

POPULATION DEVELOPMENT IN SLOVAKIA IN THE EUROPEAN CONTEXT

Jozef Mládek

*Department of Human Geography and Demogeography, Faculty of Natural Sciences,
Comenius University, Bratislava, Slovak Republic*

Abstract: The second demographic transition represents not only negative balance of population movement, but indicates significant changes of demographic processes, e.g. fertility, natality, nuptiality and family formation, reflecting changes in demographic behaviour of population. In the last decade population development in the countries of Central and East Europe has changed a lot, being significantly influenced by ongoing transformation processes. Changes in demographic processes and phenomena in Slovakia, which started at the beginning of the 90s, are being considerably influenced by changes of socio-economic relations. Some processes and their rates, mainly marriages, fertility and reproduction have closely approached figures reached by the West-European populations. But on the other side, Slovakia still maintains the natural increase of population, the life expectancy at birth is rising in slow pace. Marital relationships and family creation still remains under considerable influence of tradition family and reproductive behaviour.

Key words: demographic transition, transformation processes, natality, fertility, nuptiality, mortality, demographic behaviour of population

1. INTRODUCTION

Dramatic changes so typical for population phenomena and development of population processes, especially in terms of the European population, still draw attention of numerous sciences, but first of all of demography and demogeography. The main indicators of such changes are concerned at present with falling dynamic of population growth, decrease of marriages, lower fertility and changes in some other demographic and social processes. Such development has not been actually assumed and took scientists by surprise. According to the theory of demographic transition (demographic revolution) formulated and developed by A. Landry (1934), F. W. Notestein (1945), W.

S. Thompson (1929), G. Mackenroth (1953), R. Vance (1952), Z. Pavlík (1964), during the final stage of demographic transition the stable development of population is rather to be expected, being characterised by low birth rates and low death rates, with low natural population growth oscillating around its minimum level.

Birth rates declined below death rates displaying natural decrease of population in some European countries in 1960s. Such development was defined as the second demographic transition, or the second demographic revolution (D. J. Van De Kaa (1987), H. Birg (1996)). Negative balance of population movement indicates significant changes in large range of demographic processes, e.g. fertility, natality, nuptiality and family formation, reflecting changes in demographic behaviour of population.

This substantial difference in the nature of the first and the second demographic transitions must be sought particularly in demographic behaviour. Whilst the first demographic transition is characterised by **altruism** based on activities for benefits of others with orientation on family and posterity, industrialisation and urbanisation processes incur decrease of fertility. Beyond this, secularisation reduces the influence of religion on the family size, leading gradually to the family planning.

Characteristic feature of the demographic behaviour in the period of the second demographic transition is **individualism**, so typical for the post-industrial society. Emphasis on personal freedom here gets weaker functions of matrimony and family. Such behaviour is conducted as well by more advanced levels of education and by will of young people to develop their individual abilities.

This is valid for both men and women, moreover each of them try to maintain the certain level of independence by having his/her own source of income. That is why foundation of the family and childbearing are being regarded as a threat of their economical and social independence. Moreover, the ongoing process of the society secularisation gets weaker the demographic behaviour. In such a way the individualism becomes a powerful factor not only for the family planning and regulation, it decreases fertility to the lowest level. Whereas for the first demographic transition decline of death rates was regarded as decisive, dynamic of the second demographic process is characterised by decrease of birth rates.

2. POPULATION PROCESSES SIGNIFICANTLY INFLUENCED BY THE TRANSFORMATION

The previously mentioned trends of the population development in the European countries are, though, far more complicated and spatially significantly different. In the last decade, for instance, population development in the countries of Central and East Europe has changed a lot, being significantly influenced by ongoing transformation processes. In terms of them, Slovakia is not an exception, and here, in addition to the general all-European trends, the influence of the socio-economic transformation can be spotted as well.

Transformation has hit population phenomena and processes in different countries with different intensity. They can be perceived better after splitting into two groups. To the first group should be arranged population phenomena and processes significantly dependable from the pace of development and socio-economic conditions, having responded comparatively quickly on their changes, so figures there vary more quickly. To this group could be arranged such patterns as live births, natural population increase, fertility, nuptiality, abortions, reproduction, etc. Let us survey development and spatial differentiation of some of them.

One of the typical signs of the population development in the period of the 2nd demographic transition is decline of fertility rates. Usually the 2,1 (or 2,0) level of the total fertility which indicates a long-term balance between birth and death rates is regarded as decisive (see Table 1).

Table 1 Development of the total fertility in selected European countries

Years	United Kingdom	France	Germany	Italy	Spain	USSR
1800	5,55					
1850	4,95	3,38				
1870	4,94	3,42	5,29	4,88		
1900	3,4	2,79	4,77	4,43		
1910	2,84	2,25	3,52	4,28		
1921-25	2,39	2,42	2,62	3,5	3,96	
1926-30	2,01	2,3	2,1	3,3	3,75	6,04
1931-35	1,79	2,16	1,84	3,07	3,5	4,53
1936-40	1,98	2,07	2,24	3	2,77	4,66
1941-45	2,39	2,11	1,9	2,56	2,72	
1946-50	2,19	2,98	2,07	2,77	2,68	3,13
1950-55	2,18	2,73	2,16	2,32	2,52	2,51
1955-60	2,49	2,71	2,3	2,35	2,75	2,62
1961-65	2,81	2,85	2,49	2,55	2,89	2,48
1965-70	2,52	2,61	2,32	2,49	2,93	2,02
1971-75	2,04	2,31	1,64	2,28	2,89	1,98
1975-80	1,72	1,86	1,52	1,92	2,63	1,92
1980-85	1,8	1,87	1,46	1,55	1,86	1,99
1985-90	1,81	1,8	1,43	1,35	1,46	2,1
1995	1,71	1,7	1,24	1,17	1,18	1,39

Source: Livi Bacci, M. (1999)

By the end of the 60s majority of the European countries achieved relatively high rates of fertility, but already at that time they revealed a declining trend (see Table 2). In 1970 in Denmark, Finland, Sweden, Federal Republic of Germany, Luxembourg and Hungary the total fertility of the first European population had fallen below the level of simple reproduction. Much later, the same trend occurred in two newly established countries: Croatia, and the Czech Republic. At the same time some European countries measured quite high total fertility rates, e.g. Ireland 3,9, Norway 2,5, Netherlands 2,6,

Portugal 2,8, Spain 2,9, Poland 2,2, etc. During the last 25 years situation has changed significantly: already in 1966, the total fertility rates in majority of the European countries have declined below 2,0 (except populations of Albania, Cyprus, Island and Turkey).

Likewise the other European countries, the total fertility rate in Slovakia has had a decreasing trend. Already in 1950 it measured 3,6 reflecting impressive dynamic of reproduction processes. Beyond this post-war maximum, the second one, though less expressive, occurred in the mid-70s (2,6). In terms of this pattern, the most decisive decline of total fertility rates incurred in 1989 falling below 2,1. Further decrease of fertility in the 90s below 1,5 (in 1997 it was for instance 1,43) can be regarded even as more dramatic. The second fertility reduction is concerned with decreasing of female's net specific fertility with different intensity of its declination in various age categories of women (Mládek, J., Chovancová, J., Bátorová, S. 1998).

Evaluation of population development in terms of its natural reproduction, especially, from the point of view of net reproduction rates, has already confirmed the aforesaid changes. In 1970 only 4 countries indicated the net reproduction rates less than 1 (the limit of simple reproduction). By 1996 the situation has changed considerably, because almost all European countries have already experienced decrease of this pattern below 1, what is the evidence of insufficient population reproduction (Albania and Turkey, though, made an exception).

In course of long-term development, the net reproduction rate in Slovakia exceeds 1, indicating a certain level of extended reproduction. Nevertheless, at the same time, decline of its values indicates falling dynamic of population development. Since 1989, figures of net reproduction rates constantly fluctuate below the level of simple reproduction. Such development implies gradual transformation of population in Slovakia to the simple reproduction pattern, with definitely insufficient figures in the recent years. Such development had already measured its minimum in 1997 (0,68).

To the certain degree, synthetic evaluation of population development can be achieved over analysis of crude rates of the natural population increase. Theories of the second demographic transition assume their declination to the negative values. Analysing the European populations from this point of view, we will get even more complicated picture (see Map 1). Decrease of the natural population growth in the last 25 years is evident in all countries, but in 1996 only 14 of them measured negative values. The next 11 countries have had decreasing figures of the natural population growth, though, of very low rates. Decrease of the natural population growth in the other countries measured slower pace (Turkey, Island, Cyprus, Ireland), or remained the same for quite long period (Switzerland, Norway, Luxembourg, Finland).

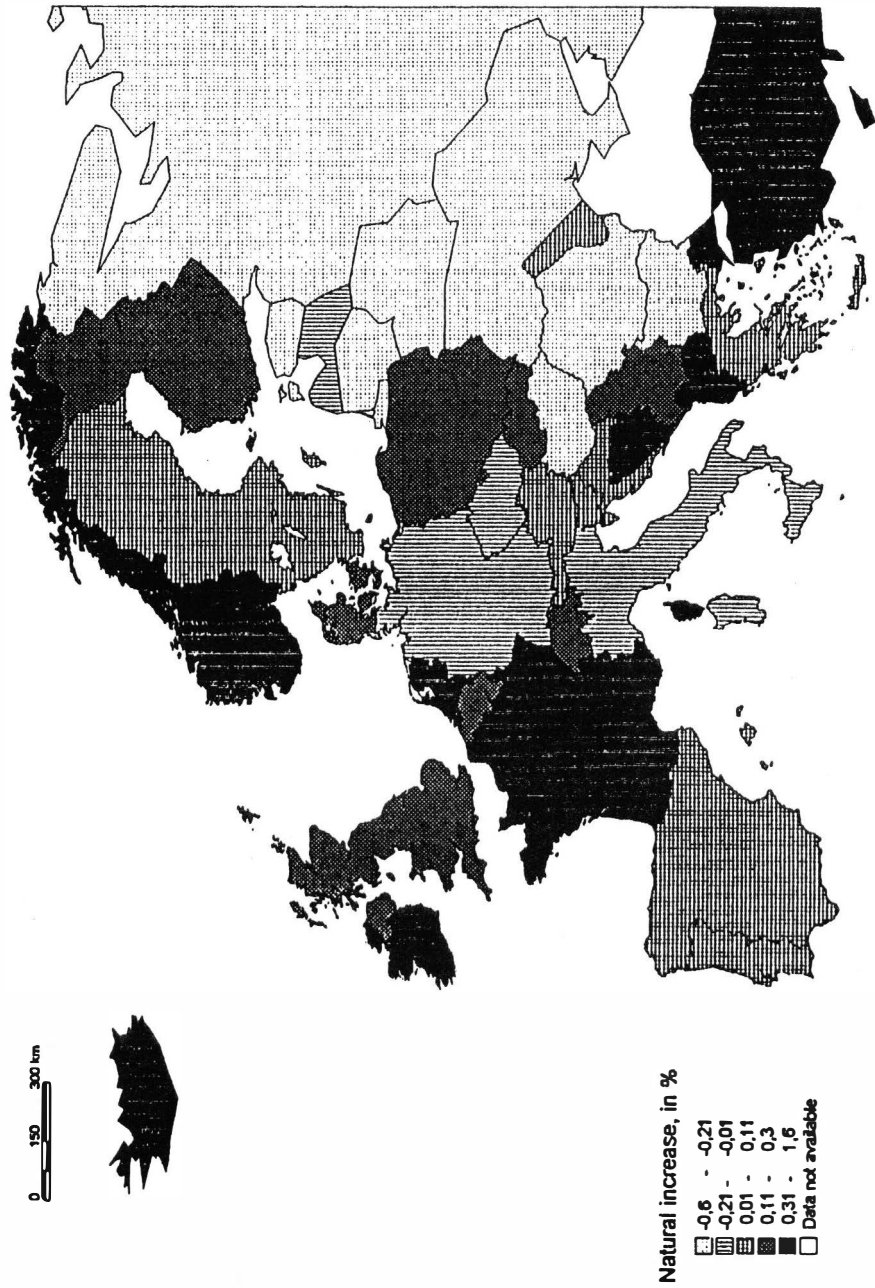
In the all-European context, the Slovak Republic has had relatively high rates of the natural population growth. Even in time of two post-war maximums, i.e. in 50s and 70s, it was 17-18% and 10-11% respectively. However, in the early 90s the radical decrease has been occurred. If in 1990 the population increased by 25 000, i.e. by 5%, in 1997 it increased only by 6987, i.e. population growth has fallen to 1,3%. It means that the natural population growth decreased by 2/3 from its initial level. Fortunately, population development in the last 3 years indicates some signs of overcoming these dramatic declines in population growth.

Table 2 Total fertility rate

Country	1970	1975	1980	1985	1990	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997
Albania	5,16		3,62	3,26	3,03					
Austria	2,29	1,83	1,65	1,47	1,45	1,48	1,44	1,4	1,42	1,36
Belgium	2,25	1,74	1,69	1,51	1,62	1,6	1,55P	1,55P		
Bulgaria	2,18	2,24	2,05	1,95	1,81	1,46	1,37	1,23	1,24	1,09
Croatia	1,8	1,91	1,92	1,82	1,63	1,52	1,47	1,58	1,67	1,69
Cyprus	2,54	2,01	2,46	2,38	2,42	2,27	2,23	2,13	2,08	2
Czech Republic	1,93	2,43	2,07	1,95	1,89	1,67	1,44	1,28	1,18	1,17
Denmark	1,95	1,92	1,55	1,45	1,67	1,75	1,81	1,81	1,75	
Estonia	2,16	2,04	2,02	2,12	2,05	1,45	1,37	1,32	1,3	1,24
Finland	1,83	1,69	1,63	1,64	1,78	1,81	1,85	1,81	1,76	1,74
France	2,47	1,93	1,94	1,81	1,78	1,65	1,65	1,7	1,72	1,71P
Germany						1,28	1,24	1,25	1,32	
FRG	2,02	1,45	1,45	1,28	1,45	1,39	1,35	1,34	1,39	
Former GDR	2,19	1,54	1,94	1,73	1,52	0,78	0,77	0,84	0,95	
Greece	2,43	2,28	2,23	1,68	1,43	1,34	1,36	1,32	1,3	1,32
Hungary	1,97	2,38	1,92	1,83	1,84	1,69	1,64	1,57	1,46	1,38
Iceland	2,18	2,65	2,48	1,93	2,31	2,22	2,14	2,08	2,12	2,04
Ireland	3,87	3,4	3,23	2,5	2,12	1,91	1,85	1,85	1,88P	1,92P
Italy	2,43	2,21	1,68	1,45	1,36	1,26	1,22	1,18	1,21E	1,22E
Latvia	2,01	1,96	1,9	2,09	2,02	1,51	1,39	1,25	1,16	1,11
Liechtenstein		1,47	1,75	1,5	1,45	1,52	1,33			
Lithuania	2,4	2,22	2,12	1,69	1,52	1,49	1,42	1,39		
Luxembourg	1,97	1,52	1,5	1,38	1,62	1,69	1,72	1,67	1,76	1,71
Malta		2,17	1,98	1,99	2,05	2,01	1,89	1,83	2,1	1,95
Moldova			2,39	2,75	2,39	2,1	1,95	1,76	1,6	
Netherlands	2,57	1,66	1,6	1,51	1,62	1,57	1,57	1,53	1,53	1,45P
Norway		1,98	1,72	1,68	1,93	1,86	1,87	1,87	1,89	1,86
Poland	2,2	2,26	2,28	2,33	2,04	1,85	1,8	1,61	1,58	1,51
Portugal	2,76	2,52	2,19	1,73	1,57	1,52	1,44	1,41	1,44	1,46
Romania	2,89	2,62	2,45	2,26	1,83	1,44	1,41	1,34	1,3	1,32
Russian Federation	2,01	1,97	1,9	2,11	1,89	1,39	1,4	1,34	1,28	
San Marino	2,23	1,91	1,46	1,14	1,31	1,12	1,22	1,1	1,25	1,24
Slovak Republic	2,4	2,55	2,32	2,25	2,09	1,92	1,66	1,52	1,47	
Slovenia	2,1	2,16	2,11	1,72	1,46	1,34	1,32	1,29	1,28	1,25
Spain	2,86	2,8	2,21	1,64	1,36	1,27	1,21	1,17	1,15	1,15E
Sweden	1,94	1,78	1,68	1,73	2,14	2	1,89	1,74	1,61	1,53
Switzerland	2,1	1,61	1,55	1,52	1,59	1,51	1,49	1,48	1,5	1,48
Macedonia	2,95	2,7	2,45	2,31	2,06		2,08	1,97	1,9	
Turkey	5,68	5,09	4,36	3,59	2,99	2,76	2,69	2,62	2,55	2,48
Ukraine	2,09	2,02	1,95	2,02	1,89	1,55	1,5	1,4		
United Kingdom	2,45	1,81	1,89	1,8	1,83	1,76	1,74	1,71	1,72	1,71
Belarus	2,33	2,22	2,07	1,91	1,61	1,57	1,39	1,31	1,23	
Bosnia-Hercegovina	2,67	2,35	1,88	1,89	1,7					
FR of Yugoslavia	2,28	2,31	2,26	2,21	2,08	1,91	1,85	1,88	1,8	

P - Provisional data, E - Estimate

Source: Recent demographic developments in Europe 1998.



Map 1 Natural increase around 1996, in Europe

Despite such radical changes, Slovakia still keeps the median position among the European countries. Perhaps more impressive results will be obtained after these countries arranging according to the crude rates of the natural population growth. The first 9 places with the most significant crude rates of population decrease will be held by the former socialist countries, which suffer consequences of the socio-economic transformation (Bulgaria, Latvia, Ukraine, Russia, Belarus, Estonia, Hungary, The Czech Republic and Romania). The same results will be gained after these countries survey according to the net reproduction and total fertility rates and crude death and live birth rates. Having analysed achieved rates of these figures it can be regarded that population development in transitive countries has made the further progress towards the second demographic transition.

3. MORE CONSERVATIVE POPULATION PHENOMENA AND PROCESSES

The second group of the population phenomena and processes is characterised by major persistence, reacting more slowly on socio-economic changes. It refers to such patterns as life expectancy at birth, infant mortality, mean age at marriage, mean age of women at birth of first child, birth outside marriages, etc. Their development depends on the overall social changes, cultural maturity, local traditions, being influenced sometimes by religiosity of population, etc.

Development of the second demographic transition is characterised as well by higher rates of late marriages and by transition from tradition to pluralistic type of family. Populations of Slovakia and some other Central and East European countries are just only approaching this model.

The long-term development of the marital relationships in Slovakia is characterised by quite high crude marriage rates and low ages at marriage. High marriage rates had fluctuated for the long period round 7-9%, being considerably influenced by the economic welfare, strong traditions of family life and religious upbringing. The family was regarded as a universal form of the marital life, whereas its alternative forms have not been applied.

Dramatic decrease of the marriage rates occurred in 1991-1995. In 1990 it was solemnised more than 40 000 marriages, meanwhile in 1995 only about 27 000. While in 1990 8 marriages per 1000 population were registered, in 1995 it was only 5. Such development was caused by several factors, for instance also by delays in marriage due to the complicated socio-economic situation in Slovakia in 1990. Actually, it was a reaction on decline of real incomes, slacken of the housing construction and climbing unemployment rate.

The second important pattern of marriage rates - age at marriage - remained at the same low level: in 1996 54,5% of males were married by 24 years of age, other 26,2% entered into a marriage being 25-29. At marriage 74,4% of females were younger than

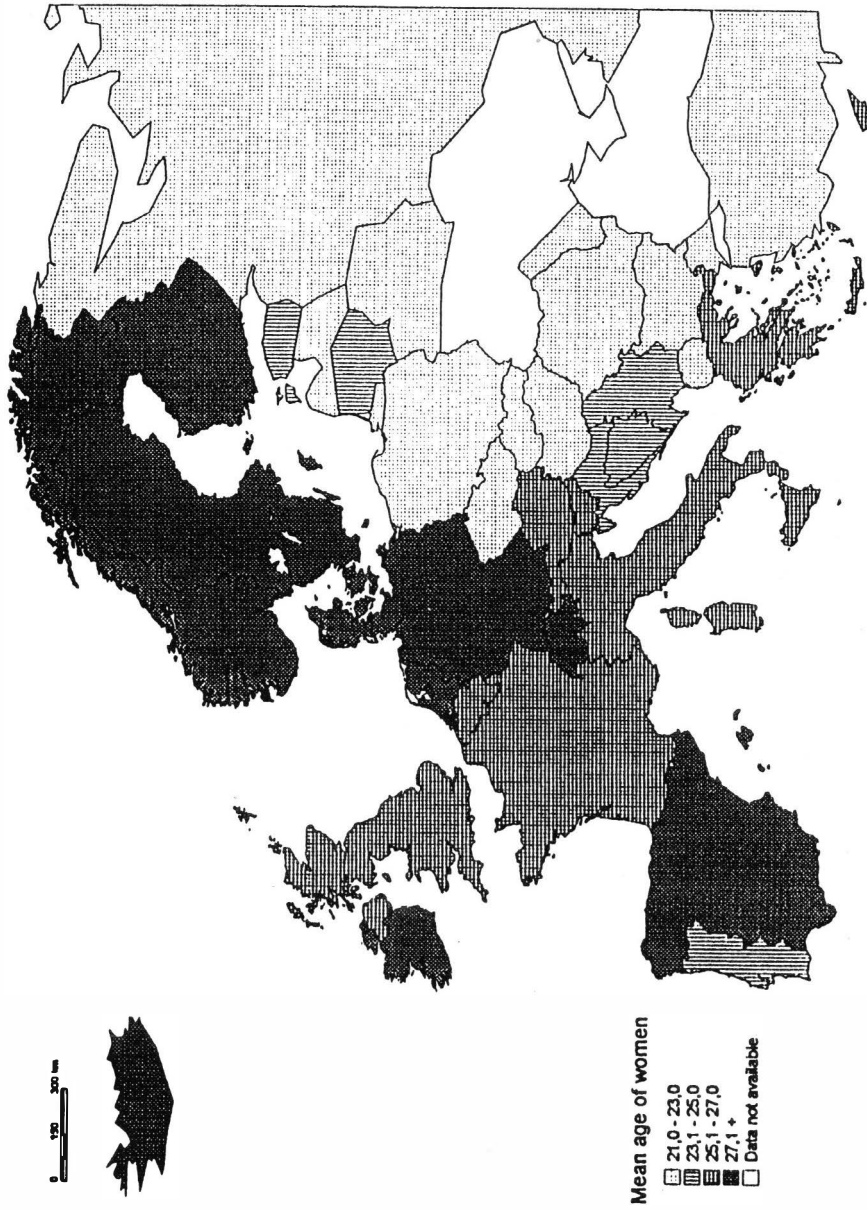
25, other 14,2% solemnised a marriage being 25-29. The mean age of women at first marriage in the EU countries is 26 (in Sweden even 28), in Slovakia it is 22, fluctuating round this level since 1970s. Correspondingly, the mean male age at marriage is 26 and female - 23 what is by 4-6 years less than in majority of the West-European countries (see Table 3, Map 2).

Table 3 Mean age of women at first marriage

Country	1970	1975	1980	1985	1990	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997
Slovak Republic	22,2	22,5	22,7	22,8	22	21,1	21,3	21,5	21,6	
Moldova			25,6	22,8	22,3	21,5	21,7	21,9	21,7	
Belarus					21,9	21,8	21,8	21,9	22	
Poland	21,9	22,1	22	22,1	21,7	21,8	22	22,1	22,3	22,5
Hungary	21,1	20,8	21,3	21,3	21,5	21,7	22	22,2	22,6	
Turkey	19,9	20,1	20,7	21,5	21,5	21,7	21,9	22,2	22,5	
Lithuania	24,1	23,7	23	23,3	22,3	22,2	22,3	22,4	22,6	22,8
Bulgaria	21,4	21,4	21,3	21,4	21,4	21,9	22,3	22,6	22,9	23,1
Czech Republic	21,6	21,6	21,5	21,6	21,5	21,9	22,2	22,6	22,9	23,3
Russian Federation			23,1	23,2	22,6	22,4	22,4	22,6	22,7	
Latvia		23,3	22,8	22,7	22,2	22,5	22,5	22,8	23,2	23,6
Romania		22,1	22,1	22,3	22,1	22,3	22,4	22,8	22,9	23
Estonia	23,5	23,2	22,6	22,8	22,5	22,9	23,4	23,5	23,7	24,1
FR Yugoslavia	22	22,1	22,5	22,8	23,4	23,8	23,6	23,9	24,1	
Croatia	21,4	21,7	22,1	22,5	23,1	23,7	23,9	24,3	24,3	24,8
Cyprus		22,9	23,7	23,8	24,1	24,4	24,8	24,9	25,2	
Portugal	24,3	23,7	23,3	23,6	24,2	24,7	24,8	24,9		
Slovenia	23,1	22,5	22,4	22,8	23,8	24,7	24,9	25,2	25,4	25,6
Greece	22,9	22,6	22,3	22,8	23,8	24,7	25,1	25,3	25,7	25,2
Belgium	22,4	21,6	22,3	23,3	24,5	25,3	25,6	25,8	26	
Former GDR	21,9	21,8	21,8	22,7	23,7	25,5	26	26,4	26,7	
Austria	23,1	22,8	23,1	24	25,1	26	26,3	26,7	26,9	27,3
United Kingdom	22,4	22,8	23	23,8	25,2	26,2	26,5	26,7		
Luxembbourg	23,2	23,3	23	24,1	25,4	25,8	26,4	26,8	26,7	27,4
France	22,4	22,5	23	24,2	25,6	26,4	26,7	26,9		
Italy	24,1	23,5		24,5	25,6	26,2	26,5	26,9		
Spain	24,8	24,2	23,7	24,6	25,5	26,5	26,8	27		
Germany					25,5	26,8	27,1	27,3	27,6	
Switzerland	24,1	24,3	25	26	26,7	27	27,2	27,3	27,3	27,4P
Netherlands	22,7	22,6	23,1	24,4	25,9	26,9	27,2	27,4	27,6	27,9P
FRG	23	22,7	23,4	24,6	25,9	26,9	27,1	27,5	27,7	
Finland	23	23,5	24,5	25,4	26,5	27,2	27,3	27,6	27,9	28,2
Norway	22,7	22,9	23,6	24,9	26,2	26,9	27,2	27,6	28	
Ireland	24,8	24,4	24,1	25	26,3	27,2	27,5	27,8		
San Marino	22,6	22,1	24,1	24,8	27,1	26,9	26,5	28	27,5	28,3
Iceland	23,2	22,7	23,2	24,9	26,1	28	28,6	28,6	29	30,4
Sweden	24	25,1	26,4	27,5	27,5	28,1	28,5	28,7	29	
Denmark		23,7	24,8	26,3	27,6	28,5	29	29,1	29,2	
Lichtenstein	23,1	25,1	25,6	26						
Malta			24,7	22,5						
Macedonia			22,2	22,4	22,8					
Bosnia-Hercegovina			22	22,4	23,3					

P - Provisional data

Source: Recent demographic developments in Europe 1998



Map 2 Mean age of women at first marriage, around 1996 in Europe

Change of the marital and partner behaviour of couples appears to be the next element of the second demographic transition. The dominant type of so called "nuclear" family, based on spouses marital relationship, was enlarged by the single-person families and non-married couples living in free union. Mainly this consensual pattern of the couples' coexistence has spread widely in the post-industrial countries being promoted as legally equal to the legitimate marriages. Cohabitation has become common as premarital coexistence (usually for 1-3 years). Very often, such non-married couples maintain an informal way of coexistence for years, even having children.

For Slovakia, such variety of forms for the couples' coexistence is not common. Legitimate marital partnership and the family life have strong roots what can be proved, for instance, by high rates of childbirths registered in marriage. In 1950, only 5,5% of infants were born beyond marriage. In 1990 this rate increased to 7,6%, but the most amazing in the recent years appeared to be a sharp increase of live births rates among illegitimate births, e.g. to 14% in 1996. In general, free union coexistence of couples is spreading throughout Slovakia very slowly. Despite this fact, cohabitation is expected to become more common here in the near future.

Position of Slovakia, as well as the other transforming countries, is different from the processes discovered in the first group. These countries experience certain lagging behind population development. Commenting positions of countries in terms of mean ages at the first marriage in Europe (see Table 3), it must be mentioned a group of countries with low ages at marriage (21-25), typical for all transforming countries (among other countries only Turkey and Portugal belong to this group). In the South and West European countries, the current female age at the first marriage is 25-28 where only Slovenia is an exception. Scandinavian countries reveal the highest values of this index (28-30 years of age).

The similar picture will be discovered after evaluation of figures related with infant mortality, life expectancy at birth, ratio of birth outside marriage and mean age of women at birth of first child. The most interesting results can be obtained after the complex analysis of all mentioned patterns based on the ball method (the number of balls was determined by a place occupied by a country in each of 6 indexes). The average place was calculated from the total sum of places of all indexes. To the group of 20 European countries with advanced stage of population development belong all West-, North- and South-European countries (where only Slovenia on the 17th place is an exception). The second half of the table is occupied by all transforming countries (where Malta on the 22nd place and Liechtenstein on the 25th place make an exception) which population development is lagging behind.

4. CONCLUSION

1. In short period of time the theory of the 2nd demographic transition has become alternative for interpretation of the population development, especially in terms of the

European countries. Its verification and further possible alterations require a certain time span and are to be studied for the longer period. As we can remember, even the theory of demographic transition has required in the past quite long time for its formulation and examination.

2. Notwithstanding all aforesaid, the theory of the 2nd demographic transition is not universally accepted by the scientific community. In some publications, the individual ethic principles of the population behaviour, so characteristic for the 2nd demographic transition, are being criticised (e.g. illegitimate coexistence of couples, liberalisation of abortion legislation, priority of individual interests, etc.). In terms of this matter, the theory critics do not want to recognise the best endeavours of scientists to study essences of population processes and phenomena with maximum objectivity, that is an inevitable condition of each scientific research.
3. Specific features, distinctive for development of the 2nd demographic transition, has already started to appear in developed countries of the West and North Europe. Development of some population processes in Central and East European countries has revealed the similar trend. In some patterns, e.g. derived from declined childbirth, they even get before the first group of countries. Changes of population behaviour in transforming countries are significantly influenced by sharply changed socio-economic conditions of the life of population, that is why they can not be regarded as clear evidence of the 2nd demographic transition.
4. Changes in demographic processes and phenomena in Slovakia, which started at the beginning of the 90s, are being considerably influenced by changes of socio-economic relations. They reflect a certain reaction on the pressure from outside, being not only a product of the natural development of the population reproductive behaviour. Currently, the reproductive behaviour is changing in slow pace, moving on alongside the overall cultural and economic development of society. The cultural changes, for instance, can be supported, but cannot be ordered, or bought. As we can remember, the demographic behaviour of population in majority of the West and North European countries has developed just in course of such slow gradual changes for several decades creating characteristic features of the 2nd demographic transition.
5. Just for these reasons, it cannot be regarded that population of Slovakia has already entered the 2nd demographic transition in population development. Some processes and their rates, mainly marriages, fertility and reproduction have closely approached figures reached by the West-European populations. However, on the other side, Slovakia still maintains the natural increase of population, though, mainly due to the relatively high rates of the live births. The life expectancy at birth, especially of male population, is rising, though, in slow pace. Marital relationships and family creation still remains under considerable influence of tradition family and reproductive behaviour.

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Resume

Populačný vývoj Slovenska v európskom kontexte

V 60. rokoch dochádza v niektorých európskych krajinách k poklesu pôrodnosti pod úroveň úmrtnosti a výsledkom je prirodzený úbytok ich obyvateľstva. Tento vývoj bol označený ako druhý demografický prechod alebo druhá demografická revolúcia. Negatívna bilancia prirodzeného pohybu obyvateľstva v sebe skrýva veľký súbor zmien mnohých procesov ako sú fertilita, pôrodnosť, sobášnosť a formovanie rodiny a tieto sú odrazom zmien v demografickom správaní obyvateľstva.

V posledných 10 rokoch sa výrazne odlišuje populačný vývoj v krajinách strednej a východnej Európy, v ktorých sa prejavuje pôsobenie transformačného procesu. Transformácia zasiahla populačné javy a procesy jednotlivých krajín rôznou intenzitou. Do prvej skupiny možno zaradiť populačné javy a procesy, ktoré sú v silnej závislosti od socioekonomických pomerov, pomerne rýchlo a intenzívne reagujú na ich zmeny a ich ukazovatele sa menia rýchlejšie (živorodenosť, prirodzený prírastok, miery plodnosti, sobášnosť, potratovosť, miery reprodukcie a ďalšie). Druhá skupina populačných javov a procesov sa vyznačuje väčšou zotrvačnosťou, pomalšie reaguje na socioekonomické premeny (stredná dĺžka života, dočasná úmrtnosť, sobášny vek, vek žien pri prvom pôrode, podiel narodených detí mimo manželstva a ďalšie). Ich vývoj súvisí s celkovými spoločenskými premenami, s kultúrnou vyspelosťou, tradíciami, ovplyvňujú ho i religiozita obyvateľstva a pod.

V tomto svetle je diskutovateľná predstava o tom, že sa slovenská populácia dostala svojim vývojom do 2. demografického prechodu. Niektoré procesy a ich miery, najmä sobášnosť, plodnosť, miery reprodukcie sa svojou úrovňou veľmi priblížili k západoeurópskym populáciám. Na druhej strane má Slovensko ešte stále prirodzený prírastok obyvateľstva, čo je najmä zásluha relatívne vyššej živorodenosti. Stredná dĺžka života, najmä mužov sa zvyšuje pomaly. Spôsob uzatvárania manželstiev a formovania rodiny je ešte stále ovplyvňovaný tradičnými predstavami o rodinnom a reprodukčnom správaní.

Zmeny demografických javov a procesov na Slovensku, ktoré nastúpili začiatkom 90. rokov sú silne ovplyvnené zmenami socioekonomických pomerov. Reprodukčné správanie sa spravidla mení pomalšie a prebieha paralelne s celkovým kultúrnym a ekonomickým vývojom spoločnosti. Takýmto postupným vývojom sa vo viacerých populáciách v krajinách západnej a severnej Európy menilo demografické správanie obyvateľstva a v priebehu niekoľkých desaťročí sa vytvárali charakteristické črty 2. demografického prechodu.