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Social Impact of Emigration and Rural-Urban Migration in Central and Eastern Europe

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**Social Impact of Emigration and Rural-Urban Migration in Central and Eastern Europe
VT/2010/001**

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1. Socio-Economic and Political Overview

Slovenia is a small country (located in Central-Southern Europe) with a two million population and labour force of less than one million people. After the Second World War Slovenia was part of the Yugoslav Federation until it gained its independence (for the first time in history) in 1991. In May 2004, it became a member of the EU (and NATO) and entered the Eurozone in January 2007.

Slovenia was the northern of the Yugoslav republics, with borders to Italy and Austria that were never closed (and with traditional contacts with both 'western' countries and also Slovene minorities in both). It was also the most developed republic in economic terms, tolerating a certain extent of private businesses (handcrafts and farmers as self-employed people). In reality the economy was functioning as a kind of semi-market system (including the existence of unemployment) and when it became legally possible (during the 1980s) the market elements were strengthened quickly. Along with the economic developments in the direction of market economy, democratization started during the 1980s and more and more socialist taboos were questioned publicly. By the end of this decade the first political parties were established and the Communist party was reforming itself and changing (adapting) the rhetoric. The democratic (and market) developments in Slovenia were in contradiction with the developments in other republics, most notably in Serbia and Montenegro where Milošević and his ideas were ascending. Besides, democratic (strong civil movements) and political developments at the end of the 1980s went hand in hand with the economic crisis and the revolt among Slovenes against centralization of Yugoslavia and financial flows towards less developed republics.

Fast developments resulted in a Referendum on which the idea of more independent Slovenia was tested at the end of 1990. The large majority of Slovene residents voted for independence (88.5% of all residents and 95% of all that voted). Six months later (in the end of June 1991) the independence of Slovenia was declared. Immediately after the federal army generals responded with threats and sending the tanks from army barracks stationed in Slovenia to the borders with Italy, Austria and Hungary. Slovenians responded with a rather improvised 'army' composed of police and special police units as well as paramilitary units of 'territorial defence'. During the ten days of war that followed there were intense negotiations (with the involvement of European countries and the USA) that ended with the retreat of the Yugoslav army back to the barracks (and surrender of several smaller Yugoslav army units). Three months later the army retreated completely from Slovenia. Among others, this decision was also the result of the rather homogenous ethnic structure of Slovenia and the fact that the war was starting in Croatia and Bosnia.

Since Slovenia used to be the most economically developed republic in Yugoslavia immigration from other republics was strong and there were many people of non-Slovene origin living and working in Slovenia. After independence and after the Yugoslav army left Slovenia some of non-Slovene origin inhabitants left, too (families of army officers, etc.). However, the majority decided to stay. While a part of this population applied for and gained Slovene citizenship, a considerable share did not apply and lost as a consequence any residence status in Slovenia – a fact that triggered a debate on these 'erased' people, court decisions stating the unconstitutionality of their exclusion and policy corrections until 2010 (see Notes on "Population data inconsistencies" and Figure 1 in Annex).¹

The political situation in Slovenia after independence was relatively stable. However, at 1992 elections (the second democratic elections in Slovenia) the political parties that led Slovenia

¹ The Constitutional Court of the Republic of Slovenia twice established that an unconstitutional situation was involved, namely that the erasing was illegal and that the government failed to address its consequences properly. The unconstitutionality and illegality of the erasing has been noted by the Constitutional Court indirectly in seven other cases. The Republic of Slovenia only in 2010, eighteen years after the erasing and eleven years from the first and seven from the second decision of the Constitutional Court (the latter also being the second oldest unfulfilled decision of the Constitutional Court) started to put right the injustice brought upon the erased and closing a painful chapter in the history of independent Slovenia (source: Ministry of the Interior, 2011).

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to political independence (Demos Coalition or so-called political Spring) lost power and for the next 12 years (until 2004) the Liberal Democrats, a political party gravitating towards left centre, hold the majority of votes and formed coalition governments with different parties. This enabled a certain continuity of development policies (economic, social and other). The first real political switch came at 2004 elections, when the right-centre oriented Slovene Democratic Party won the relative majority and formed coalition with two other right-oriented parties and a small Pensioners' Party. At the 2008 elections there was again a switch back to a left-centre parties Government that had to face the economic crisis and several much needed reforms. After increasing public dissatisfaction (as a result of increasing social differences, social consequences of the crisis, opposition to the proposed reforms, strong interest groups opposing each other, different corruption affairs and similar) the Government lost most of its public support already in the middle of its mandate and the early (premature) elections took place in December 2011. The new Government was established in February 2011 – the right-centre coalition of five parties is led by Slovene Democratic Party.

From the end of the 1980s on, the Slovenian economy faced profound changes as a consequence of transition from semi-planned to market economy and a loss of its markets in former Yugoslavia and Eastern Europe. Economic depression in the first period of transition - with a GDP fall of 20%, high inflation, collapses of enterprises (especially in heavy and labour-intensive industries) and rising unemployment - lasted until the mid-1990s, when the unemployment rate reached its peak at 9.1% (1993, LFS data).² After 1995, the economy started to stabilize and from the second part of the 1990s onwards there was a steady growth between 2% and 4% of GDP per year. GDP growth was especially high in the years before the recent crisis (5.9% in 2006, 6.9% in 2007, back to 3.7% in 2008). Economic growth was reflected in the growth of employment and the decrease of unemployment, especially after 2000. The LFS unemployment rate varied between 6 and 7% after 2000, dropped below 5% in 2007 and reached its lowest point of 4.4% in 2008. Youth unemployment was constantly about twice the overall unemployment and had been decreasing from 2000 on too. While among young unemployed the figures on young women are higher than that on young men, the gender differences in overall unemployment are not so pronounced. During the 1990s the male unemployment rate was higher than female (mostly because of the bankruptcies in more male workforce industries – metal, heavy industry) and only after 2000 the female unemployment rose over the male. However, the differences are not very big. A large part of unemployment is structural, both in terms of educational (and occupational) mismatch and regional disparities, Eastern Slovenia having significantly higher unemployment than other parts (e.g. 22.0% in Maribor compared to 9.7% in Nova Gorica; ESS, 1998). By 2010, however, the Statistical Office of the Republic of Slovenia (SORS) recorded 7.9% unemployment in Eastern Slovenia compared to 6.6% Western Slovenia (SORS, 2011a).

The labour market in Slovenia is traditionally highly regulated. The extent of flexible forms of employment (i.e. fixed-term, part-time, different forms of contractual work, student jobs) has been increasing over the years, but open-ended (permanent), full-time employment contracts still prevail. While in 1995, 8.4% of employed persons were on fixed-term contracts, by 2010 the share of employed people on fixed-term contracts increased to 17.3% (SORS, 2011c). More flexible (and insecure) forms of employment are mainly affecting young people (the incidence of fixed-term contracts among 15-24 year-olds is about four times higher than among all employed people) and the unemployed, since most of the new employment is on fixed-term basis. The Employment Service of Slovenia (ESS) reported that in 2007, 76.6% of open positions (jobs) advertised by employers were for a fixed-term period, while in 2011 the share of fixed-term jobs among open positions was already 81.7% (ESS, 2012: 6).

The demographic situation in Slovenia in the last two decades has been relatively stable. The population increase (especially after 2000) is mostly due to the immigration inflow

² Registered unemployment rates are constantly higher than LFS (Labour Force Survey) ones; the highest registered unemployment rates were in 1993 (14.0%) and 1994 (14.5%).

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(workers from the territory of ex-Yugoslavia), which nearly stopped with the economic crisis. The fertility rate in Slovenia is rather low: it has been decreasing constantly since 1980 (when it was 2.11) until 2003 when it reached the bottom with coefficient 1.20. In 2004, the trend turned and fertility started to rise again, in 2008 and 2009 being 1.53. It is expected that it will stay at that level. The expected life duration, on the other hand, is increasing constantly. While expected life duration at birth in 1990 was 69.54 for men and 77.38 for women, it rose to 75.76 for men and 82.31 for women by 2009 (SORS, 2011b). Consequently, the age structure of population is changing. The share of aged 0-14 years decreased from 20.9 in 1990 to 14% in 2010, while the share of persons aged 65 years and more increased from 10.6% in 1990 to 16.5% in 2010. The Eurostat population projections (EUROPOP, 2010) for Slovenia show the negative population trends in Slovenia (rapid ageing of population) will continue and intensify after 2020.

The recent crisis hit Slovenia strongly; the GDP fall was -8.1% 2009, while in 2010 there was already a weak growth (1.2%). Despite of governmental anti-crisis measures aimed at the companies, there were several bankruptcies of companies, especially in the manufacturing and construction sector³, and the unemployment rose considerably (the most for poorly educated workforce). In 2009, the LFS unemployment rate was 5.9% (and registered unemployment rate 9.1%) and in 2010 already 7.2% (the registered one 10.7%). It is expected that the unemployment will remain high for the next five years (especially in 2011 and 2012) and the economic growth will be a jobless one (The Institute of Macroeconomic Analysis and Developments of Slovenia (IMAD, 2011). It is also expected that the full social consequences of the recent economic crisis will become evident with some delay in this and the next years (high, long-term unemployment, increased need for financial social assistance and other social and family transfers).

The relatively successful Slovenian economic and social development during the 1990s and in the first years after 2000 was strongly connected to gradual, cautious approach to economic and social reforms. The social protection stayed at a relatively high level, which was until recently reflected in relatively low poverty rates and comparatively low income inequalities. This 'gradualist approach' was unique compared to other transition countries in Central and Eastern Europe⁴. During the 1990's the governmental policies were consistently focused on the macro economic stability that at the same time strongly sheltered national economy. After 2000, such development was increasingly criticized by economists (for example: Mrak, Rojec and Silva-Jauregui, 2004), who pointed at the need for structural economic and labour market reforms (flexibilisation of employment relations, the need for a system that would enable the so-called flexicurity), as well as reforms of pension, social, health and some other sectors. At the level of enterprises the need for technological and organizational restructuring, modernization of work and workplaces as well as faster technological modernization and innovation has been stressed. After 2004, and pronouncedly after 2010, the governmental proposals of the reforms of different sectors were met by strong resistance of trade unions, different interest groups as well as the general public opinion and the media⁵.

There are only two levels of governance in Slovenia, the national level (at NUTS1) and the local level of municipalities. In 2008, nevertheless, Slovenia introduced a somewhat dubious NUTS2 territorial division with only two regions (i.e. Western and Eastern Slovenia), which is sometimes used for statistical purposes but lacks any role of governance (cf. Figure 3 in the

³ The crisis was usually not the only reason for the bankruptcies, as most of the bankrupted enterprises were in difficult situation for a longer period due to bad managerial decisions, insolvency, etc.

⁴ Such approach was a consequence of a combination of factors, such as a relatively good economic situation at the beginning of transition, relative political stability and continuity, a high general consensus (reflected in public opinion and the attitudes of social partners) on the concern to prevent too quick and radical economic and social differentiation in the population.

⁵ Three already adopted reform acts – Pension reform Act, Small jobs Act, Act on hindering grey economy – were refused on referendums in 2011.

Annex)⁶. Currently, there are 211 municipalities in Slovenia, ranging from the two large urban municipalities (i.e. Ljubljana 280.000 with inhabitants and Maribor with 111.000 inhabitants) to the small rural ones, sometimes only with three or four hundreds of inhabitants (i.e. Hodoš with 320 inhabitants and Osilnica with 399 inhabitants respectively). Although there are administratively no regions in Slovenia, the Statistical Office uses the term 'statistical region' and defines 12 regions (comparable to NUTS3 territorial division) for statistical measurement purposes.

2. Main emigration and internal migration trends and patterns

2.1. Main emigration and re-migration trends since 1990

Generally, Slovenia is an immigration country not only since its independence but since the 1960s. As the most socio-economically developed republic of the former federation, Slovenia had been receiving population throughout the Yugoslav period. Nevertheless, after the introduction of bilateral agreement on "Gastarbeit" in the early 1960s, especially rural population from north-eastern and eastern Slovenia moved to Germany and Austria (Klinar, 1985, Malačič 2003; Šircelj 2003, Josipovič 2006). At its peak, in the early 1970's, this population numbered around 60,000 and it averaged at approximately 3% of the Slovenian population. Importantly, regional disparities were very pronounced. In north-eastern Slovenia this percentage has mounted up to 8% at the level of administrative units (former communes or great municipalities). At the local level (i.e. municipalities), however, the percentage frequently surpassed 10% of the population (Josipovič 2004; 2006; 2011; Josipovič, Dolenc, 2007).

The assessment of population developments after independence is difficult due to issues of the 'erased' inhabitants originating from other Yugoslav republics, because they did not only lose their residence rights but were also deleted from statistical accounting and later subsequently reinserted, so that statistics in the 1990s display a mixture of real population movements and residence status changes which cannot be disentangled (see the variations in the 1990's and 2000's; Figure 1, Tables 1 and 2)⁷.

The first period after the independence (1991-1997) was characterised by heavy consequences of the war. Many people temporarily moved to Slovenia as refugees, who mostly returned to their homes or at least to their home-countries by 1998. A part of the population originating from other Yugoslav republics returned, another part stayed and gained Slovene citizenship, while a third group lost all residence rights ('erased' people). Estimates differ with regard to the size of these shares (see Annex)⁸.

In the second period (1998-2003), a part of fluctuation was caused by the statistical effect of re-registering a part of the "Erased"⁹, so that this data cannot be used for assessing

⁶ A referendum on the introduction of a regional mezzo-level failed to bring results. The introduction of two 'cohesive' regions in the East and the West was largely motivated by gaining access to EU cohesion funds and has no further relevance. See also Josipovič (2009) for critique on the NUTS2 territorial division.

⁷ Figure 1 tends to present an overall impression of migration movements in former Yugoslavia and after the independence, and it is not aimed at the very recent trends. Table 1 presents the data in a period from 1997 until 2008. Table 2 presents some new data, which employ the new definition of population from 2008 and extends the time series to mid 2010.

⁸ It is very hard to estimate the numbers for the three groups. The group which intentionally left Slovenia is the smallest and consists of, mainly, military employees of former Yugoslav Army and their family members. Apart of that, the group which stayed in Slovenia, but was born outside Slovenia numbers around 150,000 (including the Slovenes born outside Slovenia). The number of citizenships under the special article for persons born outside Slovenia but living in Slovenia on the day of the referendum on the sovereignty was altogether around 170,000 (cf. Josipovič, 2006). Finally, the third group of the so-called Erased reportedly numbered up to 30,000. However, the first official number from 2003 on the Erased was 18,305, which was officially admitted to be too low. Moreover, the last official number on Erased rendered during 2009 was 25,671, which is closer to the first estimations and still held as probably inaccurate.

⁹ Roughly one third of then 25,671 »Erased« (i.e. de-registered) persons were re-registered (i.e. returned back) into the Central Register of Population.

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migration levels. Most Slovenian citizens migrated to other EU countries in this Eurostat data can be used to assess the approximate extent of net emigration. The number of Slovenian citizens in other EU countries increased only slightly from about 31,000 to 34,000 persons (Holland et al., 2011:46). According to official data the net migration of Slovenian citizens was negative in the last ten years. Still, about two thirds (66%) of those citizens who emigrate return after some time spent in other countries (cf. the rates of emigrating citizens and those of immigrated citizens in Table 11).

In the third period (from 2004 onwards) Slovenia witnessed a pronounced emigration of Slovenian citizens. According to official data for 2000-2004, about 2,000 Slovenian citizens yearly left Slovenia (Table 11). According to the same source for 2005-2009, this number rose by 60% to 3,300 per year. Though not very significant in numbers compared to the whole population (1-1.5‰ per year), this emigration bears signs of important structural ruptures. Disregarding the obstacles and the period of transition on employing people from new EU member states, the EU membership did introduce some new possibilities of working in other EU countries. The number of Slovenian citizens in other EU countries increased further to about 40,000 (Holland et al., 2011: 46). While the numbers in Germany were relatively constant or even decreasing in recent years, the number of Slovenians in other destinations increased. According to a study (IMAD, 2008: 86), the share of emigrants to other EU27 countries increased to 70%.

Drawing from the first findings of a project carried out by the Institute of Economic Research and published in the Supplement of the Newspaper Delo (13.08.2011), where the emigration of highly trained¹⁰ and staff with tertiary education was examined, it is obvious that researchers and scientists did leave Slovenia more frequently in the last couple of years as they did ever before (Bevc, 2011). However, this is a specific population which does not fit the aforementioned scheme of presumably well-educated couples predominantly with children. In contrast, the “average” researchers ageing between 35 and 40 tend to emigrate alone (either single or married). Apart of the USA, their destination countries are rather the “non-German” speaking EU-member states (UK, Netherlands, Belgium) and Australia, and they are more inclined to resettle there permanently (ibid.).

The analyses of push and pull factors in Slovenia are scarce as far as emigration is concerned. The majority of studies focus more or less on motivations for migration of immigrants from former Yugoslavia (e.g. Josipovič, 2006).

Though, some important factors, why Slovenian citizens tend not to emigrate at larger scale might be distinguished. To sum up, the main push factors for emigration to other countries are structural incapacity of offering suitable jobs (or suitable working conditions) to highly educated young and propulsive population. One can also trace daily commuting abroad, mostly to Austria (North-Eastern Slovenia) and Italy (Western parts of Slovenia) for the same structural reason – the lack of suitable jobs. Another important factor for daily commuting is solid traffic infrastructure in Slovenia enabling people to travel quickly from one place to another (cf. Josipovič, 2006, 2009).

Among pull factors, one may especially distinguish better conditions at work (more competitive environment allowing people to develop their careers) as well as other conditions (better accessibility, infrastructure etc.). Another important “pull” factor is the proximity of the border, so people from peripheral rural border areas with low number of available jobs can easily commute across the border. Nonetheless, urban border areas in western Slovenia also allow for extensive cross-border daily commuting. Cross-border daily commuting to Italy or to Austria was frequent already in the Yugoslav period (cf. Josipovič, 2006, 2009).

¹⁰ Highly trained personnel do not exclusively involve people with tertiary education (finished high school or more). They might involve also specialists with skills acclaimed otherwise than by the official education institutions (e.g. informatics). At the same time all the tertiary educated are not necessarily highly trained.

Following the World Bank Remittances Factbook data for 2009 (WB, 2011a), there were around 132,000 Slovenian emigrants abroad. The top five countries with the highest number of Slovenian emigrants are, accordingly, Germany (33,000), Croatia (26,000), Austria (18,000), Canada (11,000) and France (11,000). These numbers are much higher than the numbers of Slovenian citizens abroad, as they include besides the descendants of traditional emigrants also the persons born in Slovenia and living in other EU member states, as well as they include persons born in the Slovenian territory a long time ago who have naturalized as citizens of the receiving states. The reliability of these data cannot be assessed here. However, the main receiving states can be confirmed.

2.2. *Main internal migration trends*

Slovenia has a low rate of urbanization. In 2009, only about 48% of the population lived in cities. But that does not mean that Slovenia is not urbanized. Many small settlements around bigger urban centres were urbanized, but due to its low number of inhabitants they are not included within the list of town and cities. After 1990 the initial process of heavier urbanization triggered already by the early industrialization of Kingdom of Yugoslavia in 1930's continued. Unlike other countries in its surroundings, Slovenia has a specific settlement pattern of thousands (6,000) of small villages and dozens of small towns, which contribute to overall statistically rather low rate of urbanization. Except Ljubljana and Maribor there are no other agglomerations with more than 100,000 inhabitants. Still, there are strong processes of sub-urbanization, which include intra-urban movements in several directions as well as migration from peripheral countryside closer to urban or semi-urban centres (Figure 2, Table 5). It is important to stress that, apart from suburbanization there are stronger migration movements towards the national capital region. The recently observed intensification is probably only related to changes in recording and not in internal migration.¹¹ The main reasons for such behaviour were relatively high reimbursements for daily commuting expenses from a place of residence to a place of work. Thus for example out-migration from Pomurska region soared from long-year average between -0.2 and -0.4 per 1,000 inhabitants to -5.5 in 2008 and to -3.0 in 2009. The data showed that Pomurska region suffered net out-migration already earlier, so at least to a certain extent we have been dealing with a rather fictitious statistical population of about 1,000 persons (see Table 5).

2.3. *Main characteristics of migrants*

Those among the Slovenian citizens who left Slovenia in the last five to ten years were usually above-averagely educated, trained, and skilled. It was estimated that about 300 to 400 highly educated professionals left Slovenia permanently every year of the 2005-2007 period (Josipovič, Šumi, 2007). This estimation builds on the assumption that about at least the same share of highly educated leave the country compared to those staying. According to 2002 census data, the share of highly educated was about 13% of the total population above 15 years of age. Though there were significant regional disparities. Thus, for instance, central Slovenia (i.e. the Osrednjeslovenska statistical region including the capital city) reached 20% of highly educated (i.e. tertiary educated) among the region's population and the highest percentage of emigrants (source: Census 2002, SORS). Since the shares and numbers of enrolled and graduates have steeply risen in the last decade, it might be justifiably expected at least 20% (though rather more) of their share within the emigrant population. Given that the number of emigrating Slovenian citizens reached 2,000 per year in the first period (2000-2004) and 3,300 per year in the second period (2005-2009), we may expect at least 400 (20% of 2,000) highly educated per year in the first period (2000-2004), and 650 per year in the second period, respectively. As argued, it is obvious that these

¹¹ Table 5 shows that internal migration flows have been reinforced only in the last couple of years (2008-2009). But the rapid population changes of this extent are implausible. The main reason for such a change (shift from regions with a weak centre to regions with a strong centre) was the change in legal provisions according to which every inhabitant would be penalized if living on an address other than reported.

numbers do not represent a considerable share in the total population. Nevertheless, this movement became more pronounced after the outbreak of global economic and financial crises, but at the moment there is a lack of reliable latest quantitative data.

While foreign migration to and from Slovenia is predominantly male, (e.g. 85% of foreigners leaving Slovenia are men and 15% are women in 2009), Slovenian citizens have a balanced gender structure. In the last years (2005-2008), figures indicate a slight dominance of female emigrants (Table 7).

A few years ago, the Governmental Institute of Macroeconomic Analysis and Development issued a publication that was partially dedicated to discussion on different issues of spatial mobility, including emigration in the last two decades (IMAD, 2008). In the study only Slovenian citizens emigrating abroad in the period 1995-2006 are analysed. According to IMAD, the age structure of Slovene emigrants does not differ from the "typical" emigrant structure: 60% of them are aged between 20 and 50 years, only 6% is older than 65. The majority of Slovenian emigrants are aged between 25 and 35 years. The share of children among emigrants is relatively high and the IMAD study concludes it is on the account of emigrating parents with children who do not emigrate and search for a job, but go abroad to an already known destination for an already agreed job (ibid.). It may be added that the recent data on gender structure support the statement that Slovenian citizens move abroad in pairs, or already with children.

As concerns the educational attainment of emigrants, there is a lack of consistent data. As mentioned before, it may be expected that at least 20% of emigrating citizens hold a degree of tertiary education. A special "Action plan on cooperation with scientists and top experts of Slovene origin living abroad" estimates that at least 10% of Slovenian researchers are working abroad (under the assumption that there are 12,000 researchers working in Slovenia and at least 1,200 researchers outside its borders) (Republic of Slovenia, 2011a). The same source maintains that a large number of scientists and top experts are descendants of Slovene emigrants, who emigrated especially to USA and Canada. It argues that in the period between 1995 and 2004 as much as 73 top researchers from 30 research organisations moved out of Slovenia, all together representing 2.4% of researchers in Slovene research organisations. The profiles of emigrating researchers are mainly natural sciences, mathematics and technical profiles. The Action plan concludes that about half of emigration of researchers and scientists is permanent (ibid.). To back up this information with the study of Institute of Economic Research (Bevc, 2011), it may be argued that the number of emigrating researchers is even higher since the research project did not cover the whole population but only a non-representative but relatively large sample (see details in Chapters 2.1 and 7.1).

Speaking of ethnic communities, this is another field not covered with data. The new census of 2011 carried out in Slovenia was the first census ever to be reproduced from various data banks and registers. Accordingly, Slovenian legal arrangements, only the census could be used for collecting data on ethnicity, religious affiliation, and other "thin" data. Lacking the pertinent national researches of whatsoever, it is not possible to reasonably speculate on ethnic-selective drivers of emigration, though they also cannot be excluded.

On the other hand, we may distinguish some typical destination countries of the emigrants from Slovenia. First pertinent data is published for the year 2008 and 2009. It is expected that such information will be published regularly since it is vital for following the routes of migrants. The emigration from Slovenia in 2009 was about half higher than that of 2008 (see Table 8). The main destination countries are within Europe (94%), mainly to the EU and to the countries of former Yugoslavia. Among the European countries (4,900 emigrants), Germany, Austria, Italy, and Switzerland are top destinations. Apart from the area of former Yugoslavia (6,300 emigrants), many emigrate overseas to the USA, Canada, and Australia (about 500 emigrants in 2008). In 2009, the numbers were higher for the former Yugoslavia (13,700), but lower for the European countries (4,000), while the overseas countries retained the same number of immigration from Slovenia (Table 8).

As regards regional distribution of emigrants from Slovenia, there are some typical emigration regions. While from NE Slovenia people are traditionally more inclined to go abroad to Austria and Germany, but also to other western European countries like France and Belgium, the SW Slovenia exercise emigration mostly to Italy and partly to France, accompanied by the specific 'return' migration to other former Yugoslav republics, especially Serbia, which could be partly ascribed to the former System and its loyal military employees (cf. Josipovič, 2006).

3. Nation-wide labour market and social development trends under the influence of emigration

3.1. Economic and labour market developments

As until the economic crisis that started at the end of 2008 the incidence of emigration from Slovenia was low compared to immigration, and also because of the lack of data on educational attainment and qualifications of emigrants, the possible impact of emigration on Slovene labour market was never much discussed. The only exception is the question of brain drain where the researchers (Bevc, 2011, IMAD, 2008) and to some extent also policy makers (Republic of Slovenia, 2010) agree that this could hinder the future development of Slovenia in terms of the insufficient supply of professional workforce and also more generally in terms of lower input to modernisation and innovation of the economy.

It can be argued that the impact of emigration (not counting the return migration of workers from countries of ex-Yugoslavia) to labour market developments in Slovenia is rather weak. One of the reasons for that is the structure of Slovenian economy and employment. In the period from mid-1990s to the recent economic crisis, the sectors that contributed most to the economic and employment growth were construction, manufacturing and retail sectors – that is, the sectors that have a relatively high concentration of low skilled and low wage jobs, and have also been employing immigrant workers. Although the demand for highly qualified labour has been increasing over the years, the economy has not been able to absorb the increasing numbers of young graduates of tertiary education¹². Their unemployment is the consequence of an increase in the shares of young people continuing education at the tertiary level since 2000 (in 2008, in the generation aged 19 to 26, 53.1% were students of tertiary education), the mismatch between the areas of study preferred by the students and the demand of employers (very large shares of students enrolled in social sciences, business and administrative studies, while the demand of employers is more for technical and electro areas), as well as a slow absorption capacity of the Slovenian economy. According to Kramberger (Kramberger, 2007: 98), the annual inflow of young graduates of tertiary education to the labour market surpasses the demand for such labour for two times.

Although the relative unemployment rates of well-educated persons are low compared to the less educated,¹³ the situation of young educated people on Slovenian labour market is not good. They predominantly get jobs on fixed-term contracts and often accept jobs that are below their level of education (Ignjatović, Trbanc, 2009). These are also the reasons why among emigrants from Slovenia there are so many well-educated young and middle-aged people. It seems that behind the apparent impression that the emigration from Slovenia does not have any notable effects on the labour market there might be a hidden impact consisting of the lowering of the unemployment rates of highly educated persons. It is an assumption that has not been investigated yet and would need more attention in the future. According to IMAD (IMAD, 2008) the main reason for emigration from Slovenia is not looking for a job in

¹² In 2000, there were less than 1000 young graduates of tertiary education registered as unemployed; by 2005 their number rose to nearly 2900, in 2007 it was 2200 (Ignjatović, Trbanc, 2009).

¹³ In 2009, the relative unemployment rate (LFS) of unskilled persons with less than elementary education was 13.5%, among persons with only elementary education it was 8.1%, among those with secondary vocational education it was 6.7%, among persons with general or professional secondary education 6.1% and among persons with more than secondary education it was 3.2% (SORS, 2010a).

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general, but looking for better, more demanding and challenging job than those available in Slovenia, including better pay and better working conditions.

According to the Employment Service of Slovenia, the employers in the last decade have been constantly reporting that they have most problems in recruiting qualified workers in the area of construction and metal industry, qualified workers and engineers in mechanical and electrical areas, medical personnel (doctors and nurses) and qualified workers in catering (Republic of Slovenia, 2010: 20). There is no information available on the type of education of emigrants (only the level), so it is not possible to say whether it is the persons skilled/educated for the professions that are in high demand. The Governmental Action plan on cooperation with the scientists and top experts of Slovenian origin living abroad states that the brain drain of Slovenian top scientists and researchers is most evident in the areas of natural sciences, mathematics and technical sciences that are considered of key importance for the development of Slovenia (Republic of Slovenia, 2011a: 3).

As already mentioned Slovenia knows a phenomenon of daily commuting abroad of people living in the areas near the Austrian border (in North-East Slovenia) and near the Italian border (Western parts of Slovenia). This is not a new phenomenon, and it is a consequence of the lack of suitable jobs and, in general, higher wages in Austria and Italy. While part of daily commuting abroad is done by persons who are formally employed in Austria or Italy and live in Slovenia, a large part of it (especially in Italy) is for (occasional) performance of undeclared work, for example, women offering informal domestic help, child care, care for the elderly and similar. Some partial research data for Slovenian-Italian border area even indicate that the majority of daily commuting abroad is for performing undeclared work, often as an occasional additional source of income of people that are already employed in Slovenia (Hrvatín, 2010). The estimation of the extent of daily commuting from Slovenia to Italy based on the border count in 2000 and 2001 was around 16,000 persons daily (ibid.: 62).

Since May 2011, the employment of Slovene citizens is possible without any reservations in all EU countries (before that date in some EU countries, including Austria there were certain limitations for employment of Slovene citizens). This triggered the discussions in Slovene media about potential emigration of Slovene qualified workforce to Austria (due to wage differences), especially in the case of medical personnel, such as nurses and care providers in old-people institutions, metal workers, qualified workers in construction and similar that are in high demand both in Austria and in Slovenia. The estimation of Ministry of Labour, Family and Social Affairs is that the emigration (both daily commuting and real emigration) of Slovene people to Austria is not likely to increase considerably, as 'work mobility of Slovene people is very low, besides the expectations of Slovene job seekers are too high and the demand for labour in the Austrian labour market is limited' (Dnevnik, Daily newspaper, 13.05.2011). In the same article the EURES data on the number of daily commuters to Austria is quoted: in 2008, there were officially 5,961 daily Slovene commuters to Austria and in 2009, there were 5,367 such Slovene persons.

The expectations after the independence of Slovenia about the involvement of the Diaspora in economic development of Slovenia and the extent of return migration remained largely unfulfilled. There are hardly any investments of Slovenian people living abroad to Slovenia. In the recent years the cooperation with known Slovenian experts and scientists living abroad has been initiated and is developing, but it is too early to show any concrete results (more in Chapter 6.1). The main 'wave' of return migration happened in 2001 and 2002, when due to economic and social crisis in Argentina some emigrant families (mostly second generation of emigrants from the 1950s) decided to return (Emigration association Slovenia in the world, 2002).

According to the World Bank (World Bank, 2011a), Slovenia received around 347 million USD of remittances in 2008 and 279 million USD in 2009, which makes only about 0.6% of GDP. Compared to neighbouring Croatia (1.6 billion USD in 2008 and 1.48 billion in 2009; i.e. 2.3% of its GDP), this is relatively low amount (Table 10). There is no evidence that the

remittances have been invested in business or that they would have any impact on labour market (employment).

3.2. Social security

According to the Act on official recognition of the succession of Republic of Slovenia from 1992, Slovenia recognised as valid all bilateral agreements on labour and social security issues that SFRJ¹⁴ as the preceding state concluded with different countries. SFRJ started concluding these bilateral agreements after the World War II. Thus, before entering the EU for Slovenian emigrants the bilateral agreements 'inherited' from SFRJ applied. Those bilateral agreements were with all neighbouring countries, with the large majority of EU countries and several others. However, with some countries, like for example the USA, where there also exists Slovene emigration, the bilateral agreement was never concluded (and still is not).

After 2004, the EU regulation applies (Regulation 883/2004 on the coordination of social security systems).¹⁵

Slovenia concluded bilateral agreements on social security issues with four countries from the territory of ex-Yugoslavia – Croatia, Macedonia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, and Serbia (and the agreement with Monte Negro is in the procedure). Besides, the bilateral agreements are concluded with Argentina, Canada and Quebec, and Australia (MLFSA, 2012).

Bilateral agreements of Slovenia with Croatia, with Macedonia, with Bosnia and Herzegovina and with Serbia cover the areas of (1) health insurance, (2) obligatory pension and invalidity insurance (but not the pension related benefits that depend on means-testing), (3) unemployment insurance. In addition, the agreement with Croatia also regulates replacement of pay for the time of maternity and parental leave; the one with Macedonia also regulates replacement of pay for the time of maternity and parental leave and child allowances. Agreement with Bosnia and Herzegovina also covers parental and child allowances, and the agreement with Serbia parental allowances.

Bilateral agreements between Slovenia and Argentina, Slovenia and Canada and Quebec, and Slovenia and Australia only cover the area of pension and invalidity insurance.

Regarding the issue of social protection of **family members left behind**, Slovenia has a practically universal coverage of social and health protection insurance, including those that are not working (young, elderly, unemployed, inactive). In general, Slovenian social policy has kept a relatively high level of rights and a strong public network of services in social and health areas.

Access to basic health care is universal and due to the fact that the state covers the costs of health insurance of the unemployed and those with incomes below the minimum income the coverage of health insurance (both compulsory and additional) in Slovenia is over 95%. Access to health care is problematic mostly for people without valid official documents and permanent residence (some of the homeless, drug addicts, illegal migrants, migrants performing undeclared work).

Replacement of pay for the time of maternity and parental leave is 100% (of the average of last months pay) and its duration is 12 months.¹⁶ If mother of a newborn child has not been employed, she is entitled to parental allowance (for a duration of 12 months). There are universal family allowances for big families. Child allowances are means-tested, but the limit is set relatively high (the highest limit for child allowance is the average net wage in Slovenia per family member). The amount of child allowance for the second and the next children is higher than for the first.

¹⁴ Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia.

¹⁵ Also for EEA countries and Switzerland.

¹⁶ This will be changed to the replacement of 100% for the first 3 months and 90% for the rest due to governmental austerity measures.

Minimum income is guaranteed. In case an individual or a family for objective reasons do not have the means of subsistence, the means-tested financial social assistance can be granted upon application (by centres of social work). Since 1 January 2012 the new social legislation is being implemented (Act on Social Benefits and Act on Exercising the Rights to Public Funds), which tightened the entitlement conditions for financial social assistance (strictly taking into account the income and the property) and connected the administrative information bases. Also the state pension (not insurance based) and pension supplement for pensioners receiving very low insurance-based pensions were transferred to the social benefits system and are now strictly means-tested. In case of receiving financial social assistance for more than 12 months and in case of receiving the pension supplement (regardless of the duration) the state can repay itself after the death of the recipient (from the inheritance), except for cases where this would endanger the social situation of heirs. This legislative provision has caused that many people (especially the elderly) recently decided not to take up the pension supplement or financial social assistance.

3.3. Poverty and Social Exclusion

The at-risk-of-poverty rates (after social transfers) in Slovenia have been relatively low, since 2000 varying between 10 and 12% (11.3% in 2009). In 2010, at-risk-of-poverty rate increased to 12.7%, reflecting the consequences of the crisis (increase in unemployment, lower incomes in population). The highest at-risk-of-poverty rates are constantly found among households without active members (34.8% in 2009 and 40.1% in 2010), especially households without active members and with dependent children (as high as 60.4% in 2009 and even 74.8% in 2010), single households (43.4% in 2009 and 38.5% in 2010) and one-parent households (28.1% in 2009 and 31.4% in 2010) (SORS, 2010b, SORS, 2012b).

The shares of materially deprived (at least 3 elements out of 9) persons in population were around 14.5% from 2005 to 2007, 16.9% in 2008, 16.2% in 2009 and 15.8% in 2010 (SORS, 2012b). Shares of severely materially deprived population (at least 4 elements out of 9) were 5.1% in the period 2005-2007, 6.7% in 2008, 6.1% in 2009 and 5.9% in 2010 (ibid.). Among the persons that were below the poverty threshold, 20.5% lived in severe material deprivation in 2010 (ibid.).

The at-risk-of-poverty rate of elderly people is above the average, and even more so in the case of elderly women. In 2010, the poverty rate of persons aged over 65 years was 20.2% and of women aged over 65 years 27.1% (ibid.). Elderly people are also somewhat more often severely materially deprived.

Despite of all things said, there is no concrete evidence that would relate over-average at-risk-of-poverty rates in certain groups to emigration. Higher risk of poverty among the elderly is mostly related to low pensions, higher risk among households without active members is related to retreat from the labour market and dependence on social transfers. Although the coverage of social and family transfers is good, their level is not high (especially the level of financial social assistance).¹⁷

The characteristics of Slovene emigrants show a gender-balanced picture of younger and middle-aged people that emigrate as single people or in couples or as a family (including children). Even if one parent emigrates and the other stays in Slovenia with child(ren), this other parent is usually employed and/or receiving certain benefits. It cannot be automatically concluded that emigrants from Slovenia are leaving behind the dependent family members (most often they are not).

There are no data available on at-risk-of-poverty rates or material deprivation by statistical regions. It is possible that cross border employment (daily cross border commuting) has

¹⁷ The amount of financial social assistance (based on the minimum income) was 230 euro for the first adult person until the end of 2011. The Social Benefits Act increased it to 288 euro from January 2012 on, but before it was implemented, in December 2011 the Intervention Act decreased it for one year to 260 euro.

positive effects on lowering the poverty rates in the border areas (due to higher wages earned in Austria or Italy), but in the absence of regional data this can not be examined.

Availability of different services in the local environment (such as child care, long-term care non-for profit housing units) is important for social inclusion. The access to these services is also very important for returning emigrants. The emigrant families, that returned from Argentina in 2001 and 2002 reported on facing problems especially in the housing area (besides job search) (Emigration Association Slovenia in the World, 2002). The large majority of housing units in Slovenia is privately owned and there is a lasting deficiency of units that could be rented under more convenient conditions (so-called social-rent units or non-for profit housing). It is in the domain of municipalities to provide non-for-profit housing, but there are not enough such units for all the applicants (young families, families that can not afford to buy, people without regular income...). Also at the national level, the housing policy is not consistent.

The network of public child-care facilities has a long tradition and the inclusion of pre-school children to kindergartens is high (in 2008, there were 70.2% of children aged 1 to 5 years included in public kindergartens – SORS, 2010c). The kindergarten fee (cost) is subsidised (up to full coverage) to families with low income. The dispersion of public child-care facilities is relatively good, however, in the last years there is a problem of access, as the interest for enrolment of children in many municipalities surpasses the available places.¹⁸ In principle, there is a priority rule for enrolment of children from materially deprived families and one-parent families, but the municipalities (that are responsible for organising and financing the kindergartens) can make their own (additional) priority rules for enrolment. Such rules can include prioritising the duration of living in certain municipality, thus ‘discriminating’ the families that have recently moved to the municipality. So, for emigrants returning to Slovenia as well as for internal migrants the access to child-care facilities could present a problem.

4. Labour market and social development trends in net migration loss/gain regions

4.1. Identification of net migration loss/gain regions

In the period 1995-2009 there were five “gain regions” as far as internal migration is concerned. The highest share (2.3% of the region’s population) of internal migrants gained the Obalno-kraška region (Koper), followed by 1.9% (Notranjsko-kraška region-, Postojna), and 1.5% (Osrednje-slovenska region; Ljubljana). All other regions, especially Koroška (-3.1%), Goriška (-2.6%), and Zasavska (-2.4%), lost substantial part of their populations. The last decade (2000-2009) saw similar developments topped up with pronounced concentration in Osrednjeslovenska region (Ljubljana) especially in the last five-year period (2005-2009).

As regards the overall number of emigrants and regional disparities in Slovenia, Osrednjeslovenska (i.e. Ljubljana) statistical region (5,228 or 27.8% of all emigrants in 2009) followed by Podravska (Maribor; 2,768 or 14.7%) and Savinjska (Celje; 2,743 or 14.6%) statistical regions were the most affected by emigration (see Table 4).

Though these numbers sum the emigration of all population regardless of citizenship, the numbers of emigrating citizens are increasingly worrying for all Slovenian regions, since all of them experienced a net loss of citizens (see Table 11). In the period 2000-2009, the Pomurska region experienced -7.2% and Podravska -8.1% in the migration balance of citizens (see Tables 10 and 11). Those two regions are, accordingly, in the worst position.

¹⁸ This is largely the consequence of the governmental measure that was implemented from mid-2008 on, that the enrolment of the second (and other) child in the public kindergarten is fully subsidised for the family, thus only paying the kindergarten for the first child. In the framework of austerity measures the Government decided that from 2012 on, the payment for the second child in the kindergarten will be 30% of the cost.

Regional disparities are of special interest for the analysis, since they reveal uneven population dynamics and economic development. For example, in north-eastern Slovenia, we may trace lower rates of emigration change between the two analyzed periods. This is clearly visible in the case of Podravska statistical region (with Maribor as its capital). Similarly, the lower increase was registered in Pomurska region. As the main industrial centres moved from north-eastern Slovenia (Maribor) and mainly resettled in the central Slovenia (Ljubljana, partly Celje), so were the local workers going to search for alternative jobs. These were found mainly in Austria, for example. There is a stronger tendency to emigrate among people in Podravska statistical region (Table 11), while the relatively poorer Pomurska region (both in far north-eastern Slovenia) mainly relies on cross-border daily mobility instead (Figure 4). On the opposite side, there are two karst-Mediterranean regions (Obalno-kraška and Notranjsko-kraška statistical regions), which in spite of relatively higher GDP per capita yield rather high emigration rate. There is a strong opposition between the directions of emigration.

In the last decade (2000-2009), there were no overall net migration loss regions. The closest to loss was Pomurska statistical region in north-eastern most part of Slovenia. It lost exactly 0 inhabitants due to migration (Table 12). If we divide the last decade in two five-year period, the picture becomes more complicated.

The Pomurska region is the main, though not the only, loser of population when combining internal emigration and emigration of citizens. On the other end, there is Osrednjeslovenska statistical region, with the capital of Ljubljana, as a net migration gain region. Both regions differ drastically. The former is peripheral, rural, agrarian, with little industry, with the highest level of unemployment, the latter is central, boosting in services and administration, and, consequently, demographically. Nevertheless even the Osrednjeslovenska region suffers from net emigration of citizens. Furthermore, the GDP per capita in Pomurska region in 2009 was 11,986 Euro, and it is at 45% of 26,118 Euro in Osrednjeslovenska region (SORS, 2011b: 20). Pomurska region used to be one of the most densely populated areas, which lost its developmental impetus by historical-geographic changes (it was former part of Hungarian half of Habsburg Monarchy), as it became a part of Yugoslavian, and later Slovenian, periphery.

4.2. Labour market development in net migration loss/gain regions

There are notable differences in the structure of economy, working places, educational structure of population and unemployment rates among statistical regions. According to IMAD (IMAD, 2008) there is a high correlation between a regional GDP per capita and the educational structure of population in the region. The correlation between the supply of well-educated workforce and regional economy is two sided. The demand of employers for highly educated workforce in a region attracts such population to migrate to this region, but the existence and establishment of schools, universities and related institutions in a region can also be an attractive factor for business sector. Concentration of education opportunities, especially on tertiary level, is also an important factor influencing regional migrations.

Pomurska region is among the least developed in Slovenia. Its GDP per capita amounted to 65% of Slovenian average in 2008 (SORS, 2011b: 5). Its economic activities are mainly in sectors with low added value per employee. The share of intensive farming is high, and the region has not been highly industrialised (only a few bigger industrial enterprises mostly in textile, food processing and metal industry). The service sector is relatively underdeveloped. In the last decade the tourism sector started to grow (natural spa and health resorts). The average monthly net wage in the region in 2009 was 826.02 euro (while the average monthly net wage in Slovenia in the same year was 930.00 euro) (SORS, 2011b: 12).

The registered unemployment in Pomurska region is traditionally the highest in Slovenia. The recent crisis increased the unemployment due to collapses of several big employers (especially the textile industry Mura and meat industry Pomurka). At the end of 2009, the registered unemployment rate in Pomurska region was 20.4% (compared to 9.1% average in Slovenia). According to Employment Service of Slovenia, the number of registered

unemployed persons in the region is currently the highest since 1991. The long-term unemployment rate in the region in 2009 was 6.9% (compared to 3.3% average in Slovenia) (SORS, 2011b: 12). The educational structure of unemployed persons in Pomurska region is rather unfavourable: 42.9% of unemployed had no more than primary level education, 51.1% had secondary level education and only 5.9% had tertiary level education (ibid.). The educational structure of population aged 25 to 64 years in Pomurska region in general is lower than the average for Slovenia (27.4% of population with no more than primary education, 11.3% of population with tertiary education) and the inclusion in education is the lowest among all regions: there are 47.5 students per 1,000 inhabitants (compared to 56.1 average for Slovenia), and only 9.2% of population aged 25-64 years is included in different forms of life-long learning (compared to 14.6% average for Slovenia) (ibid.).

4.3. *Poverty and social exclusion in net migration loss/gain regions*

The differences in economic situation of regions reflect also in their social situation. There is no regional data on poverty and material deprivation available, but the data on the numbers of beneficiaries of financial social assistance is very indicative for the differences in social situation among regions. In 2009, the average number of beneficiaries of financial social assistance (which is means tested) in Slovenia was 42.8 per 1,000 inhabitants. In Pomurska region, there were 90.3 beneficiaries of financial social assistance per 1,000 inhabitants (SORS, 2011b: 14).

Although in principle the access to health, education and social services is the same in all regions, the empirical data often show another picture. Access to health services can be problematic in more rural and more scarcely populated areas. The local medical centres in rural areas (especially in less developed regions) often have problems to attract (employ) doctors and dentists and have problems organising all the basic medical services. It is not so much the doctors migrating from the region, but the young people studying medicine in university centres and later not returning home. As a consequence the standard of health service provision can be lower than in urban areas. The just published study on Inequalities in health (Buzeti et al., 2011) shows a clear causal relation between poor socio-economic situation and higher incidence of health problems both for population categories and for concentration of problems in certain regions. Regions with lower GDP per capita, with higher unemployment and lower educational structure of population have higher concentration of health problems.

Access to primary level education is relatively good also in rural areas (organised bus transfers in case of very dispersedly populated areas), but secondary level education facilities are concentrated in urban centres. Tertiary level education options are even more concentrated in big towns. As it is mostly more educated young persons that tend to migrate from less developed to more developed regions (i.e. from regions with less to the ones with more job opportunities for highly educated workforce), often in connection with their education (looking for a job in the place of their studies) this has (potential and real) long-term effects on the economy and development of the already less developed regions. Besides the economic and employment opportunities situation, it is the access to and quality of services (especially educational and health) that influence the migration flows between the regions.

Long-term care in Slovenia is mostly organised in old-people institutions (homes). There is a good regional and local distribution of such institutions as the municipalities are usually very interested for such institutions and support them. Thus, the number of persons residing in the old-people homes per 1,000 inhabitants does not differ much among regions. In 2009, in Pomurska region there were 7.3 persons per 1,000 inhabitants residing in the old-people homes, while the Slovene average was 7.9 persons per 1,000 inhabitants (SORS, 2011b: 14). On the other hand, services for home care for elderly people (home care support) are underdeveloped in Slovenia and depend largely on the ability (and readiness) of municipalities to subsidise them: they are far more available in Osrednjaslovenska region than in Pomurska region.

5. Impact of migration on vulnerable groups

5.1. Women

The employment rate of women in Slovenia is traditionally high as a legacy of formal gender equality of socialist times, relatively generous state-financed maternity and paternal leave, and availability of supporting services, especially child care facilities and also long-term care facilities for older people. From the mid-1990s until 2000, the female employment rate in age group 20 to 64 years ranged somewhat above 63%, after it was raising and reached 68.5% in 2008 (and after that dropped to 64.8% in 2011 as a consequences of crisis) (Eurostat, 2012). The comparable male employment rate was somewhat over 73% from mid-1990s to 2000, also increasing after that until it reached 77.4% in 2008 (and dropped to 71.8% in 2011) (ibid.). There is no tradition of women working part-time in Slovenia. Part-time work (work for less than full hours) is mainly performed due to health reasons (partial invalidity retirement), as student work, and work on atypical contracts. There is a possibility for a parent caring for a child that after returning from parental leave she (or he) can work less than full hours until the child age of three if having one child, or if having more children until the age of six of the youngest child (receiving proportionally less pay, but having all the social and pension contributions paid by the state as if working full hours).¹⁹ In 2006, the share of women working less than full hours among all employed women was 12%, and the share of men was 7% (SORS, 2012a). Female unemployment is higher than male since the end of 1990s, but both rates are relatively low. In 2005, the male unemployment rate was 5.5% and female 6.1%. Until 2008, when the unemployment rate was the lowest since the independence of Slovenia, the male unemployment rate dropped to 3.5% and female to 4.9%, while in 2009 it was again 5.6% for men and 5.5% for women (ibid.).

It can be argued that women in Slovenia are predominantly active in the labour market and are rarely dependent family members. Maternity is relatively well protected. Although there is no evidence of the male emigrants leaving behind the families (wives and children), and the emigration of Slovene citizens is rather gender balanced, the women that would potentially stay behind the emigrating men, would most probably not be in a vulnerable situation. Also, the problems the female returnees to Slovenia face are not gender specific. They can be connected to housing, job search, to problems with child-care (insufficient number of places in public facilities) and similar.

5.2. Children

There are no estimates available on the number of children left behind by the emigrating parent(s). However, the situation of both parents emigrating and leaving the child(ren) with grand-parents or other relatives is not common. The most likely situation regarding children of emigrating Slovenian citizens is either one parent emigrating and the other staying with child(ren) in origin country or the whole family emigrating (including children). No information whatsoever is available on the well-being of children of emigrants that stay in Slovenia, on their living conditions, school enrolment and achievements. It can be concluded from the fact that the issue never emerged in the media or in social sciences that the situation of these children is not very different than the situation of children with both parents living in Slovenia. As there is no data available on this issue, the NGO Youth Friends Association of Slovenia ([Zveza prijateljev mladine Slovenije](#))²⁰ was consulted on the scope of the phenomenon.

¹⁹ This possibility was introduced in 2002 and expanded in 2006 and is defined in the Parental Protection and Family Benefits Act (passed in 2006). According to the statistics of Ministry of Labour, Family and Social Affairs, the number of employed parents using this measure increased over the years from 463 in 2002 to 8,979 in 2010 and over 10,000 in 2011 (http://www.mddsz.gov.si/si/ueveljavljanje_pravic/statistika/druzinski_prejemki/ accessed: 20.04.2012). Although no statistics is available on sex of the parent using the measure, it can be said from practical experience that it is in majority women who use it.

²⁰ NGO Youth Friends Association of Slovenia actively offers support and help to children facing different problems and to whole families in need. It is locally organised and spread all over Slovenia. Among other activities it organises a free SOS telephone line for children and youth (an activity that is financed by Ministry of

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According to their observation the phenomenon of emigrants leaving their children in care of grand-parents or other relatives is very rare in Slovenia, they also do not encounter any problems resulting from such situations (interview).

Both, the at-risk-of-poverty rates and rates of severe material deprivation of children (0-17 years) are somewhat lower than the overall ones (in population). In 2005, the child poverty rate was 11.9% (the overall poverty rate being 12.1%), in the period 2006 to 2009 it was oscillating around 11.5%, while in 2010 it rose to 12.6% (the overall poverty rate being 12.7%) (SORS, 2012b). In 2005, 4.2% of children (0-17 years) lived in severe material deprivation (4 out of 9 elements), while the overall percentage of severely materially deprived population was 5.1% (ibid.). In 2010, the share of severely materially deprived children was 5.1%, while the respective share in the population was 5.9% (ibid.). Clearly, the social consequences of economic crisis are felt by children, too. According to the observation of NGO Youth Friends Association, the economic crisis affected many families with children, and most problematic are the ones that were even before the crisis in a vulnerable situation (parents performing low-paid jobs, one-parent families, families with many children). In families that found themselves in severe material hardship because of the unemployment of one or both parents, children often suffer a lot of stress, not only because of material deprivation, but also because of different sorts of neglect and marginalisation (interview). However, there is no evidence (not in statistics not in the observation of NGO) that child poverty and material deprivation could be linked to the emigration.

It is very difficult to speculate on the problems of children who return to Slovenia, as there is no information on it available. Problems in the area of recognition of prior education (achieved during emigration) are possible, but not very common.

5.3. Elderly

The (at-risk-of-)poverty rates of elderly people in Slovenia are significantly above the average, which is especially true for elderly women. In 2005 (when the overall poverty rate in the population was 12.1%), the poverty rate in the population aged over 65 years was 20.4% and among women aged over 65 years 26.1% (SORS, 2012b). The poverty rates of elderly people are oscillating somewhat over the years, but the trend remains the same: over average poverty rates and more than double overall poverty rate for elderly women. Thus, in 2010, when the overall poverty rate rose to 12.6%, the poverty rate among aged 65+ was 20.2% and among women aged 65+ 27.1% (ibid.). Severe material deprivation is more frequent among elderly, too. In 2005, in the overall population there were 5.1% severely materially deprived people, while among aged over 65 there were 6.9% and among elderly women even 8.2% (ibid.). In 2010, the share of severely materially deprived people in the overall population was 5.9%, among aged 65+ 6.3% and among women aged 65+ 6.9% (ibid.). Higher poverty rates and severe material deprivation among elderly women (compared to elderly men) is partially a consequence of lower pensions, but also the fact that life expectancy of women is longer and there are more elderly women than men living alone. In general, high poverty rates and material deprivation of elderly people are a consequence of low pensions (which is a consequence of the fact that in the past many people retired before fulfilling the full retirement conditions or are retired due to disabilities or were paying the lowest possible retirement contributions – for example farmers and self-employed). It is true that elderly people with low incomes (pensions) can get a supplement to the pension or in case they do not have an insurance-based pension or other income can get a state pension (since January 2012 a financial social assistance), however, the sum of these benefits is usually not high enough to lift them out of poverty risk.

There is no clear evidence that poverty of elderly people can be related to emigration. Even in case their children emigrated it is not self-evident that if they had not they would be able or

Labour, Family and Social Affairs), organises free time activities for children, summer and winter holidays (subsidised for children from poor families), offers financial grants (support) to children and families in need, etc.

willing to support them financially (or that they are not financially supporting them from abroad). However, leaving aside the financial support, the social and personal support is often even more important for elderly people. As shown in the recent survey on coping strategies of elderly people with low pensions (Hlebec et al., 2010), the social networks are extremely important for elderly people, as their independent life is often based on the informal support of relatives, neighbours and friends. Thus elderly people with lack of social network and support can face problems in everyday activities and errands. From this perspective elderly people whose children emigrated are in worse situation (regardless of their material situation).

Long-term care in Slovenia is predominately institutionalised. Elderly people with low pensions who need (or want) to be enrolled to old-people homes (institutions) and do not have close relatives to cover the cost for them get subsidy (for the difference between their pension and the cost of care and dwelling in old-people home) from the municipality. When they die, the municipality can legitimately claim back the whole amount of the subsidy from the legacy of the deceased person, if there is any, of course (usually some property, house, land or similar).

5.4. Roma

Emigration of Roma population from Slovenia is rather low. Romany population in Slovenia number around 10,000 of people (Josipovič, Repolusk, 2003). About one third lives in cities and is well integrated and hardly “noticeable”. The remaining two thirds are split in two quantitatively more or less equal parts, one residing in Prekmurje (i.e. the northern part of the Pomurska statistical region, on the left bank of Mura River), and another in SE Slovenia (the Jugovzhodna Slovenija and the Spodnjeposavska statistical regions). The main characteristic of these two populations are very low mobility (cf. Josipovič, Repolusk, 2003; Josipovič, Šumi, 2007). During the socialist self-governing and self-managing socio-economic system prevented people from being without housing. Regardless the quality of housing and the tangential living conditions in “Romany settlements”, the former System had been striving to settle the evermore mobile population permanently. This was achieved through the policy of permanent residence, which meant that every settlement or every unsettled group of people should receive the allotted portion of land or a parcel (e.g. Josipovič, 2009a). Among other socio-economic reasons, this settlement was the main cause of contemporary relative immobility.

Potentially vulnerable to emigration are those Roma, who were among the erased population. But the share of Roma among the erased is not high, since the number of Roma who settled in Slovenia in the Yugoslav period was low (couple of hundreds). Though the share of erased among these were, as expectedly, very high. It is necessary to stress that Slovenian statistical office does not collect any data according the ethnic affiliation of individuals since the last census of 2011. According to the data of previous censuses, it may be argued that rural Roma in aforementioned regions live in rather poor conditions as regards housing. After the Slovenian independence, the majority of Roma lost their jobs due to discrimination. On the other hand there are some positive developments regarding the education and housing. These improvements are concentrated more in Pomurska region, where the situation is much better compared to Roma population of SE Slovenia (Josipovič, 2009b, Ivanc, 2009).

As regards a possible pronounced emigration of Roma, it should be stressed that due to their unexpected low mobility, relatively generous social transfers, and relatively poor chances to settle somewhere outside Slovenia, they tend to stay in Slovenia.

5.5. Other ethnic and religious vulnerable groups

In Slovenia, there are about 30 ethnic and 50 distinguished religious groups. Majority of them are endangered due to the low numbers and due to non-recognition through authorities, topped by overall non-acceptance of the ‘other’ in the Slovenian society (Kneževič-Hočevar,

2004). It is hard to postulate the most vulnerable group in Slovenia. Probably the most noticeably threatened were the so-called Erased, which it was already dealt with (see also the Annex).

6. Policy responses

6.1. Encouragement of circular migration

No policies or measures to promote circular migration have existed in Slovenia up to now and there have been no bilateral agreements with other countries on the issue²¹. The only exception is the area of mobility of students and university teaching staff (professors and researchers), who can participate in exchange and mobility programmes (for example ERASMUS programme, short-time placements and similar)²² as well as top researchers and experts. In the strategic documents in the area of research and development, there are targets mentioned related to circular migration (mobility) of top researchers and experts. For example, the Resolution on National Research and Development Programme for the period 2006-2010 (Republic of Slovenia, 2006) states that Slovenia should increase the number of guest foreign top researchers and experts up to 5% of all researchers and the number of Slovene top researchers and experts temporary working abroad to 5% as well (two-way mobility of top researchers and experts). The rather general measures to reach this goal include improvements in scholarship policy (to enable student mobility), better integration of Slovene researchers in international, especially European research projects, and better support to research groups from the side of ministries and agencies. Also, the Programme for fostering the technological development and information society for the period 2007-2012, adopted by Minister of Higher Education, Science and Technology, stresses the importance of international research and development cooperation of Slovenia, including the increased international mobility of researchers.

After the independence of Slovenia the political emphasis on the importance of good relations with the Diaspora (as well as with Slovene minority in neighbouring countries) and of involvement of Diaspora in the economic development of the country has been strong and went hand in hand with a moral support and enthusiasm among Slovenes in the Diaspora and those living in neighbouring countries for the democratisation and independence of Slovenia²³.

The institution responsible for policy-making, coordination and implementation of measures in relation to Slovenes abroad and in cross-border vicinity is the Governmental Office for Slovenians Abroad (led by the Minister for Slovenians Abroad).²⁴ The Office prepared three documents addressing the relation of the Republic of Slovenia to its citizens living abroad. These are:

²¹ The main experience with circular migration in Slovenia is as a destination country for workers from the countries of ex-Yugoslavia, through the institute of work permits, which are (with the exception of personal work permits) limited in time (one to two years).

²² Contrary to other small countries, the share of Slovene students studying in other EU countries, EFTA countries or EU candidate countries is relatively low; in 2007 it was 2.1% (below the EU27 average share which was 2.8% in the same year) and is relatively stable (Republic of Slovenia, 2010: 35). However, the share of students and professors involved in the ERASMUS mobility programme has been constantly increasing since the school year 1999/2000. In that year there were 170 students and 42 university professors involved in ERASMUS mobility programme, while in school year 2004/05 there were already 742 students and 139 professors involved (CMEPIUS, accessed 28.02.2012). The large majority of students stay on a foreign university for one semester (five months).

²³ The part of the Diaspora that emigrated after the World War II (mostly to countries such as South America and Australia) due to ideological and political reasons had very restricted contacts (relations) with Slovenia before its democratisation and independence.

²⁴ After the early election in December 2011, the new Government that was established in February 2012 reduced the number of ministries and governmental offices (as part of the financial consolidation package). However, the Governmental Office for Slovenians Abroad remained untouched (with the new Minister), as well as its budget.

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- the Strategy of relations between the Republic of Slovenia and Slovenians abroad (adopted by the Government in 2008);
- the Action plan on cooperation with the scientists and top experts of Slovenian origin living abroad (2009, slightly updated in 2011) and
- the Action plan regarding cooperation and support to young Slovenians living in neighbouring countries and abroad (2010, slightly updated in 2011).

The legal basis for all three documents is the Act regulating Relations between the Republic of Slovenia and Slovenians Abroad (passed in the Parliament in 2006, amendments in 2010).

The *Strategy of relations between the Republic of Slovenia and Slovenians abroad* (Republic of Slovenia, 2008) operates with the term 'common Slovene cultural space', denoting not the geographical area, but a 'virtual' identity space of all Slovene people (either living in Slovenia, in neighbouring countries or in countries with Slovene emigration communities), strongly emphasising its cultural and language components. The two main goals of the strategy are: (1) preservation, strengthening and development of a common Slovene cultural space and (2) involvement of Slovene people living outside its borders as important actors in the development of Slovenia. In this framework, it is stated in the Strategy that Slovenia will support the Slovene communities abroad, will enable active participation of Slovenes living outside the borders to the Slovenian social and political life, and will encourage young people with Slovene ancestry (second and third generations of emigrants) to learn the Slovene language, learn about the Slovene culture and identity. However, the Strategy does not mention any concrete measures and remains rather general (and short). No report (or assessment) on its implementation is available.

The main aims of the *Action plan on cooperation with the scientists and top experts of Slovenian origin living abroad* (Republic of Slovenia, 2011a) are: establishing contacts with Slovene scientists and top experts living abroad, supporting the networking and connections between scientists and top experts abroad and those in Slovenia on individual in institutional basis, inviting the Slovene scientist and top experts living abroad to participate in preparation of strategic documents of Slovenia in different areas, ensuring the conditions for potential return of emigrated scientists and top experts, and encouraging a common Slovene scientific space. Some concrete measures were already implemented or are under implementation (mostly by the Office for Slovenians Abroad or in its coordination):

The first version of the directory with contacts of Slovene scientists and top experts living (and working) abroad has been prepared and is available on the web site of the Office for Slovenians Abroad (the directory is planned to be updated annually)²⁵;

The Office for Slovenians Abroad supports the establishment of associations of Slovene scientists and top experts abroad, although this has to be done on their own initiative²⁶;

Different information for Slovenian scientists and top experts living abroad (on Slovene institutes and universities, on open tenders for projects etc.) will be put on the already existing web page intended for Slovenians living abroad²⁷.

A so-called Committee for Science was established at the end of 2010, as an advisory body to the Government or the responsible ministers regarding the strategic development documents of Slovenia and the issues connected to the development of science, education and research in Slovenia. The Committee for Science consists of nine scientists and top

²⁵ The directory currently consists of 150 Slovene scientists and top experts living and working abroad that agreed to be on the list of contacts. The Office for Slovenians Abroad managed to get all together about 350 names and contacts, but is in many cases still waiting for the individual approvals to place them on the directory. Available at: http://www.uszs.gov.si/si/znanost_mladi_gospodarstvo/znanost/ (accessed 22.12.2011).

²⁶ The two such already functioning associations are the Slovenian American Science & Technology Association (SASTA) from Washington, and Slovenian Business and Professional Association from Cleveland.

²⁷ www.slovenija-danes.slovensi.si.

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experts of Slovene origin living abroad as well as representatives of four Slovene universities, and four Slovene scientific research institutes. The ministers for higher education, science and technology, for foreign affairs, for development and European affairs, and for Slovenians abroad are also members of the Committee for Science. On the first meeting of the Committee (in December 2010) it discussed the proposed National programme of higher education in Slovenia 2011-2020 and the proposed Research and innovation strategy of Slovenia 2011-2020.

The main aims of *Action plan regarding cooperation and support to young Slovenians living in neighbouring countries and abroad* (Republic of Slovenia, 2011b) are to strengthen and develop the Slovenian culture among the second and third generations of Slovene emigrants, support the networking and cooperation of young Slovenians living abroad in associations and support the connections and networking among young Slovenians living in Slovenia and those living abroad. Some of the measures envisaged in the Action plan are: public tenders of the Office for Slovenians Abroad for projects of associations and organisations that involve young Slovenians living abroad, actions (financial incentives) to encourage learning Slovene language and holiday exchange of youth, study exchange options, organisation of thematic seminars for young Slovenians abroad, supporting the business connections between young Slovene entrepreneurs living in Slovenia and those living abroad. Many of the activities envisaged in the Action plan (ibid.) are being implemented already for several years (public tenders, language courses, exchange of youth, and financial support to associations abroad for youth activities). Among new recently implemented measures one should mention a sub-page for youth at the website of the Office for Slovenians Abroad (containing various information, for example on youth associations in different countries and in Slovenia, language courses in Slovenia and abroad, education system and education possibilities in Slovenia, different projects, contacts, forums, different activities)²⁸. Also, there were several discussions and round tables organised in the past two years (in different countries) on the issue of challenges for youth of Slovene origin living abroad.

Young Slovenes living in neighbouring countries (as Slovene minority) and those living abroad (second and third generation of Slovene emigrants) can get public grants (scholarships) for Slovene language courses in Slovenia. Those scholarships are granted by Ministry of Education and Sports in cooperation with the Office for Slovenians Abroad. The language courses are traditionally organised by University of Ljubljana, Faculty of Philosophy (Centre for Slovene as a second/foreign language). Especially popular (and with long tradition) are so-called summer language courses, often attended by youth of second and third generation of Slovene emigrants, with the intention to learn (or practice) the language and keep the contact also from the perspective of the potential return.

The Slovene Human Resources Development and Scholarship Fund annually tenders scholarships available to young Slovenes living in neighbouring countries and abroad for graduate studies in Slovenia.

The Office for Slovenians Abroad annually issues tenders for financial support for different activities and projects of individuals, associations and organisations intended for Slovenes in neighbouring countries (Slovene minority) and abroad. The last tender published is for year 2012: there are 6.8 million EUR public funds available for projects, programmes and activities for Slovenians in neighbouring countries, and 850,000 EUR for projects and activities for Slovenians abroad (Office of RS for Slovenians Abroad, 2011: 2209-2211).

Besides the governmental policies, there exist some civil associations that aim at preserving the Slovene cultural heritage, cooperation and networking between Slovenes abroad and in

²⁸ The somehow surprising fact is that (at least for the time being) all this information is only available in Slovene language (at: http://www.uszs.gov.si/si/znanost_mladi_gospodarstvo/mladi/, accessed 22.12.2011). The English version of the web site only holds the basic information (at: <http://www.uszs.gov.si/en/>, accessed 22.12.2011).

Slovenia. The most important (for their activities) are Slovene Emigration Society (Slovenska izseljenska matica), and Slovenian World Congress (Slovenski svetovni kongres)²⁹.

Slovene Emigration Society was established in 1951 and has been since then playing an integrative role for Slovenes abroad in terms of cultural activities, celebrations, meetings and similar. Among other activities it is organising traditional annual 'meetings in my country' (annual summer meetings – picnics of Slovenes living in neighbouring countries and abroad in Slovenia).

The Slovenian World Congress was established in 1991 after the independence of Slovenia, with the idea of integrating also the part of Diaspora that was neglected before (Slovenes that emigrated due to political and ideological reasons), i.e. 'overcoming the divisions caused by decades of communism that did not raise the national awareness and the needed underlying values for it'.³⁰ The rhetoric used by Slovenian World Congress is very patriotic, calling on the duty of all Slovenes to contribute to the development of Slovenia. However, the Slovenian World Congress was the first to start searching for contacts of Slovene intellectuals (scientists, experts, artists, etc.) living abroad and organising expert conferences with them in Slovenia. On the initiative from these expert conferences, the Slovenian Research Agency (a public agency responsible amongst others for issuing the research tenders) recently started involving Slovene experts living abroad in the evaluation process for the research offers. The Slovenian World Congress organises specialised expert conferences for the following professionals: physicians (the 7th conference of Slovene physicians from abroad and Slovenia was organised in 2011), scientists and economists (managers) (the 7th conference of Slovene scientists and economists took place in 2011), architects and construction experts (the 4th conference of Slovene architects and construction experts took place in 2011), musicians (the 2nd conference of Slovene musicians abroad and in Slovenia took place in 2010), and law experts (the first such conference took place in 2010). Slovene World Congress sees organisation of these conferences as part of the (potential) repatriation process.

6.2. Encouragement of return migration and support of integration of returnees

Slovenian strategic and policy documents relating to Slovenian people living abroad are mainly focused on the Diaspora, while much less reference is made to the more recent emigration from Slovenia (people that left or are leaving Slovenia in the last two decades). In the first years after the independence of Slovenia, the general expectation was that many of Slovene emigrants would return with their families, however, the phenomenon of returnees was at the end not so big.

In 2002, Slovenian Parliament accepted a Resolution on relation to Slovenians abroad. This was a rather general document, stressing the need to foster the mutual cooperation in different areas between Slovenes living in the country in those living abroad, the need to maintain the Slovene identity, cultural heritage and language among Slovenes abroad and the need to inform Slovenes abroad about the developments in Slovenia and vice versa. It also stressed the interest of Slovenia for return migration of Slovene people and for settlement of their descendants. Providing information on different procedures that could ease the return of Slovenes abroad and their descendants (for example, the procedure of verification of diplomas) was recognised as important and the Governmental Office for Slovenians Abroad, Government Communication Office and Ministry of Information Society were assigned to prepare an information leaflet. The Resolution also stated that information

²⁹ The other two are: a catholic Rafael society and (also catholic) emigration association Slovenia in the world (very active among Slovene emigrants in Argentina).

³⁰ The quote is from the description of the Slovenian World Congress, its mission and tasks, at its webpage: http://www.slokongres.com/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=1&Itemid=4&lang=sl (accessed 10.03.2012).

relevant for people of Slovene origin considering the return migration should be available at all Slovene embassies and consular missions abroad.

In 2006, an Act on regulating the relations between the Republic of Slovenia and Slovenians abroad was passed. It introduced the status of a 'Slovene without a citizenship', which could be granted to an individual of Slovene origin, who is active in associations of Slovenes abroad or actively related to Slovenia in any other way. This status is granted upon application by Office for Slovenians Abroad. It gives a number of rights, which include the right to convenient enrolment conditions to tertiary education in Slovenia, the right to compete for public funds for research and science projects on equal terms as Slovene citizens, the right to achieve ownership on equal terms as Slovene citizens (the right to buy, own and sell the property in Slovenia), and the priority right for a job before citizens of third countries (non EU citizens). The Act on regulating the relations between the Republic of Slovenia and Slovenians abroad also defines the repatriation of Slovene people from abroad.³¹

In the last two decades, Slovenia is not perceived by policy-makers as an emigration country, but rather an immigration country. This is evident also from the Strategy of economic migration, accepted by the Government in 2010. The Strategy of economic migration (Republic of Slovenia, 2010) concentrates on fostering the labour immigration to Slovenia³², which could be seen as quite awkward compared to the negative public opinion on immigrants. However, the Strategy also addresses the return migration of Slovene emigrants and in this area foresees two main tasks: (1) creation of a common Slovene intellectual space including the Slovenes living in neighbouring countries and abroad, and (2) simplifying the procedures and improving conditions for living and work of returnees in Slovenia. But the concrete envisaged measures are only composed of offering information to potential returnees, building the network of Slovene scientists and managers living in Slovenia and abroad, and similar (ibid.).

To sum up, the main measures that are expected to encourage the return of emigrants are in Slovenia seen in the area of providing practical information on the legal system, education possibilities, jobs and other arrangements in Slovenia to emigrants (through internet, through the associations of Slovenes abroad, leaflets available at Slovene embassies and consular

³¹ Repatriation is defined in the Act as return migration of Slovene people that is organised and financed by Republic of Slovenia. It can be used in cases of Slovene people (and their close family members) who live in countries endangered by severe economic and political crisis that impacts or endangers their lives, but also in case of Slovene people that are expected to contribute substantially to the development of Slovenia. Eligibility of repatriation is decided about by Office for Slovenians Abroad, while the decision about the endangering critical countries is taken by Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Repatriated persons are granted the same rights as persons with the status of Slovene without a citizenship, and in addition they have free basic health insurance, are entitled to slovene language course (if needed), and can get a personal (individual) work permit. Repatriated persons and their close family members are provided the housing (for up to 15 months) and can get the minimum income (financial social assistance) if they have no other means of subsistence.

However, the phenomenon of repatriation practically does not exist in Slovenia. Repatriation of Slovene emigrants and their descendants was most relevant in 2001 and 2002 (that is before its regulation in the Act on regulating the relations between the Republic of Slovenia and Slovenians abroad, that was passed in the Parliament in 2006), in the time of severe economic and social crisis in Argentina, during which many Slovene emigrants living in Argentina (mostly political emigration from Slovenia during the 1950s) lost their jobs (and could not sell their property or take their savings from banks). In that period Slovenia offered support to the families that would want to return from Argentina. According to the data given at the event organised by Emigration association Slovenia in the world ([Slovenija v svetu](#)), 73 Slovene origin families living in Argentina applied for repatriation to Slovenia in the period from mid-2001 to mid-2002. Until April 2002 only 71 persons actually moved back to Slovenia. They faced problems related to housing, search for a job, social security and others (Emigration association Slovenia in the world, 2002).

³² The main guidelines of Slovenian Strategy of economic migration (2010) are: promotion of immigration for work reasons, especially in deficit occupations; promotion of entrepreneurship of immigrants, validation of formal education/qualifications and skills acquired abroad; promotion of mobility and immigration of researchers and students; decreasing the risk of brain-drain; incentives for return of Slovenes living abroad; promotion of Slovenia as an attractive place for immigration; assuring the rights and integration of immigrants; and more effective management of economic migration.

missions and similar), building the networks of Slovene scientists and experts from abroad and from Slovenia, organising conferences involving Slovenes living abroad, building connections between Slovenians abroad and Slovene research, university, economic and other institutions. Also a significant emphasis is on integration of young Slovenes living abroad (the second and third generations); there are measures like language courses, holiday exchange, summer schools, grants for studies, etc. that are popular and well used by young Slovenes living abroad. As can be concluded from policy documents (although it is not explicitly stated) the two main target groups of potential returnees for policies and measures are Slovene scientists and top experts living abroad and young Slovenes (second, third generation) living abroad. It is too early to assess the success of measures aimed at the first group (scientists and top experts) because most of them are quite recent, besides the main obstacle is the lack of employment possibilities and not appealing working conditions (including pay) at the research institutes and universities in Slovenia. But the measures focused at young Slovenes from abroad (second, third generation) have a longer tradition and seem to function well. There are no statistics available, but the examples of young Slovenes from abroad, who after studies in Slovenia decide to stay in the country, exist.

In the existing documents and plans there are no concrete employment policy measures that would be aimed at integrating the returning migrants or their family members. Among the labour market measures there is only the possibility for obtaining the status of a 'Slovene without a citizenship', which gives a priority right for a job before citizens of other third countries. However, this is an option for emigrants (or descendants of emigrants), who do not have a Slovene citizenship and does not help the returnees already holding it. Also there are no concrete measures in the housing area, except the possibility for 'Slovenes without the citizenship' to buy a property. In the education area, there is a scholarship for descendants of Slovene emigrants available for studying in Slovenia. The procedures of validation of formal qualifications acquired abroad are well established. The skills obtained in a practical way or through informal learning can also be assessed and validated through the system of national vocational qualifications (but the individual or his/her employer have to pay for the procedure).

The experience of return migration from Argentina in the period of economic and social crisis there (in 2001 and 2002) showed that the returnees met severe problems regarding the housing (and related to that also acquiring of permanent living address which is a condition for different documents – including the citizenship – health insurance, registration at employment office, and similar), as well as employment (Emigration association Slovenia in the world, 2002). The only good experience pointed out were free Slovene language courses for the returnees and their family members that needed them (ibid.).

6.3. Reintegration of IDPs (including forced returnees)

Slovenia does not have any of its own refugees abroad. During the few-month period of uncertainty (including ten days of war) after the independence of Slovenia (in 1991), people were not leaving Slovenia.

6.4. Development of net migration loss/gain regions

At the Governmental level the responsibility for regional development issues is on the Governmental Office for Local Self-Government and Regional Policy.³³ The office prepared

³³ After the early election in December 2011, the new Government that was established in February 2012 reduced the number of ministries and governmental offices (as part of the financial consolidation package). The Governmental Office for Local Self-Government and Regional Policy was abolished. The issues of regional policy and European cohesion policy were transferred under the responsibility of Ministry of Economic Development and Technology, and the issues of local self-government were transferred under the responsibility of Ministry of Justice and Public Administration.

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the Act on enabling the coherent regional development (passed in the Parliament in 2011), which addresses the regions (areas) with developmental problems and provides a set of possible instruments to address regional imbalances.

At the national level there exists a Slovenian Regional Development Fund – a public financial fund providing incentives (through public tenders) for different local/regional actors and their development projects. There were several local development agencies established with the aim to support the local development, the local enterprises (especially small and medium ones), to detect human resource needs, to help companies when restructuring and to steer the human resource development in the local environment. In Pomurska region there is Regional development agency MURA. Amongst its other activities it offers support services to micro, small and medium size enterprises, support to potential investors in the region, is involved in different national and international projects focusing at the region, issues public tenders that relate to development of the region (for example tender for so-called human resource scholarships for qualifications and professions in deficit in the region).

The regional development agency MURA (RRA MURA) also coordinated the preparation of the Regional development programme of Pomurska region for the period 2007-2013 (RRA MURA, 2007). The programme is an extensive and complex document of 250 pages, stating five priority areas for the development of the region until 2013: economic development and development of tourism, development of human resources, building of infrastructure, environment and space, agriculture and development of countryside. Within each priority area there are several programmes and within them several measures. For the first priority area there are 31 measures envisaged, for the second 24, for the third 26, for the fourth 25 and for the fifth one 12 measures (*ibid.*). The regional development agency Mura is in charge of monitoring, reporting and assessment of the Regional development programme, however, the reports are not available on the Internet (as they should be according to the programme).

In the area of health care, the reduction of health inequalities between regions in Slovenia as well as between different social and ethnic groups was one of the priorities of the National programme of health care of Republic of Slovenia (titled: Health for all until 2004). Based on the national health programme, the Ministry of Health in 2001 launched a pilot project titled Investments in health and development in Pomurska – MURA. The main goal of the project was to identify, develop, implement and strengthen best practices in the field of socio-economic and environmental development for achieving better health and quality of life for people in the Pomurska region. The project mobilised many different partners in a regional partnership and resulted in several successful projects involving local population and enterprises – in the areas of healthy food, organic farming, developing healthy products, traditional handcraft activities, healthy life style and active free time, networking, etc. (Buzeti, Maučec Zakotnik, 2008).

In the education and science area, one of the important incentives for sustaining the most educated population and for cooperating with the highly educated emigrants (both those that emigrated to other regions of Slovenia and those that emigrated abroad) was the establishment of PAZU (Pomurska Akademsko-Znanstvena Unija [Academic and Scientific Union of Pomurska]) in 2003. PAZU is an association with members who are all highly educated researchers and scholars (all holding a Phd. Degree) originating from Pomurska region. It was established with the support of RRA MURA and has sponsors ranging from local municipality (Murska Sobota) to local enterprises. Currently, it has about 150 members. The main aim of PAZU is to connect and engage top researchers and scholars originating from Pomurska region and possibly use their work for the advantage of the region. The main activities of PAZU are regular preparation of TV broadcast (in cooperation with regional television TV Idea) titled Following the tracks of progress (*Po sledeh napredka*), publication of periodic scientific publication titled Anali PAZU, organisation of annual scientific conferences, and engagement in different projects (studies on hydropower stations on Mura river, promotion of science, history of Pomurska).

In 2009, after the collapse of big enterprise (in textile industry) Mura, which was the biggest employer in the Pomurska region (employing a few thousand workers), the Government

prepared a special Act on development support to Pomurska region in the period 2010-2015 (the act was passed in 2009 and is usually referred to as 'Pomurje Act'). The main aim of Pomurje Act is to encourage and support the competitiveness of Pomurska region. Based on the Pomurje Act the proposals for programmes and projects from Pomurska region should have priority treatment when competing at tenders for national funds, EU cohesion policy funds and funds intended for development of rural areas. The Pomurje Act envisaged establishment of an intercompany training centre and a regional entrepreneur centre. It also envisaged investments in restructuring and rise of competitiveness in the agricultural sector, forestry and food-processing industry in Pomurska as well as investments in drinking water infrastructure. Tax reliefs are envisaged for new jobs (employment) and investments in the region. According to the explanation in the documentation of the Pomurje Act, all together the value of all envisaged measures for the whole period (six years) of duration of the act, including the EU funds, is 261,000,000 EUR (SVLR, 2009: 8).

For the first phase of implementation of Pomurje Act a special project office of the Government of Republic of Slovenia was established in the region (with the seat in Murska Sobota) for the period from the beginning of 2010 to the end of 2012. Among the main tasks of the governmental project office are: coordination of activities of all ministries in Pomurska region, coordination of preparation and implementation of key regional projects, organisation and offering of expert and technical support for development projects, support to regional development agency in Pomurska, encouraging the public-private partnerships. Since its establishment the Project office launched four public tenders: the first tender for co-financing of initial investments of enterprises and job creation in the Pomurska region (February 2010), the second and the third tender for the same purpose (June 2010, April 2011) and tender for promotion of social entrepreneurship in Pomurska region (April 2011). The results of the projects that got financial support through public tenders have not been assessed or evaluated yet. However, it has to be added that there have been some unfortunate developments with the management of the Project office (and funds available): in March 2011 the Government withdrew the Head of the Project office (because of the suspicion of conflict of interests and corruption) and he is currently under criminal investigation on the suspicion of corruption. In spring 2012 he was officially accused of corruption.

Regarding the active employment policy measures in principle the same measures apply nationally. However, regional employment offices have the possibility to decide on a limited number of local employment programmes (for example locally specific public works, and programmes for specific vulnerable groups, such as Roma population). Also there are some employment programmes that are only implemented in the areas with over-average unemployment.

For the time being, despite of the mentioned mechanisms, documents and programmes, the regional disparities stay the same and were even increased as a consequence of the recent economic crisis, which hit the Pomurska region harder than most of other regions. However, some of the documents and programmes are quite recent, so it might be too early to assess them.

6.5. Support to vulnerable groups related to migration

No policy measures focused at the persons left behind exist and the issue itself is completely overlooked by the policy. However, there is also no evidence about economic or social vulnerability of the family members left behind the emigrants. It could be assumed that because of the type of modern emigration from Slovenia (young people, couples or families with young children) the emigrants very rarely leave behind the dependent family members that would live in situations of material deprivation. Also, the general social inclusion policies present a net that can help support also the vulnerable groups that would be potentially affected by migration. For example, in the case of elderly people, the persons with low insurance-based pensions can get a supplement to the pension; elderly people (after the age of 65) without any incomes (who were not formally employed long enough to get an insurance-based pension) and with property not exceeding a certain amount can get a state

pension;³⁴ in case of long-term care needs, the institutional long-term care is subsidised by municipalities to the persons who can not pay for it themselves. In case of children living in low-income families (or with one parent), the parents (or other legal guardian) can get a child benefit, subsidised (or even completely free) preschool child care services, free school meals, children can take part in free summer camps (holidays).

6.6. Best practice examples of policy responses

Some of the measures that are focused at the Diaspora (especially at the second and third generations of young Slovenes abroad) have a long tradition and can be assessed as positive, both from the point of view of supporting the Slovene identity and culture among the Diaspora and from the point of view of potential return of second and third generations of emigrants. Among them summer courses in Slovene language for descendants of Slovene emigrants and scholarships for children of Slovene people abroad and in the neighbouring countries could be mentioned as cases of good practice.

The other area where some good practice has been established in the recent years is the relation to Slovene scientists and top managers living abroad. Contacts with Slovene scientists and top managers, conferences with them, attempts to involve them in preparation of Slovene strategic documents – all these are relatively recent activities but seem to be very promising, especially because the reaction from Slovene scientists and top managers abroad has been very positive up to now. Although it is rather improbable to expect their return (as the working conditions and available finances for research and work of scientists and top experts in Slovenia still remain rather unattractive), but their involvement contributes to consolidating the links with the home country thus paving the way for future investments in the economy and in human capital development.

At the regional level there exist several measures intended to support economic and social development of Pomurska region (i.e. local development agency, more extensive labour market and inclusion programmes, the Act on Development Support to Pomurska region in the period 2010-2015 which among other aims to support the establishment of new enterprises and development of new jobs in Pomurska), but according to the results they are giving, none of them can really be labelled as best practice.

As a best practice at the regional development level the setting up and activities of PAZU, the Academic and Scientific Union of Pomurska can be pointed out. It is a combination of initiative, self-organisation and enthusiasm of highly educated scientists and scholars originating from the region (and feeling the need to contribute something to the region's development although not living there), and cooperation of the local companies and local community (municipality). Therefore it can be described as a bottom-up initiative, embodied in the local/regional environment (without the support or funds from the national policy level). It is important for networking and rethinking different regional development projects, mobilisation of resources for applications to public tenders for different projects and similar. It is also important because it is buffering the negative effects of brain drain from Pomurska region.

7. Key challenges and policy suggestions

7.1. Key challenges of the social impact of emigration and internal migration

Up to now, Slovenia has rather been perceived by policy-makers and the public opinion as an immigration country (traditionally the immigration from countries of the territory of ex-Yugoslavia) and the issue of emigration (of Slovene citizens) in the last two decades (in the

³⁴ After 01.01.2012 the state pension was abolished and transformed into the system of financial social assistance. Elderly people without any income (or with very low income) can now apply for financial social assistance.

independent Slovenia) has not been recognised as an important one, neither by social scientists and experts, nor by policy-makers. As a consequence, there is poor statistical evidence and research information available on emigration from Slovenia and its effects on the economic, labour market and social developments of Slovenia are potentially underestimated. The only exception is the issue of brain drain (which is occasionally emphasised by researchers) but even here there only exist estimations on its scope and broad conclusions on the possibility of future hindering of the development because of it. The impression, based on available data, is that the impacts of emigration on the labour market (of Slovene citizens) are limited and the social impacts are negligible. However, without clear empirical data on the structure of emigrants and their situation before and after emigration, as well as on the structure and situation of those left behind it is difficult to provide more precise answers to the challenges of emigration. Therefore, there is first the need for more (empirical) research of the issue.

Until 2004 the scope of emigration of Slovene citizens was around 1‰ of population per year, after it increased to about 1.5‰ of the whole population per year. Slovene emigrants are mostly well skilled and educated persons, and often complete families (with children). The main destination countries are EU countries (traditionally Germany, Austria, but also Italy, France and other countries). The extent of return migration is hard to estimate and little is known about the situation of returnees. Following the data on immigration of Slovenian citizens to Slovenia, we might presume that, though low in numbers, approximately two thirds of them return to Slovenia (see Chapter 2.1 and Table 11). Although the emigration of well-skilled and educated people does not seem to have serious consequences for the labour market at the moment (due to its current structure), it may also be expected that in the future the lack of well-educated workforce would become more visible and problematic. Thus, the promotion and concrete policy action to enable return migration and (labour market and social) integration of whole families of returnees really is the area where more has to be done. Since there are, as mentioned, only partial studies on the question of well-educated emigrants, there is a need to improve knowledge of these issues. Drawing from the first findings of a project carried out by the Institute of Economic Research, where the emigration of highly trained³⁵ and staff with tertiary education was examined, it is obvious that researchers and scientists did leave Slovenia more frequently in the last couple of years as they did ever before (Bevc, 2011). However, this is a specific population which does not fit the aforementioned scheme of presumably well-educated couples predominantly with children. In contrast, the “average” researchers ageing between 35 and 40 tend to emigrate alone (either single or married), their destination countries are apart of the USA rather the “non-German” speaking EU-member states (UK, Netherlands, Belgium) and Australia, and they are more inclined to resettle there permanently (ibid.).

Existing policy documents do effectively address the issue of stimulating the return of highly skilled Slovenian emigrants and of people with Slovenian ancestry and/or the transfer of their knowledge and experiences, however, the concrete policy measures are mostly focused at persons of Slovene origin who do not hold the Slovenian citizenship (all the way to the fourth sequence in a lineage), while the return of more recent cohorts of emigrants is not considered much. Though heavily needed, there are no labour market measures for returnees (i.e. support for job-search, possibility to present the experiences and skills gained while working abroad and similar) and social policy measures (with especial emphasis on housing policy) and also in terms of enabling social integration of returnees and their family members (child care etc.).

One of the least economically developed regions in Slovenia – the Pomurska statistical region is the one losing the most population through natural decrease compared to other regions, which is due to an uneven age-structure throughout the last two decades. Pomurska

³⁵ Highly trained personnel do not exclusively involve people with tertiary education (finished high school or more). They might involve also specialists with skills acclaimed otherwise than by the official education institutions (e.g. informatics). At the same time all the tertiary educated are not necessarily highly trained.

region is a predominantly rural borderland with high share of farming, the highest unemployment rate and long-term unemployment rate (both twice the country average) among Slovenian statistical regions, unfavourable educational structure of population and the highest proportion of beneficiaries of financial social assistance (minimum income) per 1,000 inhabitants in the country (nearly one in ten). The region was hit severely by the recent crisis. Employment opportunities in the region are few, especially scarce are the opportunities for highly educated work force. Most critical for the possible future development of the region are out-migration (to other regions) and emigration (abroad) of well-educated young people. Though both, natural decrease and out-migration/emigration are being demographically replaced through the relatively high rates of immigration (cf. Tables 11 and 12).

The Pomurska region was considered also by the government institutions, which resulted in the Act on Development Support to Pomurska region in the period 2010-2015. As it is still in power, it is too early to judge the impacts of the aforementioned act.

The internal migration trends in Slovenia have never been much questioned and were taken as a fact, not as a problem. Due to the vicinity of state borders of economically developed countries (Austria or Italy), many people are traditionally using daily commuting for cross-border work as means of subsistence. It is now time to consider them together with other issues of economic and social development of regions, especially in the case of the least developed ones. Some policy measures that are aimed at development of jobs (including self-employment) and more extensive employment and human resource development programmes in the most under-developed regions exist, but from the point of view of their results they are apparently inefficient and insufficient. In the least developed regions that are losing the population (such as Pomurska region) it is important to find policy solutions that would stimulate development of jobs for highly educated people and also assure the development of jobs and services, and thus enable young people to stay in their regions.

7.2. Policies to be taken by different actors (national, regional, local governments, Diaspora, EU, host countries' institutions)

At **national level** first the awareness of the different effects of emigration and its social consequences should be raised. Considering the documents published by the Slovenian government (or other constitutive administrative legal bodies), it is obvious that the potential outflow of population is underestimated. The analysis of disposable data pictures this threat as rather significant. This threat is even greater since it concerns arguably high shares of well educated and skilled persons. Thus, it may be expected that the share of Slovenian citizens living abroad (mostly in more developed countries of EU, as well as in USA, Canada, and Australia) who decide to stay there will increase due to the social and economic (and political³⁶) crisis in Slovenia.

There is a need for gathering more information, on the one hand, and for more detailed data on emigration issues, on the other hand. Official statistical data coverage should range from basic statistical information on intentions of employment, education, duration of stay etc. to various socio-demographic data. There should be a greater propensity for supporting and financing research studies on the scope and nature of emigration, reasons for it, including the brain drain, the duration of emigration, the problems of returnees – and these studies should be supported by reserving public funds and by fostering initiatives. Unfortunately, the new population census of 2011 did not aim at gathering any additional data which would not have been already available in previous years from previous sources. The new census of 2011 as the first registry census in Slovenia aimed only at combining various data registers in order to render the methodologically and temporally unified data.

For example, the Romany population in Slovenia is only considered via the local communities (municipality level), local Centres for Social Work and local Employment offices. Henceforth the estimated numbers on Roma are concluded on the assumptions of official

³⁶ See Chapter 1 (confidence crisis which has led to premature elections in 2011).

organs and not independently. So the last available official census data on Romany population was rendered by the census of 2002. Following these premises, the organs within the Government should allow for that funding for additional research regarding this issue is heavily needed.

Besides, it is suggested that various institutions, which collect data by duty like the Statistical Office, ministries, other organs and offices within the Government, as well as non-governmental institutions like universities and research institutes, etc., combine pertinent data resources in a joint database, which should be made disposable to decision and policy-makers, as well as to researchers. For the purpose of managing emigration flows, establishing higher contingencies of return migration, or fostering circular migration, these aggregated data sources are of paramount importance, as well as for reallocating resources for various vulnerable groups of population, such as Roma, the Erased, returnees, unemployed etc.

Further, the National employment office should be able to update its data on employed and, above all, unemployed, with valuable “attributive” data, that is, more of the so-called “soft” data on intentions, aspirations, satisfaction with available support, future job prospects, etc. Beside numerous other possibilities, such additional data could be used for the inter-comparisons between the socio-demographic and geographical structures of the unemployed persons and the overall population. Thus, the vulnerable groups could be easily disclosed and more efficiently supported via the state apparatus.

Also at the national level, **concrete policies aimed at easing the return migration** of well-educated emigrants should be developed: in terms of labour market measures and social policy measures (with a special emphasis on housing policy) and also in terms of enabling social integration of returnees and their family members.

Another suggestion aims at establishing information or contact points for all those who would like to return to Slovenia from abroad. These “info-points” should be more sophisticated than just a simple “mailing” list, accessible via internet and via mobile technology. They should also be more user-friendly and regularly advertised in various places (virtual and physical), so interested people would freely be able to choose for cooperation. These info-points could also be used for networking and sharing of information, which is partly unavailable up to now. To attract emigrants to return is a difficult task to be rendered via cooperation of various governmental offices including the support of non-governmental institutions.

In terms of rural-urban migration, one of the most important measures, which should be implemented in Slovenia, is decentralisation and establishment of regional administrative levels (at NUTS2 and NUTS3 levels), as well as effective implementation of decentralised regional policies, which would evenly reallocate the burden of socio-economic constraints.

Regarding the average Slovenian GDP of the last five years (around 25,000 USD per capita), the Pomurska region is the most underdeveloped among regions reaching only 65.2% of the national average (see Table 9). The region’s share plummeted from 73% in 2000 to 65.7% in 2009. Combining this information with the out-migration from the region, it is easy to conceive that the region should get a special attention as regards development of jobs, especially jobs for well-skilled and well-educated people, who are permanently or temporarily leaving the region. New policy solutions should also be searched for at the level of tertiary education. At the moment there are only a couple of detached schools, university departments or institutes. One of the few such cases is the Institute for Intercultural and Jewish studies as part of the non-profit private university called ECM/ESM (European Centre Maribor/Evropsko središče Maribor). Except this private initiative, there are very scarce opportunities for the region to retain its most capable inhabitants. The state has established the Regional development agency – Mura, but this small governmental institution is far from being able to trigger the development in wide range of fields.

As to the rural and agrarian character of Pomurska region, it should be invested more in creating a new research institution or resettling the existing institutions in the field of agrarian production there. The government should create suitable business environment and

possibilities especially in a field of food processing, production and researching. The region is geographically a part of Pannonian basin and it possesses (unlike other parts of Slovenia) excellent natural possibilities for extensive farming, eco-agriculture, vineyards etc. This region of a broad flatland and small hills in the northern parts is rich with thermal springs and spas, thus providing possibilities for geo-thermal energy supply and good opportunities for tourism, which could also be more out-sourced. The traffic infrastructure is relatively good (the highways and roads), still the railway network should be extended to connect all biggest urban centres in the region, especially industrial centres of Murska Sobota and Lendava. Closely related to traffic infrastructure is the development of public transport. The government should implement policies to strengthen the infrastructure for both investors and local population. It should also prevent further shrinking of the number of local buses and soaring prices of transportation for local population, and establish better alternatives to carbon-driven technologies of personal transportation.

As regards the overall development of Slovenia, the state should prevent the low value-added businesses from dictating and demanding the elasticity of labour force in order to gain ever cheaper labour force, but to support employment at open-ended full-time jobs. In the fields of high value-added industries and research, the increasing share of fixed-term employment contracts provoked well-educated young people to leave Slovenia, while relatively older population at national/public research and education institutions (institutes and universities) mostly employed under the provisions of the former System retained their rather safe statuses. Such cleavage between “the old” and “the new” rendered the situation completely unappealing for young and capable to stay in Slovenia. The statements of the interviewees in the field of research and development regarding their future intentions show that more than half would emigrate for better working environment. They maintain that not just the salaries, but the work-load and the fixed-term employment uncertainty are the main constraints or the so-called “push” factor. In order to reallocate the financial assets in the research and development with the public sector, the government should introduce measures according to which they would pay the employees. In such way, the jobs would become more secure to younger capable cadres since the considerable amounts of money would be redirected towards the better, and at the same time not jeopardising the older employees of becoming jobless in the older stage of careers. Another very important role of the state is encouragement of private sector by variable taxing to follow the highest standards as regards working conditions for their employees and thus gain additional assets for new jobs’ opening. On the other hand, the state should search more intensively for synergies of merging public institutions in a field of research in development. One possibility is to establish one or more (depends on type of research – technological, natural sciences, and humanities/social sciences) bigger public research universities, which would substantially lower the costs of bureaucracy since the public research sphere in Slovenia ranges from tiny institutes with one or two dozens of employees to big institutes with hundreds of employees. The way solely directed in privatization of once societal (i.e. state-owned) institutions is in our opinion not the right way.

At the **level of municipalities** (and hopefully future NUTS3 regions) the establishing the relations with local emigrants is vital in order to raise the interest of emigrants for investment at home and/or potential return. Emigration is not only a national issue (or problem), but also a local and regional, as we have already shown, especially in the underdeveloped areas like Pomurska region. One of very important recent developments in this field was the establishment of the PAZU (Academic and Scientific Union of Pomurska) established in 2003 by highly skilled individual “enthusiasts” originating from the Pomurska region. By now, the PAZU unites more than 150 highly educated (holding PhD’s) researchers and scholars, who are, although *pro bono*, actively engaged in exchanging information and knowledge with the aim of contributing to the development of their home-region. Such initiatives and other existing forums should be actively sponsored by the state in order to provide for long-term developmental solutions and intellectual boost for the regions. In this way the establishment of regional governments is of paramount importance. Accordingly, the local municipalities and the future regions, regardless of the fact if they are migration “loss” or “gain” areas,

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should systematically build-up and develop networks with their out-migrants and emigrants in order to be able to forecast the possible input of knowledge, financial and human capital into the local environment. Better established and formalized relations would contribute to higher contingencies of investment, education, and overall development.

As second and further generations of Slovene migrants in the Diaspora are well covered in Slovenian policy documents, it is strongly suggested that similar measures should be implemented in the context of contemporary emigration (towards first generation emigrant) in order: first, to prevent ongoing increase of emigration flows; second, to create the local possibilities for returnees in terms of suitable employment and housing; and third, to refocus towards more contemporary issues instead of targeting the so-called third and fourth generations of long bygone political emigration.

8. Annex:

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Interview:

- Mrs. Anita Ogulin, Youth Friends Association of Slovenija (Zveza prijateljev mladine Slovenije), 07.12.2011

NOTES:

Statistical definition of population

The general definition of population changed three times since 1990. First, it was adapted for the census in 1991 on the premise of registered permanent residence. The most significant change was the one from 1995, when Slovenian citizens living abroad for more than three months were excluded from the total population of Slovenia. Similarly, permanent residents residing in Slovenia for more than three months were included in total population of Slovenia. The definition changed again for the census of 2002, when temporary residents were excluded regardless of time spent in Slovenia on the premise of the type of permit. The last definition change was implemented in 2008 following the EU directive. The notion of usual residence was introduced, which extends the critical period of stay in (or outside) Slovenia to 12 months or more regardless of the type of permit. As a direct consequence, the Slovenian population shrank roughly for 16.000 people in mid-2008 (from 2,039 mio. to 2,023 mio.; source: SORS, www.stat.si).

Population data inconsistencies

As we may see from the last two columns of Table 1 (the first two from right), there is a certain quantitative gap emerging between the population registered by the Central Register of Population (i.e. CRP at the Ministry of Interior; the column "Difference") and the sources on vital events and migration data collected by the Statistical Office of Republic of Slovenia (the column "Net Increase"). The aforementioned gap wasn't negligible at all. It mounted up to 8,438 persons in 1999, and it may be predominantly ascribed to "sorting out" the problem of the 'Erased' (see below). In this way about one third of them (overall around 26,000 persons) were returned back to the CRP. Owing to reorganization in statistical data recollecting and publishing, this gap "disappeared" in the period after 2005 despite the logical limitations of pre-issued official statistical data and the expected discrepancy between various data sources. Since the registered number of population in Central Register of Population (CRP) at the end of any year is published only couple of months later, these data present a benchmark for all ensuing data. Thus for instance, the number of births in 2007 was increased from 19,520 to 19,823 to meet the new criteria, and the number of deaths decreased from 18,782 to 18,584, respectively.

Compared to the natural change in population (difference between the numbers of births and deaths), the quantitative extent of migration is harder to follow. The migration data are published some additional months later due to double-checking (cf. Table 1 and Figure 1). Nevertheless, since 2008 both data collections are harmonized also partly due to the change of the population definition.

In 1992, the Republic of Slovenia "erased" a high number of its inhabitants from the "active evidence of population". Initially, the number of 18.305 circulated in public, while the latest statistics from 2009 counted 25,671 erased persons. Roughly half were women and children. Many of them experienced grave hardship as a result.

The erasing (slov.: *izbris*) meant that citizens of other republics of former Yugoslavia with a permanent residence in Slovenia who did not apply for Slovenian citizenship lost the right to permanent residence in the country without any legal basis or any decision being served. They became illegal "aliens" in Slovenia who had to arrange the status of a legal alien anew. Citizens of third countries (for example Germany, Italy, Switzerland etc.) who had a residence permit, as did the later erased persons, did not have to do anything as after a deadline expired they automatically became aliens with permanent residence in the Republic of Slovenia. The erased were thus discriminated compared to other foreigners. The erasing denied them of social and other rights in a country in which they had permanent residence and in which many of them had been born and attended school; some were put in centres for the deportation of aliens and/or deported from the country.

The Constitutional Court of the Republic of Slovenia has twice established that an unconstitutional situation was involved, namely that the erasing was illegal and that the

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government failed to address its consequences properly. The unconstitutionality and illegality of the erasing has been noted by the Constitutional Court indirectly in seven other cases.

The Republic of Slovenia was only in 2010, eighteen years after the erasing and eleven years from the first and seven from the second decision of the Constitutional Court (the latter also being the second oldest unfulfilled decision of the Constitutional Court) putting right the injustice brought upon the erased and closing a painful chapter in the history of our young country (source: Ministry of the Interior, 2011).

Some other reports deal with this issue very thoroughly. For example, an important volume of Jasminka Dedić et al. (2003) called *The Erased [Izbrisani]* shows that there were as many as 30,000 of erased persons. So, the question of vulnerability is now, after almost two decades, a bit obsolete, since about half of them were already forced to emigrate or to leave Slovenia, or were refrained from returning to Slovenia in 1992 and in the following years (Dedić et al., 2003). After a thorough scrutiny (which involved comparisons between the manual registers of the local administrative units and the central register of population) nonetheless made by the Ministry of the Interior, the last official number of the erased population on 26th of February 1992 was 25,671 persons. This number included 14,775 men and 10,896 women, among them were also as much as 5,360 children (Source: Mladina, 2012).

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9. Figures and Tables:

Table 1: Population change in period 1998-2008

Year	Population (31.12.)	Live Births	Deaths	Natural increase	Immigrants	Emigrants	Net Migration	Net Increase	Difference
1998	1 978 334	17 856	19 039	-1 183	4 603	6 708	-2 105	-3 288	nd
1999	1 987 755	17 533	18 885	-1 352	4 941	2 606	2 335	983	9 421
2000	1 990 094	18 180	18 588	-408	6 185	3 570	2 615	2 207	2 339
2001	1 994 026	17 477	18 508	-1 031	7 803	4 811	2 992	1 961	3 932
2002	1 995 033	17 501	18 701	-1 200	9 134	7 269	1 865	665	1 007
2003	1 996 433	17 289	19 297	-2 008	9 868	6 469	3 399	1 391	1 400
2004	1 997 590	17 961	18 523	-562	10 171	8 269	1 902	1 340	1 157
2005	2 003 358	18 157	18 825	-668	15 041	8 605	6 436	5 768	5 768
2006	2 010 377	18 932	18 180	752	20 016	13 749	6 267	7 019	7 019
2007	2 025 866	19 823	18 584	1 239	29 693	14 943	14 250	15 489*	15 489
2008**	2 039 399							(13 543)	

source: SORS; *estimation of Net Increase based on official statistical data was 13 325 (by 30 April 2008).
** CRP - Registered population (30.06.2008)

Source: SORS, Central register of population, Ministry of the Interior. (30.06.2008) (**- "Difference" in the last column is calculated from the two consecutive numbers in the first column "Population (31.12)" to show the disparity between the data in the Population register and the data from Population change calculated from columns from Natural and Migration change and represented in the column "Net Increase")

Table 2: Basic population groups by gender, Slovenia, half-yearly (2008-2010)

	Population			Citizens of the RS, residents of Slo			Foreigners, residents of Slovenia		
	TOTAL	Men	Women	TOTAL	Men	Women	TOTAL	Men	Women
2008H2	2022629	996969	1025660	1959213	950469	1008744	63416	46500	16916
2009H1	2032362	1003945	1028417	1961639	951862	1009777	70723	52083	18640
2009H2	2042335	1011767	1030568	1962680	952669	1010011	79655	59098	20557
2010H1	2046976	1014107	1032869	1964660	953951	1010709	82316	60156	22160
2010H2	2049261	1014716	1034545	1966028	954870	1011158	83233	59846	23387

Source: SORS, Central register of population, Ministry of the Interior. (30.06.2010). Note: H1 refers to 1st of January, H2 refers to 1st of July)

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Table 3: Migration change of population, Slovenia, 1995-2009

	Immigrants	Emigrants	Net migration	Immigrants per 1000 inhabitants	Emigrants per 1000 inhabitants	Net migration per 1000 inhabitants
1995	2191	776	1415	1,1	0,4	0,7
1996	1500	803	697	0,8	0,4	0,4
1997	1093	807	286	0,6	0,4	0,1
1998	4603	6708	-2105	2,3	3,4	-1,1
1999	4941	2606	2335	2,5	1,3	1,2
2000	6185	3570	2615	3,1	1,8	1,3
2001	7803	4811	2992	3,9	2,4	1,5
2002	9134	7269	1865	4,6	3,6	0,9
2003	9279	5867	3412	4,6	2,9	1,7
2004	10171	8269	1902	5,1	4,1	1
2005	15041	8605	6436	7,5	4,3	3,2
2006	20016	13749	6267	10	6,8	3,1
2007	29193	14943	14250	14,5	7,4	7,1
2008	30693	12109	18584	15,2	6	9,2
2009	30296	18788	11508	14,8	9,2	5,6

Source: SORS, Statistical Office of the Republic of Slovenia, Migration Change, 2010.

Table 4: Emigration of population, statistical regions, Slovenia, 1995-2009

	SLOVENIA	Pomurska	Podravska	Koroška	Savinjska	Zasavska	Spodnje posavska	Jugovzhodna Slovenija	Osrednjeslovenska	Gorenjska	Notranjsko-kraška	Goriška	Obalno-kraška
1995	776	45	127	48	77	16	39	49	206	106	13	19	31
1996	803	66	106	24	118	12	35	65	230	77	7	25	38
1997	807	87	117	37	104	11	31	34	189	96	13	27	61
1998	6708	176	505	111	960	119	306	344	1957	961	196	488	585
1999	2606	143	241	44	342	55	111	164	779	232	46	199	250
2000	3570	254	280	86	537	79	177	212	1038	420	73	186	228
2001	4811	152	326	113	888	92	202	385	1352	370	86	419	426
2002	7269	227	662	165	1202	217	468	445	1941	645	206	442	649
2003	5867	215	546	135	992	177	337	403	1453	609	168	353	479
2004	8269	187	785	134	1393	183	408	487	2245	781	233	602	831
2005	8605	176	886	151	1527	159	485	437	2376	757	233	574	844
2006	13749	361	1649	278	2147	178	705	852	4027	1029	329	854	1340
2007	14943	463	1939	211	2082	201	607	1066	4780	1087	432	867	1208
2008	12109	426	3189	270	1538	134	381	612	2688	806	400	662	1003
2009	18788	450	2768	397	2743	223	685	1258	5228	1449	512	1253	1822

Source: SORS; Central register of population, Register of Foreigners, Ministry of the Interior, 2010.

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Table 5: Net migration between statistical regions per 1000 inhabitants, Slovenia 1995-2009

	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009
Pomurska	-0,2	0	-0,3	-0,2	-0,6	-0,4	-0,4	-0,2	-0,4	-0,4	-0,4	0	-0,5	-5,5	-3
Podravska	-0,3	-0,1	-0,3	0,1	0,1	0,1	-0,1	0	0,1	0,2	0,1	0,1	0,5	1,4	0,9
Koroška	-0,6	-0,7	-0,6	-0,7	-1,6	-1,1	-0,9	-1,4	-1	-1,2	-2	-2,4	-3	-8,5	-5,1
Savinjska	0,1	-0,4	-0,1	-0,3	-0,4	-0,5	0	-0,2	-0,6	-0,6	-0,4	-0,5	-0,2	-4,1	-3,9
Zasavska	-0,9	1,1	1,4	0,3	-0,1	0	-1,6	-1,3	-1,9	-1,8	-1,5	-1,9	-2,6	-4,6	-8,8
Spodnje-posavska	0	0	-0,2	0,7	-0,2	-0,3	0,7	0,6	-0,3	-0,6	1	0,4	0,6	-6,4	-1,1
Jugovzhodna Slovenija	0,4	0,7	0,6	0,4	1,2	0,8	0,4	0,1	0,6	0,6	0,5	0,1	-0,6	-1	0,2
Osrednjeslovenska	-0,2	-0,5	-0,4	-0,4	-0,5	-0,4	0,3	0,2	0,5	0,5	0,7	1,2	1,3	8,3	4,6
Gorenjska	0,9	0,7	0,4	0,4	0,3	0,3	-0,7	-0,5	-0,6	-0,2	-0,8	-0,9	-0,9	-2,7	-2,5
Notranjsko-kraška	2	1,4	1,5	2,2	2,6	2,6	0,9	1,7	0,6	1,7	1,7	0,5	0,6	-1,2	-0,3
Goriška	-0,8	-0,4	0	-0,7	-0,7	-0,4	-0,3	-0,4	-0,7	-1,1	-1,1	-2,2	-2,1	-9,1	-6,4
Obalno-kraška	0,5	1	1,2	0,8	2,4	1,7	1	1,4	1,9	0,9	0,6	1,3	0,5	1,1	7

Source: SORS; Central register of population, Register of Foreigners, Ministry of the Interior, 2010.

Table 6: Foreigners by reason of immigration and country of citizenship, Slovenia, 2009

	Total	Employment	Seasonal work	Family reunification	Study	Other	Unknown
Country of citizenship - TOTAL	27393	17925	243	5213	517	431	3064
EU COUNTRIES	1881	787	0	260	35	254	545
Bosnia in Hercegovina	12910	9477	108	2193	89	55	988
Croatia	1442	757	....	285	138	67	....
Serbia	2907	1981	12	441	60	19	394
Montenegro	113	41	....	44	7	0	....
Kosovo	3576	2357	84	763	21	13	338
Other European countries	3664	2064	26	960	139	14	461
NON EUROPEAN COUNTRIES	878	456	9	253	28	9	123
Unknown	22	5	0	14	0	0	3

Source: SORS; Central register of population, Register of Foreigners, Ministry of the Interior, 2010.

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Table 7: Gender structure of emigrants (citizens and foreigners), Slovenia, 1995-2009

	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009
Sex - TOTAL	3372	2985	5447	6708	2606	3570	4811	7269	5867	8269	8605	13749	14943	12109	18788
Men	2202	1757	4174	5131	1732	2376	3503	4596	3444	6061	6659	10725	10696	8190	14816
Women	1170	1228	1273	1577	874	1194	1308	2673	2423	2208	1946	3024	4247	3919	3972
Citizens - TOTAL	776	803	807	705	963	1559	1442	2624	1887	2265	2077	2703	3178	4766	3717
Citizens - men	393	390	443	363	525	806	743	1286	952	1243	982	1315	1523	2316	1984
Citizens - women	383	413	364	342	438	753	699	1338	935	1022	1095	1388	1655	2450	1733
Foreigners - TOTAL	2596	2182	4640	6003	1643	2011	3369	4645	3980	6004	6528	11046	11765	7343	15071
Foreigners - men	1809	1367	3731	4768	1207	1570	2760	3310	2492	4818	5677	9410	9173	5874	12832
Foreigners - women	787	815	909	1235	436	441	609	1335	1488	1186	851	1636	2592	1469	2239

Source: SORS; Central register of population, Register of Foreigners, Ministry of the Interior, 2010.

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Table 8: Emigration (of citizens and foreigners), countries of next residence gender, Slovenia, 2008-2009

	2008			2009		
	Sex - TOTA	Men	Women	Sex - TOTA	Men	Women
Emigrants to abroad	12109	8190	3919	18788	14816	3972
EUROPE	11327	7792	3535	17705	14189	3516
Austria	676	358	318	518	265	253
Bosnia and Herzegovina	3118	2819	299	6712	6165	547
Montenegro	20	11	9	63	38	25
France	131	75	56	119	54	65
Croatia	764	444	320	1169	748	421
Italy	362	177	185	430	243	187
Kosovo	32	30	2	835	740	95
Macedonia, The Former Yougoslav Republic of	837	656	181	1797	1547	250
Germany	2005	995	1010	797	398	399
Serbia	1583	1301	282	3148	2728	420
Sweden	107	55	52	48	24	24
Switzerland	356	149	207	191	93	98
Other European countries	1336	722	614	1878	1146	732
AFRICA	42	25	17	48	34	14
ASIA	153	78	75	226	127	99
AMERICA, SOUTH	18	9	9	32	18	14
AMERICA, NORTH AND CENTRAL	397	187	210	393	200	193
Canada	170	85	85	118	61	57
United States	204	96	108	219	123	96
Other North and Central American countries	23	6	17	56	16	40
AUSTRALIA AND OCEANIA	157	87	70	162	85	77
Unknown	15	12	3	222	163	59

Source: SORS; Central register of population, Register of Foreigners, Ministry of the Interior, 2010.

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Table 9: Regional disparities in population and GDP, statistical regions, Slovenia, 2007-2008

statistical regions (geographical region, capital)	population density (per km ²)	GDP per capita (index, 2007)	population 2008	GDP per capita 2008
Slovenija	100.25	100.0	2.032.362	26.872
Pomurska (Eastern Slovenia, Murska Sobota)	89.41	65.2	119.537	17.521
Podravska (Eastern Slovenia, Maribor)	148.80	85.1	322.900	22.868
Koroška (Eastern Slovenia, Slovenj Gradec)	69.63	76.9	72.481	20.665
Savinjska (Eastern Slovenia, Celje)	108.58	87.9	258.845	23.620
Zasavska (Eastern Slovenia, Trbovlje)	169.51	66.1	44.750	17.762
Spodnjeposavska (Eastern Slovenia, Krško)	78.98	80.2	69.900	21.551
Jugovzhodna Slovenija (Central Slovenia, Novo mesto)	52.77	93.1	141.166	25.018
Osrednjeslovenska (Central Slovenia, Ljubljana)	204.29	143.7	521.965	38.615
Gorenjska (Central Slovenia, Kranj)	94.42	84.7	201.779	22.761
Notranjsko-kraška (Western Slovenia, Postojna)	35.53	75.4	51.728	20.261
Goriška (Western Slovenia, Nova Gorica)	50.98	96.4	118.533	25.905
Obalno-kraška (Western Slovenia, Koper)	104.19	104.0	108.778	27.947

Source: SORS, Statistical Office of the Republic of Slovenia, Regional Gross Domestic Product, 2010.

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Table 10: Workers' remittances (in USD), Slovenia, 2006-2009

	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009
remittances (USD)	n/a	282.096.500,00	322.586.500,00	346.698.100,00	279.075.600,00
Percentage of GDP	n/a	0,52%	0,59%	0,63%	0,51%

Source: World Bank (2011).

Table 11: Emigration and net migration of citizens, Statistical regions, Slovenia, 2000-2009

	Net migration (citizens)			Emigration (citizens)		
	2000-2004	2005-2009	2000-2009	2000-2004	2005-2009	2000-2009
SLOVENIJA	-3,538	-5,706	-9,244	9,777	16,441	26,218
Pomurska	-311	-544	-855	625	1,120	1,745
Podravska	-297	-2,322	-2,619	1,240	4,117	5,357
Koroška	-202	-320	-522	323	521	844
Savinjska	-375	-562	-937	1,065	1,650	2,715
Zasavska	-185	-110	-295	282	274	556
Spodnje-posavska	-90	-248	-338	366	653	1,019
Jugovzhodna Slovenija	-272	-51	-323	634	668	1,302
Osrednjeslovenska	-721	-442	-1,163	2,639	3,715	6,354
Gorenjska	-538	-590	-1,128	1,151	1,639	2,790
Notranjsko-kraška	-42	-54	-96	249	338	587
Goriška	-174	-190	-364	440	622	1,062
Obalno-kraška	-331	-273	-604	763	1,124	1,887

Source: SORS; Central register of population, Register of Foreigners, Ministry of the Interior, 2010.

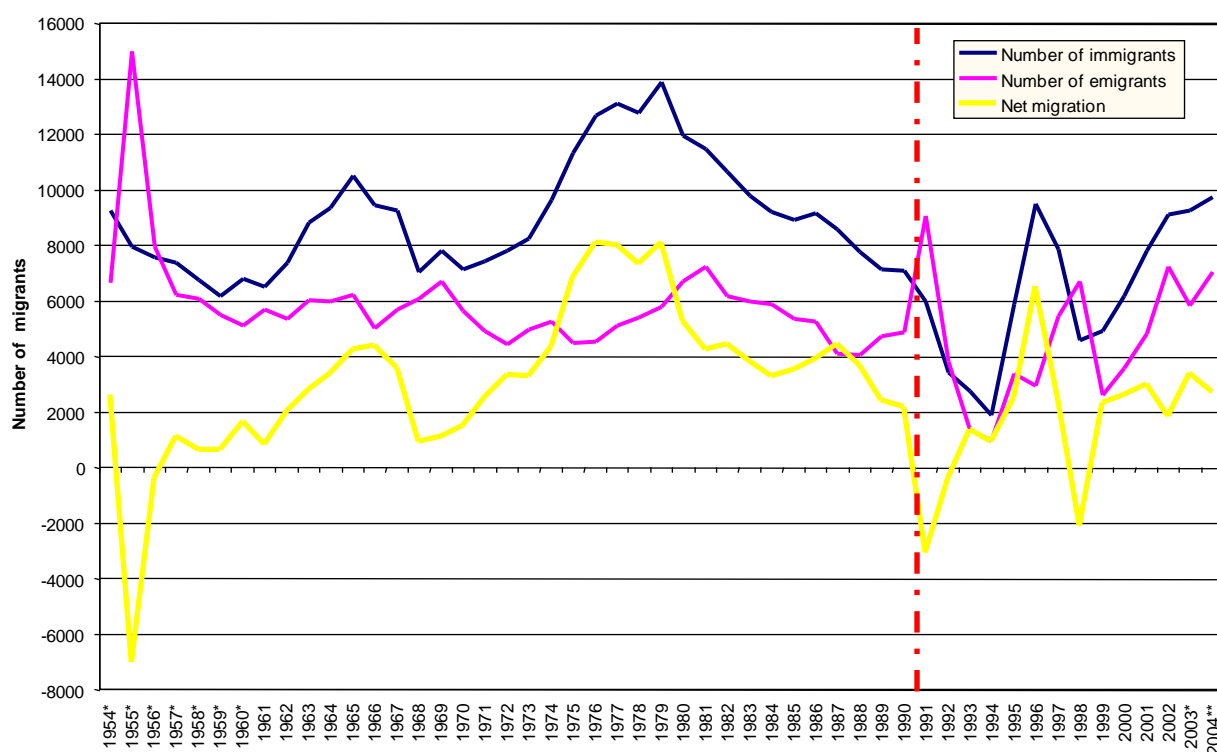
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Table 12: Net overall migration, Statistical regions, Slovenia, 2000-2009

	Net overall migration		
	2000-2004	2005-2009	2000-2009
SLOVENIJA	12786	57045	69831
Pomurska	-240	240	0
Podravska	1620	5504	7124
Koroška	-61	894	833
Savinjska	1712	8023	9735
Zasavska	114	628	742
Spodnjeposavska	809	1787	2596
Jugovzhodna Slovenija	583	4067	4650
Osrednjeslovenska	4935	19749	24684
Gorenjska	275	4169	4444
Notranjsko-kraška	507	1829	2336
Goriška	956	4035	4991
Obalno-kraška	1576	6120	7696

Source: SORS; Central register of population, Register of Foreigners, Ministry of the Interior, 2010.

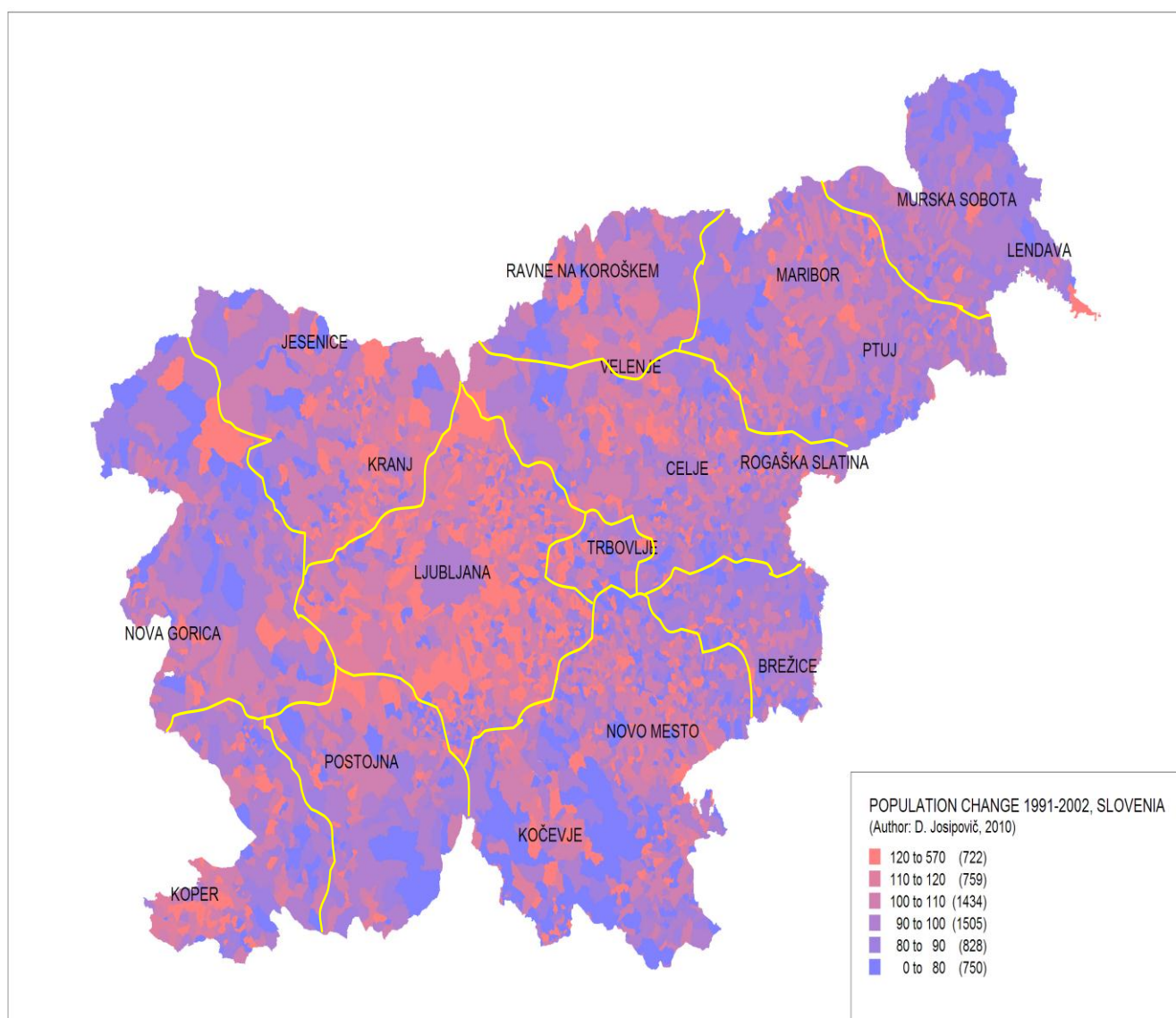
Figure 1: Migration to/from Slovenia in a period 1954-2004



Sources: Statistical Yearbook data 1964 and 2004*; Research Results – Population 2002, Monthly Statistical Review 11/2005**, SORS)

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Figure 2: Indices of population change in the period 1991-2002, Slovenia

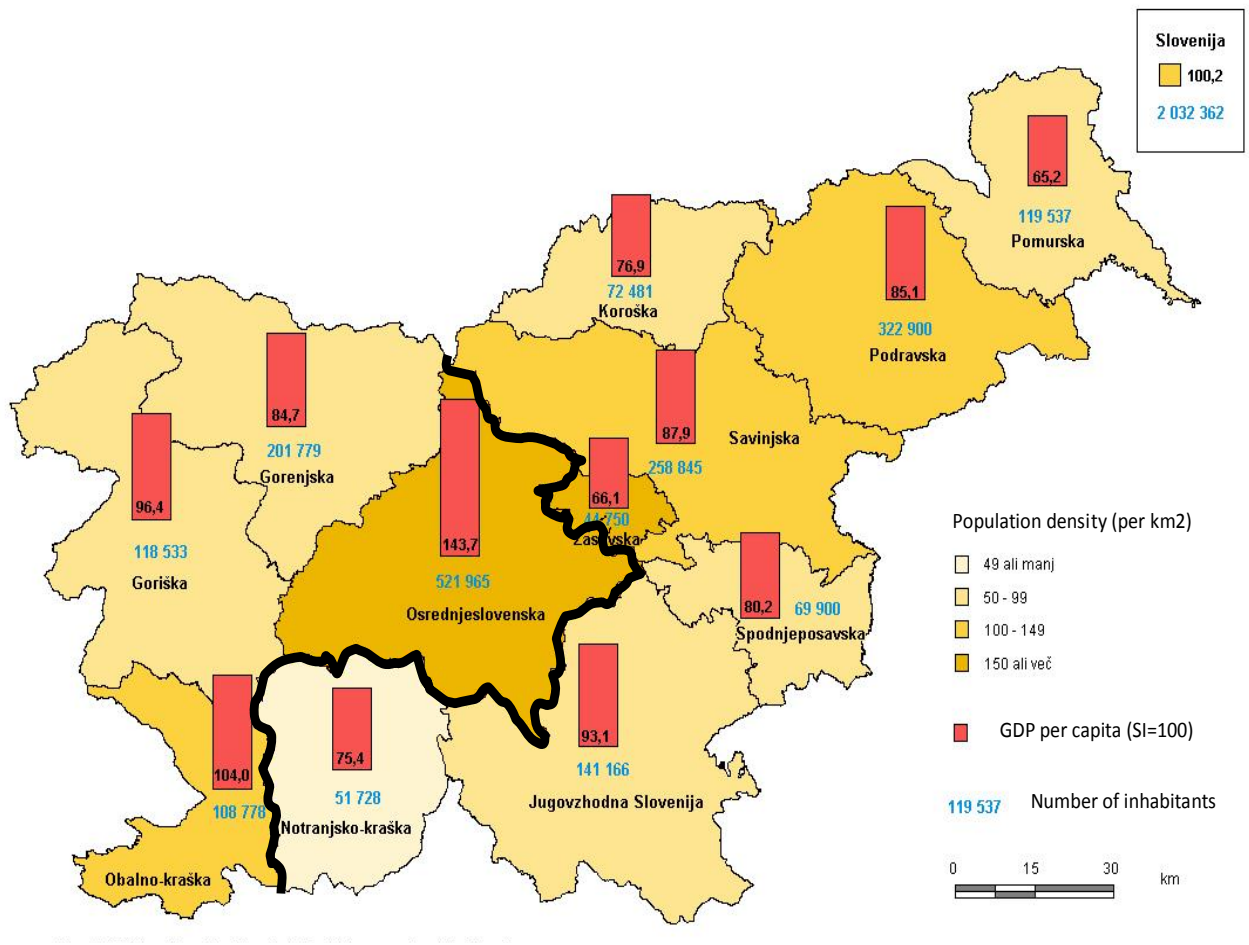


Source: SORS, 1991; 2002.

Note: The index 100 means that in a given settlement there was no change in the number of population. Blue areas show settlements with an overall decrease in the number of population. Red areas show settlements with an overall increase in the number of population. The numbers in the brackets denote the number of settlements within a given category.

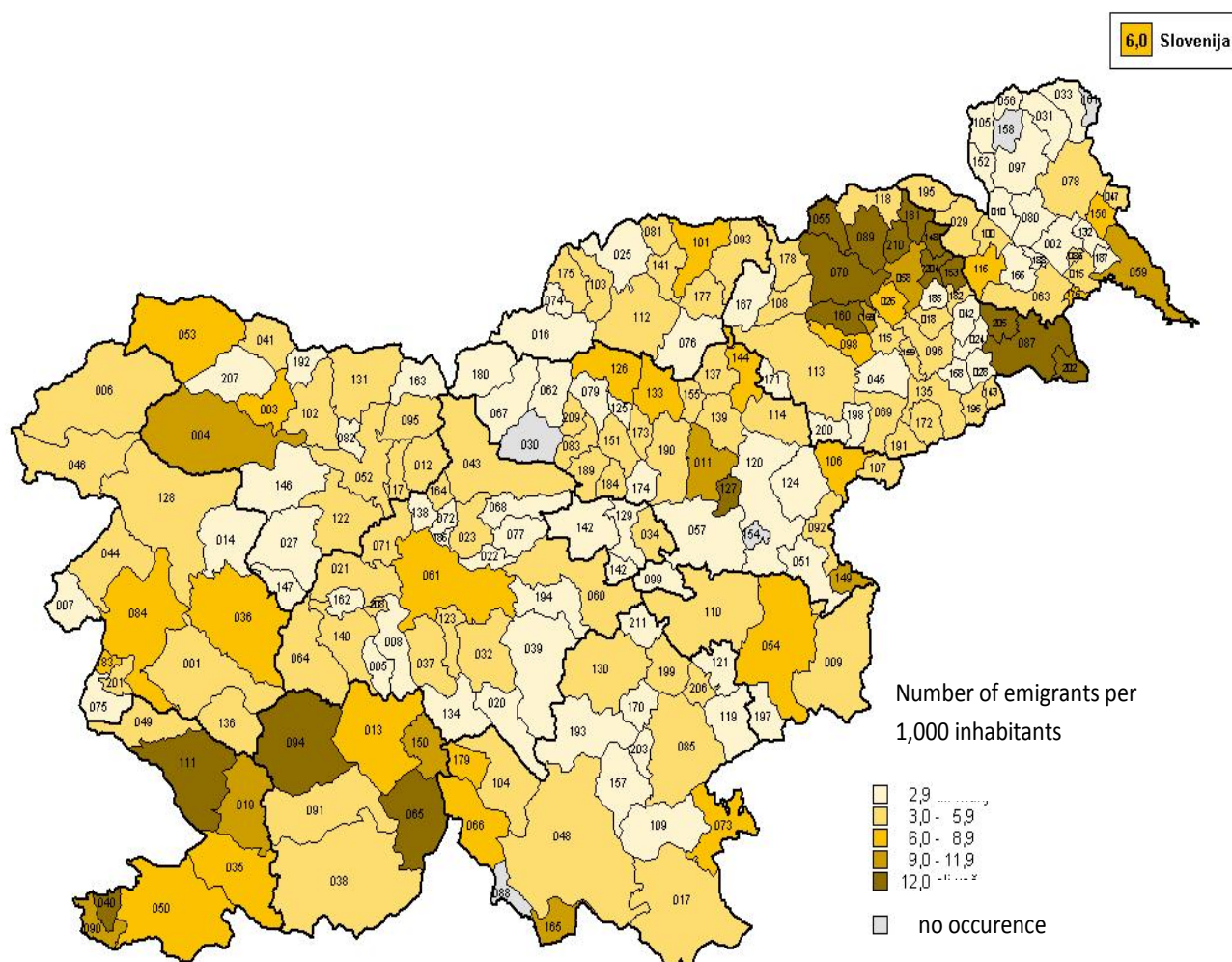
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Figure 3: Regional disparities in population and GDP, statistical regions (NUTS3)*, Slovenia, 2007-2008



Source: SORS, 2011b (*- the boundary between Western and Eastern Slovenia at the NUTS2 level is printed in bold)

Figure 4: Emigration per 1,000 inhabitants, municipalities, Slovenia, 2008



Vira: Statistični urad Republike Slovenije in Geodetska uprava Republike Slovenije

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Source: SORS, 2011b