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Impacts of Demographic Change on Economic Development and Territorial Cohesion – Example of Serbia

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Demographic change induces significant socio-economic impacts. Their extent differentiates from country to country, as well as within the national borders, which results in significant regional differences. The regional level is commonly a subject of decision-making, economic development, and spatial planning; in Serbia, however, it has been rather neglected, among other reasons, for not having administrative nor legal autonomy (except autonomous provinces Vojvodina & Kosovo and Metohija). As a result, regional disparities in Serbia are among the greatest in Europe. This research is designed as a case study that examines demographic change impacts on regional economic development. Firstly, NUTS 3 regions in Serbia will be divided into several groups as a result of cluster analysis, including testing the most optimal number of clusters. Secondly, clusters will be analysed through 30 socio-economic indicators in the field of education, mobility, occupation, employment, etc. The clusters will be determined based on population growth rate (2002-2011) and average population age (2011), i.e. the main demographic change aspects, and socioeconomic indicators will refer to 2011, as the most recent year with available data. The research results will provide further insights into the way and extent to which demographic change impacts regional economic development, hence territorial cohesion.