



Svetlozar A. Andreev

**Active Civic Participation
of Immigrants in
Slovenia**

POLITIS – a European research project

Project information

POLITIS is short for a research project with the full title: Building Europe with New Citizens? An Inquiry into the Civic Participation of Naturalised Citizens and Foreign Residents in 25 Countries. The European Commission funds the project that mainly seeks to improve our understanding of different factors that promote or inhibit active civic participation of immigrants. A unique project construction is developed that includes workshops with foreign-born students who are recruited as discussants and interviewers. National experts in all 25 EU countries have prepared country reports on the contextual conditions and state of research concerning civic participation of immigrants. These reports can be downloaded from www.uni-oldenburg.de/politis-europe

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International Coordination and Contact

POLITIS

Interdisciplinary Center for Education and Communication in Migration Processes (**IBKM**)

Carl von Ossietzky Universität Oldenburg

Ammerländer Heerstr. 114-118/ Postbox 2503

26111 Oldenburg

dita.vogel@uni-oldenburg.de

Partner Organisations:

Hellenic Foundation of European and Foreign Policy (**Eliamep**)

Athens

www.eliamap.gr

Robert Schuman Centre for Advanced Studies

European University Institute (**EUI**)

Florence

www.iue.it/RSCAS

Churches' Commission of Migrants in Europe (**CCME**)

Brussels

<http://www.cec-kek.org/content/ccme.shtml>

The author

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in Slovenia

Dr. Svetlozar A. Andreev,

Centre for the Study of Democracy/ University of Westminster, London¹

Address: CSD/University of Westminster,
100 Park Village East,
NW1 3SR London,
UK

Tel. ++44 (0) 20 74682282

Email address: andreev@iue.it

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Abstract

This literature review aims at presenting the actual state of affairs of active civic participation of immigrants in Slovenia. After the collapse of both Communism and the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia in the early 1990s, Slovenia emerged as an independent state, which was soon to embark upon regional integration in the EU. Currently a member of the latter organisation (since 1 May, 2004), Slovenia presents one of the most interesting cases of migration control and management not only in post-communist Eastern Europe, but also among the current EU member states.

Migration policy in Slovenia is a relatively recent development. Before the 1950s it used to be predominantly a country of emigration. During the 1960s and 70s, the picture gradually changed: new migrants from the East and South (mainly from the other Yugoslav republics) settled in Slovenia, while Slovenians still continued to (im)migrate as “guest workers” to the wealthy West. During the late 1980s and especially during the 1990s, with the intensification of ethnic conflicts across Yugoslavia, many new minorities came to Slovenia. Situated on important “migration routes” from East to West and North to South, Slovenia started to attract immigrants from Third World countries as well. Initially, the influx of sizeable migrant groups, representing as much as 10 percent of the entire Slovenian population, was perceived as a clear threat to national identity. The young democratic institutions, civil society and the media were not always adequately prepared or did not have any previous experience of dealing with migration problems. Coping with “migration challenges” during the last decade or so was more an experience of “learning by doing” for all actors involved in matters of migration and citizenship.

Regarding active civic participation of immigrants, as well as the related research literature and various other publications, the situation is still far from clear. Nevertheless, the first signs of active civic involvement are present, especially in the large Slovenian cities and among the “old migrants” from the former Yugoslav republics, such as the Serbs, the Bosnians and the Croats. The media and the NGO community have also taken a pro-active stance not only to defend the immigrants’ rights, but also to give them a voice in public life. Last, but not least, with the entry of Slovenia in the EU, some groups of foreign nationals have been granted new political and social rights, i.e. of participating in local elections and governance, as well as to buy property, reside, work and collect social benefits in the country.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

ABSTRACT	4
PART I: UNDERSTANDING THE CONDITIONS FOR IMMIGRANT PARTICIPATION IN SLOVENIA	6
1. Key events and demographic developments in the migration history of Slovenia	6
Excursus: the story of the ‘erased’ Slovenian citizens	11
Recent migration trends (i.e. after 2000).....	13
The current situation with migration	14
The employment of immigrants	17
2. Major issues discussed in relation to immigration	18
The story of two ‘immigration crises’	18
Recent public debates.....	20
A. The institutional framework	21
B. The legal framework	22
The legal participation of immigrants in public life	23
PART II: ACTIVE CIVIC PARTICIPATION OF THIRD COUNTRY IMMIGRANTS ..	24
PART III: EXPERT ASSESSMENT	29
ANNEX: MAPPING OF RESEARCH COMPETENCES IN SLOVENIA	31
BIBLIOGRAPHY.....	37

Part I: Understanding the conditions for immigrant participation in Slovenia

1. Key events and demographic developments in the migration history of Slovenia

After the Second World War, both international migration and internal movements of people within the borders of federal state of Yugoslavia presented an important part of the social dynamics which characterise the migration movements on the territory of today's Slovenian state.

In former Yugoslavia (SFRY), contrary to most countries of the ex-communist bloc, the internal borders were not closed for the movement of people. Although there were certain limitations and control of people's mobility, the Yugoslav citizens have had their travel documents and passports "at home," and not at some third place, i.e. in the police headquarters or with some other state authority. Moreover, there existed special bilateral agreements with the SFRY neighbouring countries, which provided for the local population living along the border to travel freely. For instance, in the case of the Slovenian-Austrian and the Slovenian-Italian border, the Yugoslav citizens (i.e. those who were living inside a defined border zone) could cross the state boundary quite easily on the basis of special documents that allowed the mobility of these people. There existed a number of so-called "local border crossing" provisions, which were not part of the international legal system of border crossing. In other words, the local border crossings were relatively open, but used for local traffic only.

Another positive aspect related to the openness of the Slovenian borders was the phenomenon of "shopping tourism." Shopping tourism can be traced back to the late 1970s and the early 1980s. Just for comparison, in most Central and Eastern European countries, shopping tourism with the West began only when the Iron Curtain was finally removed in the beginning of the 1990s.

Student mobility was quite developed as well. During the former communist regime, several student exchange schemes were established with other Socialist and Third World countries. As a rule, this transfer of students occurred within the Movement of Non-Aligned Nations, which undisputed leader was Yugoslavia, particularly at the time Tito's presidency. In the 1980s, the academic exchanges with Western countries intensified as well. Most of the students came from nearby Greece or other EEC/EC countries. Some Americans could come to study in Yugoslavia under a Fulbright exchange scheme for instance. The same was valid for Japanese and Korean students.

Chronologically, the migration processes on the territory of Slovenia in the period after World War II could tentatively be grouped into three historical periods:

- The period following World War II up to 1954: Slovenia was predominantly an emigration country;
- The period between 1954 and 1990: Slovenia faced immigration from the former Yugoslav republics, especially in the second half of the 1970s, as well as a temporary migration of Slovenians mostly to Germany and Austria as "guest workers";

- After the 1990s: the migration flows in and towards Slovenia have changed dramatically, especially due to the independence of Slovenia in 1991, European integration and such international processes as globalisation. The early 1990s are also a starting point for the formulation of a national migration policy.

The most important time-period in the country's contemporary history is the "watershed" year of 1991, when Slovenia gained its independence. After this moment, the entire process of creating a modern migration policy started.

Migration in the period 1945-1953

In the period following World War II, emigration from the Slovenian territory was quite intense. The migration balance was negative however: the majority of Slovene emigrants crossed the border *undocumented*, and the reasons for this were predominantly political. Economic migration was not high yet, because Western Europe was still in a process of post-war recovery and, hence, economically unattractive. In the mid-1950s, however, a relative increase of economic migration was registered, which later became the precursor of further migration.

Migration in the period 1954-1990

After 1954 migration was mostly the consequence of economic factors. During this period, i.e. until the end of the Cold War, Slovenia gradually turned from a country of emigration to a country of immigration. The most characteristic feature of this period is immigration of people from the other Yugoslav republics. This type of immigration activity was quite dynamic, and it can temporally be divided into two relatively equal periods: the period between 1960 and 1974, and between 1975 and 1990.² During the first period, the net migration of Slovenia in comparison to the other Yugoslav Republics was positive, i.e. between 3,000 and 5,000 per year, while, during the second period, net migration was even higher – between 5,000 to 8,000 and more immigrants per year. (Table 1)

As already stated, migration flows between Slovenia and the other Yugoslav republics were predominately the consequence of economic factors. Slovenia, being generally economically more developed, influenced the movement of people from the southeast to the northwest. This sort of migration was also the combined result of the unemployment in the other Yugoslav republics and the newly created job opportunities in Slovenia, where there was virtually no unemployment during all this period. Moreover, a part of the job positions in Slovenia remained unoccupied due to the Slovenia's permanent or temporary emigrants to the West.

One of the main features of the migration process between Slovenia and the rest of Yugoslav republics was the nature of labour formation and exchanges either at the national or federal level. For instance, the established economic system did not encourage the relocation of the physical assets of companies and their capital, but, rather, encouraged the movement of the workforce. An additional reason for immigration to Slovenia was the absence of a common immigration policy in the former Yugoslavia, which could regulate the movement of workers.³

² The criterion for this division is the number of immigrants.

³ It could be a matter of academic debate whether such policy already existed at the sub-federal level, i.e. in Slovenia, or it was conceived of after the country's independence. In any event, if such policy did exist, i.e. in the most developed Yugoslav republics, Croatia and Slovenia, it was very weak and practically inconsequential for labour mobility.

Table 1. Immigration, emigration and net migration in Slovenia with the rest of the Yugoslav republics between 1954 and 1989

Year	Immigration		Emigration		Net migrations	
	number	%	number	%	number	%
1955–1959	6,842	4.4	5,251	3.4	1,591	1.0
1960–1964	7,410	4.6	4,225	2.6	3,185	2.0
1965–1969	8,348	4.9	4,374	2.6	3,974	2.3
1970–1974	7,387	4.2	3,932	2.2	3,455	2.0
1975	10,592	5.9	3,780	2.1	6,812	3.8
1976	12,050	6.6	3,965	2.2	8,115	4.5
1977	12,535	6.8	4,419	2.4	8,116	4.4
1978	12,226	6.6	4,771	2.6	7,495	4.0
1979	13,426	7.1	5,262	2.8	8,164	4.3
1980	11,623	6.1	6,066	3.2	5,557	2.9
1981	11,095	5.9	6,661	3.5	4,434	2.3
1982	10,310	5.4	5,780	3.0	4,530	2.4
1983	9,452	4.9	5,528	2.9	3,924	2.0
1984	8,972	4.6	5,489	2.8	3,483	1.8
1985	8,602	4.4	4,719	2.4	3,883	2.0
1986	8,803	4.4	4,654	2.3	4,149	2.1
1987	8,358	4.2	3,921	2.0	4,437	2.2
1988	7,302	3.7	3,819	1.9	3,483	1.7
1989	6,584	3.3	4,283	2.1	2,301	1.2

Source: Janez Malačič, 1991

Temporary migration was not uncommon between Slovenia and the other SFRY republics as well. It was mostly seasonal, as, for example, employment in the construction sector, tourism and agriculture. For these temporary migrants there is no reliable statistical data. Nevertheless, there was some research done (see Malačič, 1991; Mežnarić, 1986; and Genorio, 1989).

A prime issue, when analysing the process of immigration and its impact on Slovenian society, has been the question of both the time frame and the social and political context of contemporary migration. The book by Silva Mežnarić (1986), with the very instructive title *Bosnians. Where do Slovenians go on Sundays?* is one of the first attempts at a comprehensive sociological analysis in the field of this country's migration. Including interviews with immigrants in Slovenia and their families back home in Bosnia, this book describes the immigrant's everyday life. In addition to merely describing migration flows, the title also suggests a crucial dimension of social reality, connected to the experience of being an immigrant in the Slovenian "host society." This is, namely, the existence of two parallel worlds: one of the majority of the population and the other – of the immigrants (or even FOR the immigrants). A vivid illustration of this is the description the empty Ljubljana streets on Saturday and Sunday. It is presumed that a sizeable portion of Ljubljana's residents, who are Bosnians, leave for their home places during the weekends. Such a depiction is not a mere statement of a well-recorded fact, but it implies a certain lack of contact and common social life between the capital's two major ethnic communities.

From which places of the SFRY did immigrants come? Kodelja (1992) defines three territories of emigration: first, the Slovenia-Croatia border municipalities from Istra to Medžimurje. Zagorje, Kordun and the greater Zagreb city municipality also belong to this territory. Second, "the central Yugoslav" territory, consisting of the northern and western parts of Bosnia, a part

of Posavina and eastern Slavonia (Croatia), Bačka, Srem in Vojvodina and Mačva in western Serbia. Third, “the southern Yugoslav” emigration territory, comprising the central part of Kosovo, Metohija, the northeastern region of Macedonia, and the area of Sandžak.

Where did the immigrants from the former Yugoslav republics immigrate? The most extensive and migrationally most prominent territories in Slovenia were the main industrial centres, such as Ljubljana, Kranj, Jesenice, Celje and Velenje – the so-called “industrial half-moon.” The second migration area was composed of the municipalities bordering Croatia (Kodelja, 1992).

Socio-economical profile of the immigrants in Slovenia The educational background of the immigrants was relatively high. Almost half of them (i.e. those being 14 years old and over) completed primary school or a lower type of education, around 40 percent had diplomas from secondary or vocational school, and around 6 percent graduated from universities and other high education establishment. For comparison, however, the emigrants from Slovenia to the West had an even better educational profile during the afore-mentioned period. The reason for the relatively good educational structure is the fact that the immigrants to Slovenia were mainly young people, who had finished at least primary, vocational or secondary school in their domestic environment. These were relatively well-educated people, who had problems finding employment in the other Yugoslav republics. The majority of immigrants who came to Slovenia worked in the public transport, the metal industry, the health sector and the construction industry. Among Slovenian emigrants, the largest occupation category was engaged in the transport industry (see more in Kreigher, 1992).

Age and gender structure As a rule, the age structure of the migrant population differs from the age structure of the rest of the population. This usually holds true for both emigrants and immigrants. Global statistics show that mostly younger people choose to migrate. The relatively young age of migrants is also indicative of the type of jobs undertaken and employment policy in the recipient country. Young people are usually the most flexible group of migrants, who are expected to adapt to the local demands for employment. Moreover, usually the majority of international migrants are men, aged between 20 and 39, and women aged between 14 and 34. (see Jakoš, 1994)

The “guest-worker”⁴ category Temporary economic migration was most extensive in the second half of the 1960s and at the beginning of the 1970s. During the 1960s, a lot of Slovenes worked in several western European countries, where there was a severe workforce shortage. Initially, it was believed that this economic migration was temporary, i.e. Slovenians would earn money abroad and come back home for good. Later on, however, and especially since the 1970s, it became clear, that the majority of these temporary migration flows were turning into permanent emigration. In 1971 there were 48,086 persons of Slovenian origin working in a foreign country, which is 7.2 percent of all Yugoslav migrant work force. Ten years later, the share of migrant workers from Slovenia among the Yugoslav workers dropped down to 6.1 percent or 53,438 (41,825 workers and 11,657 family members). The majority of these migrant workers were men, aged between 20 and 49 (Jakoš, 1994).

⁴ “Guestworkers,” or migrant workers, are those individuals who have a permanent residence in Slovenia, but also have a temporary residence in another county, because they work or study there, but they plan to return home (i.e. in Slovenia). Migrants are also those family members, who follow migrant workers to another country.

Migration during the 1990s

In the beginning of 1980s, the migration flows have begun to abate because of the changed economic situation regionally and globally (the fall of Slovenia's GDP, the reduced employment opportunities and the simultaneous rise of unemployment). Latter on, however, in the beginning of 1990s, migration to and from Slovenia surged again due to the political crisis domestically and, primarily, because of the disintegration of Yugoslavia. In this period, Slovenia received a lot of refugees from the wars in Croatia and Bosnia and Herzegovina. It also accepted a number of political immigrants from the province of Kosovo during the 1980s and 1990s.

Special attention should be paid to the phenomenon of forced migrations caused by the successive Yugoslav wars during the 1990s. The refugees left the war zones first in Croatia (1991, 1992) and, soon after, in Bosnia and Herzegovina (1992 onwards). In this period, Slovenia was for the first time faced with the pressing issues of dealing with forced migration. Related to this, it had to devise a refugee policy and to protect asylum-seekers. The social impact of this immigrants' inflow was tremendous. The main question that many people try to answer regarding that period was "How did the Slovenian state and society – i.e. the governmental institutions, civil society and NGOs – react to mass migration?" A short answer would be that the reaction was similar to that of any other European country; namely, there was a state policy of group protection of refugees, combined with a tendency of keeping them for as limited period of time as possible. It was decided that refugees could stay for a maximum of ten years, while the Slovenian authorities were examining their cases. Two problems, immediately resulting from the temporary protection, have been the time criterion and the non-integration into the new society. People with the status of temporary protection were entitled to different rights and welfare provisions than the Slovenian citizens, while they were also excluded from the labour market. This combination of restrictions and limited rights has presented one of the major weaknesses of the Slovenian legislation in this field (see Zavratnik 1996, Vrečer 1999).

Immigration to Slovenia At the end of 1990s, there were 42,000 foreigners living in Slovenia⁵, which represented 2.1 percent of the total population (much less than the EU average, however)⁶. Among them, three quarters were people with a temporary residence in Slovenia, 16 percent were foreigners with a permanent residence and 10 percent were refugees. The great majority was from the countries of former Yugoslavia (above all from BIH). On average, foreign nationals with permanent residence in Slovenia have been the oldest, while the refugees have been the youngest. Among the latter, the majority have been women; men have prevailed in the group of foreigners with permanent or temporary residence permits in Slovenia (Bevc, Prevolnik-Rupel, Verlič-Christensen 2000).

Emigration from Slovenia According to the 1991 national census, there were 53,000 migrant workers, or 2.7 percent of the permanent residents in Slovenia. In 1995 there was a formal change to the definition of who constituted a legal resident; people from this category have no longer been recognised as residents of Slovenia.⁷

⁵ The data is from the end of the year 1999.

⁶ The EU average of foreign nationals in a member state is between 3,6 and 9 percent.

⁷ Statistics have monitored the citizens of the Republic of Slovenia, who have temporally or permanently been in a foreign country (i.e. more than three months), but who have voluntarily reported their absence.

Excursus: the story of the ‘erased’ Slovenian citizens

Historically, Slovenia is one of the youngest states in the world – it has only existed officially since the beginning of the last decade. It is also one of the smallest states both in terms of its territory and population. On a territory of a little bit more than 20,000 square kilometres approximately 2 million persons live. According to the most recent census results, the country’s population is 1,995,718 people, of whom 1,949,419 are citizens of the Republic of Slovenia (excluding citizens temporarily residing abroad), 15,285 have permanent residence in Slovenia, 28,682 have temporary residence, while 2,332 persons are under temporary protection. Slovenians often joke that they always miss around 50,000 persons to reach 2,000,000 citizens. This ‘missing group’ may in fact be the last three categories of inhabitants, the majority of whom demand Slovenian citizenship.

From the point of view of its ethnic composition, Slovenia virtually represents a **nation-state**: around 90 % of its population is of Slovenian ethnic origin.⁸ Tiny communities of Slovenian origin have also been living in the neighbouring countries (Austria, Croatia and Italy), in the republics of former SFRY and further abroad (e.g. in Argentina, Canada and the United States). All of these factors have been taken into account while drafting the constitution and state-forming laws with respect to citizenship. In the provisions of these laws, Slovenian citizenship has mainly been defined in terms of blood relationship (*ius sanguinis*). Notable exceptions have also been made to recognise the existence of certain ‘historical nationalities’ living on Slovenian territory like the Italians and Hungarians as well as the Romany community (*ius solis*).⁹ However, no special provisions have been made to recognise the sizeable community of citizens of other of SFRY republics and war refugees that have resided permanently in Slovenia.

The role of the EU in the second half of the 1990s has been paramount in promoting the rights of various minority groups (Zagar 1997, Lozar 2002). Far from being a hegemonic power, the EU has exerted considerable pressure on the Slovenian authorities in a number of areas, the most important of which have been the border regime, competition policy, the free movement of persons and minority rights. One of the critical issues in the EU-Slovene relations has been the possibility given to foreign nationals to buy land in Slovenia. Being a very sensitive issue for the young Slovenian state, this problem has been counteracted by the issue of the free movement of workers from Slovenia into the current member states after enlargement. Transitional periods have been asked on both sides regarding these issues (Bucar and Brinar 2001, Šabič 2002). Thus, it could be concluded the Slovenian state has experienced a temporary weakness vis-à-vis the EU with respect to fulfilling some of the membership criteria.

One of the principal hypotheses advanced in another research by this author (Andreev 2003a) regarding the **structural weakness** of the Slovenian state is that historically it has almost always been vulnerable in its relations with an external dominant power – be it the Austro-Hungarian Empire in the distant past, or the former SFRY at the end of the 20th century. In both cases the Slovenian leadership needed the support of the international community and its

⁸ At the time of national independence, 87,84% of the country’s inhabitants were of Slovenian ethnic origin, while small Croatian, Muslim, Italian and Hungarian communities (each below 1,5%) also existed. (Population census of the Social Republic of Slovenia: 1991).

⁹ Article 64 of the Slovenian Constitution grants extensive rights and privileges to the “autochthonous Italian and Hungarian ethnic communities in Slovenia”, while Article 65 vaguely mentions the need for protecting the “Romany ethnic community”.

domestic population to assert its legitimate authority over the national territory. Since both the Austro-Hungarian Empire and the SFRY possessed the exclusive means and international legitimacy to represent Slovenia in its external relations, it was very difficult for an unrecognised state entity to seek support unilaterally in the international arena. However, in the early 1990s the desire of the Slovenian leadership to move the country away from the rump Yugoslav federation was quite strong, so it had to look for additional support from its entire domestic constituency.¹⁰ By promising to grant citizenship to all permanent residents shortly before the Plebiscite on the Sovereignty and Independence of the Republic of Slovenia (23 December 1990), the ruling elite aimed at achieving two things:

- a) Obtaining greater support for the country's independence;
- b) Convincing the international community, but also the federal authorities in Belgrade, that even nationals of other Yugo-republics residing in Slovenia supported a democratic and free Slovenia.

Depending on the trustworthiness of these suppositions, it can be claimed that the then Slovenian leadership concluded a more or less explicit deal with all segments of society to treat them equally before the law. The proposal to grant citizenship to all permanent residents made for the first time in the *Statement of Good Intentions* and enshrined in the new Citizenship Act of the Republic of Slovenia after independence has been one of the most far-reaching and comprehensive in post-communist Eastern Europe.

During the early 1990s, this deal has been almost completely tolerated by the Slovenian governing authorities. However, because of the unexpectedly high number of applicants from within Slovenia, the influx of refugees following the initiation of military and civil conflicts on the territory of the other Yugo-republics and the rising nationalism and xenophobia among parts of the Slovenian population instigated by extremist politicians, the state has proved incapable of following the liberal policies of granting citizenship and residence to foreign nationals at the same pace and intensity as in the beginning of the independence period. On the contrary, some of the state institutions and ministries began to work against the provisions of Article 40 and related laws. This led to a reaction by members of civil society and the more moderate politicians in the Slovenian parliament, who opposed changes to the existing Citizenship Act but fell short of supporting proactive liberal governmental policies towards minorities and immigrants. Left on their own, former nationals of other republics of the SFRY tried to either convert into 'good Slovenes' by speaking the language and following the local customs, or sunk into anonymity by continuing to practice their largely marginalized ethnic cultures. (Komac 2001)

Despite a set of critical points, however, Slovenia's democratic credentials have never been seriously questioned at the European level. This has been mainly because (a) Slovenia's performance regarding the protection of ethnic minorities has been better-than-average compared to that of the other candidate states from post-communist Europe, and (b) some of the current EU member states experience similar problems with their own minorities and would not welcome international solutions for issues that are perceived as an exclusively domestic affair. (European Commission 2002)

¹⁰ In April 1990 Slovenia held its first democratic elections and on the 2 July, 1990 a Declaration on the Sovereignty of the Republic of Slovenia was passed by the republican parliament.

Recent migration trends (i.e. after 2000)¹¹

A decade later, towards the end of 2000 and at the beginning of 2001, Slovenia faced quite a different type challenge related to migration. This time immigrants came from more distant non-European countries and they were more diverse than ever before. In general, the first reaction was not very positive, but quite the opposite. In public discourse, especially in the media, immigrants were described as “the others”, “foreigners”, and those with a “different identity.” Immigrants were presented as having “a different cultural, ethnical, religious background” and as potentially being a “threat to the emerging national identity,” not least because of their “high numbers”. The populist use of identity differences by politicians and the media was rather common too. The Slovenian population, because of its lack of information about and exposure to other cultures, was initially quite aggressive and xenophobic towards the recent wave of immigrants. At this point, however, it also became clear that immigration to Slovenia represented a continuous phenomenon, i.e. a process, rather than a single development or a limited sequence of events over a short period of time.

It should additionally be mentioned that there has been a close link between migration and European integration, and EU enlargement in particular. The whole concept of working out a Slovene migration policy, including the adoption of fundamental legislation in this field, has intimately been connected to the issue of Slovenia joining the EU and functioning as one of its members. The Brussels’ authorities have made it a key requirement for enlargement of the former socialist countries to start creating national migration policies. It appears as though that the different levels of legislation and governance – the national and the European – have still not been quite in unison, or they have still not been completed, in order to smoothen this process. The responses of the EU to the new migration realities in the East have not always been adequate either. For instance, certain suggested policies have been very restrictive towards immigrants, based on the pre-existing but quite different supranational and national strategies of immigration control in the EU member states (Brochmann and Hammar, 1999).

Provided the EU has been the principal actor in Slovenian migration policy, the use of concepts such as “Fortress Europe” and “the Schengen periphery”, has prompted a negative response in Slovenian society. The main concern has been about being on the wrong side of the external EU border and facing the “fortress Europe”. The issue of managing migration in Central and Eastern Europe (CEE) has also pretty much been linked to the problem of being a member or not. This has again boiled down to the perceived problem of being a policy-taker or policy-maker in the Schengen Area and Europe. (Andreev 2004)

The future dynamics and extent of migration in and out of Slovenia can hardly be predicted with any degree of accuracy. However, according to the most recent political and socio-economic trends, it has gradually become clear that some of the CEE countries are turning into countries of immigration, and not solely into transition territories for immigrants on their way to Western Europe. During the Communist period, because of the Iron Curtain, the countries east of this divide had been seen more as countries of political emigration in the period of east-west division rather than recipient countries. Today, however, those countries’ status in the migration studies has generally been one of transition countries for international migrants, which reality, as already mentioned, has been rapidly changing. Slovenia has not been exception to the rule. It has been one of the most strategically placed countries for

¹¹ For a more detailed analysis, see Simona Zavratnik Zimic: Migration Trends in Selected EU Applicant Countries, Volume VI – Slovenia. The perspective of a Country on the 'Schengen Periphery', IOM Vienna, 2004, pp. 40-49.

immigrants on the way to the West, especially to Italy, Austria and Germany. However, the most recent data has also shown that Slovenia is rapidly turning from a country of immigration for “traditional” immigrants from the territory of former Yugoslavia to an immigration destination of Third World and some other countries’ nationals.

The current situation with migration

Permanent and temporary migration – a quantitative analysis

Two elements are worth mentioning in relation to the “duration of stay” of immigrants in Slovenia: firstly, permanent residence permits represent a significantly lower number compared to the released temporary residence permits, and secondly, the highest share of residence permits has been issued in both cases to persons originating from Bosnia and Herzegovina, followed by the other former Yugoslav republics (see Table 2 and Table 3).

Table 2. Issued temporary residence permits in the period 1997-2002

Country of origin/Year of issue	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002
Bosnia and Herzegovina	3.385	3.472	8.892	15.946	16.167	15.404
Croatia	2.072	1.491	4.154	8.263	7.699	5.814
Serbia and Montenegro	1.988	2.102	4.161	6.358	5.846	5.784
Macedonia	550	935	2.442	6.547	5.972	4.642
Ukraine	171	359	661	1.420	1.242	1.050
China	86	88	173	372	490	361
Russia	101	164	209	354	359	347
Italy	176	199	190	276	277	277
Germany	119	106	137	284	212	208
Romania	22	71	125	260	236	260
Slovakia	6	9	97	214	224	361
Moldavia	5	10	61	251	285	272
Other	4.391	3.877	4.630	4.860	3.204	2.311
Total	13.072	12.883	25.932	45.405	42.213	37.091

Source: Ministry of the Interior, 2003

Table 3. Issued permanent residence permit in the period 1997-2002

Country of origin/Year of issue	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002
Bosnia and Herzegovina	336	211	1.192	3.673	913	3.638
Croatia	172	188	401	1.319	327	766
Serbia and Montenegro	196	100	275	713	332	739
Macedonia	30	34	72	135	94	295
Germany	14	28	10	4	2	24
Ukraine	3	6	11	11	3	34
Other	585	475	668	904	362	359
Total	1.336	1.042	2.629	6.759	2.033	5.855

Source: Ministry of the Interior, 2003

According to data from the Ministry of the Interior for the first half of 2003 (approximately the 30th of June 2003) 20,319 foreigners lived in Slovenia permanently and 33,984 temporary. These permits have been issued during the last twelve years – i.e. since the independence of Slovenia from SFRY. Most of the permanent permits have had duration of more than one year, since they concerned war refugees and political dissidents.

The indicative reasons for issuing a temporary residence permit were as follows:

- employment and work: 15,832
- family reunification: 8,340
- seasonal work: 5,011
- daily migrants: 1,791
- directed workers: 1,125
- study: 834
- a child born in Slovenia: 291
- Slovene origin: 47
- settlement: 18
- other purposes: 659

The data for 2004 is still not fully available. The limited available asylum application data is also of virtually no statistical relevance to analysing the overall migration trends in Slovenia (Table 4).

Table 4. Asylum applications in 2004

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Total
arrived	60	118											178
solved	101	126											227
positive	7	7											14
negative	28	30											58

Source: Ministry of the Interior, 2004

Irregular migration

Table 5. Irregular migrants and asylum seekers in the period 1997-2002

Year	Illegal border crossings	Asylum seekers
1997	7.093	72
1998	13.740	337
1999	18.695	744
2000	35.892	9.244
2001	20.871	1.511
2002	6.926	532

Source: Ministry of the Interior, 2003

The size of irregular migration in Slovenia and illegal border crossings could be explained by fact that many third-country nationals tried to enter the EU, and the Schengen Zone (i.e. Austria or Italy), through Slovenia. The Roma minority, actively travelling between the former SFRY republics and the West, has been a sizeable portion of these migrants. The war in Kosovo was an additional reason for the increase of illegal border crossing by refugees fleeing the war and trying to reunite with their families already residing in the EU countries.

In the first nine months of 2000, 27,000 illegal immigrants entered Slovenia, most from Croatia and Hungary. This is a 70 percent increase over the same period in 1999, according to the Minister of Internal Affairs. Slovenian authorities recorded a total of 6,926 illegal migrations in 2002, down 67% over the year before when there were 20,883 cases, according to data published on the website of the Slovenian police. Most of the illegal migrants were from Yugoslavia (2,015), Macedonia (1,221), Turkey (820), Iraq (596) and Bosnia-Herzegovina (405). The majority of persons attempting to cross into Slovenia illegally were apprehended at the border with Croatia. Based on the bilateral agreements on the return of persons, 2,372 persons were returned to foreign security services, most of them to Croatia. Meanwhile, neighbouring countries returned 1,369 persons back to Slovenia, notably Austria, which returned 1,013 persons.

Table 6. Number of refugees for the period from January 1995 to March 2004

Year of positive decision	Female	Male	Total
1995	-	1	1
1996	-	-	-
1997	-	-	-
1998	-	1	1
1999	-	-	-
2000	4	6	10
2001	9	18	27
2002	1	1	2
2003	23	17	40
2004	10	20	30
Total	47	64	111

Source: Ministry of the Interior, 2004

Temporary protection status was an important legal tool that was applicable towards the refugees from the military and civil conflicts in former Yugoslavia, but mostly in Bosnia and Herzegovina. The next table shows the statistical developments of granting such status for the period from 1995 to 2002. One would be encouraged to notice that the figures provided by the Ministry of the Interior reflect the number of temporary refugees accommodated in public centres, but not in private accommodations, such as those with relatives and acquaintances. The overall numbers would be much higher, especially for the early stage (1992 – 1995), if both types of accommodation were included.

Table 7. Refugees from BIH with temporary protection status (TPS) for the period 1997-2003

Date	Number of TPS	Accommodation in refugee centres	Number of centres
31.12.1997	4609	2263	12
31.12.1998	3453	1702	10
31.12.1999	3113	1621	10
31.12.2000	2800	1420	9
31.12.2001	2406	1226	9
31.12.2002	537	809*	7
3.3.2003	98	768	7

Source: Ministry of the Interior, 2004

To sum up: because of its strategic position between East and West, and because of its current status as a new EU member state, Slovenia has attracted a number of migrant groups. Their current legal status could be summarised as following:

- permanent residents: coming from the former Yugoslav republics, war refugees and asylum seekers from all over the world;
- temporary residents: people awaiting their refugee status to be confirmed; people under temporary protection (because of escaping from a military conflict); people on duty in Slovenia, and seasonal workers;
- irregular migrants: people apprehended at Slovenia's borders (usually, after having tried to transit to another EU/ Schengen Zone country).

The employment of immigrants

The employment of immigrants is regulated on the basis of different legal instruments, the two most relevant being the Employment and Work of Aliens Act and the Aliens Act. There are provisions that could be defined either as encouraging or restrictive in this respect: for example, yearly defined quotas of immigrant workers, which could potentially contribute to civic participation not solely in economic life but also in other areas of public life. However, quotas simultaneously exclude all those migrants who could not make it to be included in the limited quota.

National statistics show the following: in 2004 (up to October), 17,100 work permits have been granted to migrants, which is 1,96 % of the total population. In 2003, the number was 17,579, which represents 2,02% of the whole active working population. Quite often, quotas are not filled up to their maximum capacity (i.e. 5% of the entire working population). In addition, there exist possible limitations in the field of regional employment, especially when this goes against the public or general economic interest. The foreign nationals, who on the basis of the Accession Agreement with European Union have an equal status compared to the citizens of the Republic of Slovenia, are not included in this quota. The aliens with personal work permit and workers on secondment, as well as those aliens who are not obliged by this Act to be in possession of a work permit, are also excluded from this count.

2. Major issues discussed in relation to immigration

The story of two 'immigration crises'

Since Slovenia is a country with a relatively short period of being an independent state (since 1991), the history of public discussion on migration covers only a decade a half, or the third historical period of migration as presented above. This latter is characterised by two major break points, or, as those are described in the Slovene media, by two “migration crises.” The first one relates to the “refugee crisis” of 1992 and 1993, while the second refers to the so-called “immigration crisis” of 2001. Regarding the first crisis, there is a relevant analysis of the Slovenian public rhetoric (Doupona Horvat et al. 1998). This research covers a period of one year: between April 1992 to March 1993. It uses text analysis to monitor public discussions, while paying special attention to the implicit aspects of construction meaning in relation to various refugee policies. According to this research, which analyses of the rhetoric of politicians, other public figures, state administrators, and media representatives, a major role in this debate is played by the actors who classify the Republic of Slovenia as a country defining itself on the basis of human rights and against the “darkness” of the Balkans. This research, however, reports diverging principles of legitimisation which resulted in the construction of a so-called “refugee problem.” For instance, public figures used the rhetoric of a “refugee wave” which was allegedly over-flooding Slovenia, while refugees were portrayed as a threat to public order and local customs. Moreover, the support of the international community was exclusively invoked to legitimate ‘protectionist’ policies, such as the closing of borders, restricting the possibility for work to immigrants, etc. According to the information supplied by this research, interestingly enough, the public debate on refugee issues contrasted the “we” and “them” rhetoric, where Slovenes and Slovenia as a state upheld the image of openness and tolerance while “them” (refugees) were presented as endangering the new democracy.

The end of 2000 and the first months of 2001 witnessed similar “drama” in the public discussion. The subjects on the agenda this time were the immigrants who had entered Slovenia without valid documents. The public rhetoric was initially dominated by the representatives of the government, and particularly the Ministry of the Interior, who decided to revive the arguments from the early and mid-90s, describing immigrants as a threat to the “local people” (see Pajnik et al. 2001). Unfortunately, the media chose to follow into the steps of the Ministry of the Interior people, and put forward a discussion reflecting mainly the opinion of certain administrative and political representatives with ‘anti-immigration views’. An extensive analysis of the xenophobia and hate speech in Slovenian printed media in the first three-and-a-half months of 2001 has been summarised by Vlasta Jalušič (2002). She reports a deliberate strategy of “emotionalisation” of the media discourse – a policy of creating a crisis, by laying blame on both the immigrants and the state for the situation. The media reports exclusively stressed the victimisation of the “indigenous” local residents, emphasizing the excessive rights of the immigrants at the same time. There was an additional discourse logic promoted: i.e. of shifting away responsibilities by blaming the state and not the people for the plight of refugees and local residents. Finally, a strategy of “the normalisation of xenophobia as a response” and other social “defence mechanisms” (e.g. “we are normal” not xenophobic, and “xenophobia is a marginal phenomenon”) has been pursued.

Media attention was initially focusing on the state (non)responses to “illegal immigrants” that began to arrive in Slovenia in 2000. The media largely took over the rhetoric of the representative elite that did not know how to approach the immigration issue, or approached it

rather in a defensive fashion. A number of NGOs drew attention to the poor living conditions in the asylum private homes and the public centres for foreigners already at the end of 2000. At the same time, however, the media started to provide a larger coverage of the “voice of the people” from the neighbourhoods of the state immigration centres. This coverage helped confirm the dominant popular perception of the immigrants’ poor image, nasty habits, and the supposed danger they posed to public health by spreading diseases. Related socio-economic aspects of accepting and accommodating immigrants were also reflected in these reports, such as the notion of the “swallowing of the taxpayer’s money by foreigners.”

The attitude towards immigrants in Slovenia has not been uniform, however. A counter-trend was present in the public discourse and in politics as well. In the beginning of 2001, which is the time when the “refugee crisis” peaked, it was possible to hear voices calling for tolerance. Groups of citizens and NGOs, joined by prominent individuals, launched appeals to stop the hostility towards immigrants. The Bureau for Interventions announced a series of solidarity actions: a rally against xenophobia (‘Solidarity with Immigrants’) was organised in Ljubljana, toys were collected for the children of immigrants, a number of public forums were organized by NGOs and they attracted numerous people as well as the attention of the media. Only then had the media begun to publish appeals for tolerance and to refer to immigrants as individuals rather than a homogeneous mass of people presenting a threat. This shift of opinion might be described as the gradual media’s “change-of-heart”.

The attitude towards immigrants was apparently shaped through a “dialogue” between two poles: between the opponents and advocates of the rights of immigrants, or, in other words, those who supported immigration and those who were against it. This dualism of position was also partly misleading, not least because the dominant discourse had continually delegitimised and neutralised the opinion of the “islands of activism” operating outside the mainstream “pro and contra” discourse (Drovc 2003). This was best seen in an NGO initiative where seven NGOs (the Peace Institute, Amnesty International, KUD France Preseren, Slovene Philanthropy, the Legal and Information Centre for NGOs, the GEA Foundation 2000 and the Vox Association) gathered to lobby for a change of the asylum law, which had previously been so restrictive that it had only granted asylum to 3 persons until 1999 (for more on this initiative see Kogovšek 2001).

To conclude, in the early and mid-1990s and at the beginning of 2001, the public debate regarding migration largely concentrated on the two mentioned ‘crises,’ marked by the arrival of refugees fleeing from the wars in former Yugoslavia or were arriving for political, personal, economic reasons from SE Europe, Africa and Asia (for the varying context of these migrations, see Zavratnik Zimic 2003). Around 2001, the public and media discourses primarily promoted a certain image of immigrants, who were perceived as different and almost incompatible the local population. The public space was rarely open for serious discussion. At the same time, immigration policy has never been put on top of the political agenda, which would treat this as an urgent public issue that does not stand a dismissal in terms of, for instance, simplistically differentiating people between “us” and “them”. Some critical voices were, however, pushing for openly discussing certain issues related to migration, for changing the restrictive legislation, and for overcoming the squalid living conditions in which some immigrants were captured (see Pajnik et al. 2001; Milohnić 2001; and Kramberger / Mihelj / Rotar, 2004).

Recent public debates

The public debate in relation to immigration in 2002 and 2003 was gradually beginning to focus around migration policies, including the Schengen regime. The debate was primarily structured around the accession of Slovenia to the EU and the obligations Slovenia would have towards individual member states and the EU as a whole. Furthermore, the ongoing border settlement dispute with Croatia was also actively commented upon. For example, the media regularly followed the Schengen regime changes that influenced the work of the border police. Slovenian authorities were supposed to fulfil their international obligations following the signing of an accession agreement with the EU: e.g. to increase border surveillance for undocumented immigrants, to combine forces with the Italian and Austrian police to fight transborder crime, etc. Thus, since 2003 migration and border control issues have predominately been discussed within a larger EU framework.

In 2003, the public discussion and media reports in relation to immigration started to cover the trafficking in human beings more systematically. The debates also touched upon gender issues related to migration. Examples of such issues, regarded the treatment of Muslim (primarily Bosnian and Kosovar) and Roma women by their husbands and within their closely-knit communities. The plight of young girls, involved in “sex slavery,” was also recounted at numerous instances. The related public debates were, however, primarily organised and sponsored by NGOs and the IOs, and, only then, did they receive a broader media attention. Issues such as the integration of migrants and stopping the trafficking of human beings also emerged in the public debate, although they could not provoke a continuous reaction. The media preferred to report certain research findings (i.e. the policy research on human trafficking in Slovenia, see Zavrtnik Zimic et. al 2003), and it has given limited space to commentaries of academic scholars focusing on migration, regionalism and globalisation.

Two additional issues related to immigration were widely debated in Slovenian society in the period 2002–2004. These are the problem of the so-called “erased persons” and the question of building a Muslim cultural centre in Ljubljana (the latter was suppose to include a mosque that would be the first in the country). The “erased persons” issue reflected the act of erasure of between 18,000 and 40,000 people – many of them immigrants from former Yugoslavia – from the public records. For instance, the Ministry of the Interior had deliberately deleted these persons’ files from the citizenship registers in the period immediately following national independence. These people were consequently given a non-residents status in Slovenia, while their position and that of their families became precarious. A serious public debate did not occur up until 2002. Different NGOs, the erased themselves and some Slovenian citizens decided to call the political class attention to the fact that this group of people had practically lost not only their legal basis for stay in Slovenia, but many among the so-called “erased” lost their jobs and different social rights, including the years working towards pensions having been accumulated during the period of work when the SFRY had existed (Andreev 2003a, Dedić, Jalušič and Zorn 2003).

As far as the public discussion in relation to building a mosque in Ljubljana was concerned, different politicians, representatives of the city municipality, the media, and some professionals (e.g. architects) expressed different arguments for and against. Their statements

reflected already familiar opinions in the public space from a decade ago: e.g. “Muslims”¹² were not “genuine Slovenes”, these facilities would be less accessible to other Slovenes, the sanitary conditions were not good enough, the Slovenian capital landscape would be distorted, and, last but not least, paternalistic arguments calling for the integration and assimilation of foreigners and their culture (Dragoš 2003; see also Kos, Kreft, Krivic, Moe, Pajnik 2004).

Analysing press clippings and Internet reports of the Slovene daily newspapers throughout 2004, it is evident that several reports concentrated on the press conferences organised by the Ministry of the Interior, which reported about the breaking of smuggling networks and the undocumented border crossing by foreigners. The media was generally less active in reporting ‘positive’ events related to migration, i.e. an international conference on undocumented migration, which gathered top-level public official from different countries. When existing, these were mainly journalistic reports focusing on events as such, i.e. without further commentary or reflection. What could be concluded is that there was a general lack of a more elaborated analysis towards governmental policies on migration in the media.

One of the issues that was more thoroughly presented in the media in 2004 covered the debate about the number of working permits (i.e. quotas) for immigrants coming both from the former Yugoslav countries as well as from the new EU member states. The media investigated the life of migrants coming for economic reasons and engaging themselves in season work (i.e. in the field, the vineyards and the orchards). Several reports featured statements of Slovenian farmers complaining about the procedure of issuing work permits for non-EU member state nationals, arguing that workers from the former Yugoslav countries work much harder and are more efficient compared to, for instance, Slovak or Polish workers having come during the last couple of years, but much less so after May 2004.

In September 2004, the Ministry of the Interior, after being criticized by NGOs, individuals and intellectuals for having kept immigrants in unbearable living conditions, opened a new reception centre. The media widely reported the ceremony and occasionally included more critical opinions about the centre itself (i.e. about its being in the suburbs of Ljubljana – away from the sight of people – and for its inappropriate architectural symbolism, reminding of a post-modern prison).

3. Institutional settings framing the immigrant participation

The overview of the actual legal and institutional conditions includes a general information on the institutional actors who deal with immigration policy in Slovenia and the legislative instruments adopted after 1991. This is done by placing special emphasis on the possibilities for and actual manifestations of immigrant’s civic participation.

A. The institutional framework

The institutions dealing with migration issues are primarily the Ministry of the Interior and its Migration Directorate. The Office for Immigration and Refugees that was part of the Ministry was abolished in March 2004 and replaced with a Directorate. The police is also part of this

¹² Originally, the “Muslims” in Slovenia were predominantly the Bosnians and a few Kosovar refugees (e.g. during the late 1980s). However, in recent times, this social category, with a clear pejorative sounding, has been broadened to include third country nationals and even some Roma groups.

Ministry. Other ministries, regulating migration at different levels of social life, include the Ministry of Labour, the Family and Social Affairs Ministry and the Ministry of Culture. There are Parliamentary committees occasionally debating migration issues. However, their activity is more politically motivated and less policy oriented.

Within society, the status of so-called “new minorities” in Slovenia was slowly raised in the public debate after 2000. This was due to the organisation of a number of public events such as a scientific conference in Maribor and the Forum of the Peace Institute in Ljubljana. The problem regards the status of ethnic minorities from the republics of former Yugoslavia, who came to Slovenia as immigrants, mostly in the 1970s. The Croatian, Serbian, Bosnian and Macedonian ethnic groups have created some basic organisations; these have mostly been cultural associations in the big industrial towns. However, these minorities have been less visible in terms of political participation. One event should nonetheless be mentioned. The representative of these ethnic groups issued a common statement, in which they ask the government to constitutionally regulate their status. In the Slovenian Constitution, there are special rights granted to members of the Italian and Hungarian autochthonous minorities (Article 64), while the Roma community is mentioned in the next article (65). All other minorities are not subject of collective rights (see Andreev 2003a). This initiative, which was also supported by some academic researchers and judges, provoked some debate. The ongoing discussion had initially focused on broader migration issues and the minority policy in Slovenia. Interestingly enough, in this case, the “old immigrants” strive to become a “new minority,” and this is somewhat resisted by the majority of Slovenian people and politicians, although these four ethnic groups are far better known to the local population than the new arrivals.

B. The legal framework

Certain conditions encouraging foreign civic participation can be found in the legislation regulating social welfare and the integration of minorities into the cultural and political life of Slovenia. Immigrants are entitled to different social welfare benefits, such as pension and health care. These conditions are set out in the Social Welfare Act, the Pensions and Disability Act¹³ and the Health Insurance Act.¹⁴ Immigrants have a free access to the educational system at the level of primary school. As regards their political representation, there is a very important novelty, which enables political representation at the level of the local communities in which foreigners have their permanent residence. Within cultural life,

¹³ This area is in the framework of the Social Welfare Act (Official Gazette of the RS, No. 54/92, followed by the No. 41/99 and No. 26/2001), where Article 5 stipulates that the rightful claimants under this Act are, not only the citizens of the Republic of Slovenia with permanent residence in Slovenia, but also the aliens in possession of a permit for permanent residence in the country.

The Pension and Disability Insurance Act (Official Gazette of the RS, No. 106/99) is important for foreigners who perform independent agricultural activity or vocational training. Those people should be insured, or they have the right to voluntarily insure themselves, if it is so determined by the international agreement (Article 34).

¹⁴ The rights in the area of health care are granted in accordance to the Health Care and Health Insurance Act (Official Gazette of the RS, No. 9/92). Article 15 is especially important for those migrating in general, and, therefore, for foreigners who are beneficiaries of health care in Slovenia as well. Foreign nationals are generally provided with immediate medical treatment, but the conditions for payment/repayment differ from case to case. Similar to other East-Central European states the conditions for admission and free treatment of foreign nationals has become harsher. Moreover, a high level of corruption and bribery in the health care establishments has been reported.

there are possibilities for civic participation in terms of the state supporting some cultural activities of the immigrant organisations or individual participants.

The legal participation of immigrants in public life

The integration of immigrants in the public life of new societies concerns a wide range of aspects and policy fields: from economic to social, and from political to cultural. Social integration is one of the pillars of any migration policy. It is defined in the Resolution on the Migration Policy of the Republic of Slovenia of 2002, as well in a previous Resolution on the Immigration Policy of the Republic of Slovenia from 1999. Two additional legal acts, which support the integration policy, are to be mentioned here:

The Act Amending the Local Election Act (Official Gazette of the RS, No. 51/2002) brings novelties in the field of political participation. The novelty in this Act is that also those foreign nationals, with permanent residence in the country, have the right to vote and stand as members of the municipal council. The voter has the right to vote in the municipality of his/her permanent residence (Article 1). There have not been cases reported of immigrants or other foreign nationals (i.e. EU citizens) running for local elections. However, this act provides an important means to foreign nationals to press for their political and social concerns, albeit locally, in the near future.

The second act pertains to the field of culture. The Act on Promoting the Public Interest in Culture (Official Gazette of the RS, No. 96/2002) in its Article 65 determines that the state financially supports projects that are especially intended to culturally integrate minority communities and immigrants. This act directly relates to the possibility of immigrants social participation, although there is a condition that the intended cultural programmes and projects meet the local interest.

Article 66, defining the competence of the municipalities in this respect, determines that the municipalities should support amateurish cultural activities, including those intended to culturally integrate the minority communities and immigrants. Both acts, however, are entitled to primarily support the indigenous ethnic communities in Slovenia, such as the Germans, Hungarians and Italians. The Roma community has also been targeted as a potential recipient of state aid.

However, **restrictive conditions** for the foreign nationals' civic participation can be found in different sorts of legislation. One major group of restrictive measures refers to personal mobility. These are especially the laws regulating the admission and staying in the country. There are different kinds of visas, with various purposes and periods of duration. Most visas do not give the aliens the right to work. There are also the residence permits, which may allow a fixed (i.e. limited) or continuous period of stay in Slovenia. Those work permits that are issued for a short duration can be an obstacle to one's participation in social life. The conditions of issuing residence and work permits are defined by the Aliens Act (Official Gazette of the Republic of Slovenia, No. 61/99, No. 87/2002).

Part II: Active Civic Participation of Third Country immigrants

Are there studies/ books/ journal articles on the issue of active civic participation of immigrants in Slovenia?

The issue of active civic participation of immigrants in Slovenia has been treated relatively little by both local and international commentators of Slovenia social and political life. The reasons for this have been several: (a) the academic and research community in the country has not been so large, so other issues related to minorities and migrants have been more pressing – and, hence, more widely written (i.e. the establishing of minorities’ collective legal and political rights, analysing migration trends, studying the means of representation of indigenous ethnic communities and those of the citizens of former Yugoslavia, and the assertion of gender and other human rights in the context of the merging nationhood and integration in Europe); (b) being a young nation-state, Slovenia’s academic and political elite had a problem of accepting immigrants, and minorities in general, as an active component of Slovenian society – that is why, the ‘aliens’ were usually treated as ‘subjects’ and not as regular citizens, endowed with full rights and capabilities to participate; (c) because of the dynamic social and political processes characterising the recent Slovenian history (i.e. disintegration of SFRY, independence, EU accession and full membership in the EU – all this during slightly more than a decade), there has been a general ambivalence about what should be done in several policy areas, such as migration, border, citizenship, social and employment, international security policies, to name just a few, affecting the plight of immigrants and some of the already legal residents; finally, (d) the heterogeneous and quite mobile nature of the migrant population in Slovenia (the country being a major a ‘transit point’ for people travelling from the East and South to the West) has not permitted the immigrants to accumulate the necessary resources to organise themselves and participate in public life.

The “grey literature”¹⁵ has also not been prolific, mainly because it is relatively easy to get published in Slovenia. Both academic scholars and policy makers know each other very well. It is not uncommon that the exponents of civil society get involved in politics and, eventually, are elected.¹⁶ The internet and national media have been the main sources of “grey literature.” However, such publications have quite often been made official in academic and other kinds of editions, mainly because of the increased sponsorship for research and development by the Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Culture.¹⁷

In sum, only a few articles have directly been dedicated to the topic of immigrants’ participation. Nevertheless, the careful reader could discern an increased interest in the subject by Slovenian and international researchers, and one could register several (relatively recent) entries dedicated to this matter as part of various articles and books. As a rule, the

¹⁵ A good part of this “grey literature” could be located at the departmental web-sights of the academic and research institutions mentioned further below. Nonetheless, I would like to single out those of the Faculty of Social Science, University of Ljubljana, <http://www.fdv.uni-lj.si/angleščina/default.htm>, of the Mirovni Institut <http://www.mirovni-institut.si/>, and of the Institute for Ethnic Studies http://www2.arnes.si/~ljinv16/s1_vhod_a.HTM.

¹⁶ I remember, for instance, that, during my fellowship at the Mirovni Institut in Ljubljana (2002), I was supervised by the then Minister of Education, Mr. Slavko Gaber.

¹⁷ According to the mid-term review of the Lisbon Strategy for research and development (in March 2005), Slovenia comes closest to and much ahead of the other New EU Member States to satisfying the ‘target’ of 3% of national spending for R&D.

issue of immigrants' participation is treated by several related 'literatures' concerned with contemporary Slovenian social and political life. These are mainly the growing body of publications on 1) Slovenian and European citizenship; 2) migration; 3) ethnic minority protection and human rights; and 4) European integration and international relations.¹⁸ Lastly, one should not forget that immigrants' and citizens' participation is not only a matter of degree, but also of definition – so, it might be the case that some social science researchers have not perceived this political phenomenon as 'participation,' for instance, but rather as 'representation,' 'empowering,' 'giving a voice' or, merely, an 'unintended reaction' to a particular policy of the government, which would have lasting consequences.

But let us proceed with order. First it is worth mentioning the publications, most closely related to immigrants' participation. In her article "*The Right to Vote of Foreigners with Permanent Residence as a Contribution to the Integration in Local Self-Management*", Felicita Medved (2002) addresses the issue of the voting rights of foreign nationals as a contribution to their integration and the promotion of local democracy. In 2002, the year of municipal elections, Slovenia introduced the right of foreign nationals with a permanent resident status to vote and stand as candidates in local elections. The author speculates about the possible consequences of the electoral reform on the social integration, local self-management and development of "nominal" and full citizenship based on residence. A year before that, the same author, in the article "*Nationality, Citizenship and Integration, a European Perspective*" (2001) discusses the relationship between citizenship and migrants' integration. The latter piece of research puts forward the intriguing theoretical dilemma of membership in a state versus membership in a society. By making an analytical distinction between nominal and actual citizenship, Felicita Medved stresses the significance of the latter by studying the legal tie between an individual and a state, as well as the related a cluster of rights and duties associated with citizenship. Emanating from recent initiatives of the European Union to develop the concept of "civil society", the notion of "denizenship" is advanced. The emergence of this definition comes as a result of the classical social relation between the state and an individual, but it is also a political concept as it treats relevant politically issues as the building of a community and the naturalisation of foreign nationals. The author claims that, in most European societies, there is a trend of incorporating both legally and factually resident persons into civil society and the public institutions. Moreover, it is purported that there is an ongoing trend towards gradual liberalization of rules on naturalization, towards dilution of the "right of blood", as well as towards admission and toleration of dual and multiple citizenships.¹⁹

Second, it is worth concentrating on those publications that treat immigrants' participation as part of another, usually related, topic. With the gaining of its national independence, but also before that, Slovenian society has been preoccupied with the integration of its national minorities, such as Italians, Germans, Hungarians and the Roma. Interestingly enough, the latter community has been divided as to being 'autochthonous' and 'non-autochthonous,' depending on their period of settlement and residence in the country (see Mesojedec-Pervinsek 1997, Jalušič 2002). The former rights were enshrined in the new Slovenian

¹⁸ Interestingly enough, I could not identify an 'indigenous' and self-critical literature on civil society in Slovenia. As in many other post-communist countries, such publications have been generated from outside, as the majority and most important of the so-called civil society organisations in CEE have been foreign-sponsored.

¹⁹ Two additional articles of this author, which are framing migration debate in Slovenia and in Europe, can be added: *Migration and Asylum Policy in Transgression of European Union*, in: *Razprave in Gradivo*, No. 36/37, pp. 207-226 and *The End of European »Zero« Immigration Policy Model: Proactive Economic Migration Policy and Actors' Interests*, in: *Razprave in Gradivo*, No. 42, pp. 116-151.

Constitution, while the latter were treated as aliens and migrating people. The Institute for Ethnic Studies, created before World War II, in order to predominantly study the lifestyle of the sizeable Italian community at that time, has been a leading centre of research regarding the preservation and integration of minority communities in Slovenia. The Director of this institute, Dr. Miran Komac, has been leading a comprehensive research on the migration and integration policies in Slovenia. This project has a rather broad scope and includes topics, such as the ethnic identity of immigrants, the question of socio-economic integration, language, the media, culture, politics and public perceptions. The results are published in Miran Komac (2003): *Perceptions of Slovenian Integration Policies: Summary Account*. Inštitut za narodnostna vprašanja (Institute for Ethnic Studies), FDV, 2003. Unfortunately, most of this information in this book is presented in a crude form – mostly via statistics, accompanied by terse commentaries. Moreover, the predominant scope of Miran Komac's work is on the history and social mobility of the autochthonous ethnic communities in Slovenia (the Italians, Germans and Hungarians), as well as the inclusion of the minorities from the other Yugoslav republics into Slovenian society. Only in the last chapter, does he mention new immigrants. He does not discuss civic participation *per se*; his interest is more of an anthropologist and demographer. Nonetheless, one could discover an ample amount of quantitative and qualitative information (including responses to sociological interviews) on non-ethnic Slovenians from the period of the dissolution of the Austro-Hungarian Empire until the early 2000s.

Another set of academic literature refers to the broader area of migration, such as the dynamics immigration, and the inflow and outflow of Slovenian nationals. This kind of literature focuses on single case studies of individual immigrant groups, the plight of refugees, forced migrations, the problems surrounding trafficking in human beings, the questions of minors in migration, etc. This literature is mostly mentioned in part one, and these are those references that are of a relatively recent date – e.g. after 1991. Few titles should be mentioned for illustration: *Mednarodne migracije* (International migrations) from 1976, *Sodobni trendi mednarodnih migracij: Se klasično obdobje migracij končuje?* (Contemporary Trends of International Migrations: The End of the Classic Era?) and *Osnove migracijske politike* (The Basics of Migration Policies) from 1993. Recent books include a comparative study by Barbara Verlič-Christensen (2003) *Evropa v precepu med svobodo in omejitvami migracij* (Europe in the gap between freedom and limitations of migrations). For instance, this last work discusses new migration trends from two perspectives: migrations across and within the former socialist countries (the former Yugoslavia, Slovenia, Hungary and Poland), and migration to selected Scandinavian countries (Denmark and Sweden). In addition, the EU migration policy, and that of Slovenia in particular, have been analysed by Bešter (2003) and by different other authors in the publication *Migracije – globalizacija – Evropska unija* (Migration – Globalization – European Union). For the overall situation with migration in Slovenia after World War II, and a summary of the most prominent theoretical contributions in this respect, one should primarily refer to the work of Peter Klinar (a leading research scholar and professor of sociology at Faculty of Social Sciences in Ljubljana).

In conclusion, one could say that, as in the rest of CEE, the academic literature on immigrants' participation is relatively poorly developed and dominated by other research topics related to minorities or civil society activity. Moreover, this kind of literature is almost never focused on issues of immigrants' taking part in the social and political life of the host society *per se*, but is 'diluted by' or 'mingled with' other societal concerns regarding foreigners. However, in the case of Slovenia, the social science literature on active immigrants' participation has a potential of growth, mainly because of three factors: a) the

relatively good and increasing empowerment of all social groups, minorities included, by the Slovenian state (see Andreev 2003b), b) the rising number of migrants and ‘denizens’ in Slovenia after its entry into the EU, and c) the availability of public and private funds to conduct research on these and other topics of general concern to Slovenian society and its academic community.

Name prominent examples of immigrants that are active in public life, if there are any.

After the already mentioned “immigrants crisis” in Slovenia in the early 2000s, a number of leading individuals and NGOs were trying to increase the public awareness about the situation of migrants in Slovenia. The public debates about migration issues were usually initiated by groups of “concerned citizens”, intellectuals and NGO activists. Those individuals preferred to pick up an issue: i.e. the poor living conditions of immigrants, the hostility towards the mosque in the Slovenian capital, etc., and to critically discuss these problems. Since 2001, one could witness a further development: migrants began to express public opinions themselves. There have been public statements made about the creation of a “safe public environment” that would enable them to speak and be heard. As opposed to this, however, one could also witness an almost “instinctive” resistance on the part of some politicians and the majority of the population to silence some of the public voices among the immigrant community.

The public and private media have been prominent in this respect. Different debates in the mass media approached the topic of migration in “black or white” fashion, i.e. by adopting extreme positions vis-à-vis the migrants. Quite often migrant speakers were marginalised in these debates and their opinion was neglected. There have been also public debates where migrants were occasionally denounced for being part of the social problems that the majority of the population was facing. Even when Slovenian intellectuals, researchers, activists and other concerned citizens created a “safe environment” for debate (for example during a civic action supporting migrants in 2001), few migrants would express their views, or even participate in the debates. Here are the examples of the ‘civic participation’ of three immigrants/migrants who left a mark in Slovenia’s social and political discourse.

In 2001, Bi Fine, a singer fleeing Sierra Leone for political reasons (state persecution), came to Slovenia and applied for asylum. In the period 2001-2002 he was very active in the field of culture by organising concerts. The songs he sang had a large political impact, reflecting the nature of contemporary migration and its consequences (lyrics are published in Pajnik et al. 2001). He gained a lot of media attention at concerts, as well as otherwise, i.e. by critically analysing migration: describing the situations that push people to flee and depicting the journeys of migrants as well as the situation in the host country.

During the late 1990s and at the beginning of the 2000s, Inacio Bintchende became a widely known figure. He was an immigrant from Africa and used to perform as an actor in a popular TV show (TV Poper) transmitted on a public TV station. In 2001, Bintchende was physically attacked in the centre of Ljubljana in front of his apartment. This xenophobic act gained a lot of media attention, while Bintchende became publicly active. He tried to defend his and other migrants cause of living a normal life in Slovenia. (for more on the Bintchende case, see Zagorac 2001).

In relation to building a Muslim cultural centre in Ljubljana, a couple of figures among the Muslim (mainly Bosnian migrants and refugees) population, who were active publicly, could be named. Firstly, this is the Slovene mufti Osman Đogić, who often speaks publicly. He does

this mainly in the media, in order to explain why the Muslim community needs a cultural centre, why the Muslim people need a mosque (i.e. for many years they have been practicing their faith in a gym hall), etc. Ahmed Pasić, a graduate from the Faculty of Social Sciences of the University of Ljubljana, a president of the Islamic Community in the town of Jesenice and a coordinator for the creation of a Muslim centre, also often gives interviews on the situation of the Muslim people in Slovenia. Besides these figures, Nevzet Porić a general secretary of the Islamic community speaks publicly and engages in debates in connection with building of the mosque as well. As already mentioned, the great majority of the so-called 'Muslim community' in Slovenia came from other Yugo-republics, so, it has been naturally difficult for the rest of the Slovenians to conceptualise these migrants or naturalised citizens as radically different from them ethnically and culturally, and to anticipate their needs in terms of religious and other social institutions.

The case of the 18,000 erased Slovenian residents was publicly presented by Aleksandar Todorović, a Serbia-born archaeologist, and the president of the Association of the Erased People. During 2002–2004 he was among the few (one should mention here the former judge Matevž Krivic, about whom the Peace Institute, as well as the Helsinki committee in Slovenia, have widely published) who reminded the public about the illegal erasure of thousands of persons and this act's consequences. His position was given publicity by a number of international human rights institutions and civic organisations. (International Helsinki Federation for Human Rights 1999, Helsinki Monitor 2000)

Part III: Expert Assessment

- What are the main fields of civic activities that immigrants engage in (e.g. religious associations, parent associations, political parties etc)?

There is a perception that the vast majority of immigrants, especially those coming from the former Yugoslav states, attends religious ceremonies, especially during holidays (e.g. Ramadan and the festivities of the Serbian Orthodox Church). This public perception can, however, be interpreted as some sort of mythologisation of migrants. There certainly is an attempt of generalising about immigrants and placing them in the same “package.” When evident, this is a strategy not allowing to see migrants as individuals, but rather trying to identify what is supposedly most “commonly known” about them, i.e. their religion. No research has been done to support the hypothesis that immigrants predominantly engage in religious associations, although this is the “common” public perception. For instance, during and after the war in BIH, the mass media has represented the immigrants who decided to come to Slovenia in the context of their Muslim religious rites and institutions. Such mediated representations have largely influenced the way the public sees migrants. This trend has been so influential, that today there is virtually a lack of search for different contextualisations of migrants’ social engagement, rather than their religious practices and festivities.

There is no available data or research done regarding other areas of immigrants’ civic activity, such as the running of schools and political parties.

- What ethnic and nationality groups are particularly active, and why?

In general, it can be said that the Muslim community has recently been quite active in relation to building a Muslim centre. Other migrants from the former Yugoslavia have also been active in relation to “the erased persons” issue, which remains still unsolved.

- Is the degree of active participation of immigrants high or low compared to the majority population?

My personal opinion is that it is very difficult to distinguish the level of engagement between the so-called “majority” and the minority of the population. Among the so-called majority, only a tiny minority of citizens is actually active, and its engagement in minority/migrant/ and other marginalised persons’ issues usually gathers few people regardless of their nationality/ethnicity, etc.

- What is the relation between engagement in ethnic or migrant organisations compared to mainstream society organisations?

There is no sufficient data to provide a complete answer; I think that this question requires further research, which does not exist at the current moment.

- Where do you see major research gaps?

Major research gaps are seen both on a very general (systemic) and particular (migration policy) level. There has not been a profound and continuous research in this respect. In my opinion, it is almost impossible to evaluate the extent of the migrants' civic participation, because of two reasons: firstly, the question of civic participation itself is under-researched in the Slovenian context, and secondly, if there is some debate on immigrants' participation, it is usually the consequence of very recent social developments (i.e. which necessitate further analysis) or, simply, it reflects certain events that had been placed on the political agenda because of their actual importance (but which are not consequential for the future of immigration policy). For instance, and related to the recent transition to democracy in Slovenia, there has been some analysis of voting rights, political parties and elections in general. However, and rather unfortunately, there seems to be more about the everyday life of an average Slovenian politician than the development civic participation of the citizens, especially if those are of foreign decent and are not her/his electorate.

Annex: Mapping of Research Competences in Slovenia

This list mentions leading institutions (universities, university departments, research institutes), and leading scholars in the field of immigration/migration, civic participation, active participation of immigrants. This list includes different kinds of institutions: i.e. two universities, one public and one non-governmental research organisations, etc. The numbers from one to five do not necessarily reflect a rank according to the institution's level of importance. Moreover, there is no single research institution, which acts as a leader in the field of migration research. Scholars and activists, who are mentioned in this literature review, are usually involved in the work of several different institutions.

Research institution 1: Univerza v Ljubljani, Filozofska fakulteta, Oddelek za sociologijo / University of Ljubljana, Faculty of Arts, Department of Sociology

Address:

Filozofska fakulteta / Faculty of Arts
Oddelek za sociologijo / Department of Sociology
Aškerčeva 2
SI - 1000 Ljubljana
Slovenia

Contact Person:

Ms. Andreja Končan, Departmental Secretary
Main Office (Room 428)
phone: ++386-61-241-1-120
fax: ++386-61-125-9-337
e-mail: andreja.koncan@ff.uni-lj.si

Dean of the Faculty: Professor dr. Božidar Jezernik, dekanat@ff.uni-lj.si

Relevant researchers: Dr. Silva Mežnarič, Ddr. Rudi Rizman

Short description:

The Department of Sociology offers two undergraduate programs: sociology of culture (with an emphasis on research) leading to a Bachelor of Arts in sociology of culture degree, and sociology (with an emphasis on teaching) with a possibility of eventually becoming a lecturer of sociology. Students with a profile in sociology of culture study socio-cultural theory and research, with an emphasis on expertise in specific cultural fields. A major task of this program is also to prepare students for working in cultural management and administration, as well as in the sphere of the organisation of culture and of various cultural and political activities. Students aiming at a lecturer's sociology degree are educated in general and particular sociological fields. They are generally trained to become high school teachers of sociology and humanities. With their general sociological background, however, lecturers of sociology can also work in other areas that require trained students in sociology.

In addition to the two four-year programs of sociology of culture and sociology, the Department of Sociology also offers two multidisciplinary Masters of Arts graduate programs in sociology of culture and social anthropology, as well a Ph.D. program in sociology.

Amongst the most prominent recent activities of the department, one should mentioned, the research project on “Globalisation and Cultural Identity” (led by Prof. Rudi Rizman, duration 1999-2001).

Research institution 2: Univerza v Ljubljani, Fakulteta za družbene vede, Sociologija / University of Ljubljana, Faculty of Social Sciences, Department of Sociology

Address and Contact:

Faculty of Social Sciences

Kardeljeva ploščad 5

P.O. Box 2547

1001 Ljubljana

Slovenia

Phone: +386 1 5805-100

Fax: +386 1 5805 101

E-mail address: fdv.faculty@fdv.uni-lj.si

Dean of the Faculty: Dr. Anuška Ferligoj, Professor

Phone: +386 1 5805 110

Fax: +386 1 5805 102

E-mail: anuska.ferligoj@uni-lj.si

Relevant researchers: Dr. Barbara Verlič-Christensen, Department of Sociology

Short description:

The Faculty of Social Sciences is one of the largest academic units of the University of Ljubljana with over 4,000 students and more than 20 undergraduate and graduate programs in political science, sociology, communication, and cultural studies.

The Faculty of Social Sciences prepares its students for teaching careers in diverse social and political environments, not only in Slovenia, but also in the region and beyond. This is done through an appropriate coursework, which is designed to increase intercultural understanding of today’s world and to encourage international co-operation. The Faculty of Social Sciences offers instruction and conducts research in a variety of foreign languages, such as English, French, German, Italian, Serbo-Croatian, and Russian.

Research institution 3: Univerza na primorskem, Znansteno-raziskovalno središče Koper / University of Primorska, Science and Research Centre of Koper

Address and Contact:

University of Primorska
Science and Research Centre of Koper
Garibaldijeva 1
SI-6000 Koper

Tel. +386 566 37 700

Fax: +386 566 37 710

Http://www.zrs-kp.si

Director: Dr. Darko Darovec, darko.darovec@zrs-kp.si

Relevant researchers: Dr. Simona Zavratnik Zimic

Short presentation:

The Science and Research Centre of Koper (ZRS Koper) was established on the 1st of December 1994. Instead of the Government of the Republic of Slovenia, the Ministry of Science and Technology carries out the responsibility of a founder and supervisor, while further co-founders include the Community of the Communes of the Littoral (today its legal successors are the municipality of Koper and the communes of Izola and Piran) and the Slovenian Academy of Sciences and Arts.

The main focus of ZRS are the Mediterranean studies with an emphasis on the research of Slovenian Istria. The research and teaching approach is largely interdisciplinary: in the humanities, social and natural sciences, as well as, more precisely:

- basic and applied research,
- expert advising and consulting,
- education,
- organising meetings of scientists and experts,
- publicising and publishing,
- documentation and librarianship.

ZRS Koper takes part in international co-operation in various fields of science and technology. It links up with numerous similar organisations around the world.

The SRC Koper, which is also a member of the new [University of Primorska](#), was established by the Slovenian Parliament on the 29th of January 2003. It takes an integral part in the university's main research activities. As a part of the [University of Primorska](#), SRC Koper does not only intend to offer support in general education to the existing and future graduate and post-graduate study programmes, but it also has the ambition to independently promote and implement study programmes, especially at the postgraduate level, which may eventually lead to a range of autonomous undergraduate programmes.

Research institution 4: Inštitut za narodnostna vprašanja / Institute for Ethnic Studies

Address and Contact:

Institute for Ethnic Studies

Erjavčeva 26

SI- 1000 Ljubljana

Tel: 01 200-18-70

Fax: 01 251-09-64

E-mail: INV@inv.si

Director: Dr. Mitja Žagar, mitja.zagar@guest.arnes.si

Relevant researchers: Dr. Miran Komac, Romana Bešter, M.A.

Short presentation:

The Institute for Ethnic Studies is a public research institution in the field of ethnic studies, which investigates in an interdisciplinary way the following issues:

- the Slovenian ethnic question,
- the status of the Slovenian ethnic communities in Italy, Austria and Hungary,
- the status of the Slovenes in the successor states of the former Yugoslavia,
- the status of the Slovenian emigrants, as well as of the ethnic communities (i.e. the national minorities and other ethnic groups) in Slovenia,
- the status of migrants in Slovenia: theory and methodology of the research of ethnic topics,
- the types of ethnic problems in Europe and around the world.

The IES is the successor of the Minority Institute, which, in the years 1925-1941, functioned in Ljubljana as one of the first research institutions of its kind in the world. It was mostly dealing with the status of Slovenians in the neighbouring countries, and of the German and Hungarian minorities in Slovenia. When the Slovenian territory was occupied during WWII, the Institute was “liquidated, because its materials could fall into the hands of the occupiers.” However, as early as January 1944, in the liberated territory, the Scientific Institute was founded within the Executive Committee of the Liberation Front. This institute continued its turbulent existence as the only institution of its kind in occupied Europe (i.e. being a true

Minority Institute). Its department for border issues was transformed into the Institute for Ethnic Studies in 1948. From 1948 to 1956, the Institute functioned within the frame of the University in Ljubljana, while from then on it has been an independent scientific institution. In 1992 the IES has become one of the first public research institutions in Slovenia.

Research institution 5: Mirovni inštitut, Inštitut za sodobne politične in družbene študije /
Peace Institute, Institute for Contemporary Political and Social Studies

Address and Contact:

Peace Institute

Metelkova ulica 6, 1000 Ljubljana, Slovenija

Tel:++386 (0)1 234 77 20

Fax:++386 (0)1 234 77 22

info@mirovni-institut.si; <http://www.mirovni-institut.si>

Director: Dr. Lev Kreft, lev.kreft@mirovni-institut.si

Relevant researchers: Mojca Pajnik, M.A., Aldo Milohnić, M.A.

Short presentation:

Initially the Peace Institute focused on peace studies and the related issues of violence, war and security. During the period 1994-95, its field of activity was extended to embrace a wider range of contemporary social and political issues. Among the topics that were added to its agenda were racism and political conflict, gender studies, cultural studies, and political and social practice. Its goal to integrate academic work with concrete social and political engagement led to a number of policy studies and research projects. In addition to the topics mentioned above, it also began to concentrate on political extremism, democratisation and equal opportunity issues in Central and Eastern Europe. Special attention is paid to the study of independent women's and feminist movements in Slovenia, as well as to problems of sexual abuse, refugees, civil service in stead of the regular military service, cultural industry and so on.

Towards the end of the 1990s, three additional programs, formerly conducted by the *Open Society Institute - Slovenia*, were transferred to the Peace Institute: Media, Civil Society and East-East Co-operation. With the inclusion of these programs, the Institute's area of expertise was further extended to the fields of human rights, media studies and various topics related to the EU and the Stability Pact. Nevertheless, its staff continues to devote attention to marginal social and political issues, which are usually ignored by mainstream institutions, such as the rise and survival of protest movements, lobbying, minority protection and the privatisation of the social services.

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