



Slovenia 2016 Crime & Safety Report

Travel Health and Safety; Transportation Security; Stolen items; Theft; Burglary; Drug Trafficking; Fraud; Counterfeiting; Human Trafficking; Winter weather; Earthquakes

Europe > Slovenia; Europe > Slovenia > Ljubljana

5/12/2016

Overall Crime and Safety Situation

Post Crime Rating: Low

Crime Threats

While many travelers do not encounter crime, areas frequented by tourists can experience petty crime. Most crimes are non-violent and directed toward obtaining property (purse snatching, pickpocketing, unoccupied residential/vehicle break-ins). There have been cases of purse snatching/pickpockets at restaurants in the city center, on city buses, and in the central open market. Even these are rare in comparison with rates in the U.S. or neighboring European countries.

American visitors are generally not singled out or targeted based on nationality but rather because they look like tourists. Most of the crimes committed against American visitors fall into the category of petty theft (pickpocketing, purse snatching). These occur mostly in crowded areas, train stations, restaurants, open markets, and public transportation. Recent

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events involving U.S. Embassy personnel included solicitations for food/money, multiple thefts of bicycles, and one case of pickpocketing.

Vehicle break-ins and thefts are far less frequent than in the U.S. but remain a problem. Most break-ins are committed to obtain valuables left in plain view or the trunk. Slovenia reported 1,016 vehicle thefts in 2014. There have also been smash-and-grab incidents involving vehicles parked at local shopping centers.

Residential burglaries primarily occur when security vulnerabilities exist, and/or residents do not implement sound residential security practices. Reports indicate thefts usually occur when occupants are away for an extended period, and access is usually gained through doors or other entry points that are left unlocked. There was one instance of burglary affecting a COM residence in 2015.

Organized crime – primarily narcotics trafficking, auto theft, fraud, tax evasion, counterfeit goods, alien smuggling, human trafficking – is a problem but less so than in neighboring countries. Much of the violent crime can be attributed to organized criminal groups. Online gambling is the originating cause of many crimes, often involving loan sharking, threats, or blackmail. Gambling/betting establishments, private vehicles, and private businesses are some of the areas where these types of attacks have been reported. The attacks are typically designed to send a message to the intended recipient, rather than cause injury/fatality. These incidents normally take place in the late evening or early morning hours.

Other Areas of Concern

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Taking into account that crimes of opportunity can take place anywhere, travel throughout Slovenia is safe, and there are no regions designated as off-limits.

U.S. government personnel under Chief of Mission authority are strongly advised not to patronize establishments advertising themselves as “cabarets,” nightclubs, strip clubs, or gentlemen’s clubs. “Cabaret girls” (also referred to as “artistes”) are generally associated with or are victims of the commercial sex industry and organized crime groups. Visitors to cabarets, or those who engage with “artistes,” often find they are significantly overcharged for drinks, particularly when paying by credit card.

Transportation-Safety Situation

Road Safety and Road Conditions

Slovenia has a well-developed road network that is safe for travel. Highways connect to neighboring cities/countries and are clearly marked; road signs and traffic rules are consistent with those throughout Europe. As the number of cars continues to rise, roads are becoming more heavily congested during the weekends and during rush hours. Parking is difficult and can be expensive in the city center.

Third-party liability insurance is required for all vehicles; coverage is purchased locally. Travelers driving rented automobiles from Croatia into Slovenia are generally able to

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purchase Slovene insurance at the border. At the smaller border crossings or during peak travel times, however, it can take several hours to arrange such coverage.

Travelers should be alert to aggressive drivers both in cities and on highways. Many serious accidents occur as a result of high-speed driving. Emergency roadside assistance and towing services are available by dialing 1987, dial 112 for an ambulance or fire brigade, and 113 for police. By law, the maximum legal blood-alcohol limit for drivers is 0.05 (0.00 percent for novice drivers with less than two years of experience, any driver under 21 years, and drivers of trucks and buses).

Between November 15-March 15, the use of winter tires is mandated by law. All-season tires are permitted if they carry the MS mark and have at least 4 mm of tread. In addition, local police may require chains in heavy snow. Failure to possess the proper tires/chains may result in a substantial fine and the suspension of the cited vehicle's use. Insurance may be deemed void if a vehicle is involved in an accident between November 15-March 15 and is not fitted with winter tires.

Highway vignettes (which are purchased in the form of windshield stickers) are obligatory for all passenger vehicles using expressways. One of the most common problems faced by U.S. citizens visiting Slovenia is being pulled over on a highway for driving without a vignette. Drivers without a vignette may be fined between €300-800 and must also immediately purchase a vignette. Simply buying a vignette and placing it on the dashboard is not sufficient – the vignette must be permanently affixed to the windshield of the vehicle. Vignettes can be purchased in Slovenia at gas stations, newsstands, automobile clubs, post offices (Posta Slovenije), and some toll stations, as well as at some gas stations in neighboring countries. A one-year vignette costs €110 for Class A vehicles (cars) and €220 for Class B vehicles (two-track vehicles with vehicle height above front axle of 1.30 meters or more (about 6ft)). A

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monthly vignette costs €30, and a weekly vignette costs €15. For motorcycles, a one-year vignette is €47.50, a half-year vignette is €25, and a weekly vignette is €7.50.

U.S. citizens must be in possession of both a valid U.S. driver's license and an International Driving Permit in order to drive legally. This is valid for a maximum of one year, after which time individuals are required to obtain a Slovenian driver's license. Two automobile associations are authorized by the U.S. Department of State to issue International Driving Permits: the American Automobile Association and the American Automobile Touring Alliance (through the National Auto Club).

Current information about traffic and road conditions is available in English from the Automobile Association of Slovenia by calling (01) 530-5300 and from the Traffic Information Center for Public Roads.

Public Transportation Conditions

While Ljubljana's taxis are generally safe, clean, and reliable, taxi drivers at the airport, some hotels, and main railway stations have been known to overcharge tourists by shutting off their meters. When using a taxi, you should first ask for an estimate of the total cost and check to see that the meter is running during the journey.

Aviation/Airport Conditions

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As there is no direct commercial air service to the U.S. by carriers registered in Slovenia, the U.S. Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) has not assessed the government's Civil Aviation Authority for compliance with International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) aviation safety standards. Further information may be found on the FAA's safety assessment page.

Other Travel Conditions

Bicycling is popular, and cities have well-developed bicycling networks with marked bicycle lanes along most roads. Slovenia has more rules governing cyclists than the U.S., and police are authorized to ticket cyclists who do not follow them. There are special rules regarding children and bicycles. Please visit Slovenia's Bicycle Safety page for a list of rules and advice for cyclists.

Terrorism Threat

Post Terrorism Rating: Low

Local, Regional, and International Terrorism Threats/Concerns

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Little international/transnational terrorist activity has been observed. Slovenia's borders with its Western European/EU neighbors are open, allowing for the possibility of anonymous entry/exit by terrorist groups.

Political, Economic, Religious, and Ethnic Violence

Slovenia is a parliamentary democracy and constitutional republic. Since the breakup of Yugoslavia, Slovenia has instituted a multi-party, democratic political system, characterized by regular elections, a free press, and a strong human rights record. As a member of the Schengen area, Slovenia exerts control over its borders and visa issuance procedures.

Post Political Violence Rating: Low

Civil Unrest

Incidents of civil unrest are rare. In 2015, Slovenia saw several minor protests in favor and against the government policy toward refugees/migrants from the Middle East. Protests and demonstrations are generally peaceful; there have been very few instances of violence.

Religious/Ethnic Violence

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From its earliest days of independence in 1991, Slovenia has managed to escape ethnic/religious violence that has affected many of the former republics of Yugoslavia. Slovenia is largely a homogenous country made up of ethnic Slovenes. Slovenia is home to a sizeable Roma community and a smaller Muslim community. There have been no reports of religious or ethnic violence.

Post-specific Concerns

Environmental Hazards

Earthquakes constitute the largest post-specific threat for American citizens. The northwest is the most seismically active area, but Ljubljana has also experienced tremors. There were no tremors of significant intensity in 2015. Best practices in case of an earthquake can be found at: <http://www.earthquakecountry.info/roots/index.php>

Critical Infrastructure Concerns

No major industrial or transportation accidents have been reported. Slovenia co-owns with Croatia a nuclear power plant in Krsko, 100 km east of Ljubljana. The power plant was built in 1981 in accordance with Western standards and has a good safety record.

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Economic Espionage/Intellectual Property Thefts

Economic espionage is no more or less an issue than it is in other EU countries. Companies should take care to ensure the confidentiality and integrity of their data by following normal best business practices, including use of authorized IT software. The intellectual property rights (IPR) situation is in line with EU norms, and authorities generally enforce IPR laws.

Privacy Concerns

Business and banking information is processed professionally, and the Embassy is not aware of any particular privacy concerns arising from widespread misuse of such information. Cyber security should be a priority for any company operating in Slovenia. The importance of using only legitimate software cannot be over-stressed.

Personnel-Background Concerns

While most travelers do not encounter problems, a few issues were reported over the last few years of travelers facing discrimination.

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There are no known safety and security issues of concern for lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender (LGBT) individuals. The LGBT community is protected by anti-discrimination laws, and there are no legal/governmental impediments to the organization of LGBT events. For more detailed information about LGBT rights you may review the State Department's annual Country Reports on Human Rights Practices. For further information on lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender (LGBT) travel, please read our Information for LGBT Travelers page.

Drug-related Crimes

Slovenia is not a major drug producer but is a transit country for illicit narcotics. Heroin from Afghanistan transits Turkey and continues to through Slovenia via the "Balkan Route" and port of Koper to Western Europe. Drug-related violence is rare.

Kidnapping Threat

Kidnappings are extremely rare. In 2014, there was one confirmed kidnapping, which ended in the murder of the victim. The crime was tied to a previous incident of grand theft and is believed to have been perpetrated as an act of revenge.

Police Response

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Police response and services are good. English is the most widely spoken foreign language among the police.

How to Handle Incidents of Police Detention or Harassment

If an individual is detained or believes that s/he has been harassed by the police, s/he should contact the U.S. Embassy or request that the authorities contact the U.S. Embassy.

Crime Victim Assistance

The U.S. Embassy Regional Security Office (RSO) recommends filing a local police report in the jurisdiction where the crime occurred. Filing a police report is not obligatory; however, it may assist the local police in catching the criminal(s). In the city center, reports should be given in person at the Ljubljana Police Station Center, Trdinova Street 10, tel: (386)-(0)1-475-0600.

Police – 113

Fire/Ambulance – 112

U.S. Embassy/24-hour Emergency Number: (386)-(1)-200-5500

Medical Emergencies

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Good-quality emergency medical care is readily available.

Contact Information for Recommended Hospitals/Clinics

Travelers may obtain a list of English-speaking physicians at the U.S. Embassy or online at http://slovenia.usembassy.gov/english-speaking_doctors__dentists.html.

Primary Hospital in Ljubljana

Klinicni Center

Zaloška 2

Level 1 rated Trauma Center

General Tel: (386)-(1)-52-25-050

Emergency (386)-(1)-52-24-341

Immediate payment for medical services is required.

Non-Emergency

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BARSOS clinic

Gregorciceva 11

Tel: 01-242-0700

Country-specific Vaccination and Health Guidance

For additional information on vaccines and health guidance, please visit the CDC at:
<http://wwwnc.cdc.gov/travel/destinations/traveler/none/slovenia>.

OSAC Country Council Information

There is no active Country Council. The point of contact for any OSAC-related questions is Regional Security Officer Steve Strickland: (386)-(1)-200-5619, StricklandSA@state.gov. To reach OSAC's Europe team, please email OSACEUR@state.gov.

U.S. Embassy Location and Contact Information

Embassy Address and Hours of Operation

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U.S. Embassy

Prešernova Cesta 31

Ljubljana

The Consular Section is open daily to the public from 9:00-11:30 a.m. and 1:00-3:00 p.m.

Embassy Contact Numbers

Embassy Operator: (386)-(1)-200-5500

For after-hours emergencies involving American citizens, press 0 and ask to be connected to the Duty Officer.

Regional Security Office: (386)-(1)-200-5667

Consular Affairs: (386)-(1)-200-5500 or 5595

You may also reach the Consular Section via email at acsljubljana@state.gov or consularljubl@state.gov. Consular staff are not always immediately available to answer routine phone inquiries, so email is usually the fastest method to obtain a response.

Marine Post One: (386)-(1)-200-5556

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Website: <http://slovenia.usembassy.gov/>

Embassy Guidance

All passport and notarial services are handled by appointment only. Please check our holiday schedule to ensure that we are open on the date you plan to come to the Embassy.

Travelers should review the U.S. Embassy website for updated and special information. Americans are also encouraged to register with the U.S. Embassy through the U.S. Department of State's Smart Traveler Enrollment Program (STEP) website to obtain updated information on travel and security within Slovenia.

Tips on How to Avoid Becoming a Victim

Situational Awareness Best Practices

Exercise common sense. Traveling accompanied; exercising discretion with valuables, credit cards, and cash; maintaining control of bags and other personal belongings; locking car doors; not leaving valuables exposed in the car; and locking residence doors are all best security practices that can help avoid becoming the victim of crime.

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Try to blend in with the local environment. Avoid wearing clothing that identifies you as being an American. If singled out for verbal harassment, quietly leave the scene.

Be alert. Be aware of what is happening around you, in your neighborhood, and on the road. Remain particularly aware of your surroundings in highly congested areas or crowded shopping areas. Avoid demonstrations and other large groups of individuals.

Remain unpredictable. Do not discuss your personal or business schedule with anyone who does not need to know it. To the extent possible, do not schedule personal events for the same day and time each week. Never depart/arrive at your residence/workplace habitually. Even 20 minutes variance can disrupt plans and lead those conducting surveillance to choose an easier target. Vary your routes/times. Ensure someone always knows where you are. It is strongly recommended that you make arrangements to have a functioning phone. Keep a list of emergency telephone numbers available at home.

Regardless of the threat level, overseas residents should always maintain their travel documents in a valid state. Always have enough cash and credit cards on-hand to see you through a crisis. Identify important documents and keepsakes. Keep them all together. Ensure you have an up-to-date inventory of your possessions. Have enough supplies and food on-hand at home to see you through a few days to avoid trips to the local grocery store should there be reports of civil disturbance. Keep flashlights/candles available in case of power loss. Keep them in a standard location so that you can find them even in complete darkness.

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