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**EXTREME PERIPHERY IN THE CORE REGION OF CROATIA - THE
ŽUMBERAK CASE****Abstract:**

The importance of Zagreb urban region, according to the population, employment, transport links etc., distinguishes it as an exceptional core region of Croatia, especially after 1991. Nevertheless there are the areas inside the core region that are extremely marginal and peripheral such as Žumberak. This mountainous area on the Croatia-Slovenia border is situated within the 30 km isodistance from Zagreb, but is extremely marginal due to its weak transport accessibility (no direct bus lines towards Zagreb) as well as lack of central places and economic activities. The consequences are extreme depopulation, small fragmented and dispersed settlements (average population is 19). Today Žumberak has 8 times less population (1500) than a century ago (12000). Young population is 4 times outnumbered by old population (ageing index is 388) which counts 40% in total population. Traditional agrarian landscape is mostly neglected and deserted with the significant increase of forest areas. The one positive change noticed in the landscape transformation relates to a sporadic location of planned sport-recreation and tourist places (ethno village, golf terrains) in the most accessible parts. There are also some possibilities to develop this area as potentially second-home/recreational area for the city dwellers but this task requires much better transport infrastructure.

Keywords:

Zagreb urban region, core and periphery, marginal region, depopulation, landscape transformation, mountainous area