SUMMARY

Žumberak is a historical Croatian region belonging to the Central Croatia, which is specific by its mountain features, preserved natural landscape and landmarks, rich cultural and historical heritage and unfortunately peripheral location and long-term unfavorable demographic and economic processes. It was the very historical heritage of the Military Frontier that significantly determined the present-day unfavorable demographic processes which are, simply put, the consequence of the belated modernization and absence of the social and geographic transformation of that rural area. The Military Frontier system generated the agrarian overpopulation. When the Military Frontier dissolved, the inhabitants started moving from Žumberak, which resulted in population ageing, declining birthrates and finally demographic collapse. It is fascinating how it is possible that the region that is located only about 60 kilometers away from Zagreb is at the very edge of the demographic existence despite the numerous development potentials. To that end it is necessary to review the development potentials of Žumberak as soon as possible and to develop and implement revitalization plans which would transform Žumberak from a peripheral depopulation area marked by an economic crisis into a prosperous and modern rural area which would be able to and which would know how to optimally evaluate its specificities. The future revitalization and development of Žumberak should be based on acceptable forms of tourism and excursions and also on environmentally sustainable agriculture the products of which would be processed in local plants and then placed on the market. Considering that the revitalization is not possible without the younger population moving to this area at their favorable working and demoreproductive age, it is necessary to develop measures which would enable and encourage such process as soon as possible.

Keywords: Žumberak, depopulation, population ageing, low traffic accessibility, revitalization, deperipheralization.