

# SLOVENIA

## 1. Your country is very young, how did you become independent from Yugoslavia?

Before Slovenia became independent, it was a part of Yugoslavia which started rushing into economic, political and social problems. Because of the dissatisfaction of Slovenians, a referendum on the independence of Slovenia was held on December 23 1990, where 88% of the voters supported independence. Six months later, on 25 June 1991, Slovenia officially proclaimed its independence. Following the proclamation, a 10-day war followed, in which Slovenia, because of its unity, quickly reached peace.



**Slovenian flag on top of Triglav, June 1991**

## 2. Why is the dragon so characteristic of Slovenia? What is the origin of the name of your country and what is the meaning of your flag (colors, shield)?

The dragon appears in Slovenia in many myths and legends. The symbol of the capital city of Ljubljana is also a dragon, which was overcome by Jason and the Argonauts.

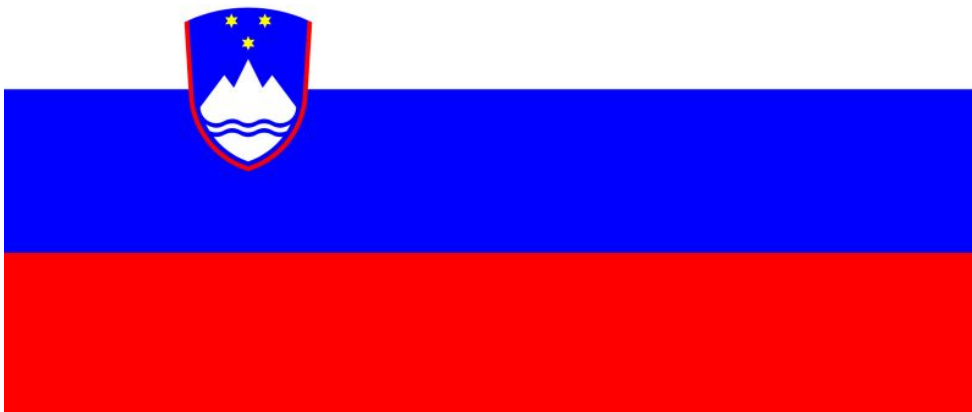
Slovenia was named after the affinities of its majority population, attributed to Slavic origin. In the old Slovenian, the word "Slovan" was used after the word "Sloven", which implies the name Slovenia.

The Slovenian flag was established in 1848, during the "national revival", when Slovenians defined Slovenian colours on the basis of colours of the province of Carniola and proposed

them to the Austrian administration for confirmation. The national flag of Slovenia features three equal horizontal bands of white (top), blue, and red, with the Slovenian coat of arms located in the upper hoist side of the flag centred in the white and blue bands. The coat of arms is a shield with the image of Mount Triglav, Slovenia's highest peak, in white against a blue background at the centre; beneath it are two wavy blue lines representing the Adriatic Sea and local rivers, and above it are three six-pointed golden stars arranged in an inverted triangle which are taken from the coat of arms of the Counts of Celje, the great Slovenian dynastic house of the late 14th and early 15th centuries.



**The Dragon Bridge in Ljubljana**



**Slovenian flag**

**3. How is your country organized politically and territorially?**

Slovenia is a parliamentary democracy. The elections are every 4 years, and the parliament consists of 90 members. Every 5 years we also elect the president of the country, who represents Slovenia at various meetings with other countries and is the supreme commander of the defense forces. Slovenia's current president is Borut Pahor. Slovenia is not divided into provinces, but 212 municipalities.



**Division of Slovenia into 212 municipalities**

#### **4. What is the fauna and flora characteristic of your country?**

In Slovenia, four natural units are present: the Alps, the Pannonian Plain, the Dinaric Mountains and the Mediterranean Sea. Therefore, flora and fauna in Slovenia are very diverse. 60% of Slovenia is covered in forests, and mixed forests are dominant. In Slovenia there are about 24,000 species, of which 2000 are on the red list (endangered). The most endangered are amphibians, followed by reptiles and mammals.

The typical animal representatives of Slovenia are: olm, brown bear, lynx, roe deer, Carniolan bee, Lipizzaner horse ... Special plant species in Slovenia include: grand pasqueflower, edelweiss, carniolan lily, gentian.





Človeška Olm

**5. What places to visit as tourists would you highlight as the most important in your country and why?**

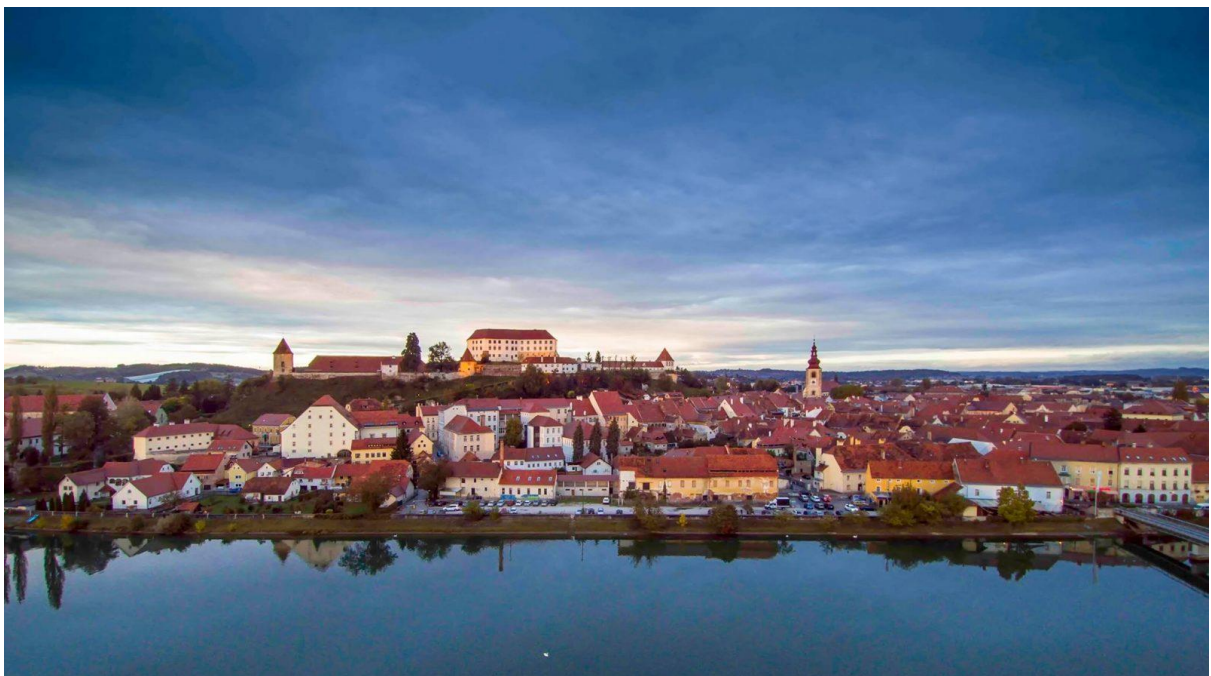


**Lake Bled, where a special experience is the visit of the island with pletna and view of the lake from the Bled castle.**





**Lake Bohinj is located in the Triglav National Park, where you experience a strong contact with nature.**



**Ptuj is the oldest Slovenian town, and there is a beautiful castle above the city.**





**The Postojna Cave is the most visited karst cave in Slovenia, where you experience the underworld with a small train.**



**The Predjama castle was once an impregnable fortress.**





**Ljubljana is the capital city of Slovenia, which has a beautiful old town.**



**Piran is the most beautiful Slovenian coastal town.**





**You can admire beautiful white horses at the Lipica Stud Farm.**



**The Soča river is best known for its emerald colour.**



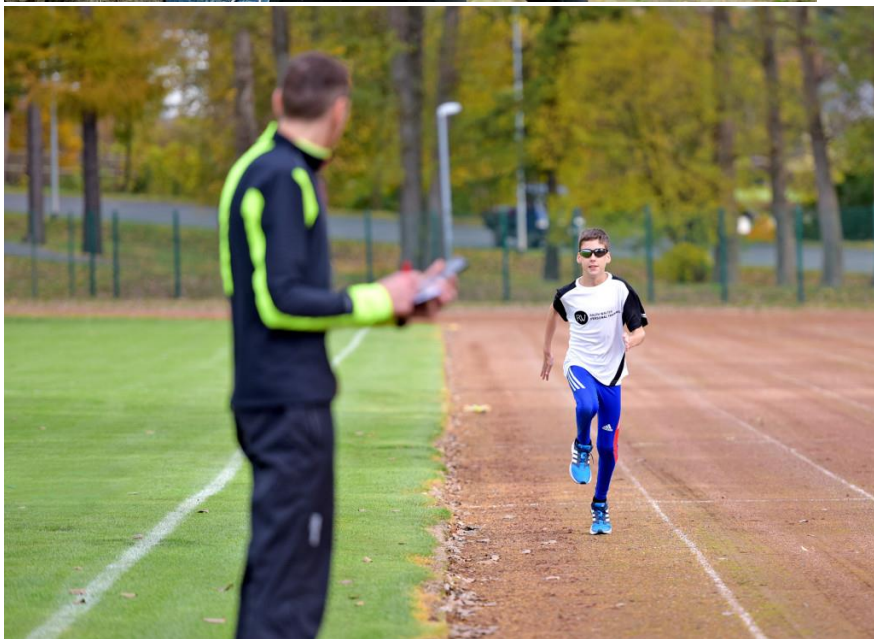


**Škocjan Caves are listed on the UNESCO's World Natural Heritage List.**

# DRAMLJE

**1. How do young people like you use to enjoy in Dramlje? What do you usually do in your free time?**

In their free time, young people like us play sports, hang out with friends and listen to music.



**2. Do you know what is the origin of the name of Dramlje?**



The name Dramlje originates from the Old Slavic word "DRAM", which means a marshy environment. The first owners of Dramlje were the monks of Charterhouse Žiče who had their ponds in the valleys in and around Dramlje. In the 14th century the Counts of Celje ruled in Dramlje, while Dramlje was first mentioned in the documents in 1451.



**Dramlje before the first world war**

**3. Due to the fact that Dramlje is a small town, you surely have to make purchases and negotiations or paperworks that can not be done there. Where do you do them and how?**

Dramlje belongs to the municipality of Šentjur, so we arrange most of the official things in Šentjur, which is less than 10 kilometers away from Dramlje. Only a little further is Celje, which is the third largest Slovenian city. In Celje are the seats of the larger and more important administrative bodies, where we arrange things that we can't arrange in Šentjur.



Šentjur



Celje

#### **4. What are the main points of Dramlje to be known in Slovenia? Could you tell us some curiosities about your village? (histories, legends...)**

In Slovenia, people know Dramlje mainly due to the motorway exit, which is named after our village. Otherwise, most people know Dramlje because of the nearby hill of St. Ursula with its beautiful views. The church was already mentioned in the 17th century, and an interesting legend is being circulated about its construction.

A landowner found a letter ordering him to build the church on the hill in honor of God and St. Ursula. But because the landowner did not build the church, he ended his life unhappily. The same happened to the second landowner. It was the third owner who completed the request in the letter, and later took care of the church and lived a happy life. According to the second legend, the church is built from the stones of the nearby castle near Gradišče.





**St. Ursula**

**5. What local holidays/celebrations/traditions are held in Dramlje and not in Slovenia? Please explain us some of them if possible.**

Every year we have three traditional events that are not found anywhere else in Slovenia:

**-Demo tractor forum:** this is a traditional event that is organized in June and will be the 12th edition this year. Every year, the event is bigger and more and more recognizable in Slovenia. Tractors and their attachments are presented every year.

**-Hike following the paths of the 14th Division:** Every February we follow the path of the Partisan 14th Division, which came to Styria in 1944 to stop the German occupation.

**-St. Ursula's day.**

# SCHOOL

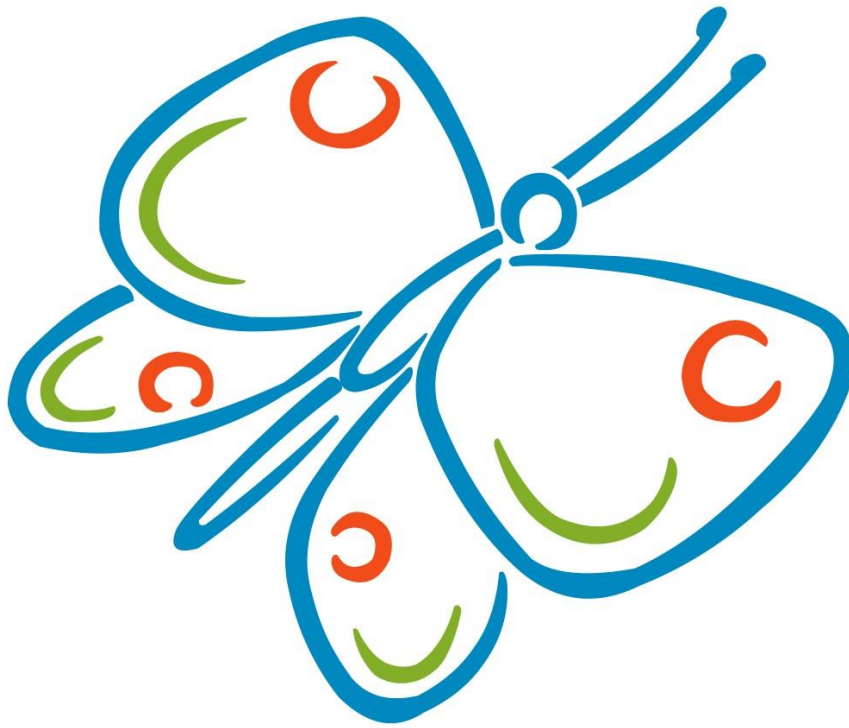
## 1. Why is the symbol of your school a butterfly?

In 2000, the then headteacher, Mr. Jančič proposed the creation of a school flag. Pupils draw different symbols, and among all the proposals, the symbol of the butterfly was selected, since in Dramlje there used to be a lot of common blue butterflies. In November 2000, the school parliament decided on a school flag with a blue butterfly in the upper left corner and an inscription "Dramlje Elementary School".



The common blue





**Logo of the elementary school Dramlje**

**2. Explain us the custom of using slippers in your school. Where does it come from and why do you use them?**

The origin of this custom is not clear. One theory is that it was adopted during the Turkish invasions in the 15th and 16th century. It is a tradition, that was transferred from the countryside to the towns. We use them so that we do not dirty the house floors and in this way save a lot of work for the housewives.

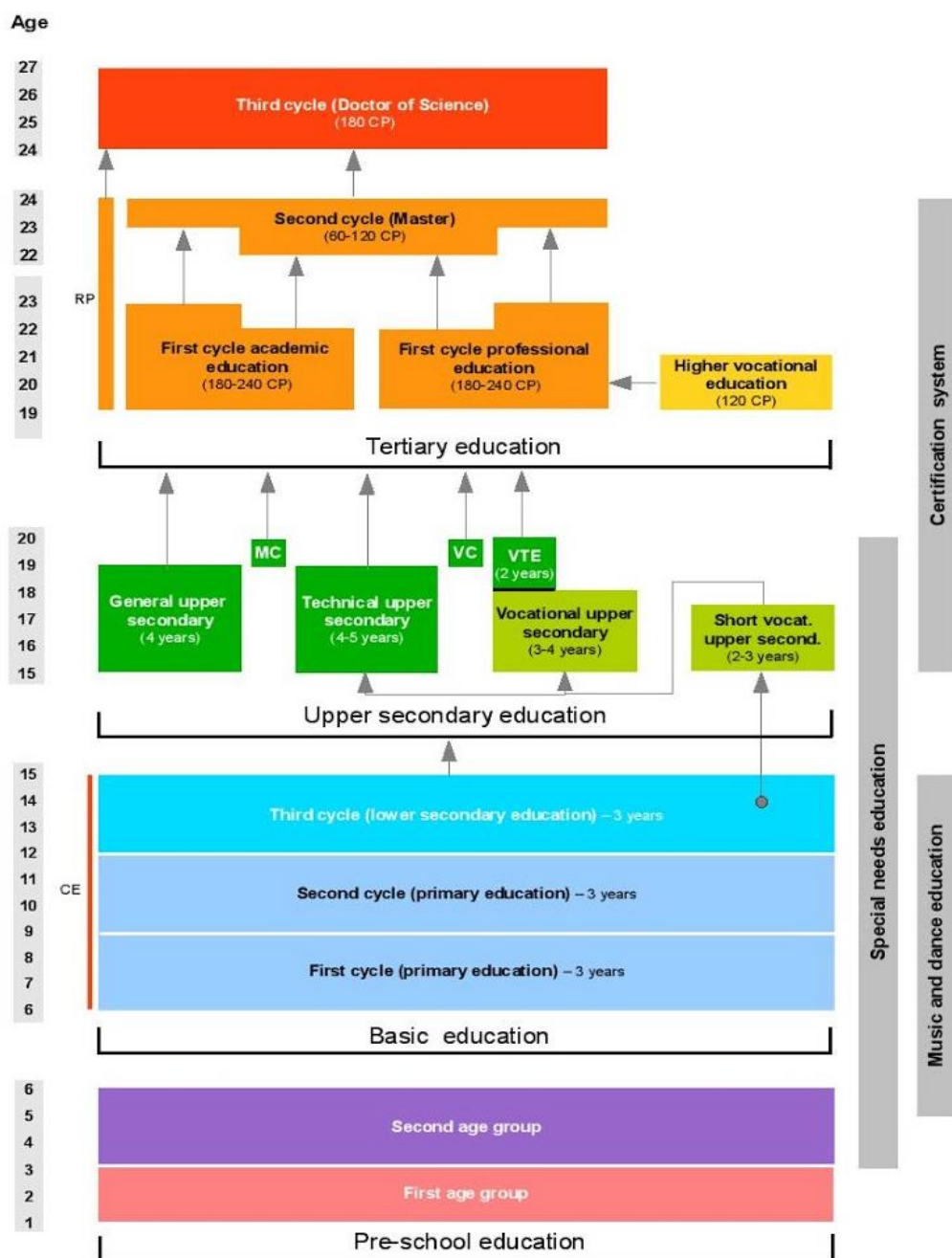
**3. When do you start school in Slovenia? How old are you when you finish your obligatory studies? Can you explain us how is organized your educational system?**

Primary school begins in the year when the child is 6 years old. The compulsory primary school lasts for 9 years, so the children end it when they are 15 years old.

After primary school, they can enroll into various vocational secondary schools and grammar schools. In order to be able to register at all, we need a certain number of points that we get from our final grades in the 7th, 8th and 9th school year. In some schools, a lot of points are required for enrollment, but you can apply to some schools no matter how many points you reach. Of course, more preferred schools require more points.

After finishing secondary school, we can enroll into vocational colleges or the university. It is necessary to complete the vocational matura examination or the general matura examination and reach a certain number of points to be able to enroll into the college or faculty of your choice.

## Structure of the education system in Slovenia



**CE** Compulsory education    **MC** Matura course (general upper secondary second chance education)  
**VC** Vocational courses (technical upper secondary retraining)  
**VTE** Vocational-technical education (2 years of technical upper secondary education built on previously completed programme)  
**RP** Regulated professions (5-6 years long higher education programmes leading directly to a Master degree)  
**CP** Credit points    **Certification system** Recognition of non-formal learning scheme

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#### 4. Answer us the following short questions:

- **How many students are there in your school? How many teachers are there?**
- **How many teaching periods have you got in your school per day? And how many and what subjects? If it is possible, how do you choose your subjects? If not, why?**
- **How are your breaks and how long are they?**

There are 233 students, 24 full-time teachers and 4 teachers also teaching at other schools at our school this year.

We have 6 to 7 lessons per day, which means 6-7 different subjects per day. We have 13 different subjects throughout the week.

At the end of the school year in the 6th, 7th and 8th grade, we select two optional subjects that we would like to attend in the next school year. The other subjects are the same for all pupils and are determined by the Ministry of Education.

The lessons last for 45 minutes, followed by a 5-minute break. During the second and third lesson we have a 15-minute break to eat our snack, and at the end of the 5th lesson, 20 minutes of lunch time.

#### 5. In our school there are “special days” like the day of the school, the cultural week, the peace day or the Christmas Festival’s day. Do you have something similar in your school and how do you celebrate them?

- **Chestnut picnic:** the event takes place on a Friday afternoon in October, classes prepare a show, chestnuts are roasted, products are crafted...
- **Christmas bazaar:** a Christmas event for parents with music acts, after the event children at the stands sell their handmade objects
- **Spring in Dramlje:** children of our school every spring present their talents to their parents
- **Carnival:** masquerade
- **Earth Day:** celebrating our planet with ecological workshops

# RANDOM

## **1. Do superstitions exist in your country? If they exist, explain us the most common ones.**

Slovenians have a lot of superstitions.

- For a day to be successful, one needs to put down the right foot first when getting up, first put on the right sock, the right shoe and the right sleeve.
- If you break a mirror, seven years of unhappiness await you.
- Meeting a chimney sweeper will bring you good luck.
- Four leaf clovers will bring you good luck.
- Each Friday 13th is considered an unlucky day.
- A black cat crossing the road in front of you is considered to bring bad luck.
- When we talk about something that went well, we knock on wood so that it does not all turn badly.
- If a person has some money in their pocket when hearing the cuckoo bird in the spring for the first time, he or she will have no financial worries during that year.

## **2. Can you answer these questions about Christmas?:**

- **Do you celebrate the tradition of the three wise men? If not, do you know about this tradition?**
- **How do you celebrate Christmas Eve and Christmas Day?**
- **How do you celebrate New Year's Eve and New Year?**
- **During these dates, what traditional traditions do you usually do?**

Yes we know and celebrate the tradition of the three wise men. In villages carol singers come to individual houses, sing and on the door write acronyms G+M+B and the number of the year to come. On Christmas Eve we traditionally set the nativity scene and the Christmas tree. We spend that evening with our families and at night a lot of people go to midnight mass. On Christmas morning we exchange gifts and spend time with people closest to us. New Year is spent with friends, or like Christmas, with the family. While waiting for midnight we eat and drink a lot. During that time we have Christmas and New Year holidays. In days after the celebration we wish the people we meet a happy new year.

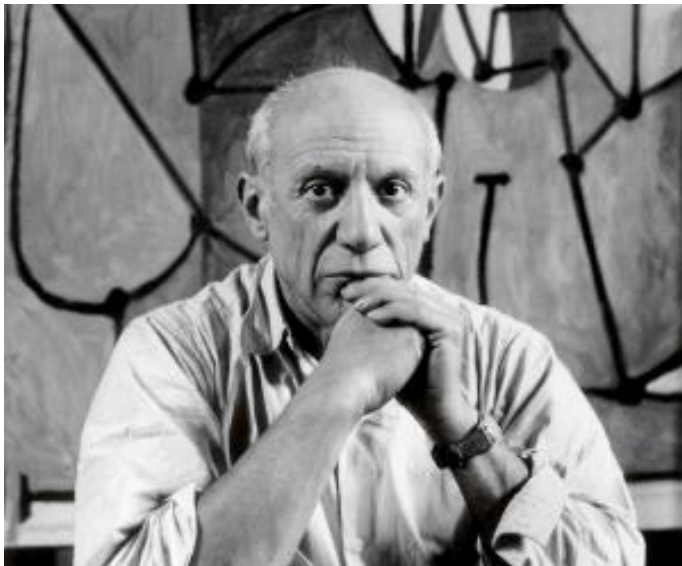
## **3. What famous Spaniards are the most known in Slovenia? Please, make a list with ten people from Spain that you know (athletes, singers, actors, sportsmen/women...)**

Most known Spaniards in Slovenia are: Pablo Picasso, Enrique Iglesias, Antonio Banderas, Pedro Almodovar, Penélope Cruz, Xavi Hernández, Marc Marquez, Pau Gasol, Rafael Nadal, king Juan Carlos, princess Sofia...





**Enrique Iglesias**



**Pablo Picasso**

**4. What are the most common modes of transport in your country? Do you have any type of discount card for young people in Slovenia for transport, cinema tickets, theatre tickets, museums...?**

The most common mode of transport in Slovenia is the car. Students mostly use trains and buses.

In Slovenia students and pensioners have a special card for discounts for transport by train and bus. Students and pensioners also have special discounts in cinemas, in most museums and other public institutions.

**5. Explain us the most important holidays/festivities/popular celebrations in your country. How do you celebrate them?**

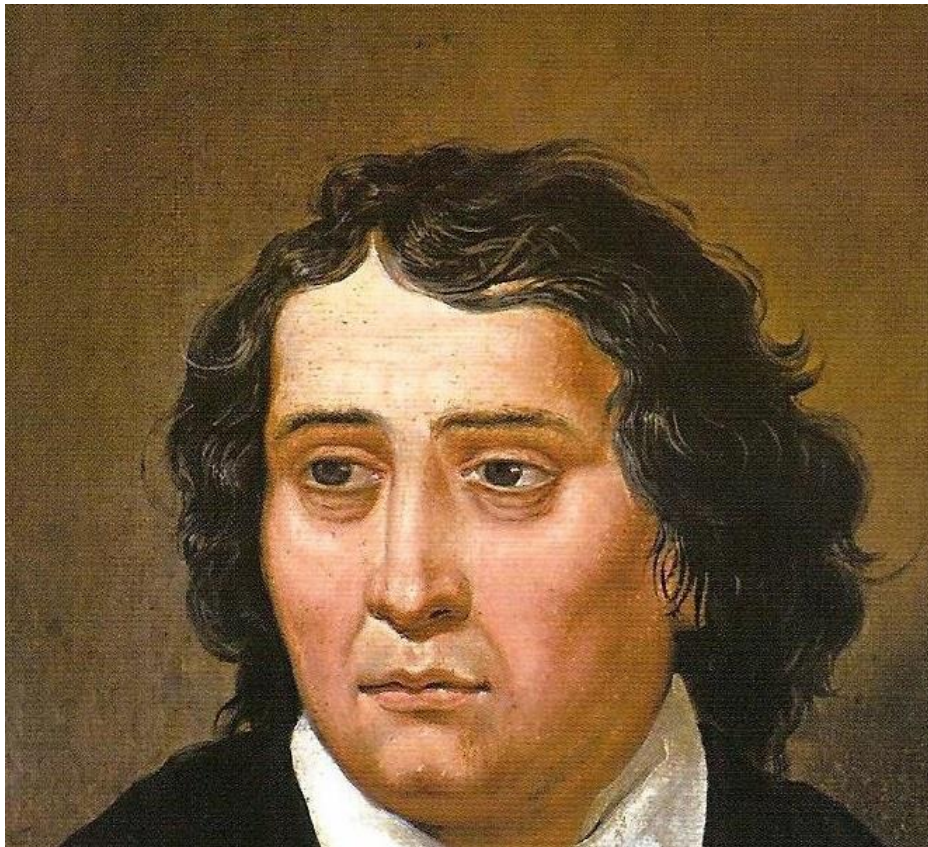
The most important Slovenian national holidays are:

**February 8 - Prešeren Day:** On this day in 1849, our most important poet France Prešeren, the author of the Slovenian anthem "Zdravljica", died. This day is a work-free day. At school we have a special celebration the day before. On this day we celebrate the day of culture and all the museums, galleries and theatres are open and free.

**April 27 - Day of Uprising Against Occupation:** On this day we remember the beginning of the rebellion against the attackers who attacked our country in 1941. This is also a national holiday and a work-free day.

**June 25 - Statehood Day:** a Slovenian national holiday and a work-free day. Commemorates the act of independence in 1991. At school, we have a special commemoration the day before and join it with the celebration of the end of the school year, and the Slovenian flags are hung in our homes. This is our most important national holiday.

**December 26 - Independence and Unity Day:** This is a national holiday and a work-free day. On this day in 1990, the results of the referendum on the independence were published. The plebiscite took place 3 days earlier and was attended by 93.2% of voters. To the question: "Should Slovenia become an independent country?", 88% of people answered with "yes".



Picture of France Prešeren





**Celebrating the independence in the Republic square in Ljubljana**