



SLOVENIA

NATO member



since 2004

Defence share in GDP

2017

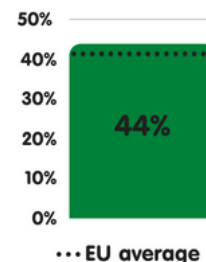


PESCO projects

Participant



Trust in EU



What does the country fear?

Slovenia expects uncontrolled migration to remain its greatest national security concern for at least the next decade. After Hungary closed its border with Serbia and Croatia in 2015, Slovenia became the main entry point for migrants travelling to the Schengen Area from the Western Balkans. In October 2015, around 12,500 migrants entered Slovenia – a country with 6,000 police officers – per day. Since then, the Western Balkans route has closed (with Slovenia installing a razor wire fence on its southern border) and the European Union has reached an agreement with Turkey designed to control migration. Nonetheless, uncontrolled immigration into Slovenia is still creating domestic political tension. Ljubljana also fears instability in the Western Balkans, due partly to political instability in Kosovo and Macedonia, and partly to interference in the region by non-Western powers, especially Russia. Yet, confident in the EU and NATO, Slovenian elites perceive there to be few major direct threats to their country that require an immediate response.

Who does the country fear?

Slovenia does not appear to view any one actor as most threatening to its national security. Ljubljana is concerned about jihadists, but largely due to the transnational reach of some terrorist organisations and Slovenia's proximity to Western Balkans smuggling routes rather than the risk of attacks on Slovenian territory. Slovenia also sees international criminal organisations as posing a moderate threat. It fears Russia far less than most EU countries do. Slovenia has supported the EU's and NATO's handling of relations with Moscow since Russia's military intervention in Ukraine. However, Slovenian leaders try to maintain friendly political relations and strong economic links with Moscow.

Essential security partners

Slovenia's most important European security partners are other NATO members – particularly France and Germany, with which it has strategic partnership agreements. The Slovenian Ministry of Defence sees Italy as a key partner in NATO operations, and the United Kingdom as an important partner due to its military capability and leading role within the alliance and at the UN. As a NATO member, Slovenia also sees the United States as an essential security partner – mostly because of the US nuclear guarantee, but also because of Washington's technological, military, and intelligence cooperation initiatives.

The EU as a security actor

Like their counterparts in most other EU countries, Slovenian elites largely perceive the EU as a transatlantic geopolitical project that has NATO as its backbone – although they believe that the EU could become a security community. For now, the country sees NATO as its key security guarantor and PESCO as primarily a mechanism for strengthening European military capabilities and perhaps developing shared European threat perceptions. Slovenia participates in the two PESCO projects it considers to be strategically important, partly with the intention of increasing its participation in EU operations.