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NIKOLAIETS Kateryna,

Doctor of Sciences (History), Professor,
Professor at the Department of Economics
and Competition Policy
State University of Trade and Economics

19, Kyoto St., Kyiv, 02156, Ukraine

ORCID: 0000-0002-0471-2895

k.nikolayets@knu.edu.ua

НИКОЛАЄЦЬ Катерина,

д. і. н., професор, професор кафедри
економічної теорії та конкурентної політики
Державного торговельно-економічного
університету

вул. Кіото, 19, м. Київ, 02156, Україна

ORCID: 0000-0002-0471-2895

k.nikolayets@knu.edu.ua

SHKUROPADSKA Diana,

PhD (Economics), Senior Lecturer
of the Department of Economics and
Competition Policy
State University of Trade and Economics

19, Kyoto St., Kyiv, 02156, Ukraine

ORCID: 0000-0002-6883-711X

diana.shkuropadska2016@knu.edu.ua

ШКУРОПАДСЬКА Діана,

доктор філософії, старший викладач
кафедри економічної теорії
та конкурентної політики
Державного торговельно-економічного
університету

вул. Кіото, 19, м. Київ, 02156, Україна

ORCID: 0000-0002-6883-711X

diana.shkuropadska2016@knu.edu.ua

LEBEDEVA Larysa,

PhD (Economics), Associate Professor,
Associate Professor at the Department
of Economics and Competition Policy
State University of Trade and Economics

19, Kyoto St., Kyiv, 02156, Ukraine

ORCID: 0000-0001-8632-5460

l.lebedeva@knu.edu.ua

ЛЕБЕДЕВА Лариса,

к. е. н., доцент, доцент кафедри
економічної теорії та конкурентної політики
Державного торговельно-економічного
університету

вул. Кіото, 19, м. Київ, 02156, Україна

ORCID: 0000-0001-8632-5460

l.lebedeva@knu.edu.ua

ENSURING THE DEMOGRAPHIC RESILIENCE OF THE EU COUNTRIES

Demographic resilience reflects a country's (or region's) ability and capacity to ensure the quantitative and qualitative reproduction of demographic structures under specific historical, socio-economic, legal, and natural conditions. Demographic processes are of fundamental importance both for national development processes and for achieving global

ЗАБЕЗПЕЧЕННЯ ДЕМОГРАФІЧНОЇ СТІЙКОСТІ КРАЇН ЄС

Демографічна стійкість відображає здатність і можливість країни (регіонів) забезпечувати кількісне та якісне відтворення демографічних структур у конкретних історичних, суспільно-економічних, правових і природних умовах. Демографічні процеси мають фундаментальне значення як для процесів національного розвитку,



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sustainable development goals. It is essential to systematically and thoroughly study the current demographic reality, understand it well, and base rational and effective responses to ongoing demographic challenges on this understanding. The long-term consequences of the COVID-19 pandemic, international conflicts, migration processes, and the mass wave of Ukrainian refugees to EU countries in 2022 have made the topic of researching demographic resilience more relevant. There is no single solution to respond to demographic challenges or fully compensate for the negative consequences of demographic changes. Therefore, it is necessary to implement and develop various adaptive measures and organizational-legal conditions to ensure demographic resilience. The research aims to justify and characterize the key organizational and legal conditions for ensuring demographic resilience in EU member countries. The theoretical and methodological basis of the research are scientific works of foreign and domestic scholars on the selected issue. General scientific and special methods are used, such as theoretical generalization, systemic analysis, systematization, statistical analysis, grouping, and scientific abstraction. Based on the criterion of "social protection of the population," the key organizational and legal conditions for ensuring demographic resilience were identified as follows: quality and accessible healthcare, gender equality, a developed system of social programs and assistance, the implementation of family-friendly policies, and effective management of migrations and refugees. The development of organizational and legal conditions depends on effective state policy and a comprehensive approach to solving this issue. Demographic resilience is one of the essential conditions for achieving sustainable economic development based on a balance between the qualifications of the workforce, their number, willingness, and ability not only to perform specific tasks but also to participate in their formulation and determine the paths to achieving the desired results. The analyzed organizational and legal conditions for ensuring demographic resilience not only affect the social stability of the integration group but also impact the pace of economic development.

Keywords: demographic resilience, European Union, legal regulation, organizational and legal mechanism, migration processes.

JEL Classification: F15, F22, F66, H55, J11, J61.

Introduction

Changes in the size and structure of a country's population play a significant role in determining the scale of national production. Demographic resilience is closely linked to the efforts of governments in countries to concentrate the necessary quantity of qualified workers on their territory to implement national macroeconomic strategies while preserving the citizens'

так і для досягнення глобальних цілей сталого розвитку. Сучасну демографічну реальність необхідно систематично й ретельно вивчати, добре розуміти та усвідомлювати, а на основі цього шукати шляхи раціонального й ефективного реагування на поточні демографічні виклики. Довгострокові наслідки пандемії COVID-19, міжнародні конфлікти, міграційні процеси та масова хвиля українських біженців у 2022 р. до країн ЄС актуалізують тему дослідження демографічної стійкості. Немає єдиного засобу для реагування на демографічні виклики або повної компенсації негативних наслідків демографічних змін. З огляду на це, необхідно впроваджувати та розвивати різні адаптивні заходи й організаційно правові умови задля забезпечення демографічної стійкості. Метою дослідження є обґрунтування та характеристика ключових організаційно-правових умов забезпечення демографічної стійкості країн – членів ЄС. Теоретико-методологічною базою дослідження є наукові праці закордонних і вітчизняних учених з обраної проблематики. Використано загальнонаукові та спеціальні методи: теоретичного узагальнення, системного аналізу, систематизації, статистичний, групування та наукової абстракції. З огляду на критерій "соціальний захист населення" ключовими організаційно-правовими умовами забезпечення демографічної стійкості визначено якісну та доступну медицину, гендерну рівність, розвинену систему соціальних програм та допомоги, реалізацію дружньої до сім'ї політики, ефективне управління міграціями та біженцями. Розвиток організаційно-правових умов залежить від ефективної державної політики та комплексного підходу до вирішення цього питання. Демографічна стійкість є однією з важливих умов забезпечення поступального економічного розвитку, заснованого на балансі між кваліфікацією працівників, їхньою кількістю, готовністю та здатністю не лише виконувати певні завдання, а й брати участь у їх постановці та визначенні шляхів досягнення бажаного результату. Проаналізовані організаційно-правові умови забезпечення демографічної стійкості впливають не лише на соціальну стабільність інтеграційного угруповання, а й на темпи економічного розвитку.

Ключові слова: демографічна стійкість, Європейський Союз, нормативно-правове регулювання, організаційно-правовий механізм, міграційні процеси.

customary living conditions and established communication. Competitiveness and the stability of national economies in the contemporary globalized world, amid unforeseen global challenges, increasingly depend on the innovation and creativity of the population. This, in turn, highlights the issue of ensuring demographic resilience at the level of individual countries and integration entities.

The COVID-19 pandemic, international conflicts, population migration, and demographic changes are reshaping the structure of EU society. There are several significant reasons for the deteriorating of demographic situation in the EU, primarily related to natural demographic processes: the increase in average life expectancy and the gradual "aging" of the population, marked by a growing proportion of elderly individuals. The "aging" population leads to a reduced share of the working-age population, increasing the demand for services from medical and social institutions funded by tax revenues.

The issue of ensuring national resilience is actively being studied by Ukrainian and foreign researchers. The issues of ensuring demographic resilience of the population have been studied by S. Kozlovsky, H. Mazur, A. Nepytyaliuk (Kozlovsky, Mazur, Nepytyaliuk, 2019; Nepytyaliuk, 2018; Kozlovsky, Nepytyaliuk, 2019), who focused their attention on analysing relationships between demographic composition of population and the possibilities to modernize the economic development sources of state. In their research, they noted not only the dependence of the slowdown in economic growth due to the loss of a portion of the working-age population but also the difficulties in replenishing the workforce due to the insufficient development of the healthcare system and unbalanced demographic policies.

In today's globalization, the problem of demographic resilience of any country in the world is extremely relevant. Demographic resilience is negatively affected by excessive population growth and excessive decline, which threatens socio-economic, financial, demographic and political stability. An important reserve for improving the demographic situation is to ensure positive migration growth and improve its quality indicators. This can be achieved only through rapid, radical and radical changes in economic, socio-economic, medical-demographic and political processes (Zaiukov, Lavrov, Oliinyk, 2021).

In a study of P. Capdevila et al. (Capdevila, et al., 2023), the importance of adaptation programs for labour migrants and war refugees in ensuring demographic resilience was emphasized. Analytical sections of statistical studies conducted in the EU territory with regional differentiation and workforce composition (Muntele et al., 2021; Colantoni et al., 2020) are of particular interest. Statistical analysis predominantly demonstrates the dependence of demographic resilience on living and working conditions in specific regions, as well as the efforts of governments aimed at retaining qualified workers in their places of permanent residence. The success of such measures largely determines citizens' attitudes toward work, their inclination toward migration in search of better job opportunities or higher income.

The issue of demographic resilience is being addressed in a practical context by the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA). In this regard, a jointly organized conference by UNFPA, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Bulgaria, and "Population Europe" that took place in Sofia, the Republic of Bulgaria, on December 1–2, 2022 where decisions were discussed concerning demographic changes related to aging, low birth rates, and population migration in Eastern European and Central Asian countries. The conference concluded with the establishment of the Sofia Alliance, a community of policymakers and practitioners aimed at providing support to countries in the region in strengthening their demographic resilience. Additionally, a regional Decade of Demographic Resilience (2022–2032) was announced to promote demographic resilience and the sustainable development agenda (UNFPA, 2022).

The concept of demographic resilience underscores the importance of population dynamics for social and economic development, individual well-being, political stability, and security. Demographic resilience involves the ability to analyse population dynamics, assess its multifaceted impact on socio-economic development, and formulate evidence-based, relevant, and effective policies and programs that fully take into account current and projected demographic trends (UNFPA, 2022).

Therefore, aspects of demographic resilience are examined both at theoretical and practical levels. However, the institutional factors that influence a country's demographic resilience are insufficiently explored in the discussed approaches. The issue of ensuring demographic resilience should be studied through organizational and legal conditions that characterize key aspects of institutional development in a country or integration group.

The research aims to justify and characterize the key organizational and legal conditions for ensuring demographic resilience among EU member states. The multifaceted nature of the issue of demographic resilience necessitates the search for progressive institutional directions to secure it. The research hypothesis asserts that, to counter existing and potential shocks, states must establish a system of organizational and legal conditions for the long-term assurance of demographic resilience.

In determining these organizational and legal conditions, we focused on the criterion of "social protection of the population," which is broadly defined as state policies aimed at safeguarding society members from socio-economic shocks such as illnesses, unemployment, disability, and gender inequality. This also pertains to individual well-being and the rights of people to have their needs met, regardless of their citizenship or residency status. Based on this criterion, the following organizational and legal conditions for ensuring demographic resilience were identified: quality and accessible healthcare, gender equality, a developed system of social programs and assistance, the implementation of family-friendly policies, and effective management of migrations and refugees.

To achieve the research objective, a combination of general scientific and specialized methods was employed. The method of theoretical synthesis was used to elucidate the concept of "demographic resilience". Systemic analysis and systematization methods were utilized to characterize the key organizational and legal conditions for ensuring demographic resilience. The statistical method and grouping method were applied to analyse the qualitative and quantitative characteristics of the organizational and legal conditions for ensuring demographic resilience. The method of scientific abstraction was used for substantiating generalizations and conclusions drawn from the research.

The study is divided into four parts. The quality and accessibility of healthcare in EU member states is assessed in the first part. A comparative analysis of the level of gender equality in EU countries is conducted in the second. The system of social programs and assistance in the EU is analysed in the third part. The fourth part provides an overview of the EU's migration policy and the specific rights of refugees.

1. Quality and Accessible Healthcare

The population of the European Union is a large multicultural society comprising 27 member states. As of January 1, 2023, the EU's population is 448 387 872 people. In fact, many EU countries have experienced a decrease in population over the past decade. The birth rate in the EU is low, with an average of 1.6 children born per woman. The demographic situation in the EU has been significantly influenced by the COVID-19 pandemic. In EU member states, the number of deaths from the coronavirus has exceeded 400 000 since the start of the pandemic (Eurostat, 2023). The COVID-19 pandemic has revealed disparities in the readiness of healthcare systems in EU countries to combat the epidemic.

The health of the population is one of the essential characteristics of a nation, which is determined by both the quantitative and qualitative aspects of new generations' reproduction. The demographic situation is often described as one in crisis due to the combination of a declining population and deteriorating "demographic quality" – primarily in terms of the health and well-being of individuals and their potential for full self-realization. To address the crisis and preserve the nation's health, it is necessary to develop a comprehensive state demographic policy aimed at the nation's well-being. This policy should include measures to improve the healthcare system, raise the standard of living, and promote healthy lifestyles.

In the development of specific demographic policies, particular attention should be given to measures in the field of medicine and healthcare. The health of the new generation today depends less on the material conditions of life and more on the health of parents, reproductive-professional, psychosocial, and medical factors. Therefore, the task of demographic policy, which envisions strengthening the family as the most crucial social unit,

creating better conditions for combining motherhood with active participation of women in production and social activities, and implementing measures to increase the life expectancy and extent working age, is impossible without improving the population’s health (Govorko, 2017).

According to Article 168 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union, the EU is obliged to ensure a high level of health protection for people when developing and implementing policies and measures. Each year, experts from the Numbeo service compile the Health Care Index for Country ranking. It is a comparative assessment of 94 countries worldwide based on the quality, accessibility, and cost of medical services, the equipment of hospitals, and the professional level of medical personnel. Each country is given a score from 1 to 100. The higher the final score, the better the country’s healthcare system. The values of the healthcare index for EU countries are presented in *Table 1*.

Table 1

Health Care Index by EU Country in 2023

Country	2023		Level
	place (94 countries)	points (100 points)	
France	4	78.8	Sufficient
Netherlands	5	78.6	
Denmark	6	78.4	
Finland	8	77.5	
Spain	9	77.5	
Luxembourg	10	77.3	
Austria	12	76.5	
Estonia	13	75.9	
Czech Republic	14	75.2	
Belgium	15	75.2	
Lithuania	17	73.7	
Portugal	22	72.3	
Germany	23	71.8	
Sweden	33	68.5	
Slovenia	42	66.4	
Italy	43	65.9	
Croatia	48	64.5	
Latvia	51	62.7	
Slovakia	60	59.7	
Poland	63	58.9	
Greece	69	57.2	
Bulgaria	70	56.9	
Romania	71	56.4	
Cyprus	75	55.3	
Hungary	79	54.2	
Malta	84	52.0	
Ireland	85	51.9	
EU		67.37	

Note: low level (1–29 points), moderate level (30–44 points), medium level (45–69 points), sufficient level (70–100 points).

Source: compiled by the authors according to (Health Care Index by Country, 2023).

Overall, the healthcare systems in the EU have a medium level. Thirteen countries have a sufficient level of healthcare, while 14 countries have a medium level. The top three countries are France, the Netherlands, and Denmark.

Healthcare in *France* is one of the most effective in the world and ranks first in the EU. The French healthcare system is considered the best not only in terms of service quality but also in terms of modern equipment. Currently, 89 % of French citizens believe that the state provides them with quality healthcare, resulting in the highest life expectancy in Europe, the lowest mortality from cardiovascular diseases, and high birth rates. Approximately 12 % of the GDP is allocated to healthcare from the state budget. It is partially funded through mandatory contributions to the social security system, which are collected from both employees and employers. Additionally, there is 100 % coverage for individuals in difficult economic situations or in need of long-term treatment and rehabilitation, including women after six months of pregnancy. Furthermore, every French citizen has the right to undergo a comprehensive health examination every two years. Such a practice positively impacts people's life expectancy. Currently, the average life expectancy in France is 82 years (Poradnuk, 2023a).

The Netherlands is known for its universal and high-level healthcare. The country has a large number of hospitals with high-quality medical services. Healthcare system in the Netherlands is one of the most expensive in the EU, with a budget of 12.9 % of GDP. In the Netherlands, there are two main forms of mandatory health insurance: Zorgverzekeringswet (Zvw), often referred to as the "basic insurance", which covers basic medical services, and Wet langdurige zorg (Wlz), which covers long-term care. Residents and employees are automatically insured for long-term medical care (Wlz), while others need to arrange private health insurance. Citizens of the EU, EEA, Switzerland temporarily residing in the Netherlands can use the European Health Insurance Card (EHIC). Citizens of other countries must arrange private social insurance. The average life expectancy in the Netherlands is 82 years (Poradnuk, 2023b).

Denmark is one of the wealthiest countries globally and pays significant attention to healthcare and pharmaceutical provision. Healthcare expenditures in Denmark account for 10.6 % of GDP, with residents having an average life expectancy of 81 years. The country provides high-quality medical services, and all citizens have access to medical products and services. Most clinics and hospitals in the country are state-owned, and treatment in these facilities is free of charge. Healthcare in Denmark is managed through local and central authorities. Medical services, home care, and care for the sick fall under the responsibility of 98 municipalities. Municipalities oversee medical facilities at the local level and are responsible not only for providing medical care but also for disease prevention and promoting a healthy lifestyle (Poradnuk, 2023c).

In general, healthcare in Europe is provided through a wide range of different systems operating at individual national levels. In most European countries, there is a system of tightly regulated competing private medical insurance companies with government subsidies for citizens who cannot afford the cost of visiting medical institutions. EU countries offer their citizens the European Health Insurance Card, which provides mutual coverage for emergency medical care when visiting other participating European countries.

2. Gender Equality

On March 5, 2020, the European Commission approved the Gender Equality Strategy 2020–2025, which is the document guiding the European Union in shaping its gender policy. Strategic planning of gender policy is a crucial aspect of valuing gender equality between women and men. The EU 2020–2025 Strategy includes a broad list of objectives that address the main challenges within the EU, including issues related to ecology, digital transformation, and demographic changes, all of which have gender aspects. For example, demographic changes in the context of increasing life expectancy (with women typically living longer on average than men and thus constituting the majority of the elderly population) create challenges in terms of possible discrimination based on gender and age in the workplace (European Commission, 2020).

Gender equality plays an important role in shaping demographic indicators and trends. In societies where women have more opportunities for education, employment, and participation in decision-making, there is often a decrease in birth rates. Equal access for women and men to quality healthcare, consultations, and controlled family planning methods generally reduces the number of unplanned pregnancies and maternal mortality. In families where responsibilities are more evenly shared between men and women, women have more opportunities to develop their careers and education. This can influence decisions about having children and their number within families. Due to limitations associated with gender discrimination, women or men may be more inclined to migrate abroad. The gender-based violence leads to physical and psychological problems for women, including unplanned pregnancies and other consequences that affect demographic indicators. In fact, gender equality impacts demographic processes by shaping birth rates, family structures, migration processes, population aging, and other demographic aspects. Gender equality can be a significant factor in improving the demographic situation in a country and enhancing the quality of life for its population.

Currently, the EU is one of the world's largest advocates and defenders of human rights, including issues related to ensuring gender equality and women's rights. Annually, the World Economic Forum conducts research on the Global Gender Gap Index. The study measures gender inequality across

14 different indicators in four main areas: economic participation and career opportunities, educational attainment, health and life expectancy, and political rights and opportunities. The index is measured on a scale from 0 to 1, where 0 represents complete gender inequality, and 1 represents complete equality. The index value is interpreted as the percentage of the gender gap, allowing for comparisons of current data with past data and tracking progress in a particular area (World Economic Forum, 2023). *Table 2* presents the Global Gender Gap Index data for EU member countries in 2023.

Table 2

The Global Gender Gap Index for EU member countries in 2023

Country	2023	
	place (146 countries)	points (1 points)
Finland	3	0.863
Sweden	5	0.815
Germany	6	0.815
Lithuania	9	0.800
Belgium	10	0.796
Ireland	11	0.795
Latvia	13	0.794
Spain	18	0.791
Estonia	22	0.782
Denmark	23	0.780
Netherlands	28	0.777
Slovenia	29	0.773
Portugal	32	0.765
France	40	0.756
Luxembourg	44	0.747
Austria	47	0.740
Croatia	55	0.730
Poland	60	0.722
Slovakia	63	0.720
Bulgaria	65	0.715
Malta	70	0.713
Italy	79	0.705
Romania	88	0.697
Greece	93	0.693
Hungary	99	0.689
Czech Republic	101	0.685
Cyprus	106	0.678
EU		0.753

Source: compiled by the authors according to (World Economic Forum, 2023).

Currently, full gender equality has not been achieved in any country in the world. Overall, the average level of the gender gap in the EU is low, with a score of 0.753. The countries with the best results in this ranking are Finland, Sweden, Germany, and Lithuania.

The EU's commitments regarding the implementation of gender equality have a long history. In fact, all major EU documents contain articles on non-discrimination, equal rights, and opportunities for women and men.

In a special publication titled "Gender Equality in the European Union" is noted that equal treatment of men and women has been one of the fundamental principles of the EU since its inception, and the principle of gender equality occupies a central place in all of its activities (Gender Equality in the European Union, 2011).

As indicated by assessments from the European Institute for Gender Equality (EIGE), ensuring gender equality can lead to the creation of 10 million additional jobs by 2050, an increase in the employment rate to nearly 80 %, and an almost 10 % increase in GDP per capita. It is expected that progress in the field of gender equality will have a positive impact on demographic processes in the EU. There is evidence that policies aimed at balancing parental responsibilities can lead to increased birth rates (United Nations Population Fund, 2020).

3. Social Programs and Assistance

The migration crisis, caused by the uncontrolled increase in the number of migrants from Syria following the start of the war in 2011, became a serious challenge for the EU. In such circumstances, Austria, Belgium, Denmark, Germany, Norway, Slovenia, Sweden, and Hungary temporarily resorted to regaining control of their own borders. In some countries, there were even attacks on migrant settlements and protests by those who advocated for the forced eviction of migrants. It quickly became evident that imperfect migrant integration policies led to increased social tension in society and mass protests against the migration policies of several European governments. The main reasons behind these protests were the belief that migrants were seeking rights and welfare without making efforts, which generations of Europeans had worked for. Additionally, the lifestyles of some migrants were considered unacceptable. Some had no intention of working and relied on social benefits, while others tried to obtain the necessary funds for further migration. There were repeated accusations against Ukrainian refugees from the war, whose numbers significantly increased in 2022. Some of them openly displayed a luxurious lifestyle while receiving social assistance from recipient countries. The highest number of such cases was recorded in Poland and Germany.

In 2020 alone, according to the Federal Statistical Office of Germany, Germany spent approximately EUR 4.1 billion on social benefits for refugees. As a result, the governments of some countries were forced to review their own policies on social support for migrants. This policy was maximally redirected towards retaining the most economically active individuals capable of implementing business projects in the country. In Germany, increased attention was paid to verifying the eligibility for social assistance and the nature of its use. In 2020, 1.1 million people in Germany received basic social assistance. In December 2020, the amounts of basic assistance paid increased by 1.3 % compared to the previous year. Addressed assistance

for housing rent was received by 592 000 households in 2020, totalling EUR 1.1 billion. The share of households receiving such social assistance was 1.4 % (Federal Statistical Office of Germany, 2023). In 2020, the volume of assistance increased slightly due to the COVID-19 pandemic. However, only a small portion of Germany’s population received housing rent assistance, indicating not only a relatively high standard of living but also the objectivity of its designation and the quality of social inspection. Nevertheless, a comparative analysis of the volumes of housing rent assistance and social payments to refugees allows us to talk not only about their comparability but also about the prevalence of assistance to refugees. The absolute majority of German citizens were able to independently pay for their own housing, and they were somewhat critical of those who, relying on social benefits, made no effort to pay for housing on their own.

Ensuring the necessary level of demographic resilience was also achieved through the implementation of programs to support childbirth or financial incentives after a child’s birth. These incentives include tax benefits, state housing programs, subsidies, or cash bonuses for families with children. For example, in 2020, in Germany, youth welfare services took care of approximately 45 400 children. A unique feature of the organization of state child support was that children themselves could apply for assistance. Furthermore, in Germany, there was an increase in the number of men receiving state aid for childcare (Federal Statistical Office of Germany, 2023).

In the EU, there is a regulation to ensure social security that defines common rules for the protection of social security rights during travelling within the European Union. All EU citizens and members of their families have the opportunity to use coordination rules if the legislation on social security of a member state applies to them. These rules apply to employees and self-employed persons, civil servants, students, pensioners, and citizens who are unemployed. The European Health Insurance Card allows citizens who are in a member state’s territory but not residents to have access to medical benefits during their stay under the same conditions and at the same cost as insured citizens in that country. After using the health insurance card, medical expenses are reimbursed by the social security system of their country of origin. These conditions are quite attractive to workers since their mobility within the EU for work-related trips or vacations is protected by medical insurance. This helps avoid competition in the labour market caused by better social security conditions in certain countries. Consequently, this system provides favourable conditions for establishing joint ventures and implementing joint business projects.

However, there are differences in pension payment rules within the EU. Typically, it is possible to receive a pension in the country where an EU citizen worked before leaving their job. If pension rights were accumulated in other countries, it is possible to receive a pension only after reaching the pension age established in those countries. In such cases, the choice of one type of pension provision affects the total amounts of payments. In some EU

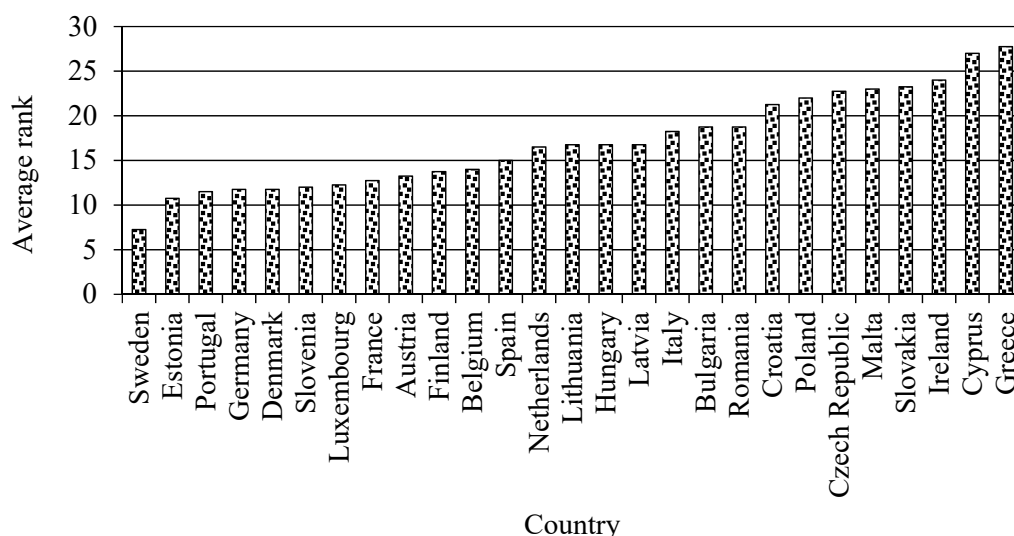
countries, entitlement to a pension is given based on a minimum work history. In such cases, the pension authority takes into account all periods of work in enterprises, institutions, and organizations within the EU to assess whether a specific citizen has the right to receive a pension. In addition, each pension authority calculates a portion of the pension it should pay, taking into account the periods accumulated in all EU countries. This calculation of the so-called theoretical amount allows determining the actual size of pension benefits with adjustments to the actual time a citizen was insured in a specific country.

The existence of proportional assistance in this case encourages people to work in one of the EU countries to secure a pension guaranteed by the European Union. This remains a significant incentive to avoid mass external labour migration of workers from EU countries. Such migration cases are usually not driven by the desire of Europeans to move to work in another continent but by the desire of immigrants from other countries to continue their "migration transit", for example, to the United States, from the territory of the EU.

The EU social security system emerged as a result of lengthy negotiations and the integration of European countries. It is a consequence of the competition in the global labour market and serves to preserve the labour potential capable of implementing innovative projects within the European Union. At the same time, the EU is facing increasing pressure from the United States, which, in one way or another, seeks to create a situation where it is advantageous for leading European workers to migrate to America. To prevent this, the proportional assistance system was created, which effectively expands the possibilities of choosing a place of residence after reaching retirement age on the territory of any EU country and does not restrict citizens from changing their place of residence within united Europe.

Family Friendly Policies help employees balance family and work responsibilities and fulfil both family and work duties without detriment to either sphere. Typically, such policies provide three main types of resources necessary for parents and children: time, finances, and services. Internationally, there is a transformation of business policies from providing financial support to providing social support for families, ensuring adequate services for child development and resources for their interaction with parents.

In June 2019, at the High-Level Political Forum in New York a summit dedicated to Family Friendly Policies was held, organized by UNICEF and the United Nations Global Compact. During the summit, a ranking of EU countries was presented based on the level of implementation of family-friendly policies (*Figure*). The inquiry revolves around four indicators: the duration of paid leave available to mothers, the duration of paid leave specifically reserved for fathers, the share of children below the age of three in childcare centres, and the share of children between the age of three and compulsory school age attending preschool or childcare centres (UNICEF, 2019).



Rating of EU countries by the level of implementation of family-friendly policies
 Note: high level (1–12 points), medium level (13–19 points), moderate level (20–30 points).
 Source: compiled by the authors according to (UNICEF, 2019).

According to the rating, Sweden, Estonia, Portugal, Germany, Denmark, Slovenia, Luxembourg, and France have the most family-friendly policies. For example, Sweden offers 35 paid weeks of maternity leave for mothers and 10.9 paid weeks for fathers. In contrast, in Estonia, compared to Sweden, maternity leave is longer (85 weeks) and shorter for fathers (2 weeks). The longest paternity leaves are offered by Portugal (12.5 weeks) and Luxembourg (10.4 weeks). The countries with the least family-friendly policies are the Czech Republic, Malta, Slovakia, Ireland, Cyprus, and Greece. In these countries, paid paternity leave is absent.

Family Friendly Policies increase the likelihood of women returning to work after maternity leave. Gender-neutral parental policies also help alleviate the so-called "motherhood penalty". By redistributing household responsibilities and allowing parents to fulfil their parental duties during parental leave, women are less likely to exit the workforce. This reduces the gender pay gap, enhances gender equality, and boosts economic productivity. For instance, the implementation of Family Friendly Policies in Scandinavian countries over the past 50 years, which is associated with increased female employment, has contributed to a 10–20 % per capita GDP growth (Sakharchuk, 2019).

To be effective, Family Friendly Policies need to strike a balance in terms of working hours, additional services, and employee compensation policies. Companies should consider the diversity of non-standard working situations and roles that their employees perform outside of work.

A compelling global example is Unilever, a leader in the food industry operating in 193 countries worldwide. Unilever provides a three-week paid

paternity leave for fathers. Furthermore, they've launched an educational program within the company to encourage fathers to take leave and care for their wives and children. This approach benefits everyone involved: mothers can recover more quickly after childbirth, fathers become closer to their wives and children, and babies receive more attention and care, which is crucial in the early days of life (Sakharchuk, 2019).

Four main stakeholders should be involved in the development of Family Friendly Policies: the government, businesses, families, and society (including civil and international organizations, trade unions, informal associations). Family Friendly Policies represent a balanced and equitable approach to ensuring resilient demographic development by motivating the population to have and raise children without hindering their career development.

4. Effective Migration and Refugee Management

In the 1992 Treaty on European Union, one of the areas of interest for the parties was immigration policy. This policy aimed to establish rules for the entry of third-country nationals into the EU territory, the conditions for their stay and employment within the EU, as well as the exercise of the right to family reunification and the prevention of illegal immigration. The pooling of efforts by EU member states in coordinating national migration policies was ensured without the risk of losing control over them by the member states. However, the situation somewhat changed in 1999 after the signing of the Amsterdam Treaty. The issue was that the determination of rules for entry into the EU territory, as well as their subsequent stay, movement, and family reunification of immigrants, were to be transferred to the EU level within five years. Setting such a deadline indicated the urgency for EU countries to address the problem of the increasing number of illegal immigrants. The quantity and nature of these migrants' arrivals practically prevented European countries from resolving this issue without close cooperation among them. The program Tampere adopted in 1999 identified the need to strengthen cooperation with countries of origin of immigrants, formulate a common asylum policy, and improve procedures for managing migration flows. However, the implementation of this program quickly revealed that the intentions of participating countries could significantly differ from the ideas proposed by the European Commission. A significant portion of states openly expressed the need to limit immigrant entry, counting on the support and resources of other EU member states. In 2004, the Hague Program was adopted, which gave additional attention not only to organizing countermeasures against illegal migration and human trafficking but also to legal migration. The control of the scale and nature of legal migration aimed to build the so-called "knowledge economy" with maximum support for economic development.

The EU's general approach to managing labour migration was outlined in the "Green Paper". The document called on European countries to intensify efforts in coordinating migration policy, including the establishment of uniform rules for long-term residence permits and the right to reside. In September 2005, the "A Common Agenda for Integration Framework for the Integration of Third-Country Nationals in the European Union" (A Common Agenda, 2005) was introduced. Integration involved expanding the involvement of immigrants in employment to increase their employment rates. The appearance of such a document indicated the increase in migration flows to such an extent that they exceeded the framework of building the "knowledge economy". Part of the external migrants, attracted by a relatively higher standard of living in the EU, counted on social integration exclusively through local government programs for migrant assistance. In this case, the increasing number of migrants only contributed to the growing burden on the social systems of EU member countries. This required measures to maximize the utilization of migrant labour. In fact, the liberalization of migration policy was a forced phenomenon and indicated not only the complexity of managing migrant flows but also the EU's interest in workers against the backdrop of the increasing average age of European countries' residents. On the other hand, authorities in several European countries had concerns about the increase in the number of migrants due to some countries' reluctance to accept them, especially regarding integration into recipient countries and employment conditions. These concerns arose because immigrants not only wanted to live in compact communities but also because of the consolidation of their demands for acceptance in recipient countries and employment conditions. Without having the required level of professional qualifications, migrants at times wanted relatively high-paying jobs.

The European Council meeting in 2006 was dedicated to the issue of amnesty for illegal immigrants, where Spain's position, which had taken such a step, was criticized. The scale of the amnesty was quite extensive, covering approximately 600 000 individuals (Borawska-Kędzierska et al., 2009). This meeting turned out to be one of the attempts to make a decision without consulting other EU countries. However, the issue of illegal migration continued to be a central topic of discussion, leading to the establishment of a special working group composed of ministers of interior affairs from the United Kingdom, France, Spain, Poland, Germany, and Italy. In 2008, this working group prepared a migration and asylum pact, which included a proposal to abolish mass amnesty for illegal immigrants. In this case, the EU's goal was to develop a unified concept for granting asylum to refugees and forming a single status for them. The unification of the concept was motivated by the fact that EU countries had previously joined forces to establish external control over immigration inflows while eliminating internal controls at the borders between countries. The Dublin rules of the EU in 2003 (Regulation (EU), 2013) established criteria and mechanisms for

a country's responsibility regarding the examination of asylum applications. The EU also defined minimum requirements for granting temporary protection in cases of a sudden increase in the number of displaced persons and measures for distributing the efforts related to receiving such individuals.

These actions demonstrated not only an awareness of the problem of increasing refugee flows but also the complexity of developing a unified EU migration policy if one member-state regularly resorts to amnesties for illegal immigrants. Of course, the interest in relatively cheap labour could be a reason for such a decision, but the subsequent legalization of a growing number of immigrants based on family reunification rules could have uncontrolled consequences for other EU states.

The initiators of the abolition of illegal immigrant legalization were primarily those states with relatively high levels of social security. This attracted immigrants to move to their territory, and in the absence of border controls between EU countries, it could become a serious problem due to the strain on the social security systems of certain countries.

An important step in regulating border crossings with EU countries was the process of digitalizing control systems. The issuance and receipt of documents in digital form not only simplified identity checks over time but also allowed facial recognition systems to be used for identification. The digitalization of healthcare services, administrative services, and the recording of the timing and volume of social benefits greatly strengthened control over border crossings and the receipt of social payments. However, to ensure maximum efficiency, digitalization required the unification of data verification rules and their incorporation into the system. In 2005, the EU adopted Directive 2005/85/EU on minimum standards for granting and withdrawing refugee status.

In 2011, the unification of rules for granting refugee status and accounting for refugees in EU countries played an important role during the migration crisis associated with the Syrian conflict resolution. At that time, a large number of war refugees sought to enter Europe illegally for subsequent legalization. Moreover, some of these people lacked any motivation to work, and their main reason for migration was the belief that the EU was "obliged" to help them in such a difficult situation.

Germany was one of the initiators of accepting an increasing number of refugees, but some other EU countries did not support such an initiative regarding refugees from the Middle East and Africa. For example, Poland tried to portray Ukrainian external labour migrants as war refugees whom the country was accepting on its territory. In this way, Poland attempted to avoid accepting migrants from countries whose citizens significantly differed from Poles in terms of lifestyle and standards of living. Such a challenge was not the last for Poland. In an attempt to facilitate the illegal migration of refugees from the war Belarus was also interested. The Polish-Belarusian border in many places was marked by attempts of illegal migrants to enter the EU from

Belarus. Moreover, the top leadership of Belarus did everything possible to destabilize the social situation in Poland and provoke a demographic crisis in that country. In such a situation, the Polish side had to resort to demonstrating its readiness to resolve the issue by force, preventing illegal crossings of its border with Belarus.

Overall, the unification of migration legislation with a focus on assimilating the most prepared specialists from other regions had a positive impact on the economies of countries that could ensure the adaptation of migrant workers in the best possible way, without disturbing the established way of life within the country. This could be achieved through a combination of advanced digital means of population movement control and a well-thought-out policy for migrant placement. In some cases, a successful scheme was used in which illegal migrants spent a certain period in places where the government of the country could effectively verify and identify them, after which they chose options for further socialization based on their level of professional competence, social adaptability, and willingness to comply with local laws. However, such an approach cannot be considered universal, as EU countries were repeatedly forced to accept large groups of illegal migrants against their will, and the readmission procedure did not always produce the desired results, especially when influential EU member state or several such countries were the initiators of refugee acceptance.

Conclusions

Demographic resilience reflects a country's (or region's) ability and capacity to ensure the quantitative and qualitative reproduction of demographic structures under specific historical, socio-economic, legal, and natural conditions. Demographic resilience also depends on the government's ability to anticipate demographic changes, understand their consequences, and develop policy measures. Ensuring demographic resilience in the EU is an important strategic goal that requires a comprehensive approach to implement the organizational and legal conditions that define it.

Demographic resilience within the EU is ensured through the implementation of comprehensive measures aimed at concentrating highly skilled workers within the European Union, fostering a sense of solidarity among the citizens of EU countries, optimizing the conditions for receiving refugees from other states, and socializing them on their own terms. Success is achieved through a systematic approach based on a thorough assessment of factors influencing migration processes and the scientific understanding and forecasting of future developments. The situation assessment is based on the analysis of diverse data on family status, the specifics of pension payments, the scale of cross-border movements, and the volume and nature of pension assistance.

A crucial means of ensuring demographic resilience is a sophisticated system for monitoring the volumes and utilization of social benefits, the

criteria for their allocation, determining the appropriateness of payments to one member of a couple, and for migrants arriving in the EU from other countries. Such a monitoring system not only forms an understanding of the presence and specialization of labour resources but also allows the evaluation of certain countries' capabilities regarding the reception and socialization of external labour migrants and war refugees. The development of the monitoring system received a significant boost during the COVID-19 pandemic when extensive digitalization of identification systems automated many processes related to border control.

Another important means of ensuring demographic resilience is the policy of placing migrants, which often involves compact placement, not allowing a change of residence for a certain period. This is necessary for their identification, determining the terms of their stay in the country, or making decisions regarding readmission.

The coordination of actions by the governments of individual countries in ensuring demographic resilience is achieved through regular consultations and the exchange of information. Despite the interest of individual countries, such as Germany, in accommodating an increasing number of refugees within the EU, some states refused to agree to unfavourable conditions. This did not lead to the disintegration of the EU, as some researchers predicted. Instead, EU countries developed algorithms for cooperation in complex situations related to the influx of refugees. In this case, the solution was the development of rules for border crossings and the placement of migrants. Additionally, conditions under which migrants could be forced to return to their home countries were established. This was often made possible by deepening cooperation with the governments of the countries from which the refugees originated.

Gender equality serves as a motivator for economic activity without harming family relationships and shared child-rearing. Strengthening gender equality still requires efforts aimed at improving the system of payments to spouses after the birth of a child and determining the size of such expenses. However, it is already positive that in the EU, men can take paternity leave if such a need exists, and this phenomenon does not elicit a negative reaction in society.

Demographic resilience cannot be achieved without the participation of the state. Ensuring demographic resilience requires a comprehensive strategy that takes into account various aspects of demography, such as birth rates, mortality rates, migration, and population structure. The state shapes trends regarding attitudes towards family, childbirth, child-rearing, attitudes towards migrants, and gender equality.

The prospects for further scientific research in this direction are related to substantiation of the methodology for calculating the level of demographic resilience of the country.

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