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KAZALO - CONTENTS

LUČKA LORBER	
Predgovor	7
Preface	8
MILAN BUFON	
The changeable political map of the Upper Adriatic region: from conflict to harmony	9
Povzetek	23
ANDREJ ČERNE	
The significance of regional planning	25
Povzetek	34
PETER JORDAN	
Principal space-related transformation processes demonstrated by maps of the atlas of eastern and southeastern Europe	37
Povzetek	55
LUČKA LORBER	
New challenges of geography in cultural and institutional association within the european higher education	57
Povzetek	66
ZOLTÁN GÁL	
Knowledge base of the region - role of the universities in regional innovation (the case of south Transdanubia)	67
Povzetek	79
PAVEL PTÁČEK	
Institutional framework and typology of economic transition in post-communist countries of Central and Eastern Europe: the role of Bretton Woods institutions	81
Povzetek	92
ZORAN STIPERSKI, JELENA LONČAR	
Former Yugoslav countries in the Balkan context and differences in their economic development	93
Povzetek	107
LUČKA LORBER	
Slovenian economy on the way from independence to catching up average economic development of EU – 27	109
Povzetek	123
Navodila za pripravo člankov v Reviji za geografijo	125

Predgovor

Filozofska fakulteta Univerze v Mariboru je v času od 14. do 27. septembra 2008 organizirala mednarodno poletno šolo GEOREGNET z naslovom Evropa Regij – Evropa kot regija v okviru srednjeevropskega programa CEEPUS (Central European Mobility Network). Namen poletne šole je bil, da razširimo in okrepimo sodelovanje partnerskih znanstvenoraziskovalnih ustanov v GEOREGNET mreži in s svojim pedagoškim delom prispevamo k boljšemu razumevanju družbenogeografskih procesov v srednji Evropi in na zahodnem Balkanu.

Tema poletne šole je bila usmerjena v analizo procesov regionalnega povezovanja evropskega prostora. Sodelujoči geografi so razpravljali o različnih vidikih evropske integracije s posebnim poudarkom na vlogi srednjeevropskih držav v tem procesu. Prispevki so bili usmerjeni k razumevanju socio–ekonomskega položaja v državah zahodnega Balkana in njihovim prizadevanjem za vstop v Evropsko unijo. Avtorji posameznih prispevkov so poudarili prostorske in funkcionalne spremembe do katerih je prišlo v času tranzicijskih procesov v postsocialističnih državah, pomen zagotavljanja konkurenčnosti gospodarstva posameznih regij ob vstopu na evropski trg, zlasti pa nujnost oblikovanja skupne regionalne politike v obmejnih območjih. V diskusijskih prispevkih je bil poseben poudarek dan ugotavljanju uspešnosti in sprememb v vrednotenju evropskega modela »združenosti v različnosti« v območjih družbenega in kulturnega stika.

Posamezni gostujoči profesorji so se prijazno odzvali na naše povabilo in svoje teme oblikovali v prispevke za revijo, ki je pred vami. Tako bodo tudi dodiplomski in podiplomski študenti iz Avstrije, Bosne in Hercegovine, Češke, Hrvaške, Madžarske, Slovaške, Slovenije, Srbije in Poljske prejeli revijo kot študijsko gradivo, kar je še posebej dragoceno.

V imenu mednarodnega programskega odbora se zahvaljujemo Filozofski fakulteti Univerze v Mariboru za vso pomoč pri organizaciji in izvedbi mednarodne poletne šole GEOREGNET.

Lučka Lorber

Preface

The Faculty of Arts at the University of Maribor organized, within the CEEPUS programme (Central European Exchange Programme for University Students), the 1st International GEOREGNET Summer School entitled *Europe of Regions – Europe as Region*, which took place from 14th to 27th September 2008. The purpose of the Summer School was to expand and strengthen the cooperation of partner research institutions in the GEOREGNET network, and to contribute through pedagogical work to a better understanding of socio-geographical processes in the Central Europe and the Western Balkans.

The topic of the Summer School was focused on the analysis of the regional connection processes in the European area. The participating geographers discussed the different aspects of the European integration, with a special emphasis on the role of the Central European countries in these processes. The contributions were focused on the understanding of the socio-economic situation in the countries of the Western Balkans, and their endeavours to enter into the European Union. The authors of the articles stressed the spatial and functional changes which emerged during the transition processes in the post-socialist countries, the importance of assurance of competitive economy of individual regions at the entrance into the European market, and particularly the need to form a common regional policy in the border areas. In the discussion contributions, a special emphasis was put on the analysis of the success and the changes in the evaluation of the European model “united in differences” in the social and cultural contact areas.

The participating professors kindly accepted our invitation to prepare review contributions on the topics presented in their lectures. Thus, the undergraduate and graduate students from Austria, Bosnia and Herzegovina, the Czech Republic, Croatia, Hungary, Slovakia, Slovenia, Serbia and Poland will receive this Review as a study material, which gives it a special value.

On behalf of the international Programme Committee, I would like to thank the Faculty of Arts at the University of Maribor for its help and assistance in the organization of the International GEOREGNET Summer School.

Lučka Lorber