Demographic diversity of Bosnia and Herzegovina: An integrated analysis of composite indicators at the municipal level

The contemporary demographic development of Bosnia and Herzegovina is a very active topic in academic, but also in wider political and public discourses, particularly in the context of increased depopulation trends. Distinctly negative processes in the natural change and net migration are the result of post-war and transitional circumstances, as well as the socio-economic status of the country. Demographic disparities conditioned by a complex social background (economic, social, political, cultural and environmental factors) are often the subject of geographic research in this area, however, few studies have resulted in a comprehensive demographic categorization of municipalities and cities in Bosnia and Herzegovina, which would be the first step in detection precise causes of demographic regression. Demographic categorization of municipalities on the basis of as many available demographic indicators as possible is a useful instrument in planning, through which concrete revitalization measures can be created primarily aimed at reducing polarization effects in development and depopulation of continuously deprived regions. This study used demographic data from the last 2013 population census, as well as those from more recent publications of national and entity statistical agencies. Special focus is placed on the index of total population change, population density, vital index, ageing coefficient and share of highly educated population. These indicators were analysed from the aspect of regional disparities, whereby special categories of municipalities and cities were created for each of them, in relation to how favourable is local demographic situation. In the second phase, their multi-criteria data integration was carried out, which more clearly indicate the general level of demographic development of individual municipalities/cities.

Keywords: Bosnia and Herzegovina, municipalities and cities, demographic categorization, depopulation, regional disparities