

The Tree of Life

Africa is called the “Cradle of Humanity”. The wisdom of this continent is appealing in every domain including the question of demography with a population of 1.5 billion people characterised by a growth rate of about 100 million every three years.

“It takes a village to raise a child” – says the African proverb meaning that affords in the said field must be common and the results have a beneficial effect on the whole society.

If one cannot be as optimistic as Doctor Pangloss, the pedantic and unfailingly optimistic tutor of Voltaire’s *Candide*, the question of demography needs to be addressed in the European Union.

The authors of the fourth special edition of *Európai Tükör/European Mirror* dedicated to the question of demography dress a gloomy picture of the demographic situation in the EU and call for an effective and EU level policy in this area.

The demographic decline resulting from low fertility rates, the increase in the ageing population in parallel with the continuous decline of the proportion of young people, which increases fiscal strains on healthcare and social security systems, which should be counterbalanced by the need to create a silver economy, and second, lower GDP per capita deriving from lower productivity and rising fiscal expenditure due to ageing constitute all elements that are strongly underlined by more than one factor. All these phenomena happen in a quasi-lack of EU initiatives in this domain.

“Jusqu’ici tout va bien.”

What can be done? Answers may be found in the writings of Andrea Kuhl, Áron Drabancz, Piroska Mária Szalai Varga Zsoltné, Petra Szűcs, Andrea Szegedi, Ádám Csepeti, Márton Zsuráfszky, István Lóránd Szakáli, Attila Miklós Kovács, Tibor Tóth, Csaba Zalai, Mariann Tánczos, Csaba Lentner and Tünde Fűrész, who have dealt with the topic from different perspectives.

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