

true in particular of medical care and rehabilitation for the elderly. The growing helplessness of Western societies in the area of securing proper care for that segment of the population has become a reality and taken very dramatic shape in a greater and greater number of countries. Among other things, it is manifested by the ever more frequent demands for the admissibility of euthanasia or possibility of the patient's expressing in advance his will not to be resuscitated should she/he become unconscious.⁵¹ In fact, this practice is already quite advanced in some countries (e.g. the Netherlands and the USA).⁵²

To conclude, the changes in the reproduction of the population during the past three decades brought a number of discrepancies to the foreground. Called the demographic-institutional contradictions in the present paper, they are discrepancies between the rapidly changing demographic regime and the institutions unable to adapt as rapidly. The contradictions seem to be among the most important sources of threat to the further functioning of Western society; they are manifested in extremely deep frustrations and alienation and in the growing potential of aggressiveness and self-destruction of the young generations. They might be among the sources of the invasion of new diseases (e.g. AIDS) and social pathologies (e.g. drug addiction). At the same time, they contribute to further reduction of the motivation to have children, and thus the phenomenon of below-replacement reproduction. As Drucker, called the „management guru” in America, recently observed, „it is a vicious circle [...], when the younger generation can't cut back on supporting the old, they have to cut back on the other side of the dependency spectrum, namely children, and they do”.⁵³

On the other hand, forced largely by demographic demands, Western societies depart from the idea of the welfare state and grow unable to resolve the issue of decent living conditions for the elderly. The dramatically aging West faces the threat of conservatism, lethal to a modern or capitalist (or post-modern?) society in the long run. Can anybody wonder in this situation that Ralph Dahrendorf perceives this inability of the institutions of Western society to start the process of change as the ultimate threat to the rights and freedoms on which civil life are based?⁵⁴

DEMOGRAPHIC PROCESSES IN THE POST-SOVIET STATES

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1 Introduction

Today, after 7 years of complete disintegration of the USSR, all major demographic trends in the post-Soviet states show continuity with the main trends of the last decades of the Soviet period and, therefore, also retain quite a large number of common features. This is due to the fact that all of the principal factors determining the demographic situation in the USSR on the eve of its disintegration continue to act.

1. Trends, inherent in the period of demographic transition, continue, in the main, to exist, and in the countries which attained an advanced stage of transition there is a clear manifestation of common post-transitional features (“the second demographic transition”).
2. There has been a continuation of action or post-action of the contradictory model of Soviet modernisation, which simultaneously engendered counter-modernisation forces which served as a brake on the emergence of new types of demographic behaviour, new demographic and family values, etc. (for instance, it inhibited the proliferation of modern methods of family planning).
3. Nowhere has an end been put to the economic and social stagnation which in Soviet times limited the possibilities of modernisation, connected in the West in a large measure with the growth of aggregate wealth and improvement of living standards, (for instance, prevented the decrease of mortality achieved in the West).
4. No country has done away with the consequences of the social upheavals from which the population of the former USSR suffered in the 20th century, although not all parts of the Soviet Union were affected by these upheavals in an equal measure.
5. The semi-colonial nature of the Soviet empire is still felt and has manifested itself in the different extent of demographic modernisation of its various parts and in the directions of the main migration flows.

The factors mentioned above act throughout the entire territory of the former USSR, but in the present article we shall deal only with an analysis of the situation in the independent states which emerged in the European part of its territory (including, of course, Russia with its Asian part). We have at our disposal fuller information about these states, and the similarity of demographic trends there is particularly great.

⁵¹ Cf. D.J. van de Kaa, *Human rights, terminal illness and euthanasia*, [in:] *Population and Human Rights*, United Nations, New York 1990.

⁵² Cf. e.g. R. Fenigsen, *Eutanazja. Śmierć z wyboru* [Euthanasia. Choose to die], W drodze, Poznań 1994.

⁵³ P. Drucker, op. cit.

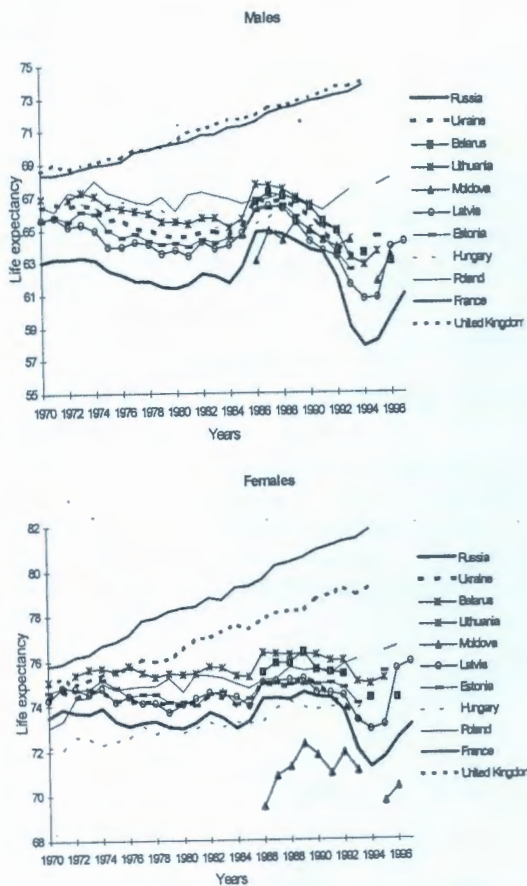
⁵⁴ R. Dahrendorf, *Inna prawda u wrót* [The other truth is near], "Gazeta Wyborcza", 2-3 July 1994 (reprinted from "La Repubblica").

2 Mortality

The long-term dynamics of life expectancy. Though in Soviet times the absolute levels of mortality and life expectancy were different in the 7 republics and continue to differ, there has been an amazing similarity in the trends of the dynamics of indicators and common differences from the respective trends in Western countries. Since the sixties, there has been stagnation resulting in the freezing and at times even some decrease in life expectancy, while in the West that indicator has continuously been growing. As a result, by the mid-eighties, the lag of the Soviet republics behind the Western countries was 6-9 years for males and 3-5 years for females. Later, during the 1985-1987 anti-alcohol campaign, all of the Soviet republics saw a simultaneous increase in life expectancy; there was then a uniform decrease in the late 1980s, and a new increase sometime around 1994.

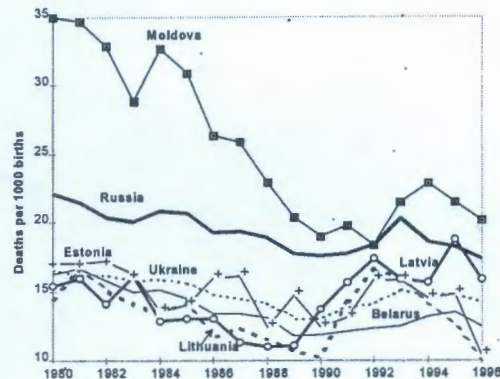
Infant mortality. Great similarity is also found in infant mortality dynamics: its general level (too high for industrial countries), relatively favourable trends in the 1980s, a sharp but short deterioration in the early 1990s, and almost the same rapid return to the former positive trends (though with some sad exceptions - the Ukraine, Latvia).

Figure 1 Life expectancy in the European post-Soviet states



Source: Hertrich, V. and F. Meslé, Mortality by cause in the Baltic countries since 1970: A method for reconstructing time series, *Revue Baltique*, Vilnius, 1997, No. 10

Figure 2 Infant mortality in the European post-Soviet states



Causes of death. The similarity of Soviet and post-Soviet trends looks most convincing when we analyse mortality by causes of death. In all states under discussion, the mortality structure by causes of death is approximately the same and essentially different from the situation in the West. These differences are particularly great for males. The chances of eventually dying from oncological and respiratory diseases are low, while the chances of eventually dying from infectious diseases and especially from external causes is high in all of the post-Soviet states. The extremely high mortality from external causes is the main unfavourable feature of the Soviet and post-Soviet pattern of mortality (Table 1).

The Soviet and post-Soviet structure of causes of death cannot be fully understood without considering the peculiarities of the age distribution of deaths from each group of causes. The mean age of death from a cause or a group of causes may serve as a generalised characterisation of that distribution. Table 2 contains this indicator for Russia, and for the sake of comparison, the "West" (a synthetic model based on averaged data for four industrial countries - the USA, the UK, France and Japan from 1989-1992).

As is shown in Table 2, for all cases of death the mean age in Russia is considerably lower than in the West. This circumstance, important as it is itself, is twice as important for the causes from which the probability of dying in Russia is relatively small. For example, it is much smaller there for respiratory diseases, which may seem to be an achievement for Russia, while high mortality from that cause, for instance, in Great Britain, may seem to be a serious shortcoming. But actually it is not so. In Russia, deaths from respiratory diseases occur quite often during childhood and young age, while in Great Britain that cause of death is typical for those of advanced age, people whose lives have already run their course and whose organisms have been weakened by old age. This difference is manifested in the huge difference between the mean age of death in Russia and in the West.

Table 1 Different causes of death for males in selected countries

State	Year	Chances (per 1000) of eventually dying from:				
		Infectious and parasitic diseases	Malignant neoplasm	Diseases of the circulatory system	Diseases of the respiratory system	External causes
Estonia	1994	10.9	152.2	477.9	42.0	221.7
Latvia	1994	18.6	136.5	476.1	43.0	221.2
Lithuania	1994	15.6	169.1	456.9	50.5	199.2
Moldova	1994	16.9	129.0	402.2	74.8	121.3
Russia	1994	19.1	135.3	445.7	66.8	225.8
Finland	1994	6.4	216.3	468.9	92.7	97.4
France	1993	13.1	304.9	310.3	84.4	85.2
Germany	1994	6.9	254.5	461.4	75.9	50.3
Sweden	1993	7.5	216.3	501.8	88.4	53.4
United Kingdom	1994	4.8	265.1	440.8	148.5	33.5
Japan	1994	18.0	273.1	324.1	178.0	61.7
United States	1992	13.0	244.2	426.7	99.9	64.6

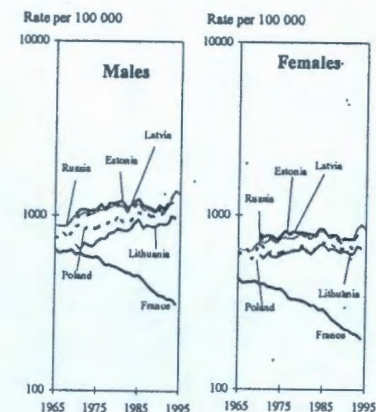
Source: World Health Statistics Annual 1995, World Health Organisation, Geneva, 1996, table B-3.

Table 2 Different causes of death and mean age at death from these causes. Russia, 1995 and the "West"

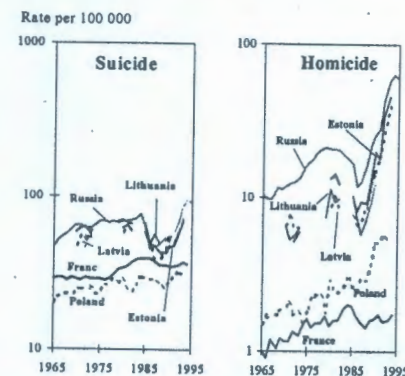
	Chances (per 1000) of eventually dying		Mean age at death, years	
	Males	Females	Males	Females
Infectious and parasitic diseases				
Russia	21	6	43.7	40.9
West	14	12	66.9	77.0
Malignant neoplasm				
Russia	142	125	63.0	66.1
West	277	213	72.5	74.6
Diseases of the circulatory system				
Russia	460	689	67.5	77.6
West	404	476	77.3	83.9
Diseases of the respiratory system				
Russia	66	36	60.2	65.0
West	117	108	80.1	84.4
External causes				
Russia	228	72	42.2	49.2
West	63	40	54.2	68.8

Source: Вишнеvский А., Школьников В. Смертность в России: главные группы риска и приоритеты действия. 1997, табл. 12, 16, 20, 24, 27.

The long-term evolution of mortality from main causes, as well as its recent changes in the 1990s, also point to the similarity of trends in the post-Soviet states and, moreover, in all of the former "socialist" countries of East Europe and, at the same time, to the considerable differences from the Western countries (see Figures 3 and 4).

Figure 3 Standardized sex-specific death rates in Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Russia, Poland and France: cardiovascular diseases

Source: Hertrich, V. and F. Meslé, Mortality by cause in the Baltic countries since 1970: A method for reconstructing time series, Revue Baltique, Vilnius, 1997, No. 10

Figure 4 Male standardized mortality rates in Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Russia, Poland and France: suicide and homicide

Source: Hertrich, V. and F. Meslé, Mortality by cause in the Baltic countries since 1970: A method for reconstructing time series, Revue Baltique, Vilnius, 1997, No. 10

3 Fertility

The similarity of fertility in both the short- and long-term periods is no less pronounced than the case of mortality.

Long-term fertility trends. In the 1950s, very prominent differences in fertility levels existed between even the European republics of the USSR. These differences have their history. At the beginning of the 20th century, the fertility level in the European part of the Russian Empire was one of the highest in the world, the Baltic provinces being the only exception. Their Protestant and Catholic population was under greater Western cultural influence, and therefore, a new model of procreative behaviour, developed in Western Europe, penetrated into the Baltic provinces earlier than into other parts of the Empire.

After the upheavals of World War I, the revolutions, and the Civil War the very high fertility level was restored inside the borders of the USSR. But beginning in the late 1920s, fertility rapidly decreased due, on the one hand, to the broadening of the scope of procreative choice and, on the other hand, to the hard, sometimes even catastrophic conditions of life in the 1930s-1940s.

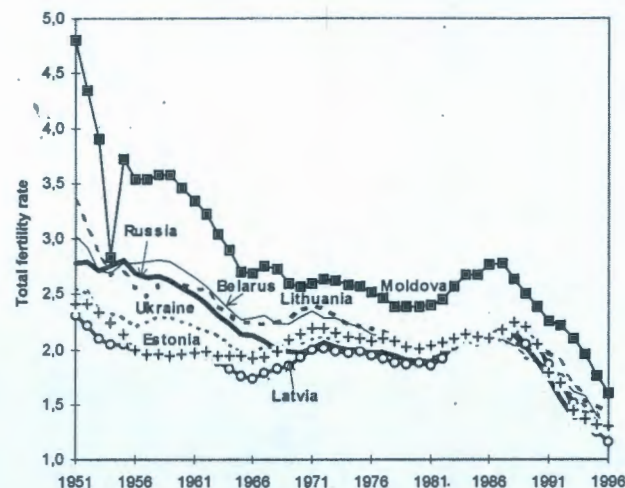
It should be mentioned that Latvia, Estonia, and, in a smaller measure, Lithuania also witnessed a sharp decrease of fertility in the late 1920s, though at that time they were not parts of the USSR and did not suffer from many of the hardships typical of Soviet life during that period. The decrease of fertility in those years was an all-European phenomenon.

The decrease of differences in fertility levels after World War II. After World War II, regional contrasts in procreative behaviour and hence in fertility levels, were very great in the Soviet Union. Levels were the lowest in Latvia and Estonia. Total fertility rates there, even at that time (the late 1950s) were below the replacement level, while in Belarus it was 2.8, and in Moldova even 3.6 (in Central Asia and Transcaucasia, which we do not discuss in this paper, fertility was even higher).

Subsequently, the decrease in fertility in the European republics of the USSR continued as a natural consequence of the demographic transition. The later the transition began, the sharper the fertility decrease was. As a result, as the fertility transition was nearing its completion, the levels in different republics were getting closer, and the differences between them were practically disappearing.

This decrease of differences in fertility levels was typical not only in the Soviet republics, but generally in all industrialised European and non-European countries. The trajectories of the fertility level decrease in Eastern and Western Europe were different, however. The fertility in the two parts of Europe decreased in waves, but the phases of these waves did not coincide. This is seen, *inter alia*, in the case of the Baltic states, where the pre-war fertility trends were approximately the same as in the neighbouring countries of Sweden and Finland. But the more or less marked baby-boom in Sweden and Finland of the mid-1940s, experienced by these and many other European countries, was not witnessed in Latvia, Estonia, or Lithuania, which at that time were republics of the USSR (Katus, 1997).

Figure 5 Total fertility rate in the European post-Soviet states



The fertility evolution there acquired a similarity with that in the other republics of the Soviet Union. But despite the different trajectories of the decrease, its final result, judging by the latest data, was approximately the same as in most countries of both Western and Eastern Europe.

Fertility trends in the 1990s. Despite the fact that since the early 1990s the factor of commonality concerning the political life in the former republics of the USSR discontinued to function, the very great similarity of fertility trends still continues to exist there. While at times certain differences are revealed, they are not very big and sometimes even simply illusory. Though after 1990 the absolute number of births in Lithuania, for instance, registered a sharp fall, it was not as great as in Russia or the Ukraine. But a more detailed study reveals that these differences are connected with differences in the age structure of the population (the Lithuanian age pyramid was not deformed as much by the social upheavals in the first half of the century as the Russian or the Ukrainian), and there were almost no differences in the total fertility rate in these three countries.

Mean ages of women at childbearing. Rejuvenation of childbearing has become a feature common to all post-Soviet republics. Unlike what is observed in most Western countries, where an decrease in the total fertility rate during the last two years has been accompanied by an increase in the mean age of women at childbearing, in all former European republics of the USSR, this indicator, as well as the mean age of first marriages, registered a declining trend.

Family planning. Another distinctive feature common to all post-Soviet republics concerns birth control methods. In contrast to Western countries, induced abortion still remains the principal method of family planning there.

The actual number of induced abortions is perhaps even higher than shown in this table, because not all of them are registered. But even if only the official (and probably not full) data on abortions are considered, their number in the post-Soviet countries is very large, when judged by Western standards. Even in Lithuania, with fewer induced abortions than the other republics of the former USSR it exceeds 70-75 per 100 live births, while in 1995 this figure was 24 in the United Kingdom, 26 in Italy, 13 in Germany, 11 in the Netherlands, 30 in Sweden, and 16 in Finland (Recent, 1997)

In the post-Soviet states, the level of abortions per thousand women is, as a rule, the highest at the age of 20-34. At the same time, there are certain differences in the age pattern of those who use abortions. Thus, in Russia and Latvia the intensity of abortion for women below 20 is already higher than for those over 35, while in Estonia this difference is less pronounced and does not exist at all in Lithuania (Table 4).

Figure 6 Number of births and total fertility rate in Lithuania, Russia, and the Ukraine in reference to the level of 1980

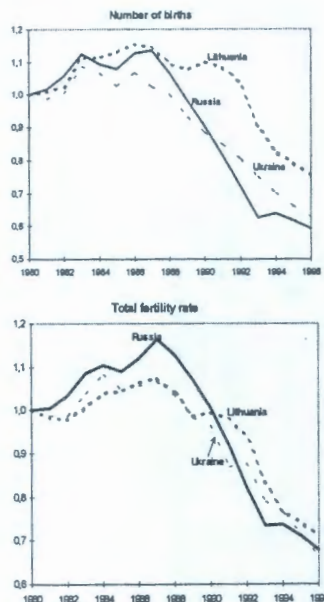


Figure 7 Mean age of women at childbearing in selected post-Soviet and Western European countries.

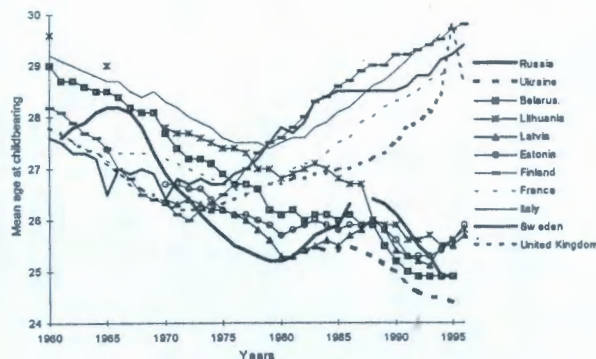


Table 3 Legal abortions per 100 births

	Belarus	Estonia	Latvia	Lithuania	Moldova	Russia	Ukraine
1960	85	198	...	58	69	166	...
1965	134	212	...	83	130	278	...
1970	128	189	...	82	123	253	157
1975	133	182	...	88	118	221	150
1980	189	160	...	87	121	204	153
1985	122	151	...	72	113	187	149
1990	80	132	...	48	106	206	155
1991	80	152	111	73	102	201	152
1992	78	158	108	76	103	216	156
1993	76	169	116	75	97	235	154
1994	78	158	109	71	95	217	153
1995	80	151	119	76	101	203	150
1996	...	146	121	71	89	203	...
1997	...	152	115	60	81	202	...

Source: Recent demographic developments in Europe 1998, Council of Europe, Strasbourg, 1998.

Table 4 Legal abortions per 1,000 females by age groups in Latvia, Lithuania, Russia, and Estonia, 1992, 1995, and 1996

	1992			1995			1996		
	15-19	20-34	35+	15-19	20-34	35+	15-19	20-34	35+
Estonia	56	95	60	32	85	21	27	76	22
Latvia	37	81	24	29	66	18	29	62	18
Lithuania	15*	72*	22*	13	55	17	14	49	14
Russia	67	150	44	56	123	33	51	122	30

* 1991

Sources: Karro, H., Reproductive health in the Baltic Sea Area. //Yearbook of population research in Finland, XXXIV, 1997, p. 11; Российский статистический ежегодник. М., Госкомстат, 1997, с. 237.

4 Migration

Migration trends in the post-Soviet states reveal either similarity or, in the case of migration exchange between these countries, are mutually complementary.

Long-term inter-regional migration trends in the former USSR. The major inter-country migration flows of the 1990s in the post-Soviet states are typical of the post-colonial situation, which, by the way, started taking shape long before the disintegration of the USSR. In the mid-1970s, Russia, formerly the main supplier of population to other regions of the former Union, began to experience net immigration in her exchange with them. The long epoch of East Slav colonisation had apparently ended.

True, in the second half of the 1970s the Ukraine had a small amount of net emigration, but this was an exception and not the rule. On the whole, the Ukraine was a republic accepting and not giving away population for a long time. Among the European republics of the former USSR, only Belarus experienced stable net emigration; in the second half of the 1970s, it was joined by Moldova. These two countries had a large share of their rural populations undergoing active urbanisation. A similar situation, often aggravated by the demographic explosion, existed in all of the Transcaucasian and Central Asian republics. Some of them (Azerbaijan, Georgia) experienced net emigration as early as the 1960s; the number of such republics increased, and in the 1980s the main direction of inter-regional flows from the less developed and urbanised republics into the more developed and urbanised ones took its final shape. At that time only Russia, the Ukraine, and the three Baltic republics had net immigration.

Inter-country migration trends in the states of the former Soviet Union. In the 1990s, the trends of the preceding years have become all the more pronounced. For some time Belarus experienced net immigration. In the Baltic countries, as in all other former republics of the USSR except the three Slav republics, there was net emigration (except in Armenia, where net immigration appeared in some years). Stable net immigration was registered only in Russia. In the Ukraine it practically ceased to exist in 1993 and became net emigration in 1994. A very small amount of immigration or even emigration was also typical of Belarus (Table 5).

The return nature of post-Soviet migration. Important migration streams link all post-Soviet states with Russia. Migration throughout all of the countries of the former Soviet Union has a pronounced nature of "return"; the Russian and Russian speaking population, formerly moving from the centre to the periphery of the Empire, is being now drawn back to the centre whose role is played by Russia. This is evidenced by both the geographic and ethnic structures of migration (Tables 6 and 7).

Table 5 Net migration rate in European post-Soviet states, percentages

	1990	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995	1996
Belarus	-0.31	0.03	0.52	0.31	-0.03	0.02	...
Estonia	-0.26	-0.51	-2.19	-0.91	-0.51	-0.55	-0.39
Latvia	-0.33	-0.41	-1.78	-1.08	-0.74	-0.42	-0.29
Lithuania	0.30	-0.14	-0.59	-0.35	-0.07	-0.05	-0.03
Moldova	-0.69	-0.76	-0.84	-0.35	-0.34	-0.39	-0.38
Russia	0.11	0.04	0.12	0.29	0.55	0.34	0.23
Ukraine	0.15	0.29	0.55	0.10	-0.28	-0.18	...

Source: Recent demographic development in Europe, 1997, Strasbourg, 1997; *Население и условия жизни в странах Содружества независимых государств. Стат. сборник. Межгосударственный статистический комитет СНГ. М., 1998.*

Table 6 Net migration between Russia and other post-Soviet states, 1989-1996, thousands

	1989	1990	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995	1996
Total	162.6	287.2	104.9	355.7	553.8	914.6	612.2	439.8
Western states	-0.5	20.1	-68.3	-121.4	10.4	166.6	109.6	100.4
Belarus	-4.6	23.3	-4.7	-21.3	-11.4	15.6	10.1	2.4
Moldova	2.0	0.9	2.5	9.9	4.5	12.0	10.5	10.9
Ukraine	2.1	-4.2	-66.1	-110.0	17.3	139.0	89.0	87.1
Baltic states	4.2	12.2	14.4	56.7	53.5	42.1	24.2	14.2
Latvia	2.5	3.9	5.8	23.2	23.7	25.0	13.7	7.4
Lithuania	1.1	5.0	4.4	11.7	17.0	6.9	2.8	1.8
Estonia	0.6	3.3	4.2	21.8	12.8	10.2	7.7	5.0
Kazakhstan	43.9	54.5	29.6	96.6	126.9	304.5	191.0	134.5
Transcaucasian states	57.1	67.9	53.5	108.9	136.0	150.2	116.4	92.3
Central Asian states	57.9	132.5	75.7	214.9	227.0	251.2	171.0	98.4

Source: Зайончковская Ж., Миграция. В кн.: *Население России 1997, М., 1998, с. 111.*

Table 7 Percentage of Russians in the net migration between Russia and other post-Soviet states, 1989-1996

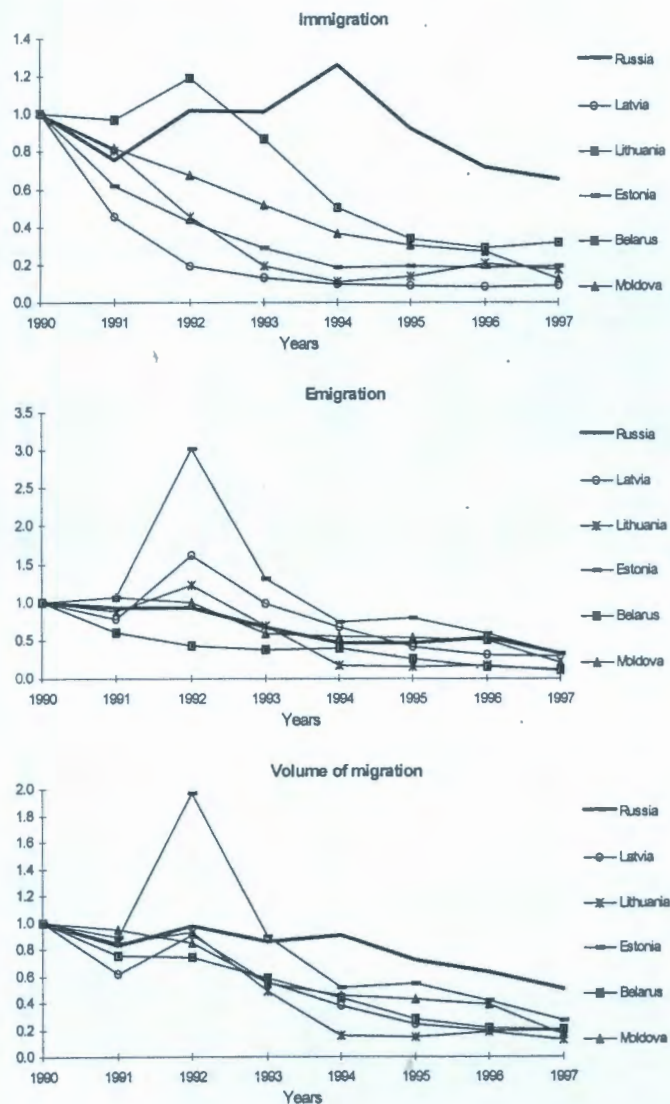
	1990	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995	1996
Total	69.6	112.2	101.2	75.7	67.0	63.4	60.0
Western states	18.9	33.1	4.8	421.2	73.3	73.9	71.4
Belarus	24.0	42.6	21.6	-10.5	85.3	91.1	141.7
Moldova	344.4	164.0	112.1	88.9	63.3	65.7	59.6
Ukraine	116.7	37.4	11.2	223.1	72.9	72.9	71.0
Baltic states	93.4	92.4	85.7	81.1	78.1	78.9	81.0
Latvia	89.7	89.7	84.9	81.9	77.2	78.1	79.7
Lithuania	102.0	102.3	87.2	78.8	78.3	78.6	83.3
Estonia	84.8	85.7	85.8	82.8	80.4	80.5	82.0
Kazakhstan	66.6	86.5	85.3	82.3	76.9	75.3	73.0
Transcaucasian states	82.5	72.7	64.6	46.4	31.8	27.7	24.9
Central Asian states	69.7	82.6	76.6	72.6	69.7	65.6	60.4

Source: Зайончковская Ж., Миграция. В кн.: *Население России 1997, М., 1998, с. 111, 114.*

The ratio of entries and departures. Changes in the volume and nature of migration in the 1990s were connected with the changes in the flows of emigration and immigration. Though there were increases in migration some years, most often immigration to Russia, the typical trend of the volume of migration (the sums of entries and departures) was downward. Net immigration to Russia was not so much due to a

large influx of immigrants as due to a decrease in the number of departures from Russia and entries into other post-Soviet states.

Figure 8 Immigration, emigration, and volume of migration in selected post-Soviet states in reference to the level in 1990



Emigration from the former USSR. In the 1990s, unlike the preceding period, free emigration from the former USSR has become possible. The emergence of huge emigration flows was expected, but these expectations were not justified. In the first half of the 1990s, there was a rise of emigration, but not a very big one. Since the beginning of the 1990s, the volume of annual emigration from Russia has reached approximately 100 thousand per year. From 1989-1996, 770 thousand permits to go abroad to a permanent place of residence were officially issued, though actual emigration to the "far-off abroad" could probably be larger. Approximately half of the entire emigration from the 7 states under discussion outside the former USSR came from Russia.

5 Population replacement and growth

Net reproduction rate. Even in Soviet times, the populations of the states under discussion, except Moldova, were not replacing themselves. The net reproduction rate has been below the replacement level in Latvia since 1959 (the years 1986-1988 excepted), in Estonia since 1959 (with the exception of 1983-1988), in Lithuania since the late 1970s (with the exception of 1986-1987), in the Ukraine since the early 1960s, and in the Russian Federation since 1964-1977 (the years 1983-1984 excepted).

Natural increase/decrease of population. Even when the net reproduction rate in all these countries was below the replacement level, there was natural population increase, due to the potential of demographic growth accumulated in the population age structure. As the potential for demographic growth exhausted itself, natural decrease was imminent. The events of the early 1990s only brought this unavoidable moment a little closer. By 1991, there was natural decrease in the Ukraine, Latvia, and Estonia. In 1992 this occurred in Russia, in 1993 in Belarus, and in 1994 Lithuania joined them. At present, natural increase is witnessed only in Moldova.

Figure 9 Net reproduction rate in the European post-Soviet states

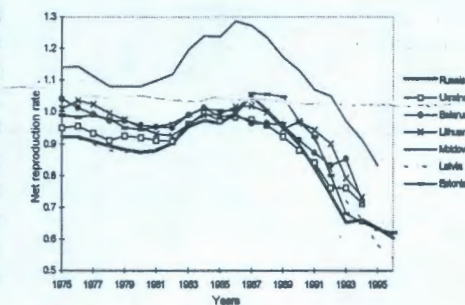
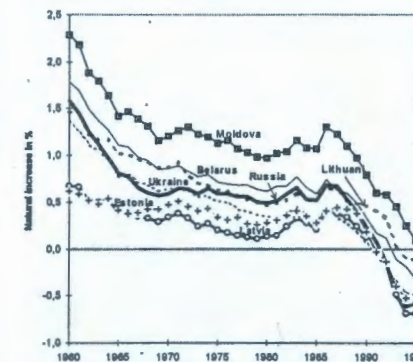


Figure 10 Natural increase/decrease in the European post-Soviet states



The role of migration. In the 1980s, when there was still natural increase in all of the European republics of the former USSR, almost all of them (with the exception of Moldova and in some years of Belarus) also witnessed net immigration which contributed to general population growth and to a certain extent softened the negative consequences of the later reduction of natural increase. But, as shown above (see Table 5), the first half of the 1990s saw the emergence of net emigration which aggravated the

impact of natural increase, now natural decrease. Moreover, in certain cases, it resulted in a general population decrease even though there was natural increase (Moldova).

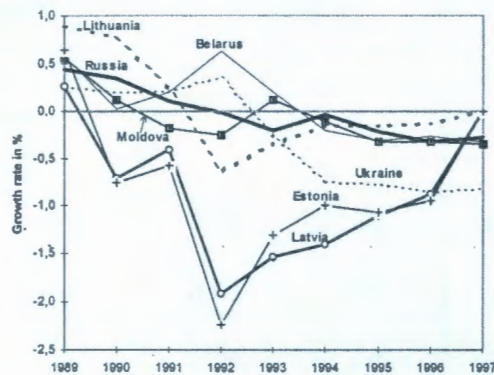
Population decrease. As a result, the populations of Latvia and Estonia began to decrease in 1990. This also happened in Moldova in 1991, in Russia and Lithuania in 1992, in the Ukraine in 1993, and in Belarus in 1994. Thus, at present, population decrease takes place in all of the countries discussed in this paper. It is not likely that it will be possible in the majority of these countries to change the situation and reach at least the level of simple replacement. It would be more realistic to try to overcome the population decrease with the help of regulation of migration increase. However, political and economic realities are not always favourable for such a strategy. It is therefore more likely that in the foreseeable future the decrease of population in most European post-Soviet countries will continue.

Conclusion

During the post-war decades, certain differences in the level of demographic processes among the former European republics of the USSR existed and continue to exist until now. For example, Lithuania always stood out by its relatively low level of abortion while Russia and Estonia both had an extremely high abortion level. This did not change in the 1990s. Lithuania continues to be the leader in life expectancy for males and females, while the lowest level of life expectancy continues to be observed in Russia for males and Moldova for females.

Most interesting however, is the great similarity in the main demographic trends in all of the countries concerned - in spite of great differences in the course of economic and political changes. The curves are either almost completely similar, as in the case of the total fertility rate or net reproduction rate, or at least have the same form e.g. the life expectancy curves.

Figure 11 Population increase/decrease in the European post-Soviet states



These similarities in the demographic trends of the 1990s in all European post-soviet states arise from the common peculiarities of the soviet pattern of demographic evolution and the inertia which was created during the soviet epoch and has yet to be overcome.

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