

Socio-demographic changes of households in the municipality of Aleksandrovac in the period from 1948 to 2011

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Introduction

Municipality of Aleksandrovac is located in central Serbia. As most municipalities in Serbia and in this part of Southeast Europe, Aleksandrovac shows a constant decrease of the population, and the tendencies of aging population as well as the decrease of universality and popularity of marriage, postponement of childbearing, family transformation, change in its functions, which have influenced the change in the shape and structure of households - decrease in the number of household members at the first place. Due to country-town migrations, country population decreased, household member number decreased as well, and the new lifestyle brought to complete change of household structure as people knew it.

Method

The aim of this paper is the analysis of households in the municipality of Aleksandrovac and their socio-demographic changes in the period from 1948 to 2011, based on census data of the Republic of Serbia. Interpretation of quantitative data will be complemented by qualitative data obtained from the examination of satisfaction with the quality of life in the municipality of Aleksandrovac. The methods which were used in writing this paper were analysis and interpretation of domestic and foreign literature, survey research, analytic-synthetic and mathematical-statistical methods.

Results

In the regarding period, as it could be seen on the Figure 1, the population increased only in the first period (from 1948 until 1953). After that period, population continuously falls. The interesting is that even though the number of inhabitants falls, the number of households raises continuously until 2002. From 2002 the number of households begins to fall as well. The number of household members constantly falls from the beginning of the regarding period (Figure 2.) At the beginning of the regarding period, the average number of household members was above six. Such households with many members, *zadruga*, were usual. It could be said that the presence of such households in rural settlements of Aleksandrovac were more often the rule than the exception. The existence and persistence of these households had a primarily socio-economic role. As agriculture stopped being the main branch of economy, socio-economic role of large household became weaker. With the decomposition of large households increased the number of households with fewer members. At the same time population decreased too, as a consequence of continuous movement of people towards bigger cities and abroad.

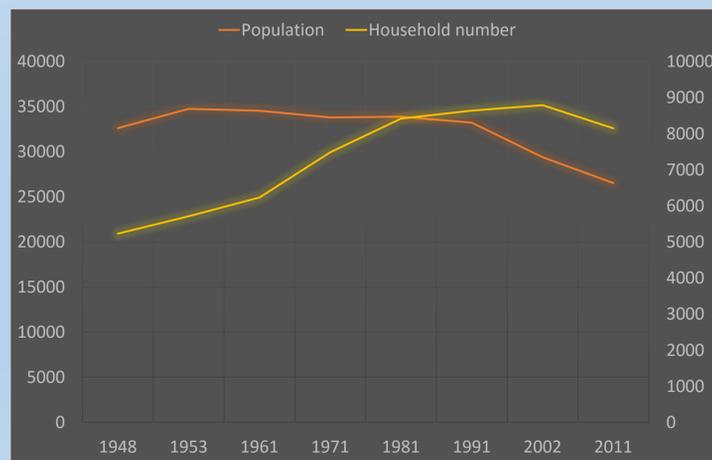


Fig. 1. Population and household number from 1948 until 2011
Source: Census data 1948-2011

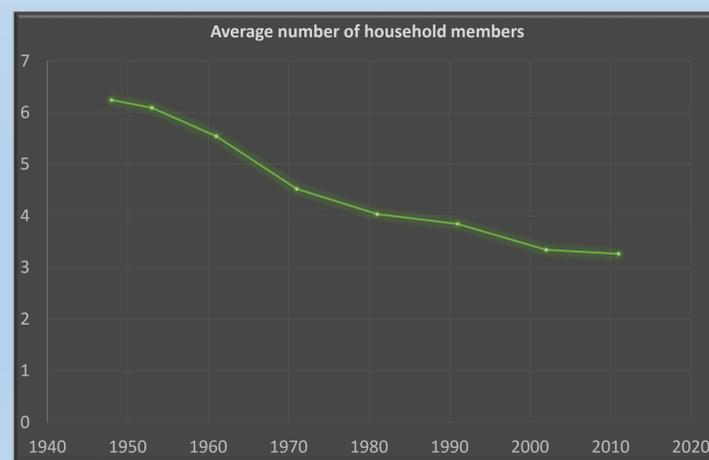


Fig. 2. Decrease of household member number from 1948 until 2011
Source: Census data 1948-2011

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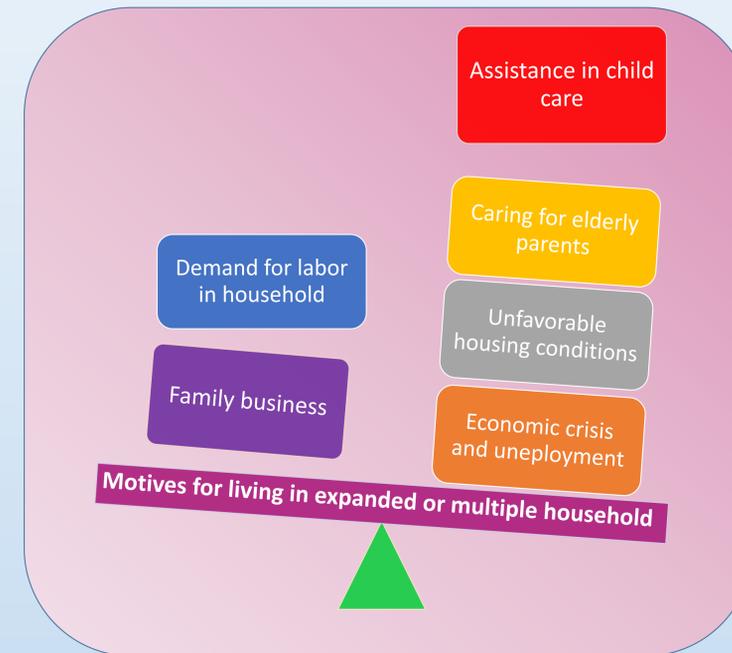


Fig. 3. Motives for living in expanded or multiple household
Source: Questionnaire survey

Questionnaire survey gives a closer view into the reasons why are people living in a larger households, as well as the insight into their opinions about the quality of life in Municipality of Aleksandrovac. This research also provides concrete answers and the reasons why are people leaving the settlements of municipality of Aleksandrovac (Fig. 4), which causes fragmentation and changes the character of households, and the results contribute to the possibilities of monitoring and forecasting of such trends.

Conclusion

The formation of the average household size affects a series of interconnected and highly correlated factors. Research of the Population Department of the United Nations, which was conducted in the 60s, based on data from 87 countries, has shown that only high reproduction rate is positively correlated with the average size of the household, while the others investigated factors: the degree of industrialization, the average duration of life, income per capita and urbanization are highly negatively correlated. Similar conclusions were made for Serbia as well. It has been proven that the greatest impact on household size has a birthrate. Highly positively correlated is still a percentage of illiterate women, and negatively are correlated: national income per capita and percentage non-agricultural population in total (Đorđević, 2008). Rapid rhythm of social and economic development has already made its influence on household and family patterns and will continue with its influence in future, and that is the fact which phases every society which is going through demographic transition.

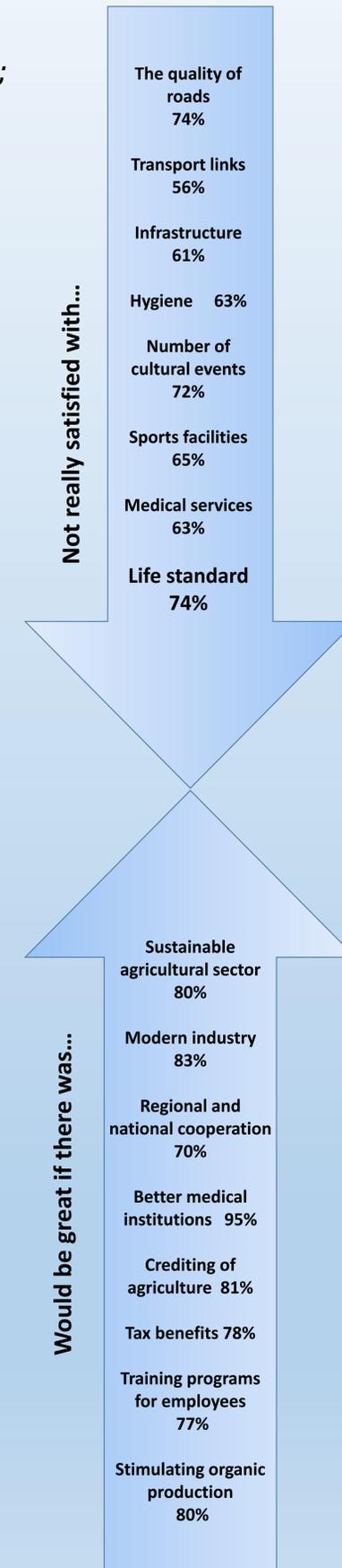


Fig. 4. Residents opinion on contemporary situation and future possibilities for a life satisfaction
Source: Questionnaire survey