

India-Slovenia Bilateral Relations

Slovenia attained independence from erstwhile Yugoslavia in 1991. India recognized Slovenia on 11 May 1992. India opened its resident Mission in Ljubljana in February 2007. Slovenia opened its resident mission in New Delhi in August 2002.

Political relations

High-level Visits

From India to Slovenia

Presidential Visit: President Ramnath Kovind, paid the first-ever State visit to Slovenia from 15-17 September 2019. His engagements included bilateral delegation level talks with Slovenian President and calls by President of National Assembly and Prime Minister. He also addressed the Indian community and Slovenia-India Business Forum. Four MOUs, one Agreement and three Programmes within earlier signed MOUs/Agreements were signed during visit.

Visit of EAM to Slovenia: As a maiden visit, EAM visited Slovenia to participate in the 16th annual Bled Strategic Forum (BSF) in Bled, Slovenia and to attend Gymnich lunch meeting of the EU Foreign Ministers from 02-03 September 2021.

MOS ML's visit to Slovenia: Ms. Meenakashi Lekhi, Minister of State for External Affairs and Culture (MoS), paid an official visit to Slovenia from 17-19 April 2023. She met Minister for Foreign & European Affairs and President (Speaker) of the National Assembly besides meeting Chairperson of the Friendship Group of the Slovenian Parliament for India; and President of the Women Parliamentarian Club.

From Slovenia to India:

Prime Ministerial visits/meetings: Prime Minister of Slovenia Mr. Borut Pahor paid a State Visit to India from 13-16 June 2011.

Visit by Slovenian Ministers

- i. Dr. Anze Logar, Foreign Minister of Slovenia participated in 7th edition of Raisina dialogue in April 2022 and met EAM on the sidelines. He participated virtually in the 6th Edition of Raisina Dialogue in April 2021. He also participated in the 6th edition of Global Technology Summit held in December 2021.

- ii. Ms. Tanja Fajon, Slovenia's Minister of Foreign and European Affairs visited India to attend the Raisina Dialogue 2023 held from 02-04 March 2023. She also met EAM on the sidelines.
- iii. Mr. Igor Papic, Minister for Higher Education, Science and Innovation of Slovenia visited New Delhi in November 2023 for participation in the 8th Water Summit and 1st Climate Finance summit. He also met Minister for New and Renewable Energy. Minister Papic again visited India in November 2024 to participate in 9th India Water Impact Summit and 2nd Climate Investments and Technology Impact Summit. He also met i. Minister of Science and Technology and ii. Minister of New and Renewable Energy.
- iv. Mr. Zdravko Počivalšek, Minister of Economic Development and Technology of Slovenia and Mr Piyush Goyal, Minister for Commerce and Industry of India held a virtual meeting on 29 June 2021.

Interaction between EAM and Slovenian FM

EAM and Slovenian Foreign Minister met on the sidelines of the Munich Strategic Forum in February 2019 and held tele-conversation on 17 June 2020. The two leaders met again on 18 February 2022. EAM met Slovenian Foreign Minister in New York in September 2024 on the sidelines of UNGA.

Cooperation during the Covid-19 Pandemic

Slovenia recognised both Covishield (Astra Zeneca) vaccine produced by the Serum Institute of India and the Covaxin vaccine produced by Bharat Biotech Ltd.

Bilateral frameworks

Foreign Office Consultations (FOCs): The 9th India-Slovenia FOCs were held on 06 January 2023 in Ljubljana, co-chaired by Secretary (West), MEA and State Secretary for Political and Multilateral Affairs, Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Slovenia.

Joint Commission on Trade and Economic Cooperation (JCTEC): The 9th Session of the Indo-Slovenia Joint Committee on Trade and Economic Cooperation (JCTEC) was held on 23 March 2021 in a virtual mode.

Science & Technology Cooperation: A Joint Working Group (JWG) on Scientific and Technological Cooperation has been set up to receive, review, select and award the scientific programmes under this Cooperation agreement.

Slovenian Parliamentary Friendship Group for India was established in February 2009. In Nov 2009, the Chairman of the Friendship Group, Joze Jerovsek,

accompanied with two members of the group visited India. Slovenia's Parliamentary delegation led by Dr. Milan Brglez, President of National Assembly paid visit to India in November 2015. The group currently consists of 17 members.

Important Agreements and MoUs signed between India and Slovenia include:

- Agreement on setting up Joint Committee on Bilateral Trade & Cooperation (1993)
- Agreement on Scientific and Technological Cooperation (1995)
- Agreement for cooperation in culture, arts, education, sports & mass media (1996)
- Double Taxation Avoidance Agreement (2003); 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)
- Air Services Agreement (2004); Protocol amending the Agreement (2012)
- MoU on Cooperation in the field of Sport (Sept 2019)
- MoU between Invest India and SPIRIT Slovenia (Sept 2019)
- MoU between IIT Kanpur and VGB, Slovenia for Clean Ganga Operation (Sept 2019)
- MoU between IIT Kanpur and Space-SI, Slovenia for Clean Ganga Operation (Sept 2019)
- MOU between National Small Industries Corporation (NSIC), India and SPIRIT Slovenia on co-operation in the field of MSME (August 2022)
- MoU between ICCR and Nova University on the establishment of India Study Centre at Nova University (September 2024)

Commercial and Economic relations

Bilateral Trade

The bilateral trade data figures are as under:-

Year	Indian Exports to Slovenia	Indian Imports from Slovenia	Bilateral Trade	Trade Balance for India
2019-20	332.55	248.43	580.98	84.12
2020-21	354.78	271.78	626.56	83.00
2021-22	494.39	303.24	797.63	191.15
2022-23	610.87	297.83	908.70	313.04
2023-24	586.97	307.74	894.71	279.23
2024-25 (April-Nov)	356.20	176.99	533.19	179.21

(Source: Ministry of Commerce and Industry, Government of India, US \$ Million)

The main items of exports from India in 2023-24 were i. Organic chemicals, ii. Pharmaceutical products, iii. Electrical machinery and equipment, iv. Vehicles other than railway, tramway, rolling stock, v. Boilers, machinery and mechanical appliance.

The main items of imports into India in 2023-24 were i. Boilers, machinery and mechanical appliance ii. Organic chemicals, iii. Electrical machinery and equipment, iv. Paper and paperboard, articles of paper. v. Optical, photographic, cinematographic measuring, checking precision, medical or surgical instruments.

Business delegation comprising members and representatives of three major chambers – ASSOCHAM, CII and IMC Chamber of Commerce and Industry accompanied President Ramnath Kovind during his State visit to Slovenia in September 2019. Delegation participated at the India-Slovenia business forum which was jointly addressed by President Kovind and President Borut Pahor.

India was a partner/focus country at the 61st International Fair of Agriculture and Food (AGRA) Fair 2023, held from 26 to 31 August 2023, in Gornja Radgona.

An India-Slovenia Business Meet was organized on 05 December 2023. The Indian delegation included representatives from logistics and construction, aviation, new and renewable energy, education, manpower & HR consultants, and hospitality sectors. Over 25 leading businesspersons of Slovenia participated in the meet.

A delegation of Slovenian logistics companies visited India between 19 and 25 November 2023 as part of a systemic promotion of Slovenia as a logistics platform towards Central and South East Europe for Asian markets. The delegation visited Mumbai, and Chennai and interacted with companies such as Vedanta, KEC, Cosco Shipping, Polyhose, and Breaks India.

Major Slovenian companies present in Indian Market are: KRKA, Lek, Le Technika, Gostol, Litostroj, Bosio, BIA Separations, Rudis, Cablex, Adria, Iskraemeco, Mahle Letrika roots, etc.

The First India-Slovenia Day of Science and Innovation was organised by the Slovenian Science Foundation on 06 February 2024.

India Chapter of India-Slovenia Science, Innovation, Technology and Economy Network of India and Slovenian experts for Science and technology was launched on 09 April 2024. Slovenia Chapter was launched in June 2024.

Cultural Relations

India and Slovenia signed Agreement in year 1996 for cooperation in the fields of culture, arts, education, sports and mass media.

There is a visible interest in Slovenia for studies in Indology, Indian languages and culture. Ms. Vlasta Pacheiner Klander, a 90 year old Sanskrit scholar from Slovenia has contributed substantially in promotion of Hindi language and vedic studies in Slovenia. She has conferred World Sanskrit Award. Sanskrit is being taught continuously for 100 years, (since establishment of university of Ljubljana) at the Department of general and Comparative Linguistics. Work of Mr. Evald Flisar, a well-known figure in contemporary Slovenian Literature has been translated in Bengali and Hindi.

Ayurveda in Slovenia is quite popular amongst Slovene people. The 5th International Ayurveda Congress, was hosted as a part of the 11th European Congress for Integrative Medicine from 21 to 23 September 2018 in Ljubljana.

Yoga in Slovenia is very popular and practiced by a good number of Slovene people. The 10th International Day of Yoga was celebrated from 10th to 22nd June 2024 all over Slovenia.

On 20 September 2022, an India corner was established in Intergenerational Centre in Bled. Another India Corner was established on 28 September 2022, at Lucija branch of the Piran city library. On World Hindi Diwas on 10 January 2024, India corners were established by gifting 150 books to Roma Community library at Murska Sobota. On Republic Day 2024, India corner was established at the Cultural Centre in the Municipality of Grosuplje.

In Slovenia, there are busts of – (i) Gurudev Rabindranath Tagore in Maribor; (ii) Mahatma Gandhi in Slovenje Gradec; and (iii) Jawarhar Lal Nehru in Gorinska Brda.

Indian Community

There are 900 PIOs/Indian nationals in Slovenia, comprising mostly of researchers/students or working in hospitality industry with few of them also owning personal businesses. An Indian association has been established under the name “Association of Indians in Slovenia (AIS)”.

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