

Petr Kačírek

University of J.E. Purkyně in Ústí nad Labem

DEMOGRAPHIC REVOLUTION AND ACTUAL DEMOGRAPHIC SITUATION IN THE WORLD

Summary: This contribution deals with the general questions of demographic development of the world. In the first part demographic revolution is characterized as a universal process that every population in the world undergoes. The following part of the contribution tries to define main tendencies and the state of current demographic situation in the world.

Demographic revolution is the most important demographic theory that explains fundamental changes in the character of demographic reproduction. The first more important attempts to explain changes in population reproduction were published in the 30s, they were, however, focused only on partial facts which were in many aspects overestimated. The first more complex theory of demographic revolution was published in 1945 by an American demographer Frank W. Notestein.

The conditions of the beginning of demographic revolution are necessary to search for the overall system of global revolution of modern time that it is a part of and it is explicable only in its context. From many conditions in the beginning of demographic revolution it is possible to state the increase of quality of life especially from the perspective of its further increase and the development of education, obligatory school attendance, and the decline in the rate of agricultural population in industrial revolution, urbanisation, women emancipation, considerable increase in expenses on children upbringing, change in the orientation of intergeneration transfers, improvement of health care and hygiene, development in knowledge and the increasing amount of information, the opportunity of social advancement, the creation of better conditions for children (although there are not so many), the development of freedom in economic and political area, the opportunity of carrier choice, the choice of living, the choice of the kind of consumption as well as political leaders in democratic society, the development of individualism and individual consciousness and so on. The emphasis only on some of these conditions distorts the view on real development because in some form all (and many other) aspects are present although in different amount [Pavlík 2004].

From the point of view of inhabitants reproduction itself there has been a distinct decline in natality and mortality during a demographic revolution in a relatively

short time period, i.e. the character of demographic revolution has changed from extensive to intensive and there has been observed the ageing of the population.

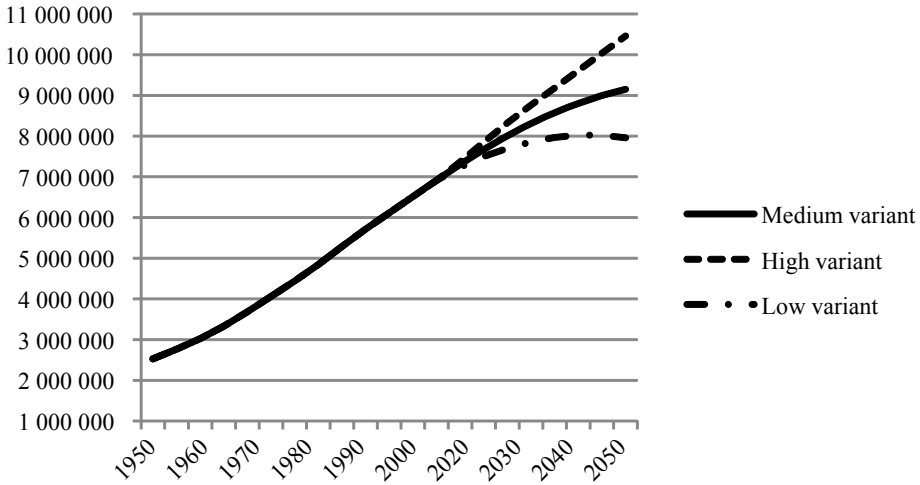


Fig. 1. World Population Growth (in thousands)

Source: UN Population Division Data. World Population Prospects: The 2008 Revision Population Database (2009).

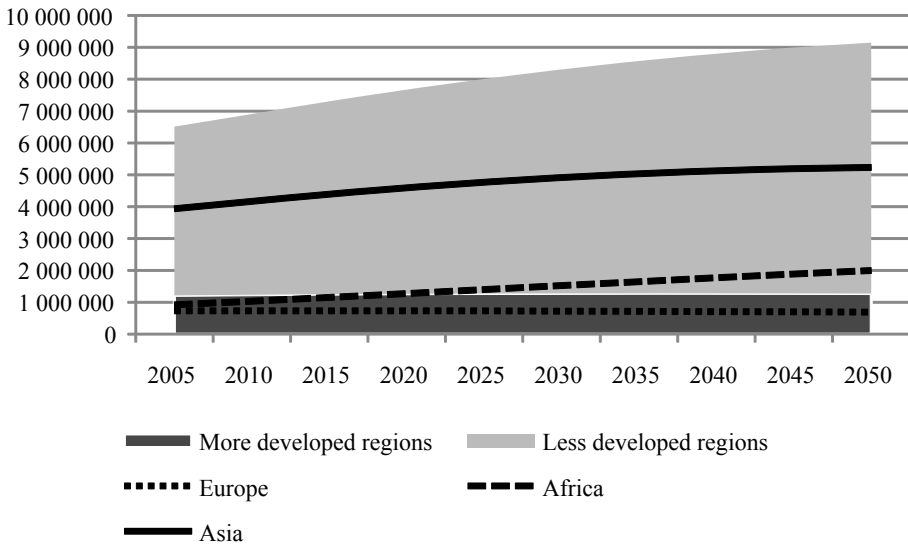


Fig. 2. World Population Growth by World Region (in thousands)

Source: UN Population Division data. World Population Prospects: The 2008 Revision Population Database, medium variant (2009).

Nowadays developed countries undergo the next phase of reproduction character change called the second demographic change with the low level of natality that is usually under the limits of pure reproduction and improving mortality. Decreasing mortality intensity is preferable in old or very old age. The intensity of child mortality is already so low that further decreasing is insignificant from the total level point of view. A fundamental tendency for the future is the growth of a percentage and number of old and very old people in population and a fundamental question is also their use in the society. The second group (formed by underdeveloped countries) has not finished the reproduction character change yet because of other conditions for the start of demographic revolution and therefore it is characteristic for these countries to have a higher rate of natality and mortality. In comparison with developed countries the question of population ageing is not topical; it is still population growth although there is a general tendency to decrease naturally the growth figures. It is necessary to say that the above mentioned division of world population into two groups is possible only with generalization and there is certain variability within each group. This is quite visible while looking at demographic indicators such as life expectancy and total fertility in other countries of the world.

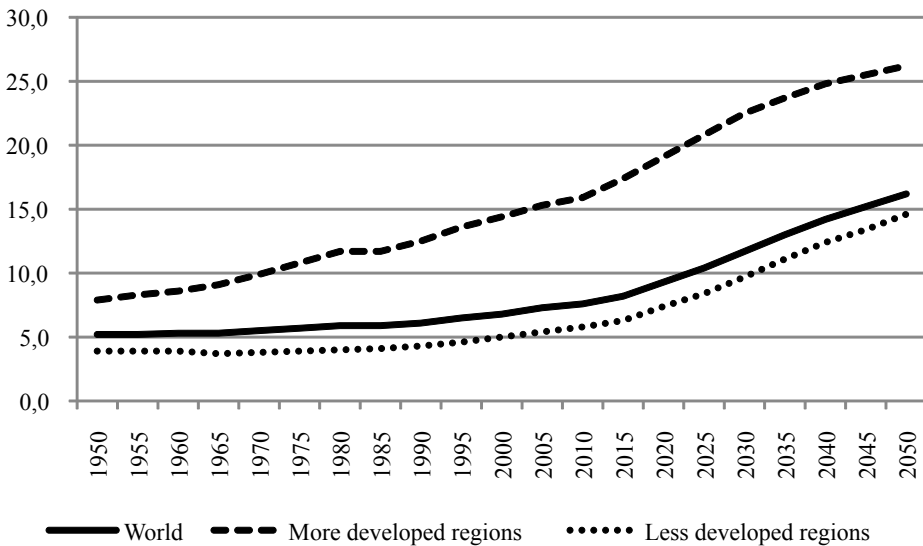


Fig. 3. Population 65+ (in %)

Source: UN Population Division Data. World Population Prospects: The 2008 Revision Population Database, medium variant (2009).

Demographic ageing is a historically unprecedented and irreversible phenomenon that would lead to a fundamental change in age structures of world populations during the 21st century. In many countries the population will get older as well as it

will decrease in number. This perspective applies to Europe as well especially to the European Union because its population grows older and after 2025 it will start to decrease [Rychtaříková 2006].

A characteristic feature of the world population is its uneven spatial lay-out among different regions, world parts and individual countries as well as within their boundaries. A similar situation is on the level of demographic reproduction that is very varied in individual countries. However, when concerning the dislocation of the population that has always been uneven, it is possible to observe a tendency to constantly growing differences in population of various areas (greater concentration in cities and centres of so called economic and political development). The time is dependent concerning the characteristics of demographic reproduction. It is necessary to bear the time when the differences are observed in mind, i.e. the phase of demographic development that undergoes gradually in individual populations. Basic tendency is contradictory to the dislocation of population development; it is gradual mutual adjustment of the level of natality and mortality after the period of big changes. These changes affect all the areas where people live, they cause temporary differentiation of the level of these processes [Pavlík 2007]. The tendency to iterative rapprochement of natality and mortality level is illustrated clearly in the following chart.

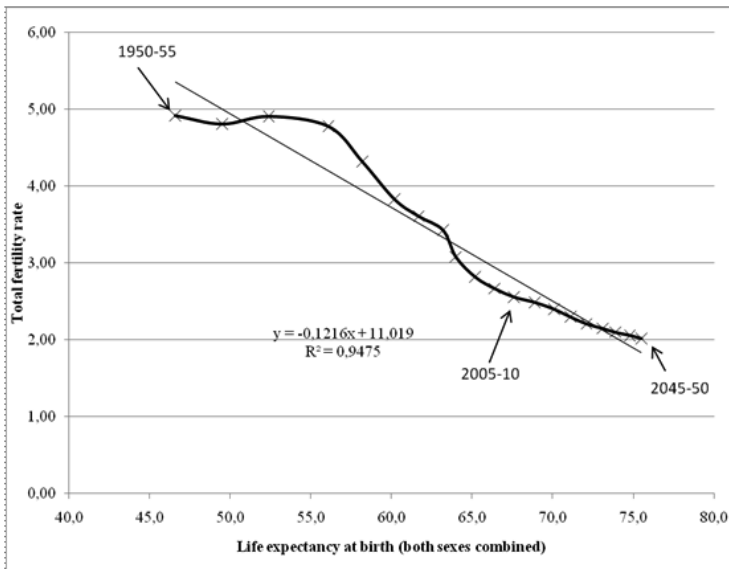


Fig. 4. World Population – Life expectancy at birth and total fertility rate (linear regression), from 1950-1955 to 2045-2050

Source: UN Population Division data. World Population Prospects: The 2008 Revision Population Database, medium variant (2009).

Future development of the world population is modelled by the demographers through population prognoses that try to estimate as accurately as possible the population amount and structure. Nevertheless it is not possible to overestimate the results of these evaluations (especially those long-term lasting). It can be said with a great certainty on the basis of knowledge of general rules and regularity in population development that the amount of people in the world follows the logical curve and is already behind its inflexion point. In case of that the demographic revolution development is given by a combination of many factors, also the impact of demographic development on social and economic development is a matter that is in many ways specific for a given country. It depends for example on the economic development rate of the country, social values, legislature in social sphere, in the health and social care, etc. The fear from the populous growth is gradually substituted by the fear of ageing that is especially topical in countries that have already undergone demographic revolution and they have great hope for the age and the level of fertility over or under the level of pure reproduction.

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REWOLUCJA DEMOGRAFICZNA I AKTUALNA SYTUACJA DEMOGRAFICZNA NA ŚWIECIE

Streszczenie: Artykuł odnosi się do ogólnych kwestii związanych z rozwojem demograficznym na świecie. W pierwszej części scharakteryzowana została rewolucja demograficzna jako powszechny proces, któremu podlega każda populacja na świecie. Następnie podjęto próbę zdefiniowania głównych tendencji i aktualnego stanu sytuacji demograficznej na świecie.