The Autonomous Region of Friuli Venezia Giulia is situated in the north-east of Italy. It borders Carinthia (Austria) to the north and Slovenia to the east. To the south it faces the Adriatic Sea and to the west its internal border is with the Veneto region. In a small space, Friuli Venezia Giulia contains very diverse environments, landscapes, history, art and culture, which make up a varied and complex reality.
The Autonomous Region of Friuli Venezia Giulia was established in 1963.
The Italian Constitution assigns the Region a special statute and administrative autonomy.

Friuli Venezia Giulia (FVG) is divided into four provinces:

1) Gorizia
2) Pordenone
3) Trieste
4) Udine

and 218 municipalities.

Capital of the region: Trieste.

Extent of the regional territory: 7,856,48 km$^2$.

Total resident population of Friuli Venezia Giulia: 1,234,079 (Source: ISTAT 01/01/2010)

Demographic density: 157,07 individuals per km$^2$

Activity rate in FVG: 67,6% (in Italy 62,5%) (source ISTAT 2010)

Unemployment rate in FVG: 4,8% (in Italy 8,3%) (source: ISTAT 2010)

Total GDP in 2009: € 34,856,1 MIO (source: ISTAT 2009)

Economy:

The economy of Friuli Venezia Giulia is one of the most developed in the country. Its core is based on small- and medium-sized enterprises, on specialized farming and on high-quality tourism with a significant inclination towards exports. Agriculture and farming maintain an essential role in the economy of the region. Its high quality products are exported not only within the country and Europe (fruit and vegetable, cheese) but are known worldwide for their quality (cured ham and wines, especially white ones).

A number of large enterprises are also present in the region in both industry and services sector. Some of these companies are world-leaders in their relevant sectors; such are Fincantieri for the construction of the world's largest cruise ships, Zanussi-Electrolux for the production of electrical appliances, Assicurazioni Generali, one of the leading insurance companies in the world, Danieli, ranking among the three largest suppliers of plants and equipment to the metal industry worldwide.

Some of the European inter-regional associations and networks in which Friuli Venezia Giulia participates:

ADRIATIC EUROREGION
AEBR – Association of European Border Regions
AER – Assembly of European Regions
AICCRE – (Member of the Council of European Municipalities and Regions) Regional Office in Udine
AICCRE – National Office in Rome
ALDA – Association of Local Democracy Agencies
LDA Brtonigla – Verteneglio - Local Democracy Agency of Brtonigla - Verteneglio (Istria County – Croatia)
LDA Niksic – Local Democracy Agency of Niksic (Montenegro)
ALPS-ADRIATIC WORKING COMMUNITY
AREV - Assembly of European Wine-producing Regions
CRPM - Conference of Peripheral and Maritime Regions of Europe
LEED - Local Economic and Employment Development (OECD member)
OICS - Inter-regional Observatory for Cooperation and Development
SEENET – Network for the cooperation between Italy and South-East Europe (7 Italian Regions and 41 local authorities in SE-Europe)
The Piazza Unità d’Italia in Trieste, where on 13th July 2010 the Concert “The Ways of Friendship” took place and brought together the Presidents of Croatia, Italy and Slovenia. The orchestra and the choir were made up of musicians from all three countries, and were conducted by Riccardo Muti. The meeting represented a sign for the future cooperation and friendship within “a Europe without borders.”

**CROSS-BORDER COOPERATION PROGRAMMES**

The Friuli Venezia Giulia region is involved in three Cross-border Cooperation Programmes within the European Territorial Cooperation Objective in the Programming Period 2007-2013:

1) Interreg IV Italy-Austria
2) CBC Programme Italy-Slovenia
3) IPA Adriatic Cross-Border Cooperation Programme 2007-2013

1) **Interreg IV Italy-Austria** covers 5 regions (2 Italian and 3 Austria Länder) and the Autonomous Province of Bozen. Financial resources of the Programme: about € 60 Mio ERDF plus € 20 Mio national co-financing. In the first three calls 75 projects were approved (total ERDF-value € 36 Mio). Friuli Venezia Giulia is represented in 29 projects. The Projects of the IV call (€ 11 Mio ERDF) are being evaluated. There will be another call (the fifth and last).

Some examples of good projects in an advanced stage of implementation:

**WASSPRONASS**: CBC Project approved in the 3rd Call. Municipality of Pontebba (FVG) as a LP, the Austrian Municipality of Hermagor and the Regional Office for Civil Protection (FVG) as Partners. It is a project with a strong territorial impact which aims at creating a watersupply network from Pontebba Municipality towards Hermagor Municipality, while Pontebba
will be connected with the sewage disposal system of Hermagor. Impacts: improved touristic attractiveness of the area, better life quality, biodiversity and ecological sustainability.

**BENCH-PA:** CBC Project approved in the 3rd Call. Benchmarking project in the field of administrative procedures with large partnership. Very good example of CBC integration of cross-border communities.

2) **CBC Programme Italy-Slovenia**

The Programme provides Community support as part of the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) for specific Italian and Slovenian regions that lie along their common border: the Italian provinces of Trieste, Gorizia, Udine, Venezia, Rovigo, Padova, Ferrara and Ravenna and Slovenian regions Goriška, Obalno-Kraška and Gorenjska. The areas of Osrednjeslovenska in Slovenia, and Pordenone and Treviso in Italy may take part in projects as an adjacent area, i.e. receiving a maximum 20% of the ERDF funding allocated to the Programme. The Operational Programme has a total budget of around €136 million. Community assistance through the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) amounts to some €116 million, which represents approximately 1.3% of the total EU investment earmarked for the European Territorial Cooperation Objective under the Cohesion Policy 2007-2013. Following the enlargement of the European Union, the Programme area has gained great strategic importance at both European and international level, turning from a peripheral area into a geographically central area of the new enlarged Europe. In years to come, the main challenge will be transforming and developing the cultural, economic and social variances and differences into “added value”, built on experiences to date. **The Friuli Venezia Giulia Region is the Managing Authority of the Programme.**

3) **IPA Adriatic Cross-Border Cooperation Programme 2007-2013**

The Programme involves 7 Italian regions facing the Adriatic Sea and territories of two member states (Slovenia and Greece), two candidate countries (Croatia and Montenegro) and three potential candidate states (Bosnia Herzegovina, Albania and Serbia – the latter is in phasing out regime). For the period 2007-2011 the total budget approved of the Programme is of about €196 MIO of which 85% made up of IPA and ERDF funds, while the remaining 15% is made up of national cofinancing provided by the States included in the Programme.

The Friuli Venezia Giulia Region is partner in the project **SHAPE** (approved in the 1st call) which aims to promote the reinforcement of institutional capacities in the preservation and management of the area's natural resources, the prevention of potential environmental risks and the support of a more rational use of the Adriatic's resources, partly in an attempt to resolve conflicts caused by various methods of exploiting the basin.

FVG is also partner in the approved strategic project **ALTERENERGY**, which aims at promoting the development of an Adriatic community which would be sustainable from an energy point of view thanks to a wider use of renewable energy sources and of energy saving interventions.
The Region of Friuli Venezia Giulia underlines the importance of the Adriatic-Ionian Initiative (AlI), launched in 2000 on a proposal of the Italian Government with a first Declaration of Ancona, within a strategy enhancing the Adriatic-Ionian basin and the different kinds of territorial cooperation in that area. In this framework a second Declaration was signed on 5th Mai 2010 in Ancona by the Foreign Ministers of the following countries: Albania, Bosnia Herzegovina, Croatia, Greece, Italy, Montenegro, Serbia and Slovenia.

This Document promotes the commitment of the involved States, also towards the EU, to support the regional cooperation through specific strategies aimed at the development of macro-regions at EU level. The Adriatic-Ionian area is therefore expected to be able to grow and take advantage of these policies in the future through the development of a specific EU-strategy for the Adriatic-Ionian region. The objective is to obtain the approval of the European Council on the European Project of the Adriatic-Ionian macro-region so that it will be possible to insert it in the EU budget 2014-2019.

Friuli Venezia Giulia considers this as an unrenounceable objective, which will allow the region to participate in the future dynamics of EU development.

The Region of Friuli Venezia Giulia will be one of the Italian member-regions within the “Contact group on the Future of the Cohesion Policy”. This Contact group is a national institutional group made up of the Italian government and representatives of Italian regions, which will decide the future cohesion policy after 2013.

YEARLY MAIN EVENTS

- In the framework of the Trilateral Collaboration Agreement of 2007 between the Land of Carinthia (Austria), the Region of Friuli Venezia Giulia (Italy) and the Region of Veneto (Italy), the Presidents of the three regions meet at least once a year on a joint agenda of various cooperation subjects.
- Once a year the Bilateral Commission between Friuli Venezia Giulia and Slovenia meet in plenary session to discuss the results and future plans of the bilateral cooperation and in general the bilateral relations.
- A collaboration agreement was signed on 15th March 2011 between the FVG region and the Istrian County, which foresees the constitution of a working group which will meet at least twice a year.

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