REGIONAL-DEMOGRAPHIC PROBLEMS OF THE BORDER SETTLEMENTS OF SREM (VOJVODINA, SERBIA)

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Abstract: The border area of Srem occupies the western part of Vojvodina’s part of Srem. It is situated, in relation to Vojvodina, on the south-western end, and has a peripheral position. In the eleven settlements of the border area, according to the census in 2002, there lived 25,681 persons. Natural movement of population is characterized by a negative natural population growth. Migrations are expressed in the direction of the municipal centre, but also towards Sremska Mitrovica, Novi Sad and Belgrade. In this way the population of working age and, generally, highly qualified population commutes to work and they are employed outside their place of residence, because of which the border area loses the most important human resource - the knowledge and working skills.

Keywords: border region, depopulation, regional development, demographic problems, Srem.

1. INTRODUCTION

Joining the EU is a strategic goal of Serbia and there is broad economic and political consensus about that. EU membership is viewed in the context of modern society and advanced economies, while the economic, political and legal requirements, which are set by the EU, are consistent with the assumptions of economic and political transformation of our society (Begg, H., Ron, B., 2000). Serbia’s integration into European structures means creating conditions for its evolution and stability while simultaneously expanding the European area of prosperity and democracy (Puga, D., 2002, Gregor, B., Larry N., 2004). The current stage of integration of Serbia into the European economic and political space is primarily determined by the EU enlargement policy, which is characterized by a process of constant changes according to changed circumstances (Petarakos, G., Topaloglou, L., 2006).

The necessity of establishing a system and legal framework, the establishment of institutions to address regional development in the future, and the necessity of dealing with projects that are important for a better life in every municipality, in every city and every district of Serbia is emphasized (Đorđević, J., Todorović, M., 2006).

Borders in East Central Europe have become much more permeable over the past ten years as formalities have been simplified and many new crossing points have opened. At the same time, cooperation in border regions has increased, thanks mainly to the EU programmes, to include a range of business, cultural and conservation interests. In many cases these arrangements have been formalised through Euroregions which have become an indicator of good international relations (van der Boel, S., 1994, Petrakos, G.C., 1996, Belec, B., 1996, Stryjakiewicz, T., 1998, Kennard, A., 2000, Szigetvari, T., 2001, Turnock, D., 2002).

The main feature of regional development in Serbia is unevenness (Todorović, M., Drobnjaković, M., 2010). Institutional issues related to regional development are: lack of basic legal solutions, absence of economic regionalization, lack of definition of the basic regional priorities, lack of coordination and competitiveness (Ash, A., 1999). At this point, in Serbia, there are regions that are significantly developed, such as the City of Belgrade and Vojvodina, as well as underdeveloped regions, such as Pčinjski (Miljanović, D. et al., 2010). Serbian border regions are mainly characterized by a high degree of barriers in relation to neighbouring countries and unfavourable demographic and economic image (Đorđević, D., 1994, 2002).

Regional disparities in Serbia are among the highest ones in Europe with the trend of their further increase. Regional polarization is, starting from 2000, more and more prominent. Relationship of the most developed and the least developed municipality in the year 2000 was 1:19, and in 2005 it was increased to 1:22. The economic crisis during the ‘90s and the initiated process of transition, caused the appearance of new areas of underdevelopment, such as Eastern Serbia, parts of central Serbia, the regional centers of mining and heavy industry, in addition to the traditionally underdeveloped regions of Kosovo, southern Serbia and Stara Raška (Miljanović, D. et al., 2010).

There are several instruments for the implementation of balanced development of regions in Serbia and one of the instruments is the stimulus of local infrastructure, stimulus of entrepreneurship and the idea of stimulation of absolute beginners in the business (Tošić, B., Miletić, R., 2002). The specific constellation of factors within a region should highlight a specific comparative advantage. The border region of Srem satisfies this condition because there are specificities when it comes to geography, the structure of production, which represent comparative advantages over the rest of Serbia and the capital.

The process of Serbia joining the European Union, despite its specificity and difficulty, opens a number of development opportunities (Todorović, M., Tošić, B., 2006). Vojvodina, and therefore the border region of Srem, due to its geographical position have a special role and responsibility in the integration process (David, B., Lisa, P., 2004).

According to the Austrian Institute for Regional Studies and Spatial Planning - OIR (Österreichisches Institut für Raumplanung - http://www.oir.at/), regional planning in the EU consists of four dimensions of territorial cohesion, such as: balance, reducing disparities, collaboration and management. Part of rural development in regional development in EU has two columns: support of agriculture in the traditional sense and support of rural development (Aadne, A., et al., 2003). Rural development should respond to regional needs and encourage the endogenous development. It should be launched by
regional development policies and focused on sustainable development through the application of the regional capital (Bernard, F., 2004). The main functions of regional governance need to be dual: on one hand strengthening the identity, motivation and social capital and, on the other hand, administration of the program, technical support and monitoring (Brian, W., 2003).

The fact that Vojvodina borders with EU member states represents a possibility to establish direct cooperation with border regions of EU member states and regions in neighbouring countries to achieve common development priorities (Đekić, S., Jovanović, S., 2009). The CBC programs provide an opportunity not only to nurture good neighbourly relations, but also to establish long-term partnerships and development projects based on real social needs, which will contribute to improving the competitiveness of the region (Wallace, C., 1999, Tóth, J., Dövényi, Z., 2010). In this way, improving human and institutional resources, AP Vojvodina reached maturity to work together with neighbouring regions on solving problems that are unique to the region (Stojanović, Ž., Manić, E., 2009). It is important to implement, at the state level but also at the regional and local governments level, the information exchange, mutual coordination and mutual learning in the processes of modernization and Europeanization.

The border region of Srem can be viewed in terms of a specific manifestation of regional differentiation and regionalization of the European space which represent the Euro-regions (Petrović, S., 2009). They are defined as specific modalities of regional, cross-border cooperation. The main feature of the Euro-region is highlighted poly-functionality in space. They have a developmental, economic function, political function, especially in terms of "softening" state borders and intensification of cross-border integration process, a transformational role, when the periphery becomes an important element of the complex connectivity with the environment (Suli-Zakar, I., Đorđević, J., Panić, M., 2004).

This form of regionalization has become the subject of numerous studies, but mainly from the economic and political aspects, and much less from the complex geographical or regional-geographical aspects. Theoretical footing of the Euro-region is in the basic idea of a politically and economically united Europe (Šabić, D., Pavlović, M., 2008), as well as in the intention to transform stagnant, peripheral position of the border regions within individual European countries, by evaluating their "new" geo-location, making a bridge of cooperation between the neighbouring states, which would create the preconditions for a faster overall development and for tighter complex interstate connection through their intermediation. Characteristically, the forms of cross-border cooperation involve a wide range of modalities of partnership-cooperation: from town-twinning to cooperation along the main water communications (Stojić-Karanović, E., 2002; Šečerov, V., 2002) or within the larger interest-related geospatial entities (Todorović, M., Tošić, B., Stojanović, B., 2004).

2. METHODOLOGY

The border region of Srem was established after the breakup of SFRY and the establishment of new borders, including border settlements. Although the formation of this border area is of recent date, the problems the population is facing are the same as in other border areas of Serbia (Kovačević, T., et al., 2009).
The border area of Srem occupies the western part of Vojvodina’s part of Srem. It is situated, in relation to Vojvodina, on the south-western end, and has a peripheral position. This area includes parts of the two largest Srem municipalities - Šid and Sremska Mitrovica, and parts of Bačka Palanka municipality.

The border area consists of eleven settlements in the municipality of Šid: Ljuba, Sot, Molovin, Bikić Do, Berkasovo, Šid, Ilinci, Vašica, Batrovci, Morović and Jemena, village Sremska Rača, which belongs to the municipality of Sremska Mitrovica, and settlements Vizić and Neštin, which belong to the municipality of Bačka Palanka (Curčić, S., 2001). As the majority of the settlements are located in the municipality of Šid, due to uniformity factors and actions of local government, the problems and potentials of settlements belonging to the municipality of Šid will be discussed further.

This work is a result of analysis of data obtained in the Republic Institute for Statistics and the Department of Real Estate Cadastre of the Municipality of Šid. For writing of this work the analytical processing of researched literature and other materials, then the statistical analysis of population census in 1991 and 2002, cartographic and graphical methods, quantitative and qualitative content analysis and the comparative method were used. The data is illustrated by drawing maps, which is done by using the ArcGis 9.3 software.

3. RESULTS

The agricultural rural area of the eleven settlements (Fig. 1.) in the municipality of Šid in the border area is 393.7 km² (Department of Real Estate Cadastre, 2010), which represents 10.7% of the territory of Srem and 1.8% of the territory of Vojvodina. These eleven settlements represent 9.4% of total number of settlements in Srem or 2.4% of settlements in the Province. The settlement network has a medium-density. For every 100 km² there is an average of 2.79 settlements, which is above the provincial average (in Vojvodina there are 2.2 settlements on 100 km²). The average size of settlements in Vojvodina is 4,351 residents, and in the observed area the number of inhabitants in the settlements is 2,335, which indicates relative fragmentation of the settlements. The factors that were crucial to the position and organization of the settlement are natural: terrain and direction of the troughs of major and minor watercourses (Curčić, S., 2010).
The total border length of the border area is about 142.9 km. Of this the length of the border with Republic of Croatia, on the north and west of the region is 110 km and the length of the border with Republika Srpska is 32.9 km. The river Sava makes the south, longest natural border of this territory. Although it is navigable, it has no special significance for traffic in this area. Other natural borders are parts of smaller waterways, such as Studva (9 miles), Smogva (3.5 miles), Debrnja (2 km) and Bosut (6.5 miles). The borders in the northern and western part of the region are administrative.

The border area is linked with the municipalities of neighbouring countries of Croatia and Republika Srpska with main and regional roads and railway network. On this territory there are eight border crossings. With Croatia border crossings are: Sot, Ljuba, Berkasovo (border zone), Šid (road), Šid (rail) and Batrovo. Border crossings with Republika Srpska are Jamena (ferryboat) and Sremska Rača. Sot and Ljuba border crossings connect Šid and Bačka Palanka, over Ilok in Croatia. The Ilok «border pocket» increases peripherality of border settlements. This position makes it difficult to transport because passengers need to cross the four border checkpoints if traveling from Šid to Bačka Palanka through Croatian territory of Ilok. The border crossing "Batrovo" is on the international road route E-70. From it separates the main road to north which, in Šid, branches to the northwest direction to the border crossing Šid and to the northeast direction towards Sot border crossing. Since 1974 and the construction of bridge over the Danube at Bačka Palanka and Ilok, the main route where Sot border crossing is gained importance and thus made a positive contribution to improving the region's geographical position (Đuričić, R., 1984). Most settlements are located on the aforementioned routes. Those that are not, are linked by roads. The railway connecting Belgrade and Zagreb passes through the territory of the municipality of Šid and the municipality of Sremska Mitrovica. Of it one wing branches to the south, toward Republika Srpska, specifically Bijeljina. Good traffic connections have a positive influence on the favourable geographical position, especially the aforementioned international route E-70 and other main and regional routes. Consequently, it can be concluded that the border region of Srem, although peripherally located, has more elements by which geographical location can be characterized as favourable.

In the geological structure of the border area, at depths of about 3,000 m, schist’s, gneisses, phyllites, diabases, tuffs and limestone from the earliest period of the Palaeozoic have been identified. Mesozoic age rocks, limestone, sandstone and shale are covered by younger, primarily neogenic sandy and clayey sediments. These layers have a strong hydro-geological significance (Miljković, Lj., 1998).

The sediments accumulated during the Quaternary are represented by pebbles, sands, sandy clay, yellow loess clay, swamp and terrestrial typical loess (Bobalj, D., Ristanović, B., 2008). Mineral resources are insignificant. Researching suggests the presence of oil and gas, but the potential reserves and profitability of investing in their exploitation have not been yet examined. There is plenty of loess and clay which are used for production of building materials as raw materials.

The climate of the border area is moderately continental. Microclimatic differences exist, mainly due to Fruška gora (294 m, trigonometric point Liske), which is with its position, altitude and vegetation, a climate modifier. The average value of the mean annual air temperature is 11.0°C. The dominant wind is the southeast wind - Kossava (233 °), and
by the frequency of occurrence a wind from the northwest direction (225 °) is close to kossava (Bogdanović, Ž., Ćurčić, S., 1998). The wind speeds in the border area (weather station Šid) reach 3.4 m/s, while the average annual precipitation is 670.2 mm (Meteorological Yearbooks, 1951-1991).

The greatest economic potential of the border area is the fertile land, which covers much of the territory, water resources and forests with varied wildlife.

The border area of Srem has abundant underground and surface waters. Much of the territory belongs to the River Sava Basin and a smaller part to the River Danube Basin. The best quality water sources are of contact type and can be found on the slopes of Fruska gora. The water closest to the topographic surface of the loess plateau can be found at a depth of 30 to 40 meters. On the loess terraces shallow aquifers occur at depths of 8-10 m, depending on soil micro relief (Đuričić, R., 1984). The drinking water the population of loess terrace receives from artesian wells. Deep aquifers can be found at the depth of 80-200 m. Thermal springs exist between settlements Ljuba and Erdevik and in the vicinity of Ilinac. The highest hydro-graphic surface density has a loess terrace and the lowest a loess plateau. Sava flows through this area in the length of 16.5 km and almost the entire territory gravitates on its basin. The waters from the cadastral territory of Molovin municipality flow into the Danube through the Dobra stream. Sava's tributaries are the Bosut River with Studva. Bosut is present with a fifth of its course in the territory, or a length of 38 km (Bogdanović, Ž., 1974, 1982). It is assumed that these flows are abandoned flows of the river Sava (Gavrilović, Lj., Đukić, D., 2002). There are a number of channelled flows, such as: Šidina, Jelisavetin kanal, Boris Blato, Draganovci, Đepuš and other. Swamped surfaces are Slezen bara in Bosut basin and Breg in the Sava basin. The best-known water reservoirs of Šid municipality are Sot, Mohorač and Bruje (Ristanović, B., Bobalj, D., 2007).

One of the most important natural resource is the soil. In mountainous area, on the loess surface, degraded chernozem, gajnjača, brown calcareous soil eroded in some places, carbonate chernozem and others can be found (Đuričić, R., 1984). The loess plateau is formed of carbonate and non-carbonate chernozem and chernozem with signs of earlier water logging. At the loess terrace there are carbonate and non-carbonate chernozem, meadow calcareous soil, meadow soil with signs of salinization, and in areas toward the rivers Sava and Bosut there are hydromorphic soils, non-carbonate meadow soil, brownized meadow soil, marsh gley soil, alluvial soil of different composition etc. (Đerčan, B., et al., 2010a).

Bio-geographical resources are separated into several zones. The area of Fruska gora is divided into three bio-geographical regions: the mountain belt, loess plateau belt and flat valley belt. The mountain belt is represented by deciduous forests (oak, linden, acacia), while conifers (spruce, fir) occur in small areas. The lower slopes are occupied by vineyards and orchards. Wildlife is comprised of wild boar, deer, pheasants, etc. Representatives of the bird fauna are: imperial eagle, blackbird, wren, nightingale, tit and others. On smaller saline surfaces there are low grasses and weeds. The pond vegetation in the wetter areas, in addition to major waterways, is represented by water lilies, water-crowfoots, rushes, bur-reeds, wholeed water milfoils, reeds and others. The alluvial plain of the river Sava basin is mostly covered by deciduous forests (oak, hornbeam, ash, elm and other soft deciduous trees) (Đuričić, R., 1984).

In the eleven settlements of the border area, according to the census in 2002 (Table 1), there lived 25,681 persons, which is 7.6% of the population of Srem, or 1.3% of the provincial population. According to population density, the border area with less than 63
inhabitants per km² is 1.5 times less populated than Srem (92 inhabitants per km²) and the Province (95 inhabitants per km²). The large area of the border region of Srem caused the settlement to differ, among other things, in the size of the population. This was very influenced by geographical location. The size of the population in the settlements, if we exclude the municipal centre where 63.5% of the population of the border region live, ranges from three hundred, like in Molovin, located in the north-western part of the mountainous border area, to over two thousand, like in Morović, which is the local gravitational centre in southern border area near the E-70 highway.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Settlement</th>
<th>Number of inhabitants</th>
<th>Population density</th>
<th>Average age 2002.</th>
<th>Share 0-14</th>
<th>Share 15-65</th>
<th>Share 65+</th>
<th>Index of aging</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Batrovci</td>
<td>359 320</td>
<td>13.0 11.8</td>
<td>43.8</td>
<td>40 202</td>
<td>78</td>
<td>2.0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Berkasovo</td>
<td>1088 1228</td>
<td>56.0 63.9</td>
<td>40.9</td>
<td>193 802</td>
<td>233</td>
<td>1.2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bikić Do</td>
<td>295 336</td>
<td>35.2 42.3</td>
<td>40.4</td>
<td>56 216</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>1.1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vašica</td>
<td>1632 1717</td>
<td>43.6 46.8</td>
<td>41.5</td>
<td>244 1140</td>
<td>333</td>
<td>1.4</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ilinci</td>
<td>869 827</td>
<td>31.4 30.0</td>
<td>43.3</td>
<td>114 534</td>
<td>179</td>
<td>1.6</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jamena</td>
<td>1320 1130</td>
<td>18.5 16.4</td>
<td>42.2</td>
<td>176 713</td>
<td>241</td>
<td>1.4</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ljuba</td>
<td>583 559</td>
<td>38.3 36.9</td>
<td>42.7</td>
<td>84 352</td>
<td>123</td>
<td>1.5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Molovin</td>
<td>305 298</td>
<td>25.8 25.2</td>
<td>42.1</td>
<td>54 180</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>1.2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Morović</td>
<td>2055 2164</td>
<td>22.8 24.6</td>
<td>39.4</td>
<td>358 1463</td>
<td>343</td>
<td>1.0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sot</td>
<td>801 791</td>
<td>37.5 37.4</td>
<td>42.2</td>
<td>117 508</td>
<td>166</td>
<td>1.4</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Šid</td>
<td>14089 16311</td>
<td>301.9 356.0</td>
<td>38.1</td>
<td>2737 11417</td>
<td>2157</td>
<td>0.8</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>23396</strong> <strong>25681</strong></td>
<td><strong>56.7 62.8</strong></td>
<td><strong>41.5</strong></td>
<td><strong>4173</strong></td>
<td><strong>17527</strong></td>
<td><strong>3981</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


During the period from 1991 to 2002 Šid, Berkasovo, Bikić Do, Vašica and Morović recorded population increase. The number of inhabitants from 1991 to 2002 has not increased in Batrovci, Ilinci, Jamena, Ljuba, Molovin and Sot. Therefore, the regularity can be observed that the population increased in the settlements that are closer to the municipality centre or located on the main road.

The population density was moving in line with the increase or decrease of population. According to the latest census it ranged from a minimum of 12 inhabitants/km² in Batrovci up to a maximum of 356 inhabitants/km² in Šid.

The average age of the population in the border region in 2002 was 41.5 years. The oldest population lived in Batrovci (43.8 years), where the largest index of aging was recorded and the youngest in Šid (38.1 years), where the lowest index of aging was recorded (Table 1).

Natural movement of population is characterized by a negative natural population growth moving to extremely low values in Sot (-22.0 ‰) and in Batrovci (-20.2 ‰). Positive population growth occurs occasionally in larger settlements, mostly in Šid (10.0 ‰) (Provincial Bureau of Statistics, 2010). Migrations are expressed in the direction of the municipal centre, but also towards Sremska Mitrovica, Novi Sad (Bubalo-Živković, M., et al., 2009) and Belgrade (Stamenković, S., Gatarić, D., 2008). In this way the population of
working age and, generally, highly qualified population commutes to work and they are employed outside their place of residence, because of which the border area loses the most important human resource - the knowledge and working skills.

Series of political developments, such as changes in states' borders and the formation of new states, have rendered Vojvodina as a territory of migrations throughout the last century (Hooghe, M., et al., 2008). These migrations have exerted a considerable impact upon Vojvodina’s ethnic structure (Bjeljac, Ž., Lukić, V., 2008). According to the census of 2002, the Serbs were a majority in eight of the eleven surveyed settlements. Rusyns are a majority in Bikić Do, but their significant presence (15%) is also found in Berkasovo. Slovaks had a majority only in Ljuba. To determine whether and to what extent did the movements of the population affect the ethnic composition the data from the last two censuses were compared. According to them, the proportion of Serbs has increased in all areas. The refugee contingent, as a demographic potential, directly contributed to the demographic development and enhanced the national homogeneity of the population (Matijević, D., et al., 2005, Nikitović, V. Lukić, V., 2010). This is supported by the observation made by Summers (Summers, M., 1998) that immigrants do not have to be a minority. Data on Rusyns in 1991 were not published.

The share of Croats decreased in all areas, in Morović and Vašica more than three times. According to the share in total population, the Croats had a majority in Sot in 1991. The proximity of the border and the territory of Croatia for the Croatian population was a strong appealing motive for resettlement in the nearby villages across the border, simply because they had some land holdings, or they processed some land there.

Table 2 shows that in the settlements of the border area of Srem active population makes 43.1%, individuals with personal income 16.7%, and the dependent population is 40.2%. Most of the dependent populations are women, in Batrovci it is up to 77.5%.
Table 2. Population activities and business by sectors, in relative numbers, in the settlements of the border area of Srem

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Settlement</th>
<th>Active population (%)</th>
<th>Individuals with personal income (%)</th>
<th>Dependent population (%)</th>
<th>The activity of the population by sector (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>total</td>
<td>female</td>
<td>total</td>
<td>female</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Batrovići</td>
<td>42.2</td>
<td>31.1</td>
<td>20.3</td>
<td>56.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Berkasovo</td>
<td>41.9</td>
<td>39.3</td>
<td>21.5</td>
<td>54.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bikić Do</td>
<td>39.9</td>
<td>30.6</td>
<td>16.7</td>
<td>48.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vašica</td>
<td>41.4</td>
<td>35.8</td>
<td>17.3</td>
<td>48.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ilinci</td>
<td>43.6</td>
<td>31.4</td>
<td>18.2</td>
<td>58.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jamena</td>
<td>42.3</td>
<td>32.1</td>
<td>14.6</td>
<td>54.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ljuba</td>
<td>45.3</td>
<td>34.8</td>
<td>13.8</td>
<td>42.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Molovin</td>
<td>47.3</td>
<td>32.6</td>
<td>10.7</td>
<td>46.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Morović</td>
<td>39.4</td>
<td>32.7</td>
<td>16.9</td>
<td>45.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sot</td>
<td>44.2</td>
<td>33.6</td>
<td>17.0</td>
<td>55.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Šid</td>
<td>46.2</td>
<td>43.1</td>
<td>17.6</td>
<td>55.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>43.1</td>
<td>34.3</td>
<td>16.7</td>
<td>51.5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


The natural resources of this area are not numerous or varied so the economy has had a lot of one-sided development. The agriculture is the dominant economic sector (Đerčan, B., et al., 2010a). It is a part of a mixed type of agriculture, dominated by annual plants (Todorović, M., 2002). In the primary sector of the economy 51.7% of the population is employed, and the proportion ranges from 6.5% (Šid) to 82.9% (Ljuba). The secondary, tertiary and quaternary sector employs most of the people in the only town in the border area, and in Ljuba and the Jamena only a few (Table 2).

4. DISCUSSION

On the presented geographical characteristics of the border area of Srem one can talk about the problems and potentials of this area.

First of all, we should point out the advantages and disadvantages of the geographical location. In times of war the border region had more negative than positive consequences stemming from its geographical position. The Front of Srem during the Second World War and the bombing on a number of occasions during the war in Croatia and Bosnia certainly confirm this view. However, in time of peace this geographical position can certainly be described as favourable. Through this area passes the E-70 highway and the railway line linking the border area with Serbia and the West. By increasing passenger and cargo transport and customs Šid would certainly have a lot of benefits. Upon entry of Croatia into the European Union the importance of the municipality and border crossings on its territory would increase even more, and the fact that the municipality of Šid is the only municipality in Vojvodina bordering with Croatia by land would certainly influence the trade with the European Union which would be carried out over this territory. When Croatia become the EU membership in July 2013, this will be an opportunity for Serbia to easily export certain products on CEFTA markets. Our country
will also gain the importance in regional trade due to favorable investment conditions. It is expected more interest in starting production in Serbia as well, which will be exported to regional and other global markets. This area has traditionally focused on Croatia as nearest neighbor, so it is necessary to strengthen cross-border cooperation (Tóth, J., Dövényi, Z., 2010).

The unfavourable demographic of the area is characterized by high mortality, as a result of high average age of the population, particularly in rural areas (Đerčan, B., et al., 2010b). The existing structure of the population does not provide conditions for the improvement of the demographic structure in the future. Analyzing the socio-economic characteristics of settlements it can be concluded that there is a relative unevenness in the development. There is a weak pace of development and construction of settlements due to the lack of economic power.

The problems and limitations in economic development are: border status, sparsely populated territory and unfavourable demographics. The aging of population and the deterioration of vital features in the long run create the problem of providing a sufficient number of working-age populations. Limitations in the development of the economy are reflected primarily in poor utilization of existing capacities. There are significant reserves that could be activated by removing the causes of their lack of utilization. Then, in the decline of production in a number of companies, difficult financial position of enterprises, unemployment, loss of some companies, unfinished privatization process, the stagnation of small businesses and service trades. For a border region primary agricultural production is a priority. Without positive changes in agricultural production, which has extensive under-used capacity, we cannot talk about the development of this area.

Previous development constraints could be overcome by restoration of agricultural production, economic and financial consolidation of agricultural enterprises and cooperatives and by restructuring of the economy. To achieve this goal, there are natural conditions and development opportunities offered by new economic conditions. Special importance should be given to mechanisms and policy measures of regional development, particularly the decisions establishing that Šid municipality, as a border municipality, has the status of priority in the policy of encouraging the development of underdeveloped and depopulated areas.

The potentials in agriculture are based on natural resources. Agricultural land is the most voluminous and most important potential.

The significant potential for future economic development of border area are a high-quality labour force, proximity to major consumer centres such as Belgrade, Novi Sad and the vicinity of borders with Croatia and Republika Srpska (BiH).

The natural conditions (pedological, climatic and geo-morphological) provide significant opportunities for the development of almost all forms of agriculture. This territory, as it extends in two production macro-areas, has the potential for crop and fruit production.

Of natural factors that limit the opportunities of agricultural production are: continental climate, which includes large temperature fluctuations during the year, accompanied by frequent frosts, the frequency of drought years, with significant uneven distribution of rainfall during the year.

The factors conditioned by the human factor, which could be a constraint for agricultural development are: fragmentation of holdings, outdated machinery, unfavourable
age structure of farmers, inadequate road network which significantly reduces the
d Advantage of a favourable geographical position.

The potentials of the area in the industry are based on available natural resources
and the values made by work. The main development priorities are more dynamic agro-
industrial complex and the further development of chemical, wood processing, textile and
metal industries. The greatest potentials are the existing capacities in the food industry.
Increase in capacity utilization, raising product quality, modernization and expansion of
product lines, the construction of smaller processing capacities for higher level of
processing, as well as the realization of economic and financial consolidation of holders of
development are necessary preconditions for successful development and operation of
companies in the industry.

There are exceptional potentials for dynamic development of small business in order
to increase the level of employment and income of the population (breeding and processing
activities, crafts and personal services, domestic industry). By expanding structures and
with greater investment in productive activities, small business can have a significant
impact on overall development. The choice of processing activities should be based
primarily on agriculture, that is, make a selection of products for which there is a demand in
the market. Breeding activities can be organized in a relatively short period of time: the
production of mushrooms, organized growing of snails, bee keeping, growing medicinal
herbs.

The development of crafts and personal services should be encouraged primarily in
the direction of deficit crafts in the function of meeting the needs of the population and
economy of this area, as well as in the development of tourism. The development of
domestic industry (as a primary or supplementary activity of the population) should be in
collaboration with stakeholders in tourism development, so the items crafting would be in
the function of tourism development.

The potential for development of trade and hospitality in order to satisfy the needs of
the population and in the function of dynamic development of tourism depend on overall
economic growth and raising the living standards of the population. The main natural
resources for tourism development are: the preserved natural heritage, vineyards, cultural
and historical heritage. Part of the border area is located within the National Park "Fruška
gora". This mountain is a significant habitat for birds; by the abundance and preservation of
biodiversity it represents the potential for creation of tourist products of special interest.
The river Bosut flows through this territory in length of 38 km. Lakes Šot, Bruje and
Moharač by Erdevik represent the water potential for a number of tourist activities. The
most famous excursion site is Lipovača. There is a restaurant of the same name, arranged
space for visitors, running track and parking. Erdevik area is known for its excellent wines.
The Wine cellar in Erdevik is widely known. The cultural - historical heritage are:
Monastery Privina Glava, the Serbian Orthodox Church of Archangel Gabriel in Molovin,
the place of Srem Front breakthrough, the Serbian Orthodox Church of St. Nicholas in Šid,
a monument of Filip Višnjić, the Roman Catholic church of St. Mary in Morović, medieval
fort at the confluence of the river Bosut in Studva, Berkasovo fortress, the archaeological
site Gradina on Bosut etc. Many of these sites are not fully used to promote tourism.

Hunting and fishing is what Šid municipality is famous for. Even among the foreign
tourists' hunting grounds like military hunting ground Morović, hunting ground "Kućine",
hunting ground "Bosutske šume" and hunting ground "Vorovo" are well known. Excellent
fishing areas are located on the rivers Sava and Bosut, from Jamena to Sremska Rača.
What limits the development of tourism is the industry in transition, so that many buildings of importance for tourism development are in the process of restructuring and ownership transformation. There are no important investments in the tourism sector, and no tax incentives for its development (Todorović, M., Bjeljac, Ž., 2009).

Another limiting factor for the development of tourism in Šid is lack of accommodations in all categories, as well as the inadequate protection of natural and cultural heritage. Unclear responsibilities of institutions and lack of resources lead to the deterioration of cultural monuments and natural values. National Park ”Fruška gora” does not have a clear touristic offer and it manages the areas of importance for tourism development. Monasteries are within the jurisdiction of the SPC.

There is no single marketing presentation of touristic potentials and no overall presentation of the area in the domestic and international markets. The lack of tourist information centres, a strong local tourism organization, constant guiding service, tourist information points and signage, as well as poor transport infrastructure affect the poor attendance and lack of information in this area. By removing these shortcomings a part of tourists in transit could be kept in the territory.

Rural tourism is another opportunity for the development of this industry. Healthy food and spending time outdoors, complemented with the possibility of excursion tours and participation in field works, represent an active form of tourism that is more and more in demand in the market. In this way young people would be activated and retained in rural areas. They would provide tourist services and the problem of unemployment would be partially solved.

5. CONCLUSION

Revitalization of cross-border area is emphasized as one of the key factors in the process of our country's integration into the European regional space. Key measures for the revitalization of the border regions are based on the possibilities of promoting individual landscape units in accordance with professional development plans.

The border area of Srem has favorable physical-geographical conditions and relatively high-quality human resources for economic development and improving the competitiveness of the region. For the border area of Srem agricultural production is of utmost importance. Without positive changes in agricultural production, which has extensive under-used capacity, we cannot talk about the development of this border area.

Some of the possible future alternative development levers of the border area are: the removal of economic and political barriers, the opening of more border crossings and simplifying border crossing while transporting passengers and goods, stimulating the development of urban settlements and the industry in it, stimulating the development of small and medium enterprises, development of agriculture, tourism and the network of educational and health institutions in the rural areas.

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