

Demographics in quality of life assessment: Lithuania in EU context

Egle Kazlauskienė, Rima Zitkienė, Ona Rakauskienė, Olga Ranceva¹

Abstract: Today the EU's social policy agenda focuses a lot on quality of life, it is determinate by the relevance of such challenges as high unemployment, especially among the young people, high migration flows, population aging, family institute's destabilization and other demographic problems. Quality of life is a concept that reflects the demographic and health, healthy environment, material, cultural and spiritual satisfactions, which could be measured in terms of macro and micro levels. The concept of quality of life is extremely difficult defined by single or by all system of indicators. The index of quality of life could be estimated on the basis of objective and subjective indicators. Quality of life assessment model could be generated by dimensions, whose are reflecting the quality of life in the state. This article discusses the demographic dimensions, which includes such demographic processes as the natural population grown, population gaining and migration, in addition – the evolution of family institute (marriages and divorces).

Index Terms: demographics, life quality of population, emigration

JEL: I14, I31, J1, R23.

I. INTRODUCTION

Constantly globally progressing economic, political, social and technological processes create good conditions for improving the quality of life. It is important to understand and define the concept of quality of life, the contents of which is realized differently why we have such variety of different scientists researches results.

The assessment of quality of life is influenced by many factors: the objectives (rate of payments, purchasing power) and subjective (happiness). Demographic dimension consist such indicators of quality of life as the average life expectancy, fertility and mortality rates, population gaining and reproductive characteristics (children birth rate), marital status, migration rate, there also may be additional indicators such as family stability indicator, number of marriages.

Negative demographic trends are partially a consequence of poor quality of life. People hardly pursue the career and stable life, there is no time for rest or family, less health care, young people seek the better life and self-realization abroad, that further increases the population aging; and the majority of emigrants are young and strongest population part. Because of this appears another problem – family destabilization, when emigrant left their children in native country. Problem of social exclusion is increased by the

negative demography tendencies – declining birth rate, family structure change, aging of population. High emigration rates call out not only labor supply and demands problems, mostly working-age people, youth is the main part of emigrating population.

II. DEMOGRAPHIC DIMENSION IN QUALITY OF LIFE CONCEPT

Quality of life is comprehensive term covering all aspects of human life, in terms of studies pertaining to quality of life, its measurement and impact on daily life, it can in essence be divided into two categories; objective - economic quality of life and subjective - non-economic quality of life studies. Objective measures are influenced by economic variables as these are more easily accepted by policymakers and are more easily interpreted (Sumner,2003). Two the most known composite objective quality of life measures are the Physical Quality of Life Index (Morris, 1979) and the Human Development Index (UNDP, 1990). The primary queries with these two measures are that they do not cover enough quality of life indicators. As a example, the Human Development Index only consists of three variables. Also GDP per capita often plays too important a role in these models. This had led to the extensive quality of life assesment model such as the Index of Economic Well-being (Osberg and Sharpe, 2000) and the Economics Intelligence Unit's (2005) QOL index (J. Lewer, G. Pacheco, S. Rossouw, 2009).

Demographic dimension or population development includes family well-being subdimension. This quality of life area combines related witch each other micro and macro enviroments – national demographic policy and institution of family, marriage. Only recently started to assume that family is one of the most important social institutions functioning in the country's well-being developement, until that there was no discussion about the institution of family and its changes impact on the prosperity of country (Esping-Andersen, 1999). According to Esping-Anderson, the family as a fundamental social institution systematically impacts people behavior and expectations and as the steate or market it is a part of regulatory infrastructure, which defines what is reasonable and desirable, and that enables the social norms and social integrations (Servetkienė, 2013).

In recent decades, the number of major developments were done in the family policy, women emancipation and their desicion to pusue career instead of housewives position encouraged by gender equality policies, mostly already implimented the dual bread-winer model, no longer supported relations between the generations (perent-child-

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grandchildren), living „under one roof“ tradition, increased number of illegitimate and children without parental care. These all changes affect the country's overall well-being and development, which cause the demographic crisis and destabilize the demographic security of state.

So one of the most important negative demographic processes reasons are destabilization of family institute, weakening family ties, increasing number of single-parent families. Occuring and spreading of such problems could be explained by the social and economic transformations – the population, especially youth, seeking education and career, housing, encounter different economic difficulties because of lack of effective family support policy, changing life style, values of life and priorities, relationship and strengthening liberal customization.

The listed circumstances negatively affect not only current population life, but also the quality of life for future generations. Decreasing number of families formation means the lower birth rate, and declining labor supply, lower tax collection, higher risk of poverty level, so the negative demographic and population evolution has not only economic impact, but also impacts the security of state in general.

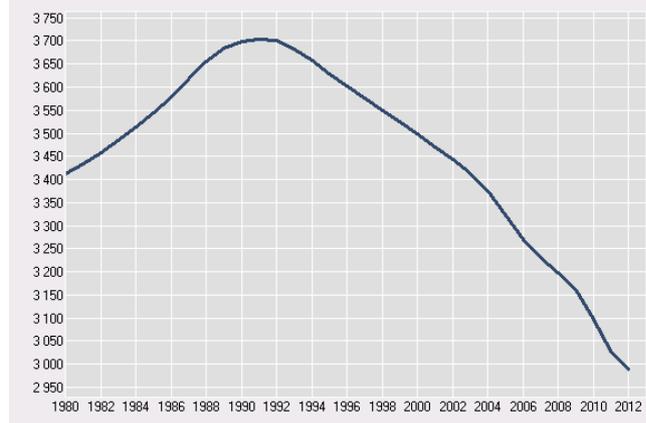
III. DEMOGRAPHIC CRISIS IN LITHUANIA

Evolution of the population depends on the state's socio-economic level of development and economic growth and associated with public economic development stages. Every stage of development characterized by certain fertility and mortality rates and population mobility. Demographic changes in society affect the socio-economic development. The transition from agrarian to industrial society is decreasing mortality, fertility decline starts later and is initially slower than the decline in mortality, it causes a demographic explosion. Industrial (post-industrial) society is characterized by low fertility and mortality rates and high population mobility. Population because of the natural changes varies a little, it is mainly caused by changes in the standard of living and migration, and could result in the depopulation.

For past twenty years all demographic processes in Lithuania are negative, which result in population decline, depopulation and rapid aging of the population. Lithuania lost almost 800 thousands inhabitants, massive emigration flows additionally impact these negative demographic processes. The population of Lithuania has been declining during twenty years because of negative natural change and high emigration. According to the forecast the European Union demographic changes will be very important in the coming decades, because of the fast majority of future population trends models, state that the population in EU continues to get older and older (because of low birth rates and increasing life expectancy). Despite the fact that migration is an important part of European countries' demographic dynamics, in practice it is clear that it will be not enough for many EU areas with such high population aging trends. These structural demographic changes could affect the capacity of governments to collect taxes, balancing finances not to provide adequate pensions and

health care (V. Stankuniene, D. Jasilionis. *Demography and we*, 2012).

Lithuania's population began to decline since 1992. Number of the population since 1989 until 2001 decreased by 190.8 thousand (5%). Population first began to decline due to emigration, since 1994 due to natural variability, due to higher mortality than birth rates. In 1995 y. natural population growth reached a critical level, when fertility rates fell below the required population reproduction process, this negative trend remains up to date (Figure 1).



Source: Statistics Lithuania, 2014

Figure 1. Average annual population in Lithuania

The rapid depopulation is common phenomena in Lithuania, when children's generation does not replace the parent generation. Depopulation exist due to two main reasons : emigration and negative natural population change. According Lithuanian statistical data 3,483,972 residents lived in Lithuania in 2001 April.¹ During the 2001-2014 years (calculated for each year from the first of January) period Lithuania's population decreased by 15.56 percent - from 3,486,998 to 2,944,459, or an average of more than one percent annually in terms of regional differences, we see that the population declines in all Lithuania, except for the three largest cities in suburb areas. Obviously, the city attracts a lot of people from rural areas, but more as a science or work - people are more likely to reside in the same non-urban areas, where the prevalence of old apartment buildings and new construction of residential house - suburbs. After 2011 census population still further reduced in 3,483,972 residents lived in the state and at the beginning of 2013 in Lithuania was 2,971.9 thousand of population that is 31.7 thousand less than the beginning of 2012. 67% of population decline was because of emigration. In 2014 beginning in Lithuania lived 2 million 944 thousand people. Over the last year, the population decreased by 27.4 thousand (0.9%). The main part of the decline 61% appeared because of negative net international migration (16.7 thousand more people emigrated than immigrated). Due to natural decline (10.7 thousand people died more than the baby was born) population decreased by 39%.

According to the latest Eurostat data on 1 January 2013

¹ Official Statistics Portal. <http://osp.stat.gov.lt/e>

the population of the European Union was estimated 505.7 million inhabitants and this was 1.1 million or 0.22% more than a year earlier. The highest natural population growth was recorded in Ireland (9.5 - per thousand inhabitants), **Cyprus** (5.2), Luxembourg (4), France and the United Kingdom (3,8). The highest negative population growth was estimated in **Bulgaria** (-5.5 per thousand inhabitants), **Latvia** (-4.5), Hungary (-3.9) and Lithuania (-3.5) (Table 1).²

TABLE 1. NATURAL CHANGE OF POPULATION IN THE EU-28

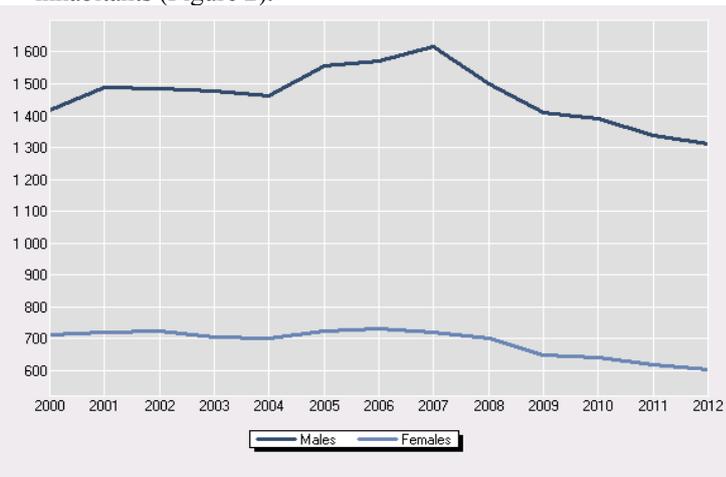
Year	The best rate		The worst rate		LT rate
		EU country		EU country	
2002	7.8	Ireland	-5.9	Bulgaria	-3.3
2003	8.1	Ireland	-5.7	Bulgaria	-3.2
2004	8.2	Ireland	-5.2	Bulgaria	-3.4
2005	8	Ireland	-5.5	Bulgaria	-4.3
2006	8.6	Ireland	-5.1	Bulgaria	-4.7
2007	9.8	Ireland	-5	Bulgaria	-4.8
2008	10.4	Ireland	-4.4	Bulgaria	-3.8
2009	10.4	Ireland	-3.6	Bulgaria	-3.1
2010	10.4	Ireland	-4.7	Bulgaria	-3.7
2011	10	Ireland	-5.1	Bulgaria	-3.6
2012	9.5	Ireland	-5.5	Bulgaria	-3.5
2013	8.5	Ireland	-5.2	Bulgaria	-3.9

Source: Eurostat

Life expectancy at birth is often used for comparing national and regional level of social development. This indicator also accurately describes the mortality rate. The assessment of mortality for this indicator, it appears that the positive Lithuanian population mortality level changes only occurred until the seventh decade of the twentieth century. From 1965 to 1984 male life expectancy decreased in Lithuania, later appeared significant fluctuations of this indicator. Women's life expectancy dynamics were more stable than men; in 1967-1984 it remained essentially the same level (Rakauskienė, Servetkienė, 2011). It should be noted that mortality during this period was singly increased of middle-aged men. Such variations in mortality rates can be based on stress state, the pessimistic mood, depression prevalence in society, which inevitably affects human health (weakening of the immune system - increases the risk of infections, cancer, cardiovascular diseases, increasing depression and suicide greater chance that Lithuania especially prevalent among working-age men). However, it should be noted that Lithuania and now, compared with other Western countries, has still relatively high mortality rates. Lithuanian population mortality rates remain among the highest in the European Union. Health experts emphasize our country's cause of death has remained unchanged for several years. In 2010 4.8 million people died in EU-27. Compared to 2009, the EU population mortality did not change - 9.7 per 1000 population deaths. According to the EU statistical office Eurostat data presented, the highest mortality rate in 2010 was registered in Bulgaria (14.6 per thousand inhabitants), **Latvia** (13.4), Hungary (13), Lithuania (12.8) and

Romania (12.1). The lowest mortality rates were recorded in Ireland (6.2), Cyprus (6.7), Malta (7.8) and Luxembourg (7.4). From 2001 until 2007 the overall mortality rate increased and reached 14.1 per thousand of the population. During the period from 2007 to 2009 this index decreased and then increased in 2013 was one of the largest in the European Union (14 thousand dead one. inhabitants). A higher overall mortality rate was only in Bulgaria (14.4 per thousand of the inhabitants), **Latvia** (14.3) and the lowest - **Cyprus** (6), Ireland (6.5) and Luxembourg (7).³

During 1994-2000 mortality rate decreased in Lithuania: from 12.5 per 1000 inhabitants in 1994 to 11.1 in 2000. Since 2001 year began to rise and in 2007 indicator reached the highest value of 13.5 died person per 1000 inhabitants (Figure 2).

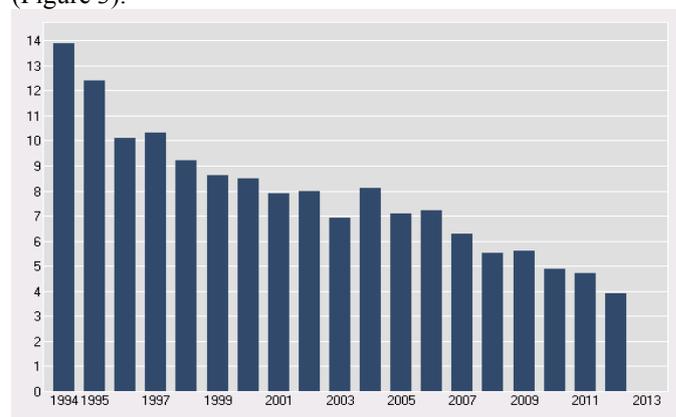


Source: Statistics Lithuania, 2014

Figure 2. Deaths per 100 000 inhabitants in Lithuania

In 2012 male mortality rate decreased by 1.2 % while women increased by 0.7 %. However, the males standardized mortality rate was still higher more than two times than women, the rural population - 1.2 times higher than in the city.

Infant mortality has declined since 1993. In 2012. was born 117 died infants and 118 died during the first months, the infant mortality rate was 3.9 per 1000 live births (Figure 3).

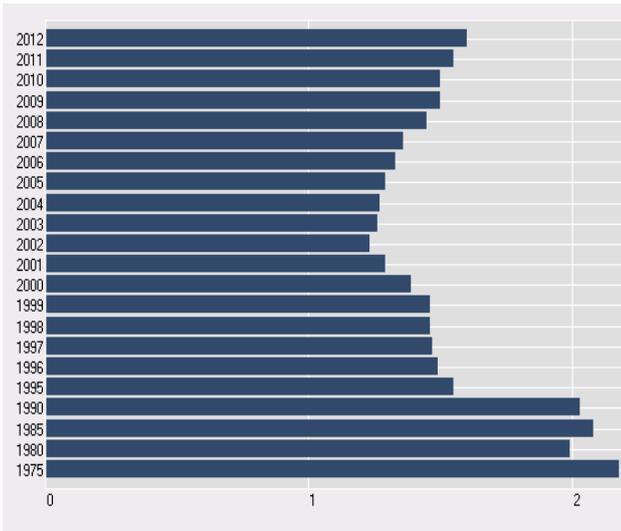


Source: Statistics Lithuania, 2014

Figure 3. Infant deaths per 1000 born

² Key figures on Europe 2014. Eurostat.³ Key figures on Europe 2014. Eurostat.

Over the past decade, the number of artificial abortions fell twice. In 2012 year 6033 was carried out in artificial abortion. Per 1000 child-bearing age (15-49 years) women was performed 8.5 abortions. Until 2009, the number of births increased and in 2010 it began to decline. In 2012 year 30,459 babies were born or 1.7 thousand less than in 2010. In 2012 the fertility rate was 10.2/1000 inhabitants (Fig. 4). In 2012 the average maternal age increased up to 29 years, and for the first time giving birth - up to 26.6 years. The total fertility rate rose to 1.6 %, but it does not ensure demographic balance.



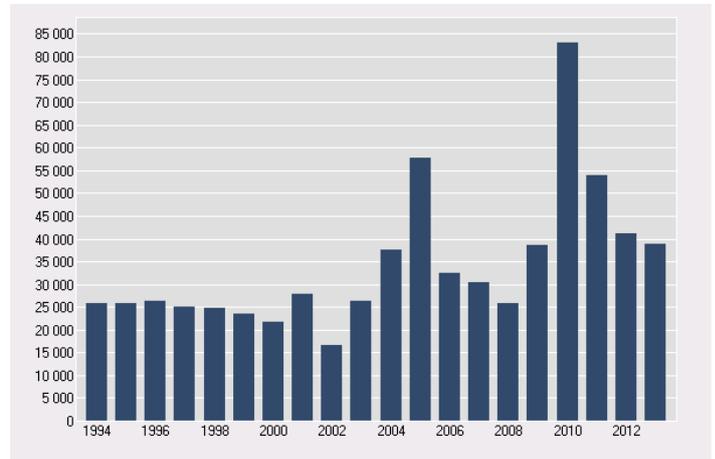
Source: Statistics Lithuania, 2014
Figure 4. The total fertility rate in Lithuania

Another negative demographic process - destabilization of the family institute and increase of single-parent families. Today's youth give priority for education and career first, change of lifestyle and values of life, that is why to create a family is no longer one of the priority tasks of life. During the past 10-15 years Lithuanian family demographic characteristics has changed dramatically: traditional marriages and the number of families has decreased in 2000-2003. After joining the EU the number of marriages per 1 thousand of the population increased again, although couples got married in older age. In 2013, was registered 20.5 thousand marriages (2012 m. - 20.7 thousands).

In recent years the number of divorces is quite stable – 3 divorces are per 1000 population or 43 divorces per hundred marriages.

The number of couples who live in a consensual marriage, the number of single-parent families, and number of never married couples has been increasing during the last decades. Because of these changes the birth rate has reached one of the lowest levels in Europe. Over the past ~ 15 years Lithuania total fertility rate fell from 2.02 to 1.3 - 1.7. In most of European countries the birth rate is also very low (in average 1.3 children per woman), which is far away from the birth rate (2.1 children per woman on average) which is needed to restore the parental generation.

Migration directly affect the demographic change in the population structure and evolution. From an economic point of view, migration is a response to better economic opportunities to live, which varies depending on labor market conditions (for example, the gender pay gap). One of the main reasons of decreasing population in Lithuania is emigration, which grew significantly after Lithuania's joined to the EU. Considering the number of population, Lithuania was leading in terms of emigration rates in the whole EU. According to the data of the Department of Statistics, about 500 thousand people left Lithuania declaring their departure in 1990-2012. This number is doubled by the number of people who left without declaring their departure because only one out of two or one out of three people declare their departure when emigrating. The research data show that among those leaving the country are mostly young, well-educated, proactive and efficient people as well as young families (Figure 5).



Source: Statistics Lithuania, 2014
Figure 5. Emigration from Lithuania

The results of the research state that the main reason for emigration is work: almost 65% of emigrants are leaving in search of work, 9% of people leave to join family members who left earlier or after having married a foreigner, 10% of people go to study (it has to be noted that the number of people studying abroad is constantly growing).

It is commonly thought that emigration is determined by economic factors: differences in salaries and standards of living in Lithuania and foreign countries. However, some researchers believe that economic reasons for emigration are overestimated. The amount of earnings is not the only criterion determining people's choices on the labour market also because each year more investment goes into creating comfortable and safe working environment (Rakauskienė, Servetkienė, 2011).

In the beginning of 2014 2 million 944 thousand people lived in Lithuania. Over the last year, the population decreased by 27.4 thousand (0.9%). The main part of the decline 61 % - due to negative net international migration (16.7 thousand more people emigrated than immigrated). This was, for the first, result of decreasing of unemployment rate and emigration from Lithuania, and

after that affected the labour market with a decreasing supply of workforce and the number of working-age population, it became increasingly difficult to maintain health and social security systems, which are financed from taxpayers money. At the same time, the need for such services will grow with an increasing number of the ageing population. Demographic Research Institute's expert estimate that during 1990 - 2011 years 670 thousand people emigrated from Lithuania (Stankuniene, Jasilionis, 2012).

IV. CONCLUSIONS

The quality of life of the population is an integrated concept offering a comprehensive description of the health, ecological, economic, material as well as spiritual development of society. Demographic dimension consist such indicators of quality of life as the average life expectancy, fertility and mortality rates, population gaining and reproductive characteristics (children birth rate), marital status, migration rate, there also may be additional indicators such as family stability indicator, number of marriages.

One of the important negative demographic processes reasons are destabilization of family institute, weaking family ties, increasing number of single-parent families. Occuring and spreading of such problems could be explained by the social and economic transformations – the population, especially youth, seeking education and career, housing, encounter different economic difficulties because of lack of effective family support policy, changing life style, values of life and priorities, relationship and strengthening liberal customization.

The negative impact on the quality of life of the population of Lithuania has been exercised by worsening demographics and the growing extent of emigration, worsening indicators of population health, rising of social and economic inequality, models of hypertrophied consumer behaviour and a decline of culture, moral and ethical as well as spiritual values.

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