



POPULATION **and** DEVELOPMENT



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CHANGING FAMILY

Ever since the United Nations declared 1994 as the International Year for the Family a growing body of literature and debate has taken place. Many definitions and positions about the family have been discussed, disputed, argued and further clarified.

From a demographic perspective, the family has also gone through tremendous alterations and change in modern times. It has experienced different statuses and roles among its constituent members. It has been subject to changing and adjusting socialization processes and impact. With increased urbanization, changing modes of production, growing globalization and easier exposure to different modes of family and social organizations among world human communities, the family has gone from a traditional extended network with a large number of children and kinship and perhaps a somewhat hierarchical structure of decision making to a nuclear family type, certainly with fewer children and kinship, and perhaps a more participatory and individual human rights based mode of internal family dynamics.

Beyond the differing views and perspectives that may enjoy legitimacy and endorsement depending on different political, so-

cial and cultural contexts and times, it is an undisputable fact that the institution of the family has been for millennia a primary breeding and socialization hub for human physical, emotional and intellectual growth and for shaping, reproducing and inculcating individual and social identities, values and codes of conduct of all sorts.

It is therefore the primary social unit that under no circumstances should be allowed to endure or suffer any want, insecurity, helplessness or vulnerability of any kind. It is also the responsibility of all societies, and all interest groups in any society including governments, public authorities and institutions of civil society to ensure that the institution of the family is availed every economic, social, legal, environmental, political and cultural support and every secure space, security and protection possible for it to grow healthily and rewardingly within its own environment.

We would like to congratulate Moldova for its commitment to family policies and for having successfully celebrated the National Family Festival on 10-16 May this year particularly as the World was celebrating the International Day of the Family on May 15.



*François Farah Ph.D.,
UNFPA Country Director for Moldova*

INTERNATIONAL CHILDREN'S DAY

International Children's Day was mentioned for the first time in August 1924 in Geneva at the World Conference for the Well-being of Children, in the framework of which, representatives of various countries adopted the Declaration on the Protection of Children. At this conference, many Governments decided to introduce "Children's Day" in the calendar of national holidays. Later, in 1954, United Nations Children's Fund issued a recommendation for adopting the holiday by all states. Most of countries, including the Republic of Moldova, celebrate this day on June 1. On this occasion, public debates and mass media campaigns on children's rights and responsibilities, as well as various social actions dedicated to children are organized.

INTERNATIONAL FAMILY DAY

International Family Day is traditionally celebrated on May 15, in accordance with the decision of the United Nations General Assembly adopted in 1993. The appointing of this day was aimed at drawing authorities' and public organizations' attention on the problems faced by families in contemporary society. In the Republic of Moldova, Family Day was for the first time marked in 2009, when the Ministry of Labor, Social Protection and Family organized the Festival of Family. The Festival of Family was also held in 2010, from May 10-16, being organized jointly by the Government of the Republic of Moldova and United Nations Agencies. The event was expanded nationally throughout ten districts of the republic. The festival promoted the values of family, love, mutual respect, equal sharing of household responsibilities, fighting all forms of violence against women, children and the elderly.

This year, the Parliament of the Republic of Moldova has declared May 15 the Family Day, being included in the list of official holidays.

WORLD POPULATION DAY

World Population Day is observed annually on July 11. The event was established by the United Nations Organization in 1987, when the world's population reached five billion people.

Population Day is aimed at focusing public opinion attention on the urgency and importance of population issues, especially in the context of global development plans and programs and the need to find solutions to these problems.

The theme of 2010 World Population Day is "Everyone counts", referring to the importance of high quality statistical data and public involvement in opinion polls and surveys for achieving progress in sustainable development.

"Population data generation, analysis and dissemination represents a crucial process for the development of policies and programs", mentioned Thoraya Ahmed Obaid, UNFPA Executive Director.

At present, the world's population exceeds 6.7 billion people. UN estimates that in 2050 there will be between 7.9 and 10.9 billion people on the globe.

In particular, the message of World Population Day in 2010 is focused on the need to conduct censuses, data analysis and on the important role of the Government and his development partners, including UNFPA, in this process. By counting and recording persons we ensure the fact that everyone's needs are taken into account. Conclusive demographic data are extremely important for planning education, healthcare and public transportation services, for developing policies based on population projections, as well as for monitoring programs and evaluate their efficiency.

In the Republic of Moldova, the last census was conducted in October 2004. According to UN recommendations, the period between censuses should not exceed 10 years. Therefore, the next census should be conducted no later than 2014. A census would give us an updated demographic picture of the country and would bring us closer to international standards in the field. Worth to be mentioned is the fact that, at the global level, in 2010 censuses are planned to be conducted in 53 countries and regions, which will cover 41% of the world's population. It is expected that by the end of 2014, when the present round of censuses will be completed, 98.4% of the world's population go through this process.

**Valeriu SAINCUS,**

PhD in geography, university lecturer, Academy of Economic Studies from Moldova

FAMILY BUILDING AND CHILDBIRTH IN WEDLOCK – A PRIORITY OF DEMOGRAPHIC POLICIES

Supporting measures that stimulate family building and childbirth in wedlock represent a sustainable solution to redress the demographic crisis in the Republic of Moldova. This opinion is held by the demographer Valeriu Sainsus, who specifies that, the development and the good implementation of demographic policies in the field of reproduction is crucial in this regard.

- *Today, young people get married on average 4-5 years later than their parents;*
- *Every fifth child is born out of wedlock;*
- *For ensuring generational replacement, families with three children must exceed half of the total number of families.*

FAMILY INCREASES THE QUANTITY AND QUALITY OF HUMAN FACTOR

Family policy in the field of reproduction requires the restructuring of measures and values promoted in this regard. Despite the European aspiration of the Republic of Moldova, it is necessary to change the emphasis from quantitative demographic measures to qualitative ones, due to the fact that, at present, the quality of human factor prevails over the quantity of human factor. Employment opportunities are dictated by the skills and qualities of the person, and family has the major role in ensuring the demographic quality. Family accomplishes two extremes of the population quality: demographic quality through reproduction, and social quality through education. Therefore, the demographic policy has the task of fulfilling the two functions of family: demographic function – demographic continuity of the human species, and social function – preservation and development of social quality.

The basic environment for a qualitative demographic reproduction is family.

The concept of reproduction requires establishing the optimum size of family for the country at the given moment, as well as for the long term. Family size is the lever or the central mechanism of the reproduction concept. It is necessary to promote a unique concept, both for the rural population and the urban population. A different concept would generate irregularities in society and would lead to speculations, affecting responsibility and social equity of social strata.

FACTORS INFLUENCING THE INSTITUTION OF FAMILY

The present generation enters marriage or tends to enter marriage rather late, on average 4-5 years later than their parents; hence the demographic probability of having children is less. This is partially explained by the existing educational system: three-year higher education program and

two-year master degree program, which the majority of youth intends to pursue. Often, the young family consciously postpones childbirth due to financial problems and socioeconomic factors (job, place of living). Moreover, the young generation does not have faith in family life, a proof to it being the increasing number of divorces, delaying age at marriage, cohabitation and backing out of marriage throughout life. This behavior is typical for a large part of young population of reproductive age in the Republic of Moldova. At the same time, it is known that the birth of two children increases family stability, thus being achieved two major objectives: family stability and the probability of reproduction. That is why, the promotion of family institution and childbirth in the wedlock is essential for the sustainable development of the country.

For a period of time, young people traditionally planned marriage after graduating university. At present, young people postpone marriage because of the lack of financial support from their parents. This determines the spread of cohabitation to the detriment of marriage. Young people who have never been married or were previously married prefer cohabitation, because they consider it as an optimal arrangement. Cohabitation creates a state of comfort to young people who indulge in the given situation, when they don't have commitments to each other and family responsibilities, thus delaying registration of marriage and childbirth.

Reproduction outside the family environment is a trend determined by cohabitation and marriage delay. According to last statistics, every fifth child is born out of wedlock. Hence the necessity of stimulating childbirth in the wedlock, which can be achieved by allocating consistent allowances, stipulated in demographic family policies.

In Malta, at marriage registration, the government supports the young family with a financial aid amounting to six average salaries granted to each member of the family. The government, thus, expresses its concern and interest towards reproduction in the wedlock and, as a result, cohabitation is avoided.

MEASURES OF STIMULATING NATALITY AT THE FAMILY LEVEL

Demographic policies must take into account the following three aspects related to family:

- Propagation of the belief that the woman has equal roles and responsibilities to those of man, regardless of its demographic function of reproduction;
- Promotion at the national level of the model family consisting of four persons, "2+2", when each reproduces himself. Although this measure

does not completely solve the demographic problem, on the long term, it has the aim of educating the sense of self-reproduction in future generations. In a society, for a sustainable generational replacement, it is necessary that families with three children constitute more than half of the total number of families.

- Creation of conditions and opportunities for young couples determined to build a family. In Malta, for example, at marriage registration, the government supports the young family with a financial aid amounting to six average salaries granted to each member of the family. The government, thus, expresses its concern and interest towards reproduction in the wedlock and, as a result, cohabitation is avoided.

Moreover, demographic policy at the family level must also take into account the aspect of migration, which in the context of the Republic of Moldova has a major role. In this regard, emigration aimed at reunifying families must not exceed the number of conationals' repatriations in the country.

The motivation of giving birth to another child will arise when every mother will have the certainty that childbirth is not a barrier to carrier and professional growth.

At the socioeconomic level, it is appropriate that the concept of reproduction includes financial stimulation of families who have completely reproduced themselves. Levers for achieving this goal are different from country to country. In Russia, for example, considerable incentive is granted to families starting with the second child (\$10,000); in Ukraine the incentive is differentiated (\$2,400 for the first child, \$5000 for the second child and \$10,000 for the third child).

At first childbirth, financial support of the family is important, whereas at the second childbirth, mother's support is much more important, especially concerning government's guarantee of keeping the job and reemploying the mother. The motivation of giving birth to another child will arise when every mother will have the certainty that childbirth is not a barrier to carrier and professional growth.

Another aspect that should be taken into account is establishing family allowances and facilities depending on the minimum standard of living and not the minimum salary. This will invest family policies with a European approach to the problem, and thus will ensure an equitable support of family.

Such mechanisms could represent efficient benchmarks for demographic policies oriented towards minimizing demographic crisis under the conditions of human factor depression and the reduction of its potential.

HAVING CHILDREN IS A BLESSING

Vasile and Svetlana Gusiuc from Bubuieci village, Chisinau municipality, have a big family. They raise together nine children. The oldest is 21 year old, and the youngest will soon be two year old. Five girls and four boys are the family's biggest fortune and pride. In good and in bad they are together and this helps them face all life's challenges.

How are roles and responsibilities divided in Gusiuc family?

Vasile: Mother has the basic role. She is a teacher, a cook and a mother to children. I am more often out of the household – mowing, weeding, or working on the construction site. I am employed at a construction company from Chisinau where I go whenever there is a need of workers; otherwise, I have to find a job on my own in the village.

Svetlana: I am employed at the Carpet Factory from the village, but in the past years I was more on the maternity leave than at work. Thus, I am more at home, taking care of children and household.

Have you ever thought of going to work abroad?

Vasile: I have never thought of it. I know that the majority of people leave in search for a better life, borrow money, take risks. But they lose their children and family, and don't understand that these are the most valuable things in life. We have decided to stay home, regardless of the situation.

We will drink a glass of water and eat a slice of bread, but we will be together. God created us to be together and care for each other.

Tell us more about your family. How do you manage to raise nine children?

Vasile: To be honest, at first, we haven't thought of having so many children. But, I guess, it was meant to be. Children are a blessing, this is why we are doing everything we can to raise and educate them well. Maybe sometimes we, the parents, eat less, but instead we offer children everything they need. Although we don't have the best living conditions, we are satisfied.

How much does it cost to give birth to a child nowadays?

Svetlana: In my case, childbirth was free-of-charge. I didn't make arrangements with famous doctors, since I have never afforded such luxury. Nevertheless, I didn't have any problems, and the children are healthy and joyous. Sometimes it happens that they get hurt or ill, but all these pass after a while.

What are your monthly expenditures for maintaining children?

Vasile: In order to buy all the necessary things for our family, including food and clothing, I should have a salary of about €1000 per month. I barely have 20-30% of this sum. Thus, we have to get around somehow – keep some birds around the house, a milk cow, cheese, sour cream, which we sell sometimes in order to buy other products instead.

What is the social protection provided by government?

Svetlana: I don't really understand the system of social protection. I was granted a sum of 325 lei when I ended my maternity leave, and I receive monthly child financial support. At the beginning of the school year, we receive social support for two children out of five that go to school. We also receive compensations for electric energy. Half a year ago we were granted a bigger financial support amounting to 10,000 lei for paying gas bills. This was a significant financial support for our family, in rest - we cannot count on government's support, since it is insignificant.

Describe an ordinary day in your life.

Svetlana: All days go by in the same way... I wake up at 6.00-7.00AM, prepare breakfast for children and, afterwards take care of the household. At lunch time I have to cook again, and then clean the house. During the school year, I spend a lot of time with children, helping doing their homework. Then I cook supper and the day is over. Raising a lot of children is very tiring. But it is also very nice when we all gather around the table, discuss, make jokes and enjoy us being together.

What does family mean to you?

Vasile: Family is that sacred environment in which we are born, raised and educated. Only in the family, life begins and continues. The birth of a child is a blessing. But this blessing does not involve only moments of joy, but also difficulties that make you stronger and wiser.

What is the favorite holiday of your family?

Svetlana: I often say that, for me, every day is a holiday and every holiday is a day of work, since the work around the house is always the same. We use to celebrate Christmas, New Year's Eve, Easter and the birthdays of our children. On these days, we try to prepare special meals, especially the cake.

In what spirit do you educate your children?

Vasile: With a lot of patience, understanding and kindness. Children must enjoy their rights, but also their responsibilities. I talk to them with a calm voice, but if they don't understand and don't obey me, then I force the note. I also give them various jobs around the house, since children must be used to work from a young age. I don't assign them hard jobs that they can't do, but ordinary jobs for children. If the child is not educated through work, then he will not know to appreciate his parent's effort when he becomes an adult.

What is your message to young couples who hesitate about having more children?

Vasile: Children must be born. Our parents raised many children and got along very well. Nowadays, young people are more selfish, but they must understand that their family and name will persist through children. We are happy and fulfilled namely because our family is increasing and we have something to leave behind us. In rest, it is known that a happy family is based on love, respect, understanding, a very important thing being the fact that we must see in our partner only his qualities and not his flaws.



Gusiuc spouses with children on the doorstep

In the period of May 24-30, 2010, Prof. Vasile Ghetau, PhD, Faculty of Sociology, University of Bucharest, Director of the Center for Demographic Research "Vladimir Trebici" of the Romanian Academy of Sciences, was on a work mission to Chisinau. He came to the Republic of Moldova at the invitation of the National Commission for Population and Development (NCPD), in collaboration with UNFPA, UN Fund for Population, and the Academy of Economic Studies of Moldova (ASEM).

The mission had two objectives. The first was the organization of a training course "Demography" in the framework of the master program in demography and population economics at ASEM. The course is included in the series of activities organized by UNFPA and its partners, aimed at developing and strengthening demographic analysis capacities in Moldova. Master students, as well as representatives of central public authorities, academic media and non-

governmental organizations participated at the courses organized in ASEM.

The second objective was studying the perspectives of creating a Demographic Center in Chisinau and developing, in close cooperation with all relevant structures from the Republic of Moldova, the concept of such a Centre. In this regard, Mr. Vasile Ghetau had a series of meetings with representatives of institutions involved in the period of May 25-28, 2010. At Government's request and in accordance with NCPD activity plan, UNFPA grants technical assistance to NCPD in developing the concept of a Demographic Centre in the Republic of Moldova.

Worth to be mentioned is the fact that Vasile Ghetau, a well-known demographer in Romania, is well versed in the demographic situation of the Republic of Moldova. Throughout years, he has trained several specialists in the field of demography from our country, being one of the international experts who endorsed the Green Book of the Population of the Republic of Moldova for the period of 1990-2008.



Prof. Vasile Ghetau, PhD, Faculty of Sociology, University of Bucharest, Director of the Center for Demographic Research "Vladimir Trebici" of the Romanian Academy of Sciences

"DEMOGRAPHY" SEEN BY STUDENTS

Recently, students of the "Demography and population economics" specialty at the Academy of Economic Studies participated at an advanced training course in demography held by Prof. Vasile Ghetau from Bucharest. I asked Ana Tambur, a 27-year old young lady, hailing from Calarasi, who at present is doing her master degree at this specialty, what new knowledge has she gained in the framework of this course and why has she chosen to study demography.

Ana, why have you chosen the specialty "Demography and population economics"?

I found out from my acquaintances about this new specialty in Moldova. I seemed to me as something new and interesting and I have decided to try my luck. I passed foreign language, computer science and economics exams and I was selected. 18 scholarships were offered at his specialty.

Have you had any knowledge in the field of demography?

No, but I graduated the State Medical and Pharmaceutical University "Nicolae Testemitanu", and my knowledge in medicine helped me learn quickly the specific notions of the demographic field.

What advantages does a master degree in demography offer?

Although initially I decided to take this specialty out of curiosity and interest, now I realize that it is very useful. The knowledge is both general and specific; we understand the essence of such phenomena as mortality, natality, migration, development of prognosis which represents the basis of developing and evaluating various policies, national healthcare plans, budgets, etc. Personally, I think that medicine as a course of study is very interesting, but it offers too little advantages when employing, the salary being

very modest for young specialists. That is why, it is not excluded that, in case there will be more opportunities in the field of demography, I will give priority to this direction of activity in the future.

Apropos, where can a young specialist with a master degree in demography be employed?

Directions of activity are multiple – in the framework of ministries, especially in departments concerned with human resources, social protection, health problems faced by population, etc.

Would you be interested in being employed in a certain ministry?

Yes. I would like to work in the Ministry of Health, and the way in which I imagine my activity in the framework of the Ministry is to influence certain policies, starting with medical healthcare insurance and ending with national healthcare policies. I think we should promote and invest more in the culture of health, which lacks completely in our country. People need to know more about the necessity of regular visits to the doctor, making medical investigations, the rights they have as patients, etc. On the other hand, they should also be aware of the responsibilities they have, because the patient must meet the doctor halfway, so that the money allotted from the state budget to healthcare be used as rationally as possible.

Recently, Prof. Vasile Ghetau, well-known specialist from Romania, held a training course in demography at the faculty where you are doing your master degree. What impressions has it made on you?

It was an extremely useful experience for us, master students. During one week, we participated daily at the lectures of Prof. Vasile Ghetau, which focused on general notions of



Ana Tambur, masterandă

demographic analysis in such fields as natality, mortality, marriage rate, as well as on demographic projections and policies. We were offered a demographic projection program which will be very useful to us in the future.

What new knowledge have you acquired during this course?

On the whole, the topics were familiar to students, but the techniques of delivering the information, examples offered, on-line documentation even during classes generated a lot of interest among students. We found out about the demographic situation of various countries, which helped us build a global picture of these phenomena. For example, we found out that France and Norway have very good reproductive healthcare policies and policies on supporting the family and mothers with children. These countries have various children's services, baby nurseries, kindergartens, maternal schools, paid holidays, rent facilitations. France is the only country in the world where the income tax depends on the number and age of children. Additionally, the government allots a unique quota at the birth of the first child amounting to approximately USD 10,000. All these actions stimulate childbirth and could serve as benchmarks for demographic policies implemented in Moldova. Despite all these, we are conscious that the national budget is too austere to afford such investments.

Why such courses are welcome?

These courses offer students experience and an exchange of very valuable ideas for their future activity. It also helps us establish useful contacts, since we can turn for help and suggestions, when necessary, to the teacher that delivered the course.



Olga GAGAUZ,
PhD in sociology, professor, European Integration Institute, ASM

FAMILY – BETWEEN WISHES AND POSSIBILITIES

Although the majority of Moldovans state that health, family and children are the values that matter the most for them, the reality proves the contrary. As years go by, the number of marriages decreases, cohabitation increases, as well as the number of bachelors, out-of-wedlock children, divorces. The given situation is determined both by modern social transformations which influence the structure of family, and unstable socioeconomic transformations. In this context, the existence of policies that would guarantee incomes for families with children, and at the same time ensure parents with favorable conditions for combining family roles with professional ones is imperative for redressing the situation.

HEALTH, FAMILY AND CHILDREN MATTER THE MOST FOR MOLDOVANS

The results of the survey “Socio-demographic problems of family functioning at the contemporary stage” (representative sample at the national level, 1,280 respondents) conducted in 2008 in the framework of the Demographic Department of the Institute of European Integrati-

As a result of labor migration, the separate living of spouses for a long period of time (3-5 years and more) has become a common thing for thousands of families from the Republic of Moldova. The phenomenon of so-called “family at distance” appeared which represents a contradiction from the point of view of norms of the institution of marriage and family. In this regard, families of young couples who do not have the necessary experience of living together are the most vulnerable.

on and Political Science, Academy of Sciences of Moldova, shows that traditional values of family are a priority of the population of the Republic of Moldova. Health, happy family life and children are in the top of main values, being mentioned as “very important” and “important” by the majority of respondents. In the top-category of vital values was included “good dwelling” and “material welfare”, as being significant conditions for ensuring a decent standard of living. On the second place of values was love, an interesting job, friendship and active life (89-93.9%). Thus, in the structure of value orientations of the po-

pulation, another important social component appeared – professional activity (table 1).

The perception of population towards certain aspects of family life, raising and education of children is also interesting. The overwhelming majority of respondents consider that family has the absolute responsibility for planning the number of children, as well as for ensuring them financially. At the same time, respondents plead for government’s support for families with little children, including when both parents are employed. Such opinions that contradict each other can be explained by financial difficulties faced by families with children, as well as by the paternalistic model of social policies practiced in the previous period (table 2).

In this context, worth to be mentioned is the fact that, according to the results of Household Budget Survey conducted by the National Bureau of Statistics, the material situation of the family largely depends on the number of children, and families with many children face a high risk of poverty. This situation requires adequate government interventions.

The second child in the family indicates not only the stability of marital relations, but also confidence in the future, which the majority of population lacks for the time being.

REALITY IS CONTRARY TO STATEMENTS

Although the population considers that family and children are the most important values, the real behavior of families proves the contrary. Annually, decreases the number of marriages, increases the phenomena of cohabitation, as well as the number of bachelors, out-of-wedlock children, divorces and, as a result, of incomplete families. The biggest change occurring in the structure of family is related to the decrease of natality, family size shrinking and orientation towards a family model with a small number of children (one child, or two at most). This situation generates a number of problems both in family, as well as in society, being the main cause of population decrease. In its turn, population decrease affects labor market, education, social protection and healthcare, infrastructure development, etc.

Some phenomena that determine the decreased sizes of contemporary family are irreversible. Among them are: the more and more active involvement of women in the labor market, raising requirements for children’s education, change of family life style, raising level of parents’ education, change of family’s value orientations, etc. Others, such as unemployment, worsening standards of

Table 1. Structure of value orientations of the population (%)

	Very important	Important	Not very important	Not important	I find it difficult to answer
Material welfare	41,1	51,8	5,3	0,4	1,4
A good dwelling	39,9	54,9	3,2	0,8	1,2
Happy family life	72,6	24,9	0,9	0,4	1,2
Love	61,6	31,9	3,3	1,0	2,1
Respect of others	32,6	54,1	10,1	1,3	1,9
Children	66,0	28,4	3,1	0,9	1,5
Health	85,0	13,3	0,6	0,2	0,8
Interesting job	34,2	55,2	6,9	1,6	2,1
Social recognition	15,4	47,9	25,5	6,5	4,8
Trusty friends	30,5	53,8	11,6	1,9	2,2
Possibility of self-realization	22,0	54,8	12,1	3,0	8,1
Pleasure	16,5	49,1	22,3	5,2	6,9
Active life	19,7	54,4	17,2	3,9	4,9
Freedom in actions	22,5	51,6	17,0	3,3	5,7

Table 2. Opinions of respondents regarding certain statements (%)

		Agree	Agree partially	Don't agree	I find it difficult to answer
1.	Watching children grow is the biggest joy in life	95,5	3,4	0,4	0,8
2.	Persons who don't have children live a senseless life	37,7	31,2	21,5	9,6
3.	Family must plan childbirth and have as many children as it can maintain	75,9	15,8	4,9	3,5
4.	The government must give support to families with little children	88,6	8,2	1,6	1,6
5.	Families with children in which both parents are employed must receive financial support	53,2	27,9	11,4	7,5

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Mariana BUCIUCEANU-VRABIE,
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CHILDREN LEFT WITHOUT PARENTS AS A RESULT OF MIGRATION – A MATTER OF EVERYONE'S CONCERN

A direct consequence of migration upon the future generation is the increasing number of underage children whose parents work abroad. What is the impact of parental absence over the raising and development of children? How do we react to this phenomenon and what immediate and long-term solutions are necessary? The following article will examine and answer succinctly these questions.

- Every fifth preschool-aged child has one parent left abroad;
- One third of school-aged children is raising without both parents;
- Half of juvenile delinquencies are done by young people left without parental care.

ALARMING STATISTICS

Statistically speaking, in the Republic of Moldova the phenomenon of children separated by one or both parents left abroad for work has reached maximum quota among European countries. Labor Force Survey for the first three months of 2010, conducted by the National Bureau of Statistics (NBS), shows that of the total number of persons aged 20-49 that are declared labor emigrants, 48,700 or 20% have at least one preschool-aged child. Of these, 36,700 are men, and 12,000 – women. The greatest majority are from rural areas (72.9%) and over one quarter from urban areas (27, 1%). Almost all of them, approximately 99%, are married people, i.e. they have a family. Labor emigration of men that have at least one preschool-aged child is much more widespread than in the case of women. In the first trimester of 2010, urban married women that have at least one preschool-aged child register fewer cases of labor migration, constituting 16.4% in 2008 and registering a significant decrease comparative to the beginning of 2010 when, practically, such cases weren't registered. In the rural areas, in the same trimester, migrant women with the same marital and parental status constituted 21.4%, compared to 17% registered in 2008. According to data of the scientific survey "Labor force migration", conducted in the second half of 2008 by NBS, of the total number of persons (318,300) declared labor emigrants in the past 12 months preceding the survey, 18.3% had at least one preschool-aged child.

According to data provided by the Ministry of Education and the Children's Rights Council, at the beginning of April 2010, as a result of labor migration, of the total number of children, approximately 84,207 school-aged

children (7-18 years) were left without parental care. Of these, two thirds (66%) are children with one emigrant parent, and a third (34%) has both parents working abroad. Compared to data presented by the Ministry of Education five years ago, the number of children in such situation is smaller, on September 1, 2005, 110,000 school-aged children being registered. Nevertheless, worth to be mentioned is the fact that, the official number of children in this situation is underestimated.



CHILDREN WITHOUT PARENTS IN TERRITORIAL PROFILE

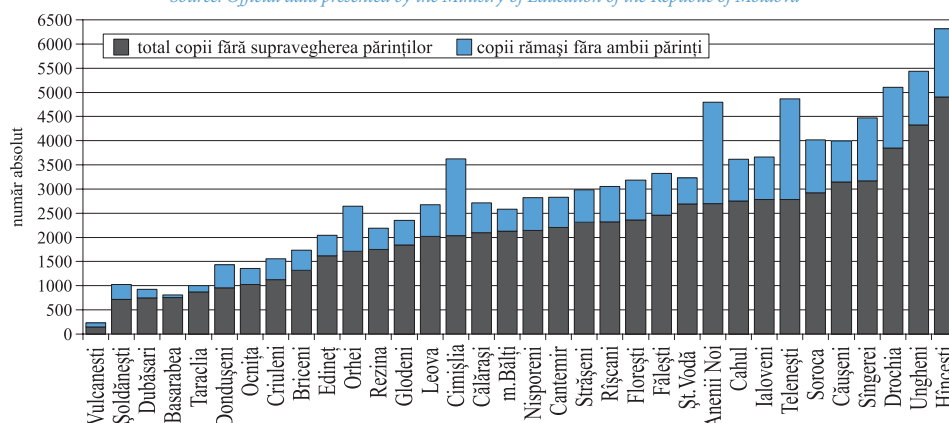
Although the phenomenon of migration and children left without parents is attested on the entire territory of the republic (fig.1), in Chisinau Municipality the situation is relatively good, the smallest values being registered. Here, approximately 3% of children are left without parents' care. At the level of territorial-administrative units, the situation is dramatic.

The amplexness of the phenomena at the regional level is greater in the centre of the republic: approximately 41.5%, comparatively to the northern part – 35.8% and the southern – 22.7%. Half of evaluated districts exceed the estimated average of the republic, i.e. 12.2% of the total number of children were left without parents' care. Thus, the most affected districts

are: Nisporeni where 20.7% of children left without parents' care was registered, Stefan Voda – 19.2%, Drochia – 19.1%, Cimislia – 18.5%, Rascani – 17.4%, Telenesti – 17.2%, etc. Only in Balti Municipality and in 10 districts out of 34, the percentage of children left without parents' care is below 10%: Briceni, Taraclia, Strasenii, Cahul, Edinet, Dubasari, Orhei, Soldanesti, Criuleni and Vulcanesti.

The brief evaluation of existing data presents a situation that is unfavorable for the development of both a healthy family and of the child. If in the majority of localities, a socio-psychological support for children is the fact that they live with at least one parent, then at the level of some districts the percentage of children left without their both parents' care is high. From this point of view, the situation in Anenii Noi, Cimislia and Telenesti is alarming, over three quarters of children being left without their both parents' care as a result of labor migration. In another group of localities: Orhei, Donduseni, Soldanesti and

Fig.1 Number of children left without parental care in territorial profile on 01.04.2010
Source: Official data presented by the Ministry of Education of the Republic of Moldova



Sangerei, children left without the care of at least one parent register, on average, 50% of the total number of children. In 14 administrative units, the percentage of children left without both parents oscillates between 30% and 40%.

PARENTAL ABSENCE AFFECTS THE BEHAVIOR OF CHILDREN

Although the first data regarding the situation of children left without parental care were collected at the national level as early as 2004-2005, the living conditions of these children are still uncertain. As a rule, children are left in the care of their close relatives, especially grandparents or neighbors, which doesn't compensate for the love, affection and support necessary for their development, socialization and integration. Although the general perception of population is that, the situation of migrants' children is significantly improving once their parents transfer money, there aren't surveys that would certify this. Moreover, after analyzing objective data, it can be observed that, although, especially in rural areas, it is attested an improvement of standards of living in households dependent of remittances, in general, indicators describing

the poverty faced by children denote that economic progress registered in the past ten years hasn't had a major positive impact upon them.

Changes produced in the emotional and social development of children left "home alone" because of their parents' migration have an enormous impact upon their life course and their psychological status. The absence of both parents or of only mother's is frequently connected to symptoms of depression among children. The results of a national study show that these complex changes can be both short-term and long-term, being determined by a multitude of factors: beginning with the period of separation from parents, child's preparation for an independent life and his relationship with his caretakers, and ending with the attitude of members of community towards the children left without parental care.

Various unofficial data show that, in many cases these children are exposed to violence, human trafficking, parasitic behavior, delinquency, truancies and school abandonment. At the same time, the lack of efficient services at the level of institutions and community that would help children avoid these hazards aggravates the situation. A tocsin regarding the severity of this phenomenon is the extreme devious behavior of children left without parents' care, approximately 55-60% of juvenile delinquencies being done by young people left without parental care. Worth to be mentioned is the fact that, although official statistics show a slight decrease in the number of delinquencies done by underage children, an increase of

their complexity and severity achieved through a higher degree of violence, aggressiveness and brutality is registered. Another negative impact of parents' migration is the increased children's household workload that is inappropriate to their age, insufficient development of independent life skills, deficient acquirement of ethical-moral norms, early start of sexual life due to the lack of education in this field, etc.

CHILDREN LEFT "HOME ALONE" NEED EVERYBODY'S ATTENTION

The complexity of implications and consequences, and the dynamics of hazards to which children left home alone are exposed as a result of parents' migration require coordinated and efficient solutions. On the international public agenda this category of children was made reference to rather late, in 2009, by the United Nations Special Rapporteur on Migrant Rights. At the national level, actions in the field were sporadic, being limited to the greatest part to statistical data collection. As a rule, community institutions are not concerned with the situation of children whose parents are working abroad, and education services provided by school, as well as leisure services do not approach the problem from the perspective of familial situation. Worth to be mentioned is the fact that, recently, by a Decision of the Government of the Republic of Moldova, No.450 of June 2, 2010, the National Action Plan for 2010-2011 on the protection of children left without parents' care was approved, stipulating the development, implementation and monitoring of various measures of identification and protection of this category of children, with a view to ensuring observance of their rights, intensifying measures of preventing the phenomenon and ensuring optimal conditions for the multilateral development of children.



(Continued from page 6)

living, reduced possibilities of families to have a place of living, mass labor migration, are determined by the unfavorable socioeconomic situation of the Republic of Moldova.

The sudden decrease of the standard of living has put the family in a difficult situation, forcing it to be in a permanent search for additional earnings. Under these circumstances, the refusal of registering the marriage or delaying it, as well as the decision of having a small number of children is a natural reaction of the family to put up with the new socioeconomic realities. Moreover, labor migration influences negatively childbirth rate, marriage rate and divorce rate, population's health, etc.

Socioeconomic instability has also considerably influenced reproductive functions of family: disbelief in the future, fear of not succeeding to ensure their children with a safe future. All these determine couples' reluctance to have children.

At the same time, it would be too simple to ascribe the drastic decrease of childbirth rate to economic factors. For example, in the Czech Republic, Slovakia or Poland the deterioration of

the standard of living was temporary, and after the economic situation redressed, fertility index didn't increase, but stabilized at a very low level of 1.21-1.25 children per woman, which is practically at the same level with our country. Therefore, the question regarding the factors that determine childbirth rate remains open, although economic and social interventions for redressing fertility must not be excluded from government's agenda.

LET'S LEARN FROM DEVELOPED COUNTRIES

The experience of some developed countries with a relatively high fertility rate, such as Sweden and, especially, France, provides some relevant principles in approaching this situation: ensuring conditions for mothers for combining family and professional roles; combining financial incentives with the development of services for families with children; recognizing the role and importance of families with children to society; community solidarity towards families with children, whose income significantly decreases when children are born.

Demographic policies, as an indispensable part of social policies, must be focused on

creating favorable conditions for raising and educating children, especially for developing extra-familial institutions. In the circumstances of social relations and mobility intensification, spread of individualist values, increased self-realization trends, in the new politic, economic and social context, the problem of sharing tasks among the family, government and society becomes a priority.

Based on the experience of developed countries that managed to obtain a positive dynamics of natality, key-points of family policies are the following: 1) development of extra-familial childcare institutions; 2) diversification of women's employment forms that allow to combine professional and parental roles; 3) programs (allowances + job) for persons with a reduces potential of professional qualification; 4) special programs of social assistance for families in difficulty and persons with limited possibilities. In other words, for redressing the situation, the development of policies that would guarantee income for families with children and, at the same time, would ensure the involvement of women in professional activity is imperative.



Oxana LIPCANU,
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“SILENT WITNESSES” OF VIOLENCE OR ACTIVE AGENTS OF CHANGE?

On March 1, 2007, The Parliament of the Republic of Moldova adopted the Law No.45 on the prevention and combating of domestic violence, which came into effect on September 18, 2008. The law is revolutionary in that it represents a first attempt to define the notion of domestic violence, types encountered, roles and responsibilities of local and central authorities in preventing and assisting domestic violence cases. It represents a novelty for the Republic of Moldova also for the reason that it changes the approach of the phenomenon from a private to a community one, which concerns and affects us all.

A new element of the Law is the introduction of mechanisms of addressing domestic violence acts, especially of protection measures, which are achieved with and by issuing the protection order. It is issued by the court within 24 hours after the application was received and provides such measures as forcing the aggressor to leave the common property, to stay away from the victim's whereabouts, to not contact her, etc.

In the period of September 2008 – September 2009 there wasn't issued any protection order, and till present (June 2010), 17 orders were issued, although, according to latest statistics, every fourth woman from Moldova is a victim of domestic violence. All orders were issued as a result of judges', prosecutors' and lawyers' training in the application of the Law No.45, as well as due to the efforts of the network of legal assistants from Anenii Noi, Rezina, Soldanesti and Vulcanesti that is administered by the Law Center from Causeni with the support of UNFPA, UN Population Fund.

A first reason invoked by judges, prosecutors, policemen, etc. of the small number of protection orders compared to the scale of the phenomenon is the lack of a clearly defined procedure for law application and protection order issuance. Although justified to a certain extent by the gaps of existing legislation, this cannot serve as a basis for specialist's refusal, whether a policeman, prosecutor or judge, to exercise his functions under his mandate and to protect the victim of domestic violence. The basic principle that should guide any professional that has information regarding an imminent danger of domestic violence or an already committed act is that “the victim or possible victim must be protected”.

Worth to be mentioned is that, a bill for amending legislation in accordance to the Law No.45, expressly stipulating the mechanisms of issuing the protection order, is at present examined by the Parliament.

The Law No.45 is valuable in that it also contributes to the prevention of domestic violence acts. Once issued, the protection order is aimed at reducing risks of aggression, eliminating at the same time possible consequences of the violent act. The consequences of domestic violence can be very painful for members of the family and community, and recovering costs may greatly exceed the intention of prevention.

Another reservation that many specialists have concerning forcing the aggressor out of his home is the “exaggerated care” towards the latter to the detriment of the victim and the child/children, if any. Some consider that “the aggressor, a human being with full rights, needs a living place and the protection order against him limits the exertion of these rights”. This statement lacks justification, considering the fact that the protection order is a temporary measure, which is aimed at protecting the victim by keeping the aggressor away from the property for a limited period of time, and the right to property is the object of other legal stipulations. Also, can the action of protecting the right to property of one person to the detriment of respecting the right to life and security of another person be justified? The answer is obvious.

It is true that rehabilitation services must exist both for aggressors and victims of domestic violence, as stipulated in the Law 45, as well. In their absence, the protection order may amplify the tension between the persons involved. The grudge that the aggressor bears for the fact that the victim “aired their dirty laundry in public” and that because of her he couldn't enter his own home, even for a limited period of time, may turn into more violent acts with more severe consequences. In such cases, the risk that the victim won't ask for help, taking an attitude of resignation and tolerance towards this situation, is very high.

Rehabilitation services for victims of domestic violence are under-developed and under-financed. To the greatest part, they are administered by NGOs and are concentrated in Chisinau and in some district centers.

At present, there are no rehabilitation services for domestic aggressors in the country, although they are an indubitable necessity. The few initiatives in providing assistance to aggressors launched by non-governmental organization are dependent on donors' funds that are sporadic and lack a normative and methodological institutionalized framework.

Prevention measures and the work with so-called family rowdies undertaken by the police force are insufficient. They cover a small number of persons with a violent behavior and a poten-

tial of relapse who are, in the majority of cases, alcohol abusers. Domestic violence cases are also frequent in families where there is no alcohol abuse and that are apparently “peaceful”. Hence, only a small part of domestic violence cases are managed by police, the greatest part being out of authorities' attention.

Another argument why specialists hesitate to get involved in domestic violence cases and initiate procedures of issuing protection orders is the supposed abuse by some persons and the application of respective procedures, with a view to removing the partner from the common property even in the absence of acts of violence and/or danger of violence. Still, this hypothesis can be easily contested by multidisciplinary specialists: social worker, policeman, family physician and others, the information of which can help the judge take the correct decision regarding the request of protection order issuance. A good specialist will know immediately if he is faced with a domestic violence case on the basis of signs that any victim of violence shows (excessive fear, signs of physical violence, depression and suicide trends, etc.)

Also many specialists hesitate to get involved in solving domestic violence cases because many victims withdraw their complaints shortly after denouncing abusers. Still, it must be mentioned that, such situations are not necessarily and always based on the cessation of violence. In many cases, victims are forced to do this for fear of the aggressor. That is why, community specialists must verify the reasons for withdrawing the complaint and monitor these families in order to avoid eventual acts of violence. As long as there is no legal obligation to verify the reasons for withdrawing the complaint by the victim, such cases will exist.

Examples of situations in which authorities are inert in addressing domestic violence cases, as well as justifications made by them and the public may continue. However, one of the main causes behind all statements is the lack of understanding the phenomenon of domestic violence, underestimation of its scale and consequences, as well as the insufficient knowledge of the legislation in the field and, specifically, of the roles and responsibilities of specialists, stipulated in the Law 45. As a result, the already “traditional” infringements of the law are frequent and we find ourselves in the position of “silent witnesses”¹. How about the victims if the legislation is inefficient, professionals are inert and assistance services are under-developed? What are they to do?

¹ “Silent witnesses” is the name of an exhibition of figures, carved in wood, made of cardboard or other materials, representing women victims of violence. The exhibition is included in the series of activities of informing on the phenomenon of violence against women.

EVOLUTION OF THE DEMOGRAPHIC SITUATION OF THE REPUBLIC OF MOLDOVA IN 2009

Recently, the National Bureau of Statistics presented the information regarding the evolution of demographic indicators of the Republic of Moldova in 2009. Ongoing decrease of the number of population, its rustication, increased population ageing phenomenon are some demographic phenomena characteristic to our country throughout last year. Let us look at the changes of the demographic situation commented by Olga Gagauz, PhD, associate professor, Institute of European Integration and Political Science, Academy of Sciences of Moldova.

GENERAL TRENDS

The number of the population of the Republic of Moldova is continuously decreasing. As of January 1, 2010, 35,563.7 million people were registered in Moldova, which is 3,800 persons less compared to 2008 and 80,400 persons less compared to 2000. The Republic of Moldova is the most ruralized country of the European space, the share of rural population constituting 58.6% of the total population. The proportion between the three big age groups (children, adults, the elderly) denotes an increase of population ageing phenomena. Compared to January 1, 2000, the reduction of young population share (aged 0-14) from 23.8% to 16.7% (-270,300 persons) and the increase of old population share (aged 65+) from 9.4% to 10.1% (+19,100 persons) has been observed.

NATALITY

In 2009, an insignificant increase in the number of newborns was registered: 40,800 newborns compared to 39,000 in 2008, childbirth rate constituting 11.4 liveborn infants per 1,000 inhabitants. However, this increase is temporarily and is due to the fact that numerous generations of women born before 1990 entered reproductive age.

Total fertility rate constituted 1.33 children per woman of reproductive age, the value

In 2009, the average age of mother at first childbirth was 23.3 years. Every second child was born in the first two years of marriage.

Evolution of main demographic indicators, period of 2007-2009*

Indicator	2007	2008	2009
No. of population at the end of the year, persons	3572,7	3567,5	3563,7
Liveborn infants, persons	37973	39018	40803
Deaths, persons	43050	41948	42139
of which, children under 1 year	428	473	493
Natural increase	-5077	-2930	-1336
Total fertility rate	1,256	1,277	1,326
No. of marriages	29213	26666	26781
No. of divorces	13923	12601	11884

of this indicator being the highest during the last ten years. Worth to be mentioned is that, a similar level of natality is registered in Romania (1.3), Russian Federation (1.35), Bulgaria (1.32), Ukraine (1.22) and Belarus (1.21).

Traditionally, the highest level of natality is registered in the rural area. The highest value of the total fertility rate was registered in the districts of Falesti, Glodeni, Sangerei and Soldanesti (1.7-1.8 children per woman of reproductive age). The smallest values of this indicator are registered in Chisinau and Balti Municipalities (respectively, 0.96 and 1.05), notwithstanding the fact that the youngest and most economically insured population of the country is concentrated in these localities.

Compared to other European countries, in the Republic of Moldova women give birth to children at younger ages, although there can be observed a trend towards childbirth decrease at very young age groups (till the age of 20). The average age of mother at first childbirth was 23.2 years. Mothers from rural areas give birth at a younger age compared to mothers from urban area, respectively, at 22.4 and 24.6 years. Every second child was born in the first two years of marriage.

Life expectancy at birth in 2009 increased approximately by one year compared to 2006. Life expectancy at birth of women is higher than that of men by 8.1 years.

In the structure of childbirths prevail children of Ist rank (53.2%), an insignificant increase register childbirths of IIrd and IIIrd rank. Most children born in numerous families belong to mothers from rural area – 80.9% of the total number of newborns from this category.

The liberalization of moral norms related to family and marriage, as well as the spread of the phenomenon of unregistered marriages contributes to the maintenance of a high level of extramarital childbirths. In 2009, the number of out-of-wedlock children constituted 9,351 (22.9% of the total number of liveborn infants). In the rural area, the number of extramarital childbirths is almost two times higher than in the urban area.

MORTALITY

The last decade is characterized by an upward trend of death rate, which is determined

In 2009, average age at first marriage was 26 years for men and 23 years for women. In Western European countries this age is 4-5 years higher.

by the scale of population ageing, as well as by the high level of mortality among the working-age population.

In 2009, 42,139 persons died, general mortality rate constituting 11.8 deaths per 1,000 inhabitants. This situation is similar to 2008. The discrepancy between general mortality rates in the urban and rural area is maintained: 9.0 deaths per 1,000 inhabitants and, respectively, 13.8 deaths per 1,000 inhabitants were registered. This significant difference is due to an increased process of demographic ageing of the population from the rural area. The most low mortality rates were registered in Chisinau Municipality (8.1 ‰), Balti Municipality (9.9‰), districts of Ialoveni (11.2‰) and Cahul (11.3‰), and the highest – in the districts: Donduseni, Soldanesti, Rascani, Briceni, Edinet, Glodeni, Floresti (15.0-17.3‰).

The structure of mortality by causes of death shows that, most deaths are caused by cardiovascular diseases, followed by tumors (13.6%), digestive diseases (9.8%), accidents, intoxications, traumas (8.2%), respiratory diseases (5.5%).

The number of deaths of children under one year of age in 2009 was 493, infant mortality rate constituting 12.1 deaths of infants under one year old per 1,000 live births.

Life expectancy at birth in 2009 increased approximately by one year compared to 2006. Nevertheless, last year a certain decrease of life expectancy of men living in the rural area was registered. Life expectancy at birth of women is higher than that of men by 8.1 years. This gap is due to a higher level of premature mortality among men. Due to the differentiated level of mortality, average life span of urban population was higher than that of the rural population by 3.5 years in men and, respectively, 3.2 years in women.

MARRIAGE RATE AND DIVORCE RATE

During the last few years, the number of registered marriages is continuously decreasing. In 2009, an insignificant increase in the

Life expectancy at birth in 2006-2009, years

Years	Total			Urban area			Rural area		
	Both sexes	Men	Women	Both sexes	Men	Women	Both sexes	Men	Women
2006	68,40	64,57	72,23	70,39	66,53	74,11	67,18	63,34	71,10
2007	68,79	65,04	72,56	70,44	66,40	74,32	67,76	64,20	71,48
2008	69,36	65,55	73,17	71,22	67,12	75,10	68,22	64,59	72,00
2009	69,31	65,31	73,37	71,51	67,48	75,33	67,95	63,98	72,18

number of marriages was registered: 26,800 compared to 26,700 in 2008, marriage rate constituting 7.5 marriages per 1,000 inhabitants. The highest number of marriages was registered in the age group of 20-24 years. The average age at first marriage was 26 years for men and 23 years for women. Young people from the Russian Federation, Ukraine and Belarus get married approximately at the same age. In Romania, this value is higher by one year, whereas in Western European countries (Germany, Sweden, France, Spain, Denmark) – by 4-5 years.

Of the total number of registered marriages in 2009, first-time marriages prevail – 81.9% among men and 84.3% among women. The share of repeated marriages is increasing. Therefore, 17.2% of marriages among men and 14.1% marriages among women were registered by divorced persons, 0.8% and 1.6% - by widowed persons.

Marriage instability is characteristic to contemporary family. The number of divorced men and women increased in all European countries, including in the Republic of Moldova. In 2009 only, 11,900 marriages were dissolved by judicial decision, the divorce rate constituting 3.3 divorces per 1,000 inhabitants.

One third of divorces (30.9%) took place after a period of marriage of up to five years. Remarkable is the fact that, every fifth marriage dissolved by divorce had a 20 years' duration. The average duration of marriages dissolved by divorce was 11 years. Marriages dissolved among couples with underage children constituted 28.4% of the total number of divorces, and

the number of underage children affected by the dissolution of these marriages was 4,666.

POPULATION MIGRATION

In 2009, similar to previous years, the number of persons that emigrated from Moldova is higher compared to the number of persons that immigrated. According to data presented by the Ministry of Information Technology and Communication, during 2009, 6,663 persons left the country to take up permanent residence abroad. The most active emigrational connections are with Ukraine and Russia (2,952 and, respectively, 1,866 emigrants). The number of citizens of the Republic of Moldova that have chosen their new residence in USA constituted 899 persons, Israel – 278, Germany – 264.

The majority of emigrants, both women and men, are young persons aged 20-39 having a high school education. The share of persons holding a college diploma constituted up to 15 % of the total.

A part of emigration is compensated through the repatriation of persons hailing from the Republic of Moldova, as well as through immigration. According to data provided by the Ministry of Internal Affairs, in 2009, 2,222 persons repatriated to the country. The distribution of repatriates by nationality is the following: Moldovans – 41.6%, Russians – 17.2%, Ukrainians – 27.2%, Gagauz – 4.9%, Bulgarians – 3.2%, Jews – 2.8%. The majority of repatriates arrived from Russia and Ukraine, 46.5% and, respectively, 36.5%.

During 2009, 2,010 immigrants arrived in the Republic of Moldova, 182 of which recei-

ved permanent residence permit, and 1,828 persons – fixed-term residence permit. According to the purpose of their arrival, they can be characterized in the following way: education – 25.6%, work – 29.4%, family immigration – 45.1%.

IN CONCLUSION

Statistical data related to the demographic situation of the Republic of Moldova in 2009 shows a constant trend of population reduction. Natural decrease is determined by the population reproduction regime during the last decades of the last century: relatively low mortality and natality below generational replacement level. For a period of time, natural increase registered positive values due to the age structure of progressive population (high number and share of children). Beginning with 1993, population growth was replaced by population decline: mortality rate exceeded natality rate.

Along with negative natural increase, negative migration growth is registered: more people are leaving the country than are coming to the country. Obviously, ongoing discrepancy between life standards in the Republic of Moldova and other European countries will generate in the future population decline due to migration.

** The information does not include data of districts from the left side of the Nistru River and Bender Municipality. Some data regarding the registration of documents related to the marital status of persons from this territory are presented.*

LAUNCH OF A NEW WEB SOLUTION FOR STATISTICAL DATA DISSEMINATION

The National Bureau of Statistics of the Republic of Moldova, jointly with Statistics Office of Norway, launched a new web solution for statistical data dissemination – Data bank – in the framework of the international seminar regarding the dissemination of statistical data and launch of a new web solution for statistical data dissemination.

The new statistical data bank PX-Web (Statbank) contains information from 20 statistical fields and 63 statistical subfields, presented in approximately 350 tables with statistical data. Temporal series are presented, as a rule, for the years 2000-2009, and for some indicators from the field of demographic statistics – beginning with 1940, of agriculture statistics – beginning with 1980. The data bank offers the possibility of accessing reference metadata (information on statistical data). A great advantage of Statbank is the availability of accessing it in English.

From the point of view of advantages for statistical data users, the new statistical data bank offers the possibility of creating without effort, at one's desire, promptly

and handily for the user, the presentation and saving of multidimensional tables. Data are presented graphically and are integrated with reference metadata. From the point of view of advantages for NBS, Statbank represents an efficient tool for creating, editing and stocking tables.

The further expansion of the data bank is planned, including with data in territorial profile (on development regions), related to MDG (Millennium Development Goals), by valorifying available fund of statistical data; migration of relevant data from temporal series placed on the NBS web page and of existent statistical bulletins (tables) to statistical data base.

The creation of statistical data bank PX-Web is due to the assistance provided by the Statistics Office of Norway, which is still providing important support in the process of aligning the national statistics to European standards.

Statistical data bank can be accessed at the following electronic address: <http://statbank.statistica.md/pxweb/Database/RO/databasetree.asp>

NATALITY IS INCREASING, BUT CHILD MORTALITY REMAINS HIGH

In 2009 in the Republic of Moldova, 40,803 children were born. The number of live born infants was 4.6% (1,785 children) higher compared to 2008. More than half of live born babies were male, according to data provided by the National Bureau of Statistics.

Children up to age 18 constitute 21.5%, or every fifth, of the total number of population of the Republic of Moldova.

The level of natality in the rural area is higher compared to the one registered in the urban area. The majority of children born in numerous families are from the rural area – 80.9% of the total number of newborns from this category. Statistical data show that extramarital childbirth rate remains high, the share of out-of-wedlock children in 2009 constituting 22.9%, i.e. every fifth child. Of the total number of newborns, 73.7% are born by mothers at first marriage. Marriages dissolved among couples with underage children constituted 28.4% of the total number of divorces, and the number of children affected by the dissolution of these marriages was 4,700.

Moreover, statistics calls attention on a high mortality of children, including infant mortality. Last year, 493 children under one year died.

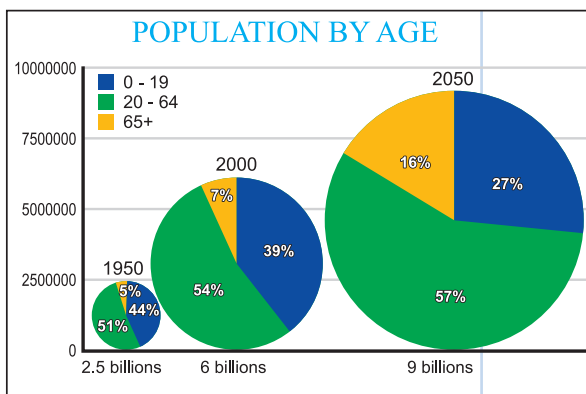
POPULATION AGEING REACHED AN UNPRECEDENTED SCALE, SHOWS A NEW REPORT

Population Division of the UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs regularly conducts, on the basis of demographic prognosis, prospective analysis related to the dynamics of population number and structure on the globe, including by regions of the world, main groups of countries (developed and developing), separate countries and territories. In December 2009, the report "World population ageing 2009" was presented: http://www.un.org/esa/population/publications/WPA2009/WPA2009_Working-Paper.pdf. Statistical data regarding population ageing in urban/rural profile, retirement systems and the impact of economic-financial crisis upon them were for the first time presented.

On the whole, UN specialists underscore the following key findings:

I. Demographic ageing is unprecedented, a process without parallel in the history of humanity. Population ageing is characterized by increases in the proportion of older persons (aged 60 years or over) and reductions in the proportion of children (persons under age 15) and of working-age persons (15 to 59). It is estimated that, at the world level, in 2045, the number of older persons will exceed the number of children. In the more developed regions, where population ageing is far advanced, the number of older persons exceeded that of children in 1998.

II. Population ageing is a global phenomenon, affecting nearly all the countries of the world and all age groups. One of the main causes of population ageing is the reduction of fertility at the global level. This leads to the slowdown in



the growth of the number of children coupled with a constant increase in the number of older persons, which is reflected upon perceptions of equity and solidarity among representatives of various generations.

III. Population ageing is a process of major importance, having significant consequences and implications for all facets of human life. In the economic area, population ageing has an impact on economic growth, savings, investment, consumption, labor markets, pensions and taxation. In the social sphere, population ageing influences family composition and living arrangements, housing demand, migration trends, epidemiology and the need for healthcare services. In the political arena, population ageing may have an impact upon election results and political representation.

IV. Population ageing is enduring. In the twentieth century, the proportion of older persons

was rising steadily and, according to expectancies, this trend will continue in the twenty-first century. The proportion of older persons passed from 8% in 1950 to 11% in 2009, and is expected to reach 22% in 2050. As old-age mortality continues to decline and fertility is unlikely to reach previous levels, demographic ageing is irreversible. The proportion of young population, which till recently, represented a large share of the population, will decrease in the twenty-first century

and the proportion of old-age population will maintain at the same level.

V. In developed countries the process of population ageing has begun earlier and was more pronounced compared to developing countries, where first signs of demographic ageing were witnessed in the last decades of the twentieth century. In developed countries, every fifth inhabitant is currently aged 60 years or over and by mid-century one third of the population will be in this age group. In developing countries, the pace of population ageing will be faster, which will require a faster adjustment to the consequences of this phenomenon in the conditions of a lower level of socio-economic development.

Olga GAGAUZ,

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UN DEPARTMENT OF ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL AFFAIRS
CONCERNED BY POPULATION AGEING IN THE REPUBLIC OF MOLDOVA

At the invitation of the Government of the Republic of Moldova and the UN Population Fund, in the period of May 3-7, 2010, a delegation of the UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UNDESA) made a study visit on population ageing in the Republic of Moldova. The mission included the expert Mr. Oleg Serrezhin, Social Affairs Officer with the UNDESA, and Mrs. Armine Mkhitarian, National Institute of Labor and Social Research, Armenia.

During three weeks, the experts had several meetings at the official level in the Republic of Moldova, including with representatives of the Ministry of Labor, Social Protection and Child, Ministry of Youth, Ministry of Education and Ministry of Health, as well as with

representatives of academic media, civil society, UN agencies.

The purpose of these meetings was to study the peculiarities of the demographic process in Moldova and to establish the framework of a future comprehensive research in this field, including the relationship between ageing and economic and social development of the country. The research will benefit from the experience of Armenia and Tajikistan who have already conducted similar studies.

The mission of UNDESA delegation to Moldova is included in a larger set of measures, initiated by UNFPA, UN Population Fund, in partnership with the Government of the Republic of Moldova, aimed at identifying solutions to over-

come the consequences of rapid population ageing. Other measures include the elaboration of a roadmap for developing policies in the field of ageing, as well as providing support for finalizing the National Strategy on Demographic Security.

Recently, the European Parliament mentioned that population ageing and decline in EU countries will have an impact ten times worse on the economy of European community states compared to the present world financial and economic crisis.

The Republic of Moldova is already included in the category of "old" countries, the coefficient of population ageing exceeding 12%. According to demographic prognoses, in 2050 one third of Moldovans will be retired.