

**Démographie spatiale des Balkans : tendances et enjeux**  
**Spatial demography of the Balkans: trends and challenges**

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**THE USE OF CENSUS DATA IN GENDER INEQUALITY RESEARCH:  
POSSIBILITIES AND CONTRIBUTIONS**

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## **Usage of Census Data in Research of Gender Inequality: Possibilities and Contribution**

### **Abstract**

This paper discussed the census as a source of data used in clarifying gender inequality. The analysis of demographic material includes age, time and spatial dimension. Possibilities and contribution usage of census data depend on the gender perspective in collecting, treatment, analysis and presenting. In countries in the region of the gender aspect is not satisfactory implemented. In some of them, the census questionnaire allowed a more realistic insight into marital status and the more meaningful material for socio-economic characteristics (such as Bulgaria and Romania).

Spatial dimension is represented by two viewpoints. One is the way that presented data are territorially organized, and the other is an approach to the analysis. From the perspective of gender differences, it is important that the diverse and comprehensive content is easily accessible for lower levels of territorial constitution. States in the region differ in that also. Positive examples are Croatia and Romania. Comparative analysis of the states allow consideration of gender inequality in the region. In order for that to be possible in the most extensive material, it is necessary to align the content and presentation of all relevant data. The importance of spatial framework was confirmed in the consideration of gender difference on the example of Serbia. The differences in matrimonial, education and economic activity of women and men, by areas, have been observed. Spatial dimensions implies the socio-economic and socio-cultural characteristics of settlements, areas, countries or regions.

Census material may contribute to a more complete insight and deeper understanding of gender inequality, but needs to remove all obstacles to such analysis.

**Key words:** population census, gender inequality, spatial dimension, Balkans

## **Emploi des données de recensement dans les recherches de l'inégalité entre les sexes : Possibilités et contribution**

### **Résumé**

Dans cette œuvre on considère le Recensement de la population en tant que source des données utilisé pour clarifier l'inégalité entre les sexes. L'analyse de ces matériaux démographiques comprend la dimension spatiale, temporelle et d'âge. La possibilité et la contribution de l'emploi des données recensées dépendent de la perspective des sexes dans la collection, le traitement, l'analyse et la présentation. Dans les pays de la région l'aspect des sexes n'est pas appliqué de la manière satisfaisante. Dans certains d'entre eux, Le questionnaire de recensement a permis l'examen plus réel de l'état de mariage, ainsi que les matériaux plus substantiels sur les caractéristiques socio-économiques (en Bulgarie et Roumanie par exemple).

La dimension spatiale est présentée de deux angles. L'un, c'est comment les données présentées sont organisées territorialement, et l'autre est l'abord lors d'exécution de l'analyse. Vu de la perspective des différences entre les sexes, il est important que le contenu plus varié et plus ample soit facilement accessible pour les niveaux plus bas de l'organisation territoriale. Par cela, les pays de la région diffèrent l'un de l'autre. En tant qu'exemples positifs on distingue la Croatie et la Roumanie. L'analyse comparative des pays permet la considération de l'inégalité entre les sexes dans le cadre de la région. Pour que cela soit possible sur les matériaux plus vastes, il est nécessaire d'unifier le contenu et présenter toutes les données pertinentes. L'importance du cadre spatial est également confirmée dans la considération des différences entre les sexes sur l'exemple de la Serbie. On a constaté les différences dans l'union en mariage, éducation et activité économiques des femmes et des hommes selon les zones. La dimension spatiale implique les particularités socio-économiques et socio- culturelle de l'agglomération, de la zone, des états et de la région.

Les matériaux de recensement peut contribuer à l'appréciation plus complète et à la compréhension plus profonde de l'inégalité entre les sexes ; mais il faut éliminer tous les obstacles à une telle analyse.

**Mots clefs :** Recensement de la population, l'inégalité entre les sexes, dimension spatiale



## Introduction

Recognition of demographic and social importance of gender relations resulted in a series of expert analyses and scientific research of gender inequality. Demographic data sources play an important role in respect to the range of observation, improvement of knowledge and further understanding of this phenomenon. In that sense, the Population Census is of considerable importance, being a survey of data collection within a defined spatial and time framework. Census data allow examination of various aspects and realization of structural and dynamic development of population. This explains an interest in approaching, both by scope and by content, the substantial census material as a source of gender inequality demographic research. Possibilities and contributions are determined by the concept and approach in collection, processing, analysis and presentation of census data, therefore they are the subject of analysis in this paper.

Analyzing the demographic gender differences in Serbia, I was confronted with the advantages and limitations of using the census data. This inspired me to examine this demographic source more precisely, from the aspect of the idea of gender inequality. In this text Population Census will be perceived as a means of data collection on the relevant socio-demographic characteristics of women and men. Main conceptual solutions and possibilities of analysis of the acquired data will be examined. Focus will be put on the census contents and methodology as a segment of gender statistics used for examination of gender positions and relevant differences. The subject of the analysis is the traditional Population and Household Census implemented in the countries of this region. It is observed as the statistic material containing data on gender issues. Special attention will be paid to the spatial dimension in researching gender inequality. It will be presented from the methodological aspect, as well as in examination of the contents of census material. Spatial framework has two aspects of observation. I will explain at which territorial level gender-relevant data are presented, and I will also examine the contents of census questionnaires in the countries of this region. Spatial dimension of demographic gender differences is important as the possibility of realizing specific social and cultural characteristics within a country, but also as a possibility of comparative research between countries, within a region, or among regions. The analysis of gender differences within a spatial framework contributes to a more complete realization, more varied comprehension and better understanding of gender inequality as a current social issue.

## Gender Inequality as a Social Problem

Gender inequality is a long-lasting phenomenon existing in societies of different development levels, different cultural and socio-economic conditions. Researchers pay significant attention to this phenomenon not only because of its long duration and distribution, but also because they realize the importance of social gender relations from both demographic and social aspects.

Gender inequality represents an unequal position of women and men in a society. Such a situation results from the action of a series of inhibiting factors and limiting circumstances that prevent the right of gender equality, as a basic human right, from being realized in practice (Šobot, 2009a). This is neither economically rational, nor morally justified. Social inequality of women and men is a consequence of social development and context, but also a stumbling point for the economic prosperity. It is inconsistent with the social justice standards and humanization of social relations. Modern society has a task to eliminate social obstacles in order to create equal possibilities for women and men to develop individual potentials and share responsibilities in all aspects of social life<sup>1</sup>. At the beginning of the XXI century, gender inequality was recognized as a problem to which it was necessary to react according to the specific characteristics of social environment. To this effect spatial framework is important, either from the aspect of territorial establishment levels of a single country, or from the aspect of recognition of gender positions and differences between countries or among groups of countries. Recognition of socio-demographic gender differences in specified spatial frameworks contributes to the defining and understanding of gender inequality.

Statistical data sources on different characteristics of women and men play an important role in this matter. By establishing, developing and improving gender statistics it was made possible to detect various aspects of gender inequality (Balon, 2007). Gender-sensitive statistics implies the defining of gender-sensitive indicators on the basis of which positions in private and public spheres are interpreted. Oriented to define gender models of behavior and position of women and men, it represents a navigation tool for more concrete and specific empirical research. Valid and substantial statistic material used for examination of gender differences represents the first step of an adequate social response.

The analysis of census data contributes for the review of gender differences in concrete social, historical and cultural conditions also. Clarification of situation and position of women and men based on the census material provides an insight into both structural and dynamical complexity of gender inequality. The interactive connection of socio-demographic characteristics and social context means connection and mutual influence of social inequality of women and men and structural-dynamic development of population. By analyzing structural characteristics, movement trends and their changes, it is possible to have an insight in gender inequality through specific features of social development in the defined spatial framework. The use of census material is based on the approach which observes social relations of genders as a consequence of social circumstances and characteristics of society development. According to this

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<sup>1</sup> *Equal possibilities*, Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe, Mission in Serbia and Montenegro, 2004.

theoretical concept, gender roles and position reflect the conditions of production and reproduction of cultural, religious and ideological systems, whereas relations between genders have various shapes in various social conditions and for that reason they are variable (Đurić-Kuzmanović, 2002:11). The use of census material is in fact aimed at researching dynamics, diversity, distribution of forms and distribution of gender differences. Spatial framework additionally enriches and improves knowledge about gender inequality.

### **Gender Issues and Demographic Analysis**

At the beginning of the twenty-first century the promotion of social equality of women and men as a system of value and as the principle of modern society development became explicit. Gender issues became research topics and subject of expert analyses. Behavior and position of women and men in various life situations are now in the centre of attention, in order to clarify gender inequality to the greatest possible extent.<sup>2</sup>

The establishment and development of gender statistics is an important segment of elimination of obstacles aiming at gender equality, as a complex problem that needs to be solved in various areas and in all spheres of life. Gender statistics represents a different approach to collection, presentation and discussion of data for the purpose of gaining a more realistic insight into life of women and men. It is necessary for defining policy and action plans, as a tool for supervision of their realization and for getting an idea of changes of gender positions. Gender statistics is designed in accordance with the defined priorities in solving gender issues.<sup>3</sup> These are equality of women and men in economical independence, coordination of private and professional life, equal share in decision-making, elimination of gender-based violence, abolition of gender stereotypes and promotion of gender equality as the segment of development and foreign policy. These priority subjects are analyzed by means of the data concerning the position and behavior of population within several areas which are of major importance for supervision and solution of gender issues. They mostly refer to demographic structure and dynamics.

Gender issues are the part of demographic reality, movement trends and actual demographic processes. The differences between socio-demographic characteristics of women and men represent the subject of interest as a factor and as an effect of demographic changes as well. Numerous life components of women and men, such as family, health, education, economic activity and realization of their rights are found in the basis of demographic phenomena and processes.<sup>4</sup> Thus, gender issues are directly connected with recognition and description of prevailing demographic trends that we are witnessing. In addition, gender perspective made the gender inequality an important subject of demographic research. Demographic ageing, decrease of population, migratory movements, household and family structure, educational and economic characteristics are the areas in which we are searching for the answers concerning various aspects of gender inequality. The data collected from these areas give evidence about the behavior and situations undergone by women and men. In addition, they refer to more profound research of conditions of observed gender differences in searching for the most detailed picture and the deepest possible understanding of gender inequality. Demographic analyses represent important guidelines in uncovering of conditionality and manifestations of this phenomenon, present in various social, economic, cultural and political conditions. Therefore it is necessary that demographic data sources are also designed on the principles of gender statistics both in terms of methodology and contents. This means that gender issues are essential not only for collection, but also for processing, analysis and publishing of census data. On the other hand, gender aspect in demographic analyses means a more complete and concrete recognition of researched phenomena and processes. It is not an alternative, but a necessary approach to understanding demographic reality (Šobot, 2009). The specific characteristics of behavior and positions of women and men as the factors of demographic phenomena and processes have made gender perspective a heuristic means of demographic analysis. Demographic research is aimed at explaining causes and recognizing consequences of population phenomena and changes. Gender perspective is guided by motives, interests and needs of women and men, as a segment of a complex deterministic basis. Each of the individual research areas includes topics relevant from the aspect of gender issues.<sup>5</sup>

Demographic ageing intensifies the importance of analysis of the position of old people. The majority of population aged 60 years and over is women. The specific position at that age is determined by the characteristics of economic activity and type of work engagement during their active life. Quality of life is also influenced by health, and in case of women it is significantly determined by their reproductive role and their position in that period. Further, it is necessary to examine the engagement of women in household work, their care of other family members, possibility of access to paid jobs, possibilities of political engagement etc. Low reproductive standards are found in the basis of demographic ageing. Although giving birth to one or possibly two children may imply a greater possibility for women to get engaged out of their homes, attention is drawn to the fact that low fertility in some countries results from an unfavorable position of women. The trends of mortality increase or its keeping to a certain level, of male population predominantly, are inevitable in demographic recognition of gender inequality. Gender aspect in migration research, being an important factor in spatial distribution of population in the territory of Balkan, should provide knowledge on

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<sup>2</sup> <http://www.unecce.org/stats/gender/genstats/genstats-1.htm>

<sup>3</sup> Developing Gender Statistics: A Practical Tool, United Nations Economic Commission for Europe, United Nations Geneva 2009

<sup>4</sup> <http://www.unecce.org/stats/gender/genpols/keyinds/genpols-2.pop.htm>

<sup>5</sup> <http://www.unecce.org/stats/gender/genpols/keyinds/genpols-2.pop.htm>

specific characteristics of migratory movements of women and men and on life conditions of migrants. The position of refugees is particularly sensitive, among which women of various ages form the majority. It is necessary to consider the position of girls and young women who are very often burdened with the responsibility for other family members.

The changes in household structure and in family configuration create a series of issues relevant from the aspect of gender relations and position of women and men. Versatility of life styles, such as the increase of illegitimate births and the rate of divorces influence women and men in different ways. The position of single mothers imposes as a special topic to be examined, especially in case of young women, taking into account the increase of this type of single-parent families. The decrease of family and household sizes should also be examined from the aspect of gender differences in behavior and positions of women and men. In modern family analyses, relevant gender issues are the use of contraceptives as well as the roles and share of responsibility between partners as regards taking care of children and household.

As regards educational and economic characteristics of women and men, gender issues mostly refer to differences and their positions concerning possibilities, choices and achievements. It is necessary to examine gender segregation in some areas of study and segregation as regards occupation and presence at managing positions. The gender gap in economic characteristics is analyzed through participation in labor, differences in accessibility to paid jobs during the entire working life, segregation in the employment market through the presence of women and men per sectors and activities, scope and characteristics of unemployment, through the presence of entrepreneurs and differences in economic power.

### **Census Material as a Source of Information on Gender Inequality**

Census material includes a series of data relevant for examination of behavior, situations and positions of women and men. Their analysis gives an insight in marital, educational, economic and migratory characteristics. By introducing age, time and spatial dimension, we increase our knowledge on gender inequality. In that way it is possible to make comparative analyses of different generations, certain spatial frameworks, change of gender characteristics and differences considering the social context and socio-demographic characteristics of settlements, areas, and regions. Due to the possibilities it offers, population censuses are an important demographic source in researching gender inequality. The content and scope of the material that can be used depend on how much the content and methodology is adapted to gender perspective requirements. Spatial dimension and possibilities of comparative approach at different territorial levels certainly represent an important segment of census material analysis from the gender perspective.

#### *Gender perspective of census material*

Census data refer to different features of socio-demographic and socio-economic characteristics, important from the aspect of gender positions and relations. By their analysis it is possible to learn the geographic and ethno-cultural similarities and dissimilarities of gender differences.

Sex is one of the basic demographic characteristics, and for the analysis of gender issues it is necessary that all other characteristics are presented for inhabitants of both sexes. Although all published data in the 2002 Population Census of Serbia were not presented as per sex as well, it was done for most characteristics. Basic migration characteristics are presented for the entire population, while daily migrations and characteristics of immigrants were presented for both sexes. National and religious affiliation were presented for the entire population, however, in some other table reviews gender perspective of cultural characteristics was indicated. Presented data concerning marital status, educational and economic characteristics were mostly given for both women and men; however, there were certain exceptions. In the tables showing active population according to occupation, age and educational status, and for active population according to occupation and job positions, the data were not presented per sexes. Of course, this does not mean that they cannot be provided, because sex is the basic characteristic of respondents and any other characteristics may be observed according to sex affiliation. However, all features of economic activity represent a very important aspect in analyses of gender relations and positions; therefore it is important to make these data easily available for both women and men.

Household structure, family configuration, age and economic characteristics of members represent important aspects of the position of women and men. However, household data were not published so that gender perspective could be applied. Namely, according to the published tables it is not possible to establish gender structure of single, two-family and multi-family households and households including persons who are not family members. It is not possible to examine gender differences as regards structural and economic characteristics of households. And number, age and kinship of members may actually be important factors for the positions of women and men, not only within a household, but as a framework of professional engagement and presence in public sphere.

The contribution of census material in researching gender inequality is also determined by the approach in processing and analyzing comprehensive census material. The possibility of defining the multi-dimensional and complex aspect of this phenomenon is very important. This is achieved by observing various distributions of analyzed characteristics and by researching their mutual connections. Recognition of marital status in view of educational characteristics and certain features of economic activity represents an important aspect of gender inequality. There are a series of important issues that should be analyzed from the aspect of socio-economic characteristics: differences in economic activity as regards the educational level and socio-professional features, specific characteristics of gender

within each individual modality of economic activity, gender differences of economically inactive persons, and particularly socio-demographic characteristics of dependant persons. Furthermore, it is necessary to improve knowledge as regards family and household structure of women and men, especially socio-demographic characteristics of single-parent families. If gender perspective was taken into account in data processing to a larger extent, the research of situations, behavior and positions of women and men would be improved both as regards quantity and quality.

#### *Territorial Framework of Presented Data*

When examining gender issues, it is essential that census data are available in such a way to enable incorporation of the spatial dimension for as many analyzed features as possible. Examination of gender differences is thus provided as regards demographic, social, economic, and cultural conditions in the selected spatial framework. Insight into the demographic situation of the lowest possible territorial level allows spatial versatility and specific qualities of gender differences. Gender inequality as a socio-cultural phenomenon can be different towards territorial units that differ according to size, anthropo-geographical, economic, sociological and a series of other characteristics. Therefore, in order to find out more about the specific features of this phenomenon, it is necessary to know its manifestations at the lowest possible territorial units. In that way material is provided for in depth research of conditionality of gender inequality and uncovering of gender roles and behavior. In the published tables of certain characteristics and some of their features, it is possible to recognize gender differences according to types of settlements. An insight of the position of women and men considering the specific socio-demographic characteristics of urban and other settlements contributes to the richness and quality of the research of conditionality, form, explicitness and reproduction of gender inequality.

In tabular reviews census data are given for different levels of territorial organization of the country where the Census is carried out. Some tables contain data at the level of settlements, some at the level of municipalities, and some at the country level. The third above mentioned way, as far as Serbia is concerned, implies taking two macro entities into account, central Serbia and the Autonomous Province of Vojvodina, being its specific socio-demographic totality. Sex and age structure data are presented at the level of settlements. As regards the features presented according to sex, at the settlement level the given data refer to economic activity, engagement of persons performing certain occupations, agricultural population and marital status. At the level of municipalities, the following features are presented: national affiliation, educational status, total and agricultural population according to their activities. In addition, there are also the data on daily migrants as per occupations and activities, immigrants according to the region they moved from, time of immigration and national affiliation. It is also possible to learn about the female population of the age of 15 and more, according to age, marital status, number of live-births and national affiliation. The economically active population presented according to occupation, sex, age and educational status cannot be analyzed at lower levels of territorial establishment, without a subsequent request. Gender differences in respect of these features can only be perceived at the level of two large areas of the Republic of Serbia: central Serbia and Vojvodina.

One of the arguments for the selectivity of data presented at lower territorial levels may be the principle of rationality, available in all census stages. However, from the aspect of the needs of the researcher to have the hypotheses checked as concretely as possible and to define gender inequality in practice, it is important to allow for establishment of gender roles, behavior and differences at the level of different territorial units for the largest possible number of relevant characteristics. In addition, as regards action plans for reducing the gender gap reduction and strategies of improvement of social position of women and men, it is important to have an insight at the level of lower territorial units as specific socio-demographic, economic and cultural frameworks.

There is a difference among countries in view of presenting additional characteristics which supplement the knowledge on socio-demographic characteristics of women and men. Additional gender relevant contents at a lower territorial level are more accessible in certain ones. In that sense, the presented census data in Croatia and Romania attract attention as positive examples. More detailed and diverse material, interesting from the standpoint of gender inequality, is easily accessible at the level of smaller territorial units. The following data were presented on the level of cities/municipalities<sup>6</sup> for residents of both sexes in Croatia: marital status by age groups, population aged 15 and over by educational attainment and areas, female population by age and number of live-born children, population by main sources of livelihood, persons in employment, by prevailing activity, by age and status in employment, persons in employment, by prevailing activity, by status in employment and activity, economically active population by usual activity, by occupation, persons in employment, by prevailing activity, by status in employment and usual working time. The census data on labor force population by age, current activity status and educational attainment were presented at the level of counties, as well as on the unemployed and inactive, due to low frequency on the level of cities. On this higher level of territorial organization of Croatia, the following data were accessible: population by age, sex, type of household and household status, population immigrated to the residence county by place immigrated from, sex and time of immigration, population by age, sex, marital and cohabitational status, population by sources of livelihood, sex and economic activity. The territorial framework of presented census data in Romania form areas, regions and counties<sup>7</sup>. Thus it is possible to observe a series of relevant data on the position of women and men not only on the level

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<sup>6</sup> Territorial organization of Croatia understands the existence of counties, cities and municipalities whose number changed with time. During the 2001 Census there were 20 counties, the city of Zagreb with a special position, 122 cities and 423 municipalities.

<sup>7</sup> In the administrative-territorial division of Romania, the urban region forms 265 municipalities and cities, and the rural region 2686 communes

of the country but according to the urban/rural sociological important distinction. Marital status of women and men by age groups, female population by number of children born alive and age, female population by age groups, marital status and number of children born alive are easily accessible for both regions. Very interesting data on the socio-economic characteristics for the research of gender inequality are also presented by regions: female population by age groups, by educational attainment and number of children born alive and a series of data on the employed and unemployed by sex. They are the following data: employed population by age groups and occupation groups, employed population by age groups and activities of national economy, employed population by age groups and status in employment, employed population by age groups and institutional unit of working place, employed population by occupation groups and educational attainment, employed population by status in employment and effective duration of working week. The following data were presented for unemployed women and men: unemployed population by age groups and educational attainment, unemployed population seeking for another working place by age groups, occupation at the last working place, unemployed population by age groups and economic activity at the last working place, unemployed population by age groups and by age groups and status in employment at the last working place.

These two examples show that complex census data, presented on lower territorial levels can be easily accessible to interested users. If this kind of data were more easily accessible in other countries as well, comparative observation of the spatial distribution of socio-demographic gender models and gender differences in the Balkan region would get a new dimension. The answer to the question on local specific qualities could be obtained and the research experience on gender inequality enriched by comparative approach in that view. The use of census data in order to clarify the determination and manifestation of gender inequalities would thereby become more effective. Apart from the answer to the question on whether a unique Balkan model of gender socio-demographic differences and considerations of the specificities of certain countries are in question, similarities and differences could be searched for, having in mind the levels of territorial organization of countries. In such a way part of the research material directed towards investigation of local behavior modalities and the position of women and men would be enriched. For example, the question on whether the gender models and gender differences in urban and rural regions are manifested in the same way in the chosen countries could be resolved. Apart from that, it would be a contribution to revealing the appearance and determination of gender inequality, having in mind the socio-economic degree of development or cultural specific qualities. It could partly be perceived how much the gender inequality is specific, and how much it is a general social phenomenon, in which way it is demonstrated and the influence of certain factors assumed.

#### *Content of Census Questionnaire*

The methodology of material collection, defining of census units and basic groups are carried out according to international recommendations, so in that sense there are no limits to comparing data between countries. Although the recommendations also refer to the content of census questionnaire, there is a difference between the countries in formulating certain questions, answer modalities and even in the choice of certain characteristics. The differences among countries in the choice of questions, processing and contents of published data are important from the angle of the possibility that the socio-demographic aspects of gender inequality are considered in an international comparative perspective. How are the questions formulated in the Balkan countries and what is the choice of traits like by which the marital, educational and economic characteristics are presented?

Gender differences in marital status are interesting from the angle of behavior, and also the situation and position of women and men, not only in the private sphere. From the methodology angle, there is the problem of the possibility of getting an insight into the real situation. Changes in behavior and standpoint toward marriage as a result often lack agreement of the formal and factual state. Hence the idea to find out the factual (de facto) marital status instead of an insight into the formal-legal state. Countries in the region did not have a uniform approach in the 2001 and 2002 censuses. The data on the marital status of the population of Serbia were gathered through one question with offered modalities: not married married, widower-widow and divorced, which referred to the formal-legal status. In certain countries two additional options existed. For single persons in Bulgaria, there was a possibility for them to factually explain their status: whether they were married, if they were still formally married or whether they were living in consensual unions. Persons who were married, widowers/widows and the divorced had to determine the duration of their marital status. This was also the case in the Albanian census. A consensual union was an option of marital status in the Romanian census. The time feature here referred only to women who were in their first marriage or consensual union. In that sense this contributes more to consideration of reproductive behavior and marital status than does it enable insight into the marriage history. The Greek census had an option – separated, apart from the standard modalities of determining the legal marital status. Couples who live separated, even though their marriage did not end formally-legally, are thus isolated.

Education is an important aspect in considering social relations between sexes and gender positions. It is especially important to consider gender differences in professional lives and the public sphere. Educational characteristics are recognized according to achieved educational level, and for persons still in school, the level of the school they are attending. In addition, the name of the school, specialization or field is determined for all persons who acquired a secondary or third degree level of education. It is necessary to enable recognition of the degree of post-university education like in Greece for example, the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and in Bulgaria. In Croatia and Romania the highest acquired level of education was entered, while in Albania there was the modality of post-university education apart from the other modalities. Taking the scope of the incorporation of the population in the education process into consideration, the question on literacy is less and less useful. Nevertheless, it represents an

important segment of educational characteristics in regions where there is a significant number of inhabitants who do not have at least primary education out of various reasons. Computer literacy could also be an additional characteristic which is being considered as well.

As regards the economic activities of the population, there are many questions which include characteristics important from the angle of the position and state of women and men. In order to achieve comparability with other European countries, the so-called current economic activity was registered in the 2001 and 2002 Censuses. The obtained data refer to the socio-economic characteristics regarding the week prior to the census. The general characteristics of economic activity for which data were gathered in all countries in the region were: occupation, field of activity, sector of employment and in most the number of working hours in a usual working week. The transformation of society and economy, as well as numerous social and economic problems with which countries in the region are facing, influence the economic activity to be a variable category more frequently in a relative short period of time. This mainly refers to the possibility of work commitment and modalities of employment of the economically active population. Thus in certain censuses, unstableness and the time aspect had a more stressed role in data collection. The Romanian census questionnaire contained questions on economic activity, as well as employment in the previous year regardless whether the persons were employed or looking for work in the census moment in 2001. The question on the length of their status and possible material benefits were intended for unemployed persons. In the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia the unemployed could circle the method of looking for work in the previous month, or to say how long they did not undertake any steps in that matter. The contents of the Macedonian questionnaire enabled better insight into the situation of the unemployed, through information on the place, company and occupation they had if they were unemployed previously. More detailed information of the economic activity of the Macedonian population was enabled by the question on additional jobs they carried out for at least one hour, whether they were paid or helping members in an agricultural household or family business. The Albanian census also had a question that was supposed to state whether the individual does any additional work and to describe it. The question on the main subsistence was included in the census questionnaires in Bulgaria, the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and Croatia, whereby more concrete knowledge on the economic situation of women and men was provided.

Census data represent a source of information on the economically inactive population as well. The possibility to get an insight into their economic situation is very limited. From the angle of gender positions, the category of dependant persons is very interesting. However, sometimes the data are not presented or not informative enough. Dependants in Serbia, Croatia and the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia answer questions on the economic characteristics of the principal earner. It is possible to find out whether their earner is a physical or legal entity, whether he/she is economically active and whether he/she is employed in the country or abroad. Socio-demographic characteristics of dependants are an important segment of research from the angle of gender inequalities and especially the social position of women.

### **Spatial Dimensions of Demographic Gender Differences**

The basis of demographic research of gender inequality is the premises on the social construction of this phenomenon. Inequality of conditions and positions of women and men, as a result of social norms, value systems, social, economic and political conditions, has become a subject of interest to demographers as well. Their task is to investigate the generalities, to recognize specific qualities, to consider factors of manifestation and reproduction mechanisms. By examining the socio-demographic characteristics of men and women, differences are determined and explanations are sought. By using census data it is possible to examine more relevant aspects, including the spatial dimension of the analyzed characteristics and gender differences.

Demographic research is not only in the function of investigating assumptions and directing empirical research. It also offers a general framework to the efforts in controlling the gender gap, improving the position of men and women, solving social and population problems. In that sense, the spatial dimension of socio-demographic characteristics and gender differences is especially important. Gender models of behavior and social position are analyzed within the framework of territorial organization of a country, by comparison between countries or regions. Those analyses examine the diversity and dispersion of gender differences in view of the social context of chosen spatial framework. In such a way the similarities of the social position of women in former socialist countries are shown which differ from the gender regimes of European Union countries (Blagojević, 2003). Nevertheless, the countries which went through a transformation of the social system in the last decade of the twentieth century form a large region in the geographical sense and insofar are their social differences larger. Having in mind the peculiarities of social transition and the sociological and cultural differences of East and Central European countries and Central Asia, there are specificities of social position of women and men which cannot be neglected (Pierella, Paci 2002). In that sense, the possibility of considering demographic gender differences in the Balkan region is important, where social and cultural similarities and differences are intertwined.

The importance of the spatial framework is in the clarification of gender inequalities as general and specific social phenomena. Due to this, it is desirable to get an insight into the spatial similarities and differences on the basis of census material as well, not only within the territorial organization of a country but from the angle of comparative approach between countries as well. The spatial dimension of demographic gender differences is also significant from the standpoint of regional development of countries, or development of a region. In a research sense, it enables

consideration of gender models and gender differences taking into account the socio-economic and socio-cultural characteristics of the chosen spatial framework.

*Spatial Dimension of Socio-Demographic Gender Differences  
in the Example of Serbia*

Spatial dimensions of gender socio-demographic differences depend on the theoretical-methodological degree of foundation of research and availability of relative data. Spatial distribution of socio-demographic gender differences represents an important framework for researching gender inequality in Serbia<sup>8</sup>. Proceeding from the standpoint on the social definition of gender inequality and the socio-demographic and cultural diversity of certain regions, the analysis is directed towards recognizing gender differences in certain spatial frameworks. Socio-demographic differences between women and men are perceived on the sociological and cultural specific regions of Serbia: Central Serbia without Belgrade, Belgrade and Vojvodina.

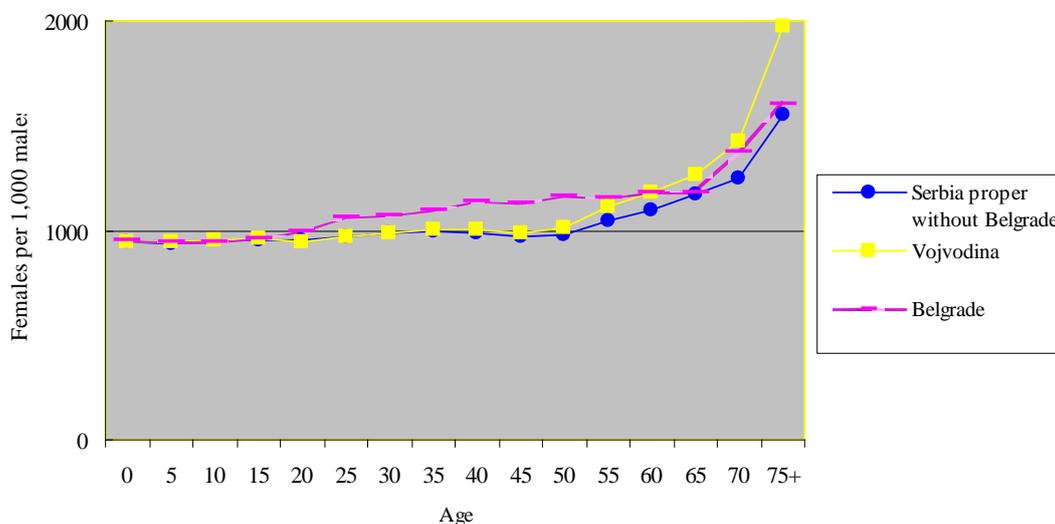
In the total population of all three regions, women are represented in a greater extent. The sex unbalance is most pronounced in Belgrade, and least in the remaining region of central Serbia (Table 1).

<b>Table 1. Feminity ratios of population of Serbia, by regions, 2002 Population Census</b>			
	Central Serbia without Belgrade	Vojvodina	Belgrade
Total	1033.3	1063.1	1107.5

Source: Calculated on the basis of 2002 Population Census of Serbia table.

The spatial difference exists in the unbalanced sex composition according to age groups (graph 1). Actually, the numerical domination of women in relation to men appears in the age marked by various life events. There are more women in Belgrade from the age of 25, while there are more men in central Serbia without Belgrade until 55 years of age. Thus these two regions face the problem of sex unbalance in different ways. In Vojvodina men are more numerous until the age of 30 and the sex distribution until the age of 55 is relatively uniform. This points out to the importance of the spatial dimension of researching the demographic behavior of women and men and recognizing demographic and social effects. The noted sex unbalance calls attention to the gender differences in view of mortality and migrational trends.

**Graph 1. Sex ratio - females per 1,000 males in Serbia, by areas, 2002.**



Spatial differences in view of the marital structure are manifested in the uneven frequency of modalities (Table 2). There is no difference in gender models among regions, but gender differences in marital state are not expressed with the same intensity. Both men and women in all three regions are mainly married, and the spatial differences are more present among women. Representation of married men in Vojvodina and Belgrade is uniform and is less than in Central Serbia without Belgrade. Representation of married women is the least among women in the capital, and the difference is more pronounced in relation to the remaining region of central Serbia. The women of Belgrade are also more often unmarried and divorced in relation to the other two regions. The representation of unmarried and divorced men is relatively uniform in Vojvodina and Belgrade. Differentiation in relation to central Serbia without Belgrade is more pronounced in the frequency of divorced.

<sup>8</sup> Research represents the basis for the preparation of the doctoral theme “Demographic and Social Aspects of Gender Inequality in Serbia from the Beginning of the Twentieth Century”, which is being prepared.

	Unmarried men	Married men	Widowers	Divorced men
Cen. Serbia without Belgrade	27.4	64.3	5.3	2.5
Vojvodina	30.8	60.8	4.4	3.7
Belgrade	31.4	60.1	4.0	4.0
	Unmarried women	Married women	Widows	Divorced women
Cen. Serbia without Belgrade	17.8	61.8	16.2	3.8
Vojvodina	20.3	56.5	17.9	5.1
Belgrade	24.4	53.4	15.0	6.9

Source: Same as Table 1.

Apart from the more pronounced differentiation of marital state by regions with women than with men, the importance of spatial dimension is visible through the uneven intensity of gender differences. The difference between the unmarried men and unmarried women is more pronounced in Vojvodina than in the other two regions, while the gender differences in the representation of married persons and divorced is more pronounced in Belgrade. Apart from the gender differences in marital state in one region, differentiation in the marital modality representation by regions is noted, both with women and men. Differentiation by regions is more of a characteristic of the marital state of women than men. These data refer to a more in-depth analysis of the marital state and to researching gender models of behavior by regions.

	Central Serbia without Belgrade		Vojvodina		Belgrade	
	men	women	men	women	men	women
No education and up to grade 3 of elementary school	4.6	15.2	3.7	9.0	1.9	5.0
grade 4-7 of elementary school	16.2	18.9	11.2	17.3	3.9	7.4
Elementary school	25.4	25.6	23.5	26.1	16.0	21.0
Secondary education	41.0	31.3	50.3	38.0	53.3	46.5
Higher education or university level	9.1	6.8	10.2	8.8	22.9	18.5

Source: Same as Table 1.

Spatial differences exist in view of the level of education as well (Table 3). Women and men in all three regions most frequently have secondary education, but their representation is different. In central Serbia without Belgrade the share of persons with this level of education is less than in the other two regions. The spatial unevenness is even more expressed with the university level educated persons. Their share is twice higher among women and men in Belgrade than in Vojvodina, and two and a half times higher than in the remaining region of central Serbia. The gender difference in all three regions is demonstrated through a larger share of university level education among men. Socio-economic factors, apart from the socio-cultural ones, should be taken into account and their influence on gender models and differences by regions.

	Men			Women		
	Central Serbia without Belgrade	Vojvodina	Belgrade	Central Serbia without Belgrade	Vojvodina	Belgrade
Active	64.1	64.7	59.6	45.1	43.0	47.2
Active with profession	51.3	50.5	47.0	34.1	32.3	36.3
Persons with personal income	23.6	22.9	26.4	21.5	24.9	28.0
Dependants	11.9	12.1	13.5	33.1	32.0	24.5

Source: Same as Table 1.

The general framework of economic activity of men and women does not differ in essence by regions (Table 4). Men are economically more active than women, but that is less distinct in Belgrade. The economic activity of men in Belgrade is less than in the other two regions, while the women are more active economically, and more than women in Vojvodina. The share of persons with personal income (category in which the majority are pensioners) is greater in Belgrade than in the other two regions, which is more pronounced with women and could be explained by the differences in the representation of agricultural population and their position in realizing their right to a pension.

Women in Belgrade are less dependant than in the other two regions, which is not the case with the male population. The analysis of as many characteristics as possible of economic activities by region would contribute to a more complete understanding of the economic situation and position of women and men.

The importance of the regional framework is confirmed on the example of gender socio-demographic differences in Belgrade (Kuburović, 2007). Demographic and sociological characteristics of Belgrade proper and areas in greater Belgrade conditioned diversity of the sex distribution and gender models of age, marital, educational and economic structure. The differences by regions in marital and economic activity are also more pronounced here with women than with men. As regards the level of education, the difference by regions is demonstrated in the same way with women as with men. The share of educated persons is greater in the city proper region.

In the stated examples of spatial framework of socio-demographic gender differences in Serbia, there are specificities for women and men and they should be accepted, even though demographic structures are not essentially different by regions. If the spatial dimension were to be neglected, a realistic picture of the state of gender inequality could not be obtained.

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Differences by regions in the sex structure, age structure, marital, educational and economic characteristics of women and men confirm the importance of spatial framework in presenting census material. It is not necessary to study them in detail in order to clarify the socio-culturological differences of gender behavior and position of women and men. It is desirable that the relevant census material with as many as possible gender questions be available for lower levels of territorial organization. Furthermore, in order to enable comparative analysis on the country level with as much ample and elaborate material as possible, it is important to have equal devotion to gender perspective, coordination of methodology and uniformity of contents.

The spatial dimension is important both from the angle of research and action. Comparison of the state and exchanging experience on different levels of territorial organization, both contribute to a more complete insight and deeper understanding of gender inequality. The contribution of census material in that respect should not be neglected, but it is necessary to eliminate obstacles to such an analysis.

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