

WELCOME TO SLOVAKIA

Official name of the country: Slovenská Republika

Location: In the middle of Europe

Population: 5,4 million

Capital: Bratislava

Language: Slovak

Currency: Euro

Religion: Catholic

Weather: mild climate: spring (5- 15 degrees), summer (15- 30 degrees), autumn (+15--5 degrees), winter (5 to -30 degrees with lot of snow).

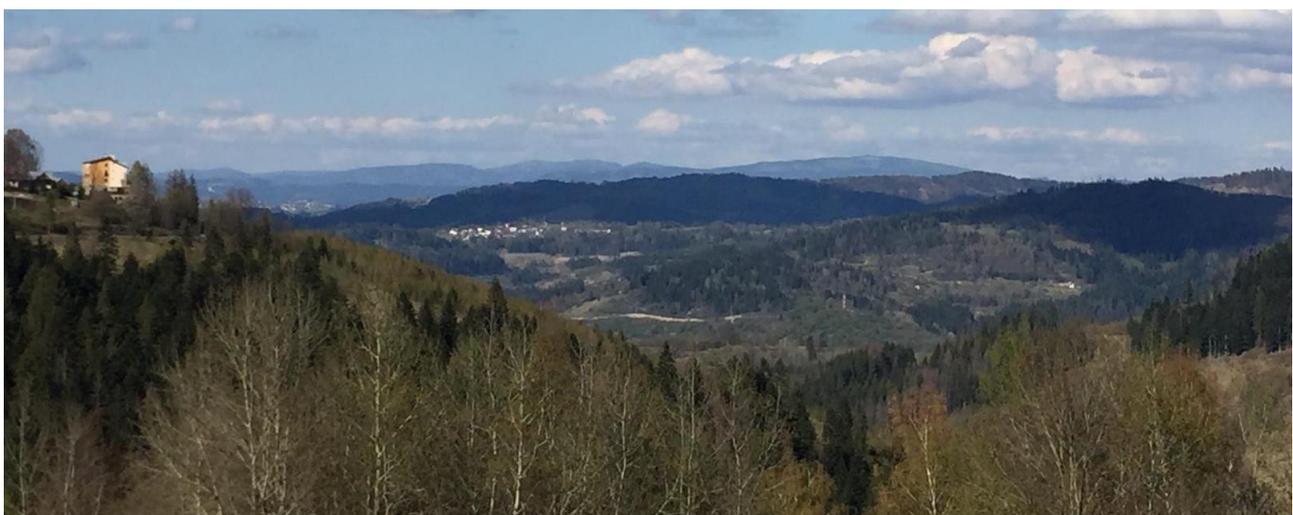


WEATHER/CLIMATE

Four Seasons

As a continental country in central/eastern Europe, Slovakia is a land of friendly, moderate climate. There are four seasons: winter (December-February), spring (March-May), summer (June-August) and autumn (September-November).

Spring, as well as autumn, is a season of frequent (and rapid) weather changes, so be sure to bring your umbrellas! The main difference between spring and autumn is in temperatures and wind conditions, with the latter being slightly warmer in the beginning, but a lot windier. While spring might be beautiful in Slovakia, it is certainly not the most hospitable season of the year. Temperatures are usually between 5-15 degrees. Early spring in Slovakian mountains may provide a last-minute opportunity to enjoy the few remaining days of winter sports season.



Hills (Husárik) above Cadca

Summers tend to be fairly hot, even tropical with heat waves in lowlands. The hottest month, with temperatures reaching 30°C to 35°C, is July. This is also a month of higher rainstorms. Storms in Slovakia are usually not very dangerous and without extremes, so

do not expect tornadoes, floods or hurricanes. As for the temperatures in northern or mountain areas, they usually stick to 25 °C or lower, according to the altitude.



Terchova on summer

Autumns are often foggy, windy and if they happen to be so, you should expect long, continuous periods of rainfall as well. On the other hand, some early autumn seasons may resemble the summer season more. With plenty of golden sunshine and dry air periods around the turn of September/October, this is the right time to enjoy hiking and other outdoor activities.



Strečno on autumn

Winter: Get ready for both rain and snow. Average temperatures keep jumping between -5°C and -10°C or lower. Some winter days might be freezing so be prepared to bring warm clothes (gloves, hat, scarf, thick warm jacket, proper shoes...) Winter season, of course, is best to be spent skiing or doing any other winter sports. Slovakia can provide plenty of such activities in its mountain areas, which often stay sunny throughout the day, no matter what do the skies look like down in the valleys.



Snowparadise Velká Rača, Mala Fatra on the background



Keric team building day

ČADCA

At first, when you arrive to Čadca, you should know how to pronounce the name. It should be something like Chatsa. Approximately 30 000 people live here and is surrounded by mountains and small villages. Čadca is situated in the region Kysuce, which is a border region with the Czech Republic and Poland. Čadca is the biggest city of the region, the centre of North Slovakia.



Town hall

ACTIVITIES IN ČADCA



Here in Čadca is an indoor swimming pool with cheap prices, entrance around 2 euros for two hours. During summer there's an outdoor swimming pool. In the same building there's also a gym. Around the city there are many fitness centres if you want to train. You can also practice volleyball, football, table tennis and basketball.

If you like hiking or sightseeing in the mountains you are lucky! Without going far from the city, you can enjoy wonderful walks or hiking. Bicycle is a great way to go around during spring and summer and there are many biking tracks around the city and nearby villages. In Keric there are 2 bicycles for volunteers to use.

For winter Čadca has many opportunities to offer. You might like to try cross country skiing, ski alpinism or you can go to the next town Oščadnica for downhill skiing. There's a ski centre called Snowparadise Velká Rača with great ski slopes. There are several ski busses going there during winter.

In a nearby town Krasno nad Kysucou is MM-Arena where's wellness centre with a spa and ice-skating ring. It's easy to get there by bus or train.

In the cultural house there's cinema and lots of events.

Žilina, the 4th biggest city of Slovakia, is only 30 minutes away from Čadca and there are good train connections to the city. There are more opportunities to do some sports, visit castles, museums or just have some urban city life.

SOME USEFULL INFORMATION



Palarikova street

The supermarkets are open from early morning until late evening every day. Other shops are usually closing around 5.00pm during the weekdays and around 12.00 on Saturdays. On Sunday the shops are usually closed.

There are some restaurants which are open only for lunch and most of them have daily menu. Some restaurants are open until 9 or 10 pm.

If you like coffee or tea, there are many nice cafés in Čadca. If you prefer alcoholic drinks, there are plenty of pubs and bars with good Czech and Slovak beers and stronger spirits made of fruits (borovicka, slivovica...) During the weekdays the bars are usually open until midnight, during the weekends they close around 3.00am.

FOOD



Brynzové Haluský

Slovak food is based on potatoes, pork meat, chicken, cheese and vegetables. You can buy fish in the supermarket, but mainly it is frozen. If you are vegetarian, you can find special meals in restaurants mostly based on fried cheese with potatoes or/ and salad. In Slovakia they produce special cheese **bryndza**. The national food is called **haluský**. It's made with potatoes, flour and cheese and usually served with bacon. There are also many other kind of cheese worth tasting for (for example **korbáčiky**). For drinking they also

produce their own cola drink called **Kofola** and grape lemonade **Vinea**.

COMMUNICATION

Many people in Slovakia, specially in the smaller towns and villages don't speak English, so be prepared to use translator/dictionary and body language a lot. Usually people are friendly, understanding and willing to help you as much as they can. Most of the restaurants around Čadca don't have English menu so for the first months in Slovakia it's always a new adventure to go for a lunch when you don't know what you just ordered.

When you greet people, don't expect hug or kiss, for Slovaks a handshake is enough. The physical contact is not usual with people you don't know so well. When you go to a shop or

restaurant you should greet people saying Dobrý den, Ahoj is only for people you already know. The same if you're leaving, you should say Dovidenia or just Dovi instead of Ahoj or Čau which you can use with your friends.

Here's some useful words and sentences:

Dobre rano: Good morning

Dobrý den: Good day (formal way to say hi)

Ahoj!: Hello!

Dovidenia: Goodbye

D'akujem: Thank you

Prosim: Please

Kolko je hodin?: What time is it?

Kolko je stoi?: How much it costs?

Kde je..? : Where is..?

Hovorite po anglicky?: Do you speak English?

Prosim vas, potrebujem pomoc!: Please, I need help!

A little word about time

Time is money and it's hard to come by! If you are coming to volunteer in Slovakia please be on time not in time. Keep time or you will miss the train or bus. The people don't appreciate you if you're always late.

TRANSPORT/TRAVELLING



The main train station in Cadca

Transport in Slovakia is cheap but crazy! You won't empty your purse by travelling, this is for sure, but you might have to change the train or bus several times and wait in the middle of nowhere wishing that the next bus will come. So, don't worry, you have everything here to be able to move no matter where you want to go.

TRAIN: Takes you almost everywhere and it's usually cheaper than buses. Especially if you are under 26 years old, get EURO 26 card (in the train station with one

photo, passport and 16 Euros) and you will get discounts every time you travel. The discount is less than 50% but it is worth it, also there are some discounts in some services, check the web site www.euro26.sk

BUS: Connections are very good inside and outside of Slovakia with the international services. The tickets are bought on the bus from the bus driver (or online for the international connections).

PLANE: From Bratislava you will find a lot of services including low cost airlines. Also don't forget to check Prague and Vienna airports.

Slovakia has plenty of places to visit; mountains, rivers, lakes, cities and lovely small villages. It is advisable to speak with locals to get information about the best destinations and how to get there. Usually train and/or bus are perfect solutions. There's direct train from Čadca to Prague and from Žilina to Bratislava, Budapest and Vienna so travelling to neighbor countries is also very easy.

ACCOMODATION

Since 2017 the volunteers live in the KERIC building. The first floor is for KERIC office and a seminar room, the second and the third floor are the flat for volunteers. On the second floor there's 3 bedrooms (shared with 2 people), small, full equipped kitchen area, toilets where's a washing machine and a shower. On the third floor there's only one big bedroom with 4 beds. On the basement level there's a café, a small classroom, a toilet and a shower. Bed sheets are provided by KERIC, but own towels volunteer needs to take with him/her. Also inside shoes/slippers are good to take. Wifi covers the whole building.

The flat is very close to the main square and to supermarkets: Kaufland, Tempo and Tesco. The train and bus stations are on the other side of the river, so you only need 5 minutes to go there.



Keric building



KERIC inside the volunteer's flat, common area



Bedrooms

SUPPORT

HOST FAMILY

The first week the volunteer will be host in Slovak family. It's an opportunity for volunteer to discover the Slovak lifestyle, create contacts, spend time with Slovak family and get to know the culture.

MENTOR OUT OF KERIC

Volunteers will have a mentor. It's a person identified by the host organisation, local people involve in KERIC, who is responsible for providing personal support during the project.

There are 3 lines of mentor's activities:

- Help with domestic life: help in shopping, public transport, mobile phones using, explaining of rules of behaviour typical for the city, support with visits to doctor, library and other social institutes.
- Help with finding contacts in the local community and take part in leisure time activities and get to know the life of community.



- With emotional mood of volunteers: to spend celebrations together, to present culture and youth subculture of the city, to talk about problems, troubles etc.

MENTOR FROM KERIC

The volunteers will be supported by person from host organisation, who will be the contact person responsible for the overall running of the EVS project in terms of activities of the volunteer, learning process, practical arrangements, allowance, etc. The volunteers will have a weekly meeting with the mentor.

REGULAR MEETING

Every Monday morning (or on appointed days), the volunteers will take part in an evaluation and planning meeting of the whole team of the host organisation where space is provided for evaluation of the volunteer's project, giving feedback and suggestions.

LONG TERM PROJECT—SCHEDULE REGULAR ACTIVITIES

(September to June)

2 hours a week– Evaluation and planning meeting.

2 to 6 hours- working with children and youth in the KERIC.

6 to 10 hours–European culture awareness and EVS promotion activities in local schools.

1,5 hours a week- Slovak lesson.

2 to 6 hours a week – helping conversation

courses in English (or other languages) to kids and youth If the volunteer is interested, he/she is welcome to organise conversational clubs in the native language of the volunteer and help the teacher to create informal atmosphere in the lessons – games, roleplays, etc.

5 to 7 hours a week– preparation for workshops, space for individual activities in KERIC or in partner institutions.

1 to 2 hours a week– help in running the KERIC office.



Views fom Harmanec

SUMMER ACTIVITIES

As there are the summer holidays, KERIC organises summer camps for children and youngsters. The plan for the summer activities will be prepared in cooperation of the KERIC staff together with the volunteer. The volunteers' participation will be chosen according to her personal interests and preference. As these activities take part also during the weekend, the volunteers' working hours and personal holidays will be taken into consideration and agreed upon. We will ensure variability of tasks for the volunteer.

AN EXAMPLE OF A WEEKLY SCHEDULE OF THE VOLUNTEER

The working hours of the volunteers are between 30 to 35 hours a week. 5 working days will normally be followed by 2 days off (usually weekend). The volunteer will be given an opportunity to modify his/her weekly schedule of activities during their EVS according to the agreement with the host organisation and the coordinating organisation based on his/her personal interests and preferences. The volunteer will also be informed about the opportunity to organise his/her own project/activities during the project. Volunteer has a possibility to enter to the language courses ran by other volunteers.



Budátn castle

MONDAY: Slovak lesson (1,5 hours), evaluation meeting (1-2 hours), conversation lesson in volunteer's own mother tongue (1,5 hours, ex. Spanish, Italian, German)

TUESDAY: Office work (1-4 hours), English conversation lesson for children and teenagers (1,5 hours)

WEDNESDAY: Cooperation with a local school (5-6 hours)

THURSDAY: English conversation lesson for children and teenagers (1,5h), conversation lesson in volunteer's mother language (1,5h)

FRIDAY: Cooperation with a local school (5-6 hours)

WEEKEND: Off (or agreed with the host organisation if there's special events, trainings...)

Volunteers will get holidays 2 days/ month. The holidays don't need to be kept on that month so it's possible to "save" days to take longer holidays later.

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<http://www.keric.sk>

<https://www.facebook.com/KERIC.Cadca>

https://www.instagram.com/Keric_cadca



Other usefull links:

Trains and busses in Slovakia:

Trains in Slovakia & neighbor countries:

Slovakia online travel guide:

Castles:

<https://cp.hnonline.sk/vlakbus/spojenie/>

<https://www.regiojet.sk/>

<https://www.leoexpress.com/en>

<http://slovakia.travel/en>

<https://www.slovakia.com/>

<https://www.slovakia.com/castles/>