

TENDENCIES OF THE MAIN DEMOGRAPHIC PHENOMENA IN THE 5 WEST REGION OF ROMANIA

TENDINȚE ALE PRINCIPALELOR FENOMENE DEMOGRAFICE ÎN REGIUNEA 5 VEST A ROMÂNIEI

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Abstract: *The trends of the main demographic phenomena provide useful information on the future evolution of the population and age structure in the West Region of Romania.* **Rezumat:** *Proiecția tendințelor privind principalele fenomene demografice oferă informații utile asupra evoluției viitoare a numărului și structurii de vârstă a populației Regiunii 5 Vest a României.*

Key words: *birth rate, death rate, migration*
Cuvinte cheie: *natalitate, mortalitate, migrație*

INTRODUCTION

Romania lies in South-Eastern Europe and covers 238,391 square kilometres. It is the twelfth largest European country and has a population of 21.7 million inhabitants. The average density is 91.07 inhabitants/km², 3-4 times smaller than in Germany, Great Britain or The Netherlands, 5-6 higher than in Finland and Sweden, and close to Greece and Spain.

Romania is a medium country from the point of view of its population. It represents 5% of EU-25 and it is the 7th in EU-27, after Germany (82.5 million inhabitants), Great Britain (59.6), France (59.3), Italy (56.3), Spain (40.7) and Poland (38.2).

Administratively, Romania's territory is divided into hamlets, villages, towns, municipalities and counties. Eight development regions were created by uniting several counties. The West Region contains the following counties: Arad, Caras-Severin, Hunedoara and Timis.

In 2004, the West Region had 1,939,514 inhabitants and represented 8.95% of Romania's population. From 1990 to 2004, due to the mixed influence of the differentiated stage of natural increase and the intense internal and external migration flows, the population decreased with 262,203 inhabitants. This significant decrease was registered mainly in Caras-Severin (-70,547 inhabitants) and Hunedoara (-82,987 inhabitants).

In the West Region, the density per square kilometre is by far lower than the national average; in 2004 it was only 60.5 compared with 90.9, which was the national average. Both the density and the number of inhabitants have decreased dramatically and there are significant differences among the counties of the region:

- Caras-Severin: 39.0, relative to 47.3 in 1990;
- Arad: 59.4, relative to 65.6 in 1990;
- Hunedoara: 68.6, relative to 80.4 in 1990;
- Timis: 76.1, relative to 83.1 in 1990 (Table 1).

In 2004, the share of the male population was below the national average (48.8%) in all the counties of the region. (Table 2)

Population and density in the West Region in 1990, 2001 and 2004

Table 1

Region/ County	Total population			Density (inhabitants/km ²)		
	1990	2001	2004	1990	2001	2004
West Region	2,201,717	2,032,829	1,939,514	68.7	63.5	60.5
Arad	508,302	475,339	460,466	65.6	61.3	59.4
Caras-Severin	403,235	350,344	332,688	47.3	41.1	39.0
Hunedoara	567,754	518,975	484,767	80.4	73.5	68.6
Timis	722,426	688,171	661,593	83.1	79.1	76.1
TOTAL Romania	23,206,720	22,408,393	21,673,328	97.3	94.0	90.9

Source: Romanian Statistical Yearbook 2005

Population per sexes in 2004

Table 2

Region/ County	Total (number of people)			Share of male population (%)
	Both sexes	Male	Female	
Romania	21,673,328	10,571,606	11,101,722	48.8
West Region	1,939,514	935,812	1,003,702	48.2
Arad	460,466	221,309	239,157	48.1
Caras-Severin	332,688	162,079	170,609	48.7
Hunedoara	484,767	235,698	249,069	48.6
Timis	661,593	316,726	344,867	47.9

Source: Romanian Statistical Yearbook 2005

Also in all the four counties the share of the male urban population was lower than the share of the female urban population. (Table 3)

Population per sexes and residential areas in 2004

Table 3

Region/ County	Urban (number of people)			Rural (number of people)		
	Both sexes	Male	Female	Both sexes	Male	Female
West Region	1,235,006	590,761	644,245	704,508	345,051	359,457
Arad	256,117	121,539	134,578	204,349	99,770	104,579
Caras-Severin	187,253	90,594	96,659	145,435	71,485	73,950
Hunedoara	372,680	180,985	191,695	112,087	54,713	57,374
Timis	418,956	197,643	221,313	242,637	19,083	123,554

Source: Romanian Statistical Yearbook 2005

Table 4 shows the great difference between the urban population (63.68%) and the rural population (36.32%) in the West Region. These values are much higher than the national ones: 54.89% for the urban area and 45.11% for the rural area.

In 2004, great differences were registered in the distribution of the population among the counties of the West Region: Hunedoara and Timis had mostly urban population, while in Arad and Caras-Severin the differences between the urban and the rural population were small.

MATERIAL AND METHOD

Demographically speaking, the main factors that influence the size and structure of the population are the birth rate, the death rate and the migration. The birth rate is the number of live births per 1,000 inhabitants in a year. The death rate is the number of the deceased of all age categories per 1,000 inhabitants in a year. The natural increase is the difference between the number newborns and the number of the deceased in a given year. The migration represents

the change of domicile.

Table 4

Population of counties and region per sexes and residential areas in 2004

Region/ County	Total (number of people)	Sex (absolute values and percentage)				Residential areas (%)	
		Male	%	Female	%	Urban	Rural
Arad	460,466	221,309	48.06	239,157	51.94	55.62	44.38
Caras-Severin	332,688	162,079	48.92	170,609	51.28	56.28	43.72
Hunedoara	484,767	235,698	48.62	249,069	51.38	76.88	23.12
Timis	661,593	316,726	47.87	344,867	52.13	63.33	36.67
West Region	1,939,514	935,812	48.25	1,003,702	51.75	63.68	36.32
Romania	21,673,328	10,571,606	48.78	11,101,722	51.22	54.89	45.11

Source: Romanian Statistical Yearbook 2005

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

In our country, the low birth rate has certain peculiarities. The major factors that have reduced the birth rate are of economic and social nature. First of all, the occupational structure of the population has suffered a great transformation, which in turn has determined, especially among the younger inhabitants, both considerable territorial and professional mobility and a prolonged training period.

The problem of a decent income, the complicated situation on the labour market and the housing issue are serious obstacles for many couples who want to start a family. Most of them do not have children or put off having children because of the cultural and psychological context and their economic or social status as a family.

Such phenomena are quite obvious in the West Region where the birth rate is the lowest in the country, except Bucharest.

In 2004, 17,976 infants were born - 8,171 less than in 1990, but 690 more than in 2003. The birth rate was 9.3 newborns per 1,000 inhabitants, compared to 11.9‰ in 1990 and 8.9‰ in 2003. In the same year, 25,023 people died, which is 52 less than in 2003 and 921 more than in 1997. The general death rate was 12.9 deaths per 1,000 inhabitants, compared with 12.8‰ in 2003 and 11.8‰ in 1990. (Table 5)

Table 5

Natural migration/movement of population in the West Region in 2004

Region/ County	Rates per 1,000 population					Still births	Deceased before 1 year of age
	Live birth	Deaths	Natural increase	Marriages	Divorces		
Romania	10.0	11.9	-2.0	6.6	1.6	6.1	16.8
West Region	9.3	12.9	-3.6	7.2	2.0	6.8	16.7
Arad	9.2	14.2	-5.0	6.6	1.8	8.3	12.7
Caras-Severin	9.8	13.6	-3.8	8.5	1.8	3.4	20.2
Hunedoara	8.8	12.5	-3.7	6.4	2.8	8.9	19.5
Timis	9.4	11.9	-2.5	7.6	1.8	6.1	15.8

Source: Romanian Statistical Yearbook 2005

Although in the past years measures have been taken to improve the health condition of the population and to provide proper medical services, the death rate in the West Region is higher than the national one.

The natural increase is negative both at the national and the regional level; in this region, it is almost twice than the national one (-3.6‰ compared with -2‰).

The difference between sexes in the death rate has been unchanged in the past years, a fact that is best illustrated by the average life span per sexes. This difference is 7 years in favour of the female sex both nationally and regionally (Table 6).

The mutations in the social and economic structure of Romania have determined intense territorial mobility among the population, with direct consequences on the number of inhabitants and the social-demographic structure.

Within the internal migration process, the urban-rural flow has a higher share (31.8%) than the rural-urban flow (21.0%).

Table 6

Average life span per sexes in 2002-2004 (years)

Region/County	Both sexes	Male	Female
Romania	71.32	67.74	75.06
West Region	70.78	67.36	74.27
Arad	70.55	67.06	74.11
Caras-Severin	70.97	67.77	74.30
Hunedoara	70.29	66.80	73.95
Timis	71.21	67.77	74.65

Source: Romanian Statistical Yearbook 2005

In 2004, although at the national level the migration balance was zero, the West region (+2.494), Bucharest (+6.987) and the Central Region (+92) still had a positive migration balance.

External migration is a chief factor that influences the population structure besides internal migration. The changes in the Romanian political and social system have made it possible for the population of the region to move to EU member states, USA and Canada.

The national statistics have shown that most of the legal immigrants have had a high educational and training level, proving the selective character of the immigration policy of the destination countries.

CONCLUSIONS

The demographic and economic effects of the evolution of the population will be noticed in time and will lead to changes in subpopulations (learning population, fertile population fit for work population). They will be felt after 2005, when the population fit for work includes the numerically reduced generations born after 1990.

In the future, it is estimated that the population of the West Region will decrease with over 200,000 people in 2002-2025. This decrease will come as a result of the birth rate deficit relative to the death rate (negative natural increase), to which the negative balance of the internal and external migration is added. By 2020 a decrease in the total population is expected in Hunedoara, while in Arad the high death rate will lead to the highest natural decrease. In Arad and Timis, the natural population decrease will counteract the positive migration balance.

LITERATURE

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