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## Demographic and social changes in the population of Tomaszów Mazowiecki at the period of the economic and political system transformation

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**DEMOGRAPHIC AND SOCIAL CHANGES  
IN THE POPULATION OF TOMASZOW MAZOWIECKI  
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**ABSTRACT.** The article presents the results of demographic and social studies carried out in Tomaszow Mazowiecki and 20 other Polish towns of rich industrial traditions. The problems analysed in the research were as follows: changes in the number of population and birthrate figures, unemployment, poverty and criminality. The main objective of the research was to prove the influence of the transformation on the demographic and social situation of towns in Poland.

**KEY WORDS:** demographic and social changes, transformation, industrial towns.

The socio-economic transformation in Poland brought about significant changes in the functional, demographic and social structure. Birthrate figures and age structure changed considerably, as well as the social situation, with growing unemployment and visible diversification of society. These issues are very important therefore were described by many authors. G. Węclawowicz (1999, 2001) presented results of socio – spatial analysis of transformation processes in Polish towns. B. Domański (2000), E. Marczyńska – Witczak, M. Piech (1998) and S. Kaczmarek (2001) described changes in industrial areas. A. Matczak, D. Szymańska (2000 a, 2000 b) and T. Kaczmarek (1998) focused on functional changes occurred after 1989. Changes in socio – economic structures of towns located in different regions of Poland presented W. Maik, D. Sokołowski, R. Jaroszevska – Brudnicka, R. Brudnicki (1996, 1997). J. J. Parysek (1998,

2002) and Z. Rykiel (2002) gave a brief summary of transition processes from socialistic to post – socialistic town in Poland.

The author conducts an analysis of the changes which took place in 1988-2002 in Tomaszow Mazowiecki and 20 other industrial towns in various parts of Poland. In the period of 1988-2002 the number of Tomaszow Mazowiecki population did not change much – by around 2% of the initial value from 1988, on an area unchanged from 1988. It should be said that until 1995 the number of population was slightly but steadily rising (Table1). However, after 1995 the number of the town population was systematically falling (Table 1), which resulted from negative tendencies in birthrate and migration figures (Fig.1). According to the data obtained from the Main Statistical Office, the decreasing birthrate and falling number of people migrating from the country to towns are typical of all Polish towns. The birthrate in towns in the last decade of the 20<sup>th</sup> c. was ten times lower than in the 1980s. Apart from Tomaszow Mazowiecki, a similar situation occurred in 13 out of the 20 towns under study. The number of population there was growing in the early 1990s, while in the second half of the decade it was systematically decreasing. This was caused by the decreasing birthrate and migration balance.

Table 1. Changes in the number of Tomaszow Mazowiecki population in 1988–2002

YEARS	TOTAL POPULATION	DYNAMICS INDICATOR (%) 1988 = 100%	NUMBER OF FEMALES PER 100 MALES
1988	69,452	100.0	110
1989	69,579	100.2	112
1990	69,925	100.7	112
1991	69,884	100.6	112
1992	69,868	100.6	111
1993	69,898	100.6	111
1994	69,949	100.7	111
1995	70,016	100.8	111
1996	69,875	100.6	111
1997	69,656	100.3	111
1998	69,648	100.3	111
1999	69,389	99.9	111
2000	69,244	99.7	111
2001	68,966	99.3	111
2002	68,054	97.9	111

Source: Piotrkowskie Voivodeship Yearbooks 1991, 1993, 1996, 1998; Lodz Voivodeship Yearbooks 2000, 2001, 2002; *Gminas* in Poland in 1996; materials obtained from the Voivodeship, Statistical Office in Piotrkow Trybunalski.

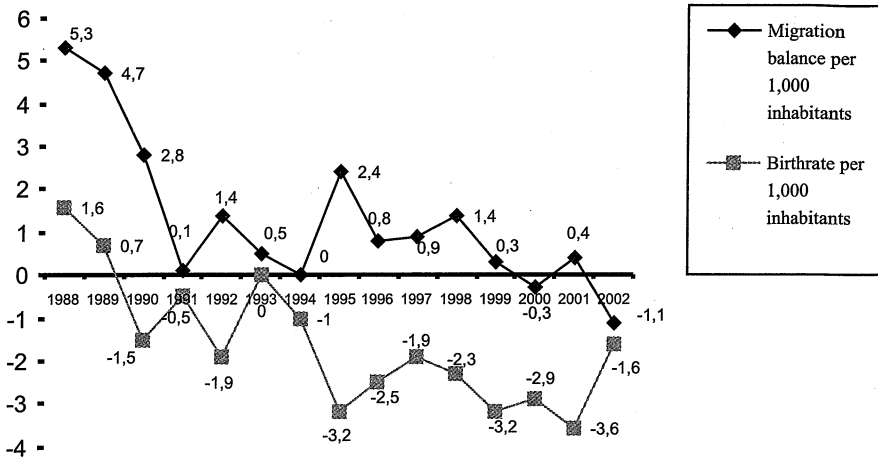


Fig.1. Changes in the birthrate and migration balance in Tomaszow Mazowiecki in 1988–2002  
 Source: Lodz Voivodeship Yearbooks 2000, 2001, 2002; Gminas in Poland in 1996, Voivodeship Statistical Office materials in Piotrkow Trybunalski

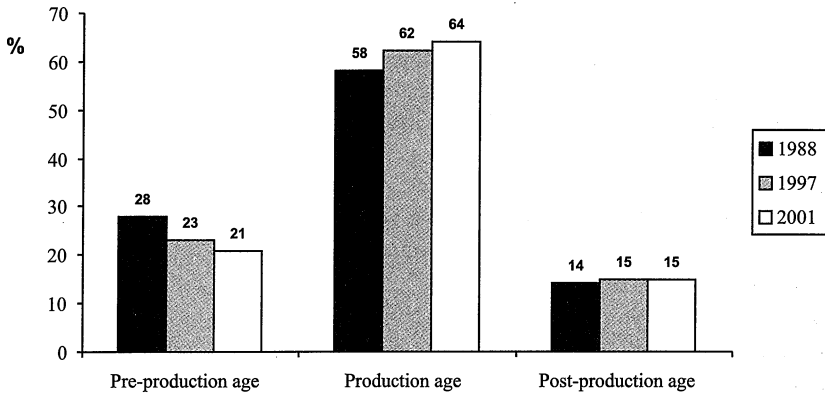


Fig.2. Percentage of Tomaszow Mazowiecki population in economic age groups  
 Source: Data obtained from the 1988 Census, Piotrkowskie Voivodeship Yearbook 1998, Lodzkie Voivodeship Yearbook 2002

The gender structure in Tomaszow Mazowiecki reflects a situation which is typical of the majority of towns in Poland, where females outnumber males. In Tomaszow Mazowiecki the average feminization coefficient value was 111, with small variations (Table 1). A similar situation occurred in the other towns under study. The feminization coefficient in most of them exceeded the value of 105.

In Tomaszow Mazowiecki one can notice an unfavourable tendency in the population structure. In 1988–2001 the percentage of people at the pre-produc-

tion age was gradually decreasing while the percentage of people at the production and post-production age was rising (Fig. 2). The situation resulted from the steadily falling birthrate. Tendencies of this type are also observable in other towns in Lodz region and Poland.

According to the National Census data, in 1988 the education structure of Tomaszow Mazowiecki inhabitants was dominated by people with elementary education (42.9%). They were followed by a group with completed secondary education (26.8%), and only a slightly smaller group with vocational education (24.8%). The smallest group consisted of people with university education (5.5%).

Table 2. The unemployed registered in Tomaszow Mazowiecki in 1992–2001

YEARS	PERCENTAGE OF THE UNEMPLOYED AMONG THE POPULATION AT THE PRODUCTION AGE	TOTAL NUMBER OF THE UNEMPLOYED	TOTAL NUMBER OF THE UNEMPLOYED DYNAMICS INDICATOR 1992 = 100%
1992	19.7	8,091	-
1993	-	8,330	103
1995	-	7,857	97
1996	18.3	7,736	95
1997	-	7,151	88
1998	16.3	6,995	86
1999	-	7,528	93
2000	-	8,040	99
2001	18.9	8,305	102
Average	18.3	7,781	-

*Source:* Author's calculations based on data obtained from the Poviats Employment Office in Tomaszow Mazowiecki and the Main Statistical Office.

The above figures are worse than the mean education structure in towns in 1988. In 2002, however, they improved. The transformation period raised people's awareness of the importance of knowledge in human life, which led to an increase in the number of students. In Tomaszow Mazowiecki a branch of the University of Lodz was established so the percentage of people with university education grew (9% in 2002) On the other hand, the percentage of people with only elementary education fell to 29% (data obtained from the Voivodeship Statistical Office in Lodz).

An extremely important social phenomenon, which commonly occurred after 1989, is unemployment. In 1989–1991 in Tomaszow Mazowiecki there were several hundred registered unemployed. Only later a wave of group job reductions due to the closing down of state enterprises caused such an increase in

unemployment that at present it is the most serious problem of the town and the region. In 1992 there were over 8,000 unemployed (Table 2), which made over 19% of the population at the production age. Due to the intensive economic growth in Poland in the first half of the 1990s, the demand and employment were rising. This resulted in smaller unemployment at that time. In Tomaszow Mazowiecki it was the lowest in 1998. However, the next years brought a negative change of the situation and the number of the unemployed began to grow again to finally exceed the figures from 1992 in 2001 (Table 2). The causes of this recurring growth in unemployment can be found mainly in the economic crisis, which started in the late 1990s, and in job reductions. It must be stressed that the percentage of the unemployed in the group of population at the production age, calculated for all towns in Poland was, respectively: 12% in 1992, 8% in 1998, and 12% in 2000 (data obtained from the Voivodeship Statistical Office in Lodz). These figures are clearly lower than the figures for Tomaszow Mazowiecki (Table 2).

For most of the period under study, the group of the unemployed in Tomaszow Mazowiecki was slightly dominated by men. As far as the group without the right to the unemployment benefit is concerned, they constituted 64% of the overall number of the unemployed at that time. The average percentage of people remaining without work for longer than 12 months (and thus losing the right to the benefit) was 48%. It is noticeable that the percentage of the most problematic unemployment groups in Tomaszow Mazowiecki is high.

The average number of the unemployed in Tomaszow Mazowiecki, as well as the percentage of the unemployed in the population group at the production age, are among the highest in the group of the 20 towns under study. Tendencies regarding the changing numbers of the unemployed in Tomaszow Mazowiecki are confirmed in the other towns. The number of the unemployed was falling there in 1992–1997, while in 1997–2001 it was rising again to reach values similar or higher than in 1992.

Unemployment in Tomaszow Mazowiecki is strictly correlated with the phenomena of poverty and crime. The average number of inhabitants receiving different forms of social care in the 1990s reached over 4,100 persons a year. Social support offered to individuals is extended to their families, so in fact the number of people benefiting from it is much larger. At the time of the study it came between 8,000 and 15,000, which made 12% to 22% of the inhabitants. This number showed a considerable changeability. The largest number of social care recipients was noted in 1992–1994. Next, until 1997 that number was clearly decreasing, but the following years brought another rise. This tendency may be explained through the most frequent reasons for which social support is granted (Fig. 3), with unemployment as the leading one. Therefore, changes in the number of social care recipients are related to the number of the unemployed.

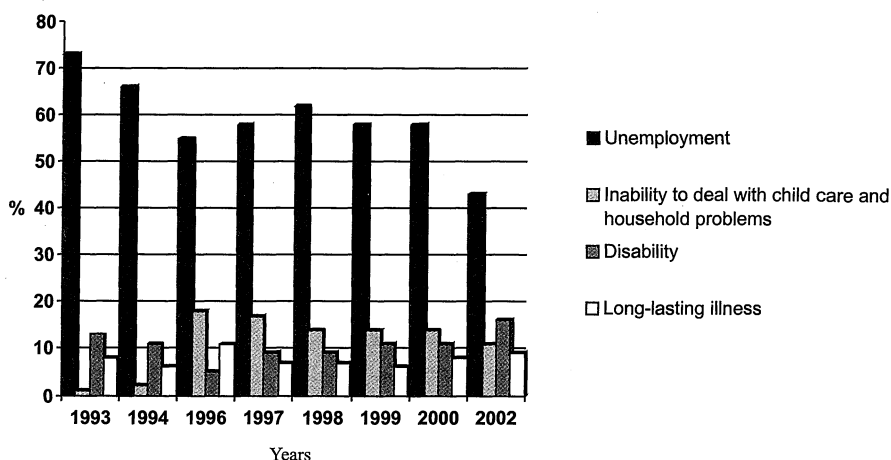


Fig. 3. The most frequent reasons for granting social benefits by the Town's Social Care Centre to families in Tomaszow Mazowiecki in 1993–2002

Source: Author's calculations based on data obtained from the Town's Social Care Office in Tomaszow Mazowiecki

Table 3. Pearson's linear correlation quotient "r" for unemployment, poverty and crime in Tomaszow Mazowiecki in 1992 – 2000

CORRELATED PHENOMENA	LINEAR CORRELATION QUOTIENT
Number of the unemployed and social care recipients	0.77
Number of the unemployed and number of committed crimes	0.71
Number of social care recipients and number of committed crimes	0.56

Source: Author's calculations based on the data obtained from the *Powiat* Employment Office, Town's Social Care Centre and *Powiat* Police Headquarters in Tomaszow Mazowiecki.

The phenomena of poverty and unemployment are strictly connected with the rising crime rate. In Tomaszow Mazowiecki in the early 1990s the number of offences and crimes was growing. Later, in 1996 and 1997 it fell drastically. Pearson's linear correlation quotient "r" shows that changes in the number of the unemployed, social care recipients and crimes in 1992–2000 in Tomaszow Mazowiecki, remained in a statistically significant correlation (Table 3).

Apart from the general character of criminality, it is also important to know the most dangerous parts of the town. Materials obtained from the *Powiat* Police Headquarters in Tomaszow Mazowiecki show that the areas most severely affected by criminality are the following:

1. Area 1 – in the town centre (Fig. 4), with numerous shops, public use buildings, parking lots and a large open air market

2. Area 2 – in the south-eastern part of the centre (Fig. 4), with two residential block estates and one estate of family houses. The most frequent crimes committed here are: thefts and break-ins to cars and flats, bicycle thefts, fights and assault
3. Area 3 – in the north-western part of the town (Fig. 4), including “The Defenders of Tomaszow Mazowiecki of 1939” housing estate, with blocks of flats and many service outlets. The predominating types of crime are thefts and break-ins, bicycle thefts, fights and assault. A considerable number of these crimes are committed by the youth inhabiting the estates.

Crimes are committed mainly in the most densely built-up and inhabited areas, as well as in the town centre where commerce and transport are well-developed and make it attractive to criminals. It is also easily observable that areas where the danger of crime is the biggest are adjacent to quarters inhabited by poor people (Fig. 4).

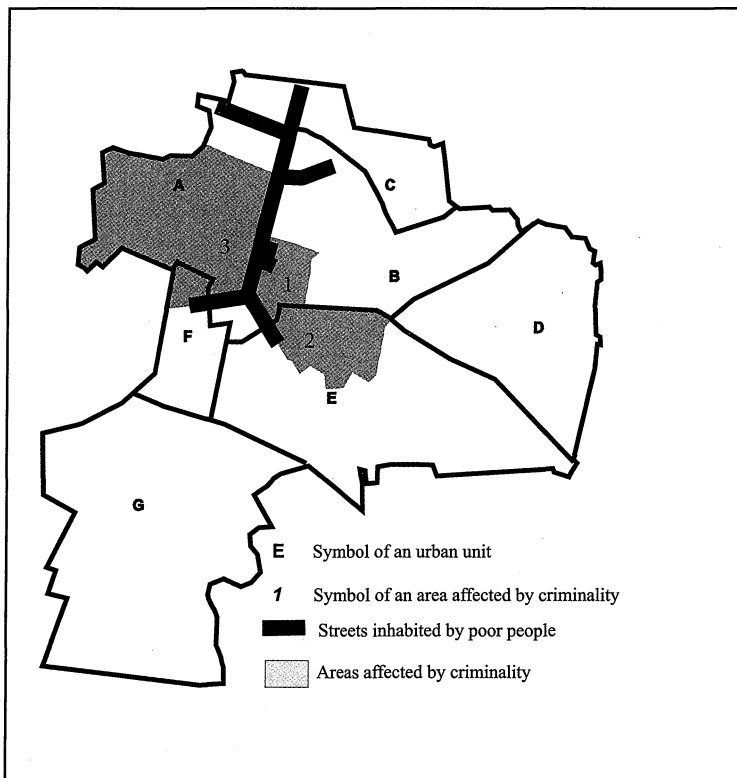


Fig. 4. Areas in Tomaszow Mazowiecki most severely affected by criminality and inhabited by poor people, against urban units established by the Main Statistical Office

Source: Materials obtained from the *Powiat* Police Headquarters and Town’s Social Care Centre in Tomaszow Mazowiecki (in 2001)



The demographic situation of Tomaszów Mazowiecki has worsened since 1989. The number of population has been falling, which results from the regressive birthrate. Despite the fact that the migration balance is usually positive, it is still too low to compensate for the negative birthrate. Apart from the decrease in the number of population, the falling birthrate causes its aging. As far as the social situation is concerned, it can be seen that as a result of transformation processes, a variety of negative phenomena became stronger. First of all there appeared the problem of official unemployment, and the poverty and crime became more severe. The cause of demographic and social problems is the economic stagnation of the town as a consequence of the fall of state enterprises (they were the basis of the town's economy before 1989). Unfortunately, the new enterprises which replaced the state giants are still unable to provide work for all the people who used to be employed in Tomaszów industry (Cudny 2002). A key to the improvement of the demographic and social condition of the town will certainly be the economic development of the whole country and the Tomaszów region.

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