

Aleksander JAKOŠ

Planning, demographics and Slovenia

In this article, the issue of demographics is presented as one of the most important factors in regard to the future development of Slovenia. We are still not fully aware of the consequences of the demographic development in the past, which has caused the current situation. The balance between the active and retired population is disturbed, as the percentage of retired persons is on the increase. This process will continue, because the number of retirements will increase in the future, mainly due to the demographic reasons. In regard to the current age the structure of the population in Slovenia, we can expect a huge and absolute increase in the number of elderly people and an even faster increase in the percentage of elderly people in the entire population. The number of retired persons will indirectly increase

due to the longer life expectancy. In a demographic sense, the increase of elderly people means a significantly higher annual number of deaths and therefore a strong negative natural growth. This will be even more evident due to the significant decrease of the number of births in the last 30 years. This problem arises not only from low birth rates, but also due to the fact that the generations of women in their fertility period are less numerous.

Key words: demographics, natural growth, migrations, population policy, spatial planning, Slovenia

1 Introduction

The main trends of the future demographic development of Slovenia are deeply rooted in today's age and the gender structure of the population, and in the current mortality and birth rates. To a minor extent, this even holds true to migration! Spatial planning and planning for the future development in general has to follow these observations to a certain extent. Since the population and their activities are the driving force behind everything, we have to devote more attention to the development of the population itself.

The content of this article is divided into three sections. The first section shows the current demographic situation in Slovenia as the result of developments in the past, but mainly in respect to the key factor for the future demographic development. It represents certain demographic laws. As an example, I'd like to mention the fact that in the next 10 years, the number of deaths in Slovenia per annum, will increase from today's figures of between 18,000 to 19,000 thousand to approximately 30,000. We have no influence on this fact, unless we expect the elderly population to begin emigrating out of Slovenia on mass. The probability for a decrease in number of births in the next years is quite high while the fact is that the number of women in their fertility period will decrease significantly.

The second section of this article is devoted to the issue of migration, which for the majority is a miraculous solution to all demographic issues from the local to the national level. I'm pointing mainly to the very "relaxed" dealings in respect to immigration into Slovenia. The expected annual number of immigrants is taken only as a statistical data: the higher the number, the better the plans look. We are not aware that behind these numbers there are real people with real needs. A worker, arriving to Slovenia (most often he/she works in the construction industry) helps to increase the gross domestic product of Slovenia and brings profit to his/her employer. But when he/she becomes an inhabitant, he/she suddenly becomes a social problem of his/her local community, while the employer simply "disappears". We have to know that immigration in the first phase brings big economic benefits for the employers, while local communities have to carry the burden of socialization and provide the appropriate social standards. This intensifies intolerance towards immigrants. When we quote the number of immigrants, we have to consider the economic aspect of transition, which is very expensive but at the same time very important for the assimilation of any new population into Slovene society.

The third section of this article deals mainly with the population policy, or the lack of it in Slovenia. We have occasional campaigns to try to improve the birth rates, which are often

disrespectful in their attitudes towards women. When talking about immigration, we all agree that we have to promote the immigration of young and educated population (Slovenia has a negative balance in this population grouping), but the fact is that we withdraw the limitations regarding the issuing of working permits for foreigners every year (Malačič, 2008), although this is not the only reason why the number of immigrants in Slovenia is still on the increase. Due to the lack of umbrella institutions (Demographic Institute, etc.), it is even more difficult to design an appropriate population policy, as the researchers of demographic issues are dispersed across various institutions. Demographic development plays a very important role in the economic, social and spatial development of the country. We must go beyond speculating or planning the future number of inhabitants, based mainly on the wish for greater numbers and less on the consideration of demographic laws and the economic capacity of Slovenia. An issue in itself is the current policy, which doesn't favour too vigorous an activity in those spheres which significantly exceed the duration of one mandate. Circa five mandates is the time period that usually passes from birth to the first employment.

2 The demographic situation in Slovenia

We are often not aware of the persistence of individual demographic phenomena. Even now, the annual number of deaths in Slovenia is influenced by the number of births for more than over a century, while quite a large number of children born now are still going to be alive in the next century. The current demographic situation in Slovenia is therefore a consequence of more than a century long demographic development of three demographic factors: mortality, births and migration rates. Figure 1 shows the age structure of the Slovene population on the 31 March 2008, which at the same time represents the demographic historical timeline. The figure shows the number of inhabitants in yearly age groups, from age 0

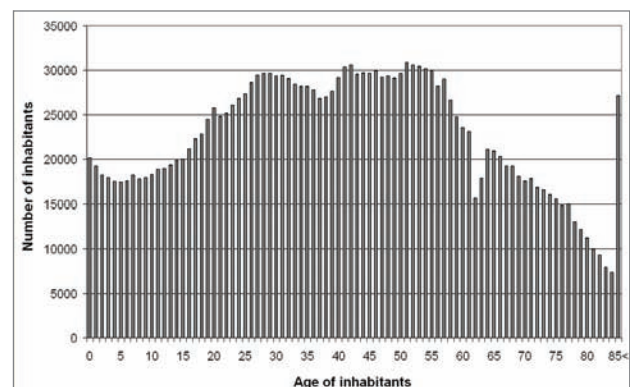


Figure 1: The population of Slovenia on the 31 March 2008 (source: Statistical Office of the Republic of Slovenia, Ministry of the Interior, 2008a).

on the left side of the figure to the age of 85 or more on the right side of the figure. Normally, the first column on the left should be the highest and should then gradually decrease to the column representing population of 84 years of age (the column 85 years of age or more represents more generations together). Since Slovenia has gone through numerous changes, mainly with regard to the birth rate and migration rates, the figure contains many “irregularities”.

If we start with the eldest population (the right side of the figure), the highest column is of course the one which shows the number of people of 85 years of age and over. It comprises all inhabitants who were born before 1923, and who now live in Slovenia. The percentage of the eldest population was in Slovenia below the average of all developed European countries for a long time and it caused some uneasiness, as the percentage of the population of 85 years of age and above was (and still is) one of the relevant indicators of development, as it shows the development of the health services, which in turn affects life expectancy. Nevertheless, this percentage in Slovenia wasn't lower due to poorer health care, but due to the emigration rate at the turn of the 19th century and the lower birth rate during WW1. Between the end of WW1 and the beginning of WW2, the number of births in the territory, which encapsulates Slovenia today, has now exceeded 30,000 per year (Šircelj, 2006). The annual number of deaths in Slovenia should be approximately the same. Nevertheless, since that was a period of mass emigration, the interwar generations are now much less numerous. The other cause of lower numbers is WW2. We are talking about generations, who are now between 64 and 84 years of age.

The figure shows a very prominent notch in the age group around 63. These are the inhabitants who were (or weren't born) due to WW2. This notch very illustratively distinguishes the “interwar population” from the inhabitants born after WW2. An example of the poor current demographic situation in Slovenia is the fact that in 1945 more babies were born than are now, although Slovenia has half a million less inhabitants than today's figures (Šircelj, 2006). Soon after WW2, the annual growth rate started to increase and quickly exceeded 30,000. Since there was almost no emigration, the number of people in the age bracket from 28 to 58 years is now around 30,000. This is also the main reason why the annual number of deaths in the next years will increase from the current number of less than 20,000 to 30,000. This number will stay more or less unchanged for the next 30 years. The annual number of deaths will in certain years even exceed the former number of births, since many people from other former Yugoslav republics migrated to Slovenia between 1957 and its independence (1991). Mostly they were the generations born in the after war baby boom period. Some estimate that approximately 120,000 peo-

ple immigrated to Slovenia (the sum of annual data, Statistical Office of the Republic of Slovenia, 1960–1992). The number of immigrants was significantly larger than the estimated number of emigrants (50,000) (Šircelj, 1990).

The last generation with almost 30,000 representatives is now 28 years of age and was born in 1988. Circa 1980, the number of births in Slovenia slightly increased, as a consequence of the most numerous generations, born circa 1950 (after war baby boom). This is also one of the reasons for the higher number of births in Slovenia now, because more people born in 1980 now means more women at the height of their fertility period, as the majority of women in Slovenia give birth at 28 years of age.

After 1980, the long decline in the number of births began. In the figure we can clearly see less numerous generations with the lowest numbers immediately after 2000 (in the figure, they are approximately 5 years old). Only the number of babies is again slightly higher, due to both slightly higher birth rate and the higher number of women at the height of their fertility period. We can also say that the current increase in the number of births is already a tertiary consequence of the after war baby boom.

The demographic history of Slovenia is very dynamic. That's why we have so many abnormalities in the age structure of the population. Nevertheless, these factors strongly determine its future demographic development. In Slovenia, the number of inhabitants around 65 years of age is significantly higher than the number of 5-year old children. Individual generations in the age group between 50 and 55 years have more than 10,000 more representatives than the groups of children between 0 and 10 years of age. This age structure clearly shows that the number of the Slovene population (without immigrants) can't increase and that we can expect a prominent negative natural growth.

The aim of this article is not to produce or evaluate various projections of the populations in Slovenia. My intention is only to show the demographic future of Slovenia, rooted in the current age structure of the population. In the near future, this age structure will have a much stronger influence on the demographic development than any eventual future changes of birth and mortality coefficients (Sambt, 2008). According to Eurostat's estimations, Slovenia would have 1.8 million inhabitants in 2050 (even with a higher birth rate than today and with 3,000–6,000 immigrants a year). The UN experts' estimation is even lower, only around 1.6 million. Now, Slovenia has more than 2 million inhabitants.

The current age and gender structure of the population in a given area plays a pivotal role in the future demographic de-

velopment of an area. This is even truer for those areas which have, due to the demographic development in the past, a very atypical age structure. Slovenia is a textbook example of that.

Mortality is usually the most stable of the classical factors that have an influence on the future demographic development. It is estimated that life expectancy in Slovenia will continue to increase. This means that the number within the elderly population will increase even more than it would, if only the more numerous generations entered the later periods of their lives. In relation with the ageing of the population, I'd like to point out to a problem we often neglect. We give a lot of attention to the issues of pensions, and the need of more health care facilities. Nevertheless, we have to be aware that the greater number in the elderly population will also need a lot of care and other forms of help, where personal contacts are needed. I'm talking about the activities that call for a greater number of people with a middle or lesser level of education. Since the percentage of college and university students is increasing and due to the fact that young generations are not as numerous, I can claim that Slovenia doesn't have such a population. This means that it needs immigrants due to the fact of the high percentage of elderly population.

It is only reasonable to expect that Slovenia will continue to try and lower the mortality rate and with this, prolong life expectancy. In order to provide further economic, social and spatial development, we have to be aware of the significant increase in the elderly population, which will be even more prominent, due to the expected fall in the total number of the population as a whole.

Birth rates are the second classical factor which plays an important role in any the future demographic development. In the long run, fertility is the most important factor for demographic development. Changes in birth rates are as a rule slower, therefore any other changes are more difficult to implement. The birth rate in Slovenia (as everywhere else in the developed world) has been decreasing for more than a century. We present the birth rate in various forms. The most illustrative is the total birth rate of women. This is the data regarding the average number of children born per woman. Since the average number of newly born boys and girls is the same, we can say the following: if the total birth rate within a given area is two, this means that a woman on average gives birth to one girl and that in the long run the number of the population stays the same. If there aren't any prominent migration patterns, this means that the areas with a total birth rate above two will see an increase in the population, while the areas with a total birth rate below two will see a decrease in the population. Slovenia fell below this line back in 1980. Five years ago, the total birth rate in Slovenia was even lower than 1.2. This means one of

the lowest birth rates in the entirety of Europe. In the last few years, the birth rate has risen slightly to just above 1.3, but it is still too far below the levels that enable at least a restoration of the population. Future trends in birth rates depend mostly on the population policy and the general economic climate, which can enable a certain population policy. An increase in the birth rate is of course of great importance for the long-term development of Slovenia. Eurostat estimates, where the birth rate will increase to approximately 1.5, which is higher than the rate now, but still far below two – the level needed to sustain the current number of inhabitants. Estimations regarding the future birth levels are very uncertain, mainly because Slovenia hasn't adopted a population policy in order to take a position with regard to any future demographic development. It isn't clear how and if we are going to deliberately increase the birth rate or are we going to try and make up for the deficit with migration. When we talk about future birth rates, we can't neglect various expert opinions and hopes. But we can accurately assess the number of women within their fertility period for at least the next 20 years. Women between 20 and 34 years of age give birth to more than 90% of all children. If we take into consideration girls born already and "age" them, we get the number of women at the height of their fertility period for every year. The results by 2027 are shown in Figure 2.

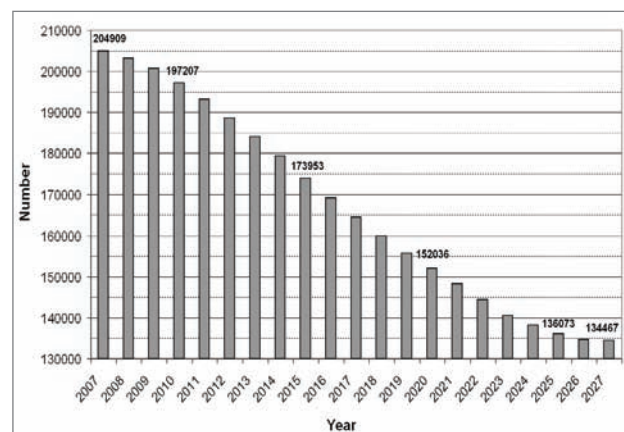


Figure 2: The estimated number of women at the height of their fertility period (20–34 years of age) in Slovenia (starting point 31 December 2007, source: Statistical Office of the Republic of Slovenia, Ministry of the Interior, 2008a).

The figure clearly shows how the number of women at the height of their fertility period will decrease as a logical consequence of the ever decreasing number of births since 1980. Despite any eventual immigration, we can claim that the number of women at the height of their fertility period and the number of births will significantly decrease in the next few years. In order to at least preserve today's annual number of births, the birth rate would need to increase by 25%, due to the lesser number of women at the height of their fertility period. Such an increase isn't likely to happen.

Natural growth is the difference between the number of born and the number of deceased people. In regard to the age and gender structure of the Slovene population, it is very clear that the natural growth rate in Slovenia will become increasingly negative. The main reason for this is the expected high increase in the number of deceased people, due to the very numerous after war generations. We have no influence upon this fact. Another indisputable fact is the decrease in the numbers of women within their fertility period. Both facts are consequences of the demographic development, specific for Slovenia in the past. The natural population trend will depend on the future birth rate, too. The hopes and expert hypotheses differ significantly. Even the most optimistic predictions don't estimate birth rate much higher than 1.5, and this level is still far from providing even the stagnation in the population number. By more pessimistic predictions the number of Slovene population would soon decrease close to one million. Quite realistic is the estimation that the number of inhabitants will start to decrease by more than 10,000 people a year (by natural growth) already in the next 10 years. When the consequences of the most numerous after war generations will be the most prominent (a huge increase in the number of the deceased per year) and the less numerous generations of girls, born at the turn of the 20th century (a substantially lower number of women within their fertility period), we can expect that the annual negative natural growth (decrease) will be around 15,000 people. Without at least a slight increase in birth rates, this number will be even greater. I'd like to stress again that these are not hypotheses (except the birth rate), but facts, which are consequences of the specific demographic development within Slovenia.

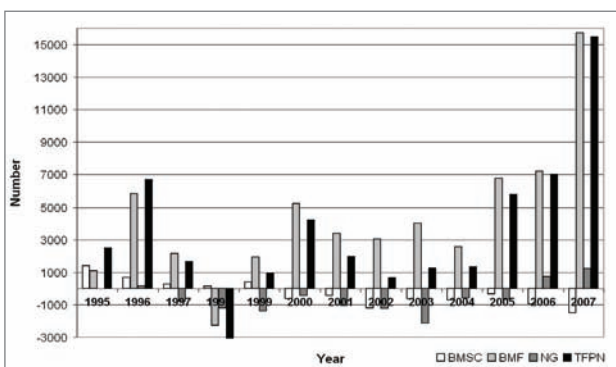


Figure 3: The impact of individual factors upon the population numbers in Slovenia (source: Statistical Office of the Republic of Slovenia, Ministry of the Interior, 2008b).

Legend: BMSC – the balance of migration of Slovene citizens; BMF – the balance of migration of foreigners; NG – natural growth; TFPN – total fluctuation in the population number.

Note: In 1999, state administration upgraded their records. Thus, the formal numbers of foreigners that left Slovenia increased significantly, although they left the country in the years before, but weren't deleted from the records. The balance of migration for that year was positive.

Figure 3 shows the demographic development of Slovenia after 1995, with respect to natural growth, migration of Slovene citizens and foreigners and the total fluctuation in the population numbers. It is already evident that the current increase in the numbers of the Slovene population is dependent entirely on immigration. When the natural growth, which is at the moment at a slightly positive rate, again becomes negative due to the demographic laws, even the most intense immigration won't be able to compensate for that. We have to know that migration will have a significant impact on the future demographic development of Slovenia.

3 Migrations

Numerous research projects, especially in the developed countries are dealing with the issues around migration. Therefore, migrations are as a rule evaluated as very positive. Migrations are of course understood as the immigration of the young and healthy population, cheap work force and especially the immigration of educated or otherwise successful population (athletes, artists and other of a similar vein).

Every person has his/her own features; therefore we must acknowledge the fact that migration doesn't cause only demographic changes. Each migrant carries with him/herself all his/her features – personality, colour of the skin, education, creed, philosophy, personal values, flaws, etc. Thus, entirely new cultural and social forms can be introduced in the areas of immigration. Migration can't be considered only as a demographic phenomenon, but also as spatial, social and economic phenomena. Despite extensive and differing studies with respect to migration I'd like to point out to the often one-sidedness of the research carried out, which study mainly migrants in the site of their immigration, while very little is said about the consequences of migration for the areas of emigration. Slovenia is no exception. We usually only generally mention the demographic risks of remote areas. From a slightly narrower demographic viewpoint, I'd like to bring attention to the fact that in regard to migration, both the number of migrants and their age and gender structure, which impacts the demographic potential in an area of immigration and emigration, is important. A very important factor in regard to the demographic potential of an area is that almost half of the migrants are between 20 and 30 years of age (Jakoš, 2009a). They are the most vital part of the population, whose migrations from one place to another don't have an impact on the changes in the birth rate (birth rate: the average number of children, born by a single woman) in an individual area. Nevertheless, their migrations strongly affect the number of births in the immigration area and so indirectly lead to a "deficiency" in the number of births in the emigration area.

The scope of migration within Slovenia depends on the administrative border, used when defining a migrant. If we take settlements as a standard, we can say that more than half of the Slovene population are migrants. By the 2002 census, only 45% of the population lived in the place of their birth. Such a high percentage of migrants are the result of the settlement system in Slovenia, which has no less than 6,000 settlements and only a good two million inhabitants. If we move the "border" to the municipality level, we have only a good 25% of migrants and only a good 10% on the regional level. We have to take into account that this is only a cross-section of a situation and a theoretical number of migrations, because many people have moved several times and the sums of the annual data give us higher numbers.

Internal migration within Slovenia after WW2 was characterized mainly by the processes of decreasing the role of the rural economy, of industrialisation and urbanisation. All these processes stimulated intensive migration from the countryside into cities. Typical for the first phase was the concentration on the republic level, where the biggest urban centres grew the fastest. In the 1970s, the policy of polycentrism came forward. It was never adopted formally, but it enabled the development of a greater number of centres. This marked the beginning of concentration on the regional level. At least demographic development on the regional level became more co-ordinated. As a consequence, inter-regional migrations decreased. Typical for the third phase was the concentration on the municipal level, where a negative migration balance was higher than the natural growth, with the exception of a few municipalities. Since migrations were local, even the statistics for inter-municipal migrations didn't cover them entirely. The bigger scope of migrations could be expected due mainly to the decreased role of the rural economy, but they were significantly lessened

by a greater accessibility of cars and the formation of a specific social class: part-time farmers. In Slovenia, daily commuting partly replaced permanent migration.

The first index of the Table 1 shows the chosen total data for the discussed periods and the entire period as a whole. The territorial change between Osrednjeslovenska and Dolenjska regions is taken into account, as well as the duplication of the results between both periods in 1997 and 1998 (hence the results of the last three columns are not a simple sum). We were interested mainly in the regional differences in the migration balance. Five regions had a positive migration balance in both periods and five regions had a negative migration balance within the same two periods. The most prominent change was observed in the Gorenjska region, which had a relatively high positive migration balance in the first period and a high negative balance in the second period. Inter-regional internal migrations were less intensive in the first period, as the greatest annual change of balance was only 72 inhabitants (in the Koroška region), while in the second period, no less than six regions had these changes with more than a hundred inhabitants per year. Typical for all regions (except the Podravska and Gorenjska regions) is that the scope of migrations increased in the second period, in both positive in negative directions. This indicates toward a certain increased polarisation of internal migrations on a regional level.

In comparison with the situation before independence, we can say that the situation in regard to internal migrations in Slovenia changed completely. People don't move to the cities because of work but stay at home and commute on a daily basis. Today, the motivation for moving is an apartment and not a job anymore. While we can say that in the past people moved to where the jobs were, they move now where apart-

Table 1: The balance of inter-regional migrations of Slovene citizens between 1991 and 1998, 1997 and 2006 and 1991 and 2006.

Region	Migration balance		Annual average		Annual m. 1991–2006	Annual average 1991–2006
	1991–1998	1997–2006	1991–1998	1997–2006		
Pomurska	-110	-424	-14	-53	-507	-32
Podravska	-247	83	-31	10	-102	-6
Koroška	-578	-953	-72	-119	-1387	-87
Savinjska	-418	-932	-52	-117	-1246	-78
Zasavska	-278	-381	-35	-48	-590	-37
Spodnjeposavska	35	135	4	17	161	10
Dolenjska	451	734	56	92	1072	67
Osrednjeslovenska	326	910	41	114	1155	72
Gorenjska	531	-461	66	-58	-63	-4
Notranjsko-kraška	468	809	59	101	1160	73
Goriška	-544	-909	-68	-114	-1317	-82
Obalno-kraška	364	1375	46	172	1648	103

Source: Bevc (2000), Statistical Office of the Republic of Slovenia, Ministry of the Interior (2008b), Jakoš (2009a).

ments are. People now move out of the bigger cities and we see the opposite trend in migration. This increases the scope of daily commuting and intensifies spatial issues, present in the areas of emigration and immigration.

The analysis of inter-regional migrations has shown that these migrations are not very significant. In the last ten years, the highest positive balance of internal migrations in the Obalno-kraška region was only 1,375 inhabitants. At the same time, inter-municipal migrations were significantly more prominent and their flow turned completely. Recently, people are on the move out from the bigger cities. The causes are mainly the lack of apartments available and their high prices. This phenomenon is most prominent in the Slovene capital of Ljubljana. Ljubljana was the classical area of immigration from WW2 to the beginning of the 1980s, when the period of building big residential communities ceased. We have to stress that the life expectancy rates have significantly increased by now and that the apartments built in Ljubljana in the 1960s and 1970s can't be transferred to the new generation, since the apartments are too small for two households and at the same time "parents are still too young" to make room for the new younger family. Since the apartments in Ljubljana are very expensive, mainly young, educated people are moving out of the capital. It has to be pointed out that these migration flows are very strong. For example, the negative migration balance from Ljubljana and Domžale between 1995 and 2005 was more than 2,000 inhabitants. The negative balance of the Municipality of Ljubljana (MOL) in only 7 years (1999 – 2005) was almost 12,000 inhabitants, which means that these migration flows are ten times stronger than the migration flows on the regional level. In total, MOL lost more than 20,000 inhabitants due to emigration after 1995 (Dolenc, 2000; Jakoš, 2007a). These migrations have the strongest impact on the spatial development of the environs with regard to the majority of bigger city, which have become more and more suburbanized.

The low numbers of inter-regional migration balances in the last ten years displays that the extent of these migrations is proportionate to a developed society and it doesn't represent a wider problem from the perspective of a too intense population concentration in individual regions and the emptying of other parts of Slovenia on that account. Increasingly and more worrying, are the local inter-municipal and even interurban migration flows. They are typically very intensive and so by default, problematic. This phenomenon is negative from the use of space on the national level perspective, as the population moves from areas with a high concentration of buildings to areas with dispersed individual houses. Considering that the biggest Slovene cities (Ljubljana, Maribor, Celje and the like) are geographically positioned on plains (basins), this means a substantial loss of farmland of the highest quality. Another

problem on the national level is the huge increase in commuting, as jobs are still situated in the cities.

As a rule, mainly young families are moving out of the cities (the mentality: "when you have a child, you need a decent apartment"), while the grandparents remain in the city. Due to the intensive growth of the cities after WW2, and which ended in the 1980s, the percentage of the elderly population in the cities is way above the Slovene average. Since the younger generations are moving out of the cities, this percentage is increasing at an even faster rate. Such demographic development can quite seriously threaten the successful functioning of cities, as it demands above the average means to be invested in order to fulfil the needs of the elderly, while the percentage of the "local" active population, is at the same time decreasing. Such unfavourable age structures can already be an issue for the normal functioning of residential neighbourhoods in individual city communities. If this demographic process continues, we can expect that the percentage of the elderly population will very soon exceed 25% of the entire population and could draw nearer to a third in about ten years or so. We must not neglect the issue of infrastructure maintenance in apartment blocks (gas pipes, elevators, roofs, façades, etc.), which is financially too burdening for pensioners – let alone the new investments! This issue is even more problematic since the percentage of one-member households amongst the elderly population is very high.

Intensive internal migration causes problems also in the areas of immigration (Jakoš, 2006). The increase in the population number is still one of the most growth indicators in Slovenia. Suburban municipalities are recently very successful in this department, especially because they get more poll tax due to this fact. Nevertheless, these municipalities are still going to have expenses for building crèches, schools, shops and many other activities, mainly services, which the modern urban population is used to having at hand. Many municipalities will have to overcome new infrastructural thresholds, as they won't be able to extend the existing communal infrastructure indefinitely and will have to build new (new water sources, electric conduits, transformers, purifying plants, etc.). Another problem is the type of building, orientated towards individual houses with gardens and based on the principle "wherever a plot of land is on sale". Despite that migrations are numerous Slovenia hasn't got a new modern urban centre, where the prices of apartments would be lower than in old cities. Migration out of the older cities should be used in creating secondary urban centres, in a system of central settlements. Therefore, we would preserve the urban densities of the population, limit the construction on farm land and more rationally use communal infrastructures. The now existing atomized building will never enable the

use of public means of transport for commuting and so only increase the use of private cars for daily migration purposes.

Internal migration has profoundly changed the demographic situation in Slovenia. The consequences of these internal migrations were vast, especially in the period of the most intensified migration. The first most obvious spatial consequence was the growth of the cities, while recently the most obvious is the suburbanisation of major cities' environs. "We can say that internal migration had (and still has) a big impact on the spatial development of Slovenia. The impact of internal migration on space is substantially greater than the impact of external migration, which mainly has an affect on economic and social development.

Apart from natural growth, another important factor that affects the number of the population is actually, external migration. The numbers of the population in Slovenia is, since the first census invariable, but it slowly increased until the beginning of the 1960s. Slovenia (current territory) had in 1857 1,101,854 inhabitants and 1,591,523 in 1961. Slovenia had a very negative migration balance up to WW2 and even a few years after. On average, almost half of the natural growth moved out of the country. Therefore, Slovenia didn't have a huge increase in the population numbers during the demographic transition (Malačič, 2003).

In 1957, Slovenia had become an immigration society for the first time in its history (the number of immigrants exceeded the number of emigrants). Immigration reached its first peak by the middle of the 1960s (the positive migration balance was around 4,000 people per year), and another, even stronger period between 1976 and 1979, when the annual balance was around 8,000 people. After that, immigration relatively subsided, but it nevertheless remained high, around 4,000 people a year. This situation continued until 1988. The disintegration of Yugoslavia and the independence of Slovenia caused certain migrations of the population, too.

The causes for immigrating to Slovenia were predominantly economic. Immigration took the same course as it did between a developed Western Europe and its less developed southern part. The Republic of Slovenia was industrially the most developed republic in the then Yugoslavia, and needed a lot of work force. Therefore, in the first wave of immigrants were predominantly male. The percentage of female immigrants drew near to the percentage of male immigrants only much later. Migration between Slovenia and other republics of the former Yugoslavia were always considered separately, although they haven't perceived as international migrations as such. Real international migrations between Slovenia and abroad were officially very rare, and the migration balance was negative.

I wrote "official", since the real number of people who left Slovenia and went for "temporary" work (1966-1974) abroad was 50,000. The then statistical methodology classified them as persons working temporarily abroad, but were still considered as inhabitants of Slovenia and were as such registered in the municipal records. Migrant workers "disappeared" from the Slovene population only after the new definition of the population (Statistical Office of the Republic of Slovenia, 1995). Thus we got a more realistic estimation of the population numbers.

Immigration to Slovenia from other Yugoslav republics (Dolenc, 2003) has certainly built up the already numerous Slovene after war generation. The inflow was so intense, that it demographically completely compensated for the high number of Slovene emigrants. The sum of the official migration balance of Slovenia between 1960 and 1990 is almost 120,000: even if we lessen it for the 50,000 Slovene migrant workers, migration still produced an increase in the population by approximately 70,000.

Due to the lower birth rate, migration was becoming an ever more important factor for the demographic development of Slovenia. Between 1961 and 1971, the migration increase represented no less than 16% of the increase in the total population, in the 1970s more than 30%, and in 1988, after a minor decrease, no less than 38% (mainly due to the decrease of natural growth in Slovenia). Due to these immigrations, the number of elderly people in Slovenia will grow even faster than elsewhere in Europe, where immigration wasn't so intense. For Slovenia, this is even more important, due to the ever decreasing ratio between the retired and active population. This ratio will increase even more with respect to the retired population numbers in next few years.

The first two years after independence, Slovenia's migration balance was negative, mainly due to the fact that part of the population moved back to their home republics of the then Yugoslavia. Nevertheless, a slightly positive migration balance could be seen already in 1993. In general we can say that external migrations between 1991 and 1991 were very few, even if we consider only the absolute numbers of immigrants and emigrants. During this period, Slovenia prepared to carry out a local autonomy reform programme. The statistical services reorganized. Data of better quality was available only from 1995. The extent of migrations increased a lot.

In comparison with the migrations between 1960 and 1990, the positive migration balance up to and including 2004 wasn't very high. A very high positive balance was recorded in 1996 (6,510) and slightly lower in 2000 (4,811), while it stayed between 2,000 and 3,000 in other years. Notable are the last three years, where the migration balance exceeded 6,000 people. In 2007, even 15,000 people! In general, all migration

Table 2: Immigration and emigration of Slovene citizens and foreigners.

Year	Total			Slovene citizens			Foreigners		
	ARRIVED	LEFT	BALANCE	ARRIVED	LEFT	BALANCE	ARRIVED	LEFT	BALANCE
1995	5,879	3,372	2,507	2,191	776	1,415	3,688	2,596	1,092
1996	9,495	2,985	6,510	1,500	803	697	7,995	2,182	5,813
1997	7,889	5,447	2,442	1,093	807	286	6,796	4,640	2,156
1998	4,603	6,708	-2,105	857	705	152	3,746	6,003	-2,257
1999	4,941	2,606	2,335	1,362	963	399	3,579	1,643	1,936
2000	6,185	1,559	4,626	935	1,559	-624	5,250	0	5,250
2001	7,803	4,811	2,992	1,030	1,442	-412	6,773	3,369	3,404
2002	9,134	7,269	1,865	1,432	2,624	-1,192	7,702	4,645	3,057
2003	9,279	5,867	3,412	1,268	1,887	-619	8,011	3,980	4,031
2004	10,171	8,269	1,902	1,574	2,265	-691	8,597	6,004	2,593
2005	15,041	8,605	6,436	1,747	2,077	-330	13,294	6,528	6,766
2006	20,016	13,749	6,267	1,765	2,703	-938	18,251	11,046	7,205
2007	29,193	14,943	14,250	1,689	3,178	-1,489	27,504	11,765	15,739

Note: ARRIVED – the number of immigrants; LEFT – the number of emigrants; BALANCE – the difference between the number of immigrants and emigrants.

Source: Statistical Office of the Republic of Slovenia, Ministry of the Interior, 2008b; Jakoš, 2009b.

flows increased substantially. Until 2000, the number of migrating inhabitants as a rule didn't surpass 10,000. Nevertheless, in 2004 this number reached 20,000 and in 2007 more than 44,000 people. The migration of foreigners plays a more and more important role. While in 1995 around 9,000 foreigners migrated, also 3,000 Slovenes or a third of all foreigners' who migrated. In 2007, the migration of Slovene citizens reached only 12% with respect to foreigners' migrating.

The extent of migration and the positive migration balance for foreigners is much higher than for Slovene citizens and is much more fluctuating, too. The migration balance during all this time is highly positive (see the note at Figure 2 for 1998). A strong increase is recorded in the last three years. Due to the high number of people migrating, we can presume that foreigners' migrations are tied to a fixed employment period.

Considering the intense increase in number of immigrants and emigrants, it is of course possible that a certain number of inhabitants are "involved" in more than one migration a year, because migrations are recorded on the basis of the registration and renunciation by individual employers. Only the migrations in the following years will show the extent of the fluctuation and actually how many migrant workers will actually stay in Slovenia.

The milestone in regard to the emigration of Slovene citizens is the year 2000, when and until the then positive migration balance shifted to a negative one. After that year, the negative migration balance of Slovenia and abroad was between 500 and 1,000 people. In 2007, it increased considerably.

The fluctuation of the population numbers in Slovenia was until the new millennium dependent mainly on the country's own natural growth. Slovenia had a very high natural growth until the middle of the 20th century, but emigration prevented a substantial increase of the absolute numbers. Until the 1980s, Slovenia had quite a high natural growth and the total number of inhabitants was further increased by immigrants. At the end of the 20th century we could already notice the consequences of the decreased in the birth rate figures. This brought Slovenia to the edge of the demographic threshold. This contributed to the greater importance of external migration, which has an increasingly stronger impact on the fluctuations in the population numbers in Slovenia.

We must not forget that the long-term development of the Slovene population depends mainly on birth and mortality rates, while migration can affect the demographic development only in the short-term. Slovenia has to implement a demographic policy, which will solve both the current demographic issues (lack of an adequate male work force, etc.) and will try to design a vision for demographic development. I'd like to point out namely toward two basic positions: an increase in the birth rate and a proper policy regarding immigration. In order to achieve a relatively balanced demographical development, we have to try and raise the total birth rate to at least 1.5. Slovenia needs immigrants (3,000–6,000 persons per year), to prevent the decrease in the population number falling below 1.8 million by 2050. In regard to immigrants, we have to solve the main issue regarding the problem of transition from worker (who presents a good profit source for an employer) to inhabitant (who is a "cost" for a local community). This conflict can cause intense intolerance (this is already happening).

4 Population policy

In our historical memory, the term population policy doesn't sound very nice, as it was often abused in a brutal fashion for various cleansings of unwanted parts of the population (skin colour, creed, nationality, political orientation, etc.) On a global level, the most infamous population policy is that of the Chinese, who successfully lowered their high population growth with limiting the birth rate to one child per family policy. After the introduction of this policy, the number of boys born considerably exceeded the number of girls born, although the ratio between them was balanced before. I have to admit that the success of this population policy gives me the shivers. On the other hand, mainly developed countries are facing issues related to a form of regression in the population numbers – due to the fall of the birth rate, below the demographic threshold and extensive immigration in the past (abnormally high percentages of the elderly population). Since the measurements for increasing the birth rate are very expensive and the goal is a very distant one, these countries try to solve this problem namely through immigration.

Slovenia has never had a defined population policy, not as a part of the former Yugoslavia (kingdom and federation), nor as a completely independent state, nor now, when Slovenia is part of the EU. All population issues have always been solved through other fields (mainly the economy and social services). Nevertheless, I wonder if the current alarmingly low birth rate (Jakoš, 2007b) really doesn't call for certain measurements by governmental institutions, which will surpass the superficial dealings with these issues with an all-encompassing band of measurements within an economic policy (mainly out of fear for our pensions) and certain other benefits within the remains of the social state.

Until the first countries started to fall below the demographic threshold (Jakoš, 2002) and the number of inhabitants started to decrease, the decline of the birth rate was for a long time only a problem for those dealing within this field of study. When that happened, the issue was brought to the politicians' attention and the low birth rate has suddenly become a matter of politics. That's the reason why we don't talk about the measures for increasing the birth rate and rather talk about the problems in regard to the ageing population, the necessity of pension scheme reform, extension of the years of service, population policy, etc. Nowadays, the pension scheme reforms and other economic measures, which are to prevent the collapse of the pension scheme, are brought to the centre of our attention. In regard to the expected ratio between the active and non-active population, these measures are of course necessary, but they are only short-term solutions. In the long-run, only an increase in the birth rate can assure an appropriate age structuring of the population as a whole.

We don't have any magic formula or a list of perfect measures which would guarantee the continuous increase of the birth rate until natural growth is positive again. We can't estimate even the necessary amount of funds. And we have to take into consideration that demographic trends are very hard and expensive to change. Nevertheless, this isn't an excuse for doing nothing. In Europe and Slovenia too, they are trying to increase the birth rates in various ways, which are extremely unusual for the 21st century (a ban on abortion, for example). In our – fortunately failed – attempt to design a population policy, some suggested that a woman should consult (and get permission) a special committee. If a woman is not able to decide for herself whether to give birth or not, I think she is not capable of exercise those rights, either. The best solution would therefore be to negate women the right to vote again, and thus avoid the need to appoint special committees for every single woman, as some are of the opinion that the ability of women to decide "properly" and independently isn't completely proven.

The fact is that the politics for increasing the birth rate is focused mainly on women and appropriates the right to decide about female sex organs and their "proper" use (abortion, in vitro fertilisation, etc.). Very similarly, is the claim that the ageing of the population is a problem, although long life expectancy is one of the greatest achievements of human kind, nowadays the problem is actually the low fertility rate. The pressures are now on women to produce more soldiers and more children in general, mainly as future tax-payers for our pensions. This claim has strong parallels with the mentality that women should give birth to children for the country and not because they simply want to have children! Why don't we give women a break and instead focus on creating favourable conditions for giving birth, raising and educating children and providing them with an appropriate environment (from "small social services" to child-friendly spatial planning and management and a clean environment).

This means free crèche spaces, primary and secondary schooling. De facto free of charge, including books, school excursions, lunches, etc. Therefore, the raising and education of children wouldn't be such a financial burden for parents anymore. Everyone should have the opportunity to finish secondary school, regardless of the financial position of their parents. The state would thus help future parents, as it would create the right conditions that would ease the decision to have more than one child. But it is essential to leave the decision as to whether to have children or not, entirely up to the people (without political pressures, other kind of propaganda and moralising).

Amongst the development indicators there is one, which is never omitted: the data regarding the percentage of students within a given population. As the desire with regard to a more educated population is generally expressed, the parents' desi-

re to enable their children to study is very understandable. Therefore, we should enable young people the possibility of education with scholarships (including with different forms of loan schemes). Such a system would enable all young people to achieve a high educational level, regardless of the financial position of their parents.

The average age of mothers giving birth to their first child in Slovenia is now above 28 years. This is mainly due to the longer time spent for schooling, but also due to the more difficult conditions for gaining independence. Because of the housing problems, young people stay longer with their parents and so considerably lessen their opportunities to create their own families. The housing problem is especially acute in the cities, because the apartments are the most expensive there. There are also a lot of residential neighbourhoods, built in the 1960s and 1970s. The apartments are relatively small and by European standards, too small even for one household, let alone for two! Questions, such as what to do with those apartments in the so-called “socialist” neighbourhoods with poor infrastructures that fall below the standards are often raised. The state could gradually buy these apartments and lease them for a minimal rent to young people (until they get a regular job or find another solution to their housing problems). Thus, it could allow them to create a family much sooner than is possible now. The average age of first time mothers would lower again, and this would improve the possibility for a second or even more children, which is today often questionable due to the biological age of the mother.

These apartments would surely be interesting to the ever more numerous elderly population. Typical for them is a single or two-person household, where they are often too big (too expensive) apartment. Since Slovenia practically doesn't engage in the practice of leasing apartments, choices for elderly people are limited. Selling an old apartment and buying a new one, is for people at that stage of life too demanding a task to take on. Another option is the resettlement to “boarding houses for elderly citizens”, which shouldn't be intended for people who don't yet need permanent health care.

Measures for improving the birth rate are related mainly to two issues. The first is financial and the second is that the goal can be achieved only far ahead in the future. When talking about the population policy, designed to increase the birth rate in Slovenia, we have to make sure that we really want this. We have to recognise the fact that we live in a democratic society, where all adult voters can decide. Amongst them is the ever growing percentage of elderly people, who undoubtedly have more interest in full pension funds than in the notion of free education. If we really want to increase the birth rate, Slovenia has to dedicate a certain part of its budget should be allocated towards this issue.

In regard to this, the problem is the remoteness of the goal itself. Even for a meagre increase in the birth rate, a huge amount of money is needed. This is followed by 25 years or so of higher costs for education and cheap apartments. This investment becomes “economically viable” only when new generations start working. Such a policy is not interesting for the political parties, which are preparing for the elections in the next year or two or even four years at the latest. Therefore, it is understandable that for any political party currently in power, such a project means a very high possibility of losing the next election, as the relocation of the money always means taking something from somewhere else and by doing this, you lose voters.

Even more complex are the measures within the field of the migration policy. Slovenia is already dependent on immigration. This dependence will become even more obvious in the next 30 years. Nevertheless, in regard to the immigrated population, we mention only the numbers which will statistically show the population growth. But we don't have a policy, which would define how we are going to provide an appropriate living standard for this segment of the population, nor other forms of assistance for those who come from areas with different languages and cultures.

Demographic processes are long and very arduous. Therefore, the measures have to be slow and last for long periods of time. An example is the increase in the number of births in the last couple of years, as a result of the greater number of women at the height of their fertility period and not as a tertiary consequence of the after war baby boom. Since the benefits for the second and subsequent children were introduced in crèches at the same time, the crèches were soon full to capacity (especially in suburban municipalities with a simultaneous intensive immigration flow). If we had a proper population policy, such events wouldn't surprise us, as a certain increase in the number of births would be expected. The same is true for the further decrease of the number of births and the increase in the number of deaths. This is the dynamics of the demographic development.

5 Conclusion

The current number and distribution of the population in Slovenia is the result of the demographic development in the past and the basis for the future demographic development. Due to emigration abroad, the number of Slovene inhabitants hasn't increased significantly during the demographic transition. This is why Slovenia doesn't have big cities, as the cities began to grow larger only after WW2, and increased only to a possible size taking into account that the country has less than two million inhabitants. The favourable natural growth and immigration in the times of former Yugoslavia enabled Slovenia to develop quickly. In a demographic sense, this development has resulted in a very high percentage of elderly people within

population as a whole. After 1980, the number of births started to decrease rapidly, the percentage of a young population in Slovenia, is nowadays significantly lower. Slovenia will therefore face problems related to the poor demographic structure of its population and their related consequences:

1. An above average number and percentage of elderly within the population

The results of this are a high percentage of retired persons, which then becomes an economic issue. This high percentage of elderly people within the population will need various forms of care and this is an economic and social problem, which indirectly calls for immigration to happen. From a demographic point of view, the annual number of deceased will increase considerably. This will be the main cause of a negative natural growth, which is a demographic issue (the decrease in the number of inhabitants).

2. Smaller numbers and a smaller percentage of younger people within the population

The result of this is a lack of an adequate work force, which is an economic problem. Therefore, Slovenia will need immigrants and to provide the transition from "worker" to "inhabitant". This is an economic problem, which can have unwanted social consequences. From a demographic point of view, a smaller population number means a lower number of women in their fertility period, which means less births and a faster decrease of the population numbers.

3. Migration

Current internal migrations on a regional level are stable, while the depopulation of the cities is quite intense. The consequence of this is suburbanisation and the problems related to this. Immigration from abroad is an economic and demographic necessity, but Slovenia hasn't designed the appropriate economic and social measures for dealing with these issues.

We can say that Slovenia faces numerous demographic problems related to the general developmental sphere, as well as to the economic, social and spatial spheres. The lack of regular monitoring and prediction of demographic developments is quite obvious. This means that Slovenia doesn't have any form of population policy, which could deal at least with the inevitable demographic events and maybe also with different hypotheses and projections of future demographic development.

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Aleksander Jakoš, Geographer and Historian
Urban Planning Institute of the Republic of Slovenia, Ljubljana,
Slovenia
E-mail: aleksander.jakos@uir.si

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