

ROMANIAN DEMOGRAPHY - REVIEW AND STRATEGIC LANDMARKS OF ITS EVOLUTION IN THE YEARS TO COME

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Abstract: *The paper presents a scientific study of those factors influencing the demographic dynamics, featuring comparative data regarding the demographic evolution with respect to the key fields of the society that might reinforce the conceptualization of a strategy meant to control and confine the national growth risks. Demography itself is approached as a part of national security, systemically integrated in the general social – economic bundled dynamics as a whole. The arguments concerning the abatement of the demographic deficit are delivered together with solutions of a possible strategy dedicated to this issue and customized by using the scientific instruments in the field.*

Keywords: *Romanian demography, evolution, strategic landmarks, review, risks.*

Demography is rated as national priority together with education and health, *demography* being a *must* to be included in a strategy the Romanian State should abide to, the demographic deficit being rated as a major risk to both security and national development.

The idea that, generally speaking, population growth is toxic for the life standard is completely wrong as nowadays, at this **moment, the population density in Romania amounts to under 90 residents / km², while in England the rate is 244 residents/km² and in Israel it reaches the value of 350 residents / km².** England, about the same size of Romania, has a population of 60 million. A massive population might entice strategic

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investments from another level, having a national retail and recruit market pool showing signs of growth for average and long terms and, what is more, Romania would be able to bring a bigger weight of contribution to the European mass.

Some major factors influencing the demographic growth are as follows:

1. The quality of life: easy access to running water, effective sewage systems, good sanitation, medical and social services (including medicines), good quality and relatively cheap food, access to living space (either as rental or purchase). These elements influence the life standard of a pretty relevant part of the population and its associated percentage.

2. The population fertility, influenced by both the environment, and the genetic heritage, but also by the existing so-called *age pyramid*.

3. The average income *per capita* as compared to cost of life and the percentage related to the middle class in the society as compared to the poor portion of the population.

4. Population migration / immigration moves, driven by specific factors such as economy, taxes, policy or environment.

5. Taxes.

6. Legislation covering the abortion and the family.

7. The stability of the job position.

8. The economic growth trend on average and long term forecast – the psychological factor.

9. Education – both at the family level and as a proper Institution.

10. Population's degree of awareness to the risks emerging from disregarding the demographic factor presence.

11. Religion – it may have a strong bearing in either direction on population behavior and perception of sexuality, family and the need to have babies.

12. Specific customs / folklore traditions – they might influence the general approach towards building up a family and the relationships between generations.

13. Environmental factors, pollution – they influence both the quality of life and also the fertility.

In addition to the Constitution itself, demography and family should have been directly the objects of the most basic social rights, apt to be protected by default, like individual property.

The Ministry of Labor and Social Security, the Ministry of Health, the Ministry of the National Education are the main institutions vested with implementation of a law related to demography. Also, for monitoring such law enforcement and the national scientific evaluation thereof, it would therefore be necessary to subsequently establish a neutral institution inside the civil society. At the same time, through the involvement of a group of experts, both international and Romanian, focused on building a strategy pack dedicated to subsections such as economy, taxes, state administration and efficiency enhancement for the state-owned companies, demography and foreign policy, the state should therefore promote specific actions for each item from the demographic strategy plan, including simulation of measures impact and a *to do* calendar draft proposed for further implementation.

To ensure the success of such a strategy it is necessary that the measures be conceptualized and enforced in a system with analyses at least following: „*dimensions: legal; organizational; physical; scientific; economic; information; political-military; cultural; environmental*”¹. At the same time, the boost provided by the implementation of such a strategy should be monitored on a permanent basis while the measures themselves should be trimmed and adjusted on the run.

We consider it necessary to take more measures and targets customized for the different stages of the demographic dynamics involving several fields, such as:

DEMOGRAPHY:

1. Having children should first be encouraged by awarding progressive financial grants for each child to be born in a family.

a. Financial measures should be taken such as tax exemption on family income for the years the babies were born and the income received by mothers for the entire period of maternity leave should be set

¹ Eugen Siteanu, Gheorghe Calopăreanu, *The concept of high security*, Annals series on military sciences, Volume 10, Issue 1/2018, pp. 65-66.

to 80% of the regular salary immediately before the occurrence of the maternity period.

b. The maximum optional lapse of the maternity leave of absence should be maintained to 2 years.

c. **The gradual financial pack granted** (allowed to only those citizens who pay their due taxes to the state taxation authorities in due time, just to prevent any form of discrimination) for legal weddings and poor & childless families, or for those having just one child.

d. **Grant a bonus for each newly born Romanian citizen**, directly related to the lowest wage in the economy (a multiple).

1. Simplifying the procedure of granting citizenship for the newborn (even if the parents are not Romanian citizens – provided only that the actual birth takes place on Romanian territory and the parents, in this case, are residents in Romania. A similar program should apply to the Romanian citizens resident abroad, provided they decide to return to the country to give birth to the child and have him/her properly registered).

2. Increasing the sum of money granted for each child until coming of age and significant and progressive financial support for each child who was born starting with the second child of each family.

3. Establishing a program of monitoring at national scale of the pregnant women's health, jointly in public/private partnerships.

4. Upgrading all maternity hospitals and wards, the neonatology wards and hospitals for children – as a mainstay priority of the medical system. These hospitals / medical facilities should be readily available and accessible, both regarding accommodation capacity and geographical location in the territory at large also to the people from the countryside (villagers). (The underlying purpose is to cut down the stillborn index, the one associated to our country being among the states on top of the list).

5. Offering proactive help & support to adoptions, as a national priority, the family of adoption enjoying by law the same facilities as the families having in care their natural children.

6. Amending the abortion law so as to favor the birth of children, having as a model the legislation provisions in Ireland and Poland.

7.Helping and supporting the program of the bearing mothers (surrogate mothers), a complementary program to the one dedicated to the prevention of sterility. On a free will basis (voluntary action), in exchange for some financial / tax free advantages, some women might accept bearing to term some act of pregnancy resulted from artificial insemination for a couple /persons physically unable to have babies. This would come together with building as many maternal shelters / centers for supporting mothers with lower means of life. Besides, the state has already taken the measure of state financing the first artificial insemination to the benefit of those persons who decide to give this method a try.

8.Providing family support under the care of the state by cutting down some percent points off the due fees and taxes to be paid by the couples who decide to start a family.

9.Encouraging mothers / fathers to come back from the maternal/paternal leave of absence, by bonuses such as:

a. the existence of some tax deductions when hiring a nation-scaled certified nanny.

b.making available a flexible work schedule for a period of 3 years from the actual birth.

c. saving the opportunity, as needed, for the mother to continue or re-enter the maternal leave of absence up to a 2-year-more term.

10. Campaigning for raising awareness at the civil society level of the abortion-related topics and on the importance to increase the birth-rate, highlighting not only the individuals' benefits on both average and long term, but also the society's benefits on the whole. This campaign should be endorsed and proactively sponsored by both the private enterprises and the NGOs as well.

ECONOMY

The economic purpose would be for the occupied active population to grow to about 40-50% of the entire population of our country. Thus, there are the following possibilities:

a. The interlink of the average and long term economic and educational strategies, aiming at a rise of the occupied population percent.

b. The unemployed should be encouraged to acquire a different qualification by easy availability and access to re-conversion professional courses.

c. Encouragement of the economic activity both at the micro level and family association level, by easy, readily available credit, European funds and extremely low tax levels throughout the entire period of active work employment. This is also a measure to bolster the average income population percent as well.

c. Encourage the hiring of youth and of freshly graduated young people as well as of the seniors (50 years or more) by a low tax policy (social security, taxes on income)

EDUCATION AND THE EXPATS

1.Promotion of higher education scholarships throughout the European Community and North America (especially for political, economic and sociological studies) depending on the up-trend fields in the Romanian economy, building up facilities to be hired in Romania at the end of this curricular occupation for as may graduates as possible given the circumstances. These could come in a package with tax amenities and full support with opening new private business ventures and also relocation facilities (easy going online documents processing, attractive credit for houses etc.);

2.A similar program for all the Romanian emigrants who are already abroad and who wish to return to the mother country: a special package for family relocation (easy online documents processing credits for houses and good business, grants from the state if the person opens up some business upon his/her coming back to the mother country, counseling for relocating the entire family, zero taxes for cash returned home by transfer to the Romanian bank accounts, a short period of friendly, low tax policy etc.). There are readily available examples such as Poland and Italy that may be further analyzed and researched as well as enhanced.

3.A repatriation program of the Romanians dwelling within the ISC area beyond the Dniester River (except the Romanians from the Republic of Moldova / Transnistria and the Odessa area), similar to the repatriate program in use in Germany, after the union. According to statistics, there are still hundreds of thousands up to as much as one million descendants of some Romanian families, who had to go through deportation or colonization, most of them living now in mixed families. A relocation package of the type mentioned above, plus the free offer of granting Romanian citizenship, a program of naturalization and jobs offers as well, could mean a serious incentive to consider repatriation as the right option to take. For such a program of such a scale, securing the co-operation of the Russian Federation is a must and, and also the active support of other member states from the ISC, plus a significant effort of the Foreign Affairs Ministry and the Romanian associations to share the program and identify, at top speed, those having Romanian blood in their veins.

4.Encouraging sport and physical activities. Increase the number of physical activities and sport in school. Encourage the organization of sports events by way of tax alleviation and foment sponsorship. Create a real sport industry following the model of football play-out and play-off championship in Italy, France, Germany or Spain, business meant to energize the physical education of youth.

5.Setting up a ministry dedicated full time to demography, youth and sport, aiming to monitor closely the implementation of demographic boost & build up strategy.

6.Founding new schools, colleges and libraries for handicapped youth or those from poor zones, from its own resources and donations in charity.

HEALTH

1. Create hospitals and maternity wards/ facilities.
2. Implement a national program of monitoring the health status of pregnant women, in private / public partnership.
3. Upgrade all maternity hospitals and wards, the neonatology wards and hospitals for children – as a mainstay priority of the medical system.

These hospital / medical facilities should be readily available and accessible, both as accommodation capacity and geographical location in the territory at large also to the people from the countryside (villagers). (The underlying purpose is to cut down the stillborn index, the one associated to our country being among the highest of all).

Collateral priorities (support package) – these measures could have an indirect impact on Romanian birth-rate:

THE STATE ADMINISTRATION should do the following:

1. Release financial resources as required for investments and other programs, such as the demographic timeline but also in view of a higher income, based on performance, meant for the staff employed by the state. It may be done by:

2. Cutting down on the number of office quarters and making the necessary steps to get paperwork done and a more efficient administration.

3. Dramatically cutting down the number of taxes, down to as few as 5, but anyway no more than 10; this feature would simplify the tax authority and administration work.

4. Removing the redundancies between the operations and headquarters office and those located in counties / regional and curtail the number of state agencies and ministries.

5. Prepare at the same time some cost-effective mechanisms of professional re-conversion of the personnel subjected to overall restructuring and curtailment of bureaucracy.

6. Keeping up to date by way of telecommunication systems between various state institutions but also by including the local administration.

7. Setting yearly targets in quality and thresholds in performance for those employed in administration jobs.

8. **Reforming the entire pension system and working on it for more simplicity. Private management of the Pension Fund in a mixed system type bank deposit for long term / low risk investment fund.**

THE INFRASTRUCTURE:

1. Customize the strategy for building roads and railways, to ease geographic mobility of the population inside Romania and covering the vacancies, securing an uninterrupted growth of occupying the labor posts as they turn available. On the other hand, however, the interconnection of the rural zones with the closest cities and villages is essential for the uprising of the population's standard of life:

a. Building outer city rings around cities of at least 50.000 habitants enlarge the national roads in view of a 4 lane traffic, where is possible, this project representing perhaps a short term and cost-effective solution as an alternative for the still missing highways.

c. Ensuring asphalt coating of inter-village roads or with the municipal cities they belong to and introducing regular commuting bus lines for passengers on these directions: train /buses.

2. Use asphalt in all cities – a 10-year strategy. Find cheap solutions of coating with asphalt, different from those using standard bitumen. There are also non conventional mixes having very similar properties to bitumen even if they lack the latter's strength and endurance, but they are cheaper, and make an attractive option to mend the muddy country roads. The regular bitumen might be used just for the major central streets that cross the villages through.

e. Building regional railroad networks, beside some high-speed transit tracks, both national and international, interlinked with the European railway-net.

THE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT:

The Economic Development

1. Creating a Developing Program for villages and small towns - in co-relation with tourism, agriculture, transportation, main routes and the strategic investments. The village is deemed as the most natural and healthy environment apt to endorse the demographic boost in Romania. The rising of the living standard in the countryside by access to comfort amenities such as sewage, gas, running water, bitumen coated roads, railways,

telecommunication, infrastructure, medical care services, education, transportation:

a. The necessity to settle homesteads in the countryside area of about 30 – 40% of the active population.

b. The development of the villages and counties in the context of the ecological and IT-based agriculture of its associated production lines, of the ecological and clean power sources of electricity, of the ecological recycling and tourism.

c. Place rural development at a high rank of priority depending on the main transportation and economy routes.

d. Highlight and enhance the traditional values from architecture and tourism points of view.

e. Financial backing of small sized, bio agro local producers.

f. Encouraging the settlement in the countryside of a portion of the young population, creating all amenities and facilities to be found in cities and by stimulation of some economic activity categories specific to the countryside environment requiring higher education, however, remote work – on the Internet, computer based financial management of the farms and food lines providers, of the recycling units, of the bio clean electric power sources, schools and colleges, local hospitals, inns & hotels management, manufacturing, community utilities, services etc.

g. Organize the counties so that they might be able to run at the level of complex management (administration, nursery schools, primary schools, colleges, professional centers, clubs, bottle & can production and processing lines, shops, local administration and services, garbage collection & recycling) for the villages inside a 10 – 15 km effective range neighborhood. The hexagonal cell building pattern could be taken as a starting point, then shaping it depending on access routes and the geographic specifics (terrain features). This particular building up pattern or template might be applied to the cities also, and while doing so, to further enlarge and cover a wider interdependence area.

2. The development of those villages in the proximity of national borders for tourism will stimulate economic exchanges with neighbor countries, while benefiting at the same time from trans-borders co-operation

funds. This particular measure might also have a positive demographic impact.

a. Development of infrastructure (highways, navigation channels, airports and bridges) and of tourism according to this particular plan.

b. Placing the development of these areas at a high rank of priority that might also profit from over-the-border workers who might be hired by the day, having also the advantage of nearby marketing venues from the countries in the neighborhood located within the associated Euro Zones.

c. Interlink of the economic zones on both sides of the borderline in every Euro Zone, encouraging personal and commodity transfer to and from such a Euro Zone.



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