Political Transition and Democracy in Slovenia

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The paper analyses the three-stage model of democratisation elaborated in the '80s on the experience of transition of the South European (SE) countries. The model served as a tool for explaining democratisation in East European countries, however it did not allow sufficiently clear understanding of the process of transition in particular East Central European countries. It is argued that the real differences among the successful and unsuccessful post-communist countries in the process of transition are not expressed in formal (normative) indicators but in the actual practices which are a consequence of a set of factors like the level of economic development, autonomy of the civil society in the period before the crisis, and the democratic traditions of each country. Economic relations in the former Yugoslavia were seriously disrupted at the end of the '80s, and in the middle of 1990 the Yugoslav program of economic stabilisation failed and Yugoslavia as an economic system ceased to exist. Due to favourable socio-economic conditions, the pre-transition and transition started in Slovenia earlier than in other countries. The developments in Slovenia have been 'a-typical' compared with East Central Europe and also with the republics of the former Yugoslavia with the exception of Croatia.

Keywords: Democratisation, pre-transition, transition, economic stabilisation.

1. Introduction

The three-stage model of democratization - pre-transition crisis, democratic transition and democratic consolidation - was elaborated in the '80s on the experience of transition of the South European (SE) countries. The model served as a tool for explaining democratization in East European countries, and the criteria of transition and consolidation were described first comparatively between southern and eastern Central Europe by Juan Linz and Alfred Stepan (1990, 1992, 1995). Though scholars who dealt intensively with political transition and parlamentarization in ECE post-communist countries (A. Agh, Z. Mansfeldova, I. Jackiewicz, W. Wesolowski, D. Sivakova, D. Zajc, N. Zakošek, W. Patzelt, D. Judge, D. Olson and others) were discovering great differences between the two regions, regarding historical background, political cultures and types of the previous totalitarian regimes. Besides, the much harder conditions (lack of strong EU support) have obviously made transition more difficult, while the relationships among the stages are more complicated.

In addition, this general model of democratic transition does not allow a sufficiently clear understanding of the process of transition in particular East Central European countries. In Slovenia this process did not depend on the disintegration of the communist system but had its own autonomous genesis, which only at the very end of the '80s (in the time of the 'great finale'), coincided with the rapid changes in East Europe. While the transition process in East Europe was connected with the disintegration of power in the Soviet Union and with the loosening of control by the Warsaw Pact, the developments which triggered democratization and led to the establishment of the new states on the territory of former Yugoslavia - one of them is Slovenia - are much older. They started at the time when the idea of Yugoslav 'workers' self-management' lost its original prestige as the 'third way' and the old communist leaders (Tito, Kardelj) died.

The case of the former Yugoslavia and its republics is an example showing how difficult it is to explain the differences in the original crisis and the modes of transition by means of universal models. It also opens many questions as to why some countries

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succeeded relatively soon to establish a workable poliarchic democracy (Dahl, 1971: 17), while others ended in semitotalitarian systems or deficient democracies as described by Merkel (Merkel, 1999). Although all research of transition has to deal with regional and country specifics, this is especially necessary on the territory of the former Yugoslavia.

Scientific interest to explain the changes in post-communist countries has concentrated mainly on the most successful countries of East-Central Europe (Poland, Hungary, the Czech Republic, Slovakia) while the specifics of the changes on the territory of the former Yugoslavia, which was considered as a country of the Balkans, remained to a great extent unexplained and the appropriate models are still missing (Toš and Miheljak, 2000: 6). This is true also for the political scientists and 'transitologists' in Slovenia, since we have been finding a lot more similarities in the transition processes with the ECE countries (especially with Poland and Hungary) than with the developments in most of the former republics of Yugoslavia.

2. The pre-transition processes in Slovenia

The real differences among the successful and unsuccessful post-communist countries in the process of transition are not expressed in formal (normative) indicators but in the actual practices which are a consequence of a set of factors like the **level of economic development, autonomy of the civil society in the period before the crisis, and the democratic traditions of each country**.

The **level of previous economic development** is one of the most important factors determining the differences between Slovenia and other ECE or Balkan countries. It was quite high in comparison with the average Yugoslav and East Central European levels. Here it should be taken into account that the economy of the former socialist Yugoslavia, as distinguished from other East European economies, was highly decentralized and enjoyed substantial autonomy from the state. Self-managed enterprises had considerable powers and a certain, though incomplete, market system was in operation. Slovenia's economy was among the best developed and was well connected with the Western markets, while its industry enjoyed certain advantages in the internal Yugoslav market. The differences in industrial development between the 'North' and the 'South' in the former 'socialist' Yugoslavia were growing in spite of the huge federal investments in the underdeveloped areas. In fact, if we go back in time - the planned and frequently violent 'socialist' industrialization in the postwar period was better accepted and had more favourable consequences in the previously more developed Slovenia than in the more rural and traditionalistic regions of the rest of the former Yugoslavia. Slovenia, with its traditional and dispersed industry, was mostly producing goods for the consumer market, while the undeveloped republics had the doubtful privilege of developing heavy industry, which was rarely making any profit (unless manufacturing for the Yugoslav Army, which was an exporter on its own) and had to be subsidized; this industry, at the same time, violently transformed the social structure and heavily burdened the environment.

Economic relations in the former Yugoslavia were seriously disrupted at the end of the '80s, when Serbia and Montenegro announced a ban on the import of Slovene goods as a reaction to the Slovene prohibition of the planned rally of Serbs in Ljubljana (these rallies were instrumentalized by the leader of the Serb Communist Party Milošević as a means to destabilize or replace the leaderships in some parts of Yugoslavia). In the middle of 1990 the Yugoslav program of economic stabilization failed (the federal authorities were not able to control the printing of money, etc.) and Yugoslavia as an economic system ceased to exist. This was the time when the economic and political benefits of separating Slovenia from the collapsing federation surpassed the costs and risks of it. After the formal proclamation of independence of Slovenia (on the 26th of June, 1991), followed by the military intervention of the Yugoslav 'socialist' army and causing a lot of damage to the industry and infrastructure (roads, telecommunications, etc.), Slovenia definitely lost a large market (at least 50%) for its products in the former republics (some of them were soon engaged in civil war). But the loss of the market pressed for quick restructuring of economy, which helped the Slovene economy to recover relatively quickly - a fact which accelerated importantly the process of political transition and helped the country to pass into the stage of early consolidation of democracy in the second half of the '90s. After the recession in 1992 and 1993, already in 1997 Slovenia surpassed the GDP it had at the time of the dissolution of Yugoslavia in 1991. Slovenia is thus - besides Poland - the only country in transition which succeeded to recover so quickly, having the greatest GDP per capita (14.000 $) (purchasing power) among the countries in transition (Table 1).

The second factor which assured smooth transition was definitely the growing **autonomy of the Slovene civil society** in the '80s. This situation was of course quite different from that in the first period after the World War II, when the Communist party

Table 1: Cumulative Change in Real GDP (1990-1997) and GDPppp in US $ in 1997 in Central and Eastern Europe

	1990	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997	GDPppp97
Central and Eastern Europe	100	88.7	80.3	75.7	78.7	82.6	85.8	88.4	
Albania	100	72.0	66.7	73.2	80.1	86.5	94.4	84.9	2.170
Bulgaria	100	88.2	81.8	80.6	82.1	83.8	74.7	70.6	3.870
Croatia	100	81.1	79.5	77.4	82.1	84.2	88.5	93.5	4.930
Czechoslovakia	100	85.7	80						
Czech Republic				80.4	82.6	86.6	90.1	91.4	10.380
Slovakia				76.8	80.7	86.1	92.1	97.4	7.860
Hungary	100	88.3	85.6	85.0	87.5	88.8	90.0	93.2	6.970
Macedonia	100	93.0	85.7	77.9	76.4	75.5	78.0	81.2	3.180
Poland	100	93.0	95.5	99.1	104.4	111.6	118.3	125.2	6.510
Romania	100	87.1	79.6	80.7	83.9	89.8	93.5	91.4	4.270
Slovenia	100	91.1	86.1	88.6	9.3	97.2	100.1	104.1	11.880
									14.000

Sources: Human Development Report for Central and Eastern Europe and CIS 1999 (published for UNDP) and The World Bank - World Development Indicators.

took control of the whole society, getting rid of all actual, and also potential, political competitors (not only of the pre-war political parties but even of political groups which collaborated with the communists in the liberation struggle). But after the rupture with Stalin and the expulsion of Yugoslavia from the communist club in 1948, even the hard core communist leaders understood that, if they were going to be different, they had to allow some liberalization and open the borders. After some oscillations in the attitude towards elementary freedoms in the '60s and '70s, public criticism was tolerated to a great extent in the '80s and civil society could articulate its demands in two magazines - *Nova revija* and *Mladina* (Youth). The first one represented critical intellectuals of liberal and national orientation, while the second, transforming from an organ of the young generation, became the main voice of the opposition. Because of its open criticism Mladina was widely read, also in other parts of Yugoslavia in spite of the language barrier. An important part of the civil demands was channelled also through various committees for human rights (Committee for the Protection of Human Rights, Committee for the Defence of the People Tried at the Military Court of Ljubljana, etc.).

The third factor was **democratic tradition,** and this, in fact, was not abundant. Actually, party politics were limited in range from the time of the establishment of the first political groups and parties at the end of the 19th century (prior to this we had only the Slovene and the German parties), when a fierce ideological struggle started among them.[1] After the unhappy experience of Slovenes with parliamentarianism in the time of the Austrian Empire (where we could not realize the political programme a 'United Slovenia'), limited parliamentarianism in the pre-war period (Kingdom of Yugoslavia) and the counter-parliamentary fundamentalism after the war, we cannot pretend to have accumulated a great amount of democratic tradition. For 61 years (from 1929 to 1990), we lived under authoritarian and even totalitarian systems, and it is only in the last ten years that we have been living in our own parliamentary state based on fully democratic principles.

From the beginning of the '80s democratic developments were going on slowly in the economy, in the intellectual sphere and in civil society, in many cases as resistance against Belgrade, which was trying to prevent democratic tendencies. The Slovene Communist Party had slowly become reconciled to these attempts, supporting at the same time the demands which were formulated by the Slovene critical public (political pluralization, abolishment of sanctions for expressing views in public, the right of conscientious objection, abolishment of the privileged position of the army, recognition of the rights for Albanians in Kosovo, etc.). These particular demands were an expression of anti-authoritarian values among Slovenes, which soon became an important part of the general political orientation. Authori-

tarian values, more common in more traditionalistic areas and republics of Yugoslavia were in favour of centralization and a stronger role of the Communist Party. The anti-authoritarian and libertarian views, which prevailed in Slovenia (and also in Croatia) opened more possibilities for democratization (Toš and Miheljak, 2000: 5).

The main political battles were fought at that time between the leaderships of national communist parties. The Serbian Communist Party, personalized more and more in Milošević, was unprepared for any reforms. Trying to maintain the power of the Yugoslav Communist Party unchanged, and even to use it as an instrument for the centralization of state power at the expense of the republics, and introducing the federal army in the political discussion as a political arbiter, etc., it was actually regressing. These completely different political trends in the former Yugoslavia put the great European powers and the United States before the dilemma whether to allow the legitimate process of the separation of Slovenia and Croatia from the federal state (provided for in the constitutions of 1974), which would ultimately mean the dissolution of former Yugoslavia, or to insist on the unity of a state which was becoming more and more autocratic, and at the same time to support one of the last 'authentic' communist regimes in Europe.

It is believed that the Slovene Communist Party at the end of the '80s, under the growing pressures of internal opposition, synchronized its attempts for economic and social reforms with the demands of the civic and para-political organizations. This was demonstrated clearly by the passing of the amendments to the Slovene Constitution in the Slovene Assembly on 29th of September 1989[2]. This reform orientation of the Slovene Communist Party was finally confirmed by the well-known withdrawal of its representatives from the last congress of the Yugoslav Communists in Belgrade, in January 1990.

The official economic and political 'sovereignization' of Slovenia and the proclamation of independence in June 1991 was a symbolic act and result of a much longer process of pre-transition and transition, which partly included the transition from an incomplete market economy to a complete market economy. For some other former republics (Croatia, Macedonia), transition to democracy (in both meanings) started perhaps only after the final act of 'sovereignization'.

3. Transition and Consolidation of Democracy

The emergence of political pluralism in Slovenia could be viewed as a consequence of a relatively mature stage of transition. The first non-communist and anti-authoritarian organizations were formed in 1988: The Slovene Farmers' League (president Ivan Oman) and the Slovene Democratic League (president dr. Dimitrij Rupel). In 1989 other political organizations appeared - Social Democrats (president Tomšič), Slovene Christian Democrats (president Lojze Peterle) and The Greens (president dr. Hubert Požarnik), while the former official 'socio-political' organizations - the Slovene Communist League (president Milan Kučan), the Socialist Alliance (president Jože Smole) and the Socialist Youth League (president Jožef Školč) – soon transformed themselves into regular political parties (the last one taking oppositional stands in the former system). The new parties represented a 'mixed bag' of organizations which formed the coalition of *'Demos'* (with the 'May 1989 Declaration' as its fundamental programme), a coalition similar to the Czech *Civic Forum* and the Hungarian *Democratic Forum*. 'Demos' was at the same time a movement for establishing a Western style system of liberal (parliamentary) democracy. Both of its key components, democracy and national self-determination, were of liberal origin (Rupel, 1998: 174). When 'Demos', after its victory in the first democratic elections in May 1990, moved to the right, it broke up (December 31, 1991) in a similar way as similar movements in some other East Central European Countries.

At the time of their formation it was naively considered that 'new' and 'old' (transformed) Slovene political parties would lead a constructive dialogue and together engage in solving the problems of transition. This party 'cooperation' would be beneficial for the new democracy. The reality was quite different - the parties soon engaged in useless quarrels and found hardly any common understanding of national interests. The particular position of the Slovene Parliament (Državni zbor) and the rather weak government allowed the political parties to use the parliamentary arena as the site of competition and mutual concessions, while elaboration of strategies and defining common positions remained a slow process. Slovene political parties - in a similar way as political parties in other ECE countries - are using their relative power to exclude other political actors from decision-making processes and even to diminish the influence of coalition partners. Such behaviour was labelled in other ECE countries as 'overparticization' or 'selfish and degenerated politics' (Agh, 1996: 248). In Slovenia we could see a particular manifestation of such behaviour in growing party polarization, reminiscent of the struggle among political parties (primarily between Catholics and Liberals) before the war, with tragic conse-

quences during the war. 'Overparticization' is considered to be a reflection of moralistic approaches and feelings of humanistic mission in the new 'transitional' political elite.[3] This elite was able to start the democratization process but had no practical political and parliamentary experience and could therefore have only very vague perceptions of its role; and so it proved to be rather short-sighted and only modestly fit for modernization processes.[4] In Slovenia we can find some parties unprepared to evaluate realistically the developments in the war - according to some rightist groups World War II did not end in 1945 but in 1990, when communism was definitely defeated.[5] On the other side, the groups on the left play down the importance of the revolutionary strategy of the communists by emphasising the particular circumstances of the war.

The proportional electoral system in Slovenia[6] (preference for PR was similar like in other ECE countries, with the exception of Hungary) with a relatively low threshold of the three mandates (the lowest among the ECE countries) allowed for a substantial number of political parties (7 - 9) to enter the Parliament (Assembly of Slovenia, with one chamber Državni zbor) and consequently for certain fragmentation[7]. Election results in 1992 and 1996 show great changes of electoral support to particular parties, though the support for both main political blocks remains almost the same (Table 2).

The particular circumstances of pre-transition, with a 'partial' transition already in the former system, together with great national consensus needed for the national 'sovereignization' (proclamation of independence) influenced the further course of transition in Slovenia in much a different way than in most of the other ECE countries. In Hungary, Poland and

Table 2: A Comparison of the Electoral Results in Slovenia on State and Local Level (1990-1996).

Parliamentary Political Parties	1990		1992		1994**	1996	
	%	seats* (80)	%	seats (90)	local elections - %	%	seats (90)
Party of Democratic Renewal – United List of Social Democrats (ZLSD)	17.3	36	13.5	14	13.3	9.0	9
Liberal Democratic Party – Liberal Democracy of Slovenia (LDS)	14.5	39	23.4	22	17.2	27.0	25
Slovene Christian Democratic Party (SKD)	13.0	23	14.5	15	18.4	9.6	10
Social Democratic Party (SDS)	7.1	17	3.3	4	13.8	16.1	16
Slovene Peasants Party – Slovene People's Party (SLS)	12.6	32	8.6	10	12.7	19.3	19
Slovene National Party (SNS)	-	-	10.2	12	3.3	3.2	4
Party of Retired Persons (DeSUS)	-	-	-	-	4.0	4.3	5
Slovene Democratic Union – The Democrats (DS)	9.5	30	5.1	6	1.3	2.6	-
Liberal Party (LS)	2.5	4	-	-	-	0.7	-
The Greens (ZS)	8.8	17	3.7	5	3.0	1.7	-
Socialist Alliance – Slovene Socialist Party (SSS)	5.3	5	-	-	-	-	-
Nationalities		6		2		2	
Turnout	83%		85.8%		62.7%	73%	

• Elections in 1990 were to the three-chamber Assembly of Slovenia with a total of 240 deputies (3x80). Only the deputies to the Socio-Political Chamber were elected on the basis of a proportional system.

** First local elections for the members of Municipal Councils, held in December 1994.

in the Baltic countries, the parties and personalities who were linked to the previous regimes and were defeated in the first elections 'returned' to power in the next elections. Such alternations became almost regular in elections in Hungary (Zajc, 2000: 57). In Slovenia we find from 1991 a completely different model of 'mixed' coalitions, composed of parties of different political orientations and coalitions of parties closest to the centre (with the exception of the last one). In spite of great ideological polarization, neither of the political blocs found enough support in the electorate to form a government with a sufficient majority.

The coalition of new parties *'Demos'* won the first election in 1990 but was dissolved in December 1990; the government changed in April 1991, when the Liberal Party (heir to the former Youth League) gained the mandate to form the government. A new 'temporary' coalition was formed in 1991 of 'new' and 'old' parties, with the main task to prepare electoral law for the new one chamber Državni zbor. In the second democratic elections - the first to Državni zbor in December 1992 - the Liberal Party, surprisingly, gained most of the votes and a particular type of *'grand coalition'* was formed, consisting again of the 'old' and 'new' parties belonging to very different 'familles spirituelles'. A coalition was made of three largest parties, Liberal Democracy (LDS), United List of Social Democrats (ZLSD) and Christian Democratic Party (SKD), joined by the small Social Democratic Party (SDS). Fierce confrontations between government and opposition and struggles for power within the coalition itself often caused important issues to remain outside the focus of debates. The balance of power in the coalition dramatically changed when the leftist United List stepped out of the coalition in January 1996, leaving the Liberal Democrats and Christian Democrats with less than 50% of the votes and turning the government into a minority government.

The balance of power among political parties changed again after the November 1996 elections. In a situation of great political polarization, when power was divided precisely in two equal parts, the Parliament was immobilized. After long negotiations to overcome the political stalemate and several attempts to form a government, a chance of forming the government appeared when one of the new ('Spring') parties, the Slovene People's Party, agreed to form a coalition with the Liberal Democracy of Slovenia. Both parties were close to the political 'centre'. The third party to join the new *pragmatic'* coalition was the Party of Retired Persons (a relatively strong interest organization of the elderly people turned into a political party). When the proposal for the new cabinet won the majority of votes on February 27, 1997, it was a full three months after the election, and the new government was finally in place.

There were not many differences among the coalition partners regarding the necessity of speeding up the process of joining the EU, though the real differences seemed to be in the ways and terms of integration - while Liberal Democrats were in favour of opening of the markets, the Slovene People's Party was trying to protect the interests of the peasantry.

Nevertheless, the feeling that Slovenia was lagging behind forced all parliamentary parties, regardless of their 'ideological' position or coalition or opposition status, to speed up the process (at the initiative of the oppositional Slovene Social Democrats) by joining forces. The result was that on 3rd of July 1997 six parliamentary political parties (Liberal Democracy of Slovenia, Slovene People's Party, Social Democratic Party of Slovenia, Slovene Christian Democrats, Associated List of Social Democrats and Party of Retired Persons), together with two representatives of the Hungarian and Italian minorities, signed the Agreement on Cooperation and Accession of Slovenia to the EU. The only one party not joining this initiative was the Slovene National Party, which has lately showed signs of a more pragmatic approach to this issue. On the basis of this agreement, the Slovene Constitution was amended and the Europe Agreement was ratified.

In spite of the differences among the two strongest partners, the coalition was endured until the Slovene People's Party decided, in early 2000, to step out of coalition (the removal of the ministers of the Slovene People's Party was announced to take place on 15th of April) and to merge with the Christian Democratic Party to form a new right-wing political party. The situation in the last year of the second term seemed to be similar to that four years before (the last year of the first term).[8] The new 'People's & Christian Party' and the Social Democratic Party formed new coalition 'Nova Slovenija', which actually succeeded with the proposal for the new Prime Minister Andrej Bajuk in May 2000.

Both parties were claiming that this change would be the remedy for the rationalization of the political scene and a means to form 'programmatic' coalitions - the era of 'mixed' coalitions would be finished forever. Further events disproved these expectations. The new People's & Christian Party took a pragmatic position in order to end the long dispute on a majoritarian electoral system and supported the (second) change of the Constitution of Slovenia (the amended Article 80 introduced a 'proportionate' system). As a result, some leaders stepped out of the Party and established a new party: Nova Slovenia (NSi). The disagreements among the coalition partners had become too great.

Table 3: Types and Duration of Slovene Coalitions

Coalitions	Parties in Coalitions	Number of Seats in the National Assembly and in Državni zbor (DZ)	Duration of Coalition	Reason of Change, Dissolution
'Demos'	SKD, SKZ, ZS, SDSS, SDZ, LS	47(80)*	16.5.1990-14.5.1992	Constructive non-confidence vote
'Small Coalition'	LDS, SDSS, ZS, SSS, DS	38(80) 50(80)	14.5.1992- 12.1.1993	Formation of govt. after 1st election to DZ
'Grand Coalition'	LDS, SKD, ZLSD, SDSS	55 63 64 59 42	12.1.1993 14.3.1994 6.4.1994 31.1.1996	 LDS, DS and ZS merge SDSS steps out ZLSD steps out
'Pragmatic Coalition'	(nova) LDS, SLS, DeSUS	49 30	27.2.1997 15.4.2000	Formation of govt. after the second election to DZ SLS steps out and merges with SKD
Coalition of the Rightist Parties 'Nova Slovenija'	(new) SLS & SKD SDS	46	3.5.2000 - - - - - - -	New Prime Minister elected Dissolution of coalition after the voting on thechange of constitut.
Coalition 'Slovenia'	NSi (New Slovenia-Christ.-People's party)	...	26.9.2000	

* Only the 80 seats in the Socio-Political Chamber of the National Assembly

The experience with 'mixed coalitions' in Slovenia can be evaluated from various points of view - they have on the one side, contributed to more consensual politics on the basis of common understanding. On the other, many times the partners spent a lot of time negotiating and the agreements were frequently deficient; even normative acts were often inconsistent and implemented with difficulties.

4. A Conclusion on Half of the Way?

Transition in Eastern Europe has so many regional specifics that it needs a new conceptional framework, taking in account the complexity of conditions. Based on the SE model of democratization, with clear stages of pre-transition and transition followed by consolidation of democracy, the ECE region needs its own theory of democratization (Agh, 2000: 2). It should also consider the links between internal processes in ECE countries and external processes supported by the EU. It is obvious that Poland, the Czech Republic, Hungary[9] and Slovenia represent a particular group of countries (lately joined by Croatia and Slovakia) with relatively successful transition in contrast to other countries in the Balkans and in the territory of the former Soviet Union.

Because of its relatively high starting point, relatively high GDP, complete openness of frontiers from the '60s on, small size of the country, and a specific geographical position, together with a homogeneous ethnic composition, pre-transition (original system crisis) and transition started in Slovenia earlier than in other countries. The developments in Slovenia have been 'a-typical' compared with East Central Europe and also with the former republics of Yugoslavia (with the exception of Croatia). A sign of normalization in transition and consolidation of democracy is that a country advances economically while the specific model of coalition formation (until 2000) allows for the participation of parties of the centre in the government. A possible crisis of the government does not affect the process of accession of Slovenia.

The characteristics of transition in Slovenia were:

a) Gradual changing of economic system and pragmatic economic policies together with a cautious attitude towards foreign advice (slow privatization),

b) Political democratization avoiding great stresses.

Transition in Slovenia demanded great social costs (though incomparable with the costs of the 'transition' of the democratic system into an authoritarian one). In comparison with other ECE countries, these costs have been smaller: lower unemployment, corruption in Slovenia and Estonia is smaller than in Italy, etc. ■

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NOTES

1 In the 1930s corporatism (a concept of social and political organization according to professional group or social class), recommended in the papal circulars *Rerum Novarum* (1891) and *Quadragesimo Anno* (1931), became part of the programme of the most influential political party of the time, the Slovene (Catholic) People's Party. This was the time when ideas of corporatism were quite popular in Central Europe, being implemented in Italy and Austria. It is widely accepted that corporatism was furthered in a certain way also by communists in some countries where they came to power (Rupel, 1998: 172). The Yugoslav assemblies on the level of the republics and on the federal level from 1953 on were assuming more and more corporate characteristics. Kardelj's so called 'pluralism of self- management interests' (institutionalized by the federal constitution and the constitutions of republics in 1974) permitted the expression of the interests of different social strata and professional groups, but not of parties.

2 The 89 amendments greatly changed the Constitution of the Socialist Republic of Slovenia of 1974 mainly by re-introducing most of the classic human rights, like the right of private property of large enterprises, the right of the people to assemble, to express and publish political opinions and to establish political organizations. By passing these amendments Slovenia actually introduced a parallel economic and political system within the still common (federal) state. These stipulations became later the integral part of the new Slovene Constitution of December 1991. The label 'socialist' in the name of the state was removed by one of the later amendments in 1990.

3 Questions of the quality of the new political elite for modernization of Slovenia and of the relationship between the old 'retained elite' and the new 'democratic' elite were opened in the political and intellectual debates in 1999 and 2000 (See: Adam, 2000:4)

4 The forming of the new parliamentary elite proved to be a difficult process since the shares of re-elected deputies in all ECE parliaments remain lower than in the Central and Western European parliaments (See: Zajc, 2000: 104).

5 During the war the Slovene Communist Party formed the Liberation Front (OF), joined by many non-communists patriots, and used the four years of fighting (organized as part of all-Yugoslav resistance movement under the leadership of Tito on the side of the allied forces) to concentrate all the power in its hands. Part of the population, fearing the communists and reprisals of the occupiers alike, took side with the occupiers, forming the 'Home Guard'.

6The electoral law for elections to the National Assembly (Državni zbor), passed in 1992, was based on the principle of proportional division of mandates and close connections between the voters and the elected. Elements of majoritarian system were introduced by determining that in each of the 88 districts only one representative is elected. The voters voted therefore for individual candidates on the party lists in individual districts, though their votes are considered to be cast for lists of candidates within the electoral unit. After the number of the mandates is calculated, the rest of the votes are assembled on the state level and distributed according to a particular formula - half of the votes are returned to the electoral units according to the results (proportionally) while the other half could be used for priority lists. The mandates on the second level are distributed only among those parties, which get a sufficient number of votes for three mandates. These rules were slightly changed in 2000, together with the change of Constitution and the threshold was raised to 4 mandates.

7 The new Slovene Constitution of 1991 determined a one chamber National Assembly (Državni zbor), consisting of 90 deputies (88 are representatives elected in electoral districts, 2 are representatives of the Italian and Hungarian minorities). Beside the Državni zbor as representative of political interests, the Constitution also provides for a National Council (Državni svet) as representative of professional, trade and local interests. Consisting of 40 councillors, it has limited powers and does not participate directly in the legislative process.

8 The announced removal of ministers of the Slovene People's Party forced Prime Minister Drnovšek to propose to the Parliament a list of new ministers. He linked his proposal with a vote of confidence. On 7th of April, the proposal was not accepted in the National Assembly and the government resigned. Some parties which voted against wanted the preliminary elections.

9 Like Slovenia, Hungary has started negotiations on 23 chapters, while 9 have been already closed.