

Aims of basic school education

Among other to provide students the opportunities to

- acquire knowledge and develop skills consistent with their abilities and interests
- foster personal development
- develop the ability for lifelong learning and continuous education
- foster the sense of belonging to one state, national identity, and cultural heritage, as well as educate about common cultural values
- educate about respecting human rights, understanding diversity and teach tolerance
- develop skills of communicating in Slovenian and foreign languages
- educate for sustainable development, for taking responsibility for one's actions, one's health, other people, and the environment, as well as
- develop entrepreneurial skills, inventiveness, and creativity.

Education staff

All education staff at school have the relevant educational qualification, namely the Master's degree and the certificate of professional examination. The education staff for SEN children have the special pedagogical educational qualification. The continuous professional development is an obligation, as well as the right of all education staff.

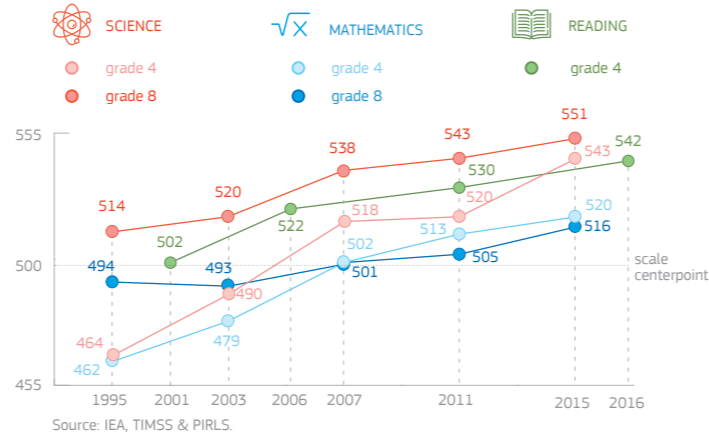
A basic school leader is the head teacher acting in capacity of a manager and a pedagogical leader. Depending on the size of the school, a head teacher can take on a deputy head.

The generalist teachers teach the grade 1 to 5 students, while subject specialist teachers teach grade 6 to 9 students. The school professional community includes the counselling staff, school librarians, organisers of meals, organisers of IT activities and computer technicians, and in certain settings, laboratory assistants, as well.

International comparison of student achievement

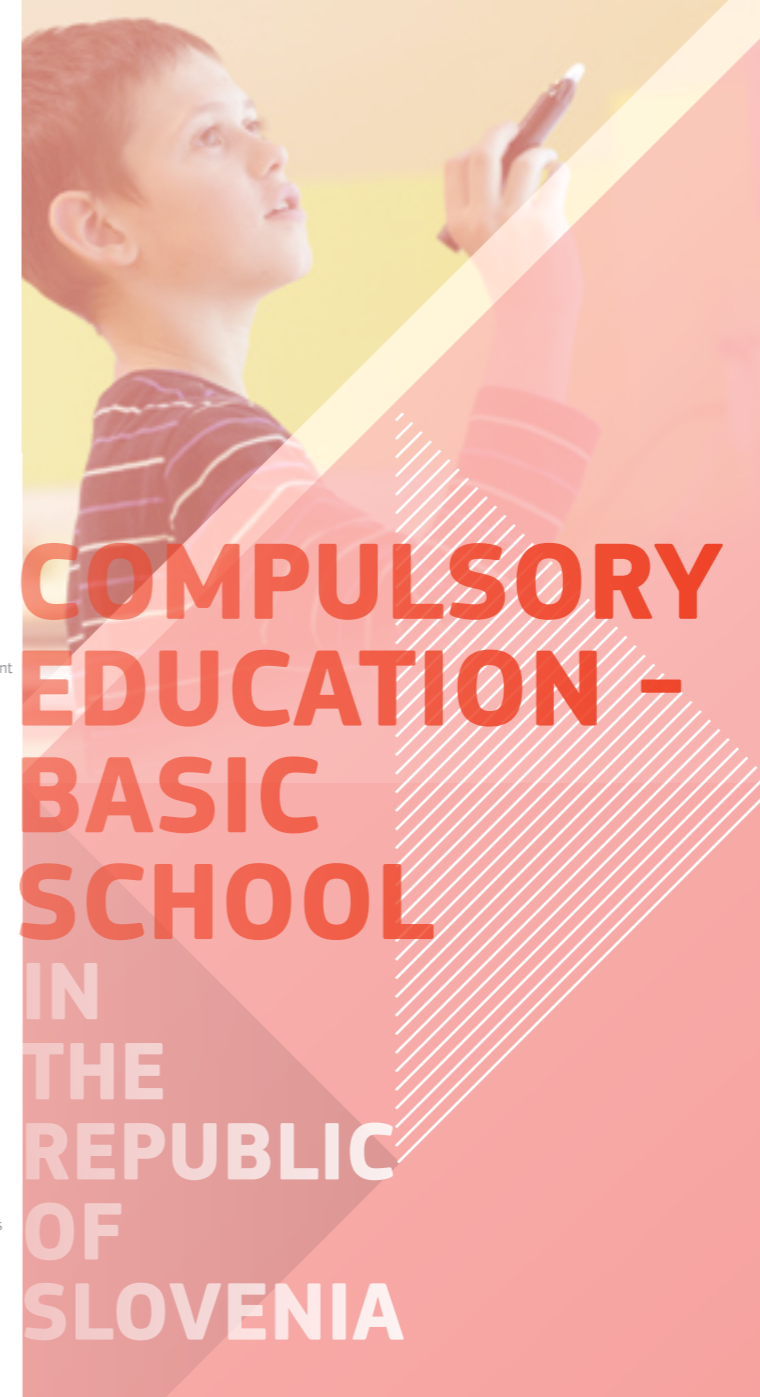
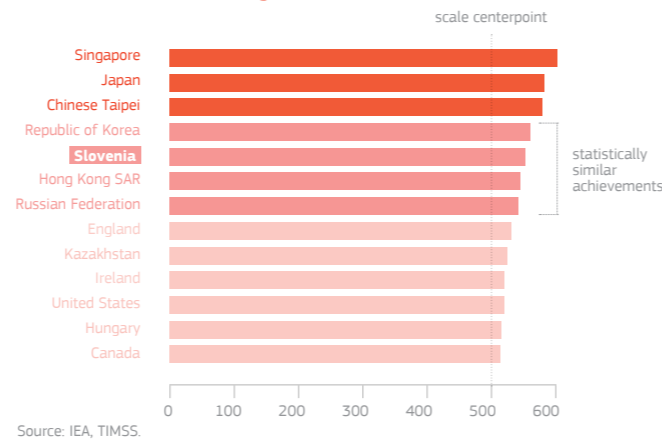
Looking at trends, the Slovenian students performed at higher levels in science, mathematics and reading in the International Mathematics and Science Study (TIMSS) 1995 to 2015 and the Progress in International Reading Literacy Study (PIRLS) 2001 to 2016.

Trends in student achievement, TIMSS 1995-2015, PIRLS 2001-2016



According to the results of the In TIMSS 2015, Slovenian grade 8 students performed in science remarkably well. Only students from Singapore, Japan, and Chinese Taipei outscore the Slovenian students.

Achievement in science, grade 8, TIMSS 2015



BASIC SCHOOL EDUCATION

Children start the compulsory 9-year basic school at the age of 6. The compulsory basic school is a single structure of primary and lower secondary general education or three educational cycles. Basic education is taught by generalist teachers and by specialist subject teachers.

| | Cycle | Grades | Education | ISCED |
|---|-------|--------|-----------------|-------|
| Single structure basic school programme | 1 | 1 to 3 | primary | 1 |
| | 2 | 4 to 6 | | |
| | 3 | 7 to 9 | lower secondary | 2 |

The total expenditure on educational institutions for basic education amounted to 2.3 percent of GDP in 2018.

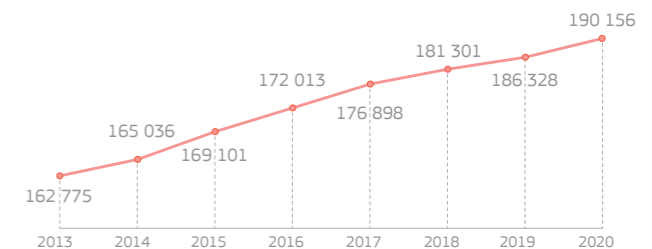
Public basic schools are set up by local communities. All children get a place at a school in their respective catchment area. Parents may enrol their children in a school outside their catchment area, in a private school or even decide to home school their child.

Majority of students attend public basic schools. In school year 2019/2020, less than 1 percent of students attended private basic schools providing the officially recognised basic school programmes.

Rise in the number

The generational cohorts continue to grow, so basic school students grow in number, too. On average, there are 20 students per class; the upper limit is at 28 students.

Students in basic education



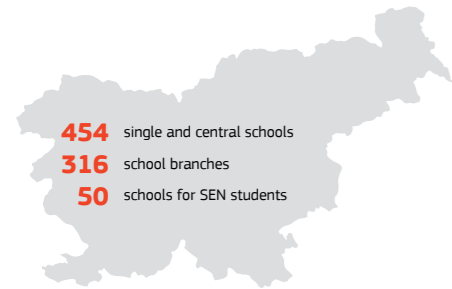
BASIC SCHOOL EDUCATION

Widespread network

The widespread network of public schools and settings of school branches gives access to basic education provision.

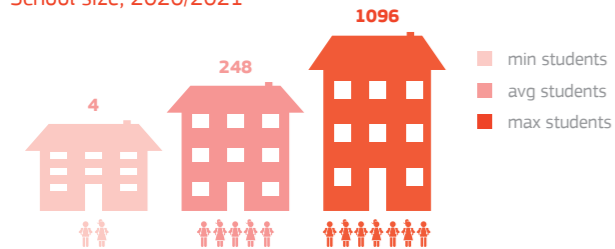
Over 450 basic schools deliver the mainstream educational programme, and some 50 specialised basic schools – special units at mainstream schools as well as specialised institutions for SEN students – deliver the adapted educational programme (under 2 percent of basic school students).

Basic school network, school year 2020/2021



Source: Ministry of Education, Science and Sport

School size, 2020/2021



Source: Ministry of Education, Science and Sport

Minority provision

The medium of instruction is Slovenian. The Italian and Hungarian national communities enjoy the right to pursue education in their respective languages in ethnically mixed areas.

Comprehensive programme

The basic school programme is determined by a timetable and subject curricula for compulsory and optional subjects, as well as various guidelines and relevant concepts.

Just as the EU average, a quarter of all lessons are dedicated to reading, writing and literature, and a sixth of all lessons to mathematics. Compared to their peers in Europe, Slovenian students at lower secondary level attend more lessons in the natural sciences. Likewise, students also do more sports relative to their European peers, and every school has a gymnasium.

Students start learning the first foreign language at the age of 7 or in grade 2. They may take non-compulsory lessons in grade 1. Students have the option to take a second foreign language in grade 4, as a non-compulsory optional subject, and may attend lessons until the end of grade 9.

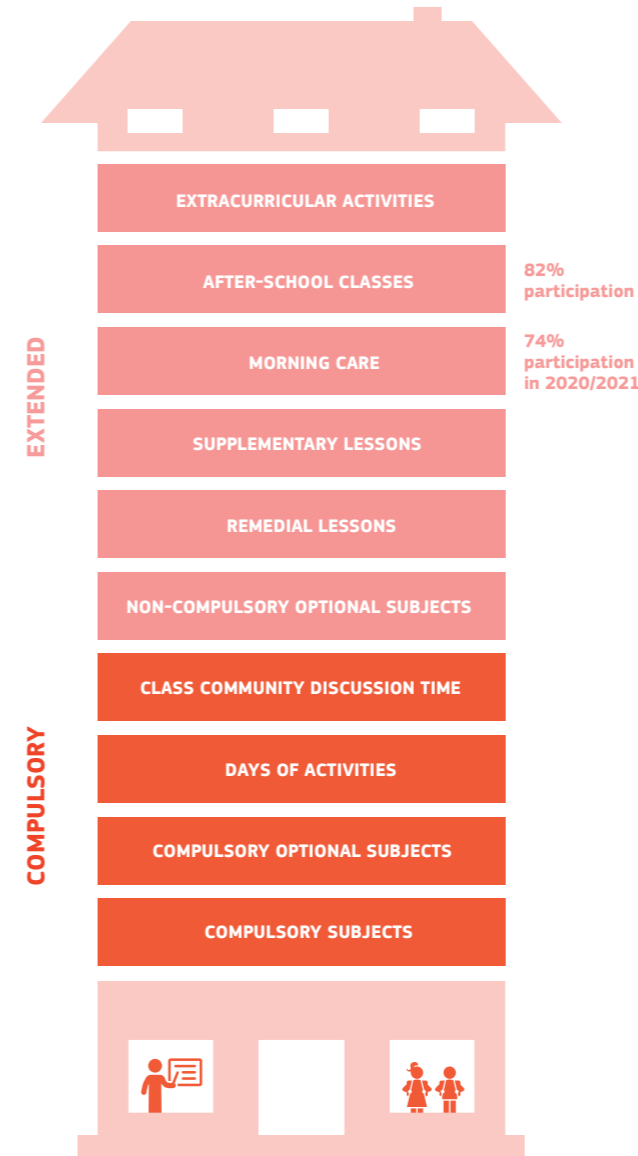
The selection of non-compulsory activities and subjects makes Slovenian basic schools front-runners in Europe. Alongside compulsory subjects, the compulsory optional subjects and class community time, all schools provide the extended programme, as well.

Assessment

In grades 1 and 2, teachers assess the progress of students with descriptive marks. From grade 3 onwards, teachers evaluate the achievement of standards of knowledge and start to assess knowledge with numerical marks.

Students sit compulsory low-stake national external assessment at the end of grades 6 and 9. Law disallows to rank schools based on the results of the national assessment.

Basic school programme



Sensitive and inclusive

All schools have a counselling service open to all school students, teachers, and parents. It provides guidance and support, career counselling, help with learning difficulties, and so forth. It is an integral service of the school programme.

All schools have a library and a computer classroom, and provide meals to students, as well. Basic schools are sensitive to the socio-economic status of students. All students can rent textbooks from a school textbook fund. Meals are free for students from disadvantaged backgrounds.

Free meals, 2019/2020



Source: Ministry of Education, Science and Sport

The majority of SEN students attend mainstream classes. The inclusive education is the paradigm for basic schools. Schools adapt the provision of their instruction to the needs of SEN students, and teachers and counselling staff provide further professional support.

The number of SEN students make up 7 percent of the total basic school student population in the school year 2019/2020.

The immigrant children have the right to basic education on the same terms as the citizens of the Republic of Slovenia. Furthermore, they have the right to additional Slovenian lessons according to criteria as set by the rules for children foreigners who enrol in the Slovenian basic school for the first time after moving to Slovenia. The schools with several foreign students can employ additional staff. In the school year 2020/2021, teachers started using the new subject-curriculum for learning Slovenian for migrant students.