

## Biometric passports of the Republic of Slovenia

On 28 August 2006, the Republic of Slovenia will start issuing biometric passports. Biometric passports will include regular passports, diplomatic passports, official passports and passports for aliens. Biometric technology enables individuals' unique characteristics to be used, which is why biometric passports will contain new security features, including a chip with stored photograph of the passport holder.

### What is biometrics?

Biometrics is a method of automatic identification of a person based on his/her physical or behavioural characteristics, such as facial image, fingerprints, iris image, voice structure, etc. Hardware and software systems are able to identify a person based on those characteristics. Thus, an individual's biometric elements can in a way function as his/her personal registration number.



Photograph of the cover of a new, biometric passport, with printed symbol for the chip.

Biometric passports will not appear essentially different from the old passports. An internationally agreed symbol will be printed on the passport cover indicating that the document contains a chip. The chip will be invisibly embedded in the polycarbonate data page of the passport, consequently making it a bit thicker. Passport design differs from the old design mainly in the colour of passport pages. Blue green colour replaces previous blue red shades, while the selection of motives, representing Slovenia's basic cultural and historical information and monuments from prehistoric times, the Roman Age, the Middle Ages, romanic, gothic, baroque style, secession, the "modern school" and the contemporary period, remains the same. On passport forms, certain data are printed in all official languages of the EU. Furthermore, the text "Evropska unija" is added on the cover of the biometric passport.

## Why biometric passports in the Republic of Slovenia

Biometric elements follow technological developments and represent the most modern protection of travel documents against counterfeiting and altering, while at the same time representing a strong tie between an individual and his/her document. In time, they will enable automated crossing of the border without classic border control.

The US Department of Homeland Security launched a border security programme called US-VISIT (United States Visitor and Immigrant Status Indicator Technology), which involves the collection of biometric data on all aliens requiring a visa to enter the USA. In 2002, the American Congress enabled the nationals of the 27 countries of the Visa Waiver Programme (VWP), which also includes Slovenia, to travel to the USA on business or tourism for up to 90 days visa-free. Furthermore, it set the deadline by which those countries had to begin issuing passports with biometric identification data, otherwise their nationals, when entering the USA, would be treated equally to the nationals of countries requiring a visa to enter the USA.

On 18 January 2005, Council Regulation no. 2252/2004 on standards for security features and biometrics in passports and travel documents issued by Member States entered into force. This regulation specifies that passports issued by the EU Member States must have an embedded storage medium - a chip with sufficient capacity - with two types of biometric data stored on it, **facial image and fingerprints** in interoperable formats. In the beginning, biometric passports will only contain stored facial image (all passports issued from 28 August 2006 onwards), which will later be followed by two biometric fingerprints (by 28 August 2009).

In Article 6, the above Regulation sets forth that **ALL OLD PASSPORTS REMAIN VALID UNTIL THEIR EXPIRY DATE**, which is why citizens will not have to replace their passports, although they can do so if they wish.

Slovenian biometric passports are also in line with international standards and recommendations in the field of travel documents and with the Resolution on uniform passport format (certain data are translated into all official languages of the EU).

## Contents of the chip

Biometric passports must be interoperable, which means that data must be written on the chip in such a way that they can be read by the border authority of any foreign country, regardless of what hardware and software is used at their border crossing points. In order to ensure interoperability, the contents of the data on the chip are strictly defined. Only the data that are also visibly printed in the passport (personal name, nationality, birth date, gender, country of issue, passport number and expiry date) are stored on the chip, as well as the photograph that is in the passport.

Photograph of an open biometric passport with the data page with invisibly stored contactless chip.

Citizens will be able to verify the data stored on the chip at the Ministry of the Interior, Beethovnova 3, Ljubljana.



OCR-B fonts enable access to data stored on the chip.

### Access to data on the chip

The citizens' fears that their data stored on the chip might be read by unauthorised persons if they carry the passport in their handbag or their pocket is ungrounded, as the chip will be locked. Only authorised persons will be able to read the data by unlocking the chip with a special device through the OCR-B text, which will be done by physically placing the passport's data page on the text reader.

During the personalisation of the passport and the chip, data will be protected and encrypted with Public Key Infrastructure (PKI), making the holder of a biometric passport free from risk of changing, deleting or abuse of data.

### Use of biometric passports at the border

During border checks, it will be established, by comparing the captured image of the person and the image stored on the chip in biometric form, if the person crossing the border with the document is in fact the person to whom the document was issued. Photographs on the chip will not be paired with other records, e.g. records of persons sought by the police.

### Instructions on how to handle the passport

In order to preserve the quality, reliability and usability of the biometric passport during the period of its validity we recommend that you handle it like any other electronic device:

- Do not bend or tear the passport or subject it to any other mechanical force.
- It is recommended to keep the passport in a special pocket of your luggage (a suitcase or a carry bag; do not carry it in your trouser pocket).
- The passport should not be exposed to harmful electromagnetic waves or to high pressure.
- The passport should not be exposed to humidity, high temperatures (above 50°C), low temperatures (below -10°C), strong sun radiation or other sources of energy, washing powder or other chemicals, solvents and alkaline products.

### What to do if a passport is misplaced, lost or stolen

Your passport is a valuable document, which is why you should guard and store it carefully.

If a passport is misplaced, lost or stolen in the Republic of Slovenia, this should be reported to the administrative unit immediately or, if this is not possible, within maximum eight days. If this happens abroad, you should file a report within maximum eight days after returning to the Republic of Slovenia. It is not sufficient to file a report with the police only. A misplaced, lost or stolen passport can cause you a lot of trouble and may eventually entail financial consequences, which is why you should never leave it unattended, such as in a car.

It is forbidden and punishable by law to give, sell, lend or give in pawn your passport, or to change or delete any data printed in it.

### How to obtain a biometric passport

Application to be issued a passport can be filed with any Administrative unit in the Republic of Slovenia or with a diplomatic consular mission of the Republic of Slovenia abroad. A citizen must file the application in person, given that the procedure involves the verification of his/her identity and of whether the photograph shows his/her true appearance. Moreover, the application must be signed. Upon the application for a new passport, the old passport (if the person had one) has to be submitted for destruction, along with a photograph that is suitable for biometric capture. The application for a minor child is filed by his/her legal representative, with the child present at the administrative unit (except babies and young children who are not yet able to sign their name).

Biometric passports will be issued with validity of ten years. The price of such a document will be 8,635 SIT. Children under 3 years of age will be issued with biometric passports with validity of three years, which will cost 6,595 SIT, whereas children between 3 and 18 years of age will be issued with a passport with validity of five years, which will cost 7,360 SIT. Citizens who travel a lot can apply for a passport with more visa pages (48 instead of 32 pages), at the additional cost of 500 SIT.

Citizens can decide for their passport to be served by registered mail or to be handed the passport at the administrative unit. Passport application form will be recorded in the computer database of issued passports. Additionally, the official at the administrative unit will scan the photograph and the signature from the passport application, which will be stored in the passport record. **Due to new procedure - scanning at the administrative unit - the procedure of filing an application will take a bit longer.** Ceteris, the manufacturer of passports, which was selected at an international call for tenders, will obtain data for passport personalisation directly from computer records. Such logistics will make it possible for a passport to be manufactured immediately upon the confirmation of the application by the official at the administrative unit.

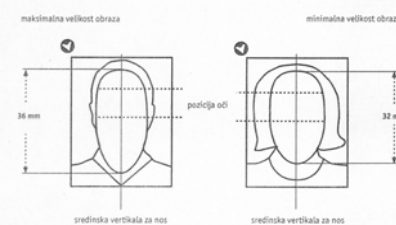
### When is it necessary to replace a passport

If you change your permanent residence, you have to submit your passport to the competent authority within 30 days from the change of residence. The change of permanent residence may be entered in your passport once free of charge. Furthermore, you have to submit your passport to the competent authority within 30 days in order to be destroyed if you change your first or last name, if the photograph no longer shows your true appearance, if the passport is damaged or worn out or if it can no longer be used for any other reason.

### Standards for photographs

International standards, technical specifications and recommendations concerning biometric passports have introduced new, stricter rules for the capture of the applicant's biometric photograph, which will be laser engraved on the data page of his/her passport and at the same time securely stored in the contactless chip. A biometric photograph includes a full face of the holder, a part of shoulders, neck, and hair in most cases.

Ustreznost fotografije za biometrične potne listine



#### Format:

Photograph size is 35 x 45 mm.  
Face size is 32-36 mm from chin to hairline.

#### Head position and facial expression:

Head position is straight (not tilted up, down or to the side).

The photograph shows a front view of the person. Facial expression is neutral. Mouth is closed.

#### Eyes and direction of looking:

Eyes are within the marked area and at equal height. They are open and clearly visible.

#### Sharpness and contrast:

Photograph is sharp with clear contrasts. **Photograph may not be retouched.**

#### Lighting:

Lighting is balanced (with no shadows or reflections).

#### Background:

Background is single-coloured, grey or light blue.

#### Photograph quality:

Skin tone is natural. Photograph has no fold lines or stains.

#### Eyeglasses:

Eyes are visible, not covered by eyeglasses.

More information: <http://www.mnz.gov.si/>