

## State Demographic Policy: Scientific Bases, Problems and Prospects for Development

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**Abstract:** This study deals with some issues concerning the scientific bases, problems and prospects for development of the demographic policy both in Russia and around the world.

**Key words:** Demography, demographic processes, demographic policy, the state, Foreign

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### INTRODUCTION

In the present period of the dynamic development of the Russian statehood, modernization of socio-economic, political and cultural spheres of society and changes in social development paradigm the role of the human factor in the ongoing transformations has been actualized. It is no coincidence that in XXI cent., in accordance with the Presidential Decree No. 683 of 31.12.2015 "On the Russian Federation National Security Strategy," the proclaimed strategic objectives of national security in the field of Improving the quality of life of Russian citizens were: improvement of the quality of life, promotion of public health and provision of stable demographic development of the country.

Analyzing the scientific elaboration degree of realization of the demographic features of the state, rights, demographic policy and demographic security, it should be noted that these problems have not yet received adequate coverage in the theoretical-legal and sectoral juridical science. Problems of legal groundwork for demographic processes still wait to be explored in the light of the fact that the interest in the field of public relations in the XXI century has increased significantly under the influence of social needs and the crisis.

Since the ancient times, the researches by thinkers were aimed at gaining insight into the essence of demographic processes and determining the role of the state in their governing. For example, the works by Confucius, Herodotus, Plato, Aristotle bring their insights into the relationship of demographic and political processes; the degree of ratio of birthrate, mortality and population size to a form of state structure, type of government is reflected in the researches by thinkers of the Middle Ages such as F. Aquinas, N. Machiavelli, T. More, T. Campanella and others (Charbit, 2010). Representatives of the economic, philosophical and socio-political thought of modern times N. Barbon, A.P. Volynskii, Voltaire, M.V. Lomonosov,

D.I. Mendeleev, Sh.L. Montesquieu, W. Petit, A.N. Radishchev, J.J. Rousseau, V.N. Tatishchev, D. William considered the forms of government in their relationship with demographic processes as a prerequisite for the state prosperity.

It is noteworthy that the concept of "demography" occurred about two hundred years later than the science it refers to; prior to that another terms had been proposed. The first who tried to name the new science was a Swiss mathematician Bernoulli Christopher (1782-1863) who proposed to call it "populationistics". The work by Belgian scientist A. Quetelet (1796-1874) "A treatise on man and the development of his faculties, or the experience of social physics" (1835) was crucial for the development of the ideas of the demographic science, where the concept of the "middle man" was formulated as the average index characterizing a society and the processes occurring in it as a result of certain laws of social development rather than as a set of random events (Quetelet, 2013). The term "demography" was introduced into scientific use by French scientist Achille (Ashy) Guillard in 1855 in the book "Elements of human statistics or comparative demography" where the scientists defined the demography as the natural and social history of a human, or a mathematical study of the population, its changes and its physical, civic, intellectual and moral conditions (Shryock and Sigel, 1973). For quite a long period, this definition of demographics was distributed quite widely, especially in the field of statistics. An example may be the name of the book by A. Guillard and the definition of demographics, proposed by a major scholar of the XIX cent. Jacques Bertillon (Clark, 1968).

Over the past half-century, there has been a trend to increased attention to the study of demography in terms of economic and social factors of the common development. In the mid 70s of the XX century, under the auspices of the UN, "The determinants and consequences

of demographic trends” was published, providing an overview of more than hundreds of works in this area, which, in particular, marked an increase in the demographic information and the source base, the rapid increase in the amount of demographic studies and their degree of specialization and progress in demographic analysis. These trends in demographics development continue at present.

## **MATERIALS AND METHODS**

In our study, we used general scientific methods and techniques of logical knowledge: analysis and synthesis, abstraction, modeling, system-structural, functional and formal-logical approaches. Special methods are represented by concrete sociological and statistical ones and the specific scientific methods-by formal and legal, comparative legal methods and the method of law interpretation.

**Main part:** “The demographic trend” of the legal policy and national security of our country is not occasional. Fairly recently, the demographic situation in Russia was described as catastrophic.

According to official data published in Russia from 1993-2006, each year mortality was >2 mil. people, while the birth rate continued to decrease rapidly and was about 1.4 mil. people per year. During this period, the population of our country decreased by 11.2 mil. people. A rapid decrease was observed in working-age population aged 26-48 year and the average life expectancy of Russians was comparable only with the life expectancy of people in the developing countries and was approximately 58.8 year (according to Rosstat).

This demographic situation caused by objective circumstances of the transition period (unemployment, low salaries and pensions, poor health care, high level of crime) has led the Russian society of the recent period to demographic crisis.

Under the influence of the crisis, since 2006, a targeted state policy started to be implemented in the demographic sphere which main activities were formulated in the Presidential Messages of 2006, 2010 and 2012, in the Russian Federation Demographic Policy Concept for the period until 2025 and in the federal laws and regulations. Some results of the implementation of the above measures have been reflected in the demographic statistics: in 2013 (the first time since 1992) natural population increase was recorded in Russia.

## **RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

Thus, some positive results in the demographic sphere have been achieved after recognition of the

demography by the state as one of the priority strategic areas of its activities, a specific function, which implementation is the basis for the existence of Russia as a sovereign state. Nevertheless, there are still many unresolved demographic problems (high mortality, especially among men of working age; the lag in mortality and life expectancy of the performance of the most successful countries; reduction of the total number of women of reproductive age; reduction of population quality; uneven territorial distribution of the Russian population; ineffective model of external and internal migration, etc.), the solution of which is impossible without a comprehensive, scientifically grounded and relying on the international experience state policy in this direction.

We should note that the establishment of demographics as an independent science was quite a long process; only by the middle of the XX century the demographers came to believe that they study not only the dynamics of the population, not just its structure and placement across the country but something that any other science had not studied yet, the laws and the social conditioning of birthrate, mortality, marriage and divorce rate, reproduction of couples and families, the reproduction of population generally as a unity of these processes.

In our view, the experience of foreign countries in the study and regulation of demographic processes is of particular interest. Currently, there is a number of international scientific organizations that study issues of global demographics (for example, the Centre for Demographic Studies at Princeton University in the US, the Institute of Demographic Studies in Paris, the Institute of Population Economics in Beijing, Institute of Social and Economic Studies of Population of RAS, etc.). At the same time, an important role in the coordination of such research belongs to the UN and its specialized agencies (World Health Organization, the International Labor Organization, UNESCO, UNFPA Population Fund, etc.). Since 1957, the global demographic problems are constantly discussed at the UN General Assembly.

As for the Foreign experience of individual countries in the legal regulation of demographic processes, the attitude of Western governments towards them can be defined as neutral, based on respect for human rights, which implies the exclusion of repressive measures and the superiority of the individual decision. For example, a bulletin “Population and Society” states that the government’s position of “non-interference” in the demographic sphere, typical of the majority of the “post-industrial” Western European countries, does not mean the complete elimination of the population policy of the state. It emphasizes only the refusal of prosecution of certain quantitative objectives.

The government's position of non-interference is well illustrated by the UK Government's statement made at the Cairo Conference on Family Planning in 1994: "The UK government does not conduct the population policy in the sense of active attempts to influence its size, age structure or change its components, with the exception of immigration". It also does not express an opinion on which size and structure of the population is desirable for the UK. Its main concern is the welfare of the population, although the government have monitored the trends in demographic development. People themselves take a decision on childbirth but the government's task is to provide them with information and resources to make this decision effective. In particular, the government takes into account the population issues in the formulation of economic and social policy.

The outlined government's position, apparently relates directly to the civilizational and cultural attitude of Western European world, aimed at priority of the individualistic beginning over the collectivistic which, in turn, has led to the replacement of the demographic policy aimed at open stimulation of the parameters of demographic reproduction and opposite to Western European ideas of the right of individual to self-determination in childbirth matters, to family policy, which aims to improve the qualitative characteristics of the population: the provision of quality health care, loans, tax benefits and social housing for the poor.

A similar experience of legal regulation of demographic processes through the implementation by the state of targeted family and social policy and thereby achievement of the qualitative characteristics of the population under the demographic crisis recovery can be also adopted by the Russian legislator.

## CONCLUSION

At the present stage of development, the Russian state requires a comprehensive, science-based demographic policy relying on positive foreign trends as an independent strategic direction of the state aimed at the needs of the developing civil society and the challenges of the time (depopulation, family crisis, a decline in birthrate, mortality growth against the backdrop of economic crises, etc.). In terms of the demographic development of the law of the Russian Federation, the enforcement and law-making experience of foreign countries in this area seems to be worthy of thorough study and application.

It also analyses the evolution of scientific approaches to determining the demographics according to the emergence chronology of the ideas and concepts, as well as foreign experience in regulating the demographic processes in order to introduce them into national practice

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