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Changing interests and identities in European border regions: A state of the art report on the Italo-Slovene border

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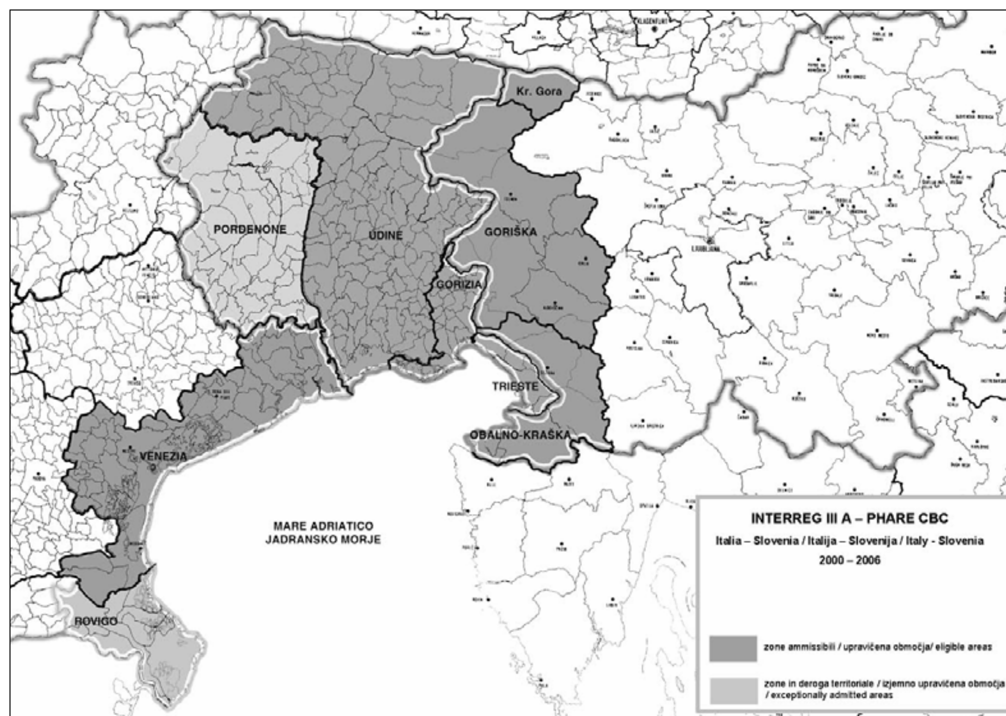

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1.0 The Italo-Slovene borderland: an introduction to the frontier, its population, and EU-led cross-border cooperation

The 'natural' boundary between Italy and Slovenia—the summit line of the Julian Alps—arrives suddenly, just north of metropolitan Trieste, amidst the morphologically non-linear Karst: those classical, jagged limestone hills, caves, and pits created over millennia by underground rivers which have given their name to similar geological formations around the world. The 'precise' boundary thus transforms into what political geographers would call a 'frontier'—an imprecise borderland into which settlements expand, where territories begin and end, and wherein civilisations have historically clashed and enmeshed.[1] The Italo-Slovene frontier—which, from its origin at the two nations' mutual border with Austria, describes what many have deemed the meeting-point of Europe's three great, historic civilisations and ethno-linguistic groups, the Romance, Germanic, and Slavonic—has also been one of European history's most violently fraught, most famously so in the 20th century. Yet, the degeneration of that frontier at the end of the Second World War into a genocide area was not due to the region's historic and enduring multicultural composition, but rather the impossibility of dividing it along ethnic lines (Gross 1978).

Competing, 'self-completing' nationalist projects in Italy and the emergent Yugoslavia had incited both to fight against the Habsburgs for the liberation of their brethren in the frontier in World War One, and thus to lay simultaneous claim thereafter to a frontier which had been and multilingual and multicultural since the 6th century AD. The addition of an ideological struggle for the frontier—incorporated into Italy after the First World War—fought largely (though not without exceptions) along nationalist lines exacerbated the conflict over to which nation the frontier 'belonged' as World War II came to its conclusion. It is the memory of Italian fascism's brutal oppression of the region's Slovenes and Croats, and the 'retribution' for it which came in the deportation, summary execution, and ultimate exodus of the bulk of the Istrian Italophone population, which continues to fuel contemporary skepticism of the 'other' community between the majority Italophone and minority Slovenophone populations on the Italian side of the border.[2]

While the Italian and Slovene minorities' protections within Italy and the former Yugoslavia were legally described in the 1975 Osimo Treaty (which fixed the border between the two states), the legal protection of the estimated 80-100,000 Slovenophones in Italy continues to evolve to this day. Rights to Slovene-language education, public address, and toponomastic signage vary between the three provinces in which the Italian Slovenophones live—Udine (*Videm*), Gorizia (*Gorica*), and Trieste (*Trst*). The latter two, post-war provinces provide the greatest *de jure* (if not *de facto*) protection due to their being subject to the Allied-coordinated post-WWII Peace Treaty between Italy and Yugoslavia. Though the region of Friuli-Venezia Giulia has been officially autonomous since 1967 due to its multicultural nature, much of the interpretation and implementation of the various minority protections has been left at the discretion of the municipal level; indeed, the Italian parliament only formally recognised the Slovenophones (and those of the province of Udine among them, having been resident in Italy since 1866) as a 'national'

[1] 'The difficulty, arising from the geographical and geological character of the Karst (*il Carso* in Italian, *Kras* in Slovene), has been inherent in all boundary disputes in this area, from Roman times down to the present day. The Julian Karst is a particularly good example of a frontier zone, and no linear boundary, unless artificially strengthened by military means, has lasted very long in it,' (Moodie 1945:58-59).

[2] Many writers have described the 'undivided' remainder of the population as suffering from what be called the 'Triestine condition'—as sense of placelessness and ambiguity brought on by living in a city that is the historic capital of a region that no longer exists; as Ivo Andrić has written, 'No one can imagine what it means to be born and to live at the border between two worlds, to know and comprehend both of them and not to be able to doing anything to bring them close again, to love them both and to oscillate from one to the other for a lifetime, to have two nations and to have nothing of them, to be at home wherever and to remain estranged from everything,' (cited in Molinari 1996:7, *translation mine*; cf. Morris 2002).

minority in 2001. In comparison, the roughly 3,000 Italophones of the Slovene littoral—who live within four officially bilingual municipalities, Portorož-Portorose, Piran-Pirano, Izola-Isola, and Koper-Capodistria—are constitutionally guaranteed the full protection and permanent representation as an autochthonous minority. The lack of a regional administrative level in Slovenia, however, has meant that the bilingual 'littoral' has had far less freedom to act on a bilateral basis than the Italian region across the border.[3]

The evolving nature of the Italo-Slovene border—and the politico-economic identity it initially helped frame as southernmost portion of the 'Iron Curtain'—continues to impact upon the populations it circumscribes and divides, most dramatically so in the latter half of the 20th century. With the accession of Slovenia to the EU in May 1994, many observers believe that the rift between the communities would finally be healed; nevertheless, the persistence of historical memory among segments of the population—and those they elect to represent them—potentially threatens to be a barrier to socio-economic integration, as it has been in the past, as well as to the ability of the Triestine economy to resuscitate after a half-century of stagnation.

The EU, meanwhile, has made a substantial investment in cross-border cooperation as a means of enhancing socio-economic integration across its internal and external borders since the early 1990s. This has occurred primarily through the Interreg Community Initiative, financed since 1991 through the Structural Funds. Along the EU's internal borders, such investment has been made due to its recognition that the frontiers between the member-states should function as the Union's connective tissue, rather than remain developmental gaps. Along its external borders, investment in borderland integration processes have provided one means of adapting and bringing what are now the new member states closer to the EU. At the same time, cross-border regional policy has been seen as a means of building networks—economic, cultural, infrastructural, inter-personal—among ethno-linguistically heterogeneous populations who remain skeptical of one another due to the legacies of fascism and the Second World War. This report will examine the impact of EU-led financial intervention upon the Slovenophone minority in Italy through looking at the potentially mobilizing effects of the socio-economic initiatives Interreg supports, the infrastructural linkages it creates, the incentives it provides for bilateral and inter-ethno-linguistic-community cooperation, and the person-to-person networks it aims to create among and across the region's border.

2.0 An overview of Italo-Slovene borderland and minority relations, 1918-2004

2.1.1 The ethnicity and geography of the Italo-Slovene borderland, 1918-1945

In 1918, at the conclusion of the First World War and upon the collapse of the Austro-Hungarian Empire, the Duchy of Görz, most of the province of Carniola, and the entirety of the Karstic littoral or 'Julian March'—including the great Austrian port at (then) *Triest*—were awarded to the Kingdom of Italy.[4] Italy's entrance into the war on the side of the

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[3] The overall population of the Italian autonomous region of Friuli-Venezia Giulia was 1.2m in 1999 (Source: Regione Autonoma Friuli-Venezia Giulia offcial website); the overall population of the Slovenian statistical region of Obalno-Kraška is 102,070 in 2002 (Source: Statistical Office of the Republic of Slovenia). Amidst the two main 'national' ethno-linguistic groups of the frontier reside speakers of Friulian (*furlan*)—which some linguists consider to be an eastern variant of Rhaeto-Romansch rather than a dialect of Italian—as well as sporadic Germanophone settlements. The Italian Ministry of the Interior estimates that there are 780,000 Friulians in Italy (all of whom live in Friuli-Venezia Giulia; Ministero dell'Intorno 1994). The small Germanophone population in the northeast of Friuli, on the border with Austrian Carinthia and Slovenian Gorenjska. The are an estimated 12,850 non-Tyrolean Germanophones and Walser living throughout Friuli-Venezia Giulia, the Veneto, the Trentino, Piedmont, and Valle d'Aosta/Vallée d'Aoste (Ministero dell'Intorno 1994).

[4] 'Triest' is the name of the city in German. The city is known in English by its Italian name, Trieste; in Slovene, it is Trst.

Triple Entente, indeed, had been predicated upon such territorial redistribution at the conclusion of a successful campaign, as secretly agreed in the 1915 Treaty of London. In the eyes of Italian irredentists, the Great War had been 'the last war of the *Risorgimento*,' (Roberts 1996:448).[5] Italy's territorial claims, however, had been economically and strategically defensive, in addition to nationalist, ones, insofar as the Austro-Hungarian territory it requested aimed to ensure Italian politico-economic hegemony over the entirety of the Upper Adriatic, and to geographically hinder, insofar as possible, any future Germanic invasion of Italy. Locally, the move sought to consolidate power among the urban, coastal Italian population—who, though in greatest concentration in Trieste, also dominated the civic life of Capodistria (*Koper* in Slovene, *Kopar* in Croatian), Pola (*Pulj/Pula*), and Rovigno (*Rovinj*), among other cities—which had previously been one among several, regional minorities within Austria-Hungary. This consolidation of politico-economic and territorial power among the Italophone community was to the disadvantage of the region's substantial, but primarily rural-agricultural, Slovene and Croatian populations (both of which had been rapidly adding to their historic presence in metropolitan Trieste throughout the late nineteenth century during the Habsburg-led development boom in the city-region) in terms of their increasingly limited abilities to develop a middle class and representative cultural and economic institutions.

At the 1919 Peace Conference both the Italians and the then-Kingdom of Serbs, Croats, and Slovenes presented competing demographic and geopolitical arguments to support their respective claims to the Julian March.[6] Finally, in 1920, the Treaty of Rapallo confirmed roughly the eastern third of present-day Slovenia as part of Italy, bringing 300,000 Slovenes into the kingdom—a quarter of the total Slovene population in Europe at the time (Pirjevec and Kacin Wohinz 1988:30).[7] The 'relocation' of such a substantial portion of the small nation's population to a larger state still contributes to Slovenia's sense of cultural peril at the hands of its larger neighbours: 'the tendency to feel like a small nation, divided between three diverse states, with an very high percentage of its co-national inhabitants outside the territory of the national "hearth" in relation to the total population….This is a political and psychological reality that often escapes the Italian side,' (Ara 1997:xiii). The fact that the Rapallo Treaty required the Yugoslav government to protect the Dalmatian Italophones, but neglected to require the Italian government to undertake the same towards its Slavonic populations—insofar as it was then considered 'insulting' to make such a requirement of a victorious Great Power—only contributed to Slovenia's sense of powerlessness to protect the cultural development of its brethren newly abroad (Sluga 2001:42). Despite growing cultural, social, and economic strength, the

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[5] The full extent of the former Hapsburg territory awarded to Italy at the end of World War I further included: the Trentino; cisalpine Tyrol (Tirol); the entirety of Istria (Istra), the islands of Cres (Cherso), Lošinj (Lussino); the port city of Zadar (Zara) and the island of Lastovo (Lagosta) and several smaller islands in the Adriatic. Significantly, the largely Italophone port of Rijeka (Fiume) became part of the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes; while irredentist claims and activity centred upon the rallying cry '*Trento e Trieste*'—both of which were gained by Italy in the post-war settlement—Italian nationalists deemed it *la vittoria mutilata,* a 'mutilated' victory, due to the fact that not all of *Italia irredenta*, 'unredeemed Italy,' was won. Italy had requested the entirety of the Dalmatian coast in the Treaty of London, and was initially authorised to occupy the full extent of their pre-war claim at the 1918 armistice. The 1920 Treaty of Rapallo confirmed the territory awarded to Italy while significantly reducing its extent in Dalmatia. Slovene nationalists, meanwhile, had not been without their own expansionist claims in the region; as early as 1853, Peter Kolzer's 'nationally' ground-breaking (and later banned) map represented 'the Slovene lands' stretching well into present-day Austria and Croatia, and out towards Udine in Italy.

[6] The Kingdom of the Serbs, Croats and Slovenes was renamed the Kingdom of Yugoslavia (from *jugo,* 'south') in 1929.

[7] That same year, the northern half of Carinthia, with its then roughly 65,000-person Slovenophone population, joined Austria by plebiscite. The territory of Slovenia, within the new South-Slav kingdom, was thus substantially reduced from its Hapsburg-era size, and two of the three historic seats of Slovene culture—Trieste and Klagenfurt (*Celovec* in Slovene)—were thus removed behind international borders (Gow and Carmichael 2000:23). Meanwhile, the remainder of Slovenia was formally separated from Austria—and Germanic culture—for the first time in its modern history.

Slovene minority in Italy at the time 'politically had not matured the request for an autonomous and independent state [and thus] remained on their own part internally divided and indecisive with respect to the possibility or the necessity of recognizing as a state of reference the just-born Kingdom of the Serbs, Croats, and Slovenes, and to support, as a result, adhesion to it,' (Bratina 1997:128; *translation mine*).

With the onset of the Fascist era in the early 1920s, the Slovenophone community in Italy was subjected (along with the Istrian Croatophones and Tyrolean Germanophones) to a concerted, often brutal, Italianisation campaign, which increased in its intensity throughout the 1930s.[8] Activities to this end spanned the demise of non-Italian ethno-cultural institutions, a ban on speaking and publishing in Slovene, encouraged resettlement of Italians within the region and non-Italophones without, as well as the 'aesthetic improvement' of Slovene place names and surnames, all of which resulted in heavy Slovenophone out-migration.[9] Fascist political discourse justified these actions on the basis that 'the ideal nation was culturally homogenous by virtue of its ability to absorb and assimilate other cultures, and that the Balkans was the antithesis of this idea,' (Sluga 2001: 47). The visual and rhetorical erasure of extant, alternative cultural histories in the 'new' territories of 'Venezia Giulia' (known as the *Julijska Krajina*, 'Julian March,' in Slovene) sought to consolidate Italy's geopolitical control over the territory. Indeed, the region's seamless, functional commercial Italophonia until the rise of 19th-century nationalism and irredentism was a reality which Italian fascism rendered permanently politicized through its efforts to enforce what came naturally in the marketplace within school, church, and home, and which furthermore only served to further Slovene and Croatian national consciousness in the wider region (Novak 1970).

Fascist Italy invaded Yugoslavia in 1941 with the intention of seizing the Dalmatian coast; by 1942, it had seized and incorporated most of Dalmatia into Italy, and also occupied Slovenia as far east as Ljubljana. The Allied landing in Sicily in July 1943 and the arrest of Mussolini two weeks later suddenly called Italy's pre- and intra-war territorial gains into question, and ennobled the partisan forces fighting under Tito—who would in November of that year declare the foundation of the Socialist Republic of Yugoslavia at Jajce in Bosnia—to make plans to claim Trieste and Istria. The Nazis, meanwhile, prepared for the worst, and seized the Julian March and Istria in anticipation of an Italian collapse; these were transformed into the Reich province of *Adriatisches Küstenland,* and were thus substantially isolated from Italian national life for the remainder of the war. During the final course of the war, the towns and valleys of the Julian March changed hands several times, seeing bitter partisan warfare, largely coordinated by the Communist Sloveno-Italian Liberation Front, against the Fascist and, later, Nazi occupiers.[10] Indeed, the utter volatility of the area, and the success of the partisan attacks against the Nazi occupying forces after Italy's *volte-face* in the war, led the Nazis to create the only extermination camp on Italian soil, at the *Risiera* (rice mill) of San Sabba in Trieste, where an estimated 3,000-5,000 persons lost their lives, the majority of whom were Slavic antifascists (Ballinger 2003a; Sluga 1996; Fölkel 1979; Bon Gherardi 1972).

On 1 May 1945, Trieste was liberated from Nazi control (or, according to some of the Italian historiography, re-occupied) by Yugoslav forces led by Tito, and the diplomatic

[8] For a cogent analysis of the Italian fascist 'project' generally cf. e.g., De Grand 1982.

[9] Fascist decree 494 (27 April 1927) required non-Italian surnames in the north-eastern border provinces to be 'corrected' to their 'original' Italian forms. The Germanophones of South Tyrol were subject to a similarly brutal Italianisation campaign.

[10] The full extent of the ethnic mélange involved in the fighting is, indeed, even more complex: in the 1943-45 period, 'German units, Slovenian militia, Italian republican fascists and, at the end, Serbian collaborationist troops battled against the partisans,' while the Croatian Ustaše acting alongside the Nazis contributed to the 'brutalisation of human conduct' in the area after 1943, which effectively laid the sociological conditions for the subsequent atrocities (Gross 1978:98, 103).

struggle for the annexation of the (never-realised) 'Free Territory of Trieste'—which was to last for nearly a decade—began. While residual contemporary mistrust of the Italians among some Slovenophone factions relates primarily to the Fascist Italianisation campaign—and is symbolised in historical memory by the *Risiera*—contemporary Italian extremism toward the Slovenes relates to the consolidation of Yugoslav comunist-partisan power in Istria and the harsh, 42-day Yugoslav occupation of Trieste, during which an unknown number of Italians in Trieste and Istria were thrown to their deaths in the Karst *foibe*.[11] The exodus of the majority of the Italophone population of the Slovene littoral and Istria (estimated at between 200,000 and 350,000 people) during and after the war—due to the witnessing of deportations of Italians and rumours of further *infoibati*—ultimately resulted in a magnificent change in the region's ethno-cultural composition, as as as a massive and difficult population shift toward refugee camps in Trieste and Gorizia, resettlement elsewhere in Italy, and migration abroad.[12] Land in the primarily Slovenophone Triestine upland was expropriated to provide temporary shelter for the *esuli* or 'exiles,' which further contributed to local ethnic hostility.[13] Meanwhile, several thousand Italian communist workers from the shipyards of Monfalcone, meanwhile, relocated to Yugoslavia (and, according to some Italian accounts, were then executed), whilst the Italian Communist Party (PCI) welcomed their brethren in the Yugoslav army as they occupied Venezia Giulia; in doing so, the PCI were left 'hopelessly exposed' to attacks from the Italian right wing that they were merely pawns of Stalin and Tito (Ginsborg 1990:104). The Istrians who left, as well as those who remained in what was to become communist Yugoslavia, were, regardless of their relative innocence or guilt, collectively stained with the 'excesses' of fascism, and as such they were destined to pay for fascism's crimes; the PCI's labeling of the exiles as such indeed led to their lending their electoral support to the revanchist and 'post-fascist' Movimento Sociale Italiano (MSI), who were to dominate the Triestine and Gorizian political scene for decades in the guise of the exiles' protector (Ballinger 2003a:202). As one exile from Pula-Pola noted, 'Those who pretended to be our defenders were those very fascists who started the war, lost it, and for while, and for which we paid [with our land], (cited in Ballinger 2003a:202).

The obsessive remembering of the tragedy of the *foibe* by the Triestine right-wing—which, combined with their revanchist territorial aspirations, ultimately resulted in the city being viewed as an extremist liability to be rendered politically marginalized as the international political environment attempted to reconstruct itself and its interconnections in the post-war era—was, in essence, a response by the periphery to a conscious 'forgetting' which took place at the nation's centre (Favretto 2003; Valdevit 1999). As early as 1945, Istria 'had become an embarrassing theme,' (Spanò 1995:152). Indeed, the silence regarding the *foibe* was intricately tied to the nation's collective lapse of memory regarding the Fascist era and its aftermath (akin to Austria's, for instance, in direct contrast to Germany's own process of *Vergangenheitsbewältigung)*. Italy's refusal to accept responsibility for the crimes of fascism in the former Yugoslavia link variously to its national embarrassment that its war-time occupation had been a resolute failure, to its insistence that it had behaved nobly in contrast to the Germans and the Croats, and more

[11] *Foibe* is the Italian name for the chasms or sinkholes of the Karst; they are *fojbe* in Slovene. The actual extent of those killed in the *foibe* and/or following deportation is the subject of vigorous and continuing historical debate; the joint Slovene-Italian Historical and Cultural Commission, indeed, cites the former as 'hundreds' and the latter as merely 'a great number' in their report to the Italian and Slovene Ministries of Foreign Affairs in July 2000.

[12] Estimates vary; as many as 350,000 Italophones (as well as Slovenes and Croats) may have fled Istria and the Slovene littoral in the aftermath of the war (cf. Donato 1997; Nodari 1997; Colella 1958).

[13] Significantly in contemporary legal debate over abandoned property, the Italophones who left present-day Slovenia and Croatia are known as *profughi* ('refugees') or *esuli* ('exiles') in Italian and as *optanti* ('those who opted to leave') in Slovene.

broadly to its national conviction that it had been opposed to fascism and thus firmly aligned with the partisan and Allied struggle against it at the end of the war—with the direct conclusion that it should not be subject to war-crimes tribunals and excessive reparations (cf. Rodogno 2003; Rodogno 2004; Petrusewicz 2004; Pavone 2004).

The debate over the pre- and post-war history of Trieste was thus one increasingly confined to historiography, wherein a flood of nationalist historians and journalists—with many exiles among them—published mostly one-sided accounts of the conflict over the region, and which, in later accounts, began to link the *foibe* to a 'Balkan' predilection for ethnic cleansing.[14] Slovene historians, meanwhile, have recently begun to reply with the 'equation' of the abuses of fascism (with the *Risiera* being their apotheosis) and the retributions enacted against the populations' tormentors in the *foibe* in the brutal, final days. This, in turn, has engendered its own response: the Italian historian Giampaolo Valdevit had argued that the 'tit-for-tat' construction employed in Slovene historiography is inaccurate, insofar as both the *Risiera* and the *foibe* must be seen as linked to the violent processes of state formation occurring on both sides of the nascent Cold-war border; as fascism inexorably led to concentration camps, the deportations and summary executions seen in Istria are by the same process inextricably linked to Tito's extermination of the Slovenian Germanophones and the foundation of the notorious Yugoslav gulag for co-national 'enemies of the people' on Goli Otok (cf. Valdevit 1999).

The debates regarding suffering and loss in this period are thus almost by nature mutually exclusionary ones (although balanced accounts do exist), with the *Risiera* and the *foibe* (the latter far more obsessively, as noted by RAI's 2005 national broadcast of the *foibe*-themed drama *Il Cuore nel pozzo*, 'The Heart in the pit') demarcating opposite identities, histories, and memories for the region's population (cf. Ballinger 2004; Ballinger 2003a; Sluga 2001; Sluga 1996). Such relentless rhetorical exclusion of the mutual culpability has, in turn, produced its own political implications; for some Italian factions in Trieste, 'the historical 'crime' of the *foibe* deprives contemporary Slovenes of any basis for demanding that Italy honor its international treaty agreements concerning minority protection,' (Ballinger 2004:149; cf. Spanò 1995). That 'conclusion' on the part of the Triestine right, indeed, was one which was both firmly juxtaposed with the reality that advances in minority protection were an international litmus test for post-war Italy's democratic credentials, and nefariously prevented the full implementation of local minority protections due to local obstructionism (Favretto 2003:179). As noted above, the relative protection of the Slovenophone minority had remained firmly linked to territory, and yet, as will be discussed subsequently, is a process that has further been subject to localised efforts at promoting and obstructing its full implementation.

2.1.2 The ethnicity and geography of the Italo-Slovene borderland, 1945-2004

The Allies assumed control of urban Trieste, the smaller port of Muggia (*Milje* in Slovene) to its south, and a narrow, coastal corridor linking them with Monfalcone and Gorizia, on 12 June 1945, an area thereafter demarcated as 'Zone A.' 'Zone B', which comprised the Triestine hinterland, the Slovene littoral below Muggia, and northwestern Istria, came under Yugoslav administration at the same time.[15] Several attempts were made by the

[14] On the diplomatic history of the Trieste question, cf. Rusinow 1969; Novak 1970; De Castro 1981; Valdevit 1986.

[15] Zone A additionally included an enclave surrounding the port of Pula-Pola in Istria until 1947. The remainder of Venezia Giulia north of Trieste was merged with the region of Friuli by the Italian government following the 1947 peace treaty. In 1954, the new province of Trieste was added to the region and replaced Friuli's historic capital, Udine, as the seat of the new region. Bianchini notes that in the discussions preceding the 'final settlement in 1951, Tito initially indicated that Yugoslavia was amenable to granting Zone B provincial autonomy, or, alternatively, to transfer Koper-Capodistria (and possibly also Piran-Pirano and Izola-Isola) to Italy in exchange for several Slovenophone municipalities in Zone A (Bianchini 1995:15, 21).

delegations of Yugoslavia and Italy with the other Great Powers to divide the region along ethnic lines, despite the fact that no 'ideal' line existed. Such extensive, high-level negotiations took place because 'the Julian problem' had become a microcosm of 'global negotiation and of relations between East and West,' (Valussi 1972:200, *translation mine*).[16] Outside of the so-defined 'Free Territory of Trieste,' the 1947 Peace Treaty between the Allied Powers and Italy eventually employed the French delegation's cartographic proposal to assign the Resia, Canal, and Natisone valleys, as well as the urban Gorizia and Monfalcone, to Italy; the remainder of the territory of the former Italian province of Venezia Giulia was assigned to Yugoslavia.[17] In addition to isolating Trieste geographically from both Italy and Slovenia (then within Yugoslavia), the post-war demarcation of the border also isolated it commercially. Indeed, despite insistence during the negotiations that the division of the region avoid its economic ruination, Trieste's new 'location,' compounded by chilly relations between Italy and Yusgolavia, resulted almost immediately in the profound disruption and stagnation of the entire regional economy; the rural hinterland of Trieste lost its commercial centre and outlet, while Trieste lost its sources of agricultural production as well as its transport routes into the Danube basin. Slovenia, meanwhile, would remain without an Adriatic port until the enlargement of Koper-Capodistria beginning in 1957.

This time cowed by its wartime *volte-face*, Italy eventually agreed to be signatory to minority protection agreements with both Yugoslavia and Austria. While these provisions were largely ones which had already been informally agreed to after World War I (and thus far never implemented), Italy now understood in signing them the precedent they would set in protecting its own minorities remaining in territories now 'abroad' (Alcock 1970:143). As noted above, the precise interpretation of the agreements' terms still, however, remained open to domestic interpretation in Italy's perspective; the largely ignored provisions regarding the Slovenophone minority were, indeed, once again reinserted into the 1975 Osimo Treaty. A variety of reasons stood behind Italy's long-standing non-implementation of the full-extent of its protection commitments to its Slovenophone minority: its 'victor' status and 'moral' capital versus communist Yugoslavia (and the Slovenes in Italy by association) during the Cold War; its lack of acceptance of its (mutual) culpability for the 'loss' of the historic Italophone communities in the Slovene littoral and Istria (which coincided with its pressure for protection toward the *rimasti*, or 'those who remained); its relative, practical lack of experience with the legal and institutional development of regional autonomy and minority protection; its fears of secessionist movements in the autonomous regions; lack of mobilization on the part of the Slovenophone minority (unlike the terrorist acts perpetrated by Germanophone factions in South Tyrol, which aimed, however violently, toward furthering discussion regarding their autonomy statute); Yugoslavia's lack of initiative in internationalizing the minority issue (as Austria did with the Germanophones), likely due to their reluctance to jeopardize preferential foreign aid and trade agreements following their ejection from the Soviet bloc; and, the local power of

[16] Ballinger notes that 'Trieste constituted an important border both physically and metaphorically, becoming an early and key point at which an emerging Cold War discourse began to be articulated,' (Ballinger 2003a:81).

[17] Italy was made to give up claim to its colonies in Libya, Somalia, and Ethiopia, the occupied Dodecanese and Albania, as well as the ports of Pula, Rijeka, and Zadar along with its 'new possessions' on the Croatian coast. It was further made to pay reparations of $360 million to Russia, Yugoslavia, Greece, Albania, and Ethiopia. (Ginsborg 1990:100). Given 'victorious' Italy's losses, the exclusion of Trieste from the new republic was seen to add insult to injury, immediately drawing support away from the DC in the first round of autonomous-regional elections toward the Italian Left. This in turn threatened future American reconstruction aid, premised on Italy (and Trieste) remaining a bulwark against communism to the east (Ginsborg 1990:115; cf. Gambino 1975:446ff). The British and American occupying forces (who remained in Zone A, given that the Free City never came into being) promised that Trieste would return to Italy a month before the crucial 1948 election, in an effort to shore up support among the electorate against an Italian Communist win (Ginsborg 1990:115).

the Triestine right-wing to block implementation of bilingual signage, *et al*., on the 'understood' basis of Italy's failures to deliver on its promises to its Istrian refugees. One further, obstacle for harmonizing the minority protection in Friuli-Venezia Giulia was the historic lack of protection afforded the 'frozen' Slovenophone communities of 'Venetian Slovenia'; an inability to agree upon the terms and geographical extent of minority protection in the province of Udine stalled discussion of further developments in the neighbouring provinces and toward a regional (or 'global') norm (Bratina 1997:129, 139).

The zonal demarcation of Trieste became the *de facto* international boundary following the 1954 London Memorandum. Considerations of the formation of a multi-ethnic free state centred upon Trieste and the rights of communities in the region to ethnic self-determination had been quickly overshadowed, as noted above, by the politico-economic polarisation of Europe and Allied fear of a potentially Communist Italy. Control of Trieste had been believed to be critical in Yugoslavia due to its strategic economic location vis-à-vis Slovenia, the size of its working-class population, and 'its role as a stronghold of the Communist camp against western influence and the starting-point for the expansion of communism to the West, especially to northern Italy,' (SIHCC 2001:146). While the emerging Cold War thus ensured that Trieste returned to Italy, the looming split between Belgrade and Moscow (in large part due to the Yugoslavia's continued claim to Trieste) rapidly altered the relationship between the West and Yugoslavia.[18]

Beginning in the latter half of the 1950s, political relations between Italy and Yugoslavia began to normalize—though mutual minority protection, per se, was never the stated or decisive factor for doing so (Bratina 1997:130)—leading to the beginnings of regional and borderland economic re-integration. Citizens of both nations began to cross the local border to visit relatives and on errands—Slovenes to shop for household goods unavailable in Yugoslavia and Italians to purchase cheaper petrol—with increasing frequency following the signing of bilateral agreements on the movement of borderland residents in 1955. Indeed, Slovenia's burgeoning economic success relative to the other republics of Yugoslavia provided ever-increasing opportunities for heightened economic relations with Italy. The divide between the Allies' original geo-political strategy behind the borderland demarcation and the daily socio-economic reality of the Italo-Yugoslav borderland widened throughout the 1960s and 1970s: 'In the spring of 1945, the Yugoslavs were willing to risk war with the U.S. and Great Britain in order to claim territory given to Austria or Italy at Versailles with substantial Slavic populations and in particular Trieste itself. Thirty years later, ordinary Yugoslavs would remark that, '"had we gotten Trieste, we would have had to drive all the way to Milan to shop",' (cited in Zimmerman 1987:15).[19] At the same time, relations between the Slovenophone minority in Italy with Slovenia (within Yugoslavia) began to normalize, and, in some ways, 'institutionalise' through economic and cultural support mechanisms (Bratina 1997:130). The era saw the formation of the first, post-war Slovene community association in Italy, the *Slovensko kulturno gospodarska zveza* (SKGZ, 'Slovene cultural-economic union'), which maintained ties with the Slovenian socialist party, and, in the 1970s, Italy's first Slovene political party, the Catholic/Liberal *Slovenska skupnost* (SSk, 'Slovene Union') (Bratina 1997:130). Due to its unique ethno-linguistic composition and the frontier-related political *problématique* it faced, Friuli-Venezia Giulia was subsequently granted its own regional parliament and

[18] NATO believed Trieste was essential for protecting Italy—and the agricultural Po Valley in particular—from a possible Soviet invasion, and Yugoslavia, as an anti-Soviet 'partner,' could prove essential in protecting Trieste (Bianchini 1995:17).
[19] Daily cross-cultural contacts are critical in rebuilding trust in many divided borderlands (cf. Donnan and Wilson 1999:122).

autonomous status within the Italian republic in 1964.[20] The Triestine historian Elio Apih notes that, by the mid-1960s, 'greater and more equitable Slovene participation in civic life stabilized, even if the effects were limited and transitory, and one can say that this fact, together with the institution of the [autonomous] region, signaled the definitive exit of [majority] Triestine political life from the period of post-fascism,' (Apih 1988:189).

De jure sovereignty over the existing border, sanctioned by the 1975 Helsinki Final Act, was finally formalised in the subsequent 1975 Treaty of Osimo. Negotiation over the Osimo Accords involved substantial discussion—if little subsequent implementation—of cross-border, economic-integration-related measures throughout the borderland region. The extensive economic cooperation foreseen in the accords was by and large never pursued, however, due to what is widely (and perhaps 'politely') perceived to be lack of interest among local political and economic actors.[21] The additional stipulations in the accords regarding the enhanced protection of minority linguistic rights and culture in both countries were, indeed, only fully implemented by Yugoslavia (and continued by the Republic of Slovenia) until the Italy Parliament finally ratified the Osimo-era legislation on the protection of its Slovenophone minority in February 2001—after a delay of three decades. This delay was due to both to resistance by politicians representing some of the municipalities in Friuli-Venezia Giulia, and primarily due to disagreement over the geographical extent of its minority protections within the province of Udine (where the Slovenophone community, which has resided within Italy's borders since 1866, is scattered across dozens of mainly sparsely-populated municipalities).

The minority-protection provisions of the Osimo Treaty concerned the right to Slovene-language education and press, to Slovenophone political, cultural, and recreational organizations, and a commitment to the community's overall equitable socio-economic development—obligations which in retrospect were among 'the non-realised or dropped Osimo Agreement stipulations, (SGPRMO 2000).' Furthermore, the educational provisions were limited to the provinces of Trieste and Gorizia, and, critically, did not include a reciprocal provision mandating courses in Slovene language and culture in Italian schools; this was in direct contrast to the Slovene littoral, where each resident of the bilingual communities is educated to native fluency in both languages in order to ensure the equal civic participation of the minority. As a result, knowledge of the Slovenophone community and its history in Friuli-Venezia Giulia has generally remained isolated within the community itself.

Attempts by the Italian Communist Party (PCI) in 1970 to introduce Slovenophone minority-protection legislation into the Italian Senate for the first time were ultimately unsuccessful. Attention—primarily academic but also to some extent civic—in borderland region in the 1970s, meanwhile, turned the threat of assimilation in light of this reality, noting that the stability of the Slovenophone minority was potentially endangered by the increasing rate on inter-cultural marriages, the continuing 'expropriation' of territory in Slovenophone municipalities for industrial purposes as well as by Italophone re-settlement within them, sub-average higher-educational enrollment and qualifications within the community, minimal average capital accumulation in local financial institutions, the continuing, commonplace perspective of their culture being a 'subaltern' one (Apih 1988:195; cf. Provincia di Trieste 1981). Furthermore, cultural development in and of itself was obstructed by the absence of a 'culture of cohabitation,' the lack of educational administrative autonomy, and the continuing, seemingly endless legal debate over a 'global

[20] Friuli-Venezia Giulia joined four other Italian regions (Sicily, Sardinia, Valle d'Aosta/Vallée d'Aoste, and Trentino-Alto Adige/Südtirol) which had previously been granted autonomy for similar reasons.
[21] Interviews with public officials in Ljubljana on 25 April 2002 and in Trieste on 6 May 2002.

protection' statute for the region—which would, in particular, 'officialise' public use of the Slovene language (Apih 1988:196). Indeed, a 'Catch-22' presented itself, in which the extent of official Slovene language protection needed to be determined (in the province of Udine in particular), but wherein the 'ethnic' census required for doing so was refused for differing reasons on both sides of the debate, i.e., for fear of increasing/decreasing the estimated number of Slovenes in Italy (Apih 1988:196).[22] In reality, the overall debate became one over whether all of the region's Slovenophones (i.e., including the 'historic' population of Venetian Slovenia) should be seen as Italian citizens who spoke Slovene, or rather as Slovenes of Italian citizenship (Apih 1988:196). All of these factors ultimately threatened the wider development of a distinctly Slovene middle class in the region, and this despite the fact that *Trst* remained—and would continue to retain vast potential for becoming—the *de facto* (if not *de jure*) seat of capitalist economic power of the wider region's Slovene population (Sapelli 1988:259-260).

The late 1980s and early 1990s saw fundamental change in the Italian political environment, with the end of the Grand (anti-Communist) Coalition between the Christian Democrats (DC) and the Socialists (PSI) due to several factors: the end of the Cold-War removing the ideologically and geopolitically 'protective' need for their coalition within the Italian Republic; the national exposure of widespread and hopelessly incriminating corruption by senior members of both parties alongside their collusion with the Mafia and other Italian criminal organizations, as revealed in the *Tangentopoli* ('Bribesville') investigations undertaken by an emboldened Italian judiciary and ultimately leading to the utter demise of both parties; and, the rise of new political parties simultaneously and in their places, in particular the separatist (and often xenophobic) *Lega Nord* (LN, 'Northern League').[23] While Lega Nord's rhetoric was frequently racist, its targets were the economic migrants from the Italian South resident in the North (and indeed, the entire economic 'abyss' of 'Rome and below'), alongside the new generation of *excomunitari* (non-European Community) immigrants within Italy generally. The Slovenes themselves remained the preferred target of the MSI, rechristened as the 'new, no-longer-post-fascist' *Alleanza Nazionale* (AN, 'National Alliance') in 1994.[24]

Within Friuli-Venezia Giulia, the fundamentally altered Italian electoral climate saw the PCI's voters divided between the PDS and Rifondazione, with some movement toward LN, while the PSI's electorate remained faithful to the local Slovene left, with some defections toward the Catholic SSk (Bratina 1997:141). The Istrian exile/right-wing community, meanwhile, continued its support for MSI through AN, with much of the remaining local vote going toward Lega Nord and Silvio Berlusconi's new centre-right party, *Forza Italia*. Despite its xenophobic rhetoric, Lega Nord's calls for separatism (later merely enhanced federalism) appealed across the board in the autonomous regions, gaining it substantial support in both Friuli-Venezia Giulia and Trentino-Alto Adige (cf. Tambini 2001). Lega Nord even opened an office in Slovenia, but ultimately proved to have an incoherent strategy towards both independent Slovenia and the Slovenes (Sema 1996:81).

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[22] Based upon data from the 1981 Italian census, some estimates placed roughly 49,000 Slovenophones living in the province of Trieste (roughly 19% of the provinicial population), 15,000 in the province of Gorizia (roughly 17%), and 21,000 in the province of Udine (roughly 5%) (cf. www.istat.it; www.uoc.edu/euromosaic.org).

[23] On the rise and vicissitudes of Lega Nord, its leader Umberto Bossi, and its evolving political agenda, cf. Albertazzi 2004, Chari *et al.* 2004; Favretto 2003, Gómez-Reino Cachafeiro 2002; Tambini 2001; Ginsborg 2001; Sema 1996; Albertazzi and McDonnell (forthcoming). On linguistic nationalism in Italy and Lega Nord, cf. Tambini 2001 and Ruzza 2000.

[24] On the similar popularity of MSI among right-wing Italophone voters in the province of Bolzano, see Tassani 1990. The end of the Cold War, meanwhile, resulted in a loss of mission for the PCI, much of which went on to become the Democratic Party of the Left (PDS), and the remainder to the refounded Communists.

Meanwhile, despite the Osimo Treaty, the Italo-Slovene border once again became a 'contestable' one beginning with Slovenia's independence from Yugoslavia in 1991. The incipient disintegration of Yugoslavia 'allowed' several issues which had been formally settled at Osimo to resurface: beyond the central issue of Slovenia's succession in treaties concluded between Italy and Yugoslavia, political actors in Italy specifically raised the issues of compensation for, and recuperation of, property abandoned by Italians in the Slovene littoral, as well as the level of protection afforded the Italophone minority within Slovenia and in relationship to its counterpart in Croatia in the context of the two nations' secession from the federal Yugoslav state.[25] Indeed, Slovenia's relationship with Italy 'was probably the single factor that could have destabilised the country internally and thwarted its European ambitions,' (Gow and Carmichael 2000:204) insofar as the Italian government presented 'essentially bilateral problems as European ones' and in doing so 'did not hesitate to put pressure on Slovenia to prove its "Europeanness"' in resolving them to its satisfaction (Šabič 2002:105). Amidst the rapidly evolving Italian political environment of the early 1990s, the *foibe*, as ever, thus resumed their role as 'an obsession in moments of national and political uncertainty,' (Pupo 1996:35).

During the first Berlusconi administration, 'Slovene' issues appeared at the level of Italian foreign policy, most directly in Italy's insistence upon Slovenia's harmonisation of property rights prior to signing its Association Agreement with the EU, alongside intermittent threats to veto its accession if it did not comply.[26] Indeed, within the governing coalition of Forza Italia, Alleanza Nazionale, and Lega Nord, it was AN's—and Trieste's own—Roberto Menia who personally interceded with party leader Gianfranco Fini (who, infamously, had once referred to Mussolini 'the greatest statesman of the century') to block Slovenia's accession process (Manzin 1997:56,162; Statera 1994). Italy's actions—on behalf of the Triestine right wing—were 'a challenge to the EU's Common Foreign and Security Policy' as well as its enlargement policy regarding a prime candidate for accession, (Gow and Carmichael 2000:206). Such robust support for continued Italian intransigence toward Slovenia among AN voters and other factions in Trieste (and elsewhere) thus continued to sour local inter-ethnic relations generally on the eve of a potential rapprochement between the borderland minority communities and 'their' nations and a new, geopolitical dawn. Indeed, bilateral relations between Italy and Slovenia—and protests by the Istrian exile community in support of a hard-line stance toward the newly independent state—frequently set the tone for local minority-majority relations within the provinces of Trieste and Gorizia in the early 1990s. Slovenia, in turn, defensively—and somewhat justifiably, as Italy still then offered its Slovenophone minority far more limited linguistic rights than Slovenia did its Italophones—formally raised the question of the level of protection afforded the Slovenophone minority across the border. Meanwhile, in Article 64 of it Constitution of December 1991, Slovenia had enshrined the protection of its Italophone minority (3,064 persons, according to the 1991 census) guaranteeing it, among other provisions, the right to free use of its national symbols, material and moral support from the state for the community's development, compulsory bilingual education in the

[25] The post-secession division of Istria between Slovenia and Croatia led Italy to query the level of protection which would be afforded the overall Italophone community in the region, given that that community would now be divided between two separate states. Italy eventually prepared a trilateral memorandum on the commitment of the two states to protect the Italophone minority, which was meant to be signed just prior to Slovenia's diplomatic recognition. In order to obtain the necessary parliamentary approval, Slovenia appended a proposal for a bilateral treaty with Italy requesting equivalent, demonstrable commitment to the latter's Slovenophone community. Italy refused to sign the documents simultaneously, and thus the Slovene Foreign Minister was instructed not to sign the trilateral memorandum. Cf. Manzin 1997; Bratina 1997:146.
[26] Previously, the Slovenian constitution had expressly prohibited the sale of land to foreigners. For an overview of the first Berlusconi administration and its foreign policy objectives, cf. Ginsborg 2001 and Katz and Ignazi 1996.

communities wherein the minority resides, and permanent representation in the Slovene Parliament—in short, in a manner considered exemplary within Europe (Roter 2003).[27]

While a majority within the Italian *Camera dei Deputati* had passed a resolution in October 1991 demanding recognition of Slovenia, this, significantly, was not acted upon by the Italian state in an individual capacity. Within that particular debate, both MSI and the extreme-right (by some accounts, openly racist) *Lista per Trieste* had argued for revision of the Osimo Treaty prior to Slovenia's recognition (Sema 1994:218-219). Italy only recognized Slovenia in conjunction with the other member-states of the EU on 16 January 1992, following Germany's unilateral decision to recognise Slovenia (and Croatia) on 23 December 1991. Indeed, according to former Slovenian Foreign Minister Dimitrij Rupel, 'Italy and its Foreign Minister De Michelis were really hard to persuade. Together with the Americans, they were our severest critics,' (Rupel 1994:191). Following (indeed, because of) the collapse of the first Berlusconi government in autumn 1994, the Spanish Presidency of the EU, under Javier Solana, was in December 1995 finally able to broker an intergovernmental compromise to the property-claims issue—and thus to find a path toward the ratification of Slovenia's Association Agreement, insofar as Italians' ability to (re)purchase property in Slovenia was Italy's pre-condition for ratifying it.[28] During the brief Dini administration, Italy proved more willing to cooperate with Slovenia, and the Prodi administration, which came into power in May 1996, finally signed Slovenia's Association Agreement the following month. Given the amount of attention the issue has garnered, it is ironic that more Germans and Austrians made use of the Spanish Compromise during its period of applicability than Italians did.[29] In amending its constitution in 1996 in order to allow property to be purchased by non-resident non-citizens from 1 July 2003, Slovenia, for its part, seems to have chosen to view the matter 'not as an act of Italian hostility, but as a mark of its advanced position as a candidate for full membership,' (Gow and Carmichael 2000:207; cf. Šabič 2002:115); Slovenia was finally admitted as a member-state of the EU on 1 May 2004.

2.1.3 Ethno-linguistic minority issues in the Italo-Slovene frontier, 1994-present

According to the Italian Ministry of the Interior, in 1994 there were an estimated 80,000 Slovenophones resident in Friuli-Venezia Giulia (Ministero dell'Interno:1994).[30] Though its approach varies widely across its territory, Italy has—despite the in part repressive and obstructive history described above—occasionally proven itself capable of highly

[27] A further 14,284 Italophones live in Croatian Istria, having previously formed the bulk of the Italophone population in the former Yugoslavia (Source: 2001 census, Republic of Croatia Central Bureau of Statistics official website). Slovenia's 8,503 autochthonous Ugrophones (Hungarians)—who live in three municipalities in Prekmurje, in the extreme east of the country—were also protected under Article 64; Slovenia's 2,293 autochthonous Roma (although estimates range as high as 7,000-8,000) are treated rather less well, but are also recognised by the Slovenian constitution as an indigenous ethnic group (Source: 1991 Census, Statistical Office of the Republic of Slovenia). The estimated 140,000 ethnic Croats, Bosniaks, and Serbs in Slovenia—many resident for more than a generation—are afforded no linguistic protection whatsoever; their cultural associations are, however, supported by the Ministry of Culture (Čurin Radovič, 2002).

[28] In the 1983 Treaty of Rome, Yugoslavia had agreed to pay Italy US$110 million, in ten instalments, in compensation for the abandoned Italophone properties in Slovenia and Croatia. The first instalment fell due on 1 Jan 1990; Yugoslavia had collapsed by the time of the third. Slovenia resolved to continue the payments once it had confirmed its share of the total with Croatia. The first Berlusconi government, however, refused to accept further payments, demandeding restitution in kind—an issue debated previously, and which it was known was not possible in some cases as properties had been converted to other uses. As a successor to the 1983 treaty, Slovenia objected, and continued to pay the instalments into a separate bank account in Luxembourg. In the 'Spanish Compromise,' Slovenia agreed that four years subsequent to the ratification of its Europe Agreement, anyone resident in Slovenia for three years would be given preferential access to Slovene real estate market.

[29] As of 1 May 2004, 180 applications for the purchase of Slovene real estate by non-Slovenes had been filed; of these, 78 were filed by Germans, 52 by Austrians, and 26 by Italians (Source: Republic of Slovenia Ministry of Foreign Affairs, personal correspondence, 30 March 2004). The residency requirement within the Compromise may, however, have played a part in this.

[30] This number is disputed; the Republic of Slovenia estimates there are 100,000.

enlightened minority protection policies; Italy's treatment of its Germanophone population in South Tyrol is on par with Slovenia's treatment of two of its autochthonous minorities, the Italophones and Ugrophones—with Belgium's Germanophones and Finland's Suecophones, they are, by most accounts, the best-protected small ethno-linguistic minorities in Europe. Roughly 2.5 million people in Italy (4.5% of the population) belong to 14 officially acknowledged minority groups, making Italy home to more minorities than any other EU country in absolute size (Ministero dell'Interno 1994). The variance in protection afforded derives from the fact that affirmative minority rights are primarily connected to territory in Italy rather than to the inhabitants themselves (similar to the connection of autochthonous minorities to their municipalities in Slovenia). The partial exception to this rule is South Tyrol, due to the Germanophone minority's decades long (and occasionally terrorist) campaign for equality in the province of Bolzano, which was staunchly supported and eventually internationalised by Austria. As a result, the most fully protected minorities in Italy are the large communities living near the state's land borders.

Nevertheless, in the absence of a general law on minority protection, the officially recognised minorities enjoy differing statuses; Italy is thus 'at the same time one of the most advanced countries [in respect to] minority protection,' as well as 'a state in which many small minority groups are in danger of being definitively assimilated in the near future,' (Palermo 2004)—and among them may be listed, as discussed earlier, the Slovenophones of the province of Udine. Though they are present within 36 communities in Friuli-Venezia Giulia, the Slovenophones of the provinces of Trieste and Gorizia have been the longest and best protected due to the fact that they, unlike the province of Udine, had been subject to the post-war negotiations over the Free Territory of Trieste (which, as noted earlier, resulted in Italy taking on commitments to minority protection in the area concerned), and are presently provided with, among other rights, education in the Slovene language at the nursery, primary and lower- and upper-secondary levels, the right to address the local and provincial public administration in Slovene, bilingual identity cards, and bilingual toponomastic signage in their communities (though the latter is being implemented at a painfully slow rate).

Italian Law 38 of 2001 officially recognised the Slovenophone community in 32 communities in Friuli-Venezia Giulia, and among them in several municipalities in the province of Udine, thus in principle making the latter equal in terms of rights with those resident of the provinces of Gorizia and Trieste for the first time.[31] Previously, the Slovenophones of Udine had no clearly defined linguistic rights, though they were technically covered by the generalised protective measures within the Osimo Treaty. Law 38 will, however only apply in those municipalities of the province which specifically request it. As such, state funds destined for its fulfilment remain at present unassigned and/or unavailable to the province's municipalities; in large part, the present blockage in applying the law overall is due to political resistance within the local government in Trieste, which does not want the law applied to all six of the province's municipalities.[32] Though the law contains educational provisions, thus far the only application of the law has been the transformation of a private, bilingual elementary school in San Pietro al Natisone (*Špeter Slovenov* in Slovene, and previously known as *San Pietro degli Slavi* in Italian) into a state-financed one; there are at present no further plans to expand bilingual education at

[31] Bratina notes that there were 17 *comuni* (municipalities) in Friuli-Venezia Giulia with Slovenophone majorities in 1997, namely: Dolina (formerly San Dorligo della Valle-Dolina), Monrupino-Repentabor, Sgonico-Zgonik, Duino-Aurisina-Devin-Nabrežina (all province of Trieste); Doberdò del Lago-Doberdob, Savogna d'Isonzo-Sovodnje ob Soči, San Floriano del Collio-Števerjan (all province of Gorizia); and, San Pietro al Natisone, San Leonardo, Stregna, Drenchia, Grimacco, Savogna, Pulfero, Taipana, Lusevera, and Resia (all province of Udine) (Bratina 1997:131fn)

[32] Interview with Italian official, 19 May 2004.

the elementary or secondary levels, or to introduce Slovene-language schools, in the province of Udine.[33] As it had presumably been preoccupied with its own entrance into the European Union, the government of Slovenia had not confronted Rome on the law's application as of May 2004.

2.2 Socio-economic development and EU regional policy in the Italo-Slovene borderland

The EU has sought to enhance cross-border development within and at the edges of the Union since 1991 both in order to increase the transactional efficency of the internal market and as part of its commitment to balanced territorial development. The Italo-Slovene border was one of the first targets of the Interreg programme due to Friuli-Venezia Giulia's own regional developmental needs, the extant groundwork for cross-border institutional cooperation in the region due to the Alpe Adria regional-cooperation initiative begun in the 1970s (as discussed below), the priority given by the EU to politico-economic stabilisation alongside the former Yugoslavia as it began its wars of succession as well as to post-communist Central and Eastern Europe generally, as well as due the tragic history of this particular frontier and the desire to facilitate better relations across it.[34]

The first Interreg programming period, which ended in 1995, was an experimental 'familiarisation' exercise for this new Community Initiative financed through the Structural Funds, and as such, the initial programming period saw little, actual cross-border impact or participation from the Slovenian side of the borderland. The EU's Phare external assistance programme began operating in Slovenia in 1992, and a cross-border cooperation (CBC) component within it was formalised in 1994, though its interventions also took place entirely upon Slovene territory.[35] The second phase of EU-led borderland integration, Interreg II Italy-Slovenia was finally approved in 1997.[36] From the outset, the Interreg II programme was committed to enhancing the cross-borderness of its interventions beyond the (very limited) achievements of the earlier Interreg programme; its interventions were divided into three 'axes': upgrading the region, local resources and environmental protection (e.g., projects included joint environmental monitoring of the Upper Adriatic, the creation of a transfrontier hiking/biking path in the Karst, improvements at the Romas d'Isonzo water purification plant); improvements in institutional cooperation and communication (e.g., feasibility studies on cross-border energy and transport networks, studies and events related to bread-making in the frontier region, exhibitions of Slovene art in Italy); and, entrepreneurial cooperation (e.g., financing for cross-border joint ventures, information and service provision for regional SMEs, trade exhibitions) (Ambrosi 2001). The specific objective of the loosely coordinated Phare CBC (cross-border cooperation) Slovenia-Italy programme was stated simply as to assist 'Phare areas bordering the EU to overcome their developmental problems' whilst promoting cross-border co-operation 'according to the Interreg programme principles,' (JPD:243-244). Interventions through Phare were particularly necessary on Slovenia's border with Italy almost immediately, as

[33] Interview with Italian official, 19 May 2004.

[34] For an overview of Interreg's pilot phase of Italo-Slovene cross-border cooperation, cf. Zago 2000; Ambrosi 2001.

[35] Phare CBC initially focused on the municipalities of Tolmin, Nova Gorica, and Koper-Capodistria. All three municipalities are situated in areas where a Slovenophone minority exists across the border in Italy, and the latter of the three is the seat of the Italophone minority in Slovenia.

[36] Though the operative programme was not approved by the Commission until 24 July 1997 due to difficulties in negotiation, its validity encompassed the programming period from 24 November 1994 to 31 December 1999. The provinces of Udine, Gorizia, Trieste and Venice were included from the outset; the former three provinces have Slovenophone minorities. The total funding for the Interreg II Italy-Slovenia programme was €31.350 million, of which Friuli-Venezia Giulia received €20.772 million and Veneto €10.474 million. Of Friuli-Venezia Giulia's funds, €10.386 was contributed by the Structural Funds, with the remainder provided by Italy and the region. Phare CBC Slovenia-Italy funds amounted to €18 million for the same period, but were allocated on a year-by-year basis at approximately €2.5-4 million per year; Phare required a national contribution of at least 25% of the total allocation.

substantial delays to cross-border traffic were occurring due to outmoded border crossings, and were further exacerbated by the transport disruption brought on by the Yugoslav wars of secession occurring to the south (OMAS 1997:1).

As Phare's programming was annual (unlike multi-annual Interreg), further CBC programmes were begun each year beginning in 1995. In addition to land and maritime border crossings, early initiatives focused on cross-border or frontier environmental issues, which were coordinate insofar as possible with Interreg in Italy once the programme got off the ground in 1997. One major consequence of the resolute focus on physical infrastructure, however, was that person-to-person networks barely developed (OMAS 1997:15). Interreg II and Phare CBC began in different years, and that lag had a significant impact upon programming, institutional cooperation, local-partnership development, and project implementation generally, as well as the overall programme's ability to achieve its aims. Meanwhile, the legal and administrative discrepancies between Interreg and Phare had vast implications for level of cross-borderness in its interventions.

For the purposes of the 2000-2006 Interreg IIIA Italy-Slovenia programme, the Italo-Slovene border is once again defined as both a land and maritime one; it includes on the Italian side the provinces of Udine, Gorizia, and Trieste (region of Friuli-Venezia Giulia), as well as the province of Venice (region of the Veneto), and on the Slovenian side the statistical regions of Obalno-kraška and Goriška as well as the municipality of Kranjska Gora (see Map I). The 232 km-long land border connects 24 Italian municipalities with 13 Slovenian ones; a maritime border, meanwhile, connects Venice with Slovenia's Italophone municipalities.[37] The programming area covers an area of 11,400km^2 and a population of 1.9m (as of 1998; JPD:12).[38] Financing was initially set at €93m for Interreg IIIA (43% of from the ERDF, the remainder from national/regional sources), and €5m annually for Phare CBC. Following enlargement, the programme budget was reset at €56m, with Slovenia's Interreg receipts as a member-state for the 2004-2006 period remaining under discussion.

The Interreg IIIA Italy-Slovenia programme is the first to have a truly joint programming document—created and approved through the involvement of regional-policy actors and local experts from both sides of the border, as well as from Brussels—as well as joint steering committee from the outset. Nevertheless, several factors still potentially compromise institutional cooperation: the cross-border partnership 'continuing' into this programming period initially involved new actors in Friuli-Venezia Giulia, the Slovenian regionalisation debate remained (and remains) unresolved, and the political environment in Trieste still encompassed several nationalist factions (though this issue has, to some extent, recently been mitigated somewhat by Illy's presence at the region's helm).

[37] CBC with Veneto is not detailed here, as there is no Slovenophone minority in that province. Further Structural Fund interventions take place in Friuli-Venezia Giulia under Objective 2, which supports socio-economic conversion in regions facing structural difficulties; as these interventions are not of a cross-border nature, they, too, are not examined.

[38] In terms of population distribution across the frontier, the province of Venice comprises 41.9% of the total population and 21.6% of the surface area; the province of Udine 23.5% of the population and 35.8% of the area; the province of Trieste 12.8% of the population and 1.1% of the area; the province of Gorizia 7.1% of the population and 4.1% of the area; the statistical region of Goriška 6.2% of the population and 20.4% of the area; the statistical region of Obalno-kraška 5.3% of the population and 9.2% of the area; and, the municipality of Kranjska Gora 3.2% of the population and 7.8% of the area. Trieste's population density is the highest, at 1,176 inhabitants/km^2(Source: JPD:13-14). The Italian provinces of Rovigo (region of Veneto) and Pordenone (region of Friuli-venezia Giulia) have associate status in the Interreg III programme.

Though the Interreg programme does not specifically target the borderland minority communities within its development priorities, specific objectives within the programme have an implicit minority 'focus' (e.g., those geared toward cross-border cultural and vocational cooperation, or toward economic development at the border itself between similar linguistic communities), and minority organisations are among the many eligible to apply with projects for funding. Furthermore, minority representatives are invited to certain committee meetings as experts involved in project elaboration or preliminary evaluation.

With the exception of the Slovenian littoral, all of the provinces involved in Interreg III experienced a slight population decline in the 1990s, with Trieste's being the most dramatic at -4.9%; Trieste further has the highest old-age index among the provinces involved, as well as in Italy overall, at 225.9% (JPD:18). Between 1995 and 1998, the workforce resident in the provinces of Trieste and Udine decreased slightly, whilst it grew in the others (JPD:22-23). The unemployment rate, meanwhile, decreased by 1.5% in the overall area, with most gains in the provinces of Udine and Gorizia; the highest regional unemployment rate was recorded in the Slovenian littoral, at 11.2% in 1998.[39] The distribution of labour in the programming region is described in Table I; the tertiary sector is the predominant source of employment in the region. The Italian provinces maintain per-capita GDP at among the highest levels in Italy, while the Slovenian regions have levels of gross added value per inhabitant on roughly the national.[40] Entrepreneurship remains higher in the Italian regions, with roughly 25% of the working population self-employed, whereas in Slovenia the self-employed comprise only about 12% of the working population—though this is in large part due to the fact that Slovenia has only had a full market economy since 1989 (JPD:30,116). The Slovene programming regions, meanwhile, rank above the national average in terms of SME development.

TABLE I

NUTS III Areas	*Agricultur*	*Industry*	*Services*
Trieste	0.0%	22.2%	77.8%
Gorizia	2.5%	32.5%	65.0%
Udine	2.0%	41.4%	56.6%
Venice	3.8%	36.7%	59.6%
Obalno-kraška	0.7%	21.8%	77.5%
Goriška	1.6%	44.9%	53.5%
Average	*2.4%*	*38.2%*	*59.4%*

Sources: ISTAT & Statistical Office of the Republic of Slovenia

There are an estimated 5,000-7,000 Slovenian 'daily migrants' working on the Italian side of the border, many of whom work in Trieste, attracted by better wages in Italy (or conversely attractive to the Italians due to their lower wages) as well as by the availability of household and care posts in this increasingly elderly city.[41] Given the delay in the application of the free-movement-of-persons principle imposed by the EU upon Slovenia, only borderland Slovenes are presently allowed to work in Italy without special permits, cross-border labour movement for borderlanders having been bilaterally agreed in 1955.[42] A 1999 survey conducted by Friuli-Venezia Giulia among a total of 2,400 residents

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[39] The Interreg IIIA Italy-Slovenia Joint Programming Document estimates the unemployment rate in the province of Trieste at roughly 9%, versus roughly 5% in the provinces of Gorizia and Udine.

[40] GDP is not yet factored on a regional level in Slovenia.

[41] Figures from *Il Piccolo*, 28 August 2004, and an interview with a Slovenian specialist on labour movement, 25 April 2002. As many of these workers are unregistered, it is not possible to provide a more precise figure; there are no official statistics nor is there any official monitoring.

[42] The Udine/Videm agreement on local cross-border traffic between Italy and Yugoslavia in 1955 created four-month permits which allowed the roughly 690,000 residents living with 10km of the border four crossings per month, each for a maximum of 24 hours. The terms of the bilateral agreement were recast in 1982 to allow the roughly 1 million residents within 20km of the border permits valid for 60 months, for an unlimited number of crossings, each for a maximum of 100 hours (Cf. Vidmar 1994). Cross-border mobility and transfrontier employment (in the Trieste area in particular) should increase substantially once Slovenia begins to enjoy the right to free movement of persons in 2011. The delay in its implementation is due to (by most accounts alarmist) concerns among member-states (Austria and Germany being the most vociferously opposed) regarding an influx of lower-cost labour from Central and Eastern Europe. The EU's subsequently delivered a horizontal response to all

of its region, Carinthia, and the Slovene borderland revealed that only 3% of Italians and 7% of Slovenes surveyed crossed the border for work (though, given that much day-migrant labour is 'untaxed', the actual number may be higher).[43]

At the same time, politicians and the media in Italy are frequently vitriolic about the 'permeability' of the Slovene border to labour-seeking immigrants—an argument as pitiful as it is spiteful, given that it is Italy which remains responsible for the EU's external/Schengen border in the region, as well along all 7,600 kilometres of its own infamously permeable maritime border.[44] Indeed, the 'test-drive' of the Schengen border with Slovenia in 1997 (*viz.,* after the EU conceded, following substantial deliberation, that Italy was capable of fully implementing the Schengen *acquis* itself) resulted in widespread complaints regarding the substantial hindrance to traffic; this led soon after to a looser level of control and the creation of 'fast-tracks' for Italians and Slovenes. (Anderson and Bort 2001:61; Skok 1998).

TABLE II

Frequency of border crossing	% of Italians	% of Slovenes
Several times a week	2.1	10.3
Weekly	5.9	7.9
Several times a month	9.5	19.3
Monthly	8.7	16.0
Several times a year	27.6	21.1
Rarely	22.7	16.2
Never	23.5	9.2

In the 1999 survey, Slovenes were overall seen to be far more cross-borderly mobile than Italians (see Table II). Nearly 75% of Italian respondents crossed the border less frequently than once a month, and about a quarter among them never did so at all. More than half of the Slovene respondents, in contrast, did so at least monthly, with nearly 20% of those doing so on a weekly basis or more often. Yet, while cross-border mobility and the openness of the border between Italy and Slovenia has been on the increase for decade after decade, inter-ethno-linguistic-group contact has remained limited. Slovenes were nearly three-times more likely to cross the border to visit relatives than Italian respondents, especially in the vicinity of Trieste (DRAE 1999: 22-23). When those who did so were asked why they crossed the border, 80% of Italians said they did so for holidays (see Table III). More than 85% of Slovenes did so for shopping, in part because of the types of goods available, the relative savings Italy offered versus Austria, and the proximity of Italian borderland cities in comparison to Ljubljana.[45]

TABLE III

Reason for border crossing	% of Italians	% of Slovenes
For holidays	79.6	24.1
For shopping	22.3	86.9
To purchase petrol	26.8	0.3
For work	3.1	7.2
To visit friends/relatives	7.6	19.2

2.3 An overview of the institutional geography of Italo-Slovene cross-border cooperation

Inter-regional planning collaboration related to the frontier began with the formation of *Trigon* by Friuli-Venezia Giulia, Austrian Carinthia, and Slovenia in 1965. This informal, sub-national arrangement became the *Alpe-Adria Working Community* in 1978, and

acceding states on the issue; despite Slovenia's asking Italy for a bilateral derogation on the issue in 2001, Italy fell into line as (more-progressive) publics in Sweden, Denmark, the Netherlands, and Ireland agreed that free movement should be delayed. To the dismay of some and the elation of others, Slovenes will, for the time being, remain shoppers in Trieste rather citizens.

43 DRAE 1999:24, 28. It should be noted that responses were not tabulated according to mother tongue.

44 The author notes, by way of an example, that upon Croatian ship's arrival in Bari in July 2004, there was no Italian passport or customs control in operation, despite the several hundred passengers originating outside the Schengen border.

45 It should be noted, however, that a short-term derogation allowing duty-free sales to continue on the Slovenian side of the Italo-Slovene borderland played some part in this trend.

gradually increased its number of member regions, technical capacities, and level of institutionalisation throughout the 1980s. Indeed, in its day, Alpe Adria provided one of the 'most compelling examples of the relative unimportance of the EC/EU as the essential impetus of transfrontier co-operation' at the Union's edge (Anderson and Bort 2001:70).[46] Decentralisation, increasing economic liberalisation, and rapprochement with its north-westerly neighbours within the Yugoslav federation during this decade—with substantial implications for Slovenia—further contributed to the circulation of people, publications, and ideas in the decades before Slovenia's secession. Italo-Slovene cooperation following a 1976 earthquake in Friuli also heralded improvement in both interregional and international relations (Strassoldo and Cattarinussi 1978).

Nevertheless, in their exhaustive discussion of transfrontier cooperation in Europe in the past decade, Anderson and Bort conclude—regarding the difficulties regional and national institutions face in achieving the ambitious objectives of such initiatives—that 'transfrontier institutions or associations lack real political weight and influence' due to a 'lack of impact among the populations in the frontier regions, political divisions, lack of resources, lack of a sense of transfrontier solidarity, constitutional obstacles and reticence or indifference of central governments,' (Anderson and Bort 2001:72). While this is, in part, due to lack of public awareness of the 'often mundane' achievements of transfrontier initiatives, it is often also the result of 'sharp differences of view between different levels of government in the same country,' divergent national administrative and constitutional structures, and disparate levels of resources and budgetary powers accorded to regions trying to cooperate (Anderson and Bort 2001: 66, 72). These issues were reflected precisely in the experiences of Italian and Slovenian institutions during Interreg II.

While Phare CBC sought to 'match' Interreg II—thereby attempting to achieve transfrontier programming continuity where possible—the mutual realisation of true cross-borderness faced several hurdles: Italy's total Interreg II funding was roughly 30 times larger than Slovenia's yearly Phare CBC allocation, thereby affecting the size and scope of projects which could be undertaken on a transfrontier basis annually; a significant lack of legal and procedural complementarity existed between the Interreg II and Phare CBC programmes, resulting in difficulty or impossibility in realizing truly joint actions as well as partnership at the implementation stage;[47] fully formed, pre-existing regional institutions in Italy—experienced in programming and implementing the earlier Interreg programme as well as other interventions financed through the Structural Funds—were required to work with the still-centralised and relatively new Slovenian National Agency for Regional Development (NARD); pre-existing cultural and economic transfrontier networks upon which to build the projects were still lacking, despite the institutional ones remaining from past initiatives; and, finally, differences in history and institutional culture between the two Italian regions (e.g, the Veneto's lack of negative recent history with Slovenia; Friuli-Venezia Giulia's autonomous regional competencies) had an impact both upon their relative ability (or willingness) to build institutional partnerships with their Slovenian

[46] Nevertheless, Alpe-Adria's eventual enlargement resulted in a less-manageable and less-coherent community, and the geopolitical transformations of 1989 and the disintegration of Yugoslavia rendered it increasingly less relevant. Croatia and Slovenia had, in part, 'lost their motivation to co-operate in a transnational form (i.e., through co-operation among regions)' as they could now do so directly with other governments, while the Austrian *Länder* lost some federal-governmental support for such initiatives insofar as then-strategically neutral Austria 'used to promote transfrontier co-operation as a substitute for foreign policy' during the Cold War (Delli Zotti 1996:56).

[47] Due to the due territoriality principle (cf. Article 130c of the Treaty on European Union), Interreg funds cannot be spent outside the EU, the paradox here being that Interreg attempts to integrate the Italo-Slovene borderland via interventions on the Italian side of the border alone. While Phare CBC attempted to bridge the 'cross-borderness gap' through financing matching projects where possible (and did so support of the programming principle), it failed to function as a straightforward supplement to Interreg due to its smaller size and because only non-profit organisations were legally eligible for its funding.

counterparts, as well as to sustain networks created during programming and implementation (Faro 2003; IZI 2001). Overall, the legal incompatibility of Interreg and Phare CBC and the problems repeatedly faced in locating Slovene project partners were among the most frequently cited complaints among Interreg beneficiaries, as will be discussed in later sections of this report.

The Interreg IIIA Italy-Slovenia programme, which concerns the period 2000-2006, is the first to have a truly joint steering committee from the outset. Given the perceived institutional 'learning-by-doing' achieved by both the Commission and the Italian and Slovene actors in the last two programming periods, the creation of a new Joint Technical Secretariat in Trieste oversee Interreg IIIA Italy/Slovenia overall, and the procedural and legal harmonization which will come in the wake regarding the financial instruments involved with Slovenia's eligibility for Interreg funding itself from May 2001, officials on both sides and in Brussels have been optimistic about the potentiality for Interreg to achieve greater cross-border impact than it has in the past.

2.4 Overall assessment

Despite a repeatedly tragic history of intercultural and political relations between the two 'kin' states, and in particular regarding Italy's past treatment of the Slavonophones resident within its territory, and current lack of truly 'positive discrimination' regarding its Slovenophone population, the EU-negotiated settlement of the property-restitution issue, recent developments in the political environment in Friuli-Venezia Giulia which have moved the administration further outside of the decades-old, obstructionist right-wing deadlock, the recent accession of Slovenia to the EU, the formal (if still in areas stalled) protection of the global Slovenophone population within Italian national legislation after a delay of half a century, and the continuing profound economic lure of Trieste for the Slovene littoral economy, all provide indication that socio-economic relations in the Italo-Slovene frontier should improve in the course of the coming decade.

Nevertheless, Bratina notes that the region's minority presence must strive for 'formal and institutional recognition' for its continuing absence presents 'perhaps the principal obstacle to productive cohabitation between the two communities and to the development of integration processes,' (Bratina 1997:140). The fact that prior to 2001 aspect of minority protection—such as educational provision and cultural-organisational support—were primarily managed by individual *provincia* (province) (rather than the *regione*, 'region') in Friuli-Venezia Giulia, and that the implementation of other aspects—such as toponomastic signage and fulfillment of bilingualism in official public settings—was left up to the discretion of the sub-provincial *comuni* (municipalities), confused the recourse to institutional recognition which the Slovenophone community might take. Meanwhile, 'new' institutional avenues may now be 'open' to the Slovenophones of Italy at the supranational level, insofar as Slovenia *qua* member-state (rather than strategically directed applicant) is now in a stronger position to press for their protection, and their simultaneously doing so on their own behalf will be free of constraints for Slovenia in the form of irritating a member-state (i.e., Italy) with veto power over their membership.[48]

[48] As Anagnostou has written regarding the Turkish Muslim population of Greece—with direct comparability to South Tyrol, as well as, potentially, Friuli-Venezia Giulia—'Minority members increasingly viewed the EU as an external system providing alternative protection and support, which the regional reforms and institutions brought closer, ensuring the irreversibility of the changes and preventing Greece from "turning the clock back to the old system",' and thus directly reducing the appeal of Turkish nationalism itself (Anagnostou 2001:116).

‘Cohabitation,’ meanwhile, per se, remained (and remains) only one model of majority/minority relations among the multi-ethnic Italian autonomous regions. The situation in Francophone/Italophone Valle d’Aosta (*Vallée d’Aoste* in French) is one based upon a pervasive, seamless bilingualism grounded in ‘complete and symmetrical integration’ between the two ethno-linguistic communities, while that in Germanophone/Italophone South Tyrol (*Südtirol* in German, *Alto Adige* in Italian) is based upon legally enforced parity and almost complete cultural separation between the communities which has ultimately produced two parallel, linguistic ‘realities’ in the presence of otherwise bilingual education and civic participation protections (Bratina 1997:136; cf. Palermo 2004). The relative dispersion of the Slovenophone population amidst the Italophones of their region remains a differentiating factor vis-à-vis other the other ‘models’ Italy provides, which, among other factors, has had distinct implications for ‘ethnic’ participation and representation in regional politics and cultural affairs in Friuli-Venezia Giulia when seen in comparison with Italy’s other multi-ethnic autonomous regions. As such, while the Triestines have to some extent experienced an ‘altoatesine’ reality toward the end of the 20th century, and while the groundwork for an increasingly ‘valdostan’ reality is being lain in Gorizia, the Udinese Slovenophones have been almost entirely ‘vanished’ into the fabric of Italophone life (Bratina 1997:138). Meanwhile, the South Tyrolese ‘cohabitation’ model has its own, obvious limitations, as will be discussed in the next section of this report.

Examination of the experience of Interreg, and its contribution toward facilitating intra-ethnic and cross-border linkages between the frontier’s communities will be undertaken in the sections to follow. While past analyses of the Interreg programme have been lukewarm about successes in achieving true cross-borderness in intervention, the seamlessness in intervention provided by Slovenia’s participation in Interreg from 2004 should remedy many of the earlier obstacles to EU-led cooperation.

3. Literature review

In order to investigate and evaluate the process and effects of cross-border cooperation, it is essential to understand the historical as well as contemporary popular, political, and institutional contexts of transfrontier socio-economic engagement. This section provides a general, theoretical overview (primarily from the fields of anthropology, sociology, and political science) for borderland analysis. It reviews theories on the historical and social development of borderlands before turning to the applicability of the theory of social-capital development to frontiers.

3.1 An overview of the political economy and anthropology of borderlands

In his 1959 article, ‘The Nature of frontiers and boundaries,’ the Romanian-American geographer Ladis Kristof wrote that ‘a boundary does not exist in nature or by itself’ but ‘always owes its existence to man,’ and that the man-made division of adjoining segments of the earth’s crust has been driven by the fact that ‘sovereignty is territorial’ and thus ‘must have a certain known extent,’ (Kristof 1959). While boundaries have, at least since the rise of the Westphalian state in Europe (as countless have argued, and similarly countless others have derided as Eurocentric inanity), demarcated the fullest extent of the sovereign state, the rise of nationalism in the 19th century questioned the continuing validity of some sovereignties because they did not simultaneously describe both a nation and a state with the same boundary line. As the Irish geographer Gearóid Ó Tuathail has more recently argued, ‘Geography is about power,’ and though it is ‘often assumed to be

innocent, the geography of the world is not a product of nature,' but 'of histories of struggle between competing authorities over the power to organize, occupy, and administer space,' (Ó Tuathail 1996:1; cf. Biggs 1999). Popular desire by ethnically awakening peoples from Finland to Serbia—expressed through diplomacy, poetry, riots, and symbols, critically including maps—demanded a revision of European geopolitical terms in the wake of the unifications of Italy and Germany.

Yet, even in the latter two cases—then 'ideals' in terms of a nation's ability to 'imagine' itself into a sovereign state—the new state boundaries still did not entirely encompass the evolving nation (Anderson 1991; Bhabha 1990). The borderland or frontier—modern geographical successor to the ancient Roman *limes,* or march—foiled the planned coincidence of state and nation in a nationalising Europe with its intrinsic ethnic hybridity. Centuries-old, liminal settlement patterns confounded the convenience of natural barriers between states, and, even more frustratingly for a new generation of nationally visionary mapmakers, urban centres populated by one ethno-linguistic group sat amidst rural hinterlands populated by another. The frontier *qua* space wherein cultures enmesh proffered a multilingual spectrum from High Savoy and South Tyrol to the Sudetenland and Silesia, rather than the rigid, ethnic fault lines which 'national' boundaries desired to be. And thus, to this day, it remains in borderlands that 'one can best appreciate the acuteness' of the 'perpetual struggle over space in global politics,' (Ó Tuathail 1996:3).

Nearly a century after the onset of World War I, ethno-national struggle in the Upper Adriatic and Adriatic Alps is one no longer fought by means of arms, explosives, or genocide in search of absolute territorial control, but is now one fought in constitutional courts, at the ballot box, and at keyboards, in search of partial territorial 'use' via means of minority-cultural preservation and (incompatibly, in the minds of some) against 'historical forgetting.' In the midst of local and regional efforts aimed at improved ethno-linguistic minority protection in areas wherein another substantial minority rejects the visual, aural, and institutional reification of an inclusive multicultural existence, the EU has endeavoured to reintegrate communities brutally divided by borders in the course of two world wars.

It was the prevailing, 19th-century geographic logic of the 'natural' border between states which spurred later Italian-nationalist claims to South Tyrol; at the time, it surely seemed nothing short of perverse that one of Europe's oldest and most stable linguistic borders ran through the central valley of soon-to-be-created Italian region of Trentino-Alto Adige, rather than along the crestline of the Alps to its north. While the geopolitical 'dilemma' of the Italo-Austrian border was made possible by the rise of nationalism, and the Italian nation collectively subsequently 'imagining' its extent, the rise of the border itself enabled those imaginings in the first instance. The American anthropologist Peter Sahlins has argued that conceptions of 'French' and 'Spanish' national identity cropped up at the periphery (amidst rural, eastern-Pyrenean Catalan-speakers) before being 'built there by the centre. It appeared less as a result of state intentions than from the local process of adopting and appropriating the nation,' (Sahlins 1989:9).

That border was ultimately meant to serve a military purpose as a natural barrier, yet ended up being an border largely because the politico-economic frisson created by the dividing line resulted in newly 'borderland' communities conceptualising 'differences of French and Spanish territory and nationality long before these…became apparent to the two states' (Sahlins 1989:286). These were concerns that were first and foremost economic and legal, long before they were ethno-linguistic, and only very rarely geographic: the 'framing of local economic interests in national terms produced a transformation at both ends: a nationalizing of the local, and a localising of the national. By voicing their local economic

interests in national terms, both peasants and nobles brought the nation into the village, just as they placed themselves within the nation (Sahlins 1989:165).

Sahlins's thesis is a fascinating and useful one in the context of post-Hapsburg borderland communities—like those located between Italy and the former Yugoslavia/Slovenia—being 'imagined' out of one state and into another, for 'in many ways, the sense of difference is strongest where some historical sense of cooperation and relatedness remains,' (Sahlins 1989:271). It is where the border is at its most arbitrary that the differences between the 'ideas,' and nation-states, of 'Italy' and 'Slovenia' become most stark, and where the erasure of the border—within the context of the EU's recent enlargement and its future integration—has become most politically fraught. For, once delineated, the ongoing narrative of the meaning of that border—for the community it bisects and the nation-states it separates—began its inscription upon the lives of those who lived alongside (and increasingly across) it, as well as many countrymen who would never in their lives actually see it. While for the Allies and the Yugoslav regime the border had marked the line at which capitalism ended and communism began, for the residents of the divided town of Gorizia, it marked the utter transformation of civic life as they had known it. The creation of the border demanded an introspective reassessment of the local identities that pre-existed it: was one now *italiano, jugosloven, goriziano, bric, slovenec, furlan*, and what did those identifications now mean?[49]

In practice, an individual was several of these, and each had, and still has (with the exception of Yugoslav, which has ceased to exist), its own uses. While in the contemporary world a plurality of individual identities is commonplace, borders play a powerful and central role in the (de)construction of modes of identification:

> Experiences of borders…simultaneously reinforce and disintegrate social and political status and role, and structure and meaning, by putting into sharp relief the full range of our identities. This is especially true of national and ethnic identities, which are configured at borders in ways that often differ from how [they] are constructed in less peripheral areas of the state. (Donnan and Wilson 1999:64)

The rhetorical and socio-political (de)construction of borders is a ceaseless project, most frenetically so when a boundary divides a still heterogeneously populated frontier, for the boundaries thus 'narrated' too often collide and conflict with intensely individual, and deeply enduring, narratives of personal identity. Borders indicate who 'can' be what through circumscribing and delimiting citizenship and/or nationality. For someone of Slovene nationality who became an Italian citizen, or a coastal, historically Venice-orientated Italophone who suddenly became a Yugoslav *tovariš* ('worker,' 'comrade') in the Socialist Republic of Slovenia, the nature and implication of one's national and civic identities, and their relationships to one another, were fundamentally altered by the relocation of the border, whether the nature of that alteration was one of celebration, protection, hybridisation, persecution, forfeiture, or erasure.

If the 'principal fiction of the nation-state is ethnic racial, linguistic and cultural homogeneity, then borders always give lie to this construct,' (Horsman and Marshall 1994:45), for narratives of national identity 'imagined' from the centre all too often fray semantically by the time they reach the very borders which describe and circumscribe them. As a result, one of the primary characteristics of border life is its very ambivalence, due to the often-competing influence of the diverse linguistic, cultural, and economic factors present (Strassoldo 1982:152). Indeed, ambivalence at the margin is twinned with ignorance of the borderland at the nation's centre, despite its hazy, half-forgotten existence

[49] Or, indeed, *italiana, jugoslovanka, goriziana, brika, slovenka, furlane*?

in the distance delimiting every citizen's perception and experience of the nation (cf. Anderson *et al.* 2002:3). Those living near the border always 'experience' the border in ways those at the centre do not. For those living in the frontier, the border—in addition to being a barrier, resource, or opportunity at different times—has also been 'a symbol of their role in cultural value systems and in systems of economic value, which are important to the daily functioning of the states in which they live,' (Donnan and Wilson 1999:127).

With the division of Gorizia, the *Brici* were left with no market town, and Yugoslavia with no city to face and defend that border, at least culturally, against Italy. Yugoslavia responded by building one: Nova Gorica ('New Gorizia') was a planned, visual demonstration to Italians and their allies of the 'utopian' successes of the new, socialist world they were creating. The physical construction of the border thus coincided with its semiotic construction; as Paasi has written, boundaries 'do not embody any eternal truths of places,' but are socially constructed, wherein 'power relations are decisive for their construction,' (Paasi 2001:23). The creation of the Italo-Yugoslav border was both an act of defining the extent, as well as the *project* and world-view, of the state, and thus served to expose the limit of each state's ability to (re)produce and control the divided frontier and the concurrent, collective 'master narrative' of national identity.

Borderlanders, insofar as they 'work and play across the borderline,' are 'frequently participants in the formal and informal politics' of both states; this, in turn, results in the emergence of complicated political allegiances and alliances, with 'consequences for the relationships between citizens and regional, state, and international bodies, especially in their roles in constructing notions of territory and sovereignty,' (Donnan and Wilson 1999:57). Identity narratives parlayed at the national level are thus locally compromised by the increasing 'transversality' of the borders that seek to define and delimit them (Glissant 1989:66). Borderlanders 'live and function in several different worlds: the world of their national culture, the world of the border environment, the world of their ethnic group if they are members of a minority population, and the world of the foreign culture on the other side of the boundary,' (Martínez 1994:20). Yet, if 'the activity of minorities and their movements effectively de-territorialise the traditional state-centred territorial order and challenge the roles and meanings of boundaries' (Paasi 1999:15), will the increasing, daily flows and migrations across Italo-Slovene, Austro-Slovene, and Italo-Austrian borders, that perpetual deterritorialisation and reterritorialisation shared by all frontier residents regardless of their primary ethno-linguistic identity, suddenly confound the bipolarity of 'inside' and 'outside,' of 'same' and 'other,' and generate a dynamic, transcendent identity in their wake? (Deleuze and Guattari 1987)

If the realities of contemporary European borderland political economy lived out poststructuralist theories of transversality and de/(re)territorialisation as straightforwardly as their proponents might suggest, there would be little need for the EU's intervention in the first instance. And in the midst of this—despite the active, daily involvement of borderland minorities in all of these processes—the EU still painstaking endeavours to counter the reality that most small ethnic groups 'are led to the dustheap of history by industrial civilization without offering any resistance,' (Gellner 1983).[50]

3.2 Ethnic-national identities and the politics of culture and identity: typologies of borderland identity and development

[50] Due to constraints of both space and scope, theories on the origins and development of nationalism, and its relationship to ethnicity, are not examined specifically here. For the primary theoretical arguments, cf. Gellner 1983; Smith 1986; Bhaba 1990; Hobsbawm 1990; Anderson 1991.

Identity is nothing if not individual and stubborn. Despite the efforts of both states to narrate national identities otherwise, Italy, and Slovenia harbour ethno-linguistic minorities who identify closely with the majority ethno-linguistic group living across the 'national' border. Linguistic identification often supersedes locational identities because it has, since the age of German Romantic nationalism, represented not only a means of communication or information-exchange, but a means of representing and defending oneself and one's status in society (Bordieu 1991). Among ethno-linguistically heterogeneous populations, an individual's affinity to those who share one's language (and/or one's sense of difference from those who do not) is enhanced in the presence of a border (Donnan and Wilson 1999). To factor this into analysis of frontiers, the anthropologists Hastings Donnan and Thomas Wilson have typologised border populations as follows:

(i) those who share ethnic ties across the border as well as with those residing at their state's geographical core;
(ii) those who are differentiated by cross-border ethnic bonds from other residents of their state; and,
(iii) those who are members of the national majority in their state, and have no ethnic ties across the state's borders. (Wilson and Donnan 1998:14)

In addition, a fourth typology—overlooked in Wilson and Donnan's construction—should be added in order to include experience of (some, according to their preference) Friulians in Italy, and (possibly) the Roma in Slovenia:

(iv) those who are not members of the national majority in their state, and have no ethnic ties across the state's borders

The concurrent, proximate residence of borderland populations of various types has implications for the way individuals interact and identify with other members of their communities (or do not), as well as for the manner in these diverse communities are integrated, protected, or ignored on a national, regional, and local basis over time. While their 'usually sparse numbers and remoteness from the centre of power' generally limits borderlanders' political clout (Martínez 1994:23), this is frequently not the case when it comes to issues wherein borderland identity and ethnically related historical events can be figured as issues of national security.

The historically evolving politico-economic nature of borders thus impacts upon the often multiple and diversely orientated populations it circumscribes and divides insofar as they foster or disallow contact between various types of frontier community across periods of time. To facilitate understanding of the frontier evolution in the wake of this process, Mexican-American social historian Oscar Martínez has described a developmental trajectory for borderlands: *alienation*, wherein tension or animosity between neighbouring states or populations prevents cross-border interaction; *coexistence*, wherein tensions between neighbouring states have been reduced, allowing a modest level of cross-border interaction; *interdependence*, wherein populations in neighbouring states interact symbiotically, and wherein some bilateral systems and policies are in place on an interstate or interregional level, yet some policies remain separated by the boundary; and, *integration*, wherein no barriers exist to interaction or flows across the border, and both states and populations on both sides enjoy a high level of mutual trust (Martínez 1994:5-10).

While one primary characteristic of borderland interdependence is the diminishment or disappearance of location-related strife, the attainment of that state does not preclude or eliminate cross-border 'conflict,' per se; the latter, indeed, can be directly (and 'progressively') 'spawned by the intrinsic contradiction of maintaining border restrictions as then economies and societies of the two sides draw together,' (Martínez 1994:15). This,

frustratingly, often impacts future development, for border economies 'react instantly to short-term policy changes, and constant adaptation lends them a speculative, restive character,' (Baud and van Schendel 1997:231). Indeed, the incremental nature of the process of borderland integration—and the concurrent political and identity issues surrounding the maintenence and concession of specific types and means of sovereignty—seems to have engendered such conflict as a byproduct. While contemporary 'transboundary cooperation receives its principal stimulus from economic development,' it is nevertheless a political/politicised process, and as such 'autonomy may be regarded as more important than efficiency,' (Hansen 1983:167).

The primary reasoning behind EU-led borderland integration is that frontiers experience significant developmental disadvantages due to the fact that 'political boundaries represent artificial barriers to the rational economic organisation of potentially complementary areas and because both public and private sectors tend to avoid investing in areas where conflicts are likely to arise,' (Hansen 1983:256). Nevertheless, while in some cases economic cooperation begins 'organically' once cross-border flows become possible (whether for reasons of market expansion or due to the existence of interested economic actors on both sides of the border), in most cases economic integration must be 'jump-started' via regional-development policy interventions.

Meanwhile, the primary characteristics of a state of integration are means (or 'freedoms') which are fundamental to economic as well as cultural interactivity. Martínez specifically defines the integrated borderland as one in which neighbouring states have eliminated 'all major political differences between them and as well as existing barriers to trade and human movement across their mutual boundary,' allowing borderlanders to 'merge economically, with capital, products, and labour flowing from one side to the other without restrictions,' (Martínez 1994:9). One major 'brake' on borderland integration in this region over the coming decade will thus result from the fact that the Slovenes, along with the rest of the newly acceded states, will not enjoy free movement of labour within the EU until 2010.[51] Indeed, as Torpey has argued, the modern state has expropriated from individuals—and now monopolizes—'legitimate means of movement' across international boundaries through having required the documentary codification (in the form of passports and identity cards) of national communities previously merely 'imagined' (Torpey 2000).

Martínez notes that, in integrated borderlands, nationalism 'gives way to a new internationalist ideology that emphasizes peaceful relations and improvements in the quality of life of people in both nations through trade and the diffusion of technology. Each nation willingly relinquishes a significant part of its sovereignty for the sake of mutual progress, (Martínez 1994:9). While relinquishing aspects of national sovereignty, as well as massive increases in multi-lateral trade and regional development, have all been hallmarks of membership in the EU, the denouement of extremist nationalism has not necessarily been a 'spill-over' effect of European integration or bi/multinational economic cooperation. The popularity of 'post-fascist' political parties representing the Italian borderlands at the national and local levels, indeed, increased at the same time as cross-border cooperation was enhanced across their borders with Slovenia prior to its accession to the EU.

The reasons for this phenomenon may be linked to the characteristic borderland phenomena noted above—the 'fraying' of the collective identity narrative at the nation's borders, and the relative economic underdevelopment of the frontier in comparison to the metropole—in conjunction with the persistence (or conscious 'remembering' by nationalist politicians) of negative historical memory. As Jedlicki has written regarding the Germano-

[51] The 'variable permeability of borders culminates in…*the* major contradiction of the contemporary world system—the fact that capital and commodities…now flow much more freely across borders [than] labour,' (Anderson *et al.* 2002:9).

Polish border the choice is one 'between deliberate stirring of memory so as to feed the dreams of retribution, or letting the ever-recurring nightmare become finally a historical recollection,' (Jedlicki 1999:231). It is local and regional debates over—and unwillingness to relinquish—'cultural' sovereignty (and thus the concurrent issues surrounding freedom of cultural expression, and social and educational policies) most frequently puts the brakes on the borderland's—and the EU's—integration.

3.3 Minority-majority relations in the borderland: toward a theoretical context for cross-border cooperation

A recent study of EU-led cross-border cooperation between Italy and Slovenia in the late 1990s concluded that the Italo-Slovene borderland had not progressed beyond a state of interdependence, nor looked likely to do so following Slovenia's accession to the EU, due to the persistence of historic, intercultural mistrust in the borderland, local political opposition to, and subversion of, specific initiatives in regional economic integration which had been motivated by xenophobia and economic nationalism, and the more general failure of EU-led and coordinate national efforts to create sustainable institutional and person-to-person networks in the region (Faro 2003). The latter factor proves most critical, insofar as network-creation generates immediate socio-economic benefits in the form of 'social capital,' whose accumulation over time can have a mitigating effect on local resistance to integration (cf. Morgan and Nauwelaers 1999; Grix 2001; Grix and Knowles 2002).

Social networks have private 'returns,' in that those included in them benefit from connections, referrals, mutual support and the like, as well as public ones, insofar as social interaction helps 'resolve dilemmas of collective action,' (Putnam 2002:7). Collective-action problems are endemic in transfrontier cooperation, as a major obstacle to borderland integration remains the historic and persistent lack of interest in borderlands themselves (beyond their existence *qua* state borders) on the part of central governments (Hansen 1983:262). As a result, borderland integration within the EU has for over a decade been the province *ne plus ultra* of the European Commission, whose institutional remit includes representing the collective interest of the member-states. The strength, persistence, and deepening of local social networks over time gives rise to 'social capital,' which the American sociologist Robert Putnam has defined as 'features of social organisation, such as networks, norms, and trust, that facilitate coordination and cooperation for mutual benefit,' and which in turn enhance benefits deriving from investment human and physical capital (Putnam 1995:66-67; cf. Putnam 1993a; 1993b; 2000). Civic engagement, in the form of the societal trust, norms, and networks which contribute to local and regional political culture (measured in terms of general interest and participation in politics as well as per capita membership in local associations), thus can facilitate and reinforce regional economic growth through helping communities to overcome collective-action problems and generating social capital in the process.[52] In Putnam's analysis, this is because civic engagement facilitates and improves local information flows (thus reducing uncertainty and engendering mutual trust among participants), fosters robust systems of reciprocity (thus effectively defining norms of locally acceptable behaviour, and so increasing the potential costs to defectors), and provides models for future cooperation (thus generating sustainable networks and norms, which are, by nature, path dependent) (Putnam 1993a; cf. North 1991). He concludes that, since the 1970s, so-defined 'civic' regions in Italy so defined

[52] Social capital 'refers to connections among individuals' i.e., social networks and the norms of reciprocity and trustworthiness rising from them. 'In that sense social capital is closely related to what some have called "civic virtue." The difference is that "social capital" calls attention to the fact that civic virtue is most powerful when embedded in a dense network of reciprocal social relations. A society of…virtuous but isolated individuals is not necessarily rich in social capital,' (Putnam 2000:19).

have 'grown faster than regions with fewer associations and more hierarchy,' and have enjoyed more-democratic local and regional government (Putnam 1993a:197).[53]

Putnam nevertheless generally (and perhaps conveniently) disregards the unique dynamics presented by the Italian border regions—though this is perhaps due to their relatively recent incorporation into Italy and/or their relatively sparse populations—and, critically, fails to takes into account inter-ethno-linguistic group associationism as a factor, despite extolling multi-ethnic Trentino-Alto Adige specifically as a model, 'civic' region at one point in his analysis.[54] While it is true that Trentino-Alto Adige/Südtirol is one of Italy's more economically successful regions, and while its legislative and administrative efficiency is both palpable and renowned within Italy, the region functions as two autonomous provinces, one monocultural and the other rigidly bicultural rather than culturally hybrid. To praise civic engagement in the region is to ignore the fact that robust levels of membership in local associations occur, by and large, to the *exclusion* of members of the region's other ethno-linguistic groups, and that, as such, dense human networks fostered at the provincial level do not give rise to abundant, regionally 'available' social capital (cf., e.g., Kaufman 2002). This particular conundrum arises in part from Putnam's conflation of the region and province as administrative and civic units in Italy, which, in Trentino-Alto Adige, for one, are critically different.

As Putnam notes, 'it is not the degree of political participation that distinguishes civic from uncivic regions, but its character,' (Putnam 1993a:109). While voters in provinces Trento or Bozen-Bolzano may turn out in droves for elections or Rotary Club meetings, and while their joint, regional parliament may in fact be among Italy's most effective, these present civic participation patterns are grounded in the detached, linguistic détente agreed in by and for region in the 1970s (similar to that of the Belgian provinces) nor do they facilitate the ongoing creation of robust 'between-group' or 'bridging' social capital in the region at large. In the wake of a flurry of academic criticism, Putnam began to address the latter distinction in later work, noting that 'bridging' networks (as opposed to 'bonding' or 'within-group' ones, which bring together people similar in age, gender, ethnicity, etc.) are more likely to generate external effects which are positive, while bonding ones 'are at greater risk of producing negative externalities' (Putnam 2002:11). This is more or less a polite way of saying that Turkish economic migrants do not necessarily receive the warmest of welcomes in small, ethnically homogenous, politically conservative German or Austrian towns, no matter how many people sing in the local church choir.[55] Though the regional government of Carinthia under the right-wing Austrian Freedom Party's Jörg Haider may very well be functionally efficient, it hardly serves as a model for socially inclusive, participatory governance.

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[53] In the framework of contemporary EU regional policy, 'less-favoured regions' often seemingly have 'little or no social capital on which they can draw, a point which turns the spotlight on factors such as the institutional capacity of the region, the calibre of the political establishment' and their 'disposition to seek joint solutions to common problems,' (Morgan 1997:496; cf. Doeringer and Terkla 1990).

[54] Trentino-Alto Adige is ranked as one of Italy's three most 'civic' regions, with Friuli-Venezia Giulia in the top six and Veneto in the top ten (Putnam 1993:97). For other relevant critiques of Putnam's work on social capital and social capital generally, cf. Kaufman and Weintraub 2004; Mayer 2003; Grix and Knowles 2002; Kaufman 2002; Fine 2001; Grix 2001; Portes and Landholt 2000; Schuller *et al.* 2000; Hall 1999; Trigilia 1999; Whiteley 1999; Boix and Posner 1998; Whiteley 1998; Woolcock 1998; Berman 1997; Eubank and Weinberg 1997; Foley and Edwards 1996; Ladd 1996; Schudson 1996; Skocpol 1996; Tarrow 1996; Levi 1996; Sabetti 1996; and (of more limited value, due to its methodological flaws) Schneider *et al.* 2000.

[55] In his more recent work, and in direct response to much criticism, Putnam has begun to caveat his theory so as to allow for this unfortunate conundrum, stating that 'we cannot assume that social capital is everywhere and always a good thing' and that 'social capital can have negative externalities does not distinguish it in principle from other forms of capital….With its internal norms of trust of reciprocity, reinforced by a shared "self-defensive" purpose, the [Ku Klux] Klan—and its counterparts in other countries—remind us that social capital is not automatically conducive to democratic governance,' (Putnam 2002:8-9).

One central question that arises is whether the high transaction costs related to transfrontier cooperation in ethnically-mixed borderlands is due to the sheer inability of these communities to generate bridging social capital in the first instance, or to the destruction of such social capital due to the politically motivated use of negative historical memory. Putnam makes a nod in this direction in writing that history 'is not always efficient, in the sense of weeding out social practices that impede progress and encourage collective irrationality. Nor is this inertia somehow attributable to individual irrationality. On the contrary, individuals responding rationally to the social context bequeathed to them by history reinforce the social pathologies,' (Putnam 1993a:179).

The political platforms of neo-fascist actors such as Italy's Gianfranco Fini and Roberto Menia—and the domestic and foreign policies they formulate and enact in favour of 'nationalist social capital' development (Máiz 2003)—have emerged inextricably from the local and national contexts they represent. Their agendas, however perversely, aim to represent 'rationally' nationalist/irredentist/xenophobic/racist social pathologies which originated in the wake of the two world wars. Wars—at least those that are won—'foster and reinforce national solidarity' and 'often create generationally defined civic habits,' (Putnam 2002: 411). At the same time, local memory and current perception of a war's outcomes—especially if it is one in which the war did not end in favour of perceived local interests—can generate similarly generationally defined, *uncivic* habits. Meanwhile, in examining the political economy of the borderland (if not every geopolitical space), it is critical to understand first how its historical context has routed, affected, and impinged upon its developmental trajectory. This is not merely because, as discussed above, historical memories are 'long'—as well as transmissible to new generations who lack direct, if not 'emotional', experience of the events 'remembered'—but because socio-economic development in and of itself is 'path-dependent.'

As most supranational policy initiatives are not subject to referenda, and as the EU's popularly representative institutions approve regional-policy initiatives only at the 'grand objective' and budgetary stages, voters opposed to further borderland integration lack opportunities to reject regional-development goals directly (cf. Olsson 2003). While electing neofascist, extreme-nationalist, or populist representatives will not halt the arrival of regional-development funding in the frontier, per se, these actors do provide a democratic 'remedy' to borderland integration conducted against the wishes of some borderland voters.[56] This is not to say that historically rooted racism alone is the nemesis of cross-border cooperation's ability to facilitate bridging social-capital creation: even in areas where regional affinity is high due to 'cultural coherency,' internal divisions can still ensue—for example, in borderland integration between France and Wallonia, where cross-border cooperation has failed to achieve its desired effects (Jouen *et al.* 2001), or as expressed in the rise of the intermittently separatist Northern League in Italy, wherein 'the demonstrably volatile though ostensibly quite homogeneous Italians' have been 'able to construct a fundamental division between north and south,' (Robbins 1997:18). The onus for developing more-efficient and more-locally motivating means of cross-border cooperation in order to overcome local opposition to such efforts and/or to inspire—through cooperation's social-capital generating effects—opposition to that opposition remains squarely on the shoulders of the EU's conscience, in the form of the European Commission and the subnational institutions with whom it coordinates these policies.

Both political and economic actors are 'usually very well aware that the rules established in the victory of an economic idea constrains future choices (*via* path

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[56] On the popularity of MSI among right-wing Italophone voters in the province of Bolzano, cf. Tassani 1990.

dependence),' (Jacobsen 2003:50). The local economic and cultural actors in whose interest the irrational idea is perpetuated all understand this argument implicitly, and hence their virulent opposition to, and internecine attempts to subvert, the processes of borderland integration. For, once the economic logic of the European single market proceeds and effectively surpasses the emotional logic of revanchism or neo-irredentism, and with it the Slovenes enter the EU to become 'Europeans' incontrovertibly (i.e., as political-economic, socio-economic, and cultural networks begin to interlock more permanently and thrive), there is more or less no going back. Thus, in the interim, what Jacobsen terms the 'élite manipulation' of local and regional politico-economic contexts ensues, and a power struggle between local and supranational institutions commences; this dynamic, in turn, will be examined in the case of the Italo-Slovene border in the research to follow.

4.0 Conclusion

In the 1990s, the state of Slovene-minority participation in politico-economic affairs in Italy was in great flux, as questions that had been silenced on both sides of the post-war scenario have been reopened, and as the Slovene nation—both within and without its borders—has begun to raise its voice within a reuniting Europe. Though recent political developments in the Italian frontier have been largely positive and well-received ones—and portend greater inclusion and participation by the Slovenophones in local and regional affairs in the future, as well as expanded socio-economic relations between Italy and Slovenia—the long-term nature of the instruments and processes of European borderland integration mean that a decade of less cordial relations—and a half-century of political and ethnic détente—form the background of this case study and still continue to influence opinion and developmental direction within some sections of the borderland population and economy. As such, though the Structural Funds, via Interreg and Phare CBC, have been one driver of minority mobilisation in the borderland, it is critical to note the impact of Slovenia's accession to the EU as a separate but coordinate factor in this arena. For this reason, bilateral relations between Italy and Slovenia, in the context of Slovenia's accession negotiations, have been introduced and will be considered, where relevant, throughout.

It must also be noted that the lack of application of the free movement of persons principle, and the continuing presence of the Schengen frontier at the Italian border, following Slovenia's accession to the EU will have a dramatic impact upon transfrontier relations and commerce, insofar as levels of contact will not be seen to substantially increase. Though the process of accession has substantially harmonised the differences in the legal framework supporting cooperation and exchange between Italy and Slovenia, systemic discrepancies still exist, and thus must be recognised as a further factor limiting inter-ethnic and bilateral politico-economic engagement. Further, differences in the minority rights regimes between the two states have differed for the past decade, and, as such, levels of minority representation on both sides of the border vary significantly. As such, a fully transfrontier view is essential here, insofar as developments on the Italian side of the border must necessarily be understood alongside to the deeply evolved and ingrained protections extant on the Slovene side.

While extensive literature, as we have seen, exists on the nature of borderlands and borderland identity, the role of social capital in forming networks between individuals and communities within nation-states, and on the origins and implications of the Structural Funds for European integration, very little work has been done to date on the intersection of these three areas. This research will thus make significant inroads in this area. Though the literature upon the European Union's impact beyond its own border has begun to expand in recent years, very little of this has focused on Slovenia itself. One question which

immediately presents itself is whether the lack of decentralisation in Slovenia impedes cooperation with Italy on a cross-border basis, or conversely, whether the experience of the regional policy—and Interreg and its successors in particular—will encourage administrative devolution in Slovenia (cf. Marek and Baun 2002; Anagnostou 2001). At the same time, the municipal level in Slovenia will be compared with the provincial level in Italy—and inexact match, but a necessary one, given the different administrative models in the two states. Furthermore, analyses of the (then) Italo-Yugoslav border were at their most popular in the 1970s, i.e., at the time of the Osimo Treaty, and more recent analyses of the borderland region have largely been journalistic or politico-historical ones, largely centred upon the heyday of Trieste in the late-19th century (Ballinger 2003b; for significant exceptions, see; Ballinger 2003a; Faro 2003; Favretto 2003; Valdevit 1999; Favaretto and Greco 1997). This study and its research will thus make significant inroads in updating contemporary academic discourse on the Italo-Slovene border in the social sciences.

Moving forward, several questions arise regarding the intersection of minority mobilisation and the Structural Funds: 1) to what extent has/does the Slovenophone minority participate(d) in the programming and implementation of Interreg interventions, and how does this compare to the involvement of Italophones in Phare CBC in Slovenia?; 2) to what extent are members of the Slovenophone minority active or participant in the major economic concerns in the frontier (and how is this evaluated or monitored) and to what extent do they participate in (or drive) the local SME sector; 3) following on from the latter, to what extent has Interreg supported ‘indirect’ minority activities via SME interventions and thus mobilised minority participation in regional economic integration; 4) to what extent does bilingualism among the minority, and monolingualism among the majority, impact the prospects for macro-regional economic participation, and to what extent is this acknowledged (or valued) within Italy; 5) how does the Slovenophone situation compare with that of the region’s other ethnic minorities, i.e., the Friulians, the Germanophones, and the Ladins, most of whom live further away from the border; 6) following on from the latter, to what extent do minority coalitions exist in Friuli-Venezia Giulia, and to what extent does Interreg connect minorities on a cross-border basis; 7) to what extent are regional minority concerns reflected in the Italian national government today; 8) to what extent has the frequent turnover in the administration(s) of Friuli-Venezia Giulia and its organs impacted the programming and implementation of Interreg, and has this affected minority participation in the programme, if at all; 9) what percentage of the population/minority population knows of and/or participates in/benefits from Interreg; and, 10) how does the contemporary politico-economic experience of the Slovenophones in Italy compare or contrast with that of other ethnic minorities resident amongst an ‘exiled’ population from its own ethnic ‘kinstate,’ e.g. among Czechs or Poles in Germany, Austrians or Germans in Slovenia, and/or Turks in Greece or Greeks in Turkey.

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Annex I: Policy Report

Regions, minorities and European policies: a policy report on the Italo-Slovene border

The Italo-Slovene borderland: an introduction

The Italo-Slovene frontier—which, from its origin at the two nations' mutual border with Austria, describes what many have deemed the meeting-point of Europe's three great, historic civilisations and ethno-linguistic groups, the Romance, Germanic, and Slavonic—has also been one of European history's most violently fraught, famously so in the 20th century. Yet, the degeneration of that frontier at the end of the Second World War into a genocide area was not due to the region's historic and enduring multicultural composition, but rather the impossibility of dividing it along ethnic lines (Gross 1978). Competing, 'self-completing' nationalist projects in Italy and the emergent Yugoslavia had incited both to fight against the Habsburgs for the liberation of their ethnic brethren in the frontier in World War One, and thus to lay simultaneous claim thereafter to a frontier which had been and multilingual and multicultural since the 6th century AD. The addition of an ideological struggle for this frontier—which had been incorporated into Italy after the First World War—fought largely along nationalist lines served to exacerbate the enduring conflict over which nation the frontier 'belonged to' as the Second World War ended. It is the memory of Italian fascism's brutal oppression of the region's Slovenes and Croats, and the 'retribution' for it which came in the deportation, execution, and exodus of the bulk of the Istrian Italophone population, which continues to fuel contemporary skepticism of the 'other' community between the majority Italophone and minority Slovenophone populations on the Italian side of the border.

While the minorities' relative protections within Italy and the former Yugoslavia were finally, legally described in the 1975 Osimo Treaty (which also fixed the border between the two states), in practice, the legal protection of the estimated 80-100,000 Slovenophones in Italy continues to evolve to this day. Rights to Slovene-language education, public address, and toponomastic signage varies amongst the three provinces in which the Slovenophones live—Udine (*Videm* in Slovene), Gorizia (*Gorica*), and Trieste (*Trst*), with the latter two, post-war provinces providing the greatest *de jure* (if not *de facto*) protection due to their being subject to the post-WWII Peace Treaty. Though the region of Friuli-Venezia Giulia has been officially autonomous since 1967 due to its multicultural nature, much of the interpretation and implementation of the various minority protections has been left to the discretion of the municipal level; indeed, the Italian parliament only formally recognised the Slovenophones as a 'national' minority in 2001. The non-implementation of the Peace Treaty's full range of minority protections on the Italian side was largely due to pressure from the Triestine and Gorizian right wing, as well as the political ability to dismiss the Slovenophones as a Communist 'threat' in the Cold War era. In comparison, the roughly 3,000 Italophones of the Slovene littoral—who live within four officially bilingual municipalities, Portorož-Portorose, Piran-Pirano, Izola-Isola, and Koper-Capodistria—are constitutionally guaranteed full protection and permanent representation as an autochthonous minority.

The evolving nature of the border—and the politico-economic identity it helped frame as southernmost portion of the 'fault-line' between the post-war capitalist and communist worlds—continues to impact upon the populations it circumscribes and divides, most dramatically so in the latter half of the 20th century. With the accession of Slovenia to the European Union in May 2004, many observers believe that the rift between the communities will finally be healed. Nevertheless, the persistence of historical memory among segments of the population—and those they elect to represent them—threatens to

continue as a barrier to socio-economic integration, as well as to the ability of the Triestine economy to resuscitate after a half-century of stagnation.

The EU, meanwhile, has made a substantial investment in cross-border cooperation as a means of enhancing socio-economic integration across its internal and external borders since the early 1990s. This has occurred primarily through the Interreg/Phare CBC programmes financed through the Structural Funds. Along the EU's internal borders, such investment has been made due to recognition that frontiers between the member-states should function as the Union's connective tissue rather than remain developmental gaps. Along the external borders, investment in cross-border integration processes have provided a further means of adapting and bringing what are now the new member states closer to the EU. At the same time, cross-border regional policy has been seen as a means of building networks—economic, cultural, infrastructural, interpersonal—among ethno-linguistically heterogeneous borderland populations who remain skeptical of one another due to the legacy of fascism and the Second World War. This report examines the impact of programmatic EU-led financial intervention upon the Slovenophone minority in Italy through looking at the potentially mobilizing effects of the regional economic initiatives it supports, the infrastructural linkages it creates, the incentives it provides for bilateral and inter-ethno-linguistic community action and cooperation, and the person-to-person networks it aims to foster among and across the frontier's communities.

An overview of Italo-Slovene borderland and minority relations, 1918-2004

In 1918, at the conclusion of the First World War and upon the collapse of the Austro-Hungarian Empire, the Duchy of Görz, most of the province of Carniola, and the entirety of the Karstic littoral, including Trieste, were awarded to the Kingdom of Italy. Italy's entrance into the war on the side of the Triple Entente had been predicated upon this territorial redistribution, as secretly agreed in the 1915 Treaty of London. Italy's claims, however, had been economically and strategically defensive, in addition to nationalist, ones, insofar as the Austro-Hungarian territory it requested aimed to ensure Italian politico-economic hegemony over the entirety of the Upper Adriatic. Locally, the move sought to consolidate power among the urban, coastal Italian population, which had previously been one among several, regional minorities within Austria-Hungary. This consolidation of politico-economic and territorial power was to be to the great disadvantage of the region's substantial, but primarily rural-agricultural in nature, Slovene and Croatian populations.

At the 1919 Peace Conference both the Italians and the then-Kingdom of Serbs, Croats, and Slovenes presented their respective claims to the Julian March. In 1920, the Treaty of Rapallo confirmed roughly the eastern third of present-day Slovenia as part of Italy, bringing 300,000 Slovenes into the kingdom—a quarter of the total Slovene population in Europe at the time (Pirjevec and Kacin Wohinz 1988:30). The 'relocation' of such a substantial portion of the small nation's population to a larger state still contributes to Slovenia's sense of cultural peril in relation to its larger neighbours (Manzin 1997:xiii). The fact that the Rapallo Treaty required Yugoslavia to protect its Italophone minority, but neglected to require the Italian Kingdom to undertake the same towards its Slavic populations—insofar as it was then considered 'insulting' to make such a requirement of a victorious Great Power—only contributed to Slovenia's sense of powerlessness to protect the cultural development of its ethnic brethren newly abroad (Sluga 2001:42).

With the onset of the Fascist era in the early 1920s, the Slovenophone community in Italy was (along with the Istrian Croatophones and Tyrolean Germanophones) subjected to a concerted, and often brutal, Italianisation campaign, which increased in its intensity throughout the 1930s. The visual and rhetorical erasure of extant, alternative cultural

histories in the 'new' territories sought to consolidate further Italy's geopolitical control over the territory. Indeed, the region's seamless, functional commercial Italophonia until the rise of 19th-century nationalism and irredentism was a reality which Italian fascism rendered permanently politicized through its efforts to enforce what came naturally in the marketplace, school, church, and home, and furthermore only served to further Slovene and Croatian national consciousness in the wider region (Novak 1970).

Fascist Italy invaded Yugoslavia in 1941 with the intention of seizing the Dalmatian coast; by 1942, it had seized and incorporated most of Dalmatia into Italy, and also occupied Slovenia as far east as Ljubljana. Primorskan Slovenes—as well as anti-fascist Italians—joined the partisans in increasing numbers. Italy's capitulation suddenly called its pre- and intra-war territorial gains into question, ennobling the partisan forces fighting under Tito to make plans to claim Trieste and Istria. The Nazis prepared for the worst and seized the Julian March and Istria; these were transformed into the Reich province of *Adriatisches Küstenland,* and were thus isolated from Italian national life for the remainder of the war. During the final course of the war, the towns and valleys of the Julian March changed hands several times, seeing bitter partisan warfare, largely coordinated by the Communist Slovene-Italian Liberation Front, against the Fascist and, later, Nazi occupiers. Indeed, the utter volatility of the area, and the success of the partisan attacks against the Nazi occupying forces led the latter to create the only extermination camp on Italian soil in Trieste, where an estimated 3,000-5,000 persons lost their lives, the majority of whom were Slavic antifascists (Ballinger 2003a; Sluga 1996; Fölkel 1979; Bon Gherardi 1972).

On 1 May 1945, Trieste was liberated from Nazi control by Yugoslav forces led by Tito, and the diplomatic struggle for the annexation of the 'Free Territory of Trieste' began. While residual contemporary mistrust of the Italians among some Slovenophone factions relates primarily to the Fascist Italianisation campaign, contemporary Italian extremism toward the Slovenes relates to the consolidation of Yugoslav communist-partisan power in Istria and the harsh, 42-day Yugoslav occupation of Trieste, during which an unknown number of Italians in Trieste and Istria were thrown to their deaths in the Karst *foibe*. The exodus of the majority of the Italophone population of the Slovene littoral and Istria (estimated at between 200,000 and 350,000 people) during and after the war ultimately resulted in a magnificent change in the region's ethno-cultural composition, as well as a massive and difficult population shift toward refugee camps in Trieste and Gorizia, resettlement elsewhere in Italy, and migration abroad.

Land in the primarily Slovenophone Triestine upland was expropriated to provide temporary shelter for the 'exiles,' which further contributed to local ethnic hostility. Meanwhile, the Istrians who left, as well as those who remained in what was to become communist Yugoslavia, were, regardless of their relative innocence or guilt, collectively stained with the 'excesses' of fascism, and as such they were destined to pay for fascism's crimes; the Italian Communist Party's labeling of the exiles as such led to their lending their electoral support to the revanchist and 'post-fascist' Movimento Sociale Italiano (MSI), who were to dominate the Triestine and Gorizian political scene for decades in the guise of the exiles' protector (Ballinger 2003a:202).

The obsessive remembering of the tragedy of the *foibe* by the Triestine right-wing—which, combined with their revanchist territorial aspirations, ultimately resulted in the city being politically marginalized as the international political environment attempted to reconstruct itself in the post-war era—was, in essence, a response by the periphery to a conscious 'forgetting' which took place at the nation's centre (Favretto 2003; Valdevit 1999). Indeed, the silence regarding the *foibe* was intricately tied to the nation's collective lapse of memory regarding the Fascist era and its aftermath. Italy's refusal to accept

responsibility for fascism's crimes in the former Yugoslavia link to its national embarrassment that its war-time occupation had been a resolute failure, to its insistence that it had behaved nobly in contrast to the Germans and the Croats, and more broadly to its national conviction that it had been opposed to fascism and thus firmly aligned with the partisan and Allied struggle against it at the end of the war—with the direct conclusion that it should not be subject to war-crimes tribunals and excessive reparations (cf. Rodogno 2003; Rodogno 2004; Petrusewicz 2004; Pavone 2004). The debates regarding suffering and loss in this period are thus almost by nature mutually exclusionary ones demarcating opposite identities, histories, and memories for the region's population (cf. Ballinger 2004; Ballinger 2003a; Sluga 2001; Sluga 1996). Such relentless rhetorical exclusion of the mutual culpability has, in turn, produced its own political implications; for some Italian factions in Trieste, 'the historical 'crime' of the *foibe* deprives contemporary Slovenes of any basis for demanding that Italy honor its international treaty agreements concerning minority protection,' (Ballinger 2004:149; cf. Spanò 1995).

The Allies assumed control of Trieste on 12 June 1945. The Triestine hinterland, the Slovene littoral, and northwestern Istria came under Yugoslav administration at the same time. Several attempts were made by the delegations of Yugoslavia and Italy with the other Great Powers to divide the region along ethnic lines, despite the fact that no 'ideal' line existed. Outside of the so-defined 'Free Territory of Trieste,' the 1947 Peace Treaty between the Allied Powers and Italy eventually employed the French delegation's cartographic proposal to assign the Resia, Canal, and Natisone valleys, as well as the urban Gorizia and Monfalcone, to Italy; the remainder of the territory of the former province of Venezia Giulia was assigned to Yugoslavia. In addition to isolating Trieste geographically from both Italy and Slovenia (then within Yugoslavia), the post-war demarcation of the border also isolated it commercially. Slovenia, meanwhile, would remain without an Adriatic port until the enlargement of Koper-Capodistria beginning in 1957.

Ultimately confirmed in its territorial claims (and this time cowed by its wartime *volte-face*), Italy eventually agreed to be signatory to minority protection agreements with both Yugoslavia and Austria. While these provisions were largely ones which had already been informally agreed to after World War I, Italy now understood in signing them the precedent they would set in protecting its own minorities remaining in territories now 'abroad' (Alcock 1970:143). Nevertheless, a variety of reasons stood behind Italy's non-implementation of the full-extent of its protection commitments to its Slovenophone minority: its 'victor' status and 'moral' capital versus communist Yugoslavia (and the Slovenophones in Italy by association) during the Cold War; its lack of acceptance of its (mutual) culpability for the 'loss' of the historic Italophone communities in the Slovene littoral and Istria (which coincided with its pressure for protection toward the Italophones who remained; its relative, practical lack of experience with the legal and institutional development of regional autonomy and minority protection; its fears of secessionist movements in the autonomous regions; lack of mobilization on the part of the Slovenophone minority; Yugoslavia's lack of initiative in internationalizing the minority issue (as Austria did with South Tyrol), likely due to reluctance to jeopardize preferential foreign aid and trade agreements; and, the local power of the Triestine right-wing to block implementation of minority-protection measures on the 'understood' basis of Italy's failures to deliver on its promises to its Istrian refugees. One further obstacle for harmonizing minority protection in Friuli-Venezia Giulia was the historic absence of protection for the Slovenophone communities of 'Venetian Slovenia'; an inability to agree upon the terms and geographical extent of minority protection in the province of Udine

stalled discussion of further developments in the neighbouring provinces and toward a 'global' norm (Bratina 1997:129, 139).

The zonal demarcation of Trieste became the *de facto* international boundary following the 1954 London Memorandum. Considerations of the formation of a multi-ethnic free state centred upon Trieste had been quickly overshadowed by the politico-economic polarisation of Europe and Allied fear of a potentially Communist Italy. While the emerging Cold War thus ensured that Trieste returned to Italy, the looming split between Belgrade and Moscow (in large part due to the Yugoslavia's continued claim to Trieste) rapidly altered the relationship between the West and Yugoslavia. Beginning in the latter half of the 1950s, political relations between Italy and Yugoslavia began to normalize, leading to the beginnings of regional and borderland economic re-integration. Citizens of both nations began to cross the local border to visit relatives and on errands with increasing frequency following the signing of bilateral agreements on the movement of borderland residents in 1955. The divide between the Allies' original geo-political strategy behind the borderland demarcation and the daily socio-economic reality of the Italo-Yugoslav borderland widened throughout the 1960s and 1970s. At the same time, relations between the Slovenophone minority in Italy with Slovenia (within Yugoslavia) also began to normalize, and, in some ways, 'institutionalise,' through economic and cultural support mechanisms (Bratina 1997:130). Meanwhile, due to its ethno-linguistic composition and the frontier-related political *problématique* it faced, Friuli-Venezia Giulia was granted its own regional parliament and autonomous status within the Italian republic in 1964. By the mid-1960s, 'greater and more equitable Slovene participation in civic life stabilized, even if the effects were limited and transitory, and one can say that this fact, together with the institution of the [autonomous] region, signaled the definitive exit of [majority] Triestine political life from the period of post-fascism,' (Apih 1988:189).

De jure sovereignty over the existing border, sanctioned by the 1975 Helsinki Final Act, was finally formalised in the subsequent 1975 Treaty of Osimo. Negotiation over the Osimo Accords involved substantial discussion of cross-border, economic-integration-related measures throughout the borderland region. The extensive economic cooperation foreseen in the accords was by and large never pursued, however, due to what is widely perceived to be lack of interest among local political and economic actors. The minority-protection provisions of the Osimo Treaty concerned the right to Slovene-language education and press, to Slovenophone political, cultural, and recreational organizations, and a commitment to the community's overall equitable socio-economic development. Furthermore, the educational provisions were limited to the provinces of Trieste and Gorizia, and critically, did not include a reciprocal provision mandating courses in Slovene language and culture in Italian schools, in direct contrast to the Slovene littoral. As a result, local knowledge of the Slovenophone community and its history in Friuli-Venezia Giulia has generally remained isolated within the community.

Attempts by the Italian Communist Party (PCI) in 1970 to introduce Slovenophone minority-protection legislation into the Italian Senate for the first time were ultimately unsuccessful. Academic and (some) civic public attention in borderland region in the 1970s, meanwhile, turned the threat of assimilation, noting that the stability of the Slovenophone minority was potentially endangered by the increasing rate on inter-cultural marriages, the continuing 'expropriation' of territory in Slovenophone municipalities for industrial purposes as well as by Italophone re-settlement within them, sub-average higher-educational enrollment and qualifications within the community, minimal average capital accumulation in local financial institutions, the continuing perspective of their culture being a 'subaltern' one (Apih 1988:195; cf. Provincia di Trieste 1981). Furthermore, cultural

development was obstructed by the absence of cohabitation, the lack of educational administrative autonomy, and the continuing, seemingly endless legal debate over a ‘global protection’ statute for the region—which would, in particular, ‘officialise’ public use of the Slovene language (Apih 1988:196). Indeed, a ‘Catch-22’ presented itself, in which the extent of Slovene-language protection needed to be determined (in the province of Udine in particular), but wherein the ‘ethnic’ census required for doing so was refused for differing reasons on both sides of the debate, i.e., for fear of increasing/decreasing the estimated number of Slovenes in Italy (Apih 1988:196). These factors ultimately threatened the wider development of a distinctly Slovene middle class in the region (Sapelli 1988:259-260).

The late 1980s and early 1990s saw fundamental change in the Italian political environment, with the end of the Grand (anti-Communist) Coalition between the Christian Democrats (DC) and the Socialists (PSI). Meanwhile, despite the Osimo Treaty, the Italo-Slovene border once again became a ‘contestable’ upon Slovenia’s secession from Yugoslavia in 1991, which ‘allowed’ several formally settled issues to resurface: beyond the central issue of Slovenia’s succession in treaties concluded between Italy and Yugoslavia, political actors in Italy specifically raised the issues of compensation for/recuperation of property abandoned by Italians in the Slovene littoral, as well as the protection afforded the Italophone minority in Slovenia and in relationship to its counterpart in Croatia in the context of the two countries independence.

During the first Berlusconi administration, ‘Slovene’ issues appeared at the level of Italian foreign policy, most directly in Italy’s insistence upon Slovenia’s harmonisation of property rights prior to signing its EU Association Agreement, alongside intermittent threats to veto its accession if it did not comply. Italy’s actions—on behalf of the Triestine right wing—were ‘a challenge to the EU’s Common Foreign and Security Policy’ as well as the EU’s enlargement policy regarding a prime candidate (Gow and Carmichael 2000:206). Robust support for continued Italian intransigence toward Slovenia among factions in Trieste and elsewhere continued to sour local inter-ethnic relations generally on the eve of a potential rapprochement between the borderland minority communities and ‘their’ nations. Italo-Slovene bilateral relations thus frequently set the tone for local minority-majority relations in the early 1990s. Slovenia, in response, formally raised the question of the level of protection afforded the Slovenophone minority across the border.

While a majority within the Italian Parliament passed a resolution in October 1991 demanding recognition of Slovenia, this was not acted upon by the Italian state in an individual capacity. The extreme right continued to argue for a revision of the Osimo Treaty prior to Slovenia’s recognition (Sema 1994). Italy only recognized Slovenia in conjunction with the EU’s other member-states on 16 January 1992. Following the Berlusconi government’s collapse in 1994, the Spanish EU Presidency was able to broker a compromise to the property-claims issue in December 1995—and thus to find a path toward the ratification of Slovenia’s Association Agreement. The Prodi administration, which came into power in May 1996, finally signed Slovenia’s Association Agreement the following month. In amending its constitution in 1996 in order to allow property to be purchased by non-resident non-citizens from 1 July 2003, Slovenia’s desire to conclude its Europe Agreement carried the day (Šabič 2002:115). Slovenia was finally duly and formally admitted as a member-state of the EU on 1 May 2004.

Current issues in minority protection and patterns of civic participation

According to the Italian Ministry of the Interior, in 1994 there were an estimated 80,000 Slovenophones resident in Friuli-Venezia Giulia (Ministero dell’Interno:1994). Though its approach varies widely across its territory, Italy has occasionally proven itself capable of enlightened minority protection policies; its treatment of its Germanophone population in

South Tyrol is on par with Slovenia's treatment of its Italophone and Ugrophone minorities, who are, by most accounts, the best-protected small ethno-linguistic minorities in Europe. Roughly 2.5 million people in Italy, or 4.5% of the population, belong to one of 14 officially acknowledged minority groups, making Italy home to more minorities than any other EU country in absolute size. The variance in the level of protection afforded derives from the fact that affirmative minority rights are primarily connected to territory in Italy, rather than the inhabitants themselves (and similar to the connection of the autochthonous minorities to their municipalities in Slovenia).

Nevertheless, in the absence of a general law on minority protection, the officially recognised minorities enjoy differing statuses. Though they are present within 36 communities in Friuli-Venezia Giulia, the Slovenophones of the provinces of Trieste and Gorizia have been the longest and best protected due to the fact that they, unlike the province of Udine, had been subject to the post-war negotiations over the Free Territory of Trieste, and are presently provided with education in the Slovene language at the nursery, primary and lower- and upper-secondary levels, the right to address the local and provincial public administration in Slovene, bilingual identity cards, and bilingual toponomastic signage in their communities (though the latter is not fully implemented).

Italian Law 38 of 2001 officially recognised the Slovenophone community in 32 communities in Friuli-Venezia Giulia, and among them in several municipalities in the province of Udine, thus in principle making the latter equal in terms of rights with those resident of the provinces of Gorizia and Trieste for the first time. Law 38 will, however only apply in those municipalities of the province which specifically request it. As such, state funds destined for its fulfilment remain at present unassigned and/or unavailable to the province's municipalities; in large part, the present blockage in applying the law overall is due to political resistance within the local government in Trieste, which does not want the law applied to all six of the province's municipalities. As it had presumably been preoccupied with its own entrance into the European Union, the government of Slovenia had not confronted Rome on the law's application as of May 2004.

Economic activity and EU regional policy in the Italo-Slovene borderland

The EU, meanwhile, has programmatically sought to enhance cross-border development within and at the edges of the Union since 1991 both in order to increase the transactional efficency of the internal market and as part of its commitment to balanced territorial development. The Italo-Slovene border was one of the first targets of the Interreg cross-border cooperation programme due to Friuli-Venezia Giulia's own regional-developmental needs, the extant groundwork for cross-border institutional cooperation in the region due to the Alpe Adria regional-cooperation initiative begun in the 1970s, the priority given by the EU to politico-economic stabilisation alongside the former Yugoslavia as it began its wars of succession and to post-communist Central and Eastern Europe generally, as well as the tragic history of this particular frontier and the desire to facilitate better relations across it.

The first Interreg programming period, which ended in 1995, was an experimental 'familiarisation' exercise for this new Community Initiative financed through the Structural Funds, and as such, the initial programming period saw little, actual cross-border impact or participation from the Slovenian side of the borderland. The EU's Phare external assistance programme began operating in Slovenia in 1992, and a cross-border cooperation (CBC) component within it was formalised in 1994, though its interventions also took place entirely upon Slovene territory. The second phase of EU-led borderland integration, Interreg II Italy-Slovenia was finally approved in 1997. From the outset, the Interreg II programme was committed to enhancing the cross-borderness of its interventions beyond the (very limited) achievements of the earlier Interreg programme; its interventions were

divided into three 'axes': upgrading the region, local resources and environmental protection; improvements in institutional cooperation and communication; and, entrepreneurial cooperation (Ambrosi 2001). The specific objective of the loosely coordinated Phare CBC (cross-border cooperation) Slovenia-Italy programme was stated simply as to assist 'Phare areas bordering the EU to overcome their developmental problems' whilst promoting cross-border co-operation 'according to the Interreg programme principles,' (JPD:243-244). Interreg II and Phare CBC began in different years, and that lag had a significant impact upon programming, institutional cooperation, local-partnership development, and project implementation generally, as well as the overall programme's ability to achieve its aims. Meanwhile, the legal and administrative discrepancies between Interreg and Phare had vast implications for level of cross-borderness in its interventions.

For the purposes of the present Interreg IIIA Italy-Slovenia programme, the Italo-Slovene border is once again defined as both a land and maritime one; it includes on the Italian side the provinces of Udine, Gorizia, and Trieste (region of Friuli-Venezia Giulia), as well as the province of Venice (region of the Veneto), and on the Slovenian side the statistical regions of Obalno-kraška and Goriška as well as the municipality of Kranjska Gora. The 232 km-long land border connects 24 Italian municipalities with 13 Slovenian ones. The programming area covers an area of 11,400km^2 and a population of 1.9m (as of 1998; JPD:12). Financing was initially set at €93m for Interreg IIIA (43% of from the European Regional Development Fund, the remainder from national and regional sources), and €5m annually for the Phare CBC component. Following enlargement, the programme budget was reset at €56m, with Slovenia's Interreg receipts as a member-state for the 2004-2006 period remaining under discussion.

The Interreg IIIA Italy-Slovenia programme is the first to have a truly joint programming document as well as joint steering committee from the outset. Given the perceived institutional 'learning-by-doing' achieved by both the Commission and the Italian and Slovene actors in the last programming period, as well as the capacity to achieve greater cross-borderness via the person-to-person intervention supported by Phare's Small Projects Fund, officials on both sides were optimistic about the potentiality for Interreg IIIA to achieve greater results at its outset. Nevertheless, several factors still compromised seamless cooperation in the institutional environment: the cross-border partnership 'continuing' into this programming period initially involved new actors in Friuli-Venezia Giulia (though, following Riccardo Illy's election to the regional presidency, yet another regional development shake-up brought the earlier programme administration back in to lead the programme), the Slovenian regionalisation debate remained (and remains) unresolved, and the political environment in Trieste still encompassed several nationalist factions (though this issue has, to some extent, recently been mitigated somewhat by Illy's presence at the region's helm).

Though the Interreg programme does not specifically target the borderland minority communities within its development priorities, specific objectives within the programme have an implicit minority 'focus' (e.g., those geared toward cross-border cultural and vocational cooperation, or toward economic development at the border itself between similar linguistic communities), and minority organisations are among the many eligible to apply with projects for funding. Furthermore, minority representatives are invited to some committee meetings as experts in project elaboration or preliminary evaluation. Given the perceived institutional 'learning-by-doing' achieved by both the Commission and Italian and Slovene actors in the earlier programming periods, the creation of a Joint Technical Secretariat in Trieste to oversee Interreg IIIA, and the procedural and legal harmonization

which will come in the wake regarding the financial instruments involved with Slovenia's eligibility for Interreg funding itself from May 2001, officials on both sides and in Brussels have been optimistic about the potentiality for Interreg to achieve greater cross-border impact than it has in the past.

Conclusion

Despite a repeatedly tragic history of intercultural and political relations between the two 'kin' states, and in particular regarding Italy's past treatment of the Slavonophones resident within its territory, and current lack of truly 'positive discrimination' regarding its Slovenophone population, the EU-negotiated settlement of the property-restitution issue, recent developments in the political environment in Friuli-Venezia Giulia which have moved the administration further outside of the decades-old, obstructionist right-wing deadlock, the recent accession of Slovenia to the EU, the formal (if still in areas stalled) protection of the global Slovenophone population within Italian national legislation after a delay of half a century, and the continuing profound economic lure of Trieste for the Slovene littoral economy, all provide indication that socio-economic relations in the Italo-Slovene frontier should improve in the course of the coming decade. Examination of the experience of Interreg, and its contribution toward facilitating intra-ethnic and cross-border linkages between the frontier's communities will be undertaken in the sections to follow. While past evaluations of the Interreg programme have been lukewarm about its achieving cross-borderness in intervention, the seamlessness provided by Slovenia's participation in Interreg from 2004 should remedy many of the earlier obstacles to EU-led cooperation.

In the 1990s, the state of Slovene-minority participation in politico-economic affairs in Italy was in great flux, as questions that had been silenced on both sides of the post-war scenario have been reopened, and as the Slovene nation—both within and without its borders—has begun to raise its voice within a reuniting Europe. Though recent political developments in the Italian frontier have been largely positive and well-received ones, the long-term nature of the instruments and processes of European borderland integration mean that a decade of less cordial relations form the background of this case study and still continue to influence opinion and developmental direction within some sections of the borderland population and economy. As such, though Interreg has been one driver of borderland minority mobilisation, it is critical to note the impact of Slovenia's accession to the EU as a separate but coordinate factor in this arena. For this reason, bilateral relations between Italy and Slovenia, within the context of Slovenia's accession negotiations, have been introduced above and will be considered, where relevant, throughout.

It must also be noted that the lack of application of the free movement of persons principle, and the continuing presence of the Schengen frontier at the Italian border, following Slovenia's accession to the EU will have a dramatic impact upon transfrontier relations and commerce, insofar as levels of contact will not be seen to substantially increase. Though the process of accession has substantially harmonised the differences in the legal framework supporting cooperation and exchange between Italy and Slovenia, systemic discrepancies still exist, and thus must be recognised as a further factor limiting inter-ethnic and bilateral politico-economic engagement. Further, differences in the minority-rights regimes between the two states have differed for the past decade, and, as such, levels of minority representation on both sides of the border vary significantly. A fully transfrontier view is essential here, insofar as developments on the Italian side of the border must necessarily be understood alongside to the deeply evolved and ingrained protections extant on the Slovene side.

Annex II: Research competency mapping

Leading research institutions and experts

Research institution I

Istituto di Sociologia Internazionale di Gorizia/International Sociology Institute of Gorizia

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E: info@isig.it

Leading expert: Dr Alberto Gasparini

Founded in 1968, the Institute of International Sociology of Gorizia (ISIG), was born from the eagerness of Franco Demarchi and some far-sighted local leaders to contribute to changing the world through research, organising academic meetings, publishing books and journals and training the *elites* of a peaceful Europe. Gorizia, located on the border between eastern and western Europe, was chosen as the symbol of a border on which new ideas and prospects could be worked out in order to develop international cooperation and the dialogue between different cultures and systems. ISIG commits itself to: carrying out research and organising conferences on relations between states, nations and ethnic groups and on cultural, economic and social development of populations; providing policy making indications designed to promote the cultural, economic and social development of populations; and organising and promoting seminars. Its scholars have published extensively on issues related the Italo-Slovene border.

Research institution II

Istituto di Studi e Documentazione sull'Europa Comunitaria e l'Europa Orientale/
Institute for the Study and Documentation of the European Community and Eastern Europe

Corso Italia 27
34122 Trieste
Italy
T: +39.040.639.130
E: isdee@spin.it

Leading experts: Dr Tito Favaretto and Dr Benoît Hamende

Founded as an independent institute at the end of the 1960s on the initiative of a number of scholars, businessmen and politicians in Friuli-Venezia Giulia, ISDEE was designed to make a contribution to overcoming the marginalisation of Eastern Italy that had come about at the end of the Second World War with the installation of communist regimes and command economies in most of the nearby Central, Eastern and South-East European countries. For more than 20 years the relations that traditionally existed between Eastern Italy and these countries had been severely curtailed. Amid the first signs of detente in

East-West relations in the 1960s, ISDEE was therefore called upon to play a prevalently cultural role, aimed at restoring and developing contacts and mutual awareness above all with the Danube-Balkan region, with particular reference to the study of the political, institutional, social and economic structures of the single countries concerned. Despite the alternating degrees of success of the process of detente, this work developed through a number of initiatives in the 1970s and early 1980s.

In the second half of the 1980s there was an expansion of opportunities for contacts and operational relations, accompanied by an increase in demand for information and analysis at a regional and national level. This produced a need for a strengthening of the Institute and a revision of its strategy, as a result of which it was completely reorganised. The desire for a deepening of bilateral cooperation in Central and Eastern Europe and the Balkans and for a thoroughgoing assessment of relations between the EEC (subsequently the EU) and Eastern Europe led to an expansion of the remit of the Institute beyond the command-economy countries in the Danube-Balkan area to include Poland, the regional entities organised in the Alpe-Adria Working Community, Austria (in view of its important role as intermediary between the-then two Europes) and a number of sectors of European Community activity of particular relevance to the development of East-West relations. In this period, and up to the crisis of the communist regimes, ISDEE provided a constant contribution of knowledge and discussion, whose further exploration in some cases acted as a support for projects and initiatives of economic cooperation.

With the new epoch ushered in by the fall of the Berlin Wall and the disintegration of Yugoslavia, the Institute's analytical work entered a more complex phase, with which the far-sighted reorganisation of 1987 helped it to cope. The Institute's structural reorganisation enabled it to go deeper into the political, institutional, economic and social repercussions of the transition processes under way in Central and Eastern Europe and the development of the crisis in Yugoslavia and its subsequent break-up into new states and entities marked by unresolved political and ethnic conflicts. It also resulted in a strengthening of documentation and analysis aimed at following the development and the characteristics of the process of rapprochement and integration in Europe.

The work of the Institute is thus focused on an assessment of the various geoeconomic and geopolitical opportunities available to Italy and its North-Eastern regions, in terms of both the EU enlargement to include Central and Eastern Europe and the more complex question of the stabilisation of the Balkans. To this end, ISDEE has been able to rely on specific experience and expertise acquired over years of work. Since its inception, the Institute has been organised on country-based sectors of documentation and analysis and economic and political-institutional theme-based working groups. The presence of a permanent pool of researchers has allowed the selection of a nucleus of top-level experienced analysts who are highly tuned to changes within single countries and relations between them and the EU.

Research institution III

Inštitut za narodnostna vprašanja/Institute for Ethnic Studies

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Slovenia
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Leading experts: Dr Miran Komač and Dr Petra Roter

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 Slovene ethnic question; the status of Slovene ethnic communities in Italy, Austria and Hungary; the status of Slovenes in the successor states of the former Yugoslavia; the status of Slovene emigrants, and of ethnic communities (national minorities and other ethnic groups) in Slovenia; the status of migrants in Slovenia, theory and methodology of the research of ethnic topics; and, ethnic issues, ethnicity, and nationalism in Europe and worldwide.

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, mostly dealing with the status of Slovenes in the neighbouring countries, and of the German and Hungarian minorities in Slovenia. When the Slovene territory was occupied, the Institute was liquidated lest its materials fall into the hands of occupiers. Yet as early as January 1944, in the liberated territory, the Scientific Institute was founded within the Executive Committee of the Liberation Front; this institute, as the only institution of this kind in the occupied Europe, continued the work of the Minority Institute. By by 1948, its department for border issues transformed into the Institute for Ethnic Studies. From 1948 to 1956, the Institute functioned within the frames of the University in Ljubljana, whilst it has since become an independent scientific institution. In 1992, the IES became one of the first public research institutions in Slovenia.

Research institute IV

Mirovni Inštitut/Peace Institute & Institute for Contemporary Social and Political Sciences

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Leading experts: Franja Arlič and Bratko Bibič

The Peace Institute was founded in 1991 by a group of independent intellectuals. Initially the Peace Institute focused on peace studies and the issues of violence, war and security. In 1994 and 1995, its field of interest was extended to embrace a wider range of contemporary social and political studies. Among the topics that were added to its agenda were racism and political conflicts, gender studies, cultural studies, and political and social practice. Its endeavours to integrate academic work with concrete social and political engagement led to a number of action research studies and projects. In addition to the topics mentioned above, we also began to concentrate on political extremism, democratisation and equal opportunity politics in Central and Eastern Europe, independent women's and feminist movements in Slovenia, as well as issues of sexual abuse, refugees, civil service in place of military service, cultural industry and the like.

Towards the end of 2000 three additional programs formerly conducted by the Open Society Institute of Slovenia were transferred to the Peace Institute: Media, Civil Society and East-East Cooperation programmes. With the inclusion of these programs its area of

work was further extended to the fields of human rights, media studies, and topics related to the EU and Stability Pact. It continues to devote close attention to marginalized social and political issues that are usually ignored by mainstream institutions.

Research Institute V

EURAC Institute for Minority Rights

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Leading experts: Marko Joseph and Markko Kallonen

EURAC is an institute for applied research and further education, with focuses in several fields, including multilingualism, federalism and regionalism, regional development, the Alpine environment, and minority rights.

EURAC's Institute for Minority Rights has been dedicated to research on issues related to the protection of minorities for many years. South Tyrol's Autonomy is compared with the situation of minorities in other European countries, providing the basis for our comprehensive research, consultation and training activity. Yet, in today's rapidly changing Europe, its research can no longer be limited to instruments of minority protection in the traditional sense. Legal issues related to the growing problem of emigration must be addressed. In Europe, emigration waves and the various related cultural values (as in South Tyrol, with its Ladin, Italian and German populations) often collide with the established systems for minority protection systems. The following questions arise as a result:

• How can cultural, linguistic and religious rights be applied to the relationship between majority and minority groups at the national and international levels?
• How can democracies and constitutions be implemented at the local administrative level in order to encourage the social integration of minorities without assimilating them?
• How can consciousness of minority rights and cultural variety be fostered and promoted as common European values?
• How can general socio-political acceptance be achieved and xenophobia combated?

These and other questions are addressed in its research activities. As co-operating partners, they work together with the multi-cultural city of Bolzano/Bozen's minority representatives, local administrations and also the majority population; at the European and international levels, with organizations like the OSZE, the Council of Europe, the European Union or the UN, as well as a broad network of University research establishments. Their research findings are made public in a series of publications, scientific essays and online papers, distributed, with the consultation of governments, NGOs, and local political bodies throughout Europe and beyond.

Ed.: In addition, three research institutes outside of Italy and Slovenia whose undertakings are not limited to the specific regions in which they operate are noted. Their expertise, current research, and extensive publishing on the socio-economic issues facing European borderlands, as well as on borderland minorities, their participation in civic affairs, and their relations with the state generally, should prove very fruitful for this project.

Research institute VI

Centre for Border Studies

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Leading experts: Prof. Stefan Berger and Prof. Chris Williams

The Centre for Border Studies at the University of Glamorgan was established in 2003 with funding from the Higher Education Funding Council for Wales. It is committed to producing research that is focused on and highly relevant to Wales but that is European in scope and global in significance. It aims to make a significant contribution to the better understanding of the intertwined nature of diverse national, political and cultural identities in contemporary Wales, Europe, and beyond. The Centre benefits from a formal link with the Department of International Politics at the University of Wales, Aberystwyth and also works in partnership with academics at the Universities of Wales Bangor and at Swansea.

Research institute VII

Institut for Grænseregionsforskning/Danish Institute of Border Region Studies

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Leading experts: Dr Gregg Bucken-Knapp and Dr Michael Schack

The Danish Institute of Border Region Studies conducts research within the fields of social science and the humanities. The Institute was established by the Danish government and the County of Southern Jutland (Sønderjyllands Amt) as an independent research institute in 1976. Since January 2004, it has been a constituent department of the University of Southern Denmark, and is active within issues relating to the Danish-German border region, as well as those relating to the European border regions, including European integration and co-operation efforts.

Its researchers provide cross-disciplinary expertise covering a broad range of fields within the social sciences and the humanities: history, language, regional and national economics, geography, sociology and social science. Research topics include the history of the national minorities, the history of businesses and institutions, bilingualism, cross-border shopping and consumer behaviour, education and the labour market, cross-border commuting, tourism, the environment, social conditions, culture and leisure. Further subjects of study are cross-border regional co-operation and the evaluation of business development programmes. The Institute and its staff participate in research networks and collaborations with many other researchers, institutions and organisations both at home and abroad.

The Institute is its own publisher, and issues most of its own research results. Larger monographs are published separately, while smaller papers on special topics or with a limited target audience are generally published in the Institute's series called *Notater*.

Research institute VIII

Borderland Foundation

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Leading expert: Krzysztof Czyżewski

The main objective of the Borderland Foundation is to contribute to strengthening borderland environmenst through its research and cultural outreach, to assist in the development of everyday practices which create open communities in areas where different national, ethnic, religious, and cultural minorities co-exist, and to offer means for preserving traditional and minority cultures. Its activities include its Documentation Center for Borderland Cultures and its Borderland Publishing House, as well as cultural sponsorship, conferences, educational offerings, and short-term initiatives.