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*Andrej Pogačnik**

POTENTIAL MEMBERSHIP OF SLOVENIA IN THE EUROPEAN UNION: ITS SPATIAL DEVELOPMENT PERSPECTIVE

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This paper summarizes the research done by the University of Ljubljana in Slovenia for the Slovenian Ministry of Environment and Planning. Its aim is to show the possibilities and dangers regarding Slovene membership in the European Union in the field of spatial development. The main goals and proposals are: urban networking, urban and traffic corridors, sustainable farming and tourism, new industrial sites, protection of nature and the ecological corridors. The co-operation with the neighbouring countries – Italy, Austria, Croatia and Hungary – has been proposed together with the response to the challenge of the competiting cities of Trieste, Gorizia, Zagreb, Rijeka and Graz.

Key words: urban networking, traffic corridors, sustainable farming and tourism, industrial site, nature protection, ecological corridors, European Union, Slovenia

INTRODUCTION

Slovenia has been actively harmonizing its legal system and fulfilling all other criteria to become a member of the European Union. The earliest date to reach this goal is estimated as 2003 and the latest as 2005–2007. All the necessary steps have also been taken to plan its spatial development according to the goals and intentions of the Union. The research team at the University of Ljubl-

* Andrej Pogačnik, University of Ljubljana, Faculty of Civil and Geodetic Engineering, Jamova 2, Sl–1000 Ljubljana, Slovenia

jana made the proposal for the Slovenian Ministry of the Environment and Planning in order to harmonize the new state plan and regional plans with "European" intentions.

The research and its final proposals presented here can be to the readers an example of challenges and dilemmas of a small new state before entering into the Union with the aim of preserving its identity and optimizing its land uses and natural resources. As spatial planning remains the "internal affair" of the member states, the proposal of the research team was the following: to admit all the spatial objectives and directives in favour of Slovenia, and to be selective and critically reconsider everything that could threaten Slovenian national identity and spatial integrity (see Fig. 1). This "principle", of course, must adhere to all those demands that are part of the obligatory package of the EU: nature protection, ecology, free (traffic) movement, free demographic flows, international cross-border co-operation, equal rights to purchase real estate, etc. (ESDP 1999, CEMAT 2000, Alpine Convention 2000, Europe 2000+, Habitat 2001).

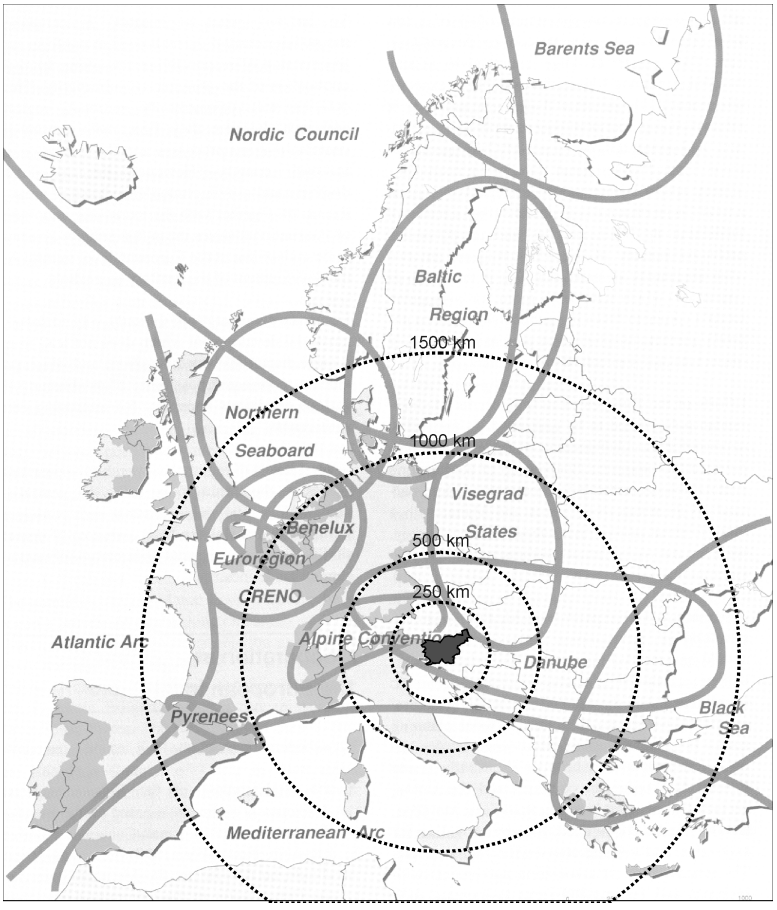

Fig. 1. European development regions in relation to Slovenia

GENERALITIES

Slovenia has a population of 1,948,000 (1999) and an area of 20,256 km^2. It borders a state of Germanic origin to the north (Austria), a state of Latin influence to the west (Italy), and Slavic nationalities to the southeast and east (Croatia). To the northeast it borders a Finno-Ugric nation (Hungary). Therefore, the Slovenian nation has been under constant and increasing pressure from the neighbouring nation-states with their assimilation forces and gravity influencing the political dependency, economics, culture, language, traffic, etc.

Since many small nations are already member states of the European Union (Denmark, Luxembourg) and many more will be in the future (Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, …), the Slovenians feel that the Union will protect their identity and act as a "shield" against the assimilation forces of world-wide globalization and gravity of large neighbouring nations.

SOCIETY AND DEMOGRAPHY

Social-demographic processes in Slovenia are similar to those in the EU (Europe 2000+): low birth rate[1], growing number of the elderly, tendency to smaller households (3 family members and less). Approximately 1,800,000 inhabitants are originally Slovenian and approx. 200,000 inhabitants or more are naturalized immigrants (from the former Yugoslavia)[2].

Therefore, demographic policies must favour the growth rate of domestic population. There are Slovenian national minorities living in Austria (Carinthia), Italy (border, mountainous regions and around Trieste) and smaller minorities in Hungary and Croatia, which are well integrated into the societies and economies of the neighbouring countries. Besides, there are numerous Slovenian minorities (economic and political immigrants) living in Argentina, the United States, Canada, and Australia that emigrated during the last two centuries. They will not return to Slovenia except for some pensioners who want to return to the homes of their far ancestors. The flow of immigrants from the former Yugoslavia (Bosnia, Kosovo, and Macedonia) has almost ceased. On the other hand, Slovenia is an important transit corridor for illegal immigration into the EU, especially from the Middle East and Far East and to a smaller degree from the former USSR. 20,000 immigrants were found in 2000 in Slovene territory and most of them cannot be returned home. This pressing problem has been causing conflicts with the local population of the areas where immigration centres have been situated. One cannot expect substantial immigration from other Slavic countries, such as Poland, Bulgaria, and other European states such as Romania, Moldova (which could "replace" the declining Slovenian population) even when all these countries become member states. Rather, people will emigrate to the more prosperous urban centres and regions in the Western Europe and "skip" Slovenia.

In Slovenia a selective immigration policy is necessary in order to ensure the survival of this small nation. It should be targeted to the replacement of domes-

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[1] According to UN, the population prognosis for 2025 is between 1,883,000 (high scenario) and 1,775,000 (low scenario).

[2] There are two smaller minorities – the Italian minority (854), and the Hungarian minority (11,019) with special political rights and defined bilingual areas.

tic population on the same level. It would be favourable if the immigrants came from similar cultural and religious backgrounds. Non-European nations bring completely different behavioural patterns, and extremely high birth rates – all of which is hard to absorb. Large European nations can absorb such demographic shocks easier or, at least, on a higher (quantitative) level.

Will the Slovenian population move more intensively after its full membership in the EU and after the "fall" of all its borders? No. The Slovenians are very attached to their homeland, even to their family houses and domestic land parcels. Internal mobility is small (and when it occurs it is permanent). We can expect some brain drain of highly-educated Slovenes into the most prosperous cities and regions in Europe. Again, immigrants from other, less developed states will unfortunately not be able to replace this flow.

Smaller sizes of households[3] caused by small number of children, and unmarried or divorced youngsters (who wish to live on their own) are causing a new "wave" of housing shortage. There is an enormous demand for flats in the capital city of Ljubljana and in its metropolitan area and in other large cities. There is also a demand to purchase parcels for single family housing in suburbia (by far the most popular lifestyle in Slovenia). On the other hand, in remote mountainous regions depopulation increasing. Many farmhouses are settled with 1–2 people only while many others have been abandoned.

(SUB)URBANIZATION AND REGIONS

Slovenia is a state of rather small towns; most of them originating from medieval times. There are about 100 urban settlements with some 1,000 inhabitants (each) and just two cities with over 100,000. The settlement pattern is of a dispersed urban-rural type, scattered in approx. 6,000 small settlements, most of them villages. How can one transform this ineffective urban system into a more competitive one?

The capital – the city of Ljubljana – with a population of approx. 270,000 (within the metropolitan region – 520,000) cannot compete with the capital cities of the neighbouring countries – Vienna, Budapest or Zagreb. It can compete only if combined with its surrounding urban region. Planners must "link" an effective network of small towns, forming a central Slovenian metropolitan region with a population of approx. 600,000. This central region must take advantage of the good traffic position in the crossing of the E-5 European corridor (Barcelona-Lvov) and the E-10 traffic corridor Munich-Salzburg-Zagreb-Belgrade (TINA 1995).

When Slovenia becomes a member state and the borders[4] disappear, a large percentage (approx. 30 %-40 %) of Slovenian territory will be under the direct gravitational influence of the large cities outside the state: Trieste, Udine-Gorizia conurbation in the west, Rijeka (the largest Croatian harbour) in the south, Zagreb with a population of over one million in the east (see Fig. 2). There are influences of lesser degrees from Austrian cities as well, especially

[3] The number of households (1999): 640,195.

[4] The length of Slovenian borders is 1,334 km (without the sea-border) and it which includes 43 international border crossings.

from Graz. The Slovenian border regions could become suburbia or function as green belts of those urban centres. The response to this threat is to organize an effective network of border towns with functional differentiation, with the development of international commercial zones, industrial parks, tourist centres, sports and leisure grounds (Pogačnik 1991). In the towns situated near the borders the functions of culture and education must be well developed to maintain the Slovenian character (high schools, theatres, libraries, museums, research institutes). Having this in mind, the Slovenian towns on the seacoast (Koper, Izola, Piran) and on the Karstic plateau around Trieste (Sežana, Kozina, Divača, Komen) must form an effective urban network. The traffic position of these towns is extremely good: the flows from northern Italy continue further to the east towards the eastern Adriatic coast, the Balkans and towards Eastern and Central Europe.

In the vicinity of Croatia's capital Zagreb a network of the towns Brežice and Krško and several smaller towns must be developed. The influence of the

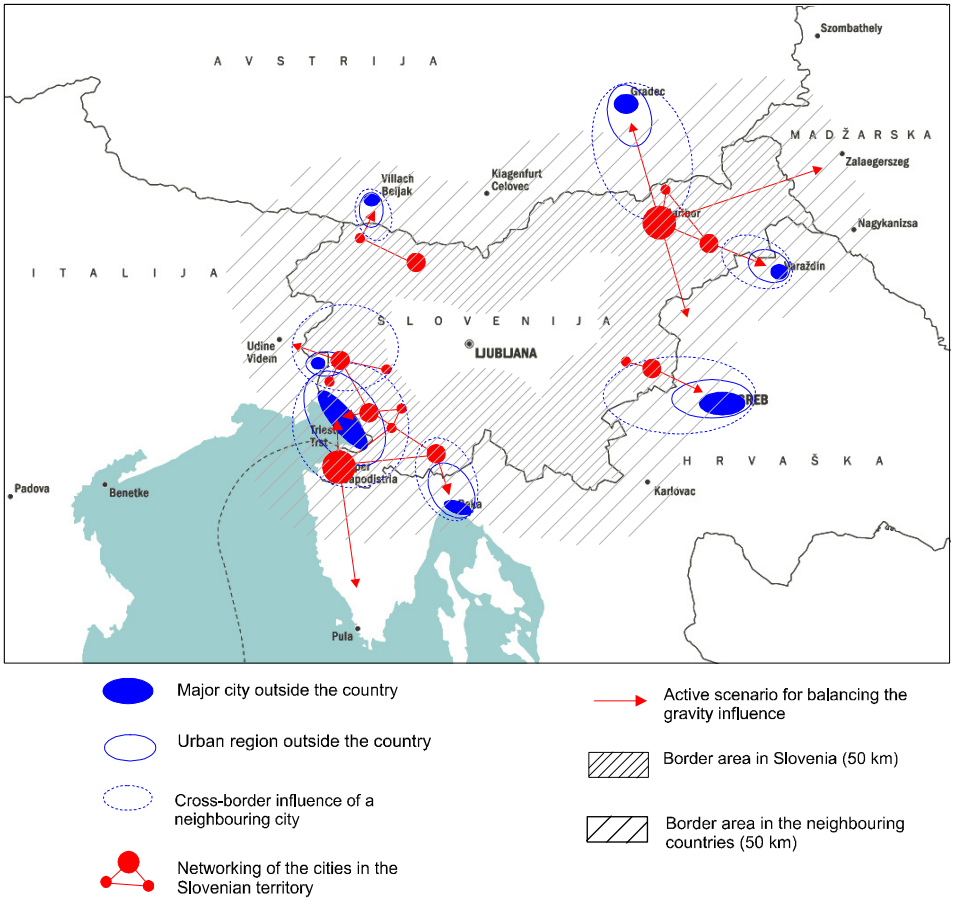

Fig. 2. Gravity influences of the cities outside Slovenia and urban networking as a response

Austrian city of Graz could be compensated by the conurbation of Maribor-Ptuj lying on the traffic axis Vienna-Zagreb.

Those small towns that are outside the main development corridors or outside the urban networks of cross-border co-operation must reinforce their role as centres of rural regions. Existing and future trends are not in favour of their prosperity. Therefore, these small towns must improve their traffic and functional linkages with the major towns and with urban development corridors.

Regional planning is a weak point of Slovenian spatial policy. Besides, the whole size of the state is comparable with one European region. At present Slovenia is divided into 12 statistical regions. In the near future Slovenia will have to form new regions which will be eligible for aid from the European Structural Funds. One of the possibilities is to form cross-border regions: the rural region of north-eastern Slovenia, together with south-eastern Austria (south Burgenland), south-western Hungary (Timar et al. 2001) and the extreme north of Croatia (the so called "quattro-region"). The third region of international co-operation lies in the mountainous border areas of Italy, Austria and Slovenia with possibilities for Alpine tourist development (Messerli and Perlik 1997).

On the other hand the Slovenian territory is part of European macro-regions, such as the Alps, the Mediterranean region (northern Italy, the northern Adriatic, western Croatia), the Danubian region (east Austria, Hungary, Croatia) and the Balkans (Croatia, Serbia, Bosnia). Besides many advantages of Slovenia being part of these regions there are also threats from those scenarios. These are, as mentioned earlier, larger urban centres abroad and the peripheral position of Slovenia. Slovenia could profit from its "overlapping" position in Euro-regions (the Alpine area and the Mediterranean, Danubian, Central European and Balkan regions "meet" and overlap in Slovenia, see Fig. 3)! It could benefit from the opportunities offered by various regional scenarios even though its territory does not lie in the development core of the main Euro-regions (Jensen and Richardson 2001).

NATURE PROTECTION AND ECOLOGY

Nature protection and ecology are the next important issues regarding Slovenian integration into the EU. At present, areas of strict nature protection form 5.7 % of the national territory. A further 25 % of the territory falls under other measures of landscape protection[5], which is more than in the majority of EU countries (Europe 2000+). Yet, the efficiency of protection is weak. In the future positive effects of coexistence of nature protection, sustainable farming, forestry, tourism and open-air recreation need to be provided.

Slovenia brings a rich bio-diversity into the European space (Marušič et al. 1995). In its territory one can find Alpine, Mediterranean, Karstic, Dinaric and Pannonian climatic, geological and hydrological features, and different plant and animal species living in the respective ecosystems. Because of unpolluted landscapes and a large proportion of forests (57 % of the territory) this natural heritage still exists. The existing natural parks and reserves must be combined and linked with "ecological corridors". Sustainable, "soft" and nature-friendly

[5] Nature protection zones cover 7,936 km^2, and cultural heritage zones cover 3,020 km^2 (approx. 15 % of the territory).

tourism, forestry and agriculture will have to find their symbiosis with environmental and landscape protection (Stanners and Bourdean, eds. 1995).

Though the ecological conditions of Slovenian water are generally good, there are some severely polluted streams due to old industries, mining and urbanization. Thus, around 100 smaller water treatment stations (for towns with over 3,000 population) have to be built. Air pollution is a problem in industrial regions with weak winds as well as in basins or valleys where temperature inversion occurs. Abandoning the use of domestic coal (replacement with gas) and installation of expensive air filters will solve these problems in the long run.

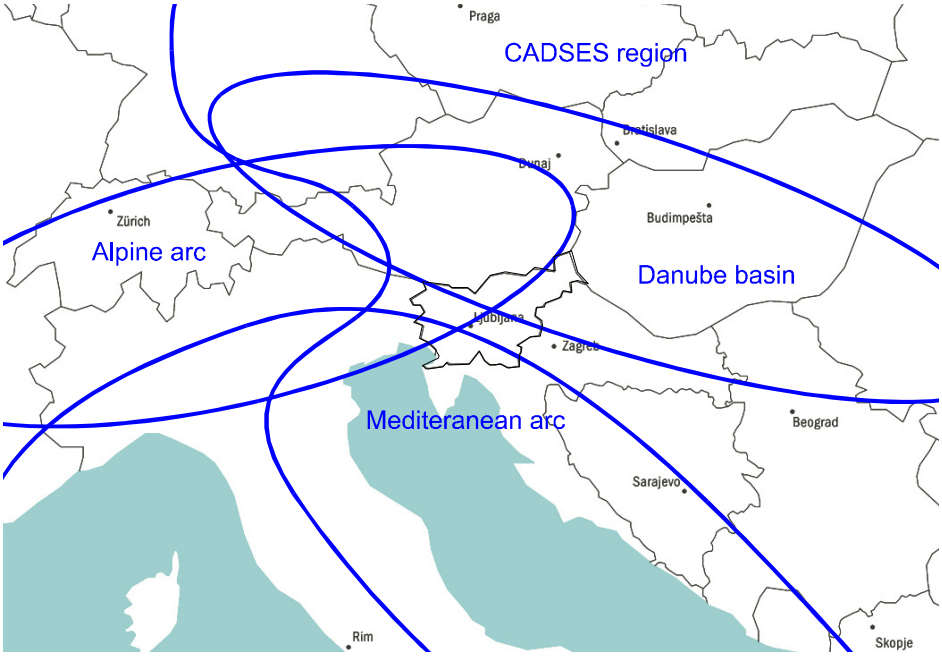

Fig. 3. European development regions in Slovenia

AGRICULTURE AND FORESTRY

Slovenian agriculture will face strong competition in European and world food markets[6] (see Fig. 4). The research group proposes that intensive farming should be developed in the flatlands and valleys of Slovenia that have rich soils and fulfil other natural conditions (though there is a conflict with ground-water protection). Enlargement of farmland ownership should be encouraged in these agricultural regions[7]. Since our traditional farm has on average of 3.2 hectares

[6] In 1995 the share of rural employment was 10 %; the share of agriculture in GDP was 4.4 %; the share of urban population in Slovenia was 63 % (in 1995 and 1996); 38.7 % of the populations lives in major cities. The rest of the population lives in small urban settlements and many are part-time farmers. Similarities can be seen from the fact that 36.5 % of population is rural, but approx. only 10 % have agriculture as the only source of income.

[7] The size of an average farmland together with forests is 5.9 % hectares.

of farmland (without forests and built parcels), this will often mean that the whole village will transform itself into a large and competitive family farm. This will inevitably cause damage to the scenic beauty of traditional landscapes (Marušič et al. 1995). Agricultural policy must also stimulate part-time farming in which about one fourth of the Slovenian population is involved. This will help preserve small-scale farming without being necessarily competitive in the European markets and it will bring additional income to the population employed in low-paid industrial jobs.

So far, the planning profession in Slovenia has established that part-time farming and sub-urbanization of Slovene villages is to be blamed for the loss of traditional agricultural landscapes. In the future, the truth will be quite the reverse. With the expected decline of Slovenian small-scale farming (and forestation) and with the development of new, large farms, part-time farming seems to be the feature that will preserve the small scale of Slovenian villages, tiny land subdivisions and small natural structures in the countryside.

More than half of Slovenia's territory has a wood cover that is growing still due to the decline of farming. Thus, Slovenia is one of the most wooded lands in Europe. This has positive effects on Europe's (and the world's) ecology and

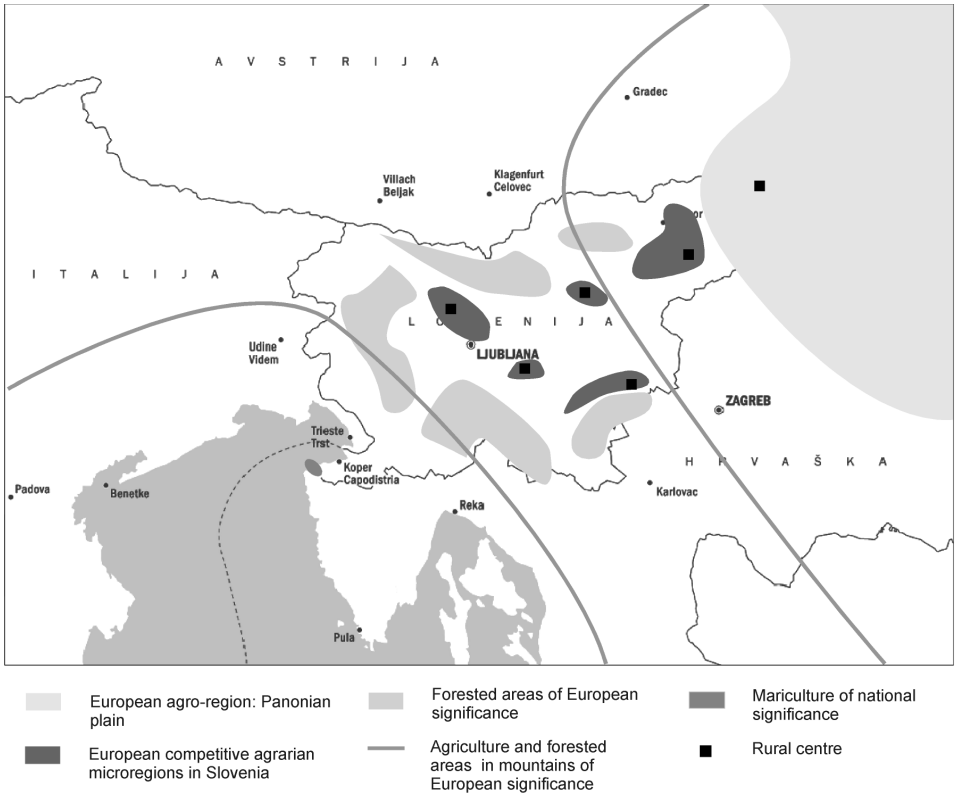

Fig. 4. The role of agriculture and forestry with regard to the neighbouring regions

natural habitats, however, this brings about negative effects on the domestic land use (farming, urbanization, damages and even dangers caused by wild animals).

INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT AND INTERNATIONAL BUSINESS

The Slovenian state plan and regional plans must offer attractive industrial sites for foreign investors. Competitive locations are in the Ljubljana metropolitan area, in the coastal zones around Trieste (Koper) and in towns along the fifth traffic corridor (such as Maribor and Celje). We expect to attract logistic centres of international business to serve Central and Eastern Europe and the Balkans (nowadays the port of Koper serves such purposes for Japanese and Korean cars). The Slovene inner market is too small to attract major firms. A good strategic position between large countries, macro-regions and markets offers great opportunities (Jensen and Richardson 2001).

A very attractive location is at the crossroads Vienna-Zagreb and Italy-Ljubljana-Budapest at the town of Maribor with its international airport. The next "strategic" location lies between Italian and Croatian borders at the junction of the Trieste-Rijeka and Ljubljana-Koper, motorways on the Karst plateau close to Trieste.

Abandoned sites of old, declined industry offer new opportunities for domestic and foreign investors. Unemployment in Slovenia (14 % in 1998, approx. 12 % in 2000) is mainly the result of declined industry and mining. Therefore a large resource of manpower for industrial jobs is being offered. These are mostly skilled workers with some form of professional education.

TOURISM

Tourism seems to be a promising Slovene branch. The country does not have any extreme large-scale tourist attractions such as the Central Alps (the Dolomites, the Austrian Hohe Tauern), or Alpine lakes found in Austrian Carinthia, it lacks the sea-coast as found in the Croatian Adriatic or city tourism comparable with Salzburg or Venice. However, Slovenia has a whole array of tiny natural and man-made attractions, two Alpine lakes, a small part of the Adriatic coast (40 km), very attractive high mountains[8], karstic caves, natural thermal springs, many well preserved historic cities, castles, monasteries, over 2,500 churches[9], etc.

The research team proposes to intensively develop some larger tourist centres that will serve the tourist regions (see Fig. 5, Alpine Convention 2000). In this way they could reach the scale of international competitiveness (Bled, Portorož, Kranjska Gora, Bovec, Ptuj, Čatež). Slovenian countryside is unpolluted and offers many opportunities for mountain climbing, river sports, camping, hunting, etc. Yet, the national policy should not disperse funds for tourist development to every farm or village. In such a way Slovenia would sooner or later

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[8] Triglav is the highest peak (2,863 m), the Alpine mountain ranges have altitudes between 1,500 and 2,500 metres.

[9] These churches are most often small pilgrimage churches of local christian communities perched on top of hills and in village centres.

lose competition with large agglomerations of tourist potentials. Apart from preserving nature unspoilt, hotels, camping sites, cable car lifts, sports grounds, amusement centres, water parks and ski resorts must be built at least in the most attractive, central locations. Austria (ÖROK 1996), Switzerland and Norway are good examples for a sustainable symbiosis between the principles of nature protection and competitive "high technological" tourist development.

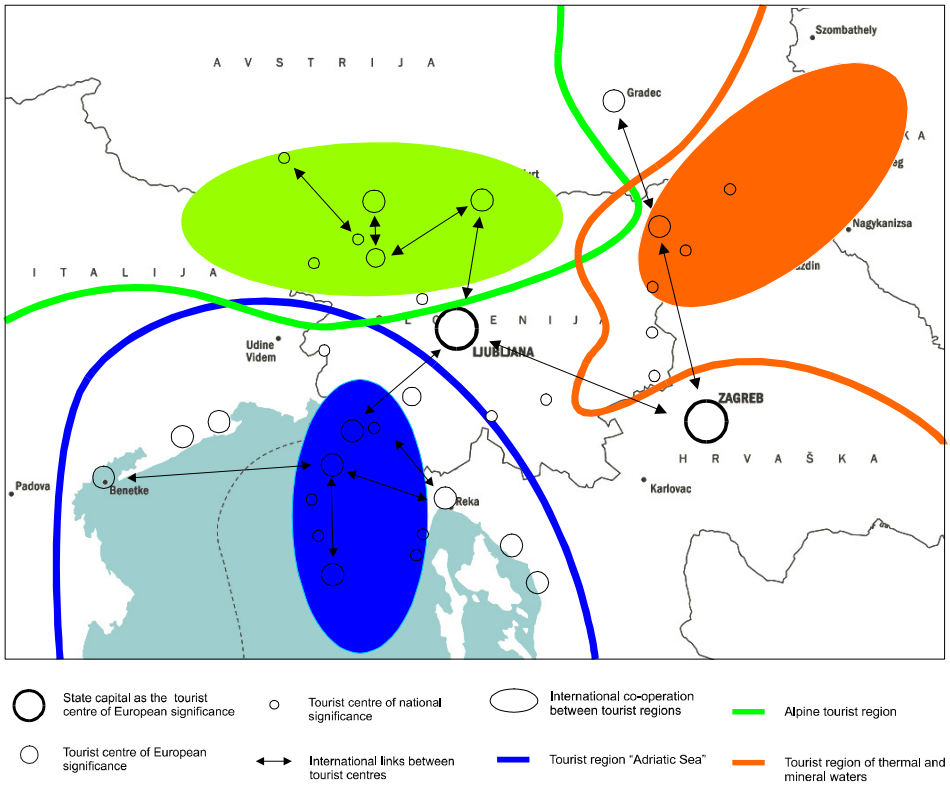

Fig. 5. Tourist regions international co-operative

TRAFFIC[10]

In terms of traffic Slovenia shall benefit from the main international streams coming from Italy or Austria going towards Croatia and Hungary and further on towards Eastern Europe and Baltic states ("Amber road"), towards the Balkans and the Middle East. Therefore, in the last decade intensive building of highways has taken place – to be completed by 2005-2007. Modernization of railways lags far behind[11]. Railway traffic and multi-modal transport (ship – rail – truck) will be favoured.

[10] Slovenia has reached European rates of motorisation (365 cars per 1000 inhabitants); road density is high – 730 km/1000 km^2, motorway density is much lower than in the EU (13.2 km/1000 km^2).

[11] Density of railway lines is 59 km/1000 km^2, total inland freight transport is 48 % by rail and 52 % by road.

It is very important to attract a high-speed railway line, which will link Venice, Trieste and Zagreb (via Ljubljana). A direct traffic corridor Trieste-Rijeka-Zagreb or Vienna-Zagreb could isolate Slovenia from global transport networks and from its most prosperous future mode – the high speed train.

Slovenian traffic planning has a good opportunity to connect Slovenia with the Danubian waterways, since Croatia has planned navigable rivers Drava and Kolpa upstream to the ports of Varaždin and Karlovac, which lie just a few kilometres from the Slovenian border. Theoretically, Slovenia could serve with its railway transport as a link between the northern Adriatic ports Trieste, Koper and the Danubian waterways (connections between the Black Sea and the Adriatic) (cf. Vision Planet 2000).

Alternatively, it could transport goods from the "final" inland ports (in Croatia) to the west. If in the future the transport technologies and economies are in favour of inland water transport, this might be a good opportunity.

Regarding air traffic, the Slovenian airports have faced huge competition from those in Vienna, Munich, Zagreb and Venice. Even closer are the airports with regional importance such as Graz, Klagenfurt, Trieste, Rijeka and Pula, providing a strong competition. Therefore, the main Slovenian airport at Ljubljana (and the secondary airport at Maribor) has to reinforce its role as a regional, tourist (charter) and cargo airport linking the EU with south-eastern countries. The airport of Ljubljana has good connections with all major European cities and could serve as an air-traffic interchange point for the destinations to Albania, Kosovo, Macedonia, Bulgaria, Cyprus, etc. (see Fig. 6).

ENERGY SUPPLY

In the field of energy production and supply[12], Slovenia will be under "pressure" to import from the less expensive exporters of energy (inside the EU and worldwide) than the Slovenian supplies can offer. There is a constant decline of coal mining[13] (and thermal electric power plants), which will continue and cause the flush effect in old industrial and mining regions. In the future we shall depend entirely on the import of gas, oil and gasoline, which is a hard burden for the Slovene economy. On the other hand, Slovenia still has substantial reserves of hydroelectric power. Further use of Alpine and Dinaric (Karstic) rivers, however, faces strong opposition from ecologists. Multifunctional waterworks, such as artificial lakes, could resolve the conflict between the goals of "energy independence" and nature protection. This compromise is urgent, since Slovenia is highly exposed to floods and water erosion caused by the rivers and creeks in mountainous areas (or by flatland rivers in the case of their catchment areas in high mountains).

The nuclear power plant at Krško[14] is constantly under political pressure from Austria, which argues that it is unsafe because of the seismic bedrock.

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[12] Slovenia covers only 21 % of its energy demand (i.e. mainly the electric pover produced in hydroelectric, coal, nuclear power plants). It imports all petrol, natural gas and coal to some extent.

[13] It covers 20 % domestic energy sources.

[14] It covers 21-35 % of all electric energy consumption in Slovenia.

However, this is not the case, additionally, the power plant has high-standard technical installations (Westinghouse). The decision was to keep using the plant until the end of its safe technological "life" and to prevent building of new nuclear power plants in the future.

Safe final disposal of low-active nuclear waste is still a neuralgic point of Slovenian planning. Every possible location faces severe opposition from ecologists and the local population with the "support" of the mass media.

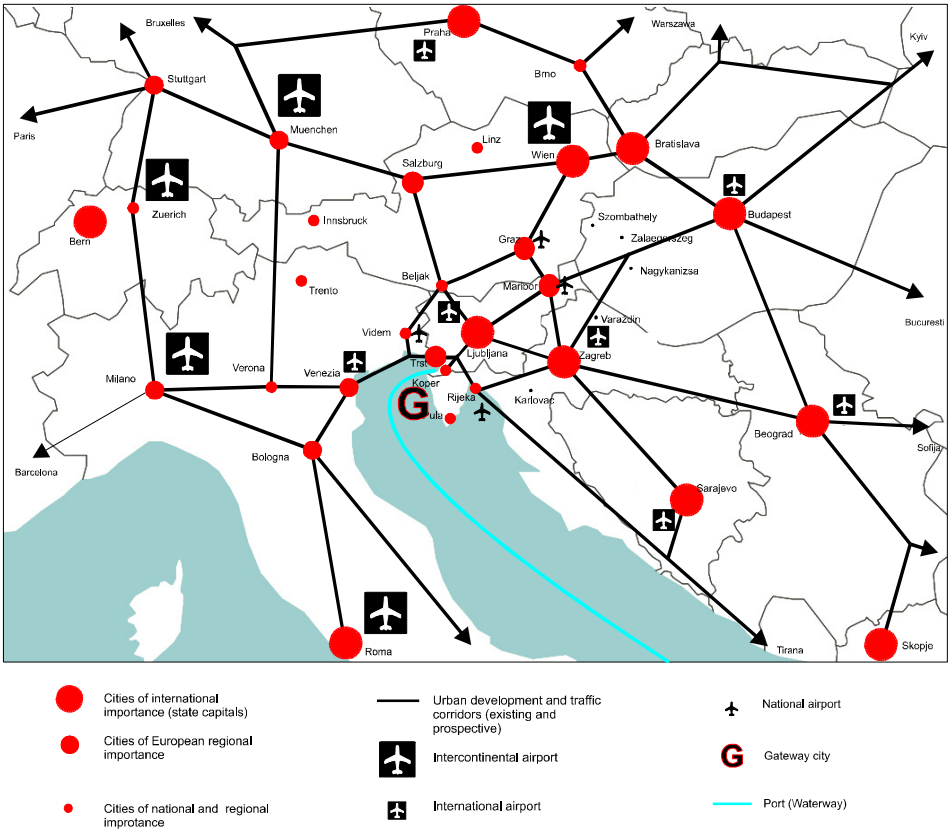

Fig. 6. Slovenian cities as part of the European urban system and traffic corridors

WATER MANAGEMENT

Slovenia is rich in inland water[15]. Most of the water has its source in the state territory flowing down to Italy or Croatia. This requires keeping high standards of water quality due to international laws. Water reserves could be effi-

[15] Average water flow of all rivers and creeks is 1,078 m^3/sec. There are approx. 7,000 springs or fountains.

ciently used for all kinds of supplies – for the population, industry, agriculture, energy production and tourism. The present situation is highly passive. Different interests block diverse and multifunctional use of Slovene water.

CULTURAL HERITAGE

Slovenia does not have cultural monuments of large proportions such as aristocratic palaces, cathedrals and castles. But it has many tiny and rich man-made structures with high ethnographic values, numerous small medieval towns, baroque churches, etc. Its major quality is the synthesis of buildings with natural setting (Fister et al. 1993). One of the great European cultural paths runs through the Slovenian territory – the Roman road from Italy along the eastern edge of the Alps through the Czech Republic, Slovakia and Poland to the Baltic Sea. Numerous antique monuments can be found along this "amber" road. Another interesting heritage is the domestic defence systems of farmers against medieval Turkish invasions aiming at northern Italy or Austria in the form of fortified churches. Slovenia also has monuments of both world wars. The Great War left several traces in the region. These are relics of battles between the Austro-Hungarian Empire and Italy along the Soča river (Isonzo) where more than one million (!) soldiers died. Thirty years later, the Second World War left monuments of anti-Nazi partisan fighting. Especially notable are the hidden partisan hospitals. These monuments are without any doubt part of European history and culture. Thus, Slovenia has been an enrichment to the European past and must protect its heritage. Many monuments could be protected with modern, new uses, such as tourism, small enterprises or week-end housings.

CONCLUSIONS

Let us conclude with the statement that Slovenia has to take part in the European Union in an active way with qualitative spatial development. Admittedly, it cannot compete with its size, numbers and scale of agglomerations, but it can compete with the skills and knowledge of human resources, with its biodiversity, scenic countryside, nature protection, good accessibility, effective urban networks, logistic and commercial centres. This active scenario will reinforce the Slovenian role in the EU together with its specific spatial qualities. Conservative and passive protection in all fields – protection of nature, traditional farming, prevention of massive transit traffic, mass tourism, opposition to foreign investors in industry or in international commercial programs, etc. – will lead to isolation, a peripheral position, poverty and – in a long run – loss of identity and national integrity. The combination of both – the active scenario together with the protection of landscape, biodiversity and cultural values – will bring Slovenia safely into the European Union.

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Andrej P o g a č n i k

POTENCIÁLNE ČLENSTVO SLOVINSKA V EURÓPSKEJ ÚNII A PERSPEKTÍVA JEHO PRIESTOROVÉHO ROZVOJA

Štúdia sumarizuje výskum Univerzity v Ľubľani pre Ministerstvo životného prostredia a plánovania Slovinskej republiky. Predkladá časť študijných materiálov pre nový štátny strategický plán priestorového rozvoja.

Výskum sa sústredil na možnosti a negatívne stránky členstva Slovinska v EÚ v oblasti priestorového rozvoja. Slovinské mestá – z európskeho pohľadu malé – sa musia zorganizovať do efektívnej siete, ktorá bude schopná konkurovať susedným pohraničným mestám. Musí sa podporiť rozvoj miest lokalizovaných na hlavných dopravných koridoroch. Ľubľana ako hlavné mesto sa musí stať uznanou metropolou, morský prístav Koper by sa mal stať vstupnou bránou do Európy. Priemysel a malé podniky, ktoré sú významnou súčasťou ekonomiky krajiny, musia prilákať nových investorov a poskytnúť nové stavebné parcely vo väčších mestách. Výroba sa musí zakladať na vedomostiach, výskume a vysokokvalifikovanej práci. Musí sa znížiť vysoká spotreba energie a s tým súvisiace znečistenie.

Po vstupe do EÚ hrozí poľnohospodárstvu kolaps. Malo by sa modernizovať a reštrukturalizovať (väčšie parcely polí, zavlažovanie, dôraz na tie produkty, ktoré sú v rámci EÚ menej obmedzované, biologické a špecializované poľné hospodárstvo, vrátane hospodárenia na čiastočný úväzok). Čistá príroda, čistá voda, horúce pramene, hory, jazerá a (krátky) úsek morského pobrežia sú základom pre budúci rozvoj cestovného ruchu. Je tu možnosť založiť prosperujúci región spolu s Chorvátskom (Istria), Talianskom, Rakúskom (Alpy) a Maďarskom (Panónsky región prírodných prameňov). Slovinsko je husto zalesnená krajina, ktorá zohráva významnú úlohu

v európskom ekosystéme. Ekologické koridory križujú územie štátu najmä medzi Alpami a Balkánskym pohorím.

Priestorový rozvoj Slovinska môže využiť jeho výhodnú polohu na dvoch transeurópskych koridoroch (E5, E10) medzi Barcelonou a Ľvovom a medzi severozápadnou Európou, Mníchovom a Istanbulom, resp. Teheránom. Okrem toho cez Slovinsko prechádzajú aj dopravné osi Taliansko – Dalmácia a Viedeň – Záhreb. Pozdĺž týchto dopravných infraštruktúr (diaľnice, rýchle železnice) by sa mala zintenzívniť urbanizácia a cestovný ruch.

Slovinsko bude musieť v porovnaní s EÚ znížiť svoju dolnú hranicu znečistenia životného prostredia, t. j. systémy kanalizácie, čističky odpadových vôd, odpadové hospodárstvo, atď. Slovinsko silne závisí na dovoze ropy a zemného prírodného plynu. Je však sebestačné v elektrickej energii, ktorú vyrábajú vodné a jadrové elektrárne.

Slovinsko by malo využiť svoju zaujímavú geopolitickú polohu, v ktorej hraničia alebo sa prekrývajú mnohé (stredozemné, alpské, balkánske, panónske, stredoeurópske a juhovýchodné) regióny. Musí využiť skutočnosť, že je aktívnou súčasťou všetkých regionálnych integrácií (a predísť hrozbe, že zostane na ich periférii).

Autor sa nazdáva, že v súvislosti so vstupom do EÚ existuje medzi situáciou Slovenska a Slovinska v priestorovom plánovaní veľká podobnosť.

Preložila H. Contrerasová