



# SLOVENIA

## INFOPACK - RECOGNITION OF LEARNING PERIODS ABROAD IN GENERAL SECONDARY EDUCATION

### Contents

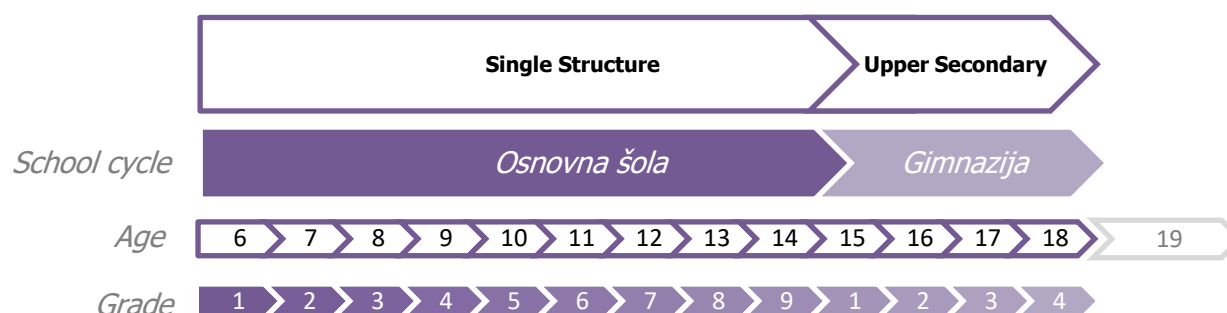
<u>GENERAL SECONDARY EDUCATION SYSTEM</u>	1
<u>INFORMATION FOR PUPILS GOING ABROAD FROM SLOVENIA</u>	2
<u>RECOGNITION OF LEARNING PERIODS ABROAD</u>	3
<u>INFORMATION FOR PUPILS HOSTED IN SLOVENIA</u>	4
<u>TESTIMONIAL</u>	5

The information below gives an overview of procedures<sup>1</sup> for the recognition of learning periods abroad in general secondary school. It can be consulted by pupils, as well as their families and teachers, who are or plan to be involved in long-term individual pupil mobility programmes abroad. Please note that this general overview does not include details on different programme types (which may be run by governmental agencies, civil society organisations, private companies or schools themselves) and such information can be obtained directly with the provider of the respective mobility programme.

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<sup>1</sup> Based on data gathered in February 2021.

## GENERAL SECONDARY EDUCATION SYSTEM



Education is compulsory until 15 years of age. General education (*gimnazija*) and technical education are four-year upper secondary school cycles which provide access to higher education.

The national curriculum<sup>2</sup> is decided at the level of the Ministry of Education, and schools and teachers are autonomous in defining elective learning content and in choosing teaching methods and learning materials.

## Graduation and Certification

At the end of general or technical education, pupils take the *Matura* examination.

The *Matura* is a national examination and is administered in the spring and autumn terms. Pupils sit exams in five subjects:

- three are mandatory (i.e., Slovenian, or Italian and Hungarian in ethnically mixed areas in Slovenian *Istria* and *Prekmurje*, Mathematics and a Foreign language);
- two are subject areas chosen by the pupil from the list of *Matura* subjects.<sup>3</sup>

The *Matura* scores count for 80 % of the total grade in each subject. The school internal assessment (oral presentation, work performed – if this is part of the subject, seminar paper or exam presentation) count for the remaining 20 %.

The *Matura* certificate gives pupils the right to apply for university study programmes and all other higher education programmes.

For more information on the structure and features of the different national education systems in Europe please see the Eurydice overview: National Education Systems | Eurydice (europa.eu).

<sup>2</sup> Ministry of Education of Slovenia, Secondary education programmes, <http://eportal.mss.edus.si/msswww/programi2020/programi/index.htm>

<sup>3</sup> The list of subjects is defined by the Council of Experts of the Republic of Slovenia for general education on the recommendation of the National Matura committee and in agreement with universities and independent higher education institutions: see [https://www.ric.si/splosna\\_matura/predmeti/](https://www.ric.si/splosna_matura/predmeti/)

## INFORMATION FOR PUPILS GOING ABROAD FROM SLOVENIA

### Age and grade

Pupils usually go on exchange when they are 17/18 years old, during the third year of upper secondary school, and they return for the final year of school. Pupils can go abroad during the last year, but it is an exception.

### Perception on individual pupil mobility

Going on a long-term pupil exchange is not popular in Slovenia as the system of recognition based on correspondence, between the curricula of host and sending school, is an obstacle for most pupils.

### Registration in the sending school

If you wish to continue your education after returning, you must remain enrolled in your home school and continue your studies by distance learning so as not to lose a year.

### Funding for the sending school

If you remain enrolled in your home school, the school will receive the same funding as if you had attended classes.

## RECOGNITION OF LEARNING PERIODS ABROAD

The following information addresses learning periods abroad lasting either up to 6 months, or a full school year. According to the analysis conducted, there is no information available on recognition procedures for periods abroad of more than 6 months and shorter than a full school year, or of any duration shorter than a full school year and finishing after the end of the school year in Slovenia. In fact, mobility programmes foreseeing these timings and durations are not usually offered.

The same procedures are applied, irrespective of which country the learning period is spent in (EU or non-EU).

*Please note that in the case of a mobility within a school-to-school partnership<sup>4</sup> (e.g. Erasmus+) the learning agreement between sending and host school can be used as recognition tool for programmes of any duration up to a full school year.*

Recognition of learning periods abroad is the responsibility of your sending school, namely the school council and the teachers' board. The recognition procedure requires that before departure the school, you and your parents agree on a personal education plan which includes the possibility of adjusting the plan should it be required. Your parents should apply in writing to acquire the right to adjust the performance of any part of the plan, and the school principal should take a decision within 15 days, after consultation with the teaching staff and the advisory service. Parents are informed within 8 days of the decision<sup>5</sup>.

<sup>4</sup> within a school-to-school partnership, learning outcomes are usually recognised based on a learning agreement developed between the schools concerned.

<sup>5</sup> Rules on adjustments of school obligations to a student in secondary school <http://www.pisrs.si/Pis.web/pregledPredpisa?id=PRAV13430>

## Periods of between 2 and 6 months

Usually, if you go abroad for a period between 2 and 6 months, you agree on a personal education plan before departure. Then you are reintegrated back in your class upon return and will need to pass the exams at the end of the school year together with your peers<sup>6</sup>. You will also need to submit a certificate of assessment and a description of the subjects studied abroad. Based on these documents, teachers recognise the contents that are in line with the curriculum of individual subjects. Teachers will also discuss with you how to catch up with the subjects you did not study abroad and pass the upcoming tests.

## A full school year

If you decide to spend a full school year abroad, you must choose whether to take a gap year or try and have the learning period abroad recognised through a personal education plan. In both cases, the school makes a legally-binding contract with you and will allow you to be admitted back into school upon return.

Upon return, you must provide the school council and teachers' board with the host school curriculum, the specific content of the subjects followed abroad and a transcript of your marks. If these documents are in German, French, Italian, or English, no legal translation into Slovenian is required. They then evaluate these documents and decide which additional exams you need to take to be admitted to the next year. In fact, unless the curriculum of the host school aligns perfectly with the content of the five subjects for the end-of-school examination (*Matura*) you will need to sit exams over the summer. You might also be able to sit exams remotely while you are still abroad.

If you go abroad during the last year of upper secondary school, you can make an agreement with your school, and perform your fourth and final year learning remotely in parallel with your education abroad and thus meet the conditions for admission to the *Matura*.

## Possibility to take an exam on the whole curriculum to be admitted to the next school year

If you decide to take your mobility as a gap year, you have a choice between repeating the grade, or taking an exam on the whole curriculum of the school year and being admitted to the next grade.

## INFORMATION FOR PUPILS HOSTED IN SLOVENIA

### Registration in the host school

As an exchange pupil, you are enrolled as a regular pupil. Schools decide autonomously on admitting you and on which grade you will be placed, based on your age, the last grade you have completed in your home country, and your level of knowledge. You can also be placed in the fourth and last grade. You may agree with the host school on a personal education plan which foresees adjustments to the obligations that regularly enrolled pupils have in terms of, for instance, lesson attendance.

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<sup>6</sup> On the basis of the Law on Evaluation and Recognition of Education

## Funding for the host school

The school receives funding for hosted pupils as they are enrolled as regular pupils.

## Certification for hosted pupils

You will normally get a certificate of attendance with a transcript of marks and any other documentation requested by your sending school.

## Possibility of graduating in the host country during the exchange

You can take the *Matura* after successfully completing the fourth year of general upper secondary school. However, this is a rare practice.

## TESTIMONIAL

### Luna from Slovenia: a full school year in France

*"I learnt to respect others and get rid of stereotypes."*

If I had to explain why I went on exchange, I would say to learn the language and become independent. Now I can say that I reached both my goals.

Before leaving I had some social and linguistic preparation. Stressing the importance of leaving without expectations would have helped too; every experience is unique and there is no point in comparing it to others.

At first the language barrier was hard to overcome but daily full immersions improved my French a lot. I also had some troubles making friends, but I worked hard on it and started making connections.

Something funny happened on my first day in the host school: I went in the wrong class and nobody noticed until the second day.

*The recognition process: a piece of cake*

I knew there might have been some obstacles upon return, but they didn't stop me from going. On the contrary, enrolling back in my school was easy, as well as catching up, mostly because I had already studied several of the contents at the French school.

I recall my exchange period as an opportunity to become more independent and more respectful. In recommending it to other students, I would advise them not to have high expectations, to think of one thing at a time, to work hard and be patient.

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