

Original scientific paper

UDC 314.74 (497.11)  
DOI: 10.2298/GSGD1602082P

Received: October 25, 2016

Corrected: November 21, 2016

Accepted: December 14, 2016

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## **POPULATION OF SERBIA ABROAD BY DESTINATION COUNTRIES: REGIONAL APPROACH**

**Abstract:** Serbia is a country with a long tradition of emigration, specific economic and political emigration context, a large number of its citizens abroad, as well as their very heterogeneous geographic distribution and differentiated structures. The main objective of the paper is to show that between the region of origin in Serbia and certain destination countries there are ties, on the basis of which migrant networks originate and spread. Over time, networks towards some countries lose their importance or are diverted to other directions.

Through incorporating a regional approach, the analysis includes the results of the last five population censuses conducted between 1971 and 2011. It is based on data on the number, share of emigrants from Serbia, with regard to the length of stay abroad, educational structure, as well as the most represented receiving countries from the regional aspects (municipalities and the intense emigration zones in Serbia). Furthermore, attention is paid to the possibilities and the main problems of statistical monitoring of international migration. Such an approach has both the research and the wider social significance, particularly because most of the population abroad covered by the census maintain ties with Serbia, often visit their hometowns and present an important resource for the socio-economic development of the country.

**Key words:** international migration, country of origin, Serbia, census of population, regional approach, countries of destination, migrant networks.

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## Introduction

Different historical periods brought significant increases in migration flows and patterns and their implications have been multiply analysed. It is believed that Europe, at the beginning of the third millennium, experienced a new migration turnaround. The changed political map of Europe and the world inextricably linked with the turbulent economic changes and effects of globalisation, international capital flows, technological progress, along with the improvement of transport infrastructure, development of telecommunications and transportation, and information revolution have resulted in the so-called global migration era (Castles & Miller, 2008). The scope of migration flows has significantly increased, and the permanent settlement, as the most common immigration pattern is being replaced by models of temporary, circular, transnational/transregional migration and intensification of spatial mobility of people in the most productive working age. Furthermore, the concealed, illegal forms of migration have become more complex, presenting an almost unsolvable problem for a growing number of economically developed countries.

At the beginning of the third millennium the public interest in the issue of international migration visibly increased. It was not conditioned only by its substantial intensification, because it had been present since the 1980s, but by the increasingly powerful immigration pressure faced by the most economically developed countries in the world. It is also one of the main reasons for migration, in the vast majority of studies, to be examined from the perspective of destination countries. The studies focussed on the countries of origin, as well as complex research involving both aspects are much more uncommon. The closely related studies are devoted to the territorial aspect of studying international migration. They belong to the group of the least numerous (Skeldon, 2008), and when viewed from the perspective of the countries of origin, it is practically negligible. It is exactly the lack of reliable information containing data about the migration flow between countries of origin and reception, as well as regional origin, demographic and socio-economic structures of migrants, that prevent not only more reliable consideration of theoretical approaches in revealing deterministic basis of migration, but a more detailed analysis of the complex relations between social development and migration, particularly in the sphere of finding a political response to the possibility of using migration (remittances, transnational migrant networks, social and human capital) to improve the socio-economic development in both the destination countries, and countries of origin (Predojević-Despić & Penev, 2012).

Serbia is a country with a long tradition of emigration, specific economic and political emigration context, a large number of its citizens abroad, as well as a very heterogeneous spatial distribution and differentiated structure of international migrants. However, very rare are the studies related to the regional origin of emigrants from Serbia and their distribution in the receiving countries. The few analyses of statistical data on the regional distribution of Serbian emigrants in the receiving countries point to the differences in the geographic distribution of the population originating from Serbia, and sometimes to a very high concentration in certain regions, as is the case with Italy (Reynaud et al., 2015). This suggests that in the receiving countries, there are specificities of the Serbian

emigrant networks, which could be further explained by additional research related to new statistical sources, both in the country of origin and reception.

Therefore, the main objective of the paper is to show, based on the Serbian census data, as the most important source of information on the citizens of Serbia working or residing abroad, through the inclusion of a regional approach to the analysis of emigration trends from Serbia, that between the region of origin and certain destination countries there are ties, on the basis of which migrant networks originate and spread. Over time, networks towards some countries lose their importance or are diverted to other directions. The analysis includes the results of the last five censuses conducted between 1971 and 2011. It is based on data on the number, share of emigrants from Serbia, with regard to the length of stay abroad, educational structure, as well as the most represented receiving countries from the regional aspects (municipalities and zones of intense emigration). Furthermore, attention is paid to the possibilities and the main problems of statistical monitoring of international migration in Serbia.

Such an approach does not have only the research, but wider social significance, particularly because most of the population abroad covered by the census maintain ties with Serbia, often visit their hometowns and present an important resource for the socio-economic development of the country.

## Background

Liberalisation of political conditions in Tito's Yugoslavia, improvement of political relations with Western countries, implementation of economic reforms (1965) and the emergence of "open" unemployment, resulted in a complete change in policies toward travelling abroad and massive economic migration once again (Vinski, 1970). At the same time, high economic growth in west European countries occurred which was followed by an increased demand for a labour force which could not be satisfied domestically. Such opposed economic conditions, as well as an almost complete liberalisation of the emigration policy of Yugoslav regime at that time, enabled a real expansion of international labour migration officially called "temporary employment abroad" by the authorities at that time. According to results of censuses carried out in 1971, 1981 and 1991, the number of Serbian citizens working or staying abroad continually increased (from 204,000 to 269,000 and then to 274,000), which meant that around every thirtieth citizen of Serbia lived abroad at that time (Tab. 1).

*Tab. 1. Serbian citizens working or residing abroad. Serbia, 1971- 2011*

	1971	1981	1991	2002	2011
<b>Total popul.</b> (in country and abroad)	7,202,915	7,729,246	7,822,795	7,893,125	7,470,798
<b>Population in country</b> (number)	6,998,934	7,460,234	7,548,978	7,478,286	7,157,387
<b>Population abroad</b>					
Number of persons	203,981	269,012	273,817	414,839	313,411
Share in total population (%)	2.8	3.5	3.5	5.3	4.2

Source: Census data

*Notes:* 1) Data refer to the total number of Serbian citizens abroad (regardless of length of stay); 2) Data for 1991 include estimated number of citizens abroad in municipalities of Bujanovac and Preševo; 3) Data for 2011 do not include the estimated population of Bujanovac and Preševo.

The grave political crisis (disintegration of Yugoslavia and wars on its territory, significantly worsened interethnic relations, unstable political situation in Serbia, heavy economic and political sanctions imposed by the international community, NATO military campaign...), a very unfavourable economic situation, and a sense of lost perspective for a large part of the population, and especially for the young generation, were the main push factors of intense emigration once again. According to the 2002 Census, 415,000 Serbian citizens (5.3% of total population) were registered to be working or staying abroad, which was an increase of over 50% in relation to the previous 1991 Census. From the occurrence of such a type of international migration, the 1991-2002 period was the era of most intense emigration of Serbian population from the second half of the 1960s.

Emigration continued in the years of 2000 as well. This, however, is not confirmed by the population census. According to 2011 Census results, 313,000 Serbian citizens lived abroad. The actual number is much greater, and the great decrease in the number of respondents abroad could be attributed to the boycott of ethnic Albanians of the 2011 Census<sup>2</sup>, the usual low coverage (estimated at least about 50%), and also due to the partial change in the method of collecting census data of persons abroad (ISS, 2013).

As regards contemporary labour migration, the beginnings are referred to the middle of the 1960s and were exclusively directed towards west European countries (Germany, Austria, Switzerland and France). There were between 68% (2002) and 82% (1971) of all census registered migrants from Serbia in the first four most important countries of destination. According to the 2002 Census, every fourth person from Serbia who was residing or working abroad was in Germany.

The destinations of Serbian migrants started to expand from the 1990s, and the most important new receiving country was Italy but also some former socialist countries (primarily Hungary and Russia). Although less intense, intercontinental migration flows were continually present, and apart from the USA and Australia, Canada and New Zealand had become frequent destinations.

Economically motivated emigration already existed in the middle of the 1960s, which produced an effect on significant changes in direction of migration, not only in terms of destination (west European countries), but also in regions of origin of migrants. Emigration was more present in the developed regions (Vojvodina and Belgrade) than in the underdeveloped ones. First of all, it can be explained by the longer history of developed regions as the emigration zones (toward West European countries) and not by the characteristics of their labour force. Over time, high emigration rate spread to other, less developed regions, as well. In the early 1970s certain territories in the north and northeast of the region of Southern and Eastern Serbia were singled out as notably emigration zones. According to the 1981 Census, the population emigration rate in several municipalities exceeded 15% of their total population (Penev & Predojević-Despić, 2012).

Towards the end of the 1980s, and especially during the escalation of the armed conflicts and deep economic crisis, as well as in the 1990s, emigration from Serbia intensified. The increase was widely present, but it was most pronounced in traditional emigration zones (north-eastern part of South and East Serbia region), but also in two

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<sup>2</sup> Albanian ethnic community is characterised by a very high emigration rate. According to the 2002 Census, there were 61,000 Albanians in the country, and 21,600 were abroad.

new regions comprising of mainly Bosniak/Muslim population (Sandžak, south-western Serbia) and Albanians (two municipalities in the very south of Central Serbia - Bujanovac and Preševo).

Despite the fact that in the last intercensal period 2002-2011 international migration of population in Serbia was much less intense than during the 1990s (ISS, 2013), the 2011 Census data indicate the continuing trend of emigration. Although the structural characteristics of migration (by sex, age, ethnicity, country of destination, etc.) have not essentially changed, there is clear indication that there have been new forms of international migration, such as circular, transnational or transregional migration. This is indicated by the high number of persons residing abroad for less than one year, which also presents a huge difference compared to the previous 2002 Census. Progress in the process of Serbia's EU accession and placement on the Schengen "white" list in 2010 can be counted among the most important causes (Predojević-Despić & Penev, 2014).

In the last intercensal period 2002-2011 there is recorded a continuous emigration from new emigration regions towards the main countries of destination for members of the Bosniak/Muslim and Albanian ethnic minority, through the possibility of asylum application process. For example, in 2010 Serbia was the third country in the EU by the number of asylum seekers with 17,740 claims and in 2014 it was on the fifth place with 30,840 claims<sup>3</sup>. These asylum seekers were mainly characterised as "false" and their claims were rejected. In 2010, only 1.8% and in 2014 only 1.4% claims were accepted, and in many cases for humanitarian reasons. The so-called false asylum seekers returned to Serbia either on their own or through the readmission program. In addition, a considerable number have repeatedly tried to gain asylum in an EU country, and their motive is not only asylum, but the benefits provided during the application process itself. Most asylum seekers comprise of the part of Roma population in Serbia which face poverty and high unemployment.

## **Theoretical Considerations**

Changes in the spatial mobility of the population, as well as the global socio-economic context, have also significantly reflected in changing perspectives of migration research in the recent decades. The atomistic theories standpoints that deny the importance of structural constraints on individual migration decisions, as well as the structural approaches that neglect the role of individuals and families in the migration process are considered to be incomplete (Massey, 1993). Therefore, the theoretical consideration of migration should start from the position that would allow the functioning of causal relationships relevant to migratory movements simultaneously on several levels (Massey, 1993).

Kritz and Zlotnik (1992) integrate key aspects of the various migration theories and emphasise the need for a systematic approach, i.e. a dynamic perspective of migration research, from recognition to a detailed insight into the changing trends and aspects of modern migration movements in the world. The development of the social networks

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<sup>3</sup> Available at <http://appsso.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/>

theory has contributed in directing migration research towards the meso-analytical level of social relations, where the focus of decision-making is shifting towards the family, i.e. household, as the main decision-making agent. Massey (1988) explains the immigration process through links that develop between individuals in the communities of origin and reception. His concept looks at immigration through a synergy of macroeconomic and structural theories, as well as the theory of human capital, with an emphasis on a joint impact of the socio-economic context in the countries of origin and reception (Massey, 1990). Faist builds a coherent approach which underlines the importance of social networks at each stage (start and acceleration, climax, deceleration) of the migration process. He also takes into consideration the concentration of migrants in some destination areas of the world. However, a detailed explanation of the structure and functioning of the migration networks is missing (Faist, 1997; Erlick, 2011). De Haas thinks that states and their policies alongside networks have a strong structuring effect on migration, and that the key condition for the successful incorporation of structure and agency in migration theories is to connect both concepts and understand their dialectics (De Haas, 2014).

Along with the development of new markets, regional economies and technology centres, the last decade of the 20th century was marked by a significant development of transnational approaches to migration that emphasised the relationships that migrants maintained with their families, communities, traditions beyond the borders of the country to which they had migrated, through which they created a transnational social field across national borders (Basch et al., 1994). This led to an increase in the diversity of patterns of migration flows. Portes (1997) believes that the establishment of transnational communities is associated with the logic of capitalism itself. According to him, the growth of such communities has been further fuelled by the dynamic globalisation, and the expansion possibilities of their activities are large and diverse. Therefore, certain changes should be introduced in researching, until recently, clearly defined dichotomous divisions to the communities of "origin" and the communities of "destination" (De Haas, 2005).

## **Statistical Data Sources and Methodology**

Migration statistics, despite the growing importance of this population dynamics component, are generally less substantial, with a much smaller coverage, less reliable and less accessible to users than is the case with the data relating to the natural movement of the population. This is especially true for the data regarding external migration (Despić, 2015; Predojević-Despić & Penev, 2012).

The basic statistical data on external migration, in the concrete case on external migration of the population of Serbia may be obtained from domestic and foreign sources. Domestic statistical sources are population censuses (Statistical Office of the Republic of Serbia - SORS), records of residence changes i.e. registration – deregistration of residence (Ministry of Interior - MoI), as well as the registration of forced migrants i.e. refugees and asylum seekers (Commissariat for Refugees). Regarding the foreign statistical sources of external migration most commonly used are the data collected by receiving countries (population censuses and registers, data of immigration services, bodies responsible for the reception of refugees, etc.) but the data of international organisations are also important, especially in emergencies, such as the UN Data Base, Eurostat, OECD, IOM and others. These data are less accessible, less comprehensive in content and above all

adapted to the needs of foreign users. At the same time, the data on migrants obtained from domestic and foreign sources are generally not fully comparable due to methodological reasons, primarily because of differences in the definitions of "foreigners" used in certain countries. In recent decades, an additional problem has been the frequent change of the state's name and its territory, primarily because the data from foreign sources are presented in the aggregate and not by "entities".

Regarding this paper, it refers to people working or residing abroad with a foreign employer, citizens of Serbia who have registered their business or a shop abroad, people working abroad on their own, people working as crew members on foreign ships and aircrafts, as well as people residing abroad as family members of people working or residing abroad (Stanković, 2014). The paper used exclusively the official statistical data obtained by regular population censuses conducted in Serbia between 1971 and 2011. For 2002 and 2011 the data used were obtained by special additional processing of the final census results.

The national census statistics is the most important source of statistical data on the population contingent of Serbian citizens working or residing abroad. Such persons were, as a special set, for the first time included in the census in 1971, and then in subsequent population censuses (1981, 1991, 2002 and 2011). In the censuses of 1971, 1981 and 1991, the population working or residing abroad was included in the total (permanent) population of Serbia. The following censuses of the total (permanent) population (2002) and the standard (permanent) population (2011) excluded the people working or residing abroad who had been absent from Serbia for more than one year (2002 and 2011), or who had been absent for less than one year, but "intended to stay abroad for more than a year" (Stanković, 2014).

The data on the observed contingent of Serbian citizens abroad are also available from foreign sources. However, due to different definitions of the observed set (immigrants, foreigners, asylum seekers), uncoordinated time frame of the censuses, problems related to the name and the territory the data about migrants from Serbia relate to (SFRY, FRY, Serbia and Montenegro, Serbia, Serbia excluding Kosovo), and especially due to the very small number of features, but also relatively difficult accessibility, these data can generally serve as additional data, primarily in terms of the number of Serbian citizens abroad, and not in terms of their socio-demographic characteristics or regional origin.

Enumeration of people working or residing abroad in the censuses conducted between 1971 and 2002 was carried out within households in the country, while the additional enumeration was done through our diplomatic missions (questionnaires were delivered to the immigrant associations and churches). Although the census coverage control, referring to the set of people abroad, pointed to a relatively small net non-coverage error<sup>4</sup>, the general assessment was that the main problem in enumeration of these persons was their incomplete coverage (Kovačević, 1995), especially in cases where all household members were abroad, or in the case of persons who resided abroad for a long time. According to some estimates, the population census of 2002 covered only about 43% of Serbian citizens who had left the country between 1991 and 2002

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<sup>4</sup> According to the results of the 2002 Census coverage control, the number of net non-enumerated persons in Serbia was 1.6%, or about 122 thousand persons (Miloski-Trpinac, 2002).

(Milosavljević & Penev, 2008). However, despite the problems related to the coverage of people working or residing abroad, the SORS decided that in the implementation of the 2011 Census information on these people should be collected only through the statement of household members, relatives or neighbours in Serbia. In addition to these reasons, the coverage of Serbian citizens working or residing abroad in 2011 was further reduced since the census was boycotted by ethnic Albanians from the municipalities of Bujanovac and Preševo.

Perhaps the best illustration of non-coverage of the population abroad is the comparison of Serbian census data for 2002 and 2011 on the number of people working or residing in several European receiving countries (e.g. Italy, Hungary, Germany, Switzerland, Sweden) and the data of their national statistical services about the number of citizens of Serbia. The differences are large in both censuses, and particularly drastic for 2002, especially for Germany (102.8 thousand according to the Serbian population census and 591.5 thousand according to the German statistics) and Switzerland (65.8 thousand versus 212.5 thousand (Predojević-Despić & Penev, 2012). The differences are much smaller in 2011, but in several countries (e.g. Italy, Switzerland), the number of emigrants from Serbia, according to Serbian population census is about two to three times smaller than the number of immigrants from Serbia recorded by the receiving countries (Reynaud et al., 2015; OFS, 2012). It should be noted that these differences cannot be explained by discrepancies of the territories (data for 2002 refer to Serbia excluding Kosovo, while the data from foreign sources relate to persons abroad from the entire territory of Serbia and from Montenegro), or differences in defining the observed population contingent (Serbian sources do not exclude persons with dual citizenship, while such persons in the receiving countries are not treated as foreigners).

## **Geographic Distribution of Emigrants in Serbia**

In terms of emigration from Serbia, there are regional differences notable at the level of municipalities, districts but also the macro entities (Central Serbia and Vojvodina). They are primarily reflected through uneven start of mass migration abroad, which is particularly characteristic at the level of smaller territorial units (municipalities and districts), then through a different intensity and direction of migratory flows, and different share of emigrants in the total population. At the same time, the differences appear if some other important characteristics of emigration and emigrant population are considered (destination, migrant sex structure, educational attainment, etc.).

Reasons for the emergence of regional differences in terms of importance and characteristics of migration flows and stocks are manifold, and can be found in the achieved level of economic development of the area, the extent of unemployment, population structure (primarily in the age, education, and ethnic structure), migrant population model (traditional and contemporary), geographical location, etc.

If we consider only the two large areas of the country, it is clearly evident that the contemporary economic emigration, whose beginning is connected to the middle 1960s, initially was much more common in the economically more developed Vojvodina than in Central Serbia. According to the 1971 Census, 70.6 thousand people from Vojvodina worked or resided abroad, representing 3.6% of its total population. At the same time in



Central Serbia 113.4 thousand people worked or resided abroad, representing 2.5% of the total population.

Three decades later (2002), almost the same number of persons working or residing abroad was enumerated from Vojvodina, but at the same time, their share in the total population decreased by 0.2 percentage points (from 3.6% to 3.4%). However, in Central Serbia, the number and share of workers and family members increased continuously and to the time of the 2002 Census, reached almost 345 thousand people, which accounted for even 5.9% of the total population from this region of the country.

As for the situation at the beginning of the second decade of the 21st century, the census results from 2011 indicate that the number of people working or residing abroad, as well as their share in the total population decreased in both two large areas of Serbia. The reduction is absolutely higher in Central Serbia (81 thousand to 20 thousand), but it is relatively higher in Vojvodina (decrease of 24% and 29% respectively). However, it is important to note that in 2011 the statistical non-coverage of population abroad was probably much higher in Central Serbia than in Vojvodina, if for no other reason than it is certainly due to the boycott by the Albanian minority<sup>5</sup>.

Regional differences are even more pronounced at lower territorial and administrative levels. At the municipal level exactly all the diversity of demographic and economic development in Serbia can be quite clearly seen, as well as the heterogeneity of the ethno-social structure of the population. At the same time, the consequences of the events of the 1990s on the migration of the population, especially the emigration flows that took place in the intercensal periods of 1991-2002 and 2002-2011 are much more obvious at the municipal level.

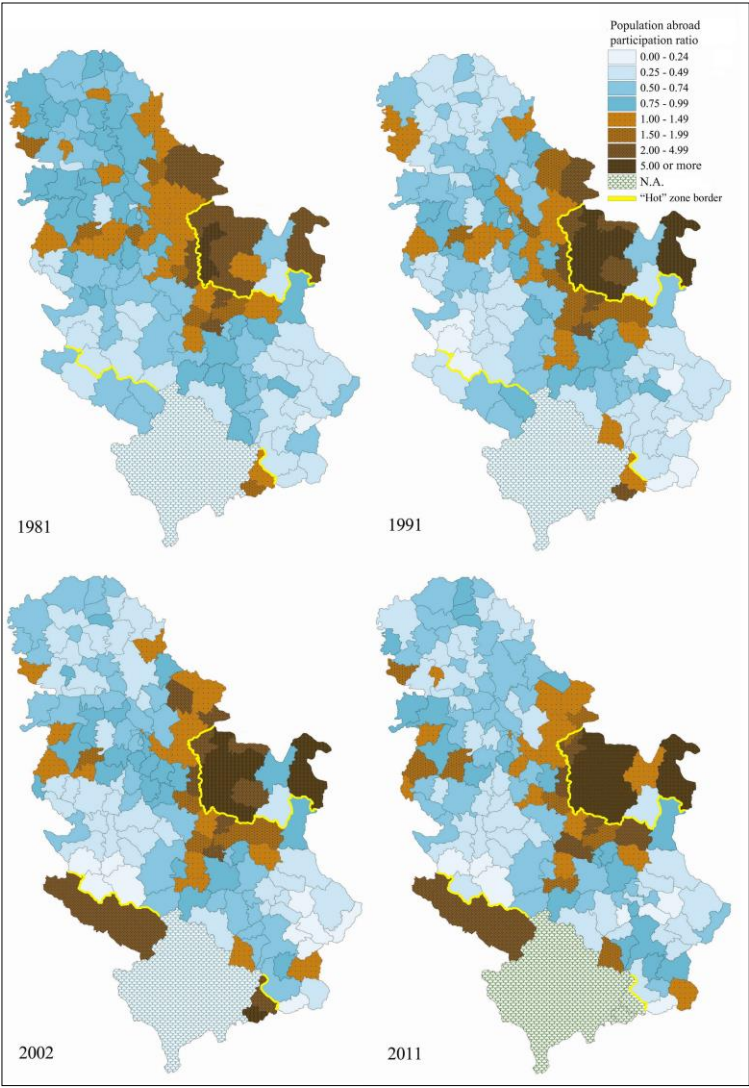
Shares of population abroad are very uneven by municipalities, and in time the differences are becoming more pronounced. The values of the percentage share of the population abroad in the total population of the municipality according to the 1981 Census ranged between 0.6% (Crna Trava) to 18.1% (Svilajnac) and three decades later (2011) the variation interval was increased to 32.5 percentage points. That year, the smallest share of the population abroad was 0.4% (municipality of Bela Palanka), and the highest amounted to 32.9% (Malo Crniće).

According to the results of all three latest censuses (1991, 2002 and 2011), in almost every third municipality (about 50) in the territory of Central Serbia and Vojvodina the share of people working or residing abroad in the total population of the municipality was low (at least twice lower than the average for Serbia). Their share in the total enumerated population in the country was from 27% (1991) to 25% (2011), while their share in the total population of Serbia working or residing stay abroad was much lower, reaching about 10%. These are mostly the same municipalities, located in Vojvodina (Bačka and North Banat), the western part of Central Serbia (parts of Kolubara, Zlatibor and Morava districts) and in the southeast of the country. On the other hand, there are no significant changes in the list of municipalities with very above-average share of the population abroad (at least twice that of the republic). They are about twenty municipalities with less than 10% (from 6.8% to 8.2%) of the total population of Serbia (in the country) but according to all three latest censuses their share in the total number of people working or

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<sup>5</sup> In 2002 in Central Serbia 21.6 thousand ethnic Albanians were enumerated working or residing abroad. At the same time, in Vojvodina less than 100 were enumerated.

residing abroad was about 4 times higher (31% to 37%). These municipalities are mainly located in the Braničevo district, in the south of Serbia (Preševo and Bujanovac), and after the intensification of the emigration process in the 1990s, this group also includes almost all Sandžak municipalities.



*Fig. 1. Population Abroad Participation Ratio.*

*Serbia, 1981- 2011 (municipalities and "hot" emigration zones)*

Source: Elaborated by the authors on the base of the census data

The relative numerical importance that the population abroad have for each municipality can be also viewed through the value of the so-called Population Abroad Participation Ratio (APR), which represents the ratio of the share of the municipality's population in the total population of Serbia in the country and the share of the number of persons abroad of the same municipality in the total population of Serbia working or residing abroad. Change in the value of this measure of association, according to the results of the censuses conducted from 1981 to 2011 also points to an earlier conclusion about the increase in differences in the relative numerical importance that the population contingent abroad has by municipalities (Fig. 1). In other words, the minimum values of the APR, were permanently at a very low level (below 0.2) and continued to decrease, from 0.18 in 1981 (Crna Trava) to 0.08 in 2011 (Bela Palanka). This means that in these municipalities the share of the population in the country in the total population in Serbia (in the country) was approximately 6 to 12 times higher than the share of their population abroad in the total contingent of Serbian citizens working or residing abroad. At the same time, an increase in the maximum value of APR was recorded, from 8.05 in 1991 (Žabari) to 11.2 in 2011 (Malo Crniće). It should be noted that all of these municipalities, with the minimum and the maximum value of APR, belong to the group of small municipalities, with the total population several times smaller than the average population size of municipalities in Serbia.

As for the major urban centres (Belgrade, Novi Sad and Niš), the values of APR, according to the results of all the three census were below one. This indicates that the large Serbian urban centres attracted "local" population more than foreign countries attracted their population. However, these findings should be taken with caution, because of the assumption that in the larger cities the statistical coverage of the population abroad is less than the average for Serbia.

### ***Three "hot" emigration zones***

In Serbia, based on the concentration of the population abroad, and not only the relative one, as well as on the percentile share of persons working or residing abroad in the total population (in the country and abroad), several zones of pronounced emigration are clearly identified. Since the beginning of the great emigration wave, towards the second half of the 1960s, and in the next 4-5 decades, central-east Serbia has been constantly distinguished, above all, as the first "hot" zone of intense emigration towards Western European countries (Map 1). If only the results of the 1981, 1991, 2002 and 2011 censuses are observed, in this area, which mainly covers the territory of three districts (all the municipalities of the Braničevo and Bor districts, and the municipalities of Despotovac and Svilajnac belonging to the Pomoravlje district), the vast majority of municipalities has always had at least twice the share of the population abroad than the average for Serbia. There are also municipalities with a record high share of persons working or residing abroad (Svilajnac with 18.1% in 1981, Žabari with 22.6% in 1991 and 29.1% in 2002, and Malo Crniće with 32.9% in 2011), as well as all those with very high values of APR (over 10 - the results of the 2011 Census).

In the municipalities of the first zone of intense emigration, the number of people abroad raised continuously until the beginning of the 2000s, that is, until the intercensal period 2002-2011. In that intercensal period there was a decrease in the number of

persons abroad, but it was slower than the decrease in other areas, i.e. much slower than the average for Serbia.

According to the 2002 Census, the group of municipalities with the highest share of people working or residing abroad was expanded by another 4 municipalities (Tutin, Sjenica, Bujanovac and Preševo). They are the municipalities which in 1991 had a low or moderately high share of people working or residing abroad (from 2.1% to 7.3%). In addition, all four municipalities are characterised by the majority Bosniak/Muslim (Tutin, Sjenica) and Albanian (Bujanovac and Preševo) ethnicity, i.e. the population of the Islamic religion. Particular attention is drawn to the fact that in these municipalities, especially in the municipalities of Sjenica and Tutin, the share of the largest ethnic group is higher in the total emigrant than in the total population of the municipality. In fact, in these municipalities, in the conditions of worsened and strained ethnic relations that were dominant during the 1990s<sup>6</sup> as well as the unfolding war in the immediate neighbourhood, members of ethnic minorities largely opted to going abroad. In this population, in addition to economic reasons for emigration, very significant, and sometimes dominant were the political reasons or the sense of enhanced personal and collective uncertainty.

Increased needs to emigrate from the country existed in other municipalities, but they were implemented to a much lesser degree. Specifically, during the last decade of the 20th century the receiving countries introduced significantly more restrictive measures against immigrants from Serbia. However, the above-average increase in the number of emigrants from traditionally emigrant municipalities or their slower reduction can be explained by an already established network of kinship and friendly relations with the people of these regions, living abroad for a long period, thus making it easier to obtain permits to work/reside in the receiving country. At the same time, due to the political situation in Serbia and the former Yugoslavia, the receiving countries granted residence permits more easily to members of ethnic minorities.

All the municipalities from the mentioned three areas have in common the very high shares of people working or residing abroad. However, according to many other characteristics (intensity in changing the number of inhabitants per intercensal period, the structure of migrants by age, sex, education, ethnicity, receiving country...) they, especially the municipalities from different areas, differ significantly both mutually and even more compared to the vast majority of other municipalities in Serbia. In order to better perceive the basic characteristics of the contingent of migrant population from areas that currently have the highest share of the population abroad, directions and intensity of emigration flows from Serbia, but also intentions to determine the causes of such a mass emigration from the country, three "hot" zones of pronounced emigration were identified. First: Central-east Serbia (14 municipalities); second: Sandžak (5 municipalities); third: far south-west of Central Serbia (2 municipalities). The areas mainly or exclusively "consist" of the municipalities with high or very high shares of the population abroad. In order for all three zones to be spatially continuous, certain zones (first and second) included the municipalities that cannot be regarded as extremely emigration ones (at least not in terms of external migration), but which by some other

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<sup>6</sup> All four municipalities are bordering Bosnia and Herzegovina (Tutin, Sjenica) and Kosovo and Metohija (Bujanovac and Preševo), i.e. the areas where military operations were conducted in the 1990s.

demographic characteristics, and above all by geographical position are similar to their neighbouring municipalities with very high shares of persons working or residing abroad.

### ***Slowing down emigration, accelerating brain-drain***

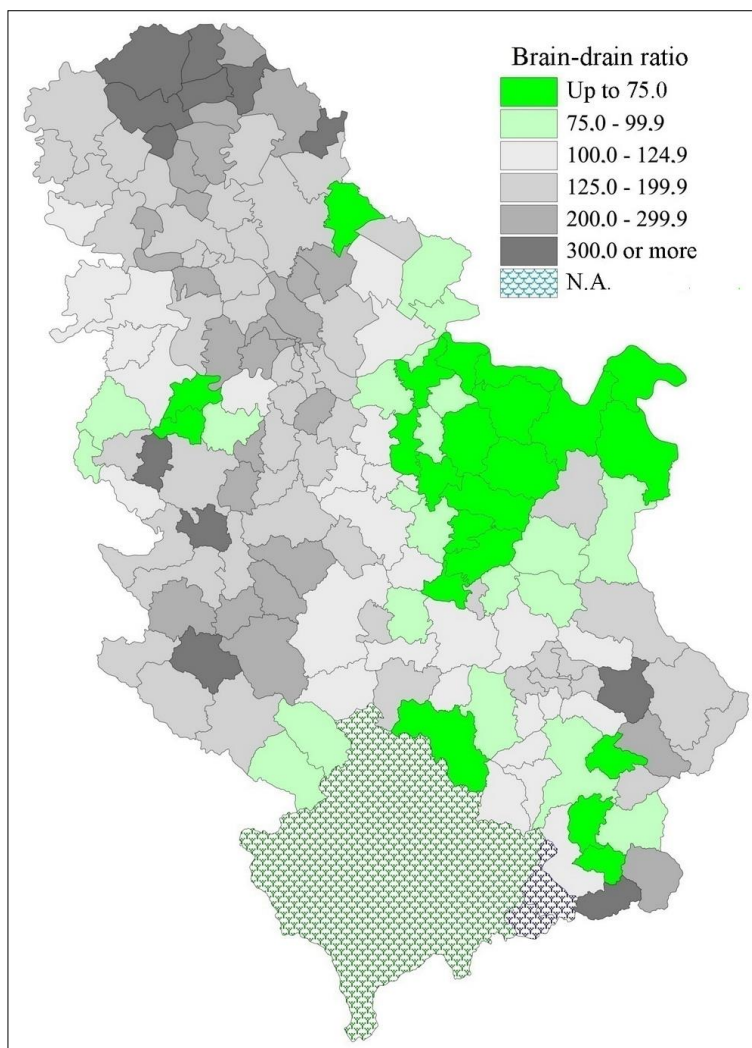
Despite the general belief that among emigrants from Serbia, the majority are "the young and highly educated", the results of the censuses conducted between 1981 and 2011 indicate the general conclusion that the educational structure of the Serbian population in the country does not differ significantly from the structure of the population abroad. However, in the reporting period there are noticeable changes reflected in improving the educational structure of the population in the country and abroad, but came about faster with emigrants (Penev, 2008; Stanković, 2014). In fact, while until 1981, there was almost no difference in the share of people without completed elementary school in the total population (aged 15 years or more) in the country and abroad (45% vs. 44%), in 2011 the share of the uneducated was much more unfavourable with the population in the country (14% vs. 6%). At the same time, there were also major changes in the shares of the population with tertiary education.

At the same time, the educational structure of the population differs significantly by age, sex, and the length of stay abroad. There are also differences in the level of education of Serbian emigrants by the receiving country. However, when making conclusions it should be borne in mind that there are no reliable estimates related to the level of under-registration by the level of education, but that the coverage of persons abroad is probably the lowest in highly educated emigrants, particularly those with the highest academic levels.

Differences in preference to emigrate by the educational level can be well seen through the Brain-Drain Ratio value /BDR/ (Despić, 2015). The 2011 Census data show that the total Serbian contingent with tertiary education (at home and abroad), based on the value of brain-drain ratio (110.9), has by 11% greater chance to be part of the emigrant population than the persons with secondary or lower educational level. Three decades earlier, the value of BDR was more than twice smaller, and it was 45.3. This means that according to the results of the 1981 Census, the probability of the Serbian population with tertiary education to be part of the Serbian emigration contingent was more than halved compared to persons with secondary or lower education level.

The educational structure of the emigrant population in Serbia in the macro regions was differentiated. Vojvodina has a slightly more favourable educational structure of emigrant population than central Serbia, both in terms of the share of the most educated (in 2011, the shares were 21% and 15%) and the share of the least educated or without education (23% vs. 36%).

The city of Belgrade, analysed as a separate entity, has by far the most favourable educational structure. According to the 2011 Census, Belgrade participated with less than 16% of the total emigrant population (aged 15 years or more), but even with more than 42% of the total population of Serbia abroad with tertiary educational level (BDR amounted to about 200). This means that the "risk" of highly educated citizens of Belgrade to emigrate was twice the "risk" of their fellow citizens with secondary or lower education.



*Fig. 2. Brain-Drain Ratio. Serbia, 2011 (by municipality)*

Source: Authors' own elaboration based on the 2011 Census data

Spatial distribution of municipalities in Serbia observed according to the values of BDR shows very high values present in municipalities in the north and north-east of Vojvodina (Fig. 2). Among them is Kanjiža, the municipality with the highest values of the BDR, which is as high as 526, Mali Idoš, Senta and Čoka with over 400, and Subotica, Bačka Topola and Nova Crnja with over three times higher possibility to emigrate for persons with higher education than for persons of lower educational qualifications. Mainly all the municipalities of the City of Belgrade also have high levels of BDR. In eight of the 17 municipalities BDR has a value of more than 200, of which only two are suburban (Surčin and Sopot), while the rest mainly make the city core (Vračar, S. Grad, S. Venac, N. Beograd, Zemun and Palilula).

There is also a group of municipalities in western Serbia, with BDR over 200, or even over 300. Although most of the analysed municipalities have low and moderate values of APR, among them there are three municipalities with significantly expressed emigration: Priboj, Prijepolje and Sjenica. There, the probability of emigration (APR) in the overall population is between two and three times higher than the average for the whole country.

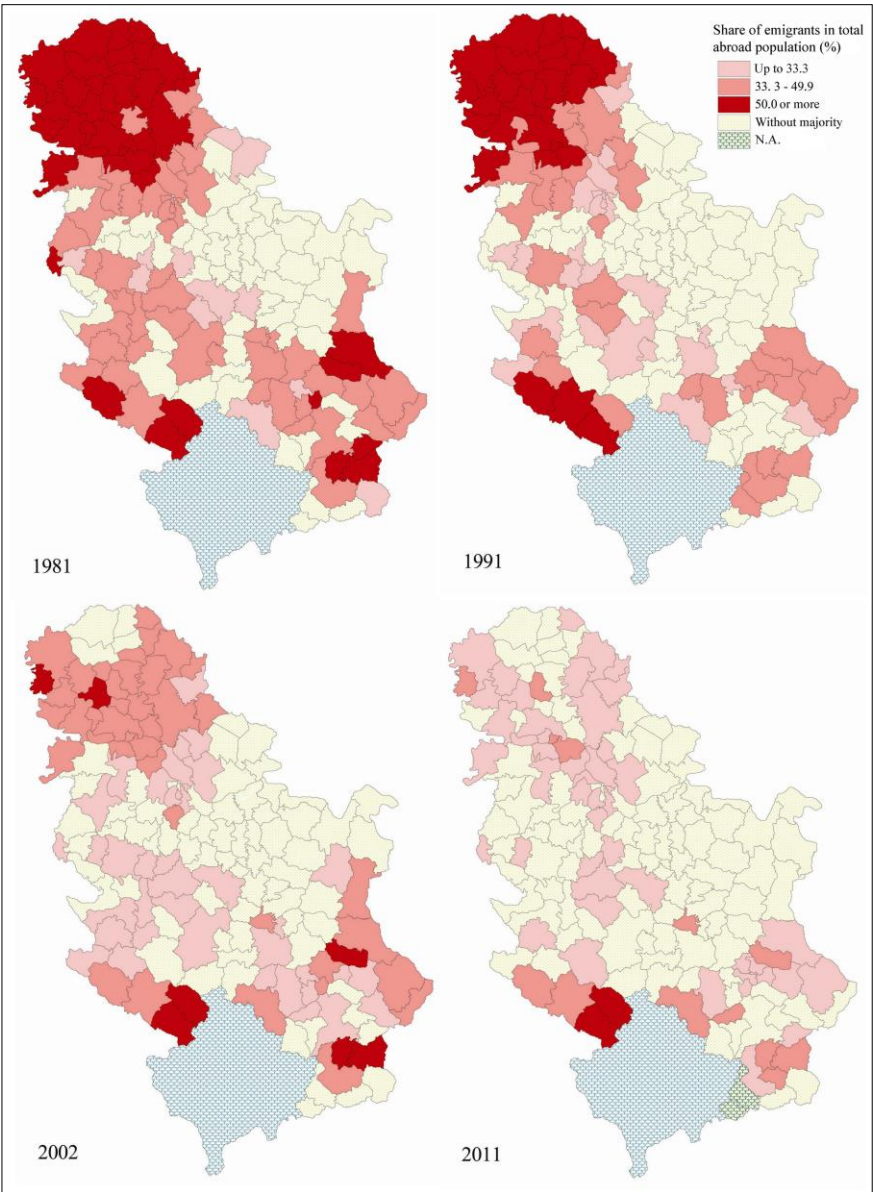
On the other hand, special attention is drawn by central-east Serbia, as an area with the lowest BDR values, but also the most unfavourable educational structure of the emigrant population. It is also the area where there are all the municipalities from the oldest "hot" emigration zone with very high shares of emigrant population and very high and record KPI values (over 10). In as many as 13 of the 14 municipalities of this "hot" emigration zone, BDR values are generally well below the average for Serbia (111), ranging from 32 to 90. It is only in the municipality of Bor that the value of BDR (179) is above the average (Fig. 2). However, Bor is the only municipality of this "hot" zone where KPI is below 1.00 (0.48), and it could be said that it belongs to it only geographically. The reasons for extremely low educational levels can be found in the fact that it is a traditionally emigration area, with a large share of emigrants who left the country in the 1980s or earlier, and a large share of people without education or only with elementary school completed. The educational structure in these municipalities is not much better for the population in the country, but they have highly developed migrant networks based on the so-called strong ties, that is, relatives and friendly ties (Granovetter, 1973). The networks based on these ties in the contemporary migration context significantly facilitate going abroad for persons without tertiary education, and perhaps especially them.

### ***Close to local compatriots even while abroad***

In Serbia, in terms of external migration destination there are considerable regional differences, which additionally intensified in the late 20<sup>th</sup> and early 21<sup>st</sup> century. They exist both at the lower (villages and municipalities), and the higher territorial levels (districts and macro-entities). The reasons for the presence of regional differences in terms of importance and characteristics of migration flows and stocks are manifold, and can be found in the achieved level of economic development of the area, the extent of unemployment, population structure (primarily age and education), the dominant migration population model (traditional or contemporary), geographical location, etc. In the late 20th century, ethnic structure of the population became increasingly important, particularly with the intensification of the political crisis that resulted in the disintegration of the former Yugoslavia, and culminated in the wars in its region. Which one will be selected depends on a number of factors, both subjective and objective. It varies from case to case whether personal preferences will prevail, characteristics of an individual (gender, age, qualifications, language skills, nationality, financial situation, etc.) or objective factors (policy of the receiving country with regard to the admission of new migrants, economic and political conditions geographical distance, etc.). In this connection, the existence of developed migrant networks or their absence is of an outmost and growing importance.

Traditionally, Germany is a main destination for emigrants from Serbia. This was the case between the two world wars, then during the mid-1960 and the 1990s and at the beginning of the 21<sup>st</sup> century. However, during the 2000s the intensity of migration to

Germany weakened, and according to the results of the 2011 Census for the first time that country failed to take the first place in the number of emigrants from Serbia (Fig. 3).



*Fig. 3. Municipalities with majority of emigrants in Germany. Serbia, 1981-2011*

Source: Elaborated by the authors on the base on the census data



At the time of the 1981 Census, every third (37%) Serbian emigrant resided in Germany. In 2002, 103 thousand were enumerated, but the share dropped to 25%. The largest decrease was registered in the intercensal period 2002-2011 (by 47 thousand), so that in 2011 the share of that country in the total number of Serbian emigrants was for the first time reduced to less than 20% (18%)<sup>7</sup>. This decrease can be partly explained by the continuing trend of selecting other countries as a destination. However, since it is one of the oldest destinations for our citizens abroad, one of the reasons is census undercount, i.e. considerably reduced coverage of persons from the families where all the members live abroad.

Germany was the main destination for Serbian emigrants, not only at the level of the country as a whole, but in both large areas and in most municipalities. In the majority of municipalities, at the time of all censuses that gathered information on emigrants from Serbia (from 1971 to 2011) Germany was the destination country that received the largest number of emigrants, and they were spatially distributed throughout Serbia. However, from census to census there were less municipalities with the majority of emigrants working or residing in this country, from 113 municipalities in 1981 to "only" 63 in 2011, out of the total of 168 municipalities (according to the administrative division from 2011).

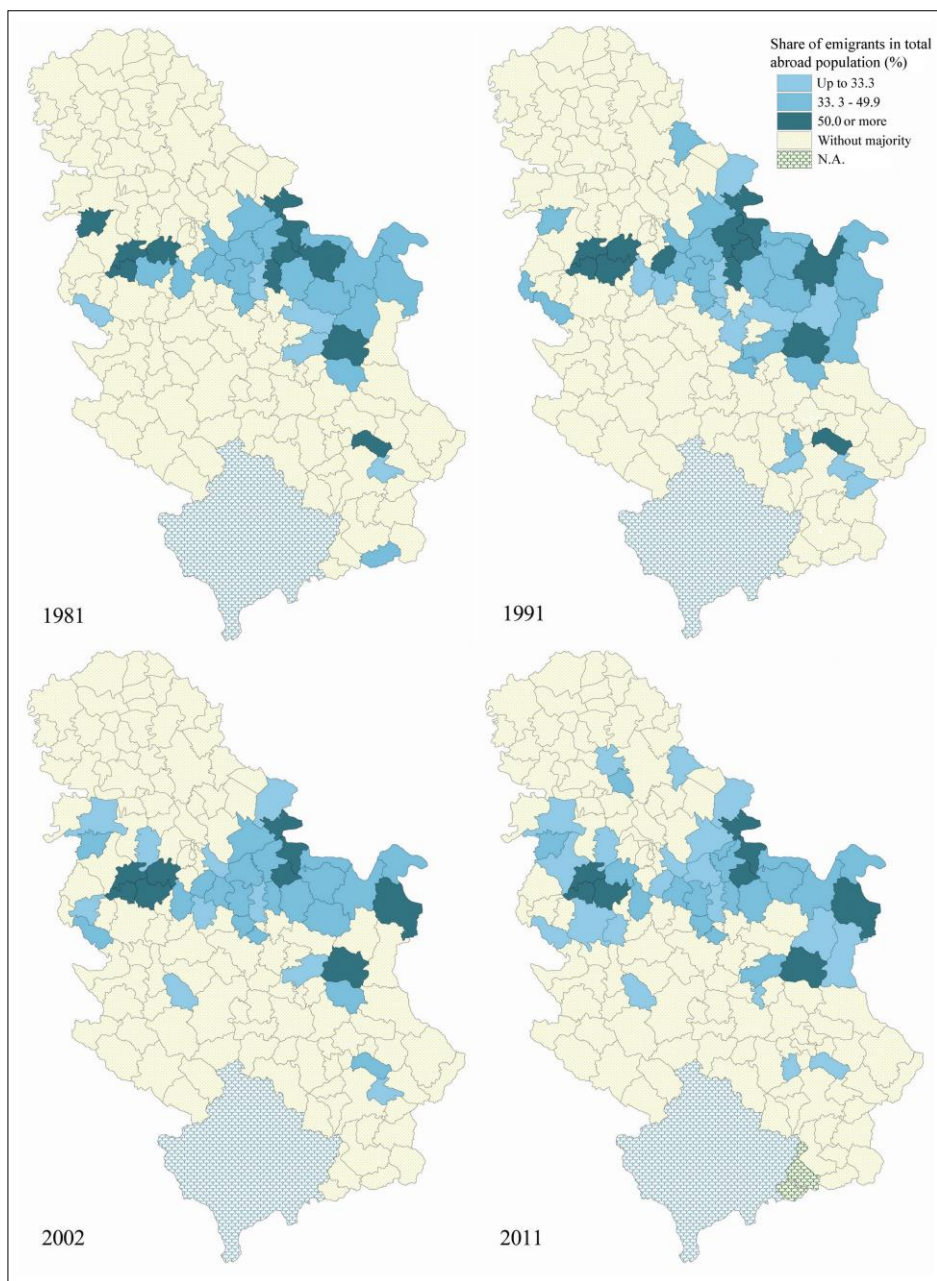
Austria is the second country by the number of municipalities in Serbia with the highest share of emigrants. At the time of the 1981 Census, there were 36 of them and in 2011 there were 45 municipalities (Fig. 4). Most of these municipalities are spatially located in the central and eastern parts of the country, then in the peripheral area of the City of Belgrade and in Mačva. This, as in the case of Germany, provides a good illustration of the "rootedness" of Serbian emigrants in these countries, but also of the importance of migrant networks when making individual decisions about the selection of the country of destination.

France is becoming less important as a destination country for emigrants from Serbia. According to the 2011 Census, emigrants who resided in France did not constitute the absolute majority of the number of persons abroad in any municipality, while only in three municipalities they were the most numerous emigrant group. At the time of the 1981 Census, such municipalities were three times more numerous (9). By origin, their largest concentration is in the municipality of Svilajnac and the five bordering municipalities, an area of origin for one third of all Serbian emigrants in France.

Switzerland, unlike France, is gaining in importance as a destination for emigrants from Serbia, their number is increased and the areas of their origin are expanded. However, most of them originate from Raška and Pomoravlje districts and two municipalities in southern Serbia - Bujanovac and Preševo (for which the data are lacking because of the 2011 Census boycott). At the same time, the number of municipalities in which emigrants in Switzerland represent a majority of people abroad significantly increased (Fig. 5). In 1981, this country was the main destination for emigrants from 9 municipalities (the same as France), and in 2011 their number increased to 24 (8 times more than in France).

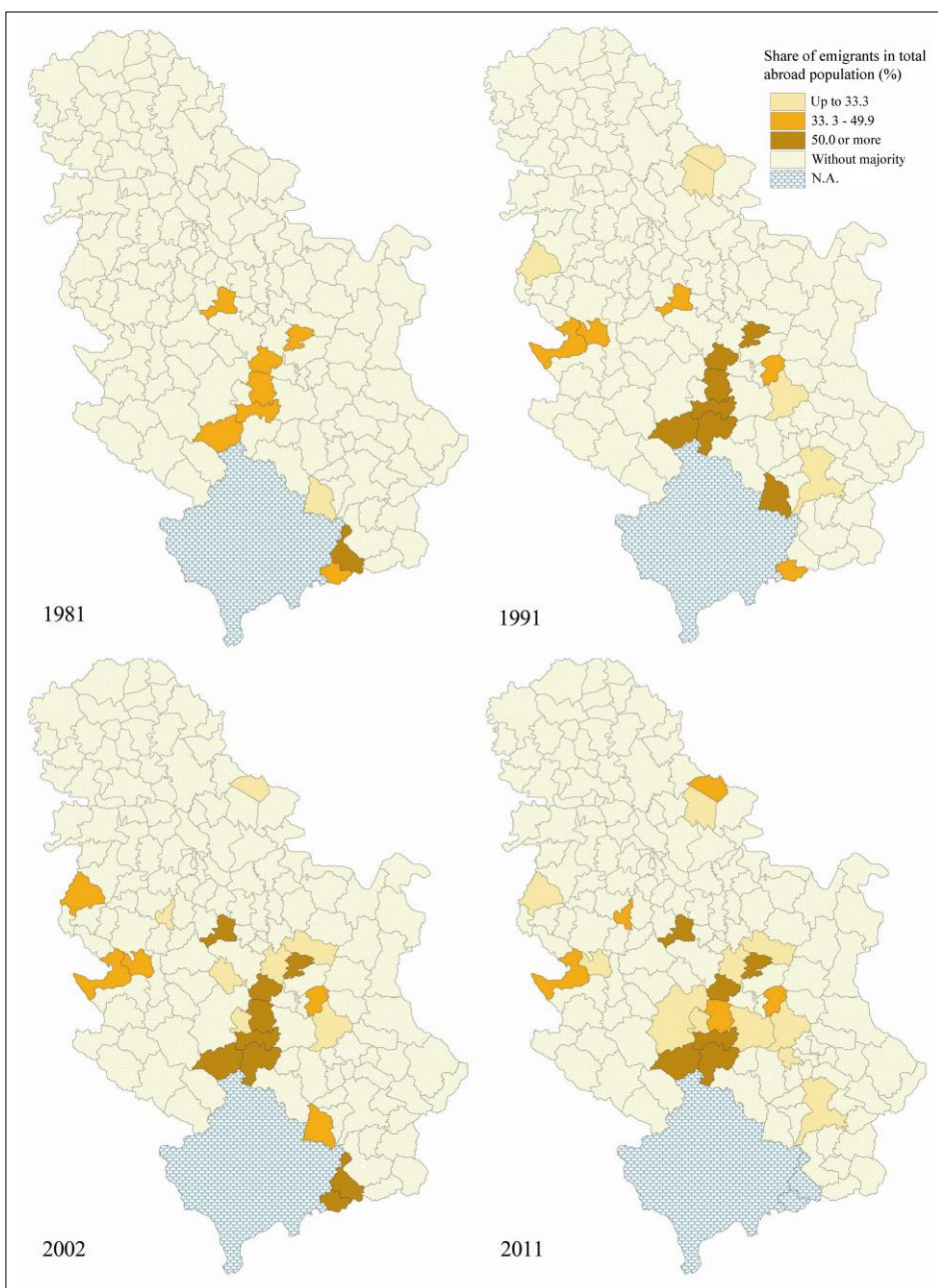
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<sup>7</sup> Without any data on ethnic Albanians who boycotted the 2011 Census.



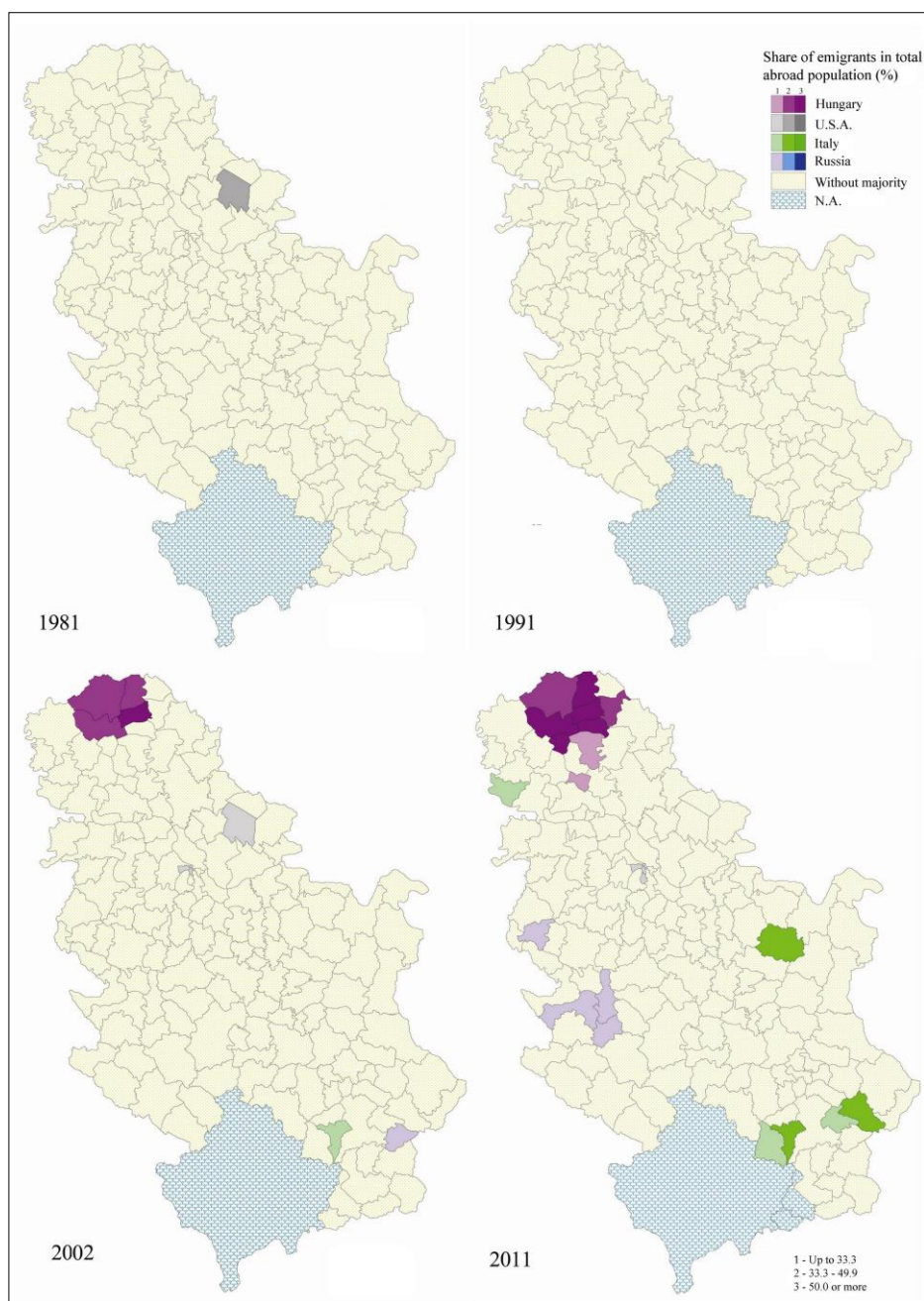
*Fig. 4. Municipalities with majority of emigrants in Austria, Serbia, 1981-2011*

Source: Elaborated by the authors on the base on the census data



*Fig. 5. Municipalities with majority of emigrants in Switzerland, Serbia, 1981-2011*

Source: Elaborated by the authors on the base on the census data



*Fig. 6. Municipalities with majority of emigrants in Hungary, Italy, Russia or USA.*

*Serbia, 1981-2011*

Source: Elaborated by the authors on the base on the census data



The destinations of Serbian migrants started to expand from the 1990s, and the most important new receiving country was Italy but also some former socialist countries (primarily Hungary and Russia). Although less intense, intercontinental migration flows were continually present, and apart from the USA and Australia, Canada and New Zealand had become frequent destinations.

Intensification of emigration flows towards new destinations has caused the increase in the number of municipalities from which people find destinations in the new receiving countries (Fig. 6). The reasons are different, but can generally be the geographical proximity and ethno-cultural closeness (Hungary and Macedonia), economic cooperation and the possibility to meet the specific requirements of foreign labour markets (Russia), a large number of highly educated professionals meeting the highest world standards (USA), but the effects of the newly established migrant networks are also very important (Italy). In this group of new receiving countries Hungary stands out significantly. In 2002, this country became the major destination for emigrants from four Vojvodina municipalities with the high share of members of the Hungarian ethnic community, directly bordering Hungary, or in its vicinity. According to the 2011 Census, the number of municipalities with the largest number of emigrants in this country increased to 9, and they are all in the north of Vojvodina. Similar reasons (primarily the proximity and ethno-cultural similarities) are present in the municipalities of Trgovište and Bosilegrad, where the majority of people abroad reside in the neighbouring Macedonia and Bulgaria. In the case of five central Belgrade municipalities (Vračar, S. Grad, S. Venac, N. Beograd, Rakovica) it is usually about the so-called brain-drain (the majority of emigrants are in the US).

## **Conclusions**

The data analysis on the Serbian emigration contingent based on the results of several recent censuses in Serbia indicates that in the last 3-4 decades certain regions of the country have developed strong migration ties with the most important European immigration countries. The number and structure of Serbian citizens abroad, especially in certain destination countries of Europe, although conditioned by the demographic characteristics of the population as well as economic and political conditions in Serbia, were also essentially conditioned by the general socio-economic and political circumstances in the countries of destination, measures of their immigration policies, but also the efficiency of the established migration ties and networks both in Serbia and in the receiving countries.

Data analysis on emigrants from Serbia in the receiving countries, in particular the results that testify about the beginning and development of migration to new destinations, such as Italy, Russia and Hungary, indicates that there are opportunities for obtaining new, very important information about contemporary migration, such as circular, transnational and transregional migration. Given that the migration flows and patterns during the current wave of globalisation are becoming increasingly more dynamic, stronger and more complex, the example of migratory movements from Serbia confirms the importance of research that would develop new advanced approaches for monitoring participants in international migration flows. Such approaches would include the spatial aspect and the regional approach at the same time on both ends of the migration process, because a re-examination is necessary, not just of how many people

from the region are choosing to migrate, but also who they are, where they are going, why they choose to migrate, and, as usually overlooked what then happens to them and the communities of which they are part, both the sending and the receiving one (Papademetriou, 2013).

At the same time, it becomes more apparent that one of the biggest obstacles to defining the complex international migration flows is that there is no statistical basis that would simultaneously, comprehensively and in compliance with methodology monitor migratory movements in the countries of origin and reception. States independently define terms such as immigrant, emigrant, foreigner and the like, and the type and contents of the data on migrants are determined by the specifics of the countries themselves, while their quality is determined by the methods of statistical monitoring (population census, population registers, immigration statistics, permanent surveys, etc.) and the statistical coverage, which in most cases is more or less incomplete. However, in the absence of the statistical monitoring platform that would uniformly (simultaneously and according to the harmonised methodology) record the migration processes from the perspective of countries of origin and countries of destination, it is necessary to advance the contents of the data on international migration by combining different statistical sources.

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**СТАНОВНИШТВО СРБИЈЕ НА РАДУ И БОРАВКУ У ИНОСТРАНСТВУ  
ПРЕМА ДРЖАВАМА ДЕСТИНАЦИЈЕ: РЕГИОНАЛНИ ПРИСТУП**

**Резиме:** Србија је држава са дугом традицијом економских и политичких миграција, великим бројем држављана који живе ван земље порекла, као и веома хетерогеном географском дистрибуцијом и различитим структурним обележјима миграната. Према резултатима пописа становништва из 1971, 1981 и 1991, број држављана Србије на раду и боравку у иностранству је континуирано растао (од 204 000 на 269 000, а потом на 274 000), што указује да је сваки тринаести становник Србије живео изван своје земље порекла. Према попису становништва 2002. године, 415 000 држављана Србије или 5.3% укупног становништва је боравило изван граница државе, те период последње деценије XX века представља период најинтензивнијих миграционих токова од 60-их година. У последњем попису становништва, 2011. године забележено је извесно опадање броја лица која су боравила у иностранству (313 000). Поред укључивања регионалног приступа у праћењу миграционих токова, анализом пописних резултата је обухваћен њихов број, удео, дужина боравка, образовна структура, као и најзаступљеније земље имиграције становништва из тзв. "врућих" емиграционих зона у Србији. Анализа података о емиграционом контингенту, која је базирана на резултатима пописа становништва од 1971. до 2011. године, указује да су у последње 3-4 деценије одређени региони у држави развили јаке миграционе везе са најважнијим европским имиграционим државама. Тако се издвајају три вруће емиграционе зоне и то у Источној Србији – Браничевски округ, у јужној Србији – општине Прешево и Бујановац и у југозападној Србији – општине Нови Пазар, Тутин, Сјеница, Пријепоље и Прибој. Са друге стране, традиционалне земље имиграције становништва Србије још од 60-их година су Немачка и Аустрија, док су временом традиционалне везе и мигрантске мреже ослабиле према Француској и Швајцарској. Нове земље дестинације од 90-их година постају Италија, Русија и Мађарска. Иако су једини извори података о међународним миграцијама пописи становништва, такав приступ има своје истраживачке и друштвене предности, пре свега зато што становништво које је пописано задржава јаке везе са Србијом и представља значајан ресурс социо-економског развоја државе.

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