

DO WE NEED NUMBERS? THE DEMOGRAPHIC FINGERPRINT ON CRISIS EVIDENCE

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Abstract: *The economic revolution that took place in the world through globalization and through the industrial revolution made a deep and lasting impression that continues to haunt current visions on the future, leaving aside the importance of understanding demographic dynamics. The tendency towards a purely economic “reading” of contemporary reality pays scant regard to the demographic conditions of its production. Put simply, if we are to understand the contemporary crisis and if we desire for our current system to survive we should focus on a reconciliation of demography within the analysis of the actual functioning society.*

Key words: *demography, security, globalization.*

1. Introduction

We believe that this scientific adventure is indeed an adventure because it means writing in the aftermath of the global agitation started by a global economic crisis. This scientific adventure is a much needed research in the effort of formatting a center of authority around the relationships between demography and the economic crisis. This scientific center of authority is embodied through scientific knowledge that can be used to understand the current crisis and the implications of demographic change upon it.

We agree with the author professor Paul Dobrescu when he considers Europe as the continent which “built the first economical region of the world. An economical edifice raised gradually, with a purely pragmatic

attitude in mind, so much so that its allure grew in time” [1].

The perception that globalization is a process “through which the center, the West, America displays dominance upon the periphery, seeing that modernity wins in the face of tradition, experiencing the victory of capitalism” [2], represents a personal translation of an interesting passage.

Nowadays, the creation of a global world interlinked has brought this clash between developed and developing countries at a new climax. It seems that in the context provided by globalization and demographic change developing countries have the chance of becoming global competitors for wealth. This opportunity was created through the obvious demographic superiority of some developing countries while developed

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countries confront demographic decline. It turns out that demographic decline can result into economic decline.

2. Objective

The current economic crisis has presented itself as a serious threat for the security of the European continent. The purpose of this research is to attract attention upon the need for considering demography as an integer part of the security policy of the EU. Its evolution demonstrates that demography establishes close ties with significant branches of economic, political and social nature within the EU, thus demanding a reconsideration of its importance.

We believe that this issue should be in some way linked with security. We agree with the statement “Regarding the security policy, the EU created a system of co-management of security and regional security partnership based on multilateral institutions and structures inspired by the concept of cooperative and comprehensive security” [3]. We believe that this strategy did not perceive demographic transition as a part of the possible downfall of the West.

We agree with the principle behind the strategy. The European policy acknowledges that there are global threats that need to be tackled in cooperation and at a greater multinational level. We have adopted this strategy in light of the new threats which have been evaluated as having a potential multinational impact, thus needing a multinational solution.

Demographic transformation is taking place all over Europe, and it also needs a European solution. Demography has been only recently perceived as a problem for Western Europe. The solution was a continuous expansion of the EU borders so as to achieve population growth through expansion if not through natural population increase. This was, unfortunately, a

temporary answer, which had positive effects only in the West through migration from the East. At the same time, it led to a new variety of problems. Perhaps for a brief period of time, it brought about a change in the demographic age structure of the EU, but it did little to solve the trends of population ageing and population decline that have a foundation of complex reasons. Simply expanding will offer only a relative solution, because with the expansion, the problem of demographic decline will also expand. It is true that the overall population loss in the West has declined due to migration from Eastern Europe, but Eastern Europe as well has started to experience a population decline never seen before. Part of this depopulation of Eastern Europe is due to the EU attraction that encouraged the augmentation of the migration flow.

We also consider “It is natural to emphasize the fact that social change nowadays is dramatic in its amplitude, rhythm, and complexity” [4]. The case of Romania jumps into mind. Romania has lost a lot of its population in the last two decades, leading to powerful social changes.

2.1. Hypothesis

We believe that demographic change leads to new security risks. Until now, research has focused around demographic change manifested through the increase of the population, but we believe that the decrease of population leads to new and unforeseen dangers.

2.2. Research Question

To what extent does the youth community in Romania perceive the demographic change? Is demographic change perceived as a risk for Romania?

3. Material and Methods

3.1. Content analysis

A.1. The first method of research constituted in content analysis. Scientific demographic literature is rich in the concept of demography and in the concept of security, but literature around the two topics linked together is seldom present. We used content analysis in order to be able to analyze the theoretical models regarding demography as they have evolved in time. At the end of the research, we had the capacity to make inferences around the links of demography and security. The inferences offered us the possibility of starting a broad description of the phenomenon of demographic security. The content analysis was deductive, and we also identified its inherent limitations.

A.2. Limitations regarding this method stem from the subjective nature of content analysis. We assumed the danger that this scientific point of view may not be understood by all scientific readers with different and valid points of view. There was also the danger that the findings may be misinterpreted. We considered both of these dangers from the beginning of our research. As a result, we took measures to ensure relative protection from them such as using a long bibliographic list and using correct scientific language.

3.2. Quantitative research.

B.1. We have constructed an on-line survey that was meant to offer some support for the theoretical aspect of the paper. The participants were students from Political Science, International Relations, European Studies and Sociology; they were between the age of 19 and 30 and of Romanian Citizenship. It was our intention to discuss this issue with people that have

successfully completed at least one course in Political Science, International Relations, European Studies or Sociology. The participants were students at either state and private universities. All the students came from different parts of Romania but not in equal numbers from the above mentioned specializations: 30% Political Studies (n=66), 25% from European Studies (n=55), 20% International Relations (n=44), 25% from Sociology (n= 55). The total number of respondents who participated to the completion of the on-line survey was 220, but initially we send invitations to 430 participants, but only 220 replied. Unfortunately, the participants were divided into a not so balanced number of female participants (80%, n=176) and male (20%, n=44).

We should mention that we have used a personal combination of methods for contacting the participants. We have used person to person contact at their university and on-line contact through e-mails and using social media tools such as Facebook, yahoo groups and discussions rooms about these issues. Firstly, we have offered guarantees of confidentiality. Secondly, we have also explained the principles behind this research using a public speech directed to all the participants. We presented in written form the research questions and the methodology behind it. We saw it fit to offer the link to the finished article. This was done for two reasons: to be able to disseminate the research and to make sure that the participants would offer their support for the proposed interpretation of data.

We sent the questionnaire via the internet, and the participants were obliged to send the completed reply in two day time. The piloting test demonstrated that the questionnaire could be completed between 30 minutes and 45 minutes. Feedback from the participants confirmed this pilot testing. The response rate was

around 90%. The structure of the questionnaire was made out of 35 closed-ended questions and 5 open ended questions. The purpose of the questionnaire was supposed to investigate the potential relationship between demography and security at the national level of Romania.

B.2. We have also identified limitations of this method. One of these limitations was the overwhelming percent of female participants. This may pose a potential danger to this research from the perspective of representation. On the other hand, the structure of the students who studied in this field was relatively linked with the structure of participants. The period of investigation was in 2012, the month of April.

This period of time was under certain political, social and media pressures. These pressures could also have an impact upon the answers provided by the participants.

4. Content analysis of the theoretical approaches to demography

The contours of this argument should be formally stated by defining the term of demography. The theoretical alignment of this research should start from the term “demography”, derived from *Srijjuo* (in Greek people) and *-graphia* (In Greek to draw or write). The second term that needs a bit of clarification is security. Regarding the word security, we have to notice its polemic nature and its linguistic polysemy. We will consider security as in opposition with the word insecurity, something that creates insecurity, a manifested or potential danger.

We noticed that the phrase “demographic security” focuses only on civil distress within a country due to change in ethnic structure. The majority of scientific research and security policies have focused their efforts to control and anticipate this type of danger. We admit that this danger

exists, but we wish to add that a shift from high to low rates of births, followed by other demographic changes have other powerful effects that put in danger societal security.

We agree that these changes encourage political instability, economic instability and social instability, but not always because of a change in the ethnic structure of a nation or territory. We admit the limitations of this study due to a stereotype of first perceiving the economic problems and the economic changes, rather than the core changes that take place at the level of demography. Demographic changes are less obvious in contemporary times, but are just as dangerous for security as economic perils. We state as well “Globalization also needs to be understood as a number of changes within the state, and not simply as a range of external forces set against it [5]”. Demography is one of these changes and its close connection with other parts of society makes it vital in understanding past, present and future developments.

Public concern about the current crisis is chiefly focused on the negative effect of economic pressures on security and development. National and world organisms are anxious to protect their security and future potential for development from the assumed consequences of exposure to the globalized economic crises. Appointed and self-appointed guardians of economic stability such as the European Financial Stability Facility set themselves up in roles of economic watchdogs with a direct purpose of shielding the current security and potential for development, but little talk is around less pernicious influences on the security and potential for development. Underlying all of the contemporary reactions against the danger of insecurity and economic underdevelopment is a common contemporary wrong assumption.

The assumption is that the demographic transition is only a set of numbers meant to be consumed by other entities and which has little effect in the grand scheme of security or development. We believe that the assumptions that role of demography and effects are not easily manageable even in a technological and knowledge based society. We believe similarly to Cleland and Wilson, authors who wished to challenge the focus only on the economic aspects of population evolution. We believe it fails to provide a complete explanation. Thus, by failing to provide a serious explanation, it represents a security threat. Easterlin tries to combine social factors with economic factors, but still is he limited by a fail in explaining the concept of demand with wide variations in fertility and the link between these two variables.

There were several theories that tried to capture the extent to which demography can inflict change upon society. There have been also several theories that wish to dominate the way in which society is perceived. We believe that any perspective upon security cannot avoid bringing into question the issues regarding demographic evolution. We would like to mention some of these theories. We do this in order to create a better understanding of the theoretical model that has been used till now to understand demographic evolution. We would like to mention that this stage of the research can be put under the phrase of historical demography. The first pair of theories concentrated on the evolution of population, seen as either a burden through high fertility leading to an increase in population, or focusing on the burden of maintaining an ageing population which will eventually lead to a decrease in population and thus in potential. Both evolutions are seen as possible threats for stability and security.

For this purpose, we have Robert Malthus (1920) and Alfred Sauvy (1961). In a lengthier presentation, Sauvy considers that there are only two options “grow...or grow older”, while Malthus considers that countries that are in economic peril are partly in this situation as a result of high fertility rates and are, in fact, in a demographic trap. Malthus considers that population growth can happen only in developing or underdeveloped countries. As a result, it was believed that this process will trigger economic downfall. Sauvy considers that population expansion without ageing is the key to economic development and overall stability.

A valid measure of Sauvy’s importance is the contemporary situation in Europe. It becomes discernible the fact that the EU has either to grow its active non-dependent population or face a demographic crisis through ageing of the population. It has proved impossible for those who have wished to construct a long term strategy for development in the EU to overlook demography. Raising the issue of a EU vision for development without acknowledging that demography has decisively altered the ways in which we need to pose the problem is impractical.

The stress that Sauvy has placed on the difference between a growing population and a growing ageing population, will form the central conduit through which policy developments in the EU will take place. Nevertheless, it is the contention of these theories which allows us to precisely note the role of demography.

We agree on the existence of a technological knowledge based society. Nevertheless, we indeed believe that demography has a considerable influence over society. It also establishes a constant feed-back type relationship with many of the pillars of the contemporary technological knowledge based society.

The magnitude of demographic implications can only be appreciated by considering some of the steps an investigator and researcher might have to take. Specify the sources of demographic change that we expect to exert an influence on demography or are known to be active factors. Next, measure the level of exposure of demography to the chosen content. Postulate likely dimensions for future evolution and direction of demographic transition. Specify whatever conditional factors might facilitate, block or amplify the process of demographic transition. Yet, after taking all of this trouble, the researcher's work is far from being over.

He is unlikely to be contemplating a complete outlook and he should not conclude from these modest findings that the analysis is done. The first step consists in understanding what led to a demographic reality. The second step consists in establishing what type of relationship exists between demography and other parts of society. In this case, we are interested in the impact of demographic changes on policies and the public perception upon these changes.

Next, we have observed the over usage of demographical transition, without properly specifying its origin or understanding. A theoretical model should include the difference between "demographic transition" and "demographic revolution". Often enough the two have been used in parallel without proper understanding of the implications.

Alfred Landry (1934) has coined the term "demographic revolution", while Dupaquier (1999) has used extensively the term of "demographic transition". The two have different meanings that should be understood before proceeding. Dupaquier (1999) believes in the existence of a natural equilibrium.

Demography is endowed with an inexorable return to this equilibrium and it is in a permanent natural search for it. Any demographic evolution should be understood, according to Jacques Dupaquier (1999) as another element towards this equilibrium. The difficulty lies in the understanding of the phases through which demography goes through. Although both theories seem to guide us towards an obvious route into the problem of demography, we wish to further encourage the usage of both theories in the construction of a theoretical model. Landry argues that the demographic revolution presents three stages in its development and their order is mandatory. This is to allow no specific abnormalities in a demographic evolution type situation. He starts by offering an accurate account about the first phase, in which we are confronted with a sort of natural fertility.

At this point in time population is not affected by the presence of political or economic determiners. At this stage, the presence of economic analysis is not considered pertinent. Demography is primordial and the only piece of this puzzle. Demography is constructed as a result of the level of fertility and fluctuating mortality. At this level of development population experiences an increase. For the second stage of demographic revolution, Landry insists that population will continue to grow and expand.

The objective component of expanding population is still present and we have to notice the presence of people that wish to maintain their standard of living. At this point, although population continues to grow, we notice the presence of certain policy restrains, that can come from either the individual or another instance of policy making outside the individual's own will and behavior: celibacy, postponement, economic restrictions on marriages, on the

number of children. Usually, these measures are pre-marriage and are used to limit the number of families that are being formed. Once the marriage has taken place, seldom do they encounter policy limits. At this level demographic variables are studied alongside with social and economic ones. The author does not eliminate either of them, but understands the need for all of them for a complete picture. These two stages are associated with demographic increase. On the other hand, in the third stage in the demographic revolution, we face a demographic decline. At this level Landry argues that people wish to climb even further on the economic and social scale and these aspirations are followed by even higher standards. These induce a sense of limiting fertility and the demographic equilibrium is put into danger. Given the context in which it emerged Landry found it easier to postulate the reasons that lie at the base of mortality decline, leaving aside the reasons that lie at the base of fertility decline.

We believe that the two others viewed different sides of demography. While Landry saw it in its relation with other elements, Dupaquier focused upon the inherent nature of demography of constantly striving to find balance. We believe that population actually possesses a natural balance. It displays mass mechanisms of controlling both explosion and implosion of population. This is a balance that is in relation with other elements and these elements interact with the population. We are thinking of economic opportunities, environmental issues and the political context. A model should combine the two models so as to analyze population as it is in a permanent search for equilibrium, but this equilibrium is in link with the environment and the political and economic context.

The diffuse nature of demography was under severe theoretical attack through his

vision upon three stages of population development: primitive, intermediate and contemporary. He is in accordance with another demographer Warren Thompson, published in 1929. He used also a three type model of population. Firstly there were countries with decrease birth and death rates. These countries would experience population growth because death rates will fall first. Secondly there were the countries that experienced uncontrollable birth and death rates. These countries were classified as Malthusian. Thirdly, we observe the countries that experienced fertility decline, but also a declining population because the death rate had still fundamental values. Despite this similar way of seeing demography, Landry was among the first to postulate that developed Europe would face a population decline even though it would experience economic prosperity. He regarded this as a significant threat for its security.

Demographic security played a crucial role in security analysis done by Landry and Thompson. In order to better capture the exact risk of an uncontrolled or unperceived demographic change they tried to use a decline example of the past, which had among other a demographic decline. Their image upon the danger of depopulation was enforced by an analysis of the declining roman population that led to the fall of the Roman Empire. Their forecast was that eventually, due to population decline, Europe will be over-run by migrants, either through peaceful migration or warlike means.

5. Results and discussions of the quantitative research

By using a complete theoretical model, it is possible to chart systematically the different approaches to the comparative study of demographic evolution in the EU. We wish to contemplate and analyze this

demographic transition by placing it in an intellectual, social and historical context. Demography should be examined selectively. An overriding focus should be placed on the way in which the demography is perceived at the institutional level, through the policy development and at the level of the individual through an understanding of the public perception of this change, in terms of attitude and aspiration. We wish to point to different ways of perceiving the power of demography and to underline both a theoretical and an empirical enquiry to add to the corpus of scientific knowledge. In particular we intend on focusing on the clashes and common ground between different accounts of policy constructing and public perception in terms of demography.

Thus, we believe that we should take notice of the following actors:

1. Actors at the micro level and their relations such as relatives, life world, friendship;
2. The institutional level;
3. The level of social systems.

5. A. We have conducted quantitative research targeted at these issues part of the findings will be presented here in the form of general conclusions. The quantitative research has reported that people are indeed aware of the demographic events that take place at the level of the micro (family and friends). A staggering 55% (n=121) of the respondents have a person that immigrated to another country. The analysis of the structure of the participants' families revealed that the number of family members is shrinking. They also notice that the number of generations has increased, thus the vertical development of the family knows an increase, while the horizontal structure of the family is decreasing, fewer families with more than one child, fewer brothers and cousins.

Future perspectives are also in support of immigrating behavior because 40% (n=88) of the respondents desire to immigrate for two reasons: either to get back together with their family or to find a better chance of having a successful life, in search for opportunities. We note that 65% of the participants felt that there is a sharp increase in the gap between the young generation and the aged generation. They also admitted that they are aware of the shrinking population in Romania.

The participants were also aware of the policies that regard age in Romania, but their utmost concern was with the change in retirement age and with the increase in social expenditure. The participants were worried that governments and institutions will function around the majority, forgetting the needs of the minority. In this context, we acknowledged the possibility that the young population can become a minority. The participants have noticed that during elections political figures promised reforms and policies to support elder adults, in order to attract their votes.

Institutions were inclined to offer policies in favor of the dominant category of people so as to come to power. On the other hand, they felt as a minority and felt that the problems with which they have to deal with are not taken into consideration by the Romanian institutions. Over 70% of the participants believed that the increase in retirement age affected them as well and the open ended questions provided the reasons: they realize that their retirement age will probably be even higher and that the number of places of work would be affected by this policy.

We are talking about changes that take place in their daily routine and affect their habits. When we specify the micro level we meant people right next to the individual, from his family or friends.

5. B. The greater macro level is present in their perspective in only 43% of the cases and mainly focuses around economic reasons. Around the security issues linked with demographic change, the participants identified several threats. We proceed on presenting them. The participants believed that population ageing leads to a decrease in spending on social and economic programs for the young (15% of the participants).

Another common interpretation was that population ageing leads to a sharp increase in spending for welfare and health (25% of the participants). The general belief was that population ageing leads to a policy of increasing retiring age and in turn leads to fewer jobs for the young community (30% of the participants). It turns out that their point of view was that population change leads to change in the social structure of the population that may lead to social conflict – (10% of the participants). Population change may lead to the promotion of a conservative political system which may not promote progress at its highest form (5% of the participants). The participants also believed that a decrease in population affects the economic, political and military potential of Romania (15% of the participants). We notice that they feel that their personal security is threatened by the evolution of demography.

Seldom do they consider the impact of demography upon the overall future of the region, country although we have geopolitical examples in the area. Serbia and Bosnia have suffered for the past few years from a decrease in the active population this prevented their economic development. At the same time, the decrease in the working population meant that taxes were not sufficient to support investment and prohibited financial stability.

Economic insecurity is in these two cases directly linked with demographic evolution. The unfortunate conflict in Kosovo also presented an enthralling demographic dilemma. Kosovo was originally the heart land of the Serbian people, but demographic changes such as migration of the Serbian Population, transfer of population between Albania and Serbia, decrease of the Serbian population on the background of a high fertility rate among Kosovo Albanians made Kosovo an Albanian province. This brought about the meeting of two situations: historically it is debated that the province of Kosovo was inhabited by Serbs, being the heart land of Serbs, but demographically speaking, Kosovo was inhabited by Albanians that desired independence from Serbia. Demographic change has brought about territorial instability and insecurity.

People tend to notice changes in their family structure, inter-generational relationships, inter-generational exchanges and notice the ageing process. Despite this situation they do not expect that such issues will pose any problems at the macro level, thus they do not see any need in specific policies from the government. The micro level changes at the level of their own family are not perceived as being isolated from the rest of society, but re considered rather the results of the evolution of the over-all population.

Even though the government might promise better social protection or an increase in expenditures for retired citizens, these policy measures are not seen as reaction tools to the demographic change. Usually, they consider them solely as either ways of gaining popular support or things that are part of the policies to bring us closer to the EU. Most of the times, the person perceives age and other variables of demographic as security threats for himself, not for the development of the macro level of the

country. Indeed, old age, having a child, the number of dependants in the family worries 87% of the people that have been involved in the research. Noticing the high percent of people that live and notice changes at the level of the family we expect these changes to affect the overall system of society. Demographic change is not an isolated phenomenon and it has wide implications upon the economic, social and political security of a country.

6. Discussion around the topic of demographic security

We argue that the development of modern society has been rightfully accompanied by the formation of new relationships between demography and the contemporary modern environment. The modern nature of present day society has shifted focus gradually from demographic changes towards a more principle base way of analyzing the world. Once upon a time, the place of demography seemed to be clear. The social relations that lived alongside the demographic reality were communal, and we even dare to say, organic in nature. Simply put, people knew where they were. The place of demography in the order of things was clearly fixed and legitimated by that reality. There was a universally binding system that legitimated future forecasts both in population and in development.

Population was clearly stratified and its evolution clearly constructed. Demography was perceived as invariable, existing to bring security to the insecurity posed by economic change. Because demographic change takes so much time, it was perceived as a stable notion. In the vast majority of research demography was studied only at the national level. The development of new demographic characteristics in neighboring or competing countries was not considered a critical research issue. Today, we understand that

the demographic decline in the West is even greater when we notice the demographic increase in competing countries around the world. Researchers have started to focus upon the demographic imbalances that create pressures between different regions in the world: Europe with a decrease in population but neighboring African and Asian countries with population booms; Russia with a decrease in population neighboring China the biggest country in the world in terms of population; China, a developing country with a great potential in population increase, neighboring Japan, with a negative expectations about population; The USA which although presents slight increase in population it neighbors Mexico and South America with a high fertility and high migration.

We have observed the remarkable extent of demographic information being consumed by public policies regarding health care, education, insurance, cultural security, territorial security, economic development, energy consumption, environmental studies, political representation and power projection.

Unfortunately, this has encouraged a relatively uncomplicated view of demography, propelled into public view as merely a set of numbers meant to be consumed. We support the approach that demography is more than figures meant for “consumption”, but it is a “propelled bullet” that is able to create new realities for its consumers.

We consider that demography has penetrated deep into its inert and most of the times passive victims: economy, culture, security leading to insecurity, rather than security. Merely noticing this is not sufficient, but we need to measure the depth and size of this penetration through complementary scientific techniques that can properly understand the now insecurity environment in which we have to develop.

In short, the historical belief in the power of demography as a stabilizing factor has been demolished. It can also become an insecurity factor. Underpinning this so call reassuring conclusion about the lack of power of demographic change was a repudiation of mass as a source of power. The view of society as being modern and highly focused on technology gave way to a view of a weakened demographic variable, which could be controlled through technological development. The notion that demography plays a role in the development of society has predominately followed two directions.

On the one hand, in America it has been viewed as a source of progress due to the baby boom generation, and, on the other hand, it has been seen as a source of poverty for underdeveloped countries. The impression that demography will always create security in the West and insecurity in the developing countries was unfounded.

Thus, demography has been seen as either a passive transmitter of economic development and security creator or an active intervener and insecurity creator in the process of increase accentuation of poverty in the underdeveloped countries "the rapid increase in the population of many poorer nations is a crucial factor preventing "takeoff," keeping them on the ground, so to speak, and from the stage of sustained economic advance." Although a valuable statement it has been proven wrong in the current process of globalization. Some developing countries in the world combined the power of demographics with that of technology (BRIC countries). By doing this they were able to challenge the economic supremacy of developed countries. As a result, nowadays, there are people that have started to ask themselves about the power of countries that manifest demographic power "Is that time already fast

approaching, with China poised to take over from the United States? This is an essential question, and yet it has not yet been taken seriously enough in the United States." [6]

This view is currently rooted in this dual view of society. The mass media has also reproduced this viewpoint in which "demographers and economists, academic cousins in the lineage from Malthus" [7], focusing merely on the economic aspect of any potential change in demography. This stress on the salience of technology as a buffer against demographic problems has gradually led to policies and geopolitical decisions less reliant on the variable of demography. A reassessment of the impact of demography on a technological advanced society or even on a technological lacking society gave rise to a new academic and policy orthodoxy, that demography has only a highly limited influence. It should also be noted that demographic transition has been partly a result of "advance in science, technology, the massive use of inanimate sources of power, the proportional reduction of the agricultural sector of the economy and employment, and the rise in individual productivity and incomes that we call the Industrial Revolution" [8]. Be this as it may, once the transition has been triggered by technological advancement, little interest has been given to the demographic transition as an independent reality altering process. We believe that the concept of demography affords a more flexible less economy centered view point through which we can conceptualize the relationships between the social, the economic, the politic and the cultural.

7. Conclusions

A valid measure of demography's importance is discernible in the fact that it has been proven that it holds a

significant importance in development. It has been also acknowledged that contemporary reality has been changed through demographic transition. Those that have wished to explain the decisively altered reality of nowadays without taking into account demographic transition were unsuccessful in doing so. The view of society as being composed of talented, isolated and anomic individuals gave way to a view of population as being made out of only individuals and of stable groups.

Most of the time, in contemporary times, we notice the entire omission of the mass, the possible power of a mass of individuals and its possible pressures on society. Nevertheless, we do not wish to consider the two points of view upon the importance of population as fundamentally and irreconcilably opposed. When we reach the level of effectiveness in grounded theory, the differences between those that praise the power of demography and those that underestimate its power are to a certain point based on mutual misunderstanding.

The alleged dichotomy between let us call them grand-demographical and a-demographical approaches is a little misleading. This tendency, of relatively contemporary systems, of inoculating themselves in the belief that demography has stopped playing a potential pivotal role in contemporary states has been reinforced publicly through the way in which economic and political crisis have been offered primarily only managerial techniques.

The stress that we place on the active role of demography and on its part in shaping contemporary reality is a result of the analysis of evolution patterns. Even nowadays, the position of the developed countries is measured without taking into account the importance of demography, although there are some researchers that

state “In other words, the United States cannot escape the inexorable logic of demography and the fact that poor countries, especially China, are catching up with it. China, which is four times as populous as the United States” [9], but not much research is being conducted outside the two key players in the world today. Neither, do we notice a more nuanced view on demographics, nor a multiple interpretation. Such managerial techniques have been considered best capable of solving the economic crisis and containing its contradictions.

The current perspective is deeply concerned with the former apparent demographic stability which has been achieved in the post-war world. This perspective upon the world does not take into account the variable of the demographic transition. Currently, we notice an effort of explaining transformations by which this stability has been changed, but without addressing the pressing issue of social change and demographic transition. By trying to understand the world by leaving out the importance of demographic change, we might confront a sense of monumental disappointment.

Currently we are dismayed by the apparent economic failure and dark projections for the future, but the tide of economic problems might be even a result of a failure to understand the importance of demographic transition.

We agree with the author “When we debate Europe, we are accustomed debating the big issues (and most probably those regarded as traditional): trans-Atlantic relations, the diplomatic relations with Russia, China and with Asia as a whole. In other words, we debate the links with the major players. Less attention is directed towards the future tendency, the reality of tomorrow which will certainly become more important; a tendency that

will most likely become permanent and will exercise a powerful influence that cannot be measured today.”[10]

Nevertheless, changes in demography have brought about changes at the social, economic, politic and military level. Demography can become a factor of insecurity, not only in cases of population explosion, but also in cases of population decrease. Till recently, most of the research has focused upon the insecurity issues brought about by population explosion such as competition for natural resources and land, competition for power, unbalancing ethnic structures, revolutions, social movements, migration, but little concern was paid to the other side, population decrease. Points of pressure have been already been formed between countries with population decrease and countries with population increase. At the same time, a decrease in population brings about issues regarding financial stability, social security, welfare spending, ethnic and age structure among other potential security risks. A decrease in population means a decrease in active population. Such a situation affects economic growth and potential of a country.

We shall try to define demographic security as we have understood it. We believe that demographic security is the capacity of a society to conserve its specific character. We can understand from demographic security the capacity of a society to continue to function in spite of changing demographic conditions. Demographic security should be understood as still witnessing changes, but as long as they are considered to be acceptable. Demographic security cannot be obtained through the absence of change or threats, but it is expected to actively ensure the necessary demographic conditions for economic growth, social and political stability. This is viable in a context in which a country, through its

population, is being able to guarantee military security. Only by having a sufficient population resource base can a country encourage both modern and traditional forms of activity ranging from services, to industry and to agriculture. In the right demographic context, the state can nurture a political system powerful enough to determine for itself. It is quite logical that population is the fundamental basis for economic and social development.

Demographic security should examine the threat posed by population events and trends to the world, regions, nations, national regions, communities and individuals. It should focus on the impact of population on international relations, the environment, national policies, economic development and social stability. At this level, it should also address demographic problems that cross national or continental borders. Specialists should address the ability of a nation, society or any other type of entity to address demographic changes, demographic tensions and conflicts. Demographic security is a fundamental concept that should be also integrated in international relations and international development. Demographic security is also the response for a people's existential anxieties.

8. Limitations

The survey was conducted only on Romanian participants. Obviously the results cannot be generalized to a greater extend. Content analysis has been conducted on a long bibliography, but not on all of the works on the issue of demographic change. The theoretical model is not yet completed.

Methodological limits have been acknowledged in the chapter regarding methodology.

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