

Changes in Average Age of National Minorities and Serbs in Vojvodina for the Period 1971-1991

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Abstract

The aim of the paper is comparison of average ages of different nationalities in Vojvodina Province between 1971 and 1991 census.

General averages in individual groups of communities state that this tendency will continue and that the situation will be stabilized only in very critical levels for aging and birth rate. This general averages show that Romanians have the highest average age and Serbs the smallest, but the increase of average age from 1971 to 1991 is greatest with Serbs (4 years and 6 months), and the smallest with Slovaks (2 years and 7 months).

Keywords: average age, minorities, Serbs, Vojvodina

Basic difficulty in determining average age of representatives of national minority or Serbs is in the fact that after the census, the obtained data is not divided into specific groups denoting sex and age structure of individual ethnic groups, but this structure is given for individual settlements. Because the average age is calculated as a ponder arithmetic mean from the data about sex and age structure, the only possibility to reach this number for a particular ethnic group is to calculate it for the communities where a particular ethnic group or Serbs represent absolute majority of population. Because that majority is never 100 % but smaller, there is enough room for unavoidable mistake, which is not so serious to diminish the importance of our calculation, so we can tolerate it.

To find out as precisely as we can the changes of average age of the representatives of national minority or Serbs we have done vast calculations from the statistics date from the Census 1971 and census 1991 for 56 communities in Vojvodina.

In sixteen of them Hungarians represent the absolute majority. In 1991 that number decreased to 45 961 (85.1 %), which then was 13.5 % of all Hungarians in Vojvodina. In most of these communities Hungarians represent majority from 91.1 to 98.3 %. Only two communities have majority under 90 % - Kanjiža (88.9 %) and Kupusina (89.6 %). In this case, the communities with smaller percentages of Hungarians have not been taken into account because it would unnecessarily decrease the correctness of the calculation. We think that 16 communities among which there are two cities are sufficient to reach the necessary conclusion. All details are given in Table.1.

In twelve of the mentioned communities Romanians have absolute majority. In 1971 these communities had 17 652 citizens. In 1991 the number decreased to 13 171 (74.6 %), which then repre-

sented 33.9 % of all Romanians in Vojvodina. In five of these communities, Romanians represent between 91.4 to 98.1 % of citizens while in other seven communities the percentages are smaller but, as in other examples in this work, it is not lower than 80 %. The percentage of Romanians is between 80.1 and 87.6 %. All details can be examined in table 2.

The average age of Ruthenians could have been examined only in one community - Ruski Krstur in Kula municipality, because the concentration of Ruthenians in all other communities is too low to obtain any objective results.

Ruski Krstur had 5 960 citizens in 1971 and till 1991 the number decreased to 5 636 (94.6 %), which for that year was 31.5 % of all Ruthenians in Vojvodina. Ruthenians in that community represent 90.2 % of entire population (Table.3).

Average age of Slovaks has been investigated in 9 communities. In five of them Slovaks represent from 90.2 to 97.2 % of population, while in other communities that percentage is between 80.8 to 87.5 %. In 1971, these communities had 41 065 citizens but in 1991 that number decreased to 39 234 (95.5 %), which for that year was 61.4 % of all Slovaks in Vojvodina (Table.4).

Finally, in 18 communities where Serbs have absolute majority the percentages range from 95.4 to 99.3 %. In 1971 there were 37 526 citizens, but in 1991 it decreased to 35 348 (94.2 %), which in that year was 3.1 % of all Serbs in Vojvodina (Table.5).

If we examine all five tables we can immediately see the following: 1) average age for all communities is above 30 years of age, and demographically it means that the conditions for renewal of the population are becoming worse. Birth rate falls, but mortality increases to a certain extent or stands on relatively high level; 2) in interval of twenty years, from 1971 to 1991, average age of the representatives of national minorities and Serbs increased drastically and not only became closer to forty but was above it in some cases. In Serb communities only two had average age close or above 40 years, while the rest of them had lower average; 3) average age of female population is always higher than the average age of the entire or male population. The reason for this is a fact that women live a few years longer than men do and because of old women the female segment is always greater in number and older than the male one.

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We shall now give a short evaluation of the situation and progression of average age of each national minority and Serbs, but because of extremely large number of data we will give a general average for each national minorities and Serbs (it is a ponder arithmetic mean of arithmetic means) Where we transformed months into corresponding decimal part of the year and then after obtaining the result, the final decimal part is transformed back into months.

Hungarians

In sixteen communities, average age of entire population was in 1971 from minimal 33 years and 4 months (Utrine) to 41 years and 7 months (Majdan), and in 1991 from minimal 38 years and 7 months

(Trešnjevac) to maximal 49 years and 1 month (Majdan). In some communities the increase is drastic, but total average shows milder situation, thus for all 16 communities average age of the entire population in 1971 is 37 years and 7 months, and for 1991 40 years and 3 months. The data show an increase of average age for 2 years and 8 months for the period of twenty years.

Romanians

In twelve communities with Romanian majority average age of the entire population ranged from minimal 36 years and 1 month (Gebenac) to maximal 39 years and 7 months (Markovac). Total average was 38 years and 7 months in 1971, and 41 year and 10 months for

1991. The increase of average age in this period was 3 years and 3 months.

Ruthenians

In Ruski Krstur, the average age of the total population was 37 years and 4 months in 1971 and in 1991 it was 40 years and 5 months. The increase for the period of twenty years was 3 years and 1 month.

Slovaks

In nine communities with Slovak majority, average age of total population was from 28 years and 9 months (Lug) to 38 years and 11 months (Pivnice) in 1971. In 1991, minimum was 32 years and 5 months (Lug) and maximum 41 years

Table 1. Fluctuations in Average Age Hungarians in Vojvodina from 1971 -1991

Town	Municipality	Population number 1971	1971 Average Age (months and year)			Population number 1991	1991 Average Age (months and year)			Change in Population number 1991/71 %	Nationality Percentage in 1991
			Total	Male	Female		Total	Male	Female		
Bački Vinogradi	Subotica	3744	35.6	34.4	36.8	2242	40.3	38.6	41.1	59.9	91.1
Gunaroš	B.Topola	1884	38.7	37.4	39.1	1531	39.3	38.4	40.1	81.3	97.6
Jazovo	Čoka	1625	40.5	39.1	41.9	1118	46.4	43.5	49.2	68.8	95.8
Kanjiza	Kanjiza	11240	37.1	35.10	38.3	11541	38.11	37.4	40.5	102.7	88.9
Kupusina	Apatin	3063	40.4	38.11	41.7	2500	41.6	40.0	42.11	81.6	89.6
Majdan	Novi Kneževac	624	42.7	43.1	42.2	387	49.1	46.11	51.3	62.0	91.2
Male Pijace	Kanjiza	2402	37.0	36.3	37.9	2144	40.6	39.3	41.10	89.3	97.6
Mali Idoš	Mali Idoš	6603	39.6	38.1	40.9	5803	39.10	38.2	45.1	87.9	92.6
Mihajlovo	Zrenjanin	1252	35.4	35.3	35.5	1169	40.2	39.7	40.8	93.4	93.4
Orom	Kanjiza	2552	34.3	33.8	34.11	1912	40.2	38.7	41.11	74.9	94.1
Sajan	Kikinda	1982	39.3	38.2	40.5	1555	42.1	40.7	43.8	78.5	94.5
Trešnjevac	Kanjiza	2304	33.7	32.10	34.5	2028	38.7	36.6	40.10	88.0	96.7
Torda	Žitište	3345	40.2	38.10	41.6	2183	43.6	41.8	45.2	65.3	91.5
Totovo selo	Kanjiza	1073	35.6	34.9	36.3	765	42.10	41.10	43.10	71.3	98.3
Utrine	Ada	1233	33.4	33.9	33.0	1143	39.2	38.0	40.6	92.7	96.4
Čantavir	Subotica	9085	37.7	36.1	39.0	7940	40.4	38.9	42.0	87.4	94.4

Table 2. Fluctuations in Average Age Romanians in Vojvodina from 1971 -1991

Town	Municipality	Population number 1971	1971 Average Age (months and year)			Population number 1991	1991 Average Age (months and year)			Change in Population number 1991/71 %	Nationality Percentage in 1991
			Total	Male	Female		Total	Male	Female		
Barice	Plandište	1259	37.3	36.5	38.1	887	43.1	42.3	43.10	70.5	91.4
Vojvodinci	Vršac	902	38.8	37.9	39.6	593	42.9	42.8	42.10	65.7	98.1
Gebenac	Bela Crkva	2040	36.1	35.0	37.2	1608	39.3	37.11	40.6	78.8	82.5
Jankov Most	Zrenjanin	977	41.6	40.8	42.5	752	43.4	41.11	44.9	77.0	80.1
Kuštilj	Vršac	1416	39.8	38.3	40.11	1082	41.5	39.7	43.1	76.4	96.6
Lokve	Alibunar	3826	37.5	36.5	38.4	2973	42.0	41.0	42.11	77.7	92.3
Malo Središte	Vršac	295	37.10	35.11	39.8	161	41.3	40.1	42.4	54.6	84.5
Markovać	Vršac	817	41.0	39.9	42.2	570	44.7	43.3	45.9	69.8	84.7
Mesić	Vršac	431	40.5	40.3	40.7	347	40.5	39.0	41.10	80.5	87.6
Ritiševo	Vršac	1017	38.4	37.4	39.2	808	42.11	40.8	44.11	79.4	84.0
Sočica	Vršac	470	39.1	37.7	40.6	291	43.8	40.1	47.2	61.9	94.5
Uzdin	Kovačica	4202	39.8	38.5	40.9	3099	41.7	40.2	43.0	73.8	84.9

Table 3. Fluctuations in Average Age Ruthinians in Vojvodina from 1971 -1991

Town	Municipality	Population number 1971	1971 Average Age (months and year)			Population number 1991	1971 Average Age (months and year)			Change in Population number 1991/71 %	Nationality Percentage in 1991
			Total	Male	Female		Total	Male	Female		
Ruski Krstur	Kula	5960	37.4	35.9	38.1	5636	40.5	38.9	41.11	94.6	90.2

Table 4. Fluctuations in Average Age Slovaks in Vojvodina from 1971 -1991

Town	Municipality	Population number 1971	1971 Average Age (months and year)			Population number 1991	1971 Average Age (months and year)			Change in Population number 1991/71 %	Nationality Percentage in 1991
			Total	Male	Female		Total	Male	Female		
Bački Petrovac	Bački Petrovac	7822	37.3	36.4	38.1	7236	39.6	37.4	41.6	92.5	87.5
Gložan	Bački Petrovac	2682	37.9	36.10	38.7	2491	40.8	39.0	42.3	92.9	90.2
Janošik	Alibunar	1488	32.4	31.6	33.1	1225	38.4	37.4	39.5	82.3	95.0
Kisač	Novi Sad	5598	36.7	35.8	37.6	5850	39.7	38.4	40.11	104.5	87.1
Kovačica	Kovačica	7119	34.7	33.7	35.7	7426	38.2	36.8	39.8	104.3	86.1
Lug	Beočin	775	28.9	27.11	29.7	864	32.11	32.2	33.8	111.5	97.2
Padina	Kovačica	6362	33.0	32.1	33.11	6076	36.2	35.0	37.5	95.5	97.0
Pivnice	Bačka Palanka	5162	38.5	37.1	39.9	4361	41.7	39.11	43.4	84.5	80.8
Selenča	Bač	4057	34.10	33.10	35.10	3705	38.5	36.11	39.10	91.3	92.7

Table 5. Fluctuations in Average Age Serbs in Vojvodina from 1971 -1991

Town	Municipality	Population number 1971	1971 Average Age (months and year)			Population number 1991	1971 Average Age (months and year)			Change in Population number 1991/71 %	Nationality Percentage in 1991
			Total	Male	Female		Total	Male	Female		
Bosut	Sremska Mitrovica	1284	31.3	31.2	31.5	1149	38.7	37.0	40.1	89.5	97.3
Brestlač	Pećinci	1122	33.5	31.9	34.11	1031	37.9	35.7	39.11	91.9	96.6
Budanovci	Ruma	2260	35.0	34.10	35.3	1848	39.5	37.11	40.11	81.8	96.5
Veliki Radinci	Sremska Mitrovica	1513	31.11	30.3	33.7	1570	37.8	36.5	38.10	103.8	97.3
Gardinovci	Titel	1636	35.11	34.10	36.11	1452	40.3	38.8	41.10	88.8	95.9
Grgurevci	Sremska Mitrovica	1452	32.6	29.9	35.0	1319	38.5	36.0	40.10	90.8	95.5
Divoš	Sremska Mitrovica	1644	34.1	33.4	34.9	1527	39.7	37.9	41.4	92.9	95.7
Karavukovo	Odžaci	5925	30.9	30.3	31.3	5607	37.1	36.1	38.0	94.6	95.8
Knićanin	Zrenjanin	2251	28.7	28.6	28.9	2227	35.9	34.11	36.7	98.9	95.4
Mandelos	Sremska Mitrovica	1418	31.9	31.3	32.2	1478	36.2	34.4	38.0	104.2	97.1
Martinci	Sremska Mitrovica	4003	36.3	35.2	37.4	3663	40.0	38.3	41.9	91.5	96.0
Mošorin	Titel	2694	36.7	36.2	37.0	2552	37.11	36.9	39.3	94.7	95.8
Noćaj	Sremska Mitrovica	2338	36.8	35.10	37.6	2237	39.2	38.2	40.1	95.7	99.3
Ogar	Pećinci	1119	31.4	29.8	33.1	1111	35.6	33.7	37.4	99.3	96.8
Ravnje	Sremska Mitrovica	1745	35.2	34.7	35.11	1587	39.3	39.4	39.3	90.4	99.3
Radenković	Sremska Mitrovica	1105	34.5	33.4	35.7	1076	37.7	37.11	37.2	97.4	95.5
Salaš Noćajski	Sremska Mitrovica	1829	35.3	34.6	36.1	1894	37.3	36.7	37.11	103.6	97.4
Stepanovićevo	Novi Sad	2188	34.1	32.5	35.9	2020	38.8	37.6	39.9	92.3	94.9

and 7 months (Pivnice). Average age increase was 2 years and 7 months.

Serbs

Since there are many villages with Serbian majority, the criterion was stricter and only communities with percentages above 95 % were taken into account (except for one village). In eighteen communities average age of total population varied from minimal 26 years and 7 months (Kničanin) to maximal 36 years and 8 months (Noćaj). In 1991 minimum was 35 years and 6 months (Ogar) and 40 years and 3 month (Gardinovci). Total average for all 18 communities was 33 years and 7 months in 1971, and 38 years and 1 month in 1991. Increase in average age was 4 years and 6 months.

Conclusion

In the 56 studied communities, population is far older than needed for normal reproduction. This property belongs to the depopulation phase, when birth

rate drastically decreases and death rate mildly increases or stands still on a relatively high level. This was confirmed for Slovaks and Romanians in two outstanding studies by other authors (Kicošev, 1987 and 1991).

In 49 communities, population number on 9 to 45 %, so in addition to death rate it is justified to assume high level of immigration (this overcomes the scope of our research). In the studied communities there are seven (among which two cities) which show increase in population between 1971 and 1991, and still record high level of average age. They are as follows: Kanjiža (102.7), Kisač (104.5), Kovačica (104.3), Lug (11.5), Veliki Radinci (103.8), Mandelos (104.2) and Salaš Noćajski (103.6). In these communities, the minimal average age was 28 years and 9 months (Lug), and maximal 37 years and 1 month (Kanjiža) in 1971. In 1991, minimum was 32 years and 11 months (Lug) and maximum 39 years and 7 months (Kisač). This clearly shows that birth rate extremely decreased.

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