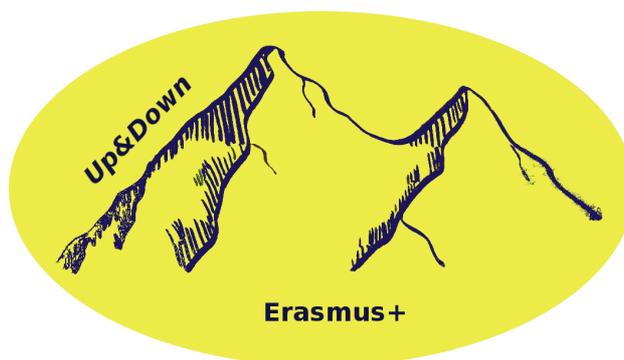


Up and down! Four season activity in the mountains: skimo and trail running

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Mountaineering in Slovenia

1. How many people do mountaineering?

Alpine Association of Slovenia (Planinska zveza Slovenije) includes a total of 58,413 (in 2018) spanning all age groups and 285 Alpine clubs. The number of young mountaineers, ranging from pre-school children to 26-year-olds, amounts more than 18,000. Slovenian mountains are visited by 1.7 million visitors per year. (<https://en.pzs.si/vsebina>.)

2. What is the educational system, how does it work, how is it built up, who teaches, ect?

Alpine school in mountain club Ljubljana Matica consists of 3 parts:

1. Beginner course -> younger apprentice
2. Advanced course -> senior apprentice
3. Final exam to become an alpinist (on a republic level)

The beginner course takes 12 months. It consists of two parts: practical and theoretical.

Theoretical part: knots, climbing gear, first aid, ethics and grading of ascents, reading topos and phrases, preparation for a climb, orientation, hazards, weather, preparations for a winter climb, alpine skiing, history of alpinism, training, nutrition and injuries.

Practical part:

1. Sport climbing: tying in, belaying, basics of free climbing, abseiling, moving of a climbing party on long sport routes.
2. Alpine climbing (summer): placing pitons, placing spring-loaded camming devices and nuts, building anchors on alpine ground, self-rescuing, rescuing and transportation of fallen climbing partner.
3. Ice climbing and winter ascents: basics of ice climbing, moving on alpine ground with crampons and usage of ice axes, self-arresting, anchors in snow, moving of a climbing party in snow conditions, avalanche safety equipment (probe, beacon, shovel), snow stability test

The beginner course ends with the final theoretical exam and practical exam where the participants have to demonstrate all the techniques. If they pass the exam they become younger apprentices.

For participation in advanced course you have to pass beginner course. The course consists of 2 parts – theoretical and practical with more complicated maneuvers and a few 2-3 day camps. The climbers are climbing under supervisions of climbing instructors and more competent climbers. In the advanced course they focus on a wider range of mountains such as Dolomites, Central Alps, etc... In the practical part they focus more on ice climbing, winter techniques, glacier travel and rescuing out of crevasses. At the end of the course they also finish with the final exam and get to the title senior apprentice. If they collect enough climbs/knowledge/experiences they can participate in

an exam which is organized by the commission for alpine climbing of Alpine Association of Slovenia and with that they get the title ALPINIST.

Conditions for participating:

Basic:

- Member of Alpine Association of Slovenia.
- Participant registered at the commission for alpinism or member of an alpine club/alpinistic section.
- Age 18 years old.
- At least 3 years since the beginning of the schooling.
- No health issues.

Special:

- At least 30 different rock ascents in at least 2 different mountain ranges.
- Minimum 15 different winter alpine climbs (ice falls, climbs, ski descents).
- At least 1 ascent over 3500 m.

Alpine school is led by the alpine instructors and the alpinists, who help.

3. What are the biggest challenges in mountaineering education in Slovenia?

The biggest challenge in mountaineering education in Slovenia is commercialization of all sport activities, but mountaineering/alpinism in particular. The number of people who want to take part in mountaineering and alpinist educational programs grows steadily each year and has reached the point where clubs cannot accept all applicants as their numbers exceed club's resources i.e. the number of qualified and licensed alpine instructors and alpinists in instructional programs. Therefore, a real concern exists, that (at least some of the rejected applicants) will pursue mountaineering/alpinist activities on without proper -- basic education. On the other hand, the commercialization of (relatively) all of the sport activities, including mountaineering/alpinism, has brought about changes in the attitudes of the newcomers, as the majority of them doesn't wish to confront the objective and subjective dangers which are inherent to the activity itself. They often (deliberately) confuse alpinist/mountaineering education for guided service. The intention thus is not in practicing and reaching the skill and knowledge level which would allow for a relative autonomy in mountaineering/alpinism (although the programs of formal education were successfully accomplished), but quite contrary. They rather rely on relatively safe guidance of the instructors/alpinist, burdening the instructional cadre even more.

4. What works fine by your opinion?

The best practice is a mix of education and socialization. During the educational programs beginners participate in a variety of the club's activities (trips, camps, weekly get-togethers ...) The development of friendships and facilitation of group formations where particular beginner can find the appropriate group of colleagues stimulate them in activities beyond formal program and are

hugely contributing to the individual`s involvement in the activity and the action of the club in the long-term.

5. Number of accidents/year (ca.) in mountaineering?

There is approximately between 450 to 550 interventions per year by Slovenian mountain rescue team. In 2018 there was 375 mountaineers rescued, out of them 92 lightly injured, 86 seriously injured and 14 dead. Report from 2018: <https://www.grzs.si/analiza>.

Mountaineering in Hungary

1. How many people do mountaineering?

This is very difficult to estimate, but the number of people belonging to the Hungarian Mountaineering Association is ca. 2000. However a lot of people who do mountaineering are coming from trekking clubs, while another category is formed by people who only do indoor climbing, but nothing else. The estimate number of ski tourers is ca. 1000.

2. What is the educational system, how does it work, how is it built up, who teaches, ect?

To become a mountaineer one has to take 3 courses:

- basic climbing (including leading)
- winter mountaineering
- traditional bigwall climbing

The first course ends with a state exam, the other two only end by inhouse examinations. During the last course certain requirements have to be met (e.g. certain number of big wall ascents above V). All courses are ca. 1 week long in practice.

3. What are the biggest challenges in mountaineering education in Slovenia?

The biggest challenge is the lack of a mentoring system. Many people who finish the first course, don't go farther as they don't find the community to do it in. Another problem is that winter mountaineering course is very varied, covers a really big number of topics in a very short time, lacking the option to gain deep experience in these. The courses should be much longer, and with more specific modules.

4. What works fine by your opinion?

Some clubs can really maintain a nice community and the sports climbing is evolving fast.

5. Number of accidents/year (ca.) in mountaineering?

The exact number is quite unknown, as smaller accidents don't get reported, especially if happening abroad. However the number of fatal accidents per year is ca. 10.

Mountaineering in Iceland

1. How many people do mountaineering?

In Iceland most mountaineers are held together by the Icelandic Alpine Club, however probably the final estimate is about 500 people. Iceland also has a very well developed and very professional search and rescue squad system, these include ca. 4000 people.

2. What is the educational system, how does it work, how is it built up, who teaches, ect?

In Iceland there is no set educational system, there are a number of courses offered by companies at all levels that one can take, but these are not regulated or in any kind of system. Luckily this still works well, mostly because the courses are high level, the people are motivated to learn and there are so few people doing mountaineering, that it's easy to find a mentor or a group of friends, from whom one can learn.

3. What are the biggest challenges in mountaineering education in Slovenia?

The biggest challenge is the lack of a state qualified system. This is not really a big challenge for hobby mountaineers, but more from the point of view that it doesn't ensure a state qualified guide system. Furthermore a big challenge is the each year growing number of tourists not being properly equipped for Iceland's harsh conditions.

4. What works fine by your opinion?

As it is a small community, the social aspect works very well, and also the mentoring is rather easy this way.

5. Number of accidents/year (ca.) in mountaineering?

Iceland has ca. 1200 callouts for the SAR groups each year, however these are not always related to mountaineering, but also traffic, domestic animals and sea rescue.