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SLOVENE ISTRIA

General on the region and border area. Geographical situation and proportions

The region in question is a part of Istria — the peninsula, the major part of which now belongs to the Republic of Croatia. As a part of Slovenian Istria we consider the region measuring 34,459 ha (1.7 % of Slovenia) with 77,964 inhabitants (1995, representing 3.9 % of Slovenian population), and divided in three municipalities. There are 125 settlements in the region, among them there are three towns: Koper (24,595 inhabitants), Izola (10,460), Piran (4773, including the towns of Portorož and Lucija 13,558). From the administrative point of view, the region is divided in three municipalities: Koper (46,270 inhabitants), Izola (14,354) in Piran (17,340).

On the northern border of Istria is situated the town of Trieste (257,000 inhabitants), the town which had been the main commercial centre of a large part of Istria (which today comprises the Slovenian Istria and a part of Croatian Istria) up to the end of World War II: after the new national boundary was set between Italy and Yugoslavia, Trieste was decreed to belong to Italy.

Natural and geographical features

The landscape sections of the Slovenian Istria are the coastal zone with accumulation plain areas, flysch uplands (hills and plateaux), and the Karst territory (Kras). In the accumulation plain areas and the wider hinterland behind them, the flat land prevails at a rather low height above sea level: in the past it was set aside for the saltpans, and on the margins for intense agriculture, whereas today there is a complex of manifold activities going on: traffic (Port of Koper), tourism, industry, agriculture, and settlements.

The flysch landscape rises gradually from the sea to the hinterland, to the south-east over low hills (up to 200 m above sea level) further into higher flysch uplands and plateaux reaching up from 300 to 500 m above sea level), and to the north-east where it reaches the Karst territory.

The climate of Slovenian Istria can be classified as a Mediterranean climate, with average temperature above 22° C in the warmest month, and 4.5° in January (Koper). In the higher flysch uplands and the Karst bordering area, the continental climatic

influence is felt due to the height and distance from the sea, which is reflected on the vegetation and cultures (stock- breeding prevails).

Development characteristics

In the 19th and early 20th century, the respective region was the agricultural hinterland of the port and industrial town of Trieste. Vegetables and milk for the town population came from the adjacent lowlands along the coast, and hay and firewood were supplied from the uplands in the hinterland. The new national boundary between the two states (1954) exerted a considerable impact on the political and economic conditions, which changed thoroughly. Between 1945 and 1956, there was a large emigration stream from Istria to Trieste: 25,070 inhabitants, which was nearly one half of the population in the region (1931: 57,303), left their homes in the towns on the Istrian coast and emigrated to Trieste. Their homes were inhabited by the rural population from the hinterland hills and from inland of Istria, but also from other regions in Slovenia.

Upon its union with Slovenia in 1954, the Slovenian Istria was primarily an agrarian region. Supported by industrialisation plan, intensive (and politically encouraged) immigration and development of other activities (traffic: port, tourism, trade), Koper and other coastal towns developed in major commercial centres. The population grew from 34,915 inhabitants (1953) to 75,929 in 1991, which is indicated by index 217. At that time, the index of population growth in Slovenia was 131.

The 'tertiary' and 'quarternary' activities prevail in the economic structure, in particular traffic, tourism and trade. The 'tertiary' and 'quarternary' sectors employ 67 % of the active population, whereas the respective figure for Slovenia is 45 %. In addition to the favourable situation at the sea, the economic growth also benefited from the region's position at the national boundary, by developing the local cross-border cooperation with Italy. Koper spread its area of influence to a part of the Croatian Istria.

Table 1: Border area in Slovene Istria.

	Number of inhabitants			Index 1991/61	Number of settlements	% Children up to 14 1991	Per capita Income Region = 100 1994
	1900	1961	1991				
<i>Towns</i>	23,022	26,783	48,275	180.2	5*	19.8	104.4
<i>Suburban areas</i>	11,723	13,303	20,685	155.5	38	19.2	97.5
<i>Countryside</i>	15,961	10,595	7383	69.7	82	17.7	77.0
Region	50,706	50,681	76,343	150.6	125	19.5	100.0

* Koper, Izola, Piran and urban settlements of Lucija and Portorož.

Regional Structure

Intense economic development brought about considerable differences in the settlement structure of the region. Population and economic activities concentrated on the three coastal towns, in which 66 % of the region's population reside today. Those settlements in which the population was growing in number during the whole post-war period, represent 26 % of the region's surface and accommodate 93 % of the population, with an average density of 553 inhabitants per square km. In 1900, 31.5 % of the population lived in rural areas, whereas today this figure has fallen below 10 %.

The rural areas which comprise some two thirds of the region is exposed to depopulation: the population has nearly halved in the post-war period. Many hamlets and small settlements are in ruins, the cultural landscape lays open to deterioration. The most intensive migration processes affected the areas most distant from the coastal agglomeration, i.e. along the Croatian border. Municipalities endeavour to solve the current disproportions in physical planning by fostering land development and communal improvement of rural areas (construction of connecting roads, waterworks, sewerage system), which gradually creates adequate living conditions also in these parts of the region. Consequently, in the last decade the number of population in the countryside is no longer on the decline: moreover, numerous houses were newly built in many villages, in particular in central settlements.



Korte above the Drnica valley in the Šavrinsko Gričevje hills has typical littoral-type houses.

The area bordering on the Republic of Croatia

The area along the national boundary with the Republic of Croatia includes the following local communities: Gračišče, Gradin, Marezige and Boršt, Šmarje and Sečovlje (excluding Podgorje and Rakitovec, which were not comprised in the public opinion research).

Although these areas are physically situated along the border, they differ as regards the connection and communications with the settlements on the other side of the border. The settlements of the local community Marezige, Boršt and Šmarje are not directly linked to the settlements over the border, since they are naturally divided by the Valley of Dragonja. The situation is different in the area of Gračišče and Sečovlje, which are connected with Croatia by motorway and international border passes: the pass of Sočerga connects the area of Gračišče with Croatia, whereas Sečovlje has got two border passes, Sečovlje and Dragonja. A border pass for local cross-border traffic is foreseen in Brezovica (Local Community of Gradin), which does not function yet; local people endeavour to open another such border pass in Hrvoji, which indicates a certain link-up among the places on both sides of the national boundary, though the whole region belongs to depopulated areas in Slovenia and Croatia.

A significant connectedness of bordering areas in the area of Gračišče-Gradin and that of Piran reflect the variable administrative regulations in the past. During the 19th century and the first half of the 20th century, the cadastral units of Movraž and Sočerga belonged to the municipality of Buzet, and the cadastral units of Gradin and Topolovec were integral part of the municipality of Obtralj/Buje. Settlements in the cadastral units of Gradin and Pregara, and partly in the cadastral unit of Topolovec, were annexed to the municipality of Koper only in 1956. On the contrary, the settlements in the cadastral units of Savudrija and Kaštel (today in the territory of R. Croatia) belonged to the municipality of Piran in the first half of this century!

The whole area along the national boundary with Croatia belongs to the rural part of the Koper region. It represents 46 % of its surface and only 6 % of the population.

Table 2: Basic data of border areas along the Slovene-Croatian border in Slovene Istria.

Local community	Number of inhabitants				Agrarian popul. % (1991)	% Children up to 14 (1991)	Per capita income reg.=100 (94)
	1900	1961	1991	1 91/61			
Gračišče, Gradin	3639	2326	1373	59.0	18.6	17.5	65.5
Marezige, Šmarje	5787	4289	3165	73.8	11.8	19.5	78.0
Sečovlje	1009	1442	1560	108.2	6.6	19.9	81.9
Border area	10,435	8057	6098	75.7	12.0	19.1	76.3
Region	50,706	49,997	76,343	150.6	3.2	19.5	100.0

The data in the table 2 reveal a common feature of this area, namely its falling behind the development of the region; the figures also point out the differences among them. The settlements in the local communities of Gračišče and Gradin are in the most unfavourable position, with the population constantly on the decline and a relatively high share of agrarian and aged population. Per capita income is by one third below the region's average. On the other hand, the position of the three settlements in the local community of Sečovelje is quite the opposite: the number of inhabitants is growing, the share of agrarian population is low and the per capita income is slightly below the region's average, however it exceeds the average of border areas.

Attitude of the population along the Slovene/Croatian border to the national boundary, and cross-border relations

The border area in question belongs to the gravitational sphere of the coastal towns and is closely related to the development of the littoral (employment, supply): it is therefore presumed that the national border does not affect the border area explicitly in an adverse way as regards commerce and development. Gravitational power of the coastal towns, in particular of Koper, was in the past — before the national boundary was established — perceived also in the part of Croatian Istria (employment, supply, regional hospital, secondary schools and institutions of higher education): we therefore assume that in some areas, to a certain extent, some negative impacts in the commercial sphere were exerted by setting up the national boundary with Croatia. By all means, the boundary has brought about a weighty change in the life of this area and mainly in the very experience of one's native/home place, the position of which was affected by the border. We tried to find out by a questionnaire about these changes and their character.

The opinion research comprised three different border areas:

- the Local community of Gračišče and Gradin as typically rural and depopulation area, the most distant area from the coastal towns. The nearest local centre is Buzet on the Croatian side of the border: before the boundary was drawn, the attachment to Croatia was considerable.
- the Local community of Marezige, Boršt and Šmarje is in fact located along the border, however, there is practically no functional and traffic connection with Croatia.
- the Local community of Sečovelje: an urbanised area close to the tourist centre — the town complex of Piran – Portorož – Lucija, located at the main traffic motorway to the Croatian Istria.

According to the census taken in 1991, 73.4 % of the inhabitants declared Slovenian nationality, and the share of population in the local communities in the border area

reached 81 %. Among the respondents the share of Slovene nationals was even higher — 86 %. Based on the census, as well as our opinion poll, in the respective border area the share of Croats exceeds the share of other nationals of former Yugoslavia. At the time of census, there were 5.4 % of Croats (municipality: 7.5), other nationals of former Yugoslavia 3.8 % (municipality: 8.5 %). If we compare the nationality of respondent and his/her spouse (partner), we find that Croatian nationals are mostly married with Slovenes, whereas other nationals of former Yugoslavia concluded a greater number of marriages among themselves than with Slovene nationals.

Table 3: Nationality of respondents and their spouses.

	Gračišče, Gradin		Marezige, Šmarje		Sečovlje		Total	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Slovene	102	87.2	142	88.8	72	80.0	316	86.1
Croat	9	7.7	6	3.8	6	6.7	21	5.7
Former YU national	6	5.1	7	4.4	7	7.8	20	5.4
Italian	0	0.0	3	1.9	1	1.1	4	1.1
Undeclared	0	0.0	2	1.3	4	4.4	6	1.6
Total	6	100.0	160	100.0	90	100.0	367	100.0



Piran is a town in Slovenian Istria with the best preserved medieval appearance.

The educational structure of the respondents is much higher than shown in the Census 1991: this is due to the fact that younger or middle generation was included in the opinion poll. Nearly two thirds of the respondents have vocational or secondary school education (according to the census, 33 %, for the region 44 %). There are certain discrepancies between the areas: the respondents in the area of Gračišče-Gradin have the lowest educational structure (in Šmarje and Marezige, a high percent of respondents with higher and university education is due to the fact that the questionnaire was completed by teachers too, which may lead to misinterpretation of the educational structure).

Table 4: The educational structure in the border areas.

	Gračišče, Gradin		Marezige, Šmarje		Sečovlje		border area	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Primary school	18	27.3	13	15.1	6	12.2	37	18.4
Vocational s.	22	33.3	16	18.6	17	34.7	55	27.4
Secondary s.	24	36.4	28	32.6	19	38.8	71	35.3
Higher ed. university ed.	2	3.0	29	33.7	7	14.3	38	18.9
Total	66	100.0	86	100.0	49	100.0	201	100.0

Migrations and inter-ethnic relations

The respective area is a rural one, with typical depopulation trends in the past (except Sečovlje), therefore the question on their migration plans is regarded an important index of further development of the area. Likewise, inter-ethnic relations in the border areas may be a potential indicator of co-operation between the neighbouring countries.

Although the respective area is a part of rural countryside with typical depopulation trends, scarcely a third of the respondents (or both spouses) have lived in their native place (or its close vicinity — up to 5 km): most of them are in the area of Gradin-Gračišče. Most families (both spouses) migrated to the settlements of the local community of Sečovlje, which is actually the bordering area to the town complex of Piran-Portorož-Lucija.

Of the population migrated to this area, 55.6 % came in the '80's (1981–90), which also relates to the age of the respondents and reflects a general impression of stopping the emigration trends from the rural countryside. According to the questionnaires, the members of other nations immigrated to this area as a spouse or both spouses. There are no significant differences between the immigrants and the natives.

The finding that settlements at the border are no longer a source of emigration is supported by the migration plans. Of all respondents, 70 % are sure that they would

not leave, and further 24 % stated a great probability of staying in the area. Only two respondents from the area of Gračišče-Gradin (Pregara) intend to move from the area, from personal reasons. Among those who are potential migrants, personal reasons are given to support the eventual migration. Bad economic conditions and remoteness of the border area are only occasionally given as a reason of eventual migration; nobody stated an inadequate housing as a motive for eventual migration.

Table 5: Duration of stay in the border area.

	Gračišče, Gradin		Marezige, Šmarje		Sečovlje		Border area	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Both spouses since infancy	23	36.5	26	30.6	15	30.6	64	32.5
One spouse immigrated	33	52.4	35	41.2	17	34.7	85	43.1
Both spouses immigrated	7	11.1	24	28.2	17	34.7	48	24.4
Total	63	100.0	85	100.0	49	100.0	197	100.0

It is also characteristic that nobody with higher or university education considers migration. Likewise, the members of other nationalities do not consider migration.

Though rural, this area is interesting for immigration. Nearly two thirds (65.2 %) of the respondents stated that inhabitants from other Yugoslav republics immigrated during the last twenty years: the least immigrants came to the area of Gračišče-Gradin, and the most of them settled down in the local community of Šmarje and Marezige (77.5 %).

The relations between the natives (Slovenes) and immigrants are good, without any conflicts arising (40.8 % of replies), or are mostly good, with occasional conflicts caused by personal reasons (21.0 %). Ten per cent of the respondents believe that immigrants do not pay consideration to the habits, customs and the culture of the native population. A few respondents believe that the attitude of immigrants toward the native population is sometimes unfavourable, or that the attitude of the natives toward the immigrants is adverse (below 6 %). The lowest opinion on the relations between the native population and immigrants are found in Šmarje (only 29 % respondents consider these relations as good, without any conflicts emerging): the greatest part of respondents in Šmarje believe that immigrants are blamed for causing unfair competition for jobs and business (7.6 %, whereas in the whole area 5.9 %), and that immigrants make the residential environment less attractive 82.1 %, whereas in the whole area 5.9 %). The least conflicts between the native population and immigrants are found in the area of Gračišče-Gradin.

After Slovenia gained independence, the respondents believe that the relations between Slovenes and Croats have not improved: on the contrary, 35.8 % of respondents assess that the relations have aggravated — again this is most obvious in Šmarje (40 %) and only 6 % assert that the relations have improved. Among the Slovenes the

number of respondents asserting that the relations have aggravated exceeds (36 %) the respective number in members of other nationals (30 %).

The possibility that conflicts among Croats and Slovenes could arise is considered as true by 71.7 % of respondents; a scarce fifth of respondents does not consider this to be feasible, whereas 9.1 % of the respondent are convinced of high probability of conflicts. On the contrary, on member of other nationals considers this possibility as true: most of them (52 %) believe that conflicts are not feasible at all.

The respondents were requested to assess personal characteristics of the Slovenes and Croats. The replies and remarks showed that they were not willing to reply to this question. However, the replies given conveyed a certain picture as shown in the tables below:

Table 6: Characteristics of Slovenes (% of responses).

Good	57.6	39.7	2.7	Bad
Self-confident	50.9	38.3	10.9	Not self-confident
Industrious	82.0	15.9	2.1	Lazy
Generous	24.0	51.4	24.6	Stingy
Honest	47.0	50.8	2.2	Unfair
Reliable	46.9	47.5	5.6	Unreliable
Economical	65.4	30.7	3.9	Spendthrift
Cheerful	47.8	37.8	14.4	Embittered
Open	29.7	41.8	28.6	Reserved

Table 7: Characteristics of Croats (% of responses).

Good	36.0	56.0	8.0	Bad
Self-confident	47.4	44.5	8.1	Not self-confident
Industrious	47.4	44.6	8.0	Lazy
Generous	22.9	61.2	15.9	Stingy
Honest	19.3	69.0	11.7	Unfair
Reliable	15.1	62.2	22.7	Unreliable
Economical	32.0	56.8	11.2	Spendthrift
Cheerful	48.0	42.8	9.2	Embittered
Open	33.1	50.9	16.0	Reserved

Slovenes are more extremely (good/bad) assessed than Croats, favourable assessments prevail (in the ration 1: 4.7). The self-assessment of Slovenes is the same as total, whereas other nationals have assessed the Slovenes generally slightly more favourably than they assess themselves.

In assessment of personal characteristics of Croats, the average and neutral assessments prevail. If we take a look at the assessments given by the Slovenes and other nationals separately, the average and neutral assessments likewise prevail, however, other nations assess them slightly less favourably and reproach them with reserve, lack of reliability, and unfairness.



Koper with its port is economically the most important littoral town in Slovenia.

The new national boundary-line and cross-border relations

In the introduction we defined the developmental differences within the border area; now we are principally interested whether these differences are reflected in the impacts of the new national boundary on the lives of the people in particular areas.

Over one half of the respondents (51.5 %) believe that the new national boundary-line had an adverse impact on the life in the border areas; only 13 % can see a favourable influence in that. The inhabitants of Marezige and Šmarje observe the least negative impacts: it should be noted that there is no direct connection with the area over the border. The highest share of negative assessments is in Sečovelje. Among Slovenes the belief in adverse impacts of the boundary-line is higher, whereas other nationals were more generous with positive assessments (22 %). The assessments do not differ in correlation with the education: the share of favourable assessments is slightly higher with the population having primary school education only.

Table 8: Assessment of the changes related to the new national boundary.

	Favourable (positive)		No changes		Unfavourable (negative)		Total	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Feeling safe	51	28.2	83	45.9	47	26.0	181	100.0
Traffic connections	17	9.4	65	35.9	99	54.7	181	100.0
Employment	12	6.7	73	40.8	94	52.5	179	100.0
Purchase, supply	24	13.4	74	41.3	81	45.3	179	100.0
Going to events	14	7.8	89	49.7	76	42.5	179	100.0
Bonds with relatives and friends	16	8.9	106	58.9	58	32.2	180	100.0
Recreation and excursions	14	8.0	73	42.0	87	50.0	174	100.0
Total	148	11.8	563	44.9	542	43.3	1253	100.0

Of the favourable influence, the feeling of safety is strongly emphasised: this is most explicit in the area of Gračišče-Gradin (38.3 %), and the lowest in Sečovelje (18.6 %). Respondents find most negative impacts in the area of traffic connections, employment and recreation. There are no essential differences among individual areas: only the order between these three areas is changing: in Gračišče-Gradin the adverse impacts are most severe in the field of employment (employment in Buzet), whereas in Sečovelje the area of excursions and recreation, as well as traffic connections, is exposed.

Cross-border relations were monitored in the light of Croatian media, contacts with relatives and friends, work in Croatia and travel across the border.

Table 9: Monitoring of the Croatian TV and radio programmes and newspapers.

	TV programmes		Radio programmes		Newspapers	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Slovene	161	78.9	187	91.7	192	94.1
Croatian	65	31.9		27.5	24	11.8
Italian	167	81.9	77	37.7	–	–
Austrian	5	2.5	2	1.0	–	–
None	6	2.9	8	3.9	8	3.9

Although the respective area is situated along the Croatian boundary-line, the monitoring of TV and radio programmes clearly shows a much greater influence of the Italian media over the Croatian ones. These figures do not differ much according to the areas: Italian media (TV and radio) prevail in all areas but the area of Gračišče-Gradin, in which Croatian are in the lead. Respondents of lower educational structure

(with primary school, also secondary and vocational school) follow the Croatian programmes, whereas those with higher and university education mostly watch Italian TV programmes and listen to Slovene radio programmes. Newspapers are least read by the population of primary school and lower education.

Table 10: Friends and relatives across the border.

	Slovenes		Other nations in this area		Total	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Personal friends on the other side of the border	88	53.0	23	85.2	111	57.5
Relatives on the other side of the border	76	45.8	22	81.5	97	50.3
Total	166	100.0	27	100.0	193	100.0

Nearly all respondents of Croatian and members of other nationalities of former Yugoslavia have got some friends and relatives on the other side of the border: also nearly a half of Slovenes has got relatives across the border. Again the population of Šmarje and Marezige has the lowest share, and that of Gračišče-Gradin (69 % of respondents have relatives in Croatia) has the highest share.

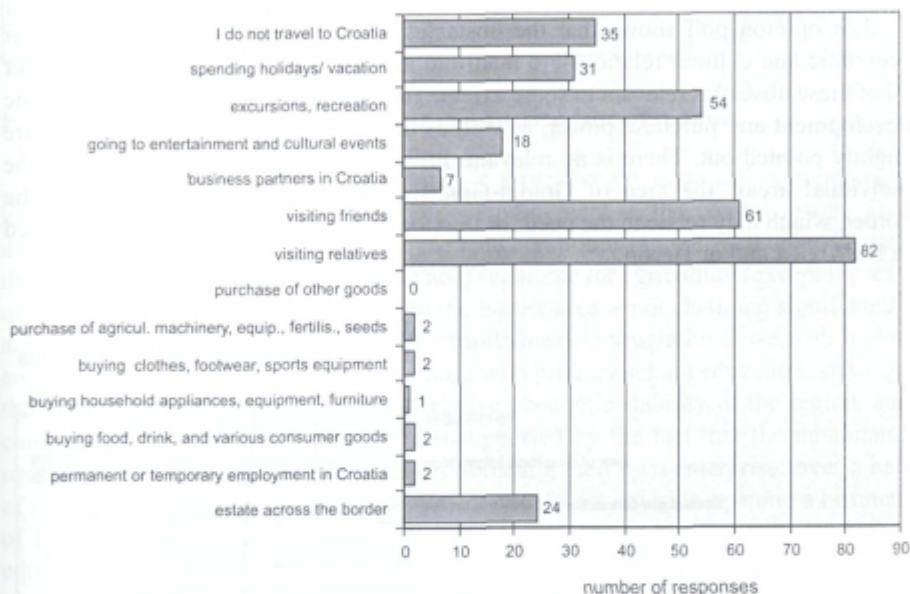
Table 11: Employment across the border before the national boundary was established.

	Gračišče, Gradin		Marezige, Šmarje		Sečovlje		Total	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Still working	1	1.5	1	1.2	3	6.1	5	2.6
Had work, no longer does now	8	12.3	6	7.0	5	10.2	19	9.8
Did not work, but now working	0	0.0	2	2.3	0	0.0	2	1.0
Did not work, nor does now	56	86.2	77	89.5	41	83.7	165	85.5
Total	65	100.0	86	100.0	49	100.0	193	100.0

The information on employment that any member of the respondent's family might have (had) in Croatia before the national boundary was established reveal that this area was not much dependent on the Croatian side: 85.5 % of respondents declare that none of their family ever worked — or works — across the border. The highest link of employment was in the area of Gračišče-Gradin. Employment across the border does not depend considerably on the nationality or education.

The inhabitants of respected area do not cross the border very often. Of all respondents, 52.5 % only cross the border once a year, and only 23 % do that once per month (again, the area of Gradin-Gračišče (36.9 %) is at the front, and Šmarje and Marezige are behind (15 %). This information is related to the reasons for travelling to Croatia: among them visiting of their relatives and friends and recreation prevail.

Reasons for travelling to Croatia



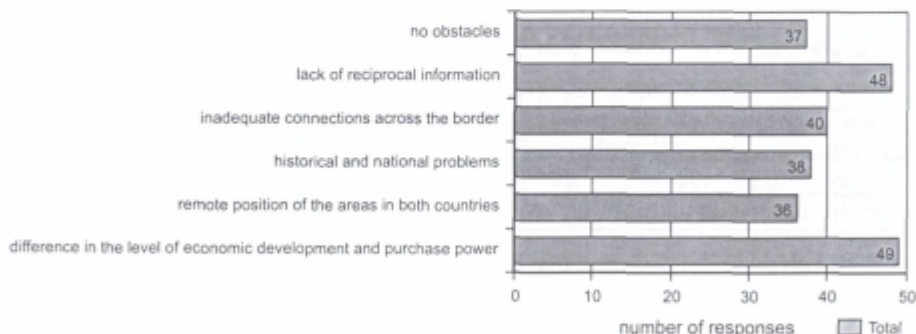
Based on these data, we find that links between the two countries are rather weak. This applies to both directions. Only two persons from Croatia are permanently employed with the local businessmen in said area, and four persons have temporary employment. Visitors from Croatia do not visit the Slovenian border area: only a fourth of respondents confirmed becoming visitors from Croatia, mostly in Sečovelje (40 %). Relatives from Croatia pay a few visits a year, most frequently in the area of Gradin-Gračišče.

In spite of weakness of cross-border links in the past, as well as at present, the respondents believe that cross-border communications should be supported and further developed, mainly in the commercial area: this would accelerate economic growth in all fields and on both sides of the border (38.3 %). The opinion that politicians and businessmen of our municipality should see to it that local problematic issues be taken into consideration on the level of the state, ranks second (28.1 %). The proposal that politicians and businessmen of our municipality should pay more attention to further economic and cultural relations across the border, with the neighbouring

county in Croatia, in order to moderate the remoteness of the border area, comes third (20.1 %). This order of sequence shows that co-operation of border regions has not been developed to the satisfactory level, and the population relies more on their own region (economy and municipality) and the state in the matter of regional development. There is only a small share of respondents (6.6 or 6.9 %) who do not feel the need to advance the cross-border contacts, or even believe that the current advantages in cross-border contacts should be abolished: most of them who share this opinion belong to the nationalities of the former Yugoslavia.

The opinion poll shows that the obstacles to the development of cross-border economic and cultural relations are manifold and complex; the respondent consider all of these obstacles relevant to some extent. The differences in the level of economic development and purchase power, as well as the lack of reciprocal information, are slightly pointed out. There is no relevant difference in the assessments between the individual areas: the area of Gradin-Gračišče stress bad connections across the border, which may relate to the need for the (local) border pass, planned to be opened in Brezovica and/or Hrvoji.

Obstacles to the development of cross-border economic and cultural relations



An inadequate regime on the border cannot be regarded as an obstacle to the development of cross-border relations: 40 % of the respondents find this regime satisfactory, and 35 % believe that this border should be quite open. Only 7 % of respondents believe that border control should be increased (no national of former Yugoslav nations is found among them). Assessments do not differ with respect to different areas or education structure.

The respondents believe that the border area can be best used by establishing a free trade zone. It is a new and specific activity (this activity was greatly supported by all respondents, those with lower education (including primary school), as well as higher education), which shows again that border areas lack functional connections: if so, catering, trade and services would have a more significant role.

Table 12: Proposals how to take the advantage of the border area.

Proposals	No.	%
More shops and catering facilities	58	23.4
Various tradesman's services	55	22.2
Free trade zone	91	36.7
Renting and cultivation of agricultural lands in Croatia	6	2.4
Changes not necessary, present condition satisfactory	38	15.3
Total	248	100.0

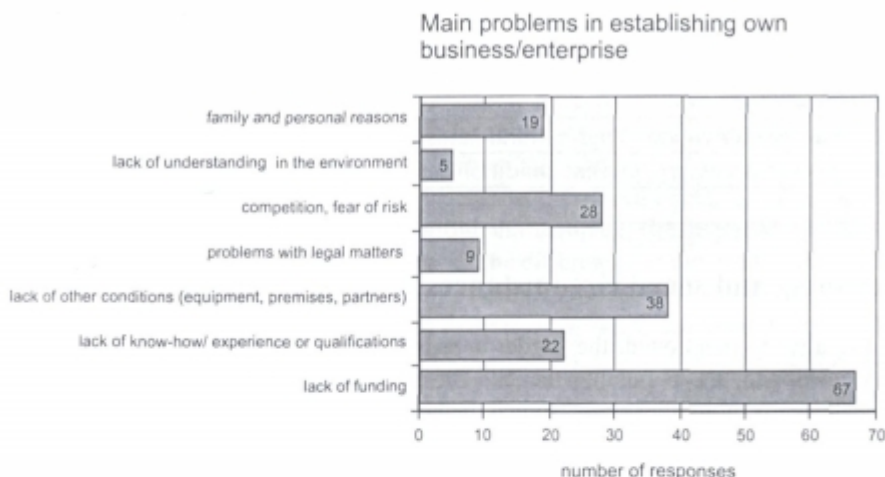
Economy and social circumstances in the border area

As already mentioned, the border area is a rural countryside and commercially less developed; the population depend on employment in the coastal towns. This dependence is more relevant inasmuch the land conditions in the flysch uplands, with the estates broken into small pieces, are not favourable for agriculture (except the area of Sečovelje). The rate of employment in the border area is not changing significantly and it does not threaten the population. Employment is sought by those with higher and university education, as well as by those with primary school education, although the share is highest among the latter. Relative economic stability of the region, and consequently of the employment, is also supported by the fact that the inhabitants usually do not solve their existence by establishing their own enterprise: over a half of respondents (55.3 %) have an employment and do not envision opening a business of their own. (the highest share of private businesses has been opened by highly educated and qualified respondents). Further 30 % of the respondents considered opening their own enterprise, but have not done so yet. Only 10 % of the respondents have their own business, the greatest number of them in Sečovelje (20 %) and the lowest in Marezige and Šmarje (6 %).

Table 13: Assessment of the current economic conditions and possibility for employment.

	Gračišče, Gradin		Marezige, Šmarje		Sečovelje		Total	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Employment rate does not change considerably	31	49.2	40	50.0	27	58.7	98	51.9
Unemployment does not threaten	15	23.8	20	25.0	6	13.0	41	21.7
Seeking employment	11	17.5	8	10.0	4	8.7	23	12.2
Loss of employment possible	6	9.5	12	15.0	9	19.6	27	14.3
Total	63	100.0	80	100.0	46	100.0	189	100.0

Those who have considered establishing their own business, but have not decided to do so, or had an enterprise and closed it down, list various reasons:



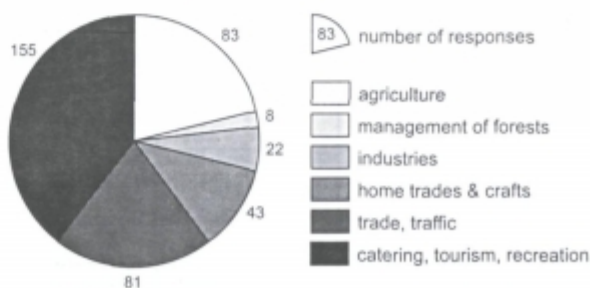
The same reasons impeding the establishment and running a private enterprise appear in each area of the border region and in all educational structures (with the lowest educated population prevails the reply that they lack the know-how and qualifications).

The economic and general conditions in the municipality remained almost unchanged, declared some 54.6 % of respondents. Among those who admit of some changes the respondents prevail who observed negative changes (29.4 %). The respondents of Marežice and Šmarje find the most negative assessments, in the group of higher and university education.

Although all the inhabitants of the border area that participated in the opinion poll believe that they could most benefit from the border position of the area, they see the perspective of the development of the municipality in tertiary activities, and even in agriculture (lower educated respondents). There are no differences among the respective areas.

The population of border areas finds the supply in their area satisfactory. It is difficult to assure that the shops with technical goods are well supplied also in

Perspective areas for the development of the municipality



sparsely peopled areas, with dispersed settlements; however, day-care centres and schools are well organised, which partly applies also to the health service. Only respondents in the area of Gradin-Gračišče are not satisfied with the health service, whereas the respondents of Marezige and Šmarje find the services and supply fully satisfactory.

Table 14: Assessment of service and supply in the local town/village.

	Satisfactory	Medium	Not satisfactory
Supply of shops in foodstuffs	48.4	27.1	24.5
Supply of shops in technical goods	29.7	26.5	43.8
Tradesmen's services	24.2	41.2	34.6
Day-care centres, schools	56.1	27.8	16.0
Health service/medical care	32.5	36.6	30.9

Sources

204 questionnaire forms.

Census taken in 1991, Bureau of RS for Statistics, Ljubljana.