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DEMOGRAPHIC POLICY AS A COMPONENT OF GENDER PROCESSES

The modern demographic situation in European countries is characterized by depopulation - a stable decrease in the population, characterized by a critically low birth rate. At the level of the European Union states, measures are urgently proposed to increase the birth rate, costs are laid in the budget structure. It is advisable to take these measures while simultaneously holding a broad public discussion and competent gender expertise. The progressive development of European states, the real implementation of National Projects, is impossible without ensuring a gender-based strategy and tactics of political decisions. In this regard, it is necessary not only to state unresolved issues but also to propose ways of solving the demographic problems of today. Since 1989, the population of Bulgaria has declined by more than two million. Such information is provided by the UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs, which monitors the population of different countries of the world.

“Every day the number of people living in Bulgaria is decreasing by an average of 220 people, or by 9 people per hour. We are dying out faster than anyone else in the world,” Petar Ivanov, director of the Demographic Institute at the Bulgarian Academy of Science and Art, said in a conversation with the local newspaper Trud. Earlier, in an interview with Bulgarian journalists, he stressed that by 2050, the country's population could be reduced to 5.2 million people.

At the same time, according to the scientist, in Bulgaria, there is not only a decrease in the general population but also a gradual replacement of the Bulgarian population by the Roma. “If the current trend continues, in 30 years the total number of Bulgarians in the country will be only 1.7 million people, there will be about 2.8 million Roma, and the Turkish population will grow to 700,000,” Ivanov said.

In more than 70 countries out of 224 studied by UN experts, women give birth to less than 2 children, among them Bulgaria and Ukraine (on average, 1.5 children). In Western countries, however, the birth rate is still higher than in the East (on average - 1.7). UN demographers warn that if countries with low fertility do not implement specific immigration policies and other strategies to increase fertility, their populations will decline dramatically in the coming decades.

The population growth was also influenced by other important factors, such as the fact that in recent years more and more women give birth to children aged 30 to 34 years. At the same time, a significant part of women become mothers between the ages of 15 and 19: from 30 to 1000 births fall on women of this particular age group. This phenomenon is connected with the growth of national minorities - Roma, Turks, and other ethnic groups, who are moving to the countries of Eastern Europe. Demographers emphasize that too young mothers have fewer real opportunities to receive a full-fledged education and further professional development, therefore one of the main goals of millennium development is to reduce the birth rate at such an early age [1].

As a result of changes in the system of family values, women have a paradoxical situation: getting higher education, a career, financial independence due to late marriage and the birth of children come to the fore. Changes in the reproductive behavior of women find a concentrated expression in the increase in the average age at the birth of their first child. Every year it becomes more difficult for people to make a choice in favor due to the lack of confidence in themselves and in the future. As a consequence of this behavior - an increase in the marriageable

age, an extension of trial marriage, a reluctance of women to register a relationship, a noticeably increased number of children born out of wedlock. The main problem preventing the emergence of children turned out to be viable factors, first of all, the housing issue, the lack of guarantees, both in their future and in the future of children.

The decline in the birth rate in Bulgaria is a consequence of the reduction in the number of women of childbearing age, due to the general labor emigration of young people. Of no small importance is the situation of a difficult economic situation and the impossibility of full-fledged family life. Modern methods and methods of contraception, even for unprotected segments of the population, allow you to postpone pregnancy until better times.

At present, Bulgaria occupies the last position in the fertility rate in the European Union, which is associated not only with unsatisfactory living conditions, but also with the lack of opportunities for implementation and career growth among women, and the rapid deterioration of economic conditions.

The current situation in the country forces women to direct all their strength, energy, and aspirations to career achievements, which are pushed into the background by motherhood. Economic difficulties and the changing role of women in Bulgarian society do not provide a chance to return to the model of simple reproduction, in which generations are simply replaced in numbers. Such replacement is necessary - one woman, in order to give birth to at least two children, must be of fertile age - from 15 to 49 years. Statistics show that this number is on average below 1.6 and there is a drop in its value against the background of a decrease in the number of women in reproductive groups.

The economy of Bulgaria is characterized by a small number of jobs, most of which are seasonal, concentrated in tourist areas. In addition, Bulgaria's accession to the EU has simplified the process of labor migration, creating favorable conditions for the ideal demographic storm - moving permanently to other countries in search of work. Migration and emigration rates are unusually high. There are now about 10% more women than men who decide to emigrate for labor. Almost half of those leaving to work and live abroad are women aged 20-39.

From the point of view of the future state, it becomes clear that we are losing specialists in whom significant resources have been invested. In the meantime, the educational and cultural level in Bulgarian preschool, school institutions, and universities is rapidly deteriorating. The successful implementation of the containment programs is expected to have a direct impact on Bulgaria as well.

In Bulgaria, the number of people of retirement age continues to grow and the number of young people continues to decline. Do not forget that only those who officially bought a ticket to another country are taken into account in the official statistical calculations, the real picture is much more deplorable - the actual figures are twice or even three times more than those provided by official specialized bodies and statistical studies.

The same trend is observed in other countries of Eastern Europe, in particular, Ukraine. UN experts predict that by 2100 the population of Ukraine will decline to 15-16 million people.

Targeted government assistance is required to support working mothers - the spread of part-time employment and flexible working hours, which are not particularly popular in Eastern Europe.

The gender approach is a fairly new paradigm of research in recent decades in the world: there are thousands of centers, groups, laboratories for the study of gender issues, scientific forums are held. A gender approach should become a natural methodology for decision-making, and, ultimately, gender equality issues are human rights issues regardless of gender.

To improve the demographic situation, a balanced policy is needed, aimed at reviving the nation, creating projects aimed at supporting disabled mothers, and the activities of counseling centers for future parents. Specialists are needed not only to accomplish the assigned tasks but also to inform the population and provide competent coverage of the work. Only the interaction of journalists and specialists in the field of demography, gender issues, as well as social and economic policy can lead to a clear understanding of the current situation and the program for solving the assigned tasks.

Analyzing the social aspect of the demographic policy, one can state not only a number of objective economic problems that restrain the growth of the birth rate but also the other side of the demographic crisis - the high mortality rate of the working-age population. Regular medical monitoring and the fight against serious illnesses seem to be effective ways to reduce this indicator.

Considering the demographic situation at the level of three components: family, state,

society, one can come to the conclusion that only a logical, thoughtful, consistent policy that pays due attention to the analysis of the economic situation in general and social protection of the population can change the existing state of affairs.

The regulation of demographic processes also requires the development of appropriate legal acts to create conditions for ensuring a stable population in the long term. Recommendations in the field of demographic and family policy can be developed in general in the following directions [2]:

- strengthening the traditional family and increasing the birth rate;
- improving the health of the population;
- minimization of illegal labor migration;
- development of a system of measures of a full-fledged state demographic policy for the formation in the long term of the optimal type of population reproduction.

Thus, there is a general relationship between the economic development of a country and the reproduction of its population. High birth rate, decrease in mortality. An increase in the number of young ages in the education of the population can cause an increase in the quality and competitiveness of the country's labor resources.

1. Klupt, M.A. (2005), «Theory of demographic development: an institutional perspective», *Societies, science and modernity*, № 2, pp. 139-149.

2. Thevenon O. Family policy in developed countries: contrasting models [Electronic resource]. - *Population etsociétés*, 2008, № 448. URL:http://www.ined.fr/en/resources_documentation/publications/pop_soc/bdd/publication/.

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GENDER PROFILE OF PONDICHERRY – AN OVERVIEW

Pondicherry is part of the geographic and linguistic-cultural region of the South Indian peninsula. Pondicherry exhibits a cosmopolitan population with diversified culture and faith. However, there are many issues related to women and gender sensitivity that could be improved due to influence of many traditional and modern factors.

Pondicherry ranks third amongst Indian States and Union Territories with a population density of 2,029 per sq.km. This is an increase of 346 per sq.km as compared to 1991 when it was 1,683 per sq.km. Density in the UT is seven times that of India as a whole.

In terms of the Human Development Index and Gender Disparity Index, the social sector expenditure in the UT was 37% as against the Indian Government figure of 15% (1997-98). Nonetheless, expenditure on women as a proportion of Net State Domestic Product is only 0.049% (2001-02). Per capita expenditure on women development was Rs.18.94 (2001-02). However, Per capita expenditure on women development had increased three times between 1993-94 and 2000-01.

The population of Pondicherry (Census, 2001) is 9.74 lakhs. As a proportion of the country's total population, it was 0.09%. Women and men constitute exactly 50% of the population (4.87 lakh) [1].

At all levels of education, primary to higher secondary, girls and boys had more or less equal size of enrolment. The Gross enrolment ratio of girls at the different levels was marginally lesser than boys. The number of girls enrolled per 100 boys was 94 at the primary, 92 at the elementary and 96 at the secondary levels. In fact, at the higher secondary level the number of girls enrolled per 100 boys was 104 [2].

There have been no dropouts among boys or girls at the primary and the elementary stages. In this respect, the UT is comparable to Kerala the most literate state of India. The dropout