

India-Slovenia Relations

Republic of Slovenia attained independence from Yugoslavia in 1991. India recognized Slovenia on 11 May 1992. India supported Slovenia for membership at the UN. Slovenia was admitted into the UN on 23 May 1992.

Opening of Resident Missions

Diplomatic relations with Slovenia were concretized when the Ambassador of India in Vienna presented credentials on February 3, 1993 for concurrent accreditation to Slovenia. India opened its resident Mission in Ljubljana in February 2007.

Slovenia opened its resident mission in New Delhi on 1 August 2002 and upgraded it to Ambassador-level in September 2009. Slovenian Embassy in New Delhi has concurrent accreditation in Nepal, Bhutan and Sri Lanka, Bangladesh. Slovenia has its Honorary Consuls in India in four cities - Kolkata, Bangalore, Mumbai and Chennai.

High-level Visits

From India –The highest level visit was of a Parliamentary delegation led by Smt. Meira Kumar, former Speaker of Lok Sabha from May 26-30 2013. Other visits include:

- Prof. Y.K. Alagh, MOS for S&T (Feb 1997);
- Shri Gingee N. Ramachandran, MOS for Finance (Revenue) (Jan 2003).
- Shri Anand Sharma, then MOS (External Affairs) for inauguration of the leased Chancery premises of Embassy of India (30 March- 1 April 2008).
- Smt. Preneet Kaur, MOS (EA) for participation at the annual Bled Strategic Forum in 2009, 2010 & 2013.
- Gen. V.K. Singh, MOS (EA) for the Bled Strategic Forum (August 2014)
- Shri M.J. Akbar, MOS (EA) for the Bled Strategic Forum (September 2017)

From Slovenia

- Dr. Dimitrij Rupel, Former Foreign Minister (2004)
- Dr. Janez Drnovsek, Former President attended the inauguration of International Conference on Human values organised by the Art of Living Foundation in Bangalore (Jan 2006) & the Satyagraha Centenary Conference in New Delhi (Jan 2007)
- Dr. Danilo Turk, Former President attended the Delhi Sustainable Summit in Feb 2010.
- Mr. Borut Pahor as PM to India on State Visit (13-16 June 2011)
- Mr. Zerjav Radovan, former Dy.PM and Minister for Economic Development and Technology (Jan, 2013)
- Mr. Karl Erjavec, Dy. PM and Foreign Minister attended the 11th ASEM Foreign Ministers' Meeting in New Delhi (Nov 2013)
- Dr. Milan Brglez, President of the National Assembly led a Slovenian Parliamentary delegation to India (November 2015)
- Mr. Alojz Peterle, Member European Parliament and Former PM of the Republic of Slovenia participated in the World Culture Festival organized by the Art of Living at New Delhi (March 2016)

Agreements/Protocols/MOUs signed between the two countries are: Agreement on setting up Joint Committee on Bilateral Trade and Cooperation (1993); Agreement on Scientific and Technological Cooperation (1995); Agreement between FICCI/ASSOCHAM and the Slovene Chamber of Commerce and Industry to set up Joint Business Council

(1995); Protocol on Foreign Office Consultations (1996); Cultural Agreement for cooperation in the fields of culture, arts, education, sports and mass media (1996); National Centre for Trade Information, India (NCTI) – Chamber of Commerce of Slovenia (CCS) Agreement for reciprocal sharing of information (1997); Double Taxation Avoidance Agreement (2003); Export Credit Guarantee Corporation (ECGC) – Slovenian Export Corporation (SEC) Cooperation Framework Agreement (2003); Bilateral Air Services Agreement (2004); MOU between ICCR and University of Ljubljana for establishment of Hindi Chair (2009); Agreement on Mutual Promotion and Protection of Investments (2011); MOU between the Bureau of Indian Standards and Slovenian Institute for Standardization (2011); MOU between the Indian Institute of Science, Bengaluru and University of Nova Gorica for Cooperation in the Field of Research and Education (2011); MOU for the establishment of Long Term Chair of Hindi at Faculty of Arts, University of Ljubljana (2011); MOU between Air India, Aerodrom Ljubljana and Adria Airways (2011); Protocol amending the Bilateral Air Services Agreement (2012); Agreement on Short-Stay Visa Waiver for Holders of Diplomatic Passports (2013); Agreement between Air India and Adria Airways on code-sharing arrangements (2013); MOU between Prasar Bharati and RTV on Co-operation in Broadcasting (2013); MOU between NIMS University of Rajasthan, Jaipur and University of Primorska on Cooperation in the Fields of Education and Science and Research (Nov 2014); Agreement on Gainful Occupation of Dependents of Members of Diplomatic Missions and Consular Posts (April 2015); Protocol Amending the Convention and the Protocol for the Avoidance of Double Taxation and the Prevention of Fiscal Evasion with respect to Taxes on Income (May 2016); MOU between Central Council for Research in Ayurvedic Sciences (CCRAS), Ministry of AYUSH and University of Primorska (July, 2016).

Institutional Mechanism: In December 2018, the National Assembly of Slovenia established a **Parliamentary Friendship Group** with India with Ms. Suzana Lep Simenko being its Chairperson. There have been seven sessions of the **Foreign Office Consultations (FOCs)** so far, the last was at New Delhi in July 2010. In addition, political consultations between India and Slovenia took place in February 2014 in Ljubljana, in which the Indian delegation was headed by JS (CE). It is Slovenia's turn to hold the next FOC. The bilateral **Joint Committee on Trade and Economic Cooperation (JCTEC)** has so far held eight sessions. The 8th Session of India-Slovenia JCTEC was held on July 16, 2013 in New Delhi. It is now Slovenia's turn to host the JCTEC.

Bilateral Trade

Total bilateral trade in 2018 increased by 33.79% from EUR 270.01 million to EUR 361.25 million. Indian exports to Slovenia increased by 36.57% from EUR 183.52 million to EUR 250.61 million and Indian import from Slovenia increased by 29.15% from EUR 86.49 million to EUR 110.64 million. This is the highest commodity trade between the two countries during the period 2014-2018. India has continuously enjoyed a trade surplus with Slovenia. Slovenia identified India as one of its strategic focus markets in 2013.

India has continuously enjoyed a trade surplus with Slovenia. Main **items of imports from India** include pharmaceutical products, organic chemicals, mineral fuels, mineral oils and products of their distillation, coffee, tea and spices, machinery and mechanical appliances, electrical machinery and equipment and parts thereof, articles of stone, plaster, cement, asbestos, mica or similar material, plastic and articles thereof, iron and steel, etc. Main **items of export from Slovenia** to India include machinery and mechanical appliances, organic chemicals, iron and steel, electric machinery and equipment, plastic and articles thereof, paper and paperboard, articles of paper pulp, aircraft, wood and articles thereof, rubber and articles thereof, etc.

Science and Technology: The bilateral S&T programmes between the two countries are being pursued under the bilateral Agreement on Scientific and Technological Cooperation signed between India and Slovenia in January 1995 in New Delhi. A Joint Working Group (JWG) on Scientific and Technological Cooperation has been set up to sign executive Programmes of Cooperation (PoC) concluded for a specified period. The 4th India-Slovenia JWG on S&T met in New Delhi in November 2014 and identified joint projects for implementation for the period 2015-17. Both sides are in direct contact for finalizing next PoC.

Culture and Education – The last Cultural Exchange Programme for 2010-14, under the Cultural Agreement for cooperation in the fields of culture, arts, education, sports and mass media signed in December 1996, is in implementation. Discussions for the next CEP are going on with the Slovene side.

Although, Ayurveda is an official practice in Slovenia, it is classified as a Complementary and Alternative Medicine (CAM) practice (also in the law it is defined as Traditional Indian Medicine) and not as a healthcare practice. The Embassy, with the support of the Ministry of AYUSH, is running an AYUSH Information Centre to promote and disseminate information pertaining to traditional medicine system of India and Yoga. An agreement was signed between Central Council for Research in Ayurvedic Sciences (CCRAS), Ministry of AYUSH and University of Primorska in July 2016 to establish an Ayurveda Chair in the University of Primorska. Prof. Anand Vijay Kalaskar joined as the visiting professor in March 2018 and completed his tenure in March 2019. The Embassy of India, with the support of Ministry of AYUSH, co-hosted the 5th International Ayurveda Congress, as a part of the 11th European Congress for Integrative Medicine from 21 to 23 September 2018 at Grand Hotel Union, Ljubljana.

A Hindi Chair was functional in the Faculty of Arts, University of Ljubljana from 2009-2013. The Mission is facilitating Hindi classes in the University of Ljubljana. An India Corner was opened in May 2018 in the Library of the University of Ljubljana by the Mission.

Slovenian educational institutions such as Joseph Stephen, National Institute of Chemistry and University of Maribor are getting popular among Indian research scholars, coming under Erasmus Scholarship and other programmes.

There are three busts of important Indian personalities in Slovenia – (i) Gurudev Rabindranath Tagore in Maribor; (ii) Mahatma Gandhi in Slovenje Gradec; and (iii) Jawarhar Lal Nehru in Gorinska Brda.

Given Slovenia's beautiful and diverse landscape, some Indian films, especially from South India, were shot in different locations of Slovenia.

Visa - In 2013, an agreement on Short-Stay Visa Waiver for Holders of Diplomatic Passports was signed between the two countries. Since April 2017, India has been issuing five-year multiple entry tourist and business visa to Slovenian citizens. Since August 2015, Slovenian citizens are also entitled for e-visa.

Transport and connectivity- There is no direct air connectivity between India and Slovenia. However, there is a code sharing arrangement between Air India and Adria Airways.

Indian Community: There is a very small Indian community of about 150, comprising mainly of students and PIOs.

Useful links

- Mission's website: **<http://eoiljubljana@gov.in>**
Facebook: **<https://www.facebook.com/indiainslovenia>**

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