

On the Demographic Potential of Russia as a Factor of Sustainable and Independent Development

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ABSTRACT

The article gives a comparative assessment of the demographic and economic potentials of Russia and the top ten world countries with the greatest military might. Its insufficient level is noted with the states with a special geopolitical and historical role in the world and with huge natural resource and other development opportunities, based on an independent policy. It is also noted that Russian demographic potential, in comparison with other major components of the geopolitical capacity, is the weakest point. The paper substantiates that the “weak points” were eliminated in the geopolitical potential for Russia of the early 21st century by operational and systematic build-up of its demographic and economic components, along with the defense capabilities maintenance at the sufficient level. It is noted that under the prevailing conditions, it is unacceptable to delay the development of economic and demographic components of Russian geopolitical potential — their accelerated buildup should be one of the key points of the ideological doctrine, of the long-term development strategy. The main indicators of today superpowers' values should become quantitative benchmarks. Approaching these values, in fact, is a fundamental condition for sustainable functioning of the country's economy and, possibly, for its survival as an integral and independent state.

Key words: Geopolitical potential, Geopolitical relations, Demographic and economic components, Competitive advantages, Population dynamics, Correlational dependence, long-term development strategy.

INTRODUCTION

Today, in the context of another exacerbation of geopolitical situation around Russia, a fundamental solution of the most significant and pressing issues of national security becomes particularly relevant here. One of such large-scale and acute problems of Russia requiring immediate solutions today is the lack of its demographic potential. One should remember that demographic potential is an important factor for economic development and one of geopolitical potential components. Small population is a rather old and massive problem for Russia, especially in view of its importance for the economic development and the country's defense capability, as well as the scale of demographic potentials of “active”

opponents who permanently suppressed it for centuries including the bloody wars examples.

Only recently in Russia there appeared some understanding, consideration of such a problem, and even certain actions have been taken to address it. In 2007, for example, a “Demography policy ...” was adopted (2007), but the results so far have been insufficient, particularly given that Russia was for a long time in the zone of the natural population losses and only in the past two years it has reached a slight growth. It seems to us that the individual measures are obviously inadequate to the magnitude of the problem. This is because this problem in Russia is still underestimated, and enough effective measures aren't taken.

In this regard, there is a need for further research on demographic issues in Russia and in its strategically important regions. Particularly, it should be treated as a factor of economic development and a constituent of geopolitical potential of the country.

Vladimir Putin noted in his annual message to the Federal Assembly that the quality and scope of the Russian economy must conform to its geopolitical and historical role in the world. Indeed, without a strong economy, comparable to the super-powers' one, it is difficult to perform significant geopolitical role in the modern world and to provide independent sustainable development of one's own country.

However, Russia will not be able to perform its geopolitical role successfully without the adequate development of another important, directly connected and highly economics-correlated element of geopolitical capacity—of the demographic factor. As the world experience of recent decades shows, along with the United States, the most populous countries — China and India have become leaders in economic development, largely unexpectedly for the rest of the world. China, whose GDP was only 11% of the USSR's, back in 1978, reached the first place in the world by the end of 2014 (estimated by the IMF at PPP) (List of countries by GDP ..., 2015). In the South of Eurasia another economic pole in the world is actively developing —India, which also largely unexpectedly became the third economic power in the world in absolute terms of GDP, outpacing the “recognized” global economic centers: Japan (by 1.5 times), Germany (by 2 times), etc.

Undoubtedly, Russia has tremendous opportunities (natural resource, territory, scientific, technical, etc.) to repeat their success. Yet in its dynamic movement, a critical limiting factor, in our view, is the small population and underestimation of this factor for the development of the economy and national security by the administrative structures at all levels. The size and density of the population in Russia today are such that it has become difficult to provide the realization of large-scale business projects demanded by our own and the global economy. It's even problematic to do the

current works, without additional labor force from other countries (Ioffe and Zayonchkovskaya, 2011; Girard, 2015; Bradshaw and Prendergrast, 2005; Khusnutdinova and others, 2015; Bazhenova and others, 2015; Karachurina and Mkrtychyan, 2015; Amcoff and Westholm, 2007; Tolts, 2008). Along with formidable challenges for the economy, small population makes it hard to maintain the geopolitical potential of the country at a high level, particularly in view of its intention to carry out an independent policy in the context of growing geopolitical tension around it.

Despite the severity of demographic problems in Russia, the decision-making authorities haven't fully realized it so far and effective measures haven't been taken. Today it takes only the 147th place in the world in birth rate (estimated by UN), with birth rate coefficient, $k = 12.6$ (with its average index in other countries of the world ($k = 20.3$) (The list of countries by birth rate ..., 2015). In 1990-e and the first decade of 2000-ies Russia even was found to demonstrate the population loss.

In these circumstances, the study of Russian demographic potential as a factor of sustainable and independent development is becoming critical. This is not only of scientific interest because there are almost no studies of the kind, but also of great practical significance for understanding the role of population in the country's gradual movement in the contemporary context, for justification of its importance and impact in strengthening the economic and geopolitical capacity and, in particular, for assessment of the opportunities and development prospects.

METHODOLOGY

Today, in the midst of a remarkable strengthening of the geopolitical tension in the world, there are new aspects in the methodological, theoretical issues of the population study. Along with the traditional “inside-branch” aspects of the population study, today it has become particularly relevant to study it as an important component of a coherent system—the geopolitical potential of the country. Its operation efficiency is in close connection with the condition of this (demographic potential), and every other component.

We consider the geopolitical potential of the country to be the aggregate 'national strength', consisting of a number of important components (military, economic, resource, population etc. potentials) and generating a corresponding level of its geopolitical influence on other countries. Geopolitical potential in today's world is a crucial factor in international political and other relations, while geopolitical factors today create the basic prerequisites for accelerated development of countries and major regions. It is important to mind not only the aggregate (or integral) geopolitical potential of the country, but also each of its main components.

Most "weak points" of the geopolitical potential tend to place outside pressure localization on the state, and vice versa, the more developed each component of the total capacity gets, the more stable its position in international relations is.

The purpose of this study is to evaluate the demographic potential of Russia as an important part of its geopolitical potential and a factor of its sustainable and independent development.

The study examines the demographic potential of Russia with the whole of its complex of "long-standing" and large, but not solvable problems. If we delay their solution further, it would inevitably lead to the aggravation of geopolitical problems and possibly to serious conflict situations. Thus, the subject of this study is justification of the magnitude and severity of the demographic problems in Russia and the development of suggestions for their solution to prevent the fragile state of the system as a whole (geopolitical capacity).

Summary of approaches. A system approach is applied whereby the demographic potential of Russia is not an end in itself, but as one of the main components of the geopolitical potential of the country and its relationship and integrity with its other key components and as an essential factor in economic development. So far, in the development of the basic components of geopolitical capacity, there is a significant gap, that inevitably leads to the system instability. To identify the "weakest points" in the geopolitical potential of the country, both Russian demographic potential

in comparison with the major world countries and other key constituents, as well as the geopolitical capacity in general are being evaluated. To justify the interconnected and simultaneous GDP development and population we assessed the tightness (force) of the correlation between these two values of the largest countries in the world.

Methods of evaluating geopolitical potential. To evaluate the quantity of the Russian geopolitical potential, in comparison with the world's largest "centers of power", we take into account five of their major components that mainly form the geopolitical potential: population, territory with all its natural-resource potential, gross domestic product (according to PPP), the military budget and the total military capability. (Because of the special significance of natural resource potential in relations among countries, it can be considered as a separate item in the row of other pillars of geopolitical capacity).

Each of these geopolitical potential components (except for the aggregate military capability, which is already a conditional unit obtained from different quantitative indexes) have strict quantitative, but unlike indicators. To perform calculations with different indicators, strict quantitative values of main geopolitical potential pillars of each country were converted into points, in accordance with their quantitative values.

To do this, for each component, the quantitative value of the leader country equaled 10 points. With the rest of the countries, the points score of the corresponding component was defined based on the ratios of their quantitative values with the leader country. The next step was to receive the sum of points of each country being compared on the five basic components of the geopolitical potential. And then, dividing the amount received from each country by five (according to the number of components)—to obtain the integral evaluation of their geopolitical potential on the scale of points.

RESULTS

The most "powerful" constituents of the Russian geopolitical potential are: 1) natural resource potential, including the territory as the

most important resource; 2) defense capabilities with its missile and nuclear component; 3) scientific, technical and educational capacity (Table 1).

Compiled using the following sources: * (List of countries by population..., 2015); ** (List of States ..., 2014); (List of countries by GDP ..., 2015); (SIPRI Yearbook, 2014); (Ageev, etc., 2011); (The population of China, 2014)

In fact, these three components of the Russian geopolitical potential are its main "competitive" advantages, which let us consider it among the three major powers in the world, along with the United States and China.

At the same time, along with these outstanding constituents of the Russian geopolitical potential, its economic and demographic

Table 1: Main indicators of geopolitical potential of the largest countries, 2014.

Countries	Population estimated on 1.01. 2015.*	Area, thous. Km ² *	GDP at PPP, bln. dollars. United States *** (IMF assessment)	Military budget. In billion dollars. United States ****	The general military capability, in points *****	The integral evaluation of geopolitical potential in points
The USA	320 (2,3)	9 629 (5,6)	17 419 (9,9)	610 (10)	9,7	7,5
China	1 367 (10,0)	9 597 (5,6)	17 617 (10)	216 (3,5)	7,3	7,3
Russia	146 (1,1)	17 098 (10)	3 565 (2,0)	84,5 (1,4)	7,5	4,4
India	1 264 (9,2)	3 288 (1,9)	7 370 (4,1)	50,0 (0,8)	5,8	4,3
Japan	127 (0,9)	378 (0,2)	4 751 (2,7)	45,8 (0,8)	3,2	1,5

Note: in brackets, there is a point score of the geopolitical potential components of the countries.

Table 2: Rating of the top 10 largest countries in the world, by main indicators

The top ten countries in the territory, million km ²		The top ten countries in terms of aggregate military capability (rating points)		The top ten countries by GDP (IMF, PPP), bln., 2014.		The ten most populous countries, million, Apr. 2015.	
Country's rating	Mln k²	Country's rating	points	Country's rating	Bln.USD.	Country's rating	Mln people
1. Russia	17,10	1. USA	9,7	1. China	17 617	1. China	1 372
2. Canada	9,98	2. Russia	7,5	2. USA	17 419	2. India	1 271
3. China	9,64	3. China	7,3	3. India	7 376	3. USA	319
4. USA	9,52	4. France	6,1	4. Japan	4 751	4. Indonesia	253
5. Brasil	8,51	5. India	5,8	5. Germany	3 722	5. Brasil	203
6. Australia	7,69	6. the UK	5,8	6. Russia	3 565	6. Pakistan	189
7. India	3,29	7. Israel	5,3	7. Brasil	3 264	7. Nigeria	178
8. Argentina	2,77	8. Pakistan	4,3	8. Indonesia	2 676	8. Bangladesh	157
9. Kazakhstan	2,72	9. Germany	3,6	9. France	2 581	9. Russia	146
10. Algir	2,38	10. Southern Korea	3,6	10. the UK	2 549	10. Japan	127

Compiled using the following sources: (List the States..., 2014); (Ageev, and others, 2011); (List of countries by GDP ..., 2015).

components don't have equally valid values. According to the size of the GDP, for example, Russia today is almost 5 times lower than the United States and China, the population lag is also very significant.

In one row with the United States and China, in many respects, the European Union (Eu, EU) can be rightly regarded (2015). This is an economic and political Union of 28 European States, with the signs of an international

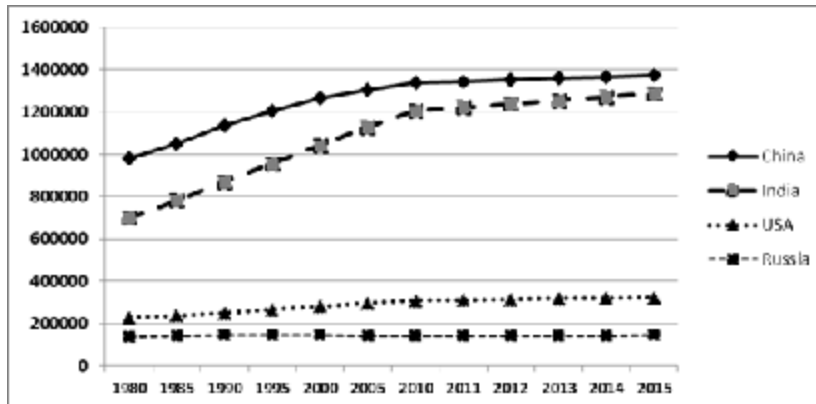


Fig. 1: Population dynamics in the largest countries in the world in 1980-2015, in thous.people

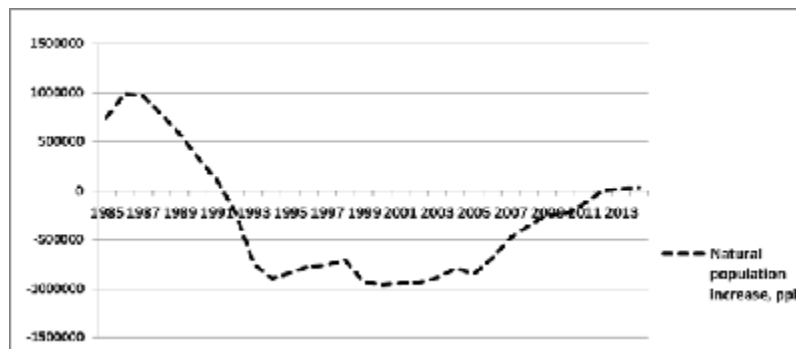


Fig. 2: Natural population growth in Russia in 1985-2014

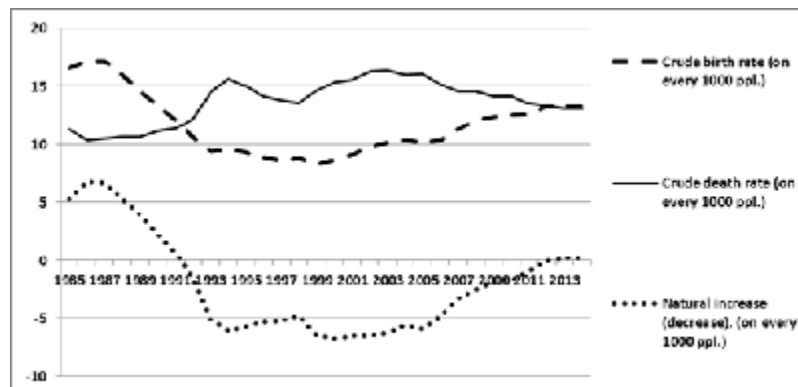


Fig. 3: General birth, mortality and natural increase of the population rates in Russia in 1985-2014

organization (an Interstate) and State (supranationalism). It produces about the same amount of GDP (18526 billion \$ in 2014, according to IMF), as the United States and China (List of countries by GDP, 2015). 506 million people live there, which is 3.5 times higher than in Russia (taking into account other European countries outside the EU, - 584 million).

For this reason, Russia which has had for a long time such an “active” geopolitical opponent as United States and NATO won’t get rid of permanent pressure on it (in the form of various types of sanctions, war threats, etc.) while maintaining the current status in its economic and demographic spheres. Therefore, along with the economy, Russia should rapidly develop the other important constituent of its geopolitical capacity—the demographic one. Here it seems to us that the demographic and economic potentials in the current conditions in Russia should develop rapidly, synchronously and in the interconnected way (like, for example, in China or India)—other approaches won’t bring the desired effect.

Our studies show that the values of these indicators are rather interdependent. Thus, Spearman’s rank correlation coefficient (r_s) between China’s GDP (in current prices, according to the National Bureau of statistics- NBS) and the growth of its population over the past 36 years (in 1978-2014) was: $r_s = 1$ (!). China in this period showed a very dynamic development of the economy, while its population also grew steadily—414 million people per 3.5 decades (China Population, 2014). Spearman rank correlation coefficient calculation (r_s) between the GDP dynamics of United States (in constant prices, 1970) and the growth of its population (United States., 2014) during the same period also confirms significant tightness (force) of the correlation between these indices: $r_s = 0.827$. That is, it may be noted that successful economies demonstrate their synchronized development with the population. In Russia, where “Gorbachev’s perestroika”, “Yeltsin-Gajdar’s reforms” and overly protracted exit from the era of change fell on this period, Spearman rank correlation coefficient (r_s), though not as high ($r_s = 0.627$), but generally also confirms the high interdependence of economic and demographic capabilities.

The demographic potential of Russia, in comparison with other major components of the geopolitical potential, is its “weakest point”. By this measure, it takes only the 9-th position in the world, while even in economy it takes the 6-th (Table 2).

As it can be seen from Table 2, the rank of world countries on the basis of five main indicators, shows the United States and China as leaders leaving other second-tier countries far behind. They both occupy the territory of more than 9 million km², producing gross production by more than 17 trillion \$. Their military and demographic capabilities also make them undoubted leaders. However, these superpowers really continue to rapidly increase their demographic potential today.

China, which was very dynamically developing during the last 36 years and by the end of 2014 became the global leader in economic potential (estimated by IMF), also increased the size of its population to 414.6 million people in this period, or by 1.4 times, while the entire population of Russia is only 146 million people) (fig. 1). The United States for the same period increased its GDP by 5, 9 times, and its population— by 90.6 million people, or, like China, by 1.4 times.

In Russia, which has always declared that the population is its main productive force, did little for its population growth in this period—over 36 years, the demographic potential increased just 1.06 times, or by 5.8% (taking into account the Crimean population). For a country, claiming a special geopolitical and historical role in the world, it is unacceptably little. As a result, while in 1980, the gap between the Russian population and its main geopolitical opponent—United States’ one amounted to 90 million people, in 2014 it was 172.5 million people. That is, the gap in the demographic potentials of modern superpowers and Russia only increases noticeably. With such a condition of demographic potential, it is unrealistic to count on effective implementation of any significant geopolitical role in the world, or on ensuring the sustainable development of the Russian economy in the long run.

Russia is comparable with the United States and China, or even gets slightly ahead of

their military and resource capabilities, but, as it can be seen from Tables 1 and 2, fig. 1, it is unacceptably behind them with equally important demographic and economic potential. With its demographic potential, Russia occupies only the 9th place in the world today, behind not only the leaders, but also such countries as Indonesia, Brazil, Pakistan, Nigeria, Bangladesh (List of countries by population..., 2015). Even neighboring Japan with its population is very close to Russia, though it has a 45 times smaller territory.

Even concerning another critical and equally insufficiently “prosperous” geopolitical component—GDP—according to IMF— Russia takes a higher—6th position (when evaluated by the purchasing power parity of currencies-PPP). Still it should be noted that the 6-th place in the world for such an important indicator as GDP is not a proper position for the state wishing to pursue an independent policy. This becomes evident today, judging by the changes of geopolitical and economic relations among the countries of the Western world and Russia.

That means that the “weakest point” in Russian geopolitical potential remains its demographic component—with its importance as the primary productive force and the most effective tool of control over its own territory, as evidenced by the centuries-old history. At the same time, Russia, which is experiencing serious demographic problems, creating corresponding geopolitical problems, takes only the 147th place in the world birth rate (List of countries by birth rate ..., 2015). According to this index the United States and labor-force abundant China are ahead of it.

We previously noted repeatedly that a long-term persistence or widening of disparities and contrasts in geopolitical potentials of neighbouring countries and their regions inevitably leads to the emergence of geopolitical problems and often to serious conflict situations (Baklanov and Romanov, 2009; Baklanov and Romanov 2014; Romanov 2012).

Judging by the recent sustained pressure on Russia, the West in the face of NATO countries, do not feel like “tolerating” its ambivalent position

any longer and is making efforts to reduce the level of its independence in the economic sphere, to demonstrate their geopolitical dominance. Therefore, NATO structure is aggressively expanding and increasing its military presence near Russian borders in Eastern Europe, at the Black and Barents Seas. Here military conflicts are fuelled by various economic sanctions; attempts are being made to create economic isolation, etc.

In these circumstances, if Russia is not prepared to agree to the place in a new world order suggested by the West, it must address the fundamental “weaknesses” in its geopolitical potential. Eliminating the “weak points” for Russia in the early 21st century means operational and systematic build-up of its demographic and economic components (in addition, of course, to the maintenance of its defense capabilities at the sufficient level). If to express this quantitatively, in order to become one of the top three superpowers, Russia in the long term should triple its demographic potential and 4.5 times increase GDP.

This should become an essential element of the ideological doctrine and long-term development strategy in Russia—otherwise, there is no chance to enjoy an undisturbed future. It is important to not only absolutely increase the economic and demographic potentials of Russia as a whole, but also to increase their concentration in the promising and strategically most important at one time or another regions—in view of the fact that it is difficult to ensure the accelerated development of economically and demographically low-density spaces.

Russian demographic problems are not new, they have been more than urgent for the country for over hundreds of years, especially in view of multimillion human losses in two World wars and in the Civil one. However, throughout this period, the State didn’t make any serious efforts for the problem solution—apparently believing that the demographic problem would have solved by itself. Yet, as we know, nothing is settled by itself. As a result, Russia, which had 159 million people in 1913 (The population of Russia ..., 2015), which lost both its the territories and population over the years, had only 146 million people in 2014, while the United

States and China, which became super-powers by the time of the 20th-21st centuries, increased their population by 3.4 times in the 100-year period.

Having had almost a million (or 0.68%) of annual population growth, Russia was losing it for 21 years (from 1992 to 2012) because of “Gorbachev’s perestroika” and “Yeltsin-Gaidar’s reforms” and only in 2013 it slightly improved the situation (fig. 2). Thus, in 2013, the growth was 24 013 people (or 0.016 percent increase), in 2014—33688 people more (or 0.023%).

Of course, for a state with huge natural-resource and other development opportunities and a special geopolitical and historical role in the world, relying on an independent policy, it is unacceptably little, especially against the background of the sustainable demographic development of the modern superpowers—the United States and China, which have a multiple times larger population. Thus, the USA—an active geopolitical opponent of Russia almost annually demonstrates 1% population growth (in 2013 and 2014—by 0.99 percent, or 3.1 million people/year), China in these years preserved a roughly 0.50 percent population growth, or 6.7 million people/year.

Russia, which faces serious demographic constraints, creating corresponding economic and geopolitical problems, takes only the 147th place in the world in birth rate (fertility rate-12.6, while the average ratio for the whole world is 20.3) (fig. 3). According to this index, it drags behind the United States with their population of 320 million people and 1.37 billion-populated China, which take respectively the 139th and 145th places (estimated by UN) on the list.

In the newest history of Russia, when the demographic problems have become critical in many respects, the “Demographic policy of the Russian Federation for the period up to the year 2025” was designed and approved in 2007 by the Decree of the President (Population policy..., 2007). As it is stated in this document, the demographic policy of the Russian Federation aims at increasing life expectancy, mortality reduction, birth-rate growth, regulation of internal and external

migration, maintaining and improving the population health and—basing on this all—improvement of the demographic situation in the country. The objectives, quantitative benchmarks of this RF demographic policy stabilization of population were announced to be 142-143 million people for the year and creating conditions for its growth to 145 million by 2025, as well as improving the life quality and life expectancy increase to 70 years by 2015 and to 75 years by 2025. (For information: in the year of “Population policy...” development, the RF population was 142.2 million people).

As it can be seen in Fig. 3, after the adoption of the “Population policy...” Russia managed to markedly reduce mortality (coeff. _{mort.} in 2014 = 13.1) and to increase fertility (coeff. _{birth} in 2014 = 13.3), and today there is, though, a small but a positive correlation between these two metrics. Governance structures at all the levels consider it a positive trend. However, in the face of foreign and economic pressure, the progress made, in our view, appears to be unstable and low, failing to provide the independent development.

In the light of the evolving geopolitical situation around Russia and tangible lack of work force, constraining its movement, its position in the demographic sphere is not satisfactory. It should be recognized that quantitative benchmarks stated in this “Population policy ...” seem surprisingly modest and in no way helpful when the urgent task is to radically increase the demographic potential of Russia and the repopulation of its strategically important territories at least. Population policy designed for “peaceful” time and aimed at the “evolutionary” population growth in the country, life expectancy increase, mortality reduction, preservation and enhancement of the population health, may not be sufficient and effective in terms of geopolitical tensions. For the “undisturbed life,” Russia must have demographic and economic potentials, close to those of the superpowers. That is, the values of the major indicators of today superpowers must become quantitative benchmarks for Russia in the long term. Approaching these values, in fact, is a prerequisite for its sustainable development and preserving the status of a holistic and independent state.

Undoubtedly, in Russia, the population health strengthening as well as the life expectancy increase and mortality reduction are extremely important. Yet, today, the population policy should have other priorities, namely: birth rate increase (which also adds to the “rejuvenation” of the nation) and migration flows to strategically important regions, which proved their effectiveness in previous critical periods both in Russia and, for example, in neighboring China.

Achieving the above broad objectives of demographic development in Russia is principally possible—the historical destiny gave it very significant competitive advantages over all other countries of the world in the form of huge territories and richest natural resources capacity to ensure sustainable and accelerated development. However, these competitive advantages should be effectively disposed of—as it was indicated in the “Population policy ...,” to create a sustainable resource base, for the successful solution of a wide range of challenges of economic and demographic development.

The obvious correlation between GDP and population growth lets us note that the demographic potential increase problem can eventually be solved in active economy development and noticeable raise of the people's standard of living. The vast majority sees the living standards rise, income increase and housing affordability as the main conditions for the potential natural population reproduction.

In the emerging geopolitical conditions, it is unacceptable to delay the development of highly efficient production, adapted to market conditions. It is a priority in strategically important regions, together with the establishment of advanced development territories, with the creation of well-paid jobs, with a massive construction of affordable housing for the population, etc. –in order to consolidate it here for the expanded reproduction and, as a consequence, the accelerated development of the economy.

DISCUSSION

For several decades, many authors have

noted that the world should restrain population growth, and that though its growth has slowed, although, in general, the Earth is overcrowded, and in many regions of the world population continues to grow rapidly (Golini, 2001; Rougoor and Marrewijk, 2015; Tolts, 2008). One should accept that the past XX century like no other, was really distinguished by rapid population growth on the Earth as a whole—from 1.65 billion people in 1900 to 6.1 billion people in 2000. The population increased particularly considerably in Central and South America—7.0 times during this period, in Africa—6.0 times, in Asia and North America—3.9 times.

At the same time, opposing the worldwide trend, the European population for this 100-year period increased very inconsiderably—only 1.8 times, including Russia — 2.2 times. So one can't say that there has been a significant population growth everywhere. Moreover, today in most European countries (and for more than two decades in Russia) even a simple reproduction of the population is not provided (Amcoff and Westholm, 2007). In 2014, for example, the population decline in Ukraine was 6.31 ‰ per 1000 inhabitants, in Bulgaria—5.38 ‰, in Serbia—4.58 ‰, in Hungary—3.46, in Germany—2.87 ‰, in Austria—1.62 ‰, in Portugal—1.55 ‰, etc. (List of ... on increment, 2014; Amcoff and Westholm, 2007).

The situation in Russia is in many ways similar to overseas Europe: only in 2013 it got out of the 21-year period of significant population losses, and in 2014, the natural growth made +0,017 ‰. Naturally, this is too little for the sustainable and independent development in the present geopolitical and external environment (Karachurina and Mkrtychyan, 2015; Khusnutdinova, etc., 2015; Ioffe and Zayonchkovskaya, 2011; Tolts, 2008; Jargin, 2009). Hence, in opposition to the worldwide (excluding Europe) trends, Russia should aim to accelerate the development of its population, in accordance with its economic and geopolitical challenges.

In the situation where modern world construction rests on the primacy of force, on mutual military-defensive deterrence of states, only a competitive state can resist the world power

monopoly. This self-sufficient state should have such global internal factors as military, financial and economic, demographic, natural-resource potential, and territory.

As can be seen from Table 1, Russia is one of the few countries that has a number of such defining global development factors, so it really can perform a special geopolitical and historic role of the confrontation to one state monopoly on the world power. Yet, its insufficiently developed demographic and economic potentials are limitation factors.

CONCLUSION

Economic and demographic indicators of countries' development are interdependent; there is obvious density (power) correlation between them. In this regard, the demographic development of Russia should be synchronously interrelated with its economic development to ensure greater impact.

The advanced development of economic and demographic potentials of Russia, especially in its strategically important regions, approximation of those geopolitical potential components to the level of the superpowers' is, in fact, a condition for its survival as a holistic and independent state. It is certainly unreal for Russia to quickly move closer to the demographic indicators of the superpowers, even of the most active "opponent", the United States or the European Union. However, it should start aspiring to that, immediately and rapidly.

Under the current circumstances, a cardinal increase of the demographic potential for Russia becomes a condition and a factor for sustainable and independent development. In this regard, it seems necessary to adjust the present "Demographic policy of the Russian Federation for the period up to 2025" or to develop a new population policy for the next twenty - thirty years, aimed at a radical increase of the demographic potential of the country. Primarily it should be made through the increase of natural reproduction and, to a lesser extent, through the increase of life expectancy and compatriots' or other Slavic population immigration (Bazhenova, etc., 2015) to particularly "problematic" regions—to avoid religious and other tensions (on the background of the dramatic rise in living standards and the special housing within those regions).

Therefore, the rapid build-up of demographic and economic potential should become one of the key points of Russia's long-term development strategy and doctrine.

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