slovenia is flown together with a number of flags, it must be positioned in the following manner:

- when the flags are arranged in a circle, it must be positioned at the centre of the circle so that it can be clearly seen,
- when the flags are arranged in a semi-circle, it must be positioned at the centre of the semi-circle,
- when the flags are arranged in a column, it must be positioned at the head of the column,
- when the flags are arranged in a row, first in the row or, viewed from the front, it must be positioned on the left,
- when the flags are arranged in a group, it must be positioned at the head of the group.

The flag is hung correctly on a flagpole when the colours are arranged from top to bottom in the order of white, blue, and red; when viewed from the front, the coat-of-arms must be on the left side of the flag in the top left section. Therefore, the correct way of flying the flag is only on a flagpole by its short side rather than its long side.

Flag at Trg republike
(Photo: Bobo)



The Anthem

France Prešeren:

A Toast

God's blessing on all nations,
Who long and work
for that bright day,
When o'er earth's habitations
No war, no strife
shall hold its sway;
Who long to see
That all men free
No more shall foes,
but neighbours be.

Translated by Janko Lavrin

The text of the anthem of the Republic of Slovenia is the seventh stanza of the poem *Zdravljica* (A Toast), written by the greatest Slovenian poet, France Prešeren. The accompanying music was composed by Stanko Premrl.

The law states that the anthem is performed in line with the law, solemnly and in accordance with the customs detailing how the anthem is played, and either sung, played on instruments, or both.

The performance of the anthem is **mandatory** on the occasion of a state or official visit, upon the arrival of the head of a foreign state in the Republic of Slovenia and on official visits upon the arrival of the prime minister of the foreign state or the authorised representative of an international organisation in the Republic of Slovenia, and at the laying of wreaths by the official representatives of the Republic of Slovenia or by the representatives of foreign states or international organisations at monuments, cemeteries and similar locations.

The anthem **may be performed** at celebrations and other solemn events marking events significant for the Republic of Slovenia; at international gatherings, sporting, cultural and other competitions, humanitarian or similar events; and at other public gatherings at which the Republic of Slovenia is represented or attending, in accordance with the rules and customs of such gatherings, and on other occasions if the use of the anthem does not contravene the law. When the anthem is performed together with the anthem of another state or of an international or other organisation, the latter is performed first, followed by the anthem of the Republic of Slovenia.

ZDRAVLJICA

(France Prešeren)

Stanko Premrl



Ži - ve naj vsi na - ró - di, ki hre - pe - né do - ča - kat'



dan, da ko - der son - ce ho - di, pre -



pir iz sve - ta bo pre - gnan, da ro - jak



prost bo vsak, ne vrag, le so - sed bo me - jak,



da ro - jak prost bo vsak, ne vrag, le so - sed



bo, ne vrag, le so - sed bo me - jak!

Upon accession to the European Union in 2004, Slovenia adopted the two European Union symbols: the flag and the anthem. The use of these symbols is regulated by the Decree on the use of the European Union flag and anthem in the Republic of Slovenia (OG RS, no. 38/2004, http://zakonodaja.gov.si/rpsi/r05/predpis_URED3365.html). The European flag consists of a circle of 12 golden stars on a blue background, the number of which represents completeness and unity, and is not linked to the number of EU members. The ratio of the sides is 1 to 1.5. An important provision is that the EU flag can only be flown with the flag of the Republic of Slovenia, whereby the Slovenian flag must occupy the place of honour. An exception occurs on the occasion of an official visit by the President of the European Council, the President of the European Parliament or the President of the European Commission, when the Slovenian flag hospitably gives priority to the European flag.

The **European Union flag is permanently flown** next to the flag of the Republic of Slovenia on buildings housing the official premises of the President of the Republic, National Assembly, the Prime Minister and the National Council, at border crossings and buildings housing Slovenia's diplomatic representations and consulates abroad. The European Union flag can also be permanently flown on buildings housing other state and local community bodies.

The European Union flag **is flown** next to the flag of the Republic of Slovenia on the occasion of visits paid by foreign statesmen and authorised representatives of international organisations to the Republic of Slovenia. The European Union flag may be flown next to the flag of the Republic of Slovenia at international gatherings, sporting, cultural and other events; at humanitarian, military and other events and public gatherings; on the occasion of local community holidays and public events as determined by the Government; and on Slovenian holidays.

of the European Union

The **European Union anthem**, the Ode to Joy, is based on the final movement of Beethoven's Symphony No. 9 in D minor, and is played in Slovenia on the occasion of a welcoming ceremony with military honours; on official visits by the President of the European Council, the President of the European Parliament or the President of the European Commission, and at official festivities celebrating Europe Day; it can also be performed at other important events connected with the European Union. The EU anthem, which is without any words, is always performed together with the anthem of the Republic of Slovenia; the Slovenian anthem is played first, except at welcoming ceremonies with military honours where an official visit is paid by the President of the European Commission or the President of the European Parliament; in these cases, the anthem of the Republic of Slovenia cedes its place of honour to the EU anthem.

Flags in front of Brdo Congress Centre
(Photo: Mirko Kunšič)



It is no coincidence that Slovenia's brand slogan is I feel Slovenia. It is impossible to present Slovenia solely through imagery or pictures: one must also feel it. Brand Slovenia is aimed not only at promoting tourism, but is an all-encompassing symbol of the presentation and establishment of Slovenian culture, science, sports, business, its countryside and the character of Slovenia's inhabitants.

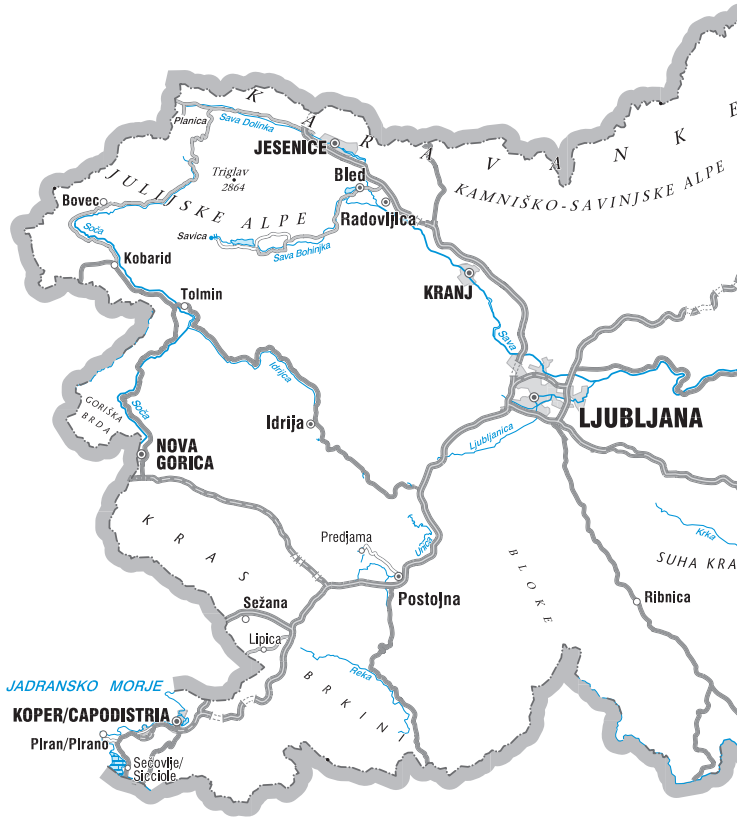
The logo's background is 'Slovenian green', symbolising the balance between the calmness of nature and the diligence of the Slovenian people. It tells of our well-preserved natural environment and our determination to keep it that way.

The logo and slogan are in English, as the main purpose of the brand is to present and establish Slovenia abroad. Brand Slovenia is the foundation for all the activities connected with the presentation of Slovenia both domestically and internationally. The brand is protected and can be used without a translation. The use of the brand (and the logo) for promotional purposes is permitted to all. However, those wishing to use it in their promotional activities must obtain consent from the brand's administrator, the Government Communication Office. This consent may be obtained via the following website: http://www.ukom.gov.si/si/promocija_slovenije/znamka_slovenije_i_feel_slovenia/i_feel_slovenia/#c299.

**I FEEL
SLOVENIA**

Slovenian exhibition space
(Source: Government
Communication Office)

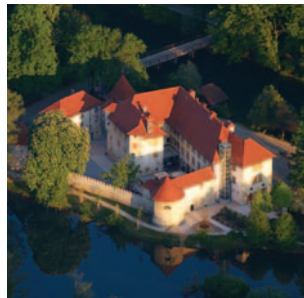






- Planica Valley (Photo: Bobo)
- Lake Bled (Photo: J. Skok)
- Ljubljana – the Capital of Slovenia (Photo: D. Wedam)
- Bee-hive panel (Photo: Čopi archive)
- The oldest vine in the world (Photo: B. Bajžeti)
- Gibanica – Prekmurje layer cake (Photo: T. Jeseničnik)
- Ptuj kurent – a Carnival mask from Ptuj (Photo: A. Fevžar)
- Chartusian Monastery Žiče (Photo: I. Kacbek)
- Otočec (Photo: Krka spa archive)
- Zeleni Jurij – figure who brings spring (Photo: Bobo)
- Ribnica traditional wooden ware (Photo: T. Jeseničnik)
- Postojna Cave (Photo: Postojna Cave archive)
- Predjama Castle (Photo: Bobo)
- Piran (Photo: U. Trnkoczy)
- Sečovelje Salina Nature Park (Photo: U. Trnkoczy)
- Lipica (Source: Lipica Stud Farm archive)
- Kobarid World War I. Museum (Photo: T. Reisner)
- Lect (Ginger bread) heart (Photo: T. Jeseničnik)

Sources: Geodetic Institute of Slovenia, www.slovenia.info, Government Communication Office, TIC Slovenjske Konjice



Key Events commemorating 20 Years of Independence of the Republic of Slovenia

23 December 2010	8.45 p.m.	Gallus Hall at Cankarjev dom, Ljubljana	<p>Main State celebration of Slovenian Independence and Unity Day Twentieth Anniversary of the Plebiscite</p> <p>Honorary speaker: Borut Pahor, Prime Minister of the Republic of Slovenia.</p>	Coordinating Committee for State Celebrations / Dep. of State Ceremonies at the Ministry of Culture of the Republic of Slovenia
15 May 2011	12 noon	Cerklje ob Krki barracks	<p>Main celebration of the Twentieth Anniversary of the Slovenian Armed Forces in independent Slovenia and Slovenian Armed Forces Day</p> <p>(the ceremony commemorates the start of military training of the first Slovenian soldiers and memory of the first Slovenian victim to fall in the fight for independence)</p> <p>Honorary speaker: Dr Danilo Türk, President of the Republic of Slovenia and Commander-in-Chief of the Slovenian Armed Forces</p>	Slovenian Army / Ministry of Defence in cooperation with the Union of Veterans of the War for Slovenia and the Sever Association of Police Veteran Societies
24 June 2011	9.15 p.m.	Kongresni trg, Ljubljana	<p>Main State celebration of Slovenian National Day and the Twentieth Anniversary of Slovenia's Independence After 8 p.m. – broadcast of the solemn session of the National Assembly and review of the special formation of the Guard of the Slovenian Army</p> <p>At 21 p.m. – Arrival of the ensigns of the Slovenian Army, Slovenian police and veteran and patriotic societies</p> <p>Honorary speaker: Dr Danilo Türk, President of the Republic of Slovenia</p>	Coordinating Committee for State Celebrations / Dep. of State Ceremonies at the Ministry of Culture of the Republic of Slovenia
27 June 2011	9 p.m.	Holmec	<p>Main celebration of Police Day, the Twentieth Anniversary of Slovenia's Independence and unveiling a plaque commemorating the fighting and victims at the former border crossing in 1991</p> <p>Honorary speaker: Katarina Kresal, Minister of the Interior of the Republic of Slovenia</p>	Ministry of the Interior in cooperation with the Sever Association of Police Veteran Societies
1 July 2011	From 10 a.m.	The centre of Ljubljana (Mestni, Pogačarjev and Prešernov trg)	<p>Homecoming – gathering of Slovenes from all over the world at the 20th Anniversary of the Independence of the Republic of Slovenia.</p> <p>The streets and squares of the old part of the town will be enlivened by various organizations and associations stalls, Slovene culinary dishes and performances of music, folklore and theatre groups who develop and preserve Slovene culture also outside our borders. The event will be concluded by a stage music performance of a well-known Slovene group Sounds of Slovenia (Sozvočja Slovenije) at 8 p.m.</p>	Office for Slovenians and Abroad, Government Communication Office, Slovenia Tourist Board, The City of Ljubljana
22 October 2011	11 a.m.	Koper	<p>Celebration of the Twentieth Anniversary of the last Yugoslav soldier leaving Slovenia at the Port of Koper</p>	Ministry of Defence and the Ministry of Interior in cooperation with the Union of Veterans of War for Slovenia and the Sever Association of Police Veteran Societies
23 December 2011	8 p.m.	Gallus Hall at Cankarjev dom, Ljubljana	<p>Main celebration of Independence and Unity Day and Twentieth Anniversary of the adoption of the Slovenian Constitution</p> <p>Honorary speaker: Dr Ernest Petrič, President of the Constitutional Court</p>	Coordinating Committee for State Celebrations / Dep. of State Ceremonies at the Ministry of Culture of the Republic of Slovenia

Issued and published by:

Department of State Ceremonies

at the Ministry of Culture of the Republic of Slovenia and

Communication Office of the Government of the Republic of Slovenia

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Translation:
**Secretariat-General of
the Government of the
Republic of Slovenia**

Printed by:
Collegium Graphicum

Print run:
5000 copies

Ljubljana, June 2011



CIP - Kataložni zapis o publikaciji
Narodna in univerzitetna knjižnica, Ljubljana

94 (497.4) "1991/2011"

STRLIČ, Nataša

Republic of Slovenia : 20 years of independence / [authors
Nataša Strlič, Jože Osterman]. - Ljubljana : National
Commemorative

Events Office at the Ministry of Culture of the Republic of
Slovenia : Communication Office of the Government of the
Republic
of Slovenia, 2011

ISBN 978-961-6370-18-9 (Ministry of Culture)
1. Gl. stv. nasl. 2. Osterman, Jože, 1947-
256474368

www.twenty.si