# Border Discourse:
# Changing Identities, Changing Nations, Changing Stories in European Border Communities

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## A 'state-of-the-art' report

## by Ulrike Hanna Meinhof and Dariusz Galasinski in collaboration with the European Border Identities consortium

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## Part 1

## Description of the Project

Many nation states in Europe have undergone dramatic social and political upheavals in this century with the construction of new or the redefinition of existing national borders before and after World War II, and more recently as a result of the collapse of the Soviet Union. New borders divide territory, which was previously unified, old borde rs collapsed, reuniting territory previously divided. The political definition and ideological make -up of many nation states changed accordingly, with new developments in process today which offer major new alignments in Eastern and South -Eastern Europe un der the umbrella of an expanding European Union. Families with three generations in the communities on the borders between what is at present the European Union's Eastern and South -Eastern frontier, and those on the previous border between East and West Ge rmany will have experienced between them several dramatic sociopolitical changes during the life -time of their older citizens. They had to embrace major shifts in their public allegiances. Our research focuses on such families in corresponding sets of bord er communities, and aims to compare how their members perceive and discursively construct their identities in relation and possibly in contrast and opposition to these upheavals in the official spheres of politics.

## Cultural and national identity

Processes of globalisation, democratisation and the expanding European Union offer transnational redefinitions of cultural identity. Yet paradoxically, nationalism and national identity are still major forces and causes of conflict in present -day Europe. This gives the study of identity formation in these new or previous border territories and of the possibilities for social cohesion or division, a renewed theoretical and practical urgency.

## Overall objective

Our research aims to identify the nature of potentially conflicting identities which people in different border communities along the eastern and southern borders of the European

Union construct, and to identify and advise on effective policies for integration and social cohesion at regional, national, transnat ional and European level. More specifically the following closely interrelated objectives inform our work in six sets of adjacent border communities.

## Detailed objectives

- to identify differences and similarities in the historical conditions in politically sensitive border communities along the eastern and south -eastern borders of the EU.

- to identify the ways in which members from three -generation families in the different geographical locations along the eastern and southern borders of the European Union perceive and narratively construct their identities in relation, and possibly in contrast and opposition, to each other and to the upheavals in the official spheres of politics;

- to examine how the discursive markers of identity appear in the lexico -grammatic al structures of the data. To examine how these markers interplay with the visual stimuli provided by selected photographic representations of the changing geographical and socio-political environment of the respective border territories, and of other symbolically charged images.

- to identify the similarities and differences in the identity formations of individuals and groups of different ages and gender and how they interact with differences in nationhood, experience, and memory;

- to identify how evaluation s about people living on the other side of the borders (e.g. friend/enemy positions) relate to the formations of a group identity in people's own community (e.g. negative identity);

- to examine whether, to what extent and how they perceive themselves today as Europeans in opposition to or as an extension of other forms of personal, local, regional, national or transnational identities;

- to find out whether and to what extent European identity is embraced as a solution to perceived national or regional confli cts or whether it is itself perceived as a conflict. To identify the key elements within the linguistic and cultural environment of border communities which encourage the perceptions of social cohesion or disunity at local, regional, national and European levels.

- to examine how people relate to the different public policies in these communities, regions or nations, where social cohesion and economic prosperity is the aim of cross - border projects, eg projects at the public administrative level, and to compar e these to other shared but more grass -root driven activities such as cross -border sports, shopping, eating out or disco evenings;

- to examine whether and to what extent there are similarities and differences between the different geographical areas under c onsiderations, and if so, whether and how these interrelate with structural similarities caused by the border existence itself and/or by economic and social changes caused by the political reorientation of the respective nation states.

- to create comparative data sets for the above across different but comparable border communities along the eastern and south -eastern borders of the European Union and including communities along the former and now dissolved border between East and West Germany, with the aim t o support best practice for the creation of a tolerant, socially inclusive and economically vibrant Europe.

- to indicate means by which policies can best combat social tensions and promote a European identity.

## A united socially cohesive Europe of cultural diversity

The aim of our project is to shed light on the difficulties of creating a united Europe which is more than just an administrative entity for its people. A Europe which is socially cohesive whilst respecting national cultural traditions, which ov ercomes painful traditions without pretending to create superficial solutions, which builds on tolerance and respect of others without ignoring the problems which mutual mistrust and resentments cause, and which encourages co -operation and economic prosper ity.

Policies in the public sphere at regional, transregional and European level are fully committed to the principles of tolerance, mutual support, social and economic collaboration and integration, especially in those regions of Europe where the poorer non-EU countries share a border with the much wealthier EU nation states. One complicating factor for collaboration in these regions is that within the EU, and in spite of their relative prosperity compared with their non -EU neighbours, these communities a re still marginalised within their own countries in socio -economic terms. Policies often do not meet with the support of the population on either side of the borders, with people's responses ranging from resentment to outright hostility, for reasons which are in part, but only in part understandable by socio -economic explanations. We believe that in order to decide on ways and means for counteracting such widespread resentment against public policy, and encourage collaboration which will further long -term economic prosperity as well as mutual respect at trans -regional and European level, we need to understand much better how people in these communities construct their cultural identities. All public policy decisions at whichever level need to take account of the many fundamental political and socio -economic changes which their communities have undergone and are still undergoing.

Painful experiences within and between generations of the same and of the neighbouring countries have not only often set the belie fs and attitudes of one generation against the other, but also reinforced long -term stereotypes precisely because of living literally next -door to the 'other'. It is thus essential to understand the process whereby the identification of and with one's own sets of in-groups feeds of and is interdependent with the construction of 'out -groups'.

## Theoretical background

Identity research into different communities is not only a central theoretical concern of many disciplines in the social sciences, from linguist ics to social psychology to politics and sociology. It also focuses on a vast array of different geographically, politically and/or socially defined groupings. Depending on the nature of the theoretical paradigms, different research methodologies are emplo yed to answer different sets of research questions. Below are only a few selected works which indicate the width and breadth of identity research in recent years.

Within Cultural Studies, Hall (1990, 1992, 1996) Kearney (1991) Gilroy (1993) Gillespie (1995) explore some theoretical and empirical questions of identity formation, including those of Diaspora communities and of indigenous ethnic minorities within European nation-states (see also Parker (1995) Brah (1996) (Busch & Wakounig 1997) (Wastl - Walter et al 1993). In political sciences as well as in social psychology, interest in different forms of collective identification is creating a new focus on the nature of multiple identities and the question of their mutual compatibility or incompatibility with one anothers (Duchesne & Frognier 1995, Ingelhart & Reif 1991, Ingelhart 1997, Mlicki & Ellermers 1996, Risse 2000). In social anthropology, the study of divisive border communities has led to a differentiation between the political and the cultural space s of identity (for illuminating case studies on divided communities in Cyprus see Papadakis 1997, 1999). For researchers with an interest in language and identity a focus on autobiographical narratives has provided a key device for tapping into the multila yered processes of identity formation (Taylor, 1989; Rosenwald & Ochberg, 1992; Vila, 1997). Critical social psychologists also have emphasised the importance of studying identity through discourse (see e.g. Beattie & Doherty, 1995; Potter & Wetherell, 198 7; Wetherell & Potter, 1992). The social psychologist Billig (1995, 1996) convincingly shows how every-day talk about nationhood forms an essential part in the daily, casual, unobtrusive confirmation and reconfirmation of national identity. Linguistic stud ies of ethnic minorities have prioritised the relationship between majority and minority languages, concentrating on language or dialect shift or language maintenance, and on individual and collective beliefs about language held by these groups, as indicat ors of their cultural identities (Gal, 1993 & 1995; Stevenson, 1997).

Such different research perspectives not only affect the classical differentiation in the social sciences between quantitative and qualitative methods, they also affect a more fundamental question about the nature of identity itself. Whether a collective identity, such as, for example, a 'national identity' is perceived or hypothesized as a relatively unified concept, with a relatively cohesive sets of assumptions shared by all of those who adhere to it, whether identity is seen as multiple but complementary (i.e. made up of many complementary sets of concentric circles such as a European who also identifies as an Italian, a Tuscan and a Florentine), or whether it is perceived as mul tiple and fragmented in a fluctuating, unstable, context -dependent way can be both the presupposition of a research programme as well as its key result. This is not as paradoxical as it seems. Thinking, for example, of a national or a regional identity as something relatively stable and conscious makes it feasible to construct questionnaires which elicit informers' preference of one collective identity over another or at showing

the nature of their identification (eg as more instrumental or more emotional) and its strength. Thinking of identity as stable but not necessarily conscious makes it feasible to construct observational or experimental methods which show how identification affects our behaviour towards others of the same or the outside group. Thinkin g of it as context-dependent but stable under the same contextual conditions still allows experiments and experimental manipulation of the conditions. However, if we think of identity as an ongoing fluctuating construction which people engage and confirm t hrough their narratives and ways of talking, then this will require the detailed analysis of how and under which circumstances such shifts occur. The latter emphasis on discourse points to intensive qualitative methods both in research design and subsequen t analysis of results which could then be contextualised by more large scale studies. In our view, such experiences cannot be appreciated by opinion polls or questionnaires (such as for example, the Eurobarometer, see Ingelehart & Reif 1991) they require i n-depth understanding of how people construct and confirm their cultural identities in an on -going process of narrating themselves and their experiences in concrete cultural contexts. In other words identity cannot be separated from the people who discursi vely 'perform' it (see also Barker & Galasinski, *forthcoming*).

Our own methodology, confirmed by prior studies of our own and other social scientists draws on an understanding that language interacts with social structure in a dialogic and mutually interdependent and reinforcing way. By focusing not only on what people actually consciously say (for example by choosing a particular content or set of words) but also on the ways in which they do (for example by choosing or avoiding particular grammatical forms) we will be able to draw conclusions about the complexities of peoples' identity formations which are sensitive to possible contradictions and tensions in these constructions. Although there is evolving work by critical discourse analysts on identity formations, such as by Wodak and others in Austria which includes a linguistic analysis of focus group discussions from Slovenia and Austria (Wodak et al 1999), a comparative exploration of cultural identity in border communities through the techniques of (c ritical) discourse analysis does not yet exist. Yet discourse analysis with a focus on formal features of language as well as content, could offer a different and, in our view, more comprehensive and complex take on identity construction from the above.

## Constructing cultural identity through discourse

Our own study is based on the fundamental assumption that language is a social phenomenon and as such does simultaneously represent and reinforce the values and beliefs of our social environment. These values and beliefs are not monolithic nor are they static, but multiple, contradictory and in flux (Volosinov, 1973 & 1976; also Billig, et al. 1988). We share the view of critical discourse analysts that any utterance which is designed to represent social real ity necessarily entails decisions as to which of its aspects to include or exclude, and secondly decisions as to how to arrange them. Each of the selections made in the construction of an utterance thus carries its share of values, so that the reality repr esented by the choices is at the same time socially constructed (Hodge & Kress, 1993: 5). Alternative representations are possible by selecting different options from the 'meaning potential' (Halliday 1978: 112ff) of a culture, but their significance

changes accordingly (Fowler 1996:4). Discourse analysis with its finely tuned methods of accounting not only for lexical choices but also for grammatical form and larger syntactic and textual patterns thus becomes a powerful tool in understanding how people eng age with social reality (van Dijk 1997, Wodak 1996) and how they construct their cultural identities in relation to changes in the social environment.

We also assume, that people construct their identities through narratives. We share the view of many cultural theorists that cultural identity is not a reflection of a fixed, natural, state of being, the one true essential self, but a process of becoming. There is no essence of identity to be discovered, rather cultural identity is continually developing wit hin the vectors of similarity and difference, of inclusivity and exclusivity (Hall, 1990, 1992, 1996). The points of difference around which cultural identities could form are interactive with socio-political contexts and are thus multiple and proliferatin g and subject to change. If we refer to identity as a discursive construct we imply and emphasize, that identity construction in our view is a complex ongoing process potentially full of contradictions and paradoxes; and that our narratives are primary mod es for engaging with such constructions. An analysis of people's narratives thus gives us the opportunity for seeing these processes in action.

Any large-scale collective identity such as a national one depends on the ability of people to perceive commonality, cohesion and continuity even where they do not know one another in person. This is what Anderson's much -quoted phrase of the 'imagined community' implies (Anderson, 1983; also Schlesinger, 1991). But it is a provisional, hybrid, and ongoing form of i dentification which has to be continually produced and reproduced over time and across space, if it is to retain its cohesive force. Instead of thinking of national cultures as unified, which once established are fixed forever, we should think of them as a discursive device complementary to and in competition with other forms of identity discourses. The unity of the nation seen from that perspective, is constructed through the narrative of the nation by which stories, images, symbols and rituals represent 'shared' meanings of nationhood.

At times of major socio -political changes when the official narratives of the nation may undergo a radical re -writing or separating off, such discursive constructions of unity may come under considerable stress. The signif icance of this for the people living in our target communities should be obvious if we consider the fundamental changes they had to undergo. For them the official narratives of the nation – for example from pre -war united to post-war divided to post 1990 r e-united Germany, - were re-written not just once, but in the case of the older generation several times. For these people this not only meant a challenge of how to construct their own cultural identity in response to official changes. By living in newly c reated or newly defined border communities, they had to do this in relation to oppositional constructions of the nation on the other side of the border - literally by 'looking across' at the Other in their every -day lives.

Vila (1997) has shown in his stu dy of border communities on the Mexican -US borders that living on either side of the border had fundamental effects on the ways in which

ethnic Mexicans constructed their origin as either an asset or a liability. The target communities of our research alon g either side of the border -lines from the Baltic to the Adriatic Sea, famously named as 'The Iron Curtain' by Churchill, were faced with the much more dramatic situation of having to construct and recontextualise their identities during major sociopolitic al upheavals. No comparative research has been done on the identity construction of different generation family members in such communities who have experienced between them such different stages in their public world. Cultural identity under those unusual circumstances is likely to be constructed through discourses which bear traces of such strains, not just for each individual but also as a generational conflict.

## First results

In an ESRC (UK) funded study conducted between August 98 and October 1999 in t he former East-German town of Hirschberg and its West German counterpart Tiefengrün, and in the border communities of (German) Guben and (Polish) Gubin we found evidence of conflicting identity formations in the (explicit) narratives of conflicts as well a s, and sometimes in contrast to, the (implicit) discursive structures of the narratives (Meinhof and Galasinski 2000, Galasinski and Meinhof forthcoming, Meinhof and Galasinski forthcoming, Meinhof in preparation). For example, when people from different generations recounted the effect which the collapse of the GDR and subsequent unification had on their every -day lives, or when the different voices of authority (grandparents, parents and children; teachers then and now) were listed, or finally when the people on the other side of the river were described, this took the form of conscious evaluations in the story telling. But we also found evidence of more unconscious and often self-contradictory linguistic markers of identity (for example shifts in the use of pronouns: impersonal/ personal; -us and them-, in place adverbials -here/ over there -; and modality markers in general (Meinhof and Galasinski 2000).

A detailed analysis of these shifting discourses reveals no evidence for either of the hypotheses disc ussed in some areas of social sciences, which one can summarize as the 'conflictual' or the 'complementary' version. There was no consistency in the narratives of our informants which would allow us to postulate on the one hand, that a transnational identity such as a European one is in competition with national and/or regional identification (conflictual model), nor is there any consistent evidence for the opposite, that those who feel strongly about the nation are more ready to identify with the larger political unit of the EU (complementary model). In relation to the collectivities offered up by town/village, region / federal state, interregion (eg the region of the 'Vogtland' comprising former East and West German regions; or the Neisse region comprising Polish and German territory), by national, and transnational identifications, the only regular feature supported by all the German narratives was a strong sub -national identity. All our informants from eastern Germany identified more or less strongly wit h the newly founded federal states of Thuringia and Brandenburg which have long cultural traditions (see also Richardson and Meinhof 1999 and Meinhof and Richardson 1999), those from western Germany with the Bavarian sub -region of Upper Franconia which i s dialectally and socio-culturally distinct from the more southern regions of the large federal state of Bavaria to which it belongs. All the other possibilities of identification were sometimes adopted or sometimes rejected, but often both evaluations ap peared in the same

informants' narratives in different discursive contexts. In relation to aspects or symbols of European unity for example, one informant's rejection of the EU's policies including the Euro as a currency altered to a positive evaluation in  the context of talking about travelling in Europe. Inversely the positive evaluation of the EU for our Polish informants became more problematical in the context of the corresponding rights which other Europeans but especially the German neighbours might  thus acquire in relation to the purchase of Polish land and property (see Meinhof & Galasinski forthcoming). Although strictly qualitative, our study points to a potential underlying problem in identity research based on questionaires, directive interviews , or experiments, namely that people's identities may be too complex, contradictory, context -dependent and only partially open to self-inspection and self -description. This not only has implications for the reliability of quantitative studies (such as the  Eurobarometer) but also for the nature of qualitatively oriented semi -structured interviews.

## Methodological innovation

Because of the inherent difficulties of tapping into people's beliefs, attitudes, emotions by usual interrogative methods, we decided t hat we needed to find novel and more indirect ways for our investigation.

The oral narratives of our informants are triggered and partially structured by a selection of photographs and images showing the border territory in general, and salient images of division and unity during the different phases in the communities' existence: for example, geographic images which are highly charged symbolically, such as the bridges across rivers which became borders; images which directly or symbolically represent the  results of public investment: such as buildings or EU notices on buildings financed with EU help, and symbolic images which signal different allegiances such as the stars of the European Union, or different national flags . This gives the informant more fr eedom in their story telling and thus reduces interviewer bias more than is the case in the more usual form of interviews, but it does provide sufficient constraint for cross  -sample analysis.

Using photographs as trigger material also allows us the neces sary integration between a discourse analytical and an ethnographic approach.  We are not only interested in peoples' accounts of their life -experiences, as shown by what they would tell us about themselves and their communities during these periods. We al so focus on the ways in which they would do this; or put differently, by the forms of language, and the selections made from the lexico -grammatical options of the language available to them. Using images avoids the risk that in formulating our questions we  might introduce those very words and labels which we will subsequently identify as salient forms in the marking of identity. Although photographs also introduce an evaluative dimension, they avoid linguistic labels and thus circularity between research de sign and analysis. We are building here on the work by Vila (1997), as well as on more general theories about the significance of photography as a memory trigger  (agreeing with and extending Keenan's 1998 critique of Sontag, 1972 and Barthes, 1982). Furth ermore, our previous work has shown that although the use of evaluative photographs as a trigger for our conversatons affected peoples' initial responses it did not bind them to the time and space nor the emotional impact of what

was being shown. In additi on to the traditionally recognised indexical capacity of photography referring to the location represented in the photographic images (e.g. Messaris, 1997), our informants constructed them in terms of two other indexicalities. They took the photographs to refer to their way of life, and their experiences of the changing realities of their public world. Informants moved with extraordinary fluidity across the time and space recorded in the pictures (Meinhof and Galasinski 2000). We are thus able to use photog raphy as a powerful trigger for personal narratives which locate speakers' experiences within historical, social and political contexts.

Once the informant has introduced particular labels, evaluating expressions, ideologically sensitive terms, or other s alient linguistic markers, the interviewers can then incorporate all those verbal markers into their own manner of speaking. By accommodating to the interviewees' discourses the interviewers are thus able to retain an ethnographic perspective which allows participation in the informants' narratives inspite of the emphasis on discursive constructions for our analysis.

The method of triggering the narratives with photographic material thus reduces the role of the researcher to a minimum. The researcher does not have to 'ask questions' that may reflect the researcher's or the consortium's academic interests. The method allows the informant to choose both the thematic (global) as well as the lexico -grammatical (local) make-up of the story. In such a way the dat a will reflect the social and cultural context of the informant. Furthermore, by selecting native/ bilingual speakers as the researchers (data collectors) we also ensure as much as possible a common frame of reference in the situation of the interview. The shared frame of reference enables the researcher to fully engage with the narrative, if necessary to follow up points of interest to the consortium. Only towards the end of the interview will we be asking more direct questions to ensure a further set of c omparative data across the communities.

## Border communities and their families

The following communities are the target of our investigation conducted by a consortium consisting of researchers from 6 different universities, with our own prior research conducted in Guben/ Gubin and Hirschberg/ Tiefengrün providing the basis for further expansion and comparison to the other communities.

As the detailed descriptions below makes obvious, there are many differences in the historical, socio -political, geographica l and demographic structures and development of the 6 sets of communities: they comprise rural village and industrial town communities with stable and/or declining populations, they vary in level of interactvitiy and contact between the population and othe r features. Our research will take note of these differences in the collection and analysis of data, and will remain sensitive to local specificities. However, some key features are shared by all of our border communities, and others are shared by one set and not by the others. It is on their basis that comparisons will be made at cross -community and cross -country level. The most important of these comparable features are as follows:

- the current situation of each set of community being situated amongst the current border between the EU and ascendant nations from the East and South -east

- a historical similarity in that some of the borders coincide with the post -world war II divisions between the Western market economies and socialist state economies, with former Yugoslavia as a special case of relative autonomy amongst the socialist states.

- a historical similarity in the level of isolation between the communities especially where the border coincided with the so -called Iron Curtain.

- a similarity in rapprochme nts between the eastern and the western states as a result of two macro -political events in particular: the collapse of the Soviet Union and the separation of the Yugoslav Republic into smaller separate nation -states. These similarities will allow us to co llect data from three -generation families whose public life has been influenced by comparable macro -political changes and compare them with one another.

- all communities receive some kind of EU support through various intra -regional and other kinds of prog rammes. This will allow us to gauge our informants response to the EU not only in the general and possibly quite abstract sense of a 'European identity' but also in relation to concrete EU supported developments (for a brief account of these EU programmes in our communities see below; but see Part 3 for more details)

The following communities (listed in geographical order from North to South) are the main focus of our enquiries:

- on the German -Polish border the towns of GÖRLITZ and ZGORZELEC;

- on the Ge rman-Czech border the towns of BÄRENSTEIN and VEJPRTY;

- on the former border between East and West Germany: Bavarian and Thuringian border communities;

- on the Austrian -Hungarian border, the villages of MOSCHENDORF (Nagysároslak) and PINKAMINDSZENT (Allerhe iligen);

- on the Austrian -Slovenian border the towns of EISENKAPPEL/ŽELEZNA KAPLA and JEZERSKO;

- on the Italian/ Slovenian border the towns of GORIZIA/GORICA and NOVA GORICA.

Part 2 of this report is a detailed account of the historical, economic demograp hic and cultural development of these communities and their current situation which shows the extraordinary socio -political environment in which families in these communities found themselves in.

## Comparability of families across our communities

In order to allow us comparability across our communities and the families chosen, samples of the following persons are being targeted:

a)      The young generation: the 14 -19 year olds of today. Individuals who experienced only the most recent changes in Europe as chil dren (e.g. the fall of the Soviet Union and Yugoslavia, the unification of Germany, the democratisation of Eastern Europe). For this generation the present status quo has been a reality for most of their youth, and they have therefore experienced previous  divisions mainly through the narratives of the older generations and school

b)      The middle generation: the 35 -65 year olds of today. Individuals who for most of their lives experienced the post -war division. They were socialised into different political regimes or in contrast to them. This generation had to accommodate a complete redefinition of the socio -political environment of the societies they grew up in.

c)      The older generation: the 70 + age range of today. Individuals who experienced pre-WW II and  WW II Europe. Furthermore, they are the generation that was subject to considerable social and demographic changes when forced to change their domicile. The older generation of Polish people living in Gubin, for example, were moved into the eastern part o f the former German town of Guben, renamed as Gubin in 1945, as a result of deliberate (and in part) enforced repatriation from other parts of Poland, including the most eastern region which was claimed by the Soviet Union and is today part of the Ukraine.

In the majority of our communities our sample families will be drawn from native speakers of the respective nation -states to which the communities belong in our present period. However, because of the substantive minority communities of Slovenians on Slovenia's Austrian and Italian border we will also include comparable samples from these ethnic minorities.

## To summarize:

Our project addresses two of the key issues in today' s social sciences   - the formation of identity and the creation of social cohesio n. Secondly, the project is designed to have direct application in formulation of policies both at the European Union as well as regional and local levels. Upon completion of the research we shall be in a position not only to make an informed comment upon  the existing policies, but also offer advice on the development of new policies in such areas as European integration, development of national, regional and local co -operation, and the development of social inclusivity.

Our study addresses the complex int eraction between public/ official definitions of national identity and other forms of collective cultural identity including the most personal. By focusing on the narratives of different generations which, at the official

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level, have experienced shifts in the emotional construction of friend/enemy positions as part of the larger political allegiances of their respective nations, we hope to throw some light on the processes whereby such positions are introduced into the self -reflecting narratives of our samp le groups. We also hope to find linguistic evidence for healing processes and conflict resolution which may allow some insights into how best to further the development of social cohesion.

The project is aimed at filling in at least two gaps in the social scientific research devoted to identity. Firstly, and most importantly, it combines the general postulates of contemporary studies of a national and transnational identity research with a linguistic project. Building on our previous research experience we shall be able not only to make claims as to whether and how national identities are perceived in contrast or combination with other available identity markers including those of the transnational/ European ones. We shall also be able to develop arguments of a more general nature relating to identity as a discursive construct.

Methodologically, the elicitation of narratives through the use of photographs will provide an innovative alternative to the more usual techniques of the semi -structured interview gu ided through open questions and answers, in that there is more freedom for interviewees to relate to images instead of answering directive questions which necessarily convey the representational interests of the researchers. In such a way we shall accompli sh minimal intervention and interference with the narratives from the interviewers. At the same time, the pilot study has shown that the pictures do provide sufficient constraints to make the data comparable across samples.

The implications of working wit h three generation families in comparable border communities in Europe, belonging to different nations and regions, yet sharing fundamental experiences of divisions and re - orientations are highly significant: not only will we be able to compare and unders tand similarities and differences in the identity constructions of people according to the national and regional affiliations of their communities in the past, the present, and by implication, the future. By focusing specifically on members from 3 generati ons in the same families we will also be able to compare and understand similarities and differences in the identity constructions of people of different gender and age groups which may cut across these national or regional allegiances. Such comparable ins ights into the identity constructions of Europeans living in the border regions between the Western and Southern nations in the EU and its newly ascendant partners emerging from political systems which were dominated or influenced by the former Soviet -Union and socialist economies are of vital importance in the formulation of differentiated and sensitive policies which would further integration and social cohesion at transregional and European level.

In the most recent decade, considerable energy has been invested in public policies within these formerly highly contentious communities in order to further social cohesion at transregional level, prevent xenophobia, and to work towards a future European integration. Several of these have been drawing direct fi nancial support from diverse

programmes of the European Union and other bi -national, trans-regional and/ or simply regional development funds.

No comparative research exists which on the one hand identifies how these cooperations feature in peoples' perce ptions with the exception of information elicited by questionnaires - a method where contradictory feelings may be at play. (eg compare the discrepancies between reports such as the Forst study , June 1998 and D. Pollack and S.Pickel 1999 about German and P olish young people's attitudes about each other and foreigners in general). Even less information exists about related ventures in comparable border regions in different European nations although in many cases similar solutions (eg bilingual schools) are b eing sought to similar problems. Our research aims to fill this gap at transnational level by creating comparative data sets of qualitative data for each corresponding set of community and its people.

The project will provide unique insights into people's experiences of social and political change and the possibilities of affecting these positively by policy measures in comparable communities at the expanding fringe of the current European Union. We expect its results to be of great use to authorities and policy makers (both transnational and more local), educators, politicians, finally all those who work toward Europe without parochial resentments.

**Part 2**

**The communities in question**

## 1. The German - Polish border: GÖRLITZ/ ZGORZELEC

Görlitz and Zgorzelec are two towns on the River Neisse, Görlitz on the West bank and thus in the Federal Republic of Germany, Zgorzelec on the East bank and so in Poland. Before the redrawing of the post-war political boundaries in 1945, they both formed the German town of Görlitz. By contrast to Guben and Gubin where the former old city was almost completely destroyed, in Görlitz/ Zgorzelec the old city escaped the war largely unscathed. Whereas the old city of Guben used to be on the Eastern bank of the river, and thus in today's (Polish) Gubin, the old and more residential part of Görlitz is situated on the Western bank of the river and thus in today's (German) Görlitz.

In the GDR, Görlitz was in the Bezirk (region) of Dresden. In today's unified Federal Republic it finds itself in the Bundesland of Saxony. Zgorzelec lies in the Wojwodship (region) of Lower Silesia, and in the Powiat (county) of Zgorzelec.

In Görlitz the population before the war (1934) was 94 645 for both sides of the river. After the war (1949) the figure for Görlitz (ie the West side alone) was 101 742. This was due to the influx of refugees from the territories lost to Poland. By 1985 the population had fallen to 79 277, and after unification even further (1990: 72 237; 1998: 65 958). The unemployment rate in April 2000 was 21.7%, ie 8614 people. Zgorzelec's current population is ca. 36,000; The unemployment rate runs at 14 per cent.


There are three border crossings in the vicinity between the two countries in the towns or its immediate vicinity. One is in the town itself, one is on a motorway in use since 1996 (Jedrzychowice-Ludwigsdorf); and one is a rail crossing, utilising the old German rail line from 1846.


**History**

# Pre-war Görlitz

Before the Second World War, Görlitz was a prosperous large town, the gateway to the German province of Silesia, which was ceded to Poland in 1945. Many inhabitants of Görlitz today were originally from this region, and the allegiance of many to a Silesian identity as opposed to the Saxon one conferred on them by the modern German political boundaries, is apparent in the town. Important pre-war industries were cloth making and the construction of railway carriages. At the end of the war, the bridges over the river Neisse were destroyed by the retreating Nazi forces.

The treaty of Potsdam in 1945 confirmed the 'Oder-Neisse Linie' as the new border between Poland and Germany, thus dividing all the cities which lay on either side of the rivers. Apart from many smaller communities and villages, this affected also the larger

cities of Frankfurt (Oder), Guben and Görlitz. Görlitz thus becam e divided by the Allies into Polish Zgorzelec on the Eastern bank and German Görlitz on the Western bank.

## Establishment of Zgorzelec

The right bank of Görlitz was taken by the Soviet military on 8 May 1945. On the 10 May 1945 Polish authorities appeared in the town and established the Polish administration of the town. The new town was named Zgorzelice. In 1948 the Committee for establishing placenames (Komisja Ustalania Nazw Miejscowych) changed the name of the town to Zgorzelec, which reflected the Slav onic origin of the location. Almost immediately the town was inhabited mostly by four distinct groups of incoming people:

- Poles returning from the war in Western Europe (soldiers and forced labourers);
- Inmates of a large PoW camp (Stalag VIII A) set up in Görlitz in 1939;
- Poles from central Poland;
- People forcibly moved from the territories taken over by the Soviet Union (pre -war eastern borderlands of Poland).

From August 1946 the Polish authorities commenced a systematic 'repatriation' of the German population living or stationed in the town, with the result that there are no more Germans living there today.

At the turn of 1949/50, a group of almost 15,000 Greeks and Macedonian political refugees settled in the town. Most of them later relocated to o ther parts of Poland or, in the 1980s, returned to Greece. Today only ca. 200 people of Greek origin still live in Zgorzelec.

Zgorzelec was the site of the signing of the so -called Zgorzelec Agreement, a treaty confirming the state border between Poland an d the GDR on 6 July 1950. The Zgorzelec Agreement was the only inter -state treaty between Poland and one of the 2 German states (GDR) until Poland signed a border treaty with the united Federal Republic of Germany in 1991. This ended years of uncertainty a s to whether the government in Bonn would accept the Oder-Neisse border as final.

The border between the two towns was opened for the first time in 1971. It was closed in 1981 after martial law was introduced in Poland, and opened again during the process of democratisation in Poland in the late 1980s.

The main thrust of the town's development is associated with the construction of mining sites and a power plant in the vicinity of the town in 1959 -65. The mines and the power plant have since been the main e mployers for the population of the town and thus are responsible for the relatively (for Polish Western borderlands) low unemployment rate. This industrial development was the beginning of Polish investment in the town and particularly in housing, sports a nd shopping facilities.

## Post-war Görlitz

The re-drawing of the border after the war, left the historical town centre, main railway station and the majority of the town's buildings (relatively unscathed by the war) in German territory. The sense of loss and truncation was nevertheless great. In 1948 the mayor of the town during the Nazi period, Hans Meinshausen, and the local party boss

were tried in a war crimes trial held in the Stadthalle by the river and condemned to death. The uprising of 17 June 1953 a gainst the GDR leadership was particularly strong in Görlitz. The population stormed the town hall and freed some political prisoners.

The river, once a focus for recreation in the town, lost its role. Only the railway viaduct and the former Reichenberger Bridge (since 1951 renamed as the Bridge of Friendship) were rebuilt. The border was tightly controlled and not open to the general public until 1971. Cross-border interaction was minimal, mainly in the form of Polish workers employed in the factories in G örlitz, eg the Condensor factory on the riverbank, clearly visible to both sides. Today this factory stands derelict as a symbol of industrial decline for both sides. The major industries remained the construction of railway carriages and cloth making.

The town's historical role as the gateway to Silesia and Eastern Europe, eg as a staging post on the historical trade route Via Regia linking Western Europe with the East (Frankfurt am Main - Dresden - Krakow - Kyiv), was lost. The border opening in 1971 provided the first opportunity to visit not only Zgorzelec but also the mountainous regions of Lower Silesia, once popular German tourist resorts, and the homelands of many Görlitz citizens. But the East German state, afraid that the instability in Poland caused by the rise of the Solidarnosc movement might prove contageous, closed the border again in 1981.

The wave of protest which engulfed the East German leadership towards the end of 1989 was joined by a sizeable portion of the Görlitz population. By the be ginning of November, over 5000 people were attending the so -called 'Peace Prayers' at the Protestant churches in the town. Within a period of a few weeks, Görlitz found itself in a state negotiating for its absorption within a united Germany.


## Common history since 1991

Since May 1991, Görlitz and Zgorzelec have belonged to the Euroregion Neisse, comprising Eastern Saxony, Lower Silesia and Northern Czech Republic. The towns signed a co-operation agreement in 1991. In 1996 the first joint session of the Zgor zelec and Görlitz councils was held at which a joint declaration of the commemoration of the 925th anniversary of the town's foundation was read. Since 1998, a joint session of the two councils has been held annually.

On 5 May 1998 (Europe Day) the council s proclaimed the Euro -city Zgorzelec -Görlitz. The event was commemorated by a large mural on a building on the Polish side of the river: the WAZE - Wizerunek artystyczny Zjednoczonej Europy (the Artistic Image of United Europe).

The two towns co -operate in the following four areas: a) city planning; b) environmental protection; c) culture, sports, education; d) law and order. This co -operation resulted in 2 transportation undertakings: a regular bus line across the border, linking the centre of Görlitz with a large German supermarket located in Zgorzelec and the free movement of local taxis across the border. The towns plan to build a joint tramline – a restoration of the pre-war line across the river. It also resulted in a programme of architectural restoration of the pre -war buildings on the Polish side. The towns aspire to rebuild one of the old pedestrian bridges across the border, but although the project has been fully

agreed and financed, its building has been delayed, reportedly by the central governments.

Görlitz has its representative information -cultural office in Zgorzelec promoting the town's cultural events on the Polish side and offering significant rebates for Poles buying tickets to attend them. A Polish -German free weekly (Wochenkurier) has c ome out in Görlitz and Zgorzelec since 1997.

The Catholic churches in the towns regularly hold a joint Corpus Christi procession. There are 2 Kindergartens, one on each side, which are both open to Polish and German children

## 2. The German - Czech border: VEJPRTY/BÄRENSTEIN

Bärenstein and Vejprty constitute one urban area divided by the river Pöhlbach (Poehlcreek). They are the only towns on the Czech -Saxon border which border one another directly.  In relation to their geographic, historic and current soc io-political development, the two border communities are proto -typical for the Saxon -Bohemian border in both, their positive and negative aspects.

The town of Bärenstein is located in the county (Landkreis) of Annaberg in Saxony and lies within the higher mountain range of the Erzgebirge (Ore Mountains). The town has about 3000 inhabitants.

The town of Vejprty is located in the county (okres) of Chomutov. The communities of Nové Zvolání, Ceské Hamry, and Vysada lie within the city limits of Vejprty. Betwee n 1963 and 1974 Cerny Potok was annexed; Loucná und Háj were annexed between 1986 and 1992. Today the town has about 3300 inhabitants.

The border can be considered the historic regional division between Saxony and Bohemia. Whilst remaining geographically c onstant, it changed politically in the course of history as the dividing line between varying states: on the one side these were the Kingdom of Saxony, the German Empire, the Free State of Saxony, the Weimar Republic, the Third Reich, the Soviet Occupation  Zone, the GDR, and finally the Federal Republic of Germany; on the other side they were the Kingdom of Bohemia, the Austrian Empire, the Austro -Hungarian Empire, the Czechoslovak Republic, the Sudetenland, Deutschböhmen, the Czechoslovak Republic, the Cze choslovak Socialist Republic (CSSR), the Czechoslovak Federal Republic ( CSFR), and finally the Czech Republic.

Up to 1914, the borderline between Bohemia and Saxony was hardly noticeable. One could cross the border without being asked for a passport. Custo ms officials merely asked about goods which were to be declared. It was only that on one side of the Pöhlbach the currency was Marks, on the other side Crowns.

At that time the majority of Vejprty's population was German. When the Czechoslovakian Republic  was founded in 1918, Czech officials moved in from the interior. Up to the 1930s, however, life was normal and busy on both sides of the Poehlbach. There were many marriages between inhabitants of Bärenstein and Vejprty. In 1936, the population of Vejprty  had increased to about 12 000 inhabitants.

## 1933-1945

After the National Socialist Party had taken power in Germany, unemployment in Bärenstein decreased. Industry flourished because of the building of motorways, rearmament and the establishment of compuls ory military service. At the same time the situation in Vejprty worsened. After Austria's annexation in March 1938 the contrasts in Vejprty between Czechs, left -wing Germans and the followers of the right -wing "Sudetendeutsche Heimatfront" (Sudeten -German Home Front) grew. In May 1938 Czech military was transferred to the border; a state of emergency was declared. In September 1938 offices in the Sudetenland were occupied by the Sudeten -German Party; in Vejprty the train station, the post office and the of fices of the political police were occupied. This provocation was apparently planned by Hitler, and, as a consequence, martial law was imposed upon Vejprty. Czech soldiers controlled the town. A great part of the German inhabitants left Vejprty for fear of armed conflicts and fled to Germany. More than three quarters of all inhabitants had left the town for a short time. On Sept 22nd 1938 the Czech officials and soldiers left the town after a gunfight; the German population returned. On October 5th 1938, as a result of the Munich Accord, German troops crossed the bridge across the Pöhlbach on their way into the Sudetenland, and on Aug. 9th 1939, the poles marking the border on the bridge were removed.

## 1945-1968

After World War II, especially during the year s 1946 and 1947, an event took place which, from the Czech viewpoint, is considered "odsun" (transfer), from the West German viewpoint "expulsion," and from a (former) East German standpoint "resettlement." At this time thousands of "expelled" Sudeten -Germans and German -Silesians passed through Bärenstein. Many of these people stayed in the surroundings of the border because they hoped to return home soon. As of 1947/48, the GDR's policy was to assimilate the new citizens, who often weren't very welcome at all. In 1950 the GDR declared the "expulsion" to be "just" and definitive. The compulsory transfer of the Germans in the years 1946 -47 nearly caused depopulation. There were new inhabitants who came from inner parts of the Czech country and from Slovakia. Those Germans who were allowed to stay (being primarily either the elderly, spouses of Czechs, or experts in various fields) and who could get back their houses in 1952 -53 were joined by others of German heritage from other areas of the Sudetenland.

In the Bärenstein area (as in other parts of the Ore Mountains) the Soviet occupying power started uranium mining after the war. Many inhabitants were conscripted to work at the "Wismut" company. Also miners who had been "expelled" from Bohemia or Silesia found work there.

As the CSSR followed a policy of delimitation in the 1950s there was no more opportunity for the two communities to come together. In 1952 the power supply for Bärenstein was cut off by Vejprty; from then on Bärenstein got its power from the to wn of Schwarzenberg. By the end of the 1950s the GDR officials advanced the contacts with Czech citizens and organisations, because the contacts of the two socialist countries were furthered by Moscow politics and followed also the political directions of the GDR and CSSR. The citizens of Bärenstein and Vejprty, however, could only visit the neighbouring community indirectly because there were no border checkpoints nearby.

## The events of 1968-1969 and afterwards

As a result of "Prague Spring" in 1968, border surveillance was intensified in Bärenstein as well. Political agitation and the control of citizens was increased in the border area of the GDR.

In July/August of this year, Soviet tank units had already been stationed in the forests around Bärenstein. In August, Soviet tanks broke through the iron border gate on the Pöhlbach bridge. During the following days the Bärenstein citizens could read slogans on the roofs of Vejprty's factories like "Ulbricht=Hitler", "1968=1938" or "German workers help us!" GDR officials condemned these slogans, calling them "an attempt at political upheaval by right-wing factions." The factories themselves in the Bärenstein area were the working point of direct political training of the "Sozialistische Einheitspartei Deutschlands" (SED). For about one month the border region was declared a prohibited area; no visitors were allowed; the inhabitants who had to go to work outside this 5 km strip were strictly controlled.

After 1969 the GDR tried to strengthen ideological and political cooperation with the CSSR in order to solidify Communist influences.

## Since 1991

The "turning point" in the GDR and the "velvet revolution" in the CSSR brought the re-opening of the border crossing point Bärenstein -Vejprty as a pedestrian crossing in June 1991. One year later a German -Czech meeting center was opened in Bärenstein. On Aug 1st 1993 the first train after 48 years crossed the railway bridge; it was mainly the initiative of the mayor of Vejprty. From 1995, trains operated on this line regularly until it was closed at the end of May 2000.

## Bärenstein and Vejprty today

Most of the Bärenstein factories either had to close after the "turning point" or to reduce the number of their workers. Also, many of the holiday homes from GDR days in Bärenstein are now empty. The rate of unemployment is about 20 %. Even attempts to find new jobs in the tourist industry were not very successful. Since 1991 there has been a center for re-integration of descendants of Germans settling in Russia for centuries ("Landesaufnahmestelle für deutschstämmige Aussiedler des Landes Sachsen"). As many as 700 people of German heritage from former Soviet states such as Kazakchstan, Kirgiszia and Ukraine are living there temporarily. Bärenstein itself now has about 3000 inhabitants.

Bärenstein has bigger problems with the shopping tourism crossing the border by foot: On some days up to 8000 visitors come to the small town. This does not only cause parking problems. The "Vietnamese markets" just across the border are rivals for businesses and craftsmen in Bärenstein, as are the Czech craftsmen who offer their services at much lower prices than their German counterparts. The inhabitants also fear that illegal border crossers cause an increase in crime (e.g. car theft).

Vejprty has seen a dramatic increase in unemployment, now at 26 -30%. The educational standard in the county of Chomutov is regarded as the lowest in the Czech Republic. 22.8% of the population in the county of Chomutov has completed education at the middle or higher level. In Vejprty this rate is even worse: only 10%. This situation is due to economical, geographical and political reasons as well as to transportational problems. Vejprty lies on the side of the mountains which faces Saxony and therefore orients itself to the Saxon county of Annaberg -Buchholz (12 km to Annaberg versus 32 km to Chomutov, 44 km to Karlovy Vary). Transportation connections to this side, however, were cut off in post -war times (see above). In addition, the Czech border region was an area to which politically unreliable persons were transferred for disciplinary reasons during communist times. Also socially discriminated minorities from inner parts of the Czech country were sent there: In Vejprty, six nursing homes for mentally handicapped people were built in recent decades. During socialist times, all the money intended for promoting economic growth in Chomutov County went directly into browncoal strip mining. Vejprty, therefore, received no funds from this side; nor did it profit from any other infrastructural improvements.

As far as nationality is concerned, the 1991 census in Vejprty brought to light the following facts about the 3300 inhabitants: Germans 15,1%, Slovakians 8,2%, Roma 3,7%, the majority of about 73 % is Czech. (these figures  are as a result of self -identification, which is not always  reliable.)


## Euroregion

Both communities belong to the Euroregion  "Erzgebirge/Krusšnohoroí" (Ore Mountains). The common work in this Euroregion is divided into seven areas: environment, economy, culture/school/youth, transportation, natural disaster/catastrophe task force, social affairs, and agriculture. A newsletter "I nfoPress" is published.

On the German side the Euroregion is promoted by the Government of Saxony and supported by counties, communities and organisations. On the Czech side, there are only the communities, companies and organisations which are trying to m aintain the "Euroregion Krusšnohoo rí". The Czech counties are not directly involved in this organisation. On the German side the counties Freiberg, Mittlerer Erzgebirgskreis, Annaberg-Buchholz and Stollberg form the area of the Euroregion. In the Czech Republic the areas of the Euroregions  are not definitely fixed and depend on those communities who want to take part. It also happens that some communities belong to two Euroregions at the same time.

Thanks to money from the European Programmes INTERREG II and PHARE CBC, the sewage system in  Bärenstein could be built and the sewage feeds into the purification plant in Vejprty. Also the reconstruction of the "Saeächsisches Haus" in Baeärenstein to a Czech-German meeting point was financed by INTERREG money.

At this time, there is good cooperat ion between the two mayors. The Czech mayor would even like to see a type of twin town program between the two, but the German mayor has reservations: Bärenstein itself has successfully been twinned with Planegg in Upper Bavaria since 1992.

## 3. Former Border Between East and West Germany: Bavarian and Thuringian Border Communities

The communities under research are located in the historical border zone of Saxony, Thuringia and Bavaria. Our research focusses on the Thuringian and Bavarian sides of the border. People on both sides lived in close cooperation until 1949, when the two German states were founded and the Iron Curtain erected. In one particular village (Mödlareuth) the German-German border ran right through the heart of the village, following a historical borderline between Thuringia and Bavaria which was defined in 1810.

Apart from Mödlareuth which has an Eastern and a Western part, we are conducting research in the town of Hirschberg in Thuringia and in some villages in the vicinity of Hirschberg, such as Sparnberg, Ullersreuth, Dobareuth, and Gebersreuth. On the Bavarian side research is mainly being conducted in Töpen and Untertiefengrün.

## History of the Regions

Both Bavaria and Thuringia are historical regions which reflect ethno-territorial entities that go back over several hundred years. However, whereas the names of these entities have remained the same, their geographical borders and socio-political structures have undergone several historical transformations. Thuringia was subject to dynastic divisions and unifications since the 6th century and remained split into tiny states until 1920 when Thuringia was founded as a state within the Weimar Republic. The Nazi government's policy of *Gleichschaltung* in the 1930s virtually abolished the division of Germany into states (*Länder*). In 1946 Thuringia was established again, erected as an administrative unit by the Allied powers. Having been incorporated into the Soviet Occupied Zone and the subsequent German Democratic Republic, Thuringia was abolished again in 1952 when the GDR reconfigurated its administrative regions. In 1990 Thuringia was re-established, this time as one of the five new *Länder* in unified Germany.

To the South, Thuringia borders the *Bundesland* of Bavaria which also looks back on a long ethno-territorial history. Bavaria provides a good example of the continuity of strong regional identity in Germany. It was established as a duchy in the 6th century and later as a kingdom, which formally ceased to exist after World War I. Unlike in the case of many other *Länder* the Allies did not alter Bavaria's pre-war borders after 1945. Our particular research sites are located in Upper Franconia, which belongs to Bavaria but represents yet another ethno-regional area. During the Middle Ages Franconia was a stem duchy within the German state. In 1806 when the German Empire was dissolved, Franconia was incorporated into Bavaria. However, many people in the area continue to define themselves as Franconians, thereby claiming a distinct regional identity within Bavaria.

## The German-German Border

With the end of World War II the character of the Thuringian -Bavarian border radically changed. In April 1945 American troops occupied Bavaria and parts of Thuringia and Saxony. However, as a resul t of the London Protocols (1944) and the conferences of Yalta and Potsdam (1945), both regions were to be made part of the Soviet zone, whereas Bavaria should remain under American administration. In keeping with this agreement, the Americans withdrew from Thuringia and the Soviets moved in. In Mödlareuth, which later became a divided village, the Americans initially vacated the village as a whole and as such it became 'Russian'. A year later, in July 1946, the Soviets vacated Bavarian Mödlareuth and moved behind the proper 'demarcation line'.

The foundation of both the Federal Republic of Germany and the German Democratic Republic in 1949 established the German -German border in our research area and gave rise to the separation of its inhabitants. From now on the Thuringian side was inhabited by 'East Germans' and the Bavarian side by 'West Germans'.

Initially a so-called 'kleiner Grenzübertrittsschein' ('small border -traffic pass') enabled the border population to move across to the other side for visits o r work. Within a couple of years this practice was stopped.

From 1952 onwards, the new demarcation line between Bavaria and Thuringia underwent increasing fortification and military control [1]. This might best be seen in the village of Mödlareuth. There, the East German administration firstly built a wooden fence to mark the border. In the following years this fence was substituted, first by several barbed wire constructions and then, in 1966, by a concrete wall which virtually sealed off East from West[2]. This wall, 3.30 metres high and roughly 700 metres long, cut through the centre of the village, which turned Mödlareuth into a "Little Berlin". It was, comparable to Berlin, heavily guarded 24 hours a day. On the East German side the wall provided the baselin e for the so-called 'control-strip' (10m-strip), the 'protection -strip' (500-m strip from the border inland) and the 5km 'restricted zone' (Sperrzone). These zones regulated and controlled life for the East Mödlareuth population which lived in the '500m -protection strip'. This was a de facto no -go area for other citizens of the GDR and entirely closed to foreigners and West Germans.

Thus the spatial manifestation of the border reached several kilometres inland, with fences, land mines, booby -traps, guard to wers, bunkers, automobile barriers, search lights and a strong presence of border police and the military. This spatially tangible presence of the border was part of people's everyday lives, it crucially informed their sense of place and sense of movement. Moving in the border zone was subject to restriction and control. Without a special pass, movement in and out of the restricted zone was impossible. Most of these experiences were shared across the Thuringian villages under research.

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[1] This is generally seen as a direct consequence of the 'Deutschlandvertrag' of 1952, signed by France, Britain, the United States and West Germany. In this treaty the occupied status of West Germany was lifted and the future of a Western alliance vis -à-vis the Soviet Union took shape

[2] East and West are political signifiers here. Actually, it is a north -south divide.

In 1952 and 1961[3] respectively, thousands of people who lived in the GDR/FRG borderzone were expelled and resettled in the hinterland. The GDR -administration classified them as "politically untrustworthy" (politisch unzuverlässig). In all our Thuringian research sites such inc idents occurred.

In due course many people moved away from the border strip or fled to the FRG.

On the Bavarian side the border was accessible, but also guarded by border police and, since 1949, by the so -called Federal Border Patrol (Bundesgrenzschutz). These were supported by American troops, stationed in nearby Hof until 1990.

In West Germany, particularly the divided village of Mödlareuth reached a certain fame. It became a favourite photo opportunity for a large number of visitors who came to see the somewhat curious "Little Berlin". In the West German press the village figured as a tragic symbol of the division of Germany. This was particularly exemplified by two brothers who lived on the respective sides and whose lives were completely isolated fro m each other. They could not visit, and not even greet each other across the wall. They both lived to see the events of 1989 but died in the early nineties.

## Socioeconomic Situation Today

The population figures of all the small border communities are fair ly small, ranging from about 40 in the village of Mödlareuth to about 1200 in the town of Hirschberg.

The villages on either side have traditionally been farming communities, with different sizes of farms.

In East Germany, the land reform and expropriati on of privately owned land was followed by the foundation of so -called 'agricultural production cooperatives' (Landwirtschaftliche Produktions Genossenschaften, LPG) in which former farmers became employees. From 1970 onwards, these LPGs engaged in an indu strialized from of production. In our area the "Cooperative Section Plant Production" (Kooperative Abteilung Pflanzenproduktion, KAP) was established. It included all the small communities in this border zone, and was tellingly called the "KAP Border". Aft er 1989 the LPG was transformed into a commercial company which now employs only a small number of people. The leather factory in Hirschberg which provided jobs for 1000 workers during GDR -times was closed down after unification. Today, many people commute to larger towns for work. On the Bavarian side the agricultural sector has declined since the 1960s. Due to the geographical proximity to the German -German border, Franconia's economic development was not as strong as in other regions of Bavaria. In addit ion, the Franconian porcelain and textile industries have recently faced recession. As a result, the unemployment rate in the area is about 14%.

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[3] In 1961 the Berlin -wall was built. In 1960/61 the GDR experienced an economic crisis and the number of people who fled the GDR rose dramatically.

## European Union Related Issues

In the early 1990s many of the Thuringian border villages received funds wit hin a programme called 'Dorferneuerung' (village rejuvenation). According to the information gathered so far, part of these funds were provided by the EU. Private and public investments which served to improve the village infrastructure received financial aid. Within this programme houses were renovated, street lights installed, streets repaired, the village ponds restored. As a result, the area looks like 'one' today with little visible difference between 'East' and 'West'.

Due to the proximity to the Czec h Republic, our area is part of the Euroregion *Egrensis*. It consists of three working groups, located in Bohemia, Thuringia -Saxony and Bavaria.

## 4. Austrian - Hungarian border: MOSCHENDORF (Nagysàroslak) and PINKAMINDSZENT (Allerheiligen)

Moschendorf on the Austrian side and Pinkamindszent on the Hungarian side of the former Iron Curtain are twin -villages which were strongly related until 1948. They had been separated after World War I in 1921 by the new state border of Austria. While between 1921 and 1948 the social and functional relations between the village inhabitants had hardly been influenced, after 1948 the Iron Curtain prevented any activities. The border has become an economic, social and psychological stopping force. Since the fall of the Iron Curtain in 1989 the population has started to co -operate again. But because of the very divergent political and economic developments of the communities, the perception and the expectation of the local population are very different.

## Population figures

The population of Moschendorf has been decreasing continuously during this century. The population has shrunk by half since 1900 (928 inhabitants), but this trend seems to have ceased. The lowest number of houses was registered in 1981. Since that time there has been an increase in second homes and pension domiciles.

Pinkamindszent also lost a large part of its population during the 20 [th] century. In 1900 the community consisted of 829 inhabitants, ninety years later the population has diminished to only 197. At the beginning of the 20 [th] century and in the time between World War 1 and World War 2 the background for this diminution was the same as in Moschendorf (just across today's borderline to Austria): the agricultural character of the local society, which to gether with the system of inheritance and the peripheral position of the community did not allow for development.

## History

After the First World War the Burgenland became a part of Austria. In 1921, the new political border, still valid today, between Hun gary and Austria was established on the existing linguistic boundary, and Pinkamindszent and Moschendorf, so far neighbouring

villages within the Hungarian half of the dual empire, became places on either side of the border. Until 1948 the state border di d not affect everyday life within the communities to any major extent, though it did have an effect on widespread bilingualism in Moschendorf which decreased with the establishment of German in the educational system and the decline of child labour movemen t to Hungarian villages during the harvest time.

In the time between the wars the border remained permeable, following functional though partly illegal traditions. Thus new economic relations across the border were developed, above all smuggling. A part o f the native population could thus benefit from the border position.

Between 1948-1990, however, the border became part of the 'Iron Curtain' dividing Eastern and Western socio -economic and political systems. It thus became a vital part of physical and psychological reality, as the geopolitical frontier separating two hostile world systems.

The community of Pinkamindszent suffered particular isolation as a result. It was not only locked away from its Austrian neighbours, but also from the rest of Hungary, because of the no -passing zone established along the border and consequently around Pinkamindszent. This isolation has led to permanent emigration from the village.

In 1956, the year of the so -called "Hungarian -uprising", the Iron Curtain fell for a short time. By the end of the year about 7,000 people not only from this region, but from the whole country, took their chances and left the country and fled over the border near Moschendorf/Pinkamendszent, before the old status was restored.

Traditionally, si nce agriculture could not nourish the population of the region because of the varied divisions of properties, a considerable part of the population left the area. Starting in the seventies of the last century emigration was the only sensible alternative for many young people from West Hungary and today's southern Burgenland. From 1880 to 1960 four hundred to five hundred people from Moschendorf emigrated to America, a development that reached its climax in the twenties. Thus Moschendorf together with a neighbouring village had the highest number of emigrants. In other words, one member of each family emigrated to America, or to Canada and Argentina.

In the sixties and seventies Moschendorf profited from the general economic development, as did the whole of B urgenland. The modification of the agricultural structure frequently meant a changeover to supplementary income or feminisation of agriculture. The women ran the farms, while their men predominantly commuted to the Graz or Vienna regions for work on a week ly basis.

In the course of the municipality's structural reform, Moschendorf was united with four other villages to the new municipality Strem on 1.1.1971. Thus five stagnating or shrinking villages were combined. Social Life of the local society in Mosch endorf was not affected by this step. Today, Moschendorf is an independent community again.

# Post 1990

The year of 1990 brought the fall of the Iron Curtain and political turnaround for Pinkamindszent. Since then, Pinkamindszent has had its own local auton omy - with self-elected mayor and councils – and still belongs to the regional office of Vasalja. The new

administration and the people tried to develop the most important infrastructures right away. A water pipeline already exists in the municipality, and almost all households are connected to the telephone network.

But, there is practically no opportunity for regular employment in Pinkamindszent. Some inhabitants still work in the agricultural co-operative Vasalja others try to operate independently and some earn their living in the regional centre Koermend. The demographic erosion continues and the number of the inhabitants diminishes, even though some children have been born, and some families have moved to Pinkamindszent. 172 inhabitants live in this small municipality, where the majority of the population is made up of the old, and therefore the demographic picture is quite disfigured.

One can still characterise Pinkamindszent today by its peripheral position. For a few years people were hoping for a small border crossing to be opened and intensive negotiations were held over it between the authorities in Moschendorf and Pinkamindszent. On government level however the decision was made that an international border crossing should be installed between the communities of Pinkamindszent and Strem. This crossing would allow the passage of border traffic of up to 3.5 t in weight. In view of the threatening of heavy transit traffic, the Moschendorfer had a local referendum against the plans for the new border crossing which therefore were rejected.

After the fall of the Iron Curtain, the Pinkamindszentians did not only feel relief and joy about it, but they also connected hopes and expectations with their position at the state border: The border for a short period received the symbolic function of connecting worlds instead of separating them. These expectations could not be fulfilled. The reasons for this include above all that Austria, which in the meantime has joined the European community, is obliged to control its external boundary more strongly than before. There are other reasons, like the shortness of funds from the Hungarian state, the lack of interest from private capital and the tendency in Hungary, as in Austria, rather to extend the existing important border crossings than to open new and smaller ones.

Also local factors play an important role: So parts of the peripheral micro society have strong restraints regarding the border opening (Moschendorf), and others have no resources in order to fight for or to establish a new border crossing (Pinkamindszent).

The fact that in 1996, Pinkamindszent elected the owner of a second home for mayor, is to be interpreted as a sign for a possible path of development. Pinkamindszent could develop into a quiet, small village in a peripheral region of west Hungary, a refuge for Aussteiger or retired people with a second home.

## 5. The Austrian - Slovenian border: EISENKAPPEL/ŽELEZNA KAPLA[4] and JEZERSKO

Eisenkappel/Železna Kapla on the Austrian side and Jezersko on the Slovenian side are located on either side of the Karawanken/Karavanke, the mountain range that forms today's border between Austria and Slovenia. The connecting road between the two communities leads across the Seeberg Saddle which is the border crossing at 1218 m above sea level.

Eisenkappel/Železna Kapla is located 15 km down the road from the Seeberg Saddle. It is the southernmost community of Austria and is located in the south -eastern part of the province Carinthia. Apart from the two main cities Klagenfurt and Villach, the province is a rural area which is characterized by typical problems of such areas, for e xample less developed infrastructure and negative migration rates. From 1951 onwards the population figure of Eisenkappel/Železna Kapla dropped constantly from 3894 to 2811 today. In 1989 alone, 450 people left the community due to the closure of the local cellulose factory. Since the amalgamation with the community Vellach/Bela in 1964 Eisenkappel/Železna Kapla has been 200 km² in size. The community includes the centre Eisenkappel/Železna Kapla itself and 11 small settlements. These are located in small lateral valleys with steep mountainsides.

Eisenkappel/Železna Kapla also comprises a substantive Slovenian speaking minority. Whereas the centre of the community has always been dominated by the German language, Slovenian was the only language used for a l ong time in the valleys. It is characteristic for the community that the language border also corresponds to its economic border, i.e. while trade and industry are located in the centre, agriculture and forestry are the predominant sectors of the economy i n the surroundings.

The community Jezersko is located 7 km down the road from the Seeberg Saddle in the north-western part of Slovenia in the region Gorenjska on the south -eastern edge of the Alps (Julijske Alpe, Kamniško -Savinjske Alpe). In the course o f the Slovenian communal structure reforms Jezersko became an independent community in 1998. Before that it was part of Kranj and Preddvor. Jezersko is located about 1000 m above sea level. With its 677 inhabitants and its size of 68,8 km² Jezersko has a l ow population density. Most of the people commute to the cities Kranj or Ljubljana. Jezersko has no industry. Its main economic act ivities are forestry and stock breeding, e.g. the Jezersko -Solcava sheep is of importance.

Between the two world wars Jezersko was one of the leading Slovenian tourist centres. Because of its mountainous climate and a mineral spring, the community has th e character of a spa. For almost three decades (1953 -1981) a hospital for eye tuberculosis

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[4] Eisenkappel/Železna Kapla is the bilingual name of the community which is used due to the fact that there is a substantial Slovenian minority living there.

brought many visitors into the region. Today tourism is one of the perspective development fields again. During the last two decades most efforts have been put into the improvement of the infrastructure such as the building of water pipes, the improvement of roads and the renovation of buildings (the school building for example). Since the independence of Slovenia in 1991 Jezersko has had to deal with demands on behal f of the former land owners who had been displaced and who had lost their properties after World War II in the process of nationalization by the communist regime.

## History

# 1918 to 1945

Eisenkappel/Železna Kapla and Jezersko belonged to the same Habsburg E mpire until the end of World War I. When the Austro -Hungarian Monarchy fell apart in 1918, the first Republic of Austria was founded north of the Karawanken/Karavanke and the Kingdom of the Serbs, the Croats and the Slovenians (SHS) was established south o f the mountain range. From then on Jezersko was no longer part of Carinthia, as it used to be within the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy. Due to territorial demands of both newly founded states armed border conflicts went on until 1920. On October 10, 1920 the d ispute was finally settled by a plebiscite in which 59% of the southern Carinthians (including Slovenian speaking people) voted to remain with Austria. After the plebiscite the Austrian Republic pursued a Germanization policy which resulted in the rapid pr ocess of assimilation of the Slovenian minority.

From 1920 onwards, the closed border prevented cross -border relations. Due to the economic crisis between the wars, however, smuggling was a widely spread phenomenon and an important economic factor. A freq uented smuggling route between Eisenkappel/Železna Kapla and Jezersko was the Roblek Alm. Smuggling, however, was a dangerous enterprise: many smugglers were shot by the border control.

During World War II the border was violently removed in the course of the German invasion in Yugoslavia in 1941. In 1942 many Carinthian Slovenians were deprived of their homes and farms, they were expelled from the province and deported to concentration camps by the Nazi Regime. Many Carinthian Slovenians united with the Yugoslav partisans to resist the NS -Regime. Eisenk appel/Železna Kapla became one of the centres of the resistance which cost the community more than 150 lives. In Jezersko the Yugoslav partisans' resistance was confronted with local domobranci who collaborated with the NS -regime.

# 1945-1991

After the end of the Second World War the border between the two communities was closed for a few years. The border never became an Iron Curtain though because the former Yugoslavia was a Non -Aligned Nation. From the 1950s onwards the border was

opened progressively. With the abolishment of the visa in the mid -60s, cross border relations gradually improved and intensified. The Slovenian minority in Eisenkappel/Železna Kapla played an important bridging role in the upcoming relations. The Slovenian cultural associations on either side of the border started to cooperate. Sport events, common theatre performances a nd folklore festivals were organized. Choirs gave common concerts. The cooperation of the local deer -hunters already began in 1974. Since then they have met regularly to coordinate deer hunting in the region.

In the late 1970s Slovenia - when it was stil l part of the Republic of Yugoslavia - began to build up business in southern Carinthia. In 1979 it acquired the majority of the shares of the cellulose factory in Eisenkappel/Železna Kapla. Because of the economic crisis in Yugoslavia in the 1980s, shoppi ng tourism became a common phenomenon. Austrians made use of the lower prices in Slovenia. Slovenians supplied themselves with commodities which were not available in Slovenia. The border exchange began to cause a change of mind amongst Carinthians who re alized that the knowledge of the Slovenian language might be an economic advantage.

# 1991 to present day

Since the independence of Slovenia in 1991 Jezersko is part of a democratic state, the Republic of Slovenia. When Austria joined the European Union in  1995 the border between the communities became part of the external border of the EU.

Today the communities cooperate on various levels. There are projects supported by the EU-programmes INTERREG and PHARE -CBC. Additionally there exist numerous other cooperations between the two communities today, e.g. since 1988 the local fire brigades of Jezersko and Eisenkappel/Železna Kapla have organised common firedrills every year. The church communities on both sides of the border meet regularly too. At this stage   it is not predictable how Slovenia's entry in the European Union, which is expected in 2005, will influence the relations between the border communities.

## 6. The Italian- Slovenian Border: GORIZIA/ NOVA GORICIA

Gorizia (slov. Gorica) (Italy) and Nova Gori ca (Slovenia) are two cities divided by the border between today's Italy and the Republic of Slovenia. The region had a complex historical development, where Slavonic, Latin and German ethnic groups were in contact and often also in opposition.

We can bet ter understand the current situation by considering that Nova Gorica was planned and built after 1948 and that Gorizia became for the first time an actual 'border community' only after WW2 and the Paris Treaty (1947). Before that, except for brief periods spanning 1700 and 1800, Gorizia and the surrounding area (the Province) had been part of two wider political -administrative units: until WW1 it was part of the Austro-Hungarian Empire and, between the two wars, of the Italian State.

Since the end of WW2, t he Italian -speaking community in Gorizia has been characterised by the following speech repertoire:

- Venetian-Julian dialect (similar to that used in Trieste) as the low variety;

- standard Italian as the high variety;

- Friulian is today a very limited speech variety in this area, mainly used in private-familiar domains and spatially limited to the quarter of St.Rocco and suburbian village of Lucinico.

As for the Slovene-speaking community in Gorizia (and in the wider area of the Province) the speech repertoire can be divided as follows:

- Collio/briško- or Carso/kraško-dialects as the low variety;

- standard Slovene as the high variety.

Nearly all the members of the Slovene-speaking community master the local varieties of Italian. Standard Italian is widely spread too, due to exposure to mass-media and the school-system as well as to different types of communicative interactions. The knowledge of any forms of Slovene by the Italian-speaking community is very scarce.

Since the Fifties, a very relevant role has been p layed by a sizeable community of 'Istria exiles' (Italian-speaking people who left the coastal-regions of Yugoslavia after WW2). For a series of complex reasons they became the champions of "Italianity", opposed to the Friulian and, even more, to the Slove ne elements.

The first years after the creation of the new border (called "line of demarcation") - initially made of barbed wire and wired fences in some places - was totally impermeable and strongly guarded (on sight), particularly on the Yugoslav side. D uring those years it was a real 'iron curtain'. Only in the second half of the Fifties, with the Udine Agreements, was a regulation made for cross-border activities and four border crossings were opened in the urban area. With the passing of time, the bord er became more and more open (albeit there are some places where wired fences exist even nowadays), permeable and little guarded.

Today the border is weakly or not at all guarded – with the exception of main communication routes. This is proved by numerous people illegally crossing the border here. Immigrants from developing countries (Asia, Middle East, the Balcans and so on) enter or try to enter the EU through this 'door' between Slovenia and Italy.

## Population

As for Gorizia Municipality, the population in 1901 was 25,432 and reached its peak in the 70's (42,778 in 1971), then slowly decreased to the lowest point of 38,505 in 1991 (of which 46.7% are males and 53.3% females). Ageing rate is quite high and growing; this trend is common to the entire north-eastern part of Italy. The ethnic structure has also changed. According to Czoernig, the Gorizia area in 1857 was composed as follows: 66.6% of Slovenes, 24.4% of Friulians, 7.7% of Italians, 1.1% of Germans and 0.2% of Jews. In 1910 there were 7.7% of Ger mans, 35% of Slovenes and 57.3% of Italians and Friulians. According to the Group Alpina estimate, in 1975 there were 0.5% of Germans, 76.7% of Italians, 9.1% of Friulians and 13.7% of Slovenes. Today, the ethnic structure is likely to be even more favoura ble to Italians and less to Friulians and Slovenes.

The population of the Municipality of Nova Gorica has registered a slow but constant growth from 1948 to 1991; in that year the population was 59,126, 48.8% males and 51.2% females. Due to changes of Muni cipality borders, the population is currently lower

(about 40,000). Ethnically, the majority of citizens are Slovenes and only a minority are from families from the Republics of former Yugoslavia, who immigrated here in the past.

## History

# 1001-1945

For more than four centuries the region of Gorizia/Görz belonged to the Austro -Hungarian Empire. It experienced some interethnic conflicts but also went through a period of prosperity. In the last 25 years of this administration the cultural and economic life of the Slovenes in Gorizia flourished alongside. Important institutions were created, such as a gymnasium, a seminary and financial institutes. This was an important historical period for the Slovenes, particularly for those living along the coast, in the so -called 'Primorska', part of which is nowadays in Italy. On the whole, the Habsburg Empire was multiethnic and multilingual; Gorizia was therefore quite varied in relation to different ethno -linguistic groups until the appearance of nationalism and irreden tism at the end of last century. The Friulian component was strong both in the countryside and in the city, and was identified as the hallmark of Italian nationality - in contrast with the two other strong ethno -groups living on the same territory, that is , Slovenes and Austro -Germans.The multiethnic cohabitation was decidedly opposed and then cancelled by the Fascist regime. In 1920, just before the regime took complete control over the administration, the 'Narodni dom' (the Slovene National House) in Trie ste was set on fire. This was the centre of Slovene political, cultural and artistic life. The years before WW2 are marked by increasing violent acts against corporations, associations and more or less important individuals of the Slovene community .The Je wish community, with a century -long tradition in Gorizia and many famous intellectual representatives, was also brutally repressed after the approval of the so -called 'racial laws' in 1943. Languages soon faced a similar destiny: German was totally removed , Slovene was decidedly denied (onomastics, toponimy, school education, liturgic use); Friulian itself was the target of an anti -dialect battle; nevertheless, Aquileia, symbol of 'Romanity' first and of 'Friulanity' then, became the symbol of 'Italianity'.

# 1945-1991

According to the Paris Treaty (September 15, 1947) the biggest part of the town of Gorizia remained under Italian administration; at the same time two bigger suburbian villages remained in Yugoslavia. With the new border, dividing this area for the first time, 8% of the previous Province territory, 74% of the population, 38% of industrial and handicraft units, and 52% of commercial activities passed to Italy. Yugoslavia thus controlled the entire mountain area, the valleys of Isonzo -Soca and Vipacco -Vipava, north from Gorizia, nearly the entire hill area of Collio -Brda and part of the Carst -Kras. The Municipality of Gorizia lost three fifths of its territory and one fifth of its population.

In the area of Gorizia, the new borderline was much closer to the historical ethnic border than anywhere else, yet a big part of the Slovene population (about 20,000) remained in Italy, thus forming a minority community within the Italian state. However, this minority group had to adapt to the soci al organization of the majority. The most relevant consequences of the new border are to be found at urban level, since nearly the entire city

of Gorizia and the main roads and railways, connecting the city to Udine and Trieste, also remained in Italy.

The new Yugoslav territories had no administration and infrastructural centre at all. Because of this situation, it was agreed to build a twin border -city on the Slovene side (Yugoslavia) and call it Nova Gorica. The Yugoslav administration planned to create a new urban centre connecting Solkan -Salcano and Šempeter -S.Pietro - previously suburbs of Gorizia - which was meant to become a beautiful city to show off for propaganda. The project started promptly and enthusiastically in 1948, but after 10 years Nova G orica was still a work -in-progress. Due to a lack of financial and economic potential and possibilities, either at local and national level, the project was never completely realized. Nevertheless, Nova Gorica has been carrying on relatively important admi nistrative and economic tasks so that it has become a relevant centripetal force. Its most important role is however related to cross -border relations and trade with the twin -city of Gorizia in particular and the rest of Italy in general.

As stated before, the border between the two states and neighbouring cities was virtually closed until 1955. After that time, from the second half of the Sixties on, cross -border relations progressively and remarkeably improved and intensified

The bases for this improve ment were the Udine Agreements, particularly those signed in 1955 and 1962, which regulate cross -border movements of people and goods in a 20 -kilometres border area. Since then cross -border economic, social and cultural relations improved at private level (individuals, organisations, enterprises, etc.) as well as at public (policy-makers, bodies and institutions).


# 1991 to present day

Since the independence of Slovenia in 1991 Nova Gorica became part of the independent democratic Republic of Slovenia curren tly one of the aspirant nations to the EU. Cross-border cooperation further improved, also due to EU policies, particulary with regards to Interreg, which is a very important means for the development of cooperation between the Autonomous Region Friuli -Venezia Giulia and the Republic of Slovenia.

Another peculiar aspect of this border situation is the presence of the Slovene minority on the Italian side of the area Gorizia -Nova Gorica, which represents only part of the wider Slovene community in Italy. The Slovene community has always contributed to the improvement of cross -border relations and cooperation. This is made possible by the wide and articulated community organisation and networks in various fields, economic and financial, political, social and c ultural as well.

The Slovene community in Italy mantains a high level of activity in the above -mentioned fields. It is also faced with some problems, which affect primarily the community itself and which are energetically tackled. One of these these proble ms is the approval by the Italian Parliament of a law for the global protection of the minority, containing guarantees for the language (the right of using the mother tongue for official relations with local authorities and various bodies), for culture, f or economic affairs, and ensuring the same juridical treatment for the entire community. Slovenes have been making requests for a juridic solution of their problems since the end of WW2; numerous bills have been presented, but so far none of them has passe d as yet.

There have also been other problems affecting the minority, expropriations of lands, belonging to Slovenes, for industrial and urbanistic purposes; insufficient funding of cultural and artistic activities, which means the decay of minority vitali ty; assimilation, a process corroding the numerical consistency of ethno -national groups, which could also create, in a near future, various problems to the basic structure of the Slovene minority community, its institutions and organisations.

Among many o ther cross-border cooperation activities, those regarding the official EU - Programmes Interreg for Gorizia and Phare -CBC for Nova Gorica must be mentioned.

The PHARE CBC programme between Italy and Slovenia (the Friuli -Venezia Giulia and Veneto regions) was initiated in 1994. Presently, it covers more than fifty projects, of which twenty -three have been successfully completed. A total of EUR 13 million has been committed so far for project implementation.

Some examples of CBC projects between Slovenia and It aly are:

- the ECO ADRIA project (five Year project which started in 1997) The overall aim of the project is to improve the quality of surface and ground waters in the Slovene and Italian border regions;

- Joint research into the archaeology, culture and histo ry of the Gori ška region;

- the establishment of regional agencies;

- cultural activities in Nova Goricia;

- infrastructure development in Nova Goricia (1994);

- water outflow optimisation at Nova Gorica and Gorizia;

- a municipality infrastructure for the treatment facility in Nova Gorica.

Also relevant are two other initiatives:

- the so-called "Cross-border Territorial Agreement", also promoted by the Municipalities of Gorizia and Nova Gorica and involving a much wider area, aims to reach a stronger cooperation for economic activities, transport, natural and cultural wealth valorisation and protection, tourism, etc.;

- the so-called "Pilot Project for the Reconciliation between Gorizia and Nova Gorica" tries to achieve a series of common interventions in various sphere s - urbanism, environment, health, transport, education, university, sports, etc. - in order to maximise the integration of the two communities living across the border.

In the short and medium term, Gorizia and Nova Gorica will have to address numerous problems in order to improve the quality of life of the citizens living on the two neighbouring urban sides mainly with regard to ethnic relations among Italians and Slovenes, the integration and harmonization of structures and services ( e.g. in the spheres of health, commerce, education, recreation) with the entry of Slovenia in the EU, and in the reconversion of structures and services of a former border -economy to an inner-European one.

**Part 3: EU Progammes operating in selected border communities**

(prepared by Teresa Tavares)

# BRIEF

# EU PROGRAMMES OPERATING IN SELECTED BORDER COMMUNITIES

PREPARED FOR THE FRAMEWORK V PROJECT

EU BORDER IDENTITIES

**(N. SERD - 1999 - 00023)**

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## CONTEXT

This brief was written by NJM European Economic and Management Consultants Ltd, a sub contractor organisation of the project 'EU Border Identities'.

The aim of this brief is to highlight the key cross border co -operation programmes as well as selected projects which are operating in the community areas analysed by the research team of the project 'EU Border Identities'.

A detailed report was produced in June 2000 and its findings presented to the research teams at the workshop held in Ilkley, September 2000 and at the workshop on cross border co-operation held in Klagenfurt, Austria in December 2000.

The specific objectives of the report were:

To provide information to the researchers conducting field research in the border communities of Görlitz/Zgorzelec and Guben/Gubin (Germany -Poland), Vejprty/Bärenstein (Czech Republic/Germany), Moschendorf/Pinkamindszent (Hungary - Austria), - Jezersko/Eisenkappel -Železna Kapla (Slovenia -Austria) and Nova Gorica/Gorizia -Gorica (Slovenia-Italy). The report highlighted examples of European Union programmes and projects operating in the area.

To gather documentary research which will contribute to the determination of the dimensions of EU policy on European Identity.

**CROSS BORDER CO-0PERATION PROGRAMMES**

**The report analysed the PHARE Cross Border Co -operation programme (CBC) (1994-98) and it also provided an insight of selected Horizontal PHARE multi - beneficiary programmes which have been contributing to the socio - economic and cultural development of European Union/Central and Eastern Europe border communities.**

**1.1          PHARE CROSS BORDER CO -OPERATION PROGRAMME**

In 1994, at the European Parliament initiative, a separate budget line (ECU 150 million) was created within PHARE, th e EU's aid programme for the Central Eastern European Countries (CEECs) to support CBC on the borders with the Member Sates of the Union, modelled on the INTERREG Initiative which was already promoting co -operation across the internal frontiers of the EU.  The INTERREG programme was created in 1990 with funding for the period 1990 to 1994 of ECU 1,000 million. This amount was increased to ECU 2,400 million for 1995 to 1999. The Commission intended that CBC funds would be allocated to border regions in the PH ARE countries to co -finance joint projects with neighbouring border regions in the EU which were eligible for INTERREG funding. The CEECs eligible to participate in the PHARE CBC were those sharing a border with the EU: Albania, Czech Republic, Estonia, La tvia, Lithuania, Bulgaria, Poland Hungary and Slovenia. A total of ECU 820 million was committed within the five years of the CBC programme (1994 -1999). This represents approximately 18% of the total PHARE funds committed over the period 1994 -98.

The new INTERREG III initiative for 2000 -2006 builds on the positive experiences of co -operation already undertaken and extend this co -operation to the whole Union and to relations with neighbouring countries. The total contribution of the European Regional Development Fund to INTERREG for this period has been set at Euro 4,875 million at 1999 prices. For 2000 -2002, the total contribution of PHARE CBC (for non EU countries) as been set up at Euro 480 million. The financial contribution is also extended to PHARE na tional programmes funding, SAPARD instrument, ISAPA and loans from the European Investment Bank.

The PHARE CBC programme plays a crucial part of the pre -accession strategy. It aims to promote cross border co -operation to prepare regions to take full adva ntage of the challenges of European integration, and to influence positively the economic development of the regions as a whole.

The actions, which can be financed through PHARE CBC include:

alleviation of administrative and institutional obstacles to t he free flow of persons, products or services across the border;

measures in the field of energy, telecommunications and transport which support the development of trans -European networks;

improvements in the infrastructure, in particular communication fac ilities, the provision of local water, gas and electric supplies;

improvement of waste and environmental management and pollution prevention;

promotion of tourism;

agriculture and rural development measures;

promotion of business co -operation and enterpris e as well as co -operation between institutions which represent the business sector;

training and employment measures;

measures to promote co -operation in health, particularly the sharing of resources and facilities on a cross border basis.

On December 19 98, the European Commission adopted a revising Regulation on the Phare CBC programme, seeking to encourage joint small -scale actions involving local actors from the border regions and to enhance local capabilities to develop and implement such actions. Fur thermore, the PHARE CBC programme will become part of a wider regional development policy in the context of the pre -accession strategy with the establishment of Joint Co -operation Centres in each border who will be responsible for the elaboration of joint programming documents.

According to the Court of Auditors Special Report on the PHARE CBC programme between 1994 -98, the programme has suffered from the following difficulties [5]:

Delays in the implementation at a project level due to the excessively high budget originally granted by the European Parliament and to the limited expenses of the administrations in the beneficiary countries.

Limited cross -border impact of some projects.

Some projects focused on national priorities rather than in the interests of the local border communities.

Limited number of joint projects with INTERREG, partly due to the lack of compatibility between the two programmes.

Non-existence of joint plans concerning both sides of the border (Member Sates and PHARE countries)

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[5] Court of Auditors Special Report N. 5/99 concerning PHARE cross border co -operation (1994 to 19998) accompanied by the replies of the Commission, OJC 48/01 of 21/02/2000, p. 23

Despite the above difficulties, the Court of Auditors also pointed out the following positive aspects of the PHARE CBC programme [6]:

Contribution to the strengthening of co -operation between PHARE countries and bordering EU Member States at national, regional and lo cal level.

Generally, most regional and local authorities have increased their participation in the planning and implementation of the programme.

Most countries have mobilised at least twenty five per cent co -financing required by the programme

The recentl y established Small Projects Fund proved to be a success for fostering CBC at grass root level.


A preliminary insight to the outcomes of the interviews with the local and regional policy makers in each side of the border communities conducted by the resea rch teams of the project 'EU Border Identities' confirmed some of the problems referred in the Court of Auditors Special Report on the PHARE CBC programme between 1994 -98. These were in particular:

Lack of information on the possibilities for EU funding

Lack of information and publicity on the existing EU funded projects and their impact on populations.

Difficulties in the submission of joint proposals due to the different institutional arrangements in each side of the border (INTERREG/PHARE CBC)

Application procedures for cross border projects take too much time and are costly

Language barriers between each side of the border delays the joint co -operation activities.


The new INTERREG III initiative builds up on the experience of the 1994 -99 period and aims to build on the outcomes already achieved by guaranteeing that the regions and territories involved co -ordinate their efforts and engage in real co -operation. Hence, actors in cross border activities must employ joint strategies and programmes. Furthermore, projects must involve not only institutions but also socio economic actors, non governmental organisations and education institutions.

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[6] idem

## 1.2 ECOS-OUVERTURE

The ECOS Ouverture ran from 1990/91 till 1999. The programme funded inter -regional co-operation projects between local and regional authorities in the EU and CEE, the Mediterranean countries and the New Independent States (NIS). Since 1994, the PHARE CBC budget line provided complementary funding for partners in the CEECs.

Since 1990-91, the programme has financial contributed 40 million ECU for the support of over 350 projects involving more than 1,250 local and regional authorities in the EU, CEECs, NIS and Mediterranean Partner Countries. An analysis of the distribution of projects showed that co-operation on economic issues is the area of greatest interest, covering over 40% of all the projects. Within this field, the most popular activities have been the assistance to SMEs and tourism, as well as the development of trade and export links. The second most popular area is 'Local and Regional Services and policies' which has been the focus of 25% of all the projects. Special areas of interest in this sphere have been the organisation and operationalisation of local government. The Programme has been replaced by Strand C of the new INTERREG III initiative.

## 1.3 ACCESS

The ACCESS Programme has replaced the LIEN and Partnership Programmes, which have been in operation since 1993. ACCESS provides co -financing grants to support transnational macro projects and local micro projects carried out by non -governmental organisations (NGOs) and non -profit organisations (NPOs)

The aims of the Programme are:

to promote the implementation of the acquis communitaire in policy areas in which governmental activitie s are absent or are complementary to those of the third sector, and to raise popular awareness and acceptance in these areas.

to encourage their inclusion and participation of individuals and groups who risk being economically, socially or politically marg inalised in the transformation process.

The programme may support activities in the areas of environmental protection, socio - economic development and social activities. Nevertheless, in order to take into account the specific local needs of each benefic iary country, the assistance priorities are developed on a country by country basis.

## 1.4    INFORMATION PROGRAMME

The need for information about the EU, its policies and programmes, increased tremendously in the last years. Hence, the European Commission i mplemented the Information  Programme. The programme runs until the end of 2001 and it has been playing a vital role in the pre -accession strategy of the CEECs countries. Between thirty to forty European Documentation Centres have been set up in these coun  tries and hundreds of civil servants, parliamentary assistants and journalists have taken part in visits. Commission delegations have been given budgets to carry out local communications and public relations activities, and to translate and print brochures  . In addition, eleven television programmes (five for Euronews, five for CONTACT and one for Bayrischer Rundfunk's 'Cafe Europa') were financed. Finally, country delegations have been encouraged to set up Information Centres accessible to the public to res  pond to public queries on all aspects of the EU and the enlargement process. Presently, seven such centres are open and more are to follow.

## 1.5    ENVIRONMENT PROGRAMME

### Black Triangle project (1991 -2001)

The overall aim of this project is to increase the in  ternational co -operation in order to implement mutually beneficial solutions to shared environmental problems in the brown coal-mining and industrial border area of the Czech Republic, Poland and Germany. This will be achieved through the improvement of en vironmental quality as part of the adoption of the acquis communitaire in preparation for the accession of Poland and the Czech Republic to the European Union.

Bellow are some selected sub projects supporting the EU environmental approximation in the Black Triangle are at different stages of implementation:

Preparation for Natura 2000 in Karkonosze/Krkono še National Parks. The aim of the project is to prepare both national parks for inclusion in the Natura 2000 Network.

Clean Nisa Conference and Black Tr iangle Environmental NGO Congress.

Black Triangle Inventory of non compliance with selected EU directives.

Quality assurance procedures for the Joint Air Monitoring System (a network of 42 automatic air monitoring stations across the region).

Czerwona Woda River Basin Master Plan (Zgorzelec, Poland, is one the beneficiary authorities)

Gas installation for hospital and social institutions in Vejprty, Czech Republic.

JAMS Software Extension for the voivodship Environmental Inspectorate in Jelenia Góra.

Decins ky Sneznik forest sand regeneration (on the Czech/German border) .

## I.6    PHARE DEMOCRACY

The PHARE DEMOCRACY programme, launched on a pilot basis in 1992 as part of the European Democracy Initiative of the European Parliament. It was intended to be the f irst specific EU contribution to the process of democratisation and political reform in Central and Eastern Europe. The Commission has since then launched an annual Democracy Programme. The general objective of the programme is to promote the concept of pluralist and democracy society, the rule of law and to strengthen the respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms in the spheres of society such as the government, parliament, local administration, the media and professional groupings and associations  .

## I.7    PHARE-TACIS JOINT VENTURE PROGRAMME

The JOP programme was launched in 1991 and it assists economic operators from within the European Union who are setting up joint ventures with partners in Central and Eastern Europe and the NIS countries, or who  wish to expand existing ones.

## I.8    PHARE SMALL AND MEDIUM SIZED ENTERPRISES' CO  - OPERATION PROGRAMME (COOPME)

The PHARE COOPME programme was launched in 1995 with the major objectives to promote the development of SMEs in CEECs through the improvement of t  he structure of existing and emerging SMEs associations, chambers of commerce and other organisations, and providing training to their staff and expanding relations and twinning arrangements between central and eastern European SMEs associations and their   EU counterparts;

## I.9    BUSINESS SUPPORT PROGRAMME

The overall aim of this programme is to help operators within the candidate countries in Central and Eastern Europe to improve their capacity to cope with the need to adopt to the requirements of the Communi ty legislation. The programme started in 1999 and ends in December 2001.

**SELECTION OF PROJECTS**

**II.I.    CROSS BORDER PROJECTS BETWEEN POLAND/GERMANY**

The PHARE CBC programme between Germany and Poland began in the voivodships of Szczecin, Gorzów Wielkopol ski and Zielona Góra (community of Guben) and was later extended to further regions from 1995 (including the voivodship of Jelenia Góra, which encompasses the community of Zgorzelec. The programme has two major components, transport and infrastructure and  training and education.

Both the German -Polish border communities analysed in the 'EU Border Identities' project, are located in Euroregions:

Görlitz and Zgorzelec belong to the Euroregion Neisse -Nisa-Nysa comprising eastern Saxony, lower Silesia and the  northern Czech Republic with offices in Zittau (Germany) and Liberec (Czech Republic)

Gubin and Guben belong to the Euroregion Spree -Neisse–Bober. The Euroregion has offices in Guben and Gubin.

In the Poland -Germany CBC programme, ECU 115 million were c ommitted in the transport sector, in large to improve infrastructure and related access roads at several of the main border crossings with Germany. The main objectives of these projects was to tackle the long waiting times to cross the border. In 1994 wait ing times on the border for lorries were of the order of thirty hours. Furthermore, Gubin and Olszyna were among the six border crossings with the longest crossing times in Europe at the end of 1998.  [7]

Selected examples of CBC projects between Poland and  Germany[8]:

Modernisation of roads 274 and 275 leading to the border crossing in Gubinek/Gubin, including the construction of bypasses, overbridges, carriageways; design and land acquisition (ECU 9.7 million 1996)

Bicycle routes in the voivodship of Jelenia  Góra (1996)

Construction of a common sewage treatment plant for Gubin/Guben, including a main inlet, a pumping station, rainwater retention tanks, aerated de -watering and composition plant (ECU 3.3. million 1996)

Construction of a waste treatment plant in  Zielona Góra (1996  ECU 2.3 million)

Creation of Euroregion Neisse and Euroregion Spree -Neisse-Bober (1996)

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[7] Court of Auditors Special Report N. 5/99 concerning PHARE cross border co -operation (1994 to 19998) accompanied by the replies of the Commission, OJC 48/01 of 21/02/2 000, p. 04)

[8] A complete list of examples is referred in the Report

Modernisation of the domestic road n. 356: Zgorzelec -Luban- Jelenia Góra (1997)

Modernisation and development of the International Music Centre Wes t-East in Zielona Góra (1997 -98)

Dwór Czarne as a base for ecological and culture activities - municipal Seminar and Conference Centre in Jelenia Góra (1997)

Building a transfer gas pipe and a gas system for the town of Gubin (1997 and 1998)

The Euroregion al fund for the Euroregions of Spree -Neisse-Bober (1997)

Redeveloping forests under the Euro -las Euro scheme in Zielona Góra area


Projects funded in the Euroregion Spree -Neisse-Bober (communities of Gubin and Guben)


Euro-cities Guben/Gubin (1999 -1996)

City markets Guben/Gubin (1999 -97)

Kläranlage Guben/Gubin (environmental project 1995 -99)

Revitalisation of the Guben Industry Mill (1998 -99)

'Touristenleitsystem' Guben (1998 -99)

German/Polish Eurocentre Guben (Technology and Business) (1998 -99)

'Green Ring' Guben/Gubin (1999)

Euro-school Guben (1997)


The Spree Neisse Bober Euro Region also received funding for the projects 'A hundred encounters on both sides of the border/ Small scale Euro regional projects' (Guben/Gubin). The project was submitted in 1997 and it finished at the end of 1999. The priority was to create new cross border contacts and reinforce those that already exist between, among others, the citizens, organisations and institutions of the two countries. The following sub projects have alre ady taken place:

Euroregion's first Euro -Sports festival

German/Polish Kunstplenair art event

Polish/German encounter for women in agriculture

German/Polish art workshop

INTERREG II projects in Görlitz  (1995 -99)


German-Polish 'Training for Cooks'

Cross Border Tourism

Qualifications in modern medicine

Cross Border logistics

Bilingual environmental consultants

Quality management systems

Europera Youth orchestra

Culture Infopoint Görlitz/Zgorzelec

Common Hauptmann-Witkacy Award

Cultural Information centre  Zgorzelec-Görlitz

Youth Europera

Oratorium Helmuth James von Moltke

University of Neisse

Archives museum of Görlitz


According to research conducted by LACE -TAP[9] (Association of European Border Regions), although there has been a growing experience with t he INTERREG/ PHARE CBC programmes on both sides of the border, co -operation should receive priority at regional and local level in the field of:

training on regional/local level on EU programmes;

economic co -operation;

tourism;

transport and environmen t infrastructure;

labour market;

social/cultural co -operation

and further support of institutional structures.

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[9] LACE-TAP project promoted by the Association of European Border Regions entitled ' Technical Assistance and Promotion of Cross border co-operation related to the Community Initiative INT ERREG II'

## II.2. CROSS BORDER CO-OPERATION BETWEEN GERMANY AND THE CZECH REPUBLIC

The 1994 CBC programme between Germany and the Czech Republic con tributed Euro 25 million to six projects supporting transport infrastructure at border crossings and environment infrastructure. The 1995, 1996 and 1997 programmes, with a total allocation of Euro 75 million, supported investment projects to modernise tran sport and energy, infrastructure and improve water and waste water quality. Furthermore, projects were funded for other activities, including the renovation of historical buildings and the development and promotion of business and tourism, the development of human resources and regenerating forests. In 1996, a small project fund was established to encourage co-operation between local and regional authorities on both sides of the border. The 1998 programme focused on establishing and supporting funding mechanisms in areas which were not sufficiently covered under previous programmes, namely rural development, reforestation and small projects. It also supported intensive co-operation between local and regional authority institution building. The 1999 programme covered issues identified as medium term priorities in the Czech Republic's Accession partnership, with focus on developing environmental and transport infrastructure in border regions, supporting intensive co -operation between local and regional authori ties on both sides of the border and fostering economic development, particularly the SME sector.

The Czech/German communities, Vejprty and Bärenstein analysed in the 'EU Border Identities' project, are located in Euroregion Krušnohorí/Erzgebirge. This E uroregion is formed by the Czech districts of Most, Chomutov, Louny and part of Teplice and by the German districts of Mittlerer Erzgebirgskreis, Annaberg, Freiberg and Stollberg. The Euroregion was established in 1992 and is based in Most (Czech Republic) . The Association co-ordinates, advises and provides information on activities, which aim to enhance conditions for friendly co -operation between the above districts.

In the Czech Republic -Germany CBC programme ECU 28,3 million has been committed in the transport sector. The largest CBC transport project implemented to date has been the modernisation of the Cheb railway station (ECU 12,9 million), the second biggest rail border crossing between the two countries. Furthermore, CBC funds have been used in the heavily polluted northern Bohemia region on the German border through which the river Elbe flows, to finance environmental related projects (particularly waste water sector).

Selected examples of CBC projects between the Czech Republic and Germany incl ude:

Chomutov betway and traffic station

Two international highways pass through the city of Chomutov, impeding the traffic efficiency

Cross border Sewage Treatment. The treatment plant is in Vejprty and the treated sewage is collected in Vejprty and Bären stein. (1997)

According to research conducted by LACE -TAP, although there is a strong involvement of social partners and growing experience with INTERREG/PHARE CBC programmes in both sides of the border and the existence of five active Euro regions, the following co-operation activities should be enhanced:

training on regional/local level on EU programmes;

economic co-operation particularly between SMEs;

tourism;

economic development related infrastructure;

labour market; social/cultural co-operation and further support of institutional structures.

## II.3. CROSS BORDER CO-OPERATION BETWEEN AUSTRIA AND SLOVENIA

Cross border co-operation between Slovenia and Austria began in 1995, following Austria's accession to the EU. Slovenia become eligible for ann ual supports amounting to EUR 3 million. Currently there are forty one on -going projects above EUR 100.000 and a number of smaller projects for up to EUR 30.000 under the Small Projects Fund facility. Since 1998, an increasing number of projects have been multi sectoral in character and have had an interregional effect. The interest in PHARE's grant finance for border areas with weak economic, social and cultural development is growing because of the impact of the development projects, which include:

New partnerships between Slovenian and Austrian institutions, including business organisations (chambers of commerce, technology parks, business information centres, agriculture institutes), associations and regional institutions;

Exchange of experts and transf er of knowledge and experience;

Joint programming, implementation and monitoring of projects;

Joint long term development initiatives;

The opening of borders to people, knowledge and goods.


Selected examples of CBC projects between Slovenia and Austria:

Various animation and awareness raising funds' events in the border region in order to promote CBC programme in general and facilitate contacts and joint projects between local actors in each side of the border (1995 -96)

Jezersko Border Crossing (1995 -96).

Cultural guide along the border (1995 -96). Guidebook with information on cultural heritage, tourist sites and cultural events in the border region.

Business Support Centre, Kranj (1996)


Research conducted by LACE -TAP revealed that there is an increa sing awareness of benefits of CBC on public as well as on business level. Still, the following fields for co -operation should be targeted:

training on regional/local level on EU programmes;

economic co-operation particularly between SMEs;

labour market;

social/cultural co-operation;

and further support of institutional structures.

## II.4.    CROSS BORDER CO-OPERATION BETWEEN ITALY AND SLOVENIA

The PHARE CBC programme between Italy and Slovenia (the Friuli-Venezia Giulia and Veneto regions) was initiated in 1994. Presently, it covers more than fifty projects, of which twenty three have been successfully completed. A total of EUR 13 million has been committed so far for project implementation.

Selected examples of CBC projects between Slovenia and Italy include:

ECO ADRIA project (five Year project which started in 1997)

The overall aim of the project is to improve the quality of surface and ground waters in the Slovenian and Italian border regions.

Joint research into the archaeology, culture and history of the Goriska region. (ECU 100,000 1997) with the presentation of the research results in a comprehensive publication and the organisation of exhibitions on both sides of the border.

Establishment of regional agencies in of Posocje, Goriska, Vipavska, Kras and Obala, bordering Italy

Culture activities in Nova Gorica

Infrastructure development in Nova Gorica (1994)

Water outflow optimisation at Nova Gorica and Gorizia (ECU 705,000).

Municipality infrastructure for the treatment facility in Nova Gorica (ECU 600,000).

Preparation of a management plan for the Triglav National park (1997)

Research conducted by LACE-TAP revealed that there is growing experience with INTERREG/PHARE CBC programmes. However, there is a need for:

economic co-operation particularly between SMEs;

labour market;

social/cultural co-operation;

and further development of regional/local cross border structures.

## II.5.   CROSS BORDER CO-OPERATION BETWEEN AUSTRIA AND HUNGARY

Following the entry of Austria into the European Union, th e PHARE cross border co-operation programme includes a specific budget designated for promoting cross border co-operation between regions of Hungary adjoining Austria: Györ -Moson-Sopron, Vas and Zala.

The Hungarian/Austrian communities, Moschendorf and Pinkamindszent, analysed in the 'EU Border Identities' project, are located in the recently stabilised Euroregion West/Nyugat Pannonia. This Euroregion is formed by the Bundesland Burgenland (Austria) and by the Local Government of the County of Györ -Moson-Sopron and the Local Government of the County of Vas (Hungary). The Euroregion was established in 1998 and is based in Eisenstadt (Austria).

Selected examples of CBC projects between the Hungary and Austria include:

Cross border industrial park Szentgot thard-Heiligenkreuz.

Szombathely-Szentgotthard railway electrification.

Lapincs Brook flood prevention.

A bilingual tourist newspaper: 'the Border country'.

A regional map of the border region (Burgenland and Györ -Moson-Soipron).

A cultural historical p anorama book.

According to research conducted by LACE -TAP, despite the strong business co-operation through joint industrial parks and services and growing experience with INTERREG/PHARE CBC programmes, co -operation should be further developed in the fields of:

training on regional/local level on EU programmes;

economic co-operation particularly between SMEs;

tourism; economic development related infrastructure;

labour market;

social/cultural co -operation and further support of institutional structure s.

## II.6. THE EUROREGION EGRENSIS

The former German-German border area under research is part of the Euroregion Egrensis which was founded in 1992/93. The *Euregio Egrensis* includes Bohemia (Czech Republic) and parts of the three German states of Thuringia, Saxony, and Bavaria. It consists of three independent working groups, one in Bohemia, Bavaria and Saxony/Thuringia respectively. Overall, the *Euregio* aims to promote tolerance and cooperation across the region.

The areas of cross-regional and cross-border cooperation and some of the projects implemented so far are listed below:

economy, infrastructure, labour market

(publication of a cross-border shopping guide; laying of a cross-border railway line; development of an Euregio economic committee)

education and science

(support of Czech-German language schools; organisation of a German-Czech student exchange)

environment, ecology

(cross-border river project)

tourism

(building of a bicycle route; preparing a travel guide)

culture and sports

(publication of a cross-border museum guide; organisation of an academic summer school; organisation of a youths summer camp; support of the Festival Mitte Europa;)

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