SPECIFICITY OF POPULATION TRENDS IN VOJVODINA – THE 2011 CENSUS

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ABSTRACT: According to the 2011 Census, Vojvodina has the population of 1,931,809 which is by 100,183 less than in 2002. Vojvodina has fewer inhabitants today than in 1971. This decrease in number of inhabitants, according to the latest census, occurred in all municipalities except in the City of Novi Sad, where the population annually increased by 4,703.

The main objective of this paper was to analyze the movement of population between two censuses, focusing on the specifics of population movements in certain areas of Vojvodina. First of all, the area of the North Banat should be pointed out because there the population has been steadily declining since 1961. On the other hand, the South Bačka area records a steady increase in population in the period from the World War Two to the present, mainly due to the mechanical movement or immigration to the center of this area – the City of Novi Sad.

In addition to the population decline, the population of Vojvodina is characterized by higher average age. The last census showed that the population of all municipalities was, on average, older than 40, except in the municipality of Žabljak (39.7) and the City of Novi Sad (40.0).

Analysis of the data has shown that the trend of the population decline in Vojvodina, caused by very high mortality rates and low birth rates, continues and that the age structure of population is becoming less favorable.

KEYWORDS: population movements, population growth, migration, aging population, Vojvodina, Novi Sad

INTRODUCTION

In the republic of Serbia, the number of inhabitants decreased by 311,139 thousand in the period from 2002 to 2011, which was an annual reduction by 34,571 inhabitants. Decrease in population was recorded in Vojvodina too, where according to the 2011 Census lived 1,931,809 inhabitants. That is by 100,183 less than in 2002 and Vojvodina today has fewer residents than in 1971. The importance of the analysis of population trends is shown by the fact that
since the first modern census in 1869 until today, the lowest growth index 95.0 was recorded in the period between the last two censuses, 2002 to 2011 [Стојшин 2011].

The basic characteristic of population trends in Vojvodina is that the population growth in the province has most often been caused by mechanical movement or relocation of the population due to various social crises or wars, and that the number of inhabitants has stagnated or declined in the “peaceful” periods.

Besides the mechanical movement of population, we should not forget the natural increase which first negative value (-1.1‰) was recorded in 1989. Since then, when Vojvodina is considered as a whole, there have been more deaths than births every year. In recent years, natural increase has been around -5.0‰.

With a population decline between the last two censuses, Vojvodina is characterized by an aging population. Analysis of the age structure of the population is essential because of the influence of this structure on the various areas of social life, as well as because it indicates that different parts of Vojvodina show some differences.

CHARACTERISTICS OF POPULATION TRENDS IN VOJVODINA

The greatest increase in population in Vojvodina since the Second World War was recorded in the period from 1953 to 1961 (index 109.2)1, when the population of Vojvodina annually increased by 19,542 residents [Стојшин 2011: 229]. The increase was influenced by higher natural increase which occurred as a result of a compensatory after war period, but also the colonization, the mechanical movement of the population, considerably influenced the population growth.

The first decrease in population in Vojvodina after the Second World War was recorded between 1981 and 1991, when the index amounted 99.0 (Table 1). During that period, in 1989, negative natural increase was recorded in Vojvodina for the first time, and the number of emigrants was higher than the number of immigrants because of the “beginning” of the social crisis.

This crisis, which “ended” with the war between the former republics of Yugoslavia, also influenced the movement of the population of Vojvodina in the period between the two subsequent censuses. Namely, it is most likely that the population would have continued to decrease until 2002 due to negative natural increase “if there had not been for the influx of a large number of refugees from the former Yugoslav republics. This is the period in which the migratory population movements had great significance for total population dynamics” [Стојшин 2011: 230], because the natural increase was constantly negative.

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1 The index given to gradation of changes in population should be explained: index less than 79 indicates sudden and significant decrease; index from 80 to 89 indicates medium decrease; index from 90 to 98 indicates slight or moderate decrease, from 99 to 100 stagnation of population, from 101 to 109 slight or moderate increase, from 110 to 119 moderate increase, and index greater than 120 indicates sudden or large increase in population.
The 2002 Census showed that there were 144,404 people who moved to this province. The refugees had a share of 9.18% in the total number of population in Vojvodina [Two centuries...2008: 61] which meant that almost every tenth resident of Vojvodina escaped from the former Yugoslav republics during the war conflicts in the nineties.

Without immigrants, Vojvodina would have faced further decrease in the number of inhabitants. However, this population inflow into the territory of the province only briefly affected the increase in population. The last census of 2011 showed again that the population decreased, compared to the previous census year, by 100,183 inhabitants [Census 2011]. The growth index in this period was the lowest one since the Second World War (Table 1).

CHARACTERISTICS OF POPULATION TRENDS IN AREAS OF VOJVODINA

It should be noted that the demographic picture is not the same in all parts of Vojvodina and that the changes in population trends vary depending on the area regarded. In the period after the Second World War until 2011, the population constantly grew only in South Bačka region where the growth index from the 1948 Census to 2011 was 171.2 (Table 1).

All areas of Vojvodina were characterized by moderate increase in population until the 1961 Census. A slight reduction in the number of residents in North Banat occurred in the next 1971 Census, while in the 1981 Census the population decrease was also noted in Central Banat. Since then, these two regions have faced a constant decline.

In the areas of Srem, West and North Bačka and South Banat, the population decrease was observed between the 1981 and 1991 Censuses. In the period from 1991 to 2002, which was characterized by specific mechanical population movement, population increased in West and South Bačka and Srem, while in other areas the trend of population decline continued [Стојшин 2011: 233].

The period between 2002 and 2011 was characterized by population decrease in all areas except South Bačka (index 103.7). The greatest decrease in the nine year period between the two censuses was recorded in West Bačka (index 87.9) and North Banat (index 89.1) regions.

Analysis of population trends in different areas of Vojvodina has shown that these areas can be classified into three groups. The first group includes those areas in which the number of inhabitants constantly decreased since the population decrease was recorded for the first time up to the 2011 Census: North Bačka (after the 1981 Census), Central Banat (after 1971), North Banat (after 1961) and South Banat (after 1981). The second group comprises Srem and West Bačka where, after the 1991 decrease, population increase was recorded in 2002, but up to the last census continued to decline. South Bačka belongs to the third group with the population constantly increasing in the period between the censuses of 1948 and 2011.
### Table 1. Population trends in areas of Vojvodina

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Vojvodina</td>
<td>1,640,599</td>
<td>1,698,640</td>
<td>1,854,971</td>
<td>2,034,782</td>
<td>2,013,889</td>
<td>2,031,992</td>
<td>1,931,809</td>
<td>117.7</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>North Bačka</td>
<td>184,506</td>
<td>186,569</td>
<td>198,392</td>
<td>205,929</td>
<td>202,493</td>
<td>200,140</td>
<td>186,906</td>
<td>101.3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Central Banat</td>
<td>218,821</td>
<td>221,667</td>
<td>229,812</td>
<td>231,486</td>
<td>216,754</td>
<td>208,456</td>
<td>187,667</td>
<td>85.8</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>North Banat</td>
<td>189,050</td>
<td>189,414</td>
<td>194,150</td>
<td>191,632</td>
<td>187,179</td>
<td>177,542</td>
<td>165,881</td>
<td>78.2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South Banat</td>
<td>279,092</td>
<td>292,125</td>
<td>320,187</td>
<td>331,285</td>
<td>315,633</td>
<td>313,937</td>
<td>293,730</td>
<td>105.2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>West Bačka</td>
<td>200,465</td>
<td>207,941</td>
<td>219,331</td>
<td>220,876</td>
<td>210,679</td>
<td>214,011</td>
<td>188,087</td>
<td>93.8</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South Bačka</td>
<td>358,722</td>
<td>377,282</td>
<td>432,873</td>
<td>486,083</td>
<td>543,878</td>
<td>593,666</td>
<td>615,371</td>
<td>171.2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Srem</td>
<td>209,943</td>
<td>223,642</td>
<td>260,226</td>
<td>285,474</td>
<td>303,216</td>
<td>335,901</td>
<td>312,278</td>
<td>148.7</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Population censuses for given years; note: population indices are given in parentheses

### NATURAL INCREASE OF POPULATION IN VOJvodina

In the previous lines, as far as the space allowed, the influence of mechanical movement of population was explained, but it should be noted that the influence of natural movement in Vojvodina is equally important. Vojvodina is characterized by a long-term trend of decline in the natural increase rates. The highest natural increase of 10.9‰ in Vojvodina was recorded after the Second World War in the period from 1948 to 1952, while from 1953 to 1960 the rate fell to 8.7‰ [Стојшин 2011: 232].

Since the end of 1961, “in 71 places in Vojvodina, negative natural increase was recorded. In the next decade, their number increased to 210, and between 1981 and 1991, to 291” [Ђурчић 1996: 95]. Natural increase from 1981 to 1990 was about 0.7‰.

In the period between 2002 and 2011, natural increase in Vojvodina had negative rates, and they continued to decrease in the following years. In the last five years, birth rates of the population in the province have been approximately equal, with about 9.4 children per 1000 inhabitants being born each year. Mortality rates have also stabilized, ranging from 14.5‰. Today, natural increase is around -5.0‰.
Table 2. Natural increase in Vojvodina

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Birth rate</th>
<th>Mortality rate</th>
<th>Natural increase</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1961</td>
<td>17.2</td>
<td>9.5</td>
<td>7.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1971</td>
<td>13.4</td>
<td>10.2</td>
<td>3.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1981</td>
<td>13.7</td>
<td>11.5</td>
<td>2.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1991</td>
<td>11.4</td>
<td>13.2</td>
<td>-1.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2002</td>
<td>9.8</td>
<td>14.4</td>
<td>-4.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2011</td>
<td>9.0</td>
<td>14.5</td>
<td>-5.5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


NATURAL INCREASE IN THE AREAS OF VOJVODINA

As shown by the analysis of population trends, the areas in Vojvodina also vary in heights of their natural increase. Greater number of deaths than births was first recorded in North Bačka in 1971, -0.5‰, while in 1981, negative natural increase was recorded in North Banat (Table 3). The area where the natural increase had a maximum positive value was South Bačka, where negative growth was recorded for the first time in 1992 (-0.9‰).2

In the last intercensal period, natural increase was negative in all areas of Vojvodina, but the rates of growth varied widely. The population of North Banat has the lowest rates in this period, -8.4‰ as recorded in 2011, and the situation was similar with the population of Central Banat (Table 3). The highest rates, but still negative, were recorded for the population of South Bačka, for example the natural increase was -1.4‰ in 2009.

The following data show the degree of difference in natural increase between the regions and municipalities as well. Specifically, in 2011, the lowest natural increase was recorded for the population of Nova Crnja, as low as -14.8‰, Čoka and Sečanj -12.8‰, while positive natural increase was recorded in the City of Novi Sad 1.2‰ (municipality of Novi Sad 1.4‰, municipality of Petrovaradin -0.3‰) [Витална статистика 2011: 5].

Novi Sad, the centre of Vojvodina and South Bačka region, the city where people from Vojvodina and other areas of Serbia gravitate, is specific for its constant population growth. This increase has been the result of immigration, but of positive natural increase as well.

Within the period from 2002 to 2011, the natural increase in Novi Sad was negative from 2003 to 20053, and then became positive as a result of immigration, primarily of young people.

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2 Source: Two Centuries of ...2012:57
3 In Novi Sad, from 1961 to 2010 negative natural increase was recorded only in the course of 7 years: 1993: -0.1‰; 1998: -0.6‰; 1999: -1.1‰; 2000: -1.1‰; 2003: -0.5‰; 2004: -0.7‰; 2005: -1.0‰; [Natural Changes...2012: 65]
Table 3. Natural increase in the areas of Vojvodina

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
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<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>North Bačka</td>
<td>5.0</td>
<td>-0.5</td>
<td>-0.2</td>
<td>-4.1</td>
<td>-6.7</td>
<td>-7.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Central Banat</td>
<td>7.6</td>
<td>1.7</td>
<td>0.1</td>
<td>-4.5</td>
<td>-7.7</td>
<td>-7.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>North Banat</td>
<td>6.8</td>
<td>1.6</td>
<td>-0.6</td>
<td>-4.4</td>
<td>-7.1</td>
<td>-8.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South Banat</td>
<td>7.3</td>
<td>3.0</td>
<td>2.3</td>
<td>-2.0</td>
<td>-4.8</td>
<td>-6.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>West Bačka</td>
<td>8.4</td>
<td>3.7</td>
<td>1.7</td>
<td>-1.9</td>
<td>-6.0</td>
<td>-8.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South Bačka</td>
<td>9.0</td>
<td>5.2</td>
<td>4.5</td>
<td>0.2</td>
<td>-1.3</td>
<td>-2.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Srem</td>
<td>8.5</td>
<td>4.6</td>
<td>3.8</td>
<td>-0.1</td>
<td>-3.8</td>
<td>-5.4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Sources: Natural Changes …1961–2010; Vitalna statistika 2011

AGE STRUCTURE OF POPULATION IN VOJVODINA

The population in Vojvodina is getting older every year. The share of population under 19 in Serbia, in the period of only nine years between the censuses of 2002 and 2011, decreased from 22.3% to 19.9%, and in Vojvodina from 22.6% to 20.0%. On the other hand, the share of population over 60 in the total population in Serbia was 22.5% in 2002 and 24.8% in 2011, which means that one in four people are over 60. In Vojvodina, the proportion of aged population increased as well, from 21.4% in 2002, to 23.7% in 2011. Also, analysis of the share of population age groups of 20–39 and 40–59 showed that in all regions, except in South Bačka, there were more residents of 40–59 than from the younger group (Table 4). The age group of 40-59 was also the largest.

The average population age in Vojvodina, according to the last census, is 41.8. Male population is on average 40.2, while female population is 43.3 years old. In urban areas, the average population age is 41.4 and in villages it is 42.3.

It is obvious that in the period from 2002 to 2011 there were significant changes in the population age structure. The share of children in the total population of Vojvodina, which is an indicator of changes in the age structure, decreased from 15.6% in 2002 to 14.3%. The share of population aged 15 to 49 in the period between the last two censuses also decreased from 49.4% to 46.3%. It was only the population over 50 that increased in 2011, from 34.3% to 39.3%.

Old demographic age of all areas of Vojvodina can be confirmed by the aging index, which indicates the proportion of the population aged 0 to 14 and the population over 65. In 2011, the aging index was 1.15.

The only region with more young (15.12% of total population) than old population 14.97% is South Bačka, with aging index 0.99. The population of South Bačka is the youngest in Vojvodina with an average age of 40.6.

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4 Source: The 2011 Census, Book 2; 2002 Census, Book 2
5 Source: The 2011 Census, Book 2
6 Source: The 2002 Census, Book 2
The population of West Bačka is the oldest, with the worst ratio of young (13.23%) and the population over 65 (18.33%). The aging index is 1.38. The population of this area has the highest average age of 43.3.

The situation is similar in North Banat (index 1.28) followed by Central Banat (1.22).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 4. Population by age in %, the 2011 Census</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Serbia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vojvodina</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>West Bačka</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South Banat</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South Bačka</td>
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<tr>
<td>North Banat</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>North Bačka</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Central Banat</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Srem</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: The 2011 Census, Book 2

CONCLUSION

The 2011 Census showed that changes in the population trends recorded in 2002 did not affect permanently the demography of Vojvodina which is getting worse every year. Population increase recorded in 2002 was the result of a large number of immigrants. If the number of immigrants had been excluded from the total population of Vojvodina, the total population would have been lower in this census, too. We can say with certainty that the trend of population decline, briefly interrupted by specific mechanical movements, continued in the period from 2002 to 2011, and that it is most likely to continue in the future.

Some areas in Vojvodina have fewer inhabitants than after the World War Two. The areas with more inhabitants in 2011 than in 1948 are South Bačka (index 2011/1948 is 171.2), Srem (index 148.7), South Banat (105.2) and North Bačka (101.3). Other areas had fewer inhabitants in 2011 than in 1948 and the largest decrease in population in this period was recorded in North Banat (index being only 78.2).

Although natural increase had greater influence on the population increase in the period after World War Two, today, negative rates affect population decrease in all areas of Vojvodina. The only area where natural increase is low but generally positive, the area to which people from other parts of Vojvodina and Central Serbia gravitate, is South Bačka, namely the City of Novi Sad. The population of this center of gravity is constantly growing while other areas
tend to be characterized by negative migration balance and very low, negative natural increase.

Vojvodina is characterized by increasing depopulation and aging population. Negative demographic trends will continue in the future. The importance of the analysis of population trends, and their structures as well, is reflected primarily in the planning of renewal and further development of Vojvodina and its areas.

REFERENCES


САЖЕТАК: На основу пописа из 2011. године у Војводини живи 1.931.809 ста-
новника што је за 100.183 мање у односу на 2002. годину. Војводина данас има мање
становника него 1971. године. Овај пад броја становника је, судећи по последњем
цензусу, присутан у свим општинама осим у граду Новом Саду где се број становни-
ка сваке године увећава за 4.703.
Циљ овог рада је анализа кретања становништва у периоду између два цензу-
са, при чему је посебна пажња дата специфичним кретањима становништва у поједи-
ним областима Војводине. Област северног Баната би посебно требало издвојити
јер је карактерише сталан пад броја становника још од 1961. године. С друге стра-
не, јужна Бачка бележи стабилан раст броја становника у периоду између Другог
светског рата па до данас, чему је углавном допринело механичко кретање станов-
ништва или имиграција у централни део ове области – град Нови Сад.
Поред броја становника који је у сталном паду, Војводину такође карактерише
популација са високим просечним годинама. Резултати последњег цензуса указују
на то да је становништво у двиим општинама старије од 40. години осим у општини
Жабаљ (39.7) и граду Новом Саду (40.0).
Анализа података је показала да се тренд пада броја становника у Војводини,
који је проузрокован високом стопом морталитета и ниском стопом наталитета,
наставља и да старосна структура становништва постaje све неповољнија.
КЉУЧНЕ РЕЧИ: кретања становништва, раст становништва, миграције, ста-
рење становништва, Војводина, Нови Сад