

## FOREWORD

The globalization of relationships caused by the changes in sociopolitical and economic systems and the accelerated process of European integration intensely influenced the spatial development. After the fall of the iron curtain intense dynamics were induced by the open borders in the hitherto passive borderlands which subsequently began to change their appearance and functions and tried to cope with new challenges of the fast growing transborder transport. With the formation of new, nation-based states, some former administrative borders became international having all the required infrastructure, duties, functions, advantages and developmental troubles. In many a place new borders cut short the former economic and cultural contacts. Even in the past, extensive new borderlands were problematic as to development due to their rural character and new borders were already formed when they were still unprepared in many aspects.

The problems of new rural borderlands are particularly topic in Slovenia and Czech Republic. They have been relatively poorly investigated so far, owing to entirely new conditions in both countries. White spots in the comprehension of developmental problems and possibilities are being filled in with a bilateral, Czech-Slovene investigation entitled "New Prosperity for Rural Regions". The latter has been substantially supported and actually made possible by the SOROS foundation. For three years, it has been continuously carried out at the Institute of Geography in Ljubljana, Slovenia, and at the Geoniky Institute in Brno, Czech Republic. Studied on the selected examples of Slovene-Croat and Czech-Slovak borders (comparable methodologies were applied) were transborder connectedness, new and old developmental problems of borderlands and the attitude of the people toward new borders and the people living beyond those borders. Later on, some Slovak colleagues joined this work, too; they did not much describe transborder contacts but rather presented various aspects of regional development of rural regions, viewed from the demographical, social and ethnic standpoints, as well as those of religious structure and characteristics of spatial distribution of election results. The latter text represents an exception to the remaining ones but reveals some specific geographical features (also of broader character) of the discussed areas in Slovakia. The results of the investigation work of all three sides were presented at the conference at Stara Lesna, Tatra Mountains, Slovakia, in June, 1998. The contributions prepared for this meeting make a basis of the current publication.

Four regions were studied in Slovenia, which significantly differ one from another by general geographical features. Outstanding in the region of Slovenian Istria is the littoral tier with its high urbanization level, while the hilly hinterlands show all the trends of demographic lag and collapse of the cultural landscape. Besides, this is an

ethnically explicitly mixed territory located along two international borders. Bela Krajina is an example of the rural regions which are remote from the capital having noticeable structural troubles and rather large percentage of the people who immigrated from neighbouring Croatia. The region was especially marked with the proximity of encounters between Croats and Serbs that took place on Croatian territory between 1991 and 1993. The region of the Lower Posavje is a rural borderland without any significant urban center, but lying very close to Zagreb, a million agglomeration in neighbouring Croatia. The region of Lower Podravje has preserved the most of all the studied areas, its rural and agrarian character as well as a series of developmental troubles. This, however, especially applies to the wine-growing hills of Slovenske Gorice and Haloze, while the level world along the Drava has to cope with certain environmental problems.

Four aspects were particularly exposed in the investigation, so by the Czech as by the Slovene researchers: 1) the changing of socioeconomic structure of the population; 2) regional development of the investigated area; 3) transborder cooperation and 4) relations between the peoples from both sides of the borders. Thus, it was possible to compare the sample areas along the Slovene-Croat border one with another, as well as to establish differences between Slovene and Czech sample borderlands.

The results of this bilateral investigation must be assessed from three aspects: from the aspect of international cooperation of two institutions and countries, from the aspect of the key results which call attention to the problems and possibilities of development, and finally, from the aspect of testing the methodologies applied in the investigation of borderlands. However, the latter will have to be studied in the future more thoroughly and with greater scientific enthusiasm and attention. Possibly the most interesting at first sight is the comparison of situations and processes in different countries and areas, together with the projections of future development. It is evident in both cases, Slovene and Czech, that simple and permanent solutions for rural borderlands cannot be expected. The reasons of the often unenviable socio-economic position of local population originate in the inherited structural unadaptability of regions and their broader hinterlands. Borders are the reality and they cannot be simply ignored although certain politically very pleasing theses are constantly repeated, about the borders that are an explicit hindering factor of development. Borders have their political, economic, cultural, ethnic and spatial functions. The solutions cannot only be searched for in the formal elimination of borders and their functions, but above all in the patient structural adapting and the searching of local inducers of development. In this light, the investigation is meant to be the stimulation for similar studies in both, or even better in the three countries, as well as elsewhere in broader extent.

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## PREGOVOR

Globalizacija odnosov po spremembi družbenopolitičnega ter gospodarskega sistema ter pospešeni procesi evropskega povezovanja je močno vplivala na prostorski razvoj. Odprte meje so po padcu železne zavesne vnesle veliko dinamike v doslej pasivna obmejna območja, ki so pričela spreminjati svoj videz in funkcijo ter se skušala prilagoditi novim izzivom naglo se povečujočega čezmejnega prometa. Z oblikovanjem novih nacionalnih držav so nekatere nekdanje administrativne meje postale mednarodne z vso infrastrukturo, obveznostmi, funkcijami, prednostmi in razvojnimi težavami. Nove meje so marsikje presekale prejšnje gospodarske in kulturne stike. Obsežna nova obmejna območja so zaradi svojega podeželskega značaja že v preteklosti veljala za razvojno problematična in jih je nova meja v marsičem zatekla povsem nepripravljene.

Slovenijo in Češko problematika novih podeželskih obmejnih območij še posebej zadeva. Doslej je bila tematika tudi zaradi povsem novih razmer v obeh državah še razmeroma slabo raziskana. Bele lise v poznavanju razvojnih problemov in možnosti smo skušali zapolniti z bilateralno češko-slovensko raziskavo "New Prosperity for Rural Regions", ki jo je izdatno podprla in dejansko omogočila fundacija SOROS, izvajali pa smo jo tri leta kontinuirano na Inštitutu za geografijo v Ljubljani v Sloveniji ter na inštitutu Geoniky v Brnu na Češkem. Na izbranih primerih slovensko-hrvaške in češko-slovaške meje smo po primerljivi metodologiji proučevali čezmejno povezanost, nove in stare razvojne probleme obmejnih podeželskih območij ter odnos prebivalstva do nove meje in prebivalstva na drugi strani. Kasneje so se v delo vključili še slovaški kolegi, ki so bolj kot mejo in čezmejne odnose predstavili različne vidike regionalnega razvoja podeželskih območij, od demografskih, socialnih in etničnih do vprašanj verske sestave ter značilnosti prostorske razporeditve volilnih rezultatov. Slednje predstavlja v primerjavi z ostalimi besedili izjemo, a razkriva nekatere (tudi širše) geografske posebnosti obravnavanih območij na Slovaškem. Rezultate raziskovalnega dela vseh treh strani smo predstavili na konferenci v Stari Lesni v Tatrah na Slovaškem, junija 1998. Prispevki s tega srečanja so tudi osnova za izdajo pričujoče publikacije.

V Sloveniji smo proučevali štiri območja, ki se med seboj močno razlikujejo po splošnih geografskih značilnostih. Območje Slovenske Istre izstopa po stopnji urbanizacije v obalnem pasu, medtem ko ima gričevnato zaledje vse trende demografskega nazadovanja in propadanja kulturne pokrajine. Obenem gre za izrazito etnično pomešano okolje ob dveh mednarodnih mejah. Bela krajina je primer od državnega središča odmaknjene podeželske pokrajine z opaznimi strukturnimi težavami in večjim deležem priseljenega prebivalstva iz sosednje Hrvaške. Območje je posebej zaznamovala bližina vojaških spopadov med Hrvati in Srbi na Hrvaškem v

letih 1991 – 1993. Območje Spodnjega Posavja je podeželska obmejna pokrajina brez pomembnejšega mestnega središča, obenem pa je v bližini, toda na hrvaški strani meje, milijonska aglomeracija Zagreba. Območje Spodnjega Podravja je od vseh testnih območij še najbolj zadržalo svoj podeželski in agrarni značaj, a tudi vrsto razvojnih težav. To velja posebej za vinorodna gričevja Slovenskih goric in Haloz, medtem ko se ravnina ob Dravi otepa z nekaterimi okoljskimi problemi.

V raziskavi smo tako na Češkem kot v Sloveniji posebej izpostavili štiri vidike: spreminjanje socialnoekonomske sestave prebivalstva, regionalni razvoj proučevanega območja, čezmejno sodelovanje ter odnose med prebivalstvom z obeh strani meje. Na ta način je mogoče primerjati tako vzorčna območja ob slovensko-hrvaški meji med seboj, kakor ugotavljati razlike med slovenskimi in češkimi primeri obmejnih območij.

Izsledke bilateralne raziskave je treba presojati s treh plati: z vidika mednarodnega sodelovanja dveh institucij in držav, z vidika ključnih rezultatov, ki opozarjajo na razvojne dileme in možnosti in slednjič tudi v luči preverjanja metodologije proučevanja obmejnih območij, ki jim bomo morali v bodoče posvetiti še več znanstvene vneme in pozornosti. Morda je na prvi pogled najbolj zanimiva primerjava stanja in procesov v različnih državah in območjih, vključno s previdnimi projekcijami nadaljnjega razvoja. Tako v slovenskem kot v češkem primeru se izkazuje, da hitrih, enostavnih in trajnih rešitev podeželskih obmejnih območij ne moremo pričakovati. Razlogi za dostikrat nezavidljiv gospodarsko socialni položaj lokalnega prebivalstva tičijo v podedovani strukturni neprilagojenosti območij in širšega zaledja. Meje so stvarnost in jih ne moremo enostavno odpisati, čeprav ponavljamo politično zelo všečne teze o meji kot izključno oviralnem razvojnem dejavniku. Meje imajo svojo politično, gospodarsko, kulturno, etnično in prostorsko funkcijo. Rešitve ne gre iskati zgolj v formalnem odpravljanju meja in njihovih funkcij, temveč predvsem v potrpežljivem strukturnem prilagajanju in iskanju lokalnih iniciatorjev razvoja. V tej luči želi biti ta raziskava tudi vzpodbuda za podobne študije v obeh oziroma treh državah in širše.

dr. Jernej Zupančič