DETERMINANTS OF DEMOGRAPHIC DEVELOPMENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF SRPSKA AT THE BEGINNING OF THE 21TH CENTURY

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ABSTRACT: For decades now, the Republic of Srpska has been affected by the natural depopulation process and starting with 2002 it has been manifested through negative rate of natural increase resulting from natality decrease and mortality increase. During the target period, the number of the live-born declined by 28% whereas the number of the dead increased by 25%. Clearly, negative demographic figures along with negative migrations resulted in the total depopulation. Negative migration balance additionally complicates negative demographic trend, which results in total depopulation of large proportions. Major issue of the Republic of Srpska population is the phenomenon of low fertility resulting from a whole range of negative factors. Therefore, the implementation of population policy measures is fundamental for both society and population in the country.

KEYWORDS: demographic development, Republic of Srpska, low fertility, population policy

In the first decade of 21st century, the Republic of Srpska witnessed an extremely difficult demographic development period in which the population gradually decreased and the natural increase got a decreasing trend. Annual population growth rate and data on the population percentage in specific areas indicate the interdependence among natural movement, depopulation, and population ageing [Marinković 2012].
Since 1992, RS population figures have been rather difficult to analyze from a scientific point of view due to the lack of a census for more than two decades. In 2013, 22 years later, a census of population, households, and flats was conducted. According to the preliminary results, there are 1,326,991 people in the Republic of Srpska.
Between 1991 and 2013, 82.2% of cities and municipalities, out of a total of 51 on RS territory, faced the population decrease. The depopulation process mostly affected eastern parts of the country, the municipalities of Berkovići, Bratunac, Višegrad, Vlasenica, East Mostar, Kalinovik, Novo Goražde, Rogatica, Srebrenica, Trnovo, Foča, Han Pijesak, and Čajniče where the population is one-third fewer than it was in 1991. Only 4 cities and 9 municipalities had the population larger than in 1991. The largest increase in population was in the cities of East Sarajevo (53.7%), Bijeljina (18.4%), Trebinje (7.8%), and Banja Luka (2%). The municipality of East New Sarajevo had three times larger population, and the population was almost as twice as large in East Ilidža and East Drvar. The municipality of Pale had the population increase of 55.5%, whereas in municipalities of Laktaši (23.2%) and East Old Town (19.9%) the population increased by one fifth. The increase was insignificant in the municipalities of Petrovac (1.4%) and Kostajnica (1.4%) and in Nevesinje the figures did not change at all [Marinković 2014].

Out of 2,756 settlements in the Republic of Srpska, 530 (19.2%) have population less than 10 people. These settlements are mostly located in the eastern parts of the country in municipalities of Višegrad (78), Kalinovik (45), Rogatica (34), Novo Goražde (33), Rudo (27), Foča (23) and Gacko (21), and in the city of Trebinje (68). Twelve municipalities had no settlements with population less than 10: Gradiška, Donji Žabar, East Ilidža, East New Sarajevo, Kneževo, Kozarska Dubica, Kostajnica, Laktaši, Novi Grad, Petrovo, Prnjavor, and Čelinac.

Extremely heterogeneous demographic features are typical of the RS area. Two thirds or 65% of the population are located west from the Brčko District all the way to Novi Grad and Ribnik, whereas the rest of the population belongs to the eastern part of the country south from Rača all the way to Trebinje and south from East Herzegovina [Marinković 2012].

The analysis of regional population distribution indicates that Banja Luka mesoregion is the most populated. Namely, this region is spatially the largest and includes 35.5% of total RS population according to 2012 estimations. Bijeljina mesoregion comes second (20%) followed by Doboj (17.4%) and Prijedor (11.6%). The following two highland mesoregions have the poorest population rates – East Sarajevo with 9.7% and Trebinje with 5.8%. The aforementioned is a direct consequence of long term emigrations that had only been accelerated by the 1992–1995 events which caused some areas to reach critical population density.

Republic of Šrpska has poor population density of 51.1 people per square kilometer. The previous cartogram clearly shows that within the country’s borderline there are extreme differences in population density. Most populated are Bijeljina and Doboj mesoregions with 74.2 and 71 people per square kilometer, respectively. Prijedor mesoregion has the population density of 66.9 people per square kilometer whereas Banja Luka mesoregion figures are 66. The poorest average density is in East Sarajevo (22.5) and Trebinje (19.1) mesoregions which are also the least populated [Marinković 2014].
Components of RS population natural movement indicate certain problems with almost all cities and municipalities. According to the 1991 population census, there were 42 municipalities in the RS territory with moderate rate of natural increase (5–14‰), and only 10 municipalities with low rate of natural increase (up to 5‰). The 1996 data show negative rate of natural increase in 28 municipalities, which makes 46% of RS territory [Marinković 2010].
The cartogram clearly shows that out of a total of 63 cities and municipalities in the Republic of Srpska, only 3 had positive rate of natural increase. Thus, except Banja Luka, Čelinac, and Jezero all other local communities had more deceased than the newborns.

We should say that ever since 1992 no city or municipality has had a continuous positive trend in the rate of natural increase. Furthermore, it is
evident that 11 cities and municipalities, or one-fifth of RS territory, has not had positive rate of natural increase during that period: Višegrad, East Drvar, East Mostar, East New Sarajevo, Kalinovik, Kozarska Dubica, Kostajnica, Petrovo, Prijedor, Rudo, and Han Pijesak.

Table 1. Population number, population density, components of natural movement, inner migrations and number of enrolled pupils in elementary schools in RS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Population number</th>
<th>Absolute difference</th>
<th>Relative difference (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1991</td>
<td>1,558,387*</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2013</td>
<td>1,326,991**</td>
<td>-231,396</td>
<td>-14.8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Population density</th>
<th>Absolute difference</th>
<th>Relative difference (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1991</td>
<td>63.24 st/km²*</td>
<td>-9.34</td>
<td>-14.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2013</td>
<td>53.85 st/km²**</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Rate of natural increase</th>
<th>Absolute difference</th>
<th>Relative difference (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1996</td>
<td>1,332***</td>
<td>-5,800</td>
<td>-30,532</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2013</td>
<td>-4,468****</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Number of the liveborn</th>
<th>Absolute difference</th>
<th>Relative difference (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1996</td>
<td>12,263***</td>
<td>-2,753</td>
<td>-22.45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2013</td>
<td>9,510***</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Number of the deceased</th>
<th>Absolute difference</th>
<th>Relative difference (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1996</td>
<td>10,931***</td>
<td>3,047</td>
<td>27.87</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2013</td>
<td>13,978***</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Inner migration balance</th>
<th>Absolute difference</th>
<th>Total sum (2007–2013.)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2007</td>
<td>133****</td>
<td>506</td>
<td>8,149</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2013</td>
<td>639*****</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Number of pupils enrolled in elementary schools</th>
<th>Absolute difference</th>
<th>Relative difference (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1996</td>
<td>127,426******</td>
<td>-30,902</td>
<td>-24.25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2013</td>
<td>96,524******</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*** Demographic statistics – Bulletins no 4 and 14, Banja Luka: Republic of Srpska Institute of Statistics.
****** Education statistics – Elementary education, Bulletins no 2 and 14, Banja Luka: Republic of Srpska Institute of Statistics.
The previous Table clearly shows that all the parameters for the RS territory, except inner migration balance, are negative. In comparison with the previous period, there are now fewer people and poorer population density; the rate of natural increase has decreased; the number of the live-born is smaller as well as the number of pupils enrolled in elementary schools.

In the near future, we may witness further decline in fertility due to the age disparity. Namely, the decreased natality rate in the early 1960s affected the portion of the reproductive population in the early 21st century. In 2013, the fertile women were those born between 1964 and 1998. Radical decline in natality in the 1970s, 1980s, and 1990s largely affected the reproduction trends in the Republic of Srpska.

In the next two decades, we might expect a mortality increase due to the inevitable loss of the 'baby boom' era population. In the early 2010s, a great part of the population, born after the WW II, got retired which shall have a further impact on the population age structure and the country’s funds. If we wish to improve the life expectancy, there is a need for preventive measures and strategies regarding the elderly population.

Family planning and population policy in the Republic of Srpska are largely affected by the existing social changes. The analyses of demographic determinants over the last decade clearly show a long-term demographic recession in the country, which was initiated by the intensive decline in fertility. In order to boost the fertility, it is necessary to develop strategies of demographic development and a family planning program which should consider the number of children necessary to replace the whole generations. Therefore, we need intensive activities to systemize the existing population policy measures and we should aim at the pronatality policy [Marinković 2014].

The general principle of population policy should be based upon the free decision making of each individual and family regardless of where the policy is being implemented. Population policy should reflect pro-natality measures on both national and local levels. The measures of pro-natality population policy should focus on children and women healthcare, child allowances, female education, and promotion of motherhood. It is crucial to make a clear distinction between population policy and social policy, i.e. a healthy population climate within a society is a priority.

Recent studies have shown that there are preconditions for birth rehabilitation in the Republic of Srpska – a fact which we base upon the opinion of most examinees that there is no clear line between a desirable and ideal number of children. In other words, three is both ideal and desirable number of children, but there is also the key number for the population reproduction which should be aimed at. Studies have confirmed that the poor reproduction in the Republic of Srpska is in connection with poor funds. Still, there is a clear readiness to adopt the pronatality policy measures in order to boost the number of the newborns [Marinković 2014].

The demographic recovery of the country as well as the demographic structure improvement entails the birth rate increase, which is attainable only by motherhood promotion (female employment incentives, labor market adjustment,
liability for legal irregularities and contempt with reference to maternal leave, 
financial incentives for families with three or more children, larger fertility 
treatment funds) and improvement of children's social care (new pre-school 
facilities, playgrounds, parks, and other cultural and sports contents, new sets 
of tax laws to support tax-free children products, daily excursions for children 
under the age of 12, new residential quarters for families with large number of 
children at small interest rates, stimulation for employers of couples with three 
or more children).

In rural areas, population and human resources should be preserved and 
given incentives via different commercial activities, employment of the young, 
construction of small production and processing capacities, employment of 
women, and different financial and non-material stimulations for rural families. 
In order to prevent further rural depopulation, rural residents should be pro-
vided with stable income. Cooperatives should actually represent places where 
the individual agricultural producers might conveniently purchase everything 
necessary for the production and placement of their products. Therefore, it is 
crucial to create such conditions that would enable women to start their own 
cooperatives in order to consolidate their agricultural products [Marinković 2014].

A long-term plan should be to prevent the young from leaving the country 
through different programs such as: employment support and career development 
for the young (support employment and self-employment of the young research-
ers and scientists, programs of training in entrepreneurship, provision of scholar-
arships for the talented people and prospective professionals, improvement of 
higher education quality, development of the program of professional training 
within the education system); management of the housing facilities for the 
young (construction of economic residential facilities, subsidies for residential 
problems of young couples with children), and stronger engagement of the 
young in the creation of cultural and sports affairs (stimulation of the young 
to take local initiatives and availability of different cultural and sports content).

Regardless of the significant regional differences within the Republic of 
Srpska area, due to general demographic migrations, specific population policy 
measures should be introduced gradually. Special attention ought to be paid to 
specific economic, socio-cultural, and other characteristics of various regions, 
i.e. the population policy should be spatially differentiated.

In order to provide a safe and balanced demographic and economic pros-
perity, the population policy measures should aim at the death rate decrease.

The focus should also be on the female health care, their reproductive 
potential and health, disease prevention, promotion of healthy life style, usage 
of adequate contraception, sterility struggle, appropriate care during and after 
pregnancy, etc.

A novelty in population policy is the population education, meaning that 
individuals know little about family planning and population policy in gen-
eral. Hence, continuous campaigns are necessary in order to spread the infor-
mation on demographic trends in the Republic of Srpska at all education levels – 
ranging from primary schools to universities [Marinković 2014].

The universal goal of the population policy measures regarding the pro-
natality should be the total fertility of 2.1 children per one mother. This would
enable a simple generation switch and the stationary population level. This goal is also attainable by promoting mothers as professionals, which means that the national program of demographic development should be a crucial document to define the family planning strategy. More specifically, in the Republic of Srpska, a whole range of measures aiming at specific population groups are necessary to promote the birth of the first and second child. The birth of a third child should be stimulated financially, i.e. the child benefits ought to be a universal trend (regardless of the financial status of a family). Based upon the suggested measures of population policy implementation in the Republic of Srpska, it is expected to reach the total fertility rate (TFR) of 2.1 children per one mother and to enable a simple generation switch.

**INSTEAD OF CONCLUSION**

Demographic development in the Republic of Srpska is a threat to the total development. Bearing in mind the aforementioned demographic features, it is crucial to implement the spatially differentiated population policy as soon as possible, especially at the municipal level. The population policy should indeed be based upon the birth rates stimulation.

The design of pro-natality population policy measures requires extensive multidisciplinary studies, which consequently needs bigger scientific, IT, and statistics funds than we have at our disposal. The pro-natality population policy should have explicit demographic objectives targeting at the total number and structure of the population, using strategic variables of fertility, nuptiality, death rates and migrations.

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РЕЗИМЕ: Демографски развој Републике Српске пријети да буде огранича-
вајући фактор свеукупног развоја. Република Српска је већ деценијски захваћена
природном депопулацијом, која се од 2002. године манифестује негативним при-
родним прираштајем, што је посљедица смањивања стопе наталитета, а повећавања
стопе морталитета. У анализираним периоду број живорођених се смањио за 28%,
dок је у истом временском интервалу број умрлих порастао за четвртину. Изрази-
tо негативна демографска слика, потпомогнута негативним миграционим салдом,
манifestује се укупном депопулацијом. Негативна демографска слика додатно је
усложњена и негативним миграционим салдом, тако да укупна депопулација попри
ма велике размјере. Основни проблем становништва Републике Српске је феномен
недовољног рађања који је посљедица низа негативних фактора. Имајући у виду
назначене демографске карактеристике, неопходно је што прије приступити спро-
вођењу просторно диференциране популационе политике, а посебно на нивоу
општина. Основна карактеристика популационе политике требало би да се заснива
на стимулисању (повећању) наталитета. Разрада мјера за провођење пронаталитет-
не популационе политике захтјева опширна мултидисциплинарна истраживања,
која би се ослањала на далеко шири научни и статистичко-информациони фонд од
оног којим ми располажемо. Пронаталитетна популациона политика би требало да
има експлицитне демографске циљеве који утичу на укупан број и структуре ста-
новништва путем стратешких варијабли фертилитета, нупцијалитета, морталите-
tа и миграција

КЉУЧНЕ РИЈЕЧИ: демографски развој, Република Српска, низак фертилитет,
pопулациона политика