Depopulation and deep aging: the former Yugoslav and western Balkans space between the second demographic transition and emigration

The article elaborates on the concept of deep aging where the overall aging effects of the second demographic transition are topped by the emigration of fertile contingent. The cases of former Yugoslav states and Albania are juxtaposed to enlighten the different demographic paths after the break-up of Yugoslavia. In the meantime, ever more pronounced emigration from all the former Yugoslav republics, including the Kosovo-Metohia territory, and Albania (as recently associated member of “the Western Balkans Six” European waiting room). In Slovenia, migrations acquired a pseudo-voluntary character somewhat similar to that of the later Yugoslav period. This leads us to the question if the maxima “the longer the period of EU membership the lesser the emigration from the country” is still true. Parallel processes of internal migration (resettlement from east to west and from south to north within the EU) and international migration (refugees, overseas migration) are discernible in Europe. The region of Western Balkans and former Yugoslav space share most of the demographic features to a lesser extent. With lower fertility and higher age-specific mortality the gap is increasing among the countries of the region. Yet there are also other, e.g. geographical, and ethnic, factors not directly connected with the pronounced emigration processes, so the contribution sets to explore these as well. The methodology involved in this research spans from the demographic methods and typical procedures for obtaining certain indicators. In addition, the geographic and spatial methods such as location quotients, densities, and complex aggregate indicators (typification, regionalization) are applied as well. The presented research is a result of the research programme on minority and ethnic studies and the research project on ethnic vitality.

**Keywords:** Former Yugoslavia, ethnic vitality, emigration, low-fertility countries, second demographic transition