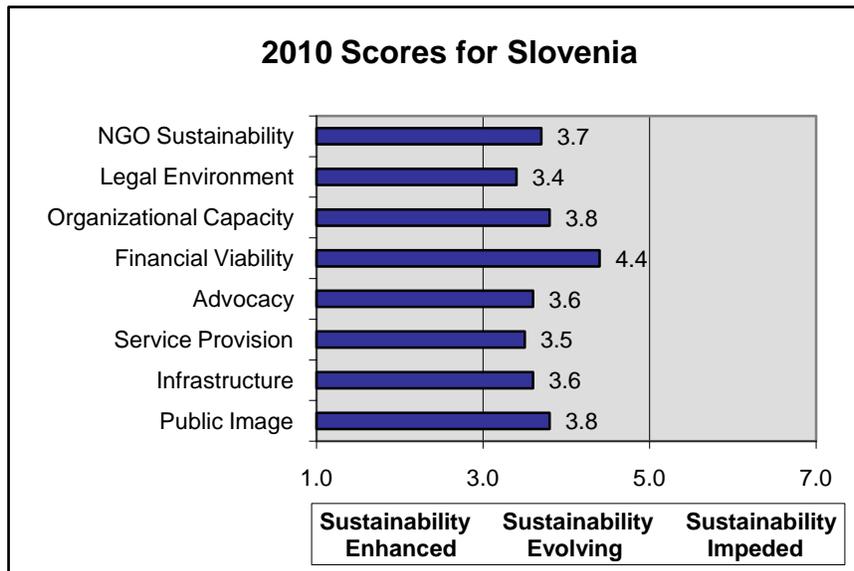


SLOVENIA



Capital: Ljubljana

Polity:
Parliamentary Republic

Population:
2,000,092 (July 2011 est.)

GDP per capita:
\$28,200 (2010 est.)

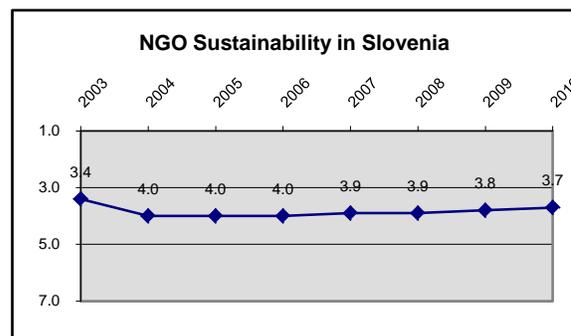
NGO SUSTAINABILITY: 3.7

NGO sustainability slightly improved in 2010 due to steady progress in improving the legal environment, strengthening NGO capacities and networking abilities, and increased NGO participation in policy processes.

The financial crisis led to higher unemployment after many bankruptcies of bigger Slovenian companies. Humanitarian NGOs were one of the most active actors helping the unemployed, especially migrant workers, and families who lost one or both incomes. The financial crisis increased the public visibility of the NGO sector, but also undermined financial stability through a decrease of private donations and a reduction of public resources.

Local elections also affected the NGO sector in 2010. Citizens elected members of 210 municipal councils and mayors. The national NGO network, Centre for Information Service, Co-operation and Development of NGO (CNVOS) and regional NGO support centers built a broad coalition and engaged candidates in debates. The debates largely focused on NGO

sector development at the local level and measures to improve cooperation between local authorities and NGOs. In addition, several NGOs created their own lists of candidates for municipal councils with the aim of bringing their objectives on to the local political agenda.



Approximately 22,000 NGOs are registered in Slovenia, including: more than 1,500 private institutes (an increase of 200 in the last year), 200 foundations (an increase of twenty in the last year), and more than 20,000 associations (an increase of 300 in the last year). The number of NGOs has been steadily increasing since 1991.

LEGAL ENVIRONMENT: 3.4

The legal environment for NGOs slightly improved in Slovenia in 2010 primarily due to improvements in the legal framework for volunteering and new government rules for public participation and consultation.

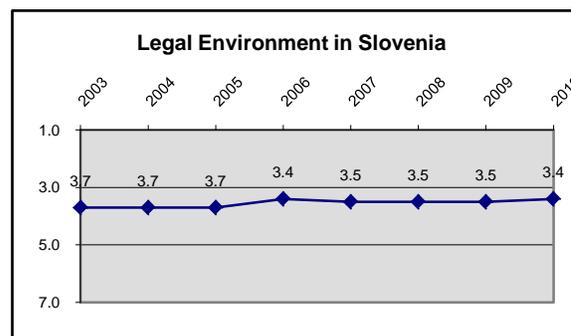
After several years of NGO pressure, the Ministry of Public Administration started drafting the Act on Volunteering. A working group comprised of representatives from different ministries and two NGO representatives started to draft the act in February 2010 based on a 2004 draft prepared by NGOs. The act sets basic principles, definitions, rights, and obligations of volunteers and voluntary organizations. The act was finalized during 2010 and passed by the parliament in February 2011.

Based on the Resolution on Legislative Regulation passed in November 2009, changes to the government's Rules of Procedure were made in 2010. The Rules now set minimum standards for public participation in legal drafting. They define the length of public consultation period for all draft laws between thirty and sixty days and obligate the responsible governmental bodies to prepare a consultation report. The report must list all comments received and provide explanations for all comments whether incorporated in the draft law or not. These changes to the Rules outline for the first time a legal framework for general public participation in Slovenia's policy development. The previous regulations were declarative and did not obligate the government to address public comments.

Several other laws that affected the NGO sector were drafted in 2010 and passed in early 2011. Changes to the Associations Act were quite technical, but nevertheless will contribute to easing the administrative burden of NGOs. With the changes, associations can register two statutory representatives. They can also register a branch office, which is very important for associations that work through local offices. All annual reports will now be publicly available on the web page of the Agency of the Republic of

Slovenia for Public Legal Records and Related Services (AJ PES), which is responsible for gathering the reports. Changes to the Social Entrepreneurship Act define, for the first time, basic principles of social entrepreneurship, characteristics of social enterprises and their benefits (subsidies for employment, a fund for social enterprises, etc.). NGOs were actively engaged in advocacy efforts during the drafting of both pieces of legislation.

The new Pension and Disability Insurance Act, which was intended to abolish obligatory pension insurance for founders of private institutes, was passed by the parliament, but overturned by a public referendum. Obligatory pensions proved to be a significant financial burden on many private institutes seeing that 19 percent of NGOs in 2009 did not receive any income and another 19 percent received income of less than €5,000.



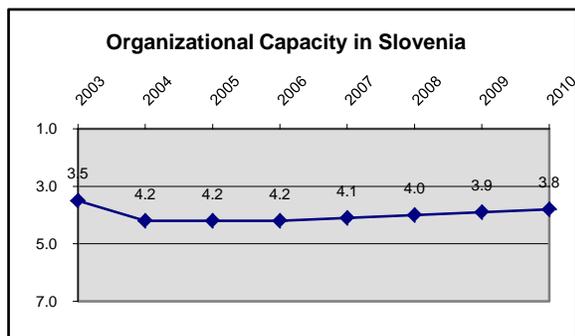
The Public Sector Integrity Act, which among other things regulates lobbying in the public sector, brought an additional administrative burden to NGOs. The act does not distinguish between professional lobbyists and others, namely NGOs. As a result, all individuals (NGO employees, volunteers, board members), who advocate for any legislative amendments, legal initiatives and the like have to register as lobbyists and submit annual reports about their lobbying activities. If someone lobbies on behalf of an NGO and the lobbyist is not registered, sanctions against the organization are set from €400 to €100,000. Since the act was new in 2010, no sanctions had yet been taken against those out of compliance. Realizing the strictness

of the act, members of the parliament adopted an amendment (to go into effect in July 2011) which will introduce exceptions for people employed by NGOs.

NGO support organizations continue to provide free legal aid to NGOs on the national and regional level. NGOs throughout the country have access to legal advice and services such as assisting in drafting legal appeals.

ORGANIZATIONAL CAPACITY: 3.8

Slovenian NGOs' organizational capacities slightly improved in 2010. According to NGO experts and the NGO resource centers, NGOs are now applying for grants with better structured project ideas; a larger number of applications submitted by smaller NGOs are now approved; and more NGOs have clearly defined missions and basic long-term strategic objectives.



NGOs are also increasingly seeking support for their initiatives among local constituencies. Environmental and social NGOs have had the most successful results. For example, environmental organizations such as Greenpeace Slovenia and Umanotera engage constituencies through petitions and e-actions, such as web-streaming of flash-mobs.

A clear definition of the management structure is regulated in the legislation, although in practice some bodies are not very active. Executive directors or presidents are the most active body due to clear responsibilities set out in the

legislation. However directors/presidents often implement tasks that are, by legislation or internal acts, assigned to board of directors.

Due to the financial crisis, the government introduced different mechanisms for reducing unemployment and NGOs have benefitted from a number of these mechanisms. First, NGO staffing increased through the government-sponsored public works program. In 2010, NGOs had 638 public works programs with 1,119 employees in contrast to 2009 when they had 433 programs with 754 employees. Second, government subsidies were given through tenders focusing on specific social groups (youth, women, and elderly) or on special fields (culture) and NGOs employing people from these categories benefited from these subsidies.

In September 2010, the first conference for the NGO Quality Assurance System (QAS) was organized to promote certification of NGOs. The conference focused on development of success indicators per the QAS and helped NGOs to identify proper indicators for their organizations.

Several European and national calls for proposals provide opportunities for NGOs to modernize their basic technical equipment. NGOs which apply to these grants tend to already have relatively good computers and access to the Internet. Grassroots organizations are not as well equipped since they tend to rely on regular mail, phone, and personal contacts to communicate with members.

FINANCIAL VIABILITY: 4.4

In 2010, both some positive and negative financial developments occurred in the NGO sector. NGOs benefited from new financial support in the amount of around €0.5 million

provided by the Swiss Government through the Swiss Block Grant. Another positive development was the increase of funds (from €1,100,000 in 2009 to approximately €3,400,000

in 2010) that NGOs received through the 0.5 percent income tax provision under which citizens can allocate 0.5 percent of their income tax to public benefit organizations, trade unions, or political parties.

At the same time, other local funding sources and private and corporate donations decreased. Some NGOs have begun to adjust their activities to diversify funding sources. For example, some have developed economic activities (such as production of handbags from recycled materials, trainings, and calculation of carbon footprints for companies) or introduced new practices of fundraising (charity auctions, concerts and online fundraising). Yet many remain primarily project-driven, and funding decreases have had a great impact on their financial sustainability. Many can hardly achieve their annual financial targets; nor are they able to cover operational costs.

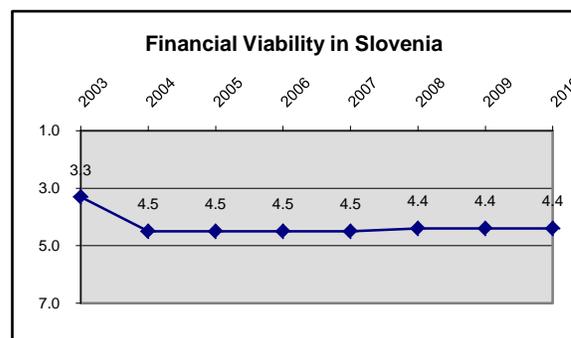
Several Slovenian cities were granted world and European titles in 2010, which provided additional financial resources for NGO programming. For example, Ljubljana was titled the World Book Capital (WBC) for 2010, and Maribor was titled the European Capital of Culture (ECC) for 2012. The Slovenian Association of Writers carried out several programs in the scope of the Ljubljana WBC, and the Festival of Love was promoted by the Association for Culture and Education Kibla in relation to Maribor ECC events.

Some young entrepreneurs new to business have organized their businesses in the form of NGOs (mostly associations) since associations' accounting requirements are simple in comparison to business accounting

ADVOCACY: 3.6

Advocacy efforts improved in 2010. NGOs actively participated in drafting some key legislation, organized several new coalitions to address public interest and conducted a number of advocacy campaigns. Passage of the changes to the government's Rules of Procedure in 2010 created a viable framework for public participation in policy development.

requirements. It remains to be seen if such a trend will affect the sector in a positive or negative manner.



Grass-root organizations raise funds from local constituencies with traditional activities such as the sale of calendars and other goods. However, local resources are not increasing as the number of organizations is growing, which creates resource and operational constraints. On the other hand, volunteering is more popular on the local level than in the urban areas where people can see an immediate impact of their work in the community.

National accounting standards in Slovenia are very clear and quite strict. All NGOs have to send their annual reports to AJPES, although only associations with annual income exceeding €million are required by law to have their annual reports audited. Private institutes and foundations are not obliged to do audits. Due to the high cost of an audit only a few organizations (when not required by the law or donors) audit their reports voluntarily in order to show financial transparency and provide evidence of good financial management for donors.

According to the Mirror to the Government Report, which monitors different mechanisms of cooperation between the authorities and the NGO sector, there were no major changes achieved between 2006 and 2009, however with the framework in place in 2010, an improvement was noted.

While special NGO advocacy coalitions were built in connection with a number of issues, NGOs were particularly involved in advocacy activities focused on passing new NGO legislation. For example, in the Act on Volunteering, two NGO representatives were part of the working group that prepared the draft act; ten regional and one national discussions were organized during the consultation period; and after the passing of the act, NGOs participated in the drafting of regulatory acts.

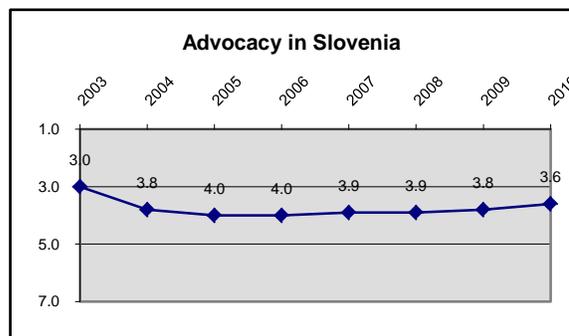
NGOs were engaged in advocacy efforts during the drafting of other pieces of legislation including the Associations Act, the Social Entrepreneurship Act, the Climate Change Act, and the Public Sector Integrity Act. In some cases, their efforts resulted in legislative changes. For example, NGOs succeeded in introducing charity lotteries into the Strategy of the Games of Chance, and a number of their suggestions were included in the amendments to the Associations Act.

Local elections created additional opportunities for NGO advocacy campaigns. Several debates with mayoral candidates were organized throughout the country with active participation of NGOs. Some introduced their own candidates as members of the municipal councils and were quite successful. Those candidates being active in NGOs were well known and popular in their communities. In addition, an initiative – My Society – of the national NGO network, CNVOS, and ten regional NGO support centers was implemented with the aim of improving cooperation between local authorities and NGOs. Under this initiative, a manual on different mechanisms of cooperation – Together for the Community – was drafted and several measures to increase cooperation with local officials were introduced. These measures included local compacts regarding cooperation between the municipality and NGOs with

SERVICE PROVISION: 3.5

There were no significant changes to NGO service provision in 2010. The government has still not improved the legislative framework for public services that would open more

concrete obligations outlined for both sides). To date, the initiative has resulted in three local compacts that established mayoral commissions for the development of NGOs.



National advocacy campaigns also continued to expand and serve as a basis for further activism. For example, after the success of Let's Clean Slovenia in a Day, which was hosted on April 17th and brought together over 273,000 people (approximately 13 percent of the population) to clean up 11,000 tons of illegally dumped waste, environmental NGOs stayed dedicated and are still monitoring and reporting illegal waste dumps.

More than a year after NGOs submitted a memorandum on potential contributions to financial crisis measures, the government responded. The response was drafted in the working group in which one NGO representative participated. The response was rather general, but promoted some of the NGOs' proposals including a special NGO Development Fund financed from the 0.5 percentage law and support for the appointment of NGO liaison officers in government ministries.

During the second half of 2010, a special government e-democracy portal was introduced. The portal enables citizens to monitor the progress of legislation and to submit their comments and proposals to draft legislation.

opportunities for the third sector. Without clear rules and procedures for outsourcing, the NGO sector is used as a last resort.

NGO service provision increased mainly in the social field where humanitarian NGOs provided support for those affected by major company lay-offs and autumn floods. Because no legal basis exists for direct in-kind support from government to citizens, the government used humanitarian organizations as intermediaries. The government provided NGOs with financial resources, and NGOs distributed humanitarian packages to those in need in the flooded areas. Several NGOs also provided food and clothes to migrant workers affected by the major lay-offs.

The examples described above demonstrate that NGOs have knowledge of market demands and constituencies' needs. However, the sector rarely upgrades strategic plans with market analysis of services provided. Market analysis and other business tools are largely considered to be inappropriate for the NGO sector, although they could help provide strategic gains.

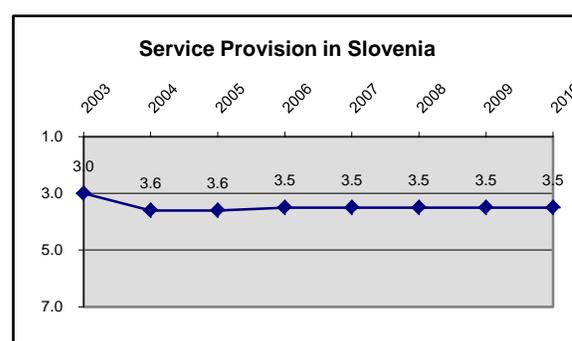
Since NGOs were used only as intermediaries for government, the organizations themselves did not benefit from additional staff or core funding. And while their services temporarily increased, this is unlikely to result in NGOs taking on more public services.

INFRASTRUCTURE: 3.6

With new regional NGO support centers and thematic NGO networks supported by the European Social Fund, local NGOs have sufficient access to information services, different levels of trainings (basic, advanced, training for trainers) and consultations.

In 2010, two NGOs with resources from the European Social Fund expanded their activities to include support services for local NGOs in underserved areas, effectively increasing the number of NGO support centers to twelve around the country. With the support of the European Social Fund, the regional NGO support centers and national NGO networks conducted 214 different trainings (such as strategic planning, project cycle management, fundraising, quality assurance system, and lobbying) with more than 3,000 participants.

NGOs that provide services recover some of their costs by charging fees. NGOs offering social services (such as day care centers) have the strongest cost recovery because their beneficiaries have to co-fund the services. Similarly, youth centers which combine cultural events with the selling of tickets, drinks, etc. have the highest cost recovery.

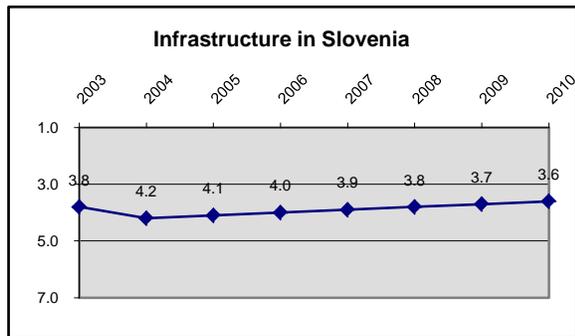


Ten new social enterprises, co-financed by the Ministry of Labor, Family and Social Affairs, started to operate in 2010. The Association Projekt Človek that works on drug-user rehabilitation established an enterprise which produces slippers from old clothes. The Association Kralji Ulice – association of homeless persons – sells used goods that were donated.

Some NGO networks (in the fields of environment, culture, education, health, and development aid) are funded from the European Social Fund (€2.5 million was allocated for 2009/2010 and €2.2 million was allocated for 2011/2012). By supporting opportunities for capacity building, the funding provided platforms for joint strategic planning among NGOs.

NGOs built different coalitions, either among themselves or with other sectors. A large coalition “My society” was created during the period of local elections to raise awareness of issues. Other, more permanent coalitions were built around common issues (such as development aid and consumer awareness) and resulted in joint activities and projects. The coalition of development aid and environmental

NGOs was started in 2007 and operates under the umbrella of SLOGA – Slovenian NGDO Platform for Development Cooperation and Humanitarian Aid. The coalition raises awareness among the general public on sustainable consumption.



More and more NGO actions or initiatives are being supported by the media or other sectors. The best example of this is the action – Let’s Clean Slovenia in a Day – that succeeded in

PUBLIC IMAGE: 3.8

NGOs continued to gain public attention in 2010. On the national level, this was mostly due to humanitarian organizations and the action – Let’s Clean Slovenia in a Day; this action generated more than 2,000 articles at its peak. Such NGO actions also improved public understanding of NGOs’ roles in society. The general public is supportive of NGO activity, realizing that some issues (human rights and consumer protection) are high on the political agenda only because of NGO initiatives.

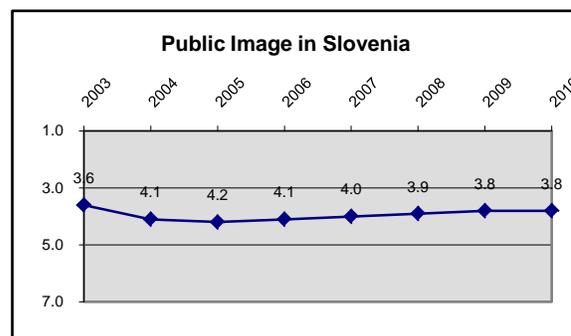
On the local level, many NGO festivals and other events organized by the regional NGO support centers also drew public attention. In 2010, regional NGO support centers and field networks organized more than 100 promotional events aimed at presenting the NGO sector to the general public. Amongst the most well known and largest is the annual LUPA NGO festival which started in 2002 and is designed to gather NGOs from all over Slovenia to exchange experience and promote their activities to the public. LUPA lasted a week and hosted many different events organized by NGOs from around the country (debates, roundtables, etc.)

gathering partners from the business sector and had extensive coverage by different media.

Another intersectoral action was a series of debates –Slovenia Reduces CO2 Emissions – that brought together representatives of civil society and business, decision makers, and experts for online debates about fulfilling Slovenia’s EU and UN ecological obligations.

National foundations in Slovenia remain underdeveloped. Private donors tend to give money directly to those in need or through humanitarian organizations for specific causes (such as fundraising concerts for handicapped people or natural disasters). Similarly, although six community foundations are registered in Slovenia, they are rather inactive and unknown to the general public and to other NGOs. The concept of community foundations has not been developed in Slovenia as successfully as in some other Central European countries.

which were broadcast by major print and television media. More than 130 NGOs participated in LUPA’s main event, the NGO Bazaar.



In general, regional NGO centers have good contacts with local reporters. For example, the regional NGO support center from Maribor, in partnership with the regional highly read newspaper, Večer, issues a special supplement every three months called Nevladna printed in 30,000 copies, which has articles that covers important NGO events and activities. Another example of a long-term NGO-media partnership is the relationship between Focus Association

for Sustainable Development and 7D weekly newspaper in which Focus activities (such as climate change and energy use) are regularly featured.

Rather than a code of ethics, Slovenian NGOs decided five years ago to have their own quality assurance system (QAS). The QAS emphasizes

the transparency and accountability of NGOs. To date, sixty NGOs have participated in QAS training and use the QAS methods for self-assessment. NGOs' annual reports are available through the AJPES website, and many NGOs also publish their annual reports on their own websites.