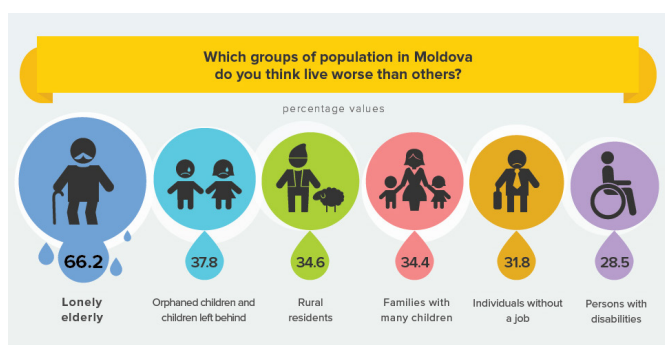


# MOLDOVA'S POPULATION IS CHANGING AND REQUIRES PEOPLE-CENTERED RESPONSES THAT BENEFIT ALL

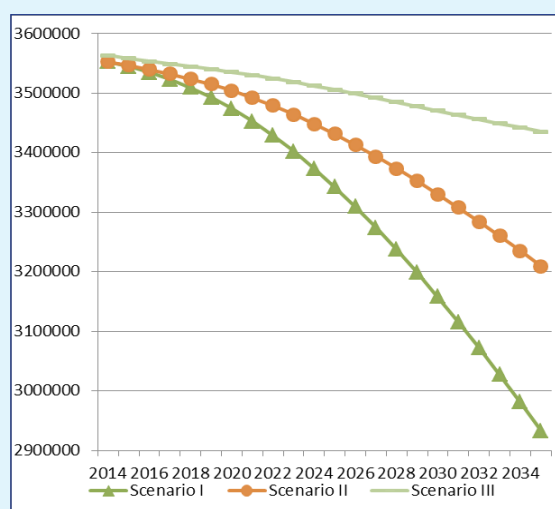
## THE ISSUE:



Moldova's population, like many countries, is going through important demographic changes. This is characterized by low birth rates, high infertility and an ageing population and has economic and social implications such as in terms of social protection, including pensions. Some of the changes can be seen positively, for example life expectancy has increased in the last 5 years from 65.31 to 68.05 years for men and from 73.37 to 75.55 years for women<sup>1</sup>.

Moldova can deal with these changes by focusing on the quality of its population. The experience in the region and elsewhere shows countries are successful when they invest in health, education and job opportunities, especially for young people. Fertility rates can go up when investments are made in health and education and when family-friendly laws and programmes are in place that allows women and men to reconcile work and having children. Family planning programmes can also contribute to healthier populations, increased population numbers and a more productive society.

## KEY FIGURES:



- If current trends and policies continue, the total population will be between 2.9m (low case scenario) and 3.4m (high case scenario) by 2035 (i).
- The share of persons aged under 15 decreased from 17.57 % in 2007 to 16.00 % in 2013; the share of the elderly people increased from 17.52 % in 2007 to 21.68 % in 2012(ii).
- The demographic dependency ratio was 51.07% in 2013, which means that one working age person is maintaining a person who was not employed (iii).
- Moldova has the 2<sup>nd</sup> highest secondary infertility in the world at 21.2%. This means that 1 in 5 women who have already had one child are unable to have another (iv).
- Sexually transmitted infections (STIs) can be responsible for up to 30%-40% of infertility cases (ii), and Moldova has the highest rate in the UNECE region of STIs (v).

While fertility is influenced by many factors, infertility is mainly a medical matter. The fact that in Moldova there is a very high level of secondary infertility - one in five women who have already had one

<sup>1</sup> National Bureau of Statistics, StatBank <http://statbank.statistica.md/pxweb/Dialog/Saveshow.asp>

child are unable to have a second - needs to be further understood and addressed so that families can fulfil their desired fertility. The availability of family planning and access to age-appropriate education and services has been proven to ensure a reduction in STIs, including HIV, and unsafe abortion and this can also reduce infertility.

Young people can be at the forefront of social transformation if provided with health services, quality education and decent job opportunities. Their active and meaningful participation in public life is not yet fully fulfilled.

As an important basis for adopting people-centred policies, the quality of data collected and the links between demographic research and policy-making need to be strengthened.

## PROGRESS MADE:

- A Roadmap on Ageing and an Implementation Plan for Mainstreaming Ageing into sectorial policies were developed and the National Programme for Demographic Security is in place.
- A wide range of facilities and programmes ensuring people's access to family planning and healthcare services were established, including 38 Youth Friendly Health Centres where more than 15,000 adolescents and youth benefited annually from information, services and commodities. A new Strategy for Youth Sector Development and a new Youth Law with participation of more than 750 young people give the opportunity for comprehensive framework for the development of the youth sector at local and national level.
- Demographic sector is coordinated at national level by a National Commission for Population and Development which brings together different ministries and government institutions, academia, NGOs and international partners such as UNFPA and the National Demographic Centre was established in 2011 to strengthen the policy response to population dynamics.
- In 2014, the Population and, for the first time, Housing Census was carried out. National Bureau of Statistics made a substantial progress in conducting this national statistical exercise, by applying new instruments in Moldova in evaluation of the Population and Housing Census

such as Post-Enumeration Survey. Policy makers together with civil society and media will have up-to-date population data in response to the needs of young people, elderly, minorities and vulnerable groups.

## WHAT REMAINS TO BE DONE:

Population changes are not a threat - but lack of preparation is. Moldova can:

- Identify a mechanism of assessing the impact of *all* policies in terms of the effect they will have on population patterns and incorporate population dynamics in sectorial policies to meet people's needs.
- Create conditions whereby families are able to make their own choices about how many and when to have children and so they can balance work/life.
- Ensure that young people have the best possible access to information, education and health so they can stay healthy and contribute effectively to the country's progress, including through their participation in decision-making and monitoring. In response to an ageing population, active involvement of elderly in public life should remain a priority and, for that, new intergenerational mechanisms should be developed.
- Strengthen the role of Parliament and the National Commission on Population and Development in monitoring implementation the existing plans and strategies; that the necessary funds are allocated; and that new policies are developed to European and international standards.
- Build a stronger research and data capacity within Moldovan institutions to be able to advise policy-makers on rights-based and evidence-based approaches for successful policies.

## Sources:

(i) ICPD At 20 Report by National Centre for Demographic Research, 2014; (ii) National Bureau of Statistics, 3 June 2014; (iii) National Bureau of Statistics, Stat Bank; (iv) [www.globalfertilitymap.com](http://www.globalfertilitymap.com) (v) [http://www.who.int/features/factfiles/sexually\\_transmitted\\_diseases/en/](http://www.who.int/features/factfiles/sexually_transmitted_diseases/en/)