## CONTENTS

**INTRODUCTION 7**

The Stability Pact for South-Eastern Europe in the Discourse on European Integration 7  
Methodological framework 12 
On the concept of the Stability Pact 14 

**THE STABILITY PACT FOR SOUTH EASTERN EUROPE 15**

Beginnings, development, goals 15 
Participants 19 
Structure 20 
The Stability Pact as a coordinator of projects 24 
  Regional funding conference 27 

**SLOVENIA AND THE STABILITY PACT 31**

Slovenia’s participation, interests, goals and obligations 31  
Organization of Stability Pact activities in Slovenia 34 
Financing of Stability Pact activities in Slovenia 35 
Slovenia’s activities 37 

**NON-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS AND THE STABILITY PACT 45**

The role and significance of NGOs 45 
Bottom-up model of creating a framework for cooperation 51 
NGOs in Slovenia 53 
Prospects for NGOs 58 

**CONCLUSIONS 61**

**CHRONOLOGY 67**

**LITERATURE 69**

**INTERVIEWS 73**
INTRODUCTION

The Stability Pact for South-Eastern Europe in the Discourse on European Integration

European history has too often been marked by hatred, destruction and human irrationality with distrust among European peoples being the order of the day. As a result, Europe was the cradle of countless wars and rivalries that stemmed from ideological, religious, territorial and political conflicts. It saw as many as 278 wars in the period from 1550 to 1945, with WWII representing the culmination of destruction (Šabič 1995, 14).

The hatred that engulfed Europe throughout these wars obscured the »European ideal«. It was nevertheless kept alive by philosophers and visionaries who, through their humanitarian and peaceful visions, gradually shaped the idea of a united Europe. Even though their dreams were repeatedly shattered by European conflicts, each bringing a new destruction, their enthusiasm, and with it the »European idea«, never completely waned (Ješovnik 2000, 3). On the contrary, the climax of European destructive behavior - the Second World War - accelerated European integration, which in the 1950s resulted in the establishment of the European Coal and Steel Community, marking the onset of European integration and introducing to the Old Continent a completely new dimension - the vision of a united Europe.
The events in the Balkans in the 1990s revived bitter memories of the dark side of European history. Human irrationality and immense hatred again prevailed and marked the last decade of the twentieth century. No fewer than five wars were fought in the region of South Eastern Europe. All resulted from the mobilization of latent ethnic and political tensions that had accumulated over time. At least 150,000 people were killed in these wars; at least 175,000 were wounded; approximately 3.5 million people were displaced, and the scale of structural damage was immense. Mutual trust among peoples of this region, which is a prerequisite for normal co-existence of all its (ethnically diverse) citizens and for future generations within the shared territories, was wasted (Stojić-Karanović 1999). On top of that, during this period the states of South Eastern Europe were affected by lasting social and economic crisis and complete absence of the rule of law. These factors created ideal circumstances for the emergence of a »non-civil society« that took the form of either organized crime or national extremism, or a combination of both. Accordingly, the countries of South Eastern Europe that occupy the peripheral area of »European idea«, have become major exporters of instability, refugees and crime.

The international community could no longer turn a blind eye to such circumstances in South Eastern Europe. The only alternative to waiting passively for the next crisis to erupt was to offer assistance to the countries of South Eastern Europe, so that they could start to join the European integration processes. Assistance was obviously most urgently needed in handling ethnic diversity, respect for human rights, and economic development. Under the auspices of the European Union, for whom the issue of political stability and security in South Eastern Europe is of vital interest, since this is the region that is an integral part of its wider geopolitical territory, the international community developed the solution called the Stability Pact for South Eastern Europe.
The Stability Pact is thus part of a wider historical process of European integration. We should point out though, that the Stability Pact is »merely« the latest in a series of regional initiatives dating from the second half of the 1990s, aimed at establishing intergovernmental cooperation in South Eastern Europe and stimulating an all-embracing stabilization of this region. Among previous initiatives, undoubtedly worth mentioning is the Process for the Strengthening of Stability and Good Neighbor Relations or Royaumont Process, which began with a Declaration adopted on December 13, 1995 during the Peace Conference for Bosnia-Herzegovina held in Paris (Ačimović 1999). Its lasting significance has been confirmed by the signatories of the Stability Pact who met on June 10, 1999 in Cologne - the text of the Stability Pact refers to the Royaumont Process as a process that established a dynamic framework for cooperation in the area of democracy and civil society.

When speaking about regional initiatives and the establishment of intergovernmental cooperation in South-Eastern Europe, we should not overlook the meeting of the foreign ministers of seven South-Eastern European countries - Albania, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Greece, Romania, Turkey and the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia - held in July 1996 in Sofia1. At this meeting the Charter on good-neighbor relations, stability, security and co-operation was adopted, by which the participating countries committed themselves to multi-lateral cooperation comprising a wide scope of activities. The »Sofia Charter« was later formalized as the South East European Cooperation Process (SEECP), which is still in place - the foreign ministers of SEECP signatories (plus Croatia which participated as an observer) regularly hold meetings. The organization is based on a »rotating« presidency which cooperates with the representatives of the EU and other international organizations.

---

The South East European Cooperative Initiative – SECI was a sequel to these regional initiatives. It was adopted on December 5 and 6, 1996 in Geneva and its members are Albania, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, Greece, Hungary, Macedonia, Moldova, Romania, Slovenia and Turkey. The basic aim of this initiative was to form a regional association which would strive to establish cooperation between member states and enable their integration into European structures (Stojić–Karanović 1999). The SECI is not a new aid program, nor does it overlap with existing initiatives within the region, but it rather supplements them, with its main objective being the establishment of close cooperation between the governments of the countries in this region.

Another worthwhile plan for the resolution of South Eastern European issues was a document entitled *A System for Post-War South-East Europe*. It was proposed in April 1992 by the working group of the Centre for European Political Studies or CEPS, presided over by Erhard Busek and Panegiotis Rumeliotis. This document examines the possible strategies for South Eastern Europe’s inclusion into the economic, security, and political structures with its point of departure being an accelerated inclusion of the countries of this region into European integration processes. This document also envisages the expansion of pre-accession strategy to Albania and ex-Yugoslav countries (excluding Slovenia), with the aim of reducing differences between these countries and current candidates for membership in the EU. The document also introduces a new category of membership in the EU, namely New Associate Member of the EU, and proposes a schedule for their gradual inclusion into the policies and

---

2 The last, revised version was presented in the beginning of May 1999.

institutions of the EU\textsuperscript{4}. The policy of gradual integration of new associate members anticipates their inclusion into the European economic space and European monetary union, the establishment of a new branch of the European Investment Bank which would co-finance the restoration programs and institutions, assistance in the creation and operation of a civil society, creation of a European area of rights, freedoms and security and a European area of military security.

In addition to these officially approved initiatives, a number of other initiatives and proposals have been put forward by political and especially expert circles. Their common conclusion has been that humanitarian and financial aid alone cannot fully guarantee long-term stability and peace in South-Eastern Europe. In order to achieve peace, tolerance and co-existence, the priority task is to promote a dialog between the peoples of South-Eastern Europe. Equally vital are political and economic reforms, with the assistance of the West representing just one instrument needed to achieve development and enduring peace.

The areas of activity defined by these and other similar initiatives are very similar to those found in the \textit{Agenda for Stability} that was adopted at the Second Regional Table of the Stability Pact in 2000 in Thesaloniki. Indeed, the Stability Pact builds on the elements of intergovernmental cooperation already in place, but it is, nevertheless, a giant step forward given the wide political support it garnered.

The Stability Pact thus represents an organized and ordered approach comprising all previous initiatives pertaining to this area. In contrast to the previous approach of the international community, which was based on reactive (crisis) intervention policies for South Eastern Europe, the Stability Pact attempts to handle the situation differently - through a long-term conflict prevention strategy. It is a

\footnote{Macedonia was the first country of South Eastern Europe to sign the \textit{Agreement on Stabilization and Accession}. Croatia signed the agreement towards the end of October, 2001.}
result of the conclusion that particular and partial solutions pertaining to a limited region, for example Bosnia-Herzegovina or Kosovo, cannot produce a stabilizing effect in the region as a whole, so a wider space - i.e. the entire South Eastern Europe - has to be included when resolving crisis. The three main elements of the Stability Pact should enable this.

First, the Stability Pact offers to the countries of South Eastern Europe a new perspective on the European integration processes and guarantees them assistance in their endeavors to fulfill the requirements for inclusion in European integration processes and the European Union. Second, the countries of South Eastern Europe committed themselves through the Pact to work together towards peace and security in the region, and towards overcoming the obstacles that obstruct the process of inclusion in the European integration processes. Third, the Stability Pact presupposes democratic development of the whole region as a basis for future prevention of conflicts and for economic development.

Methodological framework

The Stability Pact is a large and complex mechanism characterized by an intricate structure and a host of activities. Its three Working Tables embrace 20 working groups and initiatives which in turn comprise a number of diverse projects, meaning that its structure is hardly transparent. Besides this, we should point out that the Stability Pact is just one segment of activities going on in this region, as other processes and initiatives (political, economic, humanitarian and so on) are also underway simultaneously. The shaping, financing and implementation of those diverse projects takes place either within the framework of (already mentioned) other initiatives or proposals, or in the form of bilateral or multilateral cooperation (beyond this system).

Owing to the difficulties arising from such a complex structure, in this study we will limit ourselves to the political-institutional aspect of
the Stability Pact, the role and position of and activities undertaken by Slovenia, and the significance of and options for cooperation between non-governmental organizations. Accordingly, the present study is divided into three parts.

In the first part we use an analytic approach to present the founding, development, institutional mechanisms and operation of the Stability Pact and to define its main goals. In the second part we use an analytic empirical approach to study and analyze the role, position and activities of Slovenia within the Stability Pact. We also present how the activities are organized and coordinated in Slovenia and define the main goals and interests of Slovenia. The third part looks into the ways of including non-governmental organizations in the Stability Pact activities, once again using the analytic empirical approach. The interpretation and synthesis of the three parts provides the basis for evaluation of the achievements of the Stability Pact during its two years of existence so far, the scope of Slovenia’s activities within the Pact, and NGO’s prospects within the Pact.

Our study is based on the hypothesis that the *sine qua non* for the efficient implementation of the Stability Pact’s goals is a synergy of all actors with special stress on the greater participation of civil initiatives. In our opinion the goals of the Pact cannot be attained without the active participation of civil society, even though the signatories of the Stability Pact are states and international organizations that hold all key decisions in their hands. Therefore, in the process of (co)creating the framework for cooperation, an important role is expected to be played by the strategy employed by non-governmental sectors, known as the bottom-up model. Among all other relevant actors it is precisely the NGOs that could help reach consensus on strategic directions of operation and thus achieve better representation of de facto needs and interests of the countries in the region.

We should however point out that the relatively brief existence of the Stability Pact so far (two years) makes it quite difficult to assess its effects. The Stability Pact is a long-term project, so its effects - for
example in the areas of democratization, human rights or protection of minorities - will become evident only over a longer period of time.

In our empirical analysis we used several complementary research methods and techniques: a) analysis of secondary sources, b) analysis of formal documents, c) the sociological interview and d) media analysis. The first two methods were prevailingly used in the first part of the research, while in the second and third parts all methods were used. We used the method of sociological interview as a secondary source that helped us interpret and explain some relevant facts and to obtain data that we could not obtain from other sources.

**On the concept of the Stability Pact**

The notion of the Stability Pact has become quite established in the terminology of international relations in the past decade. It is based on rich experience accumulated through the management of (too) many international crises and conflicts. The idea underlying it is that prevention and resolution of conflicts can be successful only if three areas are efficiently handled and reinforced simultaneously: security, democracy and economic and social development.

Conceptually the Stability Pact has several main characteristics. It is aimed at resolving a conflict-ridden borderline region of the EU that is inhabited by diverse ethnic groups and nations which overlap beyond state borders. The activities are thus *multi-sectoral*, embracing political, security and economic dimensions, and *multi-lateral*, meaning that they include all relevant international subjects. Its main goal is to stabilize this region, both as a part of the preparations for its moving towards European integration processes, and with a view to expanding the area of stability in Europe. The initiatives may be put forward by the region itself or by other, external subjects (Emerson 2001).

The Stability Pact concept is thus most importantly characterized by a regional approach to the solution of problems based on mutual cooperation and partnership.
THE STABILITY PACT FOR SOUTH EASTERN EUROPE

Beginnings, development, goals

The Stability Pact was conceived as a long-term project comprising targeted activities to be carried out by the wider international community under the auspices of the European Union. It is a coordinated and strategically agreed process which brings together various initiatives existing in this region in an organized and orderly manner. Its main goals at the time when it was created were: to support the efforts of the countries of South Eastern Europe to promote peace, democracy, respect for human rights and economic welfare; to offer them assistance in carrying out internal and economic reforms, in establishing a market economy, regional cooperation and internal and external security; to enable them to join Euro-Atlantic integration over time⁵.

Therefore, the wish of the Stability Pact founders was to encourage an efficient process which would create circumstances for stable and peaceful development of the whole region through democratization, economic prosperity, building of civil society and resolution of minority issues.

The initiative for the Stability Pact was put forward by Germany during its presidency of the EU. At the meeting of the General Affairs Council in Luxembourg on April 8, 1999, the foreign ministers of Member States supported the beginning of preparations for the Stability Pact and entrusted the Council for the West Balkans (COWEB) with the preparation of the text for the Stability Pact. The intergovernmental conference in Cologne, at which the Stability Pact was adopted, was preceded by several meetings, among them the most important being a preparatory meeting held on April 20, 1999 in Brussels with the participation of experts and political representatives from all countries later to join the Stability Pact. The main goal of the meeting was to verify support for the Pact. Another important event was a meeting of political directors at Petersberg near Bonn on the 26th and 27th May 1999, whose main objective was to harmonize the text of the Stability Pact. At this meeting the political and other issues in the draft text were examined article by article, but despite long negotiations the text was not harmonized. The issues that remained open pertained to the conditions for Yugoslavia’s inclusion and perspectives on the inclusion in Euro-Atlantic integration of the states wishing to join. In the case of these unresolved issues, the main objector was Russia, which opposed some solutions acceptable to other actors, but which remained isolated in its views.

Despite some unresolved issues and disharmonies, on June 10, 1999 Germany convened the conference on the Stability Pact that was to be held in Cologne with the participation of foreign ministers of Member States. Before the conference of foreign ministers, a meeting of political directors from participant countries was held in Cologne with the aim of harmonizing those parts of the text of the Stability Pact for which agreement could not be reached at the previous meeting in Petersbeg near Bonn. The pressing issue of the inclusion of Yugoslavia was given particular exposure. The participants eventually agreed that the inclusion of Yugoslavia was urgently needed but only under terms set by the international community; therefore,
Yugoslavia could join the Pact only after it began to respect international obligations, resolutions of the Security Council of the EU and the text of the Stability Pact. After final harmonization the foreign ministers confirmed the text of the Stability Pact thus giving the green light for this long-term process to start.

Preparations for the conference of heads of states and governments, which was held on July 29 and 30 in Sarajevo, began soon after the conference in Cologne. Before the Sarajevo summit, on July 26, 1999, Finland, then the presiding EU country, convened a conference of the states participating in the Stability Pact. The goal was to harmonize the *Sarajevo declaration*. The participants failed to harmonize the text, in particular the issue of Yugoslavia and its role in the Stability Pact, even after long negotiations and search for a compromise. At that time power in Yugoslavia was still in the hands of Milošević.

Owing to logistic difficulties, the conference of heads of states and governments on the Stability Pact, convened by Finland and held in Sarajevo, lasted two days. Participants in the first day’s session were the countries of South Eastern Europe - receivers of aid - and the countries of its stable periphery. On the second day the conference was joined by delegations of all Stability Pact participants, sponsors and observers. The participants adopted and signed a political declaration, called the *Sarajevo declaration*, by which they confirmed their commitment to build a united, democratic and secure Europe and to accelerate the inclusion of the countries of South Eastern Europe in integration processes. The participants also expressed their regret that owing to Milošević’s continuing rule, Yugoslavia could not participate at the conference as a full and equal member of the Stability Pact. They also called on the people of Yugoslavia to bring about democratic changes and join regional cooperation as soon as possible. In this context the Sarajevo Declaration was proclaimed to be a support to all democratic forces, especially those in Yugoslavia.

In addition to the Cologne and Sarajevo conferences, which laid a framework for cooperation in South Eastern Europe that was strong-
ly supported by all participants, three other events significantly influenced the evolution of the Stability Pact. The first was the founding conference of the Regional Table for South Eastern Europe, held on September 16 in Brussels, which was the first concrete step towards the realization of the Stability Pact. At this first session of the Regional Table, participants and sponsors unanimously adopted a Work Plan prepared by the office of the special coordinator of the Stability Pact. Along with it they defined the framework of operation of individual Working Tables, confirmed presidents and co-presidents of all three Working Tables and set the dates and places of funding conferences. The second was the Regional Funding Conference held on March 29 and 30, 2000, in Brussels. At this conference representatives of 47 states and 36 international organizations and associations provided more than 2.4 billion euros for the financing of individual projects that were to be implemented under the auspices of three Working Tables, with these funds exceeding the original expectations. This financial contribution undoubtedly significantly stimulated the countries of South Eastern Europe to continue with active participation in regional cooperation and in the activities of the Stability Pact and thus jointly resolve economic and political backwardness; we will show later in the text that the results of the funding conference were too ideologically presented in many respects, as in many cases the finances in question were not fresh funds, and in addition, a large portion of promised financial support has never arrived in the region or has been received with a considerable delay. The third significant event was the inclusion of Yugoslavia in the Stability Pact, an event that took place at the extraordinary conference of the Regional Table in Bucharest in October 2000. Since Yugoslavia occupies the central geopolitical position in the region and has always been its neuralgic point, its absence from the Stability Pact had aggravated its operation. With the inclusion of post-Milošević Yugoslavia, the last and the most problematic gap from the perspective of the participants was filled in, especially if we bear in mind that the Stability Pact was initi-
ated with the aim of supporting all democratic forces and changes in the region and particularly in Yugoslavia.

Participants

The harmonized text of the Stability Pact that was adopted in Cologne specifies participants donors, observers and guests. The list of participants consists of the countries of South Eastern Europe and their neighbors: Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, Hungary, Romania, Macedonia, Slovenia and Turkey, the EU member States, two G8 members - the US and Russia - and three international organizations – the European Commission, the Council of Europe, and OSCE. The facilitating states, organizations and institutions listed are NATO, UN, UNCHR, OECD, and WEU, international financial institutions - the International Monetary Fund, the World Bank, the European Investment Bank and the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development, Canada, Japan, Switzerland and Norway and regional initiatives - representatives of the Royaumont Process, BSEC, CEI, SECI and SEECP. The observers were the representatives of Estonia, Lithuania, Latvia, Moldova, Poland, Slovakia, Ukraine, Cyprus and the Red Cross. The guests were the representatives of Montenegro, the European Parliament and the international community responsible for South Eastern Europe.

The text of the Stability Pact explicitly mentions Yugoslavia at several points. Its participation is described as desirable, but actual inclusion is postponed until after it has undergone a democratization process and has found a political solution to the Kosovo crisis. Over the course of its existence the structure of participants in the Stability Pact has changed. For example, Japan, Canada, Switzerland and Norway became full members at a second meeting of the Regional Table in Thessaloniki in June 2000, while Yugoslavia became a full member at the extraordinary meeting of the Regional Table in October 2000, and Moldova in June 2001.
Structure

The Stability Pact is a large and complex mechanism with a ramified structure comprising a number of activities. Its basic operating body is the Regional Table for South Eastern Europe chaired by the special coordinator of the Stability Pact. There are three Working Tables that operate under the Regional Table - Working Table I for democratization and human rights, Working Table II for economic reconstruction, co-operation and development, and Working Table III for security issues. These are further sub-divided into two sub-tables and several working groups, sectors and initiatives through which participants in the Stability Pact have committed themselves, on the basis of action plans and common declarations, to find joint solutions to issues such as support for non-governmental organizations, and problems, among them organized crime and corruption.
Diagram 1: The Structure of the Stability Pact

The Stability Pact for South Eastern Europe

Working Table for Democratization and Human Rights

- Human rights and minorities
- Good governance
- Gender equality
- Media
- Education and youth
- Parliamentary exchange
- Return of refugees
- »Szeged process«

Working Table for Economic Reconstruction, co-operation and development

- Regional infrastructure
- Private sector
- Trade within region
- Investment agreement
- Business consultancy
- Environmental protection
- e-initiative
- Social development

Working Table for Democratization and Human Rights

- Defence and security issues
- Arms control
- Defence reform
- Humanitarian de-mining
- Light weapons
- Elimination of war consequences

Regional Table

Special Coordinator

National Coordinators

Juridical system and internal affairs

- Fight against corruption
- Organized crime
- Asylum and migrations
- Jurisdiction
- Police and border police
- Trafficking in humans
As already mentioned the most important instrument of the Stability Pact is the Regional Table composed of all representatives of participant countries and international organizations and associations. The Regional Table generally convenes twice a year\textsuperscript{6} to determine strategic guidelines for the operation of the Stability Pact and to co-ordinate the activities of all other Working Tables. In addition, the Regional Table monitors the progress of Stability Pact activities, is a mediator between individual Working Tables, directs the operation of the Working Tables in fields which could enhance the stability of the crisis area, and supports the synergy of the Working Tables. At the core of the institutional structure of the Stability Pact is a chairman of the Regional Table - a Special Coordinator of the Stability Pact and his Brussels office. The office of the Special Coordinator operates under the auspices of the European Union, in particular the Joint Action which is a part of the Common Foreign and Security Policy, representing the third pillar of the EU. The most important task of the Special Coordinator and his office is harmonization of the political strategy of the participants and coordination of existing and new initiatives in the region aimed at avoiding duplication of work. The office of the Special Coordinator is thus primarily a political center of the pact and, owing to limited (human) resources, has only a nominal coordinating role. As a matter of fact, the office of the Special Coordinator is not directly included in the shaping, financing and implementation of particular projects and by the same token, it does not independently analyze the needs of the region or the results of activities taken. Therefore, the office of the Special Coordinator is heavily dependent on information supplied by other authorized organizations and institutions.

The Working Tables as well as the working groups, sectors and initiatives they comprise, are the most active organizational depart-

\textsuperscript{6} A convening of an extraordinary session of the Regional Table, like the one held in October 2000 in Bucharest, is also envisaged.
ments within the Pact’s operating mechanism. In accordance with the goals set by the Stability Pact, the Working Tables have drawn up their own work plans which specify the priority tasks in specific areas and list the projects and timetables for their implementation. Individual working groups, sectors and initiatives harmonize the development of their structures and work plans with the framework outlined by the Working Tables.

*The Working Table on democratization and human rights* (Working Table I) covers the most complex area of the Stability Pact. Its objectives are attainable only in the long run and through intense and active cooperation with civil society. It is the main working table because achievement of the common goals of the Stability Pact is to a great extent dependent on the success and progress of reforms that are the responsibility of this Working Table.

The annex to the Stability Pact, which was adopted in Cologne on January 19, 1999, specifies the activities of Working Table I. They pertain to democracy and human rights including the rights of national minorities, free and independent media, building of civil society, rule of law, building of institutions, efficient administration and good management, the development of common rules of conduct regarding issues related to borders (including return of refugees). In accordance with these strategies, working groups for specific areas were formed at the first meeting of the Regional Table. These areas include human rights and minorities, local self-government and public administration (good management), equal opportunities, media, education and youth, parliamentary exchange, returning of refugees, and the Szeged process for the support of democratic forces in Yugoslavia.

*The Working Table on economic reconstruction, development and cooperation* (Working Table II) held its founding meeting on October 8 and 9, 1999 in Bari. Its main responsibilities include creation of the institutions of a market economy, ensuring cooperation in the region, promotion of a free trade area, cross-border cooperation, functioning of the monetary and fiscal system, removal of trade obstacles, fur-
nishing programs for the rebuilding of infrastructure in transport, railway systems, road systems, electric power systems, gas and oil pipelines, water transport and telecommunications, promotion of private enterprise, care for environmental protection, training for the public administration sector, re-integration of refugees, coordination of the funding process, encouragement of foreign investment in the region, development and stability of agriculture and preservation of countryside. The goals so defined constituted the guidelines for the shaping of individual sectors and initiatives inside the Working Table II. These are as follows: regional infrastructure, the development of the private sector, trade within the region, investment agreement, business consultancy, environmental protection, e-initiative (e-South Eastern Europe) and social development.

The Working Table on security and defense issues (Working Table III) is concerned with justice and home affairs, migration issues, the fight against organized crime, corruption, terrorism and all kinds of criminal and illegal activities, cross-border environmental hazards, and stimulation of the long-term realization of Article IV of the Dayton Accord on arms control. Working Table III is divided into two sub-tables and eleven sectors. The first sub-table deals with defense and security issues and comprises arms control, defense reform, humanitarian de-mining of mine-affected regions, control of light weapons and removal of war consequences. The second sub-table deals with justice and home affairs including an anti-corruption initiative, the fight against organized crime, asylum and migration issues, judicial system, police and border police, and trafficking in human beings.

The Stability Pact as a coordinator of projects

As said earlier, the Cologne and Sarajevo Declarations laid the framework for cooperation, while the founding meetings of the Regional

---

7 See Strategija vključevanja Republike Slovenije v gospodarsko obnovo Jugovzhodne Evrope (The Strategy of Slovenia’s Integration in the Economic Reconstruction of South Eastern Europe), Ministry of Economic Relations and Development.
Table added the needed structure to the pact. Yet these were only a framework and structure that had to be filled with content, that is to say, specific activities that would produce obvious effects and results.

Activities undertaken under the Stability Pact have different forms of implementation - they take place on the level of inter-governmental and inter-state cooperation, or are carried out as various initiatives and concrete actions taken by the three Working Tables or working groups operating within their framework. They are realized through various projects financed directly from funds raised at the funding conference.

The key roles in the Stability Pact projects are played by the Special Coordinator of the Stability Pact, the Regional Table, the three Working Tables and working groups within them. The mentioned bodies are responsible for the formulation of professional precepts, criteria, priorities and programs, coordination of funding, monitoring of developments and analyses and implementation of particular programs.

The projects implemented by the Stability Pact may be proposed (the first stage) and prepared by countries, institutions, companies or individuals based on their own conclusions or needs expressed by the states of South Eastern Europe. All mentioned actors are required to submit their projects at the international call for projects. The proposals are collected by the Office of the Special Coordinator and then forwarded to the responsible working groups. The latter assess the proposals on the basis of priority lists, evaluate them and send selected proposals to the funding conference. The working groups, therefore, have the «exclusive» right to propose a project to the donors. Of course, the decisive role is still played by individual donors who, in accordance with their interests, decide which projects to finance. Once the selected projects are granted financial aid and thus given the green light, their implementation and coordination becomes the responsibility of implementation agencies which regularly submit reports about their work and project developments to the working groups and tables.
In this process an especially important element is the setting of priorities and the method of work when approving individual projects. The criteria according to which individual projects are classified among priority tasks are defined by the Working Tables on the basis of the operational plan and strategies shaped by the working groups. In addition there are some general criteria that must be observed by all working groups. Such general criteria are, for example, the degree to which a project corresponds to scheduled reforms, the regional character of the project and any benefits for the region (the area covered by the project, what the project will contribute to the regional development, how many countries will benefit from the project and so on), how the project contributes to the inclusion of South Eastern Europe into the European integration processes, realistic dimensions of the project and feasibility of implementation, non-duplication of projects.

Owing to the decisive roles of donors in the selection of projects, the priority lists are not the most important factor. The donor states have their own foreign policy strategies and interests on the basis of which they decide which projects to finance. Therefore, the donors may decide to finance a project that is not included in the priority list.

In addition to all these factors, a significant role is also played by skillful, active and efficient lobbying and informal personal ties.

*The Stability Pact, which is a project-oriented process, therefore does not have its own funds or resources, so in the process of project shaping, financing and implementing it primarily plays the role of a mediator and junction point between those who have specific needs, those who will implement the project and those who will finance it. The Stability Pact thus represents a structure that enables direct connection between receivers of the aid, implementing agencies and donors.*
Regional funding conference

The financing of individual projects and initiatives of the Stability Pact (which, we must stress again, does not have its own resources), is realized mainly through funding conferences. The funding conferences are usually focused on the areas handled by a particular Working Table or on a specific country. In addition to the funding conference there exists also a parallel system of financing, since any project may secure additional financial sources using either bilateral or multilateral channels.

So far only one regional funding conference has been held. It was organized by the European Commission and the World Bank and held on March 29 and 30, 2000 in Brussels. The first regional funding conference was a decisive step in the realization of the objectives of the Stability Pact, as it demonstrated that developed countries and international organizations and associations are in favor of political and economic changes in South Eastern Europe. On the other hand, it also provided a rationale for the Stability Pact as a project-oriented process.

Seeking to strike the right balance between proposed projects and realistic possibilities of their financing, the funding conference gave priority to the so called Quick Start Package projects whose implementation could begin within one year. The Quick Start Package had three main characteristics. First, a very short time taken to prepare and shape those projects. Most of the Quick Start Package projects hence do not rely exclusively on new financial resources, but the latter are used only as a supplement to the existing national aid programs in South Eastern Europe. Second, the criteria for preparing these projects, set down before the funding conference, were very loose. In particular, the potential for a quick start was required; projects had to have a regional character; they had to be financially highly-tenable or in other words, had to be attractive for donors; they had to be balanced with regard to implementation agencies. Owing to such loose criteria, the Quick Start Package projects could not ensure
the shaping of any integrated assistance strategy for the region of South Eastern Europe. Third, neither the receivers of aid nor implementation agencies had enough time to formulate new projects. Consequently, most of the proposed projects were those that were first presented before the funding conference, while other projects were just continuations of those already underway.8

All three Working Tables thus presented concrete projects ready for quick implementation which were expected to yield results within one year. Financial resources allocated for the implementation of the Quick Start Package originally totaled 1.8 billion euros. Of this, approximately 255 million euros was allocated to Working Table I, somewhat less than one billion and 450 million euros to Working Table II, somewhat more than 77 million euros to Working Table III, and somewhat more than 5 million euros to the parallel initiatives accompanying all three tables.

The regional funding conference exceeded expectations. The representatives of 47 states and 36 international organizations and associations provided more than 2.4 billion euros, thus topping the expected sum by more than 600 million euros. Of this total, a good 430 million euros were committed to the projects of Working Table I, more than one billion and 830 million euros to the projects of Working Table II, approximately 81 million euros to the projects of Working Table III, and more than 5 million euros to parallel cross-table initiatives. Two thirds of the finances were allocated to infrastructure projects.

The highest sums were set aside by the European Commission - 530 million euros, and by various international financial institutions - 894 million euros. EU Member States contributed another 552 million euros, and the US a further 80 million euros (Wisse Smit 2000).

The first Regional Funding Conference thus confirmed the commitment of both the receivers of aid and the donors, including international organizations, to carry out rapid and efficient reforms on the national level and to implement regional programs. The Regional Funding Conference is indisputably the biggest achievement of the Stability Pact, as the preparation of regional projects alone enhanced cooperation between South East European states and turned promises given by developed countries into actions. Yet this indisputable achievement is tainted by a bitter feeling that still persists. As a matter of fact, many promised resources never arrived in the region, or they arrived with a considerable delay which seriously hindered the implementation of the set objectives and realization of the (admitted-
ly quite loosely) defined operational strategies. Given the fact that many of the projects were conceived as expert assistance, where «expertise» devours substantial finances to cover its own expenses, the total sum of (applicable) financial aid to the region was substantially lower than presented.
SLOVENIA AND THE STABILITY PACT

Slovenia’s participation, interests, goals and obligations

The Declaration on the foreign policy of Slovenia (Uradni list RS, No. 108/99) explicitly specifies that Slovenia’s foreign policy must ensure two fundamental values - the security and welfare of the state and its citizens. Therefore, from the perspective of security, economy and politics, peace and stability in South Eastern Europe are part of Slovenia’s national strategic interests. These factors led Slovenia to actively engage in the resolution of crisis in the south-east region.

Despite secession, Slovenia is historically and culturally strongly related to South Eastern Europe, so its stability is in Slovenia’s vital interest. This region is a part of Europe in which Slovenia, along with its strategic partners, could gain a reputation as a relevant international factor and, thanks to its geographical position and cultural and linguistic advantages, assume the role of an agent linking South Eastern Europe with the »west«. Accordingly, the primary goal of Slovene foreign policy is to offer its own knowledge and experience to the countries in the region and to exploit its knowledge about the region acting as a mediator between this region and the international community.

Initially opinions on whether Slovenia should participate in the Stability Pact were divided. Various assessments and public debates

---

9 This especially applies to the argument about economic interests.
were permeated with fears that the Stability Pact was some kind of an »attempt to revive Yugoslavia«. The apprehension that prevailed was that by joining the Stability Pact Slovenia would be pushed into the South Eastern Europe and thus lose its status of a »central European country«. It was assumed that the international community would change the preferred identity of Slovenia, and that its description as »the most promising among the candidates in the first round of accessions to the EU« would be changed to »the most developed country of South Eastern Europe«. Such apprehensions were counteracted by other, more pragmatic standpoints, like the one proposing that - from the perspective of foreign policy - a refusal to participate in the Stability Pact would strongly damage Slovenia’s reputation.

The representatives of Slovenia thus advocated the viewpoint that Slovenia is willing to participate in the Stability Pact as a »central European country« situated near the crisis region. They further stated that Slovenia will put to use its knowledge and experience to participate in the projects in which it has interests, but not in the projects that would in any manner place it in the position of a country needing aid. With this they defined the interest of Slovenia in participating actively in the process as a donor, while they also stressed that any potential attempt to classify Slovenia among the countries of South Eastern Europe either institutionally or politically would be unacceptable. In this manner Slovenia’s participation in the Stability Pact was presented as a positive contribution to its endeavors to join the EU and NATO.

A consistent refusal on the part of Slovenia’s representatives to consent to anything that might classify Slovenia as one of the countries of South Eastern Europe, was obvious at the preparatory meeting for the conference in Sarajevo. At this meeting, Finland, which at that time presided over the EU, and Bosnia-Herzegovina, the host country, proposed that the first day of the Sarajevo conference should be designated »regional« and should be attended by all countries of South East Europe including Slovenia and Hungary. The delegation from
Slovenia was headed by then state secretary and Minister of Foreign Affairs, Dr. Ernest Petrič (later appointed the first national coordinator for the Stability Pact in Slovenia), who drew attention to the position of Slovenia’s foreign policy and to the fact that Slovenia does not need help. The Slovene delegation decisively opposed the proposal that the first day of the conference should be designated »regional« and it maintained that Slovenia could participate in the first day session only as an observer or a guest under the condition that the representatives of Austria, Italy and Greece also participated. Such conduct confirms that the Slovene political elite is heavily burdened by a »Central European« identity and it demonstrates its fear of »attempts to revive Yugoslavia«.

Since Slovenia’s demands were met, it participated in the first day’s session as a guest. On the second day of the conference, President Milan Kučan delivered a speech in which he stressed the enormous importance of the Stability Pact for South Eastern Europe and Slovenia’s readiness to undertake responsibilities for democratization and economic reconstruction of South Eastern Europe as a Central European country situated near the region, because peace and development in the region are in Slovenia’s strategic and national interests. He also pointed out how important were integrated plans and joint efforts, and advocated direct cooperation between countries that receive help.

_Notwithstanding such reservations, the political decision of Slovenia was, from the very beginning, to participate actively in the Stability Pact, placing stress on the areas of economy, protection of human rights and minorities, and humanitarian issues in post-war circumstances. Slovenia thus supported active cooperation in the stabilization of South Eastern Europe._

By becoming a participant in the Stability Pact, Slovenia assumed certain obligations that could be divided into two groups a) obliga-
tions arising from the Stability Pact processes, and b) obligations set by Slovenia itself. The first group includes the obligation to participate in all meetings and to co-create the process. The second implies obligations arising from individual projects - in short, all activities that Slovenia proposed on its own and bound itself to realize within the specified time.

**Organization of Stability Pact activities in Slovenia**

Since the areas of operation of the Stability Pact are broad and ramified, practically all ministerial sectors are included\(^{10}\). Of course, the scope, intensity and success of cooperation between individual sectors differ. While certain sectors shoulder specific projects, others just monitor activities to a lesser or greater degree and are only indirectly included in the process through certain ongoing projects.

The organization of Stability Pact activities in Slovenia should be treated from two different perspectives. On November 17, 1999, that is to say, soon after the adoption of the Stability Pact, the Slovene government adopted the first resolution specifying the organization of Stability Pact operation in Slovenia and entrusted its realization to three ministries. The former Ministry of Science and Technology undertook the harmonization of the operation of the Working Table on democratization and human rights, both professionally and in terms of content, then coordination of the operation and activities of Slovenia within the Working Table on economic reconstruction, while cooperation and development fell within the jurisdiction of the former Ministry of Economic Relations and Development. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs undertook, in cooperation with the Ministry of

---

Internal Affairs and the Ministry of Defense, the managing of the Working Table on defense issues. The role of coordinating Slovenia’s participation in the Stability Pact as a whole lay in the hands of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, which is understandable as it represents part of the country’s foreign policy. The Slovene national coordinator for the Stability Pact also operated under the auspices of the Ministry of Internal Affairs (and still does).

In the beginning of 2001, on February 7, the Slovene government adopted a new resolution about reorganization of Stability Pact implementation in Slovenia based on new circumstances and organizational changes. With this resolution the Ministry of Foreign Affairs became the central body which undertook, through the national coordinator and his project team, supervision of all coordinating activities of the three Working Tables. The management and coordination of individual projects and activities remained the responsibility of individual ministries.

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and especially the national coordinator, is therefore the main coordinating body which harmonizes the domestic political activities of individual ministries and foreign political activities, particularly those pertaining to relations with the Brussels office of the Special Coordinator of the Stability Pact, and those pertaining to other participants, international organizations and associations. In addition, the national coordinator with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs is the contact person to whom the Brussels office addresses information; the national coordinator thus takes care that relevant information is distributed to all interested parties and informs the wider public.

**Financing of Stability Pact activities in Slovenia**

In 2000 Slovenia allocated 5.13 million US dollars of budgetary and other resources to the activities of the Stability Pact. In practice only
the budget of the Ministry of Economic Relations and Development included an item relating to Stability Pact activities, while other ministries either participated through the Ministry of Economic Relations and Development or they received financial aid for their activities from international projects. It is true that the Ministry of Foreign Affairs’ budget included an item referring to humanitarian aid, but it was not directly described as an activity within the Stability Pact.

The changes in the organization of the Stability Pact in Slovenia were reflected in the changed structure of financing. It was planned that each ministerial sector directly involved in the Stability Pact operation was going to have a dedicated item in its budget for 2001. We will see later in the text how it happened that only the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Ministry of Economy (formerly Ministry of Economic Relations and Development), managed to include these two items in their budgetary plans. The funds allocated to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, which coordinated the activities, were outstanding, while the funds allocated to the Ministry of Economy were substantially reduced in 2001 compared to 2000.

In 2001 the Ministry of Economy had at its disposal only 30% of the funds allocated in 2000. The former Ministry of Economic Relations and Development had 460 million Slovene tolers for Stability Pact activities in 2000. The Strategy of Slovenia’s Integration in the Economic Reconstruction of South Eastern Europe envisaged an increase in this fund in 2001 to 550 million Slovene tolers. However, the expectations of the Ministry of Economic Relations and Development were not fulfilled and the fund was reduced to only one third. Naturally, the ministry was disappointed over such a small amount. The level of disappointment was so considerable that, according to Bojan Škoda, the leader and coordinator of the project for Slovenia’s inclusion in the economic reconstruction of South Eastern Europe and state under-secretary with the Ministry of Economy, the activities of Slovenia within the Working Table on economic reconstruction would have been better abolished than continued in that form.
Similarly, in overall terms the total budget dedicated to Stability Pact activities in Slovenia amounts to less than one half of the previous year’s budget. In the opinion of Jožica Puhar, the Slovene national coordinator for the Stability Pact, the budget plan for 2001 was a »play of chances and timelines«. Parallel with the preparations for and shaping of the budget were the changes in the organization of the government and, as a result, the organization of the Stability Pact in Slovenia. Because of this some ministries were unwilling to take the needed measures when drawing up the budget, while others relied on the Ministry of Economy (the former Ministry of Economic Relations and Development), as they expected that its budget for Stability Pact activities would increase.

It is, however, not possible to give a concise overview of all finances available for Stability Pact activities in Slovenia. In addition to budgetary and other resources there is a whole range of other services offered by ministries and other governmental departments. Here belong, for example, organization of seminars, training for individuals from the region and provision of expert knowledge.

Slovenia’s activities

Slovenia is active within all three Working Tables of the Stability Pact and it participates in these processes as a partner on equal footing with other participants and as a donor state. In the opinion of Jožica Puhar, the Slovene national coordinator for the Stability Pact, Slovenia is a typical example of the transfer of knowledge, experience, practices and models from the developed north-west to the countries of South Eastern Europe. Slovenia implements such transfers in the form of projects and other activities which include, in addition to those pertaining to the Stability Pact, those implemented through, for example, bilateral and trilateral channels.

Within the Working Table on democratization and human rights, Slovenia (in cooperation with the Council of Europe), chairs the work-
ing group for human rights and minorities. At the Funding Conference in Brussels in March 2000, Slovenia received international support for projects called *International Center for Inter-Ethnic Relations and Minorities* and *International University - graduate studies in economics for Central and South Eastern Europe*, both projects falling within the framework of Working Table I.

In January 2001 Slovenia took over from Romania the co-presidency of Working Table I for a period of 6 months. Among the priority tasks of Slovene politics during its six-month co-presidency, were promotion of democratization, respect for human rights, improvement of inter-ethnic relations, protection of minorities in South Eastern Europe, and closer cooperation among religious communities in this region. Additionally, great importance was attributed to the return of refugees, then education, training for local bodies, inter-parliamentary cooperation, gender equality and youth. Similarly, Slovenia committed itself to achieving a clearer definition of the strategic goals of Working Table I and to increasing inclusion of states and NGOs from South Eastern Europe.

On taking over the co-presidency, Slovenia presented an action plan in which it specified that it was going to focus attention on three main aspects: enhancing of links between working groups; activities of the working group for human rights and minorities whose (co)sponsor it was; and tasks related to the realization of the ten projects from the Quick Start Package: 1) *International Center for Inter-Ethnic Relations and Minorities in South Eastern Europe*; 2) *International University - post-graduate studies in economy for Central and South Eastern Europe*; 3) *Romany people in the Process of European Integration*; 4) *Network for Democracy, Human Rights and Protection of Ethnic and Religious Minorities in South Eastern Europe*; 5) *Maribor Initiative - contribution of religious communities to democratization, respect for human rights and improvement of inter-ethnic relations in South Eastern Europe*; 6) *Shaping and Strengthening of Youth Structures in South Eastern Europe*; 7) *Regional Center of*
Excellence for the Control of Public Consumption; 8) establishment of the Center for Psycho-Social Assistance to Children in the Post-War Period; 9) establishment of the office for equal opportunities in Ljubljana, and 10) setting up of a database of potential partners from South Eastern Europe interested in cooperation in multilateral projects within the EU Youth program\(^\text{11}\).

It is true that Slovenia has been offering assistance to the countries of South Eastern Europe for several years. This assistance has included transfers of knowledge, professional training, education, provision of stipends, participation in the building of institutions, activities aimed at removing trade obstacles, development of small and medium-size companies and economic investments and reconstruction of facilities. Some of these activities were transferred to Working Table II. This was also the framework within which the Strategy of Slovenia's Integration in the Economic Reconstruction of South Eastern Europe was prepared.

The activities of Slovenia within Working Table II - as well as the previously mentioned organization of the Stability Pact in Slovenia and its financial side - should be treated from the perspective of two time periods: before and after the reshaping of the Ministry of Economic Relations and Development. In 2000 Slovenia was very active within Working Table II. It played an active part in implementing the Dayton Accord in Bosnia-Herzegovina. As a result, within three years Slovenia became one of the main economic partners of Bosnia-Herzegovina with respect to exchange in goods and foreign investments. Similarly, Slovenia became an important economic partner of other countries in this region.

The key role in the strategy and implementation of the economic portion of the Stability Pact package during the initial period was played by the Ministry of Economic Relations and Development. Its

\(^{11}\) See Slovenia's Working Programme during the Co-Chairmanship of the Working Table on Democratisation and Human Rights (January – June 2001).
role was primarily important for establishing links, then in expert and organizational issues. The Ministry of Economic Relations and Development defined three priority tasks. The first was assistance in the building of institutions mainly effected as educational courses, provision of stipends and technical assistance. The second was economic cooperation and projects for the reconstruction of important facilities and infrastructure. Those projects were parts of Slovene companies’ investment in the reconstruction of social facilities, programs related to environmental protection, landscape planning, and the development of small and medium-size companies. The third was implementation of humanitarian projects such as the outfitting of hospitals, supply of urgent medical equipment and taking care of refugees.

With the reorganization of the Ministry of Economic Relations and Development into the Ministry of Economy, the interest of Slovenia in the economic part of Stability Pact activities considerably decreased, which led to the contracting of Slovenia’s activities within Working Table II. The main reason for the decrease in interest lay in the reduction of financial resources. We have already mentioned that in 2001 approximately one third only of the previous year’s amount was allocated. Consequently, the Stability Pact was no longer a priority for the Ministry of Economy, the result being that these activities were considered side-tasks.

Slovenia has also been active within the Working Table on defense issues. It has been actively included in activities related to the limitation of personal and light fire-arms, anti-corruption initiatives for the fight against organized crime, Working Tables for the fight against human trafficking and activities related to the judicial system, training of and cooperation between police forces. The most important and most successful initiative by Slovenia undoubtedly was the proposal for the setting up of a fund for demining and assistance to the victims of land mines (International Trust Fund - ITF). The international fund for demining and assistance to the victims of land mines was established by the government of Slovenia in 1998 in order to contribute
actively to the stabilization of post-Dayton Bosnia-Herzegovina. The fund extended its activities to other interested countries within the Pact - in 1999 to Croatia, and in 2000 to Kosovo and Albania. It also became a central actor in the humanitarian demining in South Eastern Europe. An important part of the Fund’s operation is assistance for and rehabilitation of the victims of mines. In Slovenia, rehabilitation of victims is carried out by the Institute for Rehabilitation which formed the Center for the Rehabilitation of Mine Victims, which to date has treated more than 400 victims.

The humanitarian demining project is one of the biggest achievements of Slovenia in South Eastern Europe. It provides direct help to the inhabitants of mine-affected regions, and the highly professional execution of operations produces efficient and successful results. The importance of this project has been confirmed through the financial aid contributed by various countries as well as the European Commission and the US.

In 1999 the Slovene government issued two public calls for projects within all three Working Tables. They were part of the preparations of the Slovene government for the Funding Conference in March 2000 in Brussels. One of the calls was issued by the Ministry of Economic Relations and Development, the other by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. The proposals for projects that were to be implemented within the Working Table on democratization and human rights were evaluated by the Ministry of Science and Technology, while projects falling within the framework of the Working Table on defense issues were the domain of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. The public calls attracted more than 130 proposals from various fields of work. Evaluation, checking and selection of proposed projects was carried out in such a way that each ministry shaped its own expert team to define criteria and selection priorities, primarily on the basis of an assessment of the likelihood that a project would receive international support, as well as the capability of Slovenia to finance the project. At the Funding Conference in March 2000 in Brussels, Slovenia thus submitted 34 projects.
Eight of these projects were submitted for implementation under the Working Table on democratization and human rights: 1) International University - post-graduate studies in economics for South Eastern Europe; 2) International Conference on Minorities (held in Portorož from 7 to 9 April 2000); 3) establishment of the International Center for Respect for Human Rights, Protection of Minorities and Settlement of Inter-Ethnic Relations in South Eastern Europe; 4) a professional workshop on the establishment and building of institutions, efficient administration and good governance; 5) a scientific conference entitled »Strategy for Social Crisis Resolution in South Eastern Europe«; 6) a ministerial conference entitled »Science, Technology, Education - the Fundamental Stones of Sustainable Development«; 7) a regional media center for South Eastern Europe in Ljubljana, and 8) an institution for inter-university cooperation and promotion of scientific and technological development in South Eastern Europe.

As for the Working Table on economic reconstruction, development and cooperation, Slovenia proposed 22 projects, mostly in the areas of road infrastructure, civil engineering, telecommunications, education and training, information science, development of entrepreneurship, agriculture and financial institutions. In addition to governmental institutions the Economic Chamber of Slovenia, The Chamber of Crafts and the Slovene Export Company also expressed interest in these projects.

Finally Slovenia also proposed four projects pertaining to the issues handled by the Working Table on security issues: a) expansion of the activities of the de-mining trust; 2) education and training of the police forces and research on the security issues in South Eastern Europe; 3) new methods of detecting mine fields, and 4) a workshop on light weapons.

International financial support was granted to two projects only: the International Center for Inter-Ethnic Relations and Minorities, which was supported by Greece and Italy (the seat of the center is at the
Institute for Nationality Issues in Ljubljana), and the International Post-Graduate School in Economics for Central and South Eastern Europe, which was supported by the US. Moral support and acknowledgment was expressed for the International Trust for De-Mining and Assistance to Mine Victims, but it did not receive any assurances that it would be secured additional financial resources.12

Another important and quite successful international project is »South East European Educational Co-operation Network«. The leaders of this project are Kultur Kontakt, Austria and the Center for Educational Policy Studies, Faculty of Education, University of Ljubljana.

The »South East European Educational Co-operation Network« derives from the needs of South Eastern European countries and objectives of the Stability Pact. The goals of this project include establishing of the network of organizations and experts, the development of systematic and electronic presentations of Central and South Eastern European educational systems, and their comparison with other systems, particularly those in Western Europe.13 The project is based on the extended Graz Process. It was supported by the Austrian Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Ministry of Education, Science and Culture, and Open Society Institute. In February 2001 the project received a support from the US through the US Democracy Grant.

Even though one of the leaders of this successful and important international project is a Slovene institution, the project is not as much as mentioned, let alone presented, in the Slovenia’s Stability Pact project team’s report. This is surprising since according to Dr. Pavel Zgaga, the director of the Center for Educational Policy Studies, the Center regularly informs the Stability Pact project team about its activities and operation.

NON-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS
AND THE STABILITY PACT

The role and significance of NGOs

In comparison with other international structures, the Stability Pact is interesting especially for the fact that it stresses the role and importance of NGOs in this region. The Pact was based on the principle that participants in the process should not be solely states and international organizations, but that it should stimulate NGOs and the civil sector and establish links with them. Certainly the participants in the Pact are states and international organizations, who have the upper hand in all key decisions, but it is also a fact that the goals of the Stability Pact cannot be attained without an active and intense cooperation from and activation of civil society.

Independent NGOs in South Eastern Europe are expected to contribute to the promotion of democratic social values and strengthening of cooperation. They should also play the role of a component complementary to states and governments. In this respect the Stability Pact was based on the recognition that NGOs and civil society initiatives should play a key part in democratization, the shaping and maintenance of peace and stability, the promotion and protection of human rights, the encouragement of cross-border cooperation in
South Eastern Europe and implementation of the values of the Stability Pact\textsuperscript{14}.

In the context of creating a participative political process, the civil society sphere - as a factor complementary to the governmental sector - was also expected to play a key role in the creating of wider support for reform implementation. Continual efforts to find and strengthen political consensus in shaping and implementing various reforms, especially through stressing their benefits, urgency and rationality, are needed in all countries of South Eastern Europe. Civil society could provide valuable contributions in this respect, particularly through innovations and development of various policies, by informing the public on policy goals and implementation of particular reforms, and by representing (partial) interests of various groups in order to bring about the discussion and resolution of their problems and needs. The more extensive the public debate and the greater the arena of initiatives, the greater probability that reforms will not remain at the planning stage but will be carried out successfully.

Yet efficient participation of civil society so defined is a priori ruled out in (the entire region of) South Eastern Europe, since not one of the South East European countries has (yet) provided conditions for an independent development of NGOs. For the normal, and thus efficient, functioning of civil society, strong support for the free and independent development of the non-governmental sector is needed, which, after all, represents a sine qua non of any democratic country. In the region of South Eastern Europe, however, it is not yet possible to speak about efficient participation of NGOs but, at the most, about the establishing and encouragement of support for their independent and free development which will eventually create conditions for the efficient participation of civil society.

The debate on civil society as a legitimizing and active factor within the Stability Pact reached its peak with the adoption of the

Declaration on the cooperation of NGOs and the governmental sector in South Eastern Europe. The Declaration on NGOs, which binds participants in the Stability Pact to help strengthen the capacities of NGOs and civil society initiatives in the regions, especially through encouraging the exchange of programs, experiences and cross-border cooperation, and to accelerate the inclusion of NGOs in various working groups, was adopted within the Working Table on democratization and human rights on October 27, 2000 in Bucharest.

A considerable degree of responsibility arising from this Declaration was undertaken by the governments of South Eastern Europe. They pledged their commitment to 1) encourage and accelerate free and independent development of NGOs and other civil society initiatives, 2) support the adoption, supplementing and implementation of legislation to create a healthy environment for the establishment of NGOs and enable their free and normal functioning, 3) encourage the inclusion of NGOs in activities aimed at providing transparency of inter-regional and inter-ethnic dialog, tolerance and multi-centrality, 4) encourage an ever greater participation of citizens in political and social life especially by supporting civil society activities aimed at raising the (democratic) awareness of the public, 5) promote indirect (e.g. through tax relief) and direct access of NGOs to both private and state resources, 6) ensure that NGOs will have an uninhibited and legitimate access to foreign financial sources, 7) support the shaping of the networks of NGOs in South Eastern Europe and encourage a regional approach in civil society activities that will enhance communication, cooperation and exchange of practices and experiences between countries in the region, 8) improve communication between public administration and NGOs with a view to ensuring the transparency of administrative and legislative procedures, especially for the purpose of increasing citizens’ trust in the functioning of national institutions and preventing bureaucratic sources of corruption, 9) support cooperation between the state and NGOs and accord-
ingly develop suitable mechanisms for open communication and exchange of information, standpoints and opinions\textsuperscript{15}.

Despite the fact that within the Working Table I the adoption of the Declaration was described as one of the greatest achievements in the field of non-governmental sector and civil society initiatives so far, the efficient implementation of the Declaration is often, and in several respects, rendered impossible in practice, especially owing to the deficit in the earlier mentioned conditions for independent development and functional operation of the non-governmental sector. This points to a discrepancy between the normative goals declared and the actual political will of the governmental sector in South Eastern Europe. Even though by signing the Declaration all parties showed that they are in favor of active participation of NGOs and thus expressed a considerable political willingness to cooperate with civil society, the Declaration too often figures as a political pamphlet not guaranteeing any palpable results. As a matter of fact, the Declaration is not (formally or legally) binding for the signatories, especially not the countries in the region, so its implementation is mostly dependent on political will, readiness to cooperate and current partial interests. In addition, given the current situation in the region, the Declaration might be too ambitious in certain points and consequently impossible to implement. Therefore, if it is to be implemented (if only in part), and if the mutual trust between non-governmental and governmental sectors is to be established, a substantial readiness for cooperation especially on the part of the governmental sector in the entire region would be needed.

In order to be able to review and assess the inclusion of NGOs in the activities of the Stability Pact, to monitor the implementation of the Declaration on NGOs on the part of both governmental and non-governmental sectors and to shape proposals for the enhanced exchange

\textsuperscript{15}See Stability Pact Declaration on NGO – Government partnership in South Eastern Europe, \url{http://www.stabilitypact.org}.\phantom{.}
and flow of information between the Office of the Special Coordinator of the Stability Pact in Brussels and NGOs in the region and beyond it, the Slovene Ministry of Foreign Affairs organized a meeting of representatives of NGOs. The meeting was held on May 12, 2001 in Brdo near Kranj. Participants were representatives of 90 NGOs that have an active role in the fields covered by the Working Table on democratization and human rights.

Since the goal of the meeting was to secure a greater role for the non-governmental sector within the Stability Pact, the NGO representatives formulated certain proposals aimed at facilitating cooperation. The need for greater transparency led to the proposal to draw up a report on the implementation of the Declaration on NGOs by countries, and to commission a study of good practices in the area of including the non-governmental sector in the activities of the Stability Pact. With the aim of achieving more efficient implementation of the goals of the Stability Pact and better flow of information between the office of the Special Coordinator and the non-governmental sector, the participants proposed to set up a consultative body for non-governmental sector issues, contact points in every country that would include representatives of governmental and non-governmental sectors, and a separate fund for NGOs which face difficulties. They also supported the idea that, together with the leaders of the working groups, NGOs should draw up proposals for the strengthening of their operation, which would, among other things, ensure greater inclusion of local organizations and their networks in the operation of the working groups. Furthermore, NGOs and leaders of working groups should jointly convince donors to be more flexible in their approach to and approval of projects presented by civil society, as this would improve the strategic transparency of the Stability Pact. Owing to impermeable borders and inhibited movement of NGO representatives participating in the projects of the Stability Pact, the representatives proposed changes in the procedure for visa acquisition. In order to improve the clarity of joint efforts, they expressed a wish to
extend the official web site of the Stability Pact so as to include a page providing relevant information on the projects undertaken by NGOs.

The following conclusions can be drawn from the meeting of the NGO representatives. Through a number of constructive proposals and initiatives, the NGO representatives have shown a serious readiness and wish to actively participate in the processes within the Working Table I. Their extensive criticism of the method of implementing the Stability Pact goals and of excessive theorizing on the one hand and an obvious lack of operative, practical approaches on the other, point to the de facto absence of efficient instruments for implementing the Declaration on NGOs, serious difficulties in securing promised financial resources, and to big problems in the flow of information and communication between NGOs and individual structures of the Stability Pact.

Yet given the current (political, economic and social) situation in the region, the meeting also revealed that some NGO expectations were unrealistic. In this respect we would particularly like to stress the idea of a separate fund for NGOs facing difficulties. Since the Stability Pact faces great difficulties in securing funds for ongoing individual projects, such expectations about a separate fund are obviously unrealizable at the moment.

The major positive contribution to the meeting is the fact that participants were representatives of NGOs from the entire region of South Eastern Europe, which could be a good basis for the strengthening of mutual ties and parallel shaping of future common initiatives and activities. Unfortunately, the organizer did not distribute the list of participants either during the meeting or after it, even though this could have been of great help to them in future communications. And finally, the greatest flaw of the meeting was undoubtedly non-attendance of more governmental representatives and donors, because of which direct contact between the representatives of these sectors was
not possible. It is a fact that the conclusions reached at such meetings are (too) often an end in themselves, so the goals remain only recorded on the declarative level without much possibility of being attained.

**Bottom-up model of creating a framework for cooperation**

The Stability Pact is characterized especially by the top-down approach or institutional strategy in shaping structures and frameworks of cooperation. A complementary bottom-up model is a strategy advocated by non-governmental sectors which is currently found only rarely within the Stability Pact. Below is a presentation of the bottom-up model. In our opinion it could have a considerable positive effect on the efficient implementation of the set goals of non-governmental participation and could thus fulfill the expectations of all involved.

A working group for equal opportunities using a bottom-up model was formed within the framework of Working Table I. It was formed on the basis of the existing and well organized regional »Central European Network for Equal Opportunities of Genders«. Originally the initiative for the Stability Pact did not imply any initiative that would pertain to equal opportunities. So the representatives of the mentioned network were of the opinion that the Stability Pact provided a good framework for a qualitative step forward in this field. Even before the Sarajevo summit they began intense lobbying activities and started searching for allies. Their efforts soon received affirmation by the OSCE which supported the need for such an initiative and offered its sponsorship. Once the regional network secured wide support by civil society, the »designers« of the Stability Pact set down two additional conditions that had to be fulfilled by the network: to ensure the support of the governmental sectors (in addition to that of the non-governmental sector), and to develop and submit an operational strategy. The network accordingly mobilized governmental representatives from all targeted countries and they jointly drew up an operat-
ing strategy based on four regional projects. These four projects set as their objectives to increase the support of the public for political activity of women - a media campaign, a training program called »Women can do it« aimed at assisting women who want to enter politics, change in electoral legislation wherever possible with the view of facilitating women’s entrance into politics, strengthening or establishment of national mechanisms for the support of equal opportunity in all countries in the region.

While the (prevailing) top-down model of cooperation within the framework of the Stability Pact is characterized by an operational strategy drawn from top downwards, meaning that it primarily meets the interests of (large) donors but does not reflect the de facto needs and interests of the receiver country, the bottom-up model is characterized by much greater consistency in strategy design while observing the interests of the region. This assertion has been confirmed through the approach of the equal opportunity group. Its representatives (who were mostly civil society actors from the region) worked out the operational strategy on their own, prepared specific projects, convinced donors through lobbying that these projects were expedient, and finally implemented approved projects. In this way the civil society movement successfully established links with international subjects - with the aim of influencing national politics in the region. As a result, according to Sonja Lokar, the leader of the group, some evaluational studies recognized the equal opportunity group as the most dynamic and successful working group. But let us once again point out that such conclusions are based on existing evaluational studies and on an interview with Sonja Lokar, rather than on the verification of actual effects in the field.

NGOs in Slovenia

As we have already mentioned, the role of NGOs could be especially important in democratization processes, in maintaining peace and stability, and in the fields of human rights and minorities. Since within the framework of the Stability Pact Slovenia showed greatest interest in the processes handled by the Working Table on democratization and minorities, which it co-chaired from January to June 2001, and since it leads the working group for human rights and minorities, the Slovene (governmental) project team and non-governmental sector should be connected through close links ensuring transparency when exchanging information and securing needed governmental support for NGOs. Yet several indicators show that cooperation between these two sectors in Slovenia within the areas covered by the Stability Pact is not as close as it should be, or as many NGOs would like to see.

Governmental representatives in Slovenia have assessed that the main problems that Slovenia faces when pursuing Stability Pact activities are difficulties in coordinating this ramified area because of insufficient finances and a relatively small number of people directly involved in the tasks arising from the Stability Pact. This is a result of the fact that the Stability Pact is not a task on the priority list of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Looked at from the perspective of human resources, it is obvious that the Slovene project team with the Stability Pact often plays the role of a kind of filter or transit station for people working there (mostly young, inexperienced personnel). High fluctuation within project-oriented processes like the Stability Pact considerably slows down and inhibits the process as a whole, as it is quite understandable that every new job position requires a period of initiation and adaptation to a new environment and approaches. The introduction of new personnel spontaneously brings new forms of communication into the process, which in a way also compels other participants to adapt, and NGOs are among them.
NGOs in Slovenia have great difficulties in establishing efficient communication with the Stability Pact project team. It is interesting to note that the home page of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs does not include information on activities or events pertaining to Stability Pact activities in Slovenia, nor are there any contact persons mentioned there. This is a paradox given the fact that the Slovene national coordinator for the Stability Pact promotes the Internet as the best medium for seeking and obtaining relevant information. Let us make a comparison with the situation in Croatia, where the home page of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs features the structure of the Stability Pact, links to many relevant documents translated into Croatian, a brief presentation of the Croatian projects within the Stability Pact, a list of contact persons, and a form for submitting a project.

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs should have a database of all Slovene NGOs active in South Eastern Europe. Yet a look at the list of the receivers of information and NGOs invited to various meetings, gatherings, seminars and conferences organized by the project team reveals that the database is rather modest, as it includes only three names: ISCOMET, Slovenian Philanthropy and the Peace Institute. These are actually the only organizations that have, over the past year, regularly attended various events, with (at least) the Peace Institute’s participation being the result of its own initiative.

This could have two meanings: either that others are not interested or passive, or that other NGOs are a priori eliminated. Given the reactions of the non-governmental sector as a whole, and especially exchanges with the representatives of Slovene NGOs, we can conclude that the second thesis is true, as NGOs express(ed) a considerable interest in participation. It is true that their interest decreased in the wake of a number of disappointments, one of the reasons being a lack of information. Consequently, these organization chose to redirect their energy towards other goals and activities.

These facts point to a considerable lack of knowledge on the part of the government about the activities of NGOs, a lack of interest in
cooperation with the non-governmental sector, and unsystematic informing of the non-governmental sector - a process which is rather left to chance. Knowing the objectives set by the Slovene government when it joined the Stability Pact (which pertain to the non-governmental sector), we could say that cooperation between the government and NGOs in Slovenia is not any better than in other regions of South Eastern Europe. This thesis can be confirmed by a quick glance at the general provisions of the Declaration on NGOs which binds the Stability Pact participants to help strengthen the capacities of NGOs and civil society initiatives in the region and promote the inclusion of NGOs in individual working groups of the Stability Pact.

The governmental sector in Slovenia even failed to provide and create successful communication and exchange of information with NGOs, let alone to ensure financial and other resources that would boost their capacities. Accordingly, despite good will, Slovenia cannot successfully transfer its experience and «good practices» to other regions of South Eastern Europe.

Below is a brief overview of the activities pursued by three NGOs operating within the framework of the Stability Pact and the fate of their projects.

ISCOMET - The International Scientific Conference of Minorities for Europe of Tomorrow, has been deemed to be the most important and successful NGO in Slovenia operating within the framework of the Stability Pact. ISCOMET is an international NGO with the seat in Slovenia. It has been active in South Eastern Europe ever since 1991. Owing to its numerous activities, in 1997 ISCOMET was entrusted with the preparation of the project «The Network for Democracy, Human Rights and Protection of Ethnic and Religious Minorities in South Eastern Europe», which was granted direct support by the Council of Ministers of the EU in 1999 and was included in the Royamont Process. In 2000 the project was included in the Quick Start Package
as part of the activities of Working Table I. In terms of content the project was concluded with the third conference »Democracy, Human Rights and Protection of Ethnic and Religious Minorities in South Eastern Europe« held in Bled in February 2001. The final declaration, called the Bled Declaration, was adopted at this conference.

In close cooperation with the European Center for Ethnic, Regional and Social Studies at the University of Maribor, ISCOMET prepared a three-year project called the Maribor Initiative - a contribution of religious communities to reconciliation, respect, cooperation, democracy and human rights in South Eastern Europe. It was supported by the government of Slovenia.

Slovenian Philanthropy is another NGO that has partly joined the activities of the Stability Pact. It is a non-profit, non-party and non-governmental association for the promotion of volunteer work and it offers psychosocial assistance to refugees and promotes health.

It became especially active in 1994 (at that time it was called the Slovenian Foundation), when it established the Center for Psychosocial Help to Refugees; in 2001 it established the Regional Center for Psychosocial Help to Children in Post-War Period. In May 2001, under the auspices of the Stability Pact, Slovenian Philanthropy organized a Conference on Psychosocial Help to Children in the Post-War Period that was financially supported by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Slovenia. This was the only activity of the Slovenian Philanthropy under the auspices of the Stability Pact. At this conference the organization took on the responsibility of cooperating with the Stability Pact in seeking channels for projects financing and further cooperation.

As regards the projects that should have been carried out within the framework of the Stability Pact, probably the most interesting is the fate of the project »Center for Media Cooperation in South Eastern Europe« which was conceptualized and supported by the Open Society Institute in Slovenia.

Various NGOs in Slovenia were asked to propose relevant projects even before the formal foundation of the Stability Pact (Sarajevo
Summit). The initiative came from various governmental bodies during preparations for the Stability Pact and its aim was to assess what Slovenia could offer to South Eastern Europe in this context. The authors of the above-mentioned project thus presented their original idea that was later presented to the participants at the Sarajevo summit (along with some other projects) by Slovenia’s President Milan Kučan. Towards the end of December 1999, the project was presented to Dr. Ernest Petrič, then the state secretary at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and to the national coordinator for the Stability Pact with the Slovene government. In October 1999 the project was supplemented and translated into English and presented at the meeting of the Working Table on democratization and human rights in October 1999 in Geneva.

However, the complications started when the Ministry for Economic Relations and Development and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs issued a public invitation in October 1999 to submit projects in the areas covered by the Stability Pact and continued when the Stability Pact organizational structure in Slovenia changed. The authors of the project thus lost touch with their proposal as it was circulated from one governmental sector to the next.

Complications culminated with the publishing of the Slovene project proposals prepared for the Regional Funding Conference in March 2000 in Brussels. The project »Center for Media Cooperation in South Eastern Europe«, or rather its major part, was merged with three other projects and initiatives for rationalization purposes. The resulting project was called »International/Regional Center for the Support and Development of the Media«. The Ministry of Science and Technology (which at that time coordinated the activities of Slovenia within the framework of Working Table I) thus allowed fragmentation, reorganization and merging of the project with three other projects without prior notification and consent of the authors and executors of the project.

The merged project (as expected) did not receive international support because of its irrational financial forecasts and the incorrect...
strategy used in designing the project. On the other hand, over the course of almost two years, the authors of the project »Center for Media Cooperation« have not received from the government any information on the destiny of their project. Ironically, in June 2001 the Ministry of Foreign Affairs sent out a short notice that the project had been handed over to the Ministry of Culture. Nobody even cared to ask the authors whether they still wanted to carry out the project after two years of waiting while the project circulated through governmental sectors.

Prospects for NGOs

In the process of NGO participation, the Stability Pact is confronted with serious difficulties in areas pertaining to a) coordination, especially the flow of information, and communication between NGOs and individual structures of the Stability Pact, and b) financing of the work of NGOs. In most cases their participation depends primarily on their own initiative, but also on their inventiveness. The case in point described above stresses that NGOs cannot be sure that they will receive finances despite their strong will, decisive initiative and professional formulation of the proposal.

Past developments within the Stability Pact show that the only option available to NGOs so far has been to use the Stability Pact as a kind of facilitator in obtaining some additional finances for those programs relevant to South Eastern Europe. NGOs, therefore, cannot expect a helping hand from the Stability Pact, as even when such is offered, it is not a guarantee that cooperation will be successful. Accordingly, the Stability Pact proved to be useful only in cases when it was used by NGOs as a (supplementary) strategy.

*In short, the structures and directions pursued by the Stability Pact could provide a synergy of NGOs. It is understandable that the Stability Pact alone is not sufficient and that NGOs have to pursue*
other activities as well. But what raises concerns is primarily the fact that the Stability Pact is not in general encouraging the activities of NGOs as it committed itself to do on the declarative level. As a result, the discrepancy between the normative definition of principles and actual situation is unacceptably large.
CONCLUSIONS

The Stability Pact for South Eastern Europe was born out of the idea that the crisis in South Eastern Europe should be resolved through a long-term conflict prevention strategy, which is much more »cost effective« than partial resolutions of individual crises. One of its fundamental traits is the conclusion that humanitarian and financial aid cannot alone guarantee enduring peace in South Eastern Europe, but long-term objectives can be attained primarily by establishing a lasting dialog and mutual respect and co-existence between the peoples of South Eastern Europe. Its development had four key stages: establishment of the Stability Pact (Cologne conference), inclusion of a large number of participants and securing of political support and legitimacy (Sarajevo conference), establishment of credibility through the project-oriented approach (Regional Funding Conference), and inclusion of a missing link in a series of participants (inclusion of Yugoslavia as a full member of the Stability Pact).

Our study is based on the hypothesis that the synergy of all participants, and especially increased participation of civil society initiatives, is a sine qua non for the efficient implementation of the objectives of the Stability Pact. Notwithstanding the fact that participants in the Stability Pact are states and international organizations, holding the reins of decisions in their hands, the goals of the Stability Pact are not possible to attain without active, intense cooperation of civil society. In the light of this, the bottom-up model, or the strategy used
by the non-governmental sector, is believed to have an important role in the context of co-creating the framework for cooperation. NGOs are those participants that could create consensus among all relevant actors on efficient strategic direction of operation and could better reflect de facto needs and interests of the region, that is to say, receivers of help.

The study has shown that in creating the framework for cooperation within the Stability Pact the top-down model is the dominant one; in other words, this is the strategy employed by institutions, while the bottom-up model of the non-governmental sector is only occasionally found, rather as a sample. This leads to a lack of efficient strategies which, in the context of assessment and selection of projects, is revealed primarily as consistency with the interests of (large and influential) donors. The latter too often accord financial support to projects that satisfy their partial interests, rather than supporting the strategies defined by individual Working Tables or working groups within them. Owing to this, the supported projects do not reflect the actual needs and interests of the receivers of help, nor do they observe the need to attain the goals set down by the Stability Pact.

In certain segments the top-down model a priori eliminates the possibility of better functioning of NGOs, because NGOs are heavily dependent on the interests and goals of donors. As a result, neither their strong will nor decisive initiative nor professionalism can guarantee that they will succeed in obtaining financing for their projects. These facts are additionally stressed by the case of the working group for equal opportunities, which is based on the non-governmental sector’s strategy and is believed to be the most dynamic and efficient segment of the mechanism.

Even though two years of existence is a period too short for any relevant assessments - since the process in question is a long-term one and its effects will be palpable only after a certain period of time - we can identify three main problems confronted by the Stability Pact: a) there is a lack of elaborate and efficient strategy; b) the voice of the
receivers of help is not »heard« often enough, and c) promised financial support is insufficient and occasionally not delivered.

The Stability Pact has entered a phase in which its strategy should be elaborated integrally and in detail. Even among elements and segments where this strategy has been adequately worked out, we can quite often observe the absence of mechanisms adequate and necessary for its implementation. Too often the process is dependent on the donor states and their strategic interests, so repeatedly the projects found on priority lists of working groups fail to be approved, meaning that the implementation of work plans set by these groups is prevented. This is why the voice of the receivers of help is often overheard and why the promised financial aid often fails to arrive, seriously obstructing the process.

In addition, one can hear objections that the Stability Pact has generated the mechanisms of diplomatic and political tourism and that this is a strategy that works. Indeed this type of diplomatic tourism consumes a considerable portion of the financial cake.

A number of projects are conceived as programs of expert assistance whereby expertise has a considerable price paid out of the financial aid granted to the project. The only alternative representing a bypass around such programs of expert assistance and securing more finances, is the development of one’s own know-how, but this also needs the approval of donors.

We can conclude that the greatest achievement of the Stability Pact - an opinion shared by the majority of participants - is the fact that it brought new »legitimacy« to communication and linked individuals and groups across the region. It helped peoples living in this region to realize that they share common problems, with only their contexts being different. Moreover, they realized that these problems should be resolved through joint efforts or they would become worse.
Despite initial reservations, through active participation in the Stability Pact Slovenia, as a Central European country located near the destabilized region, has shown its readiness to undertake part of the responsibility for the democratization and economic reconstruction of South Eastern Europe, as peace and development of this region are among Slovenia’s strategic national interests. Slovenia’s inclusion in the Stability Pact was carried out in three stages. The first stage was characterized by »fear« that its inclusion in the Stability Pact would rob it of »Central European identity« and stigmatize it as the most successful country of South Eastern Europe. The second stage could be called the stage of »approach« in which Slovenia offered participation in the field with which it is most familiar - minority policy. The Slovene government has successfully resolved the issue of minorities’ inclusion in public life, so it decided to contribute its experience to the promotion of multicultural and multiethnic society in this area. At the third stage it became included in the process and decided to join in the areas where it could expect a return on its investments (international reputation, competitive edge on the market or similar types of benefit).

The Slovene government was inhibited by three sets of factors: one is the difficult coordination of the ramified activities especially because a relatively small number of people is directly involved in the tasks arising from the Stability Pact activities; another is the low level of available funds. These inhibiting factors, coupled with the fact that the Stability Pact activities are not a priority task on the agenda of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, are the reason for Slovenia’s not contributing enough to the Stability Pact regardless of its strategic interests and needs as well as opportunities offered through the Stability Pact.

An important reason for the frequently insufficient and quite unsuccessful functioning of the Slovene government as regards Stability Pact activities is the lack of political will. In the Stability Pact processes a decisive role is played by individual ministries, which (after all) did not manage to secure sufficient finances for the Stability Pact.
activities in the 2001 budget (a result of the absence of interest and of political will). This led to the indifference observed in some governmental actors and (ultimately) pushed the Stability Pact activities, in certain (most) areas, into the background while simultaneously eliminating the possibility of (co)operation with NGOs.

In a similar manner, Slovenia did far too little as regards support for NGOs. This was confirmed through the lack of knowledge on the part of the Slovene government about the activities of NGOs, the absence of interest among governmental representatives in cooperation with the non-governmental sector, and the unsystematic informing of the non-governmental sector—a process often left to chance. It resulted in the fact that Slovenia, despite good intentions, could not successfully mediate its experience and »good practices« in the field of the non-governmental sector, or become a model for other countries in South Eastern Europe.

This said, we should point out that over the course of two years of Stability Pact implementation, Slovenia did make several positive contributions through aid provided to the region of South Eastern Europe, as indicated by initiatives for and positive assessments of certain projects that received international support. In this way it gained certain advantages, most notably an increase in Slovenia’s international reputation and a competitive edge on the market.

Finally, let us stress again, that within the framework of the Stability Pact there is still enough room for Slovenia to achieve better effects and extend its scope of activities.
CHRONOLOGY

Year 1999
June - Foreign Ministers Meeting adopts Stability Pact, Cologne
July - Sarajevo Summit, Sarajevo Declaration
September - 1st Regional Table: Stability Pact Work Plan
- The National Assembly of Slovenia discusses Slovenia’s role within the Stability Pact and formulates the strategy
October - Szeged Process initiated
- The Ministry of Economic Relations and Development and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs issue a public call for projects
November - The Slovene Government adopts a decision on the organization of the Stability Pact in Slovenia
December - The Slovene Government adopts the Strategy of Slovenia’s Integration in the Economic Reconstruction of South Eastern Europe

Year 2000
February - Mediation on Danube Bridge, Vidin-Calafat
- Anti-Corruption Initiative adopted
- Charter on Good Neighbourly Relations adopted (SEECP)
March - Regional Funding Conference, Brussels
March - Launching of Regional Environment Reconstruction Program
- Quick Start Package June 2000 Media Charter adopted
September - Task Force Against Trafficking in Human Beings established
October
- Fight Against Organised Crime Initiative adopted
- Regional Arms Control and Verification Implementation Assistance Center opened, Zagreb
- FR Yugoslavia joins the Stability Pact
- Charter on NGO-Government partnership

December
- Police Forum of SEE countries established

Year 2001

January
- Slovenia begins co-chairmanship of the Working Table of Democratization and Human Rights

February
- The Slovene Government adopts a decision on the reorganization of the Stability Pact coordinating activities within Slovenia
- Regional Economic Action Plan adopted (SEECAP)

March
- Szeged Process enhanced
- Quick Start Package: 201 of 244 projects initiated

April
- Migration and Asylum Initiative adopted

May
- Representatives of NGOs meet
- Border Management Task Force established

June
- Parliamentary Troika established
- Memorandum on Trade Liberalisation in SEE signed
- Agenda for Regional Action on Refugee Return launched
- Moldova joins the Stability Pact

October
- 2nd Regional Conference, Bucharest,
LITERATURE


*Deklaracija o zunanji politiki Republike Slovenije (Declaration on the Foreign Policy of Slovenia)*. Uradni list RS, No. 108/99.


*NGO Meeting in Brdo, Draft Chairman’s Conclusions. Brdo pri Kranju, May 2001.*


Šabić, Zlatko. International parliamentary organs in European insti-
tutional organisation: selected cases. Ljubljana: Center za mednarodne odnose na Fakulteti za družbene vede, 1995.
Bašič Hrvatin, Sandra and Petković, Brankica, co-authors of the project »Center for Media Cooperation in South Eastern Europe«. Interview by author, 29 October 2001, Ljubljana.


Lokar, Sonja, the head of the working group for gender equality operating within the Working Table on Democratization and Human Rights. Interview by author, 17 May 2001, Ljubljana.


Škoda, Bojan, Under Secretary at the Ministry of Economy and head of the project »The Strategy of Slovenia’s Integration in the Economic Reconstruction of South Eastern Europe«. Interview by author, 31 May 2001, Ljubljana.

Zgaga, Pavle, the director of the Centre for Educational Policy Studies and member of the project group in the international project »South East European Cooperation Network«. Interview by author, 23 January 2002, Ljubljana.

Žagar, Mitja, the head of the working group for human rights and minorities. Interview by author, 5 June 2001, Ljubljana.