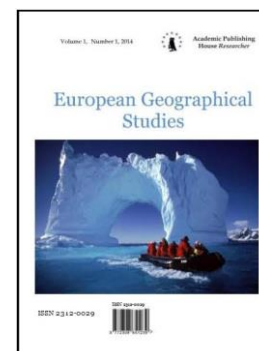


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### Geo-demographic Structure of the Czechs in Vojvodina Province (Serbia)

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#### Abstract

The short history about the settling of Czechs in Vojvodina Province was given at the beginning of the paper. It was followed by an analysis of their spatial distribution. Demographic structure of the Czechs in Vojvodina is elaborated. Particular attention was given to the period after the Second World War, e.g. the second half of the 20<sup>th</sup> and the beginning of the 21<sup>st</sup> century. Identification of tendencies in age structure of the Czechs was the main task of the paper. Statistical methods and mathematics proceeding were used to compare different parameters of the age structure (e.g. average age, median age, index of ageing, etc.). The Czechs are one of the oldest ethnic groups among the population of Vojvodina Province was proven in the paper. Publishing and events make the national and cultural identity sustainable. Therefore, at the end of the paper, exposed facts related to these activities. The results of the study will enhance the knowledge about demographic characteristics of the Czechs in Vojvodina and therefore might be useful for further research in the field.

**Keywords:** demographic structure, the Czechs, Vojvodina, Serbia.

#### 1. Introduction

Multi-ethnicity is one of the most important epithets of the Vojvodina Province. It is the result of historical events. It is especially visible in the culture, and then to other influences. Monitoring of ethnic groups in Vojvodina is very important for the forming of their sustainability strategies, as well as the sustainability of the unique identity of Vojvodina. Czechs are one of twenty-one ethnic group in Vojvodine Province.

The *Karlovac (1699) and Požarevac (1718)* peace in southern Hungary marked the end of the Turkish and the beginning of the Austrian authorities. By obtaining these areas, Vienna adopted a project on their colonization and settlement. Austria initiated a national colonization of a political nature, the main goal of which was to break up the ethnic compactness of the Serbian, Romanian and Hungarian people, primarily in the geographical region of Banat. In addition, the Court Chamber in Vienna conducted colonization for economic reasons. It was characteristic of the late 18<sup>th</sup> century and lasted until the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century. The project included the sparsely populated regions in southern Hungary. The project covered the villages along the River Nera, Karaš and

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Danube. By the colonization of Germans, other nations also settled, including the Czechs, Slovaks and Poles (Ištvaníć, 1997). About colonization of the Czechs in the territory of Vojvodina, and particularly the Bela Crkva municipality wrote Feliks Mileker, Svetolik Subotić, Ozren Radosavljević, Rudolf Stegera and Svetozar Todorov. The most attention in Vojvodina is dedicated to settlements of Ablan (Česko Selo) and Kruščica because large groups of Czechs were concentrated there (Ištvaníć, 1997).

In the paper, special attention has given to the second half of the 20<sup>th</sup> and the first decade of the 21<sup>st</sup> century, in order to determine whether there is a visible influence of the independence of the Czech Republic on demographic trends and the life of the Czechs in Vojvodina.

## 2. Preview research

About the Czechs outside the Czech Republic does not have a lot of papers. The most of papers can be found about Czechs in the United States (Capek, 1920; Rosický, 1929; Chada, 1971; Laska, 1978; Hewitt 1978; Machann, Mendl, 1983; Skrabanek, 1988; Hannan, 1996; Habenicht, 1996), in Canada (Gellner, Smerek, 1968), in Australia (Cigler, 1983), in Bosnia (Uherek, 2000) and in Slovakia (Berger, 2003). Rokach and Bauer (2004) have given attention to their age structure in Canada. Czechs in the Vojvodina Province have not already been in the focus of demographers.

## 3. Methods

The facts shown in this article are the result of consultations with a numerous of the literature sources. Data were taken from different statistical yearbooks, census or internal documentation of Statistical Office of the Republic of Serbia. Changes of the number of Czechs were done by relative numbers. The parameters of the age structure were calculated by usage of different mathematical and statistical methods.

The average age of inhabitants was calculated by following formula where:  $\bar{x}$  - average age of inhabitants,  $x$  - old age year ( $x = 0, 1, 2, 3, \dots, 99, 100$ ),  $V_x$  - number of inhabitants old  $x$  years.

$$\bar{x} = \frac{\sum (x + 0,5) \times V_x}{\sum V_x} \quad (1)$$

For calculation of median age was used following formula:  $L$  - value of lower limit of median interval,  $P$  - total number of inhabitants,  $\sum f_i$  - number of inhabitants younger than median interval,  $n$  - size of interval,  $f_{me}$  - number of inhabitants of median interval.

$$M_s = L + \frac{\left(\frac{P}{2} - \sum f_i\right)}{f_{me}} * n \quad (2)$$

The old age index represents the relation between the old inhabitants  $P_{60+}$  and young  $P_{0-19}$  inhabitants.

$$i = \frac{P_{60+}}{P_{0-19}} \quad (3)$$

Coefficients of old age takes into consideration only the relation between the oldest age groups  $P_{60+}$  and total inhabitants  $P$ :

$$k_s = \frac{P_{60+}}{P} * 1000 \quad (4)$$

Then, each other were compared. Also, comparison was done between Czechs and population of Vojvodina Province. In order to be more clear, some of results were given in the form of graphic presentation. Also, the informations and records on the Czechs and their position in this environment were used.

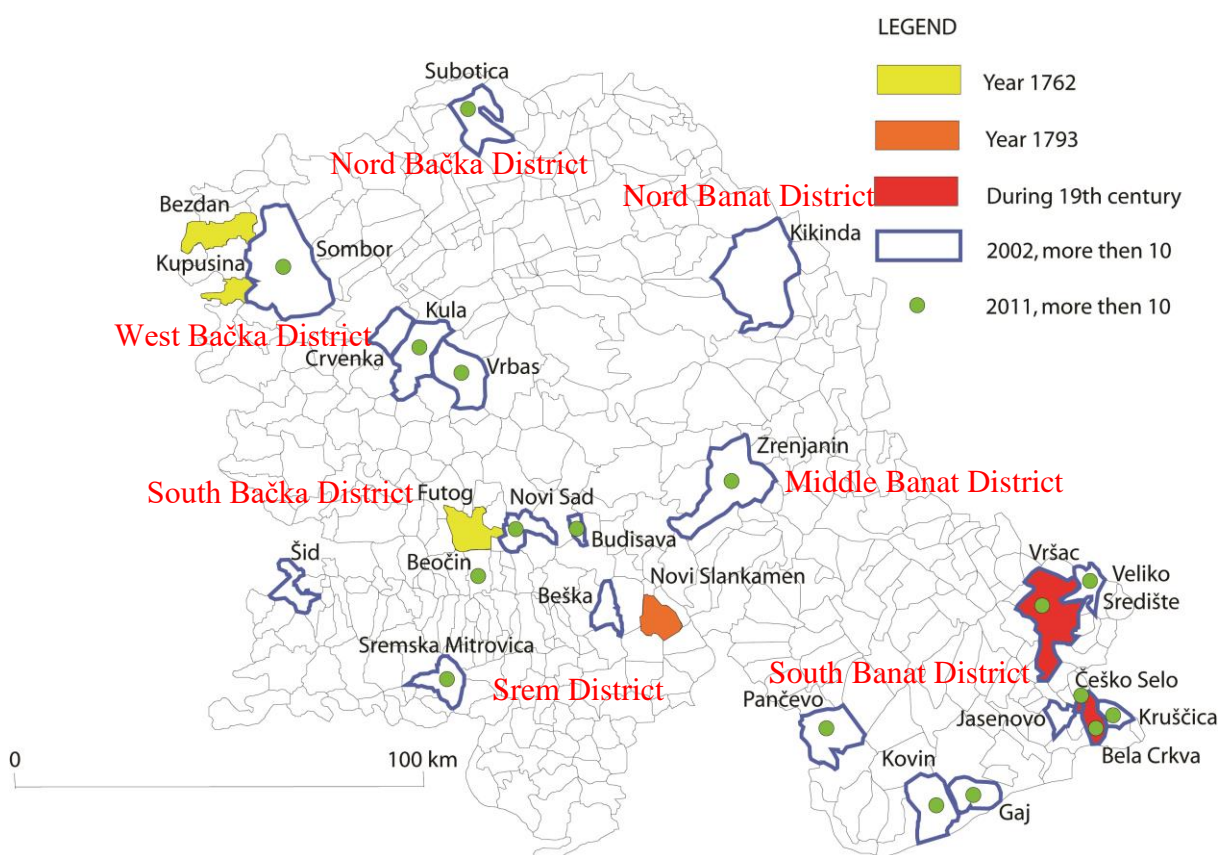
## The settling of Czechs in Vojvodina Province

Colonization was planned and organized by the Vienna Court at the time of the Maria Theresa (1749-1779) and Joseph (1780-1787). The Czechs were mostly arrived to Vojvodina with the Slovaks. During the middle Teresian colonization, in 1762, they were settled Bezdan, Kupusina and Futog. The Czech craftsmen were among the first to arrive, then bankers, industrialists,

doctors, architects and artists. At the time of Joseph colonization, 1793, they settled Novi Slankamen (Fig 1).

In the second half of the 18<sup>th</sup> century, they populated the properties of the upper parts of Banat, around Vršac and around Bečkerek (today's Zrenjanin) and wastelands. In southern Banat (southeast region of the Vojvodina Province), this process populated Czechs, Slovaks and Poles next to Serbs, Germans and Hungarians (Table 1).

In the period from 1823 to 1828, several groups of Czechs were arrived from Bohemia. Exactly, organized Czech colonization in South Banat was began in 1827, as part of the Habsburg Empire, on the territory of the former military border, which was remained almost without population after the Turks left. The route of the main road was the Danube. The Czechs were brought to the area of today's Romania, on the stretch of the Nera River to Oršava (settlement on the east part of Iron Gate). Because of the bad living conditions and despite the ban, in search of a better soil, parts of the Czechs were moved in the vicinity of Bela Crkva, Vršac, especially in the Czech Village (earlier well known as Ablian). Firstly, they were arrived in Stara Palanka and from there they were moved further into the interior. Since they were skilled in farming, they were well accepted (Jankulov, 1961; Korda-Petrović, 2013).



**Fig. 1.** Areas of the settlements in which Czechs lived and worked (Author: Tamara Lukic)

Source: Statistical Office of the Republic of Serbia, 2003a, b; Jankulov, 1961

**Table 1.** Number of Czechs, Slovaks and Poles in the settlements of Bela Crkva municipality during the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> century

Name of settlement	Families	Czechs, Slovaks and Poles (total population)	Year of arrival of the first Czechs
Ablian	39	233	1810
Banatska Palanka	3	8	1775
Banatska Subotica	5	15	1812

Bela Crkva	-	-	1766
VračevGaj	2	19	1819
Grebenac	3	20	1810
Dobričevo	20	95	1829
Dupljaja	2	19	1836
Jasenovo	8	58	1780
Kruščica	32	216	1836
Kusić	19	103	1773
CrvenaCrkva	11	39	1814
Total	144	815	

Source: Ištvančić, 1997

### Number of Czechs in Vojvodina

Number of Czechs in Vojvodina was 2.8 times lower in 2011 compared to the number of the first post-war census of 1948. Their share in the total provincial population in the first four post-war censuses was 0.2 % and was then reduced to 0.1%. Czechs are assimilated by mixing with other peoples and to full acceptance of Serbia as a new home. It is assumed that the number of Czechs and their descendants in Serbia is greater than 10,000 (according to data provided by Jaroslav Bodnar, secretary of the National Council of the Czech ethnic group). Women were more numerous throughout the whole observed period, but their share has decreased from 1971 (Table 2).

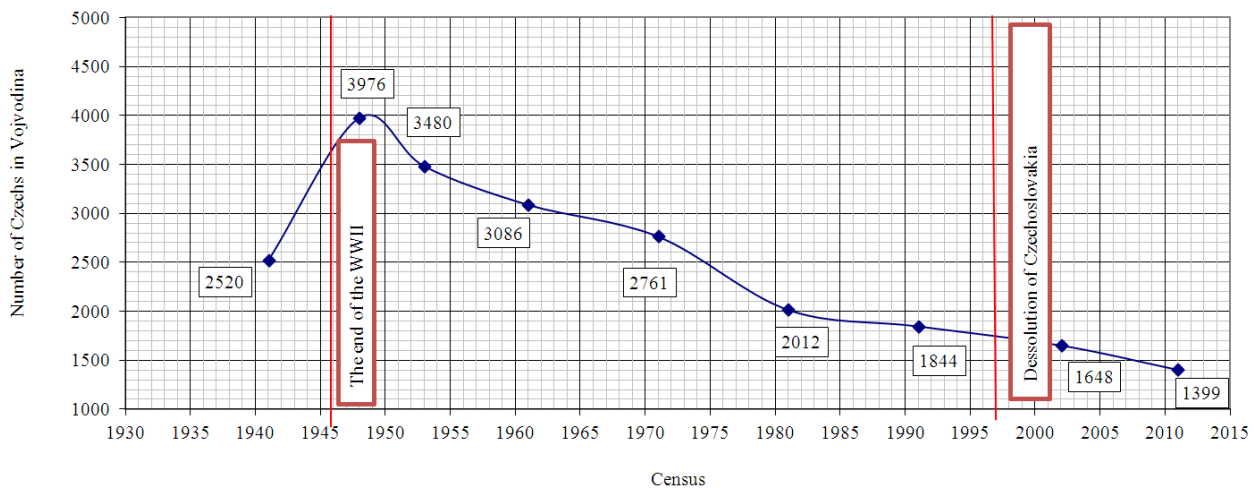
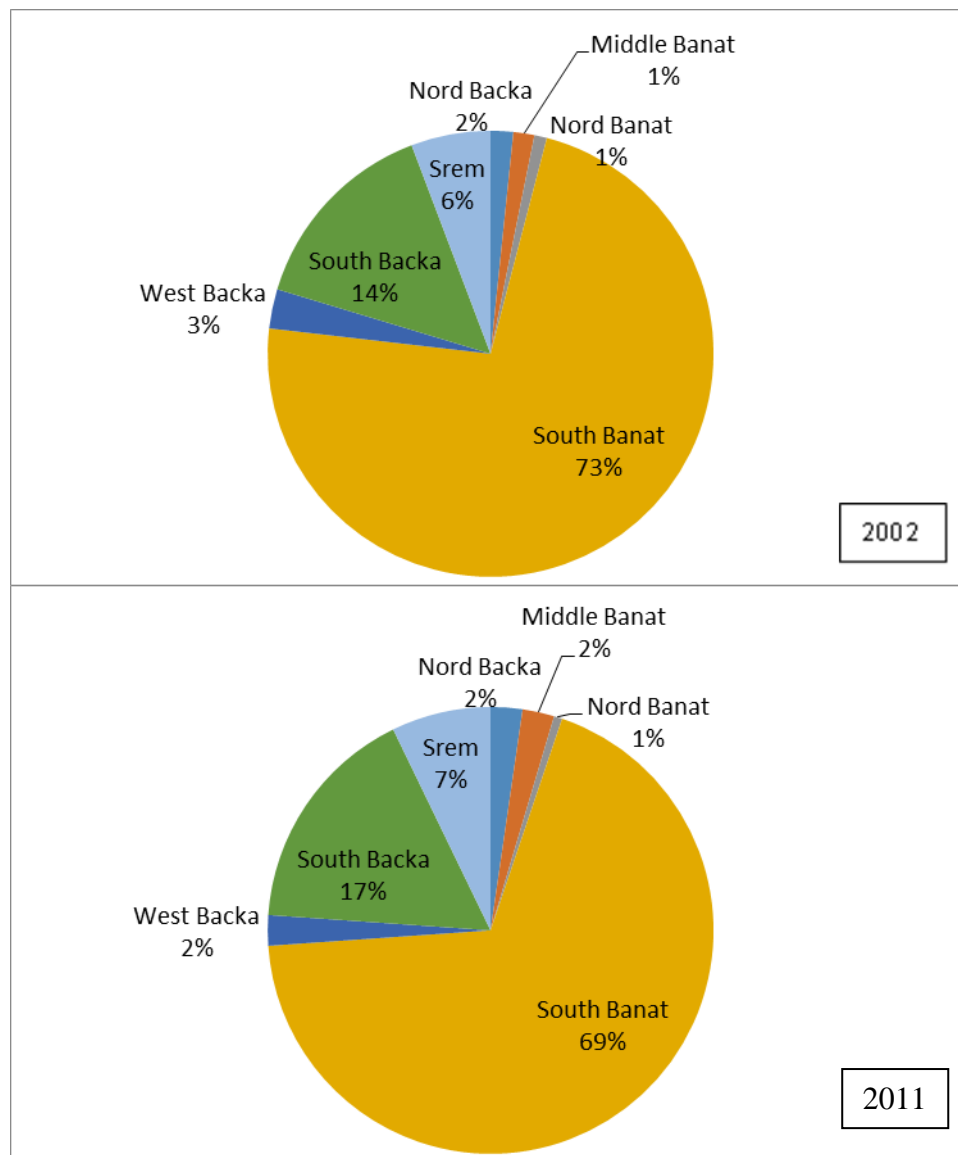


Fig. 2. Number of Czechs in Vojvodina according to Censuses between 1781 and 2011

Table 2. Changes in the number of Czechs in Vojvodina 1921–2011

Censuses	Number of Czechs	Males (%)	Females (%)	Share in population of Vojvodina	Index increase (base year 1961)	Chain index
1921	2520	No data	No data	0.2	100.0	-
1948	3976	No data	No data	0.2	157.8	157.8
1953	3480	No data	No data	0.2	138.1	87.5
1961	3086	46.2	53.8	0.2	122.5	88.7
1971	2761	46.0	54.0	0.1	109.6	89.5
1981	2012	47.2	52.8	0.1	79.8	72.9
1991	1844	47.2	52.8	0.1	73.2	91.7
2002	1648	48.3	51.7	0.1	65.4	89.4
2011	1399	49.8	50.2	0.1	55.5	84.9

Space distribution by districts, the provincial administrative units, shows that Czechs are most prevalent in South Banat District. Nearly three-quarters of Czechs of Vojvodina Province live there. South Banat District has followed by South Bačka District, where there is Novi Sad, the administrative centre of the Province, and Srem District (Figure 3). Since the beginning of the 21st century, the share of Czechs in South Banat District has reduced to the benefit of the South Bačka District and Srem district.

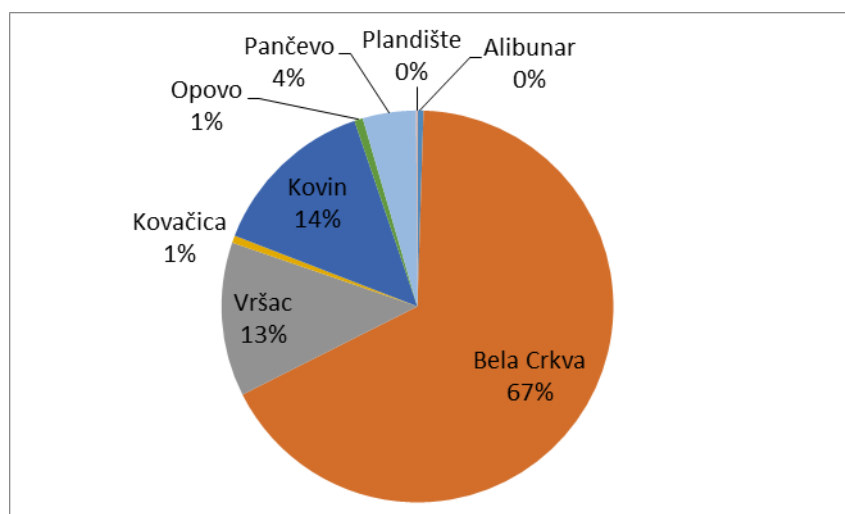


**Fig. 3.** Distribution of Czechs by districts in Vojvodina according to the censuses of 2002 and 2011

Over hundreds of Czechs live in the municipalities of Bela Crkva, Vršac, Kovin and Novi Sad (Ivkov, 2006). The Czechs most often live in the administrative centres of the district (Subotica, Zrenjanin, Kikinda, Sombor, Sremska Mitrovica, Pančevo) and small towns (Backa Palanka, Kula, Indjija, Ruma, Šid). They can be found in rural areas only in South Banat. Thus, the villages Gaj in the municipality of Kovin and Veliko Središte in the municipality of Vršac are emphasized as examples.

According to the Census 2011, among the municipalities of South Banat District, more than 2/3 of Czechs inhabit the municipality of Bela Crkva. Share of about 13 % is in the municipalities of Vršac and Kovin (Figure 4). In the municipality of Bela Crkva, a significant number of Czechs is in

rural settlements Kruščica and Česko Selo. However, their share in the total population is the largest in Česko Selo and it is 80.0 % (Table 3).



**Figure 4.** Distribution of the Czechs by municipalities of South Banat District according to the census of 2011

**Table 3.** Czechs in settlements in Bela Crkva municipality, according to the census of 2002 and 2011

Settlement	2002	%	2011	%
BanatskaPalanka	0	0.0	0	0.0
Banatska Subotica	4	2.0	-	-
Bela Crkva g	511	4.8	414	4.6
VračevGaj	5	0.3	3	0.2
Grebenac	0	0.0	0	0.0
Dobričevo	5	2.2	4	2.0
Dupljaja	3	0.4	-	-
Jasenovo	11	0.8	9	0.7
Kajtasovo	0	0.0	0	0.0
Kaluđerovo	1	0.8	-	-
Kruščica	231	23.4	173	20.0
Kusić	2	0.1	3	0.3
CrvenaCrkva	2	0.3	-	-
ČeskoSelo	39	84.8	32	80.0*

Source: Internal documentation of Statistical Office of the Republic of Serbia, 2016 \*terrain research

In the municipality of Bela Crkva, where the Czech population is the largest, simultaneously with the Serbian, the Czech language and letter are in official use. According to the census of 2011, the exact number of the Czechs cannot be seen in all the villages of the municipality due to concealment of data by Statistical Office of the Republic of Serbia (some of internal data are marked with an x). Despite that, the continuity of decline in the number of Czechs in Bela Crkva can be traced up to 2011. Specifically, in that year there were 638 people surveyed in the municipality, of which 414 in his centre. However, despite the large number of members of this ethnic group in Bela Crkva, they make up only 4.6 % of the total population.

### Age Categories

In the second half of the 20th century, the share of the youngest population (0-14) and the share of the working age population of the Czech ethnic group was less than the provincial average, while the share of the oldest population has always been higher. For half a century, the share of the category of 0-14 was reduced by 54.5 % and the share of the oldest, 50+, increased by about 34.5 % (Table 4).

**Table 4.** Age structure of population of Vojvodina and Czechs (%), according to Censuses 1961-2011

Age category of Vojvodina population	Censuses					
	1961	1971	1981	1991	2002	2011
0-14	26.6	21.2	19.9	19.2	15.9	14.4
15-49	50.2	54.6	51.4	48.5	49.4	46.3
50+	23.1	24.1	28.7	32.3	34.8	39.3
Sum	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
60+	11.9	14.8	15.2	18.7	21.9	23.6
<b>Age category of Czechs</b>						
0-14	20.9	14.3	13.8	12.3	12.2	9.5
15-49	46.3	51.6	45.2	45.9	42.5	40.4
50+	32.8	34.2	41.1	41.9	45.3	50.1
Sum	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
60+	19.5	21.3	23.4	28.5	28.6	32.4

Source: Statistical Office of the Republic of Serbia, 2003b, Federal Bureau of Statistics, 1970, Federal Bureau of Statistics, 1974, the Provincial Bureau of Statistics, 1982, 2012, own calculations

### Average Age

The average age of the Czechs in Serbia (1), according to the 2002 census, was 47.6 years (MSCG, 2004). It is larger than the calculated average age in Vojvodina by 1.7 years. Based on this we can conclude that the Czechs in the Belgrade area are older than the Czechs in Vojvodina.

Based on the level of demographic age, set by Penev, 1995: 117-145, the Czechs have been in the category of 'deepest demographic age' since the Census 1981. In fact, this category refers to a population whose average age is more than 43 years (Table 5). The category 'deep demographic age' (40-43), in which the provincial population according census 2011, is separated from the category 'demographic age' (35-40), in which the Czechs were by the results of the Census 1961.

Plavša, Bubalo-Živković (2006) analysed the mean age of the population of Vojvodina, on the basis of the results of the 2002 census. According to them, in 2002, in Vojvodina Province, older than the Czechs were the Russians (48.4), Slovenians (49.1), Vlachs (50.2), Germans (52.1), Bulgarians (49.1) and Bunjevci (46.1).

According to all post-war censuses, the Czech women in Vojvodina have always been older than Czechs men.

**Table 5.** Average age and median age of the Czechs in Vojvodina according to Censuses 1961-2002

		Census	1961	1971	1981	1991	2002	2011
		The Average age						
Males	Population of Vojvodina		32.2	34.4	35.8	37.7	39.8	41.8
	Czechs in Vojvodina		38.6	40.7	43.1	45.0	45.9	47.1
	Population of Vojvodina		31.2	35.4	34.9	39.0	38.3	40.2
	Czechs in Vojvodina		36.1	37.7	40.3	42.9	43.0	44.3

		The Median age					
Females	Population of Vojvodina	33.2	33.3	37.4	36.3	41.3	43.1
	Czechs in Vojvodina	40.7	43.2	45.5	46.8	48.6	50.0
Males	Population of Vojvodina	30.0	33.5	34.6	37.4	40.3	41.0
	Czechs in Vojvodina	37.8	40.6	43.3	44.6	47.9	50.1
	Population of Vojvodina	28.9	32.1	33.2	36.0	38.6	40.8
	Czechs in Vojvodina	34.7	37.0	38.8	43.0	44.1	51.5
Females	Population of Vojvodina	31.2	34.8	36.4	38.8	42.0	41.3
	Czechs in Vojvodina	40.3	44.6	46.8	45.8	50.2	53.4

Source: Statistical Office of the Republic of Serbia, 2003b, Federal Bureau of Statistics, 1970, Federal Bureau of Statistics, 1974, the Provincial Bureau of Statistics, 1982, 2012, own calculations

### Median age

Median age is a useful and very often used parameter when compared with an average age. Therefore, extreme values of the five-year age groups don't make influence on the average age (Djurđjević, 1996).

Previews of research about the median age of some ethnic groups in Vojvodina, according to the Census 2002, enable the comparison. Hence, in 2002, the Czechs were older than Croats (45.3 years, according to Kovačević et al., 2010, 74), Yugoslavs (34.7 years, according to Kovačević et al., 2006, 50) and Romanians (24.7, according to Kovačević et al., 2005, 57), but not from the Slovenians (52.5, according to Kovačević et al., 2008, 140).

According to the calculated values for the median age, the Czechs are more than 12 years older from the Census 1961 to the Census 2011 (2). In relation to the values calculated for the median age of the provincial population, the Czechs in each census year were older for about 7 years, and in the last census year (2011) almost 9 years (Table 5).

### The Old Age Index

If the old age index is less than 0.40, the population is young. If the value is above this number, then the population indicates aging (Rančić, 1980). If it is over 1.00, the population has over balanced the share of old in comparison with young. That indicates the negative consequences on the reproductive and active potential (Živić, Pokos, 2005).

The aging index of the Czechs in Serbia, calculated on the basis of data collected during the census 2002 stood at exactly 2.29 (MSCG, 2004). It is 0.59 more than the index, which is calculated on the basis of the same census, but only for the Czechs who settled the territory of Vojvodina (1.70). These indices also, according to the values that gave Penev (1995), show that the Czechs are in the category of the deepest age. In this category, Czechs have been since 1981 (Table 6). Last census, 2011, shows that the age index of the Czechs in the Vojvodina Province is even 2.15 (3).

**Table 6.** Old age index and coefficient of old age of Czechs in Vojvodina, according to Censuses 1961-2002

Census	1961	1971	1981	1991	2002	2011
The old age index						
Population of Vojvodina	0.36	0.49	0.57	0.73	0.97	1.18
Czechs in Vojvodina	0.74	0.99	1.26	1.55	1.70	2.15



	The coefficient of old age					
Population of Vojvodina	119.0	147.8	148.2	187.5	218.6	236.4
Czechs in Vojvodina	195.1	212.6	234.1	284.7	286.4	323.8

Source: Statistical Office of the Republic of Serbia, 2003b, Federal Bureau of Statistics, 1970, Federal Bureau of Statistics, 1974, the Provincial Bureau of Statistics, 1982, 2012, own calculations

### Coefficients of old age

Coefficients of old age directly show negative aging process in some populations. Aging process includes increase in the share of population, which is older than 60. When that number passes 120.0, then the population starts aging in demographic sense (Kicošev, Golubović, 2004). In the 2<sup>nd</sup> half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, Czechs in Vojvodina, according values of the coefficient of old age, have already been in old age (Table 6), while that happened to the provincial population between the censuses in 1961 and 1971 (4).

### Cultural Life of the Czechs

Cultural Life of the Czechs is unthinkable without 'Česka Beseda'\* (English, the Czech sermon). In 1869, this society is established in Belgrade, the capital of Serbia. Then, territory of Vojvodina was the part of Austro-Hungarian Monarchy. It was situated only few kilometres northern from Serbia and Belgrade. From the beginning, 'Česka Beseda' attracted almost exclusively Czechs. At that time, it numbered about 270 members. It has quickly become a favourite meeting place, not only for the Czechs but also for the Belgrade people, because there were organized various events, performances and gorgeous balls. During the 1<sup>st</sup> World War, entire archive of the Society was destroyed.

After the 1<sup>st</sup> World War, Vojvodina become part of the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenians (Kljakić, 2008). In December 1927, Ministry of Education issued an order by which it changed the curriculum in which mother tongue will be taught in the 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> grade of primary school. From the 3<sup>rd</sup> grade of primary schools, history and geography are taught in their native language. According to this order, in the Czech schools were placed teachers, exclusively Czechs (Glgorijević, 1981). From the disintegration and occupation of Czechoslovakia in 1939, in Serbia and Vojvodina arrived a lot of refugees. After the 2<sup>nd</sup> World War, in 1946, the Czech primary school started. Until 1950 many Czechs left Serbia for fear of communism.

Czechoslovakia peacefully split on the 1<sup>st</sup> January 1993 in two constituent states, the Czech Republic and the Slovak Republic. Given that of the total number of Czechs in Serbia, in the municipality of Bela Crkva live more than 1/3 (36.8%). On the facts of the life of the Czechs in Vojvodina is learned by focusing attention on the south-eastern municipality of Vojvodina. Nowadays the society 'Česka Beseda' has 58 members (Kljakić, 2008). It is organized as non-governmental, non-profit association that is dedicated to the conservation of cultural heritage, language and customs. The Society 'Česka Beseda' is headquartered in Belgrade with branches in Vojvodina (Bela Crkva, Kruščica, Gaj and Vršac) and Central Serbia (Kragujevac) (ARC, 2016). As a social organization, 'Česka Beseda' nurtures and develops the Czech letter, literature, education and art. Since 1998, in the framework of a local radio program, in Bela Crkva has broadcasted weekly one hour program in the Czech language. Since 1999, a bulletin in Czech language has published (Ivkov, 2006). A bilingual bulletin is printed every third month, in a circulation of about 200 copies. The Journal of the Czechs of South Banat summarizes developments in Bela Crkva. Proofreading is done by a Czech teacher and texts by association members voluntarily. With the help of the Czech Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the learning of the Czech language was organised once a week. The Czechs most commonly use their language in their families, even though it is one of three official languages in Bela Crkva. Most Czechs live in mixed marriages, and some of them do not speak Czech anymore. Those who are persistent to speak Czech language with their children, they learn Czech language, but not as good as when they attended classes in Czech (Majstorov,

\* It operates continuously under different names, and from 2010 again under the name 'Česka Beseda' Belgrade.

2009). After the adoption of the Law on Broadcasting, the radio station did not get a frequency by which the Czechs lost their daily program in their native language\*.

In the settlement of Bela Crkva there is the seat of the Czech National Council, which was established in 2010. One of the rare libraries in Serbia that has few old copies of books in the Czech language is also in Bela Crkva. In this municipality there are churches that bear witness to the colonization of the first generation of the Czechs in Vojvodina, for example: the church of Holy Trinity in the village of Kruščica. Part of the service in this church as well as in the church in Češko Selo is held in the Czech language, regardless of the fact that the local Catholic priest is not a Czech, than Hungarian.

As part of the cultural and public life in Češko Selo and Kruščica, numerous religious, ethnographic and artistic events are organised by the National Council, 'Česka Beseda', or in cooperation with the Embassy of the Czech Republic. The guests are from various fields of culture coming from the Czech Republic and programs include various forms of cooperation between the Czechs and Serbs. For example, 'Beauty of Differences' has organized in Kruščica. Program lasts for two days and includes singing and folklore nights. Part of the program takes place at a house that should be turned into a museum of crafts and handicraft products. 'The Czech Culture without Borders' has occurred in Bela Crkva as part of the program of the oldest event in Serbia 'Carnival of Flowers'. This event consists of artistic workshops, exhibitions, literary evenings, evening of folklore, race of the Czech-Serbian friendship. From 2011, in Kruščica there is manifestation 'The Czech Open International Music Festival'. The biggest holiday for all the Roman Catholic believers in Bela Crkva is 'Saint Ana' and at the same time the Thanksgiving Day to the Czech Republic. Shrovetide (Carnival) is organized in Bela Crkva and Kruščica. Since 2004 and the children's one since 2011, during Easter event has organized Eggs fest. Other events are Saint Urban, Three Kings etc. ([Internet, 2016](#)).

#### 4. Conclusion

In the territory of today's Vojvodina, as well as other parts of Serbia, the Czechs arrived in the late 18<sup>th</sup> and early 19<sup>th</sup> century. The first settlers were craftsmen, bankers, industrialists, doctors, architects and artists and they contributed significantly to the development of certain industrial activities, but also of culture and art in Serbia.

By the number, they represent one of the smallest ethnic groups in Serbia. According to all parameters of age, they are among the oldest ethnic groups in Vojvodina. Deep age disables natural reproduction. It is the result of low fertility rates and migration of young people in the past, which were influenced by different political and economic factors. Czechian identity in Vojvodina can preserve their offspring, which certainly exist. Resulting from mixed marriages, today declare themselves as members of other ethnic groups, undecided, undeclared, according to regional affiliation and the like. However, each of them is aware of their Czech ancestors.

Independence of Czech Republic had no impact on the parameters of the age structure of the Czechs in Vojvodina Province. However, it is noticeable increase in the number of cultural activities of the Czechs in Vojvodina, especially in the territory of South Banat District, in which they most present. Through the Czech National Council and the Society 'Česka Beseda', the Czech ethnic group is fully integrated into public and cultural life of Serbia, where it is recognized and has all the rights guaranteed on the preservation of identity. They are also a very important element that promotes bilateral cooperation between the Czech Republic and the Republic of Serbia.

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\* The Czech community publishes a monthly bilingual newspaper 'Beseda Česka', on regional television 'Banat' airs shows on a monthly basis, and on a local radio station once a week.

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