

INTRODUCTION

A major characteristic of United Nations international population conferences during the past three decades has been the emphasis placed on the monitoring of the implementation of their goals and recommendations. Accordingly, the Programme of Action adopted by the International Conference on Population and Development held at Cairo in 1994 recommended that actions should be taken “to measure, assess, monitor and evaluate progress towards meeting the goals of the present Programme of Action”.¹

The monitoring of population policies at the international level has a long history that dates back to the World Population Plan of Action² adopted at the World Population Conference held at Bucharest in 1974. The Plan of Action was the first international instrument on population policy. Within the framework of the Plan of Action, population policies were defined in terms of all policies and programmes—including social and economic policies—concerned with the major population variables: fertility, mortality, internal migration and geographical distribution of population, and international migration.

The Population Division, Department of Economic and Social Affairs, of the United Nations Secretariat is responsible for the global monitoring of the implementation of the Programme of Action emanating from the 1994 International Conference on Population and Development, as it was for the Plan of Action of the 1974 World Population Conference. From the very beginning, the reporting format adopted for the monitoring of implementation has been guided by the principles of objectivity and non-advocacy. Reports have been descriptive and

concise, focusing on analytical comparisons among countries and regions over time.

The present publication is part of the effort of the Population Division to disseminate the information resulting from its monitoring activities. It provides an overview of population policies and dynamics for each of the Member States and non-member States for which data are available at mid-decade for the 1970s, 1980s and 1990s—that is, at the time of the convening of the population conferences at Bucharest, Mexico City and Cairo—as well as for 2003.

The core information included in the monitoring of population policies encompasses three basic components:

Government perceptions of population size and growth, age structure and spatial distribution, and of the demographic components of fertility, mortality and migration that affect them. For each of these variables, is the level or trend viewed as a significant policy issue, and is the prevailing level or rate of change seen as too high, too low or acceptable/satisfactory in relation to other social and economic conditions?

Government objectives with respect to each variable. Is the objective of the Government to raise or to lower the level of the variable or to maintain its current level?

Government policies concerning interventions to influence each variable. Does the Government view intervention to alter levels and trends as a legitimate exercise of its authority? Has the Government actively intervened to influence the variable?

¹ Report of the International Conference on Population and Development, Cairo, 5-13 September 1994 (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.95.XIII.18), chap. I, resolution 1, annex, para. 13.6.

² Report of the United Nations World Population Conference, Bucharest, 19-30 August 1974 (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.75.XIII.3), chap. I.

The Population Policy Data Bank maintained by the United Nations Population Division was established to compile the requisite information for monitoring the implementation of the Plan of Action and later the Programme of Action. The major sources of information contained in the databank may be classified into four broad types (see box 1). The first type of information comprises official Government responses to the *United Nations Inquiry among Governments on Population and Development*, of which there have been nine separate rounds since 1963. The eighth round, the first directed towards the Programme of Action of the 1994 International Conference on Population and Development, was initiated in 1997. The ninth round was undertaken in 2003. Each round of the *Inquiry* has consisted of a detailed request for information sent to all Member States and non-member States of the United Nations. The second type of information consists of publications, documents, speeches and other materials issued by Governments, including development plans, laws, regulations and proclamations. These materials are a particularly important source of data as they reflect the official positions taken by countries. The third category of information is comprised of materials provided by international organizations, such as regional commissions, funds, programmes and agencies of the United Nations system, as well as other regional intergovernmental organizations. As countries collectively are the source of these materials, an official status may be attached to them. The fourth type of information consists of non-governmental materials, including clippings from the world press, articles in academic journals, proceedings of conferences and seminars, reports

and studies prepared by research centres and non-governmental organizations, as well as correspondence and personal communications with experts.

The successive monitoring reports have pointed to significant changes since 1974 in Government views of population issues as well as in population policy formulation. The monitoring exercise itself contributes to this evolution by increasing worldwide awareness of population issues and the need for appropriate policy responses.

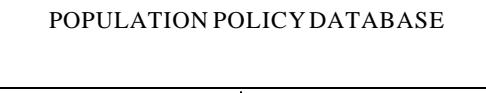
Part One of the present publication offers a global perspective on the evolution of selected aspects of population policies between 1976 and 2003 with respect to each of the major population variables, based on the country profiles. Part Two presents, on a country-by-country basis, the evolution of Government views and policies from 1976 to 2003 with respect to population size and growth, population age structure, fertility and family planning, health and mortality, spatial distribution and international migration, within the context of demographic and social and economic change. Country profiles are included for 194 Member States and non-member States of the United Nations. The material is presented in the form of data sheets, containing population policy data for each country around the dates 1976, 1986, 1996 and 2003, and population indicators for the corresponding years.

The data included in the publication are based on information available to the United Nations Population Division as of 31 December 2003.

BOX 1. SOURCES FOR MONITORING GOVERNMENT VIEWS AND POLICIES ON POPULATION

SOURCES

UNITED NATIONS POPULATION INQUIRIES AMONG GOVERNMENTS	INTERNATIONAL PUBLICATIONS, DOCUMENTS AND OTHER SOURCES	NON-GOVERNMENTAL PUBLICATIONS AND RELATED MATERIALS	GOVERNMENT PUBLICATIONS, DOCUMENTS AND OTHER SOURCES
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Source: *Trends in Population Policy* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.89.XIII.13).