

DEMOGRAPHIC DEVELOPMENT IN THE BALTIC SEA REGION

Pēteris Zvidriņš,

*Full member of Latvian Academy of Sciences,
Dr. hab. oec. (demogr.)*

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The paper deals with characterization of main demographic processes in the Baltic Sea Region (BSR). The recent publications of the Eurostat and national statistical offices make it possible to analyze different population reproduction and migration processes and to find some similarities and differences between countries. The current demographic situation in the BSR is characterised by significant differences. The population of the Nordic countries is increasing consistently whereas in the former Soviet Union republics (Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Russia) and in Poland a characteristic feature of the demographic development is decrease of the population (depopulation) due to very low fertility, comparatively high mortality and emigration of working population, mainly to the West Europe. The level of depopulation is very high in Latvia, Lithuania and Russia, including Northwest Russia. In Germany, in the first decade of the 21st century the population was already declining nevertheless positive net migration. The role of the Nordic countries in the region is increasing. The study shows that the BSR is among most ageing areas in the world. According to the calculations of the author, the rank of Germany by three ageing indicators is the 2nd highest in the world (after Japan). A very high level of ageing is observed also in Finland, Sweden and Latvia but the lowest one — in Russia and in Poland. All governments of the region considered population ageing as a major concern. Demographic projections show that population increase will occur in the Nordic countries, whereas will decrease in the Eastern BSR and Germany. The strongest population growth is projected for Norway and Sweden and the sharpest declines — for Latvia and Lithuania.

Introduction

The purpose of this paper is to characterize undergoing major demographic changes in the Baltic Sea region in the 21st century. Five former Soviet bloc countries (Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, and Russia), Germany and Nordic countries around the Baltic Sea are treated as the Baltic Sea region countries. According to the Union of Baltic Cities (UBS) Charter, these ten Baltic coastal countries are members of the UBS (Baltic Cit-

ies Bulletin..., 2011). Promotion of the BSR image is thought to be an integral part of the European Union Strategy for the Baltic area as eight out of ten states are members of the EU.

The research is based on national and international official statistical data. Comparative analysis and statistical methods have been mainly used in the paper. It should be taken into consideration that for the time being we do not have the 2011 year round

Table 1. Population and its change in ten countries around the Baltic Sea (in thousands in 1 January)

	2000	2010	Changes, in %
Russian Federation	146 890	141 915	-3.4
North-West Federal district	14 323	13 437	-6.2
Leningrad oblast	1 687	1 630	-3.4
Saint Petersburg	4 742	4 600	-3
Kaliningrad oblast	959	938	-2.2
Germany	82 163	81 800	-0.4
Lower-Saxony	7 956	7 929	-0.3
<i>Bremen</i>	660	661	0.2
<i>Hamburg</i>	1 726	1 786	3.5
Schleswig-Holstein	2 804	2 800	-0.1
Mecklenbug-Vorpommern	1 760	1 700	-3.4
Poland	38 654	38 200	-1.2
West Pomeranian	1 697	1 693	-0.2
<i>Szczecin</i>	415	406	-2.2
Pomeranian	2 184	2 240	2.6
<i>Gdansk</i>	463	462	-0.2
Varmian-Masurian	1 428	1 427	-0.1
Sweden	8 861	9 341	5.4
Denmark	5 330	5 535	3.8
Finland	5 171	5 351	3.5
Norway	4 484	4 858	8.3
Lithuania	3 512	3 329	-5.2
Latvia	2 382	2 248	-5.6
Estonia	1 372	1 340	-2.3

Source: Eurostat population database, 2011; Federal State Statistics Service of Russian Federation; Statistisches Bundesamt Deutschland (web); Statistical Yearbook of the Republic of Poland, 2010; Key figures on Europe, 2011 edition (Luxembourg, 2011, p. 37).

censuses data, excluding provisional results in Russia and Baltic States. Thus, some presented data will be corrected more or less substantially in the nearest future.

Total population change

The total population in the region is decreasing slightly. On 1 January 2000, the population of the BSR was estimated to be 298.8 million and in 2000–2009 it decreased by 4.9 million or by 1.6 % (see Table 1).

The level of depopulation is very high in Latvia, Lithuania, and Russia, including Northwest Russia (Leningrad oblast, Kaliningrad oblast, Saint Petersburg and others).

According to the latest data of Russian Federal State Statistics Service, the population of Russia at the beginning of 2011 (about 142 million) was almost five million less than at the beginning of 2000. However, in the first years of this decade the speed of decline of population has decreased. On the other hand, the CIA annual so-called World Fact Book which contains all the basic information, including population, informs that in July 2011 in Russia there were only 138.7 million people or by 4.2 million less than the number published by *Rosstat*.

According to provisional results of the population and housing 2011, the number of Latvian population on 1 March 2011 comprised 2070 thousand and since the previous census (2000) the number of population has reduced by 309 thousand or 13 per cent. These figures differ from the data calculated and published before by the Central Statistical Board of Latvia and shown in Table 1. The comparable big difference in numbers may be explained by the fact that a large part of migrants does not inform the governing bodies about the change of their place of permanent residence, and therefore, they are not withdrawn from population registers, and data are not updated. A similar

situation is observed also in Lithuania and partly also for other sending countries of the region. As a result, published and analyzed migration data do not fully reflect the factual situation, and not always international statistical indicators are comparable. However, as there is no single measure of accuracy of statistical data, we will use mainly the Eurostat publications.

The demographic situation in Estonia and partly in Poland is better, however, population decline there, excluding Northern voivodships, has been a typical feature of demographic development. Only one year (in 2010) a minimal natural increase (35 people) was observed in Estonia. The population of Germany, including northern coastal states over-Saxony, Schleswig-Holstein and Mecklenburg-Vorpommern, in the first decade of the 21st century also was declining, mainly due to low fertility and very high level of ageing.

The trend of the Nordic population growth has been unbroken for many decades. In the period of 2000–2010, a very high increase was observed in Norway and Sweden, mostly due to migration. However, in five EU Member States (Ireland, Luxembourg, Cyprus, Spain, and Malta) the population growth rates were even higher. Thus, the proportion of the Nordic population in the Baltic Sea Region is increasing.

In some larger cities of BSR we observe a population decline, or nil increase situation (for example, St. Petersburg, Riga, Kaliningrad, Gdansk, Szczecin). However, in the Nordic countries and North German larger cities their population is increasing (Stockholm, Helsinki, Oslo, Göteborg, Copenhagen, Hamburg, and others).

Fertility

The existing fertility level does not ensure the simple generation replacement in all countries of the region, however, the disparity between the highest and the lowest rates (in

the Nordic countries and Latvia) remain large (Figure 1).

In the first decade of this century, fertility increased almost in all countries, excluding Latvia where in 2009–2011, due to the economic crisis, the situation deteriorated rapidly.

The mean number of children that would be born alive to a woman during her childbearing period conforming to the age-specific fertility rates (total fertility rate TFR) in Norway increased from 1.85 in 2000 to 1.95 in 2010 and in Sweden from 1.54 to 1.98. The lowest level in 2000 and 2010 was in Latvia (TFR accordingly 1.24 and 1.17). A very low level of fertility is also in Germany and Russia. A TFR below 1.3 children per woman is defined as “lowest — low fertility” and all other countries of the EU were

displaying rates above 1.3. The increase in fertility in the region in the first decade of the 21st century may be explained partly due to a catching-up process, following postponement of childbearing.

The mean age of women at childbirth rose in all countries, and in Denmark, Germany, Finland, and Sweden women tended to have children when they were aged 30 years and more. When women give birth later, the TFR first decreases, then recovers. However, women are still postponing birth. The adjusted TFR (free from the so called tempo effect) is higher, however, the adjustment for Nordic countries is smaller than for other countries of the region, indicating that postponement process seems to be coming to an end. By contrast, calculated by the Vienna Institute of Demography the actual fertility (tempo

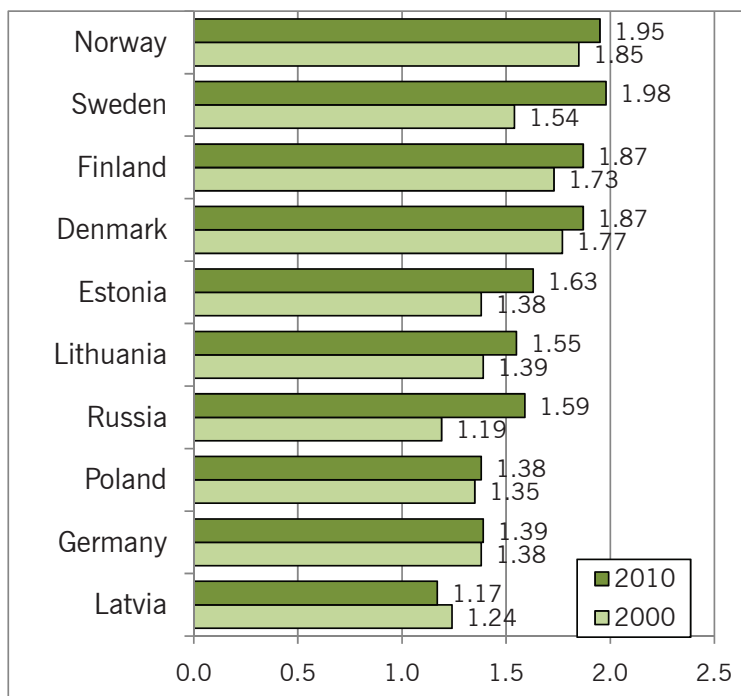


Figure 1. Total fertility rate, 2000 and 2010

Source: EUROSTAT database

adjusted TFR) in the Eastern BSR could represent 0.2–0.5 children per woman more than the unadjusted figures. For example, available data from Human Fertility Database show that in Lithuania in 2008 period total fertility rate (1.55) was 0.53 children less than tempo-adjusted value (2.08) (Human Fertility Database, 2011). This difference in Estonia was slightly lower (0.48) but adjusted TFR reached even level of 2.13. In Russia the adjustment is smaller (0.24). An estimate of 1.5–1.9 children per woman does not result in a sustainable level. We agree with the Eurostat experts that if socio-economic development and more active population policies in the Eastern BSR over the coming years played a positive role in increasing fertility, the current level of fertility might rise above mentioned values but it seems unlikely that the increase will approach level 2.0 or the replacement level of 2.1–2.2 (Demography Report, 2010).

One of the most important points to emerge from our analysis of fertility is that

the current level of fertility in the former Soviet bloc countries and Germany is too low to prevent the depopulation in the long run. On the other hand, the Scandinavian countries with a higher level of human development have higher fertility and demographic potentials on the whole. The Scandinavian and especially the Norwegian experience show that institutional adjustments can reduce the conflict between work and family responsibilities, leading to fertility increase. Analysts focusing on the Scandinavian countries view Norway as outlier on family policies (Rindfuss et al., 2010).

Changes in health and mortality

The past quarter century has seen further significant change in health and intensity of mortality. By 1990, the post-Second World War epidemiological transition had decelerated, but most of the countries recorded increased trend in life expectancy. The last two decades saw unique patterns in the former Soviet republics, especially in Russia.

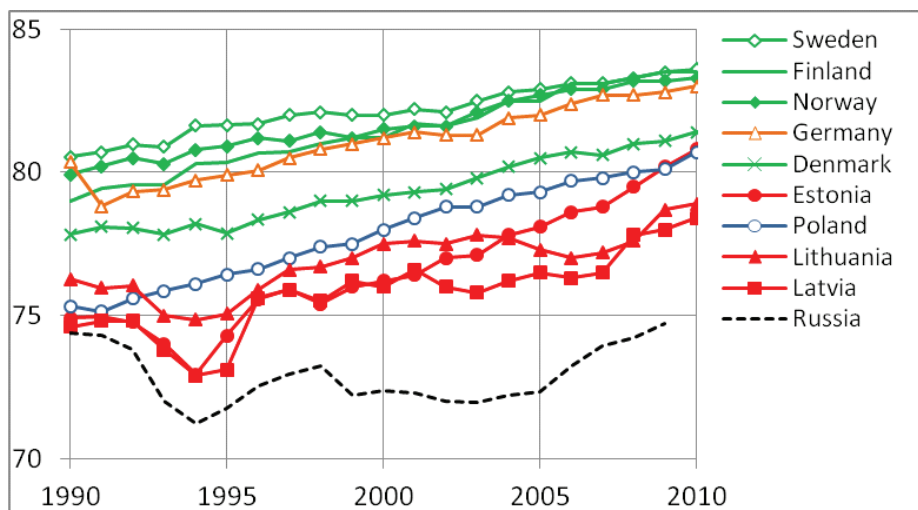


Figure 2. Life expectancy of females at birth in the Baltic Sea region countries, 1990–2010 (in years).

Source: EUROSTAT database; Население России 2010, p. 101.

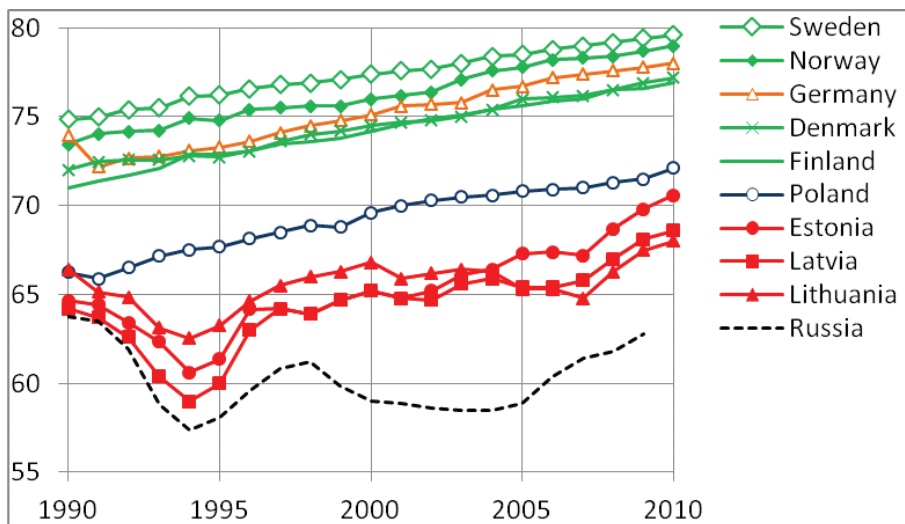


Figure 3. Life expectancy of males at birth in the Baltic Sea region countries, 1990–2010 (in years).

Source: EUROSTAT database; Население России 2010. p. 101.

As shown in Figures 2 and 3, the intensity of mortality in three Baltic countries and Russia increased significantly in the first few years after the collapse of the Soviet Union, largely because of reduced medical care and the inability of many people to adapt to the new economic situation. The average life expectancy in the mid-1990s was considerably lower than at the end of the Soviet period, especially for men. In deteriorating economic circumstances and mass unemployment men’s behaviour appeared to be affected much more strongly than that of women. The level of deaths in the independent Baltic States due to unnatural causes was three times higher than in economically developed countries of Europe. The situation in Russia was particularly unfavourable. However, life expectancy for both sexes has been rising steadily in Nordic countries, Germany, and Poland. Since the second part of the 1990s, new trends in life expectancy emerged in Estonia, Latvia, and Estonia. In Russia the socio-demographic decline was much longer

and changes appeared only about ten years later. Differences in life expectancy at birth in the BSR remain significant. For men, the highest and lowest life expectancies at birth in the Nordic countries and Russia exceeded even 12 years. For women the difference in life expectancy among the countries of the region is narrower than for men. The largest gaps in gender differences are in Russia and the three Baltic States, the smallest — in Nordic countries.

Substantial improvements have been achieved in lowering infant mortality between 2000 and 2010 (see Figure 4).

The fall was greater in Eastern BSR where infant mortality rates halved. There has been some catching up. However, the gap with Northern BSR still is big, and Finland and Sweden have one of the lowest rates within EU-27 and in the world at large. We can observe a similar situation with some specific features also in under — 5 mortality rates and in mortality of working ages.

An integrated measure of health and mor-

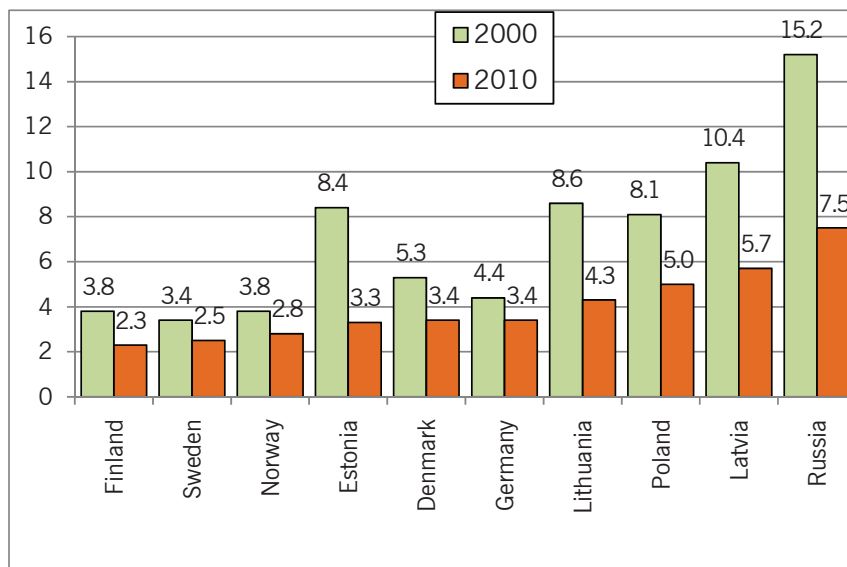


Figure 4. Infant mortality, 2000 and 2010

Source: EUROSTAT database

tality is disability-adjusted life expectancy or healthy life expectancy (HLE), which is based on the constructed life tables, special surveys assessing physical and cognitive disability, and people's health status. Indicators on healthy life introduce the concept of the quality of life, by focusing on the period that may be enjoyed by individuals free from the limitation of disability or illness. The latest available data for 2007 and 2008 show that healthy life expectancies, almost in a synchronous way, follow trends of conventional life expectancies, and similar is the ranking list. The average value of healthy life expectancy at birth for WHO European region in 2007 was 67 years (64 years for males and 70 for females). In all Nordic countries it was higher than 70 years, in the three Baltic states 63–66 years and in Russia 60 years (for males only 54.6 years) (Krumins, 2011; Estonian Human Development Report, 2010). In the produced report by the Joint Action European Health and Life Expectancy Information System (EHLEIS) we can find

comparable data of HLE at age 65 for all EU member states in 2005–2009. The highest values of life expectancies in the BSR are observed in Finland (for women) and in Sweden (for men) but the lowest — in Latvia and Estonia. Almost a similar situation is also in comparison of healthy life years (HLY) at the age of 65. In 2009, the HLY values for Latvia were 2.5 years and 3.5 years below the EU average (8.2 for both sexes) for women and men, respectively.

Migration

Migration is the main driver of population growth or decrease in the most parts of the region.

We have shown in Figure 5 the components of population change in ten countries in the first decade, and from the graph it is seen that the role of migratory movements (net migration) was stronger than the natural movements. Only in Russia, Germany, and Latvia in absolute terms the natural change played main role in the population

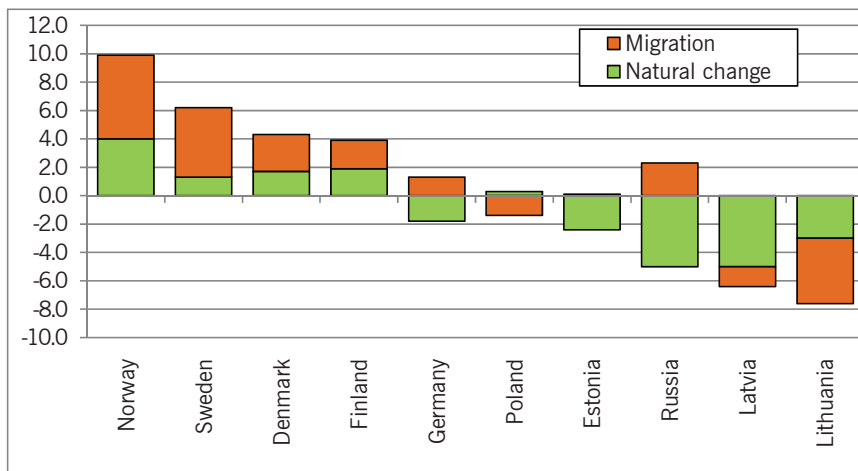


Figure 5. Structure of population change, 2000–2010 (% of the number at the beginning of 2000)

Source: EUROSTAT database

dynamics of these countries. In fact, in Latvia net emigration also outnumber the population decrease in the reproductive process. In Finland net immigration and natural increase approximately equally contributed to the total population increase. The highest share of international migration in population growth was observed in Sweden. In Germany and Russia inflows outweighed outflows, however, the total population there decreased due to the negative natural change. The excess of deaths over births more evidently was observed in the Russian Federation, including North-West Federal district.

The position of the statistics of the international migration is a serious problem in Russia. The statistical data of international migrants confirms that the enormous numbers of more than 10 million immigrants arrived for permanent residence to Russia over the period from 1991 to 2010. Emigration from Russia is more difficult for accurate quantitative evaluation, because the statistics evidently underestimates the scales of emigration. According to the data of Russian Federal State Statistics Service, the

amount of the people who moved abroad exceeded 4 million persons. Very promising is the evaluation of real figures of emigrants through data of those countries, where migrants arrive, because the statistical record of immigration everywhere is more complete than the record of emigration. For Russia estimations were conducted by some entry countries, but they are of episodic character. Besides, the problem of irregular migration remains very acute. The evaluation of the scales of irregular migration varies from 3 to 15 million. Especially high it was about ten years ago, when the problem was ranked as the threat to the national security (Ivakhnyuk, 2011, p. 26).

Differentiation in human development and population policies

The development of the level of education in the BSR countries has been even more than analyzed in previous population development aspects. The contents of the UN Human Development Index (HDI) provide a good basis for international comparisons.

Two new education indicators were adapted for the 2010 HDI: the mean years of schooling and expected years of schooling — the years of schooling that a child can expect to receive at the given enrolment rates.

According to the 2010 HDI, as in previous years, the position of the Nordic countries and Germany in the global ranking is much higher than the position of the countries of the Eastern BSR. Norway occupied the 1st place, Sweden — 9th, Germany — 10th, Finland — 16th, Denmark — 19th, Estonia — 34th, and Poland — the 41th place. These countries were classified as having very high human development. Lithuania occupied the 44th position, Latvia — 48th, and Russia — the 65th place and were classified in the group of countries with high human development.

In regard to the component of education the list of countries is similar. However, Germany and Estonia appear among the top ten of the 169 countries, Poland lags behind Lithuania and Latvia. Norway's education index values are the highest, meanwhile, the level of education in Russia is increasingly lagging behind that of other states of the region.

According to the United Nations 10th Inquiry (2009), in five countries (Germany, Poland, Latvia, Lithuania, an Russia) governments considered their population growth as too low and declared intentions to raise it (World Population Policies 2009, 2010). Estonian government viewed population growth as satisfactory with the policy aimed at raising population growth rate. In contrast, governments of the Nordic countries were

Table 2. Country ranking by ageing in the world, 2010 (rank by three indicators: 60+(%), median age, ageing index)

Country	60+ (%)	Median age	Ageing index	Sum of ranks	Rank by three indicators
Japan	1	1	1	3	1
Germany	3	2	2	7	2
Italy	2	3	3	8	3
Finland	5	4	17	26	7
Sweden	4	15	11	30	8
Latvia	17	17	6	40	13
Denmark	12	16	27	55	18
Estonia	18	23	18	59	20
Lithuania	24	27	21	72	25
Norway	22	30	33	85	28
Poland	31	35	26	92	31
Russian Federation	41	36	32	109	35

Source: Calculations based on World Population Prospects, the 2010 revision

satisfied with their growth rates and did not wish to intervene to change them.

The persistence of low fertility was the concern for six countries, and only governments of the Nordic countries viewed the fertility level as satisfactory. The most precipitous drop in fertility took place in East Germany after German unification in 1990, and there was a gradual recovery in the last decade. In 1996, Germany's government had no strict policies to increase fertility, but by 2009 it viewed the fertility level as too low and provided some stimulating measures. Governments of Finland, Estonia, Latvia and Russia viewed their countries mortality level as unacceptable.

Two countries (Denmark and Russia) wished to reduce immigration, whereas Finland, Sweden and Poland wished to increase immigration (Estonia only highly skilled workers). Governments in Poland and Russia considered their level of emigration as too high; in contrast, in Norway — as too low. In recent years, Latvian and Lithuanian governments considered emigration levels as a major concern, encouraging the return of citizens.

The age structure of the BSR population is becoming older. The median age exceeded 40 years which slightly surpasses even the European average. Increase in life expectancy in circumstances of high tempo of ageing does not lead to the decrease of overall death rates. The proportion of old people, ageing index (ratio of the population aged 60 years or over to that under age 15) and median age in Germany, Finland and Sweden are among the highest in the world. According to the calculations of the author, the rank of Latvia, Denmark and Estonia was within twenty oldest countries in 2010 (see Table 2).

The youngest population age structure is observed in Poland (31st), Norway (28th) and Russia (35th). All governments in the region considered population ageing as a major concern.

Demographic projections

Eurostat's and national demographic projections for the period 2010–2060 show that population increase will occur only in the Nordic countries, whereas it will decrease systematically in the Eastern BSR and in Germany. Over the projected period, net inflows in Germany are assumed to add up to 8 million people but “the natural decline” will be even larger and its total population will be declining. According to the Eurostat latest projection, the population of Germany would shrink by about 15 million, i.e. by almost 20% during the projection period (EUROPOP 2010). According to the 2008 Revision of the official United Nations projections, the population of Russia by 2050 will decrease by 24 million (according to the low variant would decline to 100 million and even in the high variant Russia's population would decline to 134 million). Thus, the role of the Nordic countries in the BSR will increase also in the coming decades. The strongest population growth is projected for Norway and Sweden and the sharpest declines — for Latvia and Lithuania. The population of the region is anticipated to become older in the nearest and mid-term perspective. The number of very old people aged 80 years and above will increase very markedly. These are only anticipations, which not always come true. According to the statement of former Prime Minister and newly elected State President of Russia, Vladimir Putin, the demographic situation in Russia could be improved and population could have substantial increase by 2050. “If we manage to formulate and implement effective, integrated strategy *narodoseberezheniya* (of population) — Russia's population will increase to 154 million.” (Demoscope Weekly). He called to support large families, to promote the employment of women with children, to ensure immigration (“we need to ensure migration flows at about 300 000 people a year”) and listed some other measures of demographic policy.

One of the elements of the debate on population decrease or increase is that geographical perspective is either unclear or it is not consistently applied by citizens and politicians on the global or local levels. The threat of depopulation or overpopulation is not unique in the demographic history. However, current trends in fertility, mortality and international migration indicate that many development countries have to reckon with the possibility of under-replacement reproduction or even population decline. In countries or their regions witnessing such a situation, concerns have also been voiced about the loss of national identity, including Latvia. German scholars Geys, Henemann and Kalb show for a sample of 1 021 German smaller municipalities which are particularly vulnerable to increasing cost pressures resulting from population decrease (van Dalen, 2011).

Summary and conclusions

Results presented here show that the current demographic situation in the BSR is characterized by significant difference. The past quarter century has seen dramatic changes in most countries, particularly in the former Soviet bloc countries. The collapse of the Soviet Union cardinally changed the directions and intensity of international migration and population reproduction in all the former Soviet republics, Poland and former GDR where a characteristic feature of social development is depopulation. Population decline is the current reality in Germany on the whole as net migration flows do not compensate the natural decrease and this country is one of the first that has expressly taken steps to expand child-care availability in an attempt to increase fertility.

In contrast, the population of the Nordic countries is increasing consistently due to positive natural increase and net migration. National experts and international demographic bodies assume that similar population growth would take place at least in the period by mid

of this century. Slightly under-replacement fertility in these countries has focused attention of demographers on the new prospect of population decline in the most developed countries and on concept of "optimum population". British scholars David Coleman and Robert Rowthorn believe that "defining optimum population for modern societies is difficult if not possible" (Coleman and Rowthorn, 2011, p. 242). It is clear that the process of decline has numerous drawbacks, especially if the decline is fast and protracted. On the other hand, a stable or growing population could have some advantages, more evidently environmental advantages.

Population decrease and ageing nowadays share a common cause in low fertility and in emigration of younger people which is seen more clearly when observing the situation (crisis) in Russia and Latvia. In line with the assumptions of the demographic theory (stabilization of fertility and mortality), a search for more effective pronatalistic and family policies would be an important theme of demographers' debate and priority on the public agenda.

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DEMOGRĀFISKĀ ATTĪSTĪBA BALTIJAS JŪRAS REĢIONĀ

Pēteris Zvidriņš

Kopsavilkums

Atslēgas vārdi: *demogrāfija, auglība, mirstība, depopulācija, Baltijas reģions*

Rakstā sniegts galveno demogrāfisko procesu raksturojums Baltijas jūras reģiona desmit valstīs. Pašreizējā demogrāfiskā situācija reģionā ir visai atšķirīga. Ziemeļvalstīs iedzīvotāju skaitam ir izteikta tendence palielināties, turpretim bijušajās PSRS republikās (Igaunijā, Latvijā, Lietuvā un Krievijā), kā arī Polijā iedzīvotāju skaits sistemātiski sarūk sakarā ar ļoti zemu dzimstību, relatīvi augstu mirstību un darbaspējīgā vecuma iedzīvotāju emigrāciju, galvenokārt uz Rietumeiropu. Depopulācijas līmenis ļoti augsts ir Latvijā, Lietuvā un Krievijā, t.sk. ziemeļrietumu Krievijā. Mūsu gadsimta pirmajā desmitgadē iedzīvotāju skaits samazinājās arī Vācijā, neraugoties uz pozitīvo migrācijas saldo. Rezultātā Ziemeļvalstu loma reģionā palielinās.

Pētījums parādīja, ka reģionā ir izteikts iedzīvotāju novecošanās process. Vācija ir otrā (pēc Japānas) valsts pasaulē demogrāfiskā novecojuma ziņā. Ļoti augsts novecojuma līmenis ir arī Somijā, Zviedrijā un Latvijā, bet viszemākais tas ir Krievijā un Polijā. Reģiona valstu valdības iedzīvotāju novecošanos uzskata par nopietnu demogrāfisko un sociālo problēmu. Prognozes liecina, ka tuvākajos gados un vidēji tālā perspektīvā iedzīvotāju skaits turpinās palielināties Ziemeļvalstīs un samazināsies Vācijā un reģiona austrumdaļā. Visstraujāk pieaugs Norvēģijas un Zviedrijas iedzīvotāju skaits. Relatīvi vislielākais to samazinājums būs Latvijā un Lietuvā. Šajās valstīs visai aktuāls ir jautājums par aktīvās demogrāfiskās politikas īstenošanu.