

## THE BULGARIAN SOCIETY IN DEMOGRAPHIC CONTEXT

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**ABSTRACT:** AFTER 1990, BULGARIA BY A SYSTEM POPULATION GROWTH LED TO NEGATIVE POPULATION GROWTH, WHICH IS AMPLIFIED IN THE LATE TWENTIETH AND EARLY TWENTY-FIRST CENTURY. THIS ARTICLE HAS ITS IMPORTANCE NOT ONLY FOR UNDERSTANDING THE PRESENT IN BULGARIA, BUT ALSO FOR ITS FUTURE.

**KEY WORDS:** DEMOGRAPHY, DEMOGRAPHIC DECLINE, POPULATION GROWTH, GROWTH RATE AND FERTILITY, MIGRATION, MORTALITY, POVERTY

**BULGARIA** as a state organization for more than 14 centuries stand on demographic map of Europe and managed to double its population in the last century has elapsed, can not easily be set aside from the notion that this population reduces unacceptably high rate that it prefigured serious problems in the future of Bulgaria as a country and its national security. In fact, from 1990 happened first deviation from the path of population growth and led to negative population growth in the late twentieth century. Development in the early twenty-first century confirms the severe adverse effects of the decline of both the natural and the mechanical growth. This characteristic of the country from the standpoint of demographic state, represented by demographic profile at the end of the first decade of this century is a snapshot, which has its importance not only for the present but also for the future [6].

**OCCURRING** in the late twentieth century, major changes in the demographics of Bulgaria continue to have a significant impact in the first decade of the twenty-first century. The population, regardless of the fading wave of emigration, mainly as a result of negative population growth continued to decline from 7891 thousand, in 2001 to 7668 thousand in 2005 and to 7606 thousand in the end of 2008. The rate of population decline in the country back in 1946, however, when the ratios were others - high population growth, high fertility and low mortality [10], [11], [12], (Table №1).

**Table №1**  
*Number and population growth 1880 – 2009.*

Period, years	Number at the end of the period	Growth compared to the previous period		
		Number, thousand	Index, %	Average rate, %

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1880 – 1887	3154	-	110,6*	1,45
1887 – 1905	4036	882	128,0	1,56
1905 – 1926	5479	1443	135,8	1,70
1926 – 1946	7029	1550	128,3	1,42
1946 – 1965	8228	1199	117,1	0,90
1965 – 1985	8949	721	108,8	0,44
1985 – 2005	7718	- 1231	86,2	- 0,69**
2005 - 2010	7400	- 318	95,9	- 0,82

\* Estimated on the basis of the first censuses 1880 and 1884

\*\* The negative growth refers to the population growth to -0,5 average and the negative migration balance, or changes due around two thirds of population growth and one third of emigration.

*To do further reasoning, I will "set foot" on the research performed around Population Census in 2001. In the scientific community in Bulgaria, the results of this study are more reliable than those from Population Census 2010 where due to serious errors in the methodology reported later, the statistics are inaccurate.*

**WHAT** is today the demographic situation in the country? This can be determined by the level of basic demographic indicators of the population after 2000 [10], [11], [12], (Table №2).

**Table №2**  
*Basic demographic indicators*

Indicators	Years		
	2001	2005	2009
<b>Population</b>	<b>7891095</b>	<b>7668180</b>	<b>7563710</b>
Under working age	1288193	128612	1096738
Working age	4673219	4786983	4772701
Over working age	1929683	1752585	1700711
Age dependency ratio *	46,8	44,5	45,1
Proportion young/old **	88,5	78,1	77,7
Demographic replacement ***	123,6	114,7	90,2
Foaling contingent	1907430	1856003	1750090
Women from 15 to 26 years (‰)	34,2	33,2	31,1
Women from 27 to 49 years (‰)	65,8	66,8	68,9
Average age at birth of first child (years)			
Average number of children born from one woman	25,1	25,7	26,0
Natural increase (‰)	1,24	1,21	1,57
Overall increase (‰)	-5,4	-5,6	-3,5
Overall increase (per 1,000 people)	-44188	-54333	-42890
Live births	-5,6	-7,1	-5,6
Birthrate (‰)	68180	71075	80956
Total fertility rate	9,2	8,6	10,7
(TFR) (number of children)			
Overall fertility (‰)	1,74	1,31	1,57
Dead	35,7	37,9	43,1
Overall mortality (‰)	112368	113620	110523
Child mortality (‰)	14,2	14,6	14,2
Average life expectancy – years	14,4	10,4	9,0
Men - years			
Women - years	72,07	72,61	73,40
Rate of demographic aging ****	69,07	68,68	69,90
	76,32	75,39	77,10
	98,3	98,1	99,5

- \* Population aged under 15 and over 65 to the population aged 15 to 64 years.
- \*\* Population aged under 14 years to the population aged over 65 years.
- \*\*\* Population aged 15-19 to the population aged 60-64 years.
- \*\*\*\* Increase the proportion of working age population over the previous year.

**OBVIOUSLY** mortality emerged as one of the most serious demographic problem for the country. From 1990 to today Bulgaria is the only country in the European Union, which marks the mortality steadily increase and the highest level - over 14 ‰.

**OPPOSITE** is the picture at birth rate. For almost a century continues the systematic reduction of its level to arrive at the end of the last century to the extreme values of 7,0 ‰ (1997). In the early twenty-first century the births increased to reach the level of about 10 ‰, by which today Bulgaria is among the countries with average European birth rate. Unfortunately, the continued reduction of the birthing contingent - 1907430 of women of fertile age in 2001 their number reached 1,816,002 in 2008, or only eight years there has been a decrease of 91 248 women. As a result, if this trend continues in the coming years there could hardly be expected to increase the birth rate.

**AGAINST** the background of these two demographic dimensions follow important implications for the demographic profile of our population at the beginning of the new century, presenting a threat to the society.

**AT** the beginning of the XXI century Bulgaria enters with a negative natural population growth. Every year the population reduced by over 40 thousand people and this trend is likely to continue over the next few decades.

**THE** migration processes in the early twenty-first century is accompanied by some peculiarities. After mass emigration wave in the early 90s of last century, the process of emigration from the country gradually subsides. Unfortunately there is no any official statistics on the number of emigrants abroad Bulgarian citizens. In the period 2001 - 2008, on the rather can speak for transforming emigration into two streams, which also is missing reliable information. The first stream is formed by the existing restrictions in access to the labor market for Bulgarian workers. As a result, there has been a kind of shuttle migration to external labor markets for short or long term work without a contract with the return to the country over time. This shuttle migration directly determines the social life of Bulgaria.

**THIS** stream is composed mainly of people with low education, which in the Bulgarian labor market can not find work. The second stream of migrants to the countries most EU is composed of young people wishing to receive higher education in European universities. This stream is fed each year from around 8-10000 young people who have completed secondary education. Unfortunately also is missing information on how many of them after completing their higher education returned to their country and what part of them remain as economic migrants.

**THE** internal migration continues to be the main factor in the depopulation of certain areas. There has been a reverse migration to villages but for the most part, these are people of retirement age who are still living and able to work in the private retail sector in order to provide additional income in kind.

**So**, with what kind of demographic profile enter Bulgaria in the early twenty-first century? Is this favorable profile, suggesting population growth or negative outlining

concerns about human development in the country? Comparison of key demographic indicators shows that concern about our population will occupy a growing place in the everyday life of the future. High mortality rate, the negative natural growth, boosted by periods of intense emigration of people, mostly young age of country population aging and reduce the cost of the active population, low birth rates and declining fertility contingents are elements of the demographic processes that keep population growth. Unfortunately, demographic trends occur with long-acting, which means that we must make efforts doubled and tripled to overcome in the long term.

**WITH** current trends of the rural population, leading to a contraction of their demographic and economic potential, the contribution of rural areas in the future development of the country will get smaller.

**CONDITION** of the Bulgarian village requires alternative employment on the basis of natural resources, tourism and local services. Decisions must be provided through better access to jobs in nearby towns to keep the population in rural areas and turn them into an attractive place to live and work.

**ONGOING** processes in the country of internal migration in this period predominantly negative consequences for national security - the population is concentrated in a small number of settlements (center) and the depopulation of many villages (periphery). As a result of this trend is unbalanced demographic and economic development of the country in the near future will create serious difficulties for the national and regional governments.

**APPEAR** and demographic aspects of poverty in Bulgaria. They are as a result of the economic crisis in recent years, exacerbating the social system. The number of people below the poverty line grows at the end of 2012 was 1673 thousand persons (22.3% percent of the population). The percentage of people unemployed for over 12 months annually grow by 22% since 2008. The amount of social benefits and compensations paid by the NII has grown six times in the last decade - from 169 million in 2001 to 1.04 billion in 2012. Bulgaria is qualified as the country with the highest risk of poverty and social exclusion in the European Union - 49.1% of the population in 2011. The data show that the current welfare system is inefficient and does not fulfill its basic functions at a satisfactory level.

**CATEGORY** of the poor in this country is not a homogeneous group with clear social profile. Those living in poverty are deprivation and frustration, but among them you can find people with any education, gender, ethnicity, age, religion. In Bulgaria except pensioners and unemployed, according to the classical criteria are most at risk of poverty trap, fall and occupied by low or irregularly paid wages. However, there are permanently excluded groups and the risk of reproduction of inequalities in life chances between generations (inherited poverty).

IN BULGARIA THERE ARE REGIONAL DISPARITIES IN QUALITY OF LIFE. The territorial disparities are exacerbated by the uneven distribution of investment and overall they continue to retain overall economic growth of the country. Mapping poverty in the country seems drastic differences in the spatial plan. The share of poor communities ranged from 1.8% in the capital Sofia to 53.8% in region Boynitsa. Significant differences in the profile of poverty in cities and villages. Urban poverty is monetary, while rural poverty is about lack of jobs, poor or inaccessible health care, education and social services. In rural subsistence consumption continue to form a significant part of total consumption at the expense of income from wages or entrepreneurship.

**THERE** are too bright contrasts in the various social systems and tools to influence the reduction of poverty. Pensions as a major social transfer are most essential. In reducing the poverty in Bulgaria, regardless of their low nominal amount. This is due to their relatively high share of total household income - 22.1% against 47.7% relative weight of wages. The remaining social transfers have little impact on reducing poverty. According to data for 2007 - the poverty rate before social transfers by 40.5%, when the pensions dropped sharply to 17.2%, then the remaining social transfers - only to 14.1%. It's a testament both to the low level of social benefits, and family allowances, and the inefficient allocation of resources to the poorest. Their size and disposition of the system should be modified so as not to form a risk groups, which would undermine the social security in the future.

**THESE** statistics and their analysis make it possible to display the following

### SUMMARIES AND CONCLUSIONS:

1. Started in the last century, process of systematically reducing the birth rate continues at the beginning of the new century.
2. The data from the demographic statistics show that since the beginning of the century to the present day the proportion of illegitimate births to all live births steadily and rapidly increasing. While in the eighties in our every tenth child was illegitimate, the early twenty-first century is already illegitimate child every second.
3. The mortality rate in Bulgaria started to rise from 1975 onwards, in recent years it systematically increases.
4. Significant changes are observed in the age structure of the population in the country. Decreasing the proportion of younger generations and the share of adults.
5. Differences in the birth rate among the population of different ethnic groups led to today's differences between the ethnic composition of children and young people and the general population.
6. The proportion of Bulgarian young generation is considerably less, and with time the trend is increasingly reduced. The data for the age structure of the population of the three main ethnic groups in the country show that the aging process is most pronounced among the Bulgarians.
7. The economic crisis has radically changed the environment in which human development takes place by first substantially reduce employment opportunities for labor resources. Reduced labor income affect the household budget, where they are the main source, and reduce multiple perspectives for the development of human resources. The households pass in mode "Survival", which means targeting of spending to meet the basic living needs and reduction of those that are aimed at the development of household members.
8. The poverty continues to be one of the mass social risks at the beginning of the new millennium. Its massiveness and duration are a prerequisite for the generation (and accumulation) more social risks on individuals. Equality it is almost flush, but is especially pronounced in younger age groups up to 24 years and in the villages.

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