

Jasmina Djordjevic, Milena Panic*

UNDERDEVELOPED AREAS- SOUTH MORAVA REGION**

Abstract The main goal of this paper is to point out the problem of underdeveloped areas in South Morava region as well as the factors that influenced those areas slowly withered away. The paper is particularly dealing with the influence of the morphometric characteristics of the observed territory on the size of the settlements and their economic structure. Negative trends of reducing the larger settlements and increasing the number of the smaller ones are more intensive in mountain areas than in Central Serbia. South Morava region, which includes two districts, Jablanički and Pčinjski, is economically worse than other regions in Serbia. The main reason to research this problem is to identify and follow the negative demographic tendencies and economic lagging of the area, significantly contributing to more successful realization of national, republic, regional and local interests in the area of South Morava.

Key words: region, development, restrictions, underdeveloped areas, South Morava region.

Introduction

The problem of joining the development of the border regions is anew emphasized with important positive changes in the international status of the country and its getting out of the isolation. However, the period from the international circles left trails. Underdeveloped areas stagnated and slowly regressed from the economic, social and population aspect. Taking into consideration the central model of the country and its factual organization and politics, those areas represented a periphery in relation to the trends of goods, money, population, information (Djordjevic, 1994).

Even the spatial planning, as an extreme development instrument of the realization of the national politics, has not been immune to the circumstances, since the national development politics of underdeveloped areas did not exist.

* Jasmina Djordjevic, Ph.D., Senior Scientific Associate, Geographical Institute "Jovan Cvijic" SASA, Belgrade.

Milena Panic, Geographical Institute "Jovan Cvijic" SASA, Belgrade

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Spatial Plan of the Republic of Serbia (SPRS, 1996) recommends that the spatial plans of areas for special purposes can be made for border regions and underdeveloped areas. On the other side, the regionalization has not been finished until today, so experts are getting on by themselves while making the spatial plans of the regions.

The new Constitution of the Republic of Serbia (2006) especially emphasizes the regional development, the obligation of the state to take care of the even regional development, the development of underdeveloped areas above all. The Strategy of the regional development of the Republic of Serbia was also accepted for period from 2007-2012. (2007), which is just about to induce the development of underdeveloped regions with certain measures where there are possibilities for it, especially in demographically more stable areas.

Underdeveloped regions and their characteristics

For a long time, the research subject of the official government and science in all countries and in ours has been the underdevelopment of the areas. The areas of some countries or regions lag in the development, i.e. due to low accumulation of economy and small spatial equipment in infrastructure they become emigrational areas. Nowadays there is not a government, which does not pay attention and does not try to induce by various measures and activities the development in underdeveloped areas in its programs aiming at the even development, i.e. assimilating the quality of life in the whole of its territory, and from the strategic aim especially in the border areas. The even development has the function of the sustainable development aiming towards rationality and ecological sustaining, i.e. controlled usage of the natural potentials (Malobabic, 1997). The fact that the development has its regional and spatial dimension has often been neglected, and so the defining of the institutional developmental mechanisms is not at all regionally neutral. The regional differences from the aspect of the developmental level have been observed so far, neglecting their economic-developmental, social, political repercussions, as well as the natural characteristics of the terrains. The stimulating politics as a sort of developmental compensation has not succeeded to prevent further lagging of the underdeveloped areas and their demographic discharging. Perhaps, with carrying out of the new strategy of the regional development and more significant presence of the scientific solutions, a certain form of the development will be induced, resulting with the interruption of the demographic discharging process or even bringing to anew settling of the population. What is necessary is to make the valorization of the natural potentials; define areas with agricultural resources, valuate the equipment of infrastructure systems, especially traffic connection

and energetic structure, define the tourist localities as potentials; adapt the educational profile to the needs of those areas through school system. It is also necessary to use the international funds and programs for underdeveloped regions, which are donating in character; sustain the development of local administration; etc.

This paper will pay a special attention to the influence of the natural characteristics of the observed territory on the size of the settlements and their economic structure. Negative trends of reducing the larger settlements and increasing the number of smaller ones are intensive in mountain regions comparing with Central Serbia.

The scope of the researched area and its characteristics

The researched area includes two administrative districts, Jablanicki and Pcinjski, i.e. 13 municipalities: on the territory of Jablanicki administrative district –Bojnik, Vlasotince, Lebane, Leskovac, Medvedja and Crna Trava and on the territory of Pcinjski administrative district- Bosilegrad, Bujanovac, Vladicin Han, Vranje, Presevo, Surdulica and Trgoviste. The region borders with Nisavski and Toplicki administrative district in the north, with Bulgaria in the east, with the FYR of Macedonia in the south and with AP Kosovo and Metohia in the west. By north-south direction, i.e. down the valley of South Morava, pan European infrastructure corridor X stretches connecting Middle Europe with Southeastern Europe.

Natural conditions: - The South Morava represents the framework of the river system in the region, originating by joining the Binacka Morava River and the Moravica (Presevska), and with its tributaries: the Vlasina, the Veternica, the Jablanica and the Toplica, it influences this area to distinguish as rich in waters, unsuitably arranged, used and protected. On basis of Waterpower basis of the Republic of Serbia, accumulations such as Prvonek, Lisina and Vlasinsko Lake were constructed in Pcinjski administrative district. Accumulations as Barje and Brestovac were built in Jablanicki administrative district, while the planned ones are Svodje, Grgurevac and Kljuc. The region possesses the significant sources of thermo mineral waters, not completely examined and valorized. In the activated geothermal springs health and spa centers were formed (Vranjska, Sjarinska, Bujanovacka Spa). Plenty of water represents significant potential as for water supply problem so for irrigation-drainage. The high mountain springs of qualitative water represents a special potential, giving possibilities for production, bottle and export of both light mineral and oligo mineral water.

Agricultural land potential is not rationally used, which is caused by numerous factors (unsuitable, shortened, owing structure of agricultural farm, aged households, undeveloped infrastructure, especially land-reclamation one, etc.). Above this, disorganized river courses in the areas with most qualitative plowed fields, as well as unsuitable protection from the erosion, influence the reduction of returns of agricultural cultivations.

The region has significant forest fund, which reduced by the time being even above the fact that mountain solutions confirmed in the Spatial Plan of the Republic of Serbia expect the expansion of the forest fund as a measure to prevention the negative consequences on the environment. The Region has a potential for the production of medicinal and forest herbs, as in the mountain so in the plain areas.

Population is relatively evenly positioned on districts. This is above all the result of economic lagging and demographic discharging of some parts of the region, and not the consequence of polycentric development of Serbia. Population of the South Morava region is 468.613, 51.4% in Jablanicki administrative district and 48.6% in Pcinjski administrative district. Population density is 87 people per square kilometer in Jablanicki administrative district, while in Pcinjski administrative district the population density is 65 people per square kilometer. The average population density of the region is 76 people per square kilometer (table 1).

Within the region, concentration zones of population are along the valley of the South Morava, especially in Leskovac and Vranje, where there are less than 2/3 of the total population of the Jablanicki district, i.e. a little less than 2/5 of the population of Pcinjski district.

Economy- The total area of the South Morava is 628.991 ha, whereof 54% is agricultural land (31.3% of pastures and 17.7% of meadows), 38% forest, 4% building and 3.7% is other land. Agriculture is important economic activity; almost one-fourth of the total national income of the Region is realized through it, while around 15% of the total population is agricultural one. Households of small properties (1 ha to 3 ha of used area) characterize the property structure. Cattle-breeding production is decreasing (Group of authors, 2006).

Table 1. Population and population density in 2002 (rank of municipalities according to surface)

Administrative district	Municipality	Surface		Population		Population density people per square kilometer	
		by municipalities	by districts	by municipalities	by districts	by municipalities	by districts
South Morava region Jablanski	Лесковац	1024		156 252		153	
	Мелвеђа	524		10 760		21	
	Лебане	337		24 918		74	
	Црна Трава	312	2 769	2 563	240 923	8	87
	Власотинце	308		33 312		108	
	Бојник	264		13 118		50	
	Врање	860		87 288		101	
	Сурдулица	628		22 190		35	
Pcinjski	Босилеград	571		9 931		17	
	Бујановац	461		43 302		94	
	Трговиште	370	3 520	6 372	227 690	17	65
	Владичин Хан	366		23 703		65	
	Прешево	264		34 904		132	
	Total planned area		6 289	468 613		76	

Data source: Republic bureau for statistics- Municipalities in Serbia

The region has significant land potential, but it is necessary to enable by measures of economic and tax policies to form agricultural properties –large of over 100 ha, medium- over 30 ha and small- over 3.5 ha. This relates to the plain areas of Leskovac, Vlasotince and in Vranjska valley, wherein intensive farming and fruit growing production is possible, while cattle-breeding farm should be formed in the mountain areas.

The region has potentials for the formation of a cluster within which agriculture, industry, trade, tourism, financial sector, health and other institutions can collaborate. The collaboration has an aim of the costs reduction, mutual appearing on the market, using the information base of the mutual interest, making mutual research centers and funds, in order to overcome critical situations. Thus, the competitiveness can increase and the demands of the world market can be adapted. The following is necessary:

- -Restructure of the existing economy through the process of privatization and making new small and medium enterprises
- -Specialization of economy structure-from the primary phase to the phase of the product finalization on basis of sustainable usage of the natural potential (production and processing of agricultural products, forestry and processing of lumber, processing of herbs, forest fruit, hydro economy, tourism and specialized forms of tourist offer such as spa, health, eco, winter tourism, etc.);
- -Development of the sector of services- from the highest level services, over the services of the private-public partnership, to the services that fulfill everyday needs of the population and other users of the area.

Regeneration of the network of settlements of the Region is based on the following factors and their mutual connection and restriction (Group of authors, 2006): demographic- holding the emigration trends, return of the population, increase of the population growth rate to the rate that will enable normal reproduction of the population, economic-faster development of privatization, rationalization and automatization in the secondary sector, the revitalization of the primary sector, intensive development of the tertiary sector by using the chances Corridor X gives, especially various tourist potentials (spa, country, winter tourism etc.),

socio-ecological- since the quality of life is becoming more and more important factor of the location of living and working, certain comparative advantages of the Region (spa, ecological etc.) may be emphasized with overtaking the actions on making suitable ambient;

traffic-communicational- European infrastructure corridors, especially Corridor X and gas lined one towards Bulgaria, then telecommunications, which offer the

population of the Region new possibilities to acquire knowledge, to get to information and to change the relation between the place of living and place of working.

Infrastructure (Group of authors, 2006.) –The length of the road network of the Region is 4.540 km, whereof 1.691 km, i.e., 37.2% is hard surface road, while 60% of the hard surface roads in the Republic. In the structure of the road network of the Region, local roads are over 70% (around 60% in Serbia), regional roads are 22.4% (27.5% in Serbia), while main roads and those of higher rank are 6.9% (12.4% in Serbia). As for hard surface road network as well as for other roads, there is no difference between Jablanicki and Pcinjski administrative district. The most important railroad connection of the region is E-85 the Nis- Skoplje line, which is in the infrastructure Corridor X. Among other infrastructure systems, electric power system stands out. Most of the settlements (villages and hamlets) are electrified (98%).

From the aspect of infrastructure equipment (traffic above all), lacks are especially emphasized in the east-west direction (lack of regional and main roads), as well as in periphery and border parts of the region (lack of local and regional roads). Inadequate technical equipment is also problem, such as 1) lack of hard surface roads; 2) old railroad infrastructure; 3) inadequate quality of electric power supply; 4) small number of post offices and main telephone exchanges; and 5) small number of base mobile telephony for covering the territory of the whole Region.

Infrastructure Corridor X (road, railroad, electric power, telecommunications, energetic-gas line) with planned side connections, represents the most significant potential for the infrastructure development and the whole socio-economic development of the region. After the highway construction and the construction of other infrastructure systems in Corridor X, suppositions are made for the faster development of the Region and integration of the South of Serbia into the area of the Republic. The municipalities on the main highway directions are noticed to be more developed and more attractive for settling.

Characteristics of the rural settlements in the researched area

We analyzed the demographic, economic and socio-ecologic factors in the area of Jablanicki and Pcinjski district, in the examples of the rural settlements above height limit of 800m altitude (considering that agricultural production, especially fruit farming and intensive cattle breeding can give economic effects up to 800m altitude) with an aim to get a clearer picture on the condition and numerous

processes characteristic for underdeveloped areas. Within every municipality, there is a survey of the most specific and most problematic rural settlements, with all data on the geographic position, origin, demographic picture, economic activity and equipment with infrastructure systems and objects of public services.

Jablanicki District

The Municipality of Leskovac

Mrkovicica is rural settlement, dispersed in type, in the height zone of 840-910m altitude, 36 km southeast from Leskovac. The settlement was founded in the 18th century when Serbian population settled from the surrounding settlements in the place of remnants of the former population and mining activity. The population number suddenly started reducing during the 70's of the 20th century (Group of authors, 2001). According to 1971. census there were 257 inhabitants, in 1981-77 inhabitants, in 1991 -27, while in 2002. there were 14 inhabitants (Republic Bureau for Statistics, 2004 b). Only aged households are considered, over 65 years, because none person belongs to a group of active population (RBS, 2004 a). The village had electricity in 1956, while the water supplying was individual. Elementary school stopped working. (Group of authors, 2001).¹²

Crveni Breg is a type of dispersed rural settlement, in the height zone of 600-970m altitude, on the western slopes of Cemernik Mountain, 34 km southeast from Leskovac. It belongs to a group of old settlements, which were displaced, then restored again at the beginning of the 18th century, by settling of Serbian population from the surrounding of Crna Trava, Kragujevac and surrounding settlements. In the 20th century, the population was constantly reducing, observing the census results from 1948-2002. In 1961. there were 416 inhabitants, in 1971- 287, in 1981- 169, in 1991- 69 inhabitants, while in 2002 there were 30 inhabitants older than 65 years, so that only one person was active. They were raising cattle and farming, while some mining researches were done in the area of the village (the results of which are unknown).The village is electrified, it water supplies from springs and over gravitational plumbing. Elementary school is closed.

¹ In further text, the obtained data for the rural settlements are from the same literature

The Municipality of Medvedja

Gornji Gajtan is rural settlement, dispersed in type, on 1000m altitude, on the slopes of Radan Mountain, 21 km northwest from Medvedja. The village has long history, according to which it formed in the place of traces of the former settling. Population is Serbian, settled from Montenegro. According to the census, the population had begun reducing in the middle of the 60's, so that in 1961. there were 490 inhabitants, in 1971- 302, in 1981- 163, in 1991- 105 inhabitants, while in 2002. there were 87 inhabitants, while 22 persons belonged to a group of active population. Agriculture is the most developed activity (cattle breeding, farming), less light industry. The settlement electrified in early 80's, while it water supplied over local plumbing. Elementary school closed in 1998.

Gubavce is a type of dispersed rural settlement on 920m altitude, on the slopes of Goljak Mountain, 36 km southwest from Medvedja. The original settlement had displaced, then restored by Serbian population settling from Montenegro, Herzegovina and surrounding of Gnjilane. The population number was constantly decreasing. According to the 1971 census there were 134 inhabitants, in 1981- 95 inhabitants, in 1991- 43, while in 2002 there were 36 inhabitants. Ten inhabitants belong to a group of active population, and they are all in agriculture (cattle breeding and fruit growing). The village electrified in 1987/88, and water supplied over gravitational plumbing. It has local community, while Elementary school closed in 1991.

The municipality of Crna Trava

Pavlicina is a type of dispersed village, in the height zone of 960-1120m altitude, 12 km west from Crna Trava. It was founded in the second half of the 18th century as a district of the neighboring settlement. Since the 60's the reduction of the population has been significant, in 1961 there were 473 inhabitants, in 1971- 295 inhabitants, in 1981- 134 inhabitants, in 1991- 69, while in 2002 there were 40 inhabitants, while only 3 inhabitants belonged to a group of active population because other households were old ones. Water supplying is individual, over springs, gravitational plumbing and wells.

Ostrozub is a type of dispersed rural settlement in the height zone of 1100-1200m altitude, 19 km northwest from Crna Trava. The demographic picture is extremely bad nowadays. According to the 1981 census, there were 33 inhabitants there, in 1991-9 inhabitants, while in 2002. there was only one inhabitant there (over 65 years old). The village has electricity; water supplying is individual from public fountains, springs and wells. The basic activities were cattle breeding and farming, mainly for own needs. According to the last data, this village disappeared.

The Municipality of Vlasotince

Javorje is a type of dispersed rural settlement, in the height belt of 800-1300m altitude, 21 km southeast from Vlasotince. It is an old settlement, settled by Serbian population, which moved from the settlements of Crna Trava. According to the 1981. census, there were 26 inhabitants there, in 1991-14 inhabitants, while in 2002 there was only one inhabitant there. Those were mainly old households, inhabitants were in cattle breeding and farming for their own needs. The village water supplies from the arranged springs.

Kozilo is a type of dispersed settlement, in the height zone of 1100-1300m altitude, 28 km southeast from Vlasotince. It was founded in the place of a temporary cattle-breeding settlement, by moving of the Serbian population from the surroundings. However, during the 80's, the demographic picture suddenly started changing, i.e. the population decreased, and thus in 1981 there were 62 inhabitants, in 1991-27 inhabitants, while in 2002 there were 8 inhabitants there. The households are mostly old ones because there are only two active inhabitants who are in agriculture (cattle breeding and potato production). They water supply over their own plumbing.

Pcinjski District

The Municipality of Vranje

Curkovic- a rural settlement, dispersed in type, on 850m altitude, 22 km southeast from Vranje. Throughout the history, it had had several crucial events when it disappeared and restored again. During the previous decades, the population reduced, so that according to the 1971. census there were 139 inhabitants there, in 1981- 73 inhabitants, in 1991- 31, while nowadays there are only 13 inhabitants there (2002), mostly aborigines. There are four active inhabitants and they are all in agriculture (extensive cattle breeding). The village is electrified, while it water supplies from the springs, wells and gravitational plumbing.

Cestelin- rural settlement, dispersed in type, 975m altitude, 7 km northwest from Vranje. Serbian inhabitants settled the village, and so it was in the past, too. The population significantly reduced from the 80's, when there were 143 inhabitants there, in 1991- 46, while in 2002 there were 22 inhabitants there, mainly aborigines, but also with inhabitants moved from other municipalities and republics. Nine inhabitants belong to active population group, being in

agriculture (cattle breeding, farming). They water supply over springs and gravitational plumbing.

The Municipality of Surdulica

Gornje Romanovce is a type of dispersed rural settlement, in the height belt of 1180-1300m altitude, 8 km southeast from Surdulica. Population considerably changed since the 80's when there were 319 inhabitants there, in 1991- 93 inhabitants, while in 2002. there were 50 inhabitants there, mainly older population since only 3 inhabitants belong to a group of active population. It is known cattle breeding and farming settlement.

Polja is a border settlement, dispersed in type, in the height belt of 1060-1180m altitude, 52 km northeast from Surdulica. It had very long history. It originated by moving of the cattle breeders from Serbia. Demographic ageing characterizes the village, so in 1981. there were 118 inhabitants, in 1991.-65, while in 2002. there were 18 inhabitants, whereof only 3 inhabitants belonged to a group of active population. They used to be known of apiculture, but nowadays they are in agriculture (cattle breeding and farming) just for their own needs. The village is electrified, with an individual water supply over springs, wells and fountains.

The Municipality of Bosilegrad

Zeravino is a border rural settlement, dispersed type, on 1180-1290m altitude, 34 km southwest from Bosilegrad. There are no data on the origin and development of this village. Today mainly Bulgarian and Serbian population is settling the village. Population significantly reduced since the middle of the 70's. According to 1971. census, there were 152 inhabitants, in 1981-68 inhabitants, in 1991.-34, while in 2002. there were 21 inhabitants; only 2 inhabitants are active population. They are in cattle breeding (extensively), cheese and wine production. The village is electrified, with individual water supplying (springs, wells, smaller gravitational wells).

Barje is a type of dispersed rural settlement, on 1400m altitude, 25 km west from Bosilegrad. It was founded at the end of the 18th century and at the beginning of the 19th century as a temporary cattle-breeding settlement, later becoming a smaller mining settlement for galenit exploitation. Population is Serbian and Bulgarian, orthodox. According to the 1971 census, population was 140 inhabitants, in 1981-82 inhabitants, in 1991-42, while in 2002. there were 7 inhabitants left, mostly old not belonging to a group of active population. They were mainly in cattle breeding, but traditionally developed sheep raising is dying

now. The village is electrified, while water supplying is individual over springs and fountains. Today, the village is only seasonally settled, so that there are not permanent inhabitants there.²

The Municipality of Bujanovac

Lukarce is a type of dispersed village, on 880-900m altitude, 29 km southeast from Bujanovac. It was founded by moving of the population from Macedonia at the end of the 18th century. Even since the 60's of the 20th century, population permanently decreased so in 1981. there were 71 inhabitants there, in 1991.- 44, while in 2002. there were 31 inhabitants there; only 8 inhabitants belonged to a group of active population. They are in cattle breeding, forestry (firewood felling and sale), but they used to be known by developed apiculture. The village is electrified, it water supplies over local gravitational plumbing.

Djordjevac is a type of dispersed rural settlement, in the height zone of 900-1050m altitude, 32 km north from Bujanovac. Population mostly moved, so today it is completely uninhabited. The village is electrified, it water supplied from springs, it had Elementary school which closed in the 80's. It was known of potato and rye production, forestry and firewood sale.

The Municipality of Trgoviste

Babina Poljana- dispersed rural settlement, on 1300-1450m altitude, 26 km northeast from Trgoviste. It originated by population moving from the surrounding of Kumanovo and Vranje in the 18th and 19th century. Nowadays, the demographic picture shows negative trend, faster than in 1971 when there were 468 inhabitants, in 1981.- 83 inhabitants, while in 2002 there were 53 inhabitants; only 20 inhabitants belong to active population group. In past, the village was known of cattle breeding and potato production, while today agriculture satisfies individual needs. The village electrified in the 80's, and water supplying is from springs and gravitational plumbing.

Constant population reduction is also characteristic for other settlements in the municipalities, but those data are not still alarming.

² Results of the terrain researches on the project of the Ministry of Science "Modalities of Geo potential Valorization in Underdeveloped Regions in Serbia", J. Calic, M. Milosevic, M. Milovanovic

The Municipality of Vladicin Han

Kostomlatica is a dispersed rural settlement in the height zone of 900-1050m altitude, 16 km west from Vladicin Han. The village is Serbian, originated at the beginning of the 19th century. Population significantly started reducing since the middle of the 70's so that according to the 1971. census there were 186 inhabitants, in 1981.- 72, in 1991.- 34 inhabitants, while in 2002. there were 22 inhabitants, mainly aborigines. According to 2002. census, there was only 1 active inhabitant in the village who was in agriculture, i.e. cattle breeding. The village is electrified, while water supplying is individual.

Srneci Dol- dispersed rural settlement. It lies on 820-950m altitude, 15 km west from Vladicin Han. There were 158 inhabitants according to 1981.census, in 1991.-81 inhabitants, while in 2002. there were 58 inhabitants, mainly aborigines; only 9 inhabitants are active and they are usually in agriculture (cattle breeding and farming). The village electrified in the 70's, while it water supplied over the district gravitational plumbing.

The Municipality of Presevo

Sefer is a type of dispersed rural settlement, on 780-940m altitude, 11.5 km west from Presevo. It was founded at the end of the 18th century by Albanian population moving from Albania. From the 1971. census, there were 246 inhabitants, in 1981.- 84, in 1991.-106, while in 2002. there were 57 inhabitants. Four inhabitants are active population, they are in agriculture (cattle breeding). Inhabitants also earn from firewood felling and sale. The village electrified during the 80's, while it water supplied from springs. It has an Elementary school.

Conclusion

Border regions are usually in the lower degree of the development comparing to those in the provinces. The reasons of periphery in the economic and social sense are above all strategic and secure ones. Nowadays, viewed from the perspective of developed Europe, where borders stop being in effect, while the border areas become attractive, trans-border cooperation is becoming the necessity and possibility to develop and promote these regions (Djordjevic, 2002).

According to data and previous analysis, it is noticed that the area of the "South Morava" region is economically very underdeveloped, with a constant tendency

of decreasing the population, disappearing and dying of some settlements, especially in the border area. Out of 12 most undeveloped municipalities in Serbia, seven municipalities are from this area. Above underdevelopment, significant structural problems in industry and agriculture, undeveloped infrastructure, endangered natural resources and undeveloped system of the settlements also characterize the region.

Change of future economic structure should be viewed through restructuring of the existing economy, through the process of privatization and opening of small and middle enterprises. Specialization of the economic structure should be expected- from the primary phase to the phase of the product finalization, on basis of sustainable usage of the natural potential, the existing capacities- new assortment of products; on basis of new technological improvements et al. The development of servicing sector is to be based on the services that satisfy everyday needs of the population and other users of the area.

The strategic choice of future regional development is the revitalization of the population in the area of the whole region. The basic suppositions for the demographic revitalization in the following period are intensifying the investment activities in the area of the Region of South Morava, relying on the regional development strategy, which means the strategic determination on the development of small towns, medium towns and rural and border areas. The realization of these suppositions could also enable the influence on the demographic trends.

Economy of the South of Serbia passes through much harder forms of the transitional shock than other parts of the Republic. Corridor X and ecological conditions within spa and mountain areas will greatly influence the reduction of eventual risks, because healthy environment is becoming more important factor for many activities. Proceeding from it, the strategy towards the sustainable economic development is based on the usage of all the resources that should provide employment, more even regional development and protection of the environment as the key problems of the region.

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