



CALL FOR PAPERS

THE CENTER FOR AUSTRIAN STUDIES

announces an international conference:



THE ENVIRONMENT AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT IN THE NEW CENTRAL EUROPE: Austria and Its Neighbors

19-21 September 2002
University of Minnesota, Twin Cities

The sweeping political, economic, and social changes which have taken place in Central Europe since 1989 have created a host of challenges for societies and governments in Austria and the neighboring countries. Particularly critical are questions of the environment as they relate to the quality and character of everyday life, sustainable economic development, and changes in popular values and mores. These challenges have exacerbated old problems and created new ones for the governments of the individual countries, for the relations between Austria and its neighbors, and for the region's relations with the rest of Europe and the international community.

The emphasis on speedy recovery from World War II throughout Europe and the priority given to rapid postwar development of heavy industry by the communist governments of Central Europe caused serious environmental problems to arise in the 1950s, 1960s, and 1970s. Since the 1970s and 1980s awareness of environmental problems such as pollution of air and water resources, acid rain, and the accumulation of industrial wastes has grown throughout Central Europe. Nonetheless, the high costs of remediation, the potential impact on further economic development, and the difficult choices involved have often made it hard for governments and enterprises to address these problems. Old interstate rivalries and the Cold War divisions in Central Europe long impeded regional cooperation on environmental and economic questions.

The fall of the communist governments in Central and Eastern Europe has made it possible to address environmental problems on a regional and, indeed, European-wide basis. However, it has often been difficult to break away from old national policies and economic strategies to develop meaningful international cooperation. The Gabčíkovo-Nagymaros project to control the flow of the Danube provoked serious debates in Slovakia, Hungary, and Austria in the 1970s, 1980s, and even the 1990s. The long-term fate of nuclear reactors built with Soviet technology in the former communist countries remains unresolved, and the newly completed Czech plant at Temelin has become a serious point of friction between the Czech and Austrian governments.

The Center for Austrian Studies at the University of Minnesota, in cooperation with other departments and research centers at the university, will sponsor an international, multidisciplinary symposium on the environment and sustainable development in the new Central Europe. This conference will further the development of a broad, open discussion across national boundaries by experts in higher education, research institutes, government agencies, and non-governmental organizations regarding the major issues of the environment

and development faced by the countries of Central Europe. To increase the awareness of commercial and industrial interests in Minnesota and the Upper Midwest of the problems and opportunities posed by environmental concerns in Central Europe, this symposium will feature a half-day program of workshops and presentations for business interests at the end of the academic conference.

We welcome proposals for papers from scholars in the social sciences, humanities, environmental studies, and public policy studies. Papers should address recent discussions and/or the modern history of the economic, political, and social issues facing Austria and the neighboring countries of Central Europe in the following general areas:

- protection and regulation of air and water quality, waterways, groundwater, wetlands, and forests;
- mineral resource use and sustainable development;
- energy supplies and sustainable development;
- development of transportation and communication infrastructures;
- environmental and developmental challenges for rural areas;
- policy debates in national, regional, and European governmental bodies regarding the environment and sustainable development in Central Europe;
- environmental and sustainable development issues as factors in the accession of new members to the EU;
- continuities and change in popular, intellectual, and artistic representations of the natural environment, environmental change, and economic development;
- the impact of environmental issues and concerns on business strategies for Central European commerce and industry.

Proposals for papers on other issues relating to the environment and sustainable development in Austria and Central Europe will also be considered. The Center for Austrian Studies hopes to publish selected papers from the conference in revised, expanded form. Send a title, a one-page précis of the paper, and a curriculum vitae of the presenter to:

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