



Ministry of Labour and Social Policy



United Nations Population Fund

NATIONAL DEMOGRAPHIC STRATEGY OF THE REPUBLIC OF BULGARIA

(2006 – 2020)



Strategic Aim

- The main goal for the period 2006-2020 of the Demographic Development Strategy is to slow down the rate of decrease of population and achieve its stabilization in the long run; to ensure high quality of the human capital, including people with their health condition, level of education, abilities and skills.

Priorities

- The Demographic Development Strategy sets the following parameters:
- Slowing down the negative demographic processes and the decrease of population size.
- Overcoming the negative effects of population aging, and improving the quality characteristics of human capital.
- Achieving social cohesion and creating equal opportunities for an ample reproductive life for all social groups.
- Limiting the disproportions in the territorial distribution of the population and the depopulation of some of the regions and villages.

- The Demographic Strategy addresses the entire population of the Republic of Bulgaria. The strategy takes into consideration all characteristics and specific needs typical for each of the three phases of a human life (youth, working age and pension age). Each age group has a special place and a particular role to play in the social and economic development and in the intergenerational relations.
- The Demographic Development Strategy is the national response to the demographic change that Europe is facing: declining birth rate, aging population, and large migration flows. It reflects and develops in the national context the European Commission's recommendation that for policies be initiated in response to the demographic change (the Green Book of the European Commission "Meeting the Demographic Change: a New Intergenerational Solidarity" (2005), to the UNECE Regional Implementation Strategy of the Madrid International Plan of Action on Ageing (2002) and the Action Plan adopted at the Cairo International Conference on Population and Development (1994).
- The achievement of the goals of the Demographic Development Strategy of Bulgaria up to 2020 will make it possible to also achieve the Millennium Goals, stated in the United Nations Millennium Declaration, ratified by 189 United Nations member-states on September 8, 2000 in New York.

The Demographic Development Strategy is based on the following main principles:

- Lawfulness – conformity of the goals, priorities, measures and specific activities with the Constitution of the Republic of Bulgaria, the laws and other legislative acts; exact and identical application of the law for everyone.
- Prevention – planning measures and activities for overcoming and/or limiting the action of factors that have a negative influence on the process of demographic development.
- Continuity – ensuring the continuous action of the strategy, regardless of changes in government or other social changes.
- Equality – no groups of the population should be excluded and privileged.
- Efficiency – achieving optimal results at minimal cost.
- Efficacy – correspondence of the goals, priorities, planned measures, specific programs and expected results to the real social demands.
- Coherency – ensuring coordination, mutual commitment and synergism of the effects of the specific demographic policies.
- Public-private partnership - active and coordinated participation of the government bodies, citizens and businesses in the demographic policy implementation.
- Transparency and control of performance.
- Sustainability of results – ensuring a continuous and long-term influence of the results achieved.

Basic Directions of the Demographic Policy

- The specific tasks, measures and activities for the accomplishment of the strategic priorities lie in the following main directions:
- Encouraging the increase of the birth rate through the creation of conditions favourable for child-raising and upbringing.
- Increasing the average life expectancy.
- Significantly decreasing the number of migrating people at reproductive age.
- Elaborating an adequate immigration policy.
- Overcoming the effects of population aging.

Basic Directions of the Demographic Policy

- Improving the reproductive health of the population and preventing sterility.
- Increasing the general educational level, knowledge on demographic issues, as well as sexual and reproductive culture of the population.
- Ensuring equal opportunities for an adequate reproductive life in good health for all social groups.
- Developing solidarity among different generations.
- Limiting the disproportions in the territorial distribution of the population and the depopulation in some regions and in rural areas.
- Improving and synchronizing the legal basis of the demographic development.

Overcoming the Effects of Population Aging

- In order to attain this goal, measures and tasks have to be undertaken in the following directions:
- Developing a policy for active aging.
- Adapting the social insurance system.
- Developing the system of social and health care services and improving the quality of life of the elderly.

Developing an Active Aging Policy

- Active aging has become a strategic notion in the policy of united Europe for social and economic development, drawn in the Lisbon Strategy adopted by the extraordinary European Council in Lisbon in March 2000 as an immediate response to the demographic challenge of aging of the population in the EU. The active aging policy aims at life-long learning, prolonging work life, economic and social activity after the formal retirement, and longevity in good health. The concrete tasks include:
- Elaborating measures for preserving and developing the labour potential as an element of the overall concept for the development of human resources in the country.
- Encouraging life-long learning and accelerating the activities of vocational training at the place of work.
- Introducing flexible forms of employment for retired persons without the creation of disproportions on the labour market and intergeneration conflicts.
- Overcoming the negative adjustments of employers towards older people and encouraging the longer implementation of their working experience and skills.
- Stimulating the voluntary participation of the retired people in the social life of the community and the development of a civil society.

Adapting the Social Insurance System

- Improving the insurance culture of workers and officials.
- Increasing the collection rate of insurance payments.
- Encouraging the voluntary insurance of the population in covering the insurance risks.
- Improving the control on the insurance payments and preventing the unlawful receiving of pensions (especially disability pensions due to a general disease).
- Enlarging the range of insured persons and limiting the informal employment.
- Improving the Bulgarian pension model and ensuring financial stability of the pension system through the introduction of more just and flexible forms of participation in the pension system.
- Creating a Silver Demographic Investment Fund for financial support to the pension system.
- Strengthening the role of the second and third pole of the pension system

Development of the Social and Health Care Services System and Improving the Quality of Life of the Elderly

- Priority development of social services in the institutions for the elderly and in the community instead of services in specialized institutions.
- Improving the quality of life of elderly people living in specialized institutions.
- Ensuring elderly people's opportunities for recreation, sports, tourism, and participation in cultural life.
- Priority development of the tuition of social workers specialized in taking care of the elderly.
- Encouraging the participation of NGOs in caring for and rendering social services to old people.

Basic indicators for monitoring the National demographic strategy (2006 – 2020)

- **Education indicators:**
- Illiteracy rate (%),
- Ratio of the pupils reaching 5th year of education (%),
- Gross ratio of secondary school enrollment (%),
- Ratio of the secondary school graduates at the age of 19-24 (%),
- Ratio of school dropouts – primary, secondary school (%),
- Ratio of the people with higher education (%).

Health condition indicators:



- Relative share of parturition in the presence of qualified medical personnel,
- Number of abortions per 1000 live-born babies,
- Yearly number of children deceased under the age of 5,
- Maternal mortality,
- Average life span in good health,
- Number of people who have entered hospital per 100 persons of the population,
- Tuberculosis morbidity – newly discovered cases per 100 000 persons of the population,
- Number of people living with HIV/AIDS.

Urbanization and agglomeration indicators:

- Population density
- Relative share of urban population per 1000 persons
- Communication
- Access to basic services.

Demographic indicators:

- Natural growth - per 1000 persons,
- Birthrate - per 1000 persons,
- Total fertility rate - number of children,
- Total mortality rate - per 1000 persons,
- Child mortality rate - per 1000 persons,
- Maternal mortality per 1000 born alive,
- Average life expectancy at birth – in years (men/women),
- Number of abortions per 1000 live-born babies,
- Net migration (immigrants-emigrants),
- Dependency ratio (%).

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- **An interdepartmental working group was launched in the autumn of 2006 for the elaboration of three-year thematic and budget framework for the period 2007-2009, of financially supported Plan for 2007 and system of indicators to monitor the implementation of the National Strategy for Demographic Development of Bulgaria (2006-2020) and the annual plans under it.**
 - **The working group involves more than 70 representatives of state institutions, scientific society, social partners and non-governmental organizations.**