

SELECTED PAPERS ON THE DEMOGRAPHIC DEVELOPMENT IN BULGARIA

POPULATION FORECASTS

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PROJECTED CHANGES IN THE STRUCTURE OF ECONOMICALLY ACTIVE POPULATION ACCORDING TO THE EDUCATION LEVEL IN BULGARIA TO 2021

Assoc. Prof. Adriana Hristova, Ph.D
Institute for Population and Human Studies –
Bulgarian Academy of Sciences
Department of Demography,
Bulgaria, Sofia 1113,
Akad. G. Bonchev St, bl. 6
✉ adrianahristova@mail.bg

Abstract. *In the context of long-term and significant reduction in Bulgaria's economically active population, educational structure's dynamics has become more and more significant.*

This article highlights the major results from the forecast for the economically active population's development according to the educational level in Bulgaria to 2021.

Since there is no average-term demographic forecast to 2021 or an official long-term demographic forecast, National Statistical Institute's demographic scenario for Bulgaria covering the period to 2060 (the realistic variant) has been used to develop this forecast. Likewise, no forecast on the changes in population according to the education level has been published for the period considered.

The economic activity rates have been projected for four categories of education: high-educated, those who graduated from vocational or secondary schools, low-educated or functionally uneducated.

The hypotheses were based in reliance on the analytical results and conclusions made for the period 1985-2012 and more special attention was paid to the last eight years of the reference period, i.e. the 2005-2012 period.

The reference information on the economically active population by sex, age and education categories was calculated according to data extracted from NSI publications on the censuses conducted in the country in 1985, 1992, 2001 and 2011, and based on annual data of the „Employment and Unemployment“ Labour Force Survey for the period 2001-2012.

Keywords: economic activity modelling; education forecast; economically active population.

Today's complex and dynamic society faces a universal challenge: the challenge of human labour as a fundamental economic factor and a main instrument to achieve stability and social security for individuals and as a fundamental criterion in determining the human being's place in society. This challenge is even more pressing for Bulgaria, which, over the last two decades, entered a period of a transition period, which, if we look deeper into its essence, is unique given the socio-economic, legal and other transformations Bulgaria's society has had to go through. Given the specific conditions, looking for answers to the issue of the reproduction of the economically active population and its fundamental characteristics and the issue of the establishment and development of the Bulgarian model of economic activity, employment, social security and stability of this nation's socio-economic development in the future is gaining even more importance.

Bulgaria faces a very serious, multi-aspect, large-scale and aggravating in time problem in the domain of economically active population's reproduction. In one respect, after 1990, significant and gradual reduction in the number of nation's economically active population has been registered coupled with unemployment wide-spreading and maintaining its high levels. In another respect, some major changes in both the levels and the dynamics of economically active population's quality characteristics, and, specifically, in its educational structure have been observed.

However significant the changes in the characteristics of Bulgaria's economically active population were over the period of transition to market economy and irrespectively of the foremost importance of such changes in the distribution of this nation's economically active population by levels of education, there is still no long-term empiric analysis or published forecast for the development of this fundamental quality characteristic of economically active population and of population as a whole provided by the Ministry of Education or by NSI or by any other State institution or private scientific research organisation¹. Such projections however are developed and published by the central national statistical authorities (cf.: Office for National Statistics, UK. Labour force projection 2006-2020; Statistical Bureau of Australia. Labour force projection 1999-2016; Ireland's Central Statistics. Labour force projection 2007; Statistiques canadienne. Projections de la population active au Canada, 2006-2031; Three scenarios of population, households, education and labour supply for the next 25 years, Netherlands, Population Index, vol. 45, No. 2, Feb. 1997; INSEE. Labour force projections 2003-2050; US Department of Labor – Employ-

¹ Long-term forecast for potentially active population has not been developed over the last two decades. A short-term forecast on the employed has been published (Goev, V. (1997). "Statistical modelling of dynamics and number of employed persons in Bulgaria for the period 1989-1996 and a forecast until 1998" [in Bulgarian], *Alternativi*, number 7) and a medium-term forecast for potentially active population for the period 1995-2005 (Borissova, K. (2000). "Potentially Active Population in Bulgaria. Forecasting of Labour Offer" (Study) In: "Labour, Employment and Unemployment. Women in Labour Market" [in Bulgarian] Under the editorship of Prof. K. Vladimirova. Sofia, "Stopanstvo" PH [in Bulgarian]). Two scenarios were published in 2011 on the development of labour force in Bulgaria until 2030 (Borissova-Marinova, K., Moraliyska-Nikolova, S. (2011). "Regime of population reproduction in Bulgaria and its impact on labour force offer (2005–2030). Sofia, Professor Marin Drinov Academic Publishing House [in Bulgarian]).