

ETHNO-DEMOGRAPHIC PROCESSES OF THE ROMANIAN MINORITY IN SERBIA DURING THE PERIOD 1948-2011

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Abstract: From ancient times Romanians have been an integral part of a multi-ethnic population in Serbia. Today the Romanian population lives in about 138 settlements in the Republic of Serbia: Bor, Braničevo, Zaječar, Pomoravlje, Podunavlje, Nišavska and Rasina districts. The largest number of Romanians are living in the autonomous province of Vojvodina, making 1.5% of the total population. Paradigms of ethno-demographic processes, observed in the period from 1948 to 2011 year, indicate very complex changes in the Romanian minority in Serbia, characterized by: a total population reduction, population aging, immigration, assimilation. This paper represents the ethnic theory that ethnic minorities develop in interaction with other ethnic groups.

Keywords: *Romanians, Serbia, depopulation, projections of the Romanian population in Serbia*

1. INTRODUCTION

The Republic of Serbia is a country with a heterogeneous ethnic composition, and a great number of different ethnic communities¹ live on its territory. Such ethno-demographic

¹ The Government of the Republic of Serbia - Office of Human and Minority Rights has registered 20 national councils of national minorities including the National Council of the Romanian national *minority*.

phenomenon is the result of a number of factors: geographical location, a large number of neighboring countries, chaotic and planned migration, wars, epidemics, industrialization and urbanization. Frequent changes of state borders have influenced the changes in the demographic structure of the population in Serbia and its geographic distribution. Since ancient times, Romanians have been an integral part of the multi-ethnic structure of the population of the Republic of Serbia. Uncontrolled migration of the Romanian population from Turkish invasions, but also for economic reasons to the territories of Serbia, as well as a planned settlement of Romanians in the western part of Banat (Vojvodina), by the Viennese court, have most influenced the present-day distribution of Romanians in Serbia, then metanastasic movements (Cvijić, 1991) and colonization of Romanians in Vojvodina in the 18th and 19th centuries (Jankulov, 2003, 45-50). Today Romanians live in 138 settlements in the Republic of Serbia, in the counties: Bor, Braničevo, Zaječar, Pomoravlje, Podunavlje, Nišava and Rasina districts. The largest number live in the autonomous province of Vojvodina, making 1.5% of the total population of Vojvodina. Paradigms of ethno-demographic processes of the Romanian minority community, observed in the period from 1948 to 2011, indicate very complex changes of the Romanian minority in Serbia through: total reduction of the population, aging of population, assimilation, integration and the creation of specific form of identity.

2. METHODOLOGY

The research process is based on the interest in the study of the Romanian population in Serbia, and the idea that the Romanian population in Serbia is in specific dynamic ethno-demographic processes, as well as on the theory that Romanians are in the process of quiet assimilation and integration with the Serbian majority. Regarding the methodological procedure, we opted for the "case study" method, deeming that by applying this method we can adequately perceive the generation, description and the real life context in which the Romanian population is nowadays, in order to preserve the integrity of the Romanian population, their spatial and temporal location.

The reference material for the study of national minorities in the Republic of Serbia is based on the methodology of the National Bureau of Statistics of the Republic of Serbia, which is used when conducting a census to determine the ethnic background, which is based on a subjective statement or self-definition of the respondents. Each person included in the census of population in the Republic of Serbia has the ability and the right of free expression or failure to declare affiliation on his national origin. Subjective principle of self-determination opens the possibility of changing attitude of their own ethnicity and that attitude varies from census to census, which is evident in the censuses of the Republic of Serbia, especially in censuses after 1948.²

In previous researches of the Romanian national minority, it is evident that a small number of experts dealt with the problem of ethno-demographic processes, natural migrations and compositions of population, families, households, so that it is difficult, in this context, to dispute with other studies and the results achieved. However, the researches of Maran Mircea (Maran, 2011) and (Djuric, Maran, Simikić, 2011) stand out. We have

² Bureau of Statistics of the Republic of Serbia: downloaded from website on March 10, 2014. <http://webzrs.stat.gov.rs/WebSite/Public/PageView.aspx?pKey=4>

used the above mentioned historical and sociological studies, written in the Serbian language, which refer to the Romanian population in Serbia, for the purpose of explanation of the phenomenon of the Romanian population as an integral part of the multi-ethnic structure of the population in the Republic of Serbia.

In the research process were collected ethno-statistical data³ for the time period from 1948 to 2011. In order to achieve a new, more complete, more specific, more accurate and deeper knowledge and predictions of the future development of the Romanian population, projections were made of the migration of the Romanian population, for the projection period from 2016 to 2041 year, by using mathematical methods: interpolation and geometric progressions.

3. RESULTS

Censuses of population, households and dwellings conducted after the Second World War in the Republic of Serbia, indicate significant depopulation and dynamic structural changes in the Romanian population.

Table 1. *The Romanian population in Serbia, as per the 1948 – 2011 censuses*⁴

Census	1948	1953	1961	1971	1981	1991	2002	2011
Romanians	63.130	59.705	59.505	57.419	53.693	42.316	34.576	29.332
Index	100	94.6	94.2	90.9	85.1	67.1	54.7	46.5

For the studied time period from 1948 to 2011 (Table 1) in the Republic of Serbia, a decline of the total Romanian population for 53.5% was recorded. The census from 1953 indicated the reduction of the population for 3,425 inhabitants, compared to 1948. According to the census of 1961 a further drop of 200 residents was recorded, compared to 1953. The census from 1971, confirmed the previous trend of depopulation, so that the number of Romanians fell by 2,086 while according to the census from 1981, the number of Romanians fell by another 3,726 people. The inter-census period from 1981 to 1991 was characterized by the greatest decrease in the Romanian population when their number was reduced for 11,377 inhabitants. The last two censuses also recorded declining of population in the Romanian national community. According to the census from 2002, the number of Romanians fell by 7,740 residents, and according to the census from 2011, their number decreased for 5,244, compared to 2002 year, and came to an absolute minimum for the entire observed period.

³ Database of the Bureau of Statistics of the Republic of Serbia: downloaded from website on March 10, 2014. <http://webzrzs.stat.gov.rs/WebSite/Public/PublicationView.aspx?pKey=41&pubType=1>

⁴ Data of the Bureau of Statistics of the Republic of Serbia

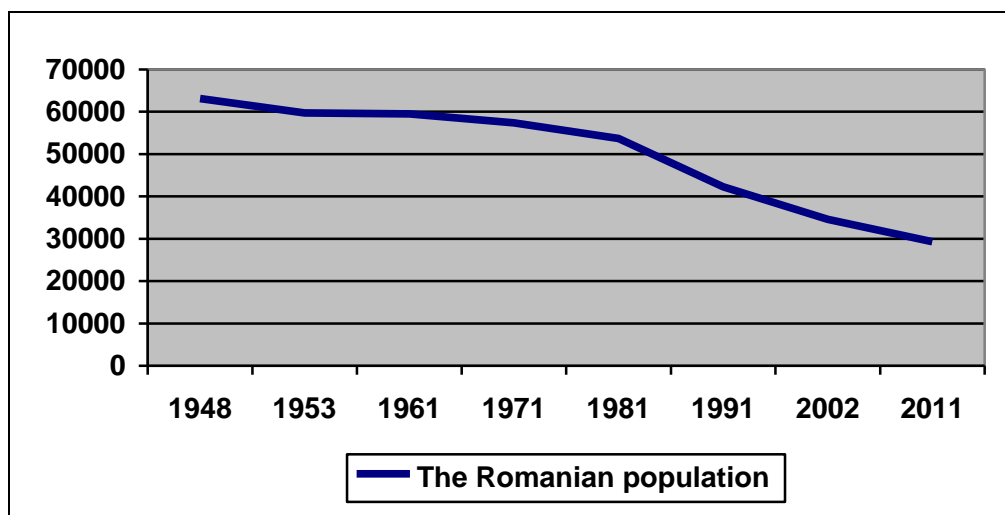


Fig. 1. *Course of the Romanian population in Serbia, as per the 1948 – 2011 censuses*

Table 2. *The Romanian population in Serbia, according to the 1948 – 2011 censuses (in percentages)*

Census	1948	1953	1961	1971	1981	1991	2002	2011
%	0.97	0.86	0.78	0.68	0.58	0.54	0.46	0.41

As the Romanian population in Serbia over the last 63 years is characterized by constant depopulation, therefore the participation of the Romanian ethnic community in the total population of the Republic of Serbia (Table 2) with 0.97% according to the census of 1948 decreased to 0.41% according to the last census in 2011 year.

Table 3. *The Romanian population in Serbia by geographic regions and censuses in 2002. and 2011*

REGION	2002.		2011.	
	Number	%	Number	%
Belgrade	1,379	4	1,282	4.4
Vojvodina	30,419	88	25,410	86.6
Šumadija and West Serbia	780	2.2	567	1.9
South and East Serbia	1,998	5.8	2,073	7.1
TOTAL	34,576	100	29,332	100

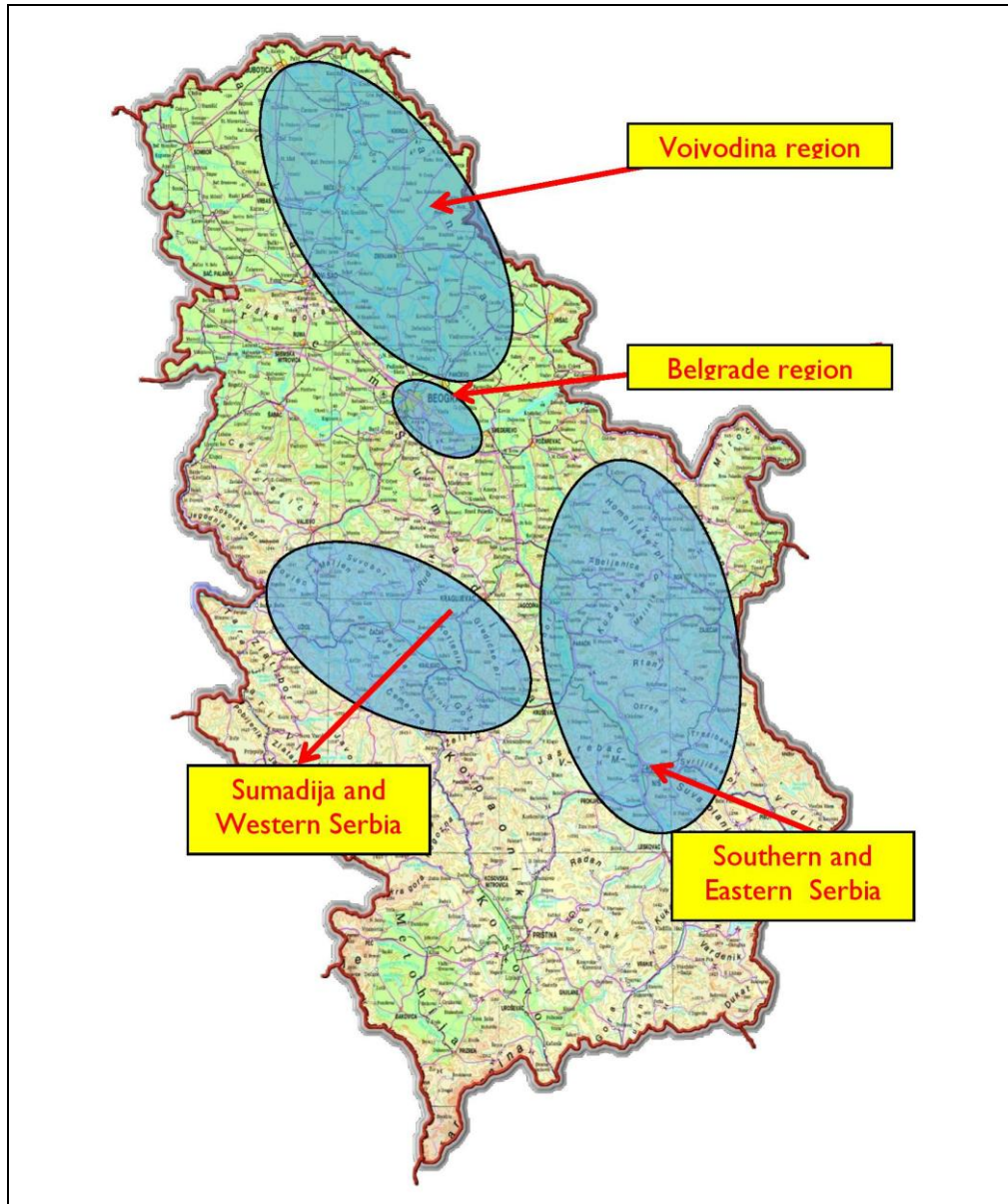


Fig. 2. Regional distribution Romanians population in Serbia

Historical circumstances caused that Romanians, in the area of present-day Republic of Serbia, are mostly populated in the region of Vojvodina and in its eastern and southeastern part (Jankulov, 2003, 87). According to the census from 2002 year (Fig. 3) Vojvodina was populated by 30,419 or 88% of the total Romanian population. The census from 2011 year (Fig. 4) also confirms the highest population of Romanians in Vojvodina. In

this census period, a reduction of the total Romanian population for 16.5% was registered. The region of Southern and Eastern Serbia is the second regarding the number of Romanians. Their number according to the census from 2002 amounted to 1,998 or 5.8%, while according to the census of 2011 it increased to 2,073, or 7.1%. In the region of Belgrade 1,379 Romanians lived in 2002, or 4%, while in 2011 that number decreased slightly and amounted to 1,282 whereas the percentage of participation in this region, due to the decrease in the total population, increased by 0.4%. The smallest numbers of Romanians on the territory of the Republic of Serbia live in the region of Šumadija and in western Serbia. According to the census of 2002, 780 residents of Romanian nationality were registered, or 2.2%, while according to the census of 2011, their number decreased by 27.3%.

From the perspective of the dominant type of settlement that the Romanian minority inhabit, it can be observed that most Romanians 20,905 or 71.3% live in rural areas while only 8,427 or 28.7% of Romanians live in urban areas. These data indicate that in terms of the social structure, the Romanian minority is composed of the population with a dominant agricultural function.

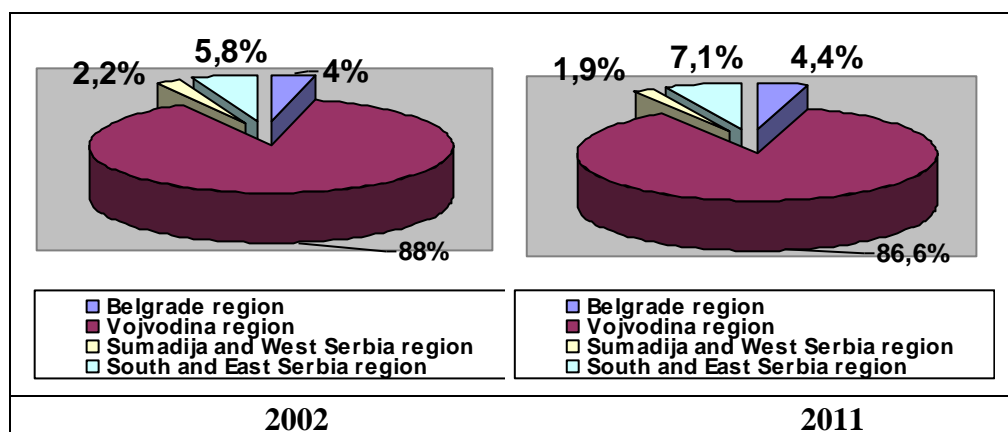


Fig. 3. *The Romanian population in Serbia by geographic regions & by censuses in 2002 and 2011*

Table 4. *Population by mother tongue, as per the censuses of 1953, 1971-2011.*⁵

Census	1953	1971	1981	1991	2002	2011
Romanians	66,594	64,832	56,393	45,565	34,515	29,075

Along with the reduction of total Romanian population, the number of the inhabitants who declared that the Romanian language was their mother tongue also decreased (Table 4). Based on the results of the census from 1953, it was evident that 66,594 people spoke the Romanian language as their mother tongue, even 6,889 residents

⁵ Data of the Bureau of Statistics of the Republic of Serbia

more than the total number of Romanians, registered that year. According to the last census from 2011 the data purport that 29,075 people or 99.1% of the population speak Romanian language as their mother tongue, or 257 inhabitants fewer than the total number of Romanians in Serbia.

Regarding the gender structure, the female population dominates the Romanian population in the Republic of Serbia. According to the census from 1991, the female population accounted for a share of 51.2% of the total Romanian population; according to the census of 2002, the female population had a share of 51.1%, while according to the last census in 2011, proportion of the female population increased to 54%.

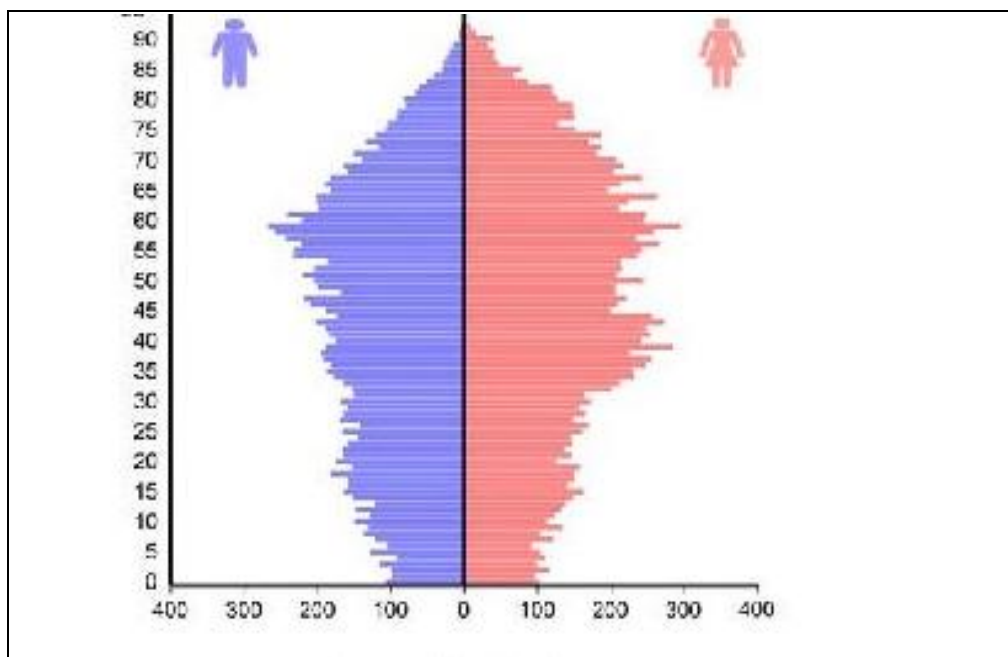


Fig. 4. Age – sex pyramid of the Romanian population in Serbia by census in 2011.

Analyzing the age pyramid (Fig. 4.) depicted according to the census results from 2011 we can conclude that there is a disorder of the age structure. The Romanian population took on the characteristics of the regressive (old) population. Looking at the Romanian population by brief classification and major age groups, we see the dominant share of the aged population (the population aged 60 years) and older middle-aged from 40 to 59 years compared to the young and young middle-aged population.

Examining the ethnic composition of the Romanian minority by religious affiliation, we have learned that among Romanians in Serbia (Serbia is a secular state) there is religious pluralism. Except the affiliation to the Romanian Orthodox Church, they belong also to other religious confessions: Greek-Catholic, Christian-Nazarene, uniat church. From the late 19th and early 20th century, various religious communities appear among Romanians: Nazarene, Adventists, Baptists, Pentecostals (Djurić, 2010, 5 -153).

Within the study of the Romanian population in the Republic of Serbia, a question arises concerning Vlachs. Vlach and Romanian in eastern Serbia are two names for the same people, and so that should be acknowledged in to all documents and public procedures.⁶

Table 5. *The Vlachs population in Serbia, as per the 1948 – 2011 censuses*⁷

Census	1948	1953	1961	1971	1981	1991	2002	2011
Vlachs	93,440	28,047	1,368	14,724	25,596	17,804	40,054	35,330
%	1.43	0.40	0.02	0.17	0.27	0.23	0.53	0.49

Chronologically speaking, according to censuses from 1948 to 2011, the Vlach population in the Republic of Serbia decreased three times (Table 5). According to census from 1948 Vlachs had a largest population - 93,440 or 1.43% of the total population while the least was according to census from 1961 – 1368 or 0.02% of the population of Serbia. According to the last census in 2011 the Vlach population numbered 35,330 or 0.49% of the total population of Serbia. Vlachs are territorially concentrated in the region of southern and eastern Serbia where they make up 93% of their total number in the territory of the Republic of Serbia. Within this region, the Vlachs are numerically the most significant ethnic communities after Serbs and Romanians, with a share of the total population of the region of 2.1%. Vlachs have no ethnic prevail in any municipality. They mostly live in a Bor region (13.3 thousand or 10.7%) and Branicevo region (13.2 thousand or 7.2%), which is 80.6% of the total number of Vlachs from southeast Serbia. Also, the relevant number and share they have in the Zajecar district (6.3 thousand or 5.2%). That actually means that in these three districts over 99% of the Vlach minority is concentrated. Observed by municipalities, most of them live in Bor (6,701 or 13.8%), then Petrovac na Mlavi (4,609 or 14.7%), Kucevo (3,927 or 25.3%), Negotin (3,382 or 9, 1%), Boljevac (3,356 or 25.8%), Zagubica (2,811 or 22.1%) and Majdanpek (2,442 or 13.1%). In percentage terms, the most Vlachs, about one-quarter, live in Boljevac, then Kucevo and Zagubica.⁸ Statistical and demographic parameters indicate that the Vlachs are among the oldest populations in Serbia with an average age of over 50 years.

The process of depopulation of the Romanian population in the Republic of Serbia is evident from the second half of the 20 century. Bearing in mind the long-term trends in the past and all the factors that conditioned changes in the Romanian population, and starting from the assumption that the future will resemble the past, we have anticipated by projections, the future development of the Romanian population by five-year projection interval in the projection horizon from 2016 to 2041 (Table 6). The projections made confirm the continuation of a disturbing trend of depopulation (Fig. 5). The largest decline is predicted by projection - by interpolation method, based on the census of 2002 and 1991 because the most drastic decline of the Romanian population in Serbia was precisely in that period.

⁶ Dragić Dragomir, Vlachs or Romanians from eastern Serbia and Vlachs question. The Helsinki Committee for Human Rights in Serbia, Belgrade, 2002

⁷ Data of the Bureau of Statistics of the Republic of Serbia

⁸ Rađuški Nada, Ethnic processes and national minorities in Serbia after the 2011 census, New Serbian Political Thought, December 8, 2013

The aforementioned projection indicates that the Romanian population will number 20,732 inhabitants in 2021, 12,132 inhabitants in 2031, and only 3,532 inhabitants in 2041. Trend of the total reduction of the Romanian population was slightly less in the inter-census period of 2002-2011 which was reflected in the projection horizon. The projection made by interpolation method based on these two censuses shows mild downward trend, so that the number of Romanians in Serbia, according to this projection model will be of 23,506 inhabitants in 2021, 17,680 inhabitants in 2031, and 11,854 inhabitants in 2041. By Interpolation method we obtained the assessment of the Romanian population in inter-census years: 2016, 2026 and 2036. The lowest depopulation is anticipated by population projection made by using the method of geometric progression, according to which the number of Romanians in Serbia, will amount to 24,433 inhabitants in 2021, 20,352 inhabitants in 2031, and 16,952 inhabitants in 2041.

Table 6. *Projections of movement of the Romanian population in Serbia from 2016 to 2041 year*

METHOD	STATUS				P R O J E C T I O N S			
	2002	2011	2016	2021	2026	2031	2036	2041
interpolation 2011/2002	34,576	29,332	26,419	23,506	20,593	17,680	14,767	11,854
interpolation 2002/1991	34,576	29,332	25,032	20,732	16,432	12,132	7,832	3,532
geometric progression	34,576	29,332	26,771	24,433	22,299	20,352	18,574	16,952

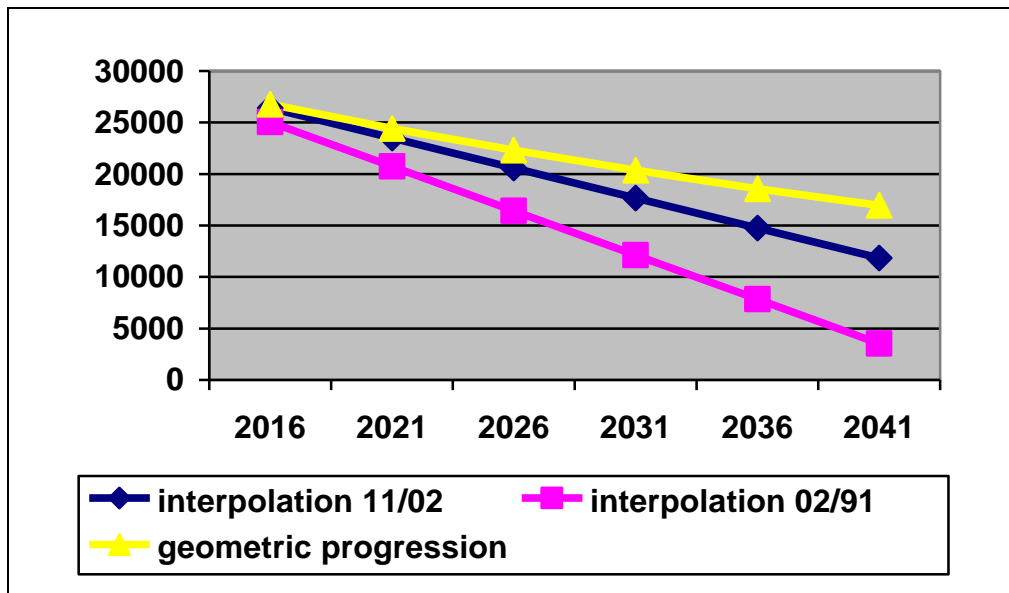


Fig. 5. *Projections of movement of the Romanian population in Serbia from 2016 to 2041*

4. ANALYSIS

The absence of major natural geographical barriers and the proximity of the mother country influenced that Serbia has the largest concentration of Romanians in the southern and southeastern Banat. The first Romanian settlements on the territory of the Serbian part of Banat are mentioned very early (14th century). However, the largest immigration of Romanians on the territory of presentday Vojvodina was from the 17th to the 19th century (Bjeljac, 2006, 375). During the reign of Prince Miloš Obrenović, in the Principality of Serbia, there were the most Romanians, after Serbs. Considering that they were of the same faith as Serbs, they were always considered as equal to them by the government, and they were not numerically singled out from Serbs anywhere (Djordjević, 1938).

In the first modern census of population, households and dwellings in the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes, which was conducted 1921 year, on a territory that included present-day Vojvodina, the Romanian population with 71,364 inhabitants, made 4.6 % of the total population in Vojvodina. The population that spoke the Romanian language was the largest according to census from 1921 year, and they lived on the territory of Banat (95.1 % of all Romanians in Vojvodina), where they had absolute majority in one administrative district (Alibunar) and they lived in substantial number of districts Novi Bečej, Kovačica, Kovin and Pančevo. On the territory of Bačka they were more prevalent in the county Apatin (Bjeljac, 2006, 375-382).

Frequent changes in census methodology of ethno-statistical parameters and changes in statistical classification, which implied the introduction of new or omission of the earlier question, led to certain instability in comparison of ethno-statistical data for the Romanian national minority, during the censuses conducted from 1921 to 2011. Thus, according to the census from 1921 year, Romanians were classified as a group of people based on the determinant "language". According to the censuses of population from 1948, 1953, 1961, 1971, 1981 and 1991, the question of nationality was posed in terms of equality and free expression. According to the census from 1948, Romanians were considered to be a nationality. According to the census from 1971, they were a nationality or ethnicity, and according to the census from 1981 they expressed their belonging to a nation, nationality or ethnic group.

According to the census of population, housing and dwellings of 1948, Romanians had the largest spatial distribution on the territory of Serbia, in the former FNR of Yugoslavia, where 98.45% of all Romanians lived. The highest concentration was in Vojvodina (92.46%) and on the north-eastern part of central Serbia (5.99%).

The census of population, housing and dwellings, from 1953, indicated a decline in the number of Romanian population, but it also showed that 98.92% of all Romanians lived in Serbia (94.81% in Vojvodina, 4.11% in Central Serbia). Census of population, housing and dwellings from 1971, indicated a further decline in the number of Romanian population in the territories of the former SFR of Yugoslavia. Romanians in Serbia made 98.03% (90.47% in Vojvodina, 7.53% in central Serbia).

According to the census from 1991, the Romanian population had an absolute majority in 18 settlements, while they had a relative majority in three settlements, of the total of 176 settlements in Vojvodina which they inhabited. In nine settlements (Ečka, Zrenjanin municipality; Banatsko Novo Selo, municipality of Pančevo; Alibunar, Alibunar municipality; Sutjeska, municipality of Sečanj; Vlajkovac, municipality of Vršac; Deliblato,

Kovin municipality; Dolovo, municipality of Pančevo, and Mramorak, Kovin municipality) share of the Romanian population was greater than 10% of the total population in those settlements (Bjeljac, 2006, 375-382). The censuses of population, households and dwellings conducted in Serbia in 2002 and 2011, indicated a further decline in the total number of inhabitants of the Romanian population.

According to the census from 1991, Romanians inhabited 149 municipalities in Serbia, including data for Kosovo and Metohija (0.03 %). The census from 2011, indicated, observed by municipalities, that the Romanian population inhabited 138 municipalities in Serbia (excluding Kosovo and Metohija). The territorial distribution of the Romanian population has not changed and it is under the direct influence of territorial distribution of Romanians formed through a very long historical period of existence in the territory of the Republic of Serbia. We can say for the Romanian population, that it has the character of dispersive ethnic group, because they have settled in several regional areas of the Republic of Serbia.

All analyzed data indicate that the ethno-demographic changes in the Romanian population are very complex and conditioned by numerous factors. Total strength of the Romanian population is constantly changing. These changes are influenced by the natural movements, i.e. by fertility and mortality, and they are also affected by migration flows. Unfortunately, we do not possess information on whether Romanians emigrated to Romania, after the accession of Romania in the community of the European Union, in 2007. Since the old-age of the Romanian population is evident, a constant decline in the fertility of the population is also obvious. When we talk about gender composition, the Romanian population has no stable character considering that, as seen by the census intervals, the participation of a female population in relation to the male is increasing.

The age structure is changing in the long-term and it is mainly influenced by movements in fertility. Based on previous studies of the Romanian population, absolute participation of some age groups in the total population, the age pyramid of a regressive type was obtained. The age structures demonstrate that compared to the older generation, the participation of children and young people is declining. Such a relationship causes low fertility rates and birth rates, and increases the mortality rate, which directly affects the negative natural increase.

All applied projection methods base similar dynamics of changes, more exactly, the depopulation of the Romanian ethnic minority for the projection horizon from 2016 to 2041 year. The most optimistic made projection, performed by the method of geometric progression, indicates that the Romanian population in 30 years, namely by 2041 year, will decrease for 57% compared to the census from 2011 year.

Mircea Maran, a connoisseur of the Romanian population in Vojvodina, argues in his researches (Maran, 2013, 229-238) that "in addition to national and ethnic - Romanian identity, there are also many other forms of identity, such as the identity of belonging to the country in which live - once Yugoslavian, now Serbian and regional-Banat inhabitants, which is in some cases quite pronounced for most members of this minority, then local, which is linked to the place of birth or residence, and finally confessional-religious, primarily Orthodox, which is usually supplemented with national identity. All these types of identity are intertwined with each other, complement each other, but sometimes cause certain confusion in the Romanian population." This is certainly indicated by the fact that a

smaller number of Romanians in relation to the total number, has declared that their native language is Romanian.

5. DISCUSSION

Ethno-demographic researches of the Romanian minority conducted in the Republic of Serbia, in the period of time from 1948 to 2011, represent a synthesis of older researches and new researches and new discoveries of its kind after the census in 2011. This type of research is an important part of the study of the Romanian population in the overall population of Serbia. The obtained results fit into a broader ethno-demographic study of the population of Serbia. In any case, our researches allow assessment of the current situation and likely movement of the Romanian minority in the future, in the territory of the Republic of Serbia.

The question is: Whether the process of assimilation or integration of the Romanian ethnic minority in Serbia is underway or completed. Maran believes that "In spite of everything, Romanians still consider themselves an integral part of the Serbian society, so that their dual identity, and in these recent times is expressed as the identity of citizens who are integrated into the state in which they live, and who do not give up of their national - Romanian identity. The psychic assimilation is added to it, which refers to taking over the ways of thinking, mentality, customs, habits and traditions of the majority of people, and it usually takes place unconsciously. There is, however, the so called socio-ethnic assimilation, which is characteristic of the multi-ethnic environment and is manifested through mixed marriages, education in non-mother language etc." (Maran, 2013, 229-238)

We agree with the opinion and research of the Roumanian historian, Maran Mircea, that the phenomenon of assimilation of the Romanian community in Banat is "primarily related to the use of the mother tongue (and not a literary language, but a dialect), which is not a language of 'majority' or the country in which minority one lives, and consists of a sense that a member of minority people, in spite of equality with the majority of people, despite the ability to use their mother (literary) language in the schools, the press, public life, still feels a dose of inferiority, which is based on the idea of belonging to the Serbian people (Maran, 2013, 229-238).

We must emphasize that the implementation of international recommendations to issues of ethno-cultural characteristics of the population does not belong to the so-called basic features (core topics), to which the Republic of Serbia adheres, significantly impede comprehensive researches of the Romanian population, as an official ethno-statistical data on confession of faith, mother tongue, and ethnicity are not sufficient for a complete understanding of population development of the Romanian minority community.

Our researches suggest that ethnicity and identification by use of the Romanian language as their mother tongue, is more objective and stable category of their ethnic identification in relation to the subjective criterion of belonging to the Romanian national minority. Native language, as an important ethnic determinant is largely based on objective factors than is the case with nationality, because of the subjectivity of the criteria when declaring. Registered degree of discrepancy between ethnicity and mother tongue of Romanians is an indicator of the intensity of assimilation and integration processes in the Romanian ethnic minority in Serbia. It should be added to all this, the existence of the

Christian-Orthodox religious identity, as we have already pointed out, whose role in the life of the Romanian community is not for ignoring.

The lack of statistical data on the natural movement of the Romanian population, reproduction, different types of migration flows, changes in the demographic, economic and social structure of the population, the number, size and characteristics of marriages, families, households and settlements, encourage us to propose the implementation of new ethno-demographic survey of Romanians in the Republic of Serbia, which will take the form of systematic, gradual and deeper scientific researches. Such researches will be aimed at gaining highly valuable theoretical and methodological analysis and compliance with previous researches. In order to facilitate the learning of this thematic specialty, so as to expose the various methods and measures, it is necessary to include the Romanists, demographers, anthropogeographers, ethnographers, historians from Romania, as well as outlining of bilateral scientific cooperation between Serbia and Romania.

The Government of the Republic of Serbia and the Government of Romania must recognize that scientific cooperation must be based on mutual benefit. Taking our accumulated experience of closeness of the Serbian and the Romanian people, as well as a high level of scientific thought in both countries, we believe in the future bilateral cooperation on this project, with the aim of internationalization of this topic.

6. CONCLUSION

Because of the fact that, Romanians, since ancient times, have been an integral part of the multi-ethnic structure of the population in the Republic of Serbia, and that they now live in 138 settlements in Serbia, we have become deeply interested to introspect, in a complex way, the paradigms of ethno-demographic process of the Romanian ethnic minority, in a time frame of 63 years, from 1948 to 2011 year. The main ethno-demographic findings point to complex demographic changes of the Romanian minority in Serbia through: total reduction of the population, ageing of the population, assimilation, integration and the creation of specific form of identity. The territorial distribution of the Romanian population has not changed and it is under the direct influence of geographic distribution of Romanians formed through a very long historical period of existence in the territory of the Republic of Serbia. Within the study of the Romanian population in the Republic of Serbia, a question arises concerning Vlachs. Vlach and Romanian in eastern Serbia are two names for the same people, and so that should be acknowledged in to all documents and public procedures. Bearing in mind the long-term trend of depopulation of the Romanian community in the past, and all the factors that conditioned changes in the Romanian population, by population projections we have predicted that the depopulation trend will continue in the future, till 2041 year. During the centuries of existence in Serbia, Romanians have formed a specific form of identity. Romanians still consider themselves an integral part of the Serbian society, so that their dual identity, and in these recent times is expressed as the identity of citizens who are integrated into the state in which they live, and who do not give up their national-Romanian identity. The applicability of the research results and findings has multiple benefits. Primarily in understanding the demographic complexity of the Romanian community; in the implementation of the population policy of the Republic of Serbia; in operational sustainability of the Romanian minority community through a clear policy, focused on the development of the Romanian population, preservation and

promotion of youth and the new generation, and in the existence of education in the Romanian language at all levels, development of the means of mass communication in the Romanian language, and development models, and in creating a sense of general well-being of the population in Serbia. Studies have prompted us to propose the implementation of new ethno -demographic survey of Romanians in the Republic of Serbia in order to obtain highly valuable knowledge through theoretical and methodological analysis and compliance with previous research. It is necessary to include Romanists, demographers, anthropogeographers, ethnographers, historians from Romania, and to outline bilateral scientific cooperation between the Government of the Republic of Serbia and the Government of the Republic of Romania. Knowing the acquired experience of closeness between the Serbian and the Romanian people, as well as a high level of scientific thought in both countries, we believe in bilateral cooperation on the project, in order to internationalize this topic.

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