

## NEW POSSIBILITIES FOR COOPERATION IN CENTRAL EUROPE: THE CASE OF THE ALPE-ADRIA WORKING COMMUNITY

### EDITORIAL INTRODUCTION

The following section is devoted to the papers and commentaries at the panel with the above title, a session at the Nineteenth Annual Convention of the American Association for the Advancement of Slavic Studies, held in Boston MA, November 8, 1987. The panel was organized by Aleš Lokar, who with the other participants represents different perspectives on the Alpe-Adria initiative from three of its 'core' regions: Slovenia itself, Carinthia, and Friuli-Venezia Giulia.

These materials are given a special place in this volume of our journal because of the enormous importance of this question for the economic, social and political future of Slovenia. As editor, I welcome the opportunity to treat the matter in this way.<sup>1</sup>

The next few paragraphs, and the map that follows, are intended to provide the necessary factual background for a full appreciation of these materials. Most of the data were taken from preliminary versions of the papers on this panel; I hereby thank the authors concerned.

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### THE ALPE-ADRIA WORKING COMMUNITY

#### Geographical data

The community extends from the Danube to the Adriatic, and comprises at its fullest extent fourteen infranational regions (cf. the accompanying map):

- in Germany: the *Freistaat* Bayern [Bavaria];
- in Austria: the *Länder* Salzburg, Oberösterreich [Upper Austria], Steiermark [Styria], Kärnten [Carinthia], Burgenland;
- in Italy: the *regioni* Veneto, Friuli-Venezia Giulia, Trentino-Alto Adige [South Tyrol], Lombardia;
- in Yugoslavia: the *republike* Slovenia, Croatia;
- in Hungary: the *megyék* Vas, Győr-Sopron.

This area includes natural barriers, in particular the Alps, as well as the political borders between the regions listed above. It may also be noted that four 'supranational' origins (Germanic, Latin, Slavic, Magyar) and six standard languages (German, Friulian, Italian, Slovene, Croatian, Hungarian) are included. The total area is 267,389 km<sup>2</sup> (103,212 sq. miles); there are over 37,200,000 inhabitants.

#### Organizational data

The Community was originally formed, with the signing of the Articles of Association in Venice on November 20, 1978, from seven regional units with two observers; the others joined later, as follows:

- 1978: Full members: Oberösterreich, Steiermark, Kärnten; Veneto, Friuli-Venezia Giulia; Slovenia, Croatia
- 1978: Active observers: Bayern, Salzburg
- 1981: Full member: Trentino-Alto Adige



1985: Active observer: Lombardia

1987: Full members: Vas, Győr-Sopron, Burgenland

On a political, ethnic, economic, social and cultural level the Alpe-Adria Working Group is one of the most heterogeneous group of collaborating regions with common interests in the whole world. It comprises fourteen neighboring provinces of five countries; of the latter, one is neutral, two belong to NATO, one to the Warsaw Pact, and one to the Non-Aligned Movement. Free Market economy, Socialist Market economy and the Hungarian form of a Centrally-administered economy exist alongside each other. The Slovenes are the only nation whose territory lies completely within the Alpe-Adria area.<sup>2</sup> It should also be noted that this is the only international forum where Slovene serves as an official language.

Tom Priestly

### NOTES

1. See also the review of Aleksij Pregarc's *jedra* later in this volume: this book belongs very much to the "Alpe-Adria spirit".
2. This is as defined in strict constitutional terms. The Friulians of Venezia-Friuli Giulia, many of whom consider themselves part of the "Friulian nation", are excluded in this sense.



# WORKING COMMUNITY ALPE-ADRIA

