



Doing Business in the European Union: Slovenia

2010 Country Commercial Guide for U.S. Companies

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Chapter 1: Doing Business in the European Union - Slovenia

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Market Overview

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- Strategically located at the “gateway” to the Western Balkans, Slovenia has been a star performer since its independence in 1991. This small transition economy with a population of only two million, has registered dramatic gains in per capita and aggregate wealth, established a stable and well-functioning democracy, and raised the standard of living for Slovenians to a level on par with Western European economies. Slovenia joined the European Union in May 2004, the euro zone in January 2007, the Schengen zone on December 21, 2007, and held the EU Presidency during the first half of 2008.
- Today, Slovenia is one the best economic performers in central and eastern Europe, with a GDP per capita in 2008 of 18,367 € equivalent in PPP of 23,100 €. Slovenia has recently enjoyed healthy growth figures, averaging 5% annual GDP growth between 2004 and 2008. Mirroring developments in other countries during the global economic crisis, GDP growth in 2008 fell to 3.5%. The Institute for Macroeconomic Analysis estimates negative GDP growth for 2009 (-7.3%) and minimal positive growth for 2010 (0.9%). Slovenia's economy is highly dependent on foreign trade. About two-thirds of Slovenia's trade is with the EU, focused primarily on the German and Austrian markets. Additionally, the country has successfully penetrated markets to the south and east, including the former Soviet Union region. Trade with the U.S. comprises only 1.5% of overall trade.
- Today, Slovenia is faced with growing challenges. Much of the economy remains in state hands and foreign direct investment (FDI) in Slovenia is one of the lowest in the EU on a per capita basis. Taxes are relatively high, the labor market is often seen as inflexible, and legacy industries are showing signs of increasing competitive pressures from China, India, and elsewhere. The current center-left government, elected in September 2008, announced that its economic priorities will focus on passing measures to reduce the impact of the global financial crisis and instituting social reforms such as (pension and health, right?). As a result, privatization has become a lower priority for the government.
- Slovenia's economy is extremely sensitive to the economic conditions of its main trading partners and changes in its international competitiveness. Keeping labor costs in line with productivity is a key challenge for Slovenia's economic well-being. Services contribute the most to the national output, accounting for 61% of GDP. Industry and construction comprised 37% of GDP; and, agriculture, forestry, and fishing accounted for 2% of GDP.

- Austrian, German and Italian firms are the primary competition for American companies doing business in the Slovenian marketplace..

Market Challenges

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- Slovenia has a small domestic market of 2 million people.
- Slovenia has a highly skilled workforce, but a small, stationary, and highly rigid labor market that is becoming increasingly more expensive.
- Slovenia has been slow to privatize, has an opaque and corruption prone public procurement system, and is relatively unfriendly to foreign direct investment.

Market Opportunities

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- The investment climate in Slovenia is a stable one, with excellent infrastructure, a well-educated workforce, and an excellent, strategic location that provides easy access to Central and Southeastern Europe.
- The major growth industries in Slovenia are the high-tech sector, especially information and communication technology (ICT), financial services, and logistics.

Market Entry Strategy

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- Although all market strategies are applicable, Slovenian business people like to develop relationships; building personal contacts with Slovenian business people and working with a local representative are common ways U.S. companies enter the Slovenian market. More information on doing business in Slovenia is available at the U.S. Embassy in Slovenia's website, <http://slovenia.usembassy.gov> and www.buyusa.gov/slovenia/en. U.S. exporters and investors seeking general export information/assistance and country-specific commercial information should contact the U.S. Department of Commerce, Trade Information Center by phone at 1-800-USA-TRAD or by fax at (202) 482-4473.

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Chapter 2: Political and Economic Environment

For background information on the political and economic environment of the country, please click on the link below to the U.S. Department of State Background Notes.

<http://www.state.gov/r/pa/ei/bgn/3407.htm>

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Chapter 3: Selling U.S. Products and Services

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Using an Agent or Distributor

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The use of a carefully selected local agent or distributor can be cheaper and more efficient than direct sales by a U.S. exporter unfamiliar with the Slovene market. Reliable and capable partners can be found, but care should be exercised. The U.S. Embassy in Slovenia can assist companies in screening potential Slovene partners. More information on how the U.S. Embassy can help you identify potential business partners can be found at <http://www.buyusa.gov/slovenia/en/> .

Due to a general lack of financial discipline, late payment to suppliers is a common problem in Slovenia. Therefore, U.S. firms are advised to obtain a confirmed irrevocable letter of credit as the basis for conducting business with a new local partner. Dunn & Bradstreet's agent in Slovenia "I d.o.o." (www.idoo.si, email: imojstri@idoo.si, phone: +386-1-234-2940; fax: +386-1-234-2958) or the Slovenian Chamber of Commerce and Industry (email: information@gzs.si, phone: +386-1-5898-000; fax: +386-1-5898-100, attn: INFOLINK Office) may be helpful in determining the creditworthiness of a potential local partner.

The following are some well-known American companies with local agent/distributor or representative offices: Goodyear, Merck, Sharp & Dohme, Coca-Cola Amatil, UPS, IBM, Nike, DHL, Philip Morris, Oracle, Hewlett Packard, 3M, Microsoft, Air Routing International, Pfizer, Wrigley, Deloitte & Touche, Cisco, Chrysler, Ernst & Young, Johnson & Johnson, Masterfoods, Pharmacia & Upjohn, Proctor & Gamble, Schering Plough, and Eli Lilly.

In Slovenia, foreigners may establish any legal organizational form described in the Companies Act (limited-liability companies, joint-stock companies, limited partnerships

with share capital, limited partnerships, general partnerships, and silent partnerships). Foreigners may be exclusive or part owners of companies.

All companies acquire the status of a legal person upon their entry into the court register. Prior to entry into the court register, a number of formalities must be performed. It is therefore beneficial to consult a lawyer as early as possible to avoid difficulties that may arise during the process of establishing a company (from adopting the memorandum and articles of association to their certification by a notary public and entry into the court register).

Foreign companies have the same rights, obligations, and responsibilities as domestic companies conducting business in Slovenia. When a company is entered into the court registry, it becomes a Slovenian legal entity, regardless of the origin of capital. The principles of commercial enterprise, free operation, and national treatment apply to the operations of foreign as well as domestic companies. Basic rights are guaranteed by the Companies Act and the Law on Foreign Transactions:

- the right to manage or participate in the management of companies in proportion to invested funds
- the right to transfer contractual rights and obligations to other foreign and domestic natural and legal persons
- the right to participate in profits in proportion to invested funds; the right to free transfer and reinvestment of profits
- the right to recover investments in companies and their share in net assets after the dissolution of companies.

Restrictions are, however, placed on foreign investments in certain sectors of national strategic or other special significance. For example: foreigners cannot establish their own companies in the manufacture or sale of arms or military equipment.

For certain activities, such as road transport, catering, and other professions, a certification is required.

More detailed information on the types of legal entities, as well as on how to establish a company, can be found at <http://www.investslovenia.org/>.

Companies wishing to use distribution, franchising and agency arrangements need to ensure that the agreements they put into place are in accordance with European Union (EU) and Member State national laws. Council Directive 86/653/EEC establishes certain minimum standards of protection for self-employed commercial agents who sell or purchase goods on behalf of their principals. In essence, the Directive establishes the rights and obligations of the principal and its agents; the agent's remuneration; and the conclusion and termination of an agency contract, including the notice to be given and indemnity or compensation to be paid to the agent. U.S. companies should be particularly aware that the Directive states that parties may not derogate certain requirements. Accordingly, the inclusion of a clause specifying an alternate body of law to be applied in the event of a dispute will likely be ruled invalid by European courts.

Key Link:

<http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=CELEX:31986L0653:EN:HTML>

The European Commission's Directorate General for Competition enforces legislation concerned with the effects on competition in the internal market of "vertical agreements."

March 1, 2010

U.S. small- and medium-sized companies (SMEs) are exempt from these Regulations because their agreements likely would qualify as "agreements of minor importance," meaning they are considered incapable of affecting competition at the EU level but useful for cooperation between SMEs. Generally speaking, companies with fewer than 250 employees and an annual turnover of less than €50 million are considered small- and medium-sized undertakings. The EU has additionally indicated that agreements that affect less than 10 percent of a particular market are generally exempted as well (Commission Notice 2001/C 368/07).

Key Link:

http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/site/en/oj/2001/c_368/c_36820011222en00130015.pdf

The EU also looks to combat payment delays with Directive 2000/35/EC. This covers all commercial transactions within the EU, whether in the public or private sector, primarily dealing with the consequences of late payment. Transactions with consumers, however, do not fall within the scope of this Directive. In sum, the Directive entitles a seller who does not receive payment for goods/services within 30-60 days of the payment deadline to collect interest (at a rate of 7 percent above the European Central Bank rate) as compensation. The seller may also retain the title to goods until payment is completed and may claim full compensation for all recovery costs. The current legislation is undergoing review.

Key Link: http://ec.europa.eu/enterprise/policies/single-market-goods/documents/late-payments/index_en.htm

Companies' agents and distributors can take advantage of the European Ombudsman when victim of inefficient management by an EU institution or body. Complaints can be made to the European Ombudsman only by businesses and other bodies with registered offices in the EU. The Ombudsman can act upon these complaints by investigating cases in which EU institutions fail to act in accordance with the law, fail to respect the principles of good administration, or violate fundamental rights.

Key Link: <http://www.ombudsman.europa.eu/home/en/default.htm>

Data Privacy/Protection

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The EU's General Data Protection Directive (95/46/EC) spells out strict rules concerning the processing of personal data. Businesses must tell consumers that they are collecting data, what they intend to use it for, and to whom it will be disclosed. *Data subjects* must be given the opportunity to object to the processing of their personal details and to opt-out of having them used for direct marketing purposes. This opt-out should be available at the time of collection and at any point thereafter. This general legislation is supplemented by specific rules set out in the "Directive on the processing of personal data and the protection of privacy in the electronic communications sector" (2002/58/EC). This requires companies to secure the prior consent of consumers before sending them marketing emails. The only exception to this opt-in provision is if the marketer has already obtained the intended recipient's contact details in the context of a previous sale and wishes to send them information on similar products and services.

Key Link: http://ec.europa.eu/justice_home/fsj/privacy/index_en.htm

Transferring Customer Data to Countries outside the EU

The EU's general data protection Directive provides for the free flow of personal data within the EU but also for its protection when it leaves the region's borders. Personal data can only be transferred outside the EU if adequate protection is provided for it or if the **unambiguous consent** of the data subject is secured. The European Commission has decided that a handful of countries have regulatory frameworks in place that guarantee the adequate protection of data transferred to them – the United States is NOT one of these.

The Department of Commerce and the European Commission negotiated the Safe Harbor agreement to provide U.S. companies with a simple, streamlined means of complying with the adequacy requirement. It allows those U.S. companies that commit to a series of data protection principles (based on the Directive), and who publicly state that commitment by "self-certifying" on a dedicated website, to continue to receive personal data from the EU. Signing up is voluntary but the rules are binding on those who do. The ultimate means of enforcing Safe Harbor is that failure to fulfill the commitments will be actionable as an unfair and deceptive practice under Section 5 of the FTC Act or under a concurrent Department of Transportation statute for air carriers and ticket agents. While the United States as a whole does not enjoy an adequacy finding, transfers that are covered by the Safe Harbor scheme will. Companies whose activities are not regulated by the FTC or DoT (e.g. banks, credit unions, savings and loan institutions, securities dealers, insurance companies, not-for-profit organizations, meat packing facilities, or telecommunications carriers) are not eligible to sign up to the Safe Harbor.

EU based exporters or U.S. based importers of personal data can also satisfy the adequacy requirement by including data privacy clauses in the contracts they sign with each other. The Data Protection Authority in the EU country from where the data is being exported must approve these contracts. To fast track this procedure the European Commission has approved sets of model clauses for personal data transfers that can be inserted into contracts between data importers and exporters. The most recent were published at the beginning of 2005; work to update these and develop new ones is ongoing. Most transfers using contracts based on these model clauses do not require prior approval. Companies must bear in mind that the transfer of personal data to third countries is a processing operation that is subject to the general data protection Directive regardless of any Safe Harbor, contractual or consent arrangements.

EU countries' Data Protection Authorities (DPAs) and large multinational companies are also developing a third major approach to compliance with EU rules on transfers of personal data to countries outside the EU. This is based on country-by-country approval of "binding corporate rules" (BCRs). Companies that set up BCRs that satisfy European DPAs will be able to use the presumption of conformity that these approvals provide to transfer personal data from the EU to any location in the world – not just the United States. BCRs can be a tool for compliance with privacy rules on a global scale. The process of negotiation and approval of the BCRs is currently lengthy and complex, and has not been attempted by small or medium-sized companies.

Key Links:<http://www.export.gov/safeharbor/>
http://ec.europa.eu/justice_home/fsj/privacy/modelcontracts/index_en.htm
http://ec.europa.eu/justice_home/fsj/privacy/workinggroup/wpdocs/2007_en.htm

Opportunities for franchising are limited only by Slovenia's small market size. McDonald's and ReMax are the best-known U.S. franchises in Slovenia. The local market does not require any special legal requirements for gaining a franchise license. For local (tax) reporting purposes, a legal entity must be the holder of the franchise license.

Direct marketing is growing year by year in Slovenia. This growth, however, has caused an increase in consumers' preference not to receive this kind of advertising. The postal service has provided Slovenian residents with special mailbox stickers indicating the individual's preference not to receive any direct marketing mail. The sale of mailing lists of individuals is not common and mail-order houses are rare. Amway is the only U.S. direct marketing company with an office in Slovenia. Studio Moderna offers direct marketing of U.S. products through infomercials on local television stations in several countries in the region, including Slovenia.

There is a wide range of EU legislation that impacts the direct marketing sector. Compliance requirements are stiffest for marketing and sales to private consumers. Companies need to focus, in particular, on the clarity and completeness of the information they provide to consumers prior to purchase, and on their approaches to collecting and using customer data. The following gives a brief overview of the most important provisions flowing from EU-wide rules on distance selling and on-line commerce. Companies are advised to consult the information available via the hyperlinks and to contact the Commercial Service at the U.S. Mission to the European Union for more specific guidance.

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Processing Customer Data

The EU has strict laws governing the protection of personal data, including the use of such data in the context of direct marketing activities. For more information on these rules, please see the privacy section above.

Distance Selling Rules

- Distance and Door-to-Door sales
The EU's Directive on distance selling to consumers (97/7/EC and amendments) sets out a number of obligations for companies doing business at a distance with consumers. It can read like a set of onerous "do's" and "don'ts," but in many ways it represents nothing more than a customer relations good practice guide with legal effect. Direct marketers must provide clear information on the identity of themselves as well as their supplier, full details on prices including delivery costs, and the period for which an offer remains valid – all of this, of course, before a contract is concluded. Customers generally have the right to return goods without any required explanation within seven days, and retain the right to compensation for faulty goods thereafter. Similar in nature is the Doorstep Directive (85/577/EEC) which is designed to protect consumers from sales occurring outside of a normal business premises (e.g., door-to-door sales) and essentially assure the fairness of resulting contracts.

Key Links: Consumer Affairs Homepage:

http://ec.europa.eu/consumers/cons_int/safe_shop/index_en.htm

Distance Selling:

http://ec.europa.eu/consumers/cons_int/safe_shop/dist_sell/index_en.htm

Door Step

Selling:http://ec.europa.eu/consumers/cons_int/safe_shop/door_sell/index_en.htm

- Distance Selling of Financial Services
Financial services are the subject of a separate Directive that came into force in June 2002 (2002/65/EC). This piece of legislation amends three prior existing Directives and is designed to ensure that consumers are appropriately protected in respect to financial transactions taking place where the consumer and the provider are not face-to-face. In addition to prohibiting certain abusive marketing practices, the Directive establishes criteria for the presentation of contract information. Given the special nature of financial markets, specifics are also laid out for contractual withdrawal.

Key Link: [http://eur-](http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=CELEX:32002L0065:EN:NOT)

[lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=CELEX:32002L0065:EN:NOT](http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=CELEX:32002L0065:EN:NOT)

Direct Marketing over the Internet

The e-commerce Directive (2000/31/EC) imposes certain specific requirements connected to the direct marketing business. Promotional offers must not mislead customers and the terms that must be met to qualify for them have to be easily accessible and clear. The Directive stipulates that marketing e-mails must be identified as such to the recipient and requires that companies targeting customers on-line must regularly consult national opt-out registers where they exist. When an order is placed, the service provider must acknowledge receipt quickly and by electronic means, although the Directive does not attribute any legal effect to the placing of an order or its acknowledgment. This is a matter for national law. Vendors of electronically supplied services (such as software, which the EU considers a service and not a good) must also collect value added tax (see Electronic Commerce section below).

Key Link: http://ec.europa.eu/internal_market/e-commerce/index_en.htm

Joint Ventures/Licensing

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In addition to establishing their own companies, foreigners can also invest in existing companies. For private companies and limited-liability companies, investments are allowed with the agreement of the partners and by joining in the partnership agreement. Takeovers of joint-stock companies are much more frequent and depend less on the individual partners/shareholders as the shares are quoted on the Stock Exchange (shares of closed companies are an exception).

Takeovers can be accomplished through mergers or acquisitions. The Law on Takeovers and the Companies Act regulate takeovers. This law establishes conditions for the purchase of stocks/shares sold by individual companies and issuers of stocks when specific legal or natural persons acquire or wish to acquire a stake in a company that gives the buyer more than 25% of the voting rights. Takeovers occur of both public companies with stocks quoted on the market and private companies through direct offers to shareholders. If the company conducting a takeover acquires a controlling interest in another company, it is obliged to inform the issuer of shares, the Securities Market Agency (SMA), and the Stock Exchange within seven days of the date that it acquires a majority stake. The issuer, who has received such a notice, must publish it within ten days in daily newspapers or on the premises of the Stock Exchange (Official Gazette no. 47/97).

Both domestic and foreign legal and natural persons may freely conclude all types of commercial contracts (agency contracts, distribution contracts, license contracts, etc.). Slovene legislation does not stipulate different administrative procedures for the performance of individual foreign trade transactions or contracts. Contractual parties in international legal transactions may select the law that will regulate their mutual relationships and the court (arbitration tribunal) of competent jurisdiction that will hear disputes.

Selling to the Government

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The procedure used by state agencies and state controlled companies for purchases is prescribed by the Public Procurement Act, published in the Official Gazette no. 36/2004. The most often used form of procurement is a public tender. In most cases foreign and domestic bidders have the same rights. In public tenders funded by EU funds, the requirement usually involves only EU origin goods or services. However, U.S.-owned companies can qualify if they have a representative office somewhere in EU.

The public procurement process in Slovenia remains a frustrating experience for many American companies. Recent complaints include insufficient time to prepare bids, extremely strict requirements regarding language, lack of transparency on who is the decision making authority on tenders, dismissal of bids as non-compliant on grounds not substantive to a company's ability to provide goods or perform services, and an appeals process not protected from possible corruption or political influences.

As a NATO member, Slovenia is required to dedicate two percent of its GDP to military expenditure. For the past few years, Slovenia was unable to meet this goal. Lately, the percentage of GDP allocated to defense has been steadily decreasing to 1.55% from 1.68% in 2004). Some of the projects for the near future include expansion and upgrade of the NATO military airport in Cerklje, upgrades to Cougar helicopters and Air Defense systems, purchase of military transport aircraft, additional equipment for recently purchased armored vehicles and 8x8 vehicles. For more information on foreign military sales opportunities, please contact the Embassy.

The EU public procurement market, including EU institutions and Member States, totals approximately EUR 1,600 billion. This market is regulated by three Directives:

- Directive 2004/18 on Coordination of procedures for the award of public works, services and supplies contracts, and
- Directive 2004/17 on Coordination of procedures of entities operating in the Utilities sector, which covers the following sectors: water, energy, transport and postal services.
- Directive 2009/81 on Coordination of procedures for the award of certain works, supply and service contracts by contracting authorities in the fields of defense and security (to be implemented in national laws of EU member states by mid-2011).

Remedies directives cover legal means for companies who face discriminatory public procurement practices. These directives are implemented in the national procurement legislation of the 27 EU Member States.

The US and the EU are signatories of the World Trade Organization's (WTO) Government Procurement Agreement (GPA), which grants access to most public supplies and services and some works contracts published by national procuring authorities of the countries that are parties to the Agreement. In practice, this means that U.S.-based companies are eligible to bid on supplies and services contracts from European public contracting authorities above the agreed thresholds.

However, there are restrictions for U.S. suppliers in the EU utilities sector both in the EU Utilities Directive and in the EU coverage of the Government Procurement Agreement (GPA). The Utilities Directive allows EU contracting authorities in these sectors to either reject non-EU bids where the proportion of goods originating in non-EU countries exceeds 50% of the total value of the goods constituting the tender, or is entitled to apply a 3% price difference to non-EU bids in order to give preference to the EU bid. These restrictions are applied when no reciprocal access for EU companies in the U.S. market is offered. Those restrictions however were waived for the electricity sector.

For more information, please visit the U.S. Commercial Service at the U.S. Mission to the European Union website dedicated to EU public procurement. This site also has a database of all European public procurement tenders that are open to U.S.-based firms by virtue of the Government Procurement Agreement. Access is free of charge.

Key Link: http://www.buyusa.gov/europeanunion/eu_tenders.html

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Distribution and Sales Channels

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Several distribution channels are open to U.S. goods on the Slovene marketplace, including wholesaling and retailing, as well as franchising, joint ventures, and licensing.

There are a large number of merchants, agents, intermediaries, wholesalers, and retailers available in Slovenia. Any firm may carry out both foreign and domestic trade.

Slovenia's major distribution centers are located in Brnik and Koper. The port of Koper is Slovenia's only seaport and is located in the western part of the country on the Adriatic Sea. Airport Jože Pučnik in Brnik is the nation's largest commercial airport and is located in the center of the country, 20 kilometers north of the capital and largest city Ljubljana. Smaller distribution centers can also be found in major cities such as Ljubljana and Maribor, Slovenia's second largest city.

Selling Factors/Techniques

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Operating hours of most businesses in Slovenia are Monday through Friday from 8 am to 4 pm, and the majority of retail stores close by 7 or 8 pm, with a few staying open until 9 pm. Most stores are open on Saturday mornings and several shopping centers are open all day on Saturdays. Larger grocery stores and larger shopping centers are opened until 3 pm on Sundays.

Many Slovenian consumers prefer to pay in monthly installments, even for lower cost goods. Other factors/technologies critical to success are close and frequent contact with buyers, motivated and trained intermediaries, and aggressive market promotion.

User manuals for technical equipment and content declaration (with appropriate labeling requirements) for goods must be presented in the Slovene language.

Electronic Commerce

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There are quite a few online stores available; buying online and paying with credit cards are becoming more common in Slovenia.

In July 2003, the EU started applying Value Added Tax (VAT) to sales by non-EU based companies of Electronically Supplied Services (ESS) to EU based non-business customers. U.S. companies that are covered by the rule must collect and submit VAT to EU tax authorities. European Council Directive 2002/38/EC further developed the EU rules for charging Value Added Tax. These rules were indefinitely extended following adoption of directive 2008/8/EC

U.S. businesses mainly affected by the 2003 rule change are those that are U.S. based and selling ESS to EU based, non-business customers or those businesses that are EU based and selling ESS to customers outside the EU who no longer need to charge VAT on these transactions. There are a number of compliance options for businesses. The Directive created a special scheme that simplifies registering with each Member State. The Directive allows companies to register with a single VAT authority of their choice.

Companies have to charge different rates of VAT according to where their customers are based but VAT reports and returns are submitted to just one authority. The VAT authority responsible for providing the single point of registration service is then responsible for reallocating the collected revenue among the other EU VAT authorities.

Key Link: http://ec.europa.eu/taxation_customs/taxation/vat/how_vat_works/e-services/index_en.htm

Trade Promotion and Advertising

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All the normal channels for advertising are available and are widely used in Slovenia, including newspapers, internet banners, magazines, television, radio, and outdoor billboards/signs. Other promotional techniques commonly employed are sales promotions, public relations, and trade fairs.

Slovenia's major newspapers are *Delo*, *Dnevnik*, *Slovenske Novice*, and *Vecer*. New, and widely distributed are also the "free" newspapers: *Zurnal24* (daily), *Zurnal* (weekly) and *Dobro jutro* (weekly). The free weeklies have distribution levels of approximately 350,000 copies. Newspapers and magazines are also most commonly used for printed as well as internet based advertising (on their webpages). The major business journals are *Finance*, *Manager*, *Podjetnik*, and *Slovenian Business Report*. For reference, the circulation figures for popular dailies are: *Zurnal24* 120,000 *Slovenske novice* 78,000, *Delo* 65,000, *Dnevnik* 47,000, *Vecer* 38,000, and *Finance* 12,000.

The major television stations are *Radio Televizija Slovenia* (network), and *POP TV*. The major "out-of-home" advertiser is *Proreklam Europlakat* (billboards, bus stations, city lights, etc.)

For a listing of all fairs in 2010 in Slovenia, visit this website: <http://www.gzs.si/fairs/>

Fair grounds that organize trade shows:

- Ljubljana Fair Grounds: <http://www.ljubljanafair.com/>
List of events: <http://www.ljubljanafair.com/fairs/>
- Celje Fair grounds: http://www.ce-sejem.si/index.php?cid=0_0_0&l=1
List of events: <http://www.ce-sejem.si/index.php?page=static&item=196>
- Portoroz: <http://www.internautica.net/>
- Gornja Ragdona: <http://www.pomurski-sejem.si/ang-kzs/kzs.htm>

General Legislation

Laws against misleading advertisements differ widely from Member State to Member State within the EU. To respond to this imperfection in the Internal Market, the

Commission adopted a Directive, in force since October 1986, to establish minimum and objective criteria regarding truth in advertising. The Directive was amended in October 1997 to include comparative advertising. Under the Directive, misleading advertising is defined as any "advertising which in any way, including its presentation, deceives or is likely to deceive the persons to whom it is addressed or whom it reaches and which, by reason of its deceptive nature, is likely to affect their economic behavior or which for those reasons, injures or is likely to injure a competitor." Member States can authorize even more extensive protection under their national laws.

Comparative advertising, subject to certain conditions, is defined as "advertising which explicitly or by implication identifies a competitor or goods or services by a competitor." Member States can, and in some cases have, restricted misleading or comparative advertising.

The EU's Audiovisual Media Services Directive lays down legislation on broadcasting activities allowed within the EU. From 2009 the rules allow for US-style product placement on television and the three-hour/day maximum of advertising will be lifted. However, a 12-minute/hour maximum will remain. Child programming will be subject to a code of conduct that will include a limit of junk food advertising to children.

Following the adoption of the 1999 Council Directive on the Sale of Consumer Goods and Associated Guarantees, product specifications, as laid down in advertising, are now considered as legally binding on the seller. (For additional information on Council Directive 1999/44/EC on the Sale of Consumer Goods and Associated Guarantees, see the legal warranties and after-sales service section below.)

The EU adopted Directive 2005/29/EC concerning fair business practices in a further attempt to tighten up consumer protection rules. These rules outlaw several aggressive or deceptive marketing practices such as pyramid schemes, "liquidation sales" when a shop is not closing down, and artificially high prices as the basis for discounts in addition to other potentially misleading advertising practices. Certain rules on advertising to children are also set out.

Key Link:

http://ec.europa.eu/comm/consumers/cons_int/safe_shop/fair_bus_pract/index_en.htm
http://ec.europa.eu/avpolicy/reg/avms/index_en.htm

Medicine

The advertising of medicinal products for human use is regulated by Council Directive 2001/83/EC. Generally speaking, the advertising of medicinal products is forbidden if market authorization has not yet been granted or if the product in question is a prescription drug. Mentioning therapeutic indications where self-medication is not suitable is not permitted, nor is the distribution of free samples to the general public. The text of the advertisement should be compatible with the characteristics listed on the product label, and should encourage rational use of the product. The advertising of medicinal products destined for professionals should contain essential characteristics of the product as well as its classification. Inducements to prescribe or supply a particular medicinal product are prohibited and the supply of free samples is restricted.

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The Commission presented a new framework for information to patients on medicines in 2008. The framework would allow industry to produce non-promotional information about their medicines while complying with strictly defined rules and would be subject to an effective system of control and quality assurance.

Key Link:

http://ec.europa.eu/enterprise/pharmaceuticals/patients/patients_key.htm

Nutrition & Health Claims

On July 1, 2007, a new regulation on nutrition and health claims entered into force. [Regulation 1924/2006](#) sets EU-wide conditions for the use of nutrition claims such as “low fat” or “high in vitamin C” and health claims such as “helps lower cholesterol”. The regulation applies to any food or drink product produced for human consumption that is marketed on the EU market. Only foods that fit a certain nutrient profile (below certain salt, sugar and/or fat levels) will be allowed to carry claims. Nutrition and health claims will only be allowed on food labels if they are included in one of the EU positive lists. Food products carrying claims must comply with the provisions of [nutritional labeling directive 90/496/EC](#). From 2010, only nutrition claims in the Annex will be allowed.

The development of nutrient profiles, originally scheduled for January 2009, is being delayed due to the 2009 Parliamentary elections and the appointment of a new Commission. Once they have been set, there will be another two-year period before the nutrient profiles begin to apply to allow food operators time to comply with the new rules. Nutrition claims can fail one criterion, i.e. if only one nutrient (salt, sugar or fat) exceeds the limit of the profile, a claim can still be made provided the high level of that particular nutrient is clearly marked on the label. For example, a yogurt can make a low-fat claim even if it has high sugar content but only if the label clearly states “high sugar content”. Health claims cannot fail any criteria.

The deadline of January 31, 2010, for compiling a list of well-established health function claims such as ‘calcium is good for your bones’ will not be met due to the vast amount of applications that have to be screened by EFSA. Disease risk reduction claims and claims referring to the health and development of children will require an authorization on a case-by-case basis, following the submission of a scientific dossier to EFSA. A simplified authorization procedure has been established for health claims based on new scientific data. [GAIN Report E48055](#) describes how application dossiers for authorization of health claims should be prepared and presented. A guidance document on how companies can apply for health claim authorizations can be downloaded from EFSA’s website at:

http://www.efsa.europa.eu/EFSA/ScientificPanels/NDA/efsa_locale-1178620753812_1178684448831.htm.

Summary Document:

http://www.efsa.europa.eu/cs/BlobServer/Scientific_Opinion/nda_op_ej530_guidance_summary_en.pdf?ssbinary=true

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Full Text:

http://www.efsa.europa.eu/cs/BlobServer/Scientific_Opinion/nda_op_ej530_guidance_%20health_claim_en.pdf,2.pdf?ssbinary=true

Key Links:

http://www.efsa.europa.eu/EFSA/efsa_locale-1178620753812_1178620835814.htm

Food Supplements

Regulation 1925/2006, applicable as of July 1, 2007, harmonizes rules on the addition of vitamins and minerals to foods. The regulation lists the vitamins and minerals that may be added to foods. This list was most recently revised in November 2009. A positive list of substances other than vitamins and minerals has not been established yet, although it is being developed. Until then, Member State laws will govern the use these substances.

Key Link: <http://useu.usmission.gov/agri/foodsupplements.html>

Tobacco

The EU Tobacco Advertising Directive bans tobacco advertising in printed media, radio, and internet as well as the sponsorship of cross-border events or activities. Advertising in cinemas and on billboards or merchandising is allowed though these are banned in many Member States. Tobacco advertising on television has been banned in the EU since the early 1990s and is governed by the TV without Frontiers Directive.

Key link: http://ec.europa.eu/health/ph_determinants/life_style/Tobacco/tobacco_en.htm

Pricing

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The price level of goods and services in Slovenia is relatively high for the region due to the high cost of labor and lack of competition in certain sectors. The market generally determines prices. The government controls the prices of oil, natural gas, railway transport, and some other products. The government may also influence the pricing policies of companies under its direct or indirect control. The price of gasoline is set through a pricing model, which adjusts to world prices every two weeks.

All prices generally include 20% VAT. Food items only include a VAT of 8.5%.

Sales Service/Customer Support

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Sales service, after sale services, and customer support are relatively poorly developed marketing tools in Slovenia.

Conscious of the discrepancies among Member States in product labeling, language use, legal guarantee, and liability, the redress of which inevitably frustrates consumers

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trying to do cross-border shopping, EU institutions have launched a number of initiatives aimed at harmonizing national legislation. Suppliers within and outside the EU should be aware of existing and upcoming legislation affecting sales, service, and customer support.

Product Liability

Under the 1985 Directive on liability of defective products, amended in 1999, the producer is liable for damage caused by a defect in his product. The victim must prove the existence of the defect and a causal link between defect and injury (bodily as well as material). A reduction of liability of the manufacturer is granted in cases of negligence on the part of the victim.

Key link:

<http://ec.europa.eu/enterprise/policies/single-market-goods/product-liability/>

Product Safety

The 1992 General Product Safety Directive introduces a general safety requirement at the EU level to ensure that manufacturers only place safe products on the market. It was revised in 2001 to include an obligation on the producer and distributor to notify the Commission in case of a problem with a given product, provisions for its recall, the creation of a European Product Safety Network, and a ban on exports of products to third countries that are not deemed safe in the EU.

Key link: http://ec.europa.eu/consumers/safety/prod_legis/index_en.htm

Legal Warranties and After-sales Service

Under the 1999 Directive on the Sale of Consumer Goods and Associated Guarantees, professional sellers are required to provide a minimum two-year warranty on all consumer goods sold to consumers (natural persons acting for purposes outside their trade, businesses or professions), as defined by the Directive. The remedies available to consumers in case of non-compliance are:

- Repair of the good(s);
- Replacement of the good(s);
- A price reduction; or
- Rescission of the sales contract.

Key link:

http://ec.europa.eu/comm/consumers/cons_int/safe_shop/guarantees/index_en.htm

Other issues pertaining to consumers' rights and protection, such as the New Approach Directives, CE marking, quality control and data protection are dealt with in Chapter 5 of this report.

Slovenia has a comprehensive legal framework for the protection of intellectual property rights. Slovenia signed the WTO Uruguay Round Agreement on Trade-Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights (TRIPs) and has implemented those commitments. The number of intellectual property complaints in Slovenia remains low, although U.S. industry representatives have raised some concerns about the pace and scope of action taken by the government against infringement.

Industrial property rights (patents, designs, trademarks and service marks, and appellations of origin) are protected in Slovenia through registration at the Slovenian Intellectual Property Office (SIPO) (website: <http://www.uil-sipo.si/GLAVAGB.htm>, email: sipo@uil-sipo.si, phone: +386 1 620 31 00; fax: +386 1 620 31 10). A list of Slovenian patent agents is available from the Patent Office of the SIPO (<http://www.uil-sipo.si/GLAVAGB.htm>).

Slovenia is a party to the following intellectual property agreements:

- Convention Establishing the World Intellectual Property Organization;
- Agreement on Trade-Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights;
- Paris Convention for the Protection of Industrial Property;
- Madrid Agreement Concerning the International Registration of Marks;
- Nice Agreement Concerning the International Classification of Goods and Services for the Purposes of the Registration of Marks;
- Locarno Agreement Establishing an International Classification for Industrial Designs;
- Hague Agreement Concerning the International Deposit of Industrial Design;
- Patent Cooperation Treaty;
- Bern Convention for the Protection of Literary and Artistic Works;
- Rome Convention for the Protection of Performers, Producers of Phonograms and Broadcast Organizations;
- 1973 Geneva Phonograms Convention; and
- Brussels Convention Related to the Distribution of Program-Carrying Signals Transmitted by Satellite.

In the event of an Intellectual Property Right infringement, U.S. companies are advised to hire a local attorney who can then pursue the matter in local commercial court.

Several general principles are important for effective management of intellectual property rights in the European Union (EU). First, it is important to have an overall strategy to protect IPR. Second, IPR is protected differently in the EU than in the U.S. Third, rights must be registered and enforced *in* the EU under local laws. Companies may wish to seek advice from local attorneys or IP consultants. The U.S. Commercial Service can often provide a list of local lawyers upon request.

It is vital that companies understand that intellectual property is primarily a private right and that the US government generally cannot enforce rights for private individuals in the EU. It is the responsibility of the rights' holders to register, protect, and enforce their rights where relevant, retaining their own counsel and advisors. While the U.S. Government is willing to assist, there is little it can do if the rights holders have not taken these fundamental steps necessary to securing and enforcing their IPR in a timely fashion. Moreover, in many countries, rights holders who delay enforcing their rights on

a mistaken belief that the USG can provide a political resolution to a legal problem may find that their rights have been eroded or abrogated due to doctrines such as statutes of limitations, laches, estoppel, or unreasonable delay in prosecuting a law suit. In no instance should USG advice be seen as a substitute for the obligation of a rights holder to promptly pursue its case.

It is always advisable to conduct due diligence on partners. Negotiate from the position of your partner and give your partner clear incentives to honor the contract. A good partner is an important ally in protecting IP rights. Keep an eye on your cost structure and reduce the margins (and the incentive) of would-be bad actors. Projects and sales in the EU require constant attention. Work with legal counsel familiar with local laws to create a solid contract that includes non-compete clauses, and confidentiality/non-disclosure provisions.

It is also recommended that small and medium-size companies understand the importance of working together with trade associations and organizations to support efforts to protect IPR and stop counterfeiting. There are a number of these organizations, both EU- and U.S.-based. These include:

- The U.S. Chamber and local American Chambers of Commerce
- National Association of Manufacturers (NAM)
- International Intellectual Property Alliance (IIPA)
- International Trademark Association (INTA)
- The Coalition Against Counterfeiting and Piracy
- International Anti-Counterfeiting Coalition (IACC)
- Pharmaceutical Research and Manufacturers of America (PhRMA)
- Biotechnology Industry Organization (BIO)

A wealth of information on protecting IPR is freely available to U.S. rights holders. Some excellent resources for companies regarding intellectual property include the following:

- For information about patent, trademark, or copyright issues -- including enforcement issues in the US and other countries -- call the STOP! Hotline: **1-866-999-HALT** or register at www.StopFakes.gov.
- For more information about registering trademarks and patents (both in the U.S. as well as in foreign countries), contact the US Patent and Trademark Office (USPTO) at: **1-800-786-9199**.
- For more information about registering for copyright protection in the US, contact the US Copyright Office at: **1-202-707-5959**.
- For US small and medium-size companies, the Department of Commerce offers a "SME IPR Advisory Program" available through the American Bar Association that provides one hour of free IPR legal advice for companies with concerns in Brazil, China, Egypt, India, Russia, and Thailand. For details and to register, visit: <http://www.abanet.org/intlaw/intlproj/iprprogram.html>
- For information on obtaining and enforcing intellectual property rights and market-specific IP Toolkits visit: www.StopFakes.gov This site is linked to the USPTO website for registering trademarks and patents (both in the U.S. as well as in foreign countries), the U.S. Customs & Border Protection website to record registered trademarks and copyrighted works (to assist customs in blocking imports of IPR-infringing products) and allows you to register for Webinars on protecting IPR.

- For an in-depth examination of IPR requirements in specific markets, toolkits are currently available in the following countries/territories: Brazil, Brunei, China, Egypt, [European Union](#), India, Italy, Malaysia, Mexico, Paraguay, Peru, Russia, Taiwan, Thailand, and Vietnam.
- For assistance in developing a strategy for evaluating, protecting, and enforcing IPR, use the free **Online IPR Training Module** on www.stopfakes.gov.

Copyright

The EU's legislative framework for copyright protection consists of a series of Directives covering areas such as the legal protection of computer programs, the duration of protection of authors' rights and neighboring rights, and the legal protection of databases. Almost all Member States have fully implemented the rules into national law; and the Commission is now focusing on ensuring that the framework is enforced accurately and consistently across the EU.

Key Link: http://ec.europa.eu/internal_market/copyright/documents/documents_en.htm

The on-line copyright Directive (2001/29/EC) addresses the problem of protecting rights holders in the online environment while protecting the interests of users, ISPs and hardware manufacturers. It guarantees authors' exclusive reproduction rights with a single mandatory exception for technical copies (to allow caching), and an exhaustive list of other exceptions that individual Member States can select and include in national legislation. This list is meant to reflect different cultural and legal traditions, and includes private copying "on condition right holders receive fair compensation."

Key Link: http://eur-lex.europa.eu/pri/en/oj/dat/2001/l_167/l_16720010622en00100019.pdf

Patents

EU countries have a "first to file" approach to patent applications, as compared to the "first to invent" system currently followed in the United States. This makes early filing a top priority for innovative companies. Unfortunately, it is not yet possible to file for a single EU-wide patent that would be administered and enforced like the Community Trademark though negotiations are progressing (see below). For the moment, the most effective way for a company to secure a patent across a range of EU national markets is to use the services of the European Patent Office (EPO) in Munich. It offers a one-stop-shop that enables rights holders to get a bundle of national patents using a single application. However, these national patents still have to be validated, maintained and litigated separately in each Member State.

Key Links: http://ec.europa.eu/internal_market/indprop/patent/index_en.htm
<http://www.european-patent-office.org>

Trademarks

The EU-wide Community Trademark (CTM) can be obtained via a single language application to the Office of Harmonization in the Internal Market (OHIM) in Alicante, Spain. It lasts ten years and is renewable indefinitely. For companies looking to protect trademarks in three or more EU countries the CTM is a more cost effective option than registering separate national trademarks.

On October 1, 2004, the European Commission (EC) acceded to the World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO) Madrid Protocol. The accession of the EC to the Madrid Protocol establishes a link between the Madrid Protocol system, administered by WIPO, and the Community Trademark system, administered by OHIM. As of October 1, 2004, Community Trademark applicants and holders are allowed to apply for international protection of their trademarks through the filing of an international application under the Madrid Protocol. Conversely, holders of international registrations under the Madrid Protocol will be entitled to apply for protection of their trademarks under the Community Trademark system.

Key Links: <http://oami.europa.eu/>
<http://www.wipo.int/madrid/en>

Designs

The EU adopted a Regulation introducing a single Community system for the protection of designs in December 2001. The Regulation provides for two types of design protection, directly applicable in each EU Member State: the registered Community design and the unregistered Community design. Under the registered Community design system, holders of eligible designs can use an inexpensive procedure to register them with the EU's Office for Harmonization in the Internal Market (OHIM), based in Alicante, Spain. They will then be granted exclusive rights to use the designs anywhere in the EU for up to twenty-five years. Unregistered Community designs that meet the Regulation's requirements are automatically protected for three years from the date of disclosure of the design to the public.

Key Link: <http://oami.europa.eu/>

Trademark Exhaustion

Within the EU, the rights conferred on trademark holders are subject to the principle of "exhaustion." Exhaustion means that once trademark holders have placed their product on the market in one Member State, they lose the right to prevent the resale of that product in another EU country. This has led to an increase in the practice of so called "parallel importing" whereby goods bought in one Member State are sold in another by third parties unaffiliated to the manufacturer. Parallel trade is particularly problematic for the research-based pharmaceutical industry where drug prices vary from country to country due to national price Regulation.

Community wide exhaustion is spelled out in the Directive on harmonizing trademark laws. In a paper published in 2003, the Commission indicated that it had no plans to propose changes to existing legal provisions.

Key Link: http://ec.europa.eu/internal_market/indprop/tm/index_en.htm

Due Diligence

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The Commercial Service at the U.S. Embassy in Ljubljana offers an “International Company Profile” service, which provides detailed information on a company, their financials, and possible media exposure. For more information, visit http://www.buyusa.gov/slovenia/en/international_company_profile.html

The following firms operating in Ljubljana can assist in performing the important task of due diligence on potential Slovenian partners:

I Poslovne informacije d.o.o. (Dunn & Bradstreet’s agent in Slovenia)
Zrinjskega cesta 4
1000 Ljubljana
Tel: +386-1-234-29-40
Fax: +386-1-234-29-58
Web: <http://www.idoo.si/>
Email: imojstri@idoo.si

Creditreform d.o.o.
Tivolska cesta 30
1000 Ljubljana
Tel: +386-1-438-16-71
Fax: +386-1-438-16-70
Web: <http://www.creditreform.si/en/index.jsp>
Email: info@creditreform.si

Coface Intercredit d.o.o.
Cankarjeva cesta 3
1000 Ljubljana
Tel: +386-1-425-90-65
Fax: +386-1-425-91-30
Web: www.coface.si/
Email: office@coface.si

Local Professional Services

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Slovenia does not recognize U.S. legal accreditation, and regulations regarding licenses to practice in-country are restrictive. Some Slovene law firms conduct business in English and are familiar with U.S. law.

Local service providers focusing on EU law, consulting, and business development can be viewed on the website maintained by the Commercial Service at the U.S. Mission to the European Union at: <http://www.buyusa.gov/europeanunion/services.html>.

For information on professional services located within each of the EU member states, please see EU Member State Country Commercial Guides which can be found at the following website [EU Member States' Country Commercial Guides](#)

Web Resources

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Commercial Service at U.S. Embassy Ljubljana
<http://www.buyusa.gov/slovenia/en/>

Slovenian Intellectual Property Office
<http://www.uil-sipo.si/sipo/office/tools/home/>

Invest in Slovenia
<http://www.investslovenia.org/>

Trade shows in Slovenia:
<http://www.gzs.si/fairs/>

Fair grounds that organize trade shows:

Ljubljana Fair Grounds: <http://www.ljubljanafair.com/>
List of events: <http://www.ljubljanafair.com/fairs/>

Celje Fair grounds: http://www.ce-sejem.si/index.php?cid=0_0_0&l=1
List of events: http://www.ce-sejem.si/index.php?page=spisek_sejmov&mode=upcoming&item=2419

Portoroz: <http://www.internautica.net/>

Gornja Ragdona: <http://www.pomurski-sejem.si/ang-kzs/kzs.htm>

Public Procurement Act
http://www.mf.gov.si/slov/javnar/ZJN-2_angl.pdf

Print media:
Delo <http://www.delo.si/>
Dnevnik <http://www.dnevnik.si/>
Slovenske Novice <http://www.slovenskenovice.si/>
Vecer <http://www.vecer.si/>
Finance <http://www.finance-on.net/>
Slovenian Business Report <http://www.sbr.si/>

Information on English Speaking Lawyers in Slovenia
http://slovenia.usembassy.gov/attorneys_list.html

EU websites:

Coordination of the laws of the Member States relating to self-employed commercial agents (Council Directive 86/653/EEC):

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<http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=CELEX:31986L0653:EN:HTML>

Agreements of Minor importance which do not appreciably restrict Competition under Article 81(1) of the Treaty establishing the European Community

http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/site/en/oj/2001/c_368/c_36820011222en00130015.pdf

Regulation on late payment: http://ec.europa.eu/enterprise/policies/single-market-goods/documents/late-payments/index_en.htm

European Ombudsman: <http://www.ombudsman.europa.eu/home/en/default.htm>

EU's general data protection Directive (95/46/EC):
http://ec.europa.eu/justice_home/fsj/privacy/index_en.htm

Safe Harbor: <http://www.export.gov/safeharbor/>

Information on contracts for transferring data outside the EU:
http://ec.europa.eu/justice_home/fsj/privacy/modelcontracts/index_en.htm

Data Protection Working Group:
http://ec.europa.eu/justice_home/fsj/privacy/workinggroup/wpdocs/2007_en.htm

Distance Selling Rules:
http://ec.europa.eu/consumers/cons_int/safe_shop/dist_sell/index_en.htm

Distance Selling of Financial Services:
<http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=CELEX:32002L0065:EN:NOT>

E-commerce Directive (2000/31/EC):
http://ec.europa.eu/internal_market/e-commerce/index_en.htm

VAT on Electronic Service:
http://ec.europa.eu/taxation_customs/taxation/vat/how_vat_works/e-services/index_en.htm

The Unfair Commercial Practices Directive:
http://ec.europa.eu/comm/consumers/cons_int/safe_shop/fair_bus_pract/index_en.htm

Information to Patients - Major developments:
http://ec.europa.eu/enterprise/pharmaceuticals/patients/patients_key.htm

Nutrition and health claims made on foods:
[Regulation 1924/2006](#)

Provisions of Nutritional Labeling:
[Nutritional labeling directive 90/496/EC](#)

EU-27 FAIRS Subject Report Health Claims - EU Authorization Procedure 2008:

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[GAIN Report E48055](#)

Guidance document on how companies can apply for health claim authorizations:

Summary document from EFSA:

http://www.efsa.europa.eu/cs/BlobServer/Scientific_Opinion/nda_op_ej530_guidance_summary_en.pdf?ssbinary=true

Full document from EFSA:

http://www.efsa.europa.eu/cs/BlobServer/Scientific_Opinion/nda_op_ej530_guidance_20health_claim_en.pdf,2.pdf?ssbinary=true

Health & Nutrition Claims:

http://ec.europa.eu/food/food/labellingnutrition/claims/index_en.htm

Tobacco: http://ec.europa.eu/health/ph_determinants/life_style/Tobacco/tobacco_en.htm

Product Liability:

http://europa.eu/legislation_summaries/consumers/consumer_safety/l32012_en.htm

Product Safety: http://ec.europa.eu/consumers/safety/prod_legis/index_en.htm

Legal Warranties and After-sales Service:

http://ec.europa.eu/comm/consumers/cons_int/safe_shop/guarantees/index_en.htm

Copyright: http://ec.europa.eu/internal_market/copyright/documents/documents_en.htm

Harmonization of certain aspects of Copyright and related rights in the Information Society - Copyright Directive (2001/29/EC):

http://eur-lex.europa.eu/pri/en/oj/dat/2001/l_167/l_16720010622en00100019.pdf

Industrial Property: http://ec.europa.eu/internal_market/indprop/index_en.htm

European Patent Office (EPO): <http://www.european-patent-office.org>

Office for Harmonization in the Internal Market (OHIM): <http://oami.europa.eu/>

World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO) Madrid: <http://www.wipo.int/madrid/en>

Directive on harmonizing trademark laws:

http://ec.europa.eu/internal_market/indprop/tm/index_en.htm

U.S. websites:

IPR Toolkit: <http://www.buyusa.gov/europeanunion/ipr.html>

EU Public Procurement: http://www.buyusa.gov/europeanunion/eu_tenders.html

Food supplements: <http://useu.usmission.gov/agri/foodsupplements.html>

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Local Professional Services: <http://www.buyusa.gov/europeanunion/services.html>.

EU Member State Country Commercial Guides - Market Research Library: [EU Member States' Country Commercial Guides](#)

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Chapter 4: Leading Sectors for U.S. Export and Investment

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 - [Environmental Equipment \(ENV\)](#)
 - [Electrical Power Systems \(ELP\) and Energy](#)
 - [Information Technology \(INF\)](#)
 - [Chemical and Pharmaceutical Sector & Biotechnology \(BTC\)](#)
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Overview

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Slovenia's legacy of worker self-management continues to be felt in the economy. A high degree of decentralization and a tendency to discourage the flow of resources from declining firms to growing ones has led to large gaps between top and bottom performers in all sectors. These performance disparities are likely to diminish as poorly performing companies might fail during the global economic crisis and resources are allocated more efficiently among sectors. For the time being, however, it is difficult to identify specific sectors where growth is likely to be concentrated. Given cost factors, viable businesses of the future are likely to have the following characteristics: moderate to low reliance on manual labor input; moderate to low use of real estate; and "environmentally friendly" undertakings.

Commercial Sectors

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Health Care Equipment (MED)

Overview

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Slovenia's health care equipment market is dominated by imports because there is limited domestic production. The approximate market size was \$350 million. Imports to Slovenia mainly come from Germany, Italy, Austria, the United States and Switzerland. (Between 15% and 20% are imports from the U.S.) The market has seen some growth over the last ten years, but the real potential lies ahead. The majority of equipment in public hospitals is outdated and expensive to maintain. The government has announced plans to restructure the healthcare sector and there will likely be increased demand for

innovative instruments and equipment. In 2007, the Oncology Institute moved in to a new facility. The new pediatrics clinic was opened in 2009.

The Ministry of Health is the main player in the Slovenian medical equipment market. The Ministry develops health policies, proposes the health care budget and the investment program for the sector, and monitors the work of state-owned health institutions. Due to fiscal problems with the national health account, the Ministry was forced to check purchasing programs centralize hospital tenders. These measures have begun to show some results in increased transparency of public procurement. Dental services are mainly in private hands.

The Slovenian market is very price-sensitive. Institutions are, however, prepared to pay well for state-of-the-art equipment.

Entire health care expenditure accounts for roughly 8%-9% of GDP. Per capita statistics (nearly 2,000 USD) are slightly below EU-27 average (2,500 USD).

Opportunities

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Slovenian public health sector seeks hospital management training. The ministry of health and the main hospitals inquired about American programs.

Resources:

Ministry of Health, Štefanova 5, SI- 1000 Ljubljana, Slovenia

E: [gp.mz\(at\)gov.si](mailto:gp.mz(at)gov.si)

<http://www.mz.gov.si/en/>

Chamber of Commerce and Industry of Slovenia, Dimiceva 13, 1504 Ljubljana, Slovenia

E-mail: info@gzs.si

<http://eng.gzs.si/slo/>

U.S. Commercial Service

Mr. Matjaž Kavčič, Senior Economic Commercial Specialist

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Drugs and Pharmaceutical products (DRG)

Overview

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Slovenia's pharmaceutical market is very competitive. Once dominated by two local domestic generic producers, the market now has products from the entire world. Innovative drug producers had a comfortable position in Slovenia until 2003 when the government initiated the first measures to decrease spending on medicines. Since then the government has introduced several amendments to by-laws in the medical sector legislation that worsened the position of drug producers. The market, however, remains attractive despite the small size of the country. Slovenia spent \$ 770 million for

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medicines. This figure makes the per capita consumption in Slovenia double the consumption in Austria. The market is not expected to experience any impacts from the global economic crisis.

The Ministry of Health is the main player in the pharmaceutical market. The Ministry develops health policies, proposes the health care budget and monitors the national health care fund spending. Due to fiscal problems, the Ministry evaluated purchasing programs and centralized hospital tenders to bring cost per unit down. The measures lowered prices per unit. The money saved will be used for other drugs, in particular for innovative products treating the two most critical health problems in Slovenia, cancer and cardiovascular illnesses.

Drugs and Pharmaceuticals Data Table (\$ millions)

	2006	2007	2008
Total Market Size	724	770	780
Total Local Production	350	370	380
Imports from the U.S.	290	310	305

exchange rate: \$1 = EUR 0.715

Note: The above statistics are unofficial estimates

Best Products/Services

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- Drugs for cardiovascular illnesses
- Innovative products for Cancer treatments

Opportunities

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The best prospects among American-made pharmaceuticals are cancer medications, cardiovascular medications, and bio-technologically produced medications.

Resources:

Ministry of Health, Štefanova 5, SI- 1000 Ljubljana, Slovenia

E: [gp.mz\(at\)gov.si](mailto:gp.mz(at)gov.si)

<http://www.mz.gov.si/en/>

Agency for medicinal products and medical devices, Ptujška 21, 1000 Ljubljana, Slovenia

E-mail: info@jazmp.si

<http://www.jazmp.si/index.php?id=56>

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Environmental Equipment (ENV)

Overview

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Slovenia's environmental legislation is harmonized with the European Union, and waste and pollution control mechanisms in Slovenia have improved over the last five years. The major concerns in Slovenia include insufficient level of treatment and coverage for municipal and industrial wastewater; uncontrolled dumping of solid and hazardous wastes; lack of proper disposal sites; lack of recycling facilities and incinerators and control of air pollution emissions in industrial areas. Increase of hazardous waste is of particular concern. In July 2002, Slovenia ratified the Kyoto protocol, according to which Slovenia has to reduce greenhouse gases by 8% between 2008 through 2012.

Slovenia produces 452 kilograms (kg) of waste per capita, which is below the EU-27 average of 522 kg per capita. EU set up a goal of 300 kg of waste per capita. The majority of the waste is deposited into landfills (71%). Only 1 kg of waste per capita is actually incinerated, which is drastically below the EU-27 average of 97 kg per capita.

Recycling of waste is drastically increasing. From 2002, the amount of recycled waste has increased 44 fold. However, only about 28% of all waste is recycled and authorities are predicting this number will increase as measures that will decrease landfill usage are implemented, including the establishment of regional centers for waste management and enforcement of fees on landfills.

Best Products/Services

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- Waste water treatment
- Recycling

Opportunities

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Project financing comes from various sources, including the state budget, local government budgets, environmental funds, EU structural funds and from individual investors and entrepreneurs. U.S. firms can compete for EU funds in a project if they partner with a Slovenian firm.

Resources:

Ministry of Environment, Dunajska 48, SI-1000 Ljubljana, Slovenia

E: [gp.mop\(at\)gov.si](mailto:gp.mop(at)gov.si)

<http://www.mop.gov.si/en/>

Chamber of Commerce and Industry of Slovenia, Dimiceva 13, 1504 Ljubljana, Slovenia

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Electrical Power Systems (ELP) and Energy

Overview

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The government of Slovenia owns a 100% stake in Holding Slovenske Elektrarne (HSE), the major electricity producer in Slovenia.

The government's vision for the energy sector through 2015, as outlined in its Strategy of Electrical Energy Production, foresees significant investments. Increased hydroelectric power generation is one of the strategic objectives of the government's energy policy. Further upgrading the upper stations on the Sava River is planned as well as construction of a chain of six new plants on the lower Sava. Construction of the first two plants began in 2004, and these are now online; construction permits for the third and fourth have been issued; construction the remaining two plants is foreseen by 2014. Upgrading of three plants on the Drava River will be completed over the next few years. Feasibility studies are underway for additional small run-of-river and storage plants and for using other renewable energy sources. Together with the new plants, these renovations will create an additional 470 MW of hydroelectric capacity by 2015.

Plans for conventional coal-fired thermal power generation are based on maintaining production at existing plant locations and building facilities at new sites, primarily for combined heat and power generation. Investments will be required to improve pollution controls to meet environmental standards, to increase rapid response and peaking capacity, and for renovation of control systems at existing plants. Construction of a new production block with a 500 MW capacity at Thermal Plant Sostanj is planned and should begin operation in 2011. The government also plans construction of two oil-fired facilities, including a 60 MW unit in Sostanj. A second oil-fired plant in Brestanica with a capacity of 143 MW is scheduled for completion by 2011.

Investment plans through 2015 in the transmission and distribution system include the modernization of national dispatching and local distribution control centers, the renovation of the transmission grid, better control of reactive power in the system, and the completion and renovation of the east-west 400 kV transmission lines with a

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connection to Hungary and a 400 kV substation. However, a lack of financial resources has already postponed these priority investment projects, although the government has not yet revised its plans.

In the past few years, there are plans to build three wind-operated power plants in the Primorska region, where the Bora wind could produce significant quantities of electrical power. All three plants would consist of 150 wind powered turbines. They are still in the process of gaining all necessary approvals (mainly environmental) for the project. The local community (represented by a birdwatcher NGO) strongly opposes the project and uses every possible legal instrument to block the project.

Quick facts about the ENERGY sector:

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While the gas and oil market is somewhat privatized, electricity production is still in state hands. Holding Slovenske Elektrarne (HSE) owns and manages a series of electricity production plants (predominately hydropower). No plans or time schedules for privatization have been announced recently.

Import items:

- brown coal and lignin,
- oil derivatives,
- liquid gas,
- natural gas,
- electricity

Best Products/Services

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- trade (wholesale) with fuels and lubricants
- trade (retail) with motor fuels
- distribution of electricity, gas, heat, and hot water
- mining

Leading Companies in Sector

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- Oil:
- Petrol, d.d. (www.petrol.si)
 - OMV Slovenija (www.omv.si)
- Gas:
- Geoplin, d.o.o. (www.geoplin.si)
- Electricity:
- Holding Slovenske Elektrarne, d.o.o. (www.hse.si)
 - Eles, d.o.o. (www.eles.si)

Opportunities

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Energy consumption is constantly increasing. Slovenia plans to upgrade its power production, most likely with an additional unit at the existing nuclear power plant and new gas power stations. Slovenia will also upgrade its distribution power grid.

Resources:

Ministry of Economy, Kotnikova 5, SI- 1000 Ljubljana, Slovenia
E: [gp.mg\(at\)gov.si](mailto:gp.mg(at)gov.si)
<http://www.mg.gov.si/en/>

Chamber of Commerce and Industry of Slovenia, Dimiceva 13, 1504 Ljubljana, Slovenia
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Information Technology and Telecommunications (INF)

Overview

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The information technology sector features opportunities on two sides of the development spectrum. On one side there is a series of highly developed IT companies with established services and research projects. On the other end, small rising companies with high potential are wide open for investment and joint venture opportunities. Many of these young companies are concentrated in technology parks such as Technology Park Brdo-Ljubljana.

The national telecommunication company Telekom Slovenije is currently state owned. It might go through the process of privatization, but the process has stalled several times due to differences in opinions within the government on when and how much to privatize “strategic sectors.”

IT and Telecommunications Data Table (\$ millions)

	2005	2006	2007
Total Market Size	2,500	2,620	2,800

exchange rate: \$1 = EUR 0.715

Note: The above statistics are unofficial estimates

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Best Products/Services

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- planning and implementation of communicating networks
- broadband infrastructure
- e-banking
- software systems for back-up files
- IT Solutions
- logistics

Leading Companies in Sector

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Machinery

- AGB LAB (www.agblab.com)
- Insilica (www.insilica.si)

Telecommunication

- Iskra Transmission (www.iskratr.si)
- Iskratel (www.iskratel.si)
- Mobitel (www.mobitel.si)
- Si.Mobil (www.simobil.si)
- Telekom Slovenije (www.telekom.si)

IT Solutions

- Actual I.T. (www.actual-it.si)
- Halcom (www.halcom.si)
- Hermes SoftLab (www.hermes-softlab.com)
- S&T Hermes Plus (www.hermes-plus.si/)
- Špica (www.spica.com)

Opportunities

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There are many business opportunities accompanying Slovenia's development of broadband infrastructure and information systems solutions for the financial industry. Also, many opportunities would likely accompany Slovenia's possible privatization of national telecommunications.

Resources:

Ministry of Economy, Kotnikova 5, SI- 1000 Ljubljana, Slovenia

E: [gp.mg\(at\)gov.si](mailto:gp.mg(at)gov.si)

<http://www.mg.gov.si/en/>

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Chemical and Pharmaceutical Sector and Biotechnology (BTC)

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Since the chemical industry is very strong in Slovenia, there is a substantial need for raw materials. The pharmaceutical sector is mainly comprised of two big companies, Lek and Krka, both of which manufacture generic products. Novartis purchased Lek in 2002. Krka's shares are listed on the Ljubljana Stock Exchange.

Jozef Stefan Institute, Slovenia's premiere research institute, is linked to the University of Ljubljana and is very involved in research and development in fields such as creating new materials, nanotechnology, and biotechnology.

Chemical and Pharmaceutical Sector and Biotechnology Data Table (\$ millions)

	2006	2007	2008
Total Market Size	4,200	4,300	4,500
Total Exports (from Slovenia)	2,800	2,900	3,000

exchange rate: \$1 = EUR 0.715

Note: The above statistics are unofficial estimates

Best Products/Services

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- base chemicals
- pesticides and agrochemicals
- paints, lacquers, and glazes
- pharmaceuticals and soaps
- products for cleaning and scents
- other chemical products
- artificial fibers
- rubber and plastics

Leading Companies in Sector

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- Belinka (www.belinka.si)
- Bia Separations (www.biaseparations.com)
- Cinkarna Celje (www.cinkarna.si)
- Helios (www.helios.si)
- Institut Jožef Stefan (www.ijs.si)
- Krka (www.krka.si)
- Lek (www.lek.si)
- Sava (www.sava.si)

Opportunities

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We currently do not know of any business opportunities in this industry.

Resources:

Ministry of Economy, Kotnikova 5, SI- 1000 Ljubljana, Slovenia

E: [gp.mg\(at\)gov.si](mailto:gp.mg(at)gov.si)

<http://www.mg.gov.si/en/>

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Logistics and Distribution (TRN)

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The geographical location of Slovenia places it at the intersection of the 5th and 10th Pan-European corridors, making it one of the major transportation connectors between the Adriatic Sea and the Balkans. The port of Koper on the Adriatic Sea is a major cargo port. Joze Pučnik Airport Ljubljana, located in the center of the country, houses a few logistical companies for air and land cargo transport. The airport has also started a large expansion project in which the capacity of the airport terminals will increase substantially (passenger and cargo wise). Additionally, the plans include a new intermodal center (adding a railroad connection to the airport) that will improve distribution capacities. Two larger logistics companies (UPS, and DHL) have already set up hubs at the airport.

Best Products/Services

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- cargo shipping
- ship cargo transport
- storing of goods
- maritime and inland logistics
- services at terminals

Opportunities

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The government of Slovenia and Slovenian FDI agency JAPTI have been working on implementing “Slovenia – Your Logistics Hub to enter EU Market.” Slovenia has the most northern port in the Mediterranean Sea, with modern and flexible infrastructure. Nine business zones spread around the country will be built in support of the national goal to become one of the best logistical partners in Europe. Business facilitation zones offer foreign business partners a chance for public-private partnership projects.

The government’s Country Development Plan includes a thorough upgrade of railway networks in both the 5th and 6th European corridors and construction of a second track between the port of Koper and Divaca. The government has announced additional highway projects in the next few years.

Leading Companies in Sector

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- BTC, d.d.(www.btc.si)
- Eurotek (www.eurotek.si)
- Intereuropa (www.intereuropa.si)
- Aerodrom Ljubljana (www.lju-airport.si)
- Luka Koper (www.luka-kp.si)
- Slovenske železnice (www.slo-zeleznice.si)
- Viator Vektor (www.viator-vektor.com)
- Schenker (www.schenker.si)

Resources:

Ministry of Economy, Kotnikova 5, SI- 1000 Ljubljana, Slovenia

E: [gp.mg\(at\)gov.si](mailto:gp.mg(at)gov.si)

<http://www.mg.gov.si/en/>

Chamber of Commerce and Industry of Slovenia, Dimiceva 13, 1504 Ljubljana, Slovenia

E-mail: info@gzs.si

<http://eng.gzs.si/slo/>

Transport and Communications Association, Dimiceva 9, 1000 Ljubljana, Slovenia

E-mail: zpz@gzs.si

<http://www.sloveniapartner.com/article.asp?IDpm=156>

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Electronics (ELC)

Overview

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The opportunities in the electronics sector are in electronic component parts, upgrades to medical and dental equipment, and development of new technologies and materials for the market.

Electronics and Electrical Engineering Sector Data Table (\$ millions)

	2006	2007	2008
Total Market Size	3,800	3,840	3,900
Total Exports (from Slovenia)	2,700	2,800	2,850

exchange rate: \$1 = EUR 0.715

Note: The above statistics are unofficial estimates

Best Products/Services

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- electrical motors and machines
- household appliances
- telecommunication equipment
- electronic measuring (scaling) systems
- medical and optical equipment

Leading Companies in Sector

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- Danfoss (www.danfoss-trata.si)
- Domel (www.domel.si)
- Eti Izlake (www.eti.si)
- Gorenje (www.gorenje.com)
- Hidria (www.hidria.si)
- Iskratel (www.iskratel.si)
- Iskra Avtoelektrika (www.iskra-ae.com)
- Kolektor (www.kolektor.si)
- Ydria Motors (www.ydria-motors.si)

Opportunities

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The U.S. market is an important market for several companies in the sector.

Resources:

Ministry of Economy, Kotnikova 5, SI- 1000 Ljubljana, Slovenia
E: [gp.mg\(at\)gov.si](mailto:gp.mg(at)gov.si)
<http://www.mg.gov.si/en/>

Chamber of Commerce and Industry of Slovenia, Dimiceva 13, 1504 Ljubljana, Slovenia
E-mail: info@gzs.si
<http://eng.gzs.si/slo/>

Electronics and Electrical Engineering Association, Dimiceva 13, 1000 Ljubljana, Slovenia
E-mail: elektroindustrija@gzs.si
<http://www.sloveniapartner.com/article.asp?IDpm=139>

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Food Processing (FOD)

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There are substantial opportunities for cereals (e.g. wheat). Due to increased prices in recent years of agricultural commodities (cereals, oils, etc.) and the weak dollar, American agricultural commodities became more attractive to European food processing industries.

Electronics and Electrical Engineering Sector Data Table (\$ millions)

	2006	2007	2008
Total Market Size	2,450	2,470	2,500
Total Exports (from Slovenia)	400	410	419

exchange rate: \$1 = EUR 0.715

Note: The above statistics are unofficial estimates

Sector Breakdown

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By sales

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- processed meat products (24%)
- milk products (15%)
- baked products - bread and pastries (13%)

By exports

- non-alcohol and alcohol beverages, vinegar (22%)
- milk products, eggs, honey (14%)
- meat (9%)
- meat products (13%)
- wheat, cereals (6%)
- sugar, sugar products (5%)

Leading Companies in Sector

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- milk products:
 - Ljubljanske mlekarne, d.d. (www.lj-mlek.si/)
 - Mlekarna Celeia, d.o.o. (www.mlekarna-celeia.si)
 - Pomurske mlekarne, d.d. (www.pomurske-mlekarne.si)
- meat, meat products:
 - Perutnina Ptuj, d.d. (www.perutnina.si)
 - MIP, d.d. (www.mip.si)
 - Kras, d.d. (www.kras.si)
 - Jata Emona, d.d. (www.jata-emona.si)
 - Droga Kolinska, d.d. (www.drogakolinska.si)
- non-alcohol, alcohol beverages, vinegar:
 - Pivovarna Laško, d.d. (www.pivo-lasko.si)
 - Pivovarna Union, d.d. (www.pivo-union.si)
 - Fructal, d.d. (www.fructal.si)
- wheat, cereals:
 - Žito, d.d. (www.zito.si)
- sugar, sugar products
 - TSO, d.d. (www.spletomat.com/tso/)

Resources:

Ministry of Economy, Kotnikova 5, SI- 1000 Ljubljana, Slovenia

E: [gp.mg\(at\)gov.si](mailto:gp.mg(at)gov.si)

<http://www.mg.gov.si/en/>

Chamber of Commerce and Industry of Slovenia, Dimiceva 13, 1504 Ljubljana, Slovenia

E-mail: info@gzs.si

<http://eng.gzs.si/slo/>

Food Processing Industry, Dimiceva 9, 1000 Ljubljana, Slovenia

E-mail: zivilska.ind@gzs.si

<http://www.sloveniapartner.com/article.asp?IDpm=144>

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Agricultural Sectors

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According to the Statistical Office there are over 77,000 holdings in Slovenia that perform agricultural activities. Average agricultural holdings use 6.3 hectares of agricultural area and breed 5.5 livestock units. An agricultural census (using EU standards) from 2000 showed that for family farms in Slovenia, medium-sized holdings predominated, with the largest percentage (27.3%) owning 5-10 hectares of land. The census also showed that, within the category of non-family enterprises, almost half were holdings with over 20 hectares of land. The statistical office states there is total of almost 500,000 hectares of agricultural land. The portion of agriculture in Slovenian GDP is slightly decreasing each year. In 2007, it only amounted to 1.5% of total GDP. Small farmers are slowly abandoning their agricultural activities and integrating in to the workforce. To support the agricultural industry, the government is trying to revive the countryside with initiatives and subsidies with special emphasis on eco farming and incorporating tourism through eco tourist farms.

In Slovenia, the predominant crops are maize for grain (production is nearly 300,000 tons/year), wheat (135,000 tons/year), potatoes, and fruits. The largest production is for animal feed. Over one million tons of maize and other types of fodder are grown annually.

The number of people employed in the agriculture sector decreased by 15% from 2000.

Best Market Prospects for U.S. Exports to Slovenia

U.S. food products that should benefit from lower tariffs due to Slovenia's EU accession and have the best sales potential include edible dried beans, cocoa, dried fruits, fruit juices, pet foods, wines and whiskey. The 2007 shortage of wheat and the subsequent increase of domestic prices have made it an attractive crop.

U.S. exports of agricultural, fish and forest products to Slovenia have fluctuated widely over the past several years. Most official statistics tend to understate actual imports from the U.S., as they do not account for products transshipped through other EU countries.

Eco Farming

The Slovene Ministry of Agriculture supports the organic farming industry in Slovenia, particularly as it relates to agricultural tourism. The government also strongly encourages rural development through ecological farming and agricultural tourism for areas less favorable for agriculture, especially the alpine region.

Coexistence and Biotech

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According to EU legislation, none of the EU member states can ban biotech products or prohibit biotech farming within their borders. However, there are still obstacles. In Slovenia, there are currently no biotech crops being farmed, due to lack of proper coexistence legislation. The coexistence law has been in preparation for the past two years. The European Commission rejected Slovenia's proposed draft due to its overly restrictive measures. There is no suggested timeframe for when the government will present the legislation to the parliament for procedure again.

Due to the relatively high production of corn in Slovenia, adoption of coexistence legislation would present an attractive market opportunity for biotech seed and plants. Nevertheless, it is important to be aware of the extremely high consumer resistance to biotechnology and its negative connotation.

Web Resources

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U.S. Department of Agriculture – Austria and Central European Region:

<http://www.usembassy.at/en/usda/>

For more information regarding Agricultural policy, projects and legislation development, please visit the Slovene Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Food at

<http://www.mkgp.gov.si/index.php?id=576&L=1>

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Chapter 5: Trade Regulations and Standards

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Import Tariffs

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When Slovenia joined the EU in 2004, it adopted the EU's customs legislation. EU regulation provides an overall legal foundation and Slovenia has adapted some parts of the EU customs regulations to national legislation.

The basic legal framework of the Customs System in the Republic of Slovenia is provided by: Customs Law [together with implementing acts (applied January 1st, 1999 and compliant with the EC Customs Code) (OG RS 1-3/95)], Customs Service Law, and Customs Tariff Law (OG RS 66/00).

Further information on Slovenian customs legislation can be found at:

http://www.carina.gov.si/en/menujska_struktura/businesses/

Import levies are payable upon the importation of most agricultural and food products. Levies are not charged if the agricultural or food product is exempt from duties pursuant to the Customs Law.

The primary basis for customs valuation is ad valorem on the transaction value of the goods, (i.e., the price paid or the price that is to be paid for the goods to be imported), including all duties and taxes paid outside Slovenia. For more than 95% of imports, customs value is established on the basis of transaction value. Besides customs duties paid according to rates provided by the Customs Tariff or preferential agreements, imports are also liable for VAT payment.

Brochure on customs in new EU countries:

http://europa.eu.int/comm/taxation_customs/resources/documents/enlarg_transition_en2.pdf

More on EU customs:

<http://europa.eu.int/scadplus/leg/en/s28000.htm>

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For information on existing trade barriers, please see the National Trade Estimate Report on Foreign Trade Barriers, published by USTR and available through the following website:

http://www.ustr.gov/sites/default/files/uploads/reports/2009/NTE/asset_upload_file348_15473.pdf

Information on agricultural trade barriers can be found at the following website:

<http://www.fas.usda.gov/posthome/useu/>

To report existing or new trade barriers and get assistance in removing them, contact either the Trade Compliance Center at <http://www.trade.gov/tcc> or the U.S. Mission to the European Union at <http://www.buyusa.gov/europeanunion>.

Import Tariffs

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- **Customs**

While EU entrance eliminated customs for products/services originating within the EU, customs still apply to products from elsewhere. The basis on which import duties are determined can be found at:

http://www.carina.gov.si/en/menujska_struktura/businesses/

- **Excise Duties**

Imports of alcoholic beverages, wines, and tobacco products are subject to excise duties.

Additional excise duties are required for certain product groups. The excise duty rates applicable in the European Union are contained in three separate document.

- Part I on **alcoholic beverages**:

http://europa.eu.int/comm/taxation_customs/resources/documents/excise_duties-part_I_alcohol-en.pdf

- Part II on **energy products and electricity**:

http://europa.eu.int/comm/taxation_customs/resources/documents/excise_duties-part_II_energy_products-en.pdf

- Part III on **manufactured tobacco**:

http://europa.eu.int/comm/taxation_customs/resources/documents/excise_duties-part_III_tobacco-en.pdf

- **Labeling**

According to EU directives, certain product groups (cosmetics, clothing, shoes, auto parts, and foodstuffs) sold in Slovenia must be labeled in Slovene. The declaration on the products must include information about the product's content, origin, manufacturer, importer, for foodstuffs a "best before" end date, and directions for use. For all products requiring a user manual or instructions for use and warranty, these documents must be translated into Slovene. For more information on labeling also see Labeling and Marking Requirements below.

For more detailed information on labeling of cosmetics, you can contact the local association of cosmetics:

KPC - Association of Cosmetics and Detergents Producers of Slovenia (part of the Association of Chemical Industries)

Dimiceva 13

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- **Quotas**

There are currently no quota restrictions for imports from the U.S.

- **Costs pertaining to WEEE**

EU Directive 2002/96/EC dictates that all EU member states have the obligation to collect and recycle electronic and electrical waste. This environmental directive is based on the theory that providers of electronic and electrical equipment (manufacturers, distributors, and importers/exporters) must ensure that equipment will not burden the environment after the end of its useful life.

Electrical and electronic equipment is divided into 10 classes:

- Large household appliances,
- Small household appliances,
- IT and telecommunication equipment
- Consumer electronics
- Lighting equipment
- Electronic and electric tools
- Toys, sport and recreational equipment
- Medical equipment
- Instruments for monitoring and control
- Machines (vending, gaming, etc.)

Since January 2006, the operational and financial responsibility is on the companies that produce the type of equipment listed above. To avoid fines and penalties, manufacturers, distributors, and importers, must sign appropriate contracts with collection and recycling companies for the processing of electronic waste.

Import Requirements and Documentation

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The Integrated Tariff of the Community, referred to as TARIC (Tarif Intégré de la Communauté), is designed to show various rules applying to specific products being imported into the customs territory of the EU or, in some cases, when exported from it. To determine if a license is required for a particular product, check the TARIC.

The TARIC can be searched by country of origin, Harmonized System (HS) Code, and product description on the interactive website of the Directorate-General for Taxation and the Customs Union. The online TARIC is updated daily.

Many EU Member States maintain their own list of goods subject to import licensing. For example, Germany's "Import List" (Einfuhrliste) includes goods for which licenses are required, their code numbers, any applicable restrictions, and the agency that will issue the relevant license. The Import List also indicates whether the license is required under German or EU law. For information relevant to Member State import licenses, please consult the relevant Member State Country Commercial Guide: [EU Member States' Country Commercial Guides](#) or conduct a search on the Commerce Department's Market Research Library, available from:
<http://www.export.gov/mrktresearch/index.asp>.

Key Link: http://ec.europa.eu/taxation_customs/common/databases/taric/index_en.htm

Import Documentation

Non-agricultural Documentation

The official model for written declarations to customs is the Single Administrative Document (SAD). European Free Trade Association (EFTA) countries including Norway, Iceland, Switzerland, and Liechtenstein also use the SAD. However, other forms may be used for this purpose. Information on import/export forms is contained in Title VII, of Council Regulation (EEC) No. 2454/93, which lays down provisions for the implementation of Council Regulation (EEC) No. 2913/92 establishing the Community Customs Code (Articles 205 through 221). Articles 222 through 224 provide for computerized customs declarations and Articles 225 through 229 provide for oral declarations.

Additional information on import/export documentation can be found in Title III, of Council Regulation (EEC) No. 2913/92 of October 12, 1992, establishing the Community Customs Code (Articles 37 through 57). Goods brought into the customs territory of the Community are, from the time of their entry, subject to customs supervision until customs formalities are completed.

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Goods presented to customs are covered by a summary declaration, which is lodged once the goods have been presented to customs. The customs authorities may, however, allow a period for lodging the declaration, which cannot be extended beyond the first working day following the day on which the goods are presented to customs. The summary declaration can be made on a form corresponding to the model prescribed by the customs authorities. However, the customs authorities may permit the use, as a summary declaration, of any commercial or official document that contains the particulars necessary for identification of the goods. It is encouraged that the summary declaration be made in computerized form.

The summary declaration is to be lodged by:

- the person who brought the goods into the customs territory of the Community or by any person who assumes responsibility for carriage of the goods following such entry; or
- the person in whose name the person referred to above acted.

Non-EU goods presented to customs must be assigned a customs-approved treatment or use authorized for such non-Community goods. Where goods are covered by a summary declaration, the formalities for them to be assigned a customs-approved treatment or use must be carried out:

- 45 days from the date on which the summary declaration is lodged in the case of goods carried by sea;
- 20 days from the date on which the summary declaration is lodged in the case of goods carried other than by sea.

Where circumstances so warrant, the customs authorities may set a shorter period or authorize an extension of the period.

The Modernized Customs Code (MCC) of the European Union is expected to be fully put into place by 2013 although there are concerns that this deadline may be missed due to the complexity of the project. Some facets of the MCC implementation have already been put into place such as Economic Operators Registration and Identification (EORI) numbers. The MCC will replace the existing Regulation 2913/92 and simplify various procedures such as introducing a paperless environment, centralized clearance, and more. Check the EU's Customs website periodically for updates:

http://ec.europa.eu/taxation_customs/customs/procedural_aspects/general/community_code/index_en.htm.

Batteries

EU battery rules changed in September 2006 following the publication of the Directive on batteries and accumulators and waste batteries and accumulators (Directive 2006/66). This Directive replaces the original Battery Directive of 1991 (Directive 91/157). The updated Directive applies to all batteries and accumulators put on the EU market including automotive, industrial and portable batteries. It aims to protect the environment by restricting the sale of batteries and accumulators that contain mercury or cadmium (with an exemption for emergency and alarm systems, medical equipment and cordless power tools) and by promoting a high level of collection and recycling. It places the responsibility on producers to finance the costs associated with the collection, treatment,

and recycling of used batteries and accumulators. The Directive also includes provisions on the labeling of batteries and their removability from equipment. For more information, see our market research report: http://www.buyusainfo.net/docs/x_8086174.pdf or visit the CS EU website Batteries Direct page at: <http://www.buyusa.gov/europeanunion/batteries.html>

REACH

REACH is a major reform of EU chemicals policy that was adopted in December 2006 and became national law in the 27 EU Member States in June 2007 (Regulation 1907/2006). Virtually every industrial sector, from automobiles to textiles, is affected by the new policy. REACH stands for the "Registration, Evaluation and Authorization and Restriction of Chemicals." Since June 1 2008, REACH requires chemicals produced or imported into the EU in volumes above 1 ton per year per to be registered with a central European Chemicals Agency (ECHA), including information on their properties, uses and safe ways of handling them. Chemicals pre-registered before December 1 2008, benefit from extended registration deadlines, from three to eleven years depending on the volume of the substance and its hazard properties. U.S. companies without a presence in Europe cannot register directly and must have their chemicals registered through their importer or EU-based 'Only Representative of non-EU manufacturer'. A list of Only Representatives can be found on the website of the U.S. Mission to the EU: <http://www.buyusa.gov/europeanunion/reach.html>.

U.S. exporters to the EU should carefully consider the REACH 'Candidate List' of substances of very high concern. Substances on that list are subject to communication requirements and may at a later stage require Authorization for the EU market. For more information, see the ECHA website: http://echa.europa.eu/chem_data/authorisation_process/candidate_list_table_en.asp

WEEE & RoHS

EU rules on waste electrical and electronic equipment (WEEE), while not requiring specific customs or import paperwork, may entail a financial obligation for U.S. exporters. They require U.S. exporters to register the products with a national WEEE authority, or arrange for this to be done by a local partner. Similarly, related rules for EEE restricting the use of the hazardous substances (RoHS) lead, cadmium, mercury, hexavalent chromium, PBBs, and PBDEs, do not entail customs or importation paperwork. However, U.S. exporters may be asked by a European RoHS enforcement authority or by a customer to provide evidence of due diligence in compliance with the substance bans on a case-by-case basis. The WEEE and RoHS Directives are currently being revised to enlarge the scope and add substances to be banned in electrical and electronic equipment; the new rules could take effect as early as 2011. U.S. exporters seeking more information on WEEE and RoHS regulations should visit: <http://www.buyusa.gov/europeanunion/weee.html>

Agricultural Documentation

Phytosanitary Certificates: Phytosanitary certificates are required for most fresh fruits, vegetables, and other plant materials.

Sanitary Certificates: For commodities composed of animal products or by-products, EU countries require that shipments be accompanied by a certificate issued by the competent authority of the exporting country. This applies regardless of whether the product is for human consumption, for pharmaceutical use, or strictly for non-human use (e.g., veterinary biologicals, animal feeds, fertilizers, research). The vast majority of these certificates are uniform throughout the EU, but the harmonization process is not complete. During this transition period, certain Member State import requirements continue to apply. In addition to the legally required EU health certificates, a number of other certificates are used in international trade. These certificates, which may also be harmonized in EU legislation, certify origin for customs purposes and certain quality attributes. Up-to-date information on harmonized import requirements can be found at the following website: <http://www.fas.usda.gov/posthome/useu/certificates-overview.html>

Sanitary Certificates (Fisheries): In April 2006, the European Union declared the U.S. seafood inspection system as equivalent to the European one. Consequently, a specific public health certificate must accompany U.S. seafood shipments. Commission Decision 2006/199/EC places specific conditions on imports of fishery products from the U.S. Sanitary certificates for live shellfish are covered by Commission Regulation (EC) 1664/2006 and must be used for gastropods, bivalve mollusks, tunicates and echinoderms. The two competent Authorities for issuing sanitary certificates are the FDA and the U.S. Department of Commerce, National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS/NOAA/USDC).

Since May 1, 2007, with the implementation of the second Hygiene Package, aquaculture products coming from the United States must be accompanied by a public health certificate according to Commission Decision 2006/199/EC and the animal health attestation included in the new fishery products certificate covered by Regulation (EC) 1664/2006. This animal health attestation is not required in the case of live bivalve mollusks intended for immediate human consumption (retail).

For detailed information on import documentation for seafood, please contact the NOAA Fisheries office at the U.S. Mission to the EU (stephane.vrignaud@mail.doc.gov) or visit the following FDA dedicated web site: <http://www.cfsan.fda.gov/>.

U.S. Export Controls

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Most technology can be exported from the U.S. to Slovenia under general export licenses. Some equipment still requires validated export licenses from the Commerce Department's Bureau of Industry and Security and/or the Department of State. For further information on U.S. export controls, please see the following website: <http://www.bis.doc.gov>

Temporary Entry

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Slovenia is a signatory to the ATA Convention on Temporary Imports and Exports.

More information on ATA: The purpose of the Convention on temporary admission is to simplify procedures on temporary imports of certain kinds of goods (professional equipment, goods for exhibitions, etc.). The ATA Carnet is a customs document to perform temporary importation and temporary exportation and it also serves as a transit document for transit of goods to the country of temporary importation. The ATA System Guarantee Association in Slovenia is the Chamber of Commerce and Industry of Slovenia, which is also authorized to issue ATA Carnets.

Products may be imported into Slovenia on a temporary basis and be exempt from customs duties in various cases, of which the most important are the following:

- Goods to be released into free circulation exempt from customs duty under the Customs Act;
- Goods temporarily imported for exhibitions or testing, if the foreign owner has made them available free of charge and for a specific period of time;
- Animals, instruments, and other items which are required for artistic, sports, or other events and the production of motion pictures;
- Packaging materials, freight, and security equipment, etc. required for the delivery or dispatch of foreign-owned goods;
- Equipment for governmental and non-governmental international or bilateral organizations, or international or bilateral commissions, with a seat in the customs territory, or having a representative office with a seat in the customs territory;
- Equipment required to avert imminent danger of epidemics, elementary or other natural disasters, or to mitigate the immediate consequences of such disasters;
- Yachts, sailing ships, and other sea vessels with accessory floating moorings and anchoring equipment, if they are used for sport and tourism (under the conditions:
 - that they are temporarily imported by companies or individual entrepreneurs registered for the rental of foreign yachts, sailing ships, and other sea vessels
 - contracts concluded with foreign sport clubs and their associations permit them to rent the sea vessels to foreign tourists, members of these clubs, and their associations for use in Slovenia);
- Household items temporarily imported by domestic and foreign natural persons entering Slovenia for a temporary sojourn; and
- Equipment that is temporarily imported by permanent correspondents or editorial offices of foreign media registered in the customs territory.

The time limit for temporary imports is based on the purpose for which goods are temporarily imported, but may not exceed a period of 12 months. Partial exemption from payment of customs duty may be granted for the temporary import of goods not mentioned above, if they remain the property of foreign persons. The amount of duty to be paid for temporary imports of goods with a partial exemption from customs duty is 3% of the duty that would have to be paid for these goods if they were released for free circulation. There is no information on warranty and non-warranty items entering Slovenia for repair available.

Labeling and Marking Requirements

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The following labeling information must be in Slovene on the original package of products subject to quality control:

- Title of the product
- Full address of the manufacturer
- Full address of the importer
- Net quantity/weight/volume
- Information, where applicable, regarding ingredients
- Use and storage instructions
- Other warnings important for the customer.

Technically complicated products must also include instructions for use, the manufacturer's specifications, a list of authorized maintenance offices, a warranty, and other applicable data. All this information must be in Slovene and attached to each product before reaching customers.

More information on labeling and marking requirements are available at the Slovenian Chamber of Commerce and Industry at <http://www.gzs.si/slo/>

An overview of EU mandatory and voluntary labeling and marking requirements has been compiled in a market research report that is available at: http://www.buyusainfo.net/docs/x_4171929.pdf.

The subject has been also been covered in the section about standards (see below).

Prohibited and Restricted Imports

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As long as appropriate permits are obtained for certain goods (such as pharmaceuticals, military equipment, etc.), there are no specific prohibitions on the import of legal products.

The TARIC is designed to show various rules applying to specific products being imported into the customs territory of the EU or, in some cases, when exported from it. To determine if a product is prohibited or subject to restriction, check the TARIC for that product for the following codes:

CITES	Convention on International Trade of Endangered Species
PROHI	Import Suspension
RSTR	Import Restriction

For information on how to access the TARIC, see the Import Requirements and Documentation Section above.

Key Link: http://ec.europa.eu/taxation_customs/common/databases/taric/index_en.htm

Customs Regulations and Contact Information

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Address: The Customs Administration of the Republic of Slovenia
Šmartinska 55, 1523 Ljubljana, Slovenia
Telephone: +386-1-478-38-00
Fax: +386-1-478-39-00
Toll free +386 2222 1122
http://www.carina.gov.si/en/contact_us/

Email: carina@gov.si

Web: <http://www.carina.gov.si/en/>

Homepage of Customs and Taxation Union Directorate (TAXUD) Website

Key Link: http://ec.europa.eu/taxation_customs/customs/index_en.htm

Major Regulatory Efforts of the EC Customs and Taxation Union Directorate:

Electronic Customs Initiative – Deals with major EU Customs modernization developments to improve and facilitate trade in the EU Member States. The electronic customs initiative is essentially based on the following three pieces of legislation:

- The [Security and Safety Amendment to the Customs Code](#), which provides for full computerization of all procedures related to security and safety;
- The Decision on the paperless environment for customs and trade ([Electronic Customs Decision](#)) which sets the basic framework and major deadlines for the electronic customs projects;
- The [modernized Community Customs Code](#) which provides for the completion of the computerization of customs

Key Link:

http://ec.europa.eu/taxation_customs/customs/policy_issues/electronic_customs_initiative/electronic_customs_legislation/index_en.htm

Customs Valuation – Most customs duties and value added tax (VAT) are expressed as a percentage of the value of goods being declared for importation. Thus, it is necessary to dispose of a standard set of rules for establishing the goods' value, which will then serve for calculating the customs duty.

The EU imports in excess of one trillion euro worth of goods (year 2004 estimate). It is vitally important that the value of such commerce is accurately measured, for the purposes of

- economic and commercial policy analysis,
- application of commercial policy measures,

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- proper collection of import duties and taxes, and
- import and export statistics.

These objectives are met using a single instrument - the rules on customs value.

The EU applies an internationally accepted concept of 'customs value'.

The value of imported goods is one of the three 'elements of taxation' that provides the basis for assessment of the customs debt, which is the technical term for the amount of duty that has to be paid, the other ones being the origin of the goods and the customs tariff.

Key Link:

http://ec.europa.eu/taxation_customs/customs/customs_duties/declared_goods/index_en.htm

Customs and Security – At the end of July 2003, the Commission presented to the Parliament and Council a series of measures to address security issues. These measures can be found in [two communications and a proposal for amending the Community Customs Code](#). This package brings together the basic concepts underlying the new security-management model for the EU's external borders, such as a harmonized risk assessment system. The security amendment to the Community Customs Code ([Regulation \(EC\) n° 648/2005 of 13 April 2005](#)) has been published in the Official Journal of the European Union on 4 May 2005. With this amendment the European Union introduces a number of measures to tighten security around goods crossing international borders. The measures will mean faster and better-targeted checks. The results are positive for customs authorities, the public and industry.

The measures cover three major changes to the Customs Code:

- require traders to provide customs authorities with information on goods prior to import to or export from the European Union (see [Pre Arrival / Pre Departure Declarations](#));
- provide reliable traders with trade facilitation measures see [Authorized Economic Operator](#) (AEO);
- introduce a mechanism for setting uniform Community risk-selection criteria for controls, supported by computerized systems.

Key Link:

http://ec.europa.eu/taxation_customs/customs/policy_issues/customs_security/index_en.htm

Contact Information at national customs authorities:

http://ec.europa.eu/taxation_customs/taxation/personal_tax/savings_tax/contact_points/index_en.htm

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The EU Standardization Act provides a new approach to determining the legal nature of standards and technical regulations. According to the Act, a standard does not become a binding requirement unless so designated by a competent ministry; thus, standards are optional/voluntary. Since Slovenia is part of the EU, it recognizes all EU and international standards.

Goods and services imported for sale in Slovenia must comply with prescribed standards and technical regulations and be certified by an authorized institution, if it is so prescribed by the appropriate ministry. The Slovenian Standards Institute will answer all questions pertaining to standards (Email: sist@sist.si). Where there is no authorized institution for certification, the Standards and Metrology Institute of the Republic of Slovenia will issue a certificate. Certificates issued abroad are valid in Slovenia if the issuing authority and the local issuing institution have a mutual recognition agreement. Health, veterinary, phytosanitary, or ecological control is obligatory for some types of products such as foodstuffs and animals.

Technical instructions, a written guarantee statement, and, if necessary, instructions for use, must be enclosed with technical goods and consumer durables imported into Slovenia. In addition, the importer must guarantee the servicing of products and supply of spare parts. A declaration consisting of the name and type of product, name of manufacturer and other prescribed data should be affixed to the product. The documents and the declaration must be written in Slovene.

If a contract with a foreign person, regulations of a foreign country, or a bilateral or international agreement requires that export or import goods be shipped with documents certified by a competent authority, the Chamber of Commerce and Industry of Slovenia or an authorized customs organization is the competent authority. If the regulations of the country in which the documents are to be used stipulate that the documents have to be issued by a state body, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs is the competent issuing authority in Slovenia.

Products tested and certified in the United States to American standards are likely to have to be retested and re-certified to EU requirements as a result of the EU's different approach to the protection of the health and safety of consumers and the environment.

Where products are not regulated by specific EU technical legislation, they are always subject to the EU's General Product Safety Directive as well as to possible additional national requirements.

European Union standards created under the New Approach are harmonized across the 27 EU Member States and European Economic Area countries to allow for the free flow of goods. A feature of the New Approach is CE marking. For a list of new approach legislation, go to http://ec.europa.eu/enterprise/policies/european-standards/documents/harmonised-standards-legislation/list-references/index_en.htm

While harmonization of EU legislation can facilitate access to the EU Single Market, manufacturers should be aware that regulations and technical standards might also function as barriers to trade if U.S. standards are different from those of the European Union.

Agricultural Standards

The establishment of harmonized EU rules and standards in the food sector has been ongoing for several decades, but it took until January 2002 for the publication of a general food law establishing the general principles of EU food law. This Regulation introduced mandatory traceability throughout the feed and food chain as of Jan 1, 2005. For specific information on agricultural standards, please refer to the Foreign Agricultural Service's website at: <http://www.fas.usda.gov/posthome/useu/>

There are also export guides to import regulations and standards available on the Foreign Agricultural Service's website: <http://www.fas.usda.gov/posthome/useu/>

Standards Organizations

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Information on particular Slovene standards and certification requirements can be obtained from the Slovenian Standards Institute (phone: +386-1-478 3013; fax: +386-1-478 3094) webpage www.sist.si/index.htm, email sist@sist.si. The institute is responsible for national standards (technical as well as quality standards).

NIST - Notify U.S. Service

Member countries of the World Trade Organization (WTO) are required under the Agreement on Technical Barriers to Trade (TBT Agreement) to report to the WTO all proposed technical regulations that could affect trade with other Member countries. **Notify U.S.** is a free e-mail subscription service that offers an opportunity to review and comment on proposed foreign technical regulations that can affect your access to international markets. Register online at: <http://www.nist.gov/notifyus/>

EU standards setting is a process based on consensus initiated by industry or mandated by the European Commission and carried out by independent standards bodies, acting at the national, European or international level. There is strong encouragement for non-governmental organizations, such as environmental and consumer groups, to actively participate in European standardization.

Many standards in the EU are adopted from international standards bodies such as the International Standards Organization (ISO). The drafting of specific EU standards is handled by three European standards organizations:

- CENELEC, European Committee for Electrotechnical Standardization (<http://www.cenelec.eu/Cenelec/Homepage.htm>)
- ETSI, European Telecommunications Standards Institute (<http://www.etsi.org/>)
- CEN, European Committee for Standardization, handling all other standards (<http://www.cen.eu/cenorm/homepage.htm>)

Standards are created or modified by experts in Technical Committees or Working Groups. The members of CEN and CENELEC are the national standards bodies of the Member States, which have "mirror committees" that monitor and participate in ongoing European standardization. CEN and CENELEC standards are sold by the individual Member States standards bodies. ETSI is different in that it allows direct participation in its technical committees from non-EU companies that have interests in Europe and gives away its individual standards at no charge on its website. In addition to the three standards developing organizations, the European Commission plays an important role in standardization through its funding of the participation in the standardization process of small- and medium-sized companies and non-governmental organizations, such as environmental and consumer groups. The Commission also provides money to the standards bodies when it mandates standards development to the European Standards Organization for harmonized standards that will be linked to EU technical legislation. Mandates can be checked on line at http://ec.europa.eu/enterprise/policies/european-standards/standardisation-requests/index_en.htm

Due to the EU's vigorous promotion of its regulatory and standards system as well as its generous funding for its development, the EU's standards regime is wide and deep - extending well beyond the EU's political borders to include affiliate members (countries which are hopeful of becoming full members in the future) such as Albania, Croatia, FYR of Macedonia, and Turkey among others. Another category, called "partner standardization body" includes the standards organization of Australia, which is not likely to become a CEN member or affiliate for political or geographical reasons. Many other countries are targets of the EU's extensive technical assistance program, which is aimed at exporting EU standards and technical Regulations to developing countries, especially in the Mediterranean and Balkan countries, Africa, as well as programs for China and Latin America.

To know what CEN and CENELEC have in the pipeline for future standardization, it is best to visit their websites. CEN's "sectors" page provides an overview by sector and/or technical committee whereas CENELEC offers the possibility to search its database. ETSI's portal (http://portal.etsi.org/Portal_Common/home.asp) leads to ongoing activities.

With the need to adapt more quickly to market needs, European standards organizations have been looking for "new deliverables" which are standard-like products delivered in a shorter timeframe. While few of these "new deliverables" have been linked to EU Regulations, expectations are that they will eventually serve as the basis for EU-wide standards.

Key Link: <http://www.cen.eu/cenorm/products/cwa/index.asp>

Conformity Assessment

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Conformity Assessment is a mandatory step for the manufacturer in the process of complying with specific EU legislation. The purpose of conformity assessment is to ensure consistency of compliance during all stages of the production process to facilitate acceptance of the final product. EU product legislation gives manufacturers some choice with regard to conformity assessment, depending on the level of risk involved in the use of their product. These range from self-certification, type examination and production quality control system, to full quality assurance system. You can find conformity assessment bodies in individual Member State country in this list by the European Commission.

Key Link: <http://ec.europa.eu/enterprise/newapproach/nando/>

To promote market acceptance of the final product, there are a number of voluntary conformity assessment programs. CEN's certification systems are the Keymark, the CENCER mark, and CEN workshop agreements (CWA) Certification Rules.. CENELEC has its own initiative. ETSI does not offer conformity assessment services.

Product Certification

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To sell products on the EU market of 27 Member States as well as Norway, Liechtenstein and Iceland, U.S. exporters are required to apply CE marking whenever their product is covered by specific product legislation. CE marking product legislation offers manufacturers a number of choices and requires decisions to determine which safety/health concerns need to be addressed, which conformity assessment module is best suited to the manufacturing process, and whether or not to use EU-wide harmonized standards. There is no easy way for U.S. exporters to understand and go through the process of CE marking, but hopefully this section provides some background and clarification.

Products manufactured to standards adopted by CEN, CENELEC and ETSI, and published in the Official Journal as harmonized standards, are presumed to conform to the requirements of EU Directives. The manufacturer then applies the CE marking and issues a declaration of conformity. With these, the product will be allowed to circulate freely within the EU. A manufacturer can choose not to use the harmonized EU standards, but then must demonstrate that the product meets the essential safety and performance requirements. Trade barriers occur when design, rather than performance, standards are developed by the relevant European standardization organization, and when U.S. companies do not have access to the standardization process through a European presence.

The CE marking addresses itself primarily to the national control authorities of the Member States, and its use simplifies the task of essential market surveillance of regulated products. Although CE marking is intended primarily for inspection purposes by Member State inspectors, the consumer may well perceive it as a quality mark.

The CE marking is not intended to include detailed technical information on the product, but there must be enough information to enable the inspector to trace the product back to the manufacturer or the authorized representative established in the EU. This detailed information should not appear next to the CE marking, but rather on the declaration of conformity (which the manufacturer or authorized agent must be able to provide at any time, together with the product's technical file), or the documents accompanying the product.

Accreditation

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Independent certification bodies, known as notified bodies, have been officially accredited by competent national authorities to test and certify to EU requirements. However, under U.S.-EU Mutual Recognition Agreements (MRAs), notified bodies based in the United States and referred to as conformity assessment bodies, are allowed to test in the United States to EU specifications, and vice versa. The costs are significantly lower which results in U.S. products becoming more competitive. At this time, the U.S. - EU MRAs cover the following sectors: EMC (in force), RTTE (in force), medical devices (in transition), pharmaceutical (on hold), recreational craft (in force) and marine equipment (in force). The U.S. Department of Commerce, National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST), has a link on its website to American and European Conformity Assessment bodies operating under a mutual recognition agreement.

Key Link: <http://ts.nist.gov/Standards/Global/mra.cfm>

Accreditation is handled at Member State level. "European Accreditation" (<http://www.european-accreditation.org/content/home/home.htm>) is an organization representing nationally recognized accreditation bodies. Membership is open to nationally recognized accreditation bodies in countries in the European geographical area that can demonstrate that they operate an accreditation system compatible with EN45003 or ISO/IEC Guide 58.

Publication of Technical Regulations

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The Official Journal is the official gazette of the European Union. It is published daily on the internet and consists of two series covering draft and adopted legislation as well as case law, studies by committees, and more (<http://eur-lex.europa.eu/JOIndex.do>). It lists the standards reference numbers linked to legislation (http://ec.europa.eu/enterprise/policies/european-standards/documents/harmonised-standards-legislation/list-references/index_en.htm). National technical Regulations are published on the Commission's website http://ec.europa.eu/enterprise/tris/index_en.htm to allow other countries and interested parties to comment.

Member countries of the World Trade Organization (WTO) are required under the Agreement on Technical Barriers to Trade (TBT) Agreement to report to the WTO all proposed technical regulations that could affect trade with other member countries. **Notify U.S.** is a free, web-based e-mail subscription service that offers an opportunity to review and comment on proposed foreign technical regulations that can affect access to international markets. Register online at Internet URL:
<http://tsapps.nist.gov/notifyus/data/index/index.cfm>

Labeling and Marking

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Manufacturers should be mindful that, in addition to the EU's mandatory and voluntary schemes, national voluntary labeling schemes might still apply. These schemes may be highly appreciated by consumers, and thus, become unavoidable for marketing purposes.

Manufacturers are advised to take note that all labels require metric units although dual labeling is also acceptable. The use of language on labels has been the subject of a Commission Communication, which encourages multilingual information, while preserving the right of Member States to require the use of language of the country of consumption.

The EU has mandated that certain products be sold in standardized quantities. Council Directive 2007/45/EC, harmonizes packaging of wine and spirits throughout the EU. Existing national sizes will be abolished with a few exceptions for domestic producers.

Key Link: http://ec.europa.eu/enterprise/prepack/packsiz/packsiz_en.htm

The Eco-label

The EU eco-label is a voluntary label which US exporters can display on products that meet high standards of environmental awareness. The eco-label is intended to be a marketing tool to encourage consumers to purchase environmentally-friendly products. The criteria for displaying the eco-label are strict, covering the entire lifespan of the product from manufacture, to use, to disposal. These criteria are reviewed every three to five years to take into account advances in manufacturing procedures. There are currently twenty-three different product groups, and approximately 250 licenses have been awarded for several hundred products.

Applications to display the eco-label should be directed to the competency body of the member state in which the product is sold. The application fee will be somewhere between €300 and €1300 depending on the tests required to verify if the product is eligible. The eco-label also carries an annual fee equal to 0.15% of the annual volume of sales of the product range within the European community. However, the minimum annual fee is currently set at €500 and maximum €25,000.

There are plans to significantly reform the eco-label in the near future, reducing the application and annual fees and expanding the product ranges significantly. It is also possible that future eligibility criteria may take into account carbon emissions.

Key Links: [Eco-label Home Page](#)
[Product Categories eligible for the Eco-label](#)

[Eco-Label Catalogue](#)
[List of Competent Bodies](#)
[Revision of the Eco-label](#)
[The Eco-label and Carbon Footprint](#)

Trade Agreements

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Slovenia has been a member of WTO since 1995
(http://www.wto.org/English/thewto_e/countries_e/slovenia_e.htm)

List of bilateral agreements between the Republic of Slovenia and the Government of United States of America:

Agreement on Investment Incentives.
Signed in Washington, on 04.26.1994

Convention on International Civil Aviation
Signed in Chicago, on 12.07.1944

Statute of the International Monetary Fund
Signed in Washington, on 01.01.1945

Statute of the International Financial Corporation
Signed in Washington, on 04.11.1955

Statute of the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development
Signed in Washington, on 12.27.1945

Accord on Transit in the International Air Space
(Accord relative au Transit des Services Aeriens Internationaux)
Signed in Chicago, on 12.07.1944

For a list of trade agreements with the EU and its Member States, as well as concise explanations, please see http://tcc.export.gov/Trade_Agreements/index.asp.

Web Resources

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Information on Slovenian customs legislation:
http://www.carina.gov.si/en/menujska_struktura/businesses/
<http://www.carina.gov.si/en/>

Brochure on customs in new EU countries:
http://europa.eu.int/comm/taxation_customs/resources/documents/enlarg_transition_en2.pdf

More on EU customs:
<http://europa.eu.int/scadplus/leg/en/s28000.htm>

Information on excise duty:

http://ec.europa.eu/taxation_customs/taxation/gen_info/tax_policy/index_en.htm

National Trade Estimate Report on Foreign Trade Barriers, published by USTR:

http://www.ustr.gov/Document_Library/Reports_Publications/2008/2008_NTE_Report/Section_Index.html.

Agricultural trade barriers: <http://www.useu.usmission.gov/agri/usda.html>.

Trade Compliance Center at <http://www.trade.gov/tcc>

U.S. Mission to the European Union at <http://www.buyusa.gov/europeanunion>.

http://ec.europa.eu/taxation_customs/common/databases/taric/index_en.htm

EU's Customs website:

http://ec.europa.eu/taxation_customs/customs/procedural_aspects/general/community_code/index_en.htm

Information on batteries: http://www.buyusainfo.net/docs/x_8086174.pdf

REACH: <http://www.buyusa.gov/europeanunion/reach.html>.

WEEE and RoHS: <http://www.buyusa.gov/europeanunion/weee.html>

Up-to-date information on harmonized import requirements:

<http://useu.usmission.gov/agri/certificates-overview.html>

U.S. export controls: <http://www.bis.doc.gov>

EU mandatory and voluntary labeling and marking requirements:

http://www.buyusainfo.net/docs/x_4171929.pdf.

Slovenian Standards Institute: www.sist.si

Foreign Agricultural Service: <http://useu.usmission.gov/agri/>.

Labeling: Key Links: http://buyusainfo.net/docs/x_4284752.pdf

http://ec.europa.eu/comm/environment/ecolabel/index_en.htm

<http://www.eco-label.com/>

European Accreditation: http://www.european-accreditation.org/default_flash.htm

Trade agreements with the EU and its Member States:

http://tcc.export.gov/Trade_Agreements/index.asp.

http://www.wto.org/English/thewto_e/countries_e/slovenia_e.htm

More resources are available at <http://www.poslovniportal.si/>

The portal offers up-to-date information pertaining to legal and regulatory framework in Slovenia.

EU websites:

March 1, 2010

Online customs tariff database (TARIC):

http://ec.europa.eu/taxation_customs/common/databases/taric/index_en.htm

The Modernized Community Customs Code (MCCC):

http://ec.europa.eu/taxation_customs/customs/procedural_aspects/general/community_code/index_en.htm.

ECHA: http://echa.europa.eu/doc/press/pr_08_38_candidate_list_20081028.pdf

Taxation and Customs Union:

http://ec.europa.eu/taxation_customs/customs/index_en.htm

Regulation (EC) 648/2005:

[Security and Safety Amendment to the Customs Code](#)

Decision N° 70/2008/EC:

http://ec.europa.eu/taxation_customs/customs/policy_issues/electronic_customs_initiative/electronic_customs_legislation/index_en.htm

Regulation (EC) 450/2008): [Modernized Community Customs Code](#)

Legislation related to the Electronic Customs Initiative:

http://ec.europa.eu/taxation_customs/customs/policy_issues/electronic_customs_initiative/electronic_customs_legislation/index_en.htm

International Level: [Customs value](#)

What is Customs Valuation?

http://ec.europa.eu/taxation_customs/customs/customs_duties/declared_goods/index_en.htm

Customs and Security:

[Two communications and a proposal for amending the Community Customs Code](#)

http://ec.europa.eu/taxation_customs/customs/policy_issues/customs_security/index_en.htm

Establishing the Community Customs Code:

[Regulation \(EC\) n° 648/2005 of 13 April 2005](#)

Pre Arrival/Pre Departure Declarations: [Pre Arrival / Pre Departure Declarations](#)

AEO: [Authorized Economic Operator](#)

Contact Information at National Customs Authorities:

http://ec.europa.eu/taxation_customs/taxation/personal_tax/savings_tax/contact_points/index_en.htm

March 1, 2010

New Approach Legislation: http://ec.europa.eu/enterprise/policies/european-standards/documents/harmonised-standards-legislation/list-references/index_en.htm

Cenelec, European Committee for Electrotechnical Standardization:
<http://www.cenelec.eu/Cenelec/Homepage.htm>

ETSI, European Telecommunications Standards Institute: <http://www.etsi.org/>

CEN, European Committee for Standardization, handling all other standards:
<http://www.cen.eu/cenorm/homepage.htm>

Standardisation – Mandates: http://ec.europa.eu/enterprise/standards_policy/mandates/.

ETSI – Portal – E-Standardisation : http://portal.etsi.org/Portal_Common/home.asp

CEN – Sector Fora: <http://www.cen.eu/cenorm/sectors/index.asp>

Nando (New Approach Notified and Designated Organizations) Information System:
<http://ec.europa.eu/enterprise/newapproach/nando/>

Mutual Recognition Agreements (MRAs):
<http://ts.nist.gov/Standards/Global/mra.cfm>

European Co-operation for Accreditation:
<http://www.european-accreditation.org/content/home/home.htm>

Eur-Lex – Access to European Union Law:
<http://eur-lex.europa.eu/en/index.htm>

Standards Reference Numbers linked to Legislation:
http://ec.europa.eu/enterprise/policies/european-standards/documents/harmonised-standards-legislation/list-references/index_en.htm
<http://ec.europa.eu/enterprise/newapproach/standardization/harmstds/whatsnew.html>

National technical Regulations: http://ec.europa.eu/enterprise/tris/index_en.htm

NIST - Notify us: <http://tsapps.nist.gov/notifyus/data/index/index.cfm>

Metrology, Pre-Packaging – Pack Size:
http://ec.europa.eu/enterprise/prepack/packsize/packsiz_en.htm

European Union Eco-label Homepage:
http://ec.europa.eu/comm/environment/ecolabel/index_en.htm

Eco-Label Catalogue: <http://www.eco-label.com/default.htm>

U.S. websites:

National Trade Estimate Report on Foreign Trade Barriers:

March 1, 2010

<http://www.ustr.gov/about-us/press-office/reports-and-publications/2009/2009-national-trade-estimate-report-foreign-trade>

Agricultural Trade Barriers:

<http://www.fas.usda.gov/posthome/useu/>

Trade Compliance Center: <http://www.trade.gov/tcc>

U.S. Mission to the European Union: <http://www.buyusa.gov/europeanunion>

The New EU Battery Directive: http://www.buyusainfo.net/docs/x_8086174.pdf

The Latest on REACH: <http://www.buyusa.gov/europeanunion/reach.html>.

WEEE and RoHS in the EU: <http://www.buyusa.gov/europeanunion/weee.html>

Overview of EU Certificates:

<http://useu.usmission.gov/agri/certificates-overview.html>

Center for Food Safety and Applied Nutrition: <http://www.cfsan.fda.gov/>

EU Marking, Labeling and Packaging – An Overview

http://www.buyusainfo.net/docs/x_4171929.pdf.

The European Union Eco-Label: http://buyusainfo.net/docs/x_4284752.pdf

Trade Agreements: http://tcc.export.gov/Trade_Agreements/index.asp

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Chapter 6: Investment Climate

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Openness to Foreign Investment

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A European Union member since May 1, 2004 and a eurozone member since January 1, 2007, Slovenia offers a positive mix of qualities to recommend it as a good investment location. With excellent and fully modernized infrastructure, a major port on the Adriatic Sea and a highly educated work force, Slovenia can be an attractive base for investors seeking to access the markets of Central and Southeastern Europe.

The left-leaning government that came into power in November 2008 has not yet formally announced its comprehensive plans for new economic policies or privatization. The government has thus far been occupied with responding to the global financial crisis and efforts to drag Slovenia out of deep recession. The current government is expected to continue with Slovenia's tradition of consensus-based policymaking, which will slow privatization efforts. It has said in the past that it will attempt to privatize the financial markets and telecommunication industry before addressing other areas. The government has also said it will encourage development of large infrastructure projects in the energy and transportation sectors - good areas for FDI.

Slovenia, in general, welcomes foreign direct investment, although for political reasons does not allow 100% foreign ownership of companies in key sectors such as energy. Slovenia particularly welcomes those investments that create jobs in the high-tech sector and have links to research and development (R and D) activities, for which special tax incentives are available. Although Slovenia has among the highest taxes in Europe, in January 2007, the government introduced tax cuts that have significantly reduced

business costs. In addition, the payroll tax was eliminated in January 2009. The corporate tax rate was lowered a full percentage point in 2010 to 20%.

There are no formal sectoral or geographic restrictions to foreign investment. In some regions, Slovenia offers special facilities and services to foreign investors. Slovenia offers financial and tax incentives within EU parameters to firms undertaking projects in economically depressed and underdeveloped areas.

The Public Agency of the Republic of Slovenia for Entrepreneurship and Foreign Investments(JAPTI), recently announced that its 2010 FDI Promotion Program would make the most of Slovenia's comparative advantages. JAPTI specifically noted Slovenia's: 1) geographical location in the heart of Europe with good communication and transport infrastructure; 2) relatively well-developed and technologically advanced industry; 3) well-educated labor force; 4) relative openness of its economy; and 5) political and economic stability. JAPTI wants to position Slovenia as a logistical hub for the region and gateway into the Western Balkans. JAPTI has worked with local communities in creating nine business zones for new investors. The program also seeks to overcome the main weaknesses of Slovenia's current policies related to FDI. Foreign companies report these weaknesses to be: the Government's passivity in promoting FDI, the lack of financial incentives for greenfield investors, and the low mobility of the labor force.

Companies investing (or considering investing) in Slovenia may be eligible for financial assistance in the form of grants from the Slovenian Public Investment Promotion Agency (JAPTI). Information and application forms are available from JAPTI or on their website www.investslovenia.si. Incentives are provided for projects that create at least 100 new jobs. This requirement is reduced to 50 new jobs in less developed regions and to 10 new jobs if the investment is in the field of research and development. The Government also provides free training and retraining employment grants to employers who intend to hire unemployed persons.

Municipalities offer different forms of incentives, which may be negotiated on a case-by-case basis. These incentives may include, but are not limited to, infrastructure to provide easy access to industrial sites, utility connections and local tax holidays.

Despite the challenges listed herein, the Government of Slovenia (GOS) expects that FDI inflows will increase in the near to medium term, as more foreign investors look to Slovenia to establish a regional presence or to strengthen their position in the area. FDI is expected to increase from the following sources:

- (i) Acquisitions of already privatized companies;
- (ii) Privatization of state-owned assets;
- (iii) Expansion of foreign-owned companies. (Historically, this has been the largest source of new jobs in the manufacturing sector);
- (iv) Privatization funds and other state-run funds which will continue to consolidate their portfolios as a way to increase liquidity; and
- (v) Greenfield investments.

Slovenia ranks 27th on Transparency International's Corruption Perception Index 2009 at 6.6 points. The Heritage Economic Freedom 2009 Report places Slovenia in the 68th spot. The World Bank Doing Business 2010 rank for Slovenia is 53rd.

Conversion and Transfer Policies

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Since September 1, 1995, Slovenia has adhered to Article VIII of the IMF Article of Agreement, thus committing itself to full current account convertibility and full repatriation of dividends. Slovenia replaced its previous currency, the Slovenian tolar, with the Euro in January 2007. In practice, to repatriate profits joint stock companies must provide the following: evidence of the settlement of tax liabilities; notarized evidence of distribution of profits to shareholders; and proof of joint stock company membership (Article of Association). All other companies need to provide evidence of the settlement of tax liabilities and the company's act of establishment.

For the repatriation of shares in a domestic company, the company must submit its act of establishment, a contract on share withdrawal, and evidence of the settlement of tax liabilities to the authorized bank.

Expropriation and Compensation

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According to Article 69 of Slovenia's Constitution, the right to possess real property can be taken away or limited, with compensation in kind or financial compensation under conditions determined by law on the basis of public interest.

There are no current expropriation-related investment disputes in Slovenia. National law gives adequate protection to all investments.

However, there is an ongoing dispute over property expropriated by the socialist Yugoslav government after World War II. The 1991 Denationalization Act allowed for claims to be submitted for recovery of such property. Of a total 39,626 denationalization claims submitted, 492 were filed by U.S. citizens. None of these U.S. citizen claimants were U.S. citizens at the time the property was expropriated. All U.S. citizen claimants are either individuals who acquired U.S. citizenship subsequent to their property being expropriated, or the heirs of individuals whose property was seized when the owners were not U.S. citizens. Of these claims, 427, or 87%, had been resolved as of August 31, 2008. According to Embassy records, none of the remaining 65 cases were resolved in 2009.

Dispute Settlement

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Slovenia is a signatory to the 1958 New York Convention on Recognition of Foreign Arbitral Awards and the 1961 European Convention on International Commercial Arbitration.

Slovenia has a well-developed, structured legal system. It is based on a five-tier (district, regional, appeals, supreme, and administrative) court system. These courts deal with a vast array of legal cases including criminal, domestic relations, land disputes, contracts, and other business-related issues and probate. A separate social and labor court with regional, appeals, and supreme courts, deals strictly with labor disputes,

pensions, and other social welfare claims. Similar to most European countries, Slovenia also has a Constitutional Court that hears complaints alleging violations of human rights and personal freedoms, expresses its opinions on the constitutionality of international agreements and state statutes, and deals with other high profile political issues. In keeping with European legal standards, in 1997 the Slovene Parliament established an administrative court to handle disputes among local authorities, between state and local authorities, and between local authorities and executors of public authority.

The Parliament passed a law on Legal Proceedings in 1999 to speed up court proceedings. The law stipulates a stricter and more efficient procedure for serving court documents and providing evidence. For commercial cases, defendants are now required to file their defense within 15 days of receiving notice of a claim. Despite the efforts to improve the effectiveness of the Slovene court system, the court backlogs at all levels are still significant and cases can drag on for years. Slovenia has received warnings from the EU on this matter several times. Because the problem is a major public concern, in 2006 the government introduced a program to cut the backlogs. The program seeks to achieve a 50% decrease in open cases and a significant cut in the time courts have to solve an open case. Over the next five years, the program will aim to reduce the average processing time of a case from 18 months to 6 months. In order to accomplish this, the Ministry of Justice has started creating a better working environment in courts, funding additional staff, changing remuneration of judges and administrative staff, and improving IT tools used in the judicial sector. There were 416,639 unresolved cases as of September 30, 2009.

Unless parties have agreed to binding arbitration for disputes, the regional court specializing in economic issues has jurisdiction over business disputes. However, the parties may agree in writing to settle disputes in another court of jurisdiction.

The parties may also exclude the court as the adjudicator of the dispute if they agree in writing that contractual disputes be solved by arbitration, whether ad hoc or institutional. In the former case, the applicable procedure and law must be determined. In the case of institutional arbitration, the type of arbitration must be clearly defined. The Permanent Court of Arbitration within the Chamber of Economy is an independent institution that solves domestic and international disputes arising out of business transactions among companies.

The procedure before the Permanent Court of Arbitration at the Chamber of Economy of Slovenia is governed by the Regulations on the Procedure before the Permanent Court of Arbitration at the Chamber of Economy of Slovenia. Arbitration rulings are final and subject to execution.

Competition is keen in Slovenia and bankruptcies are an established and reliable means of working out firms' financial difficulties.

Slovene law provides three procedural methods for handling bankrupt debtors. The first, compulsory settlements, allows the insolvent debtor to submit a plan for financial reorganization with the Court. The Compulsory Settlement Plan is then voted upon by the creditors and must be accepted by those creditors whose claims represent more than 60% of the total claimed. If the settlement is accepted, the debtor is excused from the obligation to pay the creditor the amount that exceeds the percentage of payment set forth in the confirmed settlement. The payment terms are then extended in accordance

with the conditions of forced settlement. Confirmed compulsory settlement affects creditors who have voted against compulsory settlement and creditors who have not reported their claims in the settlement procedure.

The creditor or debtor may also initiate bankruptcy procedures. The court names a bankruptcy administrator who sells the debtors property according to the bankruptcy senate president's instructions and supervision. As a rule, the debtor's property is sold by public auction. Otherwise, the creditors' committee may prescribe a different mode of sale such as collecting offers or placing conditions for potential buyers. The legal effect of completed bankruptcy is the termination of the debtor's legal status to conduct business, and the distribution of funds created from the sale of assets to creditors according to their share of total debt.

The third method, bankruptcy as forced liquidation, is distinguished from voluntary liquidation (without court intervention) as set forth in the Law on Commercial Companies. Forced liquidation is imposed on a debtor for whom the law determines the liquidation procedure and the legal conditions for ending his existence as a business entity. This would occur, for example, if the management does not operate for more than twelve months, if the court finds the registration void, or by court order.

Performance Requirements and Incentives

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No performance requirements are imposed as a condition for establishing, maintaining, or expanding an investment. There are some incentives offered to potential investors through the "FDI Incentive Scheme." The Inward Investment Cost-Sharing Grant Scheme will co-fund investments in industry, strategic services, or research and development that will result in at least 10 to 50 new jobs. More information and application forms can be found at www.investslovenia.org. On the other hand, the rigid procedures necessary to acquire work permits serve as an impediment for foreign investors. It can take two to three months to obtain a work permit. The Ministry of Labor has established a fast-track procedure for foreigners who are registered in the court registry as authorized persons or representatives of companies, managers of branch offices, and for foreigners who are temporarily sent to work in organizational units for foreign legal persons registered in Slovenia. More information on work permits and employment services can be found at <http://www.ess.gov.si>.

Right to Private Ownership and Establishment

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Private enterprise and ownership are promoted and protected in Slovenia, both by statute and the Constitution. Slovenia's laws on foreign investment are fully harmonized with EU legislation. As provided for in the Law on Commercial Companies, all business activities within Slovenia are open to domestic and foreign natural and legal persons who may establish wholly or partially owned companies in any legal form provided by the Commercial Companies Act (Limited, General, and Silent Partnerships; Joint Stock Companies, Limited Liability Companies, and Partnerships Limited by Shares; and Economic Interest Groups). Foreign investors may freely invest in Slovene companies in most industries except in banking and insurance industries, where a permit from the Bank of Slovenia or Insurance Supervision Agency is needed. Furthermore, current

regulations limit the foreign ownership stake in gaming interests to 20%. Foreign investors are permitted to obtain concessions for the exploitation of renewable and non-renewable natural and public goods. In addition, foreign and domestic investors have the same reporting requirements to the Bank of Slovenia.

Some restrictions are also applied to foreign investment in the field of military supply. For example, direct investments made by non-residents in companies or other entities that are engaged in the production of, or trade in, weaponry and military equipment are allowed only if specifically authorized by the Government of the Republic of Slovenia.

Any company registered in Slovenia is granted the status of a Slovenian legal entity under which they enjoy national treatment. Foreign investors are subject to the same legal treatment as domestic companies and enjoy the same rights and obligations. The registration process is rather simple and usually takes between three weeks and one month to complete. Registered foreign-owned companies may also become members of the Ljubljana Stock Exchange.

Foreign-owned companies are entitled to own property in Slovenia. All citizens and enterprises of the European Union or the United States have the same purchase rights and rights of use of land and natural resources as citizens and domestic enterprises. If a foreign citizen or legal person from a third (i.e., non-EU) country decides to establish a company in Slovenia, this company is considered a Slovenian legal person and as such can buy, own and sell real estate. However, while the law provides for these rights, some foreign companies have experienced unexplainable delays in obtaining land even after all the necessary paperwork was in order.

Foreign shareholders are entitled to free and unrestricted transfer of their profits abroad in foreign currency, providing that they meet their tax obligations. The 20% corporate tax rate in Slovenia applies to domestic and foreign companies and is among the lowest rates in Europe.

Credits and guarantees between residents and non-residents are regulated by the Foreign Exchange Act. The law differentiates between commercial and financial credits. Commercial credits are those credits relating to trade and rendering international services that involve a resident as one of the contracting parties. Commercial credits include contractual trade credits (deferred payments and/or advances) and their financing by banks. Factoring operations are also considered to be commercial credits, on the condition that the underlying operations from which the claims arise have the nature of commercial credits. All other operations are considered to be financial credits, including mortgage-backed and consumer loans as well as financial leasing operations.

All credit transactions, except commercial credits with payment delay or prepayments less than 12 months, must be in written form and contain all obligatory parts of the credit business. Authorized banks can undertake credit operations with non-residents for their own accounts and in their own name or in their own name and for someone else's account as his proxy. Institutions other than banks can undertake credit operations with non-residents for their own accounts and in their own name. Residents must report all credit operations with non-residents to the Bank of Slovenia within 10 days of signing the loan contract.

Larger banks in Slovenia also have specialized International Desks, which offer bank services to foreign companies and persons.

The 1999 Law on Banking allows foreign banks to establish branch offices in Slovenia. Since 1999, local borrowers have faced no restrictions with regards to borrowing from abroad, which was strictly regulated before the new legislation. Once Slovenia joined the EU, its banking regulation was entirely harmonized with the banking regulation of the EU.

As of June 2001, all restrictions on portfolio investments by foreigners in Slovenia had been abolished and the purchase of foreign equities by Slovenes fully liberalized.

There is no law, statute, or regulation that specifically deals with mortgage banking services in Slovenia. However, the Government has committed itself to creating a mortgage banking system to include property assessments and deeds that will replace the current Land Registry system. Currently there are no special mortgage banks in Slovenia. Accordingly, only a few Slovenian banks offer mortgage loans per se. Nevertheless, banks provide loans that are secured by mortgages. They are frequently granted to corporate clients and entrepreneurs as well as to private individuals.

In order for mortgages to be effective against any owner of real estate, the mortgage must be registered in the Land Registry Book at the Land Registry Office. The Land Registry Book was introduced within the present territory of Slovenia in the 19th century and serves to inform the general public of the owner of land, buildings, and parts of buildings. Within the legal system, the Land Registry Book is connected in part with substantive civil law, which regulates default procedures on real estate.

Even though many banks give priority to the cash flow statements before the collateral of the loan, the use of mortgages to finance real estate developments is common in Slovenia. Mortgages are used as collateral for corporate financing of development projects. The creditor often requires the debtor to own, in equity, one and a half to two times the amount of the loan, depending on the debtor's credit rating. Once the mortgage is consummated between the creditor and debtor, it is registered in the Land Registry Book. If the mortgager defaults on the loan, the law provides for a foreclosure procedure on the mortgaged property.

Slovene banks also offer project financing services for construction and development projects. Under this program, the banks offer up to 70% financing (30% of the project cost is usually required from the investor's own sources). The banks also offer advisory services pertaining to Slovene regulations on building and sales of real estate as well as transfer of ownership of the mortgaged real estate. As collateral, the bank usually requires a mortgage on the building being built.

Protection of Property Rights

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Slovenia has enacted highly advanced and comprehensive legislation for the protection of intellectual property that fully reflects the most recent intellectual developments in the TRIPS Agreement (Trade Related Aspects of Intellectual Property) and various EU directives. Slovenia negotiated its TRIPS commitments as a developing country and implemented its commitments as of January 1, 1996. Slovenia is a full member of the

TRIPS Council of the World Trade Organization (WTO) and the World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO). Slovenia has already ratified the WIPO Copyright Treaty and the Cyber Crime Convention.

Slovenia's Intellectual Protection Office actively participates in the Intellectual Property Working Party of the Council of Europe, the Trademark Committee and other EU working bodies in formulation of new EU legislation. The Copyright and Related Rights Act amended in 2001 and 2004 deals with all fields of modern copyright and related rights law, including traditional works and their authors, computer programs, audiovisual works, as well as rental and lending rights. The act also takes into account new technologies such as storage and electronic memory, original databases, satellite broadcasting, and cable re-transmission. The 2004 harmonization with the EU legislation introduced a new system of collective management of intellectual property rights following the latest directive.

The 1994 Law on Courts gives the District Court of Ljubljana exclusive subject matter jurisdiction over intellectual property disputes. The aim of the law is to ensure specialization of the judges and the speed of relevant proceedings. Concerning enforcement of the TRIPS Agreement provision, Slovene law provides for a number of civil legal sanctions, including injunctive relief and the removal of the infringement, the seizure and destruction of illegal copies and devices, the publication of the judgment in the media, compensatory and punitive damages, border (customs) measures, and the securing of evidence and other provisional measures without the prior notification and hearing of the other party. Furthermore, these infringements also constitute a misdemeanor with fines ranging from 400 Euro (\$580) to 45,000 Euro (\$65,250) for legal persons and a range of fines, from 40 Euro (\$58) to 2,000 Euro (\$2,900), for supervisors of individual offenders provided that the reported offenses are not criminal in nature. In such a case, the Slovenian Criminal Code would apply, which may result in fines or in extreme cases, imprisonment. While Slovene laws regarding intellectual property are clearly defined, there have been complaints by foreign investors about the slow nature of the court system.

Since the enactment of the Law on Copyright and Related Rights Act, there have been relatively few reported prosecutions for infringement violations. Most notable are cases of computer software piracy. In 2004, a long-running software piracy court case ended with a jail sentence and monetary fine. With piracy prosecution still in the early stages of implementation, Slovenia has dedicated resources to the training of prosecutors and public authorities. Slovenia continues to address the preservation of evidence in infringement procedures and border measures by amending existing legislation. Moreover, the Ministry of Culture established the Intellectual Property Fund, the Slovene Copyright Agency, and the Anti-Piracy Association of Software Dealers (BSA) to combat the problem of piracy in a collective manner.

The Law on Industrial Property grants and protects patents, model and design rights, trademark and service marks, and appellations of origin. The holder of a patent, model, or design right is entitled to: exclusively work the protected invention, shape, picture, or drawing; exclusively market any products manufactured in accordance with the protected invention, shape, picture, or drawing; dispose of the patent, model, or design right; prohibit use of a protected invention, model, or design, by any person without consent.

The holder of a trademark has the exclusive right to use the trademark in the course of trade to designate his products or services. The authorized user of a protected appellation of origin has the right to use the appellation in the course of trade for marking products to which the appellation refers.

The patent and trademark rights granted by the Law on Industrial Property take effect from the date of filing the appropriate applications. Patents are granted for twenty years from the date of filing and model and design rights are granted for ten years. Trademarks are granted for ten years, but may be renewed an unlimited number of times. The term of an appellation of origin is unlimited. All patents and trademarks are registered through the Slovenian Intellectual Property Office with all registers open to the public. Patent and trademark applications filed in member countries of the International Union for the Protection of Industrial Property are afforded priority rights in Slovenia. The priority period is 12 months for patents and six months for model and design rights.

Any person who infringes upon a patent or trademark right may be held liable for damages and prohibited from carrying on the infringing acts.

The Law on Industrial Property also provides for the contractual licensing of patents, model and design rights, and marks. All license agreements must be in writing and specify the duration of the license, the scope of the license, whether the license is exclusive or non-exclusive, and the amount of remuneration for the use if compensation is agreed upon.

Compulsory licenses may be granted to another person when the invention is in the public interest or the patentee misuses his rights granted under the patent. A misuse of a patent occurs when the patentee does not work or insufficiently works a patented invention and refuses to license other persons to work the protected invention or imposes unjustified conditions on the licensee. If a compulsory license is granted, the patentee is entitled to compensation. Slovene industrial property legislation fully complies with EU standards.

Transparency of Regulatory System

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Foreign companies conducting business in Slovenia have the same rights, obligations, and responsibilities as domestic companies. The principles of commercial enterprise, free operation, and national treatment apply to the operations of foreign companies as well. Their basic rights are guaranteed by the Law on Commercial Companies and the Law on Foreign Transactions.

Generally, the bureaucratic procedures and practices are sufficiently streamlined and transparent for the foreign investor wishing to start a business in Slovenia. In order to establish a business in Slovenia, the foreign investor must produce a sufficient minimum amount of capital (10,000 Euro (\$14,500) for a limited liability company and 25,000 Euro (\$36,250) for a stock company), establish a business address, and file appropriate documentation with the court. The entire process usually takes from three weeks to one month, but may take longer in Ljubljana due to backlogs in the court.

Slovenia signed a reciprocal taxation treaty with the United States in June 1999. The rate of taxation of profits in Slovenia is lower than in the United States. Slovenia introduced the Value Added Tax (VAT) in July 1999. Slovenian VAT only has two grades, 8.5% and 20%. The standard VAT is 20% with 8.5% for some specialty items such as food products.

In Slovenia, highly concentrated market structures are not illegal per se; however, the abuse of market power is. The Law on the Protection of Competition prohibits acts that restrict competition in the market, conflict with good business practices relating to market access, or involve prohibited speculation. The law, which is fully harmonized with EU legislation, is applicable to corporate bodies and natural persons engaged in economic activities regardless of their legal form, organization, or ownership. The law also applies to the actions of public companies.

Restriction of competition through cartel agreements, unfair competition (i.e., false advertising, promises/gifts in exchange for business, trade secrets, etc.), illicit speculation during times of irregular market situations, and dumping and subsidized imports are all prohibited. The Government may, however, prescribe market restrictions in the following instances: in cases of natural disasters, epidemics, or in a state of emergency; in cases of appreciable market disturbances due to the shortage of goods; or when necessary to satisfy requirements for the products, raw materials, and semi-finished goods of special or strategic importance to the defense of the nation.

The Competition Protection Office (CPO) is charged with ensuring fair competition in the marketplace. Investigations can be initiated by the CPO or conducted at the request of private companies. The CPO can issue a decree against any company found to have violated the Law on the Protection of Competition, although the power to fine companies rests solely in the hands of the courts. Any party trading in goods or services on the market may initiate legal proceedings in cases of unfair competition. Injured parties are entitled to compensation and the injunction of the unfair acts.

The court may issue a penalty of 125,000 Euro (\$181,250) to 1,000,000 Euro (\$1,450,000) against companies found to have engaged in cartel agreements, abused a dominant market position, committed an act of unfair competition, or engaged in illicit speculation. The managers and directors of the sanctioned company may be liable for a minimum fine of 4,000 Euro (\$5,800). Self-employed persons found to have committed any of the legally prohibited actions are liable for no less than 40,000 Euro (\$58,000). There are also fines for not complying with the CPO in the range of 2,000 Euro to 4,000 Euro (\$2,900 to \$5,800) for every week that requested documentation is not submitted. The same range of fines also applies if the sanctions are not carried out.

Efficient Capital Markets and Portfolio Investment

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The financial sector remains relatively underdeveloped for a country with Slovenia's prosperity. Enterprises rarely raise capital through the stock market. The shallowness of the sector hinders economies of scale and, despite shortcomings in the banking sector, capital is cheaper to acquire through banks than through more direct equity or debt sales.

The banking sector in Slovenia is marked by a relatively high degree of concentration (the three largest banks account for half of total banking assets and the top seven hold nearly 80% of the market), excess capacity (21 banks and 3 savings banks in a country of two million people), and a low level of (financial?) services. As a result, a number of banks are unable to exploit economies of scale and have relatively low productivity levels, with the consequences being high margins and low returns on equity.

In the past several years, a number of Slovene banks have been partially or fully taken over by foreign banks. In addition, a number of Slovene banks have announced mergers. In 2001, France's Societe Generale took over Slovenia's largest private bank, SKB Banka. In October 2001, Italian banking group San Paolo IMI purchased 82% of the Bank of Koper, the fifth largest bank in Slovenia. In spring 2002, the Government sold 34% of the largest commercial bank, Nova Ljubljanska Banka (NLB), to the Belgian KBC Group, with another 5% sold to the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD). Although the GOS has stated that it intends to invite further foreign investment into NLB, the opposite has happened, with the EBRD selling its stake in NLB to a domestic investor and KBC negotiating for the sale of its stake. The two largest banks, NLB and Nova Kreditna Banka Maribor (NKBM), are still majority-owned by the state but the current government has stated it is committed to privatizing them. Because the Government could not find a strategic partner for NKBM, it offered 49% of the bank to small investors in December 2007. The Government announced a further decrease of state shares down to 25% over the next three years. Because the sale of NKBM among small investors was publicly well received, the Government announced similar privatization for NLB and insurance company TRIGLAV prior to parliamentary elections in the fall of 2008. Lack of time and the global financial crisis cancelled or postponed these plans.

The balance sheets of Slovenia's banks are relatively strong, reflecting an early and aggressive program of bank rehabilitation launched by the Government in 1992. However, the wide differences between the balance sheets of the largest and the smallest banks seem to indicate that the ultimate consolidation of the banking sector is inevitable. The Government has encouraged bank mergers as a means of dealing with the sector's excess capacity.

New banking legislation authorizes commercial banks, savings banks, and stock brokerage firms to purchase securities abroad. Investment funds may also purchase securities abroad provided that certain diversification requirements are met.

The Ljubljana Stock Exchange (LSE) was established in 1990. A Commodity Exchange (CE) was established in 1994, but ceased operation in 1998 (why? Lack of interest?). The LSE underwent its most rapid growth during the period from 1994 to 1997, aided by the listing of new companies in the first phase of privatization in Slovenia. The LSE serves more as a vehicle for achieving the transformation of enterprises than as a means for raising capital. In 1997, the LSE became a full member of the International Association of Stock Exchanges (FIBV). In September 2008, the Wiener Borse acquired a majority stake in the LSE (81%). As a result, these changes should help the stock market further develop and could provide an incentive (for Slovenia? The government?) to speed up the privatization process.

The LSE has been working to encourage the government to list shares of strong, state-owned companies such as Telekom Slovenije or NLB in order to boost market activity.

As of January 2010, Telekom Slovenije, insurance company TRIGLAV, Port of Koper and NKBM bank are the only state-owned companies listed on the Ljubljana Stock Exchange. Although the initial Telekom Slovenije, TRIGLAV and NKBM trade volume was low, doors are open for an investor.

The LSE has two official listings - A and B - depending on the amount of a listing's capital, audited financial statements, size of the class of securities, and securities distribution. The over-the-counter (C) market has less stringent requirements. In spite of the market boom since 2002, securities markets remain relatively underdeveloped in Slovenia. Despite appreciation of the market capitalization of the LSE in recent years, it remains a very illiquid market, with annual turnover similar to a single day's trading on the NYSE.

In 1995, the Central Securities Clearing Corporation (KDD) was established. KDD runs the central registry securities and trade clearings concluded on the LSE electronic trading system. The Securities Market Agency (SMA), established in 1994, has powers similar to the SEC in the United States. The SMA supervises investment firms, the LSE, the KDD, investment funds, and management companies, and shares responsibility with the Bank of Slovenia for supervision of banking and investment services.

The LSE uses different dissemination systems, including real time online trading information via REUTERS or the BDS System. The LSE also publishes information on the Internet at <http://www.ljse.si>.

A high level of concentration characterizes the insurance sector in Slovenia with the largest company, state-owned Triglav d.d., holding 43% of the total market in gross premiums and the five largest companies accounting for 91% of market share. Insurance companies invest their assets primarily in non-financial companies, state bonds, and bank-issued bonds.

There have been significant changes in the legislation regulating the insurance sector since 2000. The Ownership Transformation of Insurance Companies Act, designed to accomplish the privatization of insurance companies, was postponed several times due to ambiguity concerning the estimated share of state-controlled capital. Although insurance sector privatization discussions have been ongoing since 2005, no concrete plans have been implemented.

Currently, there are three health insurance companies registered in Slovenia and 13 companies offering other kinds of insurance. However, under EU regulations, any insurance company registered in the EU can market its services in Slovenia as well, given that the insurance supervision agency of the country where this company is registered has notified the Slovenian Supervision Agency of the company's intentions.

Political Violence

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Except for a brief, ten-day conflict in 1991 over Slovene independence, there have been no incidents of political violence in Slovenia.

Similar to many other European countries, Slovenia does not have a bribery statute equal in stature to the U.S. Foreign Corrupt Practices Act. However, Chapter 24 of the Slovene Criminal Code (S.C.C.) provides statutory provisions for criminal offenses in the economic sector. Corruption in the economy can take the form of corruption among private firms or corruption among public officials.

The S.C.C. provides for criminal sanctions against officials of private firms for the following crimes: forgery or destruction of business documents; unauthorized use or disclosure of business secrets; insider trading; embezzlement; acceptance of gifts under certain circumstances; money laundering; and tax evasion.

Specifically, Articles 241 and 242 of the S.C.C. make it illegal for a person performing a commercial activity to demand or accept undue rewards, gifts, or other material benefits that will ultimately result in the harm or neglect of his business organization. While Article 241 makes it illegal to accept gifts, Article 242 prohibits the tender of gifts in order to gain an undue advantage at the conclusion of any business dealings.

Public officials are held accountable under Article 261 of the S.C.C., which makes it illegal for a public official to request or accept a gift in order to perform or omit an official act within the scope of his official duties. The acceptance of a bribe by a public official may result in a fine or imprisonment of no less than one year, with a maximum sentence of five years. The accepted gift/bribe is also seized.

While Article 261 holds public officials accountable, Article 262 holds the gift's donor accountable. Article 262 makes it illegal for natural persons or legal entities to bribe public officials with gifts. Violation of this article carries a sentence of up to three years. However, if the presenter of the gift discloses such bribery before it is detected or discovered, punishment may be omitted. Generally, the gift is seized. However, if the presenter of the gift disclosed the violation, the gift may be returned to him/her.

The state prosecutor's office is responsible for the enforcement of the anti-bribery provisions. The number of cases of actual bribery is small and is generally limited to instances involving inspection and tax collection. Although the prosecutor's office may suspect bribery and related corruption practices in government procurement offices, obtaining evidence is difficult, thereby making it equally difficult to prosecute. Corruption in Slovenia is on a minor scale. 2001 saw Slovenia's first and only serious scandal involving a high public official convicted of accepting a bribe.

Slovenia has signed Bilateral Investment Treaties (BITs) with Albania, Australia, Austria, Belgium - Luxembourg Economic Union, Bosnia & Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Chile, China, Croatia, Cuba, Czech Republic, Denmark, Egypt, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Iceland, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Kuwait, Lithuania, Macedonia (F.Y.R.), Malaysia, Malta, Moldova, Montenegro, Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Russian Federation, Singapore, Slovak Republic, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Thailand, Turkey, Ukraine, the United Kingdom, Uzbekistan, and Serbia. Slovenia is currently negotiating

BITs with Argentina, Brazil, Saudi Arabia and Vietnam. Slovenia does not have a BIT with the United States due to ongoing discussions between the United States and the EU on how member states without a BIT treaty will accede to the U.S.-EU BIT agreement.

OPIC and Other Investment Insurance Programs

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The U.S. Overseas Private Investment Corporation (OPIC) and Slovenia signed a bilateral agreement on April 24, 1994. There are currently a number of OPIC investment finance and insurance programs available in Slovenia, including loan guarantees, direct loans, and political violence and expropriation insurance.

The U.S. Export-Import Bank offers short-, medium-, and long-term private sector as well as short-term public sector programs in Slovenia. In July 1999, the Slovenian Export Corporation (SEC) and the U.S. Export-Import Bank signed a memorandum on cooperation in financing, insuring, and reinsuring exports to Southeast European countries. In January 2007, the SEC restructured to become the Slovenian Export and Development Bank. More information is available on their website www.sid.si.

Labor

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The labor market has been tight in recent years, and as of September 2008, the unemployment rate stood at a record-low 3.9% (according to the ILO method). However, as the spreading global financial crisis began to affect Slovenia in the last quarter of 2008, it significantly increased the unemployment rate in 2009 to ____%. This negative trend is expected to continue in 2010. Slovenia has already started to experience numerous/notable layoffs. We expect unemployment will continue to increase in 2010, especially in construction, automotive, textile and other areas of industrial production. The government's economic reforms propose to address this problem through a combination of retraining and investment in new technologies. The regions of highest unemployment in Slovenia are primarily in the northeast.

Slovenia fully harmonized its labor legislation with the EU on May 1, 2004. Slovenia opted for no transition period in connection with workforce movement within the EU, but kept the right to intervene through 2009 in case of market distortion. In line with new legislation, Slovenia has retained strict rules on issuing work permits to non-EU applicants. The 2001 Employment of Aliens Act introduces a quota system for work permits and simplifies the procedure for obtaining work permits for foreigners who have worked and lived in Slovenia over a long period of time.

Slovenia's wage-setting practice follows the "social partners" model, designed to contain upward pressure by centralizing wage decisions. In practice, however, high wage expectations have pushed Slovenia's wage levels far above those of its central European neighbors. In addition, growing labor unrest has placed pressure for wages to rise further. However, its well-educated labor force and position as the most productive transition economy allows it to remain competitive in niche markets.

Slovenia adopted an Employment Relationship Act that entered into force in January 2003. The Act defines a full time workweek as 36 to 40 hours (made up of six to eight-hour days including a 30-minute lunch break), increases protection of critical working groups (including women and children), and eases the conditions under which an employer may terminate employees.

Slovenia's labor force performs well in the higher value-added activities that utilize its skilled technicians and engineers at a somewhat lower cost than in the developed West. However, Slovenia would benefit from a workforce with stronger managerial skills, most notably in the banking and insurance sectors. Despite the introduction of greater labor market flexibility, the market for workers remains quite rigid and investors will find that termination of workers is more difficult than in the United States. In addition, the labor market remains relatively over-protected, and pay scales in public service are very complicated and do not reward performance.

In February 2010, the government implemented an increase to the minimum wage that will be phased in over the next 3 years. The minimum wage will rise from the current level of 460 euros to 510 euros this year, 530 euros in 2011, and 562 euros in 2012.

In the area of labor reform, as of early 2010, the government has not publicly unveiled its proposals to reform the labor market. However, the government has hinted cuts in the generous severance pay scheme while increases in unemployment benefits for laid-off workers.

Foreign-Trade Zones/Free Ports

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There are two kinds of Free Trade Zones in Slovenia: Free Economic Zones and Free Customs Zones.

Foreign Direct Investment Statistics

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Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) in Slovenia is fairly low, despite Slovenia's overall mix of qualities as an attractive investment location. Total FDI stock in Slovenia at the end of 2008 was \$15.98 billion. As with trade, the bulk of FDI in Slovenia is European in origin. U.S. FDI in Slovenia, as calculated by the U.S. Embassy, is around 5% of the total, or roughly \$850 million. (N.B.: The Bank of Slovenia (BoS), in its official data, lists U.S. FDI at approximately \$66 million or 0.4% of total FDI. However, this amount does not take into account significant investments by U.S. firms, notably Goodyear. This data is not listed as U.S. in origin by the BoS as U.S. funds are often routed through a third country. Goodyear's investment in Sava Tires, for example, came to Slovenia via a bank in Luxembourg. Based on our discussions with U.S. firms, we believe our estimate of \$850 million is a more accurate representation of the true U.S. FDI presence in Slovenia.)

Foreign Direct Investment in Slovenia - Stock on 31.12. 2008 (major investors)

Country	Total Value (Million Euros)	Share of Total (%)
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March 1, 2010

Austria	5,123.3	46.6
Switzerland	1,234.1	11.2
Netherlands	806.6	7.3
France	795.9	7.2
Germany	587.6	5.3
Italy	530.5	4.8
Belgium	383.5	3.5
Luxemburg	353.5	3.2
Croatia	298.5	2.7
USA	66	0.4
...		
Total	10,996.4	100.0

Foreign Direct Investment in Slovenia by sector - Stock on 31.12. 2008

Sector	Total Value (Million Euros)	Share of Total(%)
Financial intermediation, not insurance	4933.8	44.9
Mfr. pharmaceutical products	951.4	8.6
Wholesale, commission, not motors	798.7	7.3
Retail Trade	642.6	5.8
Mfr. of cars	282.2	2.6
Electricity, gas, steam, and hot water	280.1	2.5
Mfr. of pulp, paper & paper products	259	2.4
Mfr. of rubber & plastic products	252.7	2.3
Telecommunications	228	2.1
...		
Total	10,996.4	100.0

Slovene Foreign Direct Investment abroad - Stock on 31.12.2008

Country	Total Value (Million Euros)	Share of Total (%)
Croatia	1,108.1	19.6
Serbia and Montenegro	1,625.5	28.7
Bosnia and Herzegovina	689.6	12.2
Russian Federation	444	7.8
Macedonia	234.9	4.1
Germany	182	3.2
Austria	161.4	2.9
Monte Negro	144.6	2.5
Liberia	144	2.5
Netherlands	100.1	1.8
Poland	90	1.6
USA	19.4	0.3
...		

March 1, 2010

Total	5,660.5	100.0
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Slovene Foreign Direct Investment abroad by sector - Stock on 31.12.2008

Sector	Total Value (Million Euros)	Share of Total (%)
Financial intermediation, not insurance	1,231.8	21.8
Retail trade, not motors; repairs	757.3	13.4
Mfr. pharmaceutical products	522	9.2
Wholesale, commission, not motors	437	7.7
Mfr of food products & beverages	270	4.8
Warehouse	249.5	4.4
Mfr. Of electric devices	240.3	4.2
Postal Services, Telecommunications	235.9	4.2
...		
Total	5,660.5	100.0

Major U.S.-based Investors:

The following is a short list in alphabetical order of U.S. firms holding investments or with a presence in Slovenia.

3M
Amway
ANR-Amer Nielsen Research
Caterpillar
Coca-Cola Corporation
Colgate-Palmolive
Cisco
Deloitte & Touche
DHL International
DuPont
Ecolab
Eli Lilly
Ernst & Young
Emerson Electronics
Goodyear
Hewlett-Packard Company
IBM
Johnson & Johnson
Liberty Global
Marsh
Masterfoods
Merck, Sharp & Dohme
Microsoft
McDonald's

March 1, 2010

Motorola
Oracle Corporation
Pfizer Corporation
Philip Morris
PriceWaterhouse Coopers
Procter & Gamble
Schering-Plough
United Global Communications
Wrigley
Xerox
Other Major Foreign Investors in Slovenia:

Alcan, Canada
AmBev, Brazil
Belisce, Croatia
Bramac International, Austria
Brig & Bergmeister, Austria
Chiorino, Italy
Citroen, France
Danfoss, Denmark
Debitel AG, Germany
EGO, Switzerland
E. Leclerc, France
Faurecia, France
GKN, United Kingdom
Grammer Automotive, Germany
Grupo Bonazzi, Italy
Hella, Germany
Henkel Central, Austria
Horizonte Enterprise Development, Netherlands
IBRD, United Kingdom
Imperial Tobacco, United Kingdom
Inexia AB, Sweden
ISS Central Europe, Austria
IHC Holland, Netherlands
KBC, Belgium
KM Moebel, Germany
Lafarge Perlomooger, Austria
Mannesmann Rexroth, Germany
Messer Griesheim, Germany
Mobilcom, Austria
Nijaz Hastor, Bosnia and Herzegovina
Novartis, Switzerland (Sandoz Group)
Novem, Germany
Pflieger, Germany
Podravka, Croatia
Renault, France
Roxel, France
Roto Frank AG, Germany
San Paolo IMI, Italy
Safilo, Italy

March 1, 2010

Siemens AG, Germany
Societe Generale, France
Sodexo Alliance, France
Spar, The Netherlands
STE Troyes, France
Styria Federn, Austria
TCG Unitech AG, Austria
UNI Credito, Italy
Vogt, Germany
Wieneberger, Austria

Web Resources

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Employment Service of Sloven
ia: <http://www.ess.gov.si/eng/index-ang.htm>

Ljubljana Stock Exchange: <http://www.ljse.si>

Public Agency for Entrepreneurship and Foreign Investment:
<http://www.japti.si/home>

Slovenian Intellectual Property Office:
<http://www.uil-sipo.si/sipo/>

Slovenian Export and Development Bank Inc., Ljubljana:
<http://www.sid.si/home>

Bank of Slovenia: <http://www.bsi.si/en/>

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Chapter 7: Trade and Project Financing

- [How Do I Get Paid \(Methods of Payment\)](#)
- [How Does the Banking System Operate](#)
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How Do I Get Paid (Methods of Payment)

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The usual methods of payment in Slovenia include cash, bank debit cards, and major credit cards. Many vendors offer installment payments, especially for goods valued over USD 100. In cooperation with a local bank, vendors also offer on-the-spot “mini-loans” for purchases from approximately USD 500 to USD 1,500.

Other types of payment, such as wire transfer, letter of credit, documentary collections, and factoring, are also used.

Local credit rating company I d.o.o. is Dun & Bradstreet’s partner in Slovenia. It provides credit rating of local companies within a few days. (www.idoo.si)

How Does the Banking System Operate?

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The banking sector in Slovenia remains fairly rudimentary. Unlike many of the transition economies’ banking industries, Slovenian banks have rather strong capital bases and robust loan portfolios. In many cases, however, banks are limited to a narrow range of traditional activities and have yet to engage in new consumer services, investment banking, and management of more complex financial instruments. Nevertheless, the financial statements of Slovenian banks are in compliance with international standards and audited by internationally recognized auditors. Because of the relative immaturity of the banking sector, identifying financing for domestic projects can be problematic. Banks typically seek 100% collateral in most cases. Currently, there are no American banks registered in Slovenia.

Slovenia has taken some important steps to liberalize its financial markets. A combination of market forces and changes in the Bank of Slovenia’s regulations and national legislation are moving this sector in a more globally oriented direction. In the future, it will likely become easier and more transparent to make both portfolio and direct investments in Slovenia and to conduct many financial operations, including banking, securities brokering, and undertaking various credit transactions. The banking sector continues its cautious operations during the economic crisis.

The referential interest rate in Slovenia is EURIBOR. Interest rates are usually expressed as 3, 6 or 12-month EURIBOR + margin. The Consumer Price Index (CPI) is used as a measure of inflation.

Other sources of financing are available, although only for a limited range of activities. The U.S. Export-Import Bank provides medium-term and long-term loans and guarantees, and OPIC offers loan guarantees and direct loans. The European Investment Bank (EIB) and the International Finance Corporation are involved in funding large infrastructure projects, while the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD) provides financing for banking sector privatization as well as financing for the privatization of other sectors.

In July 1999, the Slovenian Export Corporation (SEC) and the U.S. Export-Import Bank signed a memorandum on cooperation in financing, insuring, and reinsuring exports to Southeast European countries.

Project Financing

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Project financing is slowly developing as a form of financing larger scale (mostly construction) projects. Many experts have discovered that Slovenia is lagging significantly behind the EU average as far as project financing of public infrastructure is concerned. Usually, public infrastructure projects come with state financial guarantees to the contractors, which is a partial reason for undeveloped project financing. Another reason for this situation is lack of public private partnerships (PPP), which often drive project financing in other countries. Involvement of private capital in public infrastructure projects in Slovenia is very rare.

Project financing for the private sector is somewhat more evolved. Slovene banks offer project financing services for construction and development projects. Under this program, the banks offer up to 70% financing (30% of the project cost is usually required from the investor's own sources). The banks also offer (in some cases require) advisory services pertaining to Slovene regulations on building and sales of real estate as well as transfer of ownership of any mortgaged real estate. For transparency reasons, banks often require investors to establish a separate company and bank account that will manage the project and through which all cash flows pertaining to the project are funneled. As collateral, the bank usually requires a mortgage on the real estate being developed.

EU financial assistance programs provide a wide array of grants, loans, loan guarantees and co-financing for feasibility studies and infrastructure projects in a number of key sectors (e.g., environmental, transportation, energy, telecommunications, tourism, public health). From a commercial perspective, these initiatives create significant market opportunities for U.S. businesses, U.S.-based suppliers, and subcontractors. The EU supports projects within its Member States, as well as EU-wide "economic integration" projects that cross both internal and external EU borders. In addition, the EU provides assistance to accession countries in Eastern and Southern Europe and Turkey, as well as some of the former Soviet republics.

The European Union provides project financing through grants from the European Commission and loans from the European Investment Bank. Grants from the Structural Funds are distributed through the Member States' national and regional authorities, and are only available for projects in the 27 EU Member States. All grants for projects in non-

EU countries are managed through the EuropeAid Cooperation agency in conjunction with various European Commission departments, called "Directorates-General."

The CSEU Tenders Database

The U.S. Commercial Service at the U.S. Mission to the European Union offers a tool on its website to help U.S.-based companies identify European public procurement opportunities. The database features all current public procurement tenders issued by all national and regional public authorities in the 27 Member States of the European Union, plus four other European countries, and that are open to U.S.-based firms under the terms of the Government Procurement Agreement (GPA) implemented in 1995. The database is updated twice weekly and is easy to use with a range of search options, including approximately 20 industry sectors. The database also contains tenders for public procurement contracts relating to structural funds. Readers may access the database at http://www.buyusa.gov/europeanunion/eu_tenders.html.

EU Structural Funds

The EU Structural Funds, including the European Regional Development Fund, were created in 1975 to assist economically depressed regions of the European Union that required industrial restructuring. The EU earmarked EUR 308 billion for projects under the Structural Funds and the Cohesion Fund programs for the 2007-2013 period for the EU-27. In addition to funding economic development projects proposed by Member States or local authorities, EU Structural Funds also support specialized projects promoting EU socioeconomic objectives. Member States negotiate regional and "sectoral" programs with officials from the regional policy Directorate-General at the European Commission. For information on approved programs that will result in future project proposals, please visit: http://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/atlas2007/fiche_index_en.htm.

For projects financed through the Structural Funds, Member State officials are the key decision-makers. They assess the needs of their country; investigate projects; evaluate bids; and award contracts. To become familiar with available financial support programs in the Member States, it is advisable for would-be contractors to meet with local officials to discuss local needs.

Tenders issued by Member States' public contracting authorities for projects supported by EU grants are subject to EU public procurement legislation if they meet the EU minimum contract value requirement for the eligible sector. Below this threshold, tender procedures are subject to national procurement legislation. There are no overt prohibitions against the participation of U.S. companies, either as developers or concessionaires of projects supported partially by the Structural Funds, or as bidders on subsequent public tenders related to such projects, but it is advisable to team up with a local partner. All Structural Fund projects are co-financed by national authorities and most may also qualify for a loan from the European Investment Bank. The private sector is also involved in project financing. For more information on these programs, please see the market research section on the website of the US Mission to the EU:

<http://www.buyusa.gov/europeanunion/mrr.html>

The Cohesion Fund

The Cohesion Fund is another instrument of EU structural policy. Its EUR 61.5 billion (2007-2013) budget seeks to improve cohesion within the EU by funding transport infrastructure and environmental projects in Portugal, Spain, Greece and the twelve new (since 2004) EU Member States from Central and Eastern Europe. These projects are generally co-financed by national authorities, the European Investment Bank, and the private sector.

Key Link: http://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/funds/cf/index_en.htm

The Trans-European Networks

The European Union also provides financial support to the Trans-European Networks (TENs) to develop infrastructure, strengthen cohesion and increase employment across greater Europe. Launched at the Essen Council (Germany) in 1994, the TENs are a series of transport, telecommunications and energy projects that are continually being expanded and upgraded. The TENs are largely financed by private sector and non-EU sources. The EU does, however, provide grants from the Cohesion Fund, loans from the European Investment Bank (and loan guarantees from the European Investment Fund), and partial feasibility study grants for the TENs. There are no overt EU restrictions on the participation of U.S. firms in the TENs.

http://ec.europa.eu/ten/index_en.html

Other EU Grants for Member States

Another set of sector-specific grants offers assistance to EU Member States in the fields of science, technology, communications, energy, environmental protection, education, training and research. Tenders related to these grants are posted on the various websites of the directorates-generals of the European Commission. Conditions for participation are strict and participation is usually restricted to EU firms or tied to EU content. Information pertaining to each of these programs can be found on:

http://ec.europa.eu/grants/index_en.htm

External Assistance Grants

The EuropeAid Cooperation Office is the European Commission agency in charge of managing the EU's external aid programs. This Agency is responsible for the management of the entire project cycle, from identification to evaluation, while the Directorates-General in charge of External Relations and Development, are responsible for the drafting of multi-annual programs. The EuropeAid website offers extensive information on the range of grant programs, the kind of projects that are eligible, as well as manuals to help interested parties understand the relevant contract law. However,

participation to calls for tender for contracts financed by EuropeAid is reserved for enterprises located in the EU Member States and requires that the products used to respond to these projects are manufactured in the EU or in the aid recipient country. But consultants of US nationality employed by a European firm are allowed to form part of a bidding team. European subsidiaries of U.S. firms are eligible to participate in these calls for tender.

Key Link: http://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/index_en.htm

All tenders related to EU-funded programs outside the territory of the European Union (including the accession countries) are located on the EuropeAid Cooperation Office website: http://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/work/funding/index_en.htm

Two new sets of programs have been approved for the financing period 2007-2013., The EU provides specific Pre-Accession financial assistance to the accession candidate countries that seek to join the EU through the “Instrument for Pre-accession Assistance” (IPA). Also, the European Neighborhood and Partnership Instrument (ENPI) will provide assistance to countries that are the Southern Mediterranean and Eastern neighbors of the EU.

- IPA replaces the following programs: PHARE (Poland and Hungary Assistance for Restructuring of the Economy), ISPA (Instrument for Structural Pre-Accession financing transport and environment projects), SAPARD (projects in the agriculture sector), CARDS (aid to southern Balkans) and the Turkey Facility Fund. IPA focuses on priorities linked to the adoption of the *acquis communautaire* (the body of European Union law that must be adopted by accession candidate countries as a precondition to accession), i.e., building up the administrative and institutional capacities and financing investments designed to help them comply with European Commission law. IPA will also finance projects destined to countries that are potential candidate countries, especially in the Balkans. The budget of IPA for 2007-2013 is EUR 11.4 billion.

Key Links: http://ec.europa.eu/enlargement/index_en.htm

http://ec.europa.eu/enlargement/how-does-it-work/financial-assistance/index_en.htm

- ENPI: replaces the former TACIS and MEDA programs. The European Neighborhood Policy program covers the EU’s neighbors to the east and along the southern and eastern shores of the Mediterranean i.e. Algeria, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Egypt, Georgia, Israel, Jordan, Lebanon, Libya, Moldova, Morocco, the Palestinian Authority, Syria, Tunisia and Ukraine. ENPI budget is €11,9 billion for 2007-2013.
http://ec.europa.eu/world/enp/index_en.htm

Loans from the European Investment Bank

Headquartered in Luxembourg, the European Investment Bank (EIB) is the financing arm of the European Union. Since its creation in 1958, the EIB has been a key player in building Europe. As the EIB's lending practices evolved over the years, it became highly competent in assessing, reviewing and monitoring projects. As a non-profit banking institution, the EIB offers cost-competitive, long-term lending in Europe. Best known for its project financial and economic analysis, the Bank makes loans to both private and

public EU-based borrowers for projects in all sectors of the economy, such as telecommunications, transport, energy infrastructure and environment.

While the EIB mostly funds projects within the EU, it lends outside the EU as well (e.g., in Central, Eastern and Southeastern Europe; Latin America; and Pacific and Caribbean states). In 2007, the EIB approved loans for projects worth EUR 56.4 billion, of which around 16% was lent outside the EU. The EIB also plays a key role in supporting EU enlargement with loans used to finance improvements in infrastructure, research and industrial manufacturing to help those countries prepare for eventual EU membership. Projects financed by the EIB must contribute to the socioeconomic objectives set out by the European Union, such as fostering the development of less favored regions; improving European transport and telecommunication infrastructure; protecting the environment; supporting the activities of SMEs; assisting urban renewal; and, generally promoting growth, competitiveness and employment in Europe. Last year, the EIB created a list of projects to be considered for approval and posted the list on its website. As such, the EIB website is a source of intelligence on upcoming tenders related to EIB-financed projects: <http://www.eib.org/projects/pipeline/index.htm>

The EIB presents attractive business opportunities to U.S. businesses. EIB lending rates are lower than most other commercial rates. Like all EIB customers, however, U.S. firms must apply the loan proceeds to a project that contributes to the European objectives cited above.

The EIB's i2i (Innovation 2010 Initiative) is designed to highlight projects that support innovative technology in the European Union, in particular by financing broadband and multimedia networks; the physical or virtual infrastructure providing local access to these networks; and research and development infrastructures, especially in the less developed regions of the European Union. i2i will also finance projects to computerize schools and universities and to provide information technology training in conjunction with public authorities.

Key Link: http://www.eib.org/Attachments/thematic/innovation_2010_initiative_en.pdf

The US Mission to the European Union in Brussels has developed a database to help US-based companies bid on EIB public procurement contracts in non-EU countries in particular. The EIB-financed contracts that are open to US-based companies are featured in this database. All the tenders in this database are extracted from the EU's Official Journal. The EIB database contains on average 50 to 100 tenders and is updated twice per week.

Key Link: http://www.buyusa.gov/europeanunion/eu_tenders.html

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EU websites:

Future project proposals:

http://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/atlas2007/fiche_index_en.htm.

The EU regional policies, the EU Structural and Cohesion Funds:
http://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/index_en.htm

The Trans-European Networks (TENs): http://ec.europa.eu/ten/transport/index_en.htm

EU Grants and Loans index: http://ec.europa.eu/grants/index_en.htm

EuropeAid Co-operation Office: http://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/index_en.htm
IPA: http://ec.europa.eu/enlargement/how-does-it-work/financial-assistance/index_en.htm

The European Investment Bank <http://www.eib.org/>

EIB-financed projects: <http://www.eib.org/projects/index.htm?lang=-en>.

The EIB's i2i (Innovation 2010 Initiative):
http://www.eib.org/Attachments/thematic/innovation_2010_initiative_en.pdf

U.S. websites:

CSEU Tender Database:
http://www.buyusa.gov/europeanunion/eu_tenders.html

Market research section on the website of the US Mission to the EU:
<http://www.buyusa.gov/europeanunion/mrr.html>

European Union Tenders Database:
<http://www.buyusa.gov/europeanunion/euopportunities.html>

Export-Import Bank of the United States: <http://www.exim.gov>

Country Limitation Schedule: http://www.exim.gov/tools/country/country_limits.html

OPIC: <http://www.opic.gov>

Trade and Development Agency: <http://www.tda.gov/>

SBA's Office of International Trade: <http://www.sba.gov/oit/>

USDA Commodity Credit Corporation: <http://www.fsa.usda.gov/ccs/default.htm>

U.S. Agency for International Development: <http://www.usaid.gov>

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Business Customs

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Slovenian business managers apply market-based, Western-style economic philosophies and customs. The management style in Slovenia tends to concentrate decision-making at the senior levels. The delegation of authority in companies is relatively poor. In principle, a negotiation should not be considered concluded until confirmed by the general manager or a clearly acknowledged decision maker. Slovenes place a premium on personal contacts and correspondence, and visits play significant roles in conducting business. Clarity and continuity in communication are important.

Travel Advisory

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No travel advisories have been issued for Slovenia. More information on travel to Slovenia is available at http://travel.state.gov/travel/cis_pa_tw/cis/cis_1020.html.

Visa Requirements

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Visas for U.S. citizens are not necessary for visits lasting less than three months. A visa to remain in Slovenia for an extended period of time must be applied for outside of the country. An entry visa for the purpose of work, education, training, or other professional activity can be obtained at any Slovenian Embassy or Consulate.

U.S. companies that require travel of foreign businesspersons to the United States should be advised that security precautions are handled via an interagency process. Visa applicants should go to the following link:

U.S. Embassy in Ljubljana, Visa Information: <http://slovenia.usembassy.gov/visas3/html>

State Department Visa Website: <http://travel.state.gov/visa/index.html>

Telecommunications

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Slovenia has efficient postal and telephone services. Fax machines are widely used. E-mail is widely available. Local telephone calling card services are not available in-country and long-distance charges tend to be high, even by European standards. In many areas only pulse telephone lines are available, though tone-dialing availability is increasing.

The dialing code for Slovenia is 386, followed by the appropriate area code: Ljubljana (1), Maribor (2), Celje (3), Kranj (4), and Nova Gorica (5) followed by a seven-digit telephone number. Codes for GSM mobile phones are 31, 40, 41, 51, 70. When dialed within Slovenia, the codes are 031, 040, 041, 051, and 070 followed by a six-digit telephone number. To dial internationally from Slovenia, you must dial 00 plus the country code.

Mobile telephony is widespread. Every business person has a mobile phone and many companies also have a general (reception/information desk) mobile number, because calling from a mobile phone to a stationary line is substantially more expensive than calling mobile-to-mobile phone.

Directory assistance is 1188.

Transportation

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Ljubljana is easily accessible by air. Joze Pucnik Airport is an international airport located 27 kilometers (approx. 17 miles) outside of Ljubljana, the capital city. The airport is serviced by the national carrier, Adria Airways (a Star Alliance member), as well as other international airlines including Austria Airlines, CSA Czech Airlines, JAT Airways, Malev, Air France, and EasyJet. (More info on Airport Ljubljana at <http://www.lju-airport.si/eng/default.asp>)

There are other airports in the general vicinity of Slovenia. The distance by car is listed in parentheses.

Graz, Austria (45 minutes to Maribor)
Venice, Italy (2.5 hours to Ljubljana)
Vienna, Austria (3 hours to Maribor)
Trieste, Italy (1.5 hours to Ljubljana)
Zagreb, Croatia (2 hours to Ljubljana)

Slovenia's transportation system is very good. Highways connect most cities and numerous border crossings into neighboring countries are easily accessible. Air travel within Slovenia is not available, but is not necessary given the small size of the country. Rail is a popular and convenient form of travel. Major cities in Slovenia have efficient public transportation systems, relying mainly on buses and taxis. Bus fares can be paid

in cash on the bus or with a prepaid card called "Urbana", which can be purchased at newspaper stands or post offices. Taxi service is readily available at designated taxi stands or can be requested by telephone.

On December 21, 2007 Slovenia joined the Schengen zone. Land border check points with Austria, Italy and Hungary were removed. Slovenia implemented Schengen for air travel in March 2008. With the entry into the Schengen zone, the border control on the border with Croatia was enhanced to accommodate "Schengen border control regulations."

Language

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The official language in Slovenia is Slovene, a southern Slavic language with some resemblance to Croatian and Serbian. Slovene is written in the standard Roman alphabet with a few additional letters. Most businessmen in Slovenia speak at least one foreign language, English being the most common. German is also useful in some parts of the country and Italian is sometimes spoken in the Italian border area. When necessary, translators and interpreters can be hired at the Slovene Association of Conference Interpreters (phone: +386(0)41-648-416, email: info@zdruzenje-kts.si)

Health

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There is no immunization or special health concerns related to Slovenia.

Local Time, Business Hours, and Holidays

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The European institutions generally follow the holidays of the EU Member State in which they are located. During the month of August, many European institutions are staffed with minimum personnel. For information on local holidays in the EU Member States, please see their Country Commercial Guides. The following is a list of holidays observed by the European Commission in Belgium during calendar year 2010:

Local time is GMT + 1

Daylight savings time is between March 29 and October 25, 2009.

To check local time at this moment, click on <http://www.buyusa.gov/slovenia/en/>

Business Hours

Typical business operating hours in Slovenia are Monday through Friday from 8 AM to 4 PM.

Holidays in 2010

January 1	Friday	Amer/Slo	New Year's Day
January 2	Saturday	Slovenian	New Year's Day
January 18	Monday	American	Martin Luther King Day
February 8	Monday	Slovenian	Day of Slovenian Culture

February 15	Monday	American	President's Day
March 14	<i>Daylight savings time U.S. (clocks moved one hour ahead)</i>		
March 28	<i>Daylight savings time SLO (clocks moved one hour ahead)</i>		
April 4 & 5	Sun/Mon	Slovenian	Easter, Easter Monday
April 27	Tuesday	Slovenian	Resistance Day
May 1 & 2	Sat/Sun	Slovenian	Labor Day
May 31	Monday	American	Memorial Day
June 25	Friday	Slovenian	Proclamation Day
July 4 → 5	Sun→Mon	American	Independence Day
August 15	Sunday	Slovenian	Assumption Day
September 6	Monday	American	Labor Day
October 11	Monday	American	Columbus Day
October 31	<i>Daylight savings time SLO (clocks moved back one hour)</i>		
October 31	Sunday	Slovenian	Reformation Day
November 1	Monday	Slovenian	Remembrance Day
November 7	<i>Daylight savings time U.S. (clocks moved back one hour)</i>		
November 11	Thursday	American	Veterans Day
November 25	Thursday	American	Thanksgiving
Dec. 25 → 24	Sat. → Friday	Amer/Slo	Christmas Day
December 26	Sunday	Slovenian	Independence Day

Business travelers to the European Union seeking appointments with officials in the U.S. Mission to the European Union in Brussels, Belgium, should contact the Commercial Service in advance. The Commercial Service at the U.S. Mission to the European Union can be reached by telephone at +32-2 508-2746, fax at +32-2 513-1228, or e-mail at brussels.ec.office.box@mail.doc.gov. A current directory of staff and locations worldwide may be accessed on the Commercial Service website <http://www.buyusa.gov/>.

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Chapter 9: Contacts, Market Research, and Trade Events

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Contacts

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U.S. and Country Contacts

Embassy of the United States of America

Ambassador (vacant) – Bradley Freden, Charge d’Affaires

Sue Shultz, Acting Deputy Chief of Mission

Yuriy Fedkiw, Political/Economic/Commercial Chief

Hunter Chen, Economic/Commercial Officer

Matjaz Kavcic, Senior Economic/Commercial Specialist

Spela Falatov, Economic/Commercial Specialist

Prešernova ulica 31, 1000 Ljubljana, Slovenia

Phone: +386-1-200-5500

Fax: +386-1-200-55-29, 200-5555

Web site: <http://slovenia.usembassy.gov/>; <http://www.buyUSA.gov/slovenia/en>

Multilateral Development Bank Operations

International Trade Administration

U.S. Department of Commerce

Ronald Reagan Building, Mezzanine Level, Washington, DC 20230

Phone: (202) 482-3399

Fax: (202) 482-3914

email: MDBO.banks@mail.doc.gov

U.S. Department of Commerce

Hilleary Smith, Desk Officer for Slovenia

Washington, D.C. 20230

Phone: (202) 482 3684

Fax: (202) 482 4505

Email: Hilleary.Smith@mail.doc.gov

Business Associations

American Chamber of Commerce in Slovenia

Ms. Ajsa Vodnik, Secretary General

Pod hribom 55, 1000 Ljubljana, Slovenia

Phone: +386-1-581-6285

Fax: +386-1-581-6111

E-mail: office@amcham.si

JAPTI – Public Agency for Entrepreneurship and Foreign Investment

Mr. Igor Plestenjak, Director
Dunajska 156, 1000 Ljubljana, Slovenia
Phone: +386-3-42-53-150
Fax: +386-3-42-51-180
Email: zare.tomsic@japti.si
Web site: <http://www.japti.si/index.php?root=4>

Slovenian Chamber of Commerce and Industry

Mr. Samo Hribar Milic, President
Dimičeva 13, 1000 Ljubljana, Slovenia
Phone: +386-1-5898-000
Fax: +386-1-5898-100
Email: infolink@gzs.si
Web site: www.gzs.si
<http://www.gzs.si/eng/>

Slovene Government

Bank of Slovenia

Governor Marko Kranjec
Slovenska 35, 1000 Ljubljana, Slovenia
Phone: +386-1-471-9000
Fax: +386-1-251-5516
Web site: www.bsi.si

Embassy of the Republic of Slovenia in Washington D.C.

Ambassador Roman Kirn
2410 California Street, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20008
Phone: (+) 1 202 667 5363
Fax: (+) 1 202 667 4563
E-mail: vwa@gov.si
Website: <http://washington.embassy.si/en>

Institute for Macroeconomic Analysis and Development

Dr. Bostjan Vasle, Director
Gregorčičeva 27, 1000 Ljubljana, Slovenia
Phone: +386-1-478-1012
Fax: +386-1-478-1070
Email: gp.umar@gov.si
Web site: <http://www.gov.si/zmar/aindex.php>

Ljubljana Stock Exchange

Mr. Andrej Sketa, President of the Management Board
Slovenska 56, 1000 Ljubljana, Slovenia
Phone: +386-1-471-0211
Fax: +386-1-471-0213
Web site: <http://www.ljse.si/cgi-bin/jve.cgi?doc=1468&sid=fKNCD6E75CqX6FUi>

Email: info@ljse.si

Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Food

Dr. Milan Pogačnik, Minister
Dunajska 56-58, 1000 Ljubljana, Slovenia
Phone: +386-1-478-9102
Fax: +386-1-478-9013
Web: <http://www.mkgp.gov.si/en/>

Phytosanitary Department
Mrs. Katarina Groznik, Department Head
Einspielerjeva 6, 1000 Ljubljana, Slovenia
Phone: +386 1 3094 379
Fax: +386 1 3094 335
Web: <http://www.furs.si/en/Index.asp>

Veterinary Administration
Dr. Vida Cadonic Spelic, Chief Veterinary Officer
Dr. Simona Salamon, Deputy Chief Veterinary Officer
Parmova 53, 1000 Ljubljana
Phone: + 386 1 300 13 00, +386 1 300 13 15
Fax: +386 1 30 15 57
Web: <http://www.vurs.gov.si/>
Email: vurs@gov.si

Ministry of Culture

Majda Širca, Minister
Maistrova 10, 1000 Ljubljana, Slovenia
Phone: +386-1-36-95-00
Fax: +386-1-36-95-01
Web site: <http://www.kultura.gov.si/>
Email: gp.mk@gov.si

Ministry of Defense

Ljubica Jelusic, Minister
Vojkova 55, 1000 Ljubljana, Slovenia
Phone: +386-1-471-22-11
Fax: +386-1-471-29-78
Web: <http://www.mors.si/?id=home&L=1>
Email: glavna.pisarna@mors.si

Ministry of the Economy

Dr. Matej Lahovnik, Minister
Kotnikova 5, 1000 Ljubljana, Slovenia
Phone: +386-1-400-3311
Fax: +386-1-400-1031
Web: <http://www.mg.gov.si/en/>
Email: gp.mg@gov.si

Ministry of Education and Sport

Dr. Igor Luksic, Minister
Kotnikova 38, 1000 Ljubljana, Slovenia
Phone: +386-1-478-42-00
Fax: +386-1-478-43-29
Web: <http://www.mss.gov.si/index.php?id=55&L=1>
Email: gp.mss@gov.si

Ministry of Higher Education, Science and Technology

Mr. Gregor Golobič, Minister
Trg OF 13, 1000 Ljubljana, Slovenia
Phone: +386-1-478-47-08
Fax: +386-1-478-47-23
Web: <http://www.mvzt.gov.si/index.php?id=94&L=1>
Email: gp.mvzt@gov.si

Ministry of Environment and Spatial Planning

Dunajska 48, 1000 Ljubljana, Slovenia
Phone: +386-1-478-7400
Fax: +386-1-478-7422
Web: <http://www.mop.gov.si/>
Email: gp.mop@gov.si

Ministry of Finance

Dr. Franc Križanič, Minister
Zupančičeva 3, 1000 Ljubljana, Slovenia
Phone: +386-1-369-66-31
Fax: +386-1-369-66-59
Web site: <http://www.gov.si/mf/angl/index.htm>
Email: gp.mf@gov.si

Ministry of Foreign Affairs

Mr. Samuel Žbogar, Minister
Zupančičeva 25, 1000 Ljubljana, Slovenia
Phone: +386-1-478-2000
Fax: +386-1-478-2341
Web site: <http://www.mzz.gov.si/index.php?id=6&L=2>
Email: info.mzz@gov.si

Ministry of Health

Mr. Borut Miklavčič, Minister
Štefanova 5, 1000 Ljubljana, Slovenia
Phone: +386-1-478-6001
Fax: +386-1-478-6058
Web: <http://www.mz.gov.si/index.php?id=670&L=1>
Email: gp.mz@gov.si

Ministry of the Interior

Katarina Kresal, Minister
Štefanova 2, 1000 Ljubljana, Slovenia
Phone: +386-1-432-51-25

Fax: +386-1-251-43-30

Web site: <http://www.mnz.gov.si/index.php?id=2049&L=1>

Email: gp.mnz@gov.si

Ministry of Justice

Mr. Aleš Zalar, Minister

Zupančičeva 3, 1000 Ljubljana, Slovenia

Phone: +386-1-369-52-00

Fax: +386-1-369-57-83

Web site: <http://www.mp.gov.si/index.php?id=717&L=1>

Email: gp.mp@gov.si

Ministry of Labor, Family and Social Affairs

Mr. Ivan Svetlik, Minister

Kotnikova 5, 1000 Ljubljana, Slovenia

Phone: +386-1-369-7700

Fax: +386-1-369-7832

Web: <http://www.mddsz.gov.si/>

Email: gp.mddsz@gov.si

Ministry of Transport

Dr. Patrick Vlačič, Minister

Langusova 4, 1000 Ljubljana

Phone: +386-1-478-8000

Fax: +386-1-478-8139

Web: <http://www.mzp.gov.si/en/>

Email: gp.mzp@gov.si

National Customs Administration

Mr. Rajko Skubic, Director General

Šmartinska 55, 1523 Ljubljana

Phone: +386-1-478-38-00

Fax: +386-1-478-39-00

Email: carina@gov.si (rajko.skubic@gov.si)

Web site: <http://carina.gov.si/index.htm>

Office for Protection of Competition

Mr. Jani Sorsak, Director

Kotnikova 28, 1000 Ljubljana, Slovenia

Phone: +386-1-478-3597

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Web: http://www.sigov.si/uvk/index_eng.php

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Office for Protection of Intellectual Property (SIPO)

Dr. Biserka Strel, Director

Kotnikova 6, 1000 Ljubljana, Slovenia

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Web: <http://www.uil-sipo.si/index.php?id=lang>

Email: sipo@uil-sipo.si

Slovenian Export and Development Bank – SID Bank

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Ul. Josipine Turnograjske 6, 1000 Ljubljana, Slovenia
Phone: +386-1-200-75-00
Fax: +386-1-200-75-75
Web: <http://www.sid.si/sidang.nsf>
Email: info@sid.si

Slovenian Institute for Standardization

Mr. Bogdan Topič, Director
Smartinska 140, 1000 Ljubljana, Slovenia
Phone: +386-1-478-3013
Fax: +386-1-478-3094
Web: <http://www.sist.si/eng/g1/g1.htm>
Email: sist@sist.si

Statistical Office of the Republic of Slovenia

Ms. Irena Krizman, Director
Vožarski pot 12, 1000 Ljubljana, Slovenia
Phone: +386-1-241-5104
Fax: +386-1-241-5344
Web site: <http://www.stat.si/eng/index.asp>
Email: info.stat@gov.si

Audit/Accounting

PricewaterhouseCoopers d.d.

Mr. Francois Mattelaer, director
Parmova 53, 1000 Ljubljana, Slovenia
Phone: +386-1-4750-100
Fax: +386-1-4750-109
Web:
<http://www.pwcglobal.com/Extweb/home.nsf/docid/30715A716318F25080256E4A00587E3B>

Deloitte & Touche revizija d.o.o. (audit company)

Mr. Yuri Sidorovich
Dunajska cesta 9, 1000 Ljubljana, Slovenia
Phone: +386-1-307-2800
Fax: +386-1-307-2900
Web: <http://www.deloitte.com/dtt/home/0,1044,sid%253D10307,00.html>

Deloitte & Touche svetovanje d.o.o. (consulting company)

Dunajska cesta 9, 1000 Ljubljana, Slovenia
Phone: +386-1-307-2800
Fax: +386-1-307-2900
Email: pgrasek@deloitte.com

KPMG Slovenija d.o.o. Audit and Tax Advisory Service
Mr. Marjan Mahnic
Zelezna cesta 8, 1000 Ljubljana, Slovenia
Phone: +386-1-420-11-60
Fax: +386-1-420-11-58
Email: kpmg.lj@kpmg.si
Web: <http://www.kpmg.si/index.thtml/>

Key EU-related websites:

For general information on the European Union

The EU's portal website
<http://www.europa.eu>

Resource for EU news, policy positions and actors
<http://www.euractiv.com/>

A to Z index of European Union websites
<http://www.eurunion.org/infores/euindex.htm>

For information on topics related to doing business in the European Union

EU's "One Stop Internet Shop for Business" (EU funds, technical standards, intellectual property law, and free access to public procurement tender notices via the Tenders Electronic Daily (TED) database).
http://ec.europa.eu/youreurope/business/index_en.htm

EU Member State Chambers of Commerce in the U.S.
http://www.eurunion.org/eu/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=2345&Itemid=9

EU market access database (information on tariffs and other trade information)
<http://madb.europa.eu/>

EURLEX – Access to EU law
<http://eur-lex.europa.eu/en/index.htm>

CORDIS – Community Research and Development Information Service (EU research and innovation website)
<http://cordis.europa.eu/>

European Commission Statistical Office (Eurostat)
<http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/>

EU Office of Official Publications
<http://publications.europa.eu/>

EU official website on the euro
http://ec.europa.eu/euro/index_en.html

European Central Bank, Frankfurt
<http://www.ecb.int/>

European Investment Bank, Luxembourg
<http://www.eib.org/>

Council of the European Union
<http://www.consilium.europa.eu/>

European Parliament
<http://www.europarl.europa.eu/>

European Court of Justice
<http://curia.europa.eu/>

EU Who is Who – The Official Directory of the European Union
<http://europa.eu/whoiswho/public/>

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Market Research

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To view market research reports produced by the U.S. Commercial Service please go to the following website: <http://www.export.gov/marketresearch.html> and click on Country and Industry Market Reports.

Please note that these reports are only available to U.S. citizens and U.S. companies. Registration to the site is required, but free of charge.

Companies that perform market research in Slovenia:

AC Nielsen d.o.o.
Cesta na Brdo 10a, 1000 Ljubljana, Slovenia
Phone: +386-1-242-7520
Fax: +386-1-242-7514
Web: <http://www.acnielsen.com>
Email: tina.kerstein@acnielsen.si

RM PLUS d.o.o.
Glavni trg 19a, 2000 Maribor
Phone: +386 2 234 25 21
Fax: +386 2 252 37 83
Director: Branko Žnuderl
Web: <http://www.rplus.si>

FRONTAL, d.o.o. DRUŽBA ZA KOMUNIKACIJSKI MANAGEMENT
Ciril-Metodova ulica 34
9000 Murska Sobota
Phone: +386 2 530 89 00

Faks: +386 2 530 89 01
Director: Kristjan Magdič
Web: <http://www.frontal.si>

CATI d.o.o.
Tržaška cesta 2
1000 Ljubljana
Phone: +386 1 241 00 72
Faks: +386 1 421 19 70
Director: Uroš Cvetko
Web: <http://www.cati.si/eng/index.html>

FIT MEDIA d.o.o.
Kidričeva ulica 25
3000 Celje
Phone: +386 3 426 67 00
Fax: +386 3 426 67 02
Director: Jože Volfand
Web: <http://www.fitmedia.si>

GFK GRAL - ITEO d.o.o.
Verovškova 55a
1000 Ljubljana
Phone: +386 1 47 20 300
Fax: +386 1 47 20 334
Director: Rudi Tavčar
Web: <http://www.gfk.si/eng/index.php>

PRISTOP d.o.o., LJUBLJANA
Trubarjeva cesta 79
1000 Ljubljana
Phone: +386 1 239 12 00
Fax: +386 1 239 12 10
Director: Aleš Razpet
Web: <http://www.pristop.si>

AGENCIJA NET d.o.o.
Stara cesta 23
1360 Vrhnika
Phone: +386 1 750 20 81
Fax: +386 1 750 20 82
Director: Tomaž Zajc
Web: <http://www.agencijanet.si>

For information on this topic please consult the Commerce Department's Country Commercial Guides on EU Member States: [EU Member States' Country Commercial Guides](#)

Alternatively, search the Commerce Department's Market Research Library, available from: <http://www.export.gov/mrktresearch/index.asp> under Country and Industry Market Reports.

Trade Events

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For a listing of all fairs in 2010 in Slovenia, visit this web site <http://www.gzs.si/fairs/>

Fair grounds that organize trade shows:

- Ljubljana Fair Grounds: <http://www.ljubljanafair.com/>
List of events: <http://www.ljubljanafair.com/fairs/>
- Celje Fair grounds: http://www.ce-sejem.si/index.php?cid=0_0_0&l=1
List of events: <http://www.ce-sejem.si/index.php?page=static&item=196>
- Portoroz: <http://www.internautica.net/>
- Gornja Ragdona: <http://www.pomurski-sejem.si/ang-kzs/kzs.htm>

Please click on the link below for information on upcoming trade events.

<http://www.export.gov/tradeevents/index.asp>

www.poslovniportal.si

Please click on the link below for information on upcoming trade events.

<http://www.export.gov/tradeevents/index.asp>

(Add link to trade events section of local buyusa.gov website here or just delete this text.)

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Chapter 10: Guide to Our Services

The U.S. Commercial Service offers customized solutions to help your business enter and succeed in markets worldwide. Our global network of trade specialists will work one-on-one with you through every step of the exporting process, helping you to:

- Target the best markets with our world-class research
- Promote your products and services to qualified buyers
- Meet the best distributors and agents for your products and services
- Overcome potential challenges or trade barriers

For more information on the services the U.S. Commercial Service offers U.S. businesses, please click on the link below.

<http://www.buyusa.gov/home/export.html>

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U.S. exporters seeking general export information/assistance or country-specific commercial information should consult with their nearest **Export Assistance Center** or the **U.S. Department of Commerce's Trade Information Center** at **(800) USA-TRADE**, or go to the following website: <http://www.export.gov>

To the best of our knowledge, the information contained in this report is accurate as of the date published. However, **The Department of Commerce** does not take responsibility for actions readers may take based on the information contained herein. Readers should always conduct their own due diligence before entering into business ventures or other commercial arrangements. **The Department of Commerce** can assist companies in these endeavors.