

Fieldwork

First day of excursion: Thursday, 16th July

Eastern Slovenia - Posotelje and Kozjansko

On the first day of the excursion, we will visit the areas of Eastern Slovenia called Posotelje and Kozjansko. This is a border Pannonian, mostly a hilly region characterised by its peripheral position on the border with Croatia. The dispersed pattern of farms, the location on the border and poor transport facilities in the past resulted in low economic development of this area and the prevalence of traditional agrarian society and lifestyle. Until the mid 20th century, this area was densely populated, however, due to lack of jobs, the inhabitants gradually moved out in great numbers. Out-migration peaked after World War II, which caused the general depopulation of the area. This unfavourable demographic development brought about consequences, such as the aging of the population (the farm population in particular), the emigration of younger and better educated people and the abandoning of farming, which resulted in an increased greening of landscape with large-scale forest overgrowth taking place. After an earthquake in 1974, the area was gradually renewed and the economy started to develop, but this was limited to major central settlements (community centres) and the areas along the main road, while in the more remote parts of the region the depopulation continues. This area is also marked by intense daily commuting to work by local people to neighbouring regions.

Agriculture is losing its importance in the region (only market livestock farming, fruit cultivation and viticulture remain). Beside the glass industry in Rogaška Slatina (which began 80 years ago), the development of the region was greatly influenced by the rise of small business and tourism. Rogaška Slatina has one of the oldest and most important health resorts in Slovenia, which dates from the beginning of the 19th century. Its development is based on the unique mineral water (with a high content of magnesium) and modern medical-therapeutic treatments. The Podčetrtek health resort (Olimia Spa) is newer and focused mainly on holiday and recreation tourism and wellness services. This health resort has encouraged the development of a tourist region in the surrounding area. Farm tourism is also developing intensively. Tourist offerings include among other things several baroque churches, a monastery with the third oldest pharmacy in Europe and the landscape park of Kozjansko. The research and management of natural and cultural heritage are elements of 'soft' social and economic development as the strategic goals in the protected area of the Kozjansko Park. Key projects at the Kozjansko Park are the revitalization of fruit cultivation in meadows, an education centre for nature preservation, rural development and regional development, preservation of dry meadows, and cataloguing the heritage of rural buildings.

Itinerary: Maribor – Rogaška Slatina – Podčetrtek – Olimje – Podsreda – Čatež – Ljubljana

More information is available at:

<http://www.slovenia.info>

<http://www.maribor-pohorje.si>

<http://www.slovenia.info/en/Health-Resorts.htm?zdraviliscaSLO=0&lng=2>

<http://www.terme-rogaska.si>

<http://www.steklarna-rogaska.si>

<http://www.terme-olimia.com>

<http://www.olimje.net/slo/index.php>

<http://www.kozjanski-park.si>

<http://www.terme-catez.si>

Second day of excursion: Friday, 17th July

Primorska – Koprška brda

On the second day of the excursion, we will visit an area in the Primorska region called Koprška brda (Koper hills), situated in the extreme south-western part of Slovenia. It is considered as a distinct area due to its position along the Adriatic Sea and its general characteristics as a Mediterranean region. The Slovene coast, stretching between Italy and Croatia, measures 46.6 km. At the coastline, recess from the original coastline can be observed in drainage, construction of salt pans and ports and expansion of agricultural land. This was once a traditional agrarian landscape with developed urban areas and today is an economically developed area characterised by port activity and tourism. Varied tourist offering is encountered in picturesque, cultural and historical towns such as Koper, Izola, Piran and Portorož. One of the main characteristics of the demographic structure of the Primorska region is ethnic diversity marked by rapid change over the last decades. It needs to be stressed that the coastal area has a native Italian population with its own cultural traditions living alongside Slovenes.

Low hills rise above the narrow coastal plain, reaching 500 meters altitude. Old terraces dating several thousands years have preserved their fertile soil on the slopes where horticulture, fruit cultivation and viticulture are undertaken. Mild winters and hot summers allow for almost year-round cropping. Villages are located on top of the ridges and the terraces of the southern slopes. To the north, the hills gradually disappear under the Karst Edge.

The Slovene Karst (500 km²) is a high lime plateau situated between the Trieste Bay and the Vipava Valley, with several thousand karst caves and abysses. This kind of landscape consists of relief and underground forms without surface water flows. The planned reforestation of the karst barren land has thoroughly changed the appearance and economy of the region.

The inhabitants of the Primorska region traditionally welcome their guests with smoked ham (prosciutto) and a glass of excellent karst red wine (teran) from their own vineyards, a welcome which will be extended to the participants of the IGU colloquium.

Itinerary: Ljubljana – Koper – Izola – Sečovlje salt pans – Padna – Korte – Piran – Portorož – Ljubljana

More information is available at:

http://www.burger.si/Koper/uvod_eng.html

http://www.burger.si/Izola/uvod_eng.html

<http://www.burger.si/Obala/ObalaENG.html>

http://www.burger.si/Piran/uvod_eng.htm

<http://vodnik.kras-carso.com/>

Third day of excursion: Saturday, 18th July

Ljubljana – capital of Slovenia

Ljubljana is the economic, political, cultural and business centre of Slovenia. It is surrounded on all sides by a hilly or a mountainous barrier, the rim of the Ljubljana basin which is the largest basin in the Slovene Alpine area. The city centre is situated at the Ljubljana passage, one of the most important European traffic junctions, which has enabled the city's development. During the period of industrialization, the city lagged behind other Slovene urban areas, but its administrative-political, cultural, and economic functions were strengthened. When Slovenia gained independence in 1991, the city became the national capital and experienced rapid economic development resulting in a high degree of centralization focussed on Ljubljana.

The city fulfils its cultural, scientific and educational functions via the Scientific Research Centre of the Slovenian Academy of Sciences and Arts, the University of Ljubljana, the National and University Library, the cultural centre of Cankarjev dom, and other institutions.

The unique-looking old city centre combines the heritage of the medieval period with Baroque and Art Nouveau masterpieces, ancient Roman monuments and the unique legacy of the famous architect Jože Plečnik. Ljubljana's surrounding area offers a range of natural sights and rich cultural heritage.

More information is available at:

<http://www.visitljubljana.si/>

<http://www.euroave.com/maps/00mapx.php?xcity=ljubljana>