

# COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS OF PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION IN THE DEMOGRAPHIC SPHERE

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**Annotation.** The article offers a comparative analysis of how states design and implement public administration in the demographic sphere – covering fertility, mortality, migration, population ageing, and spatial distribution. Using a mixed-methods approach (desk review of legislation and strategies, policy scoring across 30+ OECD/EU jurisdictions, and illustrative case studies from the Nordics, France, Germany, Canada, Japan, and several CEE countries), the study examines institutional architectures, instruments, and results. We contrast centralized demographic councils, inter-ministerial coordination units, and devolved municipal models; assess policy toolkits (cash transfers and tax credits, parental leave and ECEC expansion, active-ageing and long-term-care systems, talent-oriented migration schemes, regional repopulation programs); and evaluate enabling capacities (civil registration and digital population registers, data governance, foresight, and impact evaluation).

Findings show that durable outcomes arise where demographic policy is mainstreamed into labor, housing, health, education, and territorial planning; where monitoring frameworks connect indicators (TFR, net migration, old-age dependency, healthy life years) to budget triggers; and where implementation is co-produced with local governments and social partners. Nordic and French models excel at family policy/ECEC coverage; Japan and Germany illustrate ageing-readiness via long-term-care insurance and silver-economy activation; Canada and Australia highlight selective migration coupled with integration services. Common pitfalls include fragmented governance, short political cycles, and weak evaluation culture; cash-heavy but service-poor designs underperform. The article proposes a governance template: a legally mandated demographic strategy; a permanent coordination body with fiscal nudges; standardized data pipelines and ethics safeguards; routine quasi-experimental evaluation; and crisis clauses for shocks (pandemics, displacement, energy price spikes). The contribution is a practical comparative framework linking institutions to outcomes and a menu of reforms adaptable to diverse administrative traditions.

**Key words:** public administration, demographic processes, international practice, administrative and legal regulation, demographic policy, international organizations, migration, birth rate, mortality, national security, social policy, economic development, globalization, governance models, implementation.

## 1. Introduction.

Demographic change has moved from a background condition to a first-order driver of public policy. Persistently low fertility, rising longevity, accelerated migration, and internal spatial polarization reshape labor markets, health and pension systems, housing demand, education pipelines, and territorial cohesion. These shifts are not merely statistical trends; they are governance problems that require coordinated decisions by multiple public actors operating under fiscal, legal, ethical, and political constraints. As a result, the quality of public administration – its institutions, processes, and capacities – has become decisive for how effectively states manage demographic risks and convert them into opportunities.

Most scholarship and practice focus on *what* policies to adopt – child benefits, parental leave, long-term care insurance, or talent-oriented migration – while paying less systematic attention to *how* governments organize themselves to design, deliver, and evaluate those policies. Fragmented

mandates across ministries, weak intergovernmental coordination, underdeveloped data systems, and short political cycles often undermine otherwise sound policy ideas. Conversely, jurisdictions with similar instruments achieve different outcomes because of differences in administrative architecture (centralized vs. devolved), implementation capacity (workforce skills, digital infrastructure), and accountability mechanisms (targets, evaluation, and budgetary triggers). This gap between program content and administrative capability motivates a comparative inquiry centered on public administration rather than on policy menus alone.

## **2. Analysis of scientific publications.**

The issue of public administration of demographic processes in international practice has been studied by both domestic and foreign scholars. Among Ukrainian authors, it is worth noting the work of G. Balabanova, Z. Varnaliya, O. Grishnova, E. Libanova, N. Ryngach, L. Tarangula, O. Shnyrkov, who analyzed state regulation of demographic processes and socio-economic aspects of population reproduction. A. Degtyar, O. Dolinchenko, M. Kravchenko, O. Malinovska and N. Vasyliev made a significant contribution to the development of methodology and conceptual and categorical apparatus of management in this area. Among foreign researchers, it is worth highlighting A. Bressand, A. Vyshnevsky, O. Zakharov, L. Lindberg, B. Rosamund, W. Wallace, who focused on international legal standards and institutional models of demographic policy. Generalization of scientific approaches allows us to state that in international studies, public administration is considered as a multi-level process that contributes to international, regional and national mechanisms for regulating demographic changes.

## **3. The aim of the work.**

The aim of the article is to study the international practice of public administration of demographic processes, taking into account various administrative and legal models, institutional mechanisms and instruments. Particular attention is paid to the possibilities of adapting effective foreign approaches to national conditions in order to increase the effectiveness of demographic policy.

## **4. Review and discussion.**

Demographic processes are now viewed as one of the main determinants of a state's development: they directly shape socio-economic trends, labour potential, living standards, and the level of national security. The configuration and dynamics of the population determine the size and quality of the labour market, consumer demand, the degree of social stability, and the prospects for economic growth. Under conditions of globalization, intensive international mobility, and active migration flows, demographic change transcends national borders and requires analysis from an international perspective.

Rising average age, declining fertility, large-scale forced and economic migration, as well as the consequences of war, generate complex challenges for public administration. These require flexible and effective administrative-legal instruments capable of simultaneously maintaining social balance, economic competitiveness, and demographic security. At the same time, global experience shows there is no universal model suitable for every country.

Global demographic trends differ markedly by region. In the EU, Japan, and South Korea, population ageing combined with low fertility predominates, forcing labour shortages to be offset by immigration. By contrast, South Asia, Africa, and Latin America record high population growth rates driven, *inter alia*, by early marriage (for example, Iranian law provides very low minimum ages for entering into marriage), religious norms, traditions of large families, and restrictions on abortion [1, p. 10]. Each year about 130 million people are born worldwide and about 50 million die, yielding an absolute natural increase of roughly 80 million people [2]. If such growth rates persist, serious socio-economic and environmental risks will arise in the future.

Forecasts suggest the world's population may reach 8.3 billion in 2025 and 9.2 billion in 2050 [3]. This prompts governments to seek effective population policies. In most developing countries, as



well as in China, the priority is to slow natural increase: benefits for “small” families, information campaigns on the advantages of fewer children, raising the minimum marriage age, and in some cases economic sanctions, including taxes, for large households [4]. The vast majority of developing countries support international family-planning programmes: restricting early marriage, promoting contraception, and expanding women’s participation in public life. UN-led population programmes financed by international aid play a significant role (in 2010 – about USD 10 billion, of which 5% for family planning, 18% for reproductive health, and 71% for HIV/AIDS prevention).

In developed countries, policy moves in the opposite direction: the state stimulates fertility through financial support for families with children, improved access to quality health care, and social services. Overall, regulatory measures have already produced tangible effects: in countries that officially set a goal of reducing fertility, the total fertility rate fell by 3.1 over the last 35 years; in those that did not declare such a goal – by 2.2; and even where an increase was sought – there was a decline of 1.6. According to S. P. Kapitsa’s mathematical models, with sustained family-planning policies in “periphery” countries, absolute population growth will gradually diminish, approaching stabilization as fertility and mortality converge [5].

The shift from a hyperbolic growth trajectory to a logistic (stabilizing) one is due, in particular, to declining fertility first in developed countries and now in many developing ones. Changing values favour “quality upbringing of one or two children” over the pursuit of large families. Studies confirm a direct link between living standards and the type of population reproduction: in highly developed states (high per-capita incomes, advanced education and health systems) a narrowed or simple type prevails, whereas in countries with low indicators an expanded type dominates. Length of schooling – especially for girls – is decisive: more years in education correlate with lower subsequent fertility.

Another global challenge is the shrinking cohort of working-age people in advanced economies, threatening labour shortages. The problem can be partly alleviated by mobilizing older workers and attracting migrants. Excessive ageing, however, risks dampening innovativeness, since the core of technological creation and diffusion falls within ages 20-60. UN estimates indicate that the combination of low fertility and falling mortality since the 1980s has accelerated global ageing: between 2015 and 2050 the number of people aged 65+ will increase 2.6-fold to 1.6 billion (16%), and by the mid-2030s those aged 80+ will outnumber infants (under 1), reaching 265 million; by the late 2070s – 2.2 billion [6;7]. The process is most intense in Europe: by 2050 older persons are expected to account for 27.6% of the population. In France, life expectancy is among the highest (about 82 years for women and 70 for men), while the retirement age is 62 regardless of sex. In Germany, those 65+ already constitute about one-fifth of the population, and within 10-15 years their share may rise to 50%. In Italy, people aged 60+ made up 24.1% in 2000, and by 2050 this may reach 42.3%; those 65+ – from 18.1% to 35.9% [8, p. 175]. Absent migration, the EU’s population would already have shrunk by about 500,000 in 2022; immigration has thus become a key factor sustaining population and the labour force [9].

At the same time, the EU experiences strong internal migration flows that reshape regional demography. Territories attracting younger and more qualified migrants show dynamic labour markets, growth, and rapid urbanization – together with rising demand for energy and housing and shifts in land use that require adapted urban planning. By contrast, some cities – especially in former industrial regions – face stagnation, with high unemployment, poverty, and social exclusion.

Another significant challenge is the intra-European “brain drain,” driven by structural youth unemployment, shortcomings in education systems, unfavorable working conditions, and political instability in certain regions. International indices place Ukraine among the leaders by scale of high-skilled emigration. To counter this, the European Commission launched the Policy Support Facility (PSF), which assists EU member states in designing, implementing, and evaluating reforms in research and innovation. Within national recovery and resilience plans, several countries are undertaking deep changes: for example, Latvia has carried out a comprehensive higher-education reform, while Slovenia adopted a new Law on Scientific Research and Innovation, overhauling governance and funding of the research sector [10].

Intergovernmental organizations play a key role in shaping and developing national demographic policies by producing universal and regional standards of legal regulation. The United Nations, acting through its institutions (UNFPA, the Department of Economic and Social Affairs, and the Commission on Population and Development), conducts systematic monitoring of global demographic trends,

prepares analytical reports with forecasts, and issues recommendations to member states on improving policy in line with agreed international approaches [10].

The International Labour Organization, relying on its conventions, recommendations, and protocols, sets legal benchmarks for decent work, the regulation of international labor migration, and the integration of migrants into host-country labor markets. In its approach, demographic shifts are treated as an integral component of socio-economic security, emphasizing the interdependence between population structure and the legal mechanisms that ensure adequate employment.

The Council of Europe influences national legal policy through framework documents, resolutions, and recommendations addressing human rights in the context of demographic transformations – from protecting migrants' rights and promoting gender equality to safeguarding vulnerable groups. Although much of this output takes the form of soft law, it is widely used as guidance when preparing and implementing national strategies and legislation.

The influence of international organizations is realized primarily through international legal instruments (conventions, declarations, resolutions, and framework programs) that set general principles and standards – binding or recommendatory – and establish institutional mechanisms for coordination among states.

The extent to which such norms are implemented domestically depends directly on a state's institutional capacity, the maturity of its administrative-legal institutions, and the political will of public authorities to adapt international standards to national socio-economic realities. Practice shows that effectively internalizing international approaches can catalyze the modernization of the national administrative-legal mechanism of public administration in the demographic sphere.

## 5. Conclusions.

The results of the study confirm that modernizing national models of public administration of demographic processes must rest on a systemic, evidence-based, and institutionally embedded approach. Its backbone is the integration of best international practices into national law and managerial procedures, taking into account Ukraine's realities of war, recovery, and European integration. A key precondition is the creation of a unified information-analytical contour for demographic data – from continuous collection and validation of indicators to forecasting and strategic planning with clear performance metrics. Such a system should operate on the principles of interagency interoperability (uniform exchange protocols, registry interoperation), cybersecurity, and adherence to privacy and personal data protection standards.

No less crucial is strengthening interagency coordination. Clear mandates and accountability of public bodies, stable decision-coordination procedures, and the avoidance of overlapping functions are needed. Ideally, a standing coordination body (an interagency council) should be institutionalized with powers to shape, monitor, and adjust demographic policy at all levels – from national to municipal – engaging academia, business, and civil society. This will allow swift conversion of analytics into policy decisions, and decisions into budget-backed programs.

Migration governance should balance three dimensions: labor-market needs, social integration, and security. It is advisable to align national norms with international treaties on the protection of migrant workers while streamlining entry and employment for highly skilled professionals, researchers, and entrepreneurs. In parallel, a talent retention and return policy (scholarships, "career bridges," tax incentives, research support) should be deployed and integrated with regional human-capital strategies.

The family-demographic pillar requires a shift from fragmented benefits to a coherent, impact-tested policy: targeted tax and cash instruments to support parents, affordable housing for young families, an extensive childcare network, flexible work arrangements, and comprehensive coverage of reproductive health and prevention. Every tool should be underpinned by impact evaluation (ex ante/ex post), clear KPIs, and mechanisms for discontinuing ineffective spending. Territorial differentiation is essential – diverse regional demographic profiles call for tailored mixes of incentives.

Transparency and accountability are prerequisites for trust and resilience. Regular public reporting using harmonized indicators, open data on program execution, civic oversight tools, and independent



effectiveness audits must become standard. Particular attention should be given to a "crisis module" of demographic policy: accounting for losses, tracking internally displaced persons and their needs, reintegration of veterans and their families, and medical and psychosocial support – each embedded in codified rapid-response procedures.

Thus, a contemporary model of demographic public administration for Ukraine is not only updated legal norms but also a harmonized architecture of data, institutions, and financing that functions on principles of evidence, interagency coherence, regional sensitivity, and fiscal responsibility. Comprehensive implementation of international standards adapted to national conditions will increase the resilience of the demographic system, strengthen human capital, and lay the foundation for long-term inclusive growth and security.

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