



Univerza v Mariboru

## **ECERS – European Centre for Ethnic, Regional and Sociological Studies of the University of Maribor**

**Address:** *Krekova ulica 2, SI-2000 Maribor, Slovenia*

**Phone:** *+386 2 23 55 370*

**Fax:** *+386 2 23 55 372*

**E-mail:** [ECERS@uni-mb.si](mailto:ECERS@uni-mb.si)

**Generalities:** ECERS was founded in 1989 by the University of Maribor; whereby it began to function in January 1, 1990. It is a small, however, very flexible research institute with four full-employed researchers and one administrative-support assistant. Regularly involved in the realisation of its programme are thirty-three members of the international scientific council, outstanding experts from various European countries, who co-operate in different forms – from consultations to concrete activities. The number of staff involved in the realisation of a certain programme, varies according to the means available for single projects.

### ***ECERS research activities are focused on the following issues:***

- Political, ethnic, cultural and linguistic aspects of the European integration in the context of the EU enlargement and with emphasis on the position of the Slovenian nation, Slovenian minorities and ethnic communities in Slovenia;
- Nationalism, ethnic movements, inter – ethnic relations and protection of minorities with emphasis on South East Europe;
- The role of religious communities in enhancing of democracy, human rights and religious freedoms, protection of minorities and spreading of reconciliation and cooperation between the nations in South East Europe;
- Regionalism and European integration, international regional organisations, cross-border cooperation (including “Euroregions”), especially in the context of the EU enlargement, and with emphasis on the cooperation of Slovenia with neighbouring countries;
- The activities of international governmental and non-governmental institutions and organisations from the working field of ECERS, especially possibilities for structural European cooperation of Slovenia;
- Common foreign and security policy of the EU and especially the implementation of this policy in relation to the South East Europe;
- The status of an individual in international law with emphasis on international procedures for protection of human rights and rights of members of ethnic minorities;
- The role of the civil society in enhancement of democracy and co-operation of citizens in the processes of decision-making in the countries “in transition.”

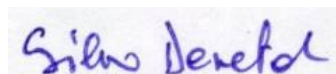
**References:** Members of the narrow research group of ECERS have in the last five years published (mainly in foreign countries) more than twenty monographic units and other concluded works, thirty scientific articles, forty published lectures at conferences and eleven chapters or independent compositions in books.

International cooperation: ECERS has regular contacts with thirteen universities and research organisations and with more than forty researchers abroad. In the realisation of its programmes ECERS cooperates with international inter-governmental and non-governmental organisations, like the Council of Europe, European Union, OSCE, FUEN, INTEREG etc.

ECERS closely cooperates especially with the international non-governmental organisation ISCOMET (International Scientific Conference Minorities for Europe of Tomorrow), with the international MFD Foundation for fostering the protection of cultural heritage of ethnic and religious minorities in South East Europe (both with the seat in Maribor) and with the MFD International Association for fostering the protection of cultural heritage of ethnic and religious minorities in South East Europe (with the seat in Luxembourg).

ECERS is regularly conducting research and executing activities from the field of fostering democratic processes, participatory democracy, human rights, minority protection and regional cooperation. Relevant to mention here is the research work on the "Study on Protection of National Minorities in Slovenia, Implementation of the »Racial« and Framework Directives in Slovenia." ECERS was as partner involved in two projects realised in Slovenia regarding human rights protection and combating discrimination: Training and Education for Combating Discrimination in Slovenia (2005-2007) and Respect of Human Dignity and Non-Discrimination Principle in the Work of Border Police and in the Execution of Prison Penalties – the Case of Slovenia (2007-2009). ECERS proved its capabilities in Project managing as it functioned as a main coordinating and managing partner-organization in the Consortium of the 2 recent TEMPUS JEP Projects: "POGESTEI – Post-Graduate Studies for European Integration" (2005-2008), which aim it was to introduce a new post-graduate programme at the faculties of law in Belgrade, Novi Sad and Niš in Serbia and TEMPUS JEP MEINEPO Master studies in European Integration and Neighbourhood Policy (2007-2009) with the aim to introduce new Master programme at the three Universities in Moldova.

Beside being member of the REDUPRE Project Consortium ECERS is involved also in realisation of the International project BRIDGE Fostering mutual understanding and co-operation of the EU with Belarus, Moldova, Russia and Ukraine (2008-2012).



Prof. Dr Silvo Devetak  
Director of ECERS