

POSITION OF RURAL SETTLEMENT IN REGIONAL STRUCTURE OF SLOVAKIA

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Abstract: This paper deals with the position of rural settlement in Slovakia, with its differentiation and its development since 1869. It tries to analyse the role of rural settlement in functional urban regions and in comparison to urban settlement. At the end of the paper, we provide a regional typology based on the differences in rural population growth rate.

Key words: rural settlement, regional structure, Slovakia

There were only two periods, between 1869 (year of the first official census on the Slovak territory) and 1991 (the last census), when rural population was growing faster than urban population - between 1880 and 1890 and between 1950 and 1961. During the first period, the share of rural population in the whole population grew from 88,5% to 89,1%, in the second period from 72,7% to 73,5%. In the remaining periods, the share of rural population was till 1991 declining - from 91,4% in 1869 to 43,3% in 1991. The largest decline was in the period 1961-1970 from 73,5% to 62,6% and in 1970-1980 from 62,6% to 50,0% (Mládek, ed., 1998). Between 1961 and 1970 migrated from villages to cities 231 616 rural residents. Main reason of migration were housing 56,8% in 1980, marriage 17,02%, new job opportunity 6,75% and reason "to avoid commuting" (moving to the place of employment) 8,09% (Bodnárová, 1986). Migration from villages to cities took 31,2% of total migration flow in Slovakia in 1960 and 30,5% in 1980. Villages have lost by this migration annually more than 1% of their population (1,69% in 1980).

Since 1991 situation has changed a little bit, and share of rural population seems to be stabilised around 43%.

There are more reasons of this change, for example slower out-migration from villages to cities, because of lack of new apartment houses in cities, or even

disintegration of cities (some former agglomerated settlement got outside of former city boundaries, it means some cities got smaller).

It seems to be a turnover in the dynamics of both parts of Slovak population (rural and urban). The relative increase of the population in Slovak cities was only one quarter as it had been in decade 1970 - 1980, and one third comparing to decade 1980 - 1991. This is probably a result of crisis in construction industry, which has not been able to develop new housing in cities, so migration flow from rural settlements to cities is almost stopped, and this almost terminates mobility of people (Bezák, 1998).

It might appear, that Slovakia is entering a faze of deconcentration of population, but this is probable just a temporal, short term change, caused by socio-economic transformation of the Slovak society after political change in 1989. We can not consider this way of development as counterurbanisation.

D. Sokolowski (1998) tries to explain two ways of understanding urbanisation.

Urbanisation "sensu largo" is identified by five attributes:

- ♦ economic (employment outside agriculture)
- ♦ social (change in lifestyle)
- ♦ demographic (transformation of population characteristics)
- ♦ infra-structural and technical
- ♦ morphological (non-rural building style)

Urbanisation "sensu stricto" embraces ten attributes, five listed above and remaining are:

- ♦ functional (diversity of economic background and employment structure)
- ♦ centrality
- ♦ social consciousness (local community has to perceive the settlement to be a town)
- ♦ spatial structure (adequate density, compaction)
- ♦ size

Identification of attributes of urbanisation may form a basis to recognise specific types of settlements.

The level of urbanisation, I think, is actually lower, as it is statistically presented. 57% of Slovak population, which live in cities, is not completely urbanised. There is still a plenty of agglomerated settlements with population measured as urban, but as I analysed, living in fact in settlements with rural houses, lack of infrastructure, services, often 3-5 kilometres from the intra-urban border line, separated from "the real city" by land, forest or lake (inside of the city boundaries), working often in agriculture. Excluding these, the share of urban population would be around 52%.

Rural settlements belong into three groups:

- ♦ settlements tightly connected to a city
- ♦ settlements joined with a city (two or three cities)
- ♦ settlements on the periphery (quite isolated)

Settlements tightly connected to a city, rarely to cities, are those rural settlements, which are neighbouring a city (city boundary), in the past could even be inside the city boundaries, as an administrative part of the city, later separated as a self governed settlement. As the city grows, it might become a part of the city again in the future. I would put into this group also those settlements inside the city boundaries, with in fact rural population and functions (mentioned above). This zone is a prime area to become a developed suburb of the city. Size of this zone depends on the size and strength of the city (centre), which this zone surrounds.

Settlements joined with a city, are those with daily interaction with a centre or centres, through commuting, services, transportation, shopping ..., but not as tight interaction as with first zone. Some services can be managed by rural settlements themselves, without assistance of the centre. In these zones we can find a mosaic settlement structure, some stronger rural settlements, mostly with good location on main roads, railroads, are surrounded by less developed settlements, mostly on side roads and with a lack of services.

The settlements on the periphery are located furthest from a regional centre, in valleys or on slopes of mountains, with a weak public transport connection to the centre, lack of owned cars, occasional contact with the city. They are also typical by the most traditional way of life, based on farming and forestry and having rare tourist services. Generally they are located in the very peripheral regions of the country with a small urban centre, far away from a larger city (with 50 000 or more inhabitants).

In 1996, only region of Trenčín had lesser share of rural population among 8 administrative regions in Slovakia (except of regions of Bratislava and Košice, with two largest cities) than the Slovak average, that was 43,3%. It means, that five Slovak regions are more rural than Slovak average.

Since the latest administrative division of the country from 1996 is more a political decision than geographical, we are going to use in this regional analysis functional urban regions, as they were created by Bezák (1990).

We have compared the population size in 1869 and 1991 in both rural and urban settlements in each functional urban region (FUR). As we can see in table 1, there are 3 types of regions (FUR):

1. regions (dark in Map 1) with growth rate of rural population above the Slovak average, which was 125,97%. As we see, there are 30 regions in this category, with growth rates between 130 and 191%. It means, no one could double its rural population in 122 years.

2. regions (grey in map) with growth rate under the Slovak average, but still with growth, it means above 100%

3. regions (bright colour on map 1) with negative growth rate of rural population. In these regions leave less rural population, than they did 122 years ago.

On the Map 1 we can identified 3 larger areas of important rural growth:

- ♦ east-central Slovakia - growth caused mainly by high natural increase of Roma population, which is dominantly concentrated here

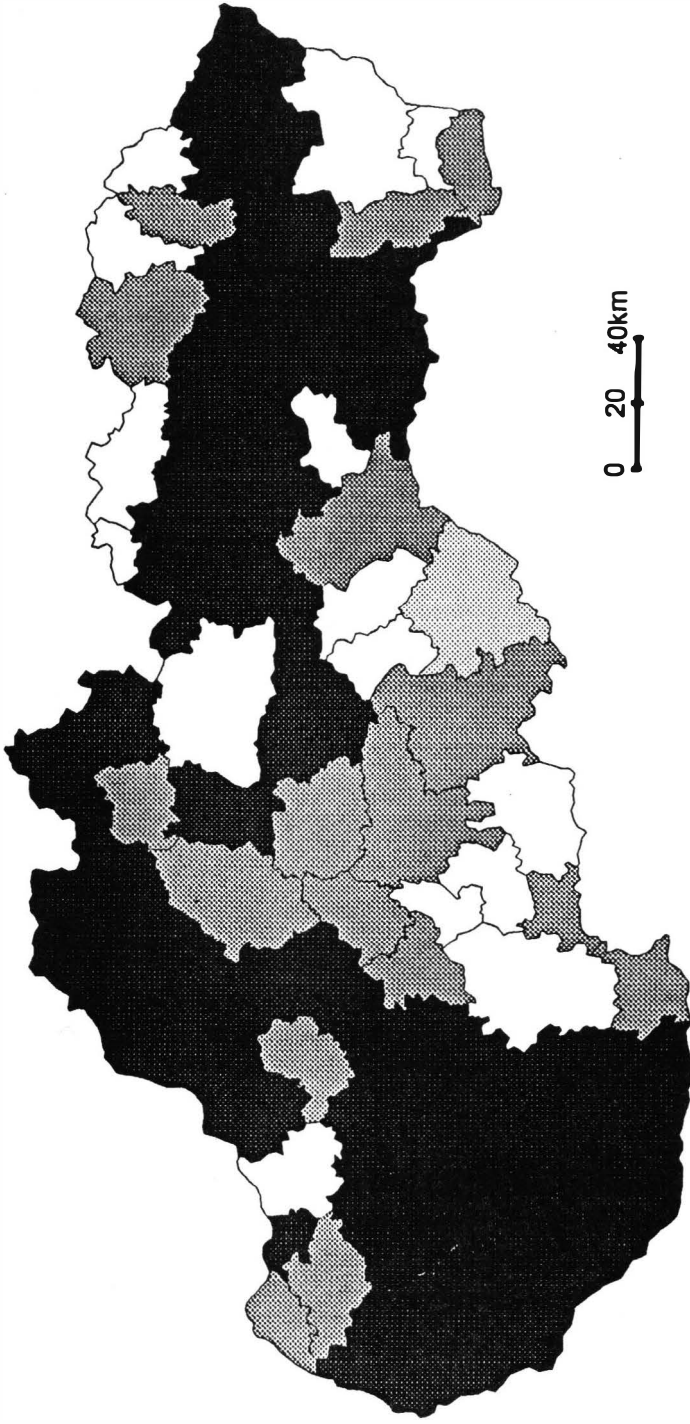


Fig. 1 Growth rate 1991/1869 of rural population in fur

- ♦ north-western Slovakia - growth caused by economic stability in the past, this part of Slovakia became the most industrialised under communist regime. Northernmost tips of this area have also high natural increase.
- ♦ south-western Slovakia - grew due to best condition for agriculture and also due to location close to the capital city of Bratislava.

Table 1 Growth rate of population 1991/1869 in FUR (ranked from the highest growth rate of rural population)

FUR	1	2	3
Trenčín	637,35	190,99	345,94
Námestovo	250,38	182,15	190,28
Topoľčany	834,81	180,98	294,63
Čadca	299,62	180,50	211,13
Prievidza	797,98	177,04	327,13
Zl. Moravce	370,32	164,38	207,16
Vranov nad Topľou	493,79	163,33	217,34
Prešov	451,72	160,48	251,91
Nitra	483,15	157,86	266,71
Dubnica nad Váhom	792,76	154,30	319,81
Púchov	567,96	153,88	218,58
Trnava	447,84	153,65	245,81
Piešťany	436,75	152,19	244,96
Žilina	643,38	150,06	264,31
Nové Zámky	359,13	146,95	196,20
Myjava	106,00	146,13	117,63
Dunajská Streda	419,46	145,72	205,79
Bratislava	547,26	145,64	344,10
Poprad	639,56	143,90	275,12
Ružomberok	496,64	142,70	222,61
Komárno	218,15	136,67	174,89
Sabinov	319,37	135,77	177,92
Spišská Nová Ves	277,43	134,29	187,01
Snina	822,04	134,08	238,54
Galanta	446,14	133,97	200,13
Považská Bystrica	705,31	133,31	275,28
Košice	611,28	131,35	291,40
Trstená	209,90	131,32	156,27
Brezno	545,23	130,89	176,19
Humenné	832,44	130,00	229,86
Bánovce n. Bebravou	577,61	119,24	199,58
Dolný Kubín	516,95	117,12	188,80
Stropkov	353,29	116,39	169,39
Žiar nad Hronom	288,36	112,45	181,22
Bardejov	491,34	110,26	166,60
Šahy	220,59	107,87	143,19
Skalica	239,12	107,17	172,39
Banská Bystrica	675,48	105,61	297,37
Kráľovský Chlmec	647,00	105,06	145,10
Rožňava	211,71	104,97	130,94

Table 1 - continue

FUR	1	2	3
Trebišov	333,94	104,17	164,20
Martin	1 119,38	103,95	253,90
Senica	244,78	103,41	141,62
Lučenec	432,20	103,27	156,40
Zvolen	449,21	103,26	218,50
Štúrovo	422,11	102,98	143,66
Žarnovica	215,17	102,96	137,45
Levice	375,56	99,39	151,52
Veľký Krtíš	525,13	96,72	134,64
Nové Mesto n/ Váhom	267,66	95,27	139,87
Michalovce	505,40	94,19	146,42
Krupina	212,67	93,59	122,09
Gelnica	120,48	91,77	100,28
Stará Ľubovňa	426,63	87,11	122,81
Liptovský Mikuláš	329,54	84,77	150,14
Rimavská Sobota	358,80	83,27	127,37
Veľké Kapušany	414,11	77,03	134,19
Banská Štiavnica	73,08	75,81	74,13
Hnúšťa	179,45	73,60	119,41
Revúca	253,48	71,78	123,98
Svidník	1 503,92	70,87	133,79
Medzilaborce	445,06	66,71	129,36
Spišská Stará Ves	212,58	61,34	84,96
Slovenská republika	445,42	125,97	212,43

FUR - functional urban region

1 - growth rate of total population in FUR

2 - growth rate of rural population in FUR

3 - growth rate of urban population in FUR

Comparing growth of rural population to growth of urban population (Map 2), we selected 5 types of regions:

1. Regions (white colour) with extremely high urban population growth in comparison to rural population growth. Only two regions Svidník (21 times bigger urban growth than rural) and Martin (10 times).
2. Regions (light grey) with very important urban population growth in comparison to rural population growth (5 - 9 times). There are 11 regions in this category.
3. Regions (grey) with 3 - 4 times (what is Slovakian average) bigger urban population growth than rural population growth. There belong the highest number of regions - 25.
4. Regions (dark grey) with slower urban population growth in comparison to rural population growth, that is the average (1 - 2 times, 21 regions).
5. Regions (dark) with slower urban than rural population growth. Only two regions Myjava in the west and Banská Štiavnica in the centre of the country, which has in fact a declining population rate in all categories.

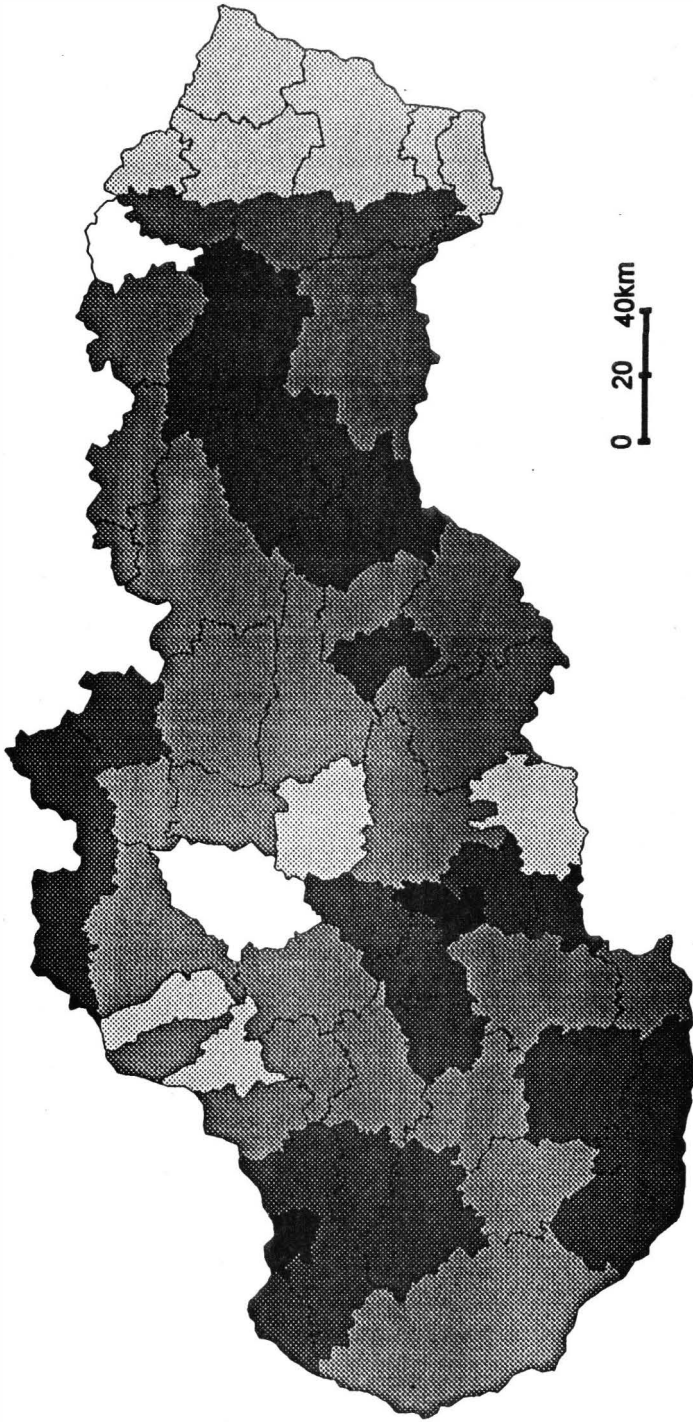


Fig. 2 Comparison of dynamics of rural and urban population in fmr

We might stress that in the last two types, rural population is still strong enough and important in regional structure. If this is result of the rural vitality or a weakness of the cities, this is the question for the further analysis.

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Statistical data

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Resume

Vidiecke osídlenie v regionálnej štruktúre Slovenska

Príspevok analyzuje pozíciu vidieckeho osídlenia v rámci regionálnej štruktúry Slovenska. Skúma jeho celkovú dynamiku aj vnútornú diferenciáciu. Hodnotí dynamiku rastu vidieckej populácie z hľadiska regionálnej diferenciácie, využívajúc priestorové jednotky - funkčné mestské regióny, vyčlenené A. Bezákom (1990).

V rámci Slovenska môžeme hovoriť o troch typoch regiónov, čo sa týka dynamiky vidieckej populácie za obdobie 1869 - 1991 (tab. 1):

1. regióny (tmavé na mape č.1) s indexom rastu vidieckej populácie väčším ako je slovenský priemer (125,97)
2. regióny (šedá farba) s rastom menším ako je slovenský priemer, ale s rastom, t.j. hodnotou nad 100,0
3. regióny (svetlá farba) s poklesom počtu vidieckej populácie za 122 rokov od 1869 do 1991

Z makrorregionálneho hľadiska (mapa 1) môžeme identifikovať tri oblasti s nadpriemerným rastom vidieckej populácie:

- ♦ centrálna časť východného Slovenska, kde bol rast spôsobený extrémnou fertilitou rómskeho etnika,
- ♦ severozápadné Slovensko, kde rastu dopomohla industrializačná politika štátu, keď v tejto časti Slovenska vytvorila hustú sieť priemyselných centier, ktoré boli vidieckou populáciou dosažiteľné dennou dochádzkou za prácou. Rastu v severnejšej časti pomohla aj najvyššia fertilita v rámci slovenského etnika.
- ♦ juhozápadné Slovensko, ktoré má najlepšie podmienky na poľnohospodárstvo a najlepšiu polohu k Bratislave

Porovnaním rastu vidieckeho a mestského obyvateľstva sme vymedzili 5 typov regiónov (mapa 2):

- ♦ regióny (biela farba) s extrémnym rastom mestského obyvateľstva v porovnaní s vidieckym. Sem patria 2 regióny Svidník a Martin.
- ♦ regióny (svetlosivá) s významným rastom mestského obyvateľstva v porovnaní s vidieckym (5 až 9 väčší rast, 11 regiónov)
- ♦ regióny (sivá) s 3 až 4 násobne vyšším rastom mestského ako vidieckeho obyvateľstva, čo predstavuje slovenský priemer a patrí sem najviac, až 25 regiónov
- ♦ regióny (tmavošedá) s podpriemerným rastom mestského obyvateľstva v rámci Slovenska (iba 1 až 2 násobne vyšší rast než u vidieckej populácii, 21 regiónov)
- ♦ regióny (čierna) s väčším rastom vidieckej ako mestskej populácie. Celkom dva výnimočné regióny sem patria Myjava a Banská Štiavnica, ktorá vykazuje úbytok obyvateľstva vo všetkých kategóriách (tab. 1)

Možno tvrdiť, že práve pri posledných dvoch typoch regiónov má vidiecke osídlenie stále dôležitú rolu v regionálnej štruktúre. Či to je ale výsledkom vyššej rurálnej vitality alebo naopak slabého rozvoja miest, je otázkou ďalšej analýzy, ktorú chceme uskutočniť v budúcnosti.