

THE EVOLUTION OF THE RESIDENT POPULATION IN BALIŢ COMMUNE

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Abstract: *The analysis and research conducted on demographic developments in recent decades is based on the continuing need for development and ensuring well-being at the local level. In recent years, important quantitative and qualitative changes have taken place in the economic and social structure of Balați commune, which have determined changes in the number and demographic structure of the resident population. The diversity of characteristics that place the population as one of the most complex statistical activities, targets at the level of Balați commune and aspects such as socio-economic disparities, labor market (urban migration, international), access to social educational, cultural and medical services, access to infrastructure (roads), public services and living standards.*

Key words: *population, rural development, resident population, labor market, communication*

INTRODUCTION

Population statistics have always been a complex set of data collection activities, due to the complexity of the characteristics that are the object of the analysis of continuous changes in its structure and size. Socio-economic, demographic, social, cultural and communication reasons require researching the number and establishing its structure [16, 17]. The need to know the structure of the population [11, 12], in Balați commune, is given by the importance of these characteristics in defining the role and place of each person in the process of population growth, economic activity, standard of living and social organization in general. Balați is a commune, located in the eastern part of Timiș County, composed of the villages Balați (residence), Bodo, Fădimac and Târgoviște (Figure 1). The geographical position of Balați commune, (positioned in the Bega river basin, at the intersection of the parallel of 45°49' north latitude, with the meridian of 21°53' east longitude), is at a distance of 65 km from Timișoara city, 16 km from the municipality of Lugoj and 29 km from the town of Făget, has a special importance that favors the development of local physical-geographical elements, which in turn have a strong imprint in the evolution of economic, tourist, social and cultural factors of the commune [4,5,7]. The first documentary attestation of Balați dates from 1488 year. Being located on the river Bega, "500 meters from the riverbed" [5], there were large floods, which made some inhabitants affected by the natural regime to move to another side, protected from floods. Thus was born a new village, named Balațiul de Sus, located on the "valley of the Church", and the old settlement was called Balațiul de Jos. In 1554, these settlements were united, under a community, led by a Roman-Dacian leader named Balu (white), at that time the community took over the name of captain. Later in the 7th century the arrival of the Slavs, transformed Balu (former name of Balați commune) into Balați, from the name of the community, they removed the ending and added the suffix "- inți", representative Slavic. Thus, at the root of the word Balu, adding the plural suffix "- int" the name of the village settlement becomes Balați, the same situation is found in the case of Budați from Timiș county and Bogdăni and Zorlinți villages from Caraș-Severin county. Balați is mentioned in documents from the 1690 year, a sign that it continued to exist during the Turkish occupation, but also in the 1717 year under Austrian occupation. Later, in 1740, the Austrians laid the foundations of new settlements, settlements on which are still today the

villages Balañ, Bodo, Fădimac and Târgoviște [5]. The presence over the years of different occupations, made Balañ commune to be characterized by a multiethnic diversity (Romanians, Hungarians, Germans, Serbs, Slovaks, Roma).

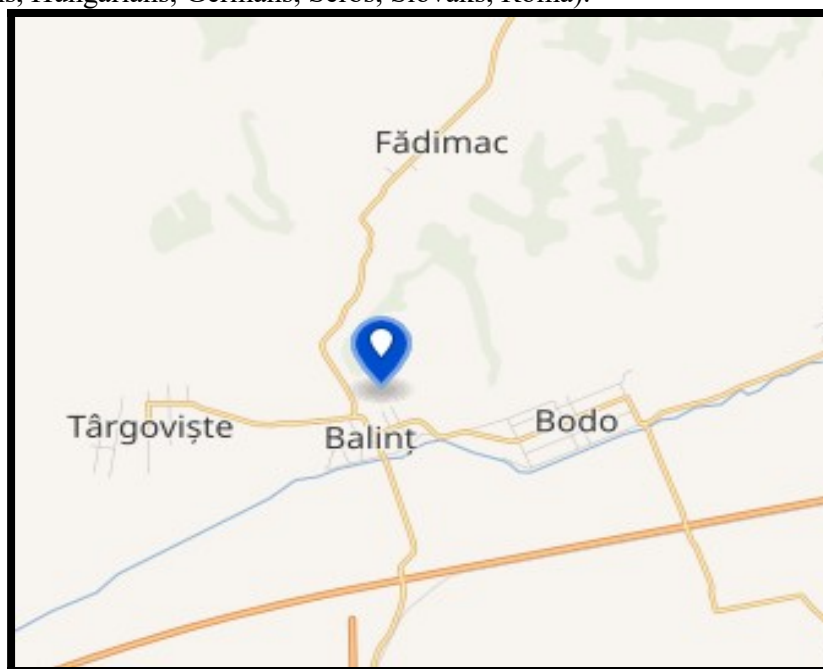


Figure 1. Map of Balañ commune

Source: <https://ro.wikipedia.org> [18]

MATERIALS AND METHODS

Given the need to delimit the research area and clarify the terms and the fact that this research has assumed a historical perspective on the resident population of Balañ commune was used: bibliographic study, method of data processing and representation and collection, consultation and analysis of statistical data.

The bibliographic study was conducted based on theoretical documentation and consultation of several works of sociological investigation, economic, statistical, and social studies in the social and communication field, but also related fields such as tourism and economics. The method of processing and graphical representation of the analyzed data was used, with emphasis on the statistical data collected, consulted and analyzed in advance. The following sources of statistical information were consulted during the research: the National Institute of Statistics, information provided by the headquarters, the Timiș County Directorate of Statistics, Tempo database and the administrative-territorial unit represented by Balañ City Hall.

RESEARCH RESULTS

The evolution of demographic phenomena cannot be analyzed separately, but only together with other changes that inevitably influence the demographic aspects: birth rate, mortality and the effects of the migratory movement [6,11]. The issue of demographic transition is also of particular interest for Balañ commune [14], given the obligation to focus on harmonizing population growth, sustainable development of the commune (environment, consumption, production, education) and economic, cultural and social branches [1,2,9]. The numerical evolution has registered over the years decreases in terms of population number, with the mention of an unequal value over time on the territory of

the commune. This phenomenon arose due to the changes that took place in the evolution of the birth rate and migrations.

Since 1956 there has been a decrease in population per commune with up to 300 inhabitants until 1966, when we witness a process of population decline, when it begins to decrease by an average of 400 inhabitants per year (Table 1.) [5,13,14,15]. This long period of continuous descent is due to the lack of young people due to the co-operation of galloping agriculture and industry, the very low birth rate and the high mortality rate.

Table 1.**The evolution of the population on the localities of Balinț commune**

local	1966	1977	1992	2002	2004
Balinț	962	806	609	625	626
Bodo	829	625	521	471	471
Fădimac	545	327	269	390	390
Târgoviște	651	500	450	266	266
Total	2987	2258	1849	1752	1753

Source: Gabriela Alina Bologa, Ioan V. Ionescu, 2006 [5]

At the level of Balinț commune, the depth of the deterioration of the age structure of the population and the implications of this deterioration are less known. As can be seen in Table 2. the number and share of the young population is decreasing and, consequently, the number and share of the elderly population is increasing, thus accentuating the phenomenon of demographic aging. It is also predominantly aged in rural areas, the Balinț commune is no exception, the average being over 60 years old (Table 2), so that even after 1989, the year of the fall of the communist regime, private property on agricultural land was restored, there were no actual increases. This aging index highlights an imbalance between generations.

Table 2.**Population structure by age groups and by localities Balinț commune localities**

	Total	0-4 years	5-9 years	10-14 years	15-19 years	20-64 years	Over 60 years
Balint	609	30	24	35	29	339	132
Bodo	521	29	25	2.3	27	282	135
Fădimac	269	12	6	13	19	151	68
Targoviste	450	19	25	24	22	292	108
Total	1849	90	80	95	97	1064	463

Source: Gabriela Alina Bologa, Ioan V. Ionescu, 2006 [5]

The resident population registered in 2020 in Balinț commune is 1578 inhabitants. The negative values of the natural increase, combined with those of external migration, caused the resident population to decrease compared to the resident population in 2011 (1589 inhabitants) and 2016 (1602 inhabitants) [16]. The year 2019 registered the lowest number of inhabitants in the history of the commune, a direct result of the trend registered at the level of the demographic phenomenon of mortality (Figure 2) [16]. The changes that took place in the dynamics of the resident population in Balinț commune are the direct result of the migration in the urban environment, as well as through the emigration of the Hungarian population. Given the fact that the main economic activity is represented by agriculture, in order to significantly increase the population, the degree of mechanization and application of advanced technologies must be increased, respectively the practice of intensive agriculture correlated with the development of full processing.

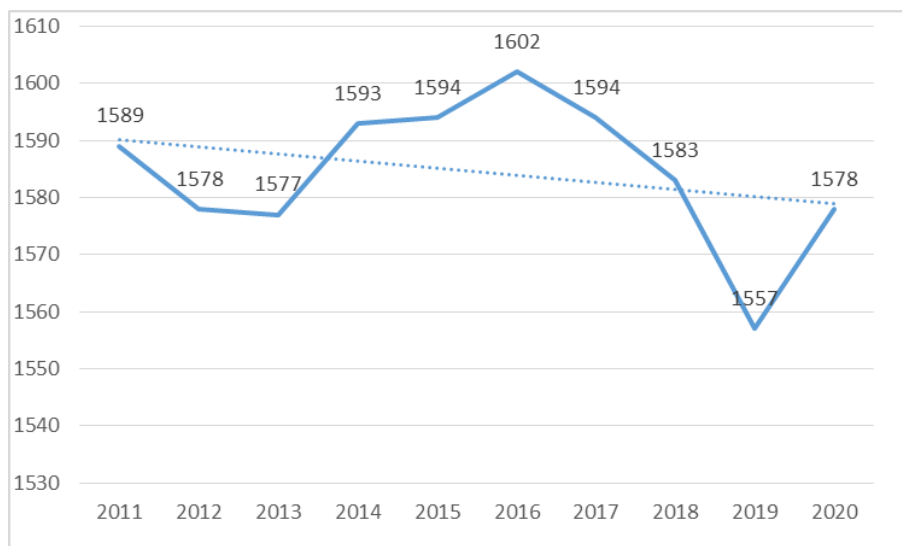


Figure 2. Evolution of the resident population in Balinț commune

Regarding the structure of the resident population by sex, the female population continues to be predominant, its share in the total population per commune decreasing very slightly from 4.2% (2011) to 3.4% (2017), to 2.6% (2018) and 2.1% (2019), but registering an upward evolution in 2020 (4.13%) [13]. In 2015 and 2016, the ratio of masculinity was equal to the ratio of females [13] (Figure 3). The factors of decreasing the birth rate are multiple, among them: the emancipation of women and their increasing participation in economic activities outside the household, increasing the duration and level of education, weakening the influence of cultural norms, increasing social mobility, high cost of raising a child, the reduction of the child's economic function and especially of his role in the economic security of the elderly, but also the emergence of modern contraceptives [1,3,8,10].

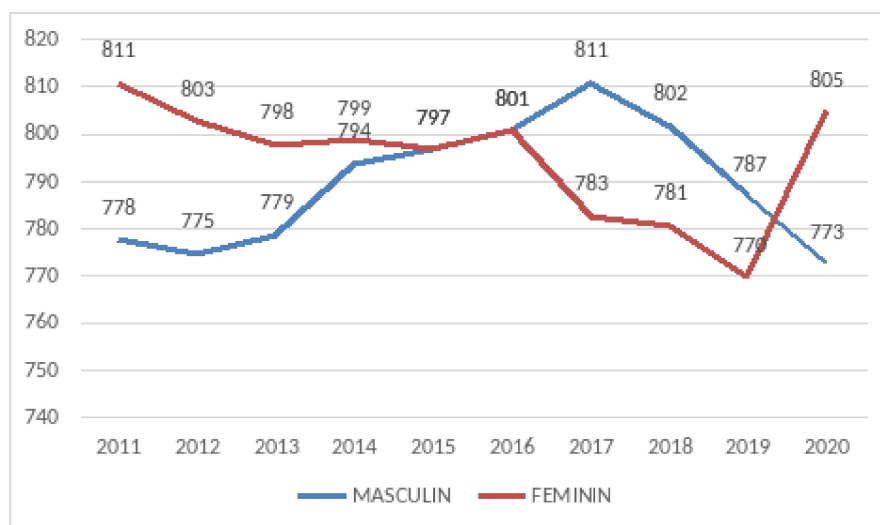


Figure 3. Evolution by sex of the resident population in Balinț commune

CONCLUSIONS

The resident population of Balinț commune has undergone significant changes over time. The study of population evolution is an increasingly complex process, being largely influenced by natural growth, migration and declining birth rates. Certainly, the correlation of the birth rate decrease with the high percentage of mortality continues to have inhibitory effects on population growth.

Given that birth rate is an extremely sensitive phenomenon to changes in social, economic, cultural and legislative factors, population mortality has more complex subordinate units, the impact of changes in socio-economic elements on stabilizing the phenomenon of depopulation being less pronounced in the long run short. The mortality rate is influenced, among other things, and the accuracy of medical services provided to the population. The return to a normal functioning of demographic phenomena is a long and complex process that can be completed only by pre-established, concise, long-term measures, with an emphasis on the development of the economic sector. The stabilization of the depopulation phenomenon of Balinț commune requires these concrete measures in view of rural development, the creation of new jobs and the development of conditions corresponding to the optimal standard of living.

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