

Merry Christmas & Happy New Year from Phil & Tim

On Friday December 19, 2008 Senator Voinovich hosted a reception to discuss changes in the Visa Waiver Program (VWP) and the Electronic System for Travel Authorization (ESTA) program. Members of Cleveland's various nationality communities had the opportunity to participate in a question and answer session which followed the senator's remarks. Senator Voinovich's Cleveland office is located at 1240 East 9th St. in the Anthony J. Celebrezze Federal Building.



GEORGE V. VOINOVICH

UNITED STATES SENATOR
OHIO

524 HART SENATE BUILDING
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20510
202-224-3353 FAX: 202-1382
[HTTP://VOINOVICH.SENATE.GOV](http://voinovich.senate.gov)

Photos: <http://picasaweb.google.com/philip.hrvat/VoinovichVisaWaiver>

US EMBASSY LJUBLJANA - EVENTS

December 2008

ESTA Mandatory on January 12 and Easy to Apply For, Explains US Consul

In a press conference on December 17th, Consul Aaron Luster reminded Slovenians that on January 12, travelers to the US under the visa waiver program are required to have an Electronic System for Travel Authorization (ESTA) approval before their arrival to the United States. The ESTA is free and the application is entirely online. The ESTA is valid for up to two years and can be used for multiple trips. During the press conference, Consul Luster explained that ESTA is required only for those traveling under visa waiver, those traveling with a visa do not have to apply for an ESTA. He also stated that over 1500 ESTA applications from Slovenia have been received and he hopes people will register with ESTA as soon as they plan to visit the United States.



Consul Aaron Luster (Photo
Courtesy of Robert Balen, Vecer)



Press Release

November 13, 2008
Contact: DHS Press Office, (202) 282-8010

**ESTA AUTHORIZATION REQUIRED FOR ALL VISA WAIVER PROGRAM
COUNTRIES BEGINNING JANUARY 12**
DHS to Designate Seven Additional Visa Waiver Countries

WASHINGTON – The U.S. Department of Homeland Security announced today that beginning Jan. 12, 2009, eligible citizens or nationals from all Visa Waiver Program (VWP) countries must obtain approval through the Electronic System for Travel Authorization (ESTA) prior to traveling to the United States under the VWP. On Monday, DHS will formally announce the addition of seven allies to the list of countries authorized to participate in the VWP. The seven countries are the Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, the Republic of Korea, Latvia, Lithuania, and Slovakia.

“We are especially pleased to welcome these allies into the Visa Waiver Program,” said Homeland Security Secretary Michael Chertoff. “Expanding the number of countries whose citizens can travel to the U.S. without a visa increases business and social ties between our countries and at the same time deepens cooperation on required security measures.”

The administration sought authority for years to reform the VWP. DHS received authorization through the issuance of the Implementing Recommendations of the 9/11 Commission Act of 2007. The VWP is administered by the department and enables eligible citizens or nationals of certain countries to travel to the United States for tourism or business for stays of 90 days or less without obtaining a visa. To be admitted to the VWP, a country must meet various statutory requirements, such as more enhanced law enforcement and security-related data sharing with the United States and timely reporting of both blank and issued lost and stolen passports. VWP members are also required to maintain high counterterrorism, law enforcement, border control, and document security standards.

The citizens or nationals of the following countries are currently eligible to travel to the United States under the VWP: Andorra, Australia, Austria, Belgium, Brunei, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Iceland, Ireland, Italy, Japan, Liechtenstein, Luxembourg, Monaco, the Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Portugal, San Marino, Singapore, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, and the United Kingdom.

Beginning Nov. 17, eligible citizens or nationals from the new VWP countries may travel to the

United States under the program provided they have an e-passport and an approved authorization via ESTA, a web-based system that determines the preliminary eligibility of visitors to travel under the VWP prior to boarding a carrier to the United States.

Required authorization through ESTA will substantially strengthen the security of the VWP by providing the department with the capability to conduct advance screening of VWP travelers. ESTA is key to transforming the VWP from a program that evaluates security threats on a country-by-country basis to one that is capable of making traveler-by-traveler judgments. In addition to enhancing security, ESTA will provide for greater efficiencies in the screening of international travelers by reducing traveler delays at the ports of entry.

The department has submitted notices summarizing these changes to the Federal Register for publication. For more information on the Visa Waiver Program, please visit http://www.cbp.gov/xp/cgov/travel/id_visa/business_pleasure/vwp/. For additional information on ESTA, visit www.cbp.gov/esta.

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George V. Voinovich United States Senator

In a year that has brought threat to our nation's standard of living and our quality of life, as well as continued challenges to our national security, it is good to pause during this holy season both to thank God for all the blessings He has bestowed upon us and to remember:

*They that hope in the Lord will renew their strength
They will soar on wings like eagles; they will run
And not grow weary, they will walk and not be faint.*
Isaiah 40:31

*Trust in the LORD with all your heart,
And lean not on your own understanding;
In all your ways acknowledge Him,
And He shall direct your paths.*
Proverbs 3:5-6

And lastly, our state motto:
With God all things are possible.
Matthew 19:26



May these words comfort you during this holy season and throughout the coming year.

George V. Voinovich
United States Senator

Dear friends / Dragi prijatelji,

We wish you a joyful and festive Christmas. May the New Year 2009 bring peace and contentment.

Želimo vam vesel in praznični Božič. Naj vam novo leto 2009 prinese mir in zadovoljstvo.

Link http://www.thezaurus.com/?/issv/bozicno_voscilo_2008/

Photo: Nouralangie Rock paintings, Kakadu National Park.

Photo by Sasha Ceferin.



Thezaurus team
Institute for Slovenian Studies of Victoria Inc.
Viktorijski inštitut za slovenistiko.
Melbourne, Australia.

Emanuela Šlebinger

Hello! My name is Emanuela Šlebinger. I am a fourth year student of English and Pedagogy at the Faculty of Arts in Slovenia. I am starting on my diploma paper about Slovene Americans and their language (if they still speak Slovene, where they learned the language, their attitude towards language, etc). As I am not able to do my field work in the USA, I have decided to do the questioning with the help of internet. I created a questionnaire and I need at least 100 people of Slovene origin to answer it. My questionnaire is simple and contains 30 questions. Now I am searching for a forum or a web page where I could post my questionnaire so people could answer it. If you can help in anyway possible I would really appreciate it. emanuela.slebinger@gmail.com



<http://www.zoomerang.com/Survey/survey-intro.zgi?p=WEB228MTET2W5R>



“Bernard Pesjak and SlovInUS News www.pesjak.com/slovinus.htm wish the readers of www.ClevelandSlovenian.com Happy Holidays and prosperous New Year.”

Association of Geneva Slovenes (Switzerland)

Dr. Zvone Žigon thought you would find this site of interest.

<http://www.slovinci.org/doc/Novice%2045.pdf>



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Pozdravljena Phil in Tim,



Pozdravljena Phil in Tim,

sva Nejc Konjedic in Tatjana Lampreht, studenta ekonomije iz Slovenije. Vajina elektronska naslova sva nasla na internetni strani slovenskega casopisa v Clevelandu.

Trenutno potujeva za 2 meseca po srednji Ameriki (trenutno sva v Nikaragvi), pot nazaj pa sva si organizirala preko ZDA, in sicer letiva najprej v Chicago, od tam pa se z avtobusom peljeva v Cleveland, kamor prispeva v ponedeljek, 19. januarja 09, in tam ostaneva 3 dni, ter se 22. januarja zjutraj odpeljeva naprej proti Buffalu in nato New Yorku, od koder imava let nazaj proti Sloveniji.

V Clevelandu bi rada spoznala koga od ameriskih slovencev, saj zaenkrat ne poznavata se nobenega, in se nama zdi lepo, da ljudje tako dalec od doma ohranjajo naso kulturo, jezik in obicaje. Rada bi spoznala kako zivite v Clevelandu, in hkrati tudi predstavila (tistim ki v Sloveniji se niso bili), kako je pri nas:)

Poleg tega bi vprasala tudi ce je mozno pri kateremu od Slovencev prenociti za te 3 dni ko bova v Clevelandu (ameriske cene hostlov so visoke za slovenski studentski zep.. kaksen kavc bi bil vec kot super:) Ce pa to ni mogoce, nic hudega, bi pa bila hvalezna za kaksen namig za poceni prenocisce.

Najina spletna stran je <http://sites.google.com/site/najinsvet/Home>

V kolikor imate kakrsnakoli vprasanja, naju prosim kontaktirajte, najina elektronska naslova sta nejc.konjedic@gmail.com in tatjana.lampreht@gmail.com.

Hvala vnaprej za odgovor oziroma za posredovanje sporocila naprej med ameriske slovence v Clevelandu:)

Drive one block north of St. Vitus Church and you won't be able to miss the "Community of Rhythm" murals displayed at Sheliga Drug. Jamie Baker at the St. Clair Superior Development Corporation www.stclairsuperior.org provided the following information about the project.

Regards, - Phil Hrvatin

Sheliga Mural!

By Cory Riordan

Have you seen the beautiful mural on the side of Sheliga Drug Store on St. Clair Avenue just east of 55th Street ?

If not, make sure to

drive, walk or meander by and see it. The mural is titled "Community of Rhythm" and celebrates the diversity of the neighborhood with flags of the many nationalities as well as depictions of people playing instruments from these nations. The City of Cleveland's Mural my Neighborhood program produced the mural. The program pairs professional artists with aspiring youth artists from the City of Cleveland to create murals. The end result at Sheliga's is amazing and the St. Clair Superior neighborhood is greatly enhanced by this wonderful artwork!

Grants from the Cleveland Foundation, the George Gund Foundation, the Bruening Foundation, Key Bank, and the Dominion Foundation, fund the twice-weekly after-school classes and field trips, as well as the stipends youth participants receive to create the Mural.



Blog about program --

<http://www.city.cleveland.oh.us/government/departments/parksrecprop/prprec/mural%20my%20neighborhood/index.asp>

Plans to Build Tourism Links Between Scotland and Slovenia

<http://news.stv.tv/scotland/64500-plans-to-build-tourism-links-between-scotland-and-slovenia-are-underway/>

stv group plc operates in television in Scotland, broadcasting to over four million viewers each week, and in cinema advertising throughout the UK. Efforts are being made to build tourism links between Scotland and Slovenia.

Ian Mitchell, from Invershin in Sutherland, hopes to explore possible links between the two countries in the growing sector of eco-friendly tourism.

Mr Mitchell is a warden in Slovenia's magnificent Triglav National Park - the only non-national to be given the honour. Slovenia is a small country and, like Scotland, is rich in beauty, biodiversity and culture.



Mr Mitchell said: "Both countries suffer many of the same problems. They suffer from a short summer season for visitors, and also both the Highlands and Slovenia have very fragile mountain environments and I think that learning from each other is to everyone's advantage".

The stunning sights in the Slovenian mountains provide the backdrop for an alternative kind of tourism, which is flourishing in these environmentally sensitive times.

Tourism has for years been the lifeblood of the Highlands, with major attractions like Dunrobin Castle bringing in tens of thousands of visitors every year.

But tourism, like all industries, has to change and diversify.

Mr Mitchell went on to say: "There's also a very good example from Slovenia which I think Scotland could develop especially in the Highlands and that's this idea of the Bohinj International Wild Flower Festival where they have two weeks of events, especially linked to the environment, the wild flowers and the nature of this area of Slovenia and there are arts events, music events, exhibitions, guided walks. It's exactly the kind of thing we could do in the Highlands as well".

William Sutherland from Sutherland Partnership said: "Well we know that this environmental festival, this flower festival that they've held has helped to draw tourism into the area - an area that has certain similarities with our own and we know that the tourism it brings is of high quality and may have some potential to extend the tourism season here".

The year ahead may yet be a landmark in efforts to promote eco-tourism in the Highlands.

A note from Maria Sedmak

Event Info

Host Klemer Žumer
Type Education Workshop
Network Global

Time and Place

Date Sunday, December 28, 2008
Time 3:00pm – 6:00pm
Location St. Mary's Slovenian Room
Street 15519 Holmes Ave
City Cleveland, Ohio
Phone 216-702-3633
Email m.a.sedmak@hotmail.com



A Slovenian, Klemen Žumer, is coming to Cleveland and would like to speak to young Slovenians about what Slovenia and being a part of the EU can do for you. He is an adviser in the European Parliament (and only 28 years old) and has been living in Brussels for the past 4 years. He will only be here for 3 days, to better know about the Slovenian community in Cleveland, so this is a one time chance to learn more about Slovenia in Europe as a whole and ask any questions you'd like answered. Here is a blurb he wrote to promote this meeting...

Slovenian citizenship today carries many advantages for its holders. Many more in fact than even a few years ago!

Today, Slovenia is an equal part of the European Union, which comprises 27 European countries and 500 million people. There are no borders on highways from Ljubljana to Paris, from Madrid to Berlin. The education systems are interlinked and mutually recognised, Slovenian students in the UK for example are treated as English in terms of enrolment fees and scholarships. A business opened by a Slovenian has legal rights in all EU countries. EU uses the same insurance regulations and Slovenian drivers license looks the same as all other EU countries, it is just in the Slovenian language. If you are Slovenian you need no visas to work in countries like the UK, Spain, Luxembourg or France, to mention a few.

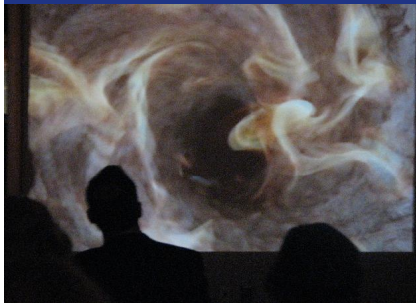
I am 28 old Slovenian from Ljubljana and for the past four years an adviser in the European Parliament. I invite you to join me as I present the opportunities that the new EU offers to its citizens. If you ever thought about studying, visiting or living in Slovenia or in Europe, come and ask any questions. I will also connect you to my friends - your peers in Europe so you can get in touch by email as well.

You don't need to speak Slovenian, but it will be a great asset!



Current Events

December 11- January 30: Transpositions. Video art exhibition 'Transpositions' and mosaic prints 'Vortex' and 'Swimming the Dark' by **Nataša Prošenc**. Embassy of Slovenia, Washington, DC. For viewing, please call in advance.



Prošenc's video art.

step for Telargo, since Japan is a difficult market to enter. Norio Azuma, president of Mitsui Logistics pointed out that at the beginning Telargo solutions will be used by Mitsui and its partners, but there are plans already to expand the business to China and South Korea.



Director of "Mitsui Logistics" Norio Azuma in director of Telargo Bogdan Pavlič.



Bishop Anton Jamnik at the Embassy of Slovenia

Telargo in Business with Mitsui

New Jersey City, December 16 - Telargo signed a deal with Mitsui, enabling this Fortune 500 company to market and sell Telargo products in Japan. Telargo is a Slovenian owned company based in New Jersey City providing products and software that help logistics companies optimize their processes or as Bogdan Pavlič, CEO puts it: *"Telargo is providing intelligent transportation solutions"*.

Telargo, starting operations in the US in 2005, is present also in Hong Kong, Dubai, Saudi Arabia, Mexico and many European countries.

Pavlič recognizes this new business endeavor as a huge

Visit by Bishop Anton Jamnik

Washington, December 19 - Monsignor Anton Jamnik, Auxiliary Bishop in the Metropolitan Archdiocese of Ljubljana and the Director of the Catholic Institute of Slovenia, visited the Embassy of Slovenia during his trip in the United States.

The purpose of his trip is connected with the establishing of a catholic university in Slovenia. On his trip, Bishop Jamnik met with several representatives of American universities, who shared with him their experience in establishing and managing higher education institutions in the United States.

Bishop Jamnik to celebrate a Slovenian mass

Bishop Jamnik will celebrate a mass in Slovenian on **Sunday, December 21, at 11:00 a.m.** at the Slovenian Chapel, Basilica of the Immaculate Conception, 400 Michigan Ave., N.E., Washington, DC 20017.

U.S. Travel Authorization Mandatory as of 12 Jan

Ljubljana, December 17 - Like the citizens of all countries included in the US visa-waiver program, Slovenian nationals wanting to travel to the United States will be required to apply online for a travel authorization as of **January 12**. The travel authorization is valid for two years, and for unlimited number of trips, and would replace the current green I-94 forms.

Those wishing to travel to the United States will have to fill in online their personal data, data from their passport and answer a few security questions, which travelers have so far been required to fill in the I-94 forms upon entry to the US.

A simple-to-use interface will guide the user through the procedure at the end of which it will serve the user with one of the three possible responses.

U.S. Consul in Ljubljana Mr. Aaron Luster, who presented the program to Slovenian reporters, said that a great majority of users would be authorized to travel to the United States, while some might need to wait for authorization for some or other reason, but the waiting period should not exceed 72 hours.

If the system rejects authorization of the application, Luster advised the users to turn to the US Embassy in Ljubljana, where they would get all the necessary information.



US Consul Aaron Luster speaking to the press about the ESTA

The *Electronic System for Travel Authorization (ESTA)* application form will have to be filled in as of 12 January by travelers planning a leisure or business trip to the US for **up to 90 days**. Those planning to work or study there will be required to get a visa as so far.

Those who have obtained a visa, will not need to apply for

electronic travel authorization. This is required for anyone entering the country by air or sea carrier, but not for short trips by land.

The online application form is available in the languages of all 34 countries whose nationals are eligible for visa-free travel to the US for up to 90 days under the visa-waiver program, Slovenian included.

The easiest way to access ESTA is via the US Embassy website <http://slovenia.usembassy.gov>.

The system is safe and **free-of-charge**, said Luster, who warned of providers offering travel authorization for a fee.

Open Call by the Ministry of Culture



Slovenian Ministry of Culture has announced an open call for collecting proposals for promoting Slovenian culture abroad in the year of 2009.

The main aim of this public call is to finance extraordinary cultural projects, connecting specifics of Slovenian culture with European extensiveness and manage to contribute to the promotion of Slovenian culture. Projects should promote Slovenian culture in the following areas: visual arts (hosting an existent exhibition), performance arts (participation at festivals), music (hosting solo performers or ensembles), literature (introducing translations of Slovenian literature abroad), cultural heritage (hosting an existent exhibition), and multimedia art

(hosting the projects abroad).

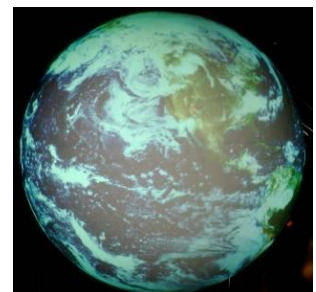
The call is open for public or private entities, as well as for individuals, who meet the requirements. For detailed information, please visit the web site of the [Ministry of Culture](#).

The Presidency of the EU Council from France to the Czech Republic

Washington, DC, December 19 – The Embassy of France in Washington, D.C. marked the end of their term as the country presiding the Council of the European Union.

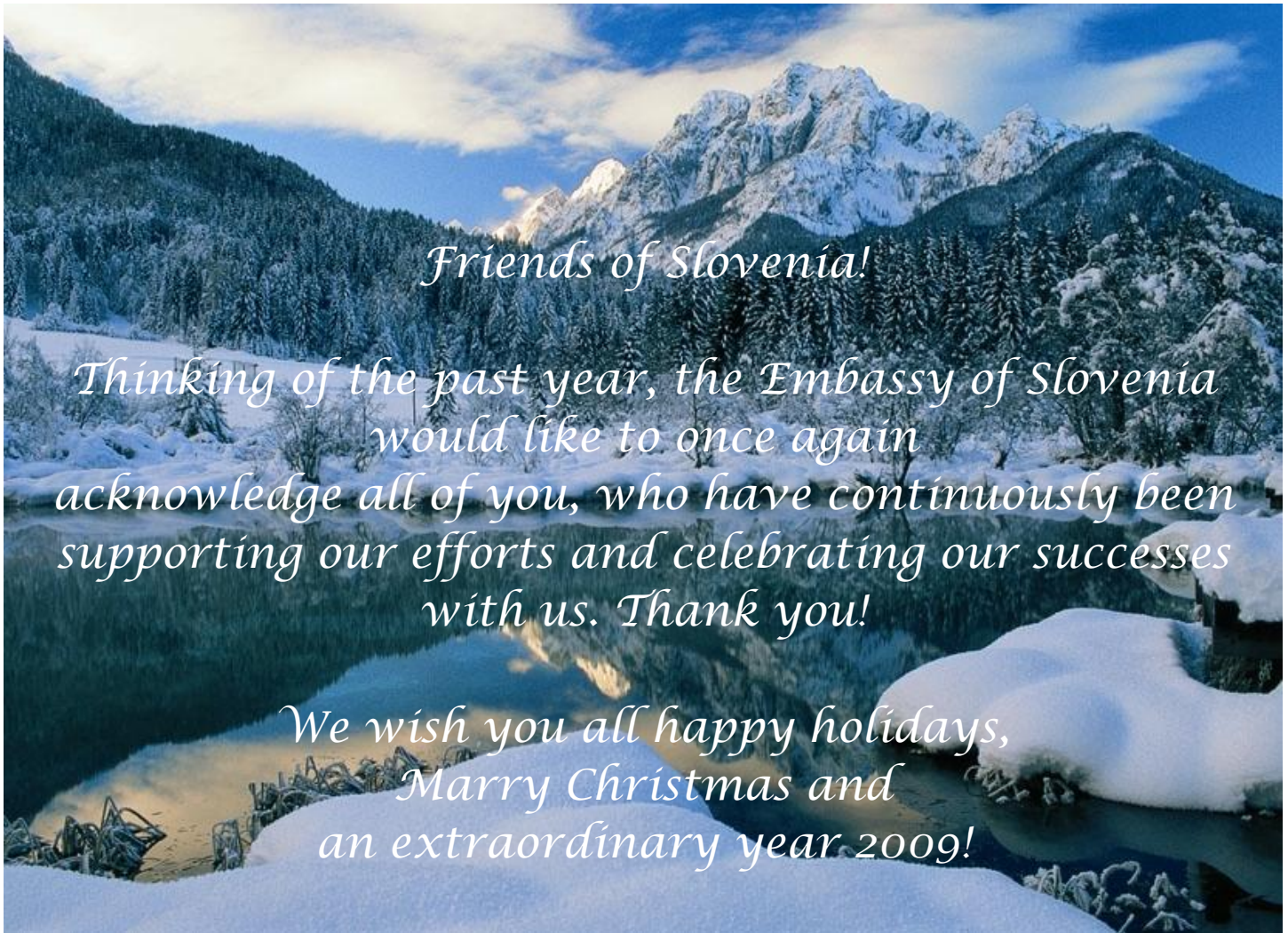


The evening was devoted to the pressing issues of climate change. With a presentation of the US National Oceanic and Atmospheric Agency (NOAA) project '[Science on a Sphere](#)', the presentation of the climate activities was extremely impressive.



'Science on a Sphere' in the auditorium at the French Embassy.

The next European country, presiding the EU Council, is the [Czech Republic](#), starting with its six month term on January 1, 2009.



Friends of Slovenia!

Thinking of the past year, the Embassy of Slovenia would like to once again acknowledge all of you, who have continuously been supporting our efforts and celebrating our successes with us. Thank you!

*We wish you all happy holidays,
Merry Christmas and
an extraordinary year 2009!*

The weekly e-Newsletter is produced by the Embassy of Slovenia in Washington. The archive of the e-Newsletter is available [online](#). To subscribe or unsubscribe to the e-Newsletter please send an e-mail to: vwa@gov.si.