

We are Europeans

Overcoming Cultural Borders Within European Community And Its Implementation Into Education

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We are Europeans

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Overcoming Cultural Borders Within European Community And Its Implementation Into Education

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Erasmus+

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Introduction

Dear friends,

I am really grateful that our school was given chance to take part in Erasmus Plus and thanks to it my colleague Zuzana Poluchová and me participated in two teachers' courses abroad.

First, we improved our information-communication technology skills in Malta. After that, we acquired more knowledge about British life, language and culture in Oxford, UK. Both stays were great, very useful and unforgettable. We met lots of wonderful people from various European countries and asked them to complete a questionnaire about their culture and lifestyle in order to help us overcome cultural borders within the European Union. I would like to express my gratitude to all those teachers who helped us with this e-book by completing the questionnaires. Through the gained information, we could learn something new about Europeans.

The e-book 'We Are Europeans' is also an outcome of our Erasmus Plus project. Its aim is to focus on bringing all Europeans closer to each other by concentrating on what we have in common, not how we differ. We hope it will help increase European awareness and overcome all cultural borders.

Natália Peciarová

Questionnaire for students

Complete the questionnaire.

- 1.** How do people in European countries spend their free time?
- 2.** Which sports are popular among the inhabitants of the EU?
- 3.** What is the average compulsory education in the EU?
- 4.** Which holiday is the most important for the Europeans?
- 5.** Which European states do people from the EU often travel to?
(for holidays, on business, study...)
- 6.** Which foreign languages are commonly taught at schools in the EU?
- 7.** What comes to Europeans' minds when they hear word Slovakia?

Are you curious to know correct answers? Let's have a look at them.

What do Europeans have in common?

1. Free time activities

The most popular free time activities within the European Union are:

- watching TV
- travelling
- walking
- doing sports
- going out with friends



2. Sports

The most popular sports within the European Union are:

- football
- hockey
- hiking



3. Education

The average compulsory education in the EU is

- Compulsory age of starting school in European countries

https://www.nfer.ac.uk/shadomx/apps/fms/fmsdownload.cfm?file_uuid=3B48895C-E497-6F68-A237-BCD7AB934443&siteName=nfer

Theoretical ages for beginning and end of lower secondary/compulsory education and curriculum documents

Country	Lower secondary begins	Lower secondary ends	Compulsory ends	Documents relate to ... (theoretical ages)	Description of stage
AT	10	14	15	12 – 14	Final 2 years of the 4 year lower level of the academic secondary school
BE	12	16	18 (1)	14 – 16	Second cycle/degree of general secondary education
DE(BA) (NRW)	10	16	18	14 – 16	Final 2 years of the 6 years of lower secondary education (<i>Gymnasium</i>)
DK	n.a.	n.a.	16	13 – 16	Final three years of the 9 year comprehensive school
ES (2)	12	16	16	14 – 16	Second cycle of compulsory secondary education
FI	n.a.	n.a.	16	13 – 16	Upper stage of the comprehensive school
FR	11	15	16	13 – 15	Final two years of the 4 year <i>collège</i>
GR	12	15	15	12 – 15	The 3 years of <i>gymnasio</i>
IE	12	15	15	12 – 15	3 years of second level education – junior cycle
IS	n.a.	n.a.	16	13 – 16	Final 3 years of the 10 year comprehensive school
IT	11	14	14	11 – 14	3 years of <i>scuola media</i>

LI	12	16	16	14 – 16	Years 3 and 4 of the 8 year <i>Gymnasium, Sekundarstufe I</i>
LU	12	15	15	12 – 15	Lower cycle of the <i>lycée</i> (general secondary education)
NL	12	15	17/18 (3)	12 – 15	The 3 year period of ‘basic education’ <i>VWO</i>
NO	n.a.	n.a.	16	13 – 16	The lower secondary stage of the 10 year comprehensive school
PT	12	15	15	12 – 15	Third cycle of basic education
SE	n.a.	n.a.	16	12 – 16	Period between years 5 and 9 in the 9 year compulsory school
UK (EWNI)	11	14	16	14 – 16	Key Stage 4, final 2 years of compulsory secondary education
UK(S)	12	16	16	14 – 16	S3 and S4, final 2 years of compulsory secondary education

n.a: not applicable – in the Nordic countries there is no separate system of lower secondary education (see Chapter 1)

(1) Part-time education (until compulsory school leaving age) for 15 to 16 year olds who are not in full-time general education

(2) Refers to the situation post-reform

(3) Compulsory education lasts either 12 years full time (age 5 to 17 years) or full time from 5 until the end of the school year in which the pupil has reached 16, followed by part-time compulsory education until 18 years of age

<http://www.leeds.ac.uk/educol/documents/00001195.htm>

4. Holidays

The most important holiday in the European countries is:

- Christmas



People decorate a Christmas tree. They can find Christmas presents under it. Families spend Christmas at home, enjoying the time spent together.



5. Travelling

The most popular countries to visit within the European Union are:

- the United Kingdom – for better job opportunities
- Italy – for holiday
- Spain – for holiday



6. Foreign Languages

The most popular languages studied by students in the European countries are:



- English



- German



- French



7. What else do Europeans have in common?

Although each nationality has something special that differs from other nations, we all want to live in peace and understanding.

We are Europeans



our project.mp4



Slovakia and foreigners

What comes to a foreigner's mind when they hear word *Slovakia*?

- the Danube River
- Bratislava – the capital
- the Tatra mountains



Information gained thanks to our colleagues – European teachers attended courses in:

- ETI Malta (1st June – 5th June 2015), St.Julian 's (Empowerment in ICT)



- Lake School of English in Oxford (7th September – 11th September 2015) (Language, Life and Culture in the UK Today)



Thanks a lot for your help, dear friends!

Questionnaire for teachers

(Participants of courses in Malta and the UK)

Dear colleagues,

Meeting people of other countries, communication and cooperation can help us understand any differences among the diversity of cultures.

We, teachers from Slovakia, would like to ask you to fill in this questionnaire in order to help us and our students overcome cultural borders within European Union.

After summarizing your answers we will prepare an e-book in the form of teaching aid where we want to introduce life and culture in various European countries, focusing on bringing other nationalities closer to students' minds.

1. How do people in your country spend their free time ?
2. Which sports are popular among the inhabitants of your country?
3. What are the typical symbols of your country? (e.g. tree, flower, animal, food, things, people etc. that can be matched with your country)
4. How long is the compulsory school education in your country? (how many years and what age)
5. Which holiday is the most important for the people of your country?

6. How do people celebrate the holiday? (Do they keep any special tradition and customs?)
7. Which European states do people from your country often travel to? (for holidays, on business, study...)
8. Which foreign languages are commonly taught at schools in your country?
9. What comes to your mind when you hear the word Slovakia ?
10. Would your school be open to participate in an international school partnership project within Erasmus+ ? (If yes, on what topic?)

Thank you very much for your time and consideration.

As a reward, you will be sent the link to our e-book after publishing. Hopefully, it will help all of us not only get interesting information, but also overcome cultural borders within the European community. 😊

Natalia & Zuzana

Our stay in Malta

Malta očami učiteliek gymnázia



Erasmus+

Po náročnom období vypracovávania vzdelávacieho projektu a vybavovania formalít sme sa tešili na nové vedomosti, zručnosti, skúsenosti a samozrejme i nezabudnuteľné zážitky, ktoré nám mala ponúknuť malá ostrovná krajina v Stredozemnom mori, **Malta**.



Bývanie v maltskej rodine predstavovalo pre nás skôr život v akejsi pevnosti. Okná vedúce do zadných dvorčiekov pripomínajúcich labyrint, dom plný domácich miláčikov, pre nás neznáme, niekedy aj nejedlé jedlá sa našťastie striedali s krásnymi a svetlými priestormi školy, kde sme sa vzdelávali v oblasti tvorivého využívania moderných technológií vo vyučovaní angličtiny. V osemčlennej skupinke učiteľov z rôznych krajín Európy pod vedením skúsenej lektorky, pôvodom Angličanky, sme míľovými krokmi získavali nové a nové vedomosti, vymieňali si skúsenosti z učiteľskej praxe či nadväzovali nové priateľstvá. Popoludnia patrili odhaľovaniu maltskej histórie, spoznávaniu krás tohto malého ostrova či zaslúženému leňošeni na skalnatých plážach mora, ktoré nám ponúkalo hru svojich rôznych farebných odtieňov. Večeri a noci sa niesli v znamení doliehajúcej neutíchajúcej hudby z okolitých rušných ulíc a diskoték, čo svedčí o temperamente južanských krajín.



Po týždni „relaxu“ v školských laviciach sme sa opäť vrátili na svoje miesta v škole, za katedru. Bohatšie však o nové cenné vedomosti a naplnené novou energiou a entuziazmom.

Pri slove Malta sa nám už navždy vybaví zlatohnedá farba prostredia, tyrkysová farba mora, bledomodrá bezoblačná obloha, obrovské skaly, veľa kameňa , úzke rušné uličky, množstvo ľudí rôznych národností, približne 400 000 obyvateľov, 300 000 áut, 1 700 000 turistov, 365 kostolov.

Zuzana Poluchová



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Our stay in Oxford

Týždeň v Oxforde



Erasmus+

Navyše súťažia v originálnych disciplínach. Sily si navzájom merajú klamári, iní súťažia v strúhaní grimás, jedení žihľavy, vábení jeleňov pračudesnými zvukmi či pretekajú sa v šnorchlovaní v kanáli plnom blata. Ženy a dievčatá sa venujú klasickému pleteniu a háčkovaniu, muži majú záľubu v rátaní vlakov a spolu si radi zatancujú [Morisov tanec](#).

Toto všetko a ešte omnoho viac zo života Britov sme sa dozvedeli v Oxforde počas nášho ďalšieho vzdelávacieho kurzu v rámci projektu Erasmus+, ktorý bol zameraný na spoznávanie kultúry tohto v správaní rezervovaného národa.



V známom univerzitnom meste sme sa opäť stretli s mnohými pedagógmi takmer z celej Európy. Trávili sme spolu čas v škole, ako študenti, ktorí sa chcú veľa naučiť. Spoznávali sme históriu mesta a slávnej oxfordskej univerzity, dozvedali sme sa nové a nové informácie o ostrovej krajine, jazyk ktorej sa učíme. Zároveň sme splyvali so životom anglických rodín, u ktorých sme boli bývali v dvojdomkoch, takzvaných semi-detached houses. Využili sme možnosť

ochutnať ich prekvapujúco zdravšiu a zdravšiu domácu stravu, výbornú pomarančovú marmeládu, octové čipsy či milovanú a zároveň nenávidenú pochutinu marmite pripomínajúcu naše magi.



Spolu so mnou takýto zaujímavý týždeň prežila v Oxforde, meste, kde žila Alica zo sveta zázrakov a kde svoju divadelnú kariéru začínal Mr Bean, Natália Peciarová, tiež učiteľka anglického jazyka Gymnázia v Partizánskom.

Zuzana Poluchová

Some European Countries and their culture

(Students ' Projects)

The United Kingdom

Capital and largest city:

London

Area: 243 610 km²

Official language: English

Population: 64,511,000



Education: The education system in the UK is divided into four main parts, primary education (starts at 5 and continues until the age of 11), secondary education (from 11 to 16), further education and higher education. Children in the UK have to legally attend primary and secondary education which runs from about 5 until the student is 16 years old.

Tradition: Traditional tea is served at 5 o'clock. If someone asks you if you "would like a cuppa", they are asking if you would like a cup of tea. If someone says "let me be a mother" or "shall I be a mother", they are offering to pour out the tea from the teapot.



Sights: **The London Eye**- it is a big wheel. You can see up to 25 miles in each direction with views over some of the world's most famous sights, including St Paul's, the Palace of Westminster and Windsor Castle.

Buckingham palace- Buckingham Palace has served as the official London residence of Britain's sovereigns since 1837.



Big Ben & The Houses of Parliament- The name "Big Ben" is generally known to describe the clock tower as a whole. However, "Big Ben" is actually the principal bell within the tower.

Nature: **Pistyll Rhaeadr, Powys, Wales**- The tallest waterfall in Wales
Lulworth Cove, Dorset- One of the planet's best examples of a cove
Cheddar Gorge, Somerset- England's deepest gorge

Free time and sports: Typical sports for the UK are: rugby, cricket, darts, golf, tennis, squash.



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Prepared by: Lívia Kákošová, 2.B

Portugal

Capital city: Lisbon

Area: 92,212 km²

Currency: Euro €

Official language: Portuguese

Recognised regional language: Mirandese

Religion: Roman Catholic Church

Population: 10, 393, 000

- **Women:** 52,45%
- **Men:** 47,55%

Education

Education in Portugal is free until the age of 18.

The educational system is divided into:

- Preschool (for those under age 6),
- Basic education (9 years, in three stages, compulsory),
 - 1st Cycle
 - 2nd Cycle
 - 3rd Cycle
- Secondary education (3 years, compulsory),
- Higher education (for example universities).

Traditions

- June 13th is known as **St. Anthony's Day**. St. Anthony is representing those who lose things and is a patron of animals too. Portuguese celebrate him by allowing the young members of the community to dance in the streets and decorate the town with flowers, candles and images of him to represent his life. The children also run through the streets on the eve of this day begging for coins in his name.
- The Portuguese are very religious and superstitious. They believe and take part in magical practices and witchcraft. These ceremonies are usually performed in order to deal with illnesses and healing. They emphasise the worshipping of saints because they believe that an offering to the saints will cure all illnesses. Many times they place an image of what needs to be healed in the church and believe that the saint will heal it.
- **Fado** is traditional portuguese genre, consisting of sad, tearful music. It's accompanied by the guitar.



Food and drink

- Many of Portugal's meals are fish-based because of the country's situation on the Atlantic. The most famous fish meal is salted cod, **Bacalhau**, which can be cooked in 365 different ways.
- One of the most popular meals in Portugal is pork. **Roast suckling pig** is a speciality of Central Portugal. Another popular pork meal is the **Carne de porco à Alentajana**, which consists of pork marinated in wine and garnished with clams.
- In the south, **Gaspacho**, a soup of tomatoes, cucumber, onions, garlic, chillies and vinegar, is popular. **Caldeirada** is a fish soup made of water, tomatoes, onions and garlic.
- A typical drink in Lisbon is Ginjinha which is a liqueur made by sour cherry. It is served with a piece of the fruit in the bottom of the cup.
- Port wine is typically a sweet, red wine, often served as a dessert wine.

Sports

- Football is the most popular sport in Portugal. The country has produced an amazing amount of talented football players who became known worldwide. Players such as Cristiano Ronaldo, Pepe, Fabio Coentrao. The Portugal National Football Team is among the higher-rated national football teams in Europe.

Monuments

- **Belem Tower** is a symbol of the Age of Discovery. Built in 1515 as a fortress to guard the entrance to Lisbon's harbor. The Belem Tower was the starting point for many of the voyages of discovery, and for the sailors it was the last sight of their homeland.



- **Rua Augusta Arch** is a stone, historical building and visitors' attraction in Lisbon on Commerce Square. It has six columns and is surrounded with statues of various historical figures.
- **The Monument to the Discoveries** is one of the modern and popular monuments. The huge monument honors the time when the Portuguese were among the world's leading explorers, seeking out new lands far across the oceans. Most important on the monument is Henry the Navigator, who founded numerous voyages including those which discovered the island of Madiera and sailed along the west coast of Africa.

Interesting facts

- The legal age to buy and drink alcohol is 16, not 18 as in the Slovak Republic
- The world-famous Port wine has been imitated in several countries - Australia, South Africa, India and the United States.
- The Festa do Colete Encanado, held in Vila Franca de Xira, is an event with bulls running.
- People with education are addressed with phrases such as *Senhor Doutor* (Mr. Dr.) and as for women it's the title *Dona*, often used with the first name as in "Dona Maria."
- Portugal is one of the oldest countries in Europe.

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Prepared by: Diana Klimková, 2.B

FINLAND



Finland is known as the country of a thousand lakes and islands. Its area is Finland's fifth largest country in Europe. Winter is the longest season and lasts longer than other seasons.

Free time in Finland People in Finland usually spend their free time with kayaking, cycling or shopping in shopping centres. One of the most visited places in Helsinki is Unique Lapland Winter World where everything is from ice and people can go skiing there, driving scooters and doing many other activities at night.



Traditions in Finland

Crayfish celebration begins when the summer starts to change and the fall evenings become darker, but the warm breath of summer in the air can be felt. Crayfish is served not only as food but also as a decoration. Christmas in Finland unconditionally includes sauna and fresh salmon with baked potatoes and carrot.



Sights

- One of the greatest sights in Finland is fortress Suomenlinna. It is located on eight still inhabited islands and it is registered in the UNESCO list.
- There is Olavinlinna Castle which was founded in the year 1475 by Erik Axelson.
- Mikkeli Cathedral is a large church in Mikkeli, Southern Savonia, Finland, designed by a Finnish church architect Josef Stenbäck. It was built in 1896–1897.



Education

Children begin primary school when they are 7 years old. Primary education is followed by a secondary school or a secondary vocational school which lasts for three years.

Sports

The most popular sports in Finland are ice hockey, skiing, athletics and floorball.



Interests

- Finns are the biggest coffee drinkers in the world.
- In almost every Finnish house you can find a sauna
- Finns have created the longest film in the world. It lasts 10 days.
- Finland has found the oldest chewing gum in the world. Its age was estimated at five thousand years.
 - Santa Claus in Finland called Joulupukki.

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Prepared by: Sofia Macháľková, 2.B



Italy, officially the Italian Republic.
The area of Italy is 301 270 km² and
There are about 60 624 442 residents.
The area includes islands:
Sicily, Sardinia, Elba, Capri, Tremitti and Ischia.
Italian is official language in Italy.
The currency is Euro.



The capital city of Italy is Rome.
Next important city is Venice.
It's a very popular city for tourists.
You can sail in gondola there.

Tradition in History

In old Rome people used to have
Gladiator games. They were organised
by rich monarchs for fun.





Venice- the most beautiful city



Lake Como-the most famous lake



Bologna- the oldest university

School system in Italy



The school system in Italy contains private Roman- Catholic schools and state schools.

Schools are controlled by Ministry of Education.

Compulsory school attendance is from the age of 6 to 14, which contains 5 years of Primary school and 3 years of lower High school. Education in those schools is free, but parents must pay for books and school supplies.

Higher High school is from the age of 14 to 19. For every higher High school parents must pay full studies plus things which students need. The school year starts in the middle of September and ends in the middle of June.

Learning foreign languages is mandatory. Tests are taken every 3 months and at the end of the study they must do the final exams.



Football

The most popular sport in Italy is football.

The Italian national football team represents Italy in international football events.

FOOD



When you say Italian food, everybody thinks about pizza or spaghetti, but in Italy there are more kinds of food, for example, 400 kinds of pasta. The next popular foodstuff is cheese – mozzarella, parmesan, ricotta etc.

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Prepared by: Miriam Hričovská, 2.B

SPAIN

Country of football and bullfighting

Spain is a country in Southern Europe. People in Spain are called Spaniards. Most people there speak Spanish, but there are other languages in different parts of the country. They are Catalan, Basque, Galician, Leonese, Aragonese, Aranese Occitan and even Portuguese.

Area of Spain is about 505,000 km².

Population is approximately 47 million people.

The capital and the largest city is Madrid. It is situated in the middle of Spain. The currency used in Spain is Euro.



Dominant sport in Spain is football (Real Madrid, Barca), but Spaniards also like tennis (Rafael Nadal), Formula One (Fernando Alonso), cycling (Alberto Contador) etc.



Spaniards attend school 5 times a week.

There are 3 types of school system:

- Basic school (6-12 years)
- High school (12-16 years)
- Maturita – Bachillerato (16-18 years)

Altamira is a cave in Spain famous for its cave paintings of wild mammals and human hands. It is located near the town of Santillana del Mar in Cantabria, 30 km west of the city of Santander. The cave with its paintings has been declared a World Heritage Site by UNESCO.



Something interesting:

The official name of the country is Spanish Kingdom.
Only 72% Spaniards speak Spanish. The Spanish national anthem does not contain words.

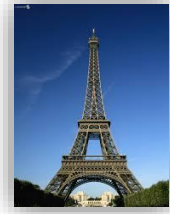


Sources:

www.en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Spain, www.google.sk/Spain
https://www.google.sk/search?q=spain&espv=2&biw=1366&bih=643&source=Inms&tbm=isch&a=X&ved=0CAYQ_AUoAWoVChMI6NOwp66ayAIVop5yCh3atAXV

Prepared by: Martin Blaha, 2.B

FRANCE



The French Republic is a sovereign state. It is located in western Europe. France surrounds the North sea and the Atlantic ocean. France covers 640,679 square kilometres. The population of France is 67 million. The capital of France is Paris, the largest city. France is divided into 27 administrative regions.

The current president of France is François Hollande. France joined the EU in 1999. The official languages are French and Romance.

The major religion is Roman Catholic – 94% of population, but Evangelical Protestantism may be the fastest growing.

France is the world's third biggest exporter of agricultural products, such as wheat, poultry, dairy, beef, and pork. France is well known for Champagne and Bordeaux. Fashion is has been important industry and export since 17th century. The most popular French brands are Dior, Chanel and Givenchy.

Popular sports in the French Republic are tennis, football, judo and rugby. France hosts the annual Tour de France, the most famous road bicycle race in the world.



France is the third most popular destination in the world. There are many attractive places for tourists. You can see a lot of parks like St. James's or Lourdes. As well as cities like Lyon, Strasbourg.

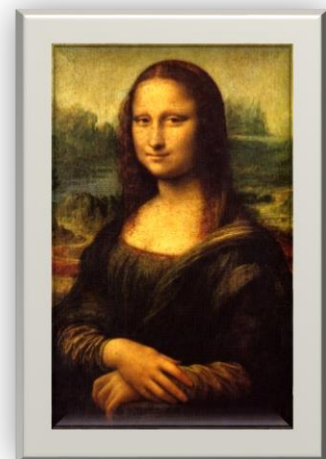


French Riviera is in south-eastern France. The sun shines 300 days per year there. There are 115 kilometres of coastline and beaches.



Paris is also the third largest city in the European Union. There is the world's largest museum of art, Louvre, where you can find the picture of Mona Lisa, which was painted by Leonardo Da Vinci.

The most visited monument is Eiffel Tower.



French citizens enjoy a high standard of living, and the country performs well in international rankings of education or health care.



Source : www.wikipedia.com

Prepared by: Adam Valjent, 2.B

SLOVAKIA

Capital: Bratislava

Geographical size: 49 035 km²

Population: 5 415 949 (2014)

Official language: Slovak

Political system: parliamentary republic

Highest mountain: Gerlach (2655 meters above sea level)

Longest river: Vah

Currency: Euro



Education in Slovakia: Slovakia has 10 years of compulsory education. Students go to school five days a week, from Monday until Friday. Saturdays as school days were cancelled before the 1980s. Summer break is from the 1st of July until the end of August. Other breaks occur a week around Christmas and Easter, in spring, and on official holidays. A school year consists of two semesters. The first one ends at the end of January in all schools, the second one before the beginning of the summer holidays. Primary and secondary school students usually have around 6 classes a day (less at the beginning of the education, more later). Classes last for 45 minutes. Most schools are state. However, there are also private schools which are paid by students' parents. Students receive marks from 1 (best) to 5 (worst). Students below the university level receive school reports (lists of final marks) at the end of each semester.



Our school

Food: Slovak food exhibits much regional variation, but generally is based on soups, stewed and boiled vegetables, stewed fruits, smoked meats (especially sausages), roasted meats, gruels, and dairy dishes. Sheep cheese with small dumplings, bryndzové halušky , is among the most typical Slovak dishes. Traditionally five meals are taken: breakfast, a snack at about ten A.M., the main meal of the day at noon - lunch, another snack around four P.M., and dinner. Tea with sugar and lemon is the most popular hot beverage. The main distilled beverage is plum brandy (slivovica), and borovička (juniper gin) is quite popular.



Symbolism: Slovakia's national flag consists of three equal horizontal bands of colour, from top to bottom white, blue, and red. Superimposed over the bands on the left side is a shield displaying the national emblem: a double apostolic cross in white sits atop the middle peak of three blue mountaintops, all on a red background. The emblem predates the national flag by centuries (elements of the emblem were used in the Great Moravian Empire) and appears in many contexts both in Slovakia and abroad among people of Slovak descent. The national flag became official on 1 January 1993, Independence Day. The national anthem 'Nad Tatrou sa blýska', translates as 'Lightning over the Tatras'. The lyrics refer to stormy times and the belief that the Slovaks survive.



Folk culture has had a broad impact on the symbols and metaphors of national culture. For example, the fujara , or shepherd's flute, a bassoonlike tube of wood over a meter long, and the valaška , or shepherd's ax, are markers of Slovak culture, along with folk costumes and designs.



Sights in Slovakia

The most famous **Slovak castles** are:



Bratislava Castle



Orava Castle



Spis Castle



Bojnice Castle

Folk architecture



Wooden bridge in Kolarovo

Wooden church in Humenne

Beautiful Slovak Nature



The High Tatras



Slovak Paradise



Pasqueflower

Fatra mountains



Chamois

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