POVERTY AND WELFARE TRENDS IN MOLDOVA
OVER THE 1990S

Country Paper

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1. Population

In 2000 in demographic development of Moldova there were no radical changes, the tendencies, characteristic for last years were kept, basically. The reduction, which has begun since 1992, of number of the inhabitants of republic has proceeded.

The number of the constant population of the Republic of Moldova on January 1, 2001 has made 3635,1 thousand people, in urban settlements lived 1486,4 thousand people (40,9 %), in a countryside - 2148,7 thousand people (59,1 %). The number of the townspeople in 2000 in comparison with 1999 was reduced to 27,8 thousand or 1,8 %, while the village population has increased on 18,8 thousand or 0,9 %.

The number of the women has made 1894,5 thousand people or 52,1% from total number of the population, number of the men, accordingly, - 1740,6 thousand or 47,9%. The ratio of the men and women in total number of the population during last years remains constant: 1000 men on 1088 women, thus in urban settlements this ratio is 1070, and in countryside - 1101.

In age structure of the population of the republic the tendency to "growing old", proceeds i.e. the increasing of a share of the women and men as elders and reduction of a share of the persons who have not achieved 18-year's age.

Sharp fall of a level of birth rate from a beginning of 1990 s have reduced the densities of children in total number of the population. On January 1, 2001 the share of children at the age of 0-17 has made 28,8 % against 33,0 % in 1990. The number of children under 5 years was reduced for the given period on 169 thousand or 45,3 %. Alongside with it the share of the teenagers at the age of 10-19 and young people at the age of 15-24 has increased. At the beginning of the current year in Moldova there were 704,2 thousand teenagers -19,4 % of all population of the republic and 662,2 thousand young boys and girls (18,2 %). The densities of these age groups in 1990 was appreciably below - 16,4 % and 14,4 % accordingly. Substantially these changes are connected with the influence of stimulating measures on material support of families with children accepted in the 80 s, owing to what in this period the birth rate has reached the peak. So, in 1986 the best parameter for all afterwar the period was registered 94,7 thousand newborn.

The ratio of the young boys and girls at the age group of 15-24 is characterized by relative balance. At the same time, tendency of displacement of the given balance to increase of a share of the young men recently has appeared. It is explained by higher intensity of migration of women at the age of 15-24.

By the beginning of 2001 the share of the persons at the age of 60 and older has made 13,6%, including the urban settlements - 11,2 %, and countryside - 15,3 %. A ratio of sexes in this age group is the following: 1000 men on 1548 women.

At the beginning of the current year, the degree of growing old of the women at the rural area is especially high their densities at the age of 60 and older in the rural population - 17,8 %. The urban area men have not reached demographic old age yet, as the share of the men at the age of older than more senior sixty does not exceed 9,1 % in urban settlements. The urban women have an initial level of demographic old age - 13 %.

Higher degree of growing old of the rural area inhabitants, in comparison with urban, causes accordingly and large "loading" on the rural population in working age. At the beginning of 2001, in Moldova on each one thousand persons in working age there were 644 in nonworking age, including in urban area - 510, in countryside – 752 people. The decrease of a parameter of demographic loading in comparison with previous years has taken place mainly because of the view of gradual increase of pension age, both women and men, and also because of the mentioned above changes at age structure of the population.
The total number of the inhabitants of the republic in the period of 2000 has decreased on 9,0 thousand people, or 0,2 %. The process of depopulation is caused by natural loss, and by migration outflow of the population.

Natural loss, which is observed in Moldova already for 2 years, for the last year it has grown in 1,5 times. In 2000 the number of dead has exceeded the number of borned on 4,3 thousand people, against 2,8 thousand in 1999. At the same time negative migration balance has increased in 1,4 times and has made - 4,7 thousand people.

In 2000 is registered 36,9 thousand of borned alive - on 1,6 thousand less, than in 1999, because of the factor of birth rate was reduced from 10,6 up to 10,2 borned to 1000 people. General "losses" among newborn for last five years (1996 - 2000) in relation to previous (1991 - 1995) have made 91 thousand people.

The decrease of birth rate is characterised both for urban settlements, and for countryside, but it was more expressed in countryside. At the same time the level of birth rate in the village remains in 1,5 times higher, than in cities (and is equal, accordingly, 11,4‰ and 8,4‰).

Almost all babies (98,8 %) were born in medical establishments, where they rendered the appropriate medical aid, the majority of children (95,7 %) had the weight at birth more than 2500 gr., and newborn with low weight have made 4,3 %.

From general number borned alived 28,8 thousand people (78,1 %) were born from the first marriage mothers.

On an educational level of the mothers of borned alive are distributed as follows: borned from the women with unfinished primary education - 2,6 %, with primary education - 23,4 %, with noncomplete secondary education - 42,0 %, with complete secondary education - 17,7 % and from the women with higher education - 12,1 %.

Parameter of total birth rate (the number of borned children on the average for 1000 women at the age of 15-49) as well as the last years continues to be reduced and in 2000 it has not exceeded 129, in urban settlements 102 respectively, and in countryside - 149 children (though for simple numerical replacement of generations of the parents by their children this parameter should make 215 children).

The level of the age ability to have children women is reduced, is especial beginning with 30 i. e. when in the family appears the third and the next child. According to the statistical data the ability to have children at the age of 30-34 was 3 times lower in comparison with the age of 20-24 and 2 times less, than in the age group of 25-29.

In a total number newborn in 2000 as the second, or the third etc. (the so-called repeated birthes) have made 46,2 %, against 48,8 % - in 1999, thus, their share is being steadily reduced.

The modern conditions for the majority of the women still cannot be perceived as, favorable for realization of having children. The refusal of young families of repeated birthes or putting them off perspectively in the increasing measure is caused by deterioration of the conditions of life, in particular by its expensiveness. For example, the cost of subjects of the first necessity for a newborn in 2000 almost in 8 times exceeded the amount of the available total income per capita and 3,5 times higher than the - monthly average wages of the workers of all branches of the economy.

Proceeding reduction of a standard of living, average consumption per capitaa, and also the absence of complete employment do not provide the demographic investments for today.

The distribution of the borned alive according to the status of employment of the mother testifies that only the motherts of 29 % of borned of the mother worked and received wages, the mothers of 27% were unemployed, and the mothers of 17 % were housewives, for the other situations (pupils, students, etc) - 27 %.

Last years, tendency of gradual increase of middle-aged mothers, including at birth of the first child is marked again. The number of births from the mothers under the age of 20 has decreased up to 16,9 % against 17,2 % - in 1999 and 18,6 % - in 1996. Factor of birth rate from teenagers has decreased in comparison with 1994 almost in 1,8 times and makes 36,3 birthes from the girls at the age of 15-19 for 1000 female population in the same age group.
At the decrease of total number of births, in the republic illegitimate birth rate continues to grow. In 2000 each fifth child (20.5 %) was born out of marriage (in 1999 a share of such children has made 18.8 %, and in 1998 - 17.8 %).

The age of the mothers at illegitimate births has two peak meanings - under 20 and 20-24, i.e. it is fell on the youngest years and testifies the decrease of the age of beginning of sexual life and as the result of it is the growth off the beforemarriage pregnancies.

The basic means of prevention of not desired births still are abortions. The prevalence of modern methods of abortions is rather low because of the low culture of contraception. In spite of the fact that last years dynamics of the level of abortions looked encouraging, the level of abortions in the republic remains high. In 2000 the frequency of abortions for 100 births has made 71 (against 64 in 1999), and in the account for on 1000 women of the fertile age - 26 (against 25), that exceeds similar parameters of other countries. Among all made abortions only 37.5 % are held on mini-abortions. The share of abortions made by the women at the age under 20 grows. The abortions and births of the girl - teenagers correspond as 1 to 2.

Deterioration of a situation with marriage of the population adversely has an effect for birth rate. The preservation of the tendencies that have been usual from the beginning of 90 s is characterised by the development of the family-marriage relations. In this period the annual reduction of number of the made marriages and rather stable level of registered divorces is marked. Factor of marriage for this period has decreased with 7.8 up to 6.0 marriages in account for 1000 people.

Some increase of number of marriages (in comparison with 1998 - on 1.7 thousand, or 7.8 %), marked in 1999, in many respects is caused by numerical updating of youth of 16-29 observed for last years, that at the age by most intensive marriages and birth rate. But the next 2000 the number of the officially registered marriages has decreased on the same 7.8 % and has made 21.7 thousand.

The reduction occurs contrary to marked above favorable for marriage to changes in age structure of youth and is accompanied by growth of not registered cohabitations and illegitimate children.

The legislatively conjugal age in the republic is established from 16 for women, for men – from 18 and is determined in view of sexual, psychological and social maturity.

Now marriages made by the women at the age under 25, make 72 % from general number of marriages, including urban women - 62 %, village inhabitants - 80 %. The share of the men who have been married at the same age has made 52 %, including in urban district - 43 %, in village - 58 %.

In 2000 the densities of the young women who have been married under 20, has decreased to 29 % (in 1993 it was the highest - 42 %). Average age of marriage accordingly has increased: women - 24 years old, men – 28 years old.

The repeated marriages make a small share of their total number and tend to increase, simultaneously with the increase of amount of divorces. So, in 2000 the densities of the divorced women who have a repeated marriage have increased from 12.0% in 1993 up to 13.8 %. In too time the densities of widows in general number of repeated marriages has decreased (from 2.8 % to 2.3 %). Thus not all divorced women and widows manage to create a family again, that negatively effects the birth rate.

The important characteristic of marriages is their durability and duration. In 2000 in registry offices were terminated 9.7 thousand marriages, that on 8.9 % more, than in 1999. The fourth part getting divorced is made by young married couples, living together less than five years, the third part of married couples breaks up after joint residing from 5 till 9 years. The largest number of divorces is registered among the men and women, at the age of 25-29, i.e. the divorces are at the reproductuve age of both sexes that by the most negative image has an effect for birth rate of the population. The divorce in crisis socio economic conditions inevitably means significant deterioration of a vital level of the majority of families with underage children who
remain without one of the parents. In total in 2000 at divorces 8248 children at the age under 18 were taken into account.

Migration processes, whose activity began to accrue last year again, render the large influence on a demographic situation in Moldova.

Negative balance of an exchange of the population of the Republic of Moldova with other countries is kept. In 2000 migration of losses have made 4,7 thousand people and have exceeded size of natural population loss.

Last year 9128 people have received the sanction to departure on a constant residence. The number of the citizens of Moldova, chosen by a new residence Germany, has made 1396 persons, USA - 1115 and Israel 1110 persons. Leaving in the specified three countries as before make more than 90 % from general number of the migrants to the far away countries. With the countries of CIS most actively develop migration communications with Russia and the Ukraine. Within 2000 to these states 3087 and 1947 men respectively have emigrated.

To a certain extent emigration from the country is compensated by repatriation of the ethnic Moldovans and people from Moldova, and as by immigration from other countries. In total in 2000 to the republic have arrived 1321 immigrants, including from Syria - 232, from the Ukraine - 195, Turkey - 154, Jordan - 137, Romania - 104, and from other countries. The number of the repatriates has made 1427 people.

According to an extreme urgency of questions connected with migration population, in 2000 at the Government of the republic the State migration service was created. The basic tasks of the given body are management of migration processes and realization of the appropriate policy according to new directions in this area.

Thus, progressing general tendency of the population ageing of Moldova, accompanied by decrease of birth rate at relative stabilization of a high level of death, an aggravation of problems of family, presence of migration outflow of the population, cause a difficult situation in the field of the population. In the usual conditions the exit can be found only by formation and realization of the complex program of state regulation of reproduction of the population, which would provide the sanction of the sharpest problems of the population and family.

2. Employment and incomes

2.1. Employment and unemployment

From the end of 1998 in the Republic of Moldova the Labour Force Survey (LFS) was introduced into statistical practice, which main task is, on the one hand definition of the economically active population - employed and unemployeds - and inactive population, and on the other hand, definition of structure of these categories, and tendency of their development. Besides the censuses of the population the survey of labour force (in which to each person can be given the certain status - employed, the unemployed or economically inactive), - is unique of available on today at disposal of the statisticians by a method giving an opportunity to cover all categories the population. LFS is carried out in families, thus each person is taken into account only once, irrespective of his place of work (one or several) or occupations, which excludes the double account. The concept and the definitions of LFS are based on the ILO (International Labour Organization) recommendations, and consequently the received data can be used by the international comparisons.

In 2000 the economically active population of the republic has made about 1655 thousand people, or 45,4 % of total number of the population. Other part is held on the economically inactive population.

The basic part of the economically active population is employed population - 1515 thousand people or 54,8 % of the population at the age of 15 and older. The occupation level of the population of working age (men of 15-61 years old and women of 15-56 years old) has made
61.2%. The greatest occupation level is observed in the age groups of 40-44 - 77.2%, of 45-49 - 76.9%, of 50-54 - 75.7%, that is a characteristic both for urban, and for rural area. Almost half of the employed population has general secondary and vocational education, higher education - 11.9%, secondary vocational and higher education with the reduced term of training - 14.3%. In cities the number of the persons with higher education was 3 times more than in countryside.

As to categories of employment, the largest densities was made by the persons of hired work (63%), other part had on the self-employed population.

The distribution of the employed population on sectors in comparison with the last year evidences of decreasing of number of working in public sector (on 15.5%) and accordingly the increase of number working in private sector (on 7.2%). In total number of employed the last occupies the largest densities (two third).

Among kinds of economic activity prevailing is the agriculture, in which every second was employed. The reason is to that Moldova is an agrarian republic, where the rural population prevails and as a rule have a personal subsidiary plots etc. Among not agricultural kinds of activities prevail industry (11.0%) and trade (9.7%). The persons having additional activity besides basic made 6.0% from total number of the employeds, that is characteristic for a countryside and as a rule, it were the various agricultural works.

One of the phenomena describing features of the labour market is the incomplete employment, which is determined by duration of working hours. This category of the persons is in a border zone between employeds and unemployeds. In 2000 a level of incomplete employment (percent of non completely engaged persons in general employment) has made 6.0%. The absolute majority of them are the persons, who, would agree to additional activity, but do not search for it. Everyone tenth, though was employed with a complete working day, actually, has worked less than usual duration and searches or is ready to begin additional activity.

Till 90s was considered, that in a socialist society there was no unemployment, and as is spoken: there is no phenomenon - there is no also statistics. In the beginning of 1992 the "Law on employment of the population in working age" was accepted, in which definition of this category was given for the first time. According to this law, the services of employment have begun official registration of the unemployeds. However, all these years did not need really to be defined scales of unemployment because on the one hand, not all unemployeds were registered in thise service, on the other hand - that from among the registered persons, some were engaged all the same in various kinds of activity, even occaional and casual, thus were not the unemployeds. Only LFS has allowed estimating actual number of the unemployeds. In 2000 according to the international criteria ILO it has reached 140 thousand people. The rate of unemployment, (relation of the unemployeds to the economically active population) has made 8.5%, of which three fifth are village inhabitants. It is necessary to note, that the rate of unemployment in cities 4.6 times more than a similar parameter in the countryside.

The high level of unemployment is observed among youth: in the age group of 15-19 - 17.4% (and in urban area it is 2.4 times higher, than in rural one), in the age group of 20-24 respectively - 14.8%. This fact evidences to its rather high activity in the labour market that is explained by desire of youth, alongside with study first of all to provide the material independence.

Among the unemployeds the greatest share is made by those who has average professional (almost one third) and general secondary education (more than a quarter). Each tenth unemployed had higher education.

More than three quarters of the unemployeds have worked, before (it is observed basically in the urban area). The basic share of them is made by the unemployeds, which have lost the workplace owing to reduction of number of the personnel, and then person, which have filled up numbers of the unemployeds as a result of liquidation and bankruptcy of the enterprises. The analysis of a kind of activity of last place of work testifies that everyone fifth was engaged before in a manufacturing industry, everyone sixth - in an agriculture. Everyone second earlier worked at the enterprises with a public ownership, more than one third - in private sector. Thus,
the unemployment because of the tightened economic crisis wounds everybody, irrespective of age, enterprise ownership, on which they worked. At the same time each tenth unemployed has expressed hope for renewal of activity on last place of work.

The distribution under the status of employment has shown, that among the unemployeds the former hired workers make the absolute majority - 93 %, among which the group of the persons at the age of 35-44 are the most numerous (i.e. they are the working persons, having certain professional experience, skills).

One of ten men became the unemployed because of the to end of any temporary activity and resignations.

In distribution of the unemployeds, which never worked almost a third (30,5 %) is held on the graduates of secondary schools and liceums. Only one of 50 unemployeds now is trained.

The number of the unemployeds, who search for work for the first time made more than one fifth from total number of the unemployeds, and among them the persons living in countryside prevail.

In 2000 the average duration of unemployment was 31 months and has increased in comparison with the last period by 3 months. The smallest duration (17 weeks) is registered among the young women (15-24 years old), and the largest duration (37 months) – among the men at the age of 35-49 years old. In urban area average duration is longer, than in village (33 and 22 months respectively), more than three quarters are the unemployeds for year and more.

About 40 % of the unemployeds are the heads of the families, 3/4 among them are the men.

More than a half of the unemployeds would agree to a workplace, irrespective of the offered conditions (if such was found), and for everyone two of five searched work on hiring, and majority of last (61,0 %) searched for work with a complete working day.

Very few unemployeds are registered in a service of employment. The adverse conditions of registration, mistrust in an opportunity of search of a place of work with the help of these services, do not stimulate the population to address to the centres of employment. So, according to the data of LFS the unemployeds prefer to search for work on ones own (through the friends, relatives, colleagues) rather than to address in services of employment.

According to the information of the Ministry of Labour and Social Protection the number of the registered unemployeds on January 1, 2001 was made 28,9 thousand people, 41% of them were free from the enterprises as a result of their liquidation and reorganization. During 2000 were registered 50,8 thousand unemployeds that was less by 7 thousand people in comparison with 1999; the majority of them are the youth under 30 (46 %).

From general number of the registered unemployeds 54,0 % - were the workers, 19,5% -clerks, others – 27,0 % - graduates of educational institutions and the persons who did not work before.

During 2000 43 % of the registered unemployeds were given a job, more than 6,4 thousand are enlisted on rates of professional training. Each second registered unemployed received the grant, which monthly average size made MDL 120 (about USD 10) in 2000.

According to LFS the economically inactive population has made hardly more than a half (54,6 %) of all population. The majority of the inactive persons are rural population.

Everyone ninth of the economically inactive population at the age of 15 and older have announced, that he either did not search work, but is ready to begin it, or on the contrary searched for work, but was not ready to begin it in following15 days. This category of the inactive population is in a boundary zone with the unemployeds: they do not carry out only one of three conditions of unemployment according to ILO. The share of this unused labour force in total number of the inactive persons has made 11,4 % or 126 thousand people, being kept on a level of the last year.

The discouraged persons, who are the most vulnerable category of a society alongside with the unemployeds and not completely engaged, deserve the special attention. They make 8,2 % of total number of the inactive persons at the age of 15 years and older. From 91 thousand discouraged persons - 58,0 % lived at urban area, more than one third were at the age of 35-49.
Especially disturbs that fact, that the youth (15-24 years old) made more than one quarters in this category of the population.

The analysis of the labour market through a prism of a gender aspect evidences to the following. A share of the women among economically active population and the employed population is practically equal to a share of the men, however occupation level of the women is a little bit lower than of the men (40,4 % and 42,8 % respectively). The women employed in such kinds of activity as public health services and social services (81 %), education (79 %), hotels and restaurants (77 %) are made the absolute majority.

Among the persons of hired work everyone second is a woman, however, among the employers they make only 17 %. The men are 1,5 times more than women as well among the heads and clerks of public administrations, chiefs of the socio economic agents.

The unemployment mentions in the greater degree of the men, than women, their share in general number makes - 57,5 %, rate of unemployment of the men - 9,7 %, of the women - 7,2%.

At the same time women are more inclined to cooperation with a service of employment than the men, as they prevail. The average duration of unemployment among the men in 2000 has reached 32 months and was for 3 months more than among the women.

The strong labour market assumes rather high requirements to safety and protection of work on a workplace, effective protection against accidents on production. 667 men have suffered on manufacture in 2000 (205 men less than the last year), from them - 52 men with fatal outcome. From total number of the injureds - 22 % are the women. In the current year the level of traumatism has made 0,84 ‰ on 1000 working, including fatal outcome - 0,07 ‰.

Each third accident has taken place because of a fall of the injured from height or fall at the same level, 26 % of the injured have suffered because off pinching, impact or crushing by working machines and equipment. From influence of various subjects 8 % has suffered.

In 2000 because of the accidents on manufacture more than 23 thousand man-days were lost, and the material damage from accidents has reached MDL 2,8 mln., which basic share has made cost of the spoiled equipment, tools of the destroyed buildings etc. More than MDL 400 thousand were paid according to the sick lists. From total number of working people 2 % were engaged at heavy works, 7 % - worked under influences of temperature, industrial environment with deviations from the established norms, about 17 % - worked under influence of raised noise level, gases, dust exceeding extreme - allowable concentration. During 2000 about 66 thousand of working people (8 % of their totals) received surcharges and indemnifications for adverse conditions and intensity of work in the sum of MDL 14,7 mln.

The important indicators of the labour market are also earnings of the hired workers and cost of expenses on a labour.

The average monthly nominal wages for one working person has made MDL 407,9 (about USD 33) in 2000, that 34 % more than in 1999, the real wages (with consumer price index taking into account) have increased only by 2,3 %. Though, the growth in all kinds of economic activity was marked, the large break in a level of wages in a branch cut continues to take place. The charged wages in financial intermediary exceeded 5,8 times than a middle republican level, in the electric power, gas and water supply - in 1,8 times, in a manufacturing industry in 1,7 times. Below the average level on republic there were wages in public health services and sphere of social services -44 %, education on -39 %, agriculture and forestry on -38 %.

Depending on patterns of ownership the highest level achieves at the enterprises with the foreign investments, where the average wages exceed in 2 times a middle republican level. The wages at the enterprises with a joint pattern of ownership (public and private) are also above in 1,7 times. Below average on economy, wages at the enterprises from the public property (-6,8 %) and private (-14,9 %) patterns of ownership.

The distribution of number of the workers on the sizes of the charged wages testifies that almost two thirds of hired workers receive wages below the average in the republic.

The expenses of the employers for a labour force (cost of work) in account on one working person have made in 2000 on the average for one month MDL 534 (about USD 43), the tendency
of the increase of direct expenses, (wages, payment of the not fulfilled time, premium etc is observed.), which have made the last year 76.3 % and reduction of indirect expenses (social maintenance, professional training, social services etc.).

2.2. Incomes. The level of distribution of household income.

The transformations of social and economic character, to which the Republic of Moldova for last years was subjected, were reflected directly on a standard of living of the population of the country as a whole.

In conditions of the transition period to the market economy accompanying by occurrence of new patterns of ownership, liberalization of the prices, reduction of the employed population and growth of unemployment, the fall of a level of material well-being of the population under influence of the given factors became inevitable.

The incomes of the population are one of the most important indicators representing an opportunity of study of evolution of a standard of living.

In spite of the fact that last five years the incomes of the population in nominal expression constantly grew, taken into account real incomes per capita in 2000 were made only 70 % of a level of 1995.

For years of reforms there were cardinal changes in distribution of the incomes between various sections of the population of republic. Till 1990 the distribution of the incomes was rather evenly. However, on the expiration of a number of years the constantly amplifying differentiation of the population on a level of distribution of the incomes began that proceeds now.

So, in 2000 the 20 % of population with the least incomes had 4.6 % of the available incomes, and on the same part the population with the greatest incomes - 48.0 % of these incomes. The incomes of the most supplied part of the population have exceeded the incomes of least supplied part by 10 times. Coefficient Jini, which is one of major indicators of a level of differentiation of the population, has made in 2000 - 0.42, that evidences about rather high level of socio economic stratification of the population of the republic.

It is necessary to note, that the degree of an inequality in distribution of the incomes has the precisely expressed regional character. So, on a share of the least supplied part of the urban population is only 2.9 % of the total incomes of the given category of the population, whereas the most supplied own 63.4 % of the incomes, thus the break between the incomes of the rich and the poor is 14 times. For the population of the countryside these parameters are 6.2 % and 34.4 % respectively, and break is no more than 8 times.

Thus, the prevailing part of the incomes is concentrated in the hands of the richest, and the process of aggravation of the social inequality of the urban population goes by faster rates in comparison with the rural one.

The analysis of the sources of the income formation also evidences to a high level of a social stratification of the society. If in 1990 the main source of the incomes of the population were wages, that was 73 % in total amount of the incomes, since 1991 the share of wages in the general structure of the incomes was constantly reducing and reached a level of 35 % in 1997. On a background of some stabilization of the national economy as a whole by 2000 densities of wages in formation of the cumulative incomes of the population was 37 %, it has increased a little. However, wages are the basic source of the incomes only for 30 % of families’, and for the majority of the families as a prevailing source of the incomes is the individual agricultural activity - 50 % of the families, that confirms thus specificity of the national economy and accordingly the dependence of a level of the incomes of the population on a seasonal character of this.

In process of increase of a standard of well-being families the tendency of growth of the importance of wages in formation of the incomes is traced. The incomes of hired work of low profitable layers of the population promote formation of the incomes at a rate of 1/5 of all
receipts. For average layers the given parameter makes about 1/3, whereas the wages of the most supplied part of the population are submitted at a rate of 1/2 of all incomes.

Thus, the kept significant interbranch distinctions in wages promote growth of a social stratification of the population of the republic. In branches with a high level of wages (crediting, finance and insurance, transport and communication, industry) in 1995-2000 the wages grew by faster rates, and in such branches as agriculture and forestry, science and public health services the given parameter remained at a very low level. As a whole in the country in 2000 the average wages on branches of economy differed more than in eight times.

The confirmation to this is that fact, that the least supplied part of the population is employed basically in agriculture and forestry - 62,6 %, and in the most paid branches of economy it is submitted no more than 14 %. According to general number of the population employed in agriculture and forestry only 12 % is most supplied. Each third member of a housekeeping working in such branches as industry, construction, trade and repair gets in to a category of the most supplied. Thus more than 60 % of the population employed in such kinds of activities as the financial intermediary is the most supplied layers of the population.

Such differentiation of wages has no direct relation to distinctions in complexity of work and its conditions, and is defined by other factors and bears large destructive potential, increasing thus social intensity in the society.

In spite of the fact that in 2000 the wages in the structure of the cumulative incomes of the population occupy the largest density (37 %), due to certain reasons this source of the incomes cannot ensure the basic requirements of the population. So, in order to satisfy the vital requirements, the population is compelled to find to additional sources of the incomes, more profitable, even if they are less stable and not always have constant character.

The occurrence of new sources of formation of the incomes, such as the income of individual (enterprise) activity and from the property, promoted an establishment of the given kinds of activities by one of the sources of the incomes (3,2 %), which however are basically characterised for more supplied part of the population (5,0 %), for the lowest and average layers of the population the main source of existence is the income of agricultural activity (47-52 %).

Social transfers as one of the sources of the incomes plays an important role in formation of the incomes of the population. The on the average these payments make 9 % in total amount of the cumulative incomes of the population. The weightly importance of the social receipts, especially for poor layers of the population, whose incomes on 12 % are formed at the expense of these transfers, that accordingly exceeds almost twice a share of social receipts of the most supplied part of the population.

However the low level of social payments does not represent the real help for the poorest part of the population - only for 23 % of the least supplied these receipts are the basic source of the incomes, others are compelled to cover the consumer needs mainly at the expense of the incomes of agricultural activity and hired work. The least supplied part of the population makes only 11 % of total beneficiars of social payments, and the majority of the addressees of the given payments is concentrated in IV and V quantile, accordingly 28 % and 21 %. It evidences that the social payments not always carry address character according to a living standard of households and the social help on the part of the state is used not only by the poorest.

As a result of changes in the structure of the incomes the densities of other receipts has increased prevailing part of which are the money resources, food products, the articles of food received free-of-charge by households from native, close, various charitable organizations etc. (on the average these receipts make 15 % in total amount of the cumulative incomes).

For the characteristic of the level and differentiation of the total incomes of the population not only final level and sources are important, but also is the process of their formation.

In 1990 the households’ incomes on 86,2 % were formed at the expense of money and on 13,8 % - at the expense of natural receipts, however by 2000 these parameters were accordingly 60,3 % and 39,7 %. In spite of the fact that at the expense of these receipts the population
provides itself with the main foodstuff, it thus is compelled to limit the consumer needs at a level of the minimally necessary goods and services because of a low level of money receipts.

The decrease of a share of the money incomes in total amount of the cumulative incomes at simultaneous increase of densities of natural receipts is one more factor confirming deterioration of a standard of living of the population of the republic, as the high level of these incomes is mainly characteristic for the poor countries.

It is necessary to note a rather high level of differentiation of natural receipts depending on a standard of well-being household. The poorest part of the population of the country forms the incomes in the greater degree at the expense of natural receipts - 83 %. So, the prevalence of natural receipts above money is characteristic mainly for the lowest and average sections of the population, for the most supplied these incomes make no more than 24 %.

In process of increase of a level of natural receipts the consumer ability of the population is considerably reduced, limiting thus access of the least supplied part to the main kinds of services of the public health services, education and transport. The most supplied allocate to the charges on transport and services of the public health services over than twice more in comparison with a low profitable part of the population. The least accessible to poor sections of the population, are the services of education, as to these charges they give five times less than the most supplied.

The significant growth of an inequality in the incomes also complicates the access of the population to food products. The consumption of calories on a soul of the population in 2000 was 1822 k/calories per day that accordingly represents 61 % from a level registered in 1990. The significant decrease of the consumption of meat (on 62 %), fish (on 65 %), dairy products (on 60 %) and bakery (on 31 %) has caused essential lack of daily average diet of the main physiological components. So, as a result of the such deficiency in nutrition of the numbers of products, the population receives less than 44 % of fibers, 5 % of fats and 29 % of carbohydrates a day, that adversely has an effect on the health of the population of the republic.

On the average the least supplied part of the population consumed monthly in 2000 in comparison with the most supplied less grain products in 1,6 times (7,1 kg.), meat products in 3 times (0,8 kg.), dairy products in 3,2 times (4,9 l), eggs in 2,1 times (6,5 pieces), potatoes in 1,9 times (3,2 kg.), fruit and vegetables in 2,4 times (5,2 kg), sugar in 4,1 times (0,4 kg.) etc.

The catastrophic recession of the parameters of the consumption level, both in quantitative, and in qualitative expression is the result of the deterioration of a standard of living of the population for these years.

The decrease of the standard of well-being of the population of the country touched the majority of the categories of households. However most vulnerable from the point of view of the level of the cumulative incomes became the families, which structure includes the elderly persons, invalids and unemployeds etc., and also families with many children.

Each third child and each ninth member of a household at the age of 60 and older belong to the least supplied part of the population. Thus, the elderly persons in a smaller rate are subjected to the process of poverty, than children, by virtue of such factors as rather less stable source of the incomes and significant material help and different sort of support on the part of relatives.

The risk of the families with children to appear below the bread line grows in the process of increasing of the number of children in the family. So, each fifth family with one child belongs to the most supplied part of the population, the presence of three children in every third family, belongs to a low profitable whereas in case of families with four and more children every second household is needy.

2.3. Social Protection of the Population

Pensioners and people entitled to various allowances and compensations are among the low-income population categories.

In early 2001 the number of pensioners - as registered with the social security authorities of Moldova - was 706.4 thousand persons, or one fifth of the total population. Pensions upon retirement due to old age were paid to 517.7 thousand persons (73%), pensions upon physical or
mental disability – to 119.7 thousand persons (17%), pensions to dependants upon loss of their breadwinner – to 50.6 thousand persons (7%).

In the last 3 years the total number of pensioners decreased by 51.6 thousand persons, or by 7%, although their portion in the total population remained practically on the same level.

We can trace a steady pattern, which is a decrease in the number of pensioners retired due to old age in proportion to both the total population and the working age population. As of early 2001, the number of pensioners made 335 persons per 1000 persons of working age population and 466 -per 1000 persons employed in the country’s economy. The decrease demonstrated by those indices was insignificant as compared to the previous year and remained practically on the level of 1995.

According to the results of the Labour Force Survey in 2000, the portion of pension-age employed persons (61 or older for men and 56 or older for women) made 9.2% of the total population in that age group. The number of men in that category amounted to about 14 thousand and number of women – in excess of 26 thousand. On the total 0.3% of the pensioners in that age group were actively looking for a job.

In late 2000 the minimum pension upon retirement due to old age (including compensations payable) amounted to MDL 64.9 or 76% of the average pension in the Republic of Moldova. At the same time it should be pointed out that the minimum pension was 10% less than the average subsistence minimum for the country.

Similar to most CIS countries, the growth rates of consumer prices in Moldova was way ahead of the pension increase rates, thus resulting in the decreasing actual value of an average pension. An average monthly pension for 2000 (MDL 85) amounted to about one fifth of the average monthly salary (MDL 407).

In early 2001 social protection authorities had on their register above 16 thousand low-income families and single parents paid monthly allowances for children under 1.5 years old, which amounted to MDL 32.4 (or approximately USD 2.5 per month) per child, and 31 thousand families and single parents paid monthly allowances for the children aged 1.5 to 16 years old, which amounted to MDL 16.2 (a little in excess of USD 1) per child. Although this year the allowances were increased respectively up to MDL 50 and 25 per child per month, the purchasing power of such allowances fell to a considerable degree; nevertheless, such allowances remain a principal source of income for most of the beneficiaries entitled to receiving them.

3. Health care

The state of health of the population is one of major «human security» characteristics. A direct dependence can be traced between the state of human health and human susceptibility to various risks, particularly in unstable economies.

For a number of years a pattern could be traced of the decrease in the expense items of the consolidated health care budget in Moldova. As compared to 1995, in 2000 their portion in the total costs was cut down by almost one third (30%), falling down to MDL 472 million. In the same period the number of hospitals decreased from 335 down to 132, and the number of outpatient or polyclinics-type facilities fell from 612 down to 571.

The total number of hospital beds had to be similarly cut down in the situation of budgetary financing deficit. In 1995 to 2000 their number fell by more than one third, as calculated per 10,000 persons, whereas the number of beds in children hospitals decreased by 40%. The total number of doctors (including all specializations) fell by 12%, and the number of children’s doctors decreased by 42% (partially due to their re-training to become family doctors).

In 2000 the average monthly nominal salary in public health care amounted to MDL 230, or 56% of the overall average monthly salary in the national economy, i.e. it is the lowest figure, as compared to the other sectors of economy. The result is the outflow of skilled medical
personnel from public health care facilities towards private facilities. The percentage of the doctors employed in private health care facilities in the total number of doctors is hardly above 5% (0.7 thousand persons). At the same time, their number grew 1.6 times in the last year alone.

Moldova continues with the reform of its health care system; the insurance health care and the market of paid medical services is growing. Nevertheless, there have been yet no noticeable improvements in the level of health care services or public health. The reform progresses, accompanied with the significant growth in prices for health care services and medicines. Within December 1995 to December 2000 the prices for medical services grew 2.1 times, and the medicines became 2.5 times more expensive.

As a consequence, here is a decline in the number of persons using the services of medical facilities. As compared to 1995, in 2000 the number of persons using health care services as outparitions decreased by one fourth, the number of hospital patients – by 40%, and children under 17 – by 50%.

### 3.1. Occurrence Rate of Diseases

Respiratory diseases rate first (35-37%) according to their occurrence in the total structure of disease occurrence among the population by type or group of diseases. Flu and acute upper respiratory duct infections account for more than a half of those, and every second case is registered in the age group of children under 14.

Infectious and pest-carried diseases rate second (10%) in the total structure of disease occurrence among the population. They accounted for 14% of all diseases registered with children, as compared to 10% in 1995. Active forms of TB are the most dangerous disease, sometimes with a lethal outcome, and the occurrence of TB per 100,000 persons was 10% higher than the respective level registered in 1995, with the total of 2.4 cases where women accounted for more than one third of the cases (0.7 thousand) and children – for 77 cases (or 3%).

Next to the growing occurrence of TB among the population, the growth was registered in the occurrence of other „social troubles” diseases, such as syphilis or gonorrhea. The growing occurrence of veneric diseases has been steadily registered since 1991. In 1997 the number of the diseased with the above diagnosis started falling, to a major extent due to improper registration of the patients applying for treatment of veneric diseases to private medical facilities, where anonimous treatment is possible in certain cases. In 2000, in the total number of cases where syphilis was diagnosed for the first time the number of male and female patients was approximately equal (2.1 thousand in each sex group), and children/teenagers under 17 accounted for 5%. The number of female cases was almost three times less than the number of male cases in the total number of cases where gonorrhea was diagnosed for the first time (0.6 and 1.6 thousand cases respectively), and children/teenagers under 17 accounted for 6%.

The occurrence rate of paediculosis (lousiness) remains high, although there is a certain decline in the number of cases. Out of 13.5 thousand cases reported in 2000, children under 14 accounted for more than two thirds (9.3 thousand).

The declining tendency of the recent years in the occurrence of the various viral hepatites was broken in 2000, when a growth of 16% was registered as compared to the number of cases for 1995. Children under 14 account for 2.3 thousand cases (57%) out of the total registered 4.1 thousand cases.

Poor quality of drinking water below the existing international standards remains among the main reasons for high occurrence of diseases. According to the data released by the Ministry of Health in 2000, 12% of all the tested pipeline water samples were reported to be below the hygienic standards in force due to poor microbiological indicators, and another 19% - due to poor sanitary and chemical parameters. The testing of water samples taken from wells has revealed a similarly alarming situation: 82% of the samples demonstrated poor sanitary and chemical indicators below the existing norms and 31% of the samples were below microbiological standards.
The environmental situation remains unfavorable. In 2000 the discharge of polluted drainage water into open water bodies without any treatment grew by 35%, as compared to the 1995 levels. Water pollution stands in direct relation with the outbreaks and spreading of acute intestinal infections, the occurrence of which remains high (10.2 thousand cases, with children under 14 accounting for two thirds), although a certain decline has been registered of recent.

A growth has been registered for that child age group in the occurrence of immunization-controlled infections: 4.6 times for whooping cough and 2.6 times for measles. At the same time the decline by 50% has been registered in the occurrence of German measles and mumps, and by one third – in the occurrence of viral hepatitis B.

Alcoholism remains a serious risk factor for the public health. As of late 2000, 55.9 thousand of alcohol-dependent patients were registered on the total with medical facilities (i.e. 13 persons per thousand of the population). In addition 6.4 thousand persons were registered preventively due to their frequent heavy drinking habits. Out of the 4.7 thousand alcoholics registered in 2000 for the first time, each seventh was female (their number grew 1.4 times in the last year).

The number of drug-addicts and those suffering from drug-dependence is steadily growing. The number of drug-addicts (including toxic substance addicts) registered with the above diagnosis in 2000 for the first time, as calculated per 100,000 of the population, grew 4.7 times as compared to 1995 and totaled 1.4 thousand cases, with teenagers under 17 accounting for every fifth case. On the total, by end of year the number of patients treated for the above addictions and registered with Moldova’s medical facilities exceeded 5 thousand (as opposed to 1.2 thousand in 1995), the actual number of drug-addicts is, however, even higher. According to the data of the National Drug Addiction Prophylactic Center, 120 to 140 drug addicts die annually due to over-dosage of drugs. The majority of such lethal cases are registered with the age group of 15 to 25.

Of importance is the epidemiological situation with AIDS and infections caused by the Human Immunodeficit Virus (HIV). Last year 174 HIV-infected persons were registered in Moldova, including 1 child. In addition AIDS was diagnosed in 4 cases.

### 3.2. Disability

Disability is still presenting a serious problem. In 2000 health care specialists examined on the total 14.4 thousand persons with the aim to categorize them by disability group; out of the above number 13.5 thousand persons were found disabled, including 17% categorized in Disability Group I, 74% - in Disability Group II, and 9% - in Disability Group III.

In 2000 alone the number of persons found disabled for the first time grew by 18% and made 497 persons per 100,000 of the population in age groups above 16. The disability causes prevailing in the structure of new disability cases were: cardiovascular diseases (19%), malignant tumors/ new formations (15%), nervous system illnesses (12%), mental disorders and behavioral deviations (8%). The percentage of the disabled in the most able-bodied age group (under 49) is rather high: 64%.

As of the beginning of 2001, 14.1 disabled children aged under 15 were registered with health care authorities. A pattern towards aggravation of the situation can be traced in the new disability growth dynamics among children. Thus, in 2000 the number of newly disabled children was 3.1 thousand, or 12.6 per 1000 children, whereas the respective figure for 1995 was 10.5. The prevailing causes of new disability were: nervous system diseases (27%), including cerebral paralysis of children (15%), followed by mental disorders and behavioral deviations (23%), including debility (15%).

### 3.3. Death Rate

A certain improvement of the negative trends in the natural rotation of the population could be traced owing to the decrease in overall death rate registered since 1996. At the same
time the dynamics (rate) of modifications varied within the above period, and in 2000 death rate remained at the level of 1999 and made 11.3 deaths per 1000 of the population.

In the last years the declining death rate was registered practically in many death cause groups. The decrease was especially pronounced in the following groups: death by accident, poisoning or trauma (from 114 deaths per 1000 of the population in 1995 down to 93 in 2000), death from malignant new formations (from 131 down to 125), death from intestinal diseases (from 111 down to 103), death from respiratory diseases (from 78 down to 69).

A certain decrease in the death rate from infections or pest-carried diseases has been followed by a significant growth: from 14.4 up to 20.2 deaths per 100,000 of the population, including death from respiratory TB (from 9.6 up to 16.1). The number of deaths from cardiovascular diseases is steadily growing. Nowadays such diseases are the cause of every second death in Moldova. Cardiovascular diseases rate first among the death causes, which are more frequent for females in comparison with males for Moldova. In all the other death cause groups death rate among males is higher than that among females: 4.7 times higher for infections and pest-carried diseases; 3.6 higher for death of accident, poisoning or trauma; 1.9 higher for respiratory diseases; and 1.4 times higher for malignant neoplasms.

For several decades general death rate dynamics has been determined primarily with the dynamics of death rate among able-bodied age groups.

The length of working (total employment) period in years has been legally fixed in Moldova as 46 years for men and 41 years for women. In 2000 death rate in the working age groups was broken down by sex as follows: on the average males accounted for 74% of deaths (thus making male death rate three times higher than that of females), and the difference in death rate figures by sex is even higher in certain death cause groups.

Infant death rate is the most impartial indicator of public health in the nation and the development level of health care in the country. There have been no significant improvements with infant death rate in Moldova since long ago.

What is even more significant, the decreasing infant death rate pattern typical of the last 4 years was broken in 2000. Infant death rate amounted to 18.3 deaths in the age group under 1 per 1000 newborns, or much higher than the respective figures for the most European countries.

Newborns under 1 accounted for 60% of the total annual deaths of children and teenagers under 15.

Almost two thirds of the total infant deaths are caused by abnormal prenatal states (28th week of pregnancy and onwards, including delivery and the first 7 days of life) and inborn anomalies, i.e. diseases closely connected with the mother’s reproductive health. Next to the above, a significant portion of all deaths were caused by respiratory diseases (19.8%), accidents, poisonings and traumas (8.4%), infectious or pest-carried diseases (5.6%), i.e. the cause groups where death rate is dependent to a considerable degree on quality and timeliness of preventive care and treatment of infants.

Of particular significance for infant death rate and death causes is premature delivery and low weight of newborns. Low-weighted newborns accounted for 4.3% of all the infants born in 2000. All the premature babies with low or extremely low body weight were born sick. Certain abnormal prenatal states were the main cause for their sicknesses and deaths.

Child death rate became a little lower in 2000. The number of child deaths under 5 was 23.3 per 1000 newborns, as compared to 23.9 in 1999. It should be noted that male death rate grew in the above age group, and female death rate became less. A decrease in child death rate was reported for both sexes in such cause groups as respiratory diseases, intestinal diseases, and in addition – accidents, poisonings and traumas for boys and inborn anomalies for girls. At the same time an increase in death rate was reported in the cause groups of infectious and pest-carried diseases and abnormal prenatal states.

At first glance the dynamics of teenager death rate might raise hopes as the number of deaths per 100,000 children in the age group of 10 to 19 years old was on a slow but steady decline for the last 4 years.
It is worrying, however, that the percentage of deaths caused by “external” factors – accidents, poisonings or traumas – is growing in the total number of teenager deaths. In 2000 the above death causes accounted for 62% of the total deaths of male teenagers. The above causes accounted for 40% of the total female deaths in the same teenage group.

A similar situation has been registered in the teenage group of 15 to 19. Murders, homicides and suicides account jointly for 20% of the total male deaths and one seventh of the total female deaths in that teenage group in cities.

One of the criteria for female health is maternal death rate, which is much higher in Moldova in comparison to the developed European economies.

Maternity death rate became a little lower in 2000: 27 maternal deaths were registered per 100,000 deliveries due to complicated pregnancy, abnormal delivery or post-delivery period (as compared to 29 in 1999).

Frequent abortions, hard labor of many women, low reproductive culture of the broad public, improper diet, growing number of stresses is a threat for normal development of pregnancy. The pregnancy ended in a premature delivery for 3.3% of all pregnant women under observation, and 3% of all pregnancies ended in abortions. Most frequent among the diseases, which preceded or developed in the course of pregnancy and aggravated its development as well as delivery and postnatal period, were: anaemia, urinogenital diseases, cardiovascular diseases and toxic states (toxicosis) on advanced stages of pregnancy.

Among death causes toxic states of the pregnant rate first: they account for 8 deaths per 100,000 deliveries.

An adequate reflection of the death rate can be found in life expectancy of the population. In 2000 the average life expectancy for Moldova was 67.6 years, including 63.9 years for males and 71.2 for females.

Within five years (1996 to 2000) life expectancy grew by 2.1 years for males and by 1.5 years for females.

At the same time the difference in those indicators by sex remains considerable: it amounts to 7.3 years (as compared to 7.9 in 1995). That high difference can be explained with an extremely high premature death rate with males.

The difference in life expectancy is similarly great for urban and rural population in Moldova. In 2000 the average life expectancy for urban males was 65 years as compared to 63.1 for the rural males, whereas the respective figures for females were 72.6 years as opposed to 70.4 years, i.e. the difference made almost 2 years for males and 2.2 years for females.

4. Education

At the current stage the Moldovan system of education is in the process of being reformed with the objective to bring the total system of education in conformity with the demands and requirements of the national economy as well as the current social and economic changes and to improve the skills of graduates and level of training in educational establishments in line with the internationally accepted standards.

Pre-School Education as the first stage in the system of education and training is represented by a network of various nurseries and pre-school kindergartens (public as well as private).

Generally children under 3 are educated and trained in families, however, nurseries, combined nursery - pre-school institutions and nursery groups in kindergartens are also available for children in that age group.

Children aged 3 to 6 (7) can be educated and trained in pre-school institutions of various types and in different ownership forms or in combined pre-school – primary school institutions. Preparatory pre-school training is obligatory for all children of 5 or older; such training is
available in preparatory pre-school groups with kindergartens or schools or, if desired by parents, it can take place in the family.

In early 2001 there were 1135 pre-school institutions in Moldova (this data and subsequent figures do not take into account the Transnistria) with the total capacity to educate 144 children, whereas the actual attendance amounted to 94 thousand children. It means that actual attendance accounted for 65% of the total capacity. The private sector was represented by 41 pre-school institutions (4% of the total number) with the capacity for 3 thousand children (3% of the total).

The transition to the market brought with it certain dramatic changes to the previously effective practices of providing socially significant services to the public for free or based upon subsidies. Due to the difficult financial situation of many enterprises and companies, which used to finance from their budget their own pre-schools providing services to employees, many of such company-owned institutions had to be closed down. The buildings were used as storage facilities, office premises, or generally as premises to let or to be otherwise used for profit. In practical terms every other pre-school institution was closed down in 1992-2000.

Within the same period the number of children going to pre-schools decreased more than two times, and the coverage of children with pre-school training fell from 55% down to 36% (from the total number of children aged 1 to 6). The coverage with pre-school education of children aged 3 to 6 made 33%.

The pattern to cut down the number of pre-school institutions and the decrease in the number of children attending them was maintained in 2000.

At the same time the current situation with the decreasing birth rate results in the annual decrease of children in pre-school age group (aged 0 to 6). Thus, the number of children in that group decreased by 69 thousand (i.e. by 19%) in the last 4 years and totaled 303.3 thousand in early 2001.

The declining demand for pre-school institutions is supported to a certain degree by the escalating unemployment and much lower employment levels of the able-bodied population, in particular women.

The growing prices for pre-school services combined with the possibility to pay by day of attendance (as opposed to the previous practice of payment by month) caused frequent cases of absenteeism from pre-schools. Thus, in 2000 the average absenteeism per child amounted to 80 days (for reasons other than being sick).

The falling coverage of children with pre-school education leads, in its turn, to the increase in the number of children with a deficit of communication skills in their age groups and lacking pre-school training as it is pre-school rather than family that plays a major role in that area. The above situation is additionally aggravated by the growing number of children born by underage or single mothers, which means the growing portion of children in risk of being brought up without a father, in poverty and with lacking psychological adaptation.

**Primary and General Secondary Education.** Primary education comprises grades I to IV inclusive, and school attendance is obligatory for all children beginning with 7 years of age. General secondary education consists of the obligatory gymnasium (grades V to IX inclusive) and lyceum (grades X to XII). At present general secondary schools (of the comprehensive type) are still functioning parallel to lyceums.

In late 2000 – early 2001 the total number of secondary education establishments was 1566, including daytime schools, gymnasiums and lyceums, with the total number of pupils amounting to 629 thousand. That number comprised 115 primary schools (19 thousand pupils), 674 gymnasiums (150 thousand pupils), 183 lyceums (135 thousand pupils), 554 secondary schools (313 thousand pupils), and 40 specialized schools (5 thousand pupils) for mentally or physically handicapped children. In addition there are training classes for talented schoolchildren functioning by colleges (for 6 thousand pupils) and by higher educational establishments (for 0.5 thousand).
The coverage of children with primary education (grades 1 to 4) amounted to 97% of the total Moldovan children aged 7 to 10. It means that 8 thousand children in that age group were not going to school for a variety of reasons.

The second-stage (incomplete) secondary education (grades 5 to 9) covers 93% of the total population aged 11 to 15; 25 thousand children were not going to school in that age group. High school (grades 10 to 12) covers 30% of teenagers aged 16 to 18, and the total coverage with complete secondary education is 41% (gross coefficient) of the respective age group, including students of secondary vocational schools.

Such institutions as gymnasiums and lyceums are obviously gaining more and more popularity in the system of secondary education. The percentage of pupils attending gymnasiums is 24%, and lyceums – 21%. The Law on Education granted the status of a gymnasium to all the second-stage (incomplete) secondary schools beginning in 1996.

The overwhelming majority of all educational establishments are in public ownership (99% of the total number of pupils), and practically all of them are part of the system supervised by the Ministry of Education. The total number of schools includes 27 non-public schools (out of which 24 are in private ownership) with 4 thousand pupils (0.6% of the total). The price payable per year of studies in a private school ranges on the average from USD 100 to USD 1000.

The problems of transition to the market brought to life certain negative phenomena in school education. The infrastructure of schools, gymnasiums and lyceums as well as training conditions for pupils are in need of improvement, which is currently impossible due to the lack of finance. Each fourth facility is in need of capital refurbishments and repairs, and as many as 50 school buildings (3%) were reported to be in hazardous state. Due to insufficient financing and arrears in financing of schools from the state budget and local budgets there is no possibility to refurbish them, to purchase the necessary manuals, training materials and visual aids, methodology instructions. Schools have no money to subscribe for newspapers and magazines. Computers needed to equip classes remain a major problem. Most of the gymnasiums (71%), 24 lyceums (13%) and 66 general schools (12%) had no informatics or computer classes. Only as little as 7% of all teachers were using information technologies, preparing their materials for the lessons. Only 50 (3%) general schools, gymnasiums and lyceums are directly connected to Internet. Many schools, which have access to information webs and networks, are unable to actually use them due to the lack of finance.

The insufficient level of teachers’ skills generally affects the quality of education and teaching, as only 79% of teachers had higher education. Highly skilled teachers are leaving the public education system for better salaried jobs elsewhere due to the low level of salaries and wages in the system. In 2000 the average nominal monthly salaries for employees in the public education system amounted to 61% of the average salaries in the national economy, which is considerably lower than the salaries and wages paid in the material production sector (36% of the salaries in industrial production and 46% of the salaries in construction).

The budgetary problems have resulted in the significant cut down of the number of out-of-school (free time) facilities for schoolchildren in Moldova (technical creative centers: hobby centers for young technicians, tourists, wild nature lovers, etc.). Since 1992 the number of such facilities decreased by more than 50%. The process of their closing down or winding up was not accompanied with the setting up of any alternative public or other structures, thus doubtless contributing to the aggravation of the current teenager free time problem closely related with the ideological void of the young. The situation is additionally aggravated by insufficient coverage of children aged 7 to 15 with obligatory secondary schooling (9 grades), the percentage of children not covered by school system amounts to 6%; the number of children not going to school for a variety of reasons made more than 30 thousand. As a consequence crime rate, occurrence of venereal diseases, drug addiction and alcoholism are growing among teenagers.

It should be further pointed out that only about one third (37%) of the total number of children, which graduated from Grade IX in School Year 2000/2001 (59.9 thousand), chose to continue their education in Grade X, 17% entered multi-profile vocational or professional
schools and only 2% entered colleges; 44% of the current year graduates have not come to any decision concerning their further education.

A decreasing pattern has become pronounced in the total number of pupils completing their course of studies in daytime general secondary schools and getting a school-leaving certificate on completion of secondary education. Only in the last three years their number fell from 25.3 thousand down to 23.6 thousand (i.e. by 7%). Out of the total number of this year’s graduates 9% entered vocational or professional schools, 13% entered colleges and 44% joined universities. Generally, one third of all graduates try to find temporary or chance jobs.

Last school year there were 40 specialized schools in operation in the total number of schools: those 40 are schools for the children with lack of mental or physical accommodation (disabled or handicapped) and the total number of pupils in such schools amounts to 5.1 thousand. Aggravation in the general situation resulted in the decrease by almost 50% in the number of such pupils, as compared to 1992. For the most part, such decrease was accounted for by the tendency on the part of parents to keep mentally handicapped children at home in families or to send them to ordinary schools with specialized compensatory training classes (0.6 thousand children).

**Secondary Vocational Training** takes place in professional or multi-profile vocational schools. Professional schools provide professional training in one or several closely related specialities (professions), whereas multi-profile vocational schools provide professional training in a broad range of professions, which is combined with general lyceum training.

As of early 2001, 80 professional and multi-profile vocational schools were training 23 thousand students. In the period of 1992 to 2000 the total number of such students fell by almost 50%.

Most schools are public, and as little as 2% of schools (for 0.4 thousand students) are in private ownership. At the same time, each tenth student trained in the system (i.e. more than 2 thousand students) is paying for his/her education on contractual basis. The price payable annually for education ranges from USD 40 to USD 400. At the same time monthly school grants paid to students amount to MDL 42-55 (i.e. USD 4-5).

Last year the system trained 14 thousand qualified workers, of which every second one managed to find a job.

**Higher Education** is provided in higher educational establishments: colleges, universities, academies and institutes.

Colleges provide higher education in reduced periods of 2 or 3 years. Colleges are able to operate as autonomous institutions or as part of other higher educational establishments. Graduates with a college diploma are able to continue education in their respective specialisms in the system of university education (institutes, academies, universities). Daytime university training takes 4 to 6 years depending on the specialism. The education is considered completed after passing of an exam to get the licenciate degree in the selected specialism and defence of a course paper or a diploma thesis.

In the beginning of School Year 2000/2001 specialists were trained in Moldova in 60 colleges (total of 20 thousand students) and 47 establishments providing university training (79 thousand students). In 1992-2000 the number of colleges grew by 16, although the total number of students trained in them became two times less. Within the same period the number of university training establishments grew by 33, and the total number of university students became 1.7 times higher.

The portion of female students exceeded 50% in the total number of students trained in higher education establishments (it amounted to 57% in colleges and 56% in universities).

Higher education reform progresses in the direction of private education development (with the growing number of private training establishments) and provision of contracted education against payment by public education establishments.
In the last 5 years the total number of students in private establishments became 5 times higher, growing from 0.7 up to 3.5 thousand in colleges and from 4.3 up to 19.7 thousand in universities.

At present every third college student and every two university students out of three are provided contracted education for payment.

Public higher educational establishments are facing an acute deficit of finance as well as material and technical resources, therefore they are forced to turn to commerce (trade in their services). In the beginning of the last school year as little as 20% of public university students and 22% of public college students were paid monthly grants. It should be emphasized that student grants are much lower than the current subsistence minimum. Thus, in late 2000 the minimum student grants amounted to 13% of the official subsistence minimum in colleges and to 17% - in universities.

In 2000 education expense made MDL 719 million in the total consolidated budget expense (in current prices). Its portion in the total budgetary expense fell by one fourth as compared to 1995 (from 24% down to 18%).

There exists student exchange with other countries. Last school year more than 2 thousand students from other countries were trained in Moldovan institutes, academies and universities; the majority of foreign students came from Ukraine (25% of all foreign students), Syria (23%) and Romania (20%). At the same time, more than 6 thousand Moldovan students were trained abroad within the framework of student exchange monitored by the Ministry of Education, with 85% of the above figure being trained in Romanian universities.

Economic and legal specialisms enjoy the highest popularity among the young Moldovans willing to join institutes, academies or universities; engineering and technical specialisms are in the lowest demand. Every fourth person joining university is choosing “law” as his/her specialism. That fact signifies for Moldova the threat of future deficit in qualified technicians and engineers.

Qualified professionals are still trained for Moldova with no consideration of the current or future demand in them existing with the national economy. The crisis in economy coupled with the destruction of the system ensuring planned training of skilled specialists and provision of guaranteed jobs upon their graduation resulted in the aggravation of unemployment among university graduates. Thousands of Lei (actually USD 300 to 600) paid by the student as payment for each year of contracted university training do not guarantee a job upon graduation. In 2000 the labor exchange registered 4 thousand unemployed university graduates and 7 thousand unemployed college graduates.

The above problems result in the attempts to seek profit from any activity or business, be it formal, informal, half legal or illegal. The lack of regulation in that sphere creates possibilities for misuse, use of skilled labor for incomparably low salaries or involvement of young people into criminal activities.

5. CHILDREN IN RISK GROUPS AND CRIME RATE

5.1. Risk Group Children

The transfer to the market accompanied with the broadening gap between classes of the society and the aggravation of all social problems causes a dramatic growth in the number of persons categorized as ‘socially vulnerable’, balancing on the verge of poverty, destitute, with no confidence in the future, in need of help and belonging to various ‘risk groups’. Generally risk groups include the handicapped, disabled, elderly and lonely people living on minimum allowances or pensions, unemployed population in working age or employed and relatively low salaried people, in particular young people, families with many children and single parent families, etc. Children are the most vulnerable group in that respect.

The year 2000 was declared the Year of children by the decree of the Moldovan President. In connection with the above fact the Department of Statistics and Sociology held an
opinion poll among the population on risks for children, including more than one thousand respondents from all over the country, with more than a half of respondents (58.4%) representing rural population. The results of the poll demonstrated that the overwhelming majority of respondents (89.8%) - irrespective of their place of residence, age or sex – believed that low income (low living standards) in the family was the main risk for children, as the main responsibility for bringing up, development and protection of children lies with their parents.

The living standards of the family can be assessed, comparing income per family member with the subsistence minimum per capita. The subsistence minimum represents the minimum consumption of material goods and services, which are necessary to satisfy primary material needs, to maintain human health and to support human life.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subsistence minimum per capita (MDL per month)</th>
<th>2001, Q1</th>
<th>2001, Q2</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Average</td>
<td>Urban</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total population</td>
<td>459.2</td>
<td>524.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Children</td>
<td>433.2</td>
<td>510.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>including:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Under 1</td>
<td>163.7</td>
<td>192.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aged 1 to 6</td>
<td>371.8</td>
<td>437.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aged 7 to 16</td>
<td>473.0</td>
<td>551.3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

According to the results of the Household Budget Survey (HBS) held in Quarter II of this year, 86.6% of the population had income levels lower than the subsistence minimum, and the disposable income of the population covered approximately one half (47.4%) of its amount. A similar picture is discovered as we analyze the situation in families with children: 87.4% of all families with children were living on income below the minimum subsistence level.

A stable pattern should be pointed out towards the decline of the average income per family member with the increase in number of children in the family. According to the results of the 2000 survey, the average monthly income per family member in families with one child amounted to MDL 187.9 whereas the respective figure was actually two times lower for families with 4 children or more. At the same time the average income per family member in childless families made MDL 221.2 to 266.6 or 2.2 to 2.6 times higher than in families with many children.

Families with children are using up all of their disposable income to satisfy their day-to-day needs, which makes impossible even the purchase of first necessity items, to say nothing of long-lived (durable) goods, complicates payment of utility bills, education and health care services etc. and makes almost impossible accumulation of family savings. The results of the opinion poll have demonstrated that impossibility to buy first necessity items remains a serious problem with 60.4% of childless respondents and for 72.7% of respondents with children. Insufficient income is closely connected with such a risk for children as limited access to health care services. The impossibility to use commercial medical services was mentioned by 81.7% of the respondents, and 73.5% of the respondents spoke of the impossibility to buy expensive medicines. Irrespective of the officially approved list of medical services to be provided to the public for free, actually that does not stand true to life in the overwhelming majority of cases. Furthermore, 80.3% of all households had problems to this or that extent in 2000 in payment of utility bills (according to the HBS).

The low levels of income in poor families force them to orient their expense mainly at purchase of food: food accounted for 62.0% of the total consumer expense of households with one child, which is practically on the level with the average figure for the country, however, food accounted for 73.9% of the total consumer expense of the households supporting 4 or more children. The high percentage of food in the total consumer expense (for the sake of comparison it should be mentioned that the respective figure does not exceed 20-25% in the developed
economies) is not yet an indicator in itself that children’s diet in the family is adequate from the point of view of calories and nutritive value; rather, the opposite is true.

The inadequacy of children’s diet is supported by the following data: children under 16 were consuming on the average 35 g of proteins and 41 g of fats daily, which is practically 2 times lower than the respective daily requirements (66 g and 75 g per day respectively), and 192 g of carbohydrates, whereas the daily required norm is 244 g. The daily consumed number of calories in food totaled 1520 Kcal, or 20% lower than it is normal for children (1915 Kcal).

Low income of families with children, food prevailing in the total consumer expense and insufficient nourishment means that households with children, and in particular families with many children, should be currently counted with the society groups most vulnerable socially.

Poor material standards of individual households have doubtless an adverse effect upon the moods prevailing in the society in general. The current general atmosphere of lacking stability, uncertainty about tomorrow among the adult population also counts among the risks for the young generation. That was the risk mentioned by 77.8% of respondents from childless households and as many as 84.2% respondents from families with children (according to the results of the opinion poll).

A special category of risk group children is orphans and children left without parental care. At present 1.4 thousand children and teenagers were registered annually in the above category in Moldova. Notwithstanding the general decline in the living standards of the population, the number of children brought up in families is growing (fostered, adopted, under guardianship). Thus, whereas in 1996 such children accounted for 66.5% of the total registered children and teenagers left without parental care, in 2000 their percentage grew up to 83.3% (the total number of children currently under guardianship or adopted in families amounts to about 9.5 thousand). The rest of the children were sent to public Infant’s Homes, orphanages and boarding schools for orphans, i.e. the state actually replaces parents for them.

According to the reported data, in 2000 the number of children in institutions of the above category totaled above 7 thousand, or by 16% less than in 1996. In addition round 6 thousand children suffering of chronic diseases, physically handicapped or demonstrating retarded development were trained in specialized schools and general type boarding schools supervised by the Ministry of Education. Generally the Ministry of Education supervises the majority of educational establishments and institutions (above 90%), the remaining ones are supervised by the Ministry of Health or by the Ministry of Labor and Social Protection.

Last year UNICEF (assisted by the inter-ministerial team) held a survey on the situation of institutionalized children in the Republic of Moldova. That survey was carried out as part of the project, which provides for examination of the current situation in that sphere in 6 countries of Central and Eastern Europe (CEE region). The survey covered 67.2% of the institutions with 73.8% of the total institutionalized children. In most cases the principal reason for institutionalization consisted in severe material problems and poor (unsatisfactory) living conditions in the family (84.6%), including retarded development and chronic diseases, which accounted for 48.0% of all cases; and deprivation of parental rights accounted respectively for 16.1% of cases; the other reasons mentioned during the survey included problems in family (single parent families, divorce of the parents, etc.) –11.0%, death of the parents – 9.8%, etc. It should be emphasized that for most children institutionalization was caused by a combination of several reasons rather than one reason only.

As regards living conditions of children in institutions, the buildings housing most of the institutions under survey (71.1%) were old and originally designed for different use; being modified sometime at a later stage to accommodate children’s institutions, only as little as 28.9% were located in the buildings specially designed and constructed for the purpose. Due to limited heating possibilities in wintertime, the temperature in the rooms (dormitories, classrooms, playrooms, gyms, canteens) falls down to 8-14°C in the cold season, thus contributing to the development of children’s health problems. Water pipeline and drainage system was totally absent or not functioning due to breakages and lack of safety in every second institution; 66.7%
of all the institutions had no elementary washing hand conditions, which presented a direct threat of an outbreak of food poisoning or acute gastric and intestinal infections with children.

As regards an adequate and balanced diet satisfying the physiological requirements of children and sanitary and hygienic norms, the situation is quite alarming in that sphere. Chronic insufficient nutrition presents a serious danger and can result in retardations in the various growth and development areas as well as lowered ability to labor.

The conclusions based on the results of the above survey stated that the currently existing system of children’s care and educational institutions was inefficient from the point of view of children’s psychic and social development and needed cardinal improvements.

More often than not persons, who were devoid of parental care, love and protection on the part of relatives and friends since their early childhood, would grow up reticent, unsociable and unsure of themselves. In its turn, it leads to the development of such traits as embitterment and cruelty, ultimately pushing the person towards willful infringements/ violations of law and crime.

5.2. Crime Rate

Juvenile delinquency became a major and acute problem in the last few years next to crime-related problems of general nature.

There are times in the life of young people when they tend to willfully violate the law, be it to satisfy their personal needs, or due to the lack of subsistence means, or as the result of their wish to stand out against the other youngsters of their age. Although many of such juvenile delinquents remain undiscovered by the authorities and do not become criminals technically, for some of them it becomes the beginning of their future criminal career.

In 2000 the number of crimes committed by teenagers totaled round 3 thousand, or 1.5 times higher than in 1996. Infringements upon property account for the predominant portion (86%) of all crimes, and thefts account for two thirds of that figure. Personal property thefts made 75% of all registered cases of theft.

Although crimes involving violence account for as little as 2% of all crimes, they are the most dangerous and cruel crimes in the total crime range. Thus, in 2000 juvenile delinquents committed 18 murders and inflicted 17 severe physical injuries, which is respectively 1.6 and 1.2 times higher than in 1996. One of the possible causes for the increase in number of such crimes is the growing involvement of the juvenile into criminal groups.

Of extreme danger is participation of adults in group crimes committed by the juvenile, which is the case in every fifth juvenile crime. The current situation actually promotes the transfer of criminal experience to the young generation.

The period of 1996 to 2000 witnessed the increase of 1.4 times in the number of juvenile delinquents (which grew up to 3 thousand). The majority here are teenagers aged 16 to 17 (64%). That is the very age when teenagers leave secondary school and face the problem of selecting their future way in life, their future occupation, be it work or continuation of school education. With their scanty experience of life, they might become easily involved in criminal environment. However, there is a growing pattern of crime rate in younger age groups, which signifies intensification of criminal influence. The number of juvenile delinquents aged 14 to 15, committing socially dangerous deeds, grew by 39% in the last five years and totaled 1046 persons in 2000. The total number of juvenile delinquents registered with the authorities of the interior for infringements and violations made 7.7 thousand, or by 15% higher than in 1996.

In transition of the economy to the market more and more families found themselves on the brink of poverty, which had a direct adverse effect upon the critical situation of children in such families. Although the number of parents in families registered as vulnerable grew in the last few years, the total number of parents deprived of their parental rights became two times less (90 in 1996 against 48 in 2000). The reason is that nowadays the government finds it increasingly difficult to take over the care and responsibility for the future of the children, whose parents have been deprived of their parental rights.
Criminal inclinations of the juvenile are intensified due to consumption of alcohol. In 1996 to 2000 the number of the juvenile delinquents registered with the police authorities for systematic drinking became 1.3 times higher (growing up to 1085 persons). In 2000 each seventh juvenile delinquent found guilty and sentenced committed the crime in the state of alcoholic intoxication.

Of particular worry is the growth in the number of drug-related crimes. Next to using drugs, the juvenile commit crimes because of drugs. The number of juvenile delinquents registered with the police authorities for use of drugs increased 2.2 times in the years of 1996 to 2000 (growing up to 307). The number of drug-related crimes became 5 times higher (increasing up to 108 cases). In 2000 such crimes accounted for 4% of all crimes.

The problem of homeless children (waifs) is becoming more and more acute in progress of transition to the market. The phenomenon of "children of the street" was first registered in Moldova in 1995-1996 and their number is steadily growing. In 2000 more than 3 thousand homeless children were detained by the police in the streets and sent to juvenile homeless distribution center, which exceeds the respective figure for 1996 by 33%. According to the findings of the survey made by the State University, more than a half of the detained juveniles (52.8%) were orphans or children in single-parent families. They fled from their homes to try and earn their subsistence as unskilled labor, beggars or thieves. Every fifteenth waif was caught at theft. Such a situation is directly related to economic exploitation of juvenile labor, as only as little as 25% of all the juvenile workers have the possibility to retain their earnings, whereas the other 75% are forced to share them with their family or leaders of organized groups.

The inefficient social labor or family rehabilitation system for juvenile delinquents with a criminal record contributes to the growth in the number of repeated crimes committed by juveniles. As compared to 1996, in 2000 the number of juveniles committing repeated crimes grew by 25% and totaled 167 persons. That is an indicator that imprisonment is not always an efficient means of punishment; the opposite is most probably true: in most cases imprisonment promotes the inclination towards repeated crime.

According to the data of the Ministry of Justice, males account for 95% of all the juveniles sentenced for crimes. Although female juvenile crime rate is comparatively low in Moldova, as opposed to the male one, a pattern was noted in the last year to more intensive involvement girls in criminal environment (growth by 23%, as compared to 1999).

In the years of 1996 to 2000 the number of sentenced criminals grew by 10% and totaled 1.8 thousand persons. The unemployed and uneducated accounted for the major portion of all cases (61%), and each fourth criminal grew up in a single-parent family. Conditional sentence is the most wide-spread means of punishment for juvenile delinquents, which is a sign of humane attitude towards them practiced by the system of justice. In 2000 the total number of the conditionally sentenced amounted to about one thousand persons, or 1.5 times higher than in 1996.

Although the international norms tend to view imprisonment as an extreme measure in case of the juvenile delinquents and consider possible only short-term imprisonment (as short as possible), 112 juveniles were sentenced to imprisonment in 2000. It is extremely worrying that the majority of the above sentenced juveniles (43%) were sentenced to long terms ranging from 5 to 10 years inclusive. That is another sign, which indicates that crimes committed by juveniles in the last years became clearly mercenary and violent in nature and were combined with excessive aggression and cruelness of actions.

The analysis of juvenile crime, its principal causes and contributing conditions makes it possible to state that the above problem deserves more detailed examination with the objective of taking relevant steps to eliminate the situations, which promote the development of the dangerous environment. The implementation of certain programs and projects targeted at prevention of juvenile homelessness and lack of care could stabilize the situation to a certain degree.