As noted earlier, over the past centuries, there have been various assessments of changes in fertility and their impact on the state structure and social processes. Nevertheless, it has always been recognized that the demographic situation of a country is invariably a key indicator of its development. Therefore, the solution of the most important social issues concerning the development of a country, its economic state and national security depends primarily on the resolution of the demographic issue. As with the development of any economy, the regional and global balance of economic and political power depends to a large extent on demographic and migration processes.

According to UN estimates, the world’s population by 2020 has reached around 7 billion 794 million 800 thousand. China remains the most populous country in the world, with 1 billion 439 million 323 thousand people. It is followed by India with 1 billion 380 million and the US with more than 331 million people. These three countries account for 40.4% of the global population.
It has already been noted that economic factors have a marked influence on the structure and size of the population. According to the World Bank, human resources in developed countries account for 68% to 76% of the total national wealth. In other words, human potential is the main factor of economic growth in the modern world, and the efficiency of the use of all other development resources depends on its condition. This is why fertility drops are attracting attention, primarily with a view of identifying their causes and dealing with them in a timely manner.

According to a United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) study in 19 European countries and in the USA, published by Der Spiegel, the coronavirus pandemic has led to a noticeable drop in the number of newborns in the USA and Europe. The figures show that there has been a sharp decline in fertility since October 2020 in all the countries studied, and in Canada, the lowest since 2006. UN expert Rachel Snow attributes this to the fact that people prefer to avoid pregnancy in unstable times.

Ukraine, the Baltics and Georgia lead in population decline among the former Soviet republics. In the 30 years since the collapse of the USSR, Ukraine has lost 20% of its population. The “anti-leader” of the list is Latvia, which has lost 28.3% of its population, followed by Lithuania (-24.5%) and Georgia (-23.2%).

However, there is a serious variation from country to country in Europe: while Spain reported a 20% drop in birth rates and France a 13.5% decline, countries such as Denmark, Finland, Norway and the Netherlands have not experienced strong variations, showing the greatest stability in terms of birth rates.

As for less developed countries, the trend is sometimes reversed. The main reason for this is worse access to contraception, making it more difficult for the local population to reduce fertility at will. This trend in particular can be seen in Bangladesh, Malawi and Mexico.

In the USA, the pandemic has also had an impact on the birth rate: for example, in California it fell by 10.5% and in Florida by 7.2%. According to surveys, many married couples have postponed pregnancy plans because of the epidemiological situation as well as the state’s failed social policies.

Last year, The New York Post reports, the number of deaths exceeded the number of births in 25 US states. The marriage rate is also at an all-time low of 6.5 marriages per 1,000 people. Millennials are the first generation to be primarily single (about 56%). According to Pew, they are not having sex and are more likely to live with their parents than previous generations in their 20s and 30s. The number of such young people tripled between 2008 and 2018. Cities like New York, where young secular Americans are flocking to build their lives, are becoming increasingly childless. There are more dogs than children in San Francisco, says the publication.

Younger generations are reluctant to become parents because they find the current realities unacceptable and the future seems more uncertain than ever, explains MSNBC, an American TV channel. And that should a worrying trend for everyone. As the pandemic has demonstrated, parents, mainly mothers, are thrown out of the workforce, either fired or forced to take care of their children or a sick family. It is now almost impossible to buy a house to raise children unless you have money or relatives to make it happen. Millennials are also faced with such fast-growing student debt that the minimum monthly salary is barely enough to pay the monthly tuition fee.

For the first time since the start of the US census in 1790, the number of white Americans in the country has declined in absolute numbers by 8.6% since 2010, Census Bureau figures show. Whites accounted for 57% (63.7% in 2010) of the US population of 332,278,200 for the first time. Since the 2010 census, the mixed population has grown from 9 million to almost 34 million. In addition, Hispanics and Latin Americans made up a group of 62 million (an increase of 23%), African Americans 46.9 million and people of Asian origin 24 million. The Financial Times published an article stating that Europeans should also “prepare themselves for a demographic replacement by Arabs and Asians.” A recent study found that population growth in the UK is almost entirely due to immigrants and their children, the Daily Mail reports. Experts are sounding the alarm because society is failing to assimilate them.

Financial hardship amid pandemic triggers record low birth rate in England. Statistics for last year show that birth rates in England and Wales have fallen to a record low level since 1938, The Times reports. More than 29% of newborns were born to non-British parents — Pakistanis and Romanians topping the list. Declining birth rates and an ageing population could hit the UK economy hard in just a few decades, The Guardian points out, citing analysts at the Social Market Foundation. To solve the demographic crisis, the experts call on the government to provide families with childcare support and to develop strategies to stimulate the birth rate, following the example of other countries. Furthermore, according to The Daily Express, a new study has shown that life expectancy in the UK is among the lowest in Western Europe, with two to four years lower in the north of the country than in most European countries. Experts point out that the economic gap between the British north and south has existed for more than 85
A sharp drop in life expectancy is increasingly being talked about in Europe, and Sweden is among the countries where it has fallen the most, Sweden’s Svenska Dagbladet reports, citing a study by researchers at Oxford University, published in the International Journal of Epidemiology. Life expectancy fell by more than six months since 2019 in 22 of the 29 countries studied. Among American men, for example, it fell by 2.2 years compared to 2019, while among Lithuanian men it fell by 1.7 years. It is noted, however, that in most countries life expectancy has fallen more for men than for women, one reason being that the pandemic has hit men particularly hard and has caused excess mortality in this group. As the publication stresses, in theory, Sweden had everything to succeed: a country with a healthy population, good health care, equality and many citizens living separately. The pandemic would not have affected life expectancy so drastically if Sweden, like many other countries, had understood from the start how serious it all was.

People used to want to conceive children, it was the default position of a healthy young person, and our existence depended on it. But now the question for more and more people is: why should we do it at all? This psychological turn has happened for a reason, and against the backdrop of a dramatic shift in the spiritual, cultural and environmental forces surrounding us in recent times. For example, a new survey shows that 39% of Generation Z are in no hurry to procreate for fear of the climate apocalypse, while a study by the Institute for Family Studies found that the desire to have children among adults has dropped by 17% since the start of the pandemic.

All these issues and problems force everyone to think about them and, instead of chasing political scandals, pointless inflating countries’ military budgets, turn their energies to improving countries’ social situations, taking care of the health care of parents and children and other factors to prevent a further decline in fertility.

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