314 (498)

Berekméri Mária, Surd Vasile[1]

SOME DEMOGRAPHICAL ASPECTS OF THE NEWLY NOMINATED TOWNS IN ROMANIA

Abstract: Present paper tries to present some demographical aspects of the newest towns declared in the post-socialist period in Romania. First we draw a sketch of the current demographic tendencies and structures, as basis for the evolution of settlements and new towns. In the second part of our paper we describe a few elements of the demographic profile of new towns declared in post-socialist period.

Key words: urbanization, demographic structure, decline, demographic ageing

In the 20th century the population in Romania has had a longitudinal increase, registering an increase of 1.6 times between 1930/1992. The most important moments with effect on population[2] were the world wars, the socialist industrialization followed by the economic conjuncture, the pro-natalist policy of the communist regime (the most important factor was the promulgation of decree 770/1966 which prohibited abortions and thereby the regularization of baby-birth wasn't possible).

The post-socialist demographic development was influenced by a series of new socio-economic conditions. The most important actions with influence on the demographic growth were: the abolishment of decree 770 right after the political turnout, economic and political opening towards West and as consequence the transformation of the outlook of life and social behavior, the spread of the modern contraceptive methods[3]. So thus Romania entered a retrogressive process started from 1990 (see fig. 1-3.)

Forthcoming we would like to present the evolution of each demographic component.
Birth rate registered a progressive decrease starting from 1990 when attained 13.6 ‰ on national level. The next years the decrease is continuous, and from 1995 the value is stagnating at 10.4 ‰. These demographic processes are influenced by several factors: the sudden reduce of the new-born baby-number is due to the abrogation of communist decree which prohibited abortion and other forms of contraception. Certainly not only the legalization of abortion influenced in negative way fertility: the transformations in the social field and family behavior played an important role. The majority of families adopted a western family-model, with utmost 2 kids, but mostly we can describe the 3-

---

persons-nuclei (partents+1 kid) especially because of economic reasons[4]. On the other hand we can notice that marriage is pushed off at a latter age, mostly in case of highly qualified persons, and as a result the first childbirth happens in a latter period of life. Another element in the decrease of fertility is emigration. Many young people (in reproductive ages) have left the country in the past decade, and consequently the fertile contingent has diminished in number. This process of decrease is more intense in the urban areas, while in rural zones the traditional samples are partly maintained.
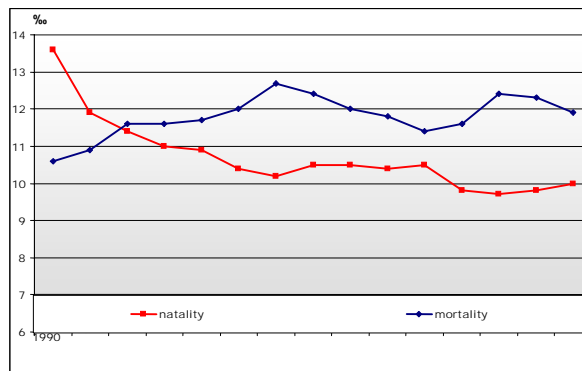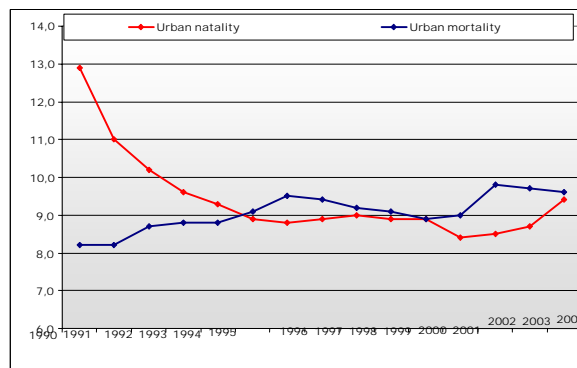

Fig. 1. Birth rate, mortality in Romania

Fig. 2. Birth rate, mortality in urban areas

---

[4] The economic causes are important first to guarantee optimal life and "quality" of child (see Becker, 1994.) but we can pronounce that as the economy of region is increasing (especially GDP/pers) the fertility level is decreasing (see Livi-Bacci, 1999. 165-182.). In Romania the fertility is changing because of the unstable economy of transition.

Mortality registered a different evolution: this indicator has increased significantly in the past decade, achieving the maximum value of 12.6 ‰ in 1996. The phenomenon has its roots in the demographic ageing (powered by the decrease of fertility) but also in the effects of the economic transition with damage on average population health level. Mortality and infant mortality has a bigger value in rural areas. This is caused by the intense demographic ageing in rural places; moreover the population health level is more unstable, with lack in the basic infrastructure.
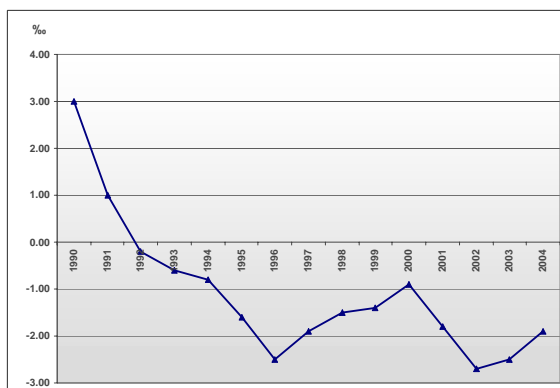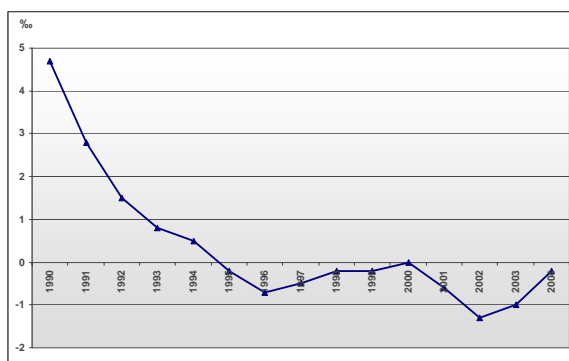

Fig. 3. Natural increase in Romania

Fig. 4. Natural increase in urban areas

As a result of these two variables the natural increase is negative[5] since 1992. The decline is continuous until 1996, reaching the lowest point of -2.5 ‰, after this we can describe a short period of growth (in 2000 the indicator registered -0.9‰), but the

---

[5] van de Kaa affirms that this period of demographic decline is the second demographic transition in the western, modern world. Details about the demographic transition and the van de Kaa theory, see Mureşan 1999, 26–29.

minimum point of the whole post socialist period is in 2000, when reaches -2.7 ‰. Recently we can witness a moderate increase of the negative values.

Considering these demographic indicators we can describe several territorial models: first determinate at the level of historical provinces. For instance Moldova is characterized by positive values (0.8 ‰), but in the muntenian – oltenian model, as in Banat too, the variables have a total opposite continual, here registering the lowest values in birth rate and the highest value in mortality, thus this regions entered a demographic decline stage. Another distinction is made of upon the settlement-type: in rural areas the demographic decline is more accentuated, and the phenomenon of demographic ageing takes extreme forms.

In this introduction we tried to present the macro-processes that characterize the demographic factors in this transition period. Our next part is about the demography of the newly nominated towns in Romania.

A. Size

This section analyzes the demographic size in the new towns of Romania, namely the population number.
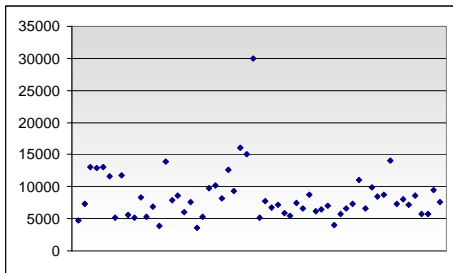

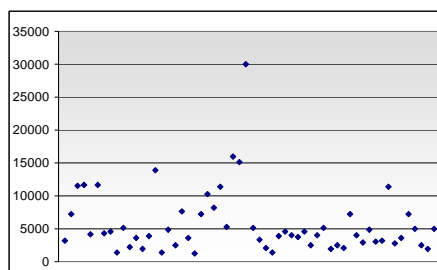Fig. 5. The size, with the dependent villages   Fig. 6. The size of new towns

As we can see the majority of the towns nominated in post socialist period belong to the category between 5000 and 10000 persons (in total 42 towns, 72 % from all). A small number of towns (6.7 %) is situated in the category with population under 5000 (thus under the limit which is required to declare a settlement town, necessary according to Law 351/2001): Căzăneşti, Ialomiţa county (3641 persons), Bechet, Dolj county (3864 persons), Miercurea Sibiului, Sibiu county (4063 persons) and Baia de Arieş, Alba county (4669 persons).

Over the number of 10000 we find 13 towns, of which one, Voluntari situated in the agglomeration-zone of Bucharest concentrates over 30000 persons. The remainder 12 town has inhabitants between 10000 – 20000: Sântana (12936 persons), Pecica (13024 persons), Săcueni (11665 persons), Ştefăneşti din Argeş (12983 persons), Flămânzi

(11799 persons), Dăbuleni (13888 persons), Otopeni (10215 persons), Chitila (12643 persons), Pantelimon (16019 persons), Popeşti-Leordeni (15115 persons), Dolhasca (11009 persons) şi Vicovu de Sus (14125 persons).

If we analyze the number of inhabitants in the town without its dependent villages, we can conclude that the composition of each cluster is changed and the majority of new towns move downwards. Thus, 39 of total new towns (66 %) have inhabitants fewer than 5000 persons, 22 % of total are situated in the category 5000 – 10000 and finally, in ten towns the number of inhabitants exceeds 10000: Otopeni, Vicovu de Sus, Chitila, Pecica, Săcueni, Sântana, Dăbuleni, Popeşti Leordeni, Pantelimon, and Voluntari.

Fig. 7. Demographic size and geographical position of
post-socialist new towns in Romania

B. Growth rate

This chapter will follow the transformations in the number of inhabitants between the last two censuses performed in the post socialist period. Briefly we can mention that the processes in the new towns were concordant with those manifested at national level, described in the earlier chapter. The majority of new towns (56 %) loose out of their inhabitants in the analyzed decade. The difference between the minimum and maximum

points is 31.56, and the annual growth rate does not pass in any case the value 2 % (the uppermost values registered in Ştefăneşti Argeş, Podu Iloaiei and Bragadiru). The annual growth rate (in fact the decline rate) is the lowest in Broşteni and Săliştea de Sus.
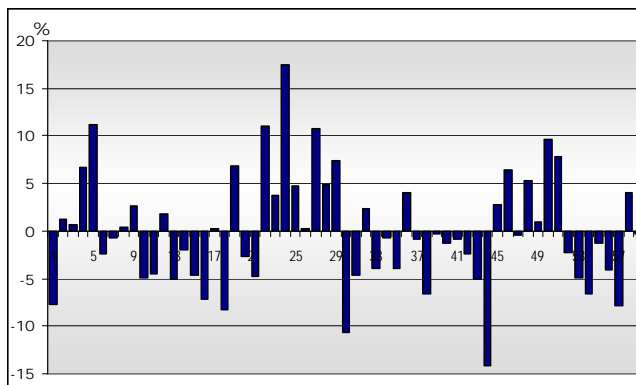

Fig. 8. Growth rate in the new towns (1992-2002)

The settlemets are numbered from 1 to 59 as follows: Baia de Arieş, Teiuş, Pecica, Sântana, Ştefăneşti, Săcueni, Bucecea, Flămânzi, Ştefăneşti, Ghimbav, Pătârlagele, Băneasa, Răcari, Bechet, Dăbuleni, Tismana, Turceni, Geoagiu, Amara, Căzăneşti, Fierbinţi-Târg, Podu Iloaiei, Otopeni, Bragadiru, Chitila, Măgurele, Pantelimon, Popeşti-Leordeni, Voluntari, Săliştea de Sus, Şomcuta Mare, Tăuţii-Măgheruş, Ulmeni, Miercurea Nirajului, Sângeorgiu de Pădure, Sărmaşu, Ungheni, Roznov, Potcoava, Ardud, Livada, Miercurea Sibiului, Sălişte, Broşteni, Cajvana, Dolhasca, Frasin, Liteni, Milişăuţi, Salcea, Vicovu de Sus, Ciacova, Gătaia, Făget, Recaş, Berbeşti, Bălcesti, Băbeni, Murgheni

In consequence we can pronounce, that majority of new towns were hit by the demographic decline generalized over national level. Those towns, which have a favorable geographical location, register a positive evolution in the population number too. Diversified economy brings new possibilities and perspectives in these towns, and thus the town will be attractive to the current population (it is important for stopping the potential emigration) and to the others to come (for example we can witness new residents in the towns from the agglomeration of the capital city)

C. Sex-structure

This segment of the population-structure is pretty balanced. The masculinity rate is 49.7 and the femininity rate 50.3 %. The majority of new towns correspond with this structure; the standard deviation from this value is 0.8. Percentage of female population beneath the average value is in: Sălişte de Sus (Maramureş), Broşteni, Liteni şi Frasin (Suceava) şi Berbeşti, Băbeni (Vâlcea). The towns with higher percentage of female

inhabitants are the following: Bălceşti (Vâlcea), Ciacova (Timiş), Milişăuţi and Cajvana (Suceava), Şomcuta Mare (Maramureş), Otopeni (Ilfov) and finally Răcari (Dâmboviţa).

D. Age-structure

This aspect is very important because has influences in the economic and social field too, influences lifestyles, cultural behavior etc. At the same time is the principal factor that influences natural population movement, birth rate, mortality, and emigration-immigration.

This analyze is based on the three major age-categories: 0-14 years, 15-59 years, and over 60. On national level the percentage of youth people is diminishing in parallel with the increase of elderly people. Thus the process of demographical ageing is characteristic in almost every new town. Of course, this process is accentuated in rural areas, as a result of massive emigration in the time of socialist industrialization. Urban has a more young profile.

The average value of the youth is 20.1 %. Differences between towns regarding age-structures are quite high: the standard deviation value is 3.7, which means that the towns can be described by various structures. The highest percentage is registered in Cajvana: 33.4 %, but we can enumerate Vicovu de Sus (29.4 %), Salcea (25,6 %), Berbeşti, Murgeni, Milişăuţi and Bechet (with 24-25 %), Turceni, Flămânzi, Miercurea Sibiului, Sântana şi Liteni (over 20%). At the other side we find Podu Iloaiei, with minimum value of 9.8 % and Dăbuleni, Măgurele, Bălcesti, Fierbinţi-Târg, Geoagiu, Voluntari, Livada, Pătârlagele, Otopeni, Popeşti Leordeni, Tismana, Ghimbav, Răcari, Amara, Ciacova (with 14-18 %).

The average value of adult people is 59.7 %. Some examples rise, where this is higher than the average: Ghimbav (71.6 %), Otopeni, Bragadiru, Chitila, Măgurele, Pantelimon, and Popeşti Leordeni (over 65 %).

Elderly people represent on average 19.8 %. Differences between towns are more accentuate than is case of young people (the standard deviation is 4.2). Values over 25 % are in: Ciacova, Dăbuleni, Ştefăneşti, Fierbinţi-Târg, Răcari and Bălcesti (the latest is the "oldest" of all). The ageing indicator (youth people reported to elderly people, in 1000 persons) has an average value of 1018, with maximum in Bălceşti (1915), Dăbuleni (1812), and Fierbinţi-Târg (1793). The minimum value is registered in Cajvana (425).

E. The qualification-structure

This segment reflects the cultural state of the population, and at the same time the level of qualification is the basis of the socio-economic-and cultural development. The percentages are calculated in function of total population, the level of qualification here means the last graduated school, after the categories as follows: primary school, gymnasium, lyceum, university.

The percentage of population with most primary school graduated is 29.4 %, with gymnasium are in average 35.5 %. High school graduated persons represent in average 15.6 %, above average in Baia de Arieş, Pătârlagele, Tăuţii-Măgheruş, Băbeni, Bălceşti, Berbeşti, Măgurele and Otopeni (over 20 %).

The last category is formed of university graduates (faculties, colleges). In this segment new towns are around the national average in urban areas: 2.9 %, with values beneath average in Salcea, Milişăuti, Cajvana (under 1 %). The maximum percentage is in Baia de Arieş (6.1 %), Pătârlagele (5.7 %), Şomcuta Mare (4.8 %), Ulmeni (5.6 %) Bălceşti, Berbeşti (6-6 %) and Măgurele (4.6 %).

Conclusions

This short analysis concentrated on some elements of the demography (size, growth rate, sex-structure, age-structure, qualification) of new towns in Romania. Our primary conclusions are: 1. we can pronounce that all new towns are affected by the demographic decline, 2. the demographic decline is accentuated and generated by the demographic ageing process, 3. the settlements with positive evolution or proper structure are positioned in a favorable location (nearby a city, or other important centre), 4. we can speak about different clusters among new towns, where the towns situated near Bucharest are detached from others (urbanization rate and modernization is higher).

References

Becker, G.S (1994). *Căsătorie, fertilitate şi familie*. in: Comportamentul uman o abordare economică, Editura All, Bucureşti

Benedek J., (2003). *Amenajarea teritoriului şi dezvoltarea regională*. Presa Universitară Clujană, Cluj

Benedek J., (2006). Urban Policies and Urbanization in Transition Romania. *In.: Romanian Revue of Regional Studies, vol. II, no. 1,* pp. 51–65.

Cucu, V. (1976). *Geografie şi urbanizare*. Editura Junimea, Iaşi.

Cucu, V. (1981). *Geografie populaţiei şi aşezărilor umane*. Bucureşti: Editura Didactică şi Pedagogică.

Ianoş, I. (1987). *Oraşele şi organizarea spaţiului geografic. Studiu de geografie economică asupra teritoriului României*. Bucureşti: Editura Academiei.

Ianoş, I. (2004). *Dinamica urbană*. Bucureşti: Editura Tehnică.

Ianoş, I., Tălângă, C. (1994). *Oraşul şi sistemul urban românesc în condiţiile economiei de piaţă*. Bucureşti: Academia Româna.

Kovács Z. (2002). Az urbanizáció jellemzői Kelet-Közép-Európában a postszocialista átmenet idején. *In: Földrajzi Közlemények, 1-4*. pp. 57–78

Livi-Bacci, M. (1999). *A világ népességének rövid története*. Budapest: Osiris.

Meaşnicov I., Hristache I., Trebici V. (1977). *Demografia oraşelor României*. Bucureşti: Editura Ştiinţifică şi Enciclopedică.

Mureşan Cornelia (1999). *Evoluţia demografică a României*. Cluj: Presa Universitară Clujeană.

Mureşan Cornelia (2005). *Introducere în demografie*. Cluj: Presa Universitară Clujeană.

Nicolae, I. (2002). *Suburbanismul ca fenomen geografic în România*. Bucureşti: Editura Meronia.

Pop, G. (2000). *Funcţiile şi dimensiunile urbanului în România*, Studia UBB, Georgr. XLV. 1.

Săgeată, R. (2006). *Deciziile politico-administrative şi organizarea teritoriului*. Bucureşti: Ed. Top Form.

Starosta, P. (1994). Ruralization and Rurality: Three Perspectives, In: Symes, D., Jansen, A. J., eds., *Agricultural Restructuring and Rural Change in Europe*, Agricultural University, Wageningen, pp. 65–75.

Vernescu, D. (1970). Probleme ale sistematizării localităţilor din jurul municipiului Bucureşt`i. *Terra, an II, 1*, 21-30.

*** (1994). *Recensământul populaţiei şi locuinţelor din 1992*, vol. I. Bucureşti: Institutul de Statistică.

*** (2004). *Recensământul populaţiei şi locuinţelor din 2002*, vol. I. Bucureşti: Institutul de Statistică.