

## DIFFERENCES IN POPULATION DEVELOPMENT OF IMOTSKI AND THE SURROUNDING RURAL SETTLEMENTS

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*Primljeno:*

Since 1991 the Town of Imotski has been a separate administrative unit with five rural settlements (Vinjani Donji, Vinjani Gornji, Glavina Donja, Glavina Gornja and Medvidovića Draga) and one urban settlement (Imotski). By comparing demographic features of Imotski with previously mentioned rural settlements the authors came to the following conclusions: emigration, deruralisation and population decrease influenced all settlements, but are more evident in the rural settlements than in Imotski.

**Key words:** Imotski, rural settlements, depopulation, deruralisation, emigration.

Grad Imotski od 1991. čini zasebnu administrativnu jedinicu u čijem je sastavu pet ruralnih naselja (Vinjani Donji, Vinjani Gornji, Glavina Donja, Glavina Gornja i Medvidovića Draga) i jedno urbano naselje (Imotski). Usporedbom demografskih obilježja Imotskog u odnosu na spomenuta ruralna naselja dolazi se do sljedećih zaključaka: procesi emigracije, deruralizacije te smanjenja broja stanovnika utjecali su na sva naselja, s time da su procesi u manjoj mjeri izraženi u Imotskom, a u puno većoj u ruralnim naseljima iako i među njima postoje određene razlike.

**Ključne riječi:** Imotski, ruralna naselja, depopulacija, deruralizacija, emigracija.

### Introduction

Imotski is the central settlement in Imotska Krajina and up to 1992 it was the centre of the former Imotski Municipality. It is situated at 395 m above sea level, 90 kilometres from Split and 65 kilometres from Mostar, near the border with Bosnia and Herzegovina. Biokovo Mountain represents the natural border between Imotska Krajina and the coast. Due to the favourable geographic conditions, namely, mild climate and fertile land, Imotski developed into the largest settlement in the area that attracted population from the surrounding rural areas. The number of inhabitants living within the borders of the former Municipality of Imotski decreased from 1971 to 2001 by 29.8 per

cent. If this trend continues at the same pace we can assume that in 5 to 10 years over 95 per cent of the area will be uninhabited. "White plague" is one of the prominent demographic features of the area (DRUŽIJANIĆ, MRKONJIĆ, 2005).

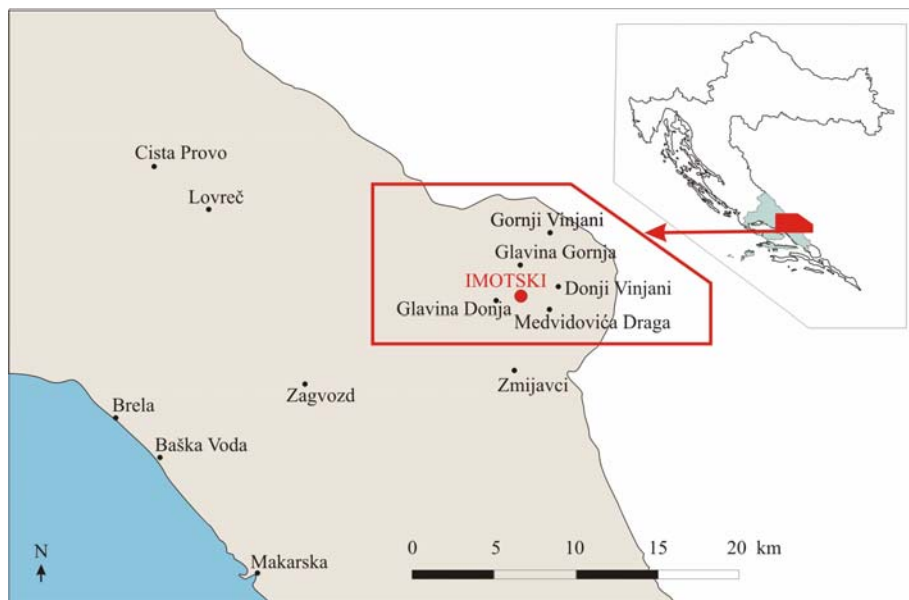


Fig. 1 Location of the analyzed area  
*Sl. 1. Smještaj analiziranog područja*  
Made by: Anica Čuka

In the period subsequent to the World War II Republic of Croatia was faced with distinct negative demographic features in the rural areas. Depopulation of many settlements caused by rural exodus and constant decrease of natural population change, together with urban-rural polarisation, intensive ageing process are just some of the basic features affecting rural settlements in Croatia (POKOS, 2002). The aim of this paper is to analyse the degree to which these processes are affecting Imotski and rural settlements surrounding it.

### **Aims and methodology**

Like most of the areas in the Dalmatian hinterland, Imotski and the surrounding rural settlements were affected by depopulation and emigration processes. The aim of this paper is to determine the extent of these processes and differences between contemporary demographic features of Imotski, Vinjani Donji, Vinjani Gornji, Glavina Donja, Glavina Gornja and Medvidovića Draga. Until 1991, the old administrative and territorial system in Croatia was in operation and according to it, the former Imotski Municipality

comprised 43 settlements. In 1992 the former Imotski Municipality was divided into Lovreć, Zmijavci, Runovići, Cista Provo, Lokvičići, Podbablje i Proložac municipalities and the Town of Imotski. This paper will deal only with the demographic changes in the Town of Imotski that now comprises six settlements: Vinjani Donji, Vinjani Gornji, Glavina Donja, Glavina Gornja, Medvidovića Draga, and Imotski.

Specific problem is encountered when dealing with data concerning Medvidovića Draga. The number of inhabitants living in that settlement does not exist for the period before 1991. Until then, Medvidovića Draga was a part of Glavina Donja and the population living in Medvidovića Draga was recorded together with the population of Glavina Donja. As a result of such census methodology, the data concerning Glavina Donja in 1991 was decreased for the population that is from that point on counted as population living in a separate settlement Medvidovića Draga. In 1857 and from 1880 to 1931 the number of inhabitants living in Glavina Donja and Glavina Gornja was counted together. The same problem appears in 1857 and 1869 when the population living in Vinjani Donji and Vinjani Gornji was counted together. In 1921 it seems that the number of the inhabitants in Vinjani Gornji is decreasing, but in fact they are joined to the data concerning Vinjani Donji. Separate data for Glavina Gornja exist from 1948 onwards since in 1857 and from 1880 to 1931 they were a part of data concerning Glavina Donja and they were joined to Imotski in 1869. All this causes problems while researching demographic features of the Town of Imotski and in much larger extent its rural settlements, especially Medvidovića Draga.

### **Population development of the Town of Imotski**

From the first official population census in 1857 until the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century the main feature of the population of Imotski and the surrounding rural settlements is a constant decrease. There were three outbreaks of cholera in 1831, 1836 and 1857. In 1874 population number decreased due to the lack of food since in Imotska Krajina the frost damaged all crops (UJEVIĆ, 1991). Fig. 2 shows changes in the number of inhabitants in Imotski and the surrounding rural settlements. When explaining this graphic presentation one should point out to some irregularities as a consequence of the data unavailability. Some of the demographic features of the analysed area cannot be explained without explanations already laid out in the previous section. In order to avoid possible misunderstandings while analysing the number of population living in Glavina Donja the authors estimated the number of inhabitants in 1921 (Fig. 2). Data for some years do not exist due to the frequent changes in the census methodology

Throughout the 20<sup>th</sup> century, the history of this area was marked by two world wars, various diseases, industrialisation, deagrarisation, deruralisation, emigration. Population living in Imotska Krajina was mainly employed in primary sector activities with agriculture and cattle raising being the most important economic branches. As population number increased there was no sufficient agricultural land for all to provide economic stability to their families. In the period from 1948 to 2001 the population of the Town of Imotski increased by 48.1 per cent, which is 0.1 per cent annually. Out of five settlements, if Medvidovića Draga is excluded due to the insufficient data, two of them recorded population decrease, Glavina Gornja and Vinjani Gornji, while Glavina Gornja and Vinjani Gornji recorded decrease in population number in the same period (Tab. 1).

Accordingly to altered census methodology in 1991, the authors adjusted the population number and excluded those living abroad (Fig. 3). In 1990s people who have been living abroad but had official place of residence in Croatia were considered as permanent inhabitants of Croatia. Since Imotska Krajina is well known for a great number of its inhabitants living abroad, it was necessary to determine the exact number of those actually living in Croatia.

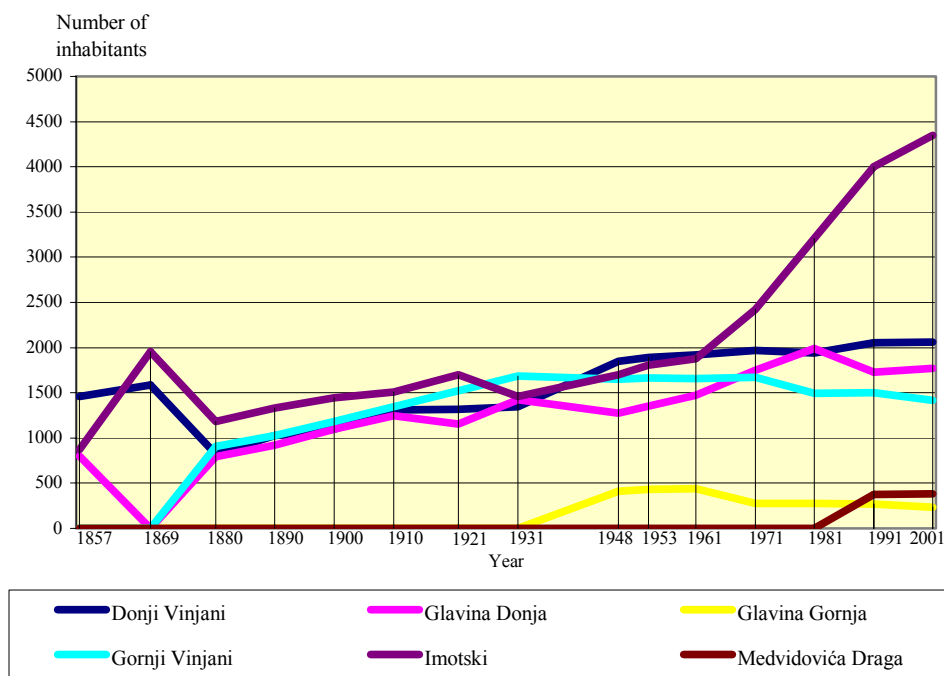


Fig. 2 Population trend of Imotski and the surrounding rural settlements from 1857 to 2001  
*Sl. 2 Kretanje broja stanovnika Imotskog i okolnih ruralnih naselja u razdoblju od 1857. do 2001. godine*

Sources: KORENČIĆ, M. (1979): *Naselja i stanovništvo SRH 1857.-1971.*, JAZU, Zagreb. HRŽENJAK, J. (1983): *Društvena struktura naselja u SR Hrvatskoj*, Liber-Pravni fakultet-Centar za stručno usavršavanje i suradnju s udruženim radom, Zagreb, pp. 707.

Popis stanovništva, domaćinstava, stanova i poljoprivrednih gospodarstava, 31.ožujak 1991., Stanovništvo u zemlji i inozemstvu po naseljima, dokumentacija 911, RZS, Zagreb, 1996.

Popis stanovništva, kućanstava i stanova 31. ožujka 2001., Državni zavod za statistiku, <http://www.dzs.hr/Hrv/Popis%202001/popis20001.htm>

In Croatia the process of depopulation started before 1990s with the exception of the period from 1970 to 1979 when generations born after the Second World War entered their fertile age (WERTHEIMER-BALETIĆ, 1995). The same process can be seen in the rural settlements surrounding Imotski. On the other hand, the population in Imotski shows a constant increase which is the case in most of the urban settlements in Croatia (FRIGANOVIĆ, 1984., NEJAŠMIĆ, ŠTAMBUK, 2003).

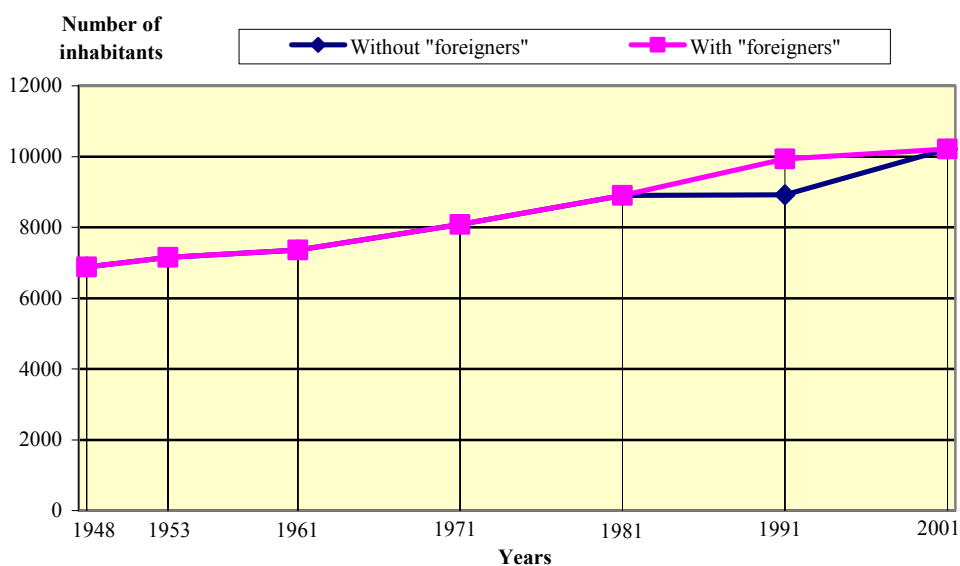


Fig. 3 Number of inhabitants in the Town of Imotski from 1948 to 2001  
Sl. 3. Broj stanovnika Grada Imotskog u razdoblju od 1948. do 2001. godine

Tab. 1 Population of the Town of Imotski, by settlements, from 1948 to 2001  
Tab. 1. Kretanje broja stanovnika grada Imotskog, po naseljima u razdoblju od 1948. do 2001.

Settlement	1948	1953	1961	1971	1981	1991	1991*	2001
Vinjani Donji	1,845	1,894	1,917	1,971	1,940	2,056	1,793	2,063
Vinjani Gornji	1,647	1,662	1,658	1,669	1,495	1,500	1,294	1,417
Glavina Donja	1,272	1,354	1,471	1,747	1,993	1,731	1,617	1,770
Glavina Gornja	414	429	442	275	274	271	223	234
Medvidovića Draga	-	-	-	-	-	377	275	382
Imotski	1,457	1,701	1,808	1,874	3,205	4,000	3,720	4,347
<b>Total</b>	<b>6,635</b>	<b>7,040</b>	<b>7,296</b>	<b>7,536</b>	<b>8,907</b>	<b>9,558</b>	<b>8,472</b>	<b>9,831</b>

\* Without "foreigners"

Sources: KORENČIĆ, M. (1979): *Naselja i stanovništvo SRH 1857.-1971.*, JAZU, Zagreb. HRŽENJAK, J. (1983): *Društvena struktura naselja u SR Hrvatskoj*, Liber-Pravni fakultet-Centar za stručno usavršavanje i suradnju s udruženim radom, Zagreb, pp. 707.

Popis stanovništva, domaćinstava, stanova i poljoprivrednih gospodarstava, 31.ožujak 1991., Stanovništvo u zemlji i inozemstvu po naseljima, dokumentacija 911, RZS, Zagreb, 1996.

Popis stanovništva, kućanstava i stanova 31. ožujka 2001., Državni zavod za statistiku, <http://www.dzs.hr/Hrv/Popis%202001/popis20001.htm>

In the first two intercensal periods (1948/1953, 1953/1961) none of the settlements recorded population decrease. In the subsequent intercensal periods (1971/1981, 1981/1991, 1991/2001) some of the rural settlements showed decrease, namely Glavina Gornja and Vinjani Gornji (Tab. 2). Imotski, as the only urban settlement, showed the highest increase in the overall number of the inhabitants mainly due to the large number of inhabitants from the surrounding rural settlements who abandoned agriculture as their basic economic activity and came to work and live in town that offered better life opportunities. This is especially true for young age groups, who are attracted to town by the pull factors that include perceived economic, social and political opportunities in a geographic area different from their own, but close to their place of origin.

Tab. 2 Population change indices of the Town of Imotski, by settlements, from 1948 to 2001

*Tab. 2 Indeks promjene broja stanovnika za Grad Imotski, po naseljima u razdoblju od 1948. do 2001. godine.*

Settlement	1948/1953	1953/1961	1961/1971	1971/1981	1981/1991	1991/2001	1948/2001
Vinjani Donji	103.0	101.2	103.0	98.4	106.0	100.3	112.0
Vinjani Gornji	101.0	100.0	101.0	90.0	100.0	94.4	86.0
Glavina Donja	106.4	109.0	119.0	114.0	87.0	102.2	139.1
Glavina Gornja	104.0	103.0	62.2	100.0	99.0	86.4	56.5
Medvidovića Draga	-	-	-	-	-	101.3	-
Imotski	117.0	106.2	104.0	171.0	125.0	109.0	298.3
<b>Total</b>	<b>106.1</b>	<b>104.0</b>	<b>103.2</b>	<b>118.2</b>	<b>107.3</b>	<b>103.0</b>	<b>148.1</b>

Sources: Same as Tab. 1

From a demographic point of view, migration is a component of change that, together with natural increase, determines the magnitude and rate of population growth (WEINSTEIN, PILLAI, 2001). Emigration is one of the prominent demographic features affecting Imotski and the surrounding rural settlements. The process of emigration started as early as 1881, when 5.8 per cent of the total population living in Imotska Krajina between 1881 and 1890 emigrated. In the period from 1891 to 1900 that share decreased to 3.19 and in the period from 1901 to 1911 to 3.14 per cent (UJEVIĆ, 1991). Most emigrants were young male population that went to some of the European countries such as Germany, Austria or Switzerland and spent there several years and came back. Smaller part of them went overseas and stayed there for a longer period of time. The emigration process is present even today but to a smaller extent due to the fact that many countries nowadays regulate the number of the immigrants and prevent their numerous arrivals in order to protect their economic stability.

Migrations are one of the most important demographic features but also the most difficult one to explain and measure. First migrations from this area were triggered by disease that affected vineyards, since they were the main source of income for a large share of population. During the 70s in West Germany alone there were around 8,900 people from Imotska Krajina (VUKOVIĆ, 2004). In 1981/1991 intercensal period two settlements, Imotski and Vinjani Donji had positive net migration (Tab. 3). In the

following intercensal period all the settlements including Imotski had negative net migration. This was the result of unfavorable economic situation in the region that caused lower birth rates and the migration of younger population, mostly to urban centers on the coast. It is necessary to point out that the increase in the population number due to immigration in Imotski is far less than the overall population number of those that emigrated from rural settlements (ŠILJKOVIĆ, ČUKA, 2005).

Tab. 3 Net migration of Imotski and surrounding rural settlements from 1981 to 2001

Tab. 3. Migracijska bilanca za Imotski i okolna ruralna naselja u razdoblju od 1981. do 2001. godine

Settlement	Number of inhabitants in 1981	Natural population increase 1981-1991	Expected number of inhabitants in 1991	Number of inhabitants in 1991	Net migration 1981/1991
Vinjani Donji	1,940	72	2,012	2,056	44
Vinjani Gornji	1,495	30	1,525	1,500	-25
Glavina Donja	1,993	107	2,100	1,731	-369
Glavina Gornja	274	9	283	271	-12
Imotski	3,205	445	3,650	4,000	350
<b>Total</b>	<b>8,907</b>	<b>663</b>	<b>9,570</b>	<b>9558</b>	<b>-12</b>

Settlement	Number of inhabitants in 1991	Natural population increase 1991-2001	Expected number of inhabitants in 2001	Number of inhabitants in 2001	Net migration 1991/2001
Vinjani Donji	2,056	112	2,168	2,063	-105
Vinjani Gornji	1,500	36	1,536	1,417	-119
Glavina Donja	1,731	74	1,805	1,770	-35
Glavina Gornja	271	1	272	234	-38
Medvidovića Draga	377	20	397	382	-15
Imotski	4,000	593	4,593	4,347	-246
<b>Total</b>	<b>9,558</b>	<b>836</b>	<b>10,394</b>	<b>9,586</b>	<b>-808</b>

Sources: HRŽENJAK, J. (1983): *Društvena struktura naselja u SR Hrvatskoj*, Liber – Pravni fakultet – Centar za stručno usavršavanje i suradnju s udruženim radom, Zagreb, pp. 707.

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Popis stanovništva, kućanstava i stanova 31. ožujka 2001., Državni zavod za statistiku, <http://www.dzs.hr/Hrv/Popis%202001/popis20001.htm>

Tablogrami Rođeni i umrli po naseljima, Državni zavod za statistiku, Zagreb

In order to get a better insight in the contemporary demographic changes the authors compared the natural population change and census population change and determined that in 1981/1991 intercensal period only two settlements had immigrational trend, Imotski and Vinjani Donji, while the other settlements had emigrational trends (Fig. 4). The worst demographic situation is found in Glavina Donja, the settlement with positive natural population change but with negative intercensal population change. Only Glavina Donja and Glavina Gornja had negative intercensal population changes and all the settlements had positive natural population change.

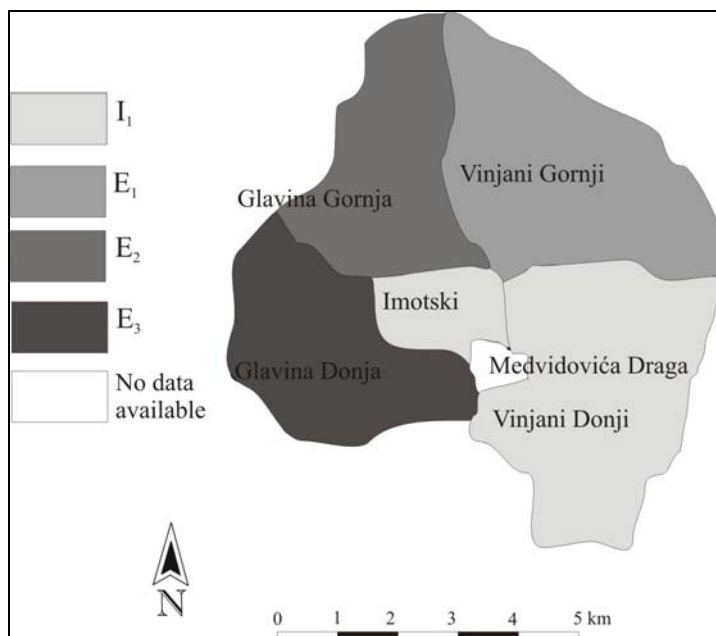


Fig. 4 Types of general population trend of the Town of Imotski in 1981/1991 intercensal period;  $I_1$  – expansion through immigration;  $E_1$  – emigration,  $E_2$  – depopulation,  $E_3$  – significant depopulation

*Sl. 4. Tipovi općeg kretanja stanovništva u Gradu Imotskom u razdoblju od 1981. do 1991. godine;  $I_1$  – ekspanzija imigracijom;  $E_1$  – emigracija,  $E_2$  – depopulacija,  $E_3$  – izrazita depopulacija*

In the following intercensal period (1991/2001) all the settlements had emigrational trend (Fig. 5). Two of them, Vinjani Gornji and Glavina Donja, were characterized by depopulation caused by negative net migration but they still had positive natural population change. It should also be mentioned that a part of population loss occurred due to different census methodologies in 1991 and 2001. The main problem present in both of these rural settlements is that young people leave their homes in search for better education and job opportunities, which will consequently lead to the further depopulation. Rural settlements around Imotski are not in such a bad situation as most of small rural settlements in Dalmatian hinterland that came to the verge of demographic extinction (MATAS, 1995). One of the important processes affecting Dalmatian hinterland is the process of littoralisation that attracted young people to the coast, especially to big urban settlements such as Zadar and Split, which as a consequence of such process recorded a significant increase in population number. The process of littoralisation started in the 1960s and its influence on the demographic features of Dalmatian hinterland is still present. Besides, in large urban coastal centers a great share of population from rural settlements surrounding Imotski as well as from Imotski went to other urban centers in Croatia, mainly to Zagreb.



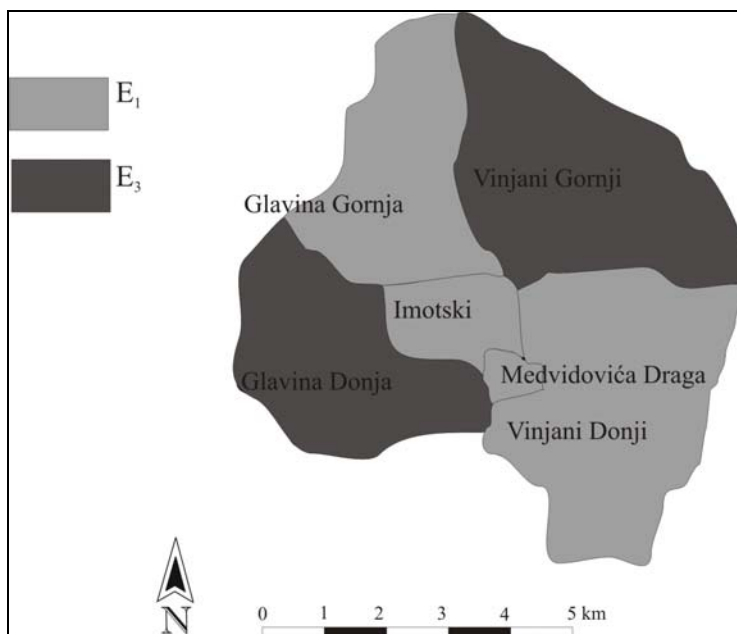


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### Natural population change

Natural population change is the difference between the number of births and the number of deaths over a period of time. In Imotski there were more births than deaths in every year from 1981 to 2002. This is not true for the surrounding rural settlements. Due to the decrease in the number of births, natural population change has been declining significantly over the past decade. At present, this process is affecting only rural settlements while in Imotski natural population change is still positive (Fig. 6). Rural settlements will soon be faced with persistent negative natural population change, i.e. the number of deaths will exceed the number of births and their future population growth will be solely dependent on potential positive net migration. But if we look closer at all the relevant indicators it is quite obvious that the rural settlements around Imotski will probably continue to lose population.

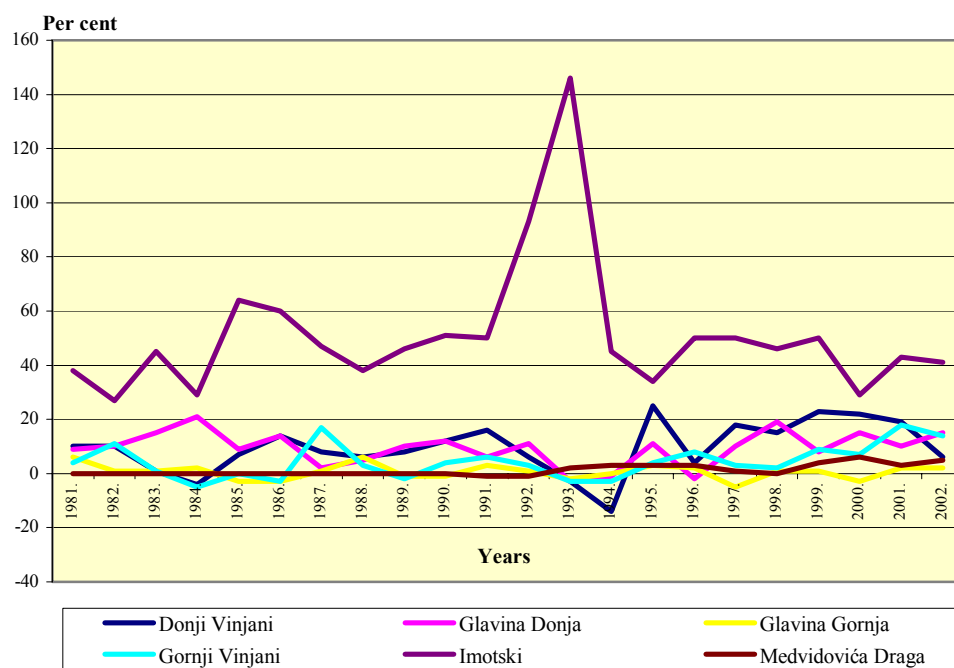


Fig. 6 Natural increase/decrease in Vinjani Donji, Glavina Donja, Glavina Gornja, Vinjani Gornji and Imotski from 1981 to 2002 and in Medvidovića Draga from 1991 to 2002

Sl. 6. Prirodno kretanje stanovništva Vinjana Donjih, Glavine Donje, Glavine Gornje, Vinjana Gornjih i Imotskog u razdoblju od 1981. do 2001. i Medvidovića Drage u razdoblju od 1991. do 2002. godine

Source: Tablogrami Rođeni i umrli po naseljima, Državni zavod za statistiku, Zagreb

The comparison of the last two intercensal periods shows that natural population increase in the Town of Imotski increased by 20.7 per cent, and the number of births by 9.9 per cent (Tab. 4). This is mainly due to the large number of births in Imotski in the 1991/2000 intercensal period. All rural settlements, except Vinjani Donji, recorded decrease in number of births and increase in number of deaths. This area is affected by an intensified migration of young people aged 20-40 causing the decrease in number of births since these young people make the fertile cohort. The increase in the number of deaths is the consequence of the population aging. The settlement with the lowest population increase in both intercensal periods is Glavina Gornja. In the 1991/2000 intercensal period the number of births and deaths in Glavina Gornja almost came to an equal, causing unfavorable demographic situation that would probably lead to a negative natural population trend in the near future.

Tab. 4 Natural population change in Imotski and in the surrounding rural settlements in 1981/1990 and 1991/2000 intercensal periods

*Tab. 4. Prirodno kretanje Imotskog i okolnih ruralnih naselja u međupopisnim razdobljima 1981./1990. i 1991./2000.*

Settlement	1981-1990			1991-2000		
	Births	Deaths	Natural increase/decrease	Births	Deaths	Natural increase/decrease
Vinjani Donji	298	226	72	330	218	112
Vinjani Gornji	214	184	30	197	161	36
Glavina Donja	266	159	107	241	167	74
Glavina Gornja	36	27	9	30	29	1
Medvidovića Draga	-	-	-	52	32	20
Imotski	830	385	445	958	365	593
<b>Total</b>	<b>1644</b>	<b>981</b>	<b>663</b>	<b>1808</b>	<b>972</b>	<b>836</b>

Source: Tablogrami Rodeni i umrli po naseljima, Državni zavod za statistiku, Zagreb

One of the most important factors of the future reproduction is fertility. The level of fertility refers to the number of live births of every woman during her life course. Although women are capable of having children prior to age of 15 and above 45, their childbearing age is assumed to be from 15 to 49 years of age (WEINSTEIN, PILLAI, 2001). In 2001 the settlements with the lowest fertility rate was Medvidovića Draga with 6.25 and the settlement with the highest fertility rate was Vinjani Gornji with 10.5 newborns per 100 women aged 15-49. Fertility rate in Imotski was 6.9. If compared to general fertility rate in Croatia in 2001 which was 3.79, all the analyzed settlements had high general fertility rates contributing in this way to the overall population number.

### Age and sex composition

The most important demographic characteristic of a population is its age and sex composition. It represents number and/or proportion of the population to be found in each age-sex group. Population pyramids graphically display this information in order to improve understanding and ease comparison. In this paper the authors compare two pyramids, one for 1971 and the other for 2001. Important events in a population's history can be visualized in a population pyramid. Events such as wars, baby booms or periods of high in/out migration can significantly affect the age/sex structure. The pyramid also shows the future population development. For example if there is a bulge in the 10-19 group it is predicted that there will be a spurt of population growth over the next decade or two because this population will enter their child-bearing years. In Croatia the decline of births and increase of life expectancy has brought numerous changes in the age-sex structures.

From the comparison of the pyramids (Fig. 7) it is evident that the process of ageing in Imotski has evolved during the past 20 years. Population ageing is pervasive, a global phenomenon affecting every human being on the Earth. Countries are at different

stages of this process and the pace of change differs greatly. In most cases it is closely related to economic state the country is in. Age/sex structure is closely related to present and future demographic and economic development (WERTHEIMER-BALETIĆ, 1999). In 1971 Imotski's age structure was almost triangular in shape with broad base representing younger age groups. The low portion of males and females in the age group from 25-29 years represents the lack of births due to the World War II. Population development in the aforementioned direction, reduction of natural growth and negative net migration balance were reflected in the age and sex composition of Imotski and rural settlements surrounding it.

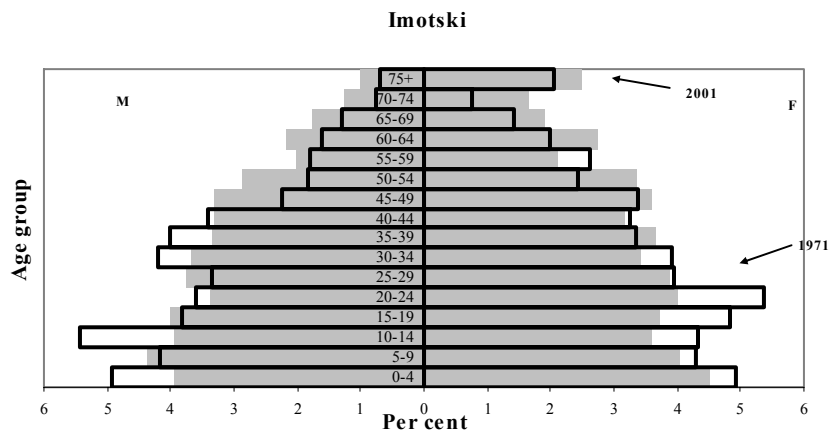
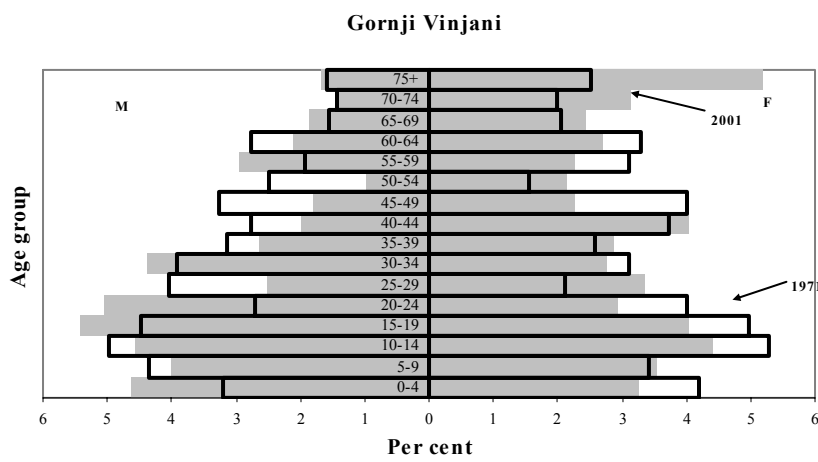
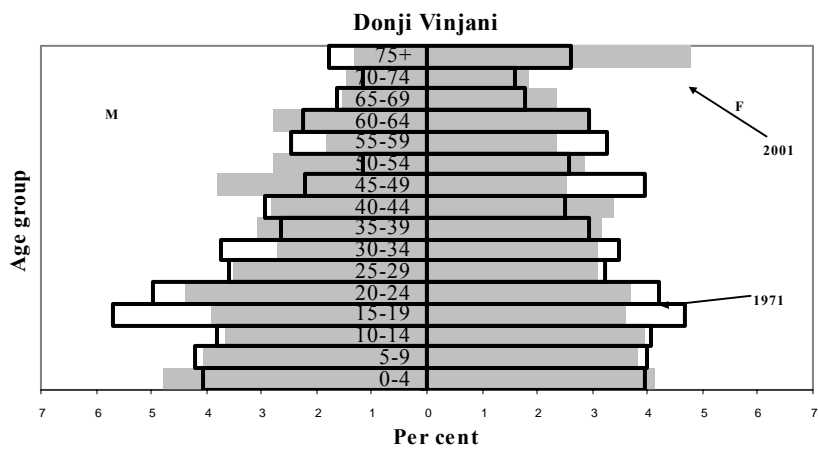
The share of age group 0-14 in the Town of Imotski in 1971 was 26.8 per cent and in 2001, 24.3 per cent (Tab 5). In accordance with the decrease of young population there is increase in the share of the older population from 9.5 in 1971 to 11.8 per cent in 2001. It is considered that if the share of the old population in total population exceeds 12 per cent the population has begun to age (FRIGANOVIĆ, 1990). As we can see, the Town of Imotski is at the very edge and if the contemporary demographic processes continue in the same direction, in 2011 the portion of old will be much higher than 12 per cent. The main reasons for the shift from a young to an old type age structure are the declining number of births and negative net migration. Increasing life expectancy adds to the number and share of elderly. Even if the birth rate increases, the number of births would have little impact on the age structure, at least in short term. It is quite obvious that a high birth rate will do little for the population's age structure if there are only a small share of men and women at reproductive age.

Tab. 5 Age structure of the Town of Imotski in 1971 and 2001  
*Tab. 5. Dobna struktura Grada Imotskog 1971. i 2001. godine*

Settlement	1971			2001		
	0-14	15-64	65+	0-14	15-64	65+
Vinjani Donji	24.0	65.4	10.6	24.4	62.3	13.4
Vinjani Gornji	26.1	62.3	11.5	23.8	60.9	15.4
Glavina Donja	28.7	61.3	10.0	23.1	64.6	12.3
Glavina Gornja	26.3	65.0	8.8	23.5	63.7	12.8
Medvidovića Draga	-	-	-	30.6	61.0	8.4
Imotski	28.1	65.0	7.0	24.5	65.5	10.0
Total	26.8	63,7	9,5	24,3	63,9	11,8

Sources: Popis stanovništva, domaćinstava, stanova i poljoprivrednih gospodarstava, 31.ožujak 1991., Stanovništvo prema spolu i starosti po naseljima, dokumentacija 882, RZS, Zagreb, 1994.  
 Popis stanovništva, kućanstava i stanova 31. ožujka 2001., Državni zavod za statistiku, <http://www.dzs.hr/Hrv/Popis%202001/popis20001.htm>

The area of the Town of Imotski went through many demographic changes affecting its age and sex structure. In 1971 the base of the pyramid is expanded which is the result of the increased birth rates that started to decrease in recent years but are still relatively high (Fig. 7). At the same time the share of population in their childbearing age is reduced which will have negative effect on the future birth rates. Nevertheless, increased birth rates are to be expected in the next ten-odd years when the aforesaid children enter their childbearing age. The analysis in all the settlements shows the increase of elderly population and the reduction of young and adult population.



(Previous page / *Prethodna stranica*)

Fig. 7 Comparison of age and sex structure of Vinjani Donji, Vinjani Gornji and Imotski in 1971 and 2001

*Sl. 7. Usporedba dobno-spolne strukture Vinjana Donjih, Vinjana Gornjih i Imotskog 1971. i 2001. godine*

The situation is much worse in the rural settlements where the process of ageing is even more evident. Many inhabitants living in Vinjani Gornji, Vinjani Donji, Glavina Donja and Glavina Gornja deserted their homes and moved either to Imotski or to some other urban centres in Croatia or abroad. This caused the decrease in the portion of younger age groups since most of the emigrants are young men and women in their fertile age. Situation in Imotski is not as serious as in rural settlements since urban centres have always attracted population from rural areas. However due to the negative affects of the Homeland war, decay in economy, privatisation, young people from rural settlements surrounding Imotski cannot find a job in Imotski. Even though there were no war activities in Imotska Krajina, many inhabitants from this area were involved in war activities in other parts of Croatia and in one part of Bosnia and Herzegovina. This were mostly young men aged 20 to 40.

Another important feature connected to age and sex structure is sex ratio which is influenced by preponderance of male births, different mortality of the sexes, and migrations. In 2001 sex ratio in Imotski was 92.5 males per 100 females reflecting an older population. Sex ratio is especially sensitive to the age of population, with the general rule being the younger the population, the higher the ratio (WEINSTEIN, PILLAI, 2001). Rural settlement with the highest sex ratio was Glavina Donja 98.4 and the lowest sex ratio was recorded in Medvidovića Draga, 90.1. In order to get a better insight and to indicate the eventual population problems this area is encountered with, the authors analysed sex ratio for the age group 15-49, that is population in their reproductive age. In 1971 sex ratio in reproductive age in Imotski was 87.1 males per 100 females due to increased male emigration. In 2001 the situation improved and the sex ratio in Imotski was 97.1. On the other hand, sex ratio in Glavina Donja in 1971 was 106.0 and in 2001 105.6. This is not an ideal situation and it shows a slight disproportion and the fact that the number of men outnumbered women. If compared to rural settlements Imotski is the only settlement with the most balanced sex ratio. Data for calculating sex ratio in Medvidovića Draga in 1971 do not exist.

### **Economic composition**

In order to analyse the economic composition the authors took into consideration the share of the agricultural population in the overall population and the percentage of active population working in one of the four economic sectors. Throughout the history the largest portion of the population worked in the primary sector, mainly agriculture. In 1953 in former Imotski municipality 82.6 per cent of the population worked in the primary sector. In 2001 that number decreased to 42 per cent. When compared to the rest of Croatia this is still a very high share of population employed in the primary sector. This is closely connected to the fact that throughout the history the agriculture was the essential economic activity. Imotsko polje with an area of 95 square kilometres (ROGLIĆ, 1994.,

DUZEL, 1995.) is one of the most fertile areas in Dalmatian Zagora. Fertile land in combination with mild climate and enough water resources are the main reasons that Imotska Krajina has always been an important agricultural area. Before the World War II 94 per cent of the population of Imotska Krajina were farmers. In 1961 this decreased to 80 per cent, the reason for this being the opening of the first factories that employed a significant part of the young active population (UJEVIĆ, 1991). Subsequently, more people from the rural settlements came to work to Imotski or left their homes altogether and emigrated in search for better life opportunities. This caused the decrease in the share of the active agricultural population (Tab. 6).

Tab. 6 The share of active agricultural population in overall active population of Imotski and the surrounding rural settlements (in %)

Tab. 6. Promjene udjela aktivnog poljoprivrednog stanovništva u ukupnom aktivnom u Imotskom i okolnim ruralnim naseljima (u %)

Settlements	1953	1961	1971	1991	2001
Vinjani Donji	78.9	77.7	50.7	16.8	3.8
Glavina Donja	-	-	43.7	9.1	0.3
Glavina Gornja	-	-	50.0	9.1	1.1
Vinjani Gornji	80.2	83.2	59.5	3.8	0.7
Imotski	46.0	41.8	7.4	4.8	0.9

Source: Popis stanovništva, kućanstava i stanova 31. ožujka 2001., Državni zavod za statistiku, <http://www.dzs.hr/Hrv/Popis%202001/popis20001.htm>

Popis stanovništva i stanova 1971., *Stanovništvo, Delatnost, rezultati po naseljima i opštinama*, knjiga X, Savezni zavod za statistiku, Beograd, 1974.

Popis stanovništva, domaćinstava, stanova i poljoprivrednih gospodarstava 31. ožujak 1991., *Aktivno stanovništvo u zemlji koje obavlja zanimanje, prema području djelatnosti po naseljima*, dokumentacija 885, godina 1992., Državni zavod za statistiku, Zagreb, 1994.

Popis stanovništva, kućanstava i stanova 2001., *Stanovništvo prema aktivnosti i spolu, po naseljima (posebno izdanje)*, Državni zavod za statistiku, Zagreb 2003.

The process of deagrarisation in Imotski began in 1960s. From that time on the number of those working in the primary sector started to decrease so, in accordance with the development of industry, the population shifted to other economic activities. From 1970s the rapid development of industry and the construction of infrastructure, mainly road, have opened wide range of possibilities for employment. As a result of deagrarisation and industrialisation processes in 2001, only 3.1 per cent of the total population of the Town of Imotski was working in the primary sector activities. The shift from the dominance of the primary sector activities to tertiary and quaternary sector was much slower in rural settlements than in Imotski (Fig. 8).

Primary sector activities have almost disappeared and tertiary and quaternary ones have taken their place. The main problem facing economy of Imotski and the surrounding rural settlements today is the lack of production, the closing of all industries and the predominance of the non-productive sectors. Since 1990s a great share of agricultural areas in Imotska Krajina has been abandoned. The main producers were the big state agricultural conglomerates who ceased to exist. Privatisation and division of land into small lots became the break point for further development of agriculture. Today, agricultural production can be restored only with the help of private investments and local communities, who should recognise the importance of primary sector in the economy of

the region. Special attention should be given to the possibilities of the organic agriculture, especially on the abandoned agricultural areas. Those areas are uncontaminated and organic production on them could start almost immediately, creating an immense potential for the local population. The vicinity of tourist areas on the shore is also an important factor that could encourage organic production, since tourists could be the main consumers of the goods produced in Imotska Krajina (ŠILJKOVIĆ, ČUKA, 2005).

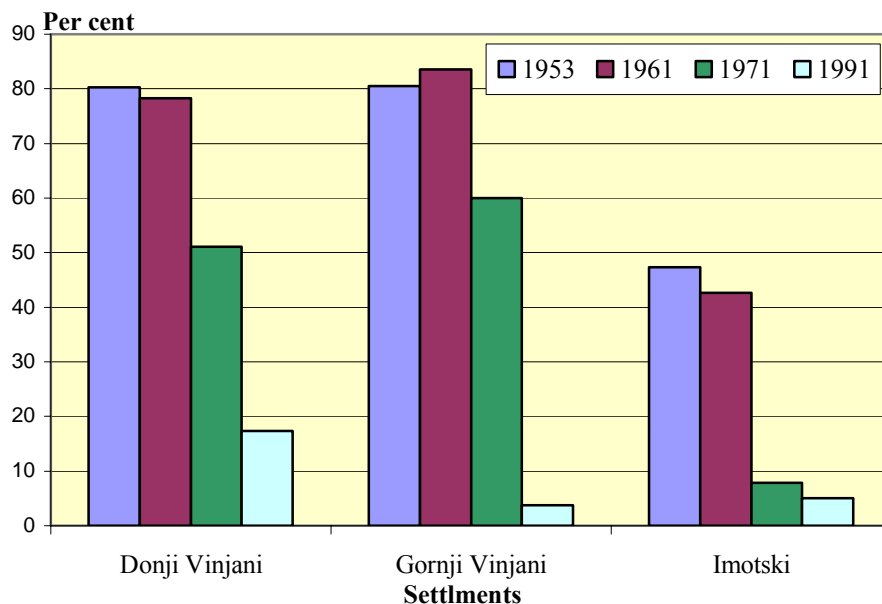


Fig. 8 Share of workers employed in primary sector activities in Imotski, Vinjani Donji and Vinjani Gornji from 1953 to 1991

*Sl. 8. Udio zaposlenih u primarnom sektoru u Imotskom, Vinjanima Donjim i Vinjanima Gornjim u razdoblju od 1953. do 1991. godine*

## Conclusion

Throughout the 20<sup>th</sup> century Imotski and rural settlements Vinjani Gornji, Vinjani Donji, Glavina Donja, Glavina Gornja and Medvidovića Draga have experienced many social and economic changes that influenced their contemporary demographic features. The most prominent change is the reduction of the number of inhabitants living in some rural settlements while Imotski shows a constant increase in population number. As an industrial and urban center of the region Imotski was attractive to the inhabitants of the surrounding rural settlements, but the population growth of 198.4 per cent in the period from 1948 to 2001 was the result of both positive net migration and positive natural change. The main cause for the depopulation of rural settlements is negative net migration since all the settlements recorded positive natural population change. The major reason for people to migrate is economics; they seek better job and financial opportunities at a place different from their current residence. The analysis of population according to



the economic sectors shows that the whole area was affected by the strong process of deagrarianisation and in 2001 most of the workers were employed in the tertiary and quaternary sector of activities. If Imotski is compared with the rural settlements the share of primary sector activities in Imotski decreased much faster than it is the case in the rural settlements.

Age and sex structure in Imotski and the surrounding rural settlements is characterised by the increase of adult and aged population at the expense of young population. All settlements, except Medvidovića Draga and Imotski, recorded the share of aged above 12.0 per cent indicating the beginning of aging process. Throughout the 20<sup>th</sup> century, Croatia underwent many changes, the most recent being five years of war (1991-1995), unsuccessful privatization process associated with the rough transition to a market economy, rising unemployment rates, large in and out-migrations and on-going fluctuations of population. All these processes affected Imotski and rural settlements surrounding it. However the best indicators of all demographic analysis are recorded in Imotski while rural settlements are not in such favorable situation. The worst situation is recorded in Glavina Gornja where the number of population in the period from 1948 to 2001 decreased for 56.0 per cent. Although contemporary demographic situation in Imotski, Vinjani Donji and Glavina Donja is not as disturbing as it is the case in Glavina Gornja and Vinjani Gornji future population development will depend on local and state authorities and their decisions in relation to economy. Taking into consideration present state of economy, emigration, depopulation and deruralisation will probably continue at much faster rate than present one.

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## SAŽETAK

### **Ana Rimanić, Martin Glamuzina, Željka Šiljković: Različitosti u demografskom razvoju Imotskog i okolnih ruralnih naselja**

Od 1991. Grad Imotski predstavlja zasebnu teritorijalnu jedinicu u čijem je sastavu pet ruralnih naselja (Vinjani Donji, Vinjani Gornji, Glavina Donja, Glavina Gornja i Medvidovića Draga) te jedno urbano naselje (Imotski). U radu je dana analiza demogeografskih obilježja Imotskog u odnosu na ruralna naselja u sklopu Grada Imotskog. Kao urbani i industrijski centar regije Imotski je privukao velik broj stanovnika ruralnih naselja te je rast stanovništva od 198,4% rezultat kako pozitivnoga migracijskog trenda, tako i pozitivnoga prirodnog prirasta. Sva naselja u promatranim međupopisnim razdobljima imaju pozitivan prirodni prirast, s tim da je u ruralnim naseljima došlo do smanjenja nataliteta posljednjih godina. Naselje s najnegativnijim demogeografskim pokazateljima je Glavina Gornja, u kojoj je došlo do smanjenja broja stanovnika od 56,0% s trendom daljnjeg pada. Usporedba dobno-spolne strukture Imotskog i ruralnih naselja iz 1971. i 2001. godine svjedoči o nepovoljnim demografskim trendovima u svim naseljima. Kod svih naselja, osim Vinjana Donjih, došlo je do smanjenja udjela mladog stanovništva zbog negativne migracijske bilance i smanjenja nataliteta. Osim u Imotskom i Medvidovića Dragi, u svim naseljima započeo je proces starenja.

Analiza ekonomske strukture stanovništva pokazuje da je u svim naseljima došlo do znatnog opadanja udjela primarnih djelatnosti, uz naznaku da se taj proces puno brže odvijao u samom Imotskom, za razliku od promatranih ruralnih naselja. Opadanje udjela primarnih djelatnosti rezultat je procesa industrijalizacije i napuštanja poljoprivrede poradi povećanja agrarne gustoće i brojnih ekonomskih promjena. Osnovni razlog opadanja broja stanovnika u ruralnim naseljima su migracije, poglavito mladog stanovništva koje odlazi u potrazi za zaposlenjem. Iako sadašnja

demogeografska situacija u Imotskom, Vinjanima Donjim i Glavini Donjoj nije zabrinjavajuća u istoj mjeri kao što je to slučaj s Glavinom Gornjom i Vinjanima Gornjim, budući demogeografski razvoj ovisit će o lokalnim i državnim vlastima i njihovim odlukama vezanim uz gospodarski razvoj analiziranog područja. Uzevši u obzir trenutno stanje gospodarstva, emigracija, depopulacija i deruralizacija zasigurno će se nastaviti. Ukoliko se trenutni demogeografski trendovi u ruralnim naseljima nastave, mogli bi postati ograničavajući čimbenik budućega gospodarskog razvoja Grada Imotskog.