POPULATION POLICIES

DSE-4 (Population Geography)   Sem: VI

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Population policy: A population policy is <u>a set of measures</u> taken by a state or a country to <u>modify</u> the way its population is changing.

➢ Population polices either <mark>promoting large families or immigration</mark> to increase its size. Or,

➢ <mark>Discouraging large families</mark> by encouraging limitation of births and also aim to modify the distribution of the population over the country by formulating strict law against migration or <u>by displacing populations.</u>

• So, it can be said that Population policies are primarily a response to the anticipated consequences of **fertility and mortality**, and secondarily to internal and international **migration** that also modify the size, age composition, and regional distribution of the population.

• In other words, *Population policies, implemented by governments, are a series of actions that are introduced to a country to adjust the county's population size. This may be encouraging the population size to increase or attempting to limit the population size.*

• *Population policies to influence population growth and distribution involve a wide range of decisions and actions by governments, both direct and indirect, which <u>influence</u> <u>individual and family decisions</u> regarding <u>marriage and childbearing, working arrangements, place of residence</u>, etc.*

MAJOR AREAS OF CONCERN FOR POPULATION POLICIES :

- MORTALITY

- FERTILITY

- MIGRATION

- SPATIAL DISTRIBUTION OF POPULATION etc.

❑ With regard to **mortality** it may be said that most of the countries in the world were not satisfied with their present level of life expectancy. It may be interesting to note that there was a wide gap between the developed and the developing countries in the overall governmental health expenditure.

✓ However, more governments of the less developed countries are now assigning greater priority to **basic health needs, improving maternal and infant health, controlling endemic diseases, training health workers and improving sanitation and health supplies**.

✓ In the more developed countries where the life expectancy generally higher and where the medical infrastructure is highly developed, the nature of problems is different. In such countries The environmental hazards and the lifestyle rather than infectious disease, have immersed as the primary cause of death. Therefore, the emphasis of the policies in such countries is on **preventing traffic accidents, drug control, pollution abatement, eradication of crime and poverty, controlling smoking and excessive alcohol consumption.**

❑ **Fertility** is one of the main elements used in population policies. For example, increasing population size by encouraging births or limiting population size by discouraging births. **This is mostly done through propaganda and incentives**.

The policies directed at fertility reduction can generally be classified into the following categories:

- Direct or indirect measures to make available family planning and related services

- Technical and administrative measures such as integrating the family planning programme with the health care delivery system

- Incentive and disincentive measures such as payment for sterilisations, taxation related to any family size, etc

- Information and education campaigns regarding small family norms and use of birth control measures and

- Measures to alter favourably the social economic determinants of fertility, such as education, status of women, income production, etc.

Example:

- Economic incentives for sterilisation in India and Sri Lanka

- The preferential treatment for small families in the Republic of Korea and the Philippines

- Financial reward for small family mothers in government hospitals of Singapore

- Availability of abortion facilities on demand in Tunisia, Cuba, China, Singapore and India

Among the developed countries, majority were **satisfied** with the present level of fertility while some were in favour of **increasing** the fertility levels, and none were in favour of any reduction in fertility. Those who favoured an increase in fertility levels included **France, Germany, Greece, Luxembourg, Bulgaria**, etc.

❑ A further element of population policies is **migration**, which is used to regulate populations. This is done through incentives for inward migration (which can be internal or external), or even limiting migration through border control.

Motivations for migration can **include tax incentives, subsidies, investments, and work permits** for migrants.

❑ Special distribution of population is highly associated with special distribution of economic activities. There is a close link in the distribution pattern of the employment opportunities and the distribution pattern of population Which encourage the rural to rural or rural to urban migration. This feature is prevalent in less developed countries. Therefore, the governments were considering policies like creating number of growth centre or taking initiatives for rural development. Now, globally, a large majority of Governments (81 percent) have carried out specific strategies or policies to influence the spatial distribution of their population.

Major Components of
Population Growth

Birth Rate

Death Rate

Immigration &
Emigration
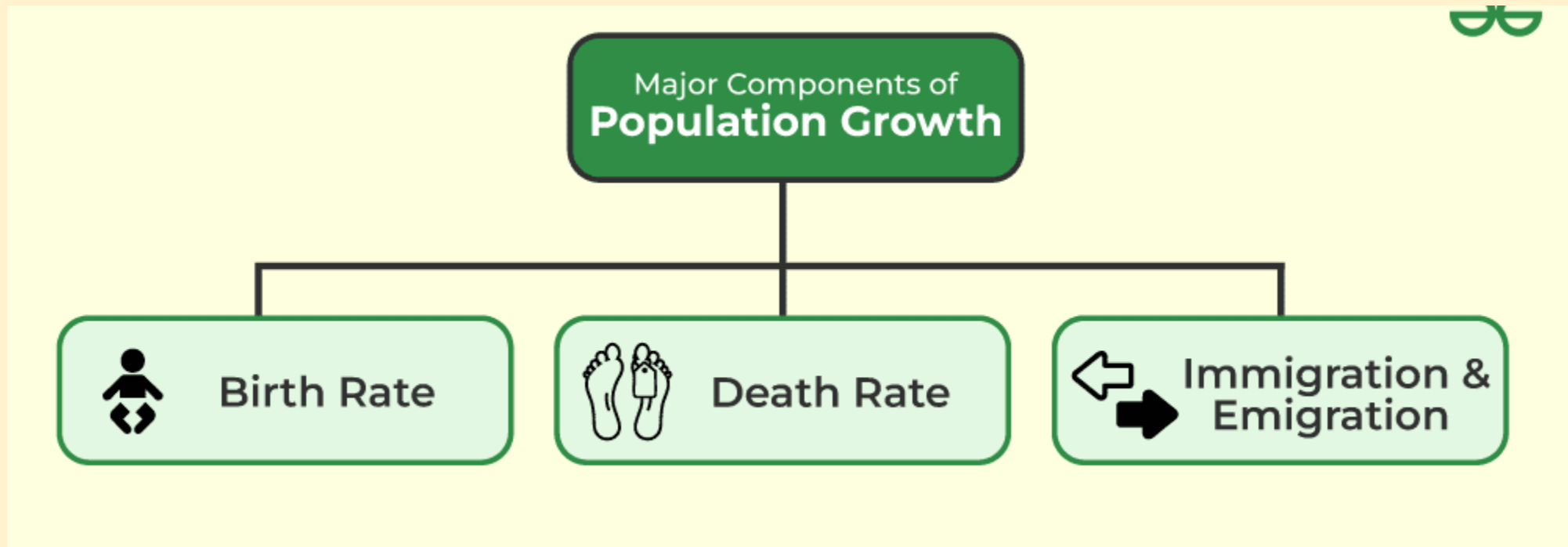
TYPES OF POPULATION POLICIES

- **Direct or explicit** – government actions taken for the purpose of affecting a demographic outcome , e.g.,

✓ Provide free family planning services

✓ Increase taxes for each additional child

✓ Restrict immigration

✓ Raise the age of marriage etc.

- **Indirect or implicit** – government actions that only indirectly have some demographic effects, e.g.,

✓ promoting female education

✓ Compulsory secondary education

✓ Restrict child labor

✓ Limit size of houses

✓ Raise status of women

✓ Provide old age security

[N.B. These Examples are applicable if the policy is taken for Slowing Population Growth]

There are three main types of population policies; these are **pro-natalist**, **anti-natalist** and **immigration policies**.

Pro-Natalist: In countries with an aging population or a small population size, pro-natalist policies aim to increase the population size by increasing the fertility rate.

Example: In 1939, **France** applied a **pro-natalist population policy** called *Code de la Famille*. The country was suffering from an aging population. The incentives of this policy include:

- Economic incentives offered to mothers who stayed at home with their children.
- Banning of contraceptives (which were introduced again in 1967 to prevent the spread of sexually transmitted diseases).
- Paid maternity leave.
- Free holidays for families with children etc.

Anti-Natalist

In contrast, in countries where the population size is considered to be too large, anti-natalist policies are implemented in an attempt to reduce population size.

Example: Between 1980 and 2016 China introduced an anti-natalist, **one-child policy**.

To prevent families from having more than one child, various enforcements were put in place. These included:

✓ Fines to those who did not comply

✓ Financial incentives to those who followed the policy

✓ Contraceptives

✓ Forced sterilizations

✓ Forced abortions etc.

[**N.B. China's one-child policy was dropped in 2016 because the fertility rate of the country significantly decreased. From 2021, families could have three children**]

Immigration

The third major type of population policy is immigration. Immigration policies are used to control the number of immigrants who enter or leave a country. The policies can encourage an influx of immigrants, encourage emigration, or they can limit the number of immigrants entering the country.

Example: Sweden currently has an open-door immigration policy. This policy aims to benefit the country economically, as immigrants will contribute to the country's economy through taxes and labor. Additionally, the country has a low birth rate.

[N.B. In 2015 a record-breaking 162,877 asylum seekers entered Sweden, which along with Germany was the preferred destination for a wave of Syrians, Afghans, and others who reached European soil in search of protection and better lives. In response, the Swedish government introduced border controls, followed in mid-2016 by a highly restrictive asylum and reunification law—a major policy shift for a country that has long prided itself on its generous asylum stance.]

Figure 1. Swedish Immigration and Emigration Flows, 1880-2017
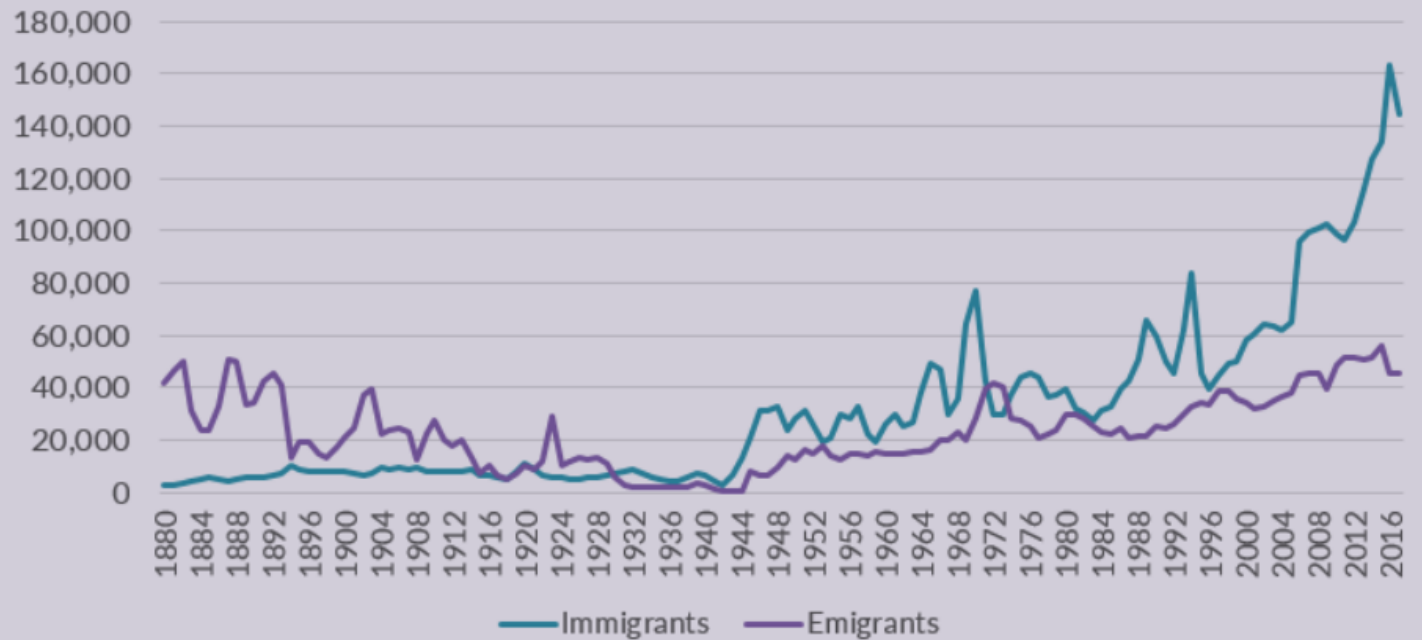
Sources: Statistics Sweden, "Befolkningsutveckling 1749-2017," accessed October 3, 2018. Available online.

CONCLUSION:

It is noteworthy to mention that population polices are highly associated with socio-cultural, economic and political condition of a country. Therefor, the norms and regulations of a population policy is dynamic inn nature. A changing political scenario can bring a huge change in any kind of internal or external affair of a country which directly or indirectly impact the existing demographic scenario. As for example , after electing again in USA, President Donald Trump has announced a flurry of immigration-related executive orders, like "Deportation of migrants", "Fortifying the US-Mexico border", "Halting the processing of migrants and asylum seekers" etc.

THANK YOU