

THE SLOVENIAN BORDERLANDS: INSIDERS OR OUTSIDERS?

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SLOVENIA AS A 'BORDERLAND' (1)

Measures of 'borderiness':

- Ratio between the surface of the state and the total length of the political borders (**5,7 km** of borders per **100 km²**). *A higher proportion of borders to land is present only in Luxembourg (nearly 9 km per 100 km²).*
- Ratio between the bordering municipalities (located within a **25 km** distance from the border) and other municipalities within the country (**61%** of the Slovenian municipalities are located within this distance; **50%** if we restrict the width to only **10 km**).

SLOVENIA AS A 'BORDERLAND' (2)

Cross-border traffic (**180 mio** passengers per year):

- **Half a million** people are crossing borders daily (*in comparison to 2 mio of the total Slovene population*).
- Out of this figure, **30%** are Slovenian citizens, who make about **50 mio** border crossings a year (*meaning that about 140 thousand Slovenian citizens, or 7% of the entire resident population, transit the border **daily** and that **each Slovenian citizen** visits a foreign country in average **once a fortnight**).*
- Prevailing origin of foreign visitors: Croatia 22%, Italy 21%, Austria 13% and Germany 12%.

SLOVENIA - STRUCTURE OF BORDER CROSSINGS PER SECTORS

	1992	1995	2002	1992	1995	2002
	<i>(Million passengers)</i>			<i>(in %)</i>		
SLO/I	51,4	74,5	64,9	36,0	41,3	36,3
SLO/A	39,4	50,7	48,6	27,6	28,1	27,1
SLO/H	1,9	4,8	4,1	1,3	2,7	2,3
SLO/CRO	50,2	50,3	61,3	35,1	27,9	34,3
<i>Total</i>	<i>142,9</i>	<i>180,3</i>	<i>178,9</i>	<i>100,0</i>	<i>100,0</i>	<i>100,0</i>

Source: Statistical Office of the Republic of Slovenia.

SELECTED CHARACTERISTICS OF SLOVENIAN BORDER SECTIONS (2002)

	<i>1</i>	<i>2</i>	<i>3</i>	<i>4</i>	<i>5</i>
SLO/I	17,4	35	38,5	17,3	38,0
SLO/A	27,9	24	26,3	7,4	27,6
SLO/H	7,6	6	6,6	6,8	2,2
SLO/CRO	47,1	26	28,6	4,8	32,2
<i>Total</i>	<i>100,0</i>	<i>91</i>	<i>100,0</i>	<i>7,8</i>	<i>100,0</i>

1 – The total border length (in %);

2 – Number of border posts in accordance with the relevant cross-border traffic;

3 – Border posts in relation to border length (in %);

4 – Number of border posts per 100 km;

5 – The total cross-border traffic (in %).

Source: Statistical Office of the Republic of Slovenia.

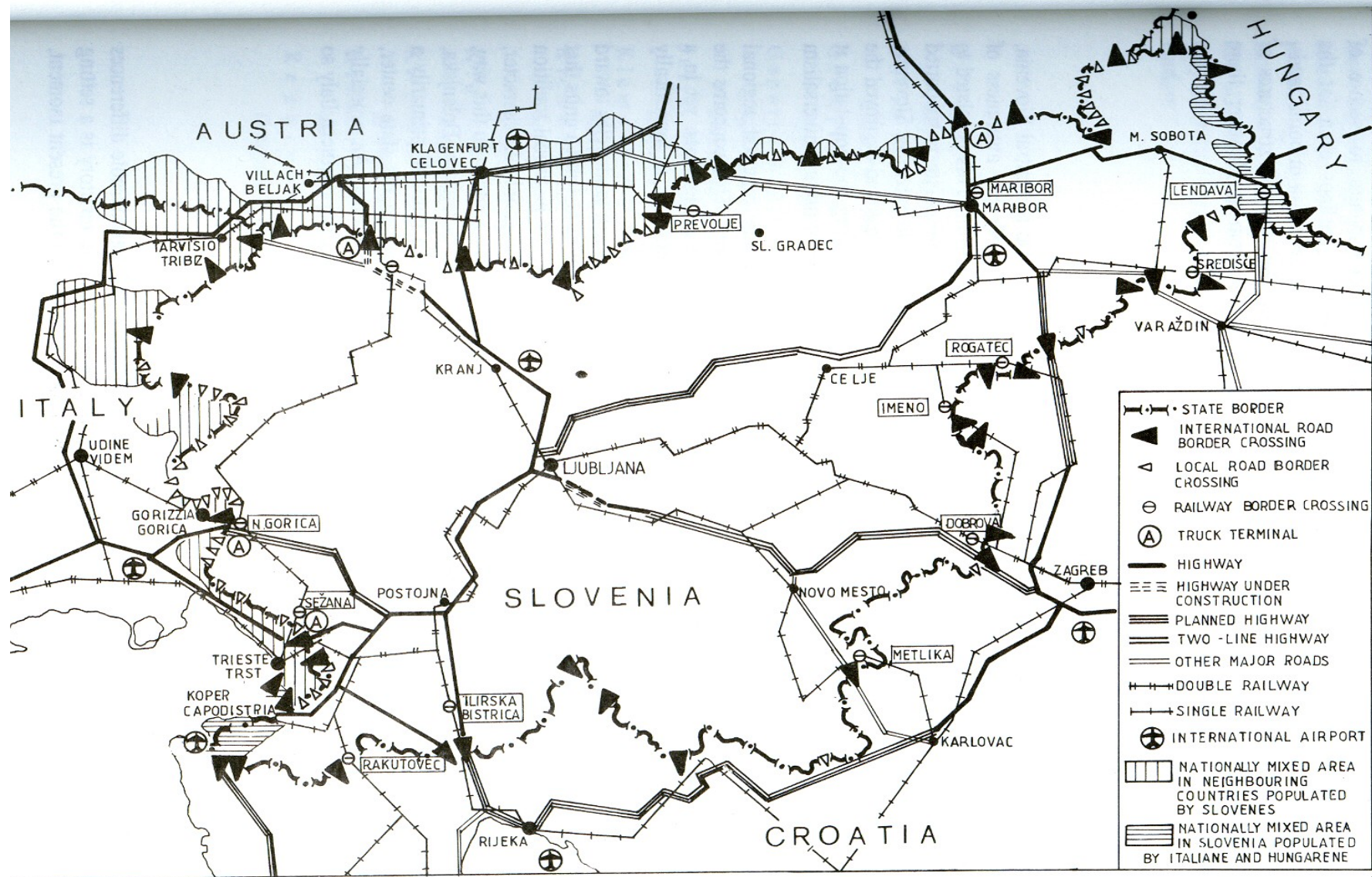


Fig. 4. THE TRANSPORTATION INFRASTRUCTURE OF SLOVENIA AND ITS NEIGHBOURHOOD

MEJNI PREHODI NA ZUNANJI SCHENGENSKI MEJI



SELECTED CHARACTERISTICS OF CURRENT CROSS-BORDER RELATIONS AT SLOVENE BORDERLANDS (2008)

	1	2	3	4	5
SLO/I	81,3	24,7	72,1	70,3	19,2
SLO/A	68,0	19,9	52,3	54,4	8,2
SLO/H	73,9	21,7	36,3	28,8	4,4
SLO/CRO	77,8	13,9	92,1	70,3	5,2

- 1 – Percentage of respondents that have acquaintances/friends across the border;*
2 – Perc. of respondents that have some family member working across the border;
3 – Percentage of respondents that actively speak the bordering language;
4 – Percentage of respondents that regularly follow the bordering TV;
5 – Percentage of respondents that visit the bordering places at least weekly.

Source: own research results

ATTITUDES FOR CROSS-BORDER COOPERATION IN THE SLOVENIAN BORDER SECTORS (2008)

	SLO/I	SLO/A	SLO/H	SLO/CRO
Index of cross-border expectation	51,2	54,9	52,1	36,2
Index of potential interdependence	62,3	52,9	58,5	55,7
Index of socio-cultural affinity	59,3	41,6	28,6	64,4
Index of functional interdepend.	20,3	14,4	14,7	14,0
<i>General index of interdependence</i>	48,3	41,0	38,5	42,6

Source: own research results

OPEN ISSUES (1): CREATING CROSS-BORDER INTER- CONNECTIONS

- The cross-border inter-connection should be sought particularly in *functional relationships* between the two border areas in question.
- They can develop on the basis of ordinary gravitational trends between urban and employment centres and their hinterlands due to the existence of certain **disparities** – mostly of an *economic nature* – or due to the existing **affinities** – mostly of a *cultural character* – between one side of the border and the other.
- Therefore, a **border region** is based on a combination of the *principle of functionality*, which originates in the adjustment of the border population and border economy to the given circumstances, and the *principle of homogeneity*, which derives from the fact that both border areas often share the affiliation to the same cultural landscape, while the border population is characterized by the same cultural features.

OPEN ISSUES (2): THE DELIMITATION OF A BORDER REGION

There are at the same time different **criteria** for the **creation** and the **delimitation** of a **border region**:

- **Institutional criteria** (e.g. bilateral agreements on the regulation of cross-border movement of goods and people in the border areas, usually extending to a width of up to 25 km from the borderline).
- **Functional criteria** (based, most often, on small-scale exchanges in the fields of supply, work and leisure time activities of the border dwellers).
- **Cultural criteria** (based on the possible cultural affinity between the two border areas in terms of common linguistic, religious or ethnic affiliation of the border population).
- **Historical criteria** (based on long-lasting past regional structures that the border has divided in a relatively recent period).

OPEN ISSUES (3):

THE 3 PARADOXES OF CROSS-BORDER INTEGRATION

- (1) The border areas with **the greatest possibilities** for development into a border region are those which have in the recent past overcome **the greatest problems** during the process of division of formerly unified administrative, cultural and functional spaces.
- (2) Demand for more intense and institutionalized cross-border cooperation is actually greater in “*old*” and **peripheral border landscapes** than in the “*new*” and **urbanized ones** where “spontaneous” functional cross-border relations are already well developed.
- (3) On the one hand the increasing **cross-border cooperation** and **mobility** helps to increase **communication** between border communities and thus to reduce **social distances**, providing greater opportunities for both socio-economic and socio-cultural integration. On the other hand it is challenging the previous **separate social** and **cultural identity** and the existing **spatial organization**. As a reaction, new forms of neo- and **micro-nationalism** and other **conservative attitudes** of “self-preservation” may develop, typically connected with the traditional peripheral status of these areas.

CONCLUSIONS (1)

- **Slovenia** seems to be a handy ‘**laboratory**’ for studying **border phenomena**, border relationships, and cross-border interdependence in both marginal and multicultural regions, as well as **convergence** and **divergence** drivers, and their spatial influences on the European ‘**new**’ and ‘**old**’, ‘**inner**’ and ‘**outer**’ border areas.
- Acting out of the Slovenian experience, **cooperation** and **integration perspectives** in today’s **Europe** may be discussed on two different but inter-related levels:
 - (1) The first regards the **integration** of an increasing number of **Central European** (multicultural) countries and regions in a wider **trans-continental dimension** of coexistence;
 - (2) The second concerns **local aspects** of **cross-border cooperation**, developing on a **continuum** between (negative) mental and **historical legacies** and **functional opportunities**.

CONCLUSIONS (2)

3 major factors which contribute towards a **positive evaluation of cross-border co-operation** could be detected:

- (1) By orchestrating a **functional and intense cross-border mobility**;
- (2) By stimulating **cultural/ethnic affinity** between the resident populations on both sides of the border;
- (3) By stimulating an **equal and modern society** in both the **socio-cultural** and **socio-economic** structure on both sides of the border and providing for **institutional cooperation** between **local communities**.

All **3 factors** should be taken into account in the process of **engineering borders and management of cross-border cooperation**, as they are representing the pre-conditions for a true **re-integration** of the European continent and can not be treated just as 'side-effects' of the **Schengen regime** and the EU's programmes such as **Interreg**.