



ADVICE & TIPS – SLOVENIA



In general, employment is increasing and unemployment is decreasing in Slovenia. Despite the reduction of jobs in some sectors, the number of economically active persons has been on the increase since 2004. In particular, there is an unmet demand for workers in construction, engineering, science and technology and healthcare, so any graduates looking for work in these areas may be successful.

- *Typical problems encountered:* the structure of unemployment remains problematic, in particular among women and older people. The proportion of the unemployed who have further or higher qualifications has also recently grown. Social science graduates in particular may experience difficulties in finding employment.
- *How to improve your chances:* UE graduates can improve their chances of finding work in their chosen careers in Slovenia with work experience in the UK. Additional skills, such as having a driving licence, knowledge of foreign languages and computer skills may also help when it comes to finding employment. Graduates wishing to work in Slovenia should focus on international companies who communicate in English.
- *Language requirements:* the main language spoken is Slovene, a distinct Slavic language. In areas where Italian or Hungarian ethnic communities reside, the official language is also Italian or Magyar (Hungary). A large proportion of the population also speaks English, German, Croatian and Serb. UE graduates will find work in Slovenia after graduation without a good knowledge of the Slovenian language. However, as with any country you are intending to live and work/study in, it is beneficial if you can speak the language to some extent.

One of the most successful ways of finding work in Slovenia is through speculative applications. Even if the company has no vacancies at the moment of writing, they still might keep your CV in file, in case a suitable vacancy arises at a later stage.

Use any contacts you - or your network - might have to find a job in Slovenia. And please be aware that contacting an international firm with a subsidiary in Slovenia and sending a speculative application to the local office is a reasonably successful strategy in Slovenia.

Slovenian employers value a good academic background, linguistic and computer skills and an understanding of business.

The Application Letter

In general a letter of application should create enough interest to make the potential employer want to look at your application in more detail and hopefully invite you for an interview. Your application letter, however, should not provide too much information about experience and qualifications; this will be provided in your CV.

Often, when personal contacts lead to an application, the first phase of having to write an application letter is replaced by less-formal telephone or e-mail contact.

The covering letter in Slovenia should be typed and no longer than one to two pages.

Expand on diplomas and degrees, languages spoken, important skills, and positions held so far.

Although there is always a need 'to sell' yourself, it should be done with a touch of modesty. Your cover letter and CV should represent who you are, what you have done, and what you want to do in a neutral, down-to-earth way.

The Curriculum Vitae

Emphasise your educational level (mention famous professors as your teachers if applicable!) above practical experience.

Mention your English skills on your CV. Languages are considered very important in Slovenia.

Pay attention to the layout and make sure your CV is well structured and focused. However, no thorough elaborations are expected; be brief and accurate as that will do.

The Application Procedure

During the interview expect questions about your motivation, your education and about the company itself. Inform yourself thoroughly on the company in advance.

On-line applications are nowadays getting common. In fact, a lot of job agencies, but also employers who publish their vacancies on-line provide the opportunity to complete the job application form on-line.

Where can I work?

- Major industries: more than half of the labour market work in services. Just over one-third of the market work in industry, and just under one in ten work in agriculture (Statistical Office of the Republic of Slovenia, 2007).
- Recent growth areas: in the services sector, the most sought-after workers are those in retail, mechanical engineering and the mass production of goods, education, real estate, leasing and business services. The main manufacturing sectors are electronics and electrics, metal processing including metalworking, machine building, car component manufacture and assembly, chemicals and pharmaceuticals.
- Shortage occupations: demand is highest for workers in the construction, metalworking, mechanical engineering, health and catering sectors, and for specialists in science and technology and medicine.
- Major companies: Slovenia's leading company is oil trader Petrol, with revenues of €1.2billion. Slovenia's second strongest company is the Renault-owned car maker Revoz. Other successful Slovenian companies include the bank Nova Ljubljanska banka, retailer Mercator, pharmaceutical company Lek, and home appliance manufacturer Gorenje. Further down the list are hardware retailer Merkur, car-seat cover manufacturer Prevent, oil retailer OMV Istrabenz, drug-maker Krka, power company Holding Slovenske Elektrarne, and Telekom Slovenije. (Statistical Office of the Republic of Slovenia)
- Major cities: Ljubljana (capital and largest), Maribor.

What's it like working in Slovenia?

- Average working hours: working hours tend to be 8am to 4pm and no more than 40 hours per week.
- Holidays: there are in total 15 public holidays, which are to celebrate religious and national festivals. In addition to public holidays, Slovenians are entitled to at least 18 days per year, although this tends to rise with each year of service
- Average graduate starting salary: the average monthly pay in Slovenia is 909.12 Euros.
- Tax rates: vary between 16% and 41% depending on income. The higher rate of tax is paid at the income level of €16,000. Income earned in Slovenia is taxable in Slovenia if the person is resident there. Generally residency in Slovenia becomes applicable if a person spends more than 183 days per year in Slovenia.
- Working practices and customs: business dress should be appropriate and is usually quite formal. Shake hands with women first when meeting people. Do not try to kiss during a greeting, as this may be seen as too intrusive. In business meetings you should expect some chit-chat before the meeting begins. This is seen as part of building the business relationship, so don't try to rush it. Slovenians tend to be indirect and polite so you should try not to interrupt and be polite as well. One side of your business card should be translated into Slovenian, and it should be exchanged after introductions. Avoid scheduling meetings in July and August, which are common vacation times.