

Slovenia

Challenges for prayer:

A long history of Catholic tradition is under threat. The three main Christian groups (Catholic, Orthodox, Lutheran) are lacking in spiritual vitality. They are rapidly declining into irrelevance while agnosticism, New Age and different forms of Eastern religious beliefs are increasing, as is general spiritual apathy, even among those who notionally believe in God. Pray for an awakening in the mainline churches that draws the many nominal Christians into personal faith in Christ.

Evangelicals are few, underfunded and divided. There is an evangelical presence in only 28 out of 210 municipalities, so church planting teams are clearly needed. The tiny evangelical population often reflects the divisive culture of the South Slavs – pray for unity and the formation of an Evangelical Alliance. Of the few dozen fellowships, almost none are self funding; most pastors rely on secular employment or external financial support, and there is little teaching in churches on stewardship and giving. Pray for Slovene believers to rise to the challenge of personal evangelism, to support their own pastors and even to send missionaries.

Vital Christian resources are in short supply. With the dearth of local fellowships, availability of quality materials in Slovene is vital for both discipleship and evangelism. Pray for:

a) Christian literature. Very few Christian books have been capably translated into this difficult language. Pray for more quality materials to be translated, and for Slovene authors to be raised up.

b) The Slovenian Bible Society, as it works on newer and more accurate modern translations. Pray also for insight on how to engage the general population with the Bible.

c) The new, modern translation of the works of Primož Trubar, the Slovene Protestant reformer who wrote the first books in Slovene (a language he helped to synthesize). He is highly regarded, although few have read his works. Pray that the Catechism and others of his books may lead many to a right understanding of God.

d) More means of engaging Slovenes with the gospel. EHC has blanketed the nation in the past with Christian literature. There is a definite need for other media, including radio, Christian bookshops, Christian magazines, newspapers and the like. Visions of Christian coffee shops, radio stations and Slovene Christian websites abound; pray for these dreams to become reality.

Slovenia has had a Protestant witness since the Reformation, but there are still very few evangelical churches. Even these few lack teaching and leadership training, although two informal Bible training schools operate with help from outside professors. Pray for the following ministries:

a) Church planting. A number of ministries work in Slovenia. Pray for faithfulness, fruitfulness and sensitivity on their part.

b) Student work. IFES, CCCI and the Nazarenes are pioneering student witness in Ljubljana and elsewhere. Josiah Venture works with middle school and high school students in a variety

of denominations and churches. **CEF** is training more Slovene leadership for its outreach to children through clubs and camps.

c) Radio. Catholic radio is broadly listened to, and some local churches have programs on local radio, but there is no regular national evangelical presence on radio or TV, except for a 15-minute **TWR** shortwave broadcast.