**Empress Maria Theresa Gymnasiums Network**

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Empress Maria Theresa, during her 40-year reign, founded nine public gymnasiums, which encouraged the development of secondary and then elementary education in the Habsburg monarchy.

According to data collected so far, the list of its public gymnasiums after the years of foundation is as follows:

1746 – Gymnasium Novo mesto

1749 – Theresianum Academy Wien

1753 – Mathematics and Nautical Sciences in Trieste

1766 – Gymnasium Karlovac

1766 – Gymnasium Vinkovci

1772 – Saint Norbert of the Premonstratensian Order Gymnasium Szombathely

1776 – Gymnasium Banská Štiavnica

1780 – Public Franziskanergymnasium Bolzano

1781 – Stiftsgymnasium Melk



From the gymnasium locations on the map it can be assumed that they were distributed throughout the monarchy: two on today's territory of Austria, Croatia and Italy, and one in Hungary, Slovakia and Slovenia. Novo mesto is fairly in the middle of these locations. As it is known so far, the gymnasium founding charter has been preserved only for the gymnasium in Novo mesto: Empress Maria Theresa founding charter of the Novo mesto Gymnasium, issued in Vienna on 8.8.1746 (<https://www.nm-kloster.si/?page_id=3085>).

In 1745, the Novo mesto citizens asked Empress Maria Theresa to have a gymnasium in Novo mesto. How complicated and demanding was the process of establishing a new gymnasium is described in the chapter on the history of gymnasium in the book *Ivan Vrhovec: The History of the Novo Mesto*, published in Slovene language by Matica slovenska in Ljubljana in 1891. The book is published in digital form on [http://www.dlib.si/stream/URN:NBN:SI:DOC-XHTPCAX3/85e506c6-8a11-43bb-83c6-c8c40bc33132/PDF](http://www.dlib.si/stream/URN%3ANBN%3ASI%3ADOC-XHTPCAX3/85e506c6-8a11-43bb-83c6-c8c40bc33132/PDF). Among other things, the Novo mesto citizens had to commit themselves to paying professors and building a building (now there is Marjan Kozina's music school).

For this visionary and courageous effort, the Novo mesto Cultural Heritage Promotion Committee, on the occasion of the municipal holiday on April 7, 2018, "made" an Internet memorial:

### Internet Memorial to the Citizens of Novo mesto 1745

With this [**Internet Memorial**](http://eregion.eu/8-9-2017-maria-theresa-gymnasium-1746-dolenjska-academic-initiative-2017)
we are expressing thanks to those citizens of Novo mesto,
who in 1745 had a vision and courage
to suggest the **[Empress Maria Theresa](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Maria_Theresa)**
to have Gymnasium in Novo mesto.

On August 8, 1746, Empress Maria Theresa
signed a **[Founding Charter of the Novo mesto Gymnasium](https://www.nm-kloster.si/?page_id=3089)** with public rights –
the first in the Habsburg monarchy.

Thankful [**Novo mesto**](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Novo_Mesto) Citizens

Published on April 7 – the Holiday of the **[City Municipality of Novo mesto](https://www.novomesto.si/en)**
in the **[European Year of Cultural Heritage 2018](https://europa.eu/cultural-heritage)**.

On that day in 1365, the **[Duke Rudolf IV. Habsburg,](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Rudolf_IV%2C_Duke_of_Austria)** granted Novo mesto the urban rights.

Novo mesto Cultural Heritage Promotion Committee

The contribution of Empress Maria Theresa to the development of education through the establishment of gymnasiums in her time was great. The contribution of these gymnasiums to the development of Europe is probably underestimated considering the number of the gymnasium graduates who were free to enter any university in the monarchy. Therefore, on the 26th of May 2018, a network of gymnasiums established by Empress Maria Theresa was formed, <http://eregion.eu/26-5-2018-empress-maria-theresa-gymnasiums-network>).

Network goals are as follows:

* Express gratitude to Empress Maria Theresa for her visionary evaluation of education.
* Present history of gymnasium as a component of European cultural heritage.
* Propose ways of effectively promoting cultural heritage in favor of sustainable tourism in the local community.
* Encourage participation and exchanges of students and gymnasium teachers by exploiting e-technologies.
* Propose possible joint cross-border projects.
* Provide a link to at least three representatives of gymnasium on the network: Director / Principal, English Language Teacher, Website Editor.