

Introduction and Methodology²

The primary objective of this research is to measure the salient demographic trends of Eastern Europe and Eurasia since the beginning of the transition. A secondary objective is to address some of the health factors which seem to be contributing to many of these demographic trends, particularly the determinants of the natural changes in the population (births rates vs. death rates). There are two general reasons why this research was undertaken. One, much of the analytical focus on the transition region by USAID's Europe and Eurasia Bureau has been on trends in economic, democratic, and social transitions with an eye most recently towards phasing-out of these "sectors" after certain thresholds have been crossed. Demographic trends can profoundly influence all three of these transition dimensions, though perhaps sometimes with considerable lag. Hence, explicitly highlighting key demographic trends of concern is an important part of taking stock as to whether the Bureau's phase-out analyses are on track and/or remain on track.

A second reason this research has been undertaken is related to the first reason. There have been ample analyses, many focused primarily on Russia or parts of the former Soviet Union, that have concluded that a demographic crisis exists, and in its wake are some very dire consequences that will likely continue to unfold if not accelerate. The work of M. Feshbach in particular comes to mind. Does the total sum of the data support this pessimism? How widespread is the crisis across the transition region? Are the trends in Russia indicative of wider trends (within the transition region as well as globally), or is Russia the exception to the general rule?

This report begins with the population growth rate and overview trends. It then reduces population growth to its components: natural change and migration. Natural change is deduced from the crude birth and death rates (births/deaths per 1,000 per year). The many demographic, health, and lifestyle factors influencing natural change are analyzed (fertility, age distribution, HIV, smoking, etc.). The different types of migration are analyzed: legal migration, illegal, trafficking, refugees, etc.

Most data were taken from the World Bank's *World Development Indicators 2004* dataset. Alternative sources for this type of demographic data included the UN *World Population Prospects*, which was rejected as the main source because the data are only given in five year intervals, and the US Bureau of the Census *International Database*, which was not chosen in large part because their dataset begins in 1996.

Data on suicide, smoking, alcohol, and tuberculosis, were taken from the WHO's *European Health For All* database. Refugee data came from UNHCR. IDP data came from the U.S. Committee for Refugees. Ethnic majority data was taken from the CIA Factbook. R&D Personnel data came from UNESCO. Human Trafficking data was taken from the Regional Clearing Point Stability Pact for Southeast Europe. Mortality by Cause data was taken from the WHO Mortality Database. The HIV dataset was taken from UNAIDS.

Unless otherwise noted, regional aggregations are weighted by population. For example, in Eurasia, Russia will be much more influential on the sub-regional aggregation than Moldova. Countries with missing values were deleted from the average except in the case for refugees, where blanks were assumed to be zero.

The country groupings within Europe and Eurasia (Northern Tier CEE, Muslim-majority, etc.) are specified in the *Appendix*; the regions outside of EE (Sub-Saharan Africa, middle-income countries, etc.) are defined by the World Bank, and can also be found in the *Appendix*.

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The three primary sub-regions utilized in the Bureau's *Monitoring Country Progress* report are also analyzed here. However, two additional significant country groups emerged from the analysis: the Muslim-majority countries and the Northern Former Soviet Union countries (NFSU). The Muslim-majority group is a group of six countries: Albania, Azerbaijan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, and Uzbekistan. Among these countries, Albania has the smallest proportion of the population as Muslim (70%), and Azerbaijan the highest (93.4%). The next highest percent for a country without a Muslim-majority is Kazakhstan (47%), then Bosnia-Herzegovina (40%). The NFSU countries consist of seven countries: Russia, Ukraine, Moldova, Belarus, Latvia, Lithuania, and Estonia. This group is a combination of countries from Eurasia and the Northern Tier CEE.

The migration values in this report were calculated as a residual of population growth and natural change, and may differ significantly from statistics reported from the countries themselves. This decision was made with the intention of quantifying types of migration that frequently go unreported (trafficking and other forms of illegal migration, etc.).

$$\text{Net Migration} = \left[\text{Population}_{\text{final}} - \text{Population}_{\text{initial}} \right] - \left[\text{Births} - \text{Deaths} \right]$$

Population Growth Natural change

Finally, some general caveats about the data merit mention. There are often a number of ways to broadly check the validity of data. This includes comparing the consistency across sources, and often more importantly, by “triangulating” across related indicators (that is, looking for consistency in message and findings among related indicators). We also know, however, that data reliability and uniformity across countries are generally much lower in the Eurasian countries than is the case in CEE. In some cases, for example, we excluded data on Turkmenistan in regional averages since the figures looked particularly suspect by any number of cross-checking procedures. In addition, data during years of conflict, in the Balkans and Caucasus in particular, are generally less reliable than in non-conflict years.

Also, as noted throughout the report, certain topics of this empirical research are in greater need of follow-up than others in no small part because current measures likely come up short. This includes some of the health measures, such as infectious diseases (where official numbers likely greatly undercount actual numbers), and assessments of lifestyle behaviors (such as smoking and drinking). On the latter, some of these data may be fairly accurate, but also incomplete. The data show, for example, that citizens of the EE countries consume notably less alcohol than most of the citizens in the Western Europe. But disaggregating those data--in the few cases where the disaggregated data are available--reveals a much more nuanced picture; one that suggests a much higher concentration of drinking of beverages of much higher alcoholic content among some groups (such as certain male cohorts) in the transition countries than in Western Europe.

Much of the data related to migration are also likely rough estimates. This includes the migration of people across borders as well as within borders, particularly during times of war and particularly illegal flows, such as human trafficking. This also includes estimates of remittances. In general, we try to give the best estimates available and, when appropriate, try to emphasize a more “bird’s eye” analysis rather than focusing on “decimal point differences.”