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THE RURAL EXODUS IN THE MUNICIPALITY OF KICHEVO

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ABSTRACT

The process of uneven spatial distribution of the population, especially the appearance of areas with increased concentration of population versus areas affected by an emphasized process of depopulation, are problems at national, regional and local level that have been affecting the Republic of Macedonia for a long period of time. These processes did not pass the present Municipality of Kichevo located in the central part of Western Macedonia, consisted of one urban settlement, Kichevo and another 78 rural settlements.

Although the total number of the population in the municipality, according to all census years data and the population estimates, is constantly increasing, large is the number of rural settlements in which the number of inhabitants is constantly decreasing causing changes in the distribution of the population and uneven economic, social and population balance at the territory of the municipality.

The aim of this paper is to consider the scope and dynamics of the population changes that occurred in the rural area of the Municipality of Kichevo.

Key words: population displacement, depopulation, rural exodus, Municipality of Kichevo

INTRODUCTION

The rural settlements as a complementary part of the rural environment in the past were developed under the influence of social, socioeconomic factors and various other factors of the natural-geographic and historical-geographical bases, processes and changes (Daskalovski, Markoski, 1990/91). The appearance of the processes of industrialization and urbanization that in the seventies of the last century occupied the Republic of Macedonia and thus the Municipality of Kichevo, initiated large changes in the number of inhabitants in the rural settlements.

The development of industry, which was primarily concentrated in the urban settlements, initiated the migrations of the population from rural areas towards the city. Consequently, in search of better living conditions the population from the rural areas leaves the villages as a place of residence and moves to the cities. With the abandonment of the rural area, especially of the passive settlements, appears the process of their population devaluation and, in general, social erosion, even more pronounced increase in the number of settlements with intensive emigration etc. (Zikov, 1990/91).

The most affected by this process are the rural settlements with a less favorable geographical position, that is, from the physical-geographical aspect, the settlements that are located at a higher altitude and from a socioeconomic aspect, the settlements that are characterized by a poor traffic connection, located far from the main roads in the municipality and settlements with the poorly developed economy.

If we take into consideration that about 80% of the territory of the municipality is hilly-mountainous (Andonovski, 1983), we will realize the reason for this intensive migration of the rural population. Depopulation processes are much weaker in municipalities, where the administrative centres are large, or medium-sized urban settlements, as well as municipalities with relatively stable economic development (Mladenov, Ilieva, 2012).

METHODOLOGY AND DATA SOURCES

Discovering the regional specifics of demographic processes is one of the most important tasks of demogeography. But, as it is well known, demographic research is dependent on data in spatial and time series. Therefore, the need to resort to indirect methods, based on the history and geography of a given place is inevitable (Grčić, 2009). The aim of this research is to analyze the population dynamics in time and space, thus, an analysis of the number of population in all of the census years (1948-2002) was made, but also for 2013 as the last year in which the processing of data from the State Statistical Office of the Republic of Macedonia was made for each of the five municipalities, separately. By using mathematical-statistical calculations and the method of comparison, some areas of the municipality were distinguished where the process of "rural exodus" is mostly emphasized.

The present Municipality of Kichevo occupies the central part of Western Macedonia. It covers an area of 823,68 km², or 3.2% of the territory of the Republic of Macedonia. According to the last census data from 2002, the municipality was populated by 56,734 inhabitants or 2.8% of the inhabitants in the country, while, according to the population estimates for 2013, the 57,124 inhabitants accounted for 2.8% of the total population. The municipality is consisted of an urban settlement, Kichevo and another 78 rural settlements. The administrative boundaries of the present Municipality of Kichevo have changed several times through history. For example, the municipality had today's borders until 1996 when the Law on the New Administrative - Territorial Division of the Republic of Macedonia was adopted, the areas of the Local Government units were determinated, and 123 municipalities were established (Ljakoska, 2016). Then, the municipality was divided into five municipalities, i.e. the Municipality of Drugovo, covering the west, southwest and the south part of the present Municipality of Kichevo, the Municipality of Vraneshtica, covering the southeast part, the Municipality of Zajas, covering the northern part, the municipality of Oslomej in the northeast part and the Municipality of Kichevo in the central part.[21] The severe conditions of the smaller municipalities resulted in changes of the territorial organization. Therefore, once again in 2004 a new territorial reorganization was carried out, where, in accordance with the Law on Territorial Organization of Local Self-Government, the number of municipalities was set at 84.[22] This Law provided the number of municipalities to be retained until the local elections in 2008 when their number was reduced to

[21] Official Gazette of the Republic of Macedonia "No. 49/1996 and 59/1996
[22] Official Gazette of the Republic of Macedonia "No. 55/2004

80, i.e. Vraneshtica, Drugovo, Oslomej and Zajas will once again merge with the Municipality of Kichevo. By the Law amending the Law on the Territorial Organization of the Local Self-Government adopted in August 2008,[23] the merger of municipalities was postponed for 2012. Finally, after the local elections in March 2013, the Municipality of Kichevo got the current borders (Ljakoska, 2016).

Data for the Municipality of Kichevo can be found in a number of studies from different scientific disciplines. The studies come from different time periods and analyze the municipality from various aspects. The work of Smiljanikj, "Settlements and Origin of the Population in Kichevo", published by the Serbian Royal Academy in Belgrade in 1931 is of great importance. For the physical-geographical characteristics of the municipality, more precisely for all macro and micro relief forms of the municipality of Kichevo, data can be found in the PhD thesis by professor Andonovski, titled "The Kicevo Valley – a Geomorphological Research", defended at the Faculty of Natural Sciences in Skopje in 1983. In this study area, data can be found in the work of Gashevski (1962), Manakovikj (1979), Stankovski (1966), Zmejkovski (1995), Vasileski (1981, 1996), Dimitrovska (2006) and others. For the socioeconomic characteristics, data can be found in the work of Panov, especially in the "Encyclopedia of the Villages in the Republic of Macedonia" (1998), Stojmilov (2005, 2016), Daskalovski (1995, 1996), Madjevikj (2000, 2001) and other.

DYNAMICS IN THE POPULATION NUMBER

According to the census data, except in the period between 1953-1961 when the total number of the population dropped from 39,730 to 38,755 inhabitants or 2.5% as a result of the migration of Turks towards Turkey, the number of the population in the municipality was continually increasing. The highest increase of the population was recorded in the period 1971-1981, when it amounted to 16.4%.

The complexity in the dynamics of the number of population in the area of study better reflects if we analyze the population in the separate areas. If we analyze each of the former municipalities separately, we will notice that in the municipalities of Kichevo, Oslomej and Zajas, the number of the population, is increasing, although with a different pace, while in the municipalities Vraneshtica and Drugovo the number is decreasing.

The increase in the number of the population in the area belonging to the former Municipality of Kichevo can be explained by the fact that the only city settlement which represents the main administrative, economic, cultural and educational centre is located in the municipality, and therefore it is expected that the majority of the population gravitates towards this municipality. The rural municipalities of Zajas and Oslomej are municipalities with dominant Albanian population, which is characterized by a greater population natural increase, and therefore an increase is expected to be recorded in the number of population, while the municipalities of Vranestica and Drugovo are municipalities with not such a favorable terrain configuration (for the most part it is a hilly-mountainous terrain), with a poor economy, dominated by the Macedonian, mostly old population and hence they face a pronounced process of depopulation.

[23] Official Gazette of the Republic of Macedonia "No. 98/2008

Table 1: Number of population, basic and chained index in the municipalities that comprise the current Municipality of Kichevo, period 1948-2013

No.	Municipality	1948	1953	1961	1971	1981	1994	2002	2013
1	Kichevo	8,761	11,167	11,838	16,810	24,207	27,543	30,138	30,479
2	Drugovo	9,824	10,157	8,403	6,431	4,704	3,555	3,249	2,946
3	Zajas	6,009	6,572	7,171	8,425	9,805	10,055	11,605	11,885
4	Oslomej	7,230	7,688	7,840	8,481	9,144	9,136	10,420	10,569
5	Vraneshtica	4,203	4,146	3,503	2,944	2,287	1,650	1,322	1,245
	Total	36,027	39,730	38,755	43,091	50,147	51,939	56,734	57,124
Basic index									
1	Kichevo	100	127.5	135.1	191.9	276.3	314.4	344.0	347.9
2	Drugovo	100	103.4	85.5	65.5	47.9	36.2	33.1	30.0
3	Zajas	100	109.4	119.3	140.2	163.2	167.3	193.1	197.8
4	Oslomej	100	106.3	108.4	117.3	126.5	126.4	144.1	146.2
5	Vraneshtica	100	98.6	83.3	70.0	54.4	39.3	31.5	29.6
	Total	100	110.3	107.6	119.6	139.2	144.2	157.5	158.6
Chain index									
1	Kichevo	...	127.5	106.0	142.0	144.0	113.8	109.4	101.1
2	Drugovo	...	103.4	82.7	76.5	73.1	75.6	91.4	90.7
3	Zajas	...	109.4	109.1	117.5	116.4	102.5	115.4	102.4
4	Oslomej	...	106.3	102.0	108.2	107.8	99.9	114.1	101.4
5	Vraneshtica	...	98.6	84.5	84.0	77.7	72.1	80.1	94.2
	Total	...	110.3	97.5	111.2	116.4	103.6	109.2	100.7

Source: Authors' calculations using MakStat database

Former municipalities may also be analyzed as separate rural areas which can also represent a separate entity and have their own characteristics and specificities in terms of demographic development. Thus, in the analyzed period, the situation with the changes in the population number is most unfavorable in the Municipality of Vranestica followed by the Municipality of Drugovo. The number of population in the other municipalities is growing, which in the Municipality of Oslomej is lower than the average growth of the present Municipality of Kichevo.

In order to emphasize the differences among areas occupied by each of the municipalities, in the total area of the contemporary Municipality of Kichevo, we can note that the largest area belonged to the former Municipality of Drugovo, or 46.5%, while the smallest area with less than 6% was occupied by the former Municipality of Kichevo. Although the former Municipality of Kichevo occupied the smallest territory, in all of the census years (except in 1948), it had the highest percentage share of the population, which in 2002 was 53.1% of the total population, while in 2013 it was estimated to be 53.4%. The Municipality of Drugovo, although occupying the largest area, is one of the municipalities with the smallest share in the total population number, which accounted for 5.7% in 2002 and 5.1% in 2013. In the total population number, the percentage share of the population in the Municipality of Vranestica was the lowest, 2.3% in 2002, and in 2013 it was expected to be reduced to 2.2%.

In Table 1 we can notice that the total number of the population increased from 36,027 inhabitants in 1948 to 56,734 inhabitants in 2002, or by 57.5%, an average of about 383 inhabitants per year. In 2013, the number of the population was estimated to be 57,124 inhabitants, which is 21,097 more than 1948, or 58.6%, i.e. only 390 inhabitants more than in 2002, or an

increase of only 0.7%. If we consider that the analysis refers to a 54 i.e. 65 year period of time, we can note that this increase is relatively small, due to the low birth rate in most parts of the municipality and the large number of emigrants.

POPULATION DENSITY

Changes in population and their pace of occurrence affect the territorial distribution of the population, its density and dispersion (Madjevikj, Apostolovska Toshevska, 2013). Population distribution represents the pattern of people`s dwelling places. To describe the distribution of population the word "density" is used. Usually, it is described as the number of people per km² (Tagore Sai Priya, 2016). The population density in all of the census years is below the national average. In 2002, it was 68.9 inhabitants/km² which was below the national average of 78.6 inhabitants/km², while in 2013 it was 69.3 inhabitants/km², just below the national average that in 2013 is considered to have been 80.3 inhabitants/km².

Table 2: Population density, total and for each of the former municipalities separately, inhabitants/km²

			inhabitants/km²							
No.	**Municipality**	**Area/km²**	**1948**	**1953**	**1961**	**1971**	**1981**	**1994**	**2002**	**2013**
1	Kichevo	49.14	178.3	227.2	240.9	342.1	492.6	560.5	613.3	620.2
2	Drugovo	383.24	25.6	26.5	21.9	16.8	12.3	9.3	8.5	7.7
3	Zajas	161.08	37.3	40.8	44.5	52.3	60.9	62.4	72.0	73.8
4	Oslomej	121.09	59.7	63.5	64.7	70.0	75.5	75.4	86.1	87.3
5	Vraneshtica	109.13	38.5	38.0	32.1	27.0	21.0	15.1	12.1	11.4
	Total	823.68	43.7	48.2	47.1	52.3	60.9	63.1	68.9	69.4

Source: Authors' calculations using MakStat database

The former Municipality of Kichevo had the greatest population density as a result of the small area that occupied and the large number of residents. Lower population density was recorded in the Municipality of Drugovo, followed by the Municipality of Vraneshtica. The decreased population density through all of the census years, is only an indicator of the population losses in this part of the municipality. At the same time, this situation indicates an uneven spatial distribution of the demographic potential.

URBAN AND RURAL POPULATION IN THE MUNICIPALITY OF KICHEVO

The only urban settlement within the Municipality of Kichevo, the city of Kichevo, belongs to the group of medium-sized towns, that is, cities with between 10,000 and 50,000 inhabitants, considering the number of residents from the 2002 census data (Stajimov, Apostolovska Toshevska, 2016).

Considering data for the number of urban and rural population shown in Table 3, it is notable that the ratio changed several times over the years. Namely, due to the constant migration of the population from the rural to the urban settlements, there is a decrease in the number of rural population and steady increase in the number of urban population. This trend of rapid increase in the proportion of urban population lasted until 1981, when this process marked stagnation.

Although the number of the rural population is higher than the number of the urban population in all of the census years, even in 2002, the percentage share of the number of the urban population was increasing until 2002. In 2002, the percentage share of the urban population, compared to the previous census year recorded a slight decline of less than 1%.

Thus, if in 1948, the percentage share of the urban population was 20.2%, it increased to 24.1% in 1953, or an increase of 3.6%. During the following period, the percentage share of urban population increased by 3.9% and in the period from 1961 to 1971, the proportion increased by 8.3%. In the period 1971-1981 it recorded an increase of 9.1%.

A particularly pronounced increase in the number of the population in the city of Kichevo was recorded in the period 1961-1981, when the city experienced great economic development, and thus its role as a receptor of the surrounding rural population increased.

Table 3: Number of urban and rural population in the Municipality of Kichevo in all census years

year	Total	Urban	Basic index 1971 = 100	%	Rural	%	Basic index 1971 = 100
1948	36,027	7,280	47.3	20.2	28,747	79.8	103.8
1953	39,730	9,567	62.2	24.1	30,163	75.9	108.9
1961	38,755	10,324	67.1	26.6	28,431	73.4	102.6
1971	43,091	15,393	100.0	35.7	27,698	64.3	100.0
1981	50,147	22,479	146.0	44.8	27,668	55.2	99.9
1994	51,939	25,129	163.2	48.4	26,810	51.6	96.8
2002	56,734	27,067	175.8	47.7	29,667	52.3	107.1
2013	57,124	/	/	/	/	/	/

Source: Authors' calculations using MakStat database

During this period, the number of the urban population doubled. In the following period, the growth of the population dropped to only 3.6%. Negative tendencies in the growth of the urban population were recorded during the period 1994-2002, i.e. the percentage of the urban population in 2002 was lower by 0.7% compared to the previous census year.

THE PROCESS OF RURAL EXODUS IN THE MUNICIPALITY OF KICHEVO

The Republic of Macedonia was affected by significant changes in the 20th century. Due to the dynamic process of industrialization and urbanization, it is estimated that since 1948 till nowadays, more than 700 thousand people have left the rural areas, searching for better living conditions in the urban areas. As a consequence, a large number of abandoned villages were recorded (in 85 villages there were no inhabitants, and in 430 villages the number of inhabitants was from 1 to 50) (Risteski, 2011). A large part of these rural settlements are located in the Municipality of Kichevo. However, the reasons are not only in the development of the processes of urbanization and industrialization, but also in the poor conditions in agriculture, of the farmers and of the peasant in general (Mijalov, 2000).

From all census years' data, we can note that the rural population dominates in the Municipality of Kichevo and the number is constantly increasing. Namely, it increased in the period from 1948-1953, then decreased in the period 1953-1994 and then increased again in 2002. This growth is primarily due to the fact that in many cases, as in the Municipality of Kichevo, the retired population returns to their rural birthplaces. Thus, the rural population size rises in

such cases, but this process does not repair the deteriorated demographic structures of the rural population and the socioeconomic and territorial development effect of such urban-to-rural migrations are quite limited (Mladenov, Ilieva, 2012). This process of population ageing in the rural settlements is a serious threat to their survival.

However, what matters the most is the fact that even 59.8% of the territory (which is what the municipalities of Vraneshtica and Drugovo occupy) are seriously affected by the process of depopulation. The amount of population loss in the villages in the period between censuses records a different pace.

Table 4: An overview of the number of inhabitants in the settlements and municipalities that comprise the present Municipality of Kichevo

No.	Settlement	1948	1953	1961	1971	1981	1994	2002	2013	Index 1971/2002
Municipality of Kichevo (former)										
1	Kichevo	7,280	9,567	10,324	15,393	22,479	25,129	27,067	...	175.8
2	Knezhino	214	191	157	48	24	6	12	...	25.0
3	Lazorovci	153	168	151	166	138	110	88	...	53.0
4	Mamudovci	144	158	200	247	297	337	401	...	162.3
5	Osoj	234	270	194	141	136	484	593	...	420.6
6	Rashtani	355	409	353	237	396	753	1,063	...	448.5
7	Trapchin Dol	381	404	459	578	737	724	914	...	158.1
	Total	**8,761**	**11,167**	**11,838**	**16,810**	**24,207**	**27,543**	**30,138**	**30,479**	**179.3**
Municipality of Drugovo										
1	Belica	873	878	702	466	248	115	103	...	22.1
2	Brzhdani	366	347	328	285	239	209	162	...	56.8
3	Vidrani	132	134	101	67	45	19	8	...	11.9
4	G. Crsko	223	215	97	53	33	10	4	...	7.5
5	G. Dobrenoec	347	347	277	237	120	71	56	...	23.6
6	G. Dushegubica	374	457	336	107	46	15	4	...	3.7
7	D. Dobrenoec	206	202	120	92	70	62	44	...	47.8
8	D. Dushegubica	...	...	...	80	48	15	11	...	13.8
9	Drugovo	537	615	606	944	1,291	1,398	1,492	...	158.1
10	Ehlovec	458	478	431	172	74	23	20	...	11.6
11	Ivanchishta	434	438	388	286	157	57	29	...	10.1
12	Izvor	55	95	163	132	93	52	49	...	37.1
13	Javorec	172	193	139	142	18	7	5	...	3.5
14	Judovo	254	299	239	196	94	46	27	...	13.8
15	Kladnik	411	379	273	164	82	25	20	...	12.2
16	Klenoec	220	216	149	56	37	22	21	...	37.5
17	Kozica	393	394	306	206	132	82	82	...	39.8
18	Lavchani	494	513	449	204	70	36	10	...	4.9
19	Malkoec	258	282	290	219	118	43	35	...	16.0
20	M. Crsko	292	234	122	40	22	5	1	...	2.5
21	M. Dolenci	234	243	210	188	175	126	109	...	58.0
22	Podvis	217	198	188	142	90	99	72	...	50.7
23	Popovec	397	395	375	267	123	49	34	...	12.7
24	Popolzhani	142	166	164	171	152	120	109	...	63.7

25	Prostranje	509	468	295	175	78	35	31	...	17.7
26	Svinjishta	228	243	237	172	125	98	57	...	33.1
27	Srbjani	526	565	473	496	534	508	495	...	99.8
28	Cer	1,072	1,163	945	672	390	208	159	...	23.7
	Total	**9,824**	**10,157**	**8,403**	**6,431**	**4,704**	**3,555**	**3,249**	**2,946**	**50.5**
Municipality of Zajas										
1	Bachishta	475	501	527	642	646	685	772	...	120.2
2	Bukojchani	162	185	213	210	168	96	97	...	46.2
3	G. Strogomishta	506	537	596	764	915	1,059	1,123	...	147.0
4	Greshnica	666	700	813	999	1,174	1,355	1,480	...	148.1
5	Dlapkin Dol	349	381	426	491	576	583	636	...	129.5
6	D. Strogomishta	278	301	340	439	517	610	698	...	159.0
7	Zajas	1,869	2,109	2,343	2,829	3,571	3,883	4,712	...	166.6
8	Kolari	430	487	582	695	870	732	880	...	126.6
9	Kolibari	340	378	423	482	629	603	747	...	155.0
10	Leshnica	264	290	302	320	282	178	219	...	68.4
11	Midinci	156	166	159	132	81	47	33	...	25.0
12	Rechani - Zajas	75	78	88	97	102	87	101	...	104.1
13	Tajmishte	439	459	359	325	274	137	107	...	32.9
	Total	**6,009**	**6,572**	**7,171**	**8,425**	**9,805**	**10,055**	**11,605**	**11,885**	**137.7**
Municipality of Oslomej										
1	Arangel	347	357	372	500	553	640	709	...	141.8
2	Berikovo	243	273	259	283	245	178	168	...	59.4
3	Garani	273	295	332	155	44	519	542	...	349.7
4	Zhubrino	248	294	328	392	416	405	547	...	139.5
5	Jagol	398	394	366	365	352	362	406	...	111.2
6	Jagol Dolenci	155	162	143	84	31	17	13	...	15.5
7	Novo Selo	311	326	316	238	220	170	143	...	60.1
8	Oslomej	226	239	201	118	102	57	40	...	33.9
9	Papradishte	206	237	216	239	219	119	75	...	31.4
10	Popovjani	275	285	267	271	293	309	399	...	147.2
11	Premka	323	342	266	205	179	132	134	...	65.4
12	Srbica	1,065	1,124	1,217	1,334	1,533	1,676	1,862	...	139.6
13	Strelci	582	665	752	1,173	1,563	1,274	1,421	...	121.1
14	Tuin	1,276	1,270	1,307	1,318	1,346	1,266	1,476	...	112.0
15	Crvivci	690	754	841	1,115	1,289	1,343	1,725	...	154.7
16	Shutovo	612	671	657	691	759	669	760	...	110.0
	Total	**7,230**	**7,688**	**7,840**	**8,481**	**9,144**	**9,136**	**10,420**	**10,569**	**122.9**
Municipality of Vraneshtica										
1	Atishta	101	100	109	72	55	41	31	...	43.1
2	Bigor Dolenci	337	317	250	214	189	194	156	...	72.9
3	Vraneshtica	792	797	745	750	710	496	438	...	58.4
4	Dupjani	208	193	142	93	45	17	8	...	8.6
5	Karbunica	312	285	240	176	113	81	42	...	23.9
6	Kozichino	254	226	188	108	41	22	17	...	15.7
7	Krushica	138	127	103	63	30	10	5	...	7.9
8	Miokazi	215	202	177	137	91	49	36	...	26.3
9	Orlanci	514	474	392	281	151	76	37	...	13.2

10	Pateec	114	119	100	78	42	10	8	...	10.3
11	Rabetino	90	82	72	58	24	6	3	...	5.2
12	Rechani – Chel.	142	156	133	113	58	31	22	...	19.5
13	Svetorache	152	145	106	69	43	10	6	...	8.7
14	Staroec	258	303	325	338	281	219	195	...	57.7
15	Chelopeci	576	620	421	394	414	388	318	...	80.7
	Total	**4,203**	**4,146**	**3,503**	**2,944**	**2,287**	**1,650**	**1,322**	**1,245**	**44.9**
Municipality of Kichevo (today)										
	Total	**36,027**	**39,730**	**38,755**	**43,091**	**50,147**	**51,939**	**56,734**	**57,124**	**131.7**

Source: SSORM, (MakStat database, Estimations of the Population by Sex and Age, by Municipalities and by Statistical Regions, 2013)

In Table 4 we can see that the situation with the rural settlements varies significantly and the number of rural settlements in which the number of inhabitants reduces is constantly increasing, i.e. the process of depopulation is present. This process is especially pronounced in rural settlements located in the hilly-mountainous areas, where the road connections are inadequate (i.e. the width of the roads is between 4.5 and 5.5 m) and can be a real problem, especially in the winter period. It is a disturbing fact that the demographic and economic picture used to be better, and now everything indicates that the downward trend will continue (Babović et al., 2016).

The massive abandonment of these rural settlements, and the migration of the population to the rural settlements from the mountainous areas, to the settlements that are located near a major road, (the city of Kichevo), or towards other cities of the Republic or abroad, had implications for their differentiation in size and number of inhabitants (Madjevikj, 1998).

Table 5: Number of villages according to the number of inhabitants in all census years

	1948	**1953**	**1961**	**1971**	**1981**	**1994**	**2002**
≤ 50	0	0	0	2	16	26	32
51-100	3	4	4	13	12	12	7
101-300	36	34	36	37	27	14	13
301-500	22	23	23	12	5	7	6
501-1,000	12	12	11	9	11	11	11
≥1,000	4	4	3	5	7	8	9
Total	77	77	77	78	78	78	78

Source: Authors' calculations using MakStat database[24]

As can be noted in Table 5, small villages with less than 50 inhabitants were first recorded in 1971, and their number even reached 32 in 2002. The villages with less than 50 inhabitants accounted for 0% in 1948, while the villages with less than 100 inhabitants accounted for only 3.9%. However, in 2002, villages with less than 50 inhabitants accounted for 41% of the total number of rural settlements, while those with less than 100 inhabitants accounted for even 50% of the total number of rural settlements. This tendency of a rapid increase in rural settle-

[24] The total number of village settlements for the period 1948-1961 is 77, because in the census statistics there are no data for the village of Dolna Dusegubica for the census years: 1948, 1953 and 1961.

ments with a small number of inhabitants is indicative to the danger of their complete displacement.

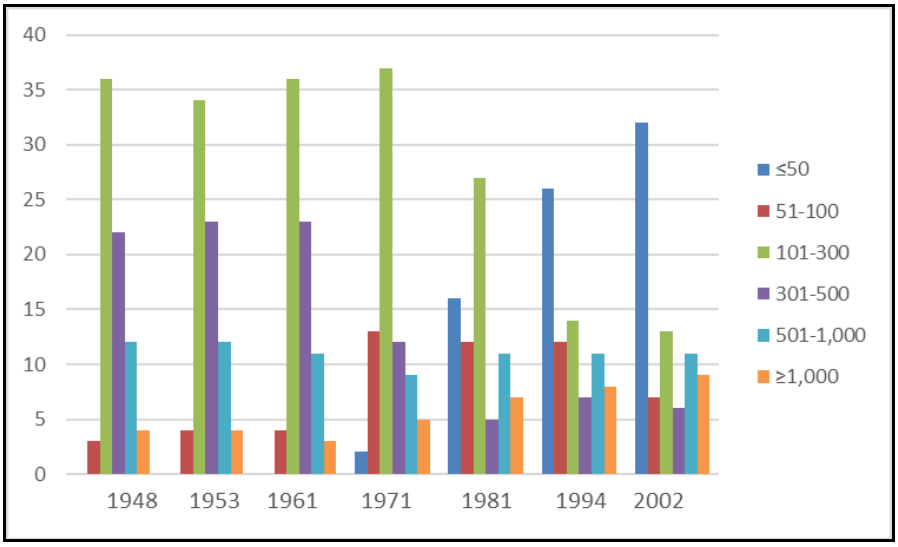


Figure 1: Number of villages according to the number of inhabitants in all census years

The number of villages with more than 1,000 inhabitants increased from 4 in 1948 to 9 in 2002, that is doubling of the number in the analyzed period. The percentage share increased from 5.2% in 1948 to 11.5% in 2002 in the total number of settlements in the municipality. Most disturbing is the fact that only 2.2% of the total rural population lived in settlements with less than 50 inhabitants, while only 4% of the total rural population lived in settlements with less than 100 inhabitants, i.e. only 2.1% of the total population in the municipality. This means that almost half of the rural settlement in the municipality is seriously affected by the process of depopulation and are threatened with total displacement. According to the 2002 census data, the largest number of villages with less than 100 inhabitants were located in the former municipalities of Vraneshtica and Drugovo, i.e. in the south, southwest and west part of the municipality, while in the rest of the municipality this situation was significantly less present. A great reduction was recorded in the number of rural settlements with between 100 and 300 inhabitants, as well as in the rural settlements with between 300 to 500 inhabitants, while the number of rural settlements with between 500 and 1,000 inhabitants marked a very slight, almost insignificant change.

16,354 inhabitants lived in rural settlements with more than 1,000 inhabitants, in 2002 or 55.1% of the rural population, which is, 28.8% of the total population in the municipality. Most of these settlements, or 4 were located in the municipality of Oslomej, 3 in the Municipality of Zajas and one in each of the municipalities Drugovo and Kichevo. First of all, these settlements are located in plain terrains of the municipality which are close to the city. The settlements from the municipalities of Drugovo and Kichevo almost merge with the city.

The average number of inhabitants in each of the village settlements in 1948 was 373.3, while in 2002 this number increased to 380.3 inhabitants. However, if we deduct the number of

the population of the rural settlements with more than 1,000 inhabitants from the total number of the rural population, in that case the average number would be 321 inhabitants in 1948 and 192.9 inhabitants in 2002.

Depopulated rural areas can be defined as "areas in demographic decline" due to the emigration of people. Thus, if we classified the villages based on the intensity of the depopulation in five categories as Mardale did in 2014, we will see the following results:

Table 6: Number of settlements according to the intensity of population losses, according Mardale

Zones without depopulation, with positive values	24
Weak depopulated zones, the indicator range between 0 - (-20) %	3
Depopulated zones, (-20) - (-30) %	2
Very depopulated zones, the values range between (-30) - (-50) %	5
Zone with extreme depopulation, over -50%	44
Total	78

Source: Authors' calculations using MakStat database and Mardale‘s classification.

In the analyzed period, only 30.8% of the rural settlements recorded a population increase. In all other cases, the number decreased, but the most worrying fact is that even 56.4% of the rural settlements lost more than half of the population in the analyzed period.

The reasons for this phenomenon are largely associated with the urbanization and establishment of infrastructure in these villages which does not meet the needs of the population, and the lack of jobs and poor conditions for agriculture due to the lack of arable land in villages with high altitude (Ljakoska, Iliev, 2013). In order to avoid complete extinction of these settlements, it is necessary to take special measures for economic development, since the existence of a settlement is conditioned by economic development, while on the other hand economic growth depends on human resources (Babović et al., 2016).

CONCLUSION

Among the demographic processes taking place in the Republic of Macedonia, the process of population reduction in certain regions is highlighted. These precise demographic processes in the region have left consequences in the size of the villages that are further on reflected in the development and the situation with the network of settlements (Madjevikj, 2008). As a consequence of the migration of the population from the villages towards the cities, caused by the occurrence of the processes of industrialization and urbanization, today, half of the rural settlements in the municipality are threatened with displacement. Migration not only caused a significant reduction in the population number in some parts of the municipality, but as a consequence of these migration processes occurred the process of de-agrarisation or abandonment of the agricultural land.

Although we are analyzing rural settlements located in hilly-mountain areas, we must not overlook the fact that in even 32 rural settlements the number of inhabitants is less than 50 and in another 7 settlements the number is between 50 and 100 inhabitants which is more than a half of the territory of the municipality.

The changes in the size of the settlements are reflected in their future demographic, functional development and the morphological appearance. Functional changes affect the morpho-

logical appearance of the settlements, they are distorting the appearance and infrastructure of the settlements. These rural settlements dispose a beautiful landscape, clean air, great water potential and excellent conditions for the development of livestock, mainly sheep farming, settlements with the basic infrastructure and excellent base needed for the development of rural tourism, but a lack of plan and program for their activation in the framework of livestock and tourism, and thus their revival.

The lack of jobs outside of agriculture is a reason more for the displacement of young population, whole families and most of the labor force and their moving towards larger rural settlements or the city of Kichevo. This way, the demographic potential is lost and the basis for sustainability of certain functions (education, health, trade and others) is narrowed. On the other hand, the drastic reduction of the population in some of the settlements is followed by disruption of the demographic structure, especially biological.

The rural municipalities that were created by the division of the Municipality of Kichevo existed independently for a short period of time and then were once again merged into the Municipality of Kichevo. However, their municipality centers could be transformed into some kind of rural centers towards which the population of the neighboring settlements will gravitate in order to achieve more balanced development within the municipality.

The policy of balanced regional development is managed by the state with the help of the units of the Local Self-Government. Therefore, knowledge of the conditions in the municipality is the starting point for creating development strategies. One of the basic measures for further planning of the development of rural areas is for the present settlement network to undergo a certain transformation due to proper targeting and territorial displacement of settlements in accordance with the natural and demographic potentials (Mijalov, 2000).

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РУРАЛЕН ЕГЗОДУС ВО ОПШТИНА КИЧЕВО

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ИЗВОД

Процесот на нерамномерна просторна разместеност на населението, односно појавата на простори со зголемена концентрација на население наспроти простори зафатени со нагласен степен на депопулација се проблеми од национално, регионално и локално ниво кои од поодамна ја зафатија Република Македонија. Овие процеси не ја одминаа нити сегашната Општина Кичево, сместена во средишниот дел на Западна Македонија, сочинета од една урбана населба, градот Кичево и уште 78 рурални населби.

Иако вкупниот број на населението во котлината, според податоците од сите пописни години но и според податоците за процена на населението од страна на Државниот завод за статистика на Република Македонија е во постојан пораст, голем е бројот на селските населби во кои бројот на жители постојано се намалува што предизвикува промени во дистрибуцијата на населението и нерамномерен економски, социјален и популациски баланс на територијата на општината.

Иако станува збор за селски населби кои се сместени во ридско-планински делови, сепак не смееме да го занемариме фактот дека дури 32 селски населби имаат поналку од 50 жители и уште 7 имаат помеѓу 50 и 100 жители и опфаќаат повеќе од половина од територијата на општината. Изнесените промени во големината на населбите се рефлектираат и врз нивниот иден демографски, функционален и физиономски развиток. Функционалните промени влијаат врз физиономските одлики, доаѓа до нарушување на изгледот и опременоста на населбите.

Во овој труд даден е преглед на обемот и динамиката на популациските промени кои настанале во руралниот простор во Општина Кичево.