

The Slovenian Blueprint for Outdoor Education

Outdoor Education in Basic Education
The roles of the Ministry and CŠOD

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DEMOGRAPHIC HARDWARE

Independent since 1991
Population: 2 million
Area: 20,272 km²
EU member since 2004

Basic education,
2025/26
192,915 pupils
821 schools / units



BIODIVERSITY & BIOMES

Alps 
Mediterranean coast 
Pannonian Basin 
Dinaric Mountains 

Brown bears: ≈954 (spring 2025)
Wolves: ≈147 (2024/25)
Adult lynx: ≈50 (2023)

**Slovenia's compact, highly diverse geography provides an
accessible, nation-wide laboratory for outdoor learning.**

A Nation Defined by Culture and Education



CENTER ŠOLSKIH IN
OBŠOLSKIH DEJAVNOSTI



REPUBLIC OF SLOVENIA
MINISTRY OF EDUCATION, SCIENCE
AND YOUTH



Unlike many nations that place military generals in their capital's main squares, Slovenia honors its greatest poet, France Prešeren.



Slovenia's cultural DNA places **language, literature, and education at the absolute center of its national identity.** The educational system is a direct reflection of these core national values.

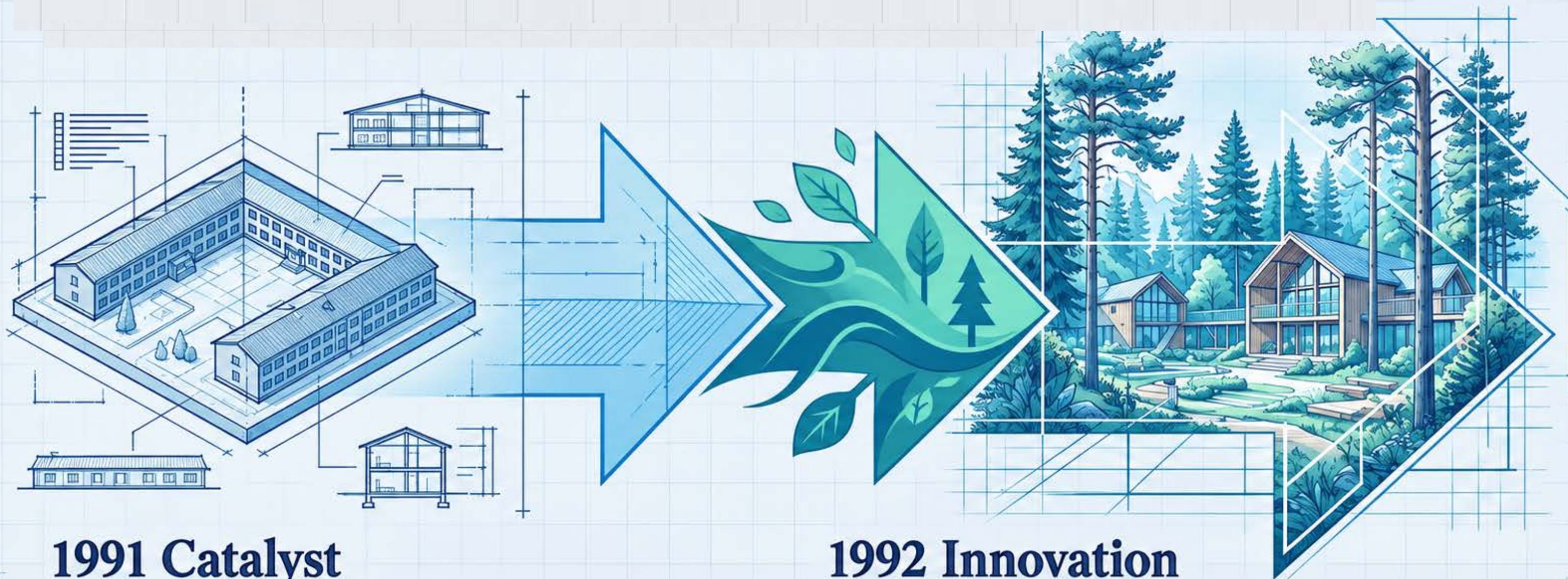
The Ultimate Peace Dividend: From Barracks to Classrooms



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1991 Catalyst

Independence left a network of empty Yugoslav People's Army (JNA) military buildings scattered across Slovenia's diverse terrain.

1992 Innovation

Instead of abandoning or commercializing these structures, the state transformed them into a nationwide network for youth development, establishing the Center for School and Extracurricular Activities (CŠOD).

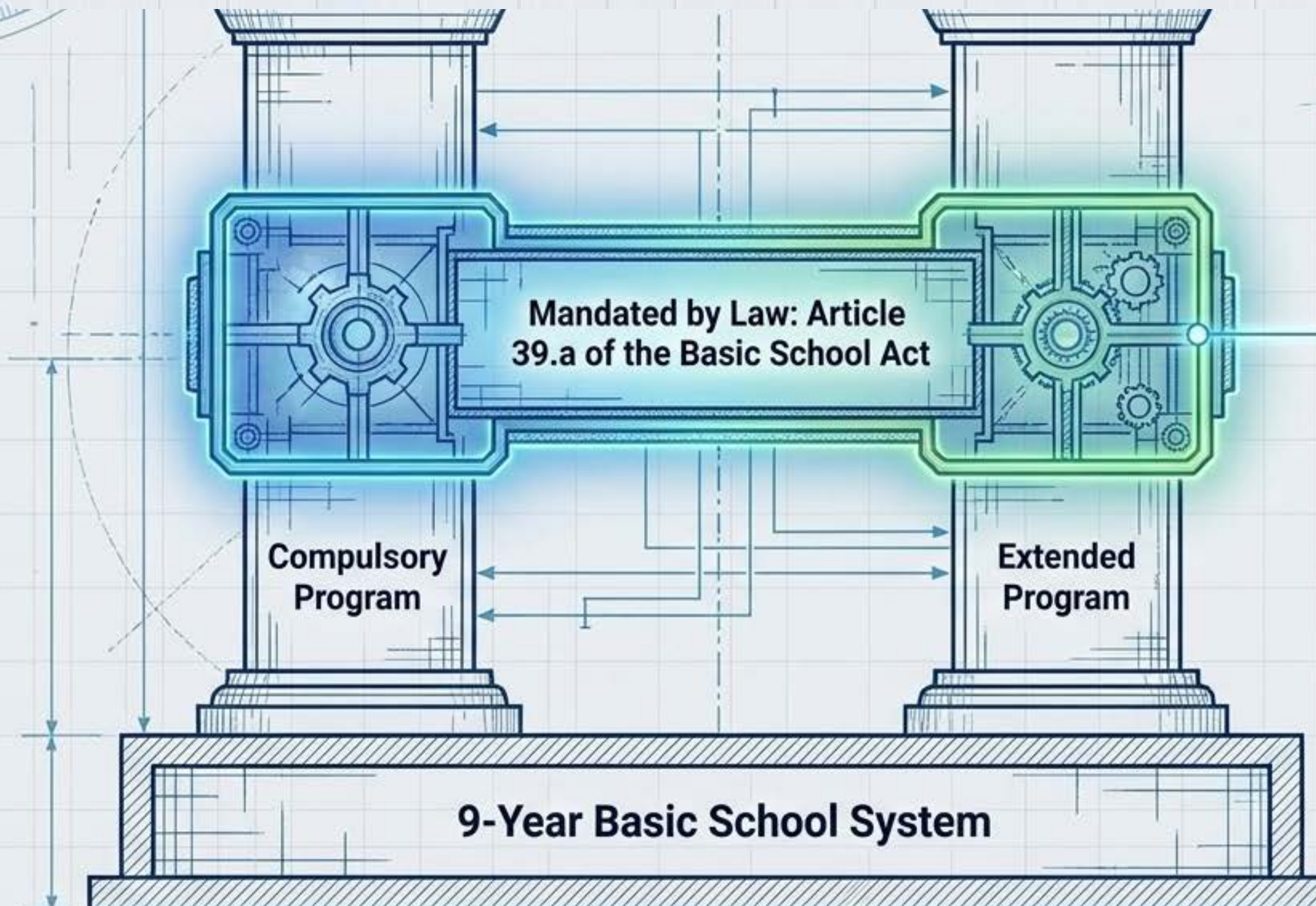
The Pillar of Education



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LEGAL MANDATE DETAILS



Duration: An organized educational workflow lasting 3 or more continuous days.



Location: Conducted entirely outside standard school premises.



Alternative Mandate: Basic schools must organize comparable local activities for students who do not attend the remote camp.

Outdoor Education in the Basic Education Programme



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COMPULSORY PROGRAMME

35 weeks of lessons*

15 activity days
Equivalent to 3 weeks

Culture, science,
technology and sport

EXTENDED PROGRAMME

Learning support

Interest activities

Optional subjects

After-school and
morning provision

SCHOOL IN NATURE

Part of the
compulsory programme

Learning beyond
the classroom

Connects subjects
through experience

*Grades 1–8: 35 lesson weeks. Grade 9: 32 lesson weeks.

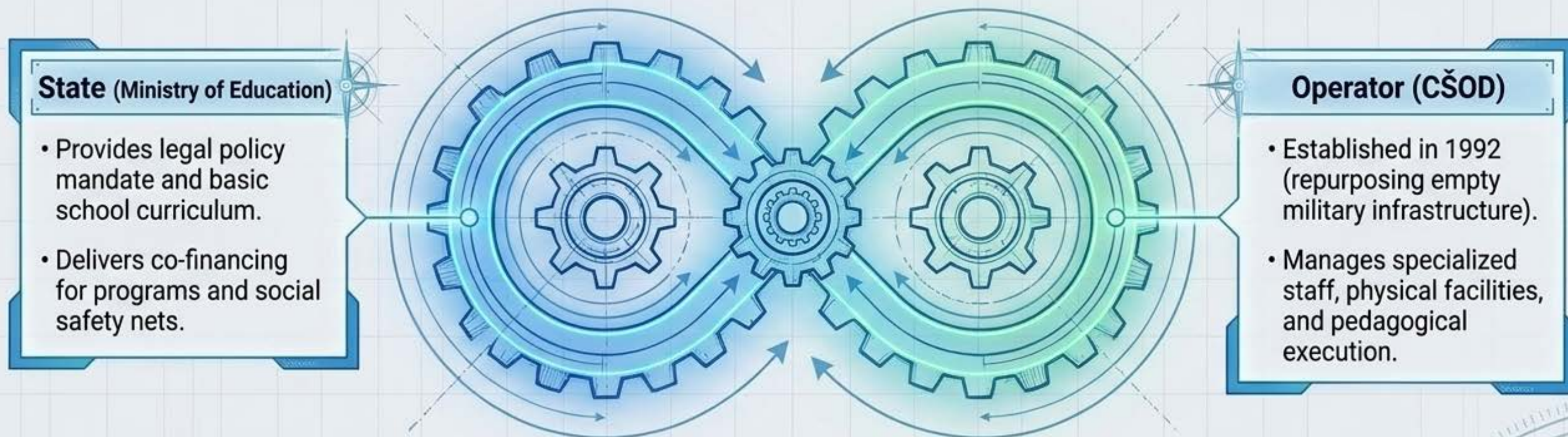
The Institutional Engine: Separating Policy from Logistics



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By separating funding from physical logistics, the state removes the execution burden from individual classroom teachers.

The Infrastructure of Learning: 25 Residential Centres



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Alpinism & Skiing



Marine Biology



Caving &
Cultural Heritage

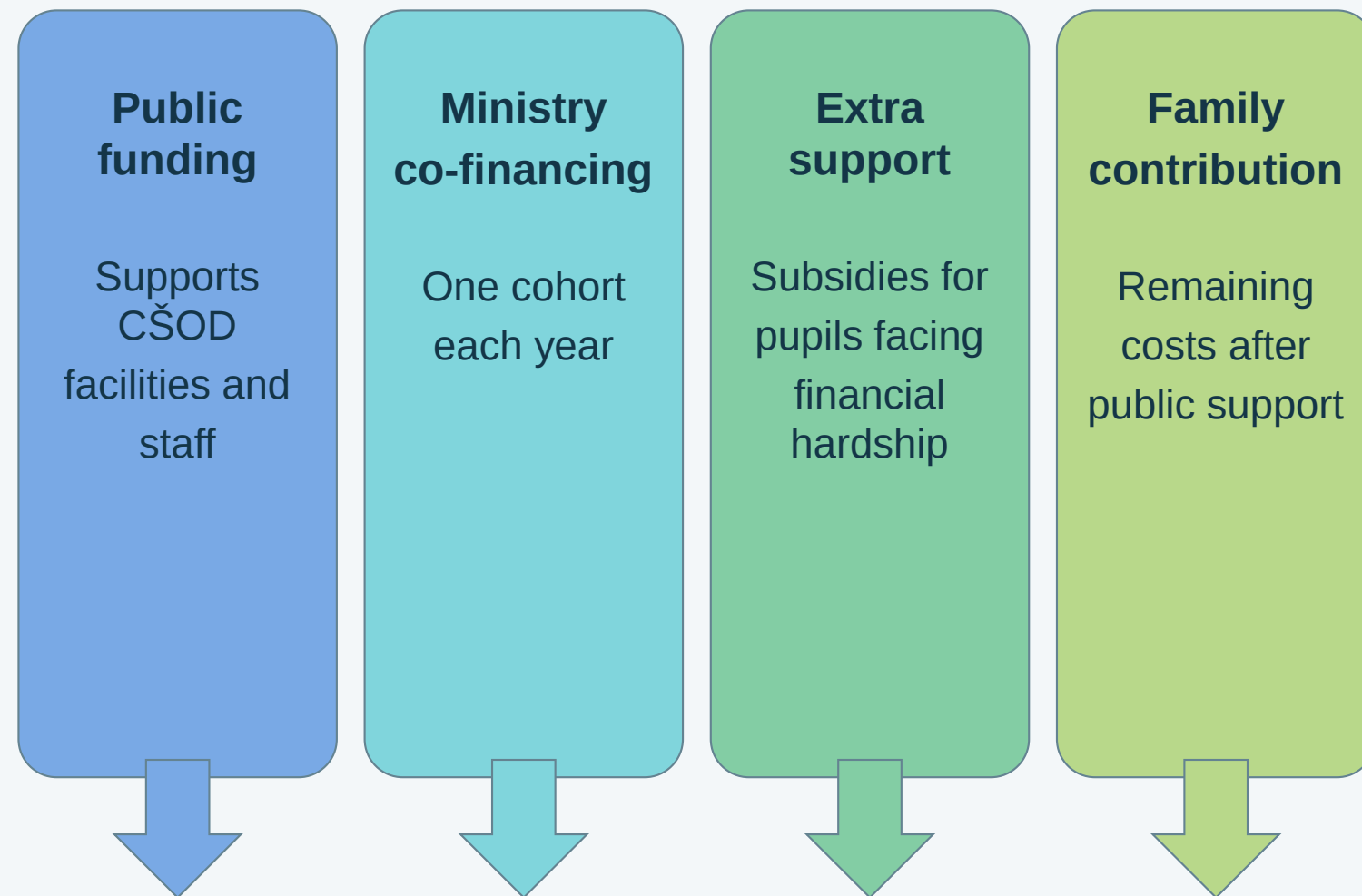


A massive state-backed
infrastructure network
providing maintained
residential buildings,
specialized outdoor
staff, and
geographically tailored
curricula.

Quality and Equity: Outdoor Learning for Every Child

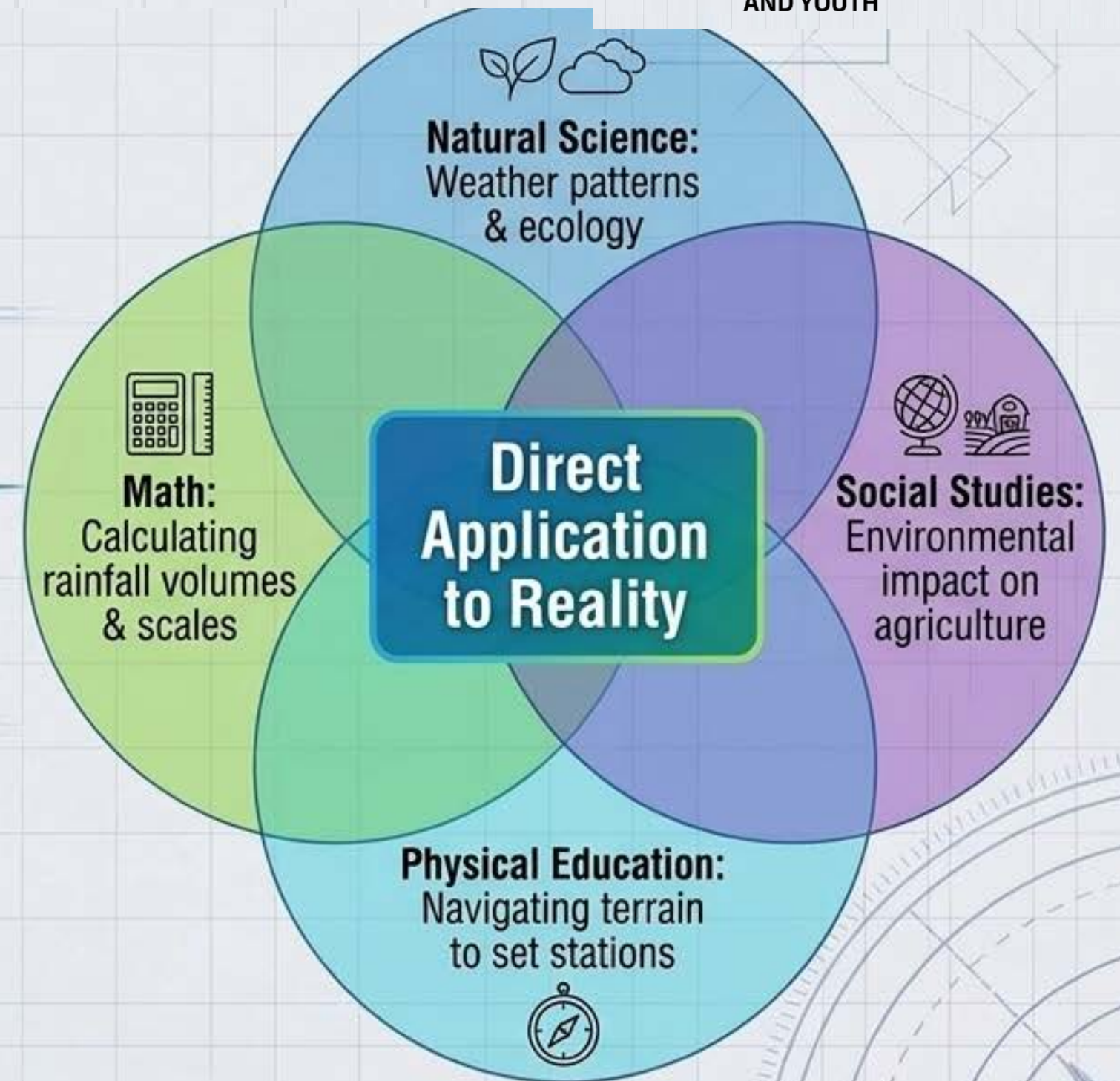
Support that makes participation possible

Total System Cost



**Our aim: every child can take part
in quality outdoor learning.**

Cross-Curricular Synthesis in the Field



School autonomy within the national curriculum
15 activity days: science, culture, technology and sport.
Schools can combine them into multi-day outdoor learning.

The Hidden Curriculum: Autonomy and Trust



1. Fostering sustainable development.
2. Taking profound responsibility for one's actions, health, and environment.
3. Building peer trust and deep social cohesion outside traditional classroom hierarchies.

Institutionalizing Safety and Parental Trust

Operational Safety Norms



Strict 1:15 specialized staff-to-student ratio.



Dynamic ratio adjustments for high-risk aquatic and alpine programs.

Parental Integration Protocol



Mandatory engagement protocol.



Parents briefed on curriculum, logistics, and financial aid a minimum of 3 months in advance.

Local Alternatives



Legally mandated comparable local project-based curriculum.



Provided for any student unable to attend the remote camp.

The Paradigm Shift: Classroom vs. Systemic Nature Model

Traditional Classroom		Slovenian School in Nature
4 walls	Spatial Canvas	20,272 km ² of diverse biomes
Siloed subject periods	Knowledge Structure	Cross-curricular synthesis
45-minute isolated blocks	Time Architecture	3+ day immersive continuous blocks
Desk-bound peer interaction	Social Dynamics	24/7 collaborative living and problem solving

Outdoor Education as a Shared Public Responsibility



THE MINISTRY
Sets the framework
and provides funding

Quality and equity



SCHOOLS
Plan learning across
subjects and activity days

Professional autonomy



CŠOD
Provides facilities
and specialist support

Learning in practice

Our shared aim: quality outdoor learning that every child can access.