

Emancipation tendencies of Lusatian Sorbs and their demographic context

Abstract:

This bachelor thesis deals with the emancipation tendencies of the Lusatian Sorbs and their demographic context. The goal of the thesis is to analyse published statistical data on the number of Lusatian Sorbs in different time periods and to explain the reasons behind their differences. It further aims to assess the linguistic situation in Lusatia, the number of Lusatian Sorb speakers and the presence of educational institutions and language programmes. Finally, the thesis focuses on examining the emancipation of Lusatian Sorbs in different social spheres where these tendencies are manifested. The conceptual framework defines the key concepts of this issue. Tables and graphs are compiled for the comparison of data. Further method is qualitative analysis of printed and internet sources. A more detailed examination focused on the five selected municipalities, which lie in the current core of the Catholic part of Lusatia, shows that the population in the selected municipalities is ageing and at the same time the number of Lusatian Sorbian speakers is decreasing, especially among the younger generation. The thesis further characterises the basic elements of Lusatian Sorbian autonomy which is reflected in institutions, media, culture and education, the Witaj project and the 2+ concept. Despite these activities, the success of emancipatory tendencies to preserve the Lusatian-Sorbian ethnicity is unclear.

Keyword: Lusatian Sorbs, emancipation, ethnicity, national minority, demographic development